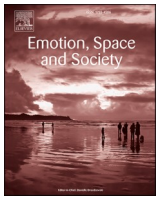
Emotion, Space and Society 57 (2025) 101121

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Emotion, Space and Society

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/emospa



Disrupted spaces: The impact of economic crisis on everyday life

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Every day
Crisis
Loss
Individual
Farmers
Embodied

ABSTRACT

Regional development research has long been shaped by a "male gaze" that privileges economic production, innovation, and growth—while sidelining the forms of care, emotions, maintenance, and everyday labour that supports life in regions (Ormerod, 2023). In this paper, I study how economic crises are lived and felt at the level of everyday life, drawing on the experiences of Danish mink farmers who were forced to cull their animals and shut down their farms during the COVID-19 pandemic. While regional studies typically assess the impacts of economic crisis through macroeconomic indicators and performance metrics, this approach often obscures the emotional, relational, and embodied dimensions of disruption. Building on feminist geographic scholarship and Felski's (2000) theorization of the everyday, I show how crisis unsettles the temporal and spatial rhythms and habits that structure daily life, social roles, and intergenerational ties. The study foregrounds how livelihoods are sustained not only through production, but through informal labor, care work, and embodied knowledge passed down across generations. These everyday practices form subtle infrastructures of resilience—deeply rooted in place, yet vulnerable to state interventions and external shocks. The case of mink farming reveals how crisis reshapes not only what people do, but how they inhabit time, space, and community. By attending to these lived experiences, I offer an understanding of economic crisis—one that centers the silent, often invisible forms of labor and loss that accompany economic transformation.

1. Introduction

The impacts of economic crises on regional economies are often approached through macro-level metrics, regional models, and performance indicators (Evenhuis, 2017; Giannakis and Bruggeman, 2017; Lemke et al., 2023; Sutton et al., 2023). These frameworks conceptualize crisis as a quantifiable rupture, e.g., declines in GDP, employment loss, or sectoral/industrial disruption. While such approaches offer useful insights into overall regional economic performance, they often abstract economic crisis from its lived experiences. They render it observable, but not necessarily felt. Feminist scholars have long argued that economic change is never merely structural—it is also embodied, emotional, and relational (McDowell, 1991, 2003; Katz, 2004; Hall, 2016). Losses in times of crisis often exceed what can be captured in macro-economic metrics and indicators.

This study takes as its starting point the argument that to understand what crisis does—to people, to places,—we must move beyond models of resilience that focus narrowly on regional adaptability, sectoral flexibility, or innovation capacity (Bristow and Healy, 2018; Hall, 2022). While important, these accounts tend to treat crisis as a problem of productivity or institutional performance, overlooking how it reshapes everyday rhythms, disrupts social roles, and alters people's sense of time and place (Dzalbe et al., 2024). Ormerod (2023) recently offered a compelling critique of mainstream regional development studies, arguing that they often adopt a "male gaze" perspective. This approach tends to prioritize economic production, pro-growth narratives, and market-driven innovation, while marginalizing the significance of gendered labor and overlooking the vital roles of social reproduction and care work as foundational elements of regional development (Pugh, 2018). Building on feminist geographic approaches, I aim to study the effects of economic crisis on everyday life by foregrounding the mundane, the embodied, and the affective. These perspectives remind us that structural change—whether through deindustrialization, policy reform, or industrial collapse—is experienced through the textures of daily life, in routines, emotional attachments, social roles, and practices of care. From this point, economic crisis appears not simply as a rupture in economic output, but as a series of lived disorientations that unsettle the temporal and spatial connections through which people organize life (Hall, 2016).

I study these dynamics through the experiences of Danish mink

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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2025.101121
Received 20 November 2024; Received in revised form 8 July 2025; Accepted 15 August 2025
Available online 6 September 2025

farmers, who had to cull their animals and close their farms as part of a nationwide mandate during the COVID-19 pandemic(Mortensen and Moesgard, 2020). While the closures were justified on public health grounds, they had profound consequences beyond the economic. Mink farming was deeply embedded in intergenerational routines, spatial practices, and social networks. The abrupt shutdown not only disrupted income but severed farmers' relations to land, animals, intergenerational family legacy, and community. Long-standing habits—once sources of stability and meaning—became obsolete almost overnight.

These disruptions reveal the fragility of everyday infrastructures that are often invisible in dominant regional analyses. Spatial strategies, like informal labor networks, and affective investments in place—passed down across generations—function as subtle forms of resilience. They help people navigate life in peripheral areas marked by shrinking services, political neglect, and economic precarity. Yet crisis erodes these structures, not just through material dispossession but by disrupting the very rhythms and relations that support livelihoods. In this context, the mink farming case is not an exception, but illustrative of broader dynamics. Peripheral industries and communities are increasingly subject to abrupt transitions driven by environmental regulation, automation, market volatility, and shifting policy paradigms (Atkins, 2024). Often these changes are framed as necessary or inevitable, but they leave communities to absorb the costs of transformation—frequently without meaningful institutional support or recognition.

