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Community participation in health promotion:
Perspectives of participation and everyday life in a multi-ethnic
and socially deprived neighbourhood

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1. Introduction

Health promotion may be determined as the corner stone of the 'new public health' due to the close correlation between the WHO Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO 1986) and the new public health (Baum 2002). The charter builds on the Declaration on Primary Health Care at Alma-Ata (WHO 1978) and WHO 'Health for All' documents (WHO 1980, 1985, 1991)[1]. Although not explicitly stated in the charter, Antonovsky's salutogenic model of health (1987) influenced the development of health promotion, emphasising a focus on health rather than on disease (Eriksson and Lindsström 2008). Health promotion aims at supporting conditions that make people healthy rather than supporting factors that prevent specific diseases (Jensen and Johnsen 2003).

There are overall five strategies in addressing health promotion: 1) building healthy policies, 2) create supportive environments, 3) strengthen community actions, 4) developing personal skills and 5) reorient health services. The strategies are based on the acknowledgement that health is created and lived by people within their settings of everyday life, i.e. planning, implementing and evaluating health promotion activities must be organised in ways that integrate lay people as equal partners. Health promotion inquires interventions that are sensitive towards particular needs and living circumstances, characteristic for specific settings. In this respect health promotion seeks to develop projects that are constructed on the basis of people's daily lives in their 'natural settings' and thus calls for developing methods in which people themselves are participating in defining, implementing and evaluating health promoting projects that are relevant and realistic to them (Green et al. 2000; Whitelaw 2001).

Subsequently community participation has increasingly become a commonly used method in designing, intervening and evaluating health promoting projects as well as serving as an ideological base in health promotion discourse. Community participation is not only a method, but a paradigm that stresses a particular orientation to research, namely the attitudes of researchers who advocate for people's right to speak, analyse and act. It is about reallocating power in society and subsequently a commitment to blurring the lines between the researcher and the researched (Minkler and Wallerstein 2003a).

In health promotion a 'radical' line has developed that advocates for developing social, economic and organisational networks that support and promote individual well-being and thus health (Murphy and Bennet 2004). Various terms like community building, community development, community organisation, community empowerment and community capacity building are referring to this process in

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[1] The Ottawa Charter has been reaffirmed in the Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion (2005) and in IUPHE 19th (International Union for Health Promotion and Education) World Conference on Health Promotion (2007).

which community members are encouraged to participate in projects aimed at improving that community's capability of solving a specific (health related) problem (Green and Kreuter 2005; Minkler and Wallerstein 2003b; Minkler 2002; Bracht 1999).

The rationale behind the ambition to increase participation is that civic engagement in one's social and political environments strengthens social capital (Putnam 1993), leads to processes of empowerment for individuals and communities (Laverack and Labonte 2000; Oakley and Kassey 1999a; Craig and Mayo 1995), builds social coherence (Speer et al. 2001) and community competences (Li et al. 2001) which are all processes that promote better health statuses and make communities capable of identifying and solving their own problems (see e.g. Minkler 2002; Baum 2002; Kawachi and Kennedy 1997; Kawachi et al. 1997).

Community participation has been criticised for lacking consensus of how to understand participation. To some, participation merely means that a representative from a particular community has the option to participate at the board where decisions are made, to others participation is referring to when community members themselves are invited to define needs and resources of the community and of how the needs should be accommodated (Tones and Green 2004; Brager and Specht 1973; Arnstein 1971). Neglects of local interpretations of participation programmes have also been addressed by arguing that the hegemonic status of participation undermines the significance of local and cultural variations (Morgan 2001; Paley 2001; Morgan 1993; Stone 1992; Woelk 1992). Community participation has further been criticised for treating communities as coherent entities, whose members share needs, problems and socio-cultural characteristics (Stephens 2007; Baum 2002; Boutillier et al. 2000; Zakus and Lysack 1998; Jewkes and Murcutt 1996), hence overlooking the diversities within communities as well as the power struggles between community members that may determine who represent the community. Overall there is a lack of a theoretical understanding of participation when it comes to its role and the social processes at play when projects based on participation are initiated (Potvin 2007).

Approaching these criticisms this thesis explores the role of participation in a community building process, exemplified by a multi-ethnic, socially deprived and stigmatised neighbourhood subjected to regeneration. The focus is on the meanings individual community members attach to the role of participation and to the neighbourhood itself. Exploring the social life in neighbourhoods, of how residents use, perceive and interact in their neighbourhood contribute to a better understanding of neighbouring relations, of social hierarchies and of the various meanings of neighbourhood that may be informative of the social processes at play when aiming at building healthy communities based on participatory

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approaches. These insights are discussed in relation to the hegemonic status of community participation that has become globally accepted as the most efficient way to address community building in health promotion. More specifically this thesis addresses the following questions:

- How is neighbourhood identity constructed in the process of community building and which values are enhanced in this process?
  - What is the role of the status as a 'stigmatised' neighbourhood in the community building process?
- How do residents relate to this construction and how do they participate in it?
  - How do residents relate to participatory discourses?
- How is everyday neighbourhood life being practiced?
  - How do residents relate to their neighbourhood?
  - How do residents interact with eachother?

This knowledge is used to identify the qualities of participating in community building to the individual resident and to identify the obstacles in daily neighbourhood life that may be barriers towards efficient community participation. The central argument of this thesis is that the discourse of community participation symbolises an exercise of power and induces forms of social control in respect of promoting specific norms, values and behaviour. In this respect community participation risks reproducing the existing power structures it attempts to challenge. I also argue that local norms, practices and values that contradict and challenge the community participation discourse are important to identify if we are to understand thoroughly the implications for and limitations of community participation. This thesis then adds new knowledge relevant for future community participation programmes in health promotion in several ways. Firstly it widens the prevailing perceptions of the concept of community participation. It does so by applying a theory that embraces community diversity and by demonstrating the various ways residents construct, perceive and interact in their community. Second it identifies mechanisms that are inclusive or exclusive towards engaging individuals and groups in community participation. And thirdly it provides details of meanings of living in poor neighbourhoods subjected to regeneration. It is crucial that these insights be embedded in future community developing projects in order to embrace community diversity and thus create more efficient community participation.

1.1 Structure and outline of thesis

The research reported in this thesis is based on ethnographic fieldwork in a multi-ethnic and socially deprived neighbourhood in Horsens, a Danish provincial town, and has resulted in three articles[2]:

1) Larsen E.L., Hansen H.P., 2008: Fra forsker til beboer: hvordan etnografisk feltarbejde kan bidrage til sundhedsfremme i boligområder (From researcher to resident: how ethnographic fieldwork may aid health promotion in neighbourhoods). *Tidsskrift for Sygeplejeforskning*, **24**(3) 21-28.

2) Larsen, E.L, Manderson, L. (2009): "A good spot": Health promotion discourse, healthy cities and heterogeneity in contemporary Denmark. *Health & Place* **15** (2009):606-613.

3) Larsen, E.L., Stock, C. Capturing contrasted realities: Integrating multiple perspectives of community life in health promotion. Currently being revised for resubmission to *Health Promotion International*.

The thesis is composed of two parts. Part one contains chapter 2 in which the thematic and theoretical background that informs this thesis is accounted for, and chapter 3 includes article 1 and describes and discusses the methodology employed. Part two is building on article 2 and 3 and presents ethnographic data and discusses the main results and what this means in a community building process. The final chapter 6 is reserved for concluding remarks and discussions of limitations of this research.

Chapter 2 first presents contemporary discussions in the research area of poor neighbourhoods and health. Increasingly there has been a focus on how the context has an influence on health status and explanations have particularly been sought in the 'social life'. However there has been an almost exclusive focus on

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[2] Further two manuscripts have been submitted and one is under preparation, resulting from the research, but not included in this thesis:

- **Larsen, E.L**. Migrants and participatory discourses in health. Manuscript currently prepared for *International Journal of Public Health*, special issue: Migrants and ethnic minorities in Europe: new challenges for public health research and practice.
- Tanggaard, P.T.; Jørgensen, S.K. and **Larsen, E.L**. Social capital and empowerment in public health. Manuscript submitted Jan. 2010 to *Social Theory and Health*.
- **Larsen, E.L**. and Tanggaard, P.T. Kan tillid helbrede? Sundhed og sygdom set fra et tillidsperspektiv (2010) [Can trust cure? Health and illness from a perspective of trust] Manuscript submitted Feb. 2010. Invitation to contribute to the anthology: Hegedahl, P. and Svendsen, G.L.H. (eds) Tillid fra vikingerne til den virtuelle verden [Trust. From Vikings to virtual reality. Theories and cases]. Odense: Syddansk Universitets Forlag.

social capital as a way of capturing the 'social life'. I therefore argue that there is a need to look deeper into what the 'social life' is and that exploring local norms and practices might just offer new insights in how to approach relations between neighbourhoods and health.

Secondly, drawing on theoretical insights from sociology and anthropology, which reflects my disciplinary background, the very concept of 'community' in health promotion is challenged by stressing that communities are symbolic constructs that come into being by historical and political processes and by exigencies of social interaction. Further adopting this theoretical orientation in approaching neighbourhood will open up for a wider perception that captures the dynamic and organic nature of neighbourhood life.

Thirdly the background chapter introduces community participation as a hegemonic discourse. It is argued that community participation is a form of social control that induces specific norms and values of correct behaviour. Importantly the form of control is apparently not transparent but comes in masked forms in which contemporary power relations are reproduced. It is therefore essential to investigate the characteristics of social control and how people relate to, challenge and contradict these forms. Thereafter the setting in which the fieldwork was conducted is described. Finally the background section provides an overview of existing research in Danish neighbourhood subjected to development and based on participatory approaches.

Followed by the background, the methodology is presented. The chapter first summarises *Article 1* which is a methodological paper, demonstrating the reflective process of the conducted fieldwork. It emphasises the researcher's role development during fieldwork and how this effects the relationships with informants and what this means for the data generation. In the chapter I describe the methods employed and account for the process of the fieldwork and the analysis. The section also contains a discussion of ethical dilemmas in which I argue for a situated ethics, emphasising the complex relationship between researcher and researched. I also draw lines to classical neighbourhood studies in social scientific disciplines in order to emphasise the need to look beyond health disciplines when investigating community life.

Beginning part two, chapter 4 first summarises *Article 2,* which explores the development of the particular neighbourhood and how participating residents are constructing, performing and contesting the hegemonic community discourse of the neighbourhood. The chapter is organised according to the main points extracted from the article and further explores how various residents relate to participatory discourses. It treats three major issues that are relevant for understanding the processes of participation. Section 4.2 *Sønderbro community discourse: constructing and performing neighbourhood identity* is a

discussion of the values constructed and embedded in the dominant *storylines* of the neighbourhood, which are part of the process of building a socially coherent neighbourhood. I argue that a particular view of the past is promoted and reproduced in residents' accounts of the neighbourhood's history, which are suitable to fit current identities. Drawing on the discursive concept of *storylines* (Davies and Harre 1990), I argue that by using dominant ways of representing the neighbourhood, residents are positioning themselves within this dominant neighbourhood discourse, thus identifying with the neighbourhood.

Second I discuss the meaning of *living in a stigmatised neighbourhood*. Overall there are many examples from the data illustrating that residents felt stigmatised living in the neighbourhood. The data even suggest that the stigmatised position was a significant component in the neighbourhood building process. However the data also points to that residents in fact are satisfied with living in the neighbourhood, not paying too much attention to how outsiders label and stereotype it. By comparison with other relevant studies in a Danish context, I argue that there is a risk that the increased focus on neighbourhoods as social 'test areas', in fact enforces the role of stigmatisation.

Participatory discourses and ethnic minorities elaborates on the points introduced in the background section on community participation as a hegemonic discourse. It particularly enhances 'local knowledge' to be engaged in the process of community building. The residents engaged in voluntary work come to represent 'local knowledge' since they define the needs, problems and goals of the neighbourhood. The remaining part of the residents is excluded, not because this is intended, but because these residents do not possess the competences necessary to engage in voluntary activities. To support this argument I compare my findings with existing research on voluntary practices in Danish culture that illustrate how ethnic minorities are excluded from this practice (Boeskov and Ilkjær 2005; Pedersen 2004; Mikkelsen 2002a; Larsen 2001).

Chapter 5 first summarises *article 3,* which investigates alternative ways of being attached to the neighbourhood, other than participating in its development. It explores everyday life community practices and the relationships between the residents. Section 5.2 *"This is our bench": creating home territories in neighbourhood* contains a discussion on the relation between residents and neighbourhood places and how these are transformed into home territories. Data are here used to demonstrate the various ways residents are engaged in the neighbourhood. In section 5.3 *The relationship between people in neighbourhoods,* I explore the interactions and relations between residents and I argue that neighbourhoods contain both very close relationships as well as non-existing relationships.

Finally the concluding section summarises the main points and suggestions are made for how to improve community participation within health promotion in the future. The very different ways of engaging in neighbourhood life and the different meanings individuals attach to their neighbourhood, challenges the ways practitioners, researchers and policy makers approach community participation. For practitioners this research may challenge them to engage in questions such as how and if their work encourage various groups in communities to participate in development processes, and to investigate which residents sets the agenda, who is excluded and for what reasons. For researchers the knowledge resulting from this thesis gives opportunities to develop new theories of community participation that are more sensitive to community diversity, and to be more focused on the social, economic and political powers at play that construct exclusion and inclusion processes. Policy makers may be inspired from the present research to develop initiatives that secure a more just housing market in order to avoid stigmatisation. They may further engage in policy making which is sensitive to the lived 'reality' of those deprived neighbourhoods, rather than being built upon ideals of how reality should be.

Part 1: Thematic and theoretical background and methodology

2. Background

2.1 Neighbourhoods and health

The idea that neighbourhood has an influence on health is not new[3]. The correlation between poor health and poor neighbourhoods has been documented during the last 150 years by looking at neighbourhood variations in morbidity, mortality and health related behaviour and by comparing low-class, middle-class and high-class areas of residency (Macintyre & Ellaway 2003; Kawachi and Berkman 2003; Macintyre et al. 2002; Pickett and Pearl 2001). Research has shown that individuals living in poor neighbourhoods are subjected to poorer mental health, physical health and self rated health including when individual socio-economic status is accounted for (see e.g. Picket and Pearl 2001 for a review).

Overall two explanations for geographical variations in health outcomes are suggested. The compositional explanation which understands the relation between neighbourhood and health as a result of population composition; meaning the concentration of people with for example low income, poor education and particular life styles in certain residential areas. The context explanation on the other hand treats place effects on health as if the place itself affects health. Context is:

> "containing those factors influencing human health behaviours or health which remain once every imaginable individual characteristic is taken into account. It is indeed a black box, an unspecified "miasma" which somehow, but we don't know how, influences some aspects of health, health related behaviour or health risks in some population groups" (Macintyre et al. 2002:129).

It has recently been argued that the contrasting dualism of composition versus context explanations to the relationship between health and place should be avoided. Rather it should be acknowledged that there is a reciprocal relationship between people and place (Bernard et al. 2007; Cummins et al. 2007; Macintyre and

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[3] Urbanisation and industrialisation in the 18th century caused an increased frequency and spread of infectious epidemic diseases, and subsequently public health emerged as a response to these health problems. In the beginning public health was mainly concerned with providing clean water, sanitation, better housing conditions and open, green recreational spaces in cities. The era of lifestyle diseases since World War Two, provided that public health focused on individual behaviour such as smoking, drinking, diet and exercise and thus directed the research focus in other directions than physical locations. More recently a renewed interest on the relationship between place and health has occurred, but is now concerned with how the social and psychological environments affect health rather than and/or in addition to physical environments (See e.g. Baum 2002 for a presentation of public health history).

Ellaway 2003; Macintyre et al. 2002). It is not a matter of either or; both explanations are complementary[4].
However the contextual dimension has been reduced to compromising of psychosocial constructs such as
social cohesion and social capital (Macintyre et al. 2002).

The body of research undertaken in social capital and health is comprehensive (for a review
see e.g. Hawe and Shiell 2000). Robert Putnam is sometimes referred to as the most influential theorist of
social capital in public health (Carpiano 2006), although Bourdieu (1985) and Coleman (1990) have made
essential contributions to developing social capital theories. In Putnam's terms social capital is beneficial for
developing and maintaining democratic society and for mobilising social groups (Putnam 1993). He stresses
the importance of social relationships, social organisation, reciprocity and civic participation in maintaining
and developing social good in societies. This rationale has been applied in research suggesting that income
inequality within communities, regions, states and countries leads to less social cohesion and trust among
citizens, which can have a negative affect on health (Kawachi et al. 1997; Kawachi & Kennedy 1997;
Wilkinson 1996). Critiques of social capital emphasises that the relationship between social capital and
health is difficult to determine and remains unsolved due to the complex interaction between socio-
economic factors, social status and health status (Ziersch et al. 2005; Kennelly et al 2003; Hawe and Shiell
2000). In addition social capital researchers in health often ignore issues of power. An exclusive focus on
social capital within particular groups overlooks that groups' position in wider society as well as
relationships between groups. It is thus essential to focus both on vertical relationships as well as horizontal
relationships in society. Furthermore it is important that we acknowledge the negative side effects of social
capital. Portes (1996) points at four issues that follow a high degree of social capital: group closure,
excessive requirements to group members, restricted individual freedom and practicing values and norms
that reproduces poor health or one's low social status in society.

Focusing on social coherence is yet another way of exploring the 'social' in neighbourhoods.
Social coherence is often seen as the basis on which social capital can be developed and represents
familiarity, values, social ties and feelings of connectedness and can indeed inform a mutual respect and
sense of belonging in neighbourhoods (Ross and Jang 2000). While social capital is concerned with the
qualities and quantities of social relationships, social cohesion: "resides more in the realm of moral
philosophy" (Labonte 2004: 116). Social cohesion then represents an ideal of how communities should be
rather than a research objective that explores its contents and the qualities of what they are.

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[4] In addition a collective dimension has been proposed offering insights in shared norms and values and thus: "adds an
anthropological perspective to the socio-economic, psychological, and epidemiological perspectives often used to examine area
effects on health" (Macintyre et al. 2002:130). Although they argue that the collective dimension no longer should be seen as
separated from the contextual perspectives, they still urge that attention should be drawn to collective social functioning and
practices (Macintyre et al. 2002).

However it is not necessarily so that poor neighbourhoods are deprived of social coherence nor social capital. Cattells (2001) study of social networks in a poor neighbourhood demonstrates five types of social networks ranging from socially excluded networks to networks of solidarity. By making this typology she shows that community context is the key to understand social capital. The origin and history of particular neighbourhoods, work opportunities and opportunities for participation were central features in building relationships of trust, reciprocity and perceptions of the neighbourhood (Cattell 2001:1512). Likewise Warr (2005) explores social contexts for residents' networks and their potential for generating social capital; particularly she is interested in the form of networks that are linked to wider networks outside the neighbourhood or what often is referred to as 'bridging' social capital (Putnam 2004). She found that social stigma, often following deprived neighbourhoods, was a barrier to participate in social networks that extended outside of the neighbourhood. It meant that networks within the neighbourhood were homogeneous and intensified both due to the difficulties in creating external linking networks and also due to lack of outsiders' interest in engaging in social stigmatised neighbourhoods. Both these studies suggest that in addition to looking at neighbourhood when determining health status, a focus on the context of the neighbourhood is also required, emphasising the relation to the outside world and the historical processes that has led to the construction of deprived neighbourhoods.

Although social capital and social coherence research in neighbourhoods have made large contributions to the contextual explanation of the relationship between neighbourhood and health, there is a need to explore other aspects of collective dimensions in neighbourhoods (Macintyre et al. 2002). It is crucial to generate knowledge of how people use their neighbourhood, how they are attached to it and of the qualities of neighbouring relationships. Exploring these forms of social life will offer us a better understanding of the links between participation and neighbourhood practices, which in turn may aid in developing interventions and contextually sensitive participatory programmes. In summary, to widen our perspective of 'the social' in neighbourhoods other than consisting of social capital and social coherence, this thesis investigates how people *live in it* and the meanings they subscribe to it.

2.2 On defining and approaching community and neighbourhood

Although never explicitly defining community the Alma Ata Declaration treats community as "a locality bound aggregation of people who share economic, socio-cultural and political characteristics, as well as problems and needs" (Jewkes and Murcott 1996:558). Elements with this way of treating community are

replicated in the health literature[5]. The notion builds on the assumption that communities are coherent units whose members potentially could organise and operate for common purposes and as if community is an independent agent. In this sense communities in health promotion are perceived as what they should be rather than what they are, neglecting what communities do to its members and what members do with their community (see also *article 3*)[6]. Further in public health discourses 'community' has tended to be articulated, exclusively and for pragmatic reasons, as geographical locations or places convenient for health interventions (Stephens 2007). Conceptualising community has also been described as a debate between 'communities of identity' and 'communities of place' (Campbell and Murray 2004).

Acknowledging that communities can refer to shared places, shared identities or shared social representations, this thesis is as a starting point concerned with shared location or neighbourhood. However neighbourhood does not necessarily constitute a community. There may be one or several communities in a neighbourhood, or there may none. Neighbourhoods in health disciplines have been conceptualised as census tracts and blocks, health districts, school districts, ZIP code areas, small clusters of housing units, systems of social relationships and individuals' interaction patterns (Fang et al. 1998; Diez-Roux et al. 1997; LeClere et al. 1997; Chaskin 1997). The reasons for these variations are related to research topics and methodologies; neighbourhood definitions are then *per se* related to research contexts (Huie 2001). In this thesis neighbourhood refers to a residential area and as a *place* that is more than territory and externally fixed space, but a complex and layered setting, embedded with individual and collective meanings (Kusenbach 2006:280-281)[7]. How to best approach and understand neighbourhoods in exploring the everyday life taking place there, I am inspired by how communities have been conceptualised and theorised upon within social disciplines.

In 1955 Higgins found 94 ways of defining community in the sociological scientific literature all differing (Higgins 1982), and today no one has solved the problem of creating academic consensus of

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[5] Community-based and community participatory health promotion projects that do not consider community diversity are common and there are innumerous examples in the health literature (Stephens 2007; Jewkes and Murcott 1996). It may be interesting in a future research project to explore whether there is an existing and hegemonic community discourse in health promotion, how it is articulated and practiced.

[6] A more nuanced way of perceiving communities is however slowly emerging in the health literature. For example Cummins et al. (2007) on their discussions of the relationship between health and place, proposes a relational perspective which emphasises space as: "unstructured, unbounded and freely connected" and emphasise that human practice forms "constellations of connections which extend outwith the traditional 'bounded' notion of place" (Cummins et al. 2007:1827).

[7] Throughout this thesis, unless clearly referring to a particular discipline, theory or study, 'community' and 'neighbourhood' appear intertwined.

how to define the concept. There seems to be consensus though, that constructing a universal definition of community, valid across time and space is an impossible task. Therefore it is fruitful to look at theoretical approaches towards community studies. The literature and theoretical directions however are too complex and comprehensive to be accounted for here (see e.g. Day 2006; Amit 2002; Amit and Rapport 2002; Chaskin 1997; Higgins 1982). Below I will then briefly summarise the major theoretical trends in community studies, leading to the constructivist and interpretive approach (Cohen 1985) with a strong emphasis on individual agency (Hannerz 1992; 1990; Barth 1969), which I have adapted in this thesis.

Tönnies, Durkheim, Weber and Simmel were the early contributors to community studies (Amit 2002). In Tönnies (1973) work on G*emeinschaft* (community) and G*esellschaft* (associations), community stands for: "real ties of interdependence and emotion between people who form part of an organic, bounded, entity, often linked to place or territory" (Day 2006:6). Associations on the other hand are characterised by contemporary and contractual relationships fitting to modern societies of commercial organisations and bureaucratic public institutions. Community in this sense is perceived as 'natural' and organic, in which members share common experiences such as backgrounds and origins. Naturally Tönnie's distinction between G*emeinschaft* and G*esellschaft* must be seen in its historical context of the emergence of modern society. Urbanisation and industrialisation were at that time perceived to be a threat to the emotional and 'natural' relationships between people. The very concept of community carried a notion of maintaining traditional social order and an implicit critic of modern society. Communities in this sense "are best regarded as an ideal, a philosophical dream, rather than a real phenomenon" (Jewkes and Murcott 1996:556).

With the emergence of the Chicago School there was a shift towards empirical approaches to studies of communities, of the daily lives in them and of: "the attitudes, motivations and definitions of the individuals" (Kurtz 1984:11). The early Chicago School specialised in urban sociology and studied how communities were internally organised, developing theories of social organisation, social psychology and human ecology. These studies illustrated the existence of a social order in urban neighbourhoods and in this sense challenged the presumptions that modernity caused chaos and enforced superficial relationships. The ecological perspective of neighbourhoods dominated in this era in which urban neighbourhoods were seen as products of natural processes of selection and competition. Neighbourhood differentiations arose from this process, composing of what was believed to be homogenous enclaves within heterogeneous cities (Chaskin 1997).

In contrast to the ecological approach dominating the first part of the 19th century, the social system/political economy approach conceived communities mainly as functional units and as products of mechanical and manipulable processes rather than natural processes. Neighbourhoods were seen as dynamic and as subject to changes enforced by external forces. The political economic approach did not neglect that community connections did exist among individual community members in various ways, but this should be seen as subjected to the influence of external interests and manipulations (Chaskin 1997).

A turn towards an individual centred approach rather than place oriented emerged with network analysis, introduced in the 1950's by Barnes (1954). The social network approach acknowledges that communities do exist, but are subordinated to the structure of multiple relationships characterising modern life. Communities in this sense is less a spatial unit than a community consisting of aggregations of interpersonal relations (Mitchell 1969). The underlying rationale of social network analysis is captured by the concept of *anticategorical imperative,* which rejects notions that human behaviour is the result of categorical attributes and norms possessed by individuals (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994). Network analysis rejects all forms of essentialism, but rather builds its rationale on explaining human behaviour by individuals' involvement in structured social relations. I share this rationale but urge also, in the context of the research questions in this thesis, that a focus on community is remained. Communities should not be understood as a homogeneous entity, but as arising of an interaction between the imagination of solidarity and its realisation through social relations. In this sense I try to capture that communities come into being by social interactions and at the same time have essential meanings for its members.

