Island - Best í heimi?

Can a critical web series provide meaningful discourse?

Final paper for MA-degree in Culture and Communication

Peter Bergstedt
Kt.: 070979-3679

Supervisor: Sumarliði Ísleifsson & Ármann Gunnarsson
September 2017
Abstract

This project demonstrates how one person with no money, can inspire a national discourse in Iceland. It aims to do so through the production of a critical web series, a marketing plan intended to make each webisode go viral, which in turn should spark a cultivated online public debate. The web series is based partially on research and interviews, but also on an examination of Icelandic culture, history and the apparent crypto-colonial mindset of the common Icelander. Via the production of a pilot, and the help of a focus group, the rather rough tone of the web series is found. The single finalised webisode is a short, factual and humorous mashup video about the short comings of the Icelandic Student Loans, and it is optimised for maximum viral spread. An extensive SWOT analysis of the launch of the web series concludes, that even if you do everything right, there is no such thing as a guaranteed viral hit. You will always need a little luck, for everything to work as intended. But if you have that, then one person, with a fully researched and well developed message, could very well inspire a national discourse.
# Table of Contents

Abstract 2
Introduction 5
Research Problem 6
Method 6
Theory 8
Times Past, and the Rise of a National Identity. 9
Young, Independent and Hungry 13
Present Day Hegemony 16
The Gaze 20
Peter Bergstedt 21
Summarisation 23
Preproduction 26
Terminology 26
Limitations 27
Inspiration 28
Where To Invade Next? (2015) 28
DR3 infomercial - Don’t hate us! (2016) 30
Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (2014 -) 32
Inspired By Progress. 33
Best I Heimi? 36
Research 38
Pilot 41
Evaluation 42
Problems with the method. 44
Webisode 46
Viral Strategy 47
The Plan 47
Launch The SWOT 51
Strengths 52
Weaknesses 53
Opportunities 54
Threats 56
Conclusion 58
Literature 59
Appendix 1 63
DR3 - Don’t Hate Us! 63
Appendix 2 64
Transcribed interview with Ragnar Auðun Árnason 64
Appendix 3 69
Mail interview with Sigurður S. Ásgeirsson (LIN) 69
Appendix 4 72
Pilot Manuscript 72
Appendix 5 75
Online chat interviews - Evaluation of the pilot. 75
Thanks to Wattle and Jesper for proofreading,

Marta for everything and as always

Áfram Ísland!
Introduction

This thesis has to come with a disclaimer. When you comment on another country, you can easily come across as being an annoying, ignorant buffoon with no respect for culture, history or national identity. If you, like I do, come from a country, that used to govern the other country up until recent history, this effect is multiplied many times. I risk becoming the old colonial overlord telling the young and independent ex-colony how to do things. This is far from my intent, and if that is the outcome, I have failed. This thesis represents a work of love, and my motivation is solely to inspire a discourse, that I do not intend to be a part of.

See, I am not from Iceland. I am from Denmark. In 1944 Iceland became independent from Denmark, and after centuries of being bossed around from Copenhagen, Icelanders have built a rich and functioning modern society. So why do I care? Well, I have married an Icelander. Met a plethora of wonderful Icelandic people, both friends and family. I have been to Iceland many times, and I live there as I am writing this. But as much as I like Iceland and Icelandic culture, there are some aspects I do not understand. One of them is an apparent acceptance of unjust policies, behaviours and facts, that somehow rattles my cage. How can Icelanders accept such a skewed work-life balance? How come Iceland has the most bizarre student loans of the Nordic countries? How come Icelanders re-elect obviously corrupt politicians and so on? I am aware that this is not something uniquely Icelandic. Corruption, weird public contraptions and customs that appear alien to others are found in all countries. I think the size of Iceland is what makes so appealing to me. With just over 300.000 people and an online infrastructure second none, I believe that if someone really put their mind to it, they could change the status quo. I might be wrong of course. Iceland could be just as hard to penetrate as other countries, otherwise someone would have surely done it by now. But maybe a foreigner with nothing at stake and no interest in anything but the betterment of livelihood for the common Icelander, could make something inspirational. Something that
would get the Icelanders talking. Something that would make the Icelanders angry enough to push for a change.

I am aware that an Icelander living in Denmark could make the same case about things annoying them about Denmark. Live in another country for long enough, and some things will begin to get under your skin. But maybe the foreigner has a valid point, and an informed discourse should never be discouraged.

**Research Problem**

*Can the crypto-colonial public of Iceland be inspired by a web series, to have a discourse about seemingly unjust policies and matters of national interest?*

**Method**

Instead of basing my thesis and web series solely on personal experience, and emotions, I will examine Icelandic culture to ensure I don’t make any false assumptions. For the web series to be a success, it needs to be in agreement with the Icelandic people, or the message could get lost in disapproving comments. I will observe the Icelander and the Icelandic history through a variety of cultural theories and thinkers. I will then attempt to use this understanding to produce a web series of short, factual and informative videos. These webisodes will be about some of the issues, that I find to be unjust in the Icelandic society. The production of the web series will also explore, how a one man production team can create high impact media without a budget.
Within the confines of this thesis I will produce one full webisode. I will research the subject thoroughly, and talk to people of interest for a better understanding of the issue. I will make a pilot first, as I would like to find right tone before producing the actual webisode. To evaluate on the pilot, I will use a focus group of young Icelanders aged 20-30, as they have the lowest voter turn out\(^1\). I would like to target them in particular, and motivate them to take an active part in the future of their country. The focus group will allow me to adjust the webisode accordingly, so the accompanying discourse can be as pure as possible.

Iceland is the country in world with most people on Facebook per capita\(^2\). Therefore, for maximum impact, I will publish the videos online, and create a viral strategy aimed at maximising views, likes and most importantly comments. Then it is time to launch the web series. Within the context of this thesis, I won’t actually upload the webisodes and implement the viral strategy, but I will make an in-depth SWOT analysis, to imagine how the project would fare once released upon the world.


Theory

Since meeting my Icelandic wife, I have spent eight years closely observing Icelandic culture and people. Slowly I started to see some connections in my observations. I noticed with wonder how people, especially family, just came knocking on our door without a prior agreement. Something that I have never seen in Denmark. I saw how people, even the young, celebrate New Year’s Eve with their family which is another thing I rarely, if ever, see in Denmark. These two observations (and many others), have led me to believe that Iceland is more family orientated than Denmark. Still they are just observations made by one person, and even though they have been somehow backed up in conversations with others, it is clear I need a more solid foundation for my web series.

In this chapter I will explore Icelandic culture, in order to establish some sort of academic backdrop for the web series. This would allow me to find themes I should stay clear of, areas I should exploit or maybe find an explanation as to why things are as I have come to believe they are. This is by no means an easy task, and there are many factors at play. History, geography, people and culture are all important when trying to understand present day Iceland. Trying to figure out, what makes a country tick is hard, but it is impossible to do truthfully unless the observer also takes a look at himself. Perhaps something that is a flaw to a Dane is a virtue for a Mexican. I will try to understand my own view of Iceland, in an effort to avoid tainting my findings. Finally, I will summarise the most important discoveries, and contemplate how I could use them in the web series. I will try to keep this chapter organised, which will be no mean feat, as the different areas constantly overlap. Therefore I have created a visualisation of the contents of this chapter (seen below)

Iceland was founded in 874 by people of Norse ancestry from Norway and the British Isles trying to acquire new farmland. Preferably farmland, that did not already have an owner. The climate is as could be expected in the North Atlantic, and the geography is as rough as it is beautiful. At the beginning Iceland enjoyed freedom before falling under first Norwegian and later Danish control. Some might call this period of independence Iceland’s golden age. In this period Icelanders famously discovered Greenland and North America, laid down the world’s first Althing and wrote down their sagas in the Eddas. All three are a matter of international renown and great national pride. In regards to the Eddas, Icelandic politician and former minister, Gylfi Gíslason (1973) quotes Professor Sigurdur Nordal’s praise of the beloved heritage.

“the best in Icelandic literature from the tenth and thirteenth centuries will stand comparison in originality and genius with any literature in the world, even though due appreciation of those works may not be general because so few foreigners have a thorough understanding of them and because it has proved so difficult to do them justice in translation”

This era is still a source of great national pride, and a trait Iceland shares with other postcolonial societies. Countries like Mexico and India also celebrate their pre-colonial golden ages with great enthusiasm.

In 1262 Iceland lost its independence to first Norway and later Denmark. The majority the following years were quite uneventful, and Iceland’s location on the periphery of the civilised world, led to descriptions about Iceland being both a dystopia and utopia. Before enlightenment Iceland was regarded as a savage place, and the people that lived there were often described as barbarians, that lived together with the livestock in tiny houses made of turf. Being on the periphery indicates that a country is backwards culturally, and not

---

3 Gíslason (1973) page 28
4 Ísleifsson (2009) page 156
5 Ísleifsson (2009) page 149.
technologically on par with the countries in the centre. Not being regarded as being on par with other countries, is something Icelanders and their self-image have struggled with for many years. According to Icelandic historian Sumarlíði Ísleifsson, the Icelandic people have spent much energy on erasing this negative image, and substituting it with a stronger and more positive one⁶. Gislason wrote, that when negative travel stories began circulating about Iceland, Arngrim the Learned got angry and wrote books in Latin to right this wrong⁷. The shift towards a more positive self-image came from abroad, with the rise of nationalism in the western and northern European countries in the 19th century. Icelandic cultural history slowly became accepted as the pure Nordic culture, and in the images, music and stories of the northern European

---

⁶ Ísleifsson (2009) page 151
⁷ Gislason (1973) page 38
countries the era was romantized heavily. This is where it becomes apparent, that Iceland does not live up to the criteria for being a post-colonial country. Denmark never invaded Iceland, and killed the indigenous population. There was no racism towards the Icelanders, and with the rise of enlightenment, romanticism and nationalism the Icelandic culture came to enjoy high status in Denmark and indeed in the rest of Europe. Icelanders then began regarding themselves with more esteem, and Ísleifsson noticed the rising pride in a tourist brochure from 1892. In 1905 Tivoli in Copenhagen had an exhibition with the people and cultures in the Danish colonies. In-between Inuits and West Indian Africans stood some Icelanders, and they were not happy. Not so much about

---

8 Gremaud (2014) page 84
9 Ísleifsson (2009) page 152
being on display, but by being on display with, what they perceived to be, lesser cultures. 

A year before independence was regained in 1944, Gudmundur Finnbogason (an Icelandic philosopher) wrote an article called “The Icelanders”, where he describes the nature of the Icelandic national identity, and how it came to be. The text is nationalistic self-flattery to the point of almost being narcissistic. Finnbogason writes, that the nature and climate of Iceland has been a big part in shaping the Icelander. The harsh environment and the origin of the country has made the Icelander self-reliant, independent, tenacious, manly and imaginative. The first Icelanders were of good Nordic stock, and they desired freedom and adventure more than living under a king they didn't agree with. They were the best of the best. Finnbogason went on, and went through 1000 biographies written about Icelanders and compiled a list of the top 10 characteristics used to describe the typical Icelander. First on the list is gifted, 2nd courteous, 3rd learned, 4th kind hearted, 5th poets, 6th hospitable, 7th cheerful, 8th stout, 9th skilful artisans, and number ten is sincere. A positive list, that fits well with Finnbogason’s earlier findings. Ísleifsson claims this became the accepted self-image of the Icelanders, even though it had roots in racism. Surely this self-image must have changed since Finnbogason published his book over 70 years ago? In 2003, then president of Iceland Olafur Ragnar Grimsson gave a speech in London, about what drives the success of the Icelandic investments at the time. Grimsson stated many of the same virtues as Finnbogason, and claims these were at the heart of the success the Icelandic business men enjoyed at this time. They were hard working, aggressive, creative and in many areas just plain better and more competitive.

---


11 Finnbogason (1943) pages 10-11

12 Finnbogason (1943) page 19

13 Ísleifsson (2009) page 154
than business men of other nations\textsuperscript{14}. It appears Grimsson believes, like Finnbogason, that Icelanders are superior by nature, and that not much has changed since 1943. Ísleifsson claims this is part of a tradition, and writes about it as “… an attempt to make the small visible and to call out loudly enough to be heard - and a clear sign of a deep sense of inferiority”.\textsuperscript{15}

The (almost) national slogan “Ísland – best í heimi”, is one I have heard many times. From the pureness of the water to Iceland having the most beautiful nature in the world. I believe Icelanders celebrate themselves even more than Danes do, which in itself is quite an achievement. Iceland is a fantastic place, and there is nothing wrong with a little self-appreciation, but sometimes it does come across as overcompensating. There are other countries with clean water, natural beauty is a question of personal taste, and let’s face it; Björk is not for everyone. Being a subjugated country, even though not in a classical post-colonial sense, did have a lasting and profound effect on Icelandic culture. According to Nelson, this is effect is called crypto-colonialism, and it is actually still felt to this day, and will be felt for years to come\textsuperscript{16}. This is a term I will touch upon later in this chapter.

