

‘HAVE YOU HEARD OF KALEVAUVA.FI YET?’ MODERN FOLKLORE, HUMOUR, AND GENDER IN THE LYRICS OF THE FINNISH FOLK TROUBADOUR DUO KALEVAUVA.FI

Charlotte Doesburg

*School of Slavonic and East European Studies
University College London, London, United Kingdom
charlotte.doesburg.16@ucl.ac.uk*

Riitta-Liisa Valijärvi

*School of Slavonic and East European Studies
University College London, London, United Kingdom
Department of Modern Languages, Uppsala University, Sweden
r.valijarvi@ucl.ac.uk*

Abstract: This article explores the lyrics of the Finnish folk duo Kalevauva.fi. The duo uses extracts from online forums and other social media. We argue that this method of song-writing is a prime example of modern folklore as it reflects the collective, anonymous creativity of people and is reminiscent of the compilation of the Finnish national epic *Kalevala*. The humour in the lyrics is used to create a sense of community and discuss taboos. It rises from incongruity, for example by mismatch between melodies and lyrical content. We relate the lyrics to internet memes, and examine stereotypical and alternative representations of Finnish men. We place Kalevauva.fi in the context of the *Kalevala* process as well as contemporary music making.

Keywords: Finnish music, folk music, gender, humour, Kalevala, modern folklore, online discussion forum, gender, song lyrics

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background, the name Kalevauva.fi, and the vauva.fi forum

Finnish professional musicians Aapo Niininen and Kimmo Numminen started the group Kalevauva.fi in the summer of 2016 as a temporary project to perform at Kaustinen Folk Music Festival.¹ Kalevauva.fi has since turned into a lasting

collaboration and the band has their own dedicated YouTube channel where they regularly upload new songs. The group has also released two albums on online streaming services. Their self-titled debut *Kalevauva.fi* was released in 2017, and in 2020 they released the album *SOME FOLK*.²

The self-described “modern troubadours”³ create their lyrics in a less than conventional way. The texts are extracted from online forum threads and other comments left on diverse social media channels. The band’s method to create lyrics from what everyday people have written on forums and social media is reminiscent of how the creator of Finland’s national epic, the *Kalevala* (1849), Elias Lönnrot (1802–1884) collected his material by travelling throughout Finland, neighbouring Karelia and Ingria, to listen to the reciting of poetry by locals (Pentikäinen 1987: 34; see also section 3.1; DuBois 1995; Honko 1990; Piela & Knuuttila & Laaksonen 2008; Kaukonen 1990; Kärki 2015; Tarkka 1994). This similarity in the method of collection from ordinary people is acknowledged in the first part of the band’s name, *Kale-*, which clearly refers to the epic’s title *Kalevala*. Because of this aspect the band’s music can be classified as folk music, whilst at the same time they make use of musical expression typically associated with popular music. In other words, they represent a hybrid form of music combining folk and pop, challenging the established genre boundaries.

The second part of the band’s name honours the website from which Niininen and Numminen first started to sample material for their lyrics. The website *vauva.fi* functions as a forum mainly aimed at (expecting) mothers and it is set up by the magazine *Vauva* ‘Baby’ (Linkoheimo 2015: 3). The majority of threads on the forum relate to pregnancy and motherhood, and this is reflected in some of the band’s songs, such as “Pitääkö synnytyksessä todellakin olla alapää paljaana?” (Does your bottom really have to be naked when in labour?) (2017) or “Annatteko lastenne leikkiä vuokratulojen lasten kanssa?” (Do you let your children play with council-house children?) (2020). A subcategory on the website *vauva.fi* is entitled *Aihe vapaa* ‘Topic free’ and features threads about a diverse range of topics unrelated to motherhood and pregnancy. The group has written numerous songs based on threads from this category, such as “Kuorsaava kissa. Ei tätä kestä” (Snoring cat. I can’t cope) (2017) or “Noloin asia mitä sinulle on tapahtunut kyläpaikassa?” (What is the most embarrassing thing that has happened to you whilst visiting someone?) (2017). The duo themselves have drawn parallels between *vauva.fi* and folk poetry both in content and form, and said that the stories on the forum are a cross-section of everyday Finnish life much like folk poetry.⁴

1.2 Previous studies and research questions

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the lyrical content and the cultural significance of the band Kalevauva.fi. Finland is known for heavy metal and the national romantic composer Sibelius but the country has a rich, diverse, and lively music scene including, for example, Finnish-medium rap and tango. Our study adds to the growing body of research on Finnish popular music (e.g., Aho & Kärjä 2007; Doesburg 2021; DuBois 1997; Jaakkola & Toivonen 2005; Jalkanen & Kurkela 2003; Kallioniemi & Kärki 2009; Karjalainen & Kärki 2020; Kärjä 2017; Kärki 2015; Lahtinen & Lehtimäki 2007; Mäkelä 2008, 2009, 2011; Neilson 2015; Ramstedt 2015; Tervo 2014; Tolvanen 2006).

Our study also exemplifies the enduring significance of the *Kalevala* in Finnish society. The epic was used for the formation of Finnish national identity in the 1800s and continues to play an essential role in the construction of that national identity (Fewster 2008: 190; Harvilahti 2002; Karkama 2001: 9). Kalevauva.fi celebrate this heritage and keep it alive by consciously collecting and reworking discourse from online sources and comparing this to Lönnrot's process in creating the epic.⁵ The music by Kalevauva.fi can be placed within a greater movement of reworking of the folk epic. Honko (1985: 16; 1990: 183) writes about the *Kalevala* process. It started when the poetry was first sung and continued with the collection of the poetry by Lönnrot and his contemporaries. Honko argues that the process is ongoing because the epic is still read and referred to.

We find that the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi, alongside the numerous works of art inspired by the *Kalevala*, from Akseli Gallen-Kallela's paintings and Jean Sibelius' compositions to Mauri Kunnas' *Koirien Kalevala* (The Canine Kalevala) and the lyrics by metal bands such as Amorphis, should all be included in the *Kalevala* process as these reworkings make the epic visible in everyday life for Finnish people and can inspire them to (re)acquaint themselves with the stories of the *Kalevala*. DuBois (1997: 27) also notes in the case of folk group Värttinä that many similarities exist between the use of folk poetic material by Lönnrot and the group, arguing: "Värttinä has become the Lönnrot of the 1990s" (ibid.: 34). A similar argument will be made in this study for the group Kalevauva.fi, through the presentation of their method and the similarities they share with the *Kalevala*'s compiler, Elias Lönnrot, and a similarity in the themes of the source material in the form of taboo subjects, gender roles, and use of humour.

There are several insightful studies on Finnish humour (e.g., Kerkkänen & Kuiper & Martin 2004; Ridanpää 2009; Huuki & Manninen & Sunnari 2010; Tervo & Ridanpää 2016; Janhonen 2017). It has been described as "dark/heavy, boorish, forthright, weird and self-ironic, with jokes often capitalising on well-known (gender specific) stereotypes of the Finnish character" (Tervo & Ridanpää 2016: 619; see section 3.3).

In the light of previous studies, our research questions are: 1) How do the themes in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi relate to the name of the band, folklore, and modern music making? 2) What does an analysis of gender and humour in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi reveal about modern Finnish society?

We have chosen to analyse the three interlinked themes (folklore, gender, and humour) because this is the first study on the phenomenon of Kalevauva.fi, and the band is at the intersection between the three. The band members are male but the perspective in the lyrics is more often than not female, and men are made fun of from this female perspective (see Papenburg 2017 on the convergence of humour and gender in all its complexity). The themes in songs are universal and relate to everyday life, which is typical of folklore (Dorson 2011 [1978]). The taboos and other difficult subject matter are approached and dealt with humour (Narvaez 2003). It has been noted that humour in the form of jokes and memes is one of the key manifestations of digital folklore, such as newslore (e.g., Frank 2011) and online comments (Laineste 2013). The jokes and memes often relate to gender roles (e.g., Takovski 2019). Subsequent studies on Kalevauva.fi could explore each related topic in more detail.

We will firstly account for our theoretical background and concepts, and our method and data. This introductory section is followed by a survey of the lyrical themes of the band. We will then analyse the following three aspects of the band's production separately: modern folklore, humour, and gender. The final section contains a summary and discussion, as well as ideas for further study.

