

The craft beer culture and the consumer

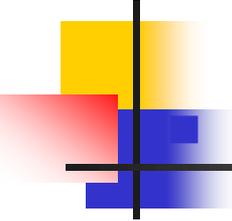
A Personal Perspective

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**Nordic Meeting on Brewing Technology
Åland**

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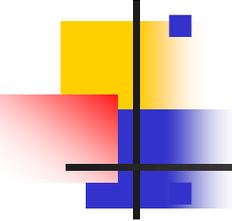
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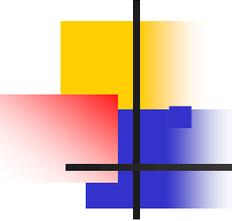
What is craft beer and -brewing?

- The evolution of craft brewing communities
- A sociological look at craft and the consumer
- Where are we in the Nordics?
- The New Nordic Beer vision and movement

What is craft beer and -brewing?

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- The existing craft beer definitions are more or less ridiculous, complicated and compromised
 - Craft beer is not about beer styles and the latest fad – It's about who we are and how we wish to be perceived
 - The craft brewing ethos is an idealistic idea about doing things better, being authentic and honestly in tune with our consumers
 - Craft brewing is about genuinely being part of and supporting the local community – events, charities, socio-economic activities
 - Craft beer is about replacing expensive hardware with passion and dedication – machines with real people
 - Craft beer is **innovative, local, sustainable and authentic** – therefore it's **trendy, sexy and contemporary**

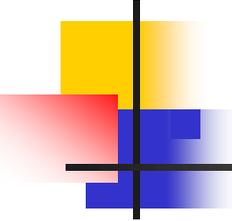
The natural evolution of a craft brewing community



Step 1: The pioneers are inexperienced newcomers, often self taught, so the focus is on learning: Brewing copies of existing beer styles from other craft beer markets

- **Step 2:** The brewers have learned the craft, so cautious experimentation begins: Extensions and interpretations of existing styles
- **Step 3:** Fully experienced and confident brewers, develop new, original beer styles rooted in their own culture and **terroir**, thus in tune with their own **souls**

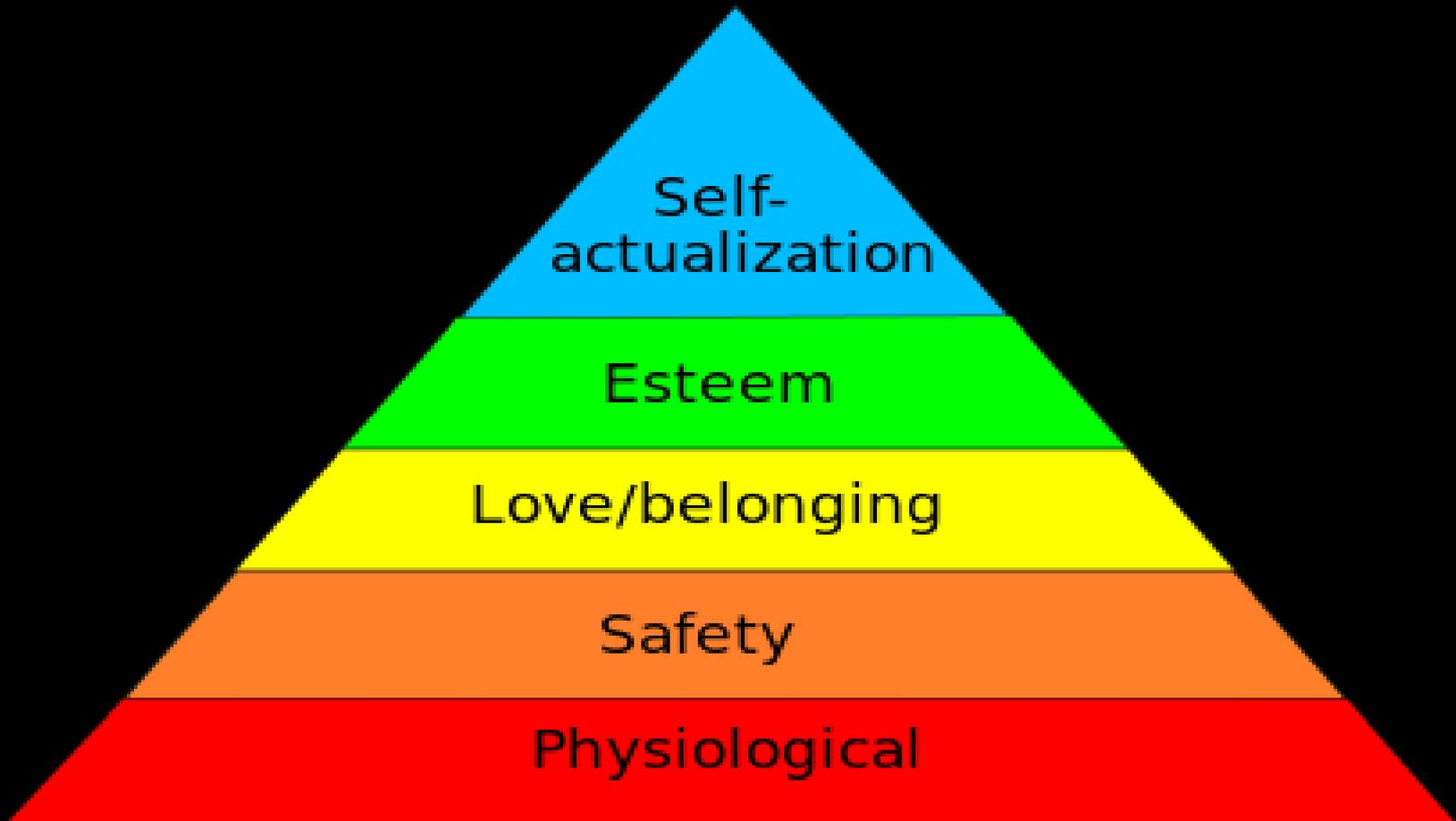
A sociological look at craft and the consumer