**Young, Independent and Hungry**

Danish cultural historian Ann-Sofie Nielsen Gremaud writes, that the pride and inferiority complex is what lay at the heart of the financial crisis in 2009\textsuperscript{17}. Útrásarvíkingur, or the business Vikings, were a celebrated bunch in Iceland before the crisis. Business vikings brought much wealth to themselves and to Iceland from the end of the last century till the crisis. They were a glimpse of past Viking grandeur, but unfortunately for the people of Iceland, it all came crumbling down. There is more to it of course, but primarily the crisis developed,

\textsuperscript{14} Ísleifsson (2009) page 155
\textsuperscript{15} Ísleifsson (2009) page 154
\textsuperscript{16} Gremaud (2014) page 102
\textsuperscript{17} Gremaud (2014) page 84
because the politicians made it easier for the Útrásarvíkingur to conduct their business. This is indicative of how completely Iceland embraced the doctrine of neoliberalism towards the end of last century, and beginning of this millennium. Economists Robert Wade and Silla Sigurgeirsdottir (2012) cites Arthur Laffer, economic advisor to Ronald Reagan, who on a visit to Iceland in 2007, said that Iceland was a model for the world. It was a good thing it wasn't. Neoliberalism was abundant in the economic politics of Iceland, especially from the 1980’s and onward, but the individualistic and consumeristic nature of neoliberalism was also notable in the streets of Reykjavik, where more and more SUVs filled the streets. Iceland is not the only country to accept neoliberalism. Many countries in post-World War 2 Europe, has slowly moved away from their more egalitarian origins, and into more neoliberal waters, as spread by the cultural imperialism conducted by the United States. The American dream of a big house and a big car, is gaining momentum, even in Denmark, which American right-wing media has accused Bernie Sanders of falsely naming as a socialist utopia. In the Danish schools, there was recently held a fake election, complete with campaigns from all the political parties. It ended with a clear victory for the right wing, especially the liberal Venstre and the neoliberal Liberal Alliance. The left wing parties SF and Enhedslisten became the smallest parties, and the (historically) biggest party the social democrats, received only 17.6%. The rest of the western world might be sliding towards more neoliberal legislation, but Iceland went further than most. American philosopher (among other titles) Noam Chomsky describes neoliberalism as a system where government should not stand in the way of the free market, and trade should be free and unregulated. The close network between politicians and business in Iceland, ultimately led to the crisis in 2009. But they were allowed to, by a

---

18 Wade/Sigurgeirsdottir (2012) page 130


population all too happy to fill their own pockets, with no regard to as to how this money was obtained. I wonder if this complete surrender to neoliberalism, was what Gislason (1973) had in mind when he wrote, that Iceland had to evolve its economy in the last quarter of the 20th century, to accommodate leaps in technology and globalisation.

Because something happened to the Icelandic spirit in the last 40 or so years on the complex background of pride, neoliberalism, inferiority and centuries of being an impoverished dominion, another trait slowly evolved. Depending on temper you could call it either individualism, greed or something in between. The Útrásarvíkingur are but the most prominent example and culmination of years of wanting more. More than one's parents, more than one's neighbours and more than the whole world, who has been laughing at you for years. Laughing at you for living at the edge of civilisation, laughing at your numbers, laughing at your stature. In the tv show “Seinfeld” (1989), Elaine complains how she wants to move into Jerry's bad apartment, because the one she has is worse. She goes on to say, that for her, it would like moving from Iceland to Finland. But all that should stop, and Iceland should be taken seriously no matter what!

---

22 Gislason (1973) page 89
23 Accessed January 3, 2017 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvF3uTYHn00
Present Day Hegemony

After the crisis in 2009, Gremaud writes, it would be a good idea to stop, and examine the temperature of the Icelandic culture and political system\textsuperscript{24}. It started promising with massive demonstrations, prosecutions of bankers and a massive effort to get the economy going again. Here in June 2017 it seems nothing much really happened. The economy is red hot. Prizes are going up. The political parties responsible for the failed legislations, that led to the hrun\textsuperscript{25} are back in charge. Icelanders are once again consuming, and that is a celebrated trait. Before the crisis there were some who voiced their concern about the materialistic consumeristic nature of the Icelanders, but they were often scolded for not being real Icelanders\textsuperscript{26}. Some of those Icelanders left the country and moved abroad. I have met quite a few of them in Denmark, and they all claim one of the reasons they left, was that they didn’t approve of the blatant Icelandic consumerism.

Another thing they all share, and something I hear from Icelanders on Iceland as well, is a distrust of the political and monetary elite. In their coverage of the latest Icelandic elections in October 2016 the independent website “World Elections”, voiced some similar concerns\textsuperscript{27}. They were worried about the lack of accountability among the political elite, quoting Hallgrímur Helgason who blogs for the newspaper DV.

“Icelandic society is like a computer game. It doesn’t matter if you lose, you just start again. You have endless “lives”… Same goes for the politicians. If they mess up the economy and bankrupt the nation, they just wait four years and then they’re back in office. We are very tolerant people.”\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{24} Gremaud (2014) page 83

\textsuperscript{25} Icelandic word that means collapse, and is used to describe the financial crisis.

\textsuperscript{26} Accessed January 3, 2017 http://grapevine.is/mag/articles/2011/07/11/whose-fault-was-the-giant-icelandic-consumption-boom/

\textsuperscript{27} Accessed January 6, 2017 https://welections.wordpress.com/category/iceland/

Calling Icelanders tolerant in this regard is Helgason at his most sarcastic, but it is a trait observed in other crypto-colonial countries.

Herzfeld comes to a similar conclusion in regards to Greece. A nation that, like Iceland, clings to its golden age centuries ago, and whose elite are controlling the national discourse with romantic ideas to enhance their own power\textsuperscript{29}. There are more similarities between Iceland and Greece, as researched by Isleifsson. He states that with nationalism and romanticism in the 19th century Iceland became a “Hellas of the North”\textsuperscript{30}. It did so because, like Greece, Iceland became widely admired for its literature and the cultural achievements of their “golden age”. As with Latin, Icelandic was regarded as a looking glass, through which one could observe the glorious past of all the gothic languages. This was further explored by the Nazis, who nurtured romantic notions of Iceland as a kind of holy island\textsuperscript{31}. Like Iceland, Greece has also been dominated by other countries for centuries, and that has shaped the Icelandic/Greek mindset, from one that accepts a foreign overlord to accepting a domestic one.

\textsuperscript{29} Herzfeld (2002) page 903
\textsuperscript{30} Ísleifsson (2009) page 150
Nelson states that this typical crypto-colonial mindset, is not one to be overcome, but it will ever so slowly evolve into something he calls post-crypto-colonialism, thereby saying its characteristics are if not permanent, then at least long lasting. Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1897-1937) called this power structure hegemony. It refers to the structure, where the elite convinces the people that what is best for the elite, is of benefit to the whole country. To project the power of hegemony, one doesn't necessarily need a military dominance, it can be accomplished by control of education and media. An example of this relationship is former (and longest serving) prime minister of Iceland, Davíð Oddsson, who after being forced to resign as head of the Icelandic central bank in 2009, became editor of Morgunblaðið, one of Iceland's biggest newspapers. A special investigation by the Icelandic parliament concluded in 2010, that the case of Davíð Oddsson and Morgunblaðið is clear evidence of how the owners of media in Iceland, engages in manipulation for political ends.

Hegemony gives the elite some control over the media, and therefore also control of modern day public debate, but Iceland had problems with maintaining a proper public debate. The rise of the bourgeoisie in other countries heralded the beginning of an informed public debate, and the end of monarchy and aristocracy. “The emergent bourgeoisie gradually replaced a public sphere in which the ruler's power was merely represented before the people with a sphere in which state authority was publicly monitored through informed and critical discourse by the people.” Iceland never really experienced that shift. In Europe citizens could meet in English coffeehouses, German Tischgesellschaften and French salons and discuss ideas free of the divide of one's social ranking. This was not an issue in crypto-colonial Iceland, and

---

32 Nelson (2011) pages 6-7
35 Habermas (1991) Page 11
hence the public debate today is flawed, as it does not have a solid foundation in the reason cultivated in the aforementioned locations. According to Habermas, reason is to be realised in rational communication in the public of cultivated people. The economic and political elite of Iceland are based in the fishing and agricultural industries, and possibilities for discussions were limited. That in turn means the public debate can be rather rough, with little chance of involving the common Icelander. An example could be Chief Economist for Danske Bank, Carsten Valgreen’s highly publicised warning of 2006, that Iceland’s economy was in bad shape. This public problem was handled internally by the banks, who came with statements ridiculing Danske Banks reasoning, and defending the Icelandic economy. These closed statements made by the banks were generally accepted and supported by the public. In Habermas definition of democracy, publicity is not something to be taken lightly. It is fundamental to a well functioning democracy. I aim for my web series to create a public debate, in what could be argued is the coffee house of the 21st century. By supporting a (hopefully) cultivated, factual and open discourse based in reason, the web series could maybe play a small part, in sparking an age where the people of Iceland take the power away from the economic and political elite.

This is my point of entry. My excuse to meddle, where I rightfully don't belong if you will. The idea that the common Icelander, whom I grown so fond of, is being manipulated by the elite, and because of their crypto-colonial past, they are all but forced to accept the unjust rulings of the powerful and rich. This fits with my understanding of the world. With my gaze.

36 Habermas (1991) page 35
40 Habermas (1991) page 120
The Gaze

When commenting on other countries and cultures, you always do so from a vantage point. A hill consisting of the commentators own cultural background, personal history, political observations and so on. To complicate things a little bit, it is not a closed off system. The gaze goes both ways. When French Philosopher Michel Foucault described the gaze in regards to Diego Velázquez’s magnificent painting “Las Menias”, he says it was a break with the tradition of art merely being looked at, and goes on to say that the observer and observed are engaged in a never ending exchange. The web series serves a different purpose than “Las Menias”, but the Danish and Icelandic gazes it brings together could prove useful. But that is not a given. Some time ago a family member, who is very active on social media, engaged a conservative Muslim online about gay rights. That conversation turned sour pretty fast because of their opposing gazes. One is brought up in a liberal, western country were gay people are (now) an accepted part of the population. The other thought being gay is a sin punishable by death. No-one convinced anyone of anything, and both just had their own gazes confirmed by the other. That is my fear. Alienating the Icelanders without the web series stirring up any meaningful conversation. The gaze is closely related to imagology, which is the academic field in which literature and art, throughout the ages, are used to find out how a people were perceived at certain points in history. A sort of a history

of stereotypes. Mandfred Beller writes “…preconceived interests can determine what we observe…”, and this can lead to, if not false observations then at least to a confirmation of the already known. In this chapter I will briefly explain my gaze, explain the imagology about Iceland I have been subjected to, and how I will use this knowledge to avoid pitfalls in the web series.

Peter Bergstedt

My background has a lot to do with my gaze of Iceland, and even more as to why I am making these web series. I grew up in a working-class suburb of Copenhagen, as the son of two teachers. We often talked about politics, and I have always been concerned with injustice and the plight of the “little man”. I happily pay my taxes, and I hate it when wealthy corporations and people evade theirs. The images that shaped my view of Iceland and the people living there, were introduced to me at school. It was mainly about geography and geology, and it was all tied together with a saga; “Gunnlaugr Ormstunga”. Nothing about contemporary Iceland, which fits well with Isleifsson’s notions of Iceland as either utopia (the saga as a beacon of literacy) or dystopia (our teachings revolved about ice, volcanos, wind and darkness). This was my image of Iceland for a long time. My low levels of both interest and information meant, that the only thing I could think of when it came to Iceland, was why people would even consider living there.

Fast forward to the 2000s. To my surprise there were successful people living in Iceland, and apparently they were buying half of Denmark. They were being called business Vikings, and they got a lot of attention. I remember being annoyed at this. Not that they were buying half the country, but that they, the Icelanders, apparently were being called modern Vikings. My image of a Viking was someone, who was invading England and sacking Paris, not peasants killing each other over a pair of sheep at the end of the world. In a way, they


43 Isleifsson (2007) pages 177-179
were burying my Danish self-image as a Viking, because if they were the modern Vikings, then we, by definition, were not. When the crisis came, Iceland was front page news for a long time, and a new layer was added to my dystopian perception of Iceland. The greedy and individualistic Icelander who would rather have a big car than take good care of the community. But the Icelanders seemed like a tough bunch, an image supported by the advertisements for 66 Degrees North, that I started seeing around the same time. Stern Icelanders thriving in harsh surroundings, is a self-image I believe many Icelanders have. Even though in general, the life of an ordinary Icelander today, is just as cosy and sheltered as that of an ordinary Dane.