I draw on feminist geographers foregrounding the importance of everyday life, particularly, I utilize Felski's (2000) concept of everyday life to develop a more grounded, human-centered understanding of economic crisis. Felski urges us to see the everyday not as static or apolitical, but as a vital terrain where meaning is made and unmade (Rose, 1993; Rönkä and Korvela, 2009; Hall, 2020, 2022).

Applying this lens, I argue that regional studies must take seriously the ways in which economic crises are lived and inhabited—how they disrupt everyday routines, reshape relationships to space and time, and unsettle the affective infrastructures of family and community life. Only by engaging with the lived, uneven textures of crisis can we begin to imagine more just, empathetic, and responsive approaches to regional development and crisis-responses (Ormerod, 2023). My work departs from dominant growth-oriented and innovation-driven frameworks that often define regional development and recovery. Rather than viewing crisis solely through metrics of productivity or institutional adaptability, I center the lived, relational, and affective dimensions of economic transformation. In doing so, I show the micro-level strategies through which people navigate structural disruptions—strategies that remain obscured in mainstream analyses, yet are vital to understanding how regions endure, adapt, and potentially transform in the face of crisis.

2. Conceptualizing everyday life

Feminist geographers have long emphasized the significance of everyday interactions as crucial sites for understanding regional political and economic transformations. Central to this perspective is the foundational feminist claim that the personal is political (Katz, 2004; McDowell, 1991; Rose, 1993). Rose (1993) critiques the marginalization of gender, everyday practices and embodied experiences within geographical knowledge production, arguing that this exclusion reflects masculinist epistemologies that have historically shaped the discipline. These dominant modes of knowledge often privilege abstraction, objectivity, and large-scale processes, sidelining the embodied, emotional, and situated experiences that feminist geographers foreground (Haraway, 1988). Similarly, Massey (2005) challenges the binary distinction between space and place that has characterized much of humanistic geography. In this framework, place—like the home and everyday life—is often associated with femininity, tradition, and fixity while space is imagined as masculine, mobile, and progressive. Such binaries not only reinforce gendered hierarchies but also obscure the ways in which home and everyday spaces are deeply implicated in and affected by broader regional socio-economic processes (Fainstein, 2005). More recently, Ormerod (2023) has drawn attention to the persistence of a "male gaze" in regional studies, where regions are often constructed primarily as sites of economic production through the means of growth, competitiveness and strong male leadership. This framing neglects the centrality of social reproduction, unpaid domestic labor, care work, and the public services—domains that are frequently feminized and rendered invisible in mainstream regional analysis (Pugh, 2018). The masculine pro-growth ideology also manifests in the narrative strategies used to justify and promote large-scale regional development initiatives, such as green megaprojects. For instance, projects like Northvolt in Sweden were celebrated as success stories (at initial phases), built around hero leadership, technological progress, and economic transformation (Eriksson et al., 2025). These narratives not only obscure the feminized labor and public infrastructures that sustain such projects but also sideline the challenges they impose on local communities, migrant workers and public authorities. In this way, the male gaze is not merely an analytical oversight but an active force in shaping regional agendas, reinforcing a selective vision of success that privileges growth over care, and spectacle over sustainability (Eriksson et al., 2025). The shift in focus on the everyday practices is necessary not only to better account for marginalized communities within regional development but also to enable the imagining of alternative futures grounded in different practices of knowledge production (Ormerod, 2023; Pugh, 2018).

Economic crises play a constitutive role in shaping regional realities and futures, they are not anomalies but rather integral features of capitalist modes of production (Harvey, 2006). Similar to approaches in regional development, the impact of crises are often assessed through macro-level indicators, such as GDP decline, unemployment rates, or reductions in economic output (Davies, 2011; Bristow and Healy, 2014; Sutton et al., 2023; Lemke et al., 2023). These metrics, while useful for capturing broad trends, reflect a particular worldview—one largely shaped by pro-growth, technocratic, and often male-dominated notions of what constitutes a successful recovery. This approach tends to prioritize economic stabilization and growth over the social, emotional, and everyday dimensions of crisis. As a result, the lived experiences of communities—the disruptions to daily life, the erosion of social ties, the enduring sense of insecurity—are often sidelined or rendered invisible in policy and academic responses (Hall, 2020). Moreover, this macro lens tends to focus on large-scale crises that make headlines, while more localized adversities remain underexamined. It becomes clear that not all crises are recognized equally, what is counted as a crisis, and whose suffering is acknowledged, is often mediated by dominant political and media narratives (Butler, 2009). This selective visibility shapes both academic inquiry and public response, reinforcing hierarchies of attention and value.