Cohen's work in the 1980's (1986; 1985; 1982), represented an interpretative shift, emphasising the meanings people attribute to communities and their membership in it. Another major work in this decade was by Anderson (1991) whose aim was to investigate the cultural processes that preceded larger communities, more precise nations, to explain solidarity and emotional attachments to nations. It is however Cohen's work that is of interest here due to the central role of individual agency and interpretation. Cohen's work was highly influenced by Barth's (1969) theory of ethnic boundaries, which encouraged a focus on demarcation rather than on the cultural substance embedded in the boundaries. The substance does not disappear with this reorientation, but is under a constant process of being reshaped by social interactions and negotiations. Inspired by Barth, Cohen sees communities as distinct cultural entities, but people only become aware of this culture when standing on its boundaries and this awareness of difference informs their belonging to locality:

"Community thus seems to apply simultaneously both similarities and differences. The word thus expresses a relational idea: the opposition of one community to others or to other social entities. Indeed it will be argued that the use of the word is only occasioned by the desire or need to express such a distinction. It seems appropriate, therefore, to focus our examination on the element which embodies this sense of discriminations, namely, the *boundary*" (Cohen 1985:12).

In Cohen's terms the identity of the community is enclosed in boundaries and is executed by the exigencies of social interaction. A community is thus a group, consisting of all those who affiliate themselves to that group and make use of particular frameworks of symbols like kinship, ethnicity or place. Importantly though not all boundaries, and definitely not all components of boundaries, are explicit and boundaries may be perceived differently by each side of the boundaries as well as being perceived differently by people identifying within that boundary (Cohen 1985:12). These statements stress how culture and ideas are uneven and unequally distributed among actors and across situations, questioning the presumption that culture is shared by people attached to the same group:

"Rhetorically, communities may represent themselves to themselves, as well as to others, as homogenous and monolithic, as a priori, but this is an idiom only, a gesture in the direction of solidarity, boundedness and continuity. The reality is of heterogeneity, process and change; of cultural communities as diverse symbolisations which exists by virtue of individuals' ongoing interpretations and interactions" (Amit and Rapport 2002:7-8).

If culture is not shared, but unevenly distributed, urges us to look at the differences within communities and particularly how people relate to the communities to which they belong. Directing the research towards individual agency may just give us a clearer view of how people use their community; express their sense of belonging and of the social order within. Importantly though and as stressed by Cohen, it is crucial to bear in mind the relation to the 'external' world or other communities since it is through these relationships that communities come into being.

This interpretative-constructionist theory informs the approach of this thesis in which communities are seen as socially constructed boundaries, consisting of choices, strategies and symbolic acts employed by individual agents, and bearing in mind that both members and non-members of communities are taking part in this construction. Adopting this understanding of community, the particular

neighbourhood which serves the case of this thesis, is then perceived as a place embedded with meanings and that has come into being by historical and political processes, and is continuously constructed and reconstructed via social interactions in daily life.

2.3 The hegemonic status of community participation

Promoting engagement of local communities in development processes is not new[8]. Already in the 1950's and 1960's community development programmes, mainly initiated by smaller NGO's, involved local people in managing and deciding how programmes should progress. This development came as a response to conventional 'top-down' development interventions which stressed an expert centred system, 'delivering' development from external sources. For example farming technologies, designed, developed and tested by agricultural engineers in donor countries, were passed on to local farmers to ease their work and increase and secure the agricultural production. However these technologies were often rejected by locals due to high costs, lack of skills and lack of knowledge of technology maintenance (Champers 1997). Expert-driven development neglected contexts and the different rationales that people in the third world are operating by. It was thus too inefficient and costly not to engage local communities.

Further there was a shift in how causes of poverty were perceived. Rather than merely being a matter of economical resources, the status of poor people were now seen as being caused by exclusion from participating in any decision making processes that related to their situations and positions in society. Poverty was thus a structural problem, and to combat poverty, a change in the way society is organised was needed. An example that reflects this shift is the study of poor people in a Brazilian slum by Paulo Freire (1971). He launched a process of *conscientisation* in which people learn, through dialogue, of their own situations and social positions within society. Through this learning process, their capabilities to act and change their situations are improved. This process has many similarities with the concept of

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[8] In this section parallels can be drawn to debates on 'participatory democracy', a recent emerged model of democracy, developed by 'New Left Thinkers' (Held 1987). The characteristics of 'participatory democracy' are based on ideas to rebalance asymmetrical power distributions. It fosters human development, strengthens political efficacy and solidarity, and promotes active citizenry (Held 1987; Pateman 1970). Through participation citizens learn of or are educated to live in a democratic society. By participation citizens develop capabilities to perform political influence and to tolerate and respect other citizens' points of views (Andersen et al. 1993; Dahl 1985). Participatory democracy builds further on an integrative perception on democracy, which sees citizens' active participation in political activities as a way to process and integrate political contradictions and that participation is contributing to develop preferences, which the majority are supporting (Agger 2004).

empowerment, frequently applied in community building in for example health promotion (see e.g. Tengland 2008; Tones 2001; Wallerstein 1992)[9].

However, not until the 1990's did participation become a commonly applied method in community development. An influential participatory approach, now adopted by the World Bank, is Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) dominated by Chamber's work and strongly influenced by Freire's radical philosophy of *conscientisation* (Chambers 1994). PRA represents a new paradigm and is sometimes presented as a series of reversals: "From the etic to the emic, from individual to group, from verbal to visual, from measuring to comparing, from reserve to rapport, from frustration to fun, from extracting to empowering, from top-down to bottom-up, from centralised-standardised to local diversity, from blue-print to learning" (Francis 2001:78). Since the early 1990's major donor development organisations have supported participatory development. In 1994 OECD (Economic Co-operation and Development) undertook a review of how community participation possibly improved the effectiveness of the work, the organisation supported. Likewise the World Bank launched their *Participation Sourcebook* in 1995 (World Bank 1995), which offered guidance on participatory methods as well as demonstrating a willingness to work collaboratively with locals. Also WHO (1994) adapted a participatory approach and stated that:

> "Where it has occurred, participation in the decision-making process and in determining how resources are allocated within the health sphere has also enhanced the public's sense of responsibility for specific projects. It has also helped to ensure that people's felt needs are covered and that the approaches taken are consistent with local social characteristics and preferences, while building on the important indigenous knowledge base and expertise which exists in every community" (WHO 1994 in Oakley and Kahssay 1999b:145).

It has thus become commonly accepted that community participation is crucial when it comes to efficient development. In addition it is perceived to enhance peoples' sense of having accomplished goals, that they have become empowered in the very process of participating in development.

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[9] Freire is in health promotion literature often mentioned as being the 'creator' of the concept empowerment (see e.g. Tengland 2008; Tones 2001; Wallerstein 1992). Empowerment is also used in social and political sciences and related to diverse theories such as those applied in feminist movements (Ferguson 1987), community development (Rothman 1971; Craig and Mayo 1995) and participatory democracy (Bachrach and Botwinick 1992). Although empowerment is applied in very different contexts and is used in various disciplines, it is possible to distinguish between two underlying ideologies which lead to different outcomes. One is concerned with solidarity and structural change as represented by e.g. Freire 1971 and Chambers 1997; 1994). The other is argued to be rooted in a neoliberal ideology and is concerned with empowering the individual, rather than changing power structures, with the aim to promote state independency and the individual's capacity for self management. This view has been strongly criticised, and it is suggested that the consequences will be an increase of social inequity (Cruikshank 1999, see also Bauman 1988).

In spite of its noble claims of redistributing power in society and 'giving a voice' to people, it is stated that: "community participation is one of the most overused, but least understood concepts without a serious attempt to critically analyse the different forms that participation could take" (Botes and Van Rensburg 2000:41). There has been a tendency of romanticising 'people' and 'communities', hence overlooking the internal and external obstacles to community participation, their interaction and relation, which will better inform us of the different processes impacting upon facilitating community participation (ibid:55-56). Likewise Rifkin (1996) in her critique of participation argues that health programmes based on participation fails to accomplishment because they are: "conceived in a paradigm which views community participation as a magic bullet to solve problems rooted both in health and political power" (Rifkin 1996:79). She advocates for a paradigm shift, moving away from programmes that most often reflect planners' conceptions of development progress rather than locals' perceptions of their own needs and capabilities, towards a paradigm that allows flexibility in the planning and implementation processes (Ibid 89-90). Similarly Cooke and Khotari (2001) in justifying their title of the anthology: 'Participation: The new tyranny', containing a collection of critical perspectives on participation, they state that: "tyranny is both a real and a potential consequence of participatory development, counter-intuitive and contrary to its rhetoric of empowerment" (Cooke and Khotari 2001:3). Indeed participation has achieved a global and hegemonic status that often fails to address power relations (Wakefield and Poland 2005). While participatory approaches seek to allocate power and resources in society, they also carry the risk of simplifying the nature of power and are thus: "in danger of encouraging a reassertion of power and social control not only by certain individuals and groups, but also of particular bodies of knowledge" (Khotari 2001:142).

This process of reasserting power initially happens through the very act of inclusion. Individuals being brought in to participate symbolises an exercise of power in itself and results in forms of control that are difficult to challenge as spaces of conflict are reduced. Marginalised people, who have reasons to challenge existing power structures and who are invited to participate through the promise of development progress, are disempowered in that very process, since they then no longer are in a position to challenge existing hierarchies. Inclusion in this respect is about control and the inducement of conformity (ibid:143). Community participation in this sense can be seen as a form of *governmentality*, whereby subjects are governed through social processes of regulations, prohibitions, proscriptions and transformations (Foucault 1991). Foucault defines *governmentality* as the 'art of government', which is not purely connected to governmental institutions or policies. It is a rationality of guidance, embedded in modernity and directed towards the subject's self governance. It is about 'convincing' the governed to act and think in certain manners, in a way where individuals govern their own actions, that are believed to be

an asset to individuals themselves as well as to overall society. *Governmentality* is formed by the relation of technologies of power and technologies of self, where the former consist of behavior regulations from external sources, such as policy documents or any act representing the intentions of society, and the latter are those techniques that allow the subject, through own means, to form and reform body, soul, mind and behavior to pursue happiness and purity (Foucault 1991; 1988; see also Vallgårda 2003).

Building on Foucault's ideas, Rose (1996) states that in contemporary political discourses, new ways of governing subjects are appearing, namely government through community (see also Conway et al. 2007; Stephens 2007; Howarth 2001; Botes and van Reensberg 2000). Government spaces are no longer territorialised across national space, but are organised in the relation between individuals and their community. Therefore: "community is not simply the territory of government but a *means* of government" (Rose 1996:335). Communities become celebrated, nurtured and shaped in directions that encourage responsibility, moral obligations and duties to secure own health, happiness and well-being which in turn promotes active citizenship within self-governing communities (*article 3*). The governmental discourse of community is underpinned by *ethopolitics*: the politics of life itself and how it should be lived (Rose 1999). By *ethopolitics* he means:

> "to characterise ways in which the ethos of human existence – the sentiments, moral nature or guiding beliefs of persons, groups, or institutions – have come to provide the 'medium' within which the self-government of autonomous individual can be connected up with imperatives of good government. In ethopolitics, life itself, as it is lived in its everyday manifestations, is the object of adjudication" (Rose 2001:18).

Following Rose, subjects of government, in the context of this thesis a 'discredited' neighbourhood, are to be enrolled in corrective regimes through governmental techniques and programmes such as neighbourhood development. This process can be compared to 'normalisation', referring to a process that ensures behaviours judged as normal become the only acceptable behaviour (Conway et al. 2007; Perryman 2006).

Understanding community participation as a form of social control and subsequently a process of normalisation, which might induce a homogenous and conforming society in respect of accepted values and correct behaviour, forms the theoretical background on which the discussion in this thesis is based. This theoretical standpoint is particularly useful to illuminate the underlying constructs of

community participation and the power relations embedded in the constructs. It further adds new perspectives on the reasons for residents' participation and non-participation in neighbourhood development as well as competitions, disunity and differences between the various meanings of neighbourhood life.

2.4 The setting

During the last decades an increased social segregation has occurred in the Danish housing market, i.e. well-to-do citizens settle in private housing estates, while the disadvantaged part of the population has settled in public housing neighbourhoods[10]. Subsequently a concentration of social problems is characterising some of the larger public housing areas. To prevent further neighbourhood deprivation and to ease some of the existing problems, urban regeneration projects have recently been initiated across Denmark (Larsen 2001). The regenerations projects differ in both content and effectiveness, varying from physical renovation, counteracting bad reputations, social mobilisation, empowerment and job training for the residents. Commonly though residential participation is highly encouraged in these projects to ensure compatibility between the project goals and the residents' needs and wishes, and to encourage engagement towards the local community and its residents. The setting *Sønderbro* subjected to research in this thesis is in this sense not unique, but was selected as a case by request of local representatives. However Sønderbro is distinct in the sense that the development process is not governed by the local municipality but by *The Sønderbro Group*. *The Sønderbro Group,* a group of local agents consisting of community workers, local residents and public employees, has since the early 1990's worked towards constructing the neighbourhood as a more social coherent place offering a variety of opportunities for participating in civic life (see also *article 2*).

The neighbourhood *Sønderbro* is centrally located in Horsens, a Danish provincial town of approximately 80,000 inhabitants, and consists of diverse middleclass and working class areas[11]. It is estimated that app. 7000 people live in the area, the majority in public housing areas and others in single-family houses. There are smaller shops located around the area, a local school, a church and public institutions such as kindergartens, nursing homes and after-school centres. The school serves as a

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[10] For a presentation of the history of the social housing policies in Denmark and the development of the segregation see e.g. Andersen and Christensen 2006.

[11] For a brief description of Horsens and for a thorough description of Sønderbro see *article 2*. Please note that the amount of the inhabitants in the article is stated to approximately 60,000. The difference of this number is explainable due to the recent (2007) 'structural reform' in Denmark. Here the counties are dismantled and the municipalities re-organised into larger entities.

rendezvous for many activities including after school hours. Attached to the school is a newly built cultural house and gymnasium being used for various sports and cultural activities by both children and adults.
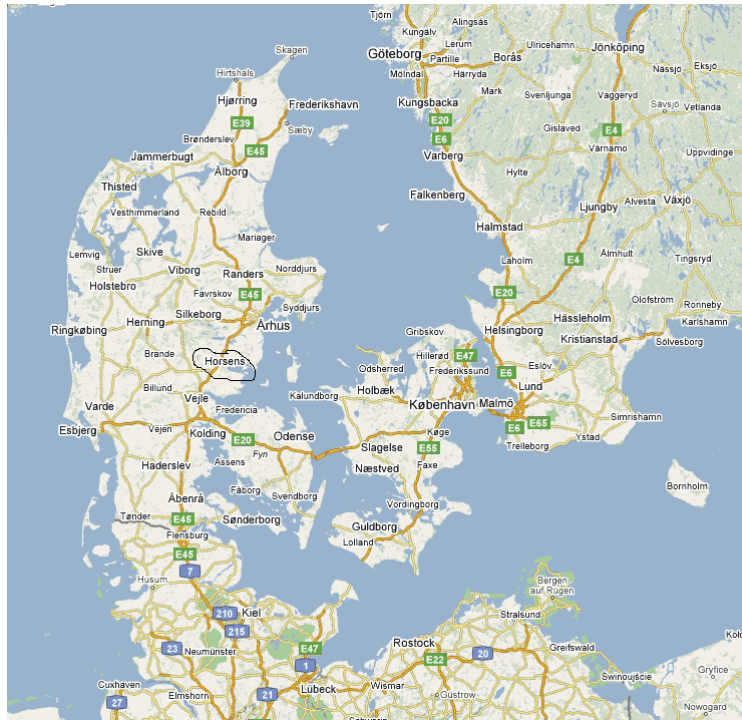
Sønderbro has suffered from a poor reputation due to its high concentration of working class areas and recently due to a high percentage of immigrants mainly from Turkey and refugees from Sri Lanka, the Middle East and the Balkans. Particularly one area, *Axelborg*, has characterised the neighbourhood as socially deprived, in which I decided to focus the fieldwork. *Axelborg* is a built in the late 1960's and is a concrete complex of six three-storey and four eight storey buildings with a total of 281 households. The apartments' sizes vary from one to four bedrooms and residents consist of a mix of families, single-parents and single adults. 639 people live in the buildings of which 60 % are of ethnic origins other than Danish. In comparison the total number of immigrants in the municipality is 8.8 %. The percentage of the residents receiving income compensating governmental aid is also higher compared to the overall municipality. Approximately half of the total number of the residents received governmental aid and this number does not exclude children. In 2007 19.2 % were retirees and 30.3% received *kontanthjælp*, the Danish term for receiving social security, compared to 7.6 % in the municipality[12].

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[12] The amount of money one receives, when being on k*ontanthjælp* is dependent on age, marital status and children. A single adult above 25 years with no children receives DKR 9.505 monthly before tax equaling EUR 1.277/ with children DKR 12.629/ EUR 1.697.

Table 1: Residents at 1st Jan. 2008: Immigrants/descendants and age groups[13]

	Axelborg		Horsens	
	Total	%	Total	%
Total population	639	100,0	80102	100,0
Total immigrants/descendants	383	60,0	7118	8,8
0-6 years	47	7,4	568	0,7
7-12 years	50	7,8	583	0,7
13-17 years	37	5,8	468	0,6
18-24 years	40	6,3	1294	1,6
25-34 years	55	8,6	1481	1,8
35-49 years	110	17,2	1668	2,1
50-64 years	35	5,5	704	0,9
65+ years	9	1,4	352	0,4

Table 2: Immigrants/descendants at 1st Jan. 2008 and country of origin

	Axelborg		Horsens	
	Total	%	Total	%
All immigrants/descendants	383	100,0	7118	100,0
EU-Countries	6	1,6	1812	25,5
Other European countries	194	50,7	2732	38,4
North, South America including Oceania	5	1,3	168	2,4
Africa	5	1,3	206	2,9
Asia, stateless and unspecified	173	45,2	2200	30,9

Table 3: Residents above 17 years, receiving income compensation at 1st Jan. 2006

	Axelborg		Horsens	
	Total	%	Total	%
Total receivers	304	100,0	30762	100,0
Unemployment benefits (from unions)	48	15,8	3297	10,7
Other income maintenance (sickness, maternity leave)	30	9,9	7234	23,5
Social security	92	30,3	2346	7,6
Rehabilitation and re-training benefits	37	12,2	1412	4,6
Temporary compensation	207	68,1	14289	46,5
Permanent compensation	97	31,9	16473	53,5

[13] Table 1-3 are reproduced with permission from Statistics Denmark.

These numbers alone expose the residents as belonging to a social class, characterised by poverty, financial as well as cultural, and are often accompanied by social problems such as alcohol and drug abuse, maladjusted behaviour in children and youth and a general anti-social behaviour. Definitions of poor neighbourhoods are often based on the concentration of individuals having a low socio-economic status, living in a specific and bound geographical location (Macintyre et al. 2005; Elliot 2000). Others include in this definition residential instability, low quality social services, such as schools, health clinics and child care, geographical isolation and shabby buildings (Burton 1997) and some also include a high level of mixed ethnic minorities, being poorly integrated in the wider society, diverging social behaviour such as violence, theft and vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse (Andersen 2005; Cattell 2001). Due to these characteristics poor neighbourhoods are often shrouded in myths of social and moral decay, and poor neighbourhoods and their residents are thus prone to social stigmatisation (Warr 2005; Vale 1995; Rainwater 1966). This is also the case for *Axelborg* and its residents, evident in its history that reveals a past of high crime, a high frequency of people moving in and out, vandalism and stigmatisation.

It was in *Axelborg* I decided to focus the fieldwork, rather than other areas of *Sønderbro*. *Axelborg's* history of social deprivation and consequently stigmatised position, in my opinion, made it suitable as a research area meeting the objectives of this PhD. project, although it is the whole area of *Sønderbro* that is subjected to development[14]. However distinct *Axelborg* is, the histories, stories and development of *Sønderbro* and *Axelborg* are closely intertwined as will be demonstrated throughout this thesis. The construction of *Sønderbro* community, and its hegemonic community discourse (*article 2*), emphasises entity, but use examples from *Axelborg* to illustrate the criminal past. In this sense *Axelborg* has come to symbolise an undesirable past whereas *Sønderbro* symbolises a promising future.

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[14] See also *article 2* for more history and characteristics of *Axelborg*, therein named *Hensedalen*.
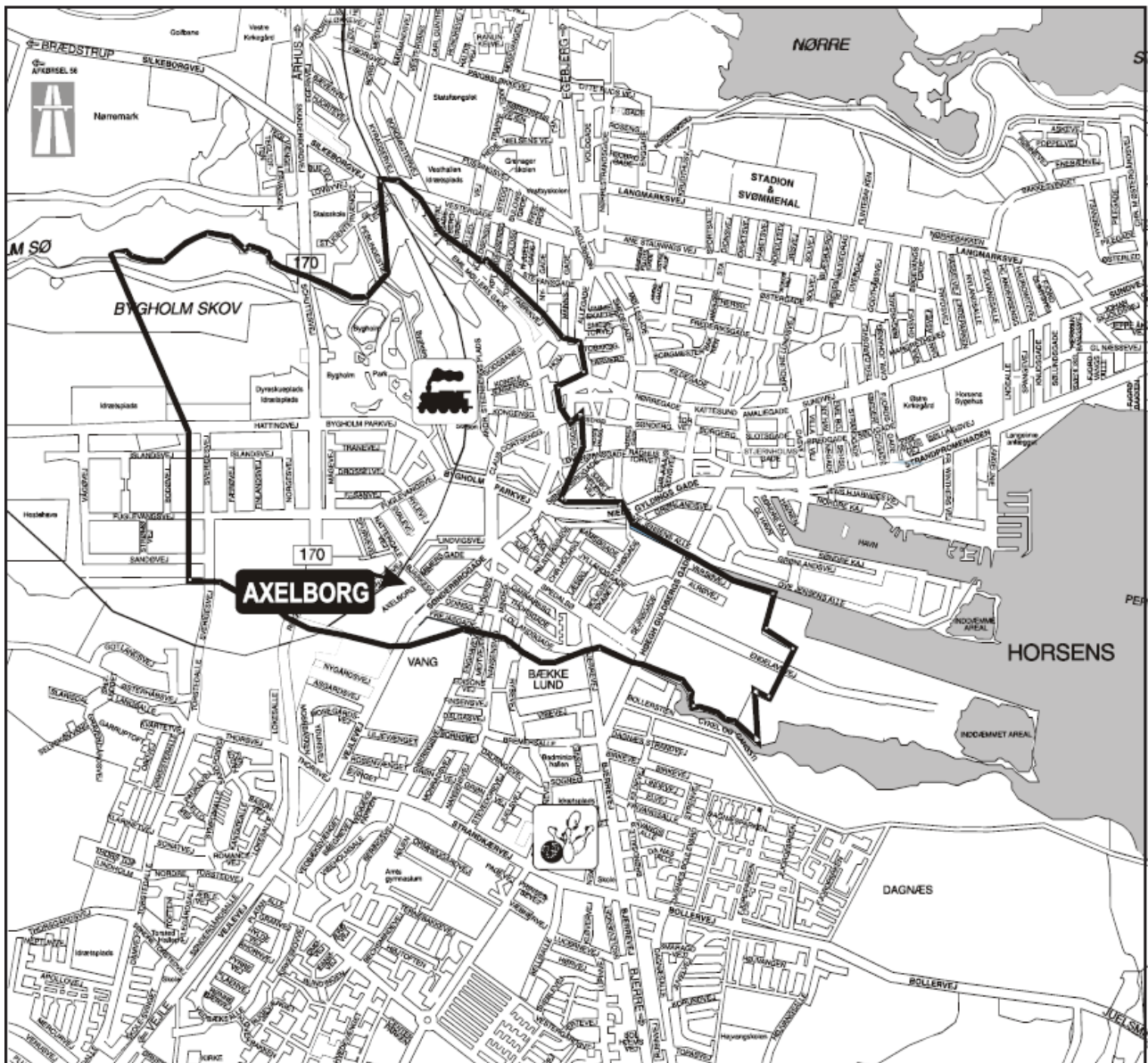
2.5 Existing research on participation in Danish neighbourhoods subjected to regeneration

Little research has been conducted to investigate the roles and meanings of participation to residents in a community building process within the health promotion discipline in a Danish context. There is however some existing overlaps with research embedded in other disciplines that should be mentioned here; some of which have been of inspiration for this thesis.

The Danish Building Institute (Statens Byggeforskningsinstitut) produces exclusive research on area-based initiatives in deprived neighbourhoods in Denmark (see e.g. Engberg 2006; Andersen 2004; Nørgaard and Ærø 2004). Research on the effectiveness of efforts to revitalise deprived neighbourhoods illustrates large disagreement of what works and for what purpose; particularly the ideas on which regeneration are built are questionable (Andersen 2002). Since the mid 1990's the housing policy in Denmark launched new ways of constructing neighbourhood regeneration projects. These new projects are referred to as *kvarterløft*, meaning 'neighbourhood boost' and are characterised by integrating social and economic perspectives in addition to physical improvements (Larsen et al. 2003). The overall strategy builds on participatory approaches with the purpose to increase residents' impact on these regenerations projects as well as building partnerships between various agents, operating in the neighbourhoods either for professional or personal reasons. The rationale behind is to improve the quality of the projects, prevent conflicts between the engaged partners, generate private resources in the projects, and generate networks, responsibility and strengthening neighbourhood identity (Agger et al. 2000).