In Denmark I have been disillusioned with, what I perceive as, the dismantling of the welfare state. Slowly but surely I feel that people, politicians and corporations are becoming more selfish, and I don't know what to do about it. Many times have I wanted to do something. Be involved. In my opinion Iceland
is further down that same road of individuality Denmark is, and I sometimes feel the Icelanders have given up. I don't blame them. As mentioned earlier, the lack of accountability in Icelandic politics is enormous, and quite frankly mind blowing to me. I almost feel compelled to do something. Say something. But why do I care so much? Couldn't I have made a thesis about something less likely to make me unpopular, with people I care about? Is there a subconscious part of me, that wants to educate the irresponsible little brother from the north? Am I secretly frustrated with the attention Iceland is receiving? The success of their football team? Maybe I am just soaked in Jantelov, and secretly think Icelanders should remain in their place. Behind Denmark. In 2005/06 I lived in Australia, and as dictated by "the 4 stages of culture shock", I also got frustrated with aspects of Australian culture, but I never did anything about it. The weather was arguably better, but as a media student at the time, I had the same opportunities to produce critical content. Maybe this whole project is born out of personal frustrations and petty jealousy more than anything, which, if left unchecked, could undermine the intended objectivity of the web series.

Summarisation

Now I will attempt to summarise the things I have learnt in this chapter, and contemplate how to put the findings to good use in the finished webisode. For clarity I have created the following flowchart, showing how I intend to proceed.

---

44 The Law of Jante. An unwritten Scandinavian law, that states you should not consider yourself special.

Pride

Icelanders are a proud people, and I should be careful not to step over the fine line between humour and ridicule. That won’t go down well, and could kill off any discourse before it even got started. I could use the pride to my advantage, by also poking my stick at the countries I will be comparing Iceland to. Thereby earning, not just cheap points, but maybe even some credibility, as the web series would seem less one sided.

Inferiority

A touchy subject with great possibilities. The whole point of the web series is to explore something in Iceland that I think is inferior to what they have somewhere else. That is the premise of the series. If I can tickle the inferiority complex just right, I might inspire the discourse I am after. In the pilot I will explore the limit of the Icelandic inferiority, and see what happens if I go too far. That will result in some empirical evidence from the focus group, I can utilise in the final webisode, and hopefully end up with something that people can and will build upon.

Individuality

This is something I think the web series as a whole, is going confront head on. Separately the webisodes will describe a given situation. That situation will have a cause, and I will present options as to how countries deal with similar issues. But if you watch the entire series, a pattern should emerge. That the problems are caused by some form of individuality or greed, and that the solution is always the community working together.

Unaccountability

Whenever the opportunity arises in the web series, that someone in particular can be held accountable for some kind of wrong, they are going to be called out. They will feature with name, picture and what (if any) punishment they received. If the unaccountability is as bad as my research indicates, then this
should make it clear to everybody, that accountability is needed to maintain/regain the trust of the people in the system.

**Being Danish**

How am I going to be involved, and what impact will it have that I am Danish? As this is something I suspect could have huge influence on the effect of the web series, I am going to once again test this potential problem in the pilot. In the pilot I will be more visible/audible as a rough colonial overlord, than I expect will be of benefit to the intended discourse. Going all in with the pilot, will on the other hand provide valuable feedback from the focus group, that I can implement to the final webisode. I could also be wrong. An angry Danish commentator could be exactly what the web series needs to achieve an edge that makes it relevant.

![Image](image-url)  
Is this really what anything needs? “Lille Danmark” 2009 by Peter Carlsen.
Preproduction

Now that I have established a theoretical backdrop, and extracted some focus points from the research, I have to start thinking about the actual web series. I will start by clarifying the key concepts of “web series” and “the one man production team”. After that I will discuss the limitations, I have as the sole producer of the web series. Then I will highlight some productions and technologies, that in one way or another has inspired the web series. With this knowledge I will be ready to start producing the web series.

Terminology

In this chapter I will briefly describe two key concepts in this thesis. These are not something I have made up for the occasion, but they are rather new concepts, and there is not an abundance of literature on the subjects, so I will be relying mainly on personal research and online resources. So for the sake of clarity and understanding, I will define their meaning within this thesis.

Web series

Episodic video content released on the internet is called a web series, and a single episode is called a webisode46. It is a broad definition, but in general web series tend to be shorter than regular flow tv, as they don't have to fit into a schedule or have commercial brakes. They range in content from sit coms like The Guild47 to Vlogs like PewDiePie48. There is an incredible variety in style, genres and production value. The content is mostly free, and available on such sites as youtube.com, vimeo.com, and apps like Snapchat. Because it has become increasingly less complicated to produce, distribute and consume content, more web series are being produced. Today the term web series also

covers professionally produced content like “House of Cards” available on Netflix. As long as it is released online first, it is defined as a web series.

**One Man Production Team**

As the headline implies it is about one man (me), being in complete control of all aspects of a production. From idea to research, shooting to editing. It is all one person. There are no one to stop you, and you can just go! Filming yourself counting to 100,000 sounds like a bad idea to me, but youtube user MrBeast did it, and 7,2 mil. people has seen it on youtube⁴⁹, making quite a lot of money for MrBeast. Being able to produce and publish content by yourself is great, but that does not necessarily mean your video is going to achieve what you want it to. MrBeast wanted as many views as possible, as that is how he makes a living. I aim to inspire a discourse, and having a discourse by yourself is contradictory. It is easy to miss the target, if you are too self reliant. Therefore, I think it is very important, to have other people look over your material, voice their opinions and give serious thought to implementing the critique into the production. You would still have complete control over where, how and for how long you work. It is *you*, making sure *your* production works.

**Limitations**

A one man produced web series aimed at creating a critical discourse, is a daunting task at best. Almost impossible at worst. Every single webisode needs to be rigorously researched, as any factual errors would undermine the credibility of the series. Research has proven time consuming, as most resources are in Icelandic, which means I have to rely on google translate and helpful Icelanders. I will produce one out of the planned eight webisodes. It will be about student loans, as that is what inspired me to begin with. It will serve as an indicator of the intended quality of the other 7 webisodes.

---

Inspiration

The attempt to inspire a discourse with media is almost as old as media itself. The Protestant Reformation wouldn't have made such an impact without the new invention of the printing press\(^{50}\). Luther and his fellow reformists translated the bible to other languages than Latin, and used the newly printed versions to spread the word of Protestantism far and wide. I am by no means an island, and the idea of a critical web series did not come out of nothing. I have studied and worked with online video and culture most of my adult life. I have followed the technological development with keen interest, both as a professional and as a hobby. In this chapter I will limit myself to explore three productions, that successfully employ techniques, I wish to emulate in the web series. I could add a much longer list of inspirations, but these three sums up many of the thoughts I had in preproduction. I will also briefly cover the incredible technological development, that has made this project even remotely possible.

Where To Invade Next? (2015)\(^{51}\)

This is the standard Michael Moore documentary format, where Moore explores his subject while in front of the camera, and with a lot of humour. Michael Moore is an American documentarist specialising in taking the “little mans” side against the system. “Where To Invade Next” is what film theoretician Bill Nichols\(^{52}\) calls a performative documentary, as it is Moore who is front and centre in the film, and the narrative is from his subjective point of view. The movie is about Moore setting out to, on behalf of America, invade other countries, and bring their good ideas back to the US. He goes to Italy because they enjoy long paid holidays. He goes to Finland because of their school system, which is based on happy kids and he goes to Iceland, because Iceland put the bankers responsible for


\(^{52}\) Nichols (2001) page 129
the financial crisis in jail. However he didn't just go from country to country, he also tried to find a red thread in all these fantastic ideas. His red thread was, that in all the countries there was a strong sense of community, and that in turn was because women in these countries are taken seriously. This red thread is something I would like to adopt. All the problems I describe in the web series, should be related to the underlying issue of manipulation by the elite, as established earlier, and that the solution is a stronger community. Having a red thread will tie the series together, and hopefully paint a bigger picture, than any one webisode can.

Moore spends much effort on the intro. He tries to set up the narrative, that he is invading other countries for their ideas, which is not an idea easily communicated, but he does so quite well, and it is crucial for the understanding of the films message. It is important that my audience understand what is going on from the start. “Where To Invade Next”, is almost two hours long. The intro is longer, than any one of my webisodes, so I have to make the intro as short and to the point as possible. Moore has always been a keen user of various media. He throws in old movie clips, cartoons, graphics and so on where ever he
deems it necessary. This is a clever move. It adds tempo and gives the director tremendous creative freedom, when compared to using only your own footage. This has to be a priority for me. As a one man production team, I could easily run into not having enough film, to keep the audience interested. As visual thinker and complex problem solver Dan Roam, author of “The Back Of The Napkin”, says “There is no such thing as boring knowledge, only boring presentation”\(^{53}\). The web series cannot be boring. Some of the webisodes could easily be complex documentaries in their own right, and boiling them down for web consumption, will not be an easy task. The goal is to start a discourse, not putting people to sleep. The last thing I would like to adapt, is actually a statement, that I want to reverse. Michael Moore says “I want to pick the flowers, not the weeds”. With this he meant, that he was only going to look at, what was working in the countries he visited. No mentions of high taxes, immigration or that Icelandic nurses have to work overtime every week to pay the bills. This is a smart move by Moore as the full picture is complicated, and would destroy the premise for his film. In an interview with Fortune\(^ {54}\) he says, he was motivated by showing concrete solutions to the American problems, he had been documenting for years. He wanted to present a bucket of flowers to the American public, a picture of how things could be done, what other options are out there, and then have a discourse about it. I am going to turn that upside down. I will only pick the weeds, present how other countries deal with the same problems, and hopefully inspire a fruitful discourse.

**DR3 infomercial - Don`t hate us! (2016)**\(^ {55}\)

DR3 is one of the new tv-channels making up DR, formerly known as Danmarks Radio, The national television media station of Denmark. DR3 is producing

---


\(^{54}\) Accessed January 10, 2017 http://fortune.com/2016/05/10/michael-moore-where-invade-next/

\(^{55}\) Accessed January 11, 2017 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhuJyCw06lw
media targeted at the young adults (15-39 years of age) segment, and they have achieved great success with their mashup videos. A mashup video is a video that mixes different seemingly unrelated videos, still photos, graphics and sound bites into a new video with its own message. The DR3 video I am inspired by, is their reply to the outpouring of rage the world sent Denmark’s way, after the government decided to confiscate jewellery from immigrants.

The video is humorous and tries to sell the idea, that Danes aren't so bad after all. I know Youtube comments are hardly sound evidence, but the majority of the comments are positive, and there is also some debate going on, which is a desirable outcome for the state financed DR3. There are several reasons as to why, I would like make the webisodes mashup videos. It adds tempo and gives possibilities for humorous input, that I just would not have, if I were to rely solely on video I shot myself. I am not a comedian, but adding humour could do wonders for the spread of the video. See the “Viral Strategy” chapter. Borrowing media from all over the Internet, and use it in my web series does however present some legal issues, but with careful planning copyright infringement can be avoided.

To some extent it is legal to use different media without the consent of the author, as long as certain criteria are met. This practice is called fair use. There are four factors a judge will look at, to determine whether or not a media production is considered fair use, should the copyright holders sue for infringement.

1. Is the use transformative, or of a commercial nature?
2. What is the nature of the original work?
3. The amount of the original used?
4. Does it harm the copyright holder’s ability to profit from the original work?

---

59 See Appendix 1.
60 Accessed January 17, 2017 https://www.youtube.com/yt/copyright/fair-use.html#yt-copyright-protection
The web series will be highly transformative works, and they are not intended to make money. Both factual and fictive media will be used, but only in very small segments. If they hurt copyright holder’s profits, it would be unintended and surprising considering the amount of media used and how it is applied to the web series. Here is an example of fair use, as youtuber Marco Schiavon has edited some of his favourite movies together in a fast paced tribute to the original works. I also intend to use as much royalty free media as possible. Media released under creative commons are free to use, as long as certain criteria are met. Multiple websites, like creativecommons.org, bensound.com, commons.wikimedia.org and many more, provide access to millions of free pictures, videos, music and more. I will use the song “Surf” by Moby, as the background music for the websisode. I got permission to use the song from Moby’s own website mobygratis.com, which is intended to give students and filmmakers, access to high quality music without the threat of copyright infringement. Internet, copyright infringement and fair use are a not an area to be taken lightly, and it is easy to get burnt if you are not careful. On top of that, rules that apply in one country might not apply in another. Therefore I have decided that I am going with the American fair use rules and give credit where it is due. This is a low budget, one man production and there is neither time or manpower enough, to make sense of different countries different copyright laws. I will use the guidelines provided by the host of the web series - youtube.com.

Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (2014 -)

Last Week Tonight is an HBO production, that air/streams Sundays and have a runtime of 30 minutes. It is a satirical look at some issues that bothers the writers of the show. It is mainly about, what the writers perceive as, injustice of some sort, and the show has targeted everybody/thing from Donald Trump over journalism to daylight savings. I am inspired by their content and tone. When John Oliver goes after something, it seems he is actually angry, and truly wants

61 Accessed January 17, 2017 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bX-Oly9ZHRg
62 Accessed January 17, 2017 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/
64 Accessed January 17, 2017 http://www.fixcopyright.eu/
to change whatever it is, he is angry about. He goes on to convey this anger in a humorous and well researched way. I hope to be able emulate these traits, even though I am nowhere near as funny as John Oliver and his team of writers. Humour is a good attention grabber, but trying to be funny and failing would be a certain fail for my web series, so it has to be used sparingly. The anger should come across in the spoken delivery of a thoroughly researched manuscript, and with a little luck the anger will be contagious. If people are angry, they are more likely to engage in sharing, liking and commenting, than they are with any other emotion. The distribution of Last Week Tonight, is also something I have taken an interest to. The full show is available on HBO Sunday, but it is also broken down into smaller segments and released on youtube.com. Everything released through youtube, is devoid of long intros, credits and other redundancies. It is straight to the point. Make every second count!

**Inspired By Progress.**

15 years ago I started as a volunteer at Vesterbro Lokal Tv in Copenhagen. Back then we needed a big setup for small productions. For a small news segment we would have to be at least two people covering the actual event. Interviewer/producer and cameraman/technician. The equipment was unwieldy and demanding. Afterwards we would take our tape, and give it to the in-house editor, who had a huge and expensive analog editing suite. Then he and the producer would edit the footage, and export the final segment on to another

tape. That tape would be put into a special video player in our control room, in
time for our weekly live show. When it was time for the segment to air, someone
would physically press play, and the producer would cut to the video feed. A
videotaped recording of the entire show was later put into the archives.

Today I could do all of this myself. Armed with nothing more than my
smartphone and an internet connection, I could potentially reach more people
than Vesterbro Lokal Tv could ever dream of. At a much higher resolution. This
incredible development is very inspirational, and I look forward to see what kind
of impact, I as a one man production team, can have with these new
possibilities. I am not the first person to notice the rapid development in video
technology. As an indicator of this development, a survey shows that in 2016
61% of businesses are using video in their marketing compared to the year
before, where 66% of businesses didn't use video at all\textsuperscript{68}. The myriad of
different platforms on which to publish or enjoy video, has completely turned the
media landscape on its head in such a way, that it easy to forget just how young
the field of online video really is. Youtube started in 2003, Vimeo in 2004,
Facebook in 2004, Netflix in 2007, Snapchat in 2011. That development is a
whole thesis on its own, and I will not be going into further detail, but to give a
general idea of the size and usage of online video, I will provide a few facts, and
conclude that video driven content is moving forward at an incredible pace.
Every minute 300 hours worth of video is uploaded to Youtube.com, and every
month 3.25 billion hours of Youtube video is being watched by 1.325 billion
people\textsuperscript{69}. 1.721 billion people are on Facebook, and among the 18-34 year old
Facebook users, 28% go to Facebook before they get out of bed\textsuperscript{70}. 158 million
people use Snapchat every day. On average they log on 18 times a day and
have 25-30 minutes of in-app time\textsuperscript{71}. Chart #1 shows how regular flow television

\textsuperscript{68} Accessed February 21, 2017, https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-use-social-video-for-
marketing/


statistics/
are loosing viewers. Especially among the 18-34 year olds, the ones that could not get out of bed, without checking their Facebook feed, and the very segment I am trying to reach. What a wonderful time to be alive, where you can actually produce something that your target audience has a chance of watching and being inspired by. You can now potentially bypass the classical, and sometimes politically controlled, media, and have a (hopefully) civilised debate based on reason. All the prerequisites are there, and this time everybody is invited into the coffee house.

Chart #1 - Not a nice chart if you produce flow-tv for a living.
Best I Heimi?

Here I will briefly describe the content of the 8 webisodes. The description, is how the webisode will be presented. Only webisode one is produced and thoroughly researched.

1. **Student Loans.**

   An Icelandic student loan is something you are likely to die with. A kind of work life-long extra tax, for having the audacity to go to school, and not having rich parents. There are other ways!

2. **Traffic.**

   Icelanders love their cars, and it seems they all have one. Weather sucks, distances are long and everybody can afford some kind of personal transport. This means lots of traffic, wasted hours, and nothing is really done about it, even though it´s by no means a new problem.

3. **Kids.**

   Icelandic kids spend more time away from their parents than in the other Nordic countries, and their parents knows it. And hate it. The kids aren´t big fans either.

4. **Tourists.**

   Iceland has seen a massive invasion of tourists over the last couple of years, and money is pouring in. But there is a price, and it is the Icelanders who are getting stuck with the bill.

5. **The Public Sector.**

   Despite all the wealth jumping out of the oceans, and pouring out of the airplanes, the Icelandic public sector is bleeding. Teachers and nurses are comparably underpaid, and many find themselves working two jobs. But that is just the tip of the Titanic.
6. **Accountability In Politics.**

   When former Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson had his fingers stuck in the Panama Papers cookie jar in front of the whole world, embarrassed and enraged Icelanders in their tens of thousands demonstrated till he finally resigned. That was in April 2016. In October 2016 he got re-elected. How is this even remotely possible?

7. **Prizes.**

   In 2012 you could buy a hotdog for 14 danish kroner at the pier in Hafnafjordur. In 2016 the same hotdog cast 25 danish kroner. An whooping 80% increase, and the exchange rate can only explain the 25%. Costco anyone?

8. **Where does the money go?**

   Iceland has every chance to be Shangri-La. Fish, tourists, low energy prices and a small but pretty much fully employed population, should have no problems what so ever. But there are plenty of problems. Is there a hole somewhere?
Research

It is important that the facts I present in the web series are correct. If I am wrong, the web series will lose all credibility, and not inspire anything but harsh comments. In this chapter I explain my research phase, which is the factual foundation for the manuscript.

When I started coming into contact with Icelanders, I obviously started hearing stories about Iceland. Many where interesting and funny anecdotes about small cultural differences, e.g. that only 20 years ago the city of Hafnafjordur held beauty contests for 14-15 year old school girls, and that the judges were other students and their teachers. Or that young Icelanders, who weren't allowed to buy alcohol from the special alcohol store, would simply buy moonshine made in toilets from random strangers instead. Other stories were more gloomy. Especially the stories I was told about the student loans. Student loans that were, in essence, a lifelong tax on people, who wanted to study, but did not have rich parents to back them up financially. A good friend told me about, how the private banks can actually benefit, from students failing their courses. My jaw hit the floor, so when I moved to Iceland, it made perfect sense to explore these loans as part of my thesis. So I started ploughing through the Internet to find stories and facts that would back up the stories I already heard. I found a few articles, like this one about the family of a deceased student, who had to pay for his student loans72. It was hard to find the one article, that could back up my narrative, especially in English, so I started a broader search. I wanted to understand the system of student loans, instead of understanding the problems with it. By doing that, I was hoping the flaws would be so apparent, that they themselves would tell me the story. I thought a good place to start was with the political parties. A problem this unjust, would have to be a political hot potato, and most parties would have an idea, of how to change it for the better. Not in Iceland. The only party I could find, that is visibly opposed the current setup of

the student loans, was Vinstri Græn and I conducted an interview with Ragnar Auðun Árnason, spokesman of the Young Left Greens, and a representative in the Student Council in Uni. Iceland\textsuperscript{73}. We had a very good talk about the Icelandic Student loans, and what Ragnar, as both a politician and a student, thought about these. He provided me with some background information, some of which I was not aware. e.g. that both in 2013 and 2015 changing governments tried to alter the laws on which the student loans are based, but both times they ran out of time, because there were to be elections. That strikes me as incredibly inefficient, but slightly outside the confines of the webisode. I knew most of what he told me going in, but one thing surprised me. When asked how the fact that Icelandic student loans are inflation indexed loans, and what he made of that, he replied that he did not know, and that he was not an economics student. As I have found through my research, inflation indexation is a very complicated matter, but also of huge importance, as it is by far the worst aspect of the loans. I must try to explain this in layman's terms in the webisode, so people have a chance of knowing what they are getting into, and what they should fight to change.

To get the facts straight, I tried to get an interview with someone at LIN, the Icelandic student loan administrator. They refused an on camera interview, but Sigurður S. Ásgeirsson who is deildarstjóri for LIN agreed to reply to some questions via E-mail\textsuperscript{74}. This supplied me with some good concrete answers, and gave me a deeper understanding of the system itself. At this point I believed I knew everything about the loans, even though I still had problems understanding the biggest problem. The repayment of the loans, but then my wife found this wonderful article\textsuperscript{75}. It uses math and factual information to compare how an Icelandic student loan is repaid in comparison to a Norwegian one. Spoiler alert - It takes (hopefully) twice the time, and it is ridiculously more

\textsuperscript{73} Appendix 2

\textsuperscript{74} Appendix 3

expensive. I got an interview with the journalist behind the article, Valur Gunnarsson, and he was very helpful. We talked about the loans, and he agreed to let me use the article and the calculations within it. It was at the same time I had my final epiphany. I found the blog Icelandic Economics\textsuperscript{76} by PhD in economics Olafur Margeirsson. In two blogposts he made me understand how the indexed loans\textsuperscript{77} of Iceland work, and what a horrible deal they are to the common Icelander. Now I understand how my inlaws borrowed 7 mil. kronur 16 years ago, and only owe 10 mil. kronur today. I will not go into further details with my findings, as that is what the web series is for, but for the sake of everybody on Iceland, I sincerely hope someone will come along and fix this incredibly broken system, before it breaks Iceland. The web series will be my contribution.

One of Olafur Margeirsson’s charts explaining how indexed loans work. The gap between the red and the blue curve, is what Icelanders are paying more, compared to countries without indexed loans.

\textsuperscript{76} Accessed February 28, 2017, http://icelandicecon.blogspot.is/

\textsuperscript{77} Mortgage loans are also indexed in Iceland.
Pilot

Name of Episode - The Icelandic Student Loans.

Summary - A Dane explores the Icelandic student loans, and draw comparisons to how Denmark and Norway support their students.

Production - A one man production of a 3-5 minutes fast-paced mash up video. A full manuscript is developed, but it is intended to serve as a foundation, as the script is likely to evolve as the production comes along. As the video is intended to go viral, I tried to follow some simple online guidelines for viral videos. I kept the video short and to the point, even though I had to cut whole portions of the script. I made the pilot stand out, while the actual quality, both technical and story wise was up to par. I tried to make the pilot humorous and stir up some emotion. These are not guarantees the webisode will be an instant viral hit, but it is a conscious effort to avoid an instant viral failure and. The “feel” of the webisode aims, at being the opposite of the sleek and glossy videos produced by Inspired by Iceland. Not because I dont like them, but because I want to be the other side of the coin.

All video has been found on youtube.com, and all images has been found through google. In order to explore the one man production team, I have truly produced the pilot alone, with nothing but my computer and a budget of zero kronur. The pilot can be viewed here.

---

78 Appendix 4


81 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3qPYqebIJo
Evaluation

The whole point of making a pilot before making the actual webisode, was to have some input from the target audience - Icelanders 20-30 years of age. Krug\textsuperscript{82} wrote about usability testing of webpages, that “\textit{Testing one user is 100 percent better than testing none}”. Having made such a short and dense video, about a complicated subject that has been boiled down and heavily seasoned for easier consumption by the target audience, I think it is fair to say, that Krugs thoughts about testing would also apply to my video. There are many pitfalls.