1.3 Theory, method, and data

The method employed in this study is qualitative content analysis (e.g., Altheide & Schneider 2013 [1996]; Krippendorff 2013 [2004]). In other words, we identify categories in the song lyrics and then analyse their significance in the context of the textual genre of women's online forums and other online sources. Our data contains the songs written and released by Kalevauva.fi during the period 2016–2020.

Theoretically, our paper represents cultural studies in as much as it seeks to understand how meaning is created in a certain context through texts, and how underlying social structures are represented through language (Barker 2011 [2000]). In other words, it attempts to decode the way in which “the world is socially constructed and represented by us in meaningful ways” (ibid.: 8).

We adhere to Klein's (2015: 280) definition of folklore: folklore is “oral narration, rituals, crafts, music making, and other forms of vernacular expressive culture”. Kalevauva.fi's use of social media discourse and posts on discussion

forums could be seen as a novel artistic way to tap into a collective psyche and make sense of the ordinary, which is also typical of folklore (Lomborg 2014).

Media discourse and representations show us what the dichotomous notions of femininity and masculinity are according to the prevalent discourse at that particular place and point in time (Krijnen & Bauwel 2015: 42); they adhere to preconceived gender and cultural stereotypes (ibid.: 44–45). Humour in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi can also be seen as a cultural construct where the knowledge and understanding of certain stereotypes and preconceptions are essential (e.g., section 3.2). We acknowledge the complicated subject positions and viewpoints in our data (see section 3.3), and our own roles as Western women in consuming and interpreting these gender representations.

LYRICAL THEMES OF KALEVAUVA.FI

The 37 Kalevauva.fi lyrics analysed by us can be thematically grouped in the following categories: 1) sexual/taboo/bodily situations, 2) topical, 3) relationships, 4) Finnish places, 5) meta, and 6) animals. The proportions of the themes can be found in Figure 1.

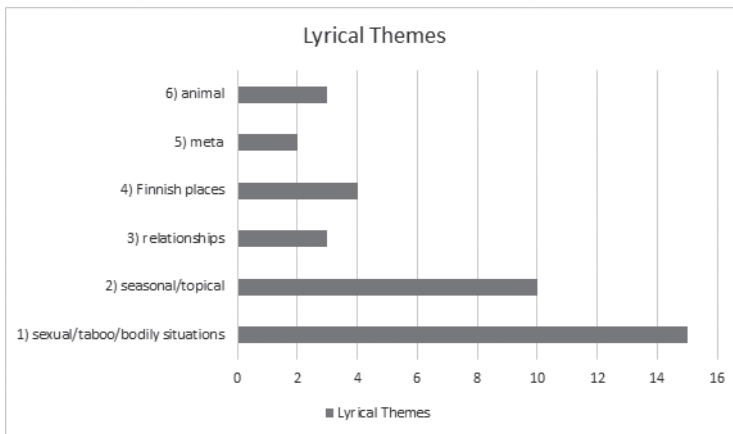


Figure 1. Themes of Kalevauva.fi lyrics.

The largest category, sexual/taboo/bodily situations, contains lyrics that mostly discuss embarrassing situations that occur in everyday life. For example, the lyrics of the song “Apua! Mies⁶ luulee että paskoin lakanat!!” (Help! My husband thinks I shat on the sheets!) (2020) speak about someone who has eaten chocolate in bed. The person accidentally stained the bedsheets with chocolate.

The husband interprets the brown stains for something else than chocolate. The wife takes revenge on her husband and his insinuations by smearing chocolate on his side of the bed too.

The second category contains lyrics of songs that are released during a time at which they are relevant. Many of these songs, such as “Joulustressi” (Christmas stress) (2019) and “Juhannussimaa” (Midsummer mead / Fucked by Juha)⁷ (2019) were released just before the public holiday in question. Other songs, such as “Käsienpesulaulu” (The hand-washing song) was released at the start of the COVID-19 crisis, in spring 2020, and “Muistakaa äänestää” (Remember to vote) was performed on television before the parliamentary elections of 2019. These kinds of songs are released at a time when they make sense.

Songs about relationships, the third category, often chronicle the difficulties of romance, such as dating or jealousy. This category overlaps partly with the largest category of sexual/taboo/bodily situations. The song “Tinder – Horror Story” (2017) features several accounts of Tinder dates gone wrong (see section 3.3).

The lyrics about Finnish places usually contain stereotypical aspects of a certain city or village as found in online comments. The song about the largest city of central Finland, Jyväskylä, includes lines about the city’s public transport being the most expensive of the country and how its residents hate the citizens of Helsinki.

Those lyrics categorised as meta are “Oletteko jo kuulleet Kalevauva.fi:stä?” (Have you heard of Kalevauva.fi yet?) (2017) and “Nykymusiikki on niin kamalaa” (Modern music is so terrible) (2018), and both play either lyrically or musically with the song’s title. The lyrics for the first song are taken from a thread under the same name and feature comments made by several users of the website *vauva.fi* about the band Kalevauva.fi. The second song is musically far removed from Kalevauva.fi’s normal troubadour sound as it has a reggaeton melody. At the start of the music video of the song, the band’s ‘agent’ asks the members of Kalevauva.fi *heitätte ne banjot pois* ‘to throw those banjo’s away’. Even though a banjo can still be heard in the song, its sound has been tweaked and it is combined with a beat, to give the song a more danceable vibe. The lyrics discuss how *ennen oli kaikki paremmin* ‘everything used to be better before’, and gives examples of there only being two TV channels and referring to a time people wore their underwear underneath their clothes (instead of on top). Though the song “Nykymusiikki on niin kamalaa” seems far removed from the world of Finnish folk poetry, the *Kalevala*’s sister collection, the *Kanteletar* (Lönnrot 2005 [1840]) features poems named “Muinaiset ajat paremmat” (Ancient times better) (Kanteletar 1: 32)⁸ and “Oli ennen parempi” (It used to be better) (1:40). These show that the notion that things used to be better is certainly not novel.

The final category, animals, contains three songs, two about cats and one about a dog, respectively. “Kuorsaava kissa. Ei tätä kestä” (Snoring cat. I can’t cope) (2017) is about a cat that wakes up its owner during the night due to its loud snoring.

A number of the songs listed in the above categories are made in collaboration with several charities or companies. Usually, the message of these songs is to improve behaviour and raise awareness for certain concerns, such as “Uskotko kaiken mitä luet netistä?” (Do you believe everything you read online?) or “Omat kassit mukana” (Bring your own bags) (both 2018). The song “Lupaa ettet hylkää mua #kissakriisi” (Promise that you won’t abandon me #catcrisis) was released on World Animal Day on Sunday, 4 October 2020. The song was made for SEY Animal Welfare Finland and highlighted the fact that over 20,000 cats are abandoned in Finland every year. The song “Joulustressi” (Christmas stress) (2019) was made in collaboration with Finn Church Aid to promote their alternative Christmas gift campaign.

ANALYSIS: FOLKLORE, HUMOUR, AND GENDER

3.1 Kalevauva.fi lyrics as modern folklore

A striking similarity exists between the work of the *Kalevala*’s compiler, Elias Lönnrot, and the two members of Kalevauva.fi. This similarity is threefold. Firstly, the collection of the material is conducted in a similar manner. Secondly, an editorial role is taken on by both Lönnrot and Kalevauva.fi. Finally, the material presented by both is a reflection of the lives lived by those who originally submitted the texts. To better understand these similarities, we will first explain these aspects in Lönnrot’s context before moving on to Kalevauva.fi.

Lönnrot collected the poems for the epic and its sister collection *The Kanteletar* (Lönnrot 2005 [1840]) in the 1800s by travelling throughout Finland, Lapland, Ingria, and Karelia. The folk poetry that he collected is estimated to be between 3000 and 3500 years old (Pentikäinen 1987: 111). Those who sang the poetry had a rural lifestyle, living in remote villages. It was partly because of the small size of the population and the distances between the villages that there was limited contact between different groups of people, and this allowed the poems to develop quite distinctly in each community.

Influences from outside, both cross-historical and cross-geographical, reached different communities (DuBois 1995: 3; Pentikäinen 1987: 107–110). Over the years, cross-historical sources, such as foreign mythologies, Viking adventure narratives, Christian lore, and medieval legendry were adopted into the folk poetry. These influences are also cross-geographical because travellers from

both the east and the west reached Finnish settlements. The new themes and stories brought by these travellers changed the folk poetry as it was used to explain changing cultural, social, and political contexts.