To understand how crises impact daily life—and avoiding a reductionist view of everyday experience (Hall, 2022)—requires a more nuanced framework. In this regard, I find Felski's (2000) conceptualization of the everyday particularly valuable. Her approach—structured around the dimensions of time, space, and modality—offers a means of understanding how socio-economic disruptions become embedded in daily routines. To begin with, Felski theorizes everyday time as shaped by repetition and reassurance—the regular, rhythmic patterns that give continuity and structure to lived experience. This repetition is not merely mechanical or linear, rather, it emerges through habitual practices and routines that are often feminized and culturally devalued as passive or unproductive, despite their centrality to sustaining daily life (Rose, 1993). Similarly, MacLeavy et al. (2021) critique reliance on linear temporal frameworks foregrounding evolutionary economic geography, that tie future outcomes too closely to past contingencies and reflect dominant, often exclusionary, perspectives. They call for greater attentiveness to alternative temporalities, advocating for a politics of time that centers the overlooked rhythms of care, maintenance, and everyday life—those that sustain communities yet fall outside

conventional metrics of productivity (Ormerod, 2023). In this article, I draw on the experiences of a farmers' community. Farming life is co-constituted through shared rhythms between humans and more-than-human beings—entangled cycles of labor, care, affect, and seasonality (Panelli, 2010; Eriksson and Bull, 2017). In Denmark's mink farms, the COVID-19 crisis—and the state-mandated culling of millions of mink—violently ruptured these established rhythms. While the mink were always ultimately destined for culling, their killing was typically embedded in familiar temporal and habitual frameworks, shaped by seasonal cycles and farming routines. The nation-wide culling rendered mink lives suddenly abject, stripping them of meaning and value, (Fleischmann, 2023; Fleischmann and Everts, 2024). This shows how deeply temporal and power structures are embedded in everyday farming life and how cris can rapture them.

The second aspect in Felski's framework—space—can be understood through both the material and affective/relational environments that shape everyday life. These include places like the home, the workplace, the habitual streets and the paths people take. Crucially, these spaces are not neutral or passive backdrops, rather, they are deeply embedded in daily routines and invested with meaning. Pini et al. (2010) analysis of the Ravensthorpe nickel mine closure in Australia shows that after the closure, familiar walking routes for redundant workers became disorienting and unsettling. What had once been ordinary, and routine was now imbued with loss and uncertainty. This suggests that the closure of the mine wasn't just a material event—it fundamentally reshaped spatial relationships, one's relational position in social networks and practices (Massey, 2005). The workers' sense of place and continuity was disrupted, revealing how intimately space is tied to personal and collective meaning. But space is not only external or public—it is also intimately domestic. The home environment plays a critical role in shaping identity and memory. Young (2005), for instance, describes home as a site for the preservation of values, where materiality anchors the self. Through objects used in homemaking—whether inherited or newly acquired items—individuals and families maintain habits, routines, and a sense of continuity over time. When the relevance of these objects begins to fade—when the practices that sustained them erode—they risk becoming little more than "museum pieces" (Young, 2005: 142). Material objects—once central to daily life—can lose their significance and recede into memory when no longer in use (Bowring, 2021; Haldrup, 2017; Walker et al., 2023). Crises can accelerate this process, abruptly rendering objects and practices obsolete. Finally, the domestic sphere also encompasses family relations, and here space becomes a site where broader socio-economic forces are felt. Hall (2016) illustrates how financial crises affect not just individuals but entire households, reshaping intergenerational roles, responsibilities, and expectations for the future. In such contexts, space becomes a medium through which economic pressure is negotiated—altering who does what, who depends on whom, and how families imagine what lies ahead.

Felski's (2005) concept of modality, the third dimension of the everyday, centers on the habits, affective dispositions, and embodied rhythms that shape how individuals engage with space and time. Modality is fundamentally about the routine patterns—the habitual ways in which people navigate their daily lives—that make up the texture of everyday existence. These routines are not simply repetitive acts, they are the embodied and affective means through which people inhabit and relate to their environments, effectively grounding experience within particular spatial and temporal frameworks (Haraway, 1988). Katz (2004) study illustrates how habitual rhythms and routines are closely linked to broader structural changes. By focusing on the shift from manual to service-based labor, Katz shows how global economic restructuring reshapes children's daily habits—altering their play, domestic roles, and social interactions. These everyday routines, viewed as embodied and repetitive modalities, reveal how children's lives absorb and reflect socio-economic transformations. Felski's concept of modality highlights that everyday life involves not only physical space but also temporal and affective dimensions that foster belonging and stability. In this regard, emotional geographers have similarly critiqued the tendency to treat emotions and embodied experience as purely personal or interior states. Instead, they emphasize the social and collective nature of affective life, showing how emotions are shaped by broader cultural narratives, power relations, and spatial contexts (Anderson and Smith, 2001; Bondi, 2005; Ahmed, 2014). Emotions, in this view, are not simply expressions of individual psychology, but are circulated, negotiated, and embedded in social practices and shared environments (Ahmed, 2014).