First of all, I am older than the target audience. The pilot relies heavily on pop culture references, and even though I tried to find video that might bridge that age gap, I might have unknowingly failed. I contemplated using more video from the nineties tv-series “Beverly Hills 90210”, but in the end I opted out, as I don’t think the target audience would “get it”, as they are too young to remember the impact the show had. I am trying a few things, that, if they failed, would make for a failed production. Did the jokes work? In my efforts to walk the line of being interesting and offensive, did I go too far? Does the video inform and does it somehow inspire people to act? To answer these questions I had to talk with the target audience. From the start I wanted to get feedback by having a classic focus group interview. It is a good way to get sound information about cultural phenomenon’s and norms from the target audience in a controlled setting\textsuperscript{83}. But people are busy, and it proved difficult to find a time where enough people from the target audience could meet up, so I was forced to go another, but not necessarily inferior, way. I decided to use online text interviews over Facebook.com’s messenger, as I could communicate with the interviewees on their own time. I conducted single interviews instead of having one collective group conversation, as I did not want the interviewees influencing each other.

As Pearce/Thøgersen-Ntoumani/Duda writes\textsuperscript{84}, text based interviews come

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{82} Krug (2014) page 114

\textsuperscript{83} LeCompte/Schensul (1999) page 129

\textsuperscript{84} Pearce/Thøgersen-Ntoumani/Duda (2014) page 680
\end{footnotesize}
closer to a conversation than using email, while still providing the respondents
time to compose an elaborate answer, as well as providing them with a visual
record, of what has transpired during the interview. I conducted five online
interviews with Icelanders aged 20-30, each containing the same five questions
on Thursday the 18th of May\textsuperscript{85}. The interviewees were Gréta Benediktsdóttir,
Unnur Kristjansdottir, Friðrik Már Jensson, Andrea Elsa Ágústdóttir and Andrea
Arnarsdóttir. They raised some good and valid points, and will I now touch on
the most important findings, and how I aim to incorporate them into the final
webisode.

They actually liked it

All respondents were positive towards the pilot, even more so than I had hoped
for. That has let me to believe, that by trying to be more edgy, than I initially
thought was necessary, made the pilot more interesting to the viewer. Andrea
Elsa Ágústdóttir said her \textit{“eyes and ears were glued to the screen”}, and I think
the tone of the pilot, combined with the unease of never knowing what comes
next, has a big part to play in that regard. Initially I was prepared to tone down
some of the language and imagery, but now I believe they are essential to any
success the web series might have. Only thing I will change is the picture of a
child with downs syndrome, that pops up while I am saying, that people who
study are less likely to marry their siblings. In Denmark I work with people with
special needs, including Downs Syndrome, and I was myself a little uneasy
about this joke. It is harsh, unnecessary and it is a stab at someone who are
absolutely guilt free when it comes to Icelandic student loans. Andrea
Arnarsdóttir suggested I should use a picture of a famous product of incest, like
King Joffrey from Game of Thrones. That is an excellent suggestion and one
that I am going to follow, as it is more relevant, more iconic and a lot more fun.

Sound

Even though this is a one man production, and I have used my computers
internal microphone instead of better and more expensive sound equipment,

\textsuperscript{85} Appendix 5
the sound was not good enough as Friðrik Már Jensson pointed out. I will rerecord the sound (still using only the laptops internal microphone) where necessary for the final webisode, and I will add subtitles to enhance the level of understanding.

**Danish Prizes**

Andrea Arnarsdóttir noted how little money Danish students were given as a grant, and she wondered how they were going to pay rent. This is due to the students being able to get an additional loan on top of the grant, working more on the side and not mentioned in the pilot is that Danish prizes are 35 percent lower than Icelands. I will add this to the final webisode, and hopefully clear up any confusion.

**Motivation**

I aim for the web series to get people angry enough, to start making an active effort in changing the problems described in the web series. Although the majority of the respondents says, that the pilot makes them angry, most of them knew the current system was faulty to begin with. Andrea Arnarsdóttir said “it makes me just tired and hopeless”, and that is not the point. My hope is that people become aware of other solutions, that seem tangible and doable enough to pursue. Once a few people get started on a just course, it can hopefully turn into a movement, that can inspire even Andrea, to get up and fight. I fully understand Anders viewpoint, I have shared that feeling many times, and I will work on a more inspirational ending.

**Problems with the method.**

The five interviewees are pretty much the only Icelanders I know between the ages of 20 and 30. I have classes with four of them. I don't know if I would call all of them my friends, but we know each other, and I don't think we dislike one another. One could fear that this could lead to their answers being overly friendly as well. However all of them are in (or just out of) university, and know all too well the importance of feedback and criticism in general, and when
writing a thesis in particular. Therefore I believe the feedback is sound. The interviewees all share the same educational level, and it would have been preferable to get some input from outside the realm of academia. Of course everybody with five years of Icelandic student loans would agree with me, that there is a problem compared to other Nordic countries. If you don't have student loans, would you even care? The replies I got where short, good and to the point, and I did not want much more than that, but it would have been good if I had five more. More eyes could have brought more feedback, but I could also have been unlucky and found the one person who just hated the pilot, and their criticism could have made me doubt the whole thing. Now I am more confident than ever, that I am on the right way, and that is a nice feeling to have, as the sensitive subject and harsh tone of the web series always made me a little uncomfortable. I have no intention of insulting anyone, I just want them to think critically about their country, and the direction it is headed.
Webisode

As described above I had to change less, from pilot till finished webisode than I thought. I made the changes, added the subtitles and a disclaimer. My counsellor Ármann Gunnarsson also saw the pilot, and he thought that, due to the provocative nature of the webisode and the potential for copyright infringement, it would be best for everybody involved, if I made it clear that the webisode is meant as a part of a master thesis. A master thesis aimed at researching whether one person with a laptop can produce media of sufficient quality to have an impact on various subjects of public interest. If I ever were to publish the web series, I could remove the disclaimer and see what would happen. I am confident, that this webisode, and the video it uses, falls entirely under youtube.com's rules for fair use, but I know enough about international copyright law, to have a healthy amount of respect for it.

The final webisode can be seen here.

86 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xRhpQbOT5R8&feature=youtu.be
Viral Strategy

With my video finally edited, uploaded and ready for the world, it is time to make a marketing plan, so we can ensure that the right people see and react to the web series. Before getting lost in the massive field of online marketing, it would be a good idea to visualise what the goals and limitations are.

Goals
1. As many Icelanders (especially between the ages of 20 and 30) as possible, are exposed to the web series.
2. As many Icelanders (especially between the ages of 20 and 30) as possible, are somehow interacting with each other because of the web series. Liking, sharing, commenting or perhaps even getting organised.

Limitations
1. No budget. It has to be free.
2. I (the web series) will by no means be involved with the online interaction between the viewers. I will only supply the ammunition, it is up to the Icelandic people what to do with it.

The Plan

The world of social media is evolving at an incredible rate. Platforms are coming and going, and there is no way of knowing, how the world will look in just two years. The best example is myspace.com. Myspace is a social network, and used to be hugely successful. In 2005 it was sold by their developers for 580 million dollars, and in 2006 they had more visitors than google.com. In march 2017 myspace was the 1650th most visited website in America. Like many other companies and online services, they got beaten by a superior product. In the case of myspace the better product was called Facebook. Since things are moving so fast, it is no easy task finding a tried and tested marketing plan, that

fits my project right here and now in 2017. Marketing professors Andreas M. Kaplan and Michael Haenlein wrote about viral marketing, on a level that made sense to the spread of “Island - best í heimi?” with the goals and limitations mentioned above. With a few modifications, I am going to implement their strategy for creating a viral epidemic. Kaplan/Haenlein perceive viral marketing as a development of the classical marketing term, word of mouth. Word of mouth is people sharing information about a subject, and according to an international survey by Nielsen, it is the most trustworthy form of advertising. With social media word of mouth becomes a much more powerful tool, as the word can spread faster and wider than ever before. Word of mouth is so attractive, because both sender and receiver gets something out of the transaction. Senders helps others while improving their confidence, and receivers can make a decision faster and at a lower risk, as friends are perceived as an objective information source. This perceived trustworthiness has given rise to a plethora of peer review websites like trustpilot.dk, yelp.com and tripadvisor.com. They allow users to evaluate restaurants, hotels, products and so on, for others users to base their purchases upon. Many other websites incorporate peer reviews as a part of their main service. Although Tripadvisor.coms reviewers are mainly ordinary people, hotels and restaurants take the website very seriously, as 93% of customers are influenced by online reviews. In order to harness this power, and make the web series go viral, “the right people need to get the right message under the right circumstances.”

Kaplan and Haenlein identified three different messengers needed for successful viral marketing campaign.

---

88 Kaplan/Haenlein (2011) page 255


90 Kaplan/Haenlein (2011) page 255


92 Kaplan/Haenlein (2011) page 256
Market Mavens

People of interest and with information about the subject. They are very active online and often engage in debates on various topics. They will receive the message first, and post them to their immediate network. It is important not to spread the message too far too soon. People are reluctant to spread something, they think other people already know. Therefore I will limit myself to three market mavens, who will take care of the initial spread.

Social Hubs

Are people with a large number of connections on social media. They have the ability act as bridges between subcultures. They have hundreds of friends on Facebook, and are probably active on other services too.

Salespeople

When the link between market mavens and social hubs are effective enough, it might be necessary to go to the salespeople. Salespeople take the original message from the market mavens and shape it for easier consumption by the social hubs.

Environment + Luck

This is the part, that makes my viral strategy a bit special. I am not trying to sell anything, collect any followers or even be in the debate myself. I only want to make the boat and gently slide it into the water. If it sinks or sails, can't be up to me. Therefore I have no preferences as to which platforms are going to be used for the viral spread. In that sense, I give up control of the environment, that is so important for a successful viral spread. I hand that part over to the market mavens. I suspect since Facebook is the social network of choice for Icelanders, most of the (inter)action will take place there. If someone wants to make a Facebook page, group or something similar on other sites, they are free to do so, but I will not. I am just a foreign guy, telling truthful stories about aspects of Iceland, that is handled better in other countries. What Icelanders do with this information, has to be up to themselves. If I get involved I fear I would contaminate the debate with my otherness. Twisting the debate into the old
nationalistic argument, that if I don't like it the smell in the kitchen, I can just leave. Finally, I also need good old-fashioned luck. Something might happen out of the blue, that will overshadow my little operation completely. Perhaps I launch the same day, Costco have an unforeseen sale, and steals any momentum my little web series could dream of. Maybe a big reformation of the student loans are just around the corner. It is impossible to be sure.

Now… Go viral!!

I will post the video to youtube.com, where I will make a channel for the sole purpose of the web series. I will then send links to the market mavens as the webisodes are uploaded. They will share the webisode, hopefully accompanied by a text, encouraging people to engage and share. The social hubs will pick up on this, and they will carry the webisode far and wide within their vast networks. At the same time the salespersons will throw the webisode into their news stream. In a country as small as Iceland I believe, if well executed and with a dash of luck, the webisodes could actually get some attention, and cause the debate I so hope it will.

Creating a viral video and an online debate with no budget is not an impossible task, but it is by no means a certainty. You cannot just press a button, and a viral sensation comes out of the other end. But a carefully crafted video, and well thought through marketing plan will go a long way.
Launch The SWOT

This is where my thesis ends. I am not going to release the finished webisode, so I will not have a definite answer to my research question. I can however make a qualified guess, if I do it within the confines of SWOT\textsuperscript{93} analysis. A SWOT analysis is a model used to identify positives and negatives about a given subject. In the context of this thesis, I will use the SWOT analysis, as a snapshot of how the web series would do upon release, if content and delivery system is as described in the previous chapters. I will use the findings to conclude upon my research question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SWOT</th>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Harmful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengths</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Obvious Problems.</td>
<td>No Clear Solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foreign Comment.</td>
<td>Satirical Form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparisons.</td>
<td>Just the Web Series.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iceland Online.</td>
<td>No Budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hard To Ignore.</td>
<td>Known Problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>Iceland As a Democratic Testing Ground</td>
<td>Copyright Infringement Cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young Icelanders Voting More.</td>
<td>Technological and Financial Development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iceland as a Monocultural Place.</td>
<td>Debate Issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dissatisfaction With the System.</td>
<td>Nothing Happens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inspire Icelanders To Make Their Own Films.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{93} Acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
Strengths

**Obvious Problems** - The subject matter for the various webisodes are not something I just came up with. They are based upon 8 years of observations and conversations with a large number of Icelanders. In the webisodes I only highlight the problems, and compare to how other countries handle the same issues. That is not the same as offering a solution, and therefore it becomes something upon we can all agree. Norwegians repay their student loans 20 years faster than the Icelandic students. Asked whether or not they would like the same system based solely upon that information, most Icelanders would obviously say yes. There is arguably more to the story, e.g. Norway is a very wealthy country, that can afford a generous student loan system. But the problems are obvious and tangible.

