

Mikael Brunila

PhD Candidate
McGill University
Department of Geography

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Education

2018–2023	PhD in Geography, McGill University, Montreal (expected). Thesis supervisors: Professors David Wachsmuth & Grant McKenzie.
2017–2018	MA in Quantitative Methods for the Social Sciences, Columbia University, NY. Thesis supervisor: Dr. Greg Eirich.
2015	Visiting Scholar, City College of New York, NY. Supervisor: Prof. John Krinsky.
2013–2019	MSc in Political Science, University of Helsinki, Finland.
2010–2011	Nordplus exchange student, University of Copenhagen, Department of Sociology.
2009–2010	Erasmus exchange student, Universidad de Complutense in Madrid, Department of Political Science.
2007–2013	BSc in Political Science, Economics, Computer Science, University of Helsinki, Finland.

Academic Employment

2019–	Graduate Research Assistant, Urban Politics and Governance research group, McGill University. Supervisor: Professor David Wachsmuth.
2020–2021	NLP Researcher, "Social Media for Weather Impacts", McGill University. Supervisor: Professor Renee Sieber.
2019	Research Assistant, Harvard University, Department of Sociology. Supervisor: Professor Ya-Wen Lei.
2015–2017	Research Assistant, "Learning in Productive Social Movements", Department of Pedagogy, University of Helsinki, New York–Barcelona–Helsinki. Supervisors: Professors Yrjö Engeström and John Krinsky (CUNY, NY).
2011	Research Assistant, Department of Political Science, University of Helsinki. Supervisor: Professor Hanna Wass.

Teaching Experience

2019	Head instructor, "URBP 644: Multivariate Analysis", Urban Planning Department, McGill University.
2019	Teaching assistant, "GEOG 407: Introduction to Programming for the Spatial Sciences", Department of Geography, McGill University.
2018	Head instructor, "Data Science Track", DeepMay programming bootcamp, Asheville, NC.

Non-Academic Employment

2018	Data Scientist, Houston Analytics, Helsinki (remote).
2014–2015	Part-time journalist, Taloussanomat, Helsinki.
2014–2015	Part-time journalist, EUObserver, Brussels (remote).
2013–2014	Part-time journalist, Hufvudstadsbladet, Helsinki.
2007–2013	Freelance journalist (NyTid, Voima, Basso, Hufvudstadsbladet), Helsinki.

Software

2020–2022	Co-developer and co-founder, "DRIFT—A progressive web app for private mapping and end-to-end encrypted spatial feature sharing", https://github.com/driftmap
2021	Co-developer, "WMDecompose: A Framework for Leveraging the Interpretable Properties of Word Mover's Distance in Sociocultural Analysis", https://github.com/maybemkl/wmdecompose

Honors, Awards & Fellowships

2020–2024	Doctoral Grant, Kone Foundation, EUR114,000.
2019	Rathlyn GIS Award, McGill University, Department of Geography, CAD5,700.
2019–2022	McGill Engineering Doctoral Award (MEDA), CAD24,000/year.
2018–2022	McGill Engineering International Tuition Award (MEITA), CAD8,000/year.
2018–2019	Schulich Graduate Fellowship, McGill University, Schools of Architecture and Urban Planning, CAD25,000.
2017–2018	ASLA-Fulbright Graduate Scholarship, Fulbright Finland, EUR22,000.
2012	Project Grant, EUR900.
2010	Public Information Grant, EUR3,000.

Publications

Books

2014	Brunila, M. & Kallio, K (eds). <i>Verkko Suljettu</i> . Into kustannus.
2012	Andersson, L., Brunila, M. , & Koivulaakso, D. <i>Äärioikeisto Suomessa—Metapolitiikkaa ja vastarintamiehiä</i> . Into kustannus.
2011	Brunila, M. , Ranta, K., & Viren, E. <i>Muutaman tähryn tähden</i> . Into kustannus.

Book Chapters

2017	Engeström, Y., Ranta, K., Rantavuori, J., & Brunila, M. . Oppiminen tuotavissa yhteiskunnallisissa liikkeissä. In H. Savolainen, R. Vilkkonen, & L. Vähäkylä (Eds.), <i>Oppimisen tulevaisuus</i> (pp. 196–122). Gaudeamus.
2014	Brunila, M. Runsauden räjähdys: Internet hakutalouden jälkeen. In M. Brunila & K. Kallio (Eds.), <i>Verkko Suljettu</i> (pp. 69–134). Into kustannus.