Felski's framework of the everyday resists rigid dichotomies and instead foregrounds how daily life is shaped through temporal investments, material and affective environments, and embodied practices. In this paper, I build on feminist critiques—particularly Ormerod's (2023) intervention—which call for rethinking regional development beyond dominant masculinist logics of innovation, pro-growth imperatives, and heroic leadership (Pugh, 2018; Eriksson et al., 2025). Feminising regional politics is not simply about centering women, rather, it involves foregrounding the politics of social reproduction, everyday life, and the experiences of marginalized and underrepresented communities.

I argue that much of the regional development literature continues to overlook how economic crises affect lived experience—not just regional indicators. This tendency reflects a broader epistemological issue, the everyday is often sidelined as analytically insignificant or incompatible with dominant frameworks of regional analysis. Yet, as feminist scholars have long argued, everyday life is not peripheral—it is constitutive of regional realities and should be central to how we understand the uneven impacts of crisis (Rose, 1993; McDowell, 1999). Acknowledging these affective and spatial dimensions of crisis is essential—not only to understand the lived realities of regional change but also to imagine more responsive and grounded forms of planning. This means attending to emotional and relational forms of loss (Atkins, 2024; Bogner et al., 2024), and designing policy interventions that are not only economically informed but also attuned to the temporal, affective, and social infrastructures that sustain regional life.

3. Methods

This study is based on interviews with thirteen mink farmers and seven farm visits in Denmark. Until recently, Denmark was among the world's leading exporters of mink pelts, which were primarily used in the global fashion industry (Hansen, 2016). That changed dramatically in late 2020, when the Danish government ordered the nationwide culling of all farmed mink (healthy and infected)—around 15 million animals—in response to concerns that the COVID-19 virus had mutated in mink and could potentially spread back to humans, posing a risk to public health and vaccine effectiveness. This decision, made at the height of the pandemic, was taken rapidly and without precedent. Alongside the culling, the government also introduced a two-year ban on mink breeding, effectively shutting down the entire industry overnight (Mortensen and Moesgard, 2020). I position the Danish mink farming crisis as a critical lens through which to examine the everyday consequences of economic crises. As such, the mink farming sector in Denmark offers more than a context-specific case. It serves as an entry point for understanding how large-scale crises intersect with everyday lives, rural identities, more-than-human lives, and deeply embedded ways of life.

The experiences of mink farmers mirror those of communities in peripheral regions and in industries undergoing transformation due to shifting societal values and increasing demands for sustainability—for instance, fossil fuel or agricultural sectors (Atkins, 2024; Friedrich et al., 2023). While such transitions are essential for moving toward more just and environmentally responsible futures, they often provoke resistance. This resistance stems not only from economic uncertainty but also from challenges to identity and disruptions to everyday routines (Runhaar

et al., 2020; van Oers et al., 2021). Thus, mink farmers' experiences allow us to trace how systemic change is felt on the ground—not abstractly, but as tangible interruptions to rhythm, habit, and place.

Seven of the interviews were conducted during farm visits, where farmers shared their memories. Conducting interviews in this setting enhanced the richness of their narratives, as the physical environment prompted recollections and emotional responses more vividly (Edwards and Holland, 2013). These visits revealed that farms were not merely sites of economic production but also spaces deeply embedded in personal histories and intergenerational ties. The remaining six interviews were carried out online due to the resurgence of COVID-19 cases. All interviews were conducted between November and December 2021, approximately one year after the nationwide culling was enforced.

All participants were based in nine different municipalities along the west coast of the Danish region of Jutland. This area is often referred to as the "rotten banana" due to its peripheral status within Danish spatial hierarchies and the negative discourses associated with it—ranging from population decline and youth outmigration to limited infrastructural and economic development (Winther and Svendsen, 2012). As such, the farmers in this study are not only navigating the industrial shut-down, but are also situated in a broader context of geographical and social marginalization (Eriksson, 2017). Their experiences reflect the realities of living in spaces often rendered invisible by dominant economic narratives—spaces where resilience, adaptation, and loss are negotiated outside of growth-driven frameworks.

To analyze the interviews, I employed an affective coding method known as emotional coding (Saldana, 2021). This approach allows for the systematic exploration of feelings, expressions, and attitudes, and is especially suited for uncovering the subjective dimensions of lived experience. Since many of the farms were family-run, this method also captured how decision-making and loss extended beyond rational economic logic and into the realms of domestic relationships and intergenerational continuity (Rönkä and Korvela, 2009). Following the initial coding, I conducted a thematic analysis (Guest et al., 2012) to develop broader themes from the established codes. Three central themes emerged: loss of control, loss of habit, and loss of social ties. These themes show often hidden costs of crisis and micro-structures and silent forms of labour that sustain livelihoods in peripheral regions.