**Foreign comment** - This can swing both ways, but based upon the feedback, I am leaning towards the foreigner approach implemented in the web series is positive. Icelanders, like Danes, complain a lot, and if the web series was just another Icelander complaining about something Icelandic, I believe, it could get lost in the online complaint maelstrom. It always interesting to hear what other cultures/people think of you. Whenever Denmark has been voted the happiest people on the earth, we have been glowing with pride, and the fact that it wasn't something we came up with our selves, makes it even better. The same thing can be said about the negatives. When the Danish government implemented a law, that would strip immigrants of their jewellery upon arrival, it was met with worldwide disdain⁹⁴. That was not something we were proud of, and it added to the feeling that maybe this was a step to far, and in the end the law has only been used 4 times⁹⁵. It is never nice to shamed by others, especially when what they are saying is true.

---


Comparisons - It might be a cheap trick, as it is a little like comparing apples and Trump, but comparing successful foreign constructions to failing Icelandic ones is effective. Luckily it is also, from both a visual and narrative standpoint, a blessing, and it makes conveying the message much easier.

Iceland Online - In 2016 Iceland had a 100% of its population online\(^{96}\), and 74.4% are on Facebook\(^{97}\). These are some of the highest numbers in the world. This means a web series intended to go viral, have every initial chance of success.

Hard to Ignore - I have done everything in my power to make a video worth watching, commenting on and sharing. The images and the speak are rough, humorous and to the point. The issues are interesting for Icelanders, and something that interests them already.

Weaknesses

No Clear Solution - The web series offers no tangible solutions, only insights in to how things are done elsewhere. This is because it is meant to serve as an inspiration, but that might be a bit disheartening for many people. Especially Icelanders of whom only 10% has faith in the political system\(^{98}\).

Satirical Form - Although I believe it to be an instrumental strategy in capturing the target audience, it could be a real turn off for other demographics. This turn could lead to a generation gap, that could turn toxic. The most important thing is to get the younger generation take an active part in the construction of the Icelandic society, but the second most important is that the whole country is working together. Hopefully the content will anger the elder demographics more than the form.


\(^{98}\) Accessed June 6, 2017, https://www.opendemocracy.net/kristinn-m%C3%A1r-%C3%A1rs%C3%A6lsson/real-democracy-in-iceland
Just the Web Series - No one is handing out pamphlets, there is no one to write, call or even a website you can visit if you want more info. It is all up to the Icelanders. This is not ideal. It would be preferable if there was a system, that could provide further information, moderate debates and facilitate a community. Maybe this development will happen by itself. Maybe the “movement” will latch on to already established organisations or maybe the single sided delivery system is why it will die out.

No Budget - One of the premises for this thesis was, that no money could be involved. How far could one person and a laptop come? Having no money puts the web series in constant jeopardy from copyright infringement lawsuits. I don't think there any infringement has occurred, but court cases can be so time and money consuming, that eventually I could be forced to take the web series down out of attrition. But not having any money, also means the web series is free of outside influence. Not being in someone's pocket, will add credibility to the project.

Known Problem - Icelanders are a well read and well informed people, and it is evident they already know some things are wrong with certain areas of Icelandic life. People already complain about the traffic, the tourists and the student loans, so what is the point of a web series? The web series can give the people of Iceland digestible information with case studies from other countries, and thereby giving their frustrations some direction. There is a risk of instead of feeling a righteous anger, some people might slump into a dispassionate state. Not sharing, not liking, not commenting, just getting even more feed up with the system they didn't trust to begin with.

Opportunities

Iceland As a Democratic Testing Ground - The former mayor of Reykjavik Jón Gnarr has talked about this concept earlier. He called it Iceland a petri dish. He describes how Iceland is a perfect testing ground for new forms of
democracy\textsuperscript{99}. Iceland is tiny, everybody is online and if someone can find the right platform, there are no reasons why a more direct web based democracy could not be tried out. If that happens, the web series could turn out to be an important part of the new political platform. Short, subject based videos with a mix of facts, humour and bite specially made for the Facebook generation could take off in Iceland, but with time it could work anywhere.

**Young Icelanders Voting More** - Just as much a goal as an opportunity, getting young Icelanders interested in societal issues would have a self-perpetuating effect on the web series. More and more would watch, leading to more and more getting involved, leading to more and more voting. Repeat. This might be wishful thinking, but it is nonetheless the whole point

**Inspire Icelanders and Others To Make Their Own Films** - If one man with a laptop and no budget whatsoever can inspire a discourse, then what is to stop everybody else.

**Iceland As a Monocultural Place** - Icelanders are pretty similar to one another. They might not share political opinions, but most of them have an Icelandic sweater in the closet. With such a small and culturally tight population, the vast majority (\textit{90\%}\textsuperscript{100}) of which being ethnic Icelanders, there is reason to think, that a web series could actually go viral without a budget. If the Icelanders like it enough to share it, it could eventually turn in to a talking point for the nation. A seemingly insignificant thing for foreigner, was the opening of the American wholesaler Costco, but it has been the biggest news story in Iceland, the year I have lived here. This would be more difficult to achieve in culturally more diverse countries with larger populations. Costco opening in Denmark would be less important to the country as a whole. In rural areas were people own cars, and are used to drive a bit for their shopping, Costco could have a significant


\textsuperscript{100} Accessed June 7, 2017, \url{http://icelandreview.com/news/2016/10/25/immigrants-make-ten-percent-icelandic-population}
impact. In the bigger cities Costco would struggle, as not even Danes can ride a bike, while holding on to a 40 pack of toilet paper.

**Dissatisfaction With the System** - As mentioned earlier Icelanders do not have a lot of faith in the political system, which is a shame of course, but a really good thing for the potential of the web series. The more angry people are to begin with, the likelier they are to support a cause that goes against that. A survey shows the thing people are most likely to share, are causes they support. I hope the Icelandic people will share the webisodes out of spite, and to let their social contacts know exactly how displeased they are.

**Threats**

**Copyright Infringement Cases** - As stated earlier I firmly believe, that the mashuped content of the web series falls within fair use. Without any money to back me up just the threat of law suits, might be enough for me to take the videos down. However, if a lawsuit was presented it could turn out to be a good test for the community. If they deemed it important enough, they could create such a stir, that the lawsuit was dropped or maybe they could crowd fund a lawyer. They could also download and republish the videos, in an effort to make the lawsuits redundant. That could still turn expensive for me though.

**Technological and Financial Development** - As most of the literature I found during my research for the viral marketing chapter proved, things move really fast in the world of social media. Providers come and go, and even though it seems Facebook is here to stay, it could be killed off by a host of different threats. Fake news, people getting killed on Facebook live, cyber bullying and so on could make Facebook a less attractive social media platform. Fast. Other networks would take over, but they would initially (at least) lack the broad reach Facebook provides. Reach, or rather the free organic reach, on Facebook is another problem. Facebook keeps changing its algorithms to provide users with a leaner news feed, but also in order to make more money, by selling the

---

increasingly hard to get reach\textsuperscript{102}. In the future this could make it even harder to have a video go viral, unless you are willing to pay for that extra reach.

**Debate Issues** - Online debate threads can be an unsavoury experience to go through. If the threads for the web series turn sour or gets trolled\textsuperscript{103}, it could destroy the debate, and any hope of anything more coming out of it. If the webisodes go truly viral, there will be many threads, which would lessen the impact of a few bad ones.

**Nothing Happens** - Of all the possible outcomes, this is the one I fear the most. Everything goes according to plan. No lawsuits. People are engaged. They share and they like, but the comments are depressive statements of how lacklustre Iceland is, and how something should done. But nothing happens. No one picks up the glove. The crypto-colonial mindset could not be changed by a simple web series.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{meme.png}
\end{center}

\begin{flushright}
memecrunch.com
\end{flushright}


\textsuperscript{103} A internet troll is a person, that intentionally post upsetting statements, with the intent of destroying on-topic debates, for his own amusement.
Conclusion

Having produced one full webisode, constructed a viral marketing plan for the distribution of the web series and on the back of a SWOT analysis it is time answer my research question.

“Can the crypto-colonial public of Iceland be inspired by a web series, to have a discourse about seemingly unjust policies and matters of national interest?”

As the SWOT analysis clarified there are many things, that has to come to fruition for the answer to be affirmative. I have created an interesting and shareable webisode. It is based on a backdrop of cultural theories, history and personal experience. It is well researched and true. It has been well received by the focus group, and under the right circumstances, I believe, it could inspire a discourse in Iceland. Maybe even one leading to some kind of actual change. But, and it is a big but, it is almost impossible to tell whether or not the webisodes will go viral. There are many things that have to go right, other things that can’t go wrong and much is dependent on something as elusive as luck. A few additions could increase the likelihood of success. It would be beneficiary, if there was some kind of setup around the webisodes. A group of Icelanders dedicated to spreading the word, keeping the debates clean and on topic. They could do it from within already existing organisations, or make new ones. As long as it is someone willing to fight the good fight. In that case money wouldn’t be needed, as the group could potentially handle incoming problems by themselves and the aid of their network.

So the answer to the question is - Yes, under the right circumstances, but to turn into a force that could facilitate change, Icelanders would have to shake off the crypto-colonial mindset, that is feeding the power structure holding them down. They need to get involved, and fight for the change many of them long for.

If they do so, everything is going to be alright.
Literature

Books


Article, chapters or AAAs


Film

Webpages
https://hagstofa.is/utgafur/frettasafn/kosningar/althingiskosningar-29-oktober-2016/
http://townhall.com/columnists/jeffjacoby/2015/10/18/no-bernie-sanders-scandinavia-is-not-a-socialist-utopia-n2067623
http://www.dr.dk/skole/samfundsfag/billede-skolevalget-er-afgjort-eleverne-stemtedblaat
https://chomsky.info/profit01/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvF3uTYHn00
http://grapevine.is/mag/articles/2011/07/11/whose-fault-was-the-giant-icelandic-consumption-boom/
https://welections.wordpress.com/category/iceland/
http://www.dv.is/blogg/hallgrimur-helgason/2013/4/19/grein-i-weekendavisen/
http://www.iceland.is/iceland-abroad/dk/files/media/dkvidskipti/kbbankidankanish_fantasies.pdf
http://www.iceland.is/iceland-abroad/dk/files/media/dkvidskipti/glitnir_comments.pdf
https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/gaze/
Appendix 1

DR3 - Don´t Hate Us!

Accessed January 11, 2017 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhuJyCw06lw

blazednlovinit for 11 måneder siden for 11 måneder siden
Well I don't know about anyone else but they won me over. Buy Danish bacon :)

Anonymous Me for 1 måned siden for 1 måned siden
This is so funny

Liam Halliday for 11 måneder siden for 11 måneder siden
This is awesome. Congrats on a sense of humour - from a Brit.

MrDragon1968 for 11 måneder siden for 11 måneder siden
It's ok. We still love you.

Love ’n kisses xxx

Læs mere

Old Riddles for 11 måneder siden
Ah, the Danes. Great country, beautiful funny people who know exactly who they are and where they come from. They have real confidence in themselves, and Germany should emulate them.

Tore Lund for 10 måneder siden
+Old Riddles Bummer, I'm a Dane and I respect Germans far more than my fellow Danes. You are polite, value good education and responsible economic policies. You have very high work ethics, and your industry sector is the awe of the rest of the European countries. The most brilliant thing you do is your banks insisting that people need to have money to buy a house, as opposed to Denmark and other countries where no down

Læs mere
Appendix 2

Transcribed interview with Ragnar Auðun Árnason

Thursday, 19 January 2017

Peter (P) - So, what is the brief history of the Icelandic student loans?

Ragnar (R) - I am not really sure when the student loans came to Iceland, but in 1987 we got the laws that we have now. Then the interest of the loans went from 0% to 1%. Then the whole groundwork was laid for LIN. Since the we have tried to change it twice in 2013 and 2016. Both times the parliament couldn't get the legislation done on time.

(P) - Oh, so it wasn't even voted down?

(R) - No they ran out of time, the parliament didn't have enough time to discuss it. Last year it was mainly because we voted half a year earlier. The education minister, we knew he was going to make a law about the student loans, but because of the panama papers there was an early election. He put it before the parliament. It was half finished really. He tried to get it through but there was no time really.

(P) - Don't you have people working for the government, that are not elected?

(R) - Yes there is. They had been working on it for quite some time, and LIN was also helping. But, I don't know... To me it felt half finished.

(P) - What is wrong with loans as they are now in 2017?

(R) - Well. The first thing is what people get per month. It is what LIN decides, but people get 165000 Isk per month, which is not enough. you pay 80000 in rent, which is not much in Reykjavik. For place through the University. Then you have 85000 kronor to live for the rest of the month, which is not enough.