Through the limited contact between the population and the influences from the outside, the poetry that Lönnrot collected was a treasure-trove of knowledge about the longstanding traditions of these communities (Siikala 2002: 16). But it was also about their present circumstances, as certain poems were forgotten over time or changed to fit the current way of living. The poetry that ended up in the *Kalevala* and the *Kanteletar* therefore shone a light on how the slowly disappearing peasant communities of Finland, Lapland, Ingria, and Karelia were living at the time. This was especially the case with the *Kanteletar*, which gave a glimpse into their everyday lives, how these people lived, loved, mourned, and taught poetry to their children.

The influence of the changing seasons was an important aspect of life, as people did not have the modern conveniences, such as central heating and refrigerators, that we have now. This is reflected in songs about the weather and the seasons, such as “Vilu viimeinki tulevi” (The cold is finally coming) (*Kanteletar* 1: 74). The agricultural lifestyle, which is closely connected to the weather – knowing the correct time to sow and harvest is paramount to having food on the table – is also reflected in the collection with a special section dedicated to songs sung by shepherds, “Paimenlauluja” (Shepherd songs) (*Kanteletar* 1: 170–206).

Another recurring theme in many of the poems is based on the roles different people take in these traditional societies. The poems set out what is expected of the members in the communities. The poems “Hyvä isäntä” (The good master) and “Hyvä emäntä” (The good mistress) (*Kanteletar* 1: 112, 113; see Timonen 1998) say that a good master of the house will greet his guests and that the mistress will weave her own cloth, among other things. At weddings, it was traditional to sing poems that included advice for both the groom and the bride, such as “Neuvo, sulho, neitoasi” (Groom, give advice to your maiden) (1: 134) or “Luulitko huolten loppuvan?” (Did you think your cares would be over?) (1: 141), which were aimed at the bride. Women at the time had a rich lament tradition: emotional songs were sung collectively in an act of ritual weeping (Utriainen 1998).

Some poems discuss taboo subjects, often sex or violence. The incestuous relationship between brother and sister found in poem 36 of the *Kalevala*, in which Kullervo unwittingly seduces his own sister, is probably the most well-known. Both in the *Kalevala* and in the other poems on this subject the incest is heavily criticised. The function of these poems was, in all likelihood, to warn others and make them conform to societal expectations (Kupiainen 2002: 276).

Another poem on a taboo subject is known as “Kojosen pojan kosinta” (The courtship of Kojonen’s son), in which the main character, Kojonen, kills his wife and gives a present of her breasts to his mother-in-law (Kiuru 1994).

Many of the poems that were sung also dealt with everyday matters, such as “Rahansa menettänyt” (The one who lost their money) (2: 253) or “Laulan lasta nukkumahan” (I sing the child to sleep) (2: 174). Some poems gave advice to younger members of the community, such as “Laulu laiskana pitävi” (The song keeps you lazy) (2: 212), which was sung by women to girls.

Unlike his predecessors, Lönnrot did not copy the poetry he had gathered wholesale into his collections (Honko 1990: 187). He did not want his work to end up in some dusty, old archive. Instead, he wanted it to be accessible and read by a wide audience (ibid.: 197). Editorial changes made by Lönnrot include: reordering poems, omitting lines, inserting lines, removing traces of Christianity, changing character and place names to create coherence, and writing his own lines if necessary (Kaukonen 1979: 72; Pentikäinen 1987: 12).

Thanks to modern technology, the members of Kalevauva.fi do not have to travel throughout Finland to gather their material. Through the use of the website *vauva.fi*, members from different parts of the country can easily communicate with each other, and their posts are visible for the whole world to see. As noted in section 2, the topics discussed on the forum are mainly those that concern parenting, especially new motherhood, but topics on wider subjects are also frequently discussed. As with the folk poetry, several songs discuss love, gender, sex or taboo subjects. For example, the song “Seksitön Jalasjärvi” (Sexless Jalasjärvi) (2019) is centred on the small town Jalasjärvi in southern Ostrobothnia. The lyrics, taken from *vauva.fi*, discuss how it is impossible to have sex in Jalasjärvi and how the friend of one of the commenters moved elsewhere to have intercourse. This anonymous description of a dire and frustrating situation is reminiscent of the Finnic collective ritual weeping of the lament tradition (Utriainen 1998). The material gathered by Kalevauva.fi reflects the everyday life of these people, what they find important, what they need help with, and what they find funny.

When comparing the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi with the original texts found online, it became clear that the members of the band also took on an editorial role. The texts are not taken over word for word, instead a similar method to that of Lönnrot can be observed. The order of lines is sometimes changed, some lines are omitted or repeated. In all likelihood, these changes are made to better fit the melody of the song but also for comic effect. The song “Tuijottava koira” (The staring dog) (2020) mainly features the text taken from the person who started the thread “Tuijottava koira, mitä meinaa?” (Staring dog, what does it mean?) on *vauva.fi*.⁹ The editorial changes made by Kalevauva.fi can be seen

in Table 1. The first change is that the text that appears later in the original thread on *vauva.fi* is inserted after the second line. A part of this line, namely where the original writer asks whether staring is a characteristic of the breed, is omitted in the song. The fourth line of the lyrics is taken from the beginning of the thread again, but part of the text is omitted. The fifth and sixth lines are quite similar to the source text, except for the omission of the words *vaan* ‘but’ in line five and *koira* ‘dog’ and *jatkuvasti* ‘continuously’ in line six.

Table 1. A sample comparison between the discussion on *vauva.fi* forum and in *Kalevauva.fi*’s song “*Tuijottava koira*” (*The staring dog*)

LYRICS		FORUM	
Tuijottava koira (<i>Kalevauva.fi</i> 2020)	The staring dog (translation of lyrics)	Tuijottava koira, mitä meinaa	Staring dog, what does it mean? (Translation of forum)
<i>Hei, mulla hoidossa tuttavan koira</i>	Hey, I’m taking care of a friend’s dog	<i>Hei, mulla hoi- dossa tuttavan koira</i>	Hey, I’m taking care of a friend’s dog
<i>Nyt 4 päivän ajan</i>	For four days	<i>Nyt 4 päivän ajan</i>	For four days
<i>Pitkäkarvainen mäyräkoira kyseessä</i>	The dog in ques- tion is a long- haired dachshund	[from later in the thread] <i>Pitkäkar- vainen mäyrä- koira on kyseessä, onko joku ro- tuominaisuus tuo tuijotus?</i>	The dog in ques- tion is a long- haired dachs- hund, is the staring some type of characteristic of the breed?
<i>En ole oikein koiraihminen</i>	I’m not really a dog-person	[from the start of the thread] <i>En ole oikein koiraihminen, mutta halusin auttaa kun eivät löytäneet koiralle hoitopaikka mat- kansa ajaksi nuo koiran omistajat</i>	I’m not really a dog-person, but I wanted to help, because the dog’s owners couldn’t find a place for him during the time of their journey
<i>Jotenkin nyt her- mostuttaa</i>	I’m starting to feel nervous	<i>Jotenkin vaan nyt hermostuttaa</i>	But I’m starting to feel nervous
<i>Kun tuolla on tapana tuijottaa</i>	As it [the dog] has a habit of staring	<i>Kun tuolla koiralla on tapana tuijottaa jatkuvasti</i>	As that dog has a habit of staring continuously

Because of the similarity in the gathering of the material from ordinary people, how it represents their daily life and through the editorial roles taken on by Lönnrot and Kalevauva.fi, the use of terms by the band, such as ‘modern troubadours’ and ‘modern folklore’, seems justified. Our analysis is further supported by previous studies on the internet and social media as a source for folklore. For example, Blank (2009: 9) calls the internet “an ideal channel for the transmission of folk narratives, due to its anonymity and efficiency in the speedy dissemination of ideas”. Blank (ibid.) continues by stating that traditional oral folklore as well as modern internet folklore are “evocative of society’s fears, hopes, anxieties, and prejudices”. He specifically mentions the communal folk wisdom of online discussion groups (ibid.), which matches the production of Kalevauva.fi perfectly.