The various strategies for implementing citizens' participation in neighbourhood development have been explored in a report by Agger et al. (2000), building on 11 Danish examples of citizen participation. They found that the cases illustrate very different 'realities' in which they are employed and that the methods used vary significantly. They suggest that for better efficiency it is crucial to be clear of the expectations of the various partners. Preparations of objectives, processes and outcomes formulated cooperatively are thus essential. One of the major problems in engaging citizens is that:

> "coincidence of interest between firms in a place, residents in a place and governance mechanisms in a place does not exist as a result of some geographical logic. If it exists at all, it has to be actively negotiated among those with a "stake" in an area. In many urban neighbourhoods, households share little else than their common residence" (Davoudi and Healey 1995:11 in Agger et al. 2000).

Similarly Andersen and Nordgaard (2002) explore how different local policies, represented by the various elements in the neighbourhood programme planning, compete for neighbourhood space. They further integrate citizens' perspectives in this process and demonstrate that although priorities of professional neighbourhood planners are conflicting both among themselves and among professional planners and residents, there is a tendency that residents have become empowered in this process.

A work that has inspired this thesis is Pløger's (2002b) comparative analyses of Danish and Norwegian neighbourhood planning policies. His analysis shows among other things the ethical imperatives

imbedded in housing policies. While these insights are highly valuable, also in the research context of this thesis, they remain focused on the underlying rationales of neighbourhood planning. Hence there is a need to explore how these rationales are being implemented and perceived by residents in their daily lives. Mazanti (2002) takes up this challenge in her PhD thesis investigating representations of place in a deprived neighbourhood, and the consequences of these representations in relation to developing deprived neighbourhoods and to residents' everyday life in these neighbourhoods. Mazanti emphasises the meaning residents attach to places and how these meanings contradict local policy makers. These insights contribute to the discussion section of this thesis in debating how political discourses of neighbourhood building do not necessarily relate to the reality of the everyday life in these neighbourhoods.

Iversen (2002) investigates how the ideal of participation and a strengthened dialogue between system and citizens has been put into practice in an ethnic diverse neighbourhood. Iversen's main argument is that political visions always occur in a concrete context in which they are interpreted, negotiated and reshaped. It is in everyday life that it becomes clear that participation is a complex process which involves conflicts between different interests and perceptions of social reality. While Iversen's approach is similar to the approach launched in this thesis, her focus is on perspectives of integration and does not implicate relations to or meanings of the neighbourhood itself or individuals' roles in the participation process.

Apart from uncovering the different realities at play in neighbourhood revitalising programmes, research illustrates that participation in neighbourhood regeneration presupposes that residents have resources at their disposal. Knowledge resources, i.e. technical knowledge, common sense and knowledge of how to behave at political meetings, have proven to be essential in order to be able to initially participate. Likewise relational resources inherent in social networks and spare time are crucial components in participatory behaviour (Agger 2004; Larsen 2001). These resources are unequally distributed and imply that participation also appears uneven. Residents who do not possess 'participation resources', can therefore not be expected to be participative. It is a huge challenge to engage 'excluded' residents to avoid them becoming target groups for activities rather than participants in them and to avoid that other resourceful residents speak on their behalf, defining their needs and goals in life (Edwards 2001).

From the review of neighbourhood participation in a Danish context above it is possible to extract two major lines: one concerned with studies which demonstrate that participation requires resources and that these resources are unequally distributed among community members (Agger 2004; Larsen 2001). The other concerned with conflicting perceptions of neighbourhood represented by residents

and policy makers respectively (Andersen and Nordgaard 2002; Iversen 2002; Pløger 2002a; 2002b; Mazanti 2002; Agger et al. 2000). Both these lines have inspired this thesis and are integrated in the discussion section. In existing research of neighbourhood participation there is however a neglect of how residents are actively engaged in constructing neighbourhood in ways that evoke hegemonic discourses of community participation. This thesis demonstrates this issue and therefore shows that 'power' is not only executed by politicians or the elite, but that lay people use, produce and reproduce dominant ideals of what community life is about and how it should be practiced; not because they are subjected to do so, but because they find it meaningful. This perspective points at that power relations are embedded in daily life and among lay people and therefore suggest that ways of representing community not only is a matter of a contradictions between residents and policymakers, but also about contrasting discourses among residents, and that these contrasts influence the particular participation pattern.

This thesis further adds new perspectives of the meanings and qualities that residents are ascribing to their neighbourhood and of the social interactions they engage in. Exploring the practices and meanings of neighbourhood life has illustrated the various ways residents use their neighbourhood and the nature of their relationships. These insights challenge perceptions of how the 'good' and 'bad' neighbour behaves, of how he or she should relate to their neighbourhood and consequently what this means for community building.

2.6 Summary

The background chapter has attempted to address the problems inherent in community participation: of neglecting the dynamic nature of community and of the perfunctory perception of participation. Firstly I have positioned this thesis in the research context of neighbourhoods and health. The acknowledgement that social contexts has an impact on health, has led to a 'formalisation of the social' into concepts such as social capital and social coherence. While using these concepts to better explain relationships between health and place has made large contributions in health disciplines, the reduction of the 'social' into these concepts might just result in a neglect of a more thorough understanding of social practices in social contexts. I have proposed a theoretical approach that embraces community diversity and focuses on individual agency and meaning-making in the process of community construction.

Further I have stated that however noble participatory approaches appear in their objectives to advocate for the powerless people, it often fails to explore the power relations at play in the processes,

and that 'participation' is closely affiliated with disciplining citizens to act and behave in certain ways, implicitly or explicitly. A hypothesis arising from this perspective, and which is supported by previous research of participation in neighbourhood generation, is that some people are more likely to participate than others, and thus more likely to comply with externally initiated community building projects. Participatory approaches then might carry the risk of strengthening some citizen's resources while increasing the marginalised social position of others. Building on this hypothesis this thesis investigates how residents themselves experience living in a neighbourhood subjected to regeneration and how they participate in this process.

3. Methodology

In this chapter I present and discuss the employed fieldwork methods, how I selected settings and informants, the analytical procedures and the ethical issues involved. *Article 1,* which is a methodological reflection on the fieldwork as strategy, is also included and summarised in this chapter.

3.1 Summary of *article 1: Fra forsker til beboer: hvordan etnografisk feltarbejde kan bidrage til sundhedsfremme i boligområder [From researcher to resident: how ethnographic fieldwork may aid health promotion in neighbourhoods]*

This article is primarily about the fieldwork as a research strategy. We address the critique that health promotion in communities often neglects the constructive nature of communities, and thus their diverse and dynamic character. Although health promotion is directed towards integrating marginalised populations in health systems, it seems that the already resourceful and empowered populations are better suited to apply health promoting messages and to participate in health promoting projects. Participative groups or individuals receive a representative role and this tendency may give a too simplified version of a community's needs, resources and values. We argue that ethnographic fieldwork, or more precise participant-observation in this context, offers us unique and different knowledge of complex issues which would have been difficult to accomplish in other ways. Choosing to become a resident in the neighbourhood served as a platform to build relations and to gain access to residents whom I would not have met in *The Community House*.

While the qualitative interview frequently is used as a method in the health sciences, it is rare to find examples on participant observation. This method offers other forms of knowledge, which supplements the qualitative interview. Firstly language is closely related to experience and is saturated with meaningful categories. To have meaningful conversations means that it is essential to know each others' categorical universe and to share social experiences. Secondly part of our knowledge is 'silent' and embodied. Experiences are embedded in our bodies and expressed via non-verbal behaviour and 'common sense'. Bourdieu conceptualised this form of knowledge as *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977). Thirdly participant observation gives the opportunity to study the differences and similarities between what is said and what is done. Very often there are discrepancies between the notions people have of specific concepts, ideas or values and how they are enacted.

We use two examples from the fieldwork that demonstrate how participant observation generates nuanced knowledge of daily community life. One illustrates the various positions the researcher has in the field and which is negotiated in interactions between researcher and informant. That roles are

negotiated means that there are limitations to what the researcher can participate in. These limitations are dependent on the relationship between researcher and informant and develop as social experiences become shared. When beginning the fieldwork, I was participating in social activities taking place in *The Community House*. Occasionally students in social work were offered internships in *The Community House* and a fixed set of social norms and behaviour was associated with this position. As a newcomer and a student, although of a different kind, I was put in this position by the residents and the information I received was very much dependent on this role. We would typically discuss the stigmatisation of the neighbourhood and its residents due to their socio-economic positions. As time progressed I was entrusted with the position as a volunteer, helping out with duties in the community house. This position awarded me with other types of information such as how the relationships were between the volunteers and between residents, and how community life was outside *The Community House*. Finally as I became a resident myself, I experienced that my informants were using me as a source of information. To demonstrate this role I account for an incident of vandalism taking place in the block I was living in. One Saturday morning I experienced the windows were torn out in the stairway from the 5th floor down to the ground floor. Later that day the care taker contacted me to learn of any information that could solve the incident. The following days the incident was a 'hot' conversation topic and since it had occurred in the block I was living in, residents asked me for information. In this sense I gained 'street credibility' since I had first hand experience. As a resident I came to share experiences with my informants which gave us a common ground to exchange information. I experienced the routines of the neighbourhood, I learned of the various types of noises from the neighbours and I became annoyed with the smell of urine in the elevators. These experiences did not insinuate that I now was living my informant's lives, but that I was capable of imagining how their lives were.

The other example demonstrates how the researcher's interactions with various groups in the field affect relationships. The topics being raised in conversations changes and develops and informant's previous statements are even modified. Modified statements should not be interpreted as lies or untruths, but rather be understood as our engagement in the field has an impact on the various positions our informants engage in. In the beginning of the fieldwork, when discussing immigrants with ethnic Danes, it was not unusual that I heard complaints of how messy they thought the immigrants were, how their cooking smelled in the stairways and of the ugly satellite dishes they put up on buildings. Particularly I learned of these opinions in conversations with 'Karen', an informant I had frequent conversations with. As the fieldwork developed and I included immigrants as my informants, Karen began to change her statements. She became familiar with my interactions with the immigrants both due to our conversation and also because she could observe my actions and interactions in the public spaces of the

neighbourhood. She would then raise other and more positive subjects of immigrants like how helpful they were, of their close family bonds and of how exciting it is to get to know a foreign culture. The point is not whether she 'truly' meant this or not, nor that there is any exceptional about having nuanced and contradicting views on a specific topic. Rather it is interesting since she positioned herself in relation to my doings in the field – and that this positioning generated other and more nuanced forms of data. These changing positions are what Goffman refers to in his work on 'frame analysis' in which he argues that we 'frame' our social interactions, which guides our perceptions and representations of 'reality' (Goffman 1974). It is, in this sense, specific situations that determine which part of our social 'realities' is represented.

The rich and detailed data generated from this fieldwork shows the complexity of daily life in a neighbourhood. This knowledge points to the context related views residents have of their neighbourhood and of their fellow residents and can possibly give us an in-depth understanding of neighbourhood life and the various meanings attached to it.

3.2 Epistemological position

The research reported in this thesis builds on ethnographic fieldwork study which is highly suited to explore different meanings and experiences of neighbourhood and community building. Ethnographic fieldwork is inscribed and has originated in the sociological and anthropological disciplines, which aim at understanding human behaviour in its social context.

The Chicago School, although generally more sociological oriented than anthropological, has a long tradition for doing fieldwork in urban sites or neighbourhoods[15]. An extensive body of theories and methods have emerged from this tradition and have set the agenda in areas of community studies, social organisation and symbolic interactionism[16]. What these studies have offered us is a sort of 'thick description' (Geertz 1973) of local communities, and often 'tough' neighbourhoods like 'slums' or 'ghettos' have been under investigation. Although not all studies mentioned below originate from the Chicago School, Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1966), Liebow's *Tally's Corner* (1967)*, Ulf Hannerz' *Soulside* (1969)

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[15] The tradition is often determined to have originated in the 1920's with the newspaper reporter Robert E. Park who introduced a descriptive and observant method to investigate urban life. Philosophically Park was inspired by Georg Simmel, distinct in Parks' focus on moral order; on how individuals maintained self respect and values in a context characterised by superficial relationships. He was however convinced that close relationships did exist in the cities; smaller enclaves of group solidarity which he labeled 'moral regions' (Park 1952: 50-51). There was a tendency to view the city as a mosaic of moral regions, which later was criticised for neglecting that these regions not are isolated entities, but parts of larger systems and thus interrelated.
[16] See e.g. Kurtz (1984) for an evaluation of the Chicago sociology.

and Andersons' *A Place on the Corner* (1978) are classical studies of inquiries into social organisations and structures of neighbourhoods in urban contexts.

The hallmark of these neighbourhood studies was that they popularised and illustrated the nature of participant observation in western, modern and urban societies. The researcher was situated in the settings studied and sometimes lived among the people in the particular neighbourhoods being explored. In the beginning neighbourhood studies were based on positivistic science, grounded on the assumption that reality was 'out there' to be observed and described. With almost photographic detail, neighbourhoods were described and thus required a highly skilled interviewer and participant observer to 'record' what was happening and what was being said. The realist position's presumption that the 'truth' is 'out there' to be captured has naturally been contested.

For example a special issue of Journal of Contemporary Ethnography was dedicated to debating Whyte's *Street Corner Society*. The vivid debate was centred on discussing different stories of Whytes' *Cornerville* and thus different versions of reality within the epistemology of social realism and between different epistemological positions (Whyte 1993; Whyte 1992; Boelen 1992; Denzin 1992). What this debate clarified was the crucial requirement that researchers position themselves within epistemological traditions since this clearly has an impact on how the field is approached and the data analysed. Contemporary researchers employing ethnographic fieldwork will argue that the field we write about is constructed, and data generated by our own presence and interactions with our informants and therefore not something existing out there to be discovered (Denzin 1992; Clifford and Marcus 1986). Indeed the fieldwork is a social experience "mediated by and constituted through the fieldworker's relationships with others" (Amit 2000:1).

My own position draws on assumptions grounded in social constructionism[17]. There are several directions within social constructionism. In common though, social constructionism positions knowledge as deriving from and being maintained by social interactions. The way we understand and categorise the world around us is not a reflection on how the world is, but a product of historically and culturally specific perceptions of the world (Burr 1995). The social constructionisms approach adopted here draws on developments within social psychology also labelled *discursive psychology* (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999). Central works within this field are exemplified by Billig (1992), Edwards and Potter (1992)and Gergen (1985). The notion that language is perceived as a social praxis that forms the social world and the subjects place in it, and thus has real consequences, is shared by other directions within social constructionism. Its

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[17] Social constructionism and social constructivism are frequently used synonymously. I chose to follow Jørgensen and Phillips (1999) recommendation in using the first term, not having it confused with Piagets constructivist theory.

distinct character is directed towards analysing the social context in which language is displayed, hence opening up for empirically analysis in social settings (Jørgensen and Phillips 1999: 105-106).

There are two major points inherent in discursive psychology that is important in this research context. One is the notion that identities are discursive, not fixed categories, and that people have more and flexible identities. Hall (2003) states that: "identities [...] are points of temporary attachments which discursive practices construct for us" and "they are a result of a successful articulation or 'chaining' of the subject into the flow of the discourse" (Hall 2003:6). This approach allows for the exploration of the positions individuals take up in various discursive practices. The second point is that discourses constitute an *interpretative repertoire* or *storylines* (Wetherell and Potter 1992; Davies and Harre 1990). This is understood as concepts and specific ways of talking about an issue that gives resources to construct specific versions of social reality. This way of understanding discourse form the basis of the analysis, which allows for an identification of the key concepts and metaphors that are used by individuals to narrate their own experiences and an understanding that people draw on different discourses in different contexts.

By this position I also consider this research as a discursive construction, being only one possible way of portraying the field under study. As observers we are part of the field ourselves, thus challenging traditional attempts within the positivist criteria of validity, reliability and generalisability. This will be discussed in the concluding section. Descriptions of the field settings, of our relationships with our informants and reflexivity of how we progressed in the field are thus crucial in accounting for how data was generated. Below I will present how the fieldwork proceeded, emphasising the analytical process as well as its ethical implications.

3.3 Fieldwork: places, people and types of data

The setting for this research was already defined beforehand since *The Sønderbro Group* took the initiative of having research done of the neighbourhood's development. *The Sønderbro* setting was however a too large area to be investigated exhaustively considering the research questions and methods used. As already mentioned the majority of the fieldwork took place in *Axelborg* rather than other areas of *Sønderbro* due to its distinct character of being disadvantaged. The choice of focusing on *Axelborg* is related to that residents here are subjected to projects initiated by *The Sønderbro Group* and that many of the community activities took place in *Axelborg* The fieldwork took place between August 2006-November 2007 with single-event follow ups in November 2008 and February/March 2009. In two periods of each two months I rented a

small apartment in *Axelborg*. The four months as a local resident provided great details of the daily routines in the neighbourhood as well as I came to share social experiences with the residents. It is through the shared experiences that we as fieldworkers come to learn and distinguish what are considered to be meaningful acts and conversations by the people we study (*article 1*). My presence and interaction with other residents generated invaluable details of living in a socially deprived neighbourhood.

Selecting the settings and informants for this research followed the overall research focus areas:

1. How is the neighbourhood Sønderbro constructed in the process of community building
2. How do residents relate to this construction and how do they participate in it
3. How is everyday neighbourhood life being practiced

The process of selecting whom to talk to and the places to observe within a setting is not only a matter of deciding what is relevant for the research. Often selection is subjected to what kind of data is available; selection then is not only a result of deliberate acts. It is therefore important to explicitly account for the criteria used in selecting people and places within settings (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). This section then contains descriptions and reflections of the selective processes and of the places and people included and excluded.

3.3.1 Selecting social settings

Beginning the fieldwork the main focus was on how the neighbourhood was constructed in the process of community building and how residents took part in therein. These questions are treated in *article 2* and chapter 4. I was already in contact with central people from *The Sønderbro Group.* A community worker in *Axelborg* and a principal organiser of *The Sønderbro Group* functioned in the beginning as 'gate-keepers' for getting access to participating residents. The settings in which participant-observation took place were therefore selected due to the fact that these settings constituted frames for community activities in which residents took part. I refer to these settings as 'institutionalised' settings in which 'formalised' activities were taking place. Via these settings I could easily access residents who were participating in arranging community activities as well as those who were participating in these activities. Three settings were chosen: *The Community House* and the *second-hand shop* both located in *Axelborg*, and *The Cultural House*, located next to the public school *Søndermarksskolen.* Both *The Community House* and *The Cultural House* served as a venue for various activities such as bingo, communal dinners, community meetings and cultural and social events. Here I was introduced to residents who were active in the process of community building. The key community worker also had her office in *The Community House* and residents who needed assistance for various reasons such as personal matters, unemployment, illness, and social

problems would come by. Two volunteers assisted the community worker and 5-6 other volunteers took part in organising social events, bingo, distributing news letters and communicating information of the community's development and progress to outsiders as well as other residents. In addition an unstable number of residents engaged as volunteers on an irregular basis and helped out in bigger events such as festivals, Christmas parties and similar.

The Cultural House was a new establishment, built in 2004 as a result of local initiatives in fundraising. *The Cultural House* has since then developed further and amongst other things *The Café* and *The Secretariat* has been established (see also section 6.1.4 *The future of Sønderbro*). My fieldwork in *The Cultural House* was centred in *The Café*. Here four volunteers worked regularly and like *The Community House*, a number of residents engaged in bigger events. Volunteers from *The Community House* also helped out in these larger events (see also *article 2* for a description). During lunch breaks *The Café* sold candy, ice creams, soft drinks and lighter dishes for the school children and weekly bingo was held. *The Café* also arranged Christmas lunches and cooperated with the local school and *The Secretariat*.

The Second-Hand Shop was run by 3-4 volunteers and was also a place that offered (in cooperation with the municipality and community workers) long-term unemployed residents an opportunity for testing their work ability. Apart from being an important setting for assessing information on the meanings and characteristics of participation, *The Second-hand Shop* also provided contacts with other residents, who frequently entered the shop for a bargain or a neighbouring chat. The shop did however close in 2007 for a number of reasons including illness, lack of new volunteers and an acceptance of that it 'had served its time'.

In addressing the research area: How is everyday neighbourhood life being practiced, treated in *article 3* and chapter 5, I had to look beyond the institutionalised settings and those activities taking place there. Exploring meanings of neighbourhood and relationships within neighbourhood I adopted an interactional approach. Meanings of place are not naturally given, but are only constructed by people's interactions with each other and how they practically use the place (Kusenbach 2006; Morill and Snow 2005; Lofland 1998). Other settings were therefore selected based on residents' interactions in *Axelborg's* public places; on benches, green areas, the laundry house and the snack bar.
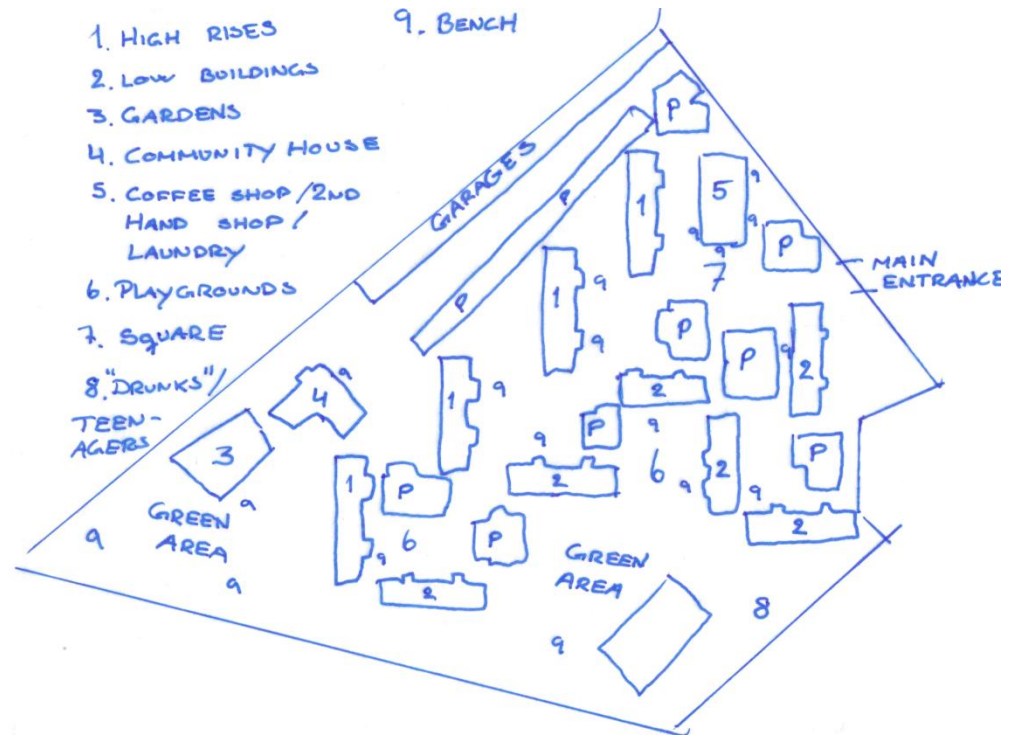
3.3.2 Selecting informants

In order to capture the social diversity of the neighbourhood, the informants varied according to age, education, ethnic origin, job situation, gender and level of participation in the community building process. Selecting informants was thus not a deliberately act of choosing residents representing certain social categories such as age, ethnicity, gender or educational level, but was rather guided by how the fieldwork processed and of the residents met during this process (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

A total number of 129 individuals, mainly residents, but including also professionals working in the community and relatives and friends to the residents living nearby, appeared in the fieldnotes. Some of which appeared several times, some I developed a relationship with and some were only brief encounters occurring once or several times. Selecting the informants was like the settings selection, related to the three research focus areas. The informants can therefore be divided into the following groups corresponding with *article 2* and *article 3*. The first group consisted of professionals working in and with the community, members of *The Sønderbro Group* (professionals and volunteering residents) and of residents who were participating in the formalised neighbourhood activities, although at various levels and various intensities. Inclusion criteria therefore depended on residents' presence in the settings *The Community*

House, *The Culture House* and *The Second-hand Shop* in which volunteers were working and naturally also on their willingness to participate in the research.

In the final research focus area, I was interested in how other residents than volunteers perceived of their neighbourhood by investigating daily neighbourhood life and interactions. I therefore considered it important to sample informants across age, gender, ethnicity and social characteristics, such as education level, employment status and social relations to capture neighbourhood diversity. I selected these informants based on their presence in the public neighbourhood places illustrated above, and on their willingness to participate in my research. Informants I made contact with here introduced me to other residents and this selection process can be classified, considering the inclusion criteria above, as a 'snowball effect'. I hence had little control of whom to include and exclude, but was highly dependent on informants' social networks. The informants included in this research is categorised in the following main groups:

- Sønderbro group: A mix of professionals and residential volunteers working in and with the Sønderbro neighbourhood: teachers at the local school, business owners, employees at state institutions such as kindergartens, youth clubs and institutions for citizens with particular social needs, and public housing administrators. The residential volunteers were mainly women and retired.
- Community worker: Community caretakers, community social workers and community administrators of Axelborg
- Volunteers: volunteers in the three settings: community house, cultural house, second hand shop. The volunteers were mainly women above 45 years old, retired due to old age or poor health, or unemployed.
- Axelborg residents
  - Bingo-players: Mainly residents of Axelborg, participating in activities arranged in the community house and cultural house, mainly bingo-related activities.
  - Alcoholics: A group of 5-6 individuals, all residents of Axelborg, 'hanging out' on a regular basis at the alcoholics' benches.
  - Immigrants residing in Axelborg: The majority of immigrants participating as informants were Turkish, Kurdish and Tamil. One Iraqi family were also participating.
  - Long term residents of Axelborg: Residents who had lived in Axelborg for more than 8 years and had first hand experience in the development process.
- Others informants: friends and relatives to residents residing elsewhere.