4. Results

4.1. Setting the scene: stories of mink farming in Denmark

To understand the impact of the crisis on the everyday lives of mink farmers, I begin by outlining the pre-crisis context. I cannot fully capture the complexity of mink farmers' lives. However, I argue that mink farming should not be seen as a sterile economic activity, but as a practice that produces space and livelihoods—creating connection, enabling agency, and sustaining intergenerational family relations. In this sub-section, I present an overview of the mink farming industry in Denmark and the events of November 2020, alongside quotes from farmers to illustrate their everyday life before the farm closures. Before the farm closures and the nationwide cull, there were around 800 mink farms in Denmark. Mink pelts ranked as Denmark's third-largest animal export after pigs and cattle (Hohnen, 2020), and Denmark was a major global exporter, known for producing mink pelts of the highest quality (Hansen, 2016). Danish mink farmers were well-connected through broad networks facilitated by institutionalised local, regional, and national fur breeders' associations. These associations served as platforms for mink farmers to maintain connections over geographical distances and provided a source of support during challenging times (Dzalbe et al., 2024). Most mink farms in Denmark were a family legacy passed down from parents to their children and was integrated into the daily lives of farmers' families.

> I brought my daughter to the farm when I was feeding on the weekends. And we had fun at the farm. At the start of COVID-19, she was sent home from kindergarten. Sometimes, it was too boring to be at home with mum and her little brother. Then I brought her to the farm, and she had fun, so it also hit her emotionally because we had some good times there together. [i13]

The farm was more than a site of production—it was also a space of shared rhythms and emotional attachment, particularly during the disruptions brought on by COVID-19. In line with Felski's concept of everyday time, the quote foregrounds the repetitive, embodied routines—feeding animals on weekends, bringing a child along—that structure and grounded their lives. These rhythms are not solely functional, they are deeply relational and affective and affect the intergenerational family relations (Hall, 2016). The daughter's presence on the farm during the pandemic reflects a moment of restructured everyday life, where disrupted routines (e.g., school closures) are replaced by new ones embedded in the farm's temporalities. What emerges is a shared temporal rhythm between parent and child, interwoven with care, boredom, play, and work. These moments, seemingly mundane, help explain how macro-changes unfold at most intimate spaces (Katz, 2004).

In July 2020, several farms in the north of Jutland became infected by COVID-19 and the Danish government took measures to mitigate the risk of further contamination. However, with more farms getting infected on 4 November, the Danish government announced its decision to cull the entire mink population in Denmark. This decision was publicly disputed as unconstitutional, and a commission was introduced by the government to inquire into the legitimacy of the mink cull (Kevany et al., 2022). Such top-down political interventions rendered the lives of mink abject (Fleischmann, 2023). Although they were raised to be commodified and eventually killed, the abrupt culling was experienced as a profound loss because it broke with the normative rhythms and habits of farm life, it was in the wrong place and time (Convery et al., 2005). While the end result for the mink may be the same, it was the rupture in the established modality of everyday life (Felski, 2000).

According to respondents, the period from July up until November could be characterised by a constant flux of changing information, leaving them uncertain about which updates were the most recent and accurate. *"Every day the news … you didn't know if information was old or which leg do you have to* stand *on when you get up in the morning"* [i11]. After the complete destruction of mink livestock, the government offered farmers a 2020 compensation package with two options (Danish Ministry of Finance, 2021): exit the industry and have their infrastructure expropriated or suspend production during the ban and resume breeding in 2023. Only 13 farmers chose the latter, the vast majority decided to part with the industry (Byskov Svendsen and Dam, 2022).

4.2. Stories of everyday life loss

Three major themes were identified in the interview material: loss of control, habit, and social ties that reflect how moments of crisis disturb everyday life. In the following, each is discussed in more detail.

a. Loss of control

This theme is characterised by farmers being unable to participate in, or influence the course of, the actions taken in mitigating developments before, during, and after the total culling of their mink. Mink farmers were accustomed to navigating change and had developed adaptive strategies to manage periods of supply and demand imbalance—for example, by saving during profitable years or reducing investments and personal spending when pelt prices declined. Farmers often referred to these imbalances using the Biblical metaphor of seven bad years and seven good years. One farmer talked about the difference between the seven bad years and the total culling, saying that: *"The big difference between seven bad years and this [the culling] is that, in the seven bad years,*

we can actually work ourselves through them, but we can't work ourselves out of this" [i4]. Adversity, such as the "seven bad years," becomes familiar and part of everyday rhythms, enabling farmers to maintain a sense of agency by adapting through familiar habits like saving money, reducing labour, or avoiding investment in farm infrastructure. In contrast, the culling represents a rupture that breaks these rhythms, undermining the ability to respond through habitual actions and destabilizing the once-familiar farming environment. During the unfolding of the COVID-19 pandemic in Denmark, many felt a lack of agency and inability to become active participants, instead perceiving themselves as passive observers.