One could also argue that the anonymous comments and extracts selected and sung by Kalevauva.fi become memes, the ultimate modern folklore product. Memes can be defined as digital cultural products that are created with awareness of each other and then circulated and imitated via internet (e.g., Shifman 2014). Both Shifman (ibid.) and Wiggins (2019) highlight intertextuality as one of the key features of memes. In memes, like in Kalevauva.fi’s lyrics, texts, or images are indeed recycled and modified with the purpose to entertain and to comment on aspects of human experience. Burgess (2007) describes memes as instances of vernacular creativity in which the private is made public. This matches Kalevauva.fi’s lyrics in which intimate and private discussions from internet forums become hit songs available for everyone. The songs spread online, and entertain while highlighting modern Finns’ concerns, embarrassing moments, prejudices, etc. Communal wisdom about husbands’ and pets’ behaviour, sex, and dating is sought and offered in the lyrics. The meme-like quality is at its most obvious in the following extract from the song “Lomalle lompsis #kiitollinensiunattuonnellinen” (On holiday hop #gratefulblessedhappy) (2019), which is a collection of short quotes, hashtags, and phrases. The duo says on their Facebook page that this particular song is a collection of annoying phrases.¹⁰

<i>Lomalle lompsis</i>	On holiday hop
<i>Ai jumaleissön</i>	Omg
<i>Ei se väärin oo</i>	It’s not wrong
<i>Lomalle lompsis</i>	On holiday hop
<i>Nyssaa naattii</i>	Now you can enjoy
<i>#kiitollinensiunattuonnellinen</i>	#gratefulblessedhappy
<i>Juurikin näin tsaijajai</i>	Exactly like this ahhhh
“Lomalle lompsis #kiitollinensiunattuonnellinen” (On holiday hop #gratefulblessedhappy) (Kalevauva.fi 2019)	

The song mocks overused phrases by inserting them into one list-like song that becomes like a musical long-form meme. Hashtags and memes are ideal for the charity collaborations described in section 2 as well. Catchy tunes and viral funny lyrics help to spread the word and raise money for a charity and awareness of more serious issues.

3.2 Humour in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi

This section focuses on what makes the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi funny. We also explore the potential functions of humour in the songs. Firstly, we argue that the humour in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi rises mainly from incongruity. Eagleton (2019: 67) has defined incongruity as “a sudden shift of perspective, an unexpected slippage of meaning, an arresting dissonance or discrepancy, a momentary defamiliarizing of the familiar and so on”. One could say this incongruity and consequent experience of being amused takes place when people are confronted with concepts which are unexpectedly not in line with their expectations (e.g., McGhee 1979). We acknowledge the subjectivity of our interpretations of humour and irony in the analysis and the fact that the original contribution to the vauva.fi forum was not always intended to be humorous. The humour and irony arise from the intentions of the musicians and the listeners’ understanding of these intentions (cf. Hutcheon 2003 [1994]: 111–134).

An example of the shift in perspective in the case of Kalevauva.fi is the fact that the texts from women’s discussion forums mostly from a woman’s point of view are sung by two men. For example, in the song “Panohanskat” (Gloves for getting laid) (2018) the wife talks about her husband who insists on wearing driving gloves during sex and then takes these to a work seminar, which makes the wife suspect him of cheating on her. One could see this incongruity creating understanding between genders (see below and 3.3). In “Tuijottava koira” (The staring dog) (2019) someone is looking after a friend’s dog and this ordinary activity is turned into a gothic horror story in which the person fears the almost superhuman dog’s stare (see also section 3.1).

Furthermore, there is a stark contrast or discrepancy between the sometimes vulgar or mundane topics on the one hand, and the elaborate and catchy melodies as well as the professional musical performances. For example, in the song “Pitääkö synnytyksessä todellakin olla alapää paljaana” (Does your bottom really have to be naked when in labour) (2016) a banjo and a guitar are combined with coordinated harmonies and serious faces. In “Annatteko lastenne leikkiä vuokratalojen lasten kanssa?” (Do you let your children play with council-house children?) (2020) a classical-sounding orchestra accompanies the sensitive and provocative topic.

The unfamiliar is familiarised in the lyrics when someone asks for advice from fellow discussion forum participants, but it is then often flipped and de-familiarized again by absurd or unhelpful explanations, filtered through the band's editorial choices and reproduced in each live performance, viewing of the YouTube videos, or listening to the songs on streaming services. For example, in the following example from the song “Mieheni kertoi telakoituneensa” (My husband told me he had docked) (2017) a woman is shocked after finding out that her husband has had a sexual experience with another man at a work party. The lines after are various pieces of more or less helpful advice by different voices, as the following example shows.

<i>Olen järkyttynyt, olen järkyttynyt</i>	I am shocked, I am shocked
<i>Mitä tästä pitäisi ajatella?</i>	What should I think about this?
<i>Ei mitään syytä huolestua</i>	There's no reason to worry
<i>Varmasti suurin osa miehistä harrastaa tuota</i>	Probably most men do that
<i>Voi olla muodostunut alueellisia eroja</i>	There may be local differences
<i>Käytä miehesi sukupuolitesteissä</i>	Take your husband to STD tests
<i>Ja vaadi saada kuulla kyseisen kaverin tulokset kanssa</i>	And demand to get the results of the friend as well
<i>Kysys nyt mieheltäs oliko niillä katsekontaktia</i>	Ask your husband if they had eye contact
<i>ja koskiko kivekset toisiansa</i>	And if their testicles touched each other

Kalevauva.fi (2017) “Mieheni kertoi telakoituneensa” (My husband told me he had docked)

Jokes and humour are used to build consensus, create solidarity, and hold a group together (e.g., Coser 1959; Terrion & Ashford 2002; Janhonen 2017). This is most clearly the case with Kalevauva.fi's songs about different Finnish cities: humour defines and divides in-groups and out-groups very clearly to the ones that are from the city and the ones that are not. For example, the duo sings that Kouvola, a small town in southern Finland, is no New York but it is okay for a Finnish city. Vantaa, a part of greater Helsinki, is a town without its own identity, where you can choose to live if you cannot afford to live in Helsinki. The university town Jyväskylä in central Finland is where girls flock to study 'hooy' humanities. The playful mockery extracted from songs with positive twists is funny both for locals and for outsiders. The seasonal songs about public holidays also create a sense of unity. For example, the bossa nova style song “Joulustressi” (Christmas stress) (2018) asks whether we always

have to celebrate Christmas or go to the mother-in-law's, and highlights the fact that we get to go back to work to rest after the holidays. It lists all the unnecessary Christmas presents (including a laminated BMI chart and a grave plot for a 17-year old) and laments the fact that the fleece socks in the shop are the wrong colour. The listener can relate to this experience of Christmas. A similar but nostalgic in-group solidarity effect is achieved by "Nykymusiikki on niin kamala" (Modern music is so terrible) (2018). The lyrics state that everything used to be better, there was no auto-tune and people had perfect pitch and healthy self-criticism instead.

Humour is also used to mitigate failure, one's inferior position and the loss of face, as well as to manage the fear of the unknown or to deal with traumatic experiences (Kerkkänen & Kuiper & Martin 2004; Vucetic 2004). In other words, humour serves as a therapeutic coping tool. This aspect is not only evident in the seasonal songs about Christmas woes, it is also prominent in the critical or disappointed voices on the forum. For example, in the song "Meneekö nuoruus hukkaan jos ei pane" (Is your youth wasted if you don't have sex) (2017) the original poster of the thread on *vauva.fi* wonders whether she will lose her youth because she only sleeps with someone once a year. The song "Noloin asia mitä sinulle on tapahtunut kyläpaikassa" (What is the most embarrassing thing that has ever happened to you while visiting someone?) (2017) also deals with losing face as different people retell their most awkward experiences when visiting someone. For instance, one person talks about how they tried to sit on the toilet in such a way that their urine did not burble against the toilet's porcelain. By accident, the urine splashed on the little mat in front of the toilet instead of going into the toilet.