The categorisation of the informants was partly a result of how they identified themselves. The volunteers, members of *The Sønderbro Group* and community workers would refer to themselves as such. Long term residents, alcoholics, immigrants and bingo-players were (sub)categorised according to what they did in neighbourhood places: drinking alcohol or playing bingo and how informants distinguished between residents. The distinction of the latter part of informants should not be mistaken for a clear-cut categorisation of *Axelborg* residents, nor are they rigidly reflecting the demographic composition, although there are some overlaps. Distinguishing between the various groups in the neighbourhood has caused much 'mind work' throughout the fieldwork. In the beginning it seemed 'natural' to distinguish between volunteers, long term residents, alcoholics, the Turks and the Tamils, since this was how residents, particularly ethnic Danes, themselves talked and distinguished between themselves. I thus tried to discover patterns that would apply to these categories. I found that alcoholics were also long term residents, that the volunteers were also Turkish immigrants, that also the Tamils and Turks were long term residents and that the Turks also consisted of Kurdish immigrants, the Kurdish were also Iraqi and that you could further distinguish within the groups between ages, gender, educational level and so forth. No particular or distinct behaviour applied to any of the groups, and the groups were constantly emerging, evolving and dissolving. Therefore using these categories as analytical boxes at face value did not make sense. Rather, distinguishing between the groups applied in certain contexts. I therefore urge the reader to bear in mind, that the categories of residents not are consolidated groups with distinct behaviour or experiences of neighbourhood, but rather articulated as distinct groups that only are meaningful in specific contexts.

Of the 129 informants, 32 were formally interviewed; of which two were professionals from *The Sønderbro Group*, three were community workers. They were included to obtain professional perspectives of the neighbourhood's development, history and social status and because they also took part in constructing neighbourhood identity. Besides they offered unique knowledge of the everyday life of the neighbourhood. Of the remaining formally interviewed informants eight were volunteers (in the various three settings), four Turkish individuals, four Tamil individuals, three Kurdish individuals, one Iraqi family, one alcoholic, five long term residents and one bingo-player. Selecting informants for formal interviews was based on their presence in the neighbourhood either in the various community in-door settings or in outdoor areas and on their ability to speak Danish.

All interviews were conducted in Danish and followed a simple guideline including questions related to personal biographies, their experiences of and attachment to the neighbourhood, their social engagement in the neighbourhood including the development process, their neighboring contacts and their

use of the public spaces[18]. The interviews were audio-recorded and lasted between 40 minutes and two and a half hours. The interviews took mainly place in the interviewee's private home, but a few were also conducted in *The Community House*. The interviews with community workers were conducted at their work place.

As I already knew most of the informants beforehand, the interview sessions were characterised by a friendly atmosphere. During my presence in the field and by participating in social events and interactions, I learned of local behaviour and meaningful conversations. I could thus refer to a topic or situation that became subject for further elaboration and dialogue. By using local categories and knowledge in e.g. interviews, I thus came to position myself within the commonly accepted neighbourhood jargon, and it both generated a familiarity as well as informing the process of the interviews (*article 1*).

3.3.3 Types of data: transcripts, fieldnotes and documents

The data consisted of field notes, interview transcripts and text materials regarding *Sønderbro's* development and activities. The fieldnotes were based on participant-observation in the settings described above. At all times I was carrying a notebook in which I scribbled key words and key phrases of observations and the activities I was participating in. These activities were not merely a result of deliberate selection, but were also determined by how informants' allowed me to take part in the activities and which roles I should possess (Otto 1997; see also *article 1*). Besides from consisting of an important part of the data, these occasions gave opportunity to invite informants to be formally interviewed. Lengthier passages of informal conversations and short interviews were also recorded in these notebooks. In total I filled three note-books, two in A5 size and one in A4. Ending each day I transcribed the field notes and included also my reflections of being in the field, of participating in neighbourhood life and activities, of how my role developed over time and of the residents' changing reactions and perspectives towards me (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995; see also *article 1*). These transcriptions may also be termed 'headnotes' which continues to develop while in the field, reflects the fieldwork process and as such contains the first steps towards an interpretation of the field (Sanjek 1990).

The formal interviews were all audio-recorded. Due to lack of resources only ten interviews were transcribed in their full length. Of the remaining part I transcribed important passages and summarised the less relevant passages. Two of the interviews were poor in detail due to inadequate Danish

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[18] See also interview guide in the appendix.

spoken. The interviews were re-listened several times to discover and rediscover the context of the interviews. Transcriptions are de-contextualised and de-temporalised conversations, which are 'freezed' into a written text (Kvale 2000; see also Ulrich 2010). As such transcriptions are artificial constructions from a verbal to a written form of communication (Kvale 2000). Therefore it is important to constantly involve the context of the interviews in the analysis and interpretation of the written texts, since contexts are informing the interview situations (Gubrium and Holstein 2008).

In addition to fieldnotes, headnotes, interview transcriptions and interview listening, several documents related to the neighbourhood's development, progress and future goals were collected. Local newspaper articles, minutes of community meetings, minutes of *The Sønderbro Group* meetings, a community diary, kept by a community worker, and Sønderbro publications were collected. The Sønderbro publications: *Sønderbrobladet* (2000- 2009) and *Et Indre Kvarterløft* (2007) were particular useful in exploring how the neighbourhood were constructed, by identifying key terms in the dominant neighbourhood discourse evident in these publications.

The fieldnotes and headnotes have determined my analysis to a greater extent than the formal interview transcriptions and other text documents. The latter are used to document and explicate the analytic categories and interpretations thereof that evolved during the fieldwork process and therefore appearing in the headnotes. Particularly interview passages are used to document how informants were positioning themselves within the hegemonic community discourse.

For the sake of clarity I have summarised the fieldwork process in the illustration below:

Selecting people and places:

Sønderbro Setting: 'gate keepers' identified.

Focus: How is Sønderbro constructed in the process of community building?

Multi-sited:
Main groups of Informants:
All groups:
- Sønderbro group
- community workers,
- volunteers
- alcoholics,
- immigrants,
- long-term residents,
- bingo-players

Main types of data:
Sønderbro publications, documents, transcripts, field notes and head notes

Focus: how do residents participate in community building?

Three settings chosen: Community house, Cultural house; 2nd hand-shop. Main groups of informants:
- Volunteers
- Community workers
- Residents participating in 'formalised' community activities

Main types of data:
Fieldnotes and headnotes, interview transcripts, recordings. Sønderbro publications and documents.

Focus: How is everyday life in neighbourhood being practiced?

Settings chosen: Axelborg Outdoor places: benches, green areas, gardens, etc. Main groups of informants:
- long term residents
- immigrants
- alcoholics
- volunteers

Main types of data:
Field notes and head notes, interview transcripts, recordings.

3.3.4 Exclusion and limitations resulting from the selection process

All conversations and interviews were conducted in Danish. There was a language barrier since not all immigrants spoke Danish. This has naturally excluded some residents from participating in this research. From an early stage of the fieldwork I decided to exclude the use of an interpreter, due to the research interest in residents who were actively engaged in community development. These residents were either Danish of origin or of other ethnic origin and having good Danish skills. There was thus no need for an interpreter. However as the fieldwork proceeded and I became engaged in more informal community activities, in which non-Danish-speaking residents were involved, the use of an interpreter became pertinent. Since this fieldwork was organised to be centred on participant-observation and on my interactions with informants, I presumed it to be 'disturbing' to have an interpreter present. I did become a familiar face among the immigrants particularly among unemployed women. Even though we did not have long conversations in Danish, I often sat with the women in the outdoor spaces and we would exchange short polite phrases in Danish. Fortunately this practice occasioned that other immigrants joined us, some of them speaking Danish. They would then translate our conversations and these occasions further caused opportunities to visit people in their private homes and for doing more focused interviews.

Immigrants speaking Danish are in general better integrated in Danish society. They have or have had jobs, have completed an education or grew up in the Danish society. Their competences in socialising with Danish persons as well as knowing the Danish societal system and its values are far better than immigrants who do not speak or understand Danish. These experiences and competences presumably had an impact on how they experienced and narrated they experiences of belonging to the neighbourhood. This issue is crucial to keep in mind, not to be tempted to take their accounts as representing their entire ethnic group. This issue applies naturally also to other groups in the neighbourhood, whether ethnic, religious or social.

For ethical reasons minors were also excluded from this research. Receiving parents' permission would have been too impractical as much of the fieldwork took place in every-day settings and conversations with informants occurred spontaneously.

A critical point could be raised at my exclusive focus on *Axelborg* rather than other parts of *Sønderbro*. The majority of my informants lived in *Axelborg* and the fieldwork took place mainly there. One of the major aims of *The Sønderbro Group* is to construct *Sønderbro* as a coherent neighbourhood; they seek to emphasise unity and to integrate residents from the various parts of the neighbourhood, both the public housing areas and the private housing areas. An alternative could have been to have chosen one of

the other public housing areas in *Sønderbro* with similar residential characteristics as *Axelborg*. But since *Axelborg* has a long history of engaging residents in neighbourhood activities, even before *The Sønderbro Group* came into existence, I decided it was a better choice, assuming that residents here were more experienced with neighbourhood development.

It made sense to separate professionals from volunteering residents. Although both had their daily lives in *Sønderbro*, and even though some professionals did in fact live there, the professionals were not subjected to 'being developed'. They were rather helping to improve conditions for those in need, and importantly, they received salary for their work. In participatory approaches it is decidedly essential to include 'locals' in development processes and 'locals' are defined as those people considered somewhat powerless (Kothari 2001). Implicit in this inclusion process is an asymmetrical power balance between residents and professionals, which at times during fieldwork was expressed explicitly by both partners. Distinguishing between professionals and residents is in this sense given *a priori* and some people, residents rather than professionals, are perceived more 'local' than others and thus better or more authentic representatives of the neighbourhood. Having included professionals as primary informants would undoubtedly have generated other forms of data, but to accommodate the research questions and the underlying and supporting theory of power embedded in participatory discourses, I decided it was important to make this distinction.

The Sønderbro Group however insists that they have a horizontal organisational structure, suggesting that all are participating on equal terms in decision making processes. This study then might be criticised for having an exclusive focus on residents rather than professionals who also took part in developing and constructing the neighbourhood. Distinguishing between professionals and residents in some instances is a fictive division, since they all are working towards the same goal: to improve the living conditions for residents in the area. For example the solidarity among group members, whether professionals or residents, was strong when confronted with governmental or local authorities. These authorities were described as having 'too rigid and slow working procedures', 'bureaucratic', 'using top-down approaches' and 'being prejudiced towards the neighbourhood'. Descriptions like these can be seen as components in a process of constructing an 'enemy' or a group's 'otherness' that in the end builds and strengthens group identity (see e.g. Wodak et al. 2005; Snow 2001; Castells 1997; Gillis 1994).

Selecting informants based on their use of public places and social interactions in them naturally excluded residents, who did not appear frequently in public. Undoubtedly they would have had other and supplementing perspectives of the neighbourhood which are not included in this thesis. At one

point however I rang doorbells in an attempt to get familiar with anonymous residents who did not appear in the institutionalized settings or the public places. However this fieldwork practice did not systematically explore who they were, nor give any thoroughly insights of their perspectives of the neighbourhood. It did only give a preliminary glance of their characteristics: some were mentally and socially disabled, others felt hindered due to old age, some experienced cultural and language barriers and others simply did not prioritise neighbourhood life due to for example work or family situations

3.4 Analytic process

3.4.1 Ethnographic analytical principles

The overall analytical approach adapted in this thesis is grounded in ethnographic analysis (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). There is no clear recipe of how to conduct ethnographic analysis, there are however some guidelines that are fruitful when accounting for analytic procedures. First analysis of data should not be seen as a distinct phase of research, but a process of a commitment to a dialectical interaction between data generation and data analysis. Theory, data collection and analysis are closely intertwined. For example reflecting upon the methods applied in *Street Corner Society,* Whyte (1966) argues that analysing our data does not occur in a straight line and that data on the first glance, not necessarily fall into any coherent pattern. In the experience of being absorbed in a confused mass of data: "we go on living with the data – and with the people – until perhaps some chance occurrence casts a totally different light upon the data, and we begin to see a pattern that we have not seen before" (Whyte 1966:279-280). In *article 1* we demonstrate how long-term engagement in the setting and interactions with the various groups influences the relationship with informants, and therefore adds new perspectives on previous discussed issues. Karen did early in the fieldwork make statements such as 'the Turkish are noisy', 'the Turkish are messy people' and 'the Turkish occupy the laundry hall'. At first I categorised these statements in themes of 'potentially conflicts between the various ethnic groups', but soon discovered that this category only applied in specific contexts, and thus could not be seen as a general attitude towards immigrants. Hence I moved back and forth from desk to field in order to 'test' emerging categories in other social contexts and their meaning to other informants.

Secondly the process of analysis does not stop, once we have left the field, nor when we have organised our data into themes. It continues in the process of writing ethnographic accounts since we in that process, and continued from other stages of research, apply reflexivity in the way we transform and translate our field experiences into scientific texts. In this sense "data are materials to think with"

(Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:158). The issues involved here are: the way we construct our text, the selective process of data we present, and the way we demonstrate relationships between data and concepts or theories. In ethnographic writing there is a continuous interplay between the concrete, local, empirical and the abstract, analytic, theoretical. The successful ethnographic text demonstrates a balance between these two levels. Analytic procedures are thus not explicitly described, but rather demonstrated in the text via these principles of dialogue between data and ideas. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007: 191-7).

3.4.2 Analytical procedure

The dataset was organised and categorised according to emerging themes, which were identified by comparing the various data sources. Apart from reorganising the dataset according to themes, I created categories of groups of residents, i.e. their ethnic origin, long-term or short-term residency, level and content of participation and use of the neighbourhood places. As described above this was not unproblematic as the groups constantly evolved and dissolved. However they were useful as guiding principles towards distinguishing between what was being said and by whom. I further developed categories of the contexts the data were generated in, i.e. where the observations and conversations took place, who were present and the social activities that 'framed' the places. These ways of preparing the analysis made it possible to compare themes across the different categories and explore the relationships between and within categories and subcategories.[19]

The theoretical perspectives used to make sense of the data, can be described in the following process. First the theoretical assumption is that in the community building process, a hegemonic discourse of the neighbourhood has been constructed, which is drawing on the global discourse of community participation (section 2.3). By analysing documents describing the neighbourhood's development as well as the fieldnotes, headnotes and interview transcripts, I identified this hegemonic discourse and its key terms. This hegemonic discourse is documented in *article 2* and chapter 4.2 *Sønderbro community discourse: constructing and performing neighbourhood identity*.

I then proceeded to analyse how residents narrated their own neighbourhood experiences. Riessmann states that we do not have direct access to experience, but that life comes to us in the form of

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[19]This method may be compared with 'constant comparative method' developed within the discipline of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998). I do not however claim to belong to the grounded theory tradition. The theory, method and central concepts inherent in grounded theory are related to positivistic epistemological positions (Lomborg and Kirkevold 2003), although lately, tendencies towards constructivism have emerged within grounded theory (Charmaz 2000, MacDonald and Schreiber 2001). Epistemologically my research is distinct from grounded theory in that I position my research in social constructionism (see also section 3.2).

stories; analysing stories thus becomes a way of analysing experiences (Riessmann 2008; 1993). Getting access to people's experience is in this sense through their stories. Importantly though:

> "Narratives are not simply reflections of experience, nor are they descriptive free-for-alls. Not just anything goes when it comes to experience. Rather narrative comprise the interplay between experience, storying practices, descriptive resources, purposes at hand, audiences, and the environment that conditions story telling" (Gubrium and Holstein 2006:19).

The way stories are constructed is then highly dependent on the context they are constructed in and to whom they are performed.

In analysing resident's narratives of neighbourhood experiences I have focused on how people are drawing on the hegemonic community discourse. A discourse refers to different and complex ways of thinking, speaking and acting. Discourses are both ideologies and practices that are connected to superior rules and regularities, and which constructs and is created by social reality. Discourses describe reality in specific ways, consisting of specific relations between categories, therefore excluding alternative ways of describing reality (Wright & Shore 1996; Laclau & Mouffe 1985). There are various discursive approaches amongst others: discourse theory (Laclau and Mouffe 1985), discursive psychology (Billig 1992; Edwards and Potter 1992; Davies and Harre 1990; Gergen 1985), and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1995). The different approaches share social constructivism, structuralism and post-structuralism as a source of inspiration. The theoretical concept *storylines,* applied in this thesis, originates from discursive psychology. By a discourse's *hegemonic* status I use the theory developed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985). A discourse is hegemonic when it has reached temporary closure, meaning that it is not being contested by other discourses, and it has reached a status as common sense or *doxa* (Bourdieu 1993). The reasons for its hegemonic status is related to political contexts, power and that people find it as a plausible way of thinking and acting. Importantly the hegemonic status should be understood as *temporary*, since a discourse never reaches a permanent status of closure (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:110-125).

The fact that Horsens is a member of WHO Healthy Cities Programme has made an impact on how local politicians and other agents approach development in the various public sectors (*article 2*). Key notions inherent in these policy documents are the prioritising of citizen's participation, voluntarism and community development. These ideas are also inherent in how *The Sønderbro Group* has constructed the community discourse, and as we shall see inform how residents narrate their experiences of community development. Davies' and Harre's (1990) concept of *storylines* is particularly relevant when describing and analysing collective consensus. The concept is not explicitly defined but contains: "a

particular interpretation of cultural stereotypes to which they are invited to conform [...] to contribute to that person's story line" (Davies and Harre 1990:6). *Storylines* is a mechanism that creates and maintains a specific discursive order and which is organised around specific events, moral values and characters (ibid:5). *Storylines* play an essential role in positioning the subject in a discourse. A subject position incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and localises people within the discourse when using that repertoire: "Once having taken up a particular position as one's own, a person inevitable sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, story-lines and concepts which are made relevant within the discursive practice in which they are positioned" (Davies and Harre 1990:3). Importantly though the assumption is that people do not unconsciously use the discourse, but that the discourse is *evoked* by their use of specific story-lines (see also Hajer 1995:56-57).

The concept of *storylines* is used in chapter 4. Based on the dataset presented in *article 2*, I argue that adopting the *Sønderbro* community discourse as one's own, provide authority to the individual and posit them to be part of community life. However, not all residents evoke the discourse, but rather challenge it as we shall see, by using other terminologies of community life.

In analysing how residents interacted with and relate to eachother, the basic theoretical assumption was that communities are socially constructed boundaries, consisting of symbolic acts and employed by individual agents (section 2.2). This assumption allowed me to view the data as meaningful acts employed to construct senses of community and which potentially would reveal alternatively ways of constructing community other than the hegemonic way. Chapter 5 Routines and relationships in everyday neighbourhood life and *article 3* builds on this assumption, and is further developed based on theories of neighbouring relationships (Kusenbach 2006; Lofland 1998).

The ethnographic analytical principle of interplay between theory and data can be read in the discussion section *Participatory discourses and ethnic minorities*. Here immigrants' weak neighbourhood identification and their lack of participation in neighbourhood building are related to other's research of immigrants' general lack of engagement in voluntary activities in overall Danish society. The textual dialogue between my data and others' ideas are then departure points of discussing essential values embedded in Danish culture that encourages civic participation, and which I argue informs the behaviour of the volunteers.

Sanjek (1990) states that developing theoretical orientations 'make re-reading fieldnotes and eye-opening experience' (Sanjek 1990:94). After having left the field I therefore re-read the fieldnotes several times with new theoretical and thematic perspectives. The sections *Living in a stigmatized*

neighbourhood and *Participatory discourses and ethnic minorities* were not research questions that I had prepared before going to the field, but rather resulted from an ongoing process of exploring the data and topics in academic literature that treated disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the meanings of volunteering in civic activities.

Below is illustrated the analytical procedures:

Research focuses: How is the neighbourhood Sønderbro constructed in the community building process and how do residents participate in this process.	Research focus: How is everyday neighbourhood life being practiced?

↓   ↓

Generating and processing data: Ethnographic approach

↓   ↓   ↓

Emerging themes:
stigmatisation
volunteer identity
ethnicity and
participation

Methodological reflections
Product:
Article 1:

Emerging themes:
Neighbouring
relationships
Creating home
territories

↓   ↓

Theoretical
orientation and
Analytical tools:
Narrative discoursive
approach

Theoretical
orientation and
Analytical tools:
Social
constructionism and
interactionism

↓   ↓

Product:
Article 2 and
chapter 4

Product:
Article 3 and
Chapter 5

3.5 Ethical dilemmas and considerations

Beginning the fieldwork I had not foreseen the vulnerability of the people involved in this project. At first glance, studying a neighbourhood and people's participation in it I (naïvely) believed I was studying what anybody could observe. I naturally guaranteed informants anonymity when participating in interviews and also informed of my presence and purpose of the research. I was interviewed in the local newspaper, I wrote a presentation to another paper and I gave presentation at meetings in *The Community House*. Further I made sure to make myself visible in the neighbourhood. I participated in anything you could participate in and I frequently used the public areas at different times during the day so as many residents as possible would become familiar with me. Residents regularly using *The Community House* and other public spaces soon became familiar with me and they were helpful in spreading the rumour that a researcher now was present in their community. Based on the information I gave residents, they then consented to or restrained from participating in the project.

Informants' decision on participating in research based on the information we give them is often defined as *informed consent*. The notion of *informed consent* however, raises ethical questions, most obvious in ethnographic fieldwork aimed at uncovering organised crime, e.g. trafficking organs (Scheper-Hughes 2004). Even though that my relations with informants was based on an 'openness' of the reasons of my presence, situations often occurred, where my role was indistinct. I was frequently a guest in people's private homes and at times I was invited to join in family gatherings, dinners and parties within the neighbourhood, and was thus introduced to residents' families and friends. In these situations my position became blurred. I was introduced to my informants' relatives as a researcher but was invited as a friend. Was I then to stop the fieldwork while joining in these parties or when I met people who were not part of the neighbourhood although part of my informants' networks? Fieldwork does not stop and begin with delimited situations, and our position as fieldworker, friend, acquaintance or community worker is not always clearly defined. Participating in our informants' lives is a total experience, demanding personal engagement as well as professional distance and thus involving ethical considerations. How and when to exclude a particular situation from fieldnotes, is dependent on the situation itself and we can only exclude these situations in our *written text*, or we can choose to camouflage the data or construct cover stories in which we are able to expose the points we wish to tell. The point is that any situation becomes part of the fieldwork; it becomes part of the fieldworkers experience, which in the end informs us of how we interpret the people and situations we study.

Furthermore dilemmas of *informed consent* occurred in relation to how many details of the research I gave. Research questions develop all the time in the process of fieldwork, as we by our mere presence in the field get new ideas and find new topics to follow, that we could not have foreseen. Informing of this development is often too complex and if we were to inform of all small changes, the research process would slow down as well as making it unsmooth (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). There were situations where I was participating in and observing neighbourhood festivals, where I had no chance of informing everybody of the research undertaken. There were also situations where informants raised political topics which contents I did not agree about, but still refrained to object to and I might even have given the impression that I did agree. These were situations where I deemed it to be crucial to let the informant develop his/her viewpoints, because they were so importantly related to experiences of being a resident. It might be argued and criticised that in these cases research was valued higher than the notion of *informed consent*.

Finally, *informed consent* raises questions when it comes to the analytical process, and subsequently our published results. Informants might agree to be participants in a research project investigating such and such questions, while the data might be analysed in relation to topics that occurred in the analytic process. In such cases the original meaning of *informed consents,* which was negotiated in the beginning phase of the research, loses its meaning. *Informed consent* is thus not an absolute and clear cut concept, but rather inevitable entails ethical dilemmas, that can be accommodated by our reflections. This position, also referred to as *ethical situationism* (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007) or *situated ethics* (Goodwin et al. 2003, Simons and Usher 2000), opens for careful weighing the prospects and consequences for particular research strategies in particular situations and research phases, and bearing in mind our obligations not to harm or exploit the people we study. This ethical approach must be employed based on a "realistic view of human relations, not an idealised one" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:225), meaning that the researcher-researched relationship is much more complex than prescribed beforehand in academic settings.

The relationship with my informants developed over time and I experienced social support and neighbouring helpfulness as a resident in the neighbourhood. Entering the field site involved ethical thoughts of 'intruding' into people's private homes for the purpose of doing research, of letting relationship develop and of leaving the field again. With the exception of those who do fieldwork in settings they normally appear in, terminating the fieldwork normally means leaving the field. When living close by, as is the case for me, this is not an option and might inflict guilt or bad consciousness. These difficulties typically mirror the relationships one has developed in the field. Some of my informants, particular those who had

poor social networks, saw my presence as a welcomed break in their daily routines and sometimes loneliness. They enjoyed the attention from a listening researcher as well as the dialogues developing in our interactions. Other informants confined in me with personal details of family relations, joys and problems in daily life. These relationships affected me personally and have been, and still are, issues to be managed.

3.6 Place anonymity

It soon became clear that residents' narratives were saturated with topics such as experiences of social marginalisation, violence, abuse of alcohol, racism and being imprisoned, not because I asked about it, but because it was important aspects of the resident's lives that informed their way of making sense of the social realities they took part in. The project was then notified to and approval was given by the Danish Data Protection Agency according to the rules of sensitive information and research. In addition I was facing the dilemma of anonymising the neighbourhood I was studying. It is a common practice to do so in some disciplines and in some parts of the world, assumingly to make people more difficult to identify. The rationale behind using community anonymity is thus based on an ethical imperative to protect our informants. Although our informants have the right to remain anonymous, there is no explicit prescription of disguising the identity of the places we study (Datatilsynet, American Anthropological Association). The practice of anonymising places is then based on historical circumstances as well as ideologically or methodologically perspectives rather than being a substantial connection between informant confidentiality and community pseudonyms (Szklut and Reeed 1991). Assuming I was doing the right thing to protect my informants, I followed this practice and in the publications the neighbourhoods appear by the pseudonyms: *Agerbæk* and *Hensedalen*. However by studying ethical issues concerned with anonymity of place (Nespor 2000, Szklut and Reed 1991) and by reading of other similar research project, emphasising the importance of context in neighbourhood studies (Warr 2005, Cattell 2001, Frohlich et al. 2002) I have decided to reveal the identity of the place.