(P) - No, Hangekjot is over 1000 kronor if you buy the good stuff!

(R) - So, we have tried to, some of the students, to get LIN to change the number, and it goes up a little each year, but not enough.

(P) - Yeah, i guess it has to follow the prizes as much as it can…
(R) - But, it doesn't really do it as much as the prizes go up. The rent in Reykjavik has gone up a lot recently, and the student loans has not followed as they should.

(P) - So first of all, you don't get enough money.

(R) - Right, the other thing is how much you can earn with out you getting lower student loans. you can earn, i think, 935000 kronor over the year, without the student loans going down. 935000 is not much. It is basically your summer job. This is something LIN control, it doesn't have to a law.

(R) - Another thing wrong with the system are the grants. We have a grant system. not a lot of people know it, because it is inside the interest rates. LIN takes the loans for about 3 %, but gives the students 1% interest and thats the hidden grant. But is not a lot, and maybe it pushes the students to take more loans to get more grant. It is not really a bad thing, but we would like to see a grant system that you can actually see. You don't have to take enormous amount of loans. It is pretty complicated. The law we put forward in 2013 would mean that when you finished your studies a bit of your loan would fall out as a grant, and it would depend on how fast you were to go through your studies.

(P) - As in Norway?

(R) - Yes. There was also something about if you had children and couldn't finish on time, it would not be counted. I would like to see a loan system that worked that way, because you would be thinking mostly about the students who took the loans. Financially able of working and paying loans. The most frustrating thing about the loans today is how far behind the other nordic countries we are. We look to the, and we would like to have their system.

(P) - Yeah, wouldn't that be nice. What is the interest rate of the Icelandic student loans?

(R) - 1%.

(P) - 1%, but thats not all is it? It also follows the inflation somehow?

(R) - Yeah, well… I am not sure, I don't study economics.

(P) - Does it just follow inflation, because you may two times a year right?

(R) - Yes… And in the law from 2016, you should pay each month instead. Because that is a bit ridiculous. Paying two times a year becomes really expensive, but paying each month wouldn't be as much.
(P) - And it is hard to figure out how much have to pay. Do have any chance of knowing?

(R) - Yeah… I think so. They amount that you pay is a percentage of your salary, and that was not in the law of 2016, and many people like that. Because if you study to be a teacher the income won't be so high, but then you don't have to pay so much back.

(P) - Wouldn't that mean that the primary school teacher would just take forever to pay the loan off?

(R) - Yeah, but as the system is now you could go your whole life without paying the loan back, and that is another grant as some people point out. But it is not handy, because you can't use it?

(P) - If you can't pay it back, why not loan as much as you possibly can, and just never say it back?

(R) - Well… You gain much more from taking large student loans than small ones, and just paying them off until you die. I think there are some people there will never be able to pay it back, but these are people going abroad to study at some expensive schools.

(P) - So tuition fee are also a student loan?

(R) - Yeah yeah, those people will always have problems paying their loans back, but we want people to go to these school, because the knowledge they bring back is worth more. As a society we gain a lot.

(P) - Wouldn't it be easier just to give them grant?

(R) - Some people get a grant, but there are many other expenses.

(P) - Who and how benefits from the system as it is now?

(R) - Well… The people who go to expensive studies abroad, but we gain so much when they come back.

(P) - Yeah, like Sigmundur coming back and taking over the country. That was priceless..

(R) - Yeah, well he never finished his studies. Oxford won't tell, and he won't tell… So we might never know. He did take the info down from his website though.
Whenever I think I have heard every crazy story from Iceland, there is always one more... And brings me to the private banks. How is it they are involved with this government setup?

I have no idea why they are involved, but it has become quite an issue, and something student see as being wrong with the loans as they are now. You get your student loans after each semester, because you have to finish 22 etc points to get the money.

You don't get the money before the semester? How are you going to live through the first semester then?

That's the problem. You have to take a loan from the bank, and then pay them back when you get your student loan. They have tried changing it. Students try to live of their summer jobs until January when they get the student loan.

So when you are done studying you get a semester worth of student loans?

Yeah

Well, that's smart...

Yeah, it's a pretty bad system. And because the banks are involved the communication between LIN and the banks aren't that good. I know people that hadn't been payed last week from LIN. They had like 5000 kronor on their bank accounts. Not leaving the house. I am not sure why the banks are involved. of course they privatised in early 2000s

In the happy days.

Yeah, the happy days.

But if you fail your courses you then end up owing the bank.

Yes, but I think you get a lower loan. But I am not really sure about the setup. But it is very stressful for students, that you have to wait until you get your final grade before getting the money. They don't want to loan you the by the month, because they are not sure if you are going to finish... But if you fail, you could just pay it back then.

We have the same issue in Denmark, with people starting studies, and not finishing and there by we have just given them money.

Yeah...
(P) - Is it true you cannot choose to repay your loan within the first few years?
(R)- Yes. You don't start paying the first two years.
(P) - Well can you?
(R) - I dont think so, but I don't know… It is not really something I am thinking about right now. Haha.
(P) - Haha, no I guess not. Who are you paying back, when your pay back? Is it LIN or the banks?
(R) - LIN.
(P) - And you are paying 1% and the inflation? Is that on top of the 1%?
(R) - Well, eh… The percentage is always 1%, but the inflation can affect how much the money is worth, so… It will always just get higher…
(P) - And if you had crisis like some of my friends did their loans just doubled?
(R) - Yeah… I think in the new laws, inflation wasn't part of it?
(P) - Sounds like a smart thing.
(R) - Its a debate. The icelandic kronor is such an unstable currency.
(P) - Who do you think benefits from having such an unstable kronor?
(R) - eh… The big fish companies.
(P) - I was so hoping you would say that.
(R) - All the big companies in the market don't really benefit from it. They would rather we go into the EU, and get the euro. The fish companies control the currency because they are such a big part of our society and market.
(P) - If you had complete control, how would you shape the student loans?
(R) - eh… I quite like the law from 2013, which had the grant. After you finish your studies, your loans would fall. but first and foremost we have to think about the people who have to take loans. We have to give them a student loan system that is good, before implementing the grant system. So I would like to see a grant system, where you take loans, which fall after you finish, and then we can think about giving money for studying.
(P) - Perfect!! Thats it.
(R) - You are welcome..
Appendix 3

Mail interview with Sigurður S. Ásgeirsson (LIN)

23. January 2017

Hello again Peter
I will try to answer your questions as best I can.

1. What is the brief history of the Icelandic student loans, who were supposed to benefit, and was your system inspired by another system from start?

The Icelandic student loan fund is dated back to around 1911-1912. It has had many names and developed greatly in this time. In the beginning it did not receive government funding for instance. I'm not sure what the original concept was, I assume it was to enable students who did not come from wealth to acquire an education.

The Icelandic student loan system differs greatly from those of the other Nordic countries. This is unusual as we adapt much of our law from the other Nordic countries, especially from Denmark. The fact that the student loan system here in Iceland is not inspired by another country's system is probably due to the fact how old the system is here. So instead of basing the system on a foreign one, the lawmakers have decided to build upon the system that was already in place (nb this is just my educated guess), but the fact remains that the Icelandic student loan system is quite unique compared to the other Nordic countries whose systems are quite similar.

2. What is the current loan amount and interest rate?

The current interest rate is 1%. Loan amount varies, there is no fixed maximum loan amount but there is a maximum time one can continue receiving student loans (divided among bachelor, masters and doctoral studies)

Student loans are adjusted for inflation (verðtryggð). This common with loans in Iceland and is currently the most common type of mortgage loan.

3. How exactly is the repayment done? (This is one of my main gripes, so I would
rather not get this part wrong)
2 years after a student has finished his/her studies, repayment of the student loans begin. Annual payment is 3.75% of ones yearly wage but there is a minimum payment per year (in the year 2016 that minimum payment was 127,270 ISK). Payments are twice a year, of the 1st of march each year the minimum payment is due but on the 1st of september each year the income based payment is due (yearly income - minimum payment). It is possible to divide each of the two payments into 6 smaller payments thus making the payments a monthly occurrence throughout the year.

4. How much are you allowed to earn on the side, and what happens if you earn to much?
While still receiving student loans a student is allowed to earn 930,000 ISK each year. After that maximum is reached the student loan is decreased by 45% of the income that supercedes the maximum.

5. How and why are the private banks involved?
Student loans in Iceland are payed at the end of the semester, after grades have been handed out. Students that are eligible for student loans are however able to receive a loan from their bank that covers the time period from start of semester till the end of semester.

6. Who and how (if any) benefits from the current setup from your point of view?
The current system favors students who study for a long time and take high student loans. It also favors students who pursue careers that require a high degree of education but do not reward with high wages.

7. Why do you get extra (how much) when you are from the country?
I assume you mean from the countryside? Either way you dont receive any extra loan if you are from the countryside, nor if you are from the country Iceland.

8. Why and how are the interest rate of the loans connected to inflation rates?
Student loans are adjusted for inflation. So if there is 4% inflation in the year 2016, all student loan amounts will increase by 4%.
As I explained above, this is not a method of loan that is unique for the Icelandic student loan fund but a very common method of loan in Iceland (and by far the most common for high loans such as mortgage). This type of loan is subject to a lot of debate in Iceland and have a long history but all in all, they are a normal thing in Iceland.

9. 
How come the amount borrowed doesn’t follow the prizes? I'm not sure I understand the question.

10. 
Some students, especially the ones caught by the financial crisis, might never pay of their loans. What will happen with their loans when they die?
If the loan is not in default when the loan recipient dies, the loan is reduced to zero and written off.

The last three questions I cannot answer as I cannot speak on the behalf of the Icelandic student loan fund on such matters. However, I encourage you to take a look at the recent bill that was put forth last year regarding big changes to the Icelandic student loan system. The bill has not been passed and is still up for debate at the Icelandic parliament. It is my opinion that the changes suggested in the bill are for the better and would bring us closer to the type of system that is operated in the other Nordic countries.

Here is a link to the bill: http://www.althingi.is/altext/145/s/1373.html
You can also ask some of your Icelandic classmates about the bill. It was a hot topic among students when it was put forth and most university students would have some information and an opinion of it.

11. 
What are the current systems biggest flaws in your opinion?

12. 
Which way would LIN like to see the student loans evolving?

13. 
How would you?

Bestu kveðjur,
Sigurður S. Ásgeirsson Deildarstjóri - Ráðgjafadeild Lánasjóður íslenskra námsmanna
Aaaah, to be a student. Partying while getting more smarter is awesome, and something most developed countries considers an endeavour worth supporting, because educated people, tend to earn more money, pay more taxes and are less likely to marry their siblings. Iceland is one those countries that support their students. Tuition fees are almost almost nonexistent, and every month Icelandic students can receive a student loan of around 170000 isk. That number can then go up or down depending on marital status, kids and all that… 170000 is actually a pretty decent number… If it was 2005. If you are lucky enough to find a place to stay in Reykjavik, that isn't rented out to tourists, like this spacious 19m2 single room apartment in ODDAGARDAR, it will set you back a whooping 78.000 isk a month. That leaves 90ish thousand kronor for fun and games… oh…and books, transport, clothes. Hankekjøt at Bonus is fucking 1060 isk!! And don't even get me started on the beer! Luckily you could just get a student job. Problem solved! Yeah well… not so much!! If you earn more than around 950000 isk, you will just get a deduction in your student loans.

Other countries do it differently… Take for instance my country. Your old colonial overlords down in Denmark. We also support our students, but in a slightly superior way.

In Denmark a single student living by himself gets payed 6.015 danish kr, which is roughly 100.000 i.kr. I say roughly because the icelandic kronor is even more untrustworthy than your politicians. The cool thing is that those 100000 kr is a grant. It is free money. Get a job on the side, and you can make close to 200.000 isk per month, before it impacts your student grant. If you still need more money, you could take a student loan of around 50000 isk on top of the grant. As a gesture of awesomeness, Danish students are payed the same amounts during the summer. When not studying…

Ok, granted. The Danish system has been always superior, and I understand if you regret jumping ship in 1944, but let us not dwell on that… Let us instead...
dwell on how the private banks are involved in the Icelandic student loans. Back in 2004, where the whole of Iceland was money crazy, Landsbankin struck a deal with Lin, which means that while you apply for a loan at Lin, it is actually your own bank that loans you the money. At the end of a semester Lin will then pay your loan to the bank, and you now owe Lin. If you pass!! If you somehow doesn't complete enough ecst points, Lin wont pay your bank, and you are now the proud owner of a very real bank loan, with an unreal high interest rate. So if you somehow fail, they will must surely win. This pretty fucked up system of kicking people who are already on fire, right in the nuts, is also a bureaucratic bottleneck, as grades has to be given, before Lin can pay your bank, before your bank can start paying you again... Yes... no wonder many students struggle at the beginning of a semester!