Furthermore, humour is used to manage power relations, either as a subversive expression of resistance (Dubberley 1988) or to maintain the status of the ones already in power (e.g., Billig 2005: 201–202; also Janhonen 2017). Humour can also be used to mock and humiliate others (Barbe 1995) or to gain status (Huuki & Manninen & Sunnari 2010). One could analyse *Kalevauva.fi*'s choice of lyrics from this perspective: the singers raise themselves above human experience and trivialise the concerns of people and residents in certain towns. However, the popularity of the duo shows that this negative interpretation is unlikely and the more probable function of humour is performative, aesthetic, and playful (Oring 2016). For example, the song "Sohva haisee perseeltä" (The sofa stinks of ass) (2018) does not appear to have a deeper meaning although it ends with the philosophical question *haiseeko sohva perseeltä vai perse sohvalta?* 'does the sofa smell of ass or the ass of the sofa?' Our analysis is supported by the fact that Kimmo Numminen stated in an interview that they write and

perform the songs with respect, not to mock, and that they want to be objective messengers of the people.¹¹

A question arises: Is the humour in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi specifically Finnish? Its premise is definitely Finnish: the national epic *Kalevala* was critical in the national romantic movement and essential in the creation of Finnish national identity (Harvilahti 2002: 278; Piela & Knuuttila & Laaksonen 2008). The name of the band and their branding as modern folklore is an in-group joke for those who know Finnish. The focus here is not on performing and creating a national identity (cf. Kärki 2020). We believe that what ultimately makes the songs Finnish is the fact that they follow the Finnish tradition of humorous parody music that was especially popular in the 1980s and 1990s (Tervo & Ridanpää 2016). Parody has remained a feature of Finnish rap videos (ibid.) and it appears in other humorous lyrics today (e.g., Valijärvi 2017). For example, the Finnish heavy metal group Lordi won the Eurovision song contest while the band members were dressed up as monsters to honour comic book style imaginary horror rock, such as the band Kiss¹² (Maglov 2016: 64–65). This could also be interpreted as a way to ridicule both the whole genre of Eurovision and heavy metal music. The dark Finnish self-irony mentioned by Tervo & Ridanpää (2016: 619) is not present in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi but gender stereotypes are (see section 3.3).

3.3 Gender in the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi

Masculinity in Finland is, to a certain extent, constructed on a national level (Valkonen & Hänninen 2013), informed by other identities, such as femininity (Lehtonen 1999: 74, 76), and changes over time (Simonen 2012: 386). Originally taking shape in the early nineteenth century, the stereotypical Finn was a serious, trustworthy, honest, quiet, and reserved peasant (Fewster 2008: 191; Honko 1996: 41). The Finnish soldiers who fought in the Second World War were hailed as ideal and patriotic (Peltonen 2000: 267). However, an aspect of wilderness was also included in this image, as these soldiers were skilled in fighting in the forest, able to endure the cold, and traverse the harsh landscape on skis. To a certain extent, this identity of seriousness and patriotism still pervades in modern Finnish society (Ollila 1998: 130).

However, perceptions of Finnish masculinity have adjusted considerably and are changing. The rather idealised physically fit and invincible version of the Finnish male is contrasted by a completely opposite view of men as violent, alcoholic, full of shame, and self-destructive at times (Jokinen 2000: 11–12; Oksanen 2011: 358; Simonen 2012). This anti-hero view on masculin-

ity is supported by the fact that Finnish men are more likely to die by suicide, have alcohol problems, or suffer from homelessness (Hearn & Lattu 2002: 54; Jokinen 1999: 17). Alcoholism in Finnish males has more or less reached the level of national stereotype, according to Simonen (2012: 386).

Like alcoholism, violence is also seen as typical of Finnish masculinity, as violent females are very much the exception both culturally and socially (Jokinen 2000: 12). Jokinen (ibid.: 51–103) traces the connection between violence and Finnish masculinity back to the heroes of the *Kalevala*. From Jokinen’s analysis, it becomes clear that several characteristics of two of the epic’s main heroes, the vain ladies’ man Lemminkäinen and the self-destructive orphan Kullervo, are also those usually associated with Finnish masculinity. These traits are, amongst others, the inability to regulate feelings, violence, self-destructiveness, and a sense of shame. Jokinen (ibid.: 100–101) also notes that the stories of Lemminkäinen and Kullervo contain a sense of bitter humour and ingredients of parody targeted at traditional masculinity. We would argue that the dark humour and parodical ingredients are also present in the story of the epic’s main hero, the shaman Väinämöinen, who has a strong desire to get married but is refused by every woman. In one of the poems Väinämöinen’s masculinity is directly ridiculed as follows: “Oi on hullu hulluuttasi, mieletön mielesi vähyyttä” (You fool in your foolishness, feeble-minded in your manliness) (Tarkka 1994: 254). This dark sense of humour at the expense of men seems to be a recurring theme throughout Finnish culture (Valijärvi 2017: 288–289). The 1998 sketch from the comedy show of Studio Julmahuvi called “Roudasta Rospuuttoon” (From ground frost to mud season) features the same mocking attitude towards Finnish men. The main character comes home drunk and ashamed and, after a while, is resolute to make amends but only makes things worse.¹³

Similar humoristic attitudes towards Finnish men’s flaws and their desire for alcohol can also be found in music. In the metal scene, the songs “Lemminkäisen laulu” (The song of Lemminkäinen) (2009) and “Mahtisanat” (Words of power) (2009) by Kotiteollisuus¹⁴ (Doesburg 2021) and the video for “Pakko-lasku” (Crash landing / The bill that has to be paid) (2010) by Stam1na¹⁵ all play with ideas on Finnish masculinity, from alcohol abuse to their inability to effect change. In hip-hop, the song “Selvä päivä” (Sober day) (2011) by Petri Nygård and Lord Est also parodies men’s drinking (Valijärvi 2017: 288–289, see also Tervo & Ridanpää 2016: 627–628).

These humorous attitudes towards masculinity and at the expense of it, which can be traced back to the *Kalevala*, can also be found in some of the lyrics of Kalevauva.fi. The song “Mies syö lapsen vanukkaat” (My husband eats the children’s puddings) (2017) relates the stories of several women who complain that their husbands keep eating food clearly meant for their children, such as

the small cartons of juice when there is a one litre carton of juice available. Towards the end of the song, one of the speakers mentions that she has hidden the children's desserts in the vegetable drawer of the refrigerator because her husband will never look there. In the song, men are described as slightly incapable because they are unable to tell the difference between food meant for children and for the grown-ups of the household. They are also seen as unable to control themselves. The song "Tinder – Horror Story" (2017) also features several accounts of men that highlight their wild nature. There is the story of the person who started the thread, who speaks about her male one-night stand who urinated in the wardrobe. Another user comments that her one-night stand put up his hands in the 'devil's horns' sign during the act. Even here the humour is in the performance's intention and the audience's interpretation: the original post may not have been humorous and not everyone understands the irony (cf. Hutcheon 2003 [1994]: 111–134).

The lyrics of Kalevauva.fi do, however, reveal an alternative, more sensitive and vulnerable type of masculinity that is neither a physically strong war hero, nor an alcoholic and useless anti-hero. An example of this is the song "Nainen johon olen ihastunut vihaa minua!" (The woman I have fallen in love with hates me!) (2017). The protagonist in the song is male. He reveals his vulnerable side and in the original thread¹⁶ asks the women on the vauva.fi forum for advice. In the following extract from "Te, ketkä ette harrasta usein seksiä" (You who don't have sex often) the man sums up his life and how he longs for intimacy with his wife.

Pappi sanoi aamen, lapset tehty ja minä rakensin perheelle talon. Nyt ei ilmeisesti enää tarvita seksiä. Ainakaan vaimon mielestä. The priest said amen, we've had the children and I built a house for the family. Now apparently you don't need sex anymore. At least that's what my wife thinks.

"Te, ketkä ette harrasta usein seksiä" (You who don't have sex often) (Kalevauva.fi 2017)

In the song "Mies mustasukkainen kun lähden laivalle" (My husband is jealous when I go on a cruise) (2017) the man stays at home worrying about what might happen and it is the woman's turn to be the active and adventurous one. The advice from the forum is 'don't go, you won't be able to control your emotions, you will cheat on your man'. Traditional masculinity and heteronormativity are challenged by the song "Mieheni kertoi telakoituneensa" (My husband told me he had docked) (2016), in which the husband has a sexual experience with another man. This same-sex encounter further illustrates changing masculinities and the acceptance of or the openness to discuss queer identity in Finland, also

exemplified by the popularisation of the artist known as Tom of Finland, who drew homoerotic images of men, which are now available in the form of various merchandise such as coffee, vodka, bedlinen, and towels (see, e.g., Lahti 1998). The fact that the wife in the song complains about her husband's behaviour could be seen as an expression of an anti-gay sentiment, or she is simply upset about the fact that he had sexual relations with someone else.

The act of hiding certain food items in the refrigerator's vegetable drawer or the questionable behaviour of men on dates seems more humorous if we consider the fact that the songs are sung by two men instead of the women who initially comment on the various threads on *vauva.fi*. The mocking attitudes towards men in these songs, characteristic of Finnish culture, are amplified by the self-irony shown by *Kalevauva.fi*'s male singers. The inclusion of alternative masculinities in the songs make them more contemporary and more representative of Finnish masculinities today.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Our study identified the lyrical themes in *Kalevauva.fi*'s production until 2020. They include Finnish places, animals, sexual/taboo and other embarrassing situations, relationships, seasonal or otherwise topical themes, and meta themes, i.e., songs about *Kalevauva.fi* and modern music. The duo's lyrical output is retrieved from the forum *vauva.fi*, and more recently they have experimented with using other online sources and social media.