When particular neighbourhoods are being exposed to research, the details of the neighbourhood contexts are critical for a thorough description and thereof understanding and interpretation. Features and characteristics of the neighbourhood are accounted for in residents' narratives and disguising these details would be too exhaustive if not meaningless to accomplish. Neighbourhoods consist of complex layers of experience in which historical, social, political and cultural details are embedded. For example in *article 2* I demonstrate a story of stigmatisation:

'a square in the neighbourhood is called Spedalsø, an old name of the area referring to its location near the old hospital (i.e. spedal). In Danish Spedal is considered a near homonym with spedalsk, meaning 'leper'. This has led some residents to interpret Spedalsø as the place where lepers would be quarantined. The meaning is inaccurate, but it captures the sense of marginality and social deprivation of its members' (*article* 2:610).

Although in this article I chose to anonymise the neighbourhood, I also chose to tell the above story which discloses the neighbourhood by its real name. I should of course have been consistent from the beginning and calling the neighbourhood by its real name. Nespor (2000) argues against anonymising neighbourhoods since it often is too ineffective to truly cover the identity of a particular neighbourhood. In addition he argues that anonymisation of places assumes that theoretical insights obtained from one place can easily be transferred to other places. The point is that historical and political processes, geography and culture that constitutes the context of places is shaved off and this 'placelessness' defines the static and abstract space of academic discourse.

Finally the fact that Horsens has been a WHO 'Healthy City' since 1987 has indeed increased the awareness of community building and citizens' participation in various places of the town. Studying a neighbourhood includes investigating local policy documents, newspaper articles and historical accounts, which also are important data in this research. Obviously data are subjected to interpretations, but by using tactics to blur the origin of our data we challenge the validity of our research and our obligation to ensure that generalisations based upon our research are valid:

"In order to conceal the name of the research site, do we disguise our sources behind such clumsy circumlocutions as "the local newspaper" or "the town's history", or, even worse, omit necessary or pertinent data? How can we justify making these materials unavailable to other scholars and still call our studies scientific"? (Szlut and Reed 1991:106).

To accommodate the validity of this research in line with scientific obligations as well as acknowledging the importance of context in people's accounts of neighbourhood experiences, I choose not to disguise the neighbourhood in question.

Part 2: Data presentation, analysis and concluding remarks

The fieldwork conducted in this research project generated huge amounts of ethnographic details that could not be fully presented in the articles constituting this thesis. This part is therefore dedicated to 1) present more thoroughly the ethnographic data, that forms the analytical base on which my conclusions build 2) to further elaborate on the main points extracted from *article 2* and *article 3* and 3) to introduce new themes, which have not been subjected for publication yet.

The overall aim of this thesis was to investigate how people are participating in building their own neighbourhood and subsequently exploring the everyday practices of neighbourhood life. The specific research questions are treated in the following order:

- How is neighbourhood identity constructed in the process of community building and which values are enhanced in this process?

  Treated in *article 2* and chapter 4

  o What is the role of the status as a 'stigmatised' neighbourhood in the community building process?

  Treated in section 4.2 *Living in a 'stigmatised' neighbourhood*.

- How do residents relate to this construction and how do they participate in it?

  Treated *article 2* and chapter 4

  o How do residents relate to participatory discourses?

  Treated in section 4.3 *Participatory discourses and ethnic minorities*

- How is everyday neighbourhood life being practiced? Article 3 and chapter 5.

  o How do residents relate to their neighbourhood?

  Treated in section 5.2 *"This is our bench: creating home territories in neighbourhoods.*

  o How do residents interact with eachother?

  Treated in section 5.3 *The relationship between people in neighbourhoods*.

Chapter 6 contains suggestions for themes to include when building healthy communities in the future. Limitations and weaknesses of this thesis are also presented and discussed in this final chapter.

4. Neighbourhood construction and participation in neighbourhood building

This chapter first summarises *article 2* in order to introduce the main points. I then elaborate on these points by using ethnographic data as illustrations in section 4.2 *Sønderbro community discourse: constructing and performing neighbourhood identity*. Section 4.3 *Living in a 'stigmatised' neighbourhood* discusses the neighbourhood's position as socially disadvantaged and what this means in the community building process. Finally in section 4.4 *Participatory discourses and ethnic minorities*, I discuss how ethnic minorities relate their neighbourhood experiences to a migration context rather than contexts of participatory discourses and volunteer identity.

4.1 Summary of *article 2: "A good spot": health promotion discourse, healthy cities and heterogeneity in contemporary Denmark*

This paper first sets the stage of Horsens as a WHO Healthy city to determine how and why ideals embedded in health promotion, such as empowerment and participation, is influencing local policy makers in articulating and constructing community development programmes. Based on these ideals, a group of local social entrepreneurs took the initiative to form the group: *The Sønderbro Group* (described in the article as *Agerbæk gruppen*). Their goal was to construct a new neighbourhood, by building social coherence among diverse population groups living in various sub-areas, ranging from socially deprived building blocks, like *Axelborg* (*Hensedalen*) to nice middle-class private housing areas. Beginning around 1990, concrete improvements took place; the apartments of *Axelborg* were renovated, green areas were constructed, a community council office opened in *Axelborg*, a media campaign was launched to improve the reputation of *Axelborg* and *Sønderbro*, and a new community centre was built offering assistance in e.g. job opportunities, language courses, physical exercise and general human intercourse.

Along these activities a particular community discourse emerged, one that celebrates the participation of the residents, and which is rooted in hegemonic participatory discourses, emphasising that community development happens best, initiated by residents themselves. We found this discourse present in residents' narratives of neighbourhood life and in various documents and articles produced by members of *The Sønderbro Group*. Stories of the neighbourhood were constructed around notions of 'before' and 'after' that *Sønderbro* was formulated and developed as a coherent neighbourhood. The past was

associated with a high crime rate, a poor reputation, social isolation, neighbourhood insecurity and stigmatisation, whereas the present carries connotations of success. For example it was recognised that *Sønderbro*, and particularly *Axelborg*, had become a better place to live, a place where neighbours cared for each other and residents were actively engaged in neighbourhood life and development. Neighbourhood belongings had strengthened, and even neighbourhood pride had evolved.

I found that practicing this community discourse was most common among the volunteers and other residents who were engaged in activities in the community centres of *Sønderbro* and *Axelborg*. The volunteers found personal meaning in those activities and thus identified with the discourse. However we also found oppositional views of the neighbourhood's development. Some of the residents and even some of the volunteers gave the impression that they found "the whole thing, becoming too fancy", since *Sønderbro* was becoming more organised, formalised and professional, and was in this sense contributing to the experience of being in competition with each other.

The discourse was further being challenged by notions of 'proper' behaviour. On one hand it was encouraged that residents were engaged in each other's lives, offering help and caring for one another's well being. On the other hand there was a strong consensus of not interfering in each other's lives, to respect privacy and to mind one's own business. It was even encouraged to exclude residents who did interfere, who risked becoming known as 'gossips' and people lacking moral. On the basis of the demonstrated opposing views of community life and on who and how the community discourse is practiced, we concluded the paper by arguing that a focus on social positioning of residents and of how neighbourhoods are historically and politically constructed, might add new perspectives in health promotion of communities. The social positioning of the residents has a great say in who gets to represent the community as well as how it is being represented, and the processes that have led to the specific demographic composition of the residents.

4.2 Sønderbro community discourse: constructing and performing neighbourhood identity

Apart from the improved physical surroundings of the neighbourhood, an important component of building *Sønderbro* as a coherent entity was enhancing the residents' sense of belonging to the neighbourhood. The community building process can be determined as a process of constructing a specific neighbourhood identity in which the neighbourhood and its residents are perceived in particular ways. This section first

demonstrates how the neighbourhood and its residents are characterised and how this particular neighbourhood identity is being performed by residents.

Axelborg in the past was perceived to be a chaotic place, dominated by criminals. Headlines in the local media during the early 1990 state[20]: "*Axelborg center of violence*" (Horsens Folkeblad) and "*Child assaulted in Axelborg*" (Horsens Folkeblad). In this period the Housing agency faced problems in renting out the apartments. Before the refugees arrived and before the renovations began, Axelborg frequently had empty apartments. It was not a desired place to live due to its poor reputation. The state prison was believed to play a central role in building up this reputation. Both due to that families of long-term prisoners moved to Horsens and settled in *Axelborg* and that:

> "*The governmental prison service used Akselborg as a re-entry of the ex-prisoners to society and they lived in small rooms in the basements. They were tough boys and we had some problems with them…..They smoked hash and whatever they could find, boiled opium poppies and stuff. There was a smell of ether in the whole basement* (laughs)" (Jens, community worker, July 11th 2007).

As demonstrated in *article 2* a media campaign was launched in the early 1990's to communicate stories of success. Local residents appeared in the media to inform of their personal experiences of living in the neighbourhood and of the ongoing activities in *The Community House* and later *The Cultural House*. For example a headline in Horsens Folkeblad, Aug. 17th 2002 stated: "Finally a success: The ugly duckling became a beautiful swan". Whether or not these stories had an impact on 'outsiders' point of view of *Sønderbro* is hard to judge, but it definitely had an impact on how residents perceived themselves and *Sønderbro.* A community worker explains:

> "*In the early 1990's we began to renovate….Previously everything that had to do with violence, whether appearing in TV syd, Jyllandsposten, or Folkebladet, was related to Axelborg. Then all of a sudden stories appeared 'where the sun was shining'. And people were proud of coming from Axelborg"* (Eik, community worker, Nov. 14th 2006).

The 1990's thus transformed, through physical renovations, social initiatives, and a media campaign, the neighbourhood to a 'normal' place and today both residents and community workers characterised it as

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[20] Copies of these headlines were given to me by a community worker. Unfortunately the dates were not stated thereon.

peaceful, a place of neighbourhood solidarity and even said to be a 'boring' place, although said with a humoristic glint in the eye, referring to its criminal past:

> *You know back then everything was a mess. I grew up just across the street and I remember coming here after school. Back then I didn't notice it was a bad neighbourhood. You know what kids are like. They don't have the same prejudices against people. But I have been told that the community workers would never enter the basement alone* [where former prisoners lived]. *There were some cases of personal assaults, so the workers would always come in pairs ….. We don't have these kinds of problems anymore. This is just a normal place to live now"* (Michael, community worker, 2nd August 2007)

Characterising Axelborg as a 'normal' place to live, rather than a socially disadvantaged neighbourhood, is a key component in the Sønderbro community discourse, which apart from distancing itself from the poor reputation, is a strong tool in the de-stigmatisation process, creating community consensus and thus belonging (see also next section).

Having advantaged to become a normal place, particular qualities of its residents are promoted and created in the community discourse. For example as mentioned in *article 2,* a frequently told event of the past was the project of building a new cultural centre – *The Culture House*. Through initiative of the residents and organised by *The Sønderbro Group*, residents raised money to build this centre by contacting local businesses and organisations. During this process of fundraising, a sort of symbolic 'piggy bank' was placed at a central square so residents could follow the process of how much money had been collected. The essence of this story is that residents have the capability to act and succeed in spite of their low social position in society, adversity and disbelief from outside agents. This quality of having a strong will and ability to 'self-help', have come to characterise the residents of *Sønderbro.*

Another central key component of the community discourse was construction of being a good neighbour, emphasising taking action to help neighbours:

> *My mother was among those keeping an eye on everything that was going on. She lived in one of the high buildings and had a pretty good view of the neighbourhood. The police also knew her, but only for good things. One late evening she noticed some people were trying to break in to the supermarket. She called the police and they arrived fast enough to prevent an actual break in……Also there was a woman who noticed that curtains from an apartment hadn't been pulled for some days. She also called the police. It turned out that the person in*

that apartment was very sick and was then hospitalised. And that is the good thing about living here. That people are watching each other. So you don't die in your home, without anybody noticing (Karin, resident, July 17th 2007).

Being a good neighbour also contained notions of interfering; both related to helping out, but also if experiencing neighbours had trouble. One example is stated in *article 2*, where Laila confronts the mother, who had a 'troubled' teenage son. Confrontations however may not always turn out nice. An alternative key characteristic of being a good neighbour, which is not part of the Sønderbro discourse, is 'to mind one's own businesses'. Interference then is highly depended on contexts, people involved and situations.

Success of neighbouring intervention as well as taking action by own hand is illustrated by the following story:

"*She* [a community worker] *tells of an episode, where a woman comes to the community house, beaten up by her husband. In a situation like this, she wouldn't try to persuade her to go to the women's home: "then she can sit there and then she will begin missing her husband, then she will return home and they will have a reunion. After a while she will be beaten again. Instead there are other women here, who have helped her. They were sitting and talking one day. The day after she had left her husband*" (fieldnotes 14th August 2006).

This excerpt illustrates that besides from being assisted by neighbours, the most efficient aid comes from within the local environment, rather than being applied from 'above'. This corresponds with key notions in the community participation discourse accounted for in chapter 2, where it is stated that development or change must come from locals themselves. In line with notions of empowerment, *The Sønderbro Community Discourse* aims at strengthened the residents' belief that they can take action by their own hands, providing meaning in life as well as giving them a sense of controlling their own life course. *The Sønderbro Community Discourse* thus draws on values embedded in the hegemonic participation discourse.

In analysing my dataset it became clear that mainly volunteers, those residents participating in community building, identified within the Sønderbro discourse, both regarding how Axelborg was described before and after the renovation period, but also regarding the notions of being able to act for changes and being a resourceful person:

"*When I first came here* [in the community house] *I was quiet and timid. I wouldn't dare to open my mouth and speak my opinion. But now, Jenny told me the other day that I had changed a lot. And it is to her credit. She taught me a lot about putting my foot down.....Now,*

you know I come daily helping out and so. I think I have helped many of the residents here. Also the immigrants or what to call them ehh… New-Danish [nydanskere]. *Sometimes they do not understand the letters they receive from the municipality and then I help translate* (Bente, volunteer, 19th Dec. 2006)

Likewise a former volunteer, I was introduced to in the beginning of the fieldwork, now having a full time job says: "*I had many trouble with the municipality. My social worker told me that there was no way I could have a job as a single mother and three small children. I therefore did not get much help in applying for jobs. To day I am working full time*" (Anette, resident, 8th August 2006). It is through self-action, through defying 'the system' and one's marginal position that they demonstrate that they have a worth, that they have become *empowered*.

Besides from demonstrating empowerment, frequently I heard volunteers tell of how *Axelborg* in the past was a place not to enter after dark, whereas today residents are eager to help each other out. The quote introducing *article 2*: "*In the old days, it was very unsafe to live here. If you threw a flat tyre from the seventh floor, it would be stolen before it reached the ground. If you do the same today, it would be fixed*" captures the essence of *The Sønderbro Community Discourse*.

As stated in chapter two, it is in the construction of 'otherness', in our relations to others, that we come to define ourselves. The 'otherness' of Sønderbro is here represented by the old times in Axelborg. By constantly referring to how Axelborg was in the past and comparing it with presence, *The Sønderbro community discourse*, was constructed and reconstructed by various community members' narratives of past and present. Importantly these stories might not have been personally experienced, but are rather specific representations of the past. Processes of identification reify the particular group, since certain, unique and flattering stereotypes are produced, maintained and reproduced; like we also see it in the construction of larger community identities such as national identities (see e.g. Billig 1995). In Cohen's words: "People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity" (Cohen 1985:118). Neighbourhood then is much more and beyond locality since it becomes navigation points in residents own personal stories of selfhood

The point however is not whether these representations really happened or not, or whether they were experienced personally. Maurice Halbwach's (1992) notions of collective memory might aid us in understanding connections between representations of the past and identity. He understands the past as constructed and based on present social relations and practices, and is thus separated from a 'proper' objective past. Memory is a product of how we interpret the social world, through own experiences and

within particular social frameworks. This is not to deny that certain events actually did take place in the past, but to emphasise the selective 'exploitation' of past events to fit present social and political processes that gain authority through accumulative memory practices (Schwartz 1982). Memory work or presentations of the past is thus a social practice, depending on how we define ourselves or which identity we represent:

> "We are constantly revising our memories to suit our current identities. Memories help us make sense of the world we live in; and "memory work" is, like any other kind of physical or mental labour, embedded in complex class, gender and power relations that determine what is remembered (or forgotten), by whom and for what end " (Gillis 1994:3).

Identity and memory are thus interdependent factors, changeable across time and space. We produce personal memories so they fit the 'cosmological' order, we at certain times identify with and simultaneously the 'cosmological' order is a product of how we interpret the past. Transferring these ideas to representations of the past in *Axelborg*, residents who narrate their stories in particular ways, both reproduce certain notions of the past and at the same time identify themselves within a certain social order. Davies and Harre's concept of *storylines* (1990) is useful in understanding this process[21]. Narratives containing specific patterns of the neighbourhood's history can be seen as *storylines* that have become accepted as specific ways of talking about and understanding neighbourhood development and which positions the individual who is using them within a hegemonic discourse. Residents, particularly volunteers, adopted and took part in developing *storylines* of how the neighbourhood had changed from being an unsafe place to a friendly area, and stressing that this process had happened by initiatives of the volunteers themselves.

These insights are important when understanding why some residents are participating as volunteers in the process of community building. For them participation contains meaningful activities, that apart from applying them with personal content of being useful for the community and of socialising with fellow community members, is a mean of expressing neighbourhood identity as it is formulated by *The Sønderbro Group* and its members. It provides residents with a certain social position in the wider community and in some cases even provides them with authority. Participation then is a way of expressing that you identify with the neighbourhood, more specifically with the formulated, formalised and authoritative notions of how the neighbourhood is characterised. Importantly though, it is crucial to clarify which residents actually are using *storylines* to tell their own neighbourhood experiences. Taken together

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[21] The concept of *storylines* is explicated in the methodological section.

the articles state that only a small part of the residents actually are participating in neighbourhood development, and also demonstrate that there are alternative ways of representing the neighbourhood. It possibly would be more appropriate to name it 'volunteer' identity, rather than neighbourhood identity, as it is mainly volunteers who are identifying with it.

4.3 Living in a 'stigmatised' neighbourhood

The neighbourhood's social position in a wider societal context has an influence on how residents perceive themselves as well as how outsiders perceive the neighbourhood and its residents. Neighbourhoods are constructed and interpreted, not just by its residents but also by external agents such as professionals providing services, local businesses and politicians and from the media environment which alter public perceptions. The media appearances of *Axelborg* in local newspapers during the 1980's were dominated by stories of violence and vandalism and this process fed the public opinion as well as contributing to mythmaking and stigmatisation (*article 2*).

Public housing has been associated with social stigma across time and space due to poverty and physical and social disorder. Already in the 1960's Rainwater (1966) concluded on his project in a lower class neighbourhood in Missouri that: "their inability to control" the physical environment and worn down buildings "tells them that they are failures as autonomous individuals" and when they try to improve their physical conditions "they are generally exposed in their interactions with caretakers" to further moral degradation since they are blamed for their insufficiency (Rainwater 1966: 29-30 in Vale 1995: 649). Poor people have by definition access to fewer resources than non-poor and leave them in a position of being limited in performing social requirements due to their incapabilities of reciprocating the social and financial support they are deemed to have received (Reidpath et al. 2005; Warr 2005; Waxman 1983). Moral failure is often associated with poverty, which can be used as a way of legitimising poor people's continuously marginalisation and exclusion. There is however a distinction between the 'deserving' poor and the 'non-deserving' poor; i.e. poor people might not be poor by their own fault, whereas others might take advantage of the welfare system (Reidpath et al. 2005; Waxman 1983).

The political and historical processes that led to the construction of public housing neighbourhoods and its demographic composition are important steps in the stigmatisation process. In this process what is perceived as 'normal' is being shaped. Goffman (1963) defines stigma as an: "attribute that is deeply discrediting" and reduces the stigmatised person: "from a whole and usual person to a tainted

and discounted one" (Goffman 1963:3). He argues that stigma arises during social interaction, when one social group possesses attributes that are deviant in relation to perceived norms; and that this group is incapable of performing social requirements in social interactions (Goffman 1963). Stigma is thus dependent on the relationship between attributes and stereotypes. This relationship is determined by a process composed of: i) The social, economic and cultural forces that create and maintain human differences. ii) The linking of negative stereotyping to human differences. iii) The separation of 'us' from 'them' and iiii) The experiences of the categorised person or groups as having lost status and being discriminated (Link and Phelan 2001). The process of stigmatisation is highly dependent on access to resources, on social, economic and political power that: "allows the identification of differentness, the construction of stereotypes, the separation of labelled persons into distinct categories and the full execution of disapproval, rejection, exclusion, and discrimination" (Link and Phelan 2001: 367). Stigma in this sense is a way of controlling community membership, of maintaining a specific social order and of justifying forms of social, political and economic exclusion (Reidpath et al. 2005).

The consequences of living in stigmatised neighbourhoods have been linked to generating distrust between neighbours, enforcing social isolation and being a barrier for building relationships with other communities (Cattell 2001; Cambell and Gillies 2001). Particularly the limited opportunities to link with other communities, in attempts to build social capital, are maintaining stigmatised neighbourhoods in their social position (Warr 2005). The role of stigmatisation also has a crucial role in *Sønderbro storylines*. It was being used as a strategy to build a sense of belonging and of unity. Residents' perceptions of the neighbourhood were permeated with notions of the 'outside world's' prejudices against them (see also Hayden 2000). Frequently residents told of prejudices they were met with, when interacting with individuals, public services and private businesses outside the neighbourhood. One informant told of how he was refused a loan only after telling his address. Another of how she was met with suspiciousness and rudeness, when asking for help at the municipality office:

> "*There was a lot of paperwork after my husband died and I moved [to Axelborg]. There was a woman at the national registration office and she looked at me when I handed in the paper work and said: "I assume you are divorced". It was so humiliating. I learned I could receive financial aid because I was alone with a child. I didn't know such things - I always took care of myself you know. I then had to contact a lot of different offices. But I never said I was from Axelborg. Never. I gave the street address instead* (Grethe, 1st March 2007).

The residents shared experiences of being stigmatised and that just because of their geographical location. A commonly told neighbourhood story, published in *article 2*, demonstrates that a central square in Sønderbro, *Spedalsø*, is perceived to be named after leprosy, *spedalske*, since it was believed that leprous patients were isolated in the area in the old times. This interpretation of the name, although not strictly correct in a historical sense, clearly demonstrates that residents orient their interpretations of the social world towards experiences of being 'outcasts', excluded from and marginalised in the wider society. For some residents, they even themselves had prejudices before moving into *Axelborg*:

> "*When I moved out here twenty years ago I thought it would only be for a short while. I only planned to stay here for six months. I came here because I was getting a divorce. I kind of stuck to my own businesses, because I thought I wouldn't stay for that long. But perhaps also because at the time I had a newborn……I was embarrassed to live here. Back then you didn't dare tell anyone that you lived here and I was afraid to let my children grow up here…But I didn't move. After a while I started coming in the community house for bingo. I was worried in the beginning. But I soon found out that they* [Axelborg residents] *also are human beings* (laughs). *And now I know a lot of people here. Actually more people know who I am, because they know I am in the community house*" (Bente, volunteer, Dec. 19th 2006).

She herself was full of prejudgments of the neighbourhood and its residents, but she learned that "they were also human beings". Yet another informant told of her own experience of becoming a resident:

> "*When I moved here I was afraid of some of the residents. I mean some of the people who lived here back then, weren't exactly angels. They were drunks, drug addicts and so forth. I was really afraid of them. Until one of the neighbours said to me: "try and imagine – they would never hurt you. As soon as they find out you belong here, they wouldn't touch a hair on your head. On the contrary if an outsider tries to harm you, you can be sure they will try and protect you". And of course she was right. I just didn't think of it that way. I was just so afraid*" (Karin, resident, July 17th 2007)

She too, recalls her earliest memories of *Axelborg* as fearful, but soon learns that her fear is based on misunderstandings and prejudices. When 'they' learn that she too is a resident, 'they' will include her in the community, support and protect her. Her statement implies that there is a strong social bond between the residents and that they stick together against threats from the outside. Even residents who are not 'angels', because of their drug abuse, become 'guardian angels' protecting against non-residents. Her statement further implies that the discriminatory attitude applied to *Axelborg* and its residents are not justifiable and

only by being included in the community, one will learn of the 'real' and friendly *Axelborg*. In other words stigmatisation was an important component in neighbourhood identification and was used as a strategy to express neighbourhood identity. This is not to be mistaken with identification as victims, but rather to emphasise that in spite of being disliked and treated as outcasts, they had a rather 'normal' life in the neighbourhood and importantly, were able to take action as *The Sønderbro Community Discourse* stresses and described in the previous section. There is thus both pride involved in living in a stigmatised neighbourhood, having undergone a long development process in which residents are pro-active, and 'shame' or embarrassment due to the frequent prejudices met outside the neighbourhood.

There was however residents who did not experience being stigmatised or did not put too much notice on it. Generally residents stated that they were content with living in the neighbourhood for reasons related to: central location, short distances to schools, child care and shopping centres, services from the housing agency was satisfactory and generally neighbours were perceived to be friendly and the social tone in the neighbourhood pleasant:

> "*We have lived here for twenty years. When we came it was good. It was like living in a hotel. I lived many poor places with my parents, sometimes with drug addicts and loud music being played all night.........Sometimes we are talking about getting a house, but it is difficult. And we don't want to live far from Axelborg. Here are people to talk with. I know of some of the Turkish immigrants bought houses away from here. It is very difficult for them in winter. Because here in Axelborg there are many immigrant children and they play together*". (Sengül, resident, 30th Nov. 2006).