> At the time, it was very surrealistic. I don't know exactly how to describe it, but when I look back, it's like a film from Lars Von Trier. It's dark, grey, and black and this is perhaps the best way to describe it. You're like a puppet in a show, and you don't know what happens next. [i1]

> Now we don't know what tomorrow will bring and how long a time we'll have to wait for the government make a decision. First, we had anger. Murder in the eyes, but you can't do anything. You can just lean back and sit and wait and you have to accept that. Because they're coming when they're coming you can't do anything. [i7]

These quotes reveal how the farmers' emotions extend beyond individual grief or loss, embodying a collective feeling of injustice and disempowerment (Ahmed, 2014). The surreal and puppet-like experience described by the farmers illustrates a loss of agency and voice in the state's intervention—a sense of being decontextualized and reduced to mere objects within a broader crisis narrative focused narrowly on mink and virus containment. Although these animals were always raised for commodified death, the crisis disrupted established rhythms of labor for mink farmers. It exposed the precarity not only of the animals' lives (Convery et al., 2005; Fleischmann and Everts, 2024) but also of the farmers' livelihoods, both subject to the state's power to declare certain lives disposable (Brun et al., 2017) in the context of spatial power--asymmetries(Massey, 2004a, 2004b). This reflects a common pattern in state interventions and regional development approaches, where economic production is perceived narrowly as profit maximization and growth—treated as a sterile activity separated from the broader meanings, values, and social relations that shape people's lives (Ormerod, 2023). Farmers are framed primarily as rational actors focused on economic outcomes, rather than as individuals embedded in histories, social networks and value systems. The farmers' anger and frustration, mixed with helplessness, reveal that such interventions do more than affect the targeted industry—they reconfigure social relations and regional identities.

The farms have become objects resembling memorabilia (Haldrup, 2017) standing as monuments to a lost past. For third- or fourth-generation mink breeders, these empty farms symbolize not only economic loss but a rupture in family legacy and identity (Hall, 2016). Drawing on Young's (2005) insight that homes preserve the significance of objects through everyday adaptation, these farms once embodied the rhythms, care, and agency of daily life. Everyday as a space of familiar routines and embodied practices shows how these farms, once sites of sustained activity and belonging, now are disconnected from established habits, rhythms and meanings. Made redundant from their everyday use, they exist like museum pieces, monuments to a past over which farmers have lost control.

b. Loss of habit

This theme is characterised by the loss of familiar routines, activities, sounds, and sights that were once essential aspects of farmers' everyday lives. The core of this theme is closely tied to the concept of modality in Felski's (2000) framework. Modality serves as the medium by which individuals connect with their surroundings through sensory and affective experiences. During my farm visits, the farms were completely empty, silent, and looked abandoned (See Figs. 1 and 2).

On many occasions, the farmers got emotional as being on the farms brough back memories of the sudden closure as well as many said they prefer not to come here.

> The farm is so quiet. Yeah, it's amazing how quiet a farm can be. Because normally we had the mink, the people and everything, you know. But it's really quiet. Also, now, I turn on the heater because it's so cold down there. It's very unwelcoming. [i8]

> The worst thing I can do is go to the farm. Just being inside a mink farm I'm not getting well. It's like being in a car accident and every time you pass the part of the road where you been in the accident you always think: "is something coming?" [i10]

Both quotes illustrate a profound transformation of space—from a site of daily life, production, and community into one marked by loss, discomfort, and trauma. Everyday space is not a neutral backdrop but an affectively charged and habituated environment (Felski, 2000; Young, 2005). The mink farm, once characterized by the rhythms of animals, people, and routine labour *"the mink, the people and everything"* [i8], is now described as *"quiet"* and *"unwelcoming"*—both emotionally and physically cold. The act of turning on the heater, though seemingly mundane, becomes a gesture of emotional labor, an attempt to preserve warmth, familiarity, and care within a space fundamentally altered by crisis. Emotions, bound themselves to places (Ahmed, 2014) transforming them into sites of longing, dread, or grief. In this context, the mink farm becomes a site of haunting—where once-routine practices are now inescapably bound up with loss (Pini et al., 2010). The quietness, the coldness, the emotional unease evoked by these transformed spaces are not peripheral responses, rather, they reveal the deep emotional, social, and intergenerational entanglements embedded in everyday farming life. What is often rendered invisible in dominant regional narratives—such as reproductive labor, care work, and multigenerational ties to place (Ormerod, 2023)—becomes visible here as central to how space is inhabited, remembered, and mourned in moments of economic crisis. Felski's (2000) concept of modality extends beyond routines to include the circulation of narratives that confer meaning and continuity. In Danish mink farming communities, the home was not only a space of material maintenance but also a site where pro-mink farming narratives were reproduced. These narratives became affective objects—passed down through generations, embedded in family identity, and sustained through daily conversation and shared values. As Young (2005) notes, domestic objects gain meaning through their integration into lived practice; similarly, the narrative of mink farming as skilled and honourable labour was continually reaffirmed at home. As

Fig. 1. Mink farms. Own photo.