We analysed the similarities between *Kalevauva.fi* and the nineteenth-century folklorist Lönnrot: both sampled texts created by other people and used their own creativity and editorial choices to form a distinct piece of work. They both represented the concerns and wishes of the people and included taboo subjects in their works. We drew parallels between *Kalevauva.fi*'s lyrics and internet memes and described the lyrics as instances of modern folklore. Humour in the lyrics stems from different types of incongruity, e.g., the one between the beautiful instrumental and musical output and the sometimes explicit or mundane lyrical content, or the unexpected responses or ways of sampling from the *vauva.fi* discussion forum. The functions of humour in *Kalevauva.fi* vary: it creates group coherence, mitigates difficult situations having a therapeutic function, entertains creatively, and plays with the Finnish gender roles.

The case of *Kalevauva.fi* is one of the myriad examples in which the ancient folk poetry of the Finns is kept alive through adaptation. What is different in the reworking of the epic in the case of *Kalevauva.fi* is how the material is

adapted. Other artists mentioned are often inspired by specific stories from the epic or the folk poetry that they translate into music or visuals or other products. To our knowledge, Kalevauva.fi is the first to apply the method that Lönnrot used to create the *Kalevala* to the creation of new lyrics. This method includes the collection of material, either in villages or online, and the editing of that material to fit it with the purpose; creating the epic or lyrics. The method used by the Kalevauva.fi challenges traditional and historical notions and our understanding of what folk music is and how it is transmitted and created (cf. Keegan-Phipps & Wright 2020). Our study demonstrates the way in which the creation and dissemination of folk music is evolving in the digital age.

Furthermore, our study on Kalevauva.fi illustrates changes in music production in general. While the duo plays traditional analogue instruments and their voices are not altered by, e.g., autotune, the way they disseminate, produce, and promote their music is predominantly digital: the duo's tracks are released on YouTube and Spotify, they started out without a record label, they sample lyrics from digital sources, their interviews appear in digital newspapers, and they are active on social media themselves. Money comes from live performances and advertising on YouTube, and streams. This is not surprising, considering Finland is a digital superpower where internet access is a basic human right (Statistics Finland 2020; European Commission 2020). The digital format gives the band power over their own output and makes them entrepreneurs, while fans can take part in the creative process and the production of the music commodity, which in turn may create a complicated situation where different interests may clash (see Morris 2014, 2015). For example, when Kalevauva.fi first released their songs, there was a lively discussion about who the royalties should go to as the texts have originally been written by others; some people said they felt proud that their comments had been used.¹⁷ In this context, it is also worth noting that Kalevauva.fi donated money to the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters in Finland in 2017.¹⁸

Kalevauva.fi counteracts this complex relationship between the audience and the artist by using their popularity for charity projects, such as a recent collaboration with the SEY Animal Welfare Finland to solve the crisis of abandoned cats¹⁹ or the Christmas campaign song that was commissioned by the Finn Church Aid to raise money for developing countries.²⁰ The band members can thus be seen as entrepreneurs engaging in cause-related marketing where they contribute to charitable causes to flag their societal and corporate responsibility and achieve their own commercial, and perhaps artistic, objectives at the same time (Varadarajan & Menon 1988: 60). This is in line with the trend of millennial consumers placing value in corporate social responsibility, which

has led to more firms entering partnerships with non-profit organisations to appeal to this ethically conscious generation (see Cosgrave & O'Dwyer 2020 for a detailed discussion of this trend).

A study about the reception of the songs and the phenomenon of Kalevauva.fi would complement the present one well. Interviewing listeners and fans would further illustrate the function and effectiveness of the humour in the lyrics. A reception study would also add to our analysis of gender roles as they are portrayed in the songs: it would be interesting to know if men and women perceive the lyrics differently. We would welcome further studies that focus on song writing by method of sampling from internet forums and social media. Studies on the meme-like quality and folkloric elements of popular music are also worth of further study.

NOTES

¹ See <https://www.iltalehti.fi/viihdeuutiset/a/201706012200176004>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

² Note that *some* is the Finnish abbreviation for 'social media'.

³ See <https://www.kalevauva.fi/>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

⁴ See <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-9042665>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

⁵ See <https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-9042665>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

⁶ The Finnish word *mies* can mean 'man' or 'husband, co-habiting male partner'. We have translated the latter as 'husband' throughout but it can also refer to a common-law spouse.

⁷ *Sima* is a traditional home-made mead-like non-alcoholic drink usually drunk on May Day; the word play is inspired by the comic Fingerpori and is a collaboration between Kalevauva.fi and the hip-hop group Teflon Brothers; see <https://www.hs.fi/nyt/art-2000006134724.html>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

⁸ As per tradition, we will refer to poems in Lönnrot (2005 [1840]) as (*Kanteletar* part number: poem number) to facilitate finding the poems in different editions.

⁹ See https://www.vauva.fi/keskustelu/1520242/ketju/tuijottava_koira_mita_meinaa, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

¹⁰ See https://www.facebook.com/kalevauva.fi/videos/lomalle-lompsis-kiitollinensiunatt_uonnellinen/443991073096864/, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

¹¹ See <https://www.ess.fi/teemat/720566>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

¹² See <http://rockandrollgarage.com/lordi-singer-talks-about-ghost-and-kiss-influence/>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

¹³ The sketch is available on YouTube with English subtitles at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUyFg9xoPKk>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

¹⁴ Finnish hard rock and heavy metal band.

¹⁵ Finnish heavy metal music group.

¹⁶ See <https://www.vauva.fi/keskustelu/2824095/nainen-johon-olen-ihastunut-vihaaminua>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

- ¹⁷ See <https://www.radionova.fi/ohjelmat/radio-novan-iltapaiva/a-124753We>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.
- ¹⁸ See <https://www.ess.fi/teemat/720566>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.
- ¹⁹ See <https://sey.fi/kalevauva-fi-julkaisi-hylatyille-kissoille-omistetun-kappaleen-kalevauva-fi-on-seyn-kissakriisi-kampanjan-suojelija/>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.
- ²⁰ See <https://www.kirkonulkomaanapu.fi/ajankohtaista/uutiset/toisenlaisen-lahjan-ja-kalevauva-fin-yhteistyosta-syntyi-kappale-joulustressi/>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.

REFERENCES

- Aho, Marko & Kärjä, Antti-Ville (eds.) 2007. *Populaarimusiikin tutkimus*. [The Study of Popular Music.] Tampere: Vastapaino.
- Altheide, David L. & Schneider, Christopher J. 2013 [1996]. *Qualitative Media Analysis*. 2nd edition. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Barbe, Katharina 1995. *Irony in Context*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Barker, Chris 2011 [2000]. *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. 4th edition. London: SAGE.
- Billig, Michael 2005. *Laughter and Ridicule: Towards a Social Critique of Humour*. London: SAGE.
- Blank, Trevor J. 2009. Introduction: Toward a Conceptual Framework for the Study of Folklore and the Internet. In: Trevor Blank (ed.) *Folklore and the Internet: Vernacular Expression in a Digital World*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, pp. 1–20.
- Burgess, Jean Elizabeth 2007. *Vernacular Creativity and New Media*. Diss. (PhD Thesis). Queensland University of Technology, Australia. Available at <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/16378/>, last accessed on 16 January 2023.
- Coser, Rose Laub 1959. Some Social Functions of Laughter: A Study of Humor in a Hospital Setting. *Human Relations*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 171–182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872675901200205>.
- Cosgrave, David & O'Dwyer, Michele 2020. Ethical Standards and Perceptions of CRM among Millennial Consumers. *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 37, No. 5, pp. 863–884. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-05-2019-0125>.
- Doesburg, Charlotte 2021. Of Heroes, Maidens and Squirrels: Reimagining Traditional Finnish Folk Poetry in Metal Lyrics. *Metal Music Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 317–333. https://doi.org/10.1386/mms_00051_1.
- Dorson, Richard M. (ed.) 2011 [1978]. *Folklore in the Modern World*. The Hague: De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110803099>.
- Dubberley, W. S. 1988. Humor as Resistance. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 109–123. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839880010201>.
- DuBois, Thomas Andrew 1995. *Finnish Folk Poetry and the Kalevala*. New York: Garland Publishing.
- DuBois, Thomas Andrew 1997. Lönnrot and Värttinä: (Re)presenting Oral Tradition to a Willing Audience. *Journal of Finnish Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 27–36.