Repayment - Icy vs norway. examples. Working life not long enough to repay.

Anyways, now you are finally done with your master degree, and you are extra excited because you can finally start paying your student loan off.

Just for kicks, we are going to compare how repayments of student loans are done in Norway and Iceland. Just so that you can an idea with amount of shit students in other countries are NOT dealing with.

After 5 years of studies

1,7 island - efter 5 år 6 mio because of shitty index regulated interest, 12 min over 40 år med 3%, almost 3 times more but only 16% more money,

1,6 norge - efter 5 år 4,7, nul inflationrente, maks 20 years

Almost paying the same amount back each month no 23300 is 25300.

when the norwegians are done after 20 years icelandic students still owe 3 mil. If you study more or have kids these numbers are going to be much worse! If a single parent loan all the money they can they will end up owing 18 mil instead of 6 mil... In norway a single parent still can only owe 4,7, as that is the maximum!

So i have given you some of the facts about Icelandic student loans. If you think you are getting a sweet deal, then don't do anything. Just sit there. If not. Get involved. find a political party willing to transform the student loans into something... else, whatever that may be.

You don't win!
and there it is... You are finally done studying, and the glorious repayment of the student loans can commence. Lets compare the repayment methods of Norway and Iceland, because you actually pretty much owe the same amounts when you are done with five years of studying.

Here are two glasses. they are filled with the amount you have loaned plus interests. The norwegian will drink steadily for 20 years, and then his glass is empty. Done. The Icelander... Thats a different story and rather complex story, so lets boil it way down.

The Icelander, like the norwegian starts drink the sweet sweet repayment juice. Problem is, ever so often, someone comes and adds a little to the glass. Thats because icelandic loans are inflation indexed, which means they follow the inflation. Long story short . . . As an average icelandic student you will drink roughly a third more repayment juice, and it will take you 20 years longer to finish, than your nordic buddy there.

IF you think icelandic student loans are a sweet deal, dont do anything. Just sit there. If you think they need a makeover, please get involved and let your voice be heard.

XOXO a concerned dane
Appendix 5

Online chat interviews - Evaluation of the pilot.

THU 8:50AM

Peter
Hi Greta
Ok, so i might need your help. For my master thesis I am making one episode of what would be a web series about things, that (in my mind) dont really work in Iceland. The episode I am making is about “The Icelandic Student Loans”. I have made a pilot of the episode, that I hope I can get you to watch and comment on. Its like 3,5 minutes, so if you have time to watch it, and answer a few questions I would be super happy!!?

Knus Peter

Gréta
Hey hey hey!

Of course darling no problemo!

Peter
You are more than perfect;)

Peter
Here is the link:) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3qPYqeblJ0

It is a pilot, so it is not polished, but please dont be gentle on that account! I am looking for a few things. Btw, I will be using your comments in my thesis, but dont let that hold you back:) 1 - Is it worth watching?
2 - Did you learn anything?
3 - Is it too offensive?
4 - Does it make you angry? and if yes - how?
5 - What would make it better? Both with content, looks, length, technical, tone and so on.
You rock!!! Thank you:)

Pilot - Best i Heimi - Student Loans
Icelandic Student Loans - Where good intentions go, when they grow up to be sadistic assholes..
youtube.com

Gréta

1 - Is it worth watching?
Definitely worth watching, fun imagery in tact with the information we are being given.
2 - Did you learn anything?
Yes, it was the perfect amount of information for a short informative web series, it's a good amount of basic information but if the viewer wants to learn more they have the opportunity to do that as well.
3 - Is it too offensive?
Not offensive at all, only maybe the government or LÍN would be offended, but that's a good thing because they need to change their ways!

4 - Does it make you angry? and if yes - how? A certain amount of anger did arise, yes. This is because we are being given information to make us realise how unfair our student loan system is, and that other nations have it better than us. which brings up anger in a lot of situations whether it be regarding loans or other aspects which affect or quality of life.

5 - What would make it better? Both with content, looks, length, technical, tone and so on.

Maybe make it a bit more neutral, when the Danish part comes the commentator says 'we take care of our students' instead of maybe Denmark takes care of their students, and he also refers to Icelanders as 'you' or 'you guys' rather than just saying Icelanders. This would only be relevant I believe if he is only trying to reach out to the Icelandic population but to reach a wider audience they could try and change the

Peter
Thank you:) Perfect commentary!! It stopped In the middel of a sentense though. Did you have even more gold?

Gréta
Woah

... change the way they address the viewers

Peter
😊awesome!! thanks again!!
Hi Unnur

Ok, so i might need your help. For my master thesis I am making one episode of what would be a web series about things, that (in my mind) dont really work in Iceland. The episode I am making is about “The Icelandic Student Loans”. I have made a pilot of the episode, that I hope I can get you to watch and comment on. Its like 3,5 minutes, so if you have time to watch it, and answer a few questions I would be super happy!!?

Knus Peter

Hi Peter! Are you back from the other side of the wall?

Yeah, I can totally watch it for you and answer some questions. No problem 😊

Have to meet soon!
Knus

Peter
Oh, you are just too cool!! Yes i am back, and it was a really cool trip! beautiful, weird and cold! I ate polarbear (well one bite because it was horrible)Here is the link:) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3qPYqebJ0

It is a pilot, so it is not polished, but please dont be gentle on that account! I am looking for a few things. Btw, I will be using your comments in my thesis, but dont let that hold you back:)
1 - Is it worth watching?
2 - Did you learn anything?
3 - Is it too offensive?
4 - Does it make you angry? and if yes - how?
5 - What would make it better? Both with content, looks, length, technical, tone and so on.
You rock!!! Thank you:)

Pilot - Best i Heimi - Student Loans
Icelandic Student Loans - Where good intentions go, when they grow up to be sadistic assholes..
youtube.com
Unnur

Okey, im done 😊 sorry i didnt have time until now. I loved it!

Unnur

1- yes, it’s hilarious and interesting
2- No, not really. Nothing there that I didn’t know already
3- No, not at all! I loved it!
4- Well yes, because i´m Icelandic and just finished my masters after 5 years with students loans… not happy about that. It will take my about 40 years to pay it back.
5- Nothing that comes to my mind. There was maybe one time that I forgot to listen because there was so much going on – not in a bad way though 😊

Peter

You Are a gem!!!! No worries with the time. I am doing this all weekend:)
THU 8:49AM

Peter

Hi Friddy
Ok, so i might need your help. For my master thesis I am making one episode of what would be a web series about things, that (in my mind) dont really work in Iceland. The episode I am making is about “The Icelandic Student Loans”. I have made a pilot of the episode, that I hope I can get you to watch and comment on. Its like 3,5 minutes, so if you have time to watch it, and answer a few questions I would be super happy!!?
Knus Peter

THU 10:02AM

Friðrik

Yeah no problem

Peter

Sweet!!

Peter

Here is the link:) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3qPYqeblJ0

It is a pilot, so it is not polished, but please dont be gentle on that account! I am looking for a few things. Btw, I will be using your comments in my thesis, but dont let that hold you back;

1 - Is it worth watching?
2 - Did you learn anything?
3 - Is it too offensive?
4 - Does it make you angry? and if yes - how?
5 - What would make it better? Both with content, looks, length, technical, tone and so on.
You rock!!! Thank you:)
Pilot - Best i Heimi - Student Loans
Icelandic Student Loans - Where good intentions go, when they grow up to be sadistic assholes..
youtube.com

Friðrik
- Is it worth watching? Yes totally worth it, and many people are interested in the subject.
2 - Did you learn anything? no, not really. But thats only because I have been dealing with LÍN for a while now.
3 - Is it too offensive? Not to me but there are scenes that many people might find offensive. Well maybe not offensive, more like unpleasant (E.g. Horse penis and puking santa)
4 - Does it make you angry? and if yes - how? I’ve been angry at Lín for years now, so… yes and no.
5 - What would make it better? Both with content, looks, length, technical, tone and so on. : Voice recording needs to be better. More clear and of higher quality. At times it sounds tinny and pixelated. Other than that it looks good, I like the humor and also the editing.
Friðrik
If you need more I could dig deeper but this is what I came up with

Peter
It is Perfect!!!!!!! Thank you homie 😃 see you at the party, whenever that is 😏

Friðrik
yeaaaaa boii

THU 8:50AM

Peter
Hi Andrea
Ok, so i might need your help. For my master thesis I am making one episode of what would be a web series about things, that (in my mind) dont really work in Iceland. The episode I am making is about “The Icelandic Student Loans”. I have made a pilot of the episode, that I hope I can get you to watch and comment on. Its like 3,5 minutes, so if you have time to watch it, and answer a few questions I would be super happy!!?

Knus Peter

THU 10:03AM
Andrea
Of course 😊

Gladly

Peter

aaaaah, you are beyond fantastic!!! Hope all is well with the Andrea! Here is the link:) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3qPYqeblJ0

It is a pilot, so it is not polished, but please dont be gentle on that account! I am looking for a few things. Btw, I will be using your comments in my thesis, but dont let that hold you back:
1 - Is it worth watching?
2 - Did you learn anything?
3 - Is it too offensive?
4 - Does it make you angry? and if yes - how?
5 - What would make it better? Both with content, looks, length, technical, tone and so on.
You rock!!! Thank you:)
Andrea
Nooo problem luv and Greenland... Wow! Lucky you

Peter
Yeah, that was pretty great!! And Sumarlidi was just the perfect travel buddy:)

Andrea
Haha I found out yesterday that he was with you... he's awesome

Peter
he is so happy go lucky. So a nice guy!

Andrea
Indeed he is

And Wow that video is amazing!

The footages wow... just wow

Can you do my final project for money? 😊

Peter
It's a very beautiful place:) 

haha--- no!
I am really starting to feel used and abused by uni Iceland...

We can see the end though!

Andrea
1. Totally worth watching.

2. Nothing that I didn't already know. Been bitching about it for years.

3. Not offensive at all... just hard core truth

4. Of course it makes me angry. Fuck LÍN right?

5. I'm not sure. I thought it was very good. You went right to the point, the clips were great and graphic at times. The length worked because you went straight to the points so...

Peter
haha!! fight the power!

Andrea
And the tone was very good. You are funny, sarcastic, real

Peter
yeah, does get too long?
Andrea
No not at all

Peter
How about the audio? Would it be nice some subs?

Andrea
My eyes and ears were glued to the screen
I felt like it was shorter so great job!

Peter
aaaaah... Nice of you to say. Especially during the puke scene right?

Andrea
Am I to positive?
Loved it!

Peter
I mean!! Wow!! He is just turning inside out:)

Andrea
And Peter Griffin diving into change

Peter
no no, if you are being real, then i am happy:D
Hi Andrea,
Ok, so i might need your help. For my master thesis I am making one episode of what would be a web series about things, that (in my mind) dont really work in Iceland. The episode I am making is about “The Icelandic Student Loans”. I have made a pilot of the episode, that I hope I can get you to watch and comment on. Its like 3,5 minutes, so if you have time to watch it, and answer a few questions I would be super happy!!?
Knus Peter

Andrea
Sure I'd love to see it

Peter
Awesome sauce!! Here is the link:) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3qPYqebIJO

It is a pilot, so it is not polished, but please dont be gentle on that account! I am looking for a few things. Btw, I will be using your comments in my thesis, but dont let that hold you back:)
1 - Is it worth watching?
2 - Did you learn anything?
3 - Is it too offensive?
4 - Does it make you angry? and if yes - how?
5 - What would make it better? Both with content, looks, length, technical, tone and so on.
You rock!!! Thank you:) and please do your worst!
Pilot - Best i Heimi - Student Loans

Icelandic Student Loans - Where good intentions go, when they grow up to be sadistic assholes..
youtube.com

Andrea
1. Yes
2. Yes I learned that the danish student pay isn't that high but you can of course get a lot more for it- how do they afford rent though?
3. Maybe switch out the downs kid for some more notorious child of incest maybe joffrey from GoT
4. Not really it makes me just tired and hopeless
5. Just the pilot? It's pretty good but maybe find some footage of students actually studying and/or working some effect to make the voice a little more dramatic might be good
I can probably say more later Im in clasd

Peter
haha:) I thought it need some incest:) Great points... Sorry about the hopeless. Prices in Denmark are around 30 lower on everything, but I should totally get that in there! You have been fantastic, Thanks!