Translated Books

2009	Fleischer, R. <i>Postdigitaalinen manifesti</i> . Into kustannus. (Translation from Swedish to Finnish.)
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Journal Articles

- 2023 St-Hilaire, C., **Brunila, M.** & Wachsmuth, D. "High rises and housing stress—A spatial big-data analysis of rental housing financialization". *Journal of the American Planning Association*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2022.2126382>.
- 2022 McKenzie, G., Romm, D., Zhang, H., & **Brunila, M.** "PrivyTo: A privacy-preserving location-sharing platform". *Transactions in GIS*, 26(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/tgis.12924>.
- 2020 Romascanu, A., Ker, H., Sieber, R., Greenidge, S., Lumley, S., Bush, D., Morgan, S., Zhao, R., & **Brunila, M.** "Using deep learning and social network analysis to understand and manage extreme flooding". *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 28(3), 251–261. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5973.12311>.
- 2019 Caldwell, H., Krinsky, J., **Brunila, M.**, & Ranta, K. "Learning to Common, Commoning as Learning". *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 18(6). <https://acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1763>.

Conference Proceedings

- 2022 **Brunila, M.**, McConnell, M. & Grigg, S. "DRIFT: End-to-end encrypted spatial feature sharing & instant messaging", *Proceedings of the 6th ACM SIGSPATIAL International Workshop on Location-based Recommendations, Geosocial Networks and Geoadvertising* <https://doi.org/10.1145/3557992.3565987>
- 2022 **Brunila, M.**, & LaViolette, J. "What kind of company do words keep? Revisiting the distributional semantics of J.R. Firth & Zellig Harris". *Proceedings of the 2022 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies*. NAACL-HLT 2022, Seattle, WA.
- 2021 **Brunila, M.**, & LaViolette, J. "WMDecompose: A Framework for Leveraging the Interpretable Properties of Word Mover's Distance in Sociocultural Analysis". *Proceedings of the 5th Joint SIGHUM Workshop on Computational Linguistics for Cultural Heritage, Social Sciences, Humanities and Literature*, 154–167. <https://aclanthology.org/2021.latechclfl-1.18>
- 2021 **Brunila, M.**, Zhao, R., Mircea, A., Lumley, S., & Sieber, R. "Bridging the gap between supervised classification and unsupervised topic modelling for social-media assisted crisis management". *Proceedings of the Second Workshop on Domain Adaptation for NLP*, 33–49. <https://aclanthology.org/2021.adaptnlp-1.5>

Selected Academic Presentations

- 2022 | **Brunila, M.** "Shannon Games: Neural Language Models, Cybernetics & The Role Reversal Between Information & Meaning". From One to Zero—Critical Approaches to Digital Technology and Media. Graduate student and faculty workshops in the Anthropology department. Berkman Klein Center, Harvard University.
- 2021 | **Brunila, M.** & LaViolette, J. "WMDecompose: A Framework for Leveraging the Interpretable Properties of Word Mover's Distance in Sociocultural Analysis". 5th Joint SIGHUM Workshop on Computational Linguistics for Cultural Heritage, Social Sciences, Humanities and Literature. Online.
- 2021 | **Brunila, M.**, Zhao, R. & Mircea, A. "Bridging the gap between supervised classification and unsupervised topic modelling". Second Adapt-NLP workshop at EACL 2021. Online.
- 2019 | **Brunila, M.** "The Currency of Place—Identifying the Value of Neighbourhood Names on Airbnb in New York City Using FastText and Intrinsic Auto-Regressive Modelling", StanCon 2019, Cambridge, UK.
- 2019 | **Brunila, M.** "Word2Vec, Vec2Capital—How Embedding Models Power the Expansion of a New Rent Gap", Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers, Washington, DC.
- 2017 | **Brunila, M.** "Mapping and periodising social movements using R and Python: A humble introduction through two examples", Annual Finnish Sociology Days, Tampere, Finland.
- 2017 | **Brunila, M.** "Housing movements as circulation struggles?", Annual Finnish Sociology Days, Tampere, Finland.
- 2017 | **Brunila, M.** "From debt to the joy of the common: Transformative agency in the Spanish housing rights movement", Annual Meeting of the Finnish Association of Political Science, Jyväskylä, Finland.

Selected Essays & Periodicals

- 2020 | **Brunila, M.** "Döden och den eviga återkomsten, eller Muminrollet i antropocen". *Kritiker* 57-58. <http://www.kritiker.nu/nummer57/index.html>.

Languages

Finnish	Mother tongue
Swedish	Mother tongue
English	Fluent
French	Fair
Spanish	Fair
German	Fair
Danish	Fair

Programming languages

Python	Fluent
R	Fluent
JavaScript	Fair
Bash	Fair
C++/Stan	Fair
Markdown	Fair
HTML/CSS	Fair