- Eagleton, Terry 2019. *Humour*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- European Commission 2020 = Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2020. Finland. Available at <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/desi-finland#:~:text=Finland%20ranks%202nd%20in%20Digital,member%20states%20with%20some%20distance>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.
- Fewster, Derek 2008. Kalevala ja muinaisuuden politisoituminen. [Kalevala and the Politicisation of Ancient Time.] In: Ulla Piela & Seppo Knuuttila & Pekka Laaksonen (eds.) *Kalevalan kulttuurihistoria*. [Cultural History of the Kalevala.] Helsinki: SKS, pp. 190–205.
- Frank, Russell 2011. *Newslore: Contemporary Folklore on the Internet*. Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi.
- Harvilahti, Lauri 2002. Eepostutkimus 2000: Maailman eeposten moninaisuus ja uudet haasteet. [Epic Research 2000: World's Epic's Diversity and New Challenges.] *Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja*, Vol. 79–80, pp. 278–283.
- Hearn, Jeff & Lattu, Emmi 2002. The Recent Development of Finnish Studies on Men: A Selective Review and a Critique of a Neglected Field. *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 49–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/080387402317533880>.
- Honko, Lauri 1985. The Kalevala Process. In: *Kalevala 1835–1985: The National Epic of Finland*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Library, pp. 16–24.
- Honko, Lauri (ed.) 1990. *Religion, Myth, and Folklore in the World's Epics: The Kalevala and Its Predecessors*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Honko, Lauri 1996. Changing National Identities: Finland. *Anthropological Journal on European Cultures*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 35–63. Available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43234804>, last accessed on 16 January 2023.
- Hutcheon, Linda 2003 [1994]. *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony*. London: Routledge.
- Huuki, Tuija & Manninen, Sari & Sunnari, Vappu 2010. Humour as a Resource and Strategy for Boys to Gain Status in the Field of Informal School. *Gender and Education*, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 369–383. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540250903352317>.
- Jaakkola, Jutta & Toivonen, Arne 2005. *Inspired by Tradition: Kalevala Poetry in Finnish Music*. Jyväskylä: Gummerus.
- Jalkanen, Pekka & Kurkela, Vesa 2003. *Suomen musiikin historia: Populaarimusiikki*. [The History of Finnish Music: Popular Music.] Helsinki: WSOY.
- Janhonen, Kristiina 2017. The Roles of Humour and Laughter in Youth Focus Groups on School Food. *Journal of Youth Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 9, pp. 1127–1142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2017.1311404>.
- Jokinen, Arto 1999. Suomalainen miestutkimus ja -liike: Muutoksen mahdollisuus? [Finnish Masculinity Research and Movement: Opportunity for Change.] In: Arto Jokinen (ed.) *Mies ja muutos: Kriittisen miestutkimuksen teemoja*. [Man and Change: Themes in Critical Studies of Masculinity.] Tampere: Tampere University Press, pp. 15–51. Available at <https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/68101>, last accessed on 16 January 2023.
- Jokinen, Arto 2000. *Panssaroitu maskuliinisuus: Mies, väkivalta ja kulttuuri*. [Armoured Masculinity: Man, Violence, and Culture.] Tampere: Tampere University Press. Available at <https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/68040>, last accessed on 23 January 2023.

- Kallioniemi, Kari & Kärki, Kimi 2009. The *Kalevala*, Popular Music, and National Culture. *Journal of Finnish Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 2, pp. 61–72. Available at <https://www.academia.edu/630952/>, last accessed on 16 January 2023.
- Kärjä, Antti-Ville 2017. A Metahistorical Inquiry into Historiography of Nordic Popular Music. In: Fabian Holt & Antti-Ville Kärjä (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Popular Music in the Nordic Countries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 185–202. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190603908.013.0010>.
- Karjalainen, Toni-Matti & Kärki, Kimi (eds.) 2020. *Made in Finland: Studies in Popular Music*. London: Routledge.
- Karkama, Pertti 2001. *Kansakunnan asialla: Elias Lönnrot ja ajan aatteet*. [For the Nation: Elias Lönnrot and Ideology of the Time.] Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society.
- Kärki, Kimi 2015. Forging Metal: The *Kalevala* in the Finnish Heavy Metal Performance. In: Toni-Matti Karjalainen & Kimi Kärki (eds.) *Modern Heavy Metal: Markets, Practices and Cultures*. International Academic Research Conference, 8–12 June 2015, Helsinki, Finland. Conference Proceedings. Helsinki: Aalto University, pp. 131–137.
- Kärki, Kimi 2020. Performing National Identities. In: Toni-Matti Karjalainen & Kimi Kärki (eds.) *Made in Finland: Studies in Popular Music*. London: Routledge, pp. 201–216.
- Kaukonen, Väinö 1979. *Lönnrot ja Kalevala*. [Lönnrot and the *Kalevala*.] Helsinki: SKS.
- Kaukonen, Väinö 1990. The *Kalevala* as Epic. In: Lauri Honko (ed.) *Religion, Myth, and Folklore in the World's Epics: The Kalevala and Its Predecessors*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 157–179.
- Keegan-Phipps, Simon & Wright, Lucy 2020. “Tradition”, Vernacularism, and Learning to Be a Folk Musician with Social Media. In: Janice L. Waldron & Stephanie Horsley & Kari K. Veblen (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social Media and Music Learning*. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190660772.013.26>.
- Kerkkänen, Paavo & Kuiper, Nicholas A. & Martin, Rod A. 2004. Sense of Humor, Physical Health, and Well-Being at Work: A Three-Year Longitudinal Study of Finnish Police Officers. *Humor – International Journal of Humor Research*, Vol. 17, No. 1/2, pp. 21–35. <https://doi.org/10.1515/humr.2004.006>.
- Kiuru, Eino 1994. The Wife-Killer Theme in Karelian and Russian Songs. In: Anna-Leena Siikala & Sinikka Vakimo (eds.) *Songs Beyond the Kalevala: Transformations of Oral Poetry*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, pp. 220–235.
- Klein, Barbro 2015. Folklore. In: James D. Wright (ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 280–284. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.12074-4>.
- Krijnen, Tonny & Bauwel, Sofie van 2015. *Gender and Media: Representing, Producing, Consuming*. London: Routledge.
- Krippendorff, Klaus 2013 [2004]. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. 3rd edition. London: SAGE.
- Kupiainen, Tarja 2002. The Forbidden Love of Sister and Brother: The Incest Theme in Archangel Karelian *Kalevala* Meter Epic. In: Anna-Leena Siikala (ed.) *Myth and Mentality: Studies in Folklore and Popular Thought*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, pp. 272–300.