Some residents would have many and close social relationships in the neighbourhood; other residents mainly had their social networks outside the neighbourhood, and importantly, did not feel they were lacking social contacts in their close environments (*Article 3,* see also next chapter).

Stigmatised neighbourhoods with their connotations of high crime rates, drug abuse and other forms of diverging social behaviour and social insecurity are then not necessarily experienced as such by their residents. These perspectives challenge recent trends in policies aimed at developing stigmatised neighbourhoods. Embedded in these policies are notions that people living in stigmatised neighbourhoods are socially isolated and lack social networks and thus do not have access to social support or resources beneficial for accommodating everyday life circumstances (Manzatti 2002; Pløger 2001). Contemporary neighbourhood regeneration projects, share an understanding that these neighbourhoods can be 'lifted' out of their low social position by constructing prophylactic generic chains; i.e. by creating social networks,

structured through the spatial organisation of the neighbourhood in the form of supplying a variety of social activities, which will enforce socially diverging individuals to participate and thus be integrated in their close environments. This process will presumably lead to a better quality of life, strengthening sense of belonging and sense of coherence and thus anti-social behaviour or diverging behaviour will be reduced. The political desire to secure stability and social 'order' in stigmatised neighbourhoods then assumes homogeneity related to ethics, norms and values (Pløger 2002a). These initiatives aim at engaging 'resourceful' individuals in their neighbourhood, either professionals or residents, to generate a moral responsibility to solve the problems in the neighbourhood through collective action.

This rationale is highly reflective in the development of *Sønderbro* and is also replicated in some resident's narratives of 'proper' neighbourhood behaviour, emphasising care for one another as well as imposing social control (*Article 2*). The strong emphasis on community solidarity is inspired by the philosophical orientation *communitarism* in which community is promoted as an ethical imperative[22]. Communities are perceived as 'natural' in the sense that they exist *a priori* to human existence, thus unavoidable to humans. We strive to become part of communities and along with the right to belong to communities we have the duty to be participative in them and be responsible to them (Pløger 2002a). In this sense, notions of communities, neighbourhoods or local environments are orientated towards a pre-modernistic form of community, a nostalgic idea that is associated with Tönnie's concept of *Gemeinschaft* (1973).

The ideas that de-stigmatisation projects are built on, are then not necessarily related to the 'reality' of peoples' lives in these neighbourhoods nor their needs and hopes. Living in poor neighbourhoods is not equivalent to having poor lives. As demonstrated in *article 3* there are various ways of perceiving and practicing neighbourhood life. Not all residents have a desire to engage socially with their neighbours, nor to be participative in development processes, nor to secure social and moral order, as determined by *The Sønderbro Community Discourse*. They too have jobs to take care of, families to attend to, activities outside of the neighbourhood to go to, and socialising with people other than residents from the same neighbourhood. Early in the process of during fieldwork I was confronted with this contradiction:

> *"On the way back on the train I wonder, where the problem really is. Here various kinds of people are living, having different backgrounds, ethnicity and yes some have problems. They*

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[22] Proponents of *Communitarism* are amongst others Amatai Enzioni, Alasdair MacIntyre and Charles Taylor. For an introduction see Fischer (1998). *Communitarism* originated as a critique of modernity and its focus on individualism. The critique is a protest of the destruction of common norms, values and moral and they argue for a reconstruction of civil society's autonomy in relation to welfare society.

may not be among the smartest, the most beautiful and successful, or the healthiest and a large proportion are receiving financial aid. But they have a life and even meaningful lives. They have a family. What are they supposed to do? Are they going to be empowered and to do what? Am I just constructing my own field here?" (Headnotes August 11th 2006).

Naturally I also learned during fieldwork that some residents really did need a helping hand to sort out job situations, language courses, improving social contacts and preventing abusive behaviour of various kinds. And as stated in the previous section, some residents felt they had become empowered through aid by community workers and that these experiences enforced emotions of attachment to the neighbourhood. Mazanti (2002) concludes in her research of a stigmatised neighbourhood that it is a positive asset to have local, social networks, but it is not being practiced in many places, not even in middle-class private housing areas. Residents in deprived neighbourhoods have similar relations and attachments to their local environment as residents in better-off neighbourhoods. A few are locally engaged, while the majority have social networks through their work places, friends and families (Mazanti 2002). It has been argued that the increased focus on poor neighbourhoods through initiatives of increasing social engagement in fact are components of a stigmatising process since it positions these neighbourhoods in a permanent status as social test areas (Pløger 2002b, Vale 1995). Whether or not this is the case for *Sønderbro* cannot be judged here, but it seems only fair to be aware of residents' everyday life circumstances and perceptions of neighbourhood and to include these perceptions in future neighbourhood work.

4.4 Participatory discourses and ethnic minorities

Although this project did not explicitly aim at uncovering how ethnic minorities participated in neighbourhood building, it became evident that they had other ways of constructing neighbourhood than ethnic Danes. Ethnic minorities in *Axelborg* constituted 60 percent of the total number of residents. The three major ethnic groups were Tamil, Turkish and Kurdish. They were less likely to use *The Sønderbro Community Discourse* and its embedded *storylines*. When asking about neighbourhood experiences, volunteers and ethnic Danes would relate their stories to the distinction between before and after the renovation of *Axelborg* and to their experiences of stigmatisation. I found that when talking to ethnic minorities of their neighbourhood experiences, we often ended up talking about being migrants in Denmark. Their stories of neighbourhood were embedded in experiences of being ethnic minorities, rather than in experiences of being residents in a stigmatised neighbourhood:

"E: *How many years did you live in Axelborg?*

Siwan: *I came to Denmark 16 years ago and I have lived 16 years in Axelborg. I like it here and I have no problems with people…..For 14-15 years now I had my own businesses. I don't want to move to Sjælland although I have family and friends there. I like quiet towns……I like to work and don't want to sit at home on the couch watching TV and just getting money. I came from Turkey, but I am not Turkish, I am Kurdish. But we could not speak our own language and so. It was difficult we could not be ourselves ehhh….. have our own passport you know. Now I am a Danish citizen. I like working and don't want to go the social offices. I can't sit still I do all kind of things and pay my tax. We are responsible to take care of ourselves. We live here now you know"* (Sirwan, resident, Kurdish migrant, 26th July 2007)

Being in *Axelborg* was about being in Denmark, of experiences that enabled or enforced people to leave their countries of origin and of experiencing settling and integrating into Danish society. Sirwan related his story of being in *Axelborg* to being Kurdish in Turkey, of not being able to proper express his ethnic identity by speaking his own language or by having a Kurdish passport. The seemingly paradox is that he still not has 'his own' passport, now being a Danish citizen, having a Danish passport. Instead of stressing exclusive mechanism in Denmark, as he experienced them in Turkey due to his Kurdish identity, he emphasises that he 'can't sit still' and 'like to work', thus expressing willingness to pay his tax and take part in Danish society.

Likewise the Tamil residents I interviewed emphasised their experience of *becoming refugees* and of how they entered Denmark and thus *Axelborg:*

"I came here from Sri Lanka in 1986, because there was a war. First I thought of going to Canada, because I have family there. But I couldn't. I couldn't get out in a normal way. I had to pay a lot of money. Then I thought of Denmark. Danish refugee aid had some apartments here in Axelborg at the time and we were six Tamils who shared.... When I came I went to a Danish language course for 10 months. Later I started at the technical college, but it was difficult to find an internship. Finally I succeeded, but I couldn't find a job. Then I went back to school again. But still could not find a job. I didn't want to stay at home " (Siva, resident, Tamil refugee 8th August 2007.

Like Sirwan, Siva builds his *Axelborg* story on past experiences and also emphasises that 'he didn't want to stay at home. Frequently I was also told stories of experiencing poor working conditions, of experiencing exploitation by employers and Danish politicians, of not being able to find jobs, of bitterness due to the years of hard toil that caused harm to their bodies, making them unable to perform in the labour market:

"I have pains in my arms and back from working life. Now I have been 'evaluated' by the municipality. They say I am too healthy to receive incapacity benefit (førtidspension) but I feel too sick to work. I am entitled for a 'flex job', but I can't find any such positions……It has been tough. Money we have, but we are bored when we don't have so much family around us. We are all sick from stress here. We just sit and watch TV…We have been back in Turkey and the doctors there ask us: "Why are you all so sick?" It is because we have so much stress in life. We are ok, but we have stress. Too many foreigners suffer from stress" (Sengül, resident, Turkish migrant, 30th Nov 2006).

Sengül felt grateful, that her children had opportunities to educate themselves and that they would not have to engage in low-skill industrial work.

Neighbourhood experiences could not be separated from the experience of being and becoming an immigrant or refugee in Denmark. It draws attention to how people construct their stories and how their stories are influenced by different contexts. One context is the particular interview situation. It may be that my presence, by being Danish, thus representing Denmark, triggered that our conversations were as much about being foreigners in Denmark as they were about neighbourhood experiences[23]. Sirwan's agenda, either consciously or unconsciously, may have been to convince me that he was a 'good' migrant, that he was not one of those migrants, dominating in the popular media, that exploit the Danish welfare system and 'sit on the couch watching TV all day'. Riesmann (2008) states that people construct their identities through storytelling and that "identities are narratives, stories people tell themselves and others about who they are (and who they are not)" (Yuval-Davis 2006 in Riessman 2008:8). Sirwan, emphasises that he is a Danish citizen who likes to work, thus constructing his identity in the context of being well-integrated in Danish society. He does not position himself within hegemonic neighbourhood *story-lines*, of living in a stigmatised neighbourhood and frequently being met with outsiders' prejudices, rather he frames his story in a context of being an ethnic minority first in Turkish context, then in a Danish context. Similarly Siva frames his story in contexts of being Tamil, of becoming a refugee, of arriving in Denmark and finally *Axelborg*.

In telling their neighbourhood experiences ethnic minorities were thus drawing on other discourses than *The Sønderbro Community Discourse*. Two distinct discourses was identified in their

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[23] For a similar discussion see also article 1 in which I refer to Goffman's frame analysis, to argue that specific situations evoke specific representations of reality.

narratives; one was emphasising that Denmark helped out, offering new opportunities for refugees or migrants looking for new opportunities in life. Drawing on this discourse, informants expressed gratefulness and responsibility to be active in the labour market, stressing their ability and will to be independent from the Danish welfare system. Whereas other narratives, drew on a discourse, permeated with notions of being 'worn down' or even 'exploited' by the labour market. In these narratives, residents also emphasised that they had been used to taking care of themselves, although having had hard times in Denmark. Now being unable to work and providing for themselves were perceived as sources to stress and illness.

Drawing on these other discourses suggests that migrants were not familiar with *The Sønderbro Community Discourse*, or maybe they were, but did not identify with it. It does not mean that they were socially inactive, did not feel attached to the neighbourhood or felt socially isolated. Rather I found that they had other ways of practicing social life in and perceiving neighbourhood. Particularly they were highly engaged in socialising with families, friends and fellow ethnic individuals:

> *"We socialise mostly with other Tamils. They are mother's contacts. They have been a huge help. They are almost like family....I am not sure about how it is within other cultures, but Tamils are very good at gossiping. Especially when it comes to falling in love (laughs). When girls do just minor things, then immediately everybody knows. I think it is negative when we live together like this. There are some Tamils when they are in our home; all they do is gossip* (Nusha, resident, Tamil woman 1st August 2007).

Further Turkish informants stated that, the Turkish migrants settling in Axelborg descended from the same area in Turkey or as one Turkish woman stated: "*I do not miss Turkey at all, because we are many Turkish people here and we visit each other a lot*" (Banu, residents, 2nd August 2007). This corresponds with a previous study on residents' contentment with their neighbourhood, which demonstrates that primarily ethnic minorities have more social relations in their neighbourhood than ethnic Danes (Munk 1999).

The overall pattern of settlement among ethnic minorities in Denmark shows a tendency towards concentration in particular and urban neighbourhoods (Andersen 2006). In general there are three explanations for this pattern. One is a structural explanation, which emphasises lack of resources and opportunities in their selection of settlement and is highly related to unemployment and low income (Andersson 1998). Second, ethnic minorities are discriminated by the rental housing market, since they do not have the same access to the variety of neighbourhoods as ethnic Danes. It is a form of discrimination that is produced and reproduced through public imaginations and cultural stereotypes by which urban space is segregated and stigmatised (Børresen 2002). An example is private businesses that do not

prioritise ethnic minorities in their selection of new tenants. It has also been documented that ethnic Danes move out from neighbourhoods, once ethnic minorities are moving in (Andersen 2005). This particular issue is of great importance to some ethnic Danes of *Axelborg* who worry that more and more ethnic minorities will 'take over' the neighbourhood, and ethnic Danes thus 'pushed' out:

> "*I have lived here for many years and in those times we could speak to each other. When I first came here it had a nice reputation. The residents were middleclass, those who could afford living in modern high rises, with plenty of space and an elevator. Then came the working class and the middleclass moved out since large areas of single-family houses were being built at that time. ......Yes we also had problems during the 1980's with drug addicts, but that is not a problem anymore. Now we have other trouble. Too many foreigners are living here and they do not speak any Danish. I think that there only should be 15 or 20 percent, but here more than half of the residents are foreigners and I think it scares off other Danish people wanting to move in*" (Svend, resident, August 9th 2007).

The third explanation of concentration of ethnicity in certain urban areas is related to culture, and underlines that ethnic minorities settle close to family, friends and to some extent their fellow ethnic groups by their own choice (Børresen 2002). The wish to settle close to family was also evident in *Axelborg*. One woman for example had her sister, mother and brother all living in *Axelborg* with their own families and there was a vivid coming and going across each others home:

> "*I went to interview Sengül at her home. As I arrived her mother and niece were there, although soon leaving after I came. The whole interview session was characterised by family members coming in and out of the living room, some who were also living in the apartment, others in other buildings*" (Excerpt from fieldnotes, Nov. 30th 2006).

In this sense and to those residents, neighbourhood was associated with family rather than a place one would engage in to promote neighbourhood development.

It has been argued elsewhere that neighbourhoods with a high concentration of ethnic minorities consist of those ethnic minorities who are least integrated and/or ethnic minorities who feel most isolated and marginalised in relation to the Danish society (Andersen 2006). Whether this was the case for *Axelborg* cannot be judged here. But there was a tendency that young Tamil families moved out and bought one-family houses. They were of course economically able to do so and participated in the

Danish labour market, which typically is determined as an integrating factor in Danish society[24]. In this sense deprived neighbourhoods with high concentrations of ethnic minorities become a 'transit stage'. Migrants settle in deprived neighbourhoods due to lack of choices and due to discriminative attitudes of the private housing market, but they move out when possible, meaning their opportunities in Danish society have increased. It is possible that along with being better integrated in the labour market, one has become more experienced in adapting to or managing the Danish 'system' and values. If this is correct then the ethnic minorities who are left in those neighbourhoods are least familiar with for example the value of civic participation, characteristic for voluntary activities. This will be explicated below.

An important reason for participating in community building was the attached value and identification as a volunteer (*article 2*). Inherent in this identity is the value of being an active citizen, being empowered to take control in one's own life and to make a change in society. Voluntary activities are deeply embedded in Danish society and there is saying in Danish, that if you have three people sharing a particular interest, they will form an organisation to work for a common purpose. The tradition of volunteering and uniting is even believed to capture the Danish folk soul (Børsch 2001; Mikkelsen 2002b). From childhood, Danish citizens engage as members in sports clubs, scout movements, church organisations and other organised leisure activities[25]. This continues in adulthood and also includes membership in maternity groups, trade unions, political movements and grassroot movements. It is thus an essential part of our lives and it is as if every stage of life, every activity you engage in, there is a club for it. The volunteers would emphasise and express having competences in taking action and in making a difference; in other words they valued the principle of civic participation. This would not only apply to taking action in building the neighbourhood, but to other social spheres as well:

> In 1985 some social workers settled in an office in Axelborg. The first arrangement they made was to clean the stairways (laughing). And I helped out and afterwards we went outside to have sausages. Since then I have been engaged. The social workers were kind of forerunners to the present arrangement with community workers. They were going to develop this neighbourhood, because it was a neighbourhood with many social losers. .... It was nice they came since I felt a bit lonely. We arranged meetings and they also arranged a week course. I really didn't need this course since I have a lot of education. So I asked if they thought it was appropriate. And I was allowed to come.....After some time the whole thing died out again

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[24] At a national level the Tamil population has the highest employment percentage (67%) compared to other ethnic minorities from non-western countries in Denmark. Therefore the Tamil population is considered to be the best integrated (Ministeriet for Flygtninge, Indvandrere og Integration [Ministry of refugees, Migrants and Integration] 2006).

[25] This is perhaps also characteristic for other westernised democratic nations and cultures.

and they built the community house. Now I help out there. I clean, do the laundry, attend meetings and festivals and help out at bingo sessions.... I also had breaks in the volunteering work, but it made me feel left out. But I have always been socially engaged and helped out for those in need. Now I also volunteer at a nursing home and I also helped out this young refugee boy who had problems with the Danish language and I found out that he was not liked by his Danish teacher at school. We met twice a week and I taught him the roots of the words (Jytte, volunteer, 5th March 2007).

Inger likewise emphasises in her stories of being engaged in neighbourhood development that she had been '*responsible for bingo sessions for two years*' (Inger July 17th 2007), and that she also had volunteered at the women's home and at a shelter for homeless people. Volunteers thus separated themselves from the people they were volunteering to help out. Jytte did not like to be put in the same boat as those 'social losers'. To Inger, by stressing her volunteering jobs in other spheres, she situated herself as a person with resources being able to help less resourceful persons.

There were two major themes that characterised the volunteers' narratives of being engaged in neighbourhood building; one was related to their various volunteering responsibilities, not only in the neighbourhood itself, but in other social spheres, thus stressing abilities and willingness to help out. The other issue was that volunteers associate their volunteering activities to something that one is brought up with. Jytte explains for example that her father was very socially engaged and that: '*these things run in the family'*. Another volunteer, Bente, mentioned that "being involved" was a family thing, implying that she had learned as a child the importance of being engaged in voluntary work:

"*I know a lot of people and not only in Axelborg. Maybe I do not know everybody, but they know who I am. My daughter is very embarrassed, when walking with me downtown, because everybody say hello to me. She feels the same way as I did when I was a child. I was also embarrassed, but also proud that my father was so known in town since he also was involved in volunteer activities*" (Bente, volunteer, Dec 19th 2006).

Recently there have been political interests in integrating ethnic minorities through means of participation in voluntary organisations. The benefits of such memberships, apart from the activity itself, are that these organisations often are means to create and maintain social networks. The organisations are perceived as a sphere, where immigrants can learn of Danish culture, of democratic values and of how Danish society is structured. Some also argue that the organisations are a way of organising and disciplining citizens into democratic thinking and acting (Pedersen 2004 in Boesskov and Ilkjær 2005:15-16). A recent report of

ethnic youth minorities' participation in associations, states that among ethnic minorities there is a general lack of knowledge of voluntary organisations and that this is a barrier for encouraging their children and youth to participate in such activities or movements (Boeskov and Ilkjær 2005). The authors stress that ethnic minorities have no previous experience in engaging in for example sports activities, that the way we organise activities in Denmark simply is unfamiliar to many immigrants. Further they highlight that reasons for lacking interest in organisations are associated with how they are organised socially. Immigrants mainly socialise and have their close social bonds with family members or people sharing the same ethnic origin (see also Mikkelsen 2002a). It is within these social groups that values and perceptions are shared and formed. Therefore many immigrants do not see any obvious reasons to engage in organisations if it does not represent their own social networks or is considered to be of any value by their own network (Boeskov and Ilkjær 2005:16-18).

4.4 Summary

This chapter identified different ways of responding to community development. The volunteers identified with the neighbourhood, positioning themselves within the community discourse, performing it and reproducing hegemonic *storylines* that constructs and represents the neighbourhood in a specific way. There were however also competition between the volunteers in the various settings. As stated in article 2, there were divergence between volunteers from *Axelborg* and volunteers from *Sønderbro*. Particularly *Axelborg* volunteers and long-term residents felt 'sidelined' by members of *The Sønderbro Group,* whose work they characterised as being 'too fancy' and lacking 'cosiness' (*article 2*:611). Ethnic minorities were rarely engaged in volunteering activities, and I discussed that this was related to the context of being migrants, their social networks and the meanings their attached to neighbourhood.

Building neighbourhoods then, and particularly constructing a certain way of representing and characterising the neighbourhood, both entails a space for identification and thus individual meaning and contentment, and a space for marginalisation due to limited space for alternative ways of representativeness. In this respect in order to participate in community building one must have *learned,* associate or identify with certain democratic values that are embedded in the participation discourse. One might argue that the volunteers have a certain habitus, in Bourdieu's sense, of engagement that makes it 'natural' for them to apply these competences in various contexts (Bourdieu 1977). Those individuals who know the rules of engagement in voluntary activities, who grew up in Danish society and from early childhood learned the privileges of being organised in various groups, are far better suited to take a leading

role in participative and voluntary work (see also Larsen 2001). In this sense residents of neighbourhoods characterised by diversity are not participating on equal terms.

5. Routines and relationships in everyday neighbourhood life

This chapter builds on *article 3*, summarised below and which identifies five different categories on which interactions are based upon. Based on these categories this chapter further explores the relationships between residents and the relationships between residents and the neighbourhood.

5.1 Summary of *article 3*: *Capturing contrasted realities: integrating multiple perspectives of community life in health promotion*

This article first outlines that communities in health promotion have been treated as homogenous entities, in which people share needs, characteristics and goals and whose members can organise and operate for common purposes. The superficial way of treating community along with the frequent use in political rhetoric of community as a way of solving a variety of social problems, neglects the diversity within communities and the various perspectives of community life community members have.

In accommodating these issues, this study is built on a theoretical perspective which embraces community diversity and explores everyday life in *Axelborg*, how residents use the public spaces, what activities they are engaged in and how their relations are with each other. Five different modes of practicing community life were identified based on social interactions related to 1) specific *localities*, 2) specific *activities*, 3) sharing experiences of *community history*, 4) *loyalty* within one's social network and 5) sharing *ethnicity*. *Locality* refers to social interactions taking place in the public spaces of the neighbourhood, like the green areas, benches, garages, laundry and the like. These social interactions are characterised by informal activities and spontaneous interactions that occur in these spaces, although routine meetings also happen on a day to day basis. Relationships between the residents practicing this mode vary; it may be close friends, families, acquaintances or even strangers. *Activity,* like *locality*, is referring to concrete happenings or exchange of objects between residents, but is more organised than interactions based on *locality*. *Activities* are for example events taking place in the community houses or routine activities taking place among specific residents. *Loyalty* is a category that characterises close social bonds between residents; it could be family members or close friends. *Loyalty* implies a high degree of social and even financial support and that one prioritises these bonds prior to being engaged in community activities. *History* is based on notions that residents share perceptions of how the neighbourhood has developed. In this sense a collective memory of the neighbourhood's past has emerged. Residents practicing this category are typically ethnic Danes and long-term residents who were or are actively engaged in building the neighbourhood. The final category of practicing community life is *ethnic origin;* referring to shared experiences and perceptions of being of the same ethnic origin. Relationships could be

close or loose. Strong affiliations to one's ethnic group, like *loyalty*, could mean strong social support for individuals and weak social support for the neighbourhood as a whole.

These five modes of community practices illustrate the complexity of how residents interact socially in the neighbourhood and identify the small components of what constitutes a community. This knowledge suggests that it is crucial to engage theories that consider complexity of community life and how the individual is actively engaged in constructing meanings of community. It further suggests that there is a need to look beyond those community members who are participating in community building, those whom we normally meet in community building projects and who are representing the community.

5.2 "This is our bench": creating home territories in neighbourhood

In *article 3* it is determined that localities enable people's social interactions and that localities induce relationships' sustainability. This section takes one step further in exploring what these localities actually mean to people.

Public places refer to those places that are accessible and visible to the general public, but may also be places with restricted access such as gate kept neighbourhoods, excluding people who do not 'belong' there (Morill and Snow 2005). *Axelborg* may be considered itself as a *place*, a physical constructed locality given meaning by social interactional processes. But *Axelborg* is also constituted by several *places* such as benches, green areas and playgrounds. The benches are placed around the neighbourhood; some facing the playgrounds, the parking lots, the 'main entrance' to the neighbourhood, around the coffee shop and the green areas (see also section 3.3.1 the *Axelborg* map of public places). Some benches are even named after its users and their main activity performed there: Drinking beers; consequently those benches are referred to as 'the drunks' benches'. Observing the benches one will notice, that specific residents would have their favorites and at specific times during the day. Changes in the seasons have a saying in this. During the summer seasons when the weather allows it, residents meet at benches, having small picnics or barbeques. On a regular basis, during the long bright summer evenings, particularly the Turkish and Kurdish residents bring their own teas, coffees and cakes. As one informant states: *"You may find it quiet now, but just you wait till summer, then it is crowded with Turkish families having their own private coffee-clubs"* (Brian, resident, 19th Oct. 2006. The benches are of great importance to the residents as they serve as meeting points, where you meet your 'favorite neighbour' and this is also the places where you can observe the groupings of the residents:

"The public space is organized in a manner that reflects how the different groupings come together and what they do. The most obvious being the alcoholics at the benches near the 'Teahouse'[26]. Mostly they hang out there during the afternoons, whereas in the evenings the students sometimes meet up there also drinking. Then there is the football ground and the children's play ground. The green bushy area used by teenagers, hiding from the adults. The garages that also serve as workshops and men's meeting places, some decorated with blankets and small furniture. One gets the impression that they serve as men's free space without women. Then there are the benches close to the entrance. During the morning hours they are 'reserved' for the group of elderly residents associated with the second-hand shop. In the evenings they are reserved for male immigrants, whereas female immigrants use those benches opposite the parking lot" (excerpt from headnotes July 2nd 2007).