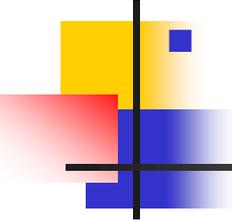
Consider craft beer a sociological phenomenon – a natural and inevitable consequence of the sociological development of our societies

- On the next slide I have copied Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs', and my argument is that this applies not only to individuals but to our societies in general, and thus also to our consumers

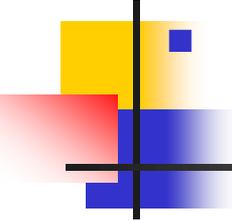
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



A sociological look at craft and the consumer

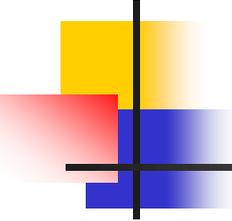
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- After WW II and until the late 1970'ies we were focused on establishing safety, material wealth and social security
 - As consumers we were content belonging to the greater community – buying big, international 'commodity' brands like everyone else
 - Through the 1980'ies and the '90'ies we moved up towards the top – self actualisation – of the pyramid, wishing to express our individuality in our behaviour – also as consumers
 - Consequently, craft beer has been spreading and growing all over since then, because it offers 'self actualisation' to the consumer (plus beers that tastes better!)

The (craft beer) consumer in 2016

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- A few key words: Individualized, critical, focused on health, sustainability and acting local...

 - He – and increasingly she - wants to know where, how and by whom their beer is made
 - He/she does not only buy products – the story behind it is equally important
 - Consequently, the demand for new beers and new stories is ever increasing
 - He/she will not be fooled, so the mega-brewer's attempts at 'crafty' beers are deemed to fail
 - BUT big brewers buying smaller, local breweries and letting them retain their individuality is the way forward

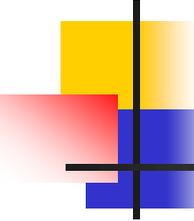
The Nordic craft beer scene



1990'ies and 2000's: Steps 1 and 2 in the 'Evolution Process' – from 14 to 125 breweries (DK), market share from 0 to 3 % of the beer market

2010's – past part: The fascination shifts to the US craft scene - bigger beers, lots of US hops, Belgian styles, wheat beers. DK: Slow growth in no. of breweries (world record!), market share from 3 to 8 %. Huge growth in no. of breweries and market shares in Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland

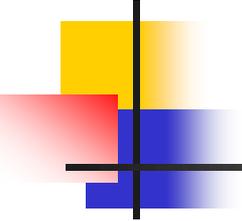
The present: The hoppy beers (IPAs) are still dominating. More inspiration from the US - sour beers, wood ageing, is a growing trend. Step 3 in the evolution process started 2012 – 2013: The New Nordic Beer movement



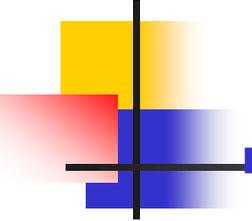
New Nordic Beer – The Vision

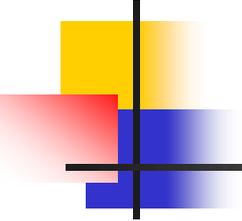
To create a number of **new beer styles** that owe their **distinct character** to both **new raw materials and ingredients** as well as **novel techniques** applied in the handling of the ingredients, from the selection of cultivars through the breeding, the cultivation and the processing of them and their application in the **brewing processes**. The journey towards the objectives takes place in a multitude of **cooperating networks** involving all links in the **value chain**. And the journey never ends...

New Nordic Beer – Why and how?

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- It is a natural extension of the hugely successful wave of 'New Nordic Cuisine' - local, organic, unique and sustainable
 - We're reaching step 3 in the evolution process anyway...
 - Establishes communication, connections, collaborations/networking between academia, breeders, growers, processors, brewers, costumers and consumers – the 'Value Chain'
 - 'High value' niches in the markets are in demand
 - Aroma, flavor and taste to be top of the agenda instead of yields, disease resistance and short term earnings
 - Focus on the specific potential our unique climatic conditions create for new ingredients

Conclusions

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- Craft brewing seems to follow the same evolution process everywhere
 - Craft beer and brewing is quite simply acting in accordance with where the consumers are going
 - After the initial 'evolution stages' of a craft community, development of a local craft tradition is not just inevitable, but it is also the basis for long term success



Q and A

Thanks for listening!

And now it's time for all your much appreciated comments and questions...