Fig. 2. Empty mink farm. Own photo.

one farmer noted.

> On Facebook there are some people who hate us. They hate mink farmers. But in our area here, it's a farming area, and, you know, if you tell somebody that you are a mink farmer, then there is a kind of respect. People are not angry at mink farmers here. [i8]

While anti-fur narratives dominated public discourse, the home and local area provided a space where these critiques could be resisted and farming affirmed as legitimate, even morally good and environmentally friendly.

c. Loss of social ties

The final theme revolves around the loss of social ties within and outside the mink-breeding industry. Mink farms served as gateways into multiple communities and roles. For example, one's position within family dynamics, participation in the mink-farming industry in Denmark, involvement in local municipalities, and overall standing in the global fur production sector. The loss of farms affected the entire family, not just financially but also through shared practices. *"My wife was driving when she heard it on the radio. She came home crying. I was sitting here calm, and she was … yeah … I had to take care of her"* [i10].

Emotional responses to the mink culling extended beyond the self, circulating between family members and reconfiguring gendered roles and responsibilities within the home. This underscores that feelings are not private states but are shaped by and embedded in shared social and spatial contexts (Ahmed, 2014; Bondi, 2005).

> It was very hard to see my son and my daughter and my wife because it's a family business in a way everybody was involved in and out in this business. So when they were crying I couldn't do anything to make the crying stop. Because I'm a man, I have to take care of my family. It's very weird, I just couldn't take it, it made me half-man. [i1]

It also unsettled the farmer's sense of masculinity, as shifting economic realities rendered his traditional role as provider and protector increasingly redundant (McDowell, 2003). The home, often imagined as a refuge (Young, 2005), becomes instead a place where the consequences of crisis are felt most acutely, negotiated not just through policy or economic adaptation, but through the everyday work of supporting one another. As feminist geographers have long argued, such emotional labor—often overlooked in regional studies—is central to how households absorb and endure systemic disruption (Hall, 2016). In this case, emotional labor is shared, redistributed, and deeply intertwined with familial care, revealing the home as a key arena for the lived experience of macro-changes (Katz, 2004).

Exiting the mink industry also meant losing one's position within the mink-farming industry and practice in Denmark and being part of a fur breeders' community that was globally renowned as being the best.

> In Denmark, we call it vidensdeling [knowledge sharing]. Also, we have groups where we meet and speak. We call it erhvervsgrupper [business groups]. We meet perhaps 10 mink farmers, and we talk about what we're doing in the next month or something that happened there, and if we have a problem [with] what we're doing … Maybe I've done something last year that was good, then I also tell all the others what I did. [i5]

Everyday life in mink farming communities was structured not only through material labour but also through routinized practices of knowledge exchange and mutual support. These gatherings were more than just technical exchanges. They were repetitive social rhythms that allowed for emotional validation, troubleshooting, and the reinforcement of collective experience. Through repetition—monthly meetings, shared problems, and circulated stories—these practices anchored mink farming in a broader relational and affective network, extending the spatial boundaries of "home" and "work". This also fostered a deeper sense of belonging to a community, which, for those living in peripheral areas, meant important connectivity. Not just due to geographic distance, but also because they were part of a contested industry. In such context, these meetings may have served as important sites of resistance, where collective identity and solidarity were strengthened in response to external pressures. One respondent, a third-generation breeder, even had a tattoo of a mink on their forearm (see Fig. 3).

Providing full-time employment for people in their municipalise or and seasonal labour for migrant workers was a matter of pride for many, given the depopulation their home areas faced.

> People who were moving from all over the world to work for us and stayed here, they bought houses, started raising a family, and became very important members of our community. They start their family, the kids go to school, and then they earn money, go to shops to buy food, and put money back into this community. And they keep the

Fig. 3. A tattoo of a mink.

small communities alive. In my opinion, the most important thing for a small area like this is to keep the people here. [i1]

The farmer mentioning retaining people in the area underscores how care also manifests as a response to crisis—whether economic, demographic, or political—by fostering stability and continuity in places often at risk of abandonment. This invites a rethinking of labour and industry not just as economic units, but as affective and political sites where care and social responsibility is practiced (Massey, 2004a; Ormerod, 2023) particularly in the context of a small rural regions suffering from outmigration.