- Lahti, Martti 1998. Dressing Up in Power: Tom of Finland and Gay Male Body Politics. *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 35, No. 3/4, pp. 185–205. https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v35n03_08.
- Lahtinen, Toni & Lehtimäki, Markku 2007. *Roll over Runeberg: Kirjallisuustieteellisiä esseitä rocklyriikasta*. [Roll over Runeberg: Literary Criticism Essays about Rock Lyrics.] Tampere: Tampereen yliopisto.
- Laineste, Liisi 2013. Funny or Aggressive: Failed Humour in Internet Comments. *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*, Vol. 53, pp. 29–46. <https://doi.org/10.7592/FEJF2013.53.laineste>.
- Lehtonen, Mikko 1999. Maskuliinisuus, kansallisuus, identiteetti. [Masculinity, Nationality, Identity.] In: Arto Jokinen (ed.) *Mies ja muutos: Kriittisen miestutkimuksen teemoja*. [Man and Change: Themes in Critical Studies of Masculinity.] Tampere: Tampere University Press, pp. 74–88. Available at <https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/68101>, last accessed on 16 January 2023.
- Linkoheimo, Eveliina 2015. *Yhteisöllisyyden keinot keskustelupalstoilla: Miten vauva.fi:n äityiskeskustelupalstoja voidaan kehittää?* [Ways to Create a Community on Discussion Forums: How Can Motherhood Discussion Forums on vauva.fi Be Developed?] Diss. (PhD Thesis). Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulu. Available at <https://www.theseus.fi/handle/10024/91896>, last accessed on 27 January 2023.
- Lomborg, Stine 2014. *Social Media, Social Genres: Making Sense of the Ordinary*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Lönnrot, Elias 2005 [1840]. *Kanteletar, elikkä Suomen kansan vanhoja lauluja ja virsiä*. [Kanteletar, Or the Old Songs and Poems of the Finnish People.] Helsinki: SKS.
- Maglov, Marija 2016. Musical Genre as an Indicator of the Unity in Diversity Concept: Case Study of the ESC's Winning Song *Hard Rock Hallelujah*. *ART+MEDIA Journal of Art and Media Studies*, Vol. 10, pp. 59–65. <http://dx.doi.org/10.25038/am.v0i10.134>.
- Mäkelä, Janne 2008. The State of Rock: A History of Finland's Cultural Policy and Music Export. *Popular Music*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 257–269. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143008004054>.
- Mäkelä, Janne 2009. Alternations: The Case of International Success in Finnish Popular Music. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 367–382. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549409105369>.
- Mäkelä, Janne 2011. *Kansainvälisen populaarimusiikin historiaa*. [History of International Popular Music.] Helsinki: Suomen Jazz & Pop Arkisto.
- McGhee, Paul E. 1979. *Humor: Its Origin and Development*. San Francisco: Freeman.
- Morris, Jeremy Wade 2015. *Selling Digital Music, Formatting Culture*. Oakland, California: University of California Press.
- Morris, Jeremy Wade 2014. Artists as Entrepreneurs, Fans as Workers. *Popular Music and Society*, Vol. 37, No. 3, pp. 273–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007766.2013.778534>.
- Narvaez, Peter 2003. *Of Corpse: Death and Humor in Folklore and Popular Culture*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press. Available at https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/usupress_pubs/52/, last accessed on 16 January 2023.
- Neilson, Tai 2015. Where Metal and Myth Collide – Finnish Folk Metal. In: Scott A. Wilson (ed.) *Music at the Extremes: Essays on Sounds Outside the Mainstream*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., pp. 129–142.

- Oksanen, Atte 2011. Drinking to Death: Traditional Masculinity, Alcohol and Shame in Finnish Metal Lyrics. *Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, Vol. 28, No. 4, pp. 357–372. <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10199-011-0030-3>.
- Ollila, Anne 1998. Perspectives to Finnish Identity. *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol. 23, No. 3/4, pp. 127–137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03468759850115918>.
- Oring, Elliott 2016. *Joking Asides: The Theory, Analysis, and Aesthetics of Humor*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press.
- Papenburg, Bettina (ed.) 2017. *Gender: Laughter*. Farmington Hills, Mich.: Macmillan Reference.
- Peltonen, Matti 2000. Between Landscape and Language: The Finnish National Self-Image in Transition. *Scandinavian Journal of History*, Vol. 25, No. 4, pp. 265–280. <https://doi.org/10.1080/034687500750046924>.
- Pentikäinen, Juha 1987. *Kalevalan mytologia*. [Kalevala Mythology.] Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Piela, Ulla & Knuutila, Seppo & Laaksonen, Pekka (eds.) 2008. *Kalevalan kulttuuri-historia*. [Cultural History of the Kalevala.] Helsinki: SKS.
- Ramstedt, Kim 2015. Chase Sound Boys out of Earth: The Aura of Dubplate Specials in Finnish Reggae Sound System Culture. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 25–42. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12801/1947-5403.2015.07.02.02>.
- Ridanpää, Juha 2009. Geopolitics of Humour: The Muhammed Cartoon Crisis and the *Kaltio* Comic Strip Episode in Finland. *Geopolitics*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 729–749. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650040903141372>.
- Shifman, Limor 2014. *Memes in Digital Culture*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Siikala, Anna-Leena 2002. What Myths Tell about Past Finno-Ugric Modes of Thinking. In: Anna-Leena Siikala (ed.) *Myth and Mentality: Studies in Folklore and Popular Thought*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, pp. 15–32.
- Simonen, Jenni 2012. Miehet ja alkoholi: Ikä, koulutustausta ja juomisen maskuliinisuus. [Men and Alcohol: Age, Education Background, and Masculinity of Drinking.] *Yhteiskuntapolitiikka*, Vol. 77, No. 4, pp. 386–402. Available at <https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/102991>, last accessed on 17 January 2023.
- SKVR 1908 = Niemi, Robert Aukusti (ed.). *Suomen kansan vanhat runot 1*. [The Old Poems of the Finnish People 1.] Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society.
- Statistics Finland 2020 = Use of the Internet for Following the Media and for Communication Has Increased. *Statistics Finland*, 10 November. Available at https://www.stat.fi/til/sutivi/2020/sutivi_2020_2020-11-10_tie_001_en.html, last accessed on 17 January 2023.
- Takovski, Aleksandar 2019. Representing Sexuality through Folklore: Erotic Folktales and Online Jokes As ‘Mirrors’ of Gender Hierarchies. *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore*, Vol. 75, pp. 149–172. <https://doi.org/10.7592/FEJF2019.75.takovski>.
- Tarkka, Lotte 1994. Other Worlds: Symbolism, Dialogue and Gender in Karelian Oral Poetry. In: Anna-Leena Siikala & Sinikka Vakimo (eds.) *Songs Beyond the Kalevala: Transformations of Oral Poetry*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, pp. 250–298.
- Terrior, Jenepher Lennox & Ashforth, Blake E. 2002. From ‘I’ to ‘We’: The Role of Putdown Humor and Identity in the Development of a Temporary Group. *Human Relations*, Vol. 55, No. 1, pp. 55–88. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0018726702055001606>.

- Tervo, Mervi 2014. From Appropriation to Translation: Localizing Rap Music in Finland. *Popular Music and Society*, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 169–186. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03007766.2012.740819>.
- Tervo, Mervi & Ridanpää, Juha 2016. Humor and Parody in Finnish Rap Music Videos. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 6, pp. 616–636. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13675494166632006>.
- Timonen, Senni 1998. “Every Tree Bites Me”: North Karelian Lyric Poetry. In: Satu Apo & Aili Nenola & Laura Stark-Arola (eds.) *Gender and Folklore: Perspectives on Finnish and Karelian Culture*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, pp. 201–235.
- Tolvanen, Hannu 2006. The Quiet Past and the Loud Present: The Kalevala and Heavy Metal. *Volume! La revue des musiques populaires*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp. 75–89. <https://doi.org/10.4000/volume.498>.
- Utriainen, Terhi 1998. Feminine and Masculine in the Study of Balto-Finnic Laments. In: Satu Apo & Aili Nenola & Laura Stark-Arola (eds.) *Gender and Folklore: Perspectives on Finnish and Karelian Culture*. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, pp. 175–200.
- Valijärvi, Riitta-Liisa 2017. Representations of Finland in Contemporary Finnish Popular Music. In: Ulla Tuomarla & Iwona Piechnik & Bernadett Bíró (eds.) *Finland Suomi 100: Language, Culture, History*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, pp. 283–303. Available at https://tuhat.helsinki.fi/ws/portalfiles/portal/97036135/Finland_Suomi_100_final.pdf, last accessed on 17 January 2023.
- Valkonen, Jukka & Hänninen, Vilma 2013. Narratives of Masculinity and Depression. *Men and Masculinities*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 160–180. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X12464377>.
- Varadarajan, Rajan P. & Menon, Anil 1988. Cause Related Marketing: A Coalignment of Marketing Strategy and Corporate Philanthropy. *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 52, No. 3, pp. 58–74. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002224298805200306>.
- Vucetic, Srdjan 2004. Identity is a Joking Matter: Intergroup Humor in Bosnia. *Spaces of Identity*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 7–34.
- Wiggins, Bradley E. 2019. *The Discursive Power of Memes in Digital Culture: Ideology, Semiotics, and Intertextuality*. London: Routledge.

Charlotte Doesburg received her PhD from University College London, United Kingdom, in 2022. For her PhD, she researched the adaptation of the *Kalevala* and other folk poetry in Finnish metal music and its connections to Finnish national identity.

charlotte.doesburg.16@ucl.ac.uk

Riitta-Liisa Valijärvi is Associate Professor of Finnish and Minority Languages at University College London, United Kingdom, and Senior Lecturer of Finnish at Uppsala University, Sweden. She has previously studied Finnish pop music and Estonian heavy metal.

r.valijarvi@ucl.ac.uk