At the very far end of the complex small garden plots are available to the residents for growing vegetables and flowers. It is the housing agency that offers this service and each spring, for a symbolic amount of money, residents can sign up for a lease contract of these plots, often during circumstances of quarrels of 'who gets the best garden'.

The second time I lived in *Axelborg* was during the summer 2007. This time my apartment was facing the gardens and one afternoon I was watching a man of Vietnamese origin nursing the garden. I went down there to have a talk: "*He was weeding and complaining that he didn't have time enough as an excuse for the weeds in his garden. He was pointing at the other plots and said: "this belongs to a Tamil, this to a Kurdish". Then he asked if I wanted a garden. I said no. He laughed and said that gardens are just for old men*" (Fieldnotes 9th July 2007). Time was an indispensable resource in nursing the gardens and while this particular man was employed, mostly female unemployed migrants were engaged in gardening. A group of Turkish women were particularly dominant in this practice. In the evenings they would gather, taking walks around the gardens, exchanging ideas of good garden practice. And during the day time they would work in the gardens individually or sometimes jointly. In total there were 12 gardens of 26-28 square meters each. In practice though, the leaseholders sometimes divided the gardens among them. One

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[26] The 'Teahouse' symbolises residential tolerance, which is embedded in *The Sønderbro Discourse*. The story goes that when the outdoor areas of *Axelborg* were renovated, residential meetings were held in order to accommodate the residents' needs and wishes. At that time there had been some complaints that alcoholics were occupying the benches at the main entrance and some of the residents felt uncomfortable with that. But instead of wishing to exclude the alcoholics and ban them from the outdoor areas, the residents agreed that a shelter should be built for them in a less visible area of *Axelborg*. The residents named it 'The Teahouse'. This story is frequently told to emphasise that residents were part of deciding how the outdoor areas should look like and particularly to stress neighbouring tolerance. However the alcoholics preferred to sit at benches near the teahouse.

woman for example allowed her neighbour to use a small corner of her garden, since she had no need for the total garden space. Other women would merge their gardens, work it jointly and divide its crops among them. The crops were typically various kinds of herbs like mint, parsley, thyme, coriander and vegetables such as beans, onion, zucchini, lettuce and root crops.

The gardens served other functions than being merely of utility value. They became *places* for socializing and for creating and maintaining social bonds. Or in other words they were grounds for reciprocity: women exchanging crops or women exchanging work force: "*Nur* [Turkish woman] *approaches me at the bench. 'I have seen you working the garden' I say, and she replies that it is not her garden, she only takes care of it while her neighbour is in Turkey during the summer*" (excerpt from fieldnotes 4th August 2007). The day after Nur invited me to the garden and gave me onion and parsley as a neighbouring gesture.

The distinctly routine use of benches and other outdoor and public areas, transform these public *spaces* into *places*. The underlying presumption here is that meaning of place is not inherent in its physical constructions, but is only given meaning by people's interactions with each other in these places. Low and Altman (1992) for example define place as: "space that has been giving meaning through personnel, group, or cultural processes (Low and Altman 1992:5). *Place* then is familiar to the individual known due to social interactions, whereas s*pace* is the abstract, unfamiliar physical localities, that is yet unknown to people. The concept of *home territories* (Cavan 1963), that is connections between people and their daily 'hang outs', as we meet them for example in Whyte's sociological classic *Street Corner Society* (1966), is useful in understanding the meaning of places to people. Home territories created in public places are typically established by people, who have and practice intimate relationships such as friends, close neighbours or even relatives. These territories are characterised by "the relative freedom of behaviour and the sense of intimacy and control over the area" (Cavan 1963:18). Home territories are dependent on locals' ability to include or exclude other residents, and it may not always be apparent which areas are home territories and which are merely public and shared places, nor is there always consensus among residents which territory belongs to which group of people. It does however become explicit when home territories are contested as the following interview excerpt illustrates:

Bodil: "*Usually we sit down here in the evenings drinking coffee and playing trivial pursuit, but now* our *bench has gone missing. It has been moved down to the fire place, I don't know who did it, but Jens* [a community worker] *does not care and will tell us to sort it out by ourselves.....You see the benches over there? I call them the gossip benches. Every night they*

[The Turkish women] *sit there gossiping, sometimes scowling at us. Maybe they took it. Or their kids did"*.

Eva: "*Does anyone approach you asking to join in or do you join in at other benches*"?

Bodil: "*No, Every man for himself here. There is only one. It is Karin's upstairs neighbour. She is so annoying and she does not speak a word of Danish. As soon as I leave my apartment and come down, she is there immediately. It is like she is watching*" (17th July 2007).

The removal of 'her bench' challenged her control of the area and she clearly felt provoked by the fact that somebody had taken 'her bench' as if somebody had entered her personal home. She also felt intimidated by Karin's neighbour, who she feels is observing her movements and who is not a person she desires to include in her home territory.

Ulla a retired female, who frequently comes down to 'the drunks' benches', also expresses her attachment to a particular area of the neighbourhood:

"*Sometimes some of the residents complain that noise is coming from our benches during night time. But it is not us. It must be some of the teenagers using them. Then there is broken glass scattered around and trash everywhere. They should clean up after themselves and not make all this noise, since we are being blamed. This is like our garden right? You see - we bring our own ashtrays. We want it to look nice*" (Ulla, July 15th 2007).

Her sense of 'ownership' of certain benches was strengthened by bringing in personal items such as the ashtrays. That somebody else was using their bench, messing it up, challenged her control of the bench, not that she didn't want somebody else using it, but that she could not control 'their' behaviour and that she might be blamed for misbehaviour she was not responsible for.

Home territories were also constructed in indoor community areas such as the community house. One Tuesday night during fieldwork I went to the community house for a game of bingo. I was still unfamiliar with this practice, both in terms of the game itself, but also of the unwritten social rules that applied to being engaged in this practice:

"*I arrived early, went to buy a cup of coffee and wanted to have a chat with Laila, but she was busy preparing sandwiches. Henning and Anders were setting up the microphone and arranging the bingo numbers and gifts. Not many people had arrived yet and I felt a little insecure – It was so obvious that I was new in this arena and I really felt that every movement*

I made was registered. I sat down at the table, where I sat last week, but the others of that table had not yet arrived. Then Heidi turns up, sits down and then Linda arrives. She looks at me and says: "You are in my seat". She did not say it in a nasty way, but it was rather a statement of fact and meaning I had to move. I did of course change my seat and the incident was an opportunity to raise the question of which seat and tables belonged to which residents" (Headnotes 24th Oct. 2006).

While the above excerpt demonstrates the construction of home territory, they also suggest how the residents are organised in the neighbourhood's public places: the alcoholics, the Turkish/Kurdish, the ethnic Danes and the teenagers separately, not as an explicit formulated rule of behaviour and not even as an ideal to most of the residents, but rather as a matter of routine. The home territories are *shared* among the residents, e.g. Ulla's bench is controlled by her and other 'drunks' during afternoons, whereas teenagers control them in the evenings, the old people are controlling the benches in front of the second hand shop during mornings and early afternoons, whereas Turkish and Kurdish migrants 'take over' in the late afternoons and evenings. People's interactions in public spaces of the neighbourhood have thus created a distinct neighbourhood routine that is both maintained and challenged in daily life.

The relationship between people and places, exemplified with *home territories,* is an important component in place attachment. According to theory of place attachment: "people develop attachment bonds with certain places, thereby entering into meaningful relationships with these places and ultimately incorporating them as part of their self-identity" (Leith 2006: 318). The creation of emotional links to places is constituted by meaningful interactions, having two related components: the *interactional past* and the *interactional potential* of a place (Milligan 1998). Past events, practices and routines associated with a specific place, or memories of a place form the *interactional past*. When for example residents recall past events in their *home territories,* they construct and express a sense of belonging like Bodil's story of 'my bench' illustrates. The *interactional potential* of a site is on the other hand what is imagined or expected to happen at the site. This is connected to routinised behaviour such as coming to the same bench every day or to planning future events, like arranging a picnic or community festival. The experiences of interactional past and potentials can be coined to *experiences of continuity*, meaning that residents experience coherence between the neighbourhood's past, present and future.

5.3 The relationship between people in neighbourhoods

Article 3 attempts to characterise the elements that advances social bonds between residents, both the qualities that are inherent in these social bonds as well as the practices that sustain them. In the previous section I demonstrated the transformation from *spaces* to *places* to *home territories*. I will now turn to explore what types of relationships are dominant in the neighbourhood. A distinction between *places* and *realms* is relevant here. *Places* offer a perspective of how residents use, understand and feel attached to the neighbourhood; whereas *realms* will provide an understanding of types of relationships between residents. *Realms* are typically understood as social territories, based on the types of relationships that predominate in those places (Morill and Snow 2005:15). In the literature both places and realms are typically divided into public and private arenas. Public realms are predominantly characterized by 'those non-private sectors or areas of urban settlements in which individuals in co-presence tend to be personally unknown or only categorically known to one another' (Lofland 1989:454). In contrast private realms are places such as households in which individuals have intimate relationships like families or close friends.

In principle the border between public and private realms and their corresponding places is blurry. Imagine families having picnics in public parks, lovers' meetings at urban squares or the sales demonstrator marketing in people's private homes. The distinction is thus too simple to grasp complex social realities. Following Hunter (1985), Lofland (1989; 1998) promotes a third realm that adds precision, although not exhaustively, of the empirical reality. This realm, defined as the *parochial realm*, is predominant in neighbourhoods or workplaces in which people engage in interpersonal networks. In Lofland's (1998) perspective the three social realms, are social territories each characterised by a particular *relational form* that refers to how individuals interact with one another. These relational forms are: an *intimate relational form* associated with the private sphere for example in family relationships or friends, a *communal relational* form that indicates relationships such as neighbours, work mates or acquaintances and finally a *stranger relational form* that corresponds with a public realm (Lofland 1998). This ladder form can be compared with, what in urban anthropology is referred to as 'traffic relationships', relationships that are characterised by brief and superficial encounters in public spaces (Hannerz 1980). The point is that to each realm is tied a set of norms and behaviours that only applies within that specific realm. The benefits of this trichotomous distinction are an improved understanding of social territories, of their boundaries, structures and inherent qualities formed by social interactions.

Kusenbach (2006) develops upon this distinction in her exploration of neighbouring patterns in the parochial realm. She distinguishes between four different practices that individuals engage in to treat each other as neighbours: friendly recognition, parochial helpfulness, proactive intervention and embracing

and contesting diversity. Within each practice are distinct behavioural patterns. The friendly recognition practice is ranging from a friendly nod when greeting to small talk of weather and to cheerfulness and flirting. The parochial helpfulness is represented by small services such as borrowing a cup of sugar, accepting package delivery or watering plants, while one's neighbour is away on vacation. Proactive intervention goes beyond the parochial helpfulness since neighbours in this practice are taking action without having negotiated first. They are small favours initiated in situations to prevent one's neighbour getting into trouble.

The form of neighbouring behaviour promoted by *The Sønderbro Discourse* corresponds with Kusenbach's 'proactive intervention'. As demonstrated in *article 2*, one is considered a good neighbour if one is taking action to prevent 'anti-neighbouring' behaviour. *The Sønderbro Discourse* contains the key notion that residents care for each other and even make efforts to make sure that major problems not are interrupting 'normal' neighbourhood order. This notion of 'caring' is even articulated as a form of social control. Some volunteers expressed that they would take action if they noticed that someone was misbehaving. As an example a resident stresses to intervene if teenagers are misbehaving by asking parents to take action. Caring then goes both ways; it might be a genuine concern of each others' well being and it might be a controlling mechanism to maintain a specific social order. On the other hand there was a strong notion of not interfering with other people's lives. Respecting privacy, not sticking one's nose into other people's businesses, not crossing any lines of polite and respectful behaviour were norms, associated with 'correct' social behaviour[27]. Being too confronting towards your neighbours, you fall at risk of being excluded. There is then a distinction between performing concern for neighbours' well-being and performing respect for neighbours' privacy. How, when and what informs which performance is dependent on relationships, personal agendas and situations. The preference of one neighbourhood practice over another suggests there is a hierarchical range of practices, and that some practices are perceived more 'right' than others. It raises questions of who gets to define which practice is best, thus neglecting other neighbourhood practices that are considered important and meaningful for maintaining a specific every-day routine.

Finally in Kusenbach's terms, the last neighbouring practice is 'embracing and contesting' diversity. They are acts of inclusion or exclusion of neighbours who differ from oneself, and extend beyond other culturally defined boundaries. She demonstrates how residents tolerate cultural diversities and even express that they prefer diversity above homogeneity. Other examples illustrate hostility towards residents

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[27] This notion is not only inherent in behavior in this particular context. It is a cultural value that it is practiced in many parts of the western world.

who differ distinctively from oneself and these acts are ranging from withholding friendly recognition to anonymously complaining to the authorities of what they consider as inappropriate behaviour. Acts of inclusion and exclusion are comparative to my own data. For example ethnic Danes would complain about the smells of exotic cooking, of how immigrants would bargain too much in the second-hand shop and of their noisy or messy behaviour. On the other hand I also found that ethnic Danes would emphasise the strength of cultural diversity, that it 'was interesting' to learn of other cultures, particularly cooking was in some cases considered to be inspiring to the 'salt and pepper' kitchen, characterising Danish cooking. In *article 1* I use an example where *Karen's* perception of migrants embraces the contradiction of inclusive and exclusive acts. In some instances she excludes migrants in neighbouring relations due to their 'messiness' and 'noisiness'. At other times she expresses that ethnic Danes should appreciate family relations more as migrants typically to do. These contradictions then are depending on the contexts they are being told in, to whom they are being told and also rely on the individual migrant who is being talked about. Some immigrants are considered being too foreign, not trying to adapt to the Danish society, whereas others are perceived to be hard workers, making effort and still managing to keep their cultural identity or ethnic roots intact. The varieties of practices towards immigrants and circumstances that inform the acts are too complex to fall into any clear patterns that will clearly define which acts are directed towards particular ethnic or cultural groups. However there was a tendency of stereotyping certain ethnic groups when speaking of them in general terms, whereas when speaking of particular individuals, characteristics and acts became much more blurred.

Kusenbach's distinction of neighbouring behaviour is useful in exploring how resident treat each other as neighbours, and her categorisation were highly recognisable in my own data. But in my data I also found that residents were treating eachother in other ways than being merely neighbours. Neighbouring interactions is then only one part of the social interaction pattern in neighbourhoods. As demonstrated in *article 3*, five different ways of practicing community life, informs and characterises interactions between residents. Relationships other than neighbouring relationships can be that of family ties or close friends while also ethnicity and sharing neighbourhood history define relationships and hence types of social interactions. The point is that the social realms, Lofland and Kusenbach distinguish between, which in each way inform social interactions, are multiplex in neighbourhoods. People are not just neighbours. They are also relatives, close friends, enemies, strangers and long-term acquaintances. In determining relationships in neighbourhoods it may then be fruitful then to distinguish between *types* of neighbours and how residents categorise neighbours and non-neighbours. This will be explicated below.

Investigating the fieldnotes, the headnotes and interviews a neighbour is sometimes described as 'the anonymous' person living upstairs or next door, one you can hear move around, but never speak to, other than muttering a 'hello' when bumping into him/her in the stairways. A neighbour can thus be geographically close but socially distant; I call this a 'geographical neighbour', sometimes also referred to by informants as 'a resident'. Attached to being 'a geographical neighbour' is a set of ideals of how to perform 'good neighbouring behaviour'. There is naturally a set of rules, you as a resident must comply with in order to rent the apartments, and in extreme cases the housing agency may exclude you from the apartment you rent. For example you are not allowed to keep dogs and cats (although it was common to have cats, and neighbours as well as community care takers were aware of that), you are not allowed to disturb your neighbours and noise were therefore not allowed during night time. In addition to these rules, 'unwritten rules' of being a good neighbour are constantly being negotiated among residents. Describing how he understands a good neighbour Lars explains:

> "Some newcomers from the 4th floor were collecting signatures for a complaint, but I didn't want to sign it. It is much better to fix these things without involving the housing agency. They could just have left a note in their letterbox asking them kindly to be quiet. I often have parties here, but no one is complaining, so how can I complain of others? .... Yes the downstairs neighbour sometimes comes up and asks me to turn down the music. So I do – and then everybody is happy (Lars, resident, August 27th 2007).

In Lars' perceptions a good neighbour was one you could sort out problems with and those disagreements occurring when you live in high-rises, whereas the complaining neighbours wished to admonish their 'noisy neighbours'. Other positive features associated with the 'geographical neighbour' were described as 'one who does not get into other people's businesses'. It was highly valued that neighbours did not interfere, meaning asking personal questions, gossiping or telling people what to do e.g. giving order of how to behave properly. Immoral neighbouring behaviour was further associated with being messy. Throwing rubbish in the public areas, in the stairways or urinating in the elevator were causing conflicts between neighbours: *"I once asked this woman to deal with her son, who was peeing in the stairways. The women got very upset and began to call me bad names"* (Emine, Turkish woman, 13th August 2007). Greediness was also a feature of immoral neighbouring behaviour:

> "When we had the summer festival, we began the morning with free bread in the community house. I noticed this family, I think they were Bosnian, after eating they filled a plastic bag

with bread rolls. I would have said something to them, but you see they had already touched the bread – so what was the point? (Sengül, Turkish woman, 13th August 2007).

A neighbour is also described as one you have a social relationship with, which can be more or less intimate. I call this a 'social neighbour'. In contradiction to the geographical neighbour, a social neighbour is one that cares and shows interest, helps out and interferes if problems occur. Treating one as a social neighbour include exchanges of vegetables from the gardens, nursing each others' gardens, checking mail while the neighbour is away, watering plants, cooking and shopping when sick or doing and sharing specific activities in the public places such as repairing bicycles, watching children at the playground, drinking beers or sharing company, small talk and personal conversations at the benches.

Several of the informants, within several of the ethnic groups, including ethnic Danes, had family members living in neighboring buildings and they found great support in living close by to their relatives[28]. One informant was frequently babysitting for her grandchild, while another was attending to her sick and elderly mother. Other relationships in this category are characterised by close friendship in which caring for and helping one another is highly valued:

"When Karin was hospitalised, I came to visit her, and when she came home, I cooked for her and nursed her…….She also supports me. Last year I was diagnosed with diabetes and I also had some personal problems……. Karin would listen and often call on me to see if I was alright" (Bodil July 17th 2007).

Close relationships advantages the individual in that they feel emotionally, practically and even financially supported. But the bonds may also have side effects. One is that individuals might feel restricted in their individual freedom and even monitored. Examples were found, demonstrating that some felt monitored by their families and this resulted in withholding the truth of one's whereabouts and discouraged socialising with other residents. Another is that behavior that is not socially acceptable within one's group, may lead to social exclusion and even isolation. A resident told me her personal story of being separated from her husband who was 'treating her bad'. She was not Danish of origin, but came to Denmark in a family re-union program[29]. She was therefore very dependent on her husband's social network and the contacts she made via her ethnic identity:

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[28] This reflects an overall national pattern of settlement, in which citizens representing lower socio-economic groups compared to higher socio-economic classes to a greater extent settle in the same neighbourhoods, not necessarily by choice, but rather by lack of choice and related to their social position (Ærø 2002).
[29] I deliberately leave her ethnic identity undisguised in order to secure her anonymity.

"After being separated she had no contact with her ethnic group. She felt that they were talking behind her back and gossiping. She stopped seeing them and for a while she came to the Community House. Likewise her children are mostly socializing with ethnic Danes. Now her social contacts are at work" (Except from fieldnotes July 15th 2007).

Exclusion and restricted individual freedom are what Portes (1998) refers to as negative aspects of social capital; that strong, social bonds, although having embedded resources, carry the potential of controlling social behavior that are not expedient for the individual's social and mental well being.

Finally, worth mentioning are acts of 'non-neighbouring' behaviour. As already mentioned it was stressed that good neighbourhood practice was to stick to one's own business. It was thus a local value of not to engage in neighbours lives. Other acts that fall into this category are 'indifference', not necessarily in negative terms, but rather as an expression of not having any needs or desire to engage. Residents expressing this norm most often had their networks outside of the community and considered the neighbourhood as a place to live, rather than a place to have a life. Naturally there were also examples of rejecting reciprocity, refusal of returning 'hellos' or even of hostility between residents:

"Karin told me today of this woman, she believed she was Turkish. They had a verbal fight in the laundry house about who had reserved the machine. Karin was sure it was her, so she put in her clothes, started the machine and went to her apartment. When she came back, her clothes was lying on the floor – all wet and now very dirty" (Excerpt from headnotes August 2nd 2010).

Disputes between the residents did occur and were mostly related to neighbouring noise or 'messy' behaviour. Minor quarrels would be sorted by the residents themselves or they would simply ignore each other. At other times the community workers would be involved and functioned as mediators between the partners. In extreme and rare cases the police was even involved and it happened that restraining orders were enforced by legal authorities.

The relationships between the residents then are of a different nature: family members, friends, acquaintances, 'strangers', even enemies or social or geographical neighbors.

Intimacy scale: Neighbourhood relationships

Low   High

←   →

Non-neighbours/ Anonymous residents/ Strangers	Geographical neighbours/ familiar residents		Social neighbours		Non-neighbours/close friends or relatives
Non-acknowledgement: Being aware of other's physical presence, but no verbal contact.	Greeting terms: Nodding, greeting, talks of the weather and similar.	Small talks in public places	Sharing activities in public places: gardening, picnics, play grounds, activities in community house	Intimate relationships in public places.	Exchanging visits to private homes: Relatives, friends and relationships developed from neighbour to friend.

On both ends of the scale you find non-neighbouring relationships. The left end characterised by 'no social contact' other than the awareness of eachother's physical presence and managing this presence. For example the unwritten rules that apply when passing eachother on the pavement, or when a resident choose to sit at another bench than the bench already occupied by a fellow resident. In these situations residents treat other residents as *strangers*, that is patterned ways of interaction that structures and maintains a specific social order, in this case residents that share social space, but no social relation (see also Lofland 1973; Goffman 1963). At the right end of the scale with the highest degree of intimacy you also find non-neighbouring relationships. These are characterised by residents who are relatives or friends beforehand living in the neighbourhood, or residents who become friends or lovers caused by a 'neighbouring' development.

Having social relationships with neighbours is an important contributor to place attachment and thus a sense of community. It is argued that place attachment occur because of people have relationships in these places, whether friends, neighbours, relatives or acquaintances, and the sense of community that these relationships form (Gustafson 2001:9). We see this illustrated rather explicitly by women who nurse their garden (place) simultaneously nurse their 'social neighbour' (relations) by exchanging crops, man-power and gardening advices. However other neighbourhood relationships are at play: the geographical neighbour/anonymous resident with whom social interactions are kept at a minimum.

Place attachment can be formed by personally experienced interactions in a site or by hegemonic identity discourses such as national identities or other collective identities (see also Larsen

2004; Küchler 1999; Billig 1995; Gillis 1994; Casey 1993; Löventhal 1985). These insights suggest that constructing a collective identity in the neighbourhood based on hegemonic narratives of the neighbourhood, of its history and development may be useful for strengthening place attachment and thus community coherence. As demonstrated throughout this thesis a distinct community discourse has been processed, one that is encouraging residents to be participative in neighbourhood building and to treat each other as social neighbours. It is however mainly volunteering residents who have adopted the dominant community discourse. The crux of the matter is then to construct a discourse that is inclusive towards those residents who do not take part in the actual volunteering neighbourhood work and who think and act differently.

5.4 Summary

This chapter illustrated how neighbourhood places become meaningful in everyday social practices and how these places are transformed into home territories. I have further demonstrated how neighbours are categorised and which characteristics are associated with the 'good' versus the 'bad' neighbour. These data illuminate the various relationships in the neighbourhood, other than being neighbours, as well as different ways of neighbouring behaviour. The way residents practice community life, ascribe meanings to it and the nature of the relationships between residents shed light on the vivid and friendly atmosphere that ensures quality of the residents' lives and at the same time reveals the alternative identities at play that are considered more meaningful than neighbourhood identity itself. As illustrated residents have various ways of participating in community life that looks beyond participation in formalised activities, such as those appearing in the community house and being organised by community workers. Participation takes place in spaces, private and public, and in activities, they find meaningful as ways of being engaged in and practicing community life.

6. Concluding remarks

6.1 Implications for community participation in health promotion

This thesis is founded in raising critical questions of the use of community participation in health promotion. I stated that there is a lack of consensus of how to understand the concept, and that communities have been treated as coherent entities, hence overlooking the internal diversities as well as relationships to other communities and its position in overall society. The thesis has attempted to accommodate these issues by exploring how individuals are participating in community building. I have demonstrated that a particular community discourse has emerged, which constructs the neighbourhood in a specific way and serves as a vehicle to separate an inglorious past from a promising future. The stigmatised identity of the neighbourhood plays an important role in this discourse, not as a way of positioning the residents as victims, but to emphasise that in spite of the low social status, they manage to take action to improve their situations. By participating in community building and by using *storylines* embedded in the discourse, residents position themselves within this hegemonic community discourse and thus identify with a particular way of constructing and representing the neighbourhood.

I have further illustrated the diversity of neighbouring interactions and relations to emphasise the various meanings residents ascribe to neighbourhood life. By describing the different kinds of relationships residents engage in, I have argued that although residents are not engaged in community building, they are engaged in the community in other ways and thus have meaningful and rich social lives. These varieties add to the perspective that there is not only one way of representing the neighbourhood. It suggest that participation, above all, appeals to a certain part of the population; those who are already 'enrolled' in or comply with a set of beliefs, which encourage engagement in civic life.