5. Discussion and concluding remarks

My aim was to study how economic crises disrupt everyday life. I based my analysis on the experiences of Danish mink farmers who lost their farms in 2020, following a government-mandated cull of all farmed mink due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Theoretically, I drew on the work of feminist geographers (McDowell, 1991, 2003; Rose, 1993; Massey, 2004a; Ormerod, 2023) who emphasize the everyday as an important scale for understanding the impacts of broader socio-economic transformations. In particular, I engaged with Felski's (2000) framework of everyday life to explore how such disruptions manifest in daily practices and social relations. This study responds to the call by (Ormerod, 2023) to move beyond the "male gaze" in regional development research by foregrounding gendered and often invisible everyday practices. Rather than conceptualizing the economy solely in terms of production and growth, I emphasize the forms of care and maintenance that sustain livelihoods in peripheral areas. By attending to these practices—as well as to the less visible forms of loss and disruption that economic indicators tend to obscure—I contribute to a more nuanced, feminist understanding of how communities navigate economic crisis in peripheral regions.

In this study, I draw on Felski (2000) conceptualization of everyday life, which she frames through three interconnected dimensions: time, space, and modality. These are not discrete categories but entangled processes that shape everyday life. Through the repetition of certain practices and habits, people develop a sense of familiarity with their environment. Even adversity becomes expected and incorporated into everyday rhythms—as in the farmers' references to the "seven bad years and seven good years." Over time, these patterns generate embodied knowledge and resilience, allowing individuals to manage their livelihoods and navigate uncertainty. However, moments of crisis disrupt this familiarity. They disturb established rhythms, render habitual practices obsolete, and undermine the social networks that once provided support and stability (Hall, 2016; Pini et al., 2010). These routines and relationships are not only mechanisms for maintaining livelihoods but also vital tools for coping with external pressures. Crisis—such as that experienced by the mink farmers during the COVID-19 pandemic—rewrites the rules of relating to space. It makes space strange, both materially (empty farms, absent animals and workers, the loss of familiar sounds) and relationally (the fracturing of intergenerational roles and social networks that had been rooted in the mink farming industry). One of the most striking aspects of this case is that animals were always destined for eventual slaughter, yet the state-mandated intervention redefined the timing, manner, and meaning of this process (Convery et al., 2005). It was not merely a decision about what should happen, but also a directive on how, when, and where it should occur. This intervention disrupted the temporal and spatial rhythms that generations of farmers had cultivated, and in doing so, it destabilized the foundations of everyday life that gave meaning, structure, and continuity.

Approaching crisis as a felt and lived experience—rather than solely as an observable or measurable phenomenon—opens up a different understanding of how crisis manifests and how it is managed in peripheral regions. Feminist scholarship has long emphasized the importance of unseen labour and care work (McDowell, 1991; Hall, 2020, 2022; Ormerod, 2023), drawing attention to the everyday practices that sustain life under conditions of structural neglect. In this context, my study brings attention to what I call the *silent forms of resilience* embedded in the routines, rhythms, and habits of everyday life. These practices are not passive repetitions, they are cultivated strategies developed over time and often passed down across generations. In the case of Danish mink farmers, such practices included informal spatial networks for managing supply and labor, the intergenerational transmission of farming knowledge, and the reliance on family members to maintain operations in the absence of public support. These micro-practices are not incidental—they are carefully maintained responses to the chronic structural challenges of living in peripheral regions, including geographic isolation, lack of public infrastructure, and economic precarity. These everyday structures of resilience are subtle, often invisible, and built through care. Yet crisis, particularly when it is externally imposed—as in the case of the state-mandated cull of mink—can dismantle these foundations. Established roles, responsibilities, and interdependencies within families and local networks are destabilized. Crisis, in this sense, is not merely an economic shock but a deep disturbance of social and emotional life.

By attending to everyday practices, we not only uncover these hidden forms of resilience but also the unseen losses that communities endure in times of crisis. These losses go far beyond what economic indicators can capture. They include the erosion of social roles (Pini et al., 2010; Dzalbe et al., 2024), the disintegration of intergenerational continuity (Hall, 2016), and the emotional toll of disconnection and uncertainty. For regional studies and development, this perspective offers a crucial shift. It urges scholars and policymakers to look beyond aggregate data and formal institutional responses, and instead to take seriously the granular, affective, and relational dimensions of crisis. Recognizing everyday resilience practices as active and intentional strategies challenges dominant narratives that frame rural communities as passive recipients of aid or development. It also suggests that interventions must be attentive to the fragile infrastructures of care, habit, and memory that sustain peripheral regions.

Treating crisis as a lived experience compels regional studies to center the social, temporal, and emotional dimensions of place-making. It encourages a more grounded, feminist approach to regional development—one that acknowledges the value of everyday practices, the costs of their disruption, and the importance of sustaining the invisible labor that support livelihoods.

Declaration of generative AI in scientific writing

During the preparation of this work the author used ChatGPT in order to grammar and spell-check the manuscript. After using this tool/service, the author reviewed and edited the content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the published article.

Funding

This research was funded by the Swedish research councils Forte (grant number 2019-00152; SD and EHW) and Formas (2019-00664; RHE).

Declaration of interest statement

The author declares that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the mink breeders for sharing their stories. Also, thanks to Rikard Eriksson and Emelie Hane-Weijman for

their valuable comments and feedback on the manuscript.

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