These findings are relevant to future health promoting projects aimed at building healthy communities and based on participatory approaches. If participation is meant to 'handle over the stick', to give opportunities for people to take action corresponding with their own realities then we must take a step further to include other groups as well as those already adhering to participatory ideals. In this sense we should strive to go beyond reproducing existing power relations in our society. How to construct such approaches is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, below, I propose with caution some aspects that should be acknowledged when building healthy communities.

6.1.1 Who are the 'locals'?

The research underlying this thesis has shown that there is a dominant way of representing the neighbourhood and that parts of the residents are adherent to this way of representation. Seeing this representation as a hegemonic discourse allows for engaging analyses of how members take actively part in constructing this discourse and how they position themselves within it. Importantly though it is crucial to recognise the embedded power relations. A very central principle of participatory approaches to community building is the engagement of local knowledge, which presumably will secure sustainability in development. Underpinning this principle is a dichotomous understanding of power relations; e.g. the powerless versus the powerful, local versus elite and micro levels versus macro levels. Participatory approaches are then about empowering the powerless, of reversing 'existing' power relations, of setting the locals against the elite. Kothari states that: "the almost exclusive focus on the micro-level, on people who are considered powerless and marginal, has reproduced the simplistic notion that the sites of social power and control are to be found solely at the macro- and central levels" (Kothari 2001:140). Recognising instead that individuals are vehicles of power, and are operating through a combination of power technologies, such as policies and hegemonic norms and practices, and self-technologies, i.e. techniques through which we constitute ourselves, power is everywhere, not only at the centres or among the elite, but in the creation of norms, and in everyday life at micro-levels and practiced by 'ordinary' people (Foucault 1988). Knowledge is accumulated norms and practices, being constructed in relation to and embedded in power relations. The omnipresence of power means that local knowledge can no longer be perceived as opposed to knowledge represented by outsiders or professionals. 'Local knowledge' is then not something local people have; something to be 'collected' and occurring out of locally practiced norms, but rather reflects and reproduces power relations in wider society.

The volunteers represent 'local' knowledge; that is they get to define and describe neighbourhood characteristics, common needs, problems and goals. It is not *Sønderbro* professionals who dictate what residents should think and feel about their neighbourhood, nor is residents enforced to be participative in community building. Rather residents constitute themselves through discourses of power and lead to a process of normalisation of specific norms and practices. It is through the very process of repetition that consensus is reached and specific practices and representations become normative.

The point is that engaging local knowledge in participatory approaches is a selective process, not consciously though, but in that those people who are engaged in participation are only representing *one part* of the community. Ironically then, participatory approaches which aims at distributing power equally in society and give people a 'voice' in their own life courses, fail to recognise that the same power

structures they wish to challenge are actually being reproduced. Volunteers then come to reproduce the same ideas and values that participatory approaches are built on as well as defining 'local needs' in their dominant position of representing the community. Participatory approaches run risk of masking and reproducing existing power structures in society and in the particular community. It is thus crucial to identify who 'the locals' are that are participating in our projects; i.e. distinguishing between various groups in communities, how they are related and positioned and how they relate to the community as such.

6.1.2 Embracing community diversity

We cannot enforce homogeneity in heterogenic neighbourhoods, but we can acknowledge that diversity is a fact of life also in socially deprived neighbourhoods. It is however important to take a step further than merely accepting community diversity. There is a need to develop theories that enable us to understand and examine community diversity. Such theories could be adopted in participatory programmes by guiding participation towards embracing community heterogeneity. I have proposed a theoretical approach that acknowledges that communities are socially constructed and executed by the exigencies of social interaction. With this approach individual agency is emphasised as well as the various meanings individuals are ascribing to community life. There is however still a huge gap between conceptualising communities as organic towards including these diverse perspectives in community participation. Potvin (2007) put forward a conception of participation that:

> "happens when several groups among those involved in a social space develop their own problematisation and initiate actions in order to translate other relevant groups. These multiple translation processes involve heterogeneous mouthpieces, each representing the problematisation and interests of a relevant group of actors" (Potvin 2007:119).

Translation is a process which develops when social actors representing different groups in a network come together to solve specific issues on which they have different perspectives. It is also a process that embraces the dynamics of a network by acknowledging that happenings, actors and relationships can challenge the existing order. Translation is a: "constant adjustment of a plurality of actors in a social space through the operations of problematisation, interest, enrolment and mobilisation of relevant actors" (Ibid:118). Seeing participation as a translation process encapsulates the diversities, the controversies, and the constant development that takes place in communities. This way of perceiving participation may help us accommodate neighbourhood dynamics by integrating them in future participation programmes which will precipitate more inclusive forms of participation. Importantly though, the translation process builds on

network theories, and network theories have been criticised for directing focus away from the community itself and for emphasising relationships individuals have in various communities. While it is important to keep in mind that people engage in different networks, both within a community and with other communities, it is equally important to remain focused on the community we wish to explore in order to integrate perspectives of relationships between people and their community.

While Potvin's conception of participation as a translation process, is grounded in a theory that accommodates community diversity, the crucial question is still how to encourage people to participate in the first place. The research underlying this thesis has shown that participation adheres to certain parts of the population, those that have already learned the 'culture' of participation and who find personal satisfaction in practicing participation. As I have argued above these groups are reflecting the existing order of society and practicing accepted social norms. There is thus a need for further investigation of how to practice the theoretical approach of translation processes in order to avoid merely reproducing the existing power structures of communities and societies and to include those norms and practices that differs from the dominant ones.

6.1.3 Investigate the neighbourhood's social position in overall society

This thesis has also shown that the position of the neighbourhood in relation to overall society both influences how people see themselves and the neighbourhood they live in. Communities are not isolated islands but constructed in relation to other communities and the status as being stigmatised does therefore not occur in a vacuum. Stigmatisation occurs through relations, when communities or individuals are perceived as excluded from the norm. It is possible to distinguish between levels of stigmatisation or rather how stigmatisation is managed at a political level versus how it is experienced and managed by people who are stigmatised. For the residents in *Sønderbro* stigmatisation has been transformed to a positive asset, into pride of being part of the neighbourhood, and that in spite of its poor reputation, its residents manage to take actions for positive changes. Although stigmatisation is used as a positive component in neighbourhood identity it also has an influence of residents' emotions. Embarrassment, anger and other people's ignorance were themes brought up in conversations of the neighbourhood's reputation. The Janus-faced meaning of stigmatisation in neighbourhood identity thus both contains enhancing mechanism for participation and barriers for residents' well-being. While it is possible to construct ways to manage the role of stigmatisation in positive ways, it is also possible to construct ways to manage or rather combat stigmatisation at a political level. Although this thesis has not had an exclusive focus on the political

structures of society, and how these structures may promote or prevent poor neighbourhoods and subsequently stigmatisation and social deprivation, I suspect that enabling people to manage being stigmatised by ways of building communities, does not alone solve the stigmatisation problem or the social problems often occurring in stigmatised neighbourhoods. It is equally important to construct policies that aim at preventing neighbourhoods becoming poor and stigmatised in the first place and which secures that people have equal access to housing areas. Recently demolishment of some of the most socially deprived building blocks has been practiced in Denmark and elsewhere in Europe. These practices seem to be rooted in a logic that assumes that if the buildings are gone the problems of social deprivation and stigmatisation are gone too, thus neglecting much more complex and structural related issues of inequality and inequity.

We should also critically examine our own agendas for building healthy communities and the presumptions, imaginations and prejudices we have of those communities we target in our research programmes. Neighbourhoods subjected to development programmes are often stigmatised, surrounded by myths of moral decay and social deprivation. While a range of social problems are more likely to occur in poor neighbourhoods, these problems only represent part of everyday neighbourhood life. They too have 'normal' lives; i.e. normal considered the context they are living in. Residents are socialising with each other on a daily basis in public and private spheres and at different levels as friends, relatives, neighbours and 'strangers'. They share happy, sad and joyful moments or - just moments. They also prioritise privacy just like the rest of us and might not find it interesting or beneficial to be participative in community building. Informants stated that before moving into the neighbourhood, they themselves had prejudices of the residents; that they feared them and believed them to be criminals and drug abusers. By living there and by interacting with residents they learned of other perspectives of the neighbourhood; that residents here also were 'normal' beings. Likewise I also learned of the neighbourhood, which showed a rich and complex everyday life and much more than merely being a place to avoid or a place needing development. This is not to say that we should leave 'them' alone to solve their own problems, rather we should seek to learn of their perspectives and integrate them in future programmes.

6.1.4 The future of Sønderbro

As the fieldwork and research stops, life goes on in the settings being studied. I withdrew from the field ending 2007, but continued attending meetings and social activities in the neighbourhood through 2008 and 2009. I thus had the opportunity of observing the continuous development of the neighbourhood. A major happening was the establishment of the *Sønderbro Secretariat*, which opened in May 2008. The

secretariat opened up for new initiatives that can be divided into two lines. One which is focused on supporting residents to arrange and participate in activities, such as stop–smoking-courses, hiking tours, healthy cooking and sports activities for children. This line is dependent on initiatives coming from the residents themselves. The other line is to support residents to improve their skills so they are better fit to engage in the labour market. It includes for example education and language courses for immigrants. Taken together these lines have increased the awareness among the residents of the possibilities to engage in the neighbourhood as well as being opportunities for improving their own situations. There is an emerging tendency that migrants are engaging in these new initiatives. The frequency and qualities of this tendency need to be explored further to enable any systematic analysis. This tendency may be a step in a direction that reflects a more inclusive form of participation in which several groups are participating and that accommodates community heterogeneity. It may also be that immigrants now have learned or adapted to ways of being citizens in a Danish multi-ethnic and socially deprived neighbourhood.

6.2 Methodological considerations and limitations

6.2.1 Reflections on data generation and validity

Ethnographic fieldwork is often described as a hermeneutical spiral in which there is continuous process of generating data, analysis and interpretation. Unlike methods integrated in positivistic science, ethnographic fieldwork is not a method where the fieldworker collects data in the sense that data exist 'out there' to be discovered, collected and analysed. Interacting with informants is then not a matter of extracting information from him or her on a given subject, but rather that data is generated via the relationships between fieldworker and informant (Hansen 2004; Hastrup 2003; Hansen 1995).

In *article 1* the data generation process is described, illustrating two cases from the fieldwork. One example demonstrates how my role developed over time, and how in each role there were specific types of behaviour attached, influencing our relationships and therefore what type of subjects being discussed and how. The other example shows that by interacting with various groups of informants, has influences on what was being said, and sometimes previous statements on particular issues were modified or developed. Informants' awareness that residents representing other groups took part in the research might have caused suspiciousness or competition between informants. That we have an effect on the people we study is inarguable, however we cannot be certain of the motivations and reasons of our

informants' behaviour or statements, but we can clarify that specific situations alter which part of 'reality' is presented (*article 1*).

This research then is situated in a constructivist interpretative paradigm, assuming a relativist ontology, i.e., the existence of multiple realities, and a subjectivist epistemology, i.e. that researcher and researched co-create data. This position demands other sets of criteria for evaluating research than those known in positivistic sciences. Naturalistic inquiry has evolved a set of criteria to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research. These criteria include credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln 2008; Lincoln and Guba 1985). Triangulation, a central concept embedded in these criteria, has become a frequently applied method to validate data in qualitative methods also in the health sciences (Ulin et al. 2004). The naturalistic approach however assumes that social phenomena are objects existing independently of the researcher, that objectivity should be preserved throughout the research process, i.e. the researcher's practical and political commitments be considered extraneous to the research process, and that: "research can provide knowledge of the social world that is superior in validity to that of the people being studied" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007:10).

The criteria developed in naturalistic science to establish trustworthiness is thus about increasing the *accuracy* of the data processed (Carter and Little 2007). This research does not claim to belong to the naturalistic tradition; I therefore reject applying the validation criteria in their original meaning as developed in the naturalistic tradition. That is not to say then that everything and anything goes in qualitative research based on the epistemological standpoint that knowledge is valid related to the context it is produced in. The issue of validating the generated data is then not about proving their accuracy, but rather to test the value in the context they are generated in and to compare it to existing theories and to social structures[30]. It is about continuously questioning what is being said, by whom, to whom and under which circumstances and in what contexts; in other words of engaging reflexivity throughout the entire research process (Kvale 1989; Pyett 2003; Hammersley & Atkinson 2007). It is by this form of reflexivity and comparison that has been part of this research process, that have informed my choices of rejecting, selecting and emphasising issues that support the research aims.

A critical point of the research process could be raised regarding *article 3*. The distinction between five categories of neighbourhood interactions: *locality, activity, loyalty, history* and *ethnic origin* were composed to illustrate the different ways residents used the neighbourhood and the qualities and contents of their social relations. The categories were developed according to observations made in the

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[30] Some scientists even reject the term 'validity' in human science epistemology, arguing that it makes more sense to talk in terms of *defensible knowledge claims* (see e.g. Salner 1989).

neighbourhood and to extracting categories from the interviews. The way that the modes *locality* and *activity* are presented is descriptive and refers only to how, where and what was being practiced. It did not explicitly treat the meaning of these practices and is thus subjected to further exploration. The other three categories: *loyalty, history* and *ethnic origin* were deeper engaged with the qualities of the interactions by analysing how residents were related to and bonded with each other. A way to accommodate this problem could have been to have put more effort into exploring the attached meanings of tangible interactions by supplementing the observations with contemporary interviews, rather than comparing observations and, participant observations with interviews as was the case for *article 2*. I did have conversations with residents of the meaning of the practices, while they were 'performing', but not systematically enough to have been able to process any qualified analysis.

A stronger engagement to the ethnic minorities could have been emphasised. The findings show that to them, the meaning of neighbourhood is not easily detachable from the overall experience of being 'new-comers' in Denmark. Their experiences of stigmatisation were not related particularly to the area of residency, but rather to being an ethnic minority. These findings are supported by a recent report of how refugees and immigrants relate to their neighbourhood, defined as public housing areas (Vacher 2007). The author of the report identifies two crucial issues at play: *integration* and *diaspora*. Ethnic minorities perceive their neighbourhood as an alienated space, where they are constantly being reminded of their status as strangers in a foreign country. The political debates of integration have been hostile during the last decade and this has influenced public opinion; every man or woman in the street thus has an opinion of immigrants and how well or poor they are integrated in Danish society. This means that immigrants moving around in public spaces always are at risk of being confronted with other people's prejudices and presumptions. The result is that they resign from using and engaging in the neighbourhood and that they turn towards their own cultural heritages. The experiences of nostalgia that life in the diaspora imply, result in a series of identity constructing practices, containing amongst other things communication, consumption and aesthetics (Vacher 2007).

The results of this thesis also show that ethnic minorities are less engaged in community building and that this may be explained by their lack of knowledge and experiences with overall Danish *foreningskultur* (culture of associations). This issue could have been subjected to further exploration but demanded that the research questions were directed towards why ethnic minorities were not participating and therefore would have involved other methodological considerations such as the use of an interpreter. Considering these findings I urge that future research of community building explore more in-depth the

barriers and promoting factors for ethnic minorities to engage in their neighbourhood on equal terms as ethnic Danes.

6.2.2 Transferability

Generalisation is desirable in research in order to share and apply the results beyond the original study setting. In positivistic science, in its 'classical' sense, generalisations: "are assertions of *enduring* value that are *context-free*" (Lincoln and Guba 1985:110). In qualitative studies generalisation understood in these terms is not possible to achieve due to their presumptions that all knowledge is context dependent, and that the aim is to gain in-depth knowledge of the particular rather than representativeness of larger populations. The term transferability has been proposed to cover generalisation or external validity in qualitative research and is commonly used to day (Maltheud 2001). Transferability refers to that knowledge generated from one context can be transferred to another. Importantly though this is an empirical matter depending on the degree of similarity between sending and receiving contexts (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 297). It is thus not possible for the 'sender' to judge whether a 'receiving' context is suitable: "The person who wishes to make a judgment of transferability needs information about *both* contexts to make that judgment well" (Ibid: 127). It is however crucial that the 'sender' is detailed about describing the setting they have studied so other researchers can make qualified judgment whether transferable or not. Detailed descriptions, or as Geertz would have put it: 'thick descriptions' (Geertz 1973) are essential in ethnographic studies.

I have attempted to accommodate this criterion by providing as many details as possible of the setting and of the informants participating in research. It has been an ongoing process throughout this thesis, explicit in the methodological section and implicit in chapters 4 and 5 by comparing my findings to other relevant findings to see if these made sense in other study contexts. For example by juxtaposing the findings that only a few non-ethnic Danes participated in neighbourhood building with how ethnic minorities were participating in overall voluntary activities (Mikkelsen 2002a; Boesskov and Ilkjær 2005). Also the section on neighbouring relationships contains comparisons between various meanings of neighbouring interactions (Kusenbach 2006). The process of comparison with other studies therefore suggests that transferability is possible, not only to studies of deprived and stigmatised neighbourhoods subjected to regeneration, but to studies aimed at discovering inequity in participatory patterns among various populations in contemporary society.

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Summary

Community participation in health promotion: perspectives of participation and everyday life in a multi-ethnic and socially deprived neighbourhood

Community participation has during the last decades become popular in health promotion as a method to build healthy communities. Given that people participating in community development experience a stronger commitment, hence improving their life quality, and that people's participation is a criterion of success of the development process, it is important to gain knowledge of how people experience being part of that development process. This knowledge is crucial considering the widespread use of community participation and the somewhat uncritical perception of the concept. This thesis aims at increasing knowledge of community participation by exploring how people in a multi-ethnic and socially deprived neighbourhood are participating in its development and how they are participating in neighbourhood life in general. Generating knowledge of everyday practices in neighbourhood may enable us to better understand the various ways people use and live in their neighbourhood which will inform us of how to better approach community participation in the future.

The thesis is built on three articles. In *article 2* the aim was to challenge community participation in health promotion discourse by demonstrating how key concepts embedded in this discourse have permeated local contexts and how residents are constructing, operationalising, resisting and relating to this discourse. It shows that the hegemonic neighbourhood discourse contains similar key concepts as those in the health promotion discourse and that residents both comply with and contests this discourse. The study further identifies local values contradicting ideals of commitment inherent in health promotion discourses.

Article 3 focuses on the daily neighbourhood life, exploring the nature of the relationships between the residents as well as how they interact with eachother. Five dominant ways of practicing neighbourhood life was identified, which draws attention to the various meaning residents ascribe to their neighbourhood. Both *articles 2* and 3 are based on data, generated from ethnographic fieldwork in a Danish neighbourhood characterised by multi-ethnicity and social deprivation. The dataset consist of field notes of participant observations,

various documents related to local policies and to the neighbourhood, and 32 recorded open-ended interviews. Analysing the data were partly conducted via a discursive narrative approach and partly based on constant comparative method.

Article 1 is a methodological paper aimed at demonstrating how ethnographic fieldwork generates rich and unique data that may be useful for health promotion in social settings. By using examples from the conducted fieldwork the article illustrates how the fieldworker's participation in the setting being studied, provides a fundamental base for engaging in meaningful conversations with informants. It also provides examples from the field demonstrating how relationships with informants develop over time, which influences the data generation.

Together these studies show that participation in neighbourhood development is meaningful to residents who engage in it, however only a minority do so. Moreover there are contradicting views among participating residents of how to define and practice good neighbouring behaviour. Residents have various ways of living meaningful neighbourhood lives, which relates to their perceptions of how a neighbourhood should be and what needs it should fulfil. These studies have illustrated the complexity of neighbourhood life which challenges the way community participation is approached in contemporary community development discourses.

Keywords: community participation, poor neighbourhoods, ethnographic fieldwork, community discourse, health promotion.

Resumé på dansk

Lokalsamfund og borgerinddragelse i sundhedsfremme: Perspektiver på deltagelse og hverdagsliv i et multi-etnisk og socialt belastet boligområde.

Gennem de seneste årtier er der i stigende grad øget fokus på opbygningen af lokalsamfund også indenfor sundhedsfremme. Med opbygningen af lokalsamfund, menes her initiativer som har det formål at styrke de sociale netværk blandt beboerne samt at gøre lokalområderne til attraktive boligområder. Et centralt omdrejningspunkt for den type projekter er at inddrage borgerne i formulering af mål, metoder og gennemførelser af disse projekter. Det underliggende rationale er at individer, der deltager i denne proces, oplever en større tilknytning til de fællesskaber og derigennem øger deres livskvalitet og oplevelsen af at kunne kontrollere retningen i eget liv. Derudover anskues deltagelse i sig selv som et kriterium for en succesfuld opbygningsproces. Desværre tages der ofte ikke højde for at borgere deltager på forskellige vilkår eller at borgerne har forskellige perspektiver af deres lokalsamfund, som påvirker deltagelsesmønstret som helhed. Det er derfor essentielt at opnå viden omkring hvordan deltagere oplever at være del af denne proces, som vil kunne anvendes i fremtidige sundhedsfremmeprojekter som bygger på borgerdeltagelse.

Denne afhandling søger at afdække udviklingen i et multi-etnisk og socialt belastet boligområde ved at fokusere på hvordan beboerne deltager i denne udvikling og hvordan de deltager i det sociale liv generelt i boligområdet.

Afhandlingen er bygget på tre artikler. I artikel 2 var formålet at udfordre begrebet 'borgerdeltagelse' i sundhedsfremmediskursen. Artiklen demonstrerer hvordan nøgletermer indlejret i denne diskurs har gennemsyret lokale kontekster og hvordan beboere konstruerer, operationaliserer, yder modstand og relaterer til denne diskurs. Studiet viser at den fremherskende måde at repræsentere boligområdet, rummer begreber som ligner nøgletermerne i sundhedsfremmediskursen, og at beboere både anvender og anfægter denne diskurs.

Artikel 3 fokuserer på hverdagslivet i boligområdet, og udforsker de relationer beboerne har til hinanden og hvordan de agerer med hinanden i dagligdagen. Der blev

identificeret fem hovedkategorier, som karakteriserer forskellige måder at praktiserer hverdagslivet på. Både artikel 2 og 3 er baseret på data, genereret fra etnografisk feltarbejde udført i et social belastet boligområde i Danmark. Data består af feltnoter fra deltagerobservation, forskellige dokumenter, der omhandler boligområdets udvikling og historie, og 32 semistrukturerede interviews. Dataanalysen blev delvist udført som en diskursiv narrativ tilgang og delvist via en etnografisk analytisk proces.

Artikel 1 er et metodologisk studie, som har det formål at demonstrere hvordan etnografisk feltarbejde genererer kompakte og unikke data. Ved at anvende eksempler fra feltarbejdet, illustrerer studiet hvordan feltarbejderens deltagelse i de lokaliteter, der studeres, udgør en fundamental base for at kunne engagerer sig i meningsfyldte samtaler med informanterne. Der illustreres også hvordan relationer med informanter udvikles undervejs gennem feltarbejdet og den betydning det har for datagenereringen.

Tilsammen viser disse tre studier at kun en mindre del af beboerne deltager i opbygningen af deres boligområder, men at det giver stor mening for de, som er involveret. Der udover er der modstridende synspunkter blandt beboerne omkring hvordan 'det gode naboskab' praktiseres. Beboerne har meget forskellige måder at relaterer til deres boligområde på, som hænger sammen med deres forestillinger om hvilke fysiske og sociale behov et boligområde skal opfylde. Resultaterne af denne afhandling udfordrer dermed den måde, hvorpå 'lokalsamfund' og 'deltagelse' hidtil er blevet anskuet indenfor sundhedsfremme.

Nøgleord: Borgerinddragelse, socialt belastede boligområder, etnografisk feltarbejde, diskurs, sundhedsfremme.

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Appendix 1: Interview guide

1. Personal information and background
   - Age, ethnicity, education, job situation.
   - Family relations, living conditions in childhood.
   - Characteristics of social network and social support.

2. History in Axelborg/Sønderbro
   - When and why did you move to the neighbourhood?
   - Do you think Axelborg has changed/developed and how?
   - How well did you know Axelborg before you moved in?
   - How was Axelborg perceived by 'outsiders' in the past?

3. Participation in 'building' Sønderbro/Axelborg
   - How do you participate in the building process (initiatives, organising, helping, supporting, taking part in social activities)?
   - How do you see your own role in developing Sønderbro?
   - How do you benefit from participating?
   - Explain the barriers/promoting factors of participating.

4. Axelborg/Sønderbro today
   - How would you characterise the neighbourhood today?
   - What are the best and worst things of the neighbourhood?
   - How do you think 'outsiders' characterise the neighbourhood (What kind of reactions do you get from 'outsiders' when telling your address)?
   - How do you compare the neighbourhood with other places in Horsens?

5. How do you 'use' Axelborg/Sønderbro and how do you socialise with the residents?
   - Do you use the public spaces of the neighbourhood (where, how and why)?
   - How would you describe your relationships with neighbours?
   - What makes up a 'good' and a 'bad' neighbour?
   - How would you describe your social relations in the neighbourhood?

6. Social coherence in Axelborg/Sønderbro
   - Do you think there is a sense of belonging/unity in the neighbourhood and how do you see this expressed?
   - How would you group the residents in the neighbourhood?
   - How do you see the groups are interacting with eachother (conflicts, gossip, initiatives, friendly atmosphere)?

Appendix 2: Article 1-3

1) Larsen E.L., Hansen H.P., 2008: Fra forsker til beboer: hvordan etnografisk feltarbejde kan bidrage til sundhedsfremme i boligområder (From researcher to resident: how ethnographic fieldwork may aid health promotion in neighbourhoods). *Tidsskrift for Sygeplejeforskning*, **24**(3) 21-28. Reproduced with permission from the journal.

2) Larsen, E.L, Manderson, L. (2009): "A good spot": Health promotion discourse, healthy cities and heterogeneity in contemporary Denmark. *Health & Place* **15** (2009):606-613. Reproduced with permission from the journal.

3) Larsen, E.L., Stock, C. Capturing contrasted realities: Integrating multiple perspectives of community life in health promotion. Submitted to *Health Promotion International*