

INSECURITY ON THE RISE

A study of the tendency towards an increased experience of insecurity
among residents in the Danish social housing area of Brøndby Strand



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Abstract

This master thesis is a study of why the experience of insecurity is increasing among residents in the Danish social housing area of Brøndby Strand while crime rates are lower than they have been for forty years. The research seeks to explore this apparent paradox through empirical data collected through qualitative interviews with residents of Brøndby Strand and quantitative data from surveys and statistics, but it also seeks to explain the tendency of the increased experience of insecurity on a more general level in the late modern society through relevant theory.

The qualitative interviews from where statements will be analysed have been conducted in the fall of 2020, and the interviewees are all tenant board members from Brøndby Strand, who provide explanations as to why the insecurity is increasing among residents in the neighbourhood, based on their personal experiences as well as through their roles as mediators in their community. Quantitative data sets such as statistics and surveys serve the research with some more generalisable data, and the theory included in this research will serve some explanation to the empirical data, but also elucidate how the tendency of an increased experience of insecurity is both relevant and present in our late modern society.

The analysis will be built up around working questions that seek to shed a light on different aspects of the overall topic of insecurity, because as the reader will find, the topic of insecurity is a complex size. Because of this research's intentions to entail the experience of insecurity on both an individual level, a community-based level and a societal level, three overall topics will be covered, because of their relevance to the acquired empirical data and their possibility to explore different perspectives of the topic of insecurity. These three research topics can largely be described as: distrust in law enforcement, ethnic demography and neighbourly relations.

Through analysis of the empirical data and implementation of relevant theory, this research finds that the increasing experience of crime as a problem can be attributed to a change in the residents' perception of crime wherein new types of crime may be perceived as more threatening to residents and more unassailable for law enforcement. The research will show how people are then more inclined to distrust the authorities because of the authorities' inability to eradicate certain types of crime. It will also be demonstrated how globalisation is affecting the local communities and the residents' experience of insecurity on a number of different aspects, whereof one is the aspect of increased mobility in the world is affecting

the demographic change in a neighbourhood such as Brøndby Strand. Immigrants and descendants make up more than half of the neighbourhood's population, and this introduction of the outsiders into the neighbourhood can cause a further experience of insecurity among residents of Danish descent. Demographic changes to a neighbourhood alongside an increased segmentation of resident's social lives may lead to a reduction in close neighbourly relations which also affects the experience of insecurity among residents. Among others, these are all elements that lead to an increase in the experience of insecurity, as it will be demonstrated throughout this research.

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1 Introduction

Working in the Danish NGO, Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke, for more than a year, I have been involved with the social housing sector for a while now. My work hours have especially been spent in the neighbourhood, Brøndby Strand, where I work with young people, supporting them in their own engagement to change the public narrative about the neighbourhood, specifically the narrative about the neighbourhood's youth.

Brøndby Strand is not officially a vulnerable social housing area, unlike other social housing areas, that have been defined so by the Danish state ("Hvordan defineres en ghetto og et udsat boligområde?", 2018). In its entirety, the neighbourhood only meets one of the criteria to be classified as a vulnerable social housing area, which is the criterion about the number of residents who are immigrants or descendants of immigrants from non-western countries. The number of residents with non-western backgrounds in Brøndby Strand surpasses that of 50% (SocialRespons, 2019), which has directly led to political discussions on bringing down the numbers of non-western immigrants in the area ("F21 Om antal beboere i Brøndby Strand med indvandrerbaggrund", 2017). So even though Brøndby Strand is not officially a vulnerable social housing area, it is often publicly branded as a ghetto or vulnerable neighbourhood, mainly due to its large number of non-western immigrants and descendants.

As I have been working closely together with residents as well as project workers in Brøndby Strand my interest in the neighbourhood has grown immensely. I have been curious as to why some of the residents that I have encountered do not want to walk alone from the station at night-time. I have been curious about the communication gap that seems to be present between the different resident groups in the area. I have been curious as to why the residents that I have met through my work there seem to carry the identity of being "from the ghetto". So, I have been curious about many things regarding the residential area of Brøndby Strand - so I looked to previous research about the area.

Early in my search I encountered the *Tryghedsmåling Brøndby Strand 2019* which can be translated to Security Survey Brøndby Strand 2019. The survey explores the residents' perception of satisfaction, neighbourly relations, participation and security in the neighbourhood. The survey was not only conducted in 2019 but also in 2016, and the final report compares answers from both years which gives us as readers an insight into the changes that have happened over the last years.

1.1 Problem description and research question

I made a lot of interesting findings in the Security Survey, but what stood out to me the most was that the residents' experience of security in the neighbourhood was declining. To me this was curious since what I had heard elsewhere was that crime rates were drastically declining on a national level but also on a local level in Brøndby Strand. National crime rates are in fact lower than they have been for forty years (Balvig, 2015: 7) (Danmarks Statistik, 2019: 7). Especially youth criminality is falling drastically on a national level ("Baggrundsviden og tal", 2019). The same pattern shows in the municipality of Brøndby. Crime rates are falling, and the number of police reports fell from 2997 reports in 2016, to 1973 reports in 2019 (Appendix 1).

Brøndby Strand's residents' experience of security in the neighbourhood is declining while there is also a decrease in both police reports and criminal cases in the area. To me, this presented an interesting paradox which I wanted to investigate further. However, it turned out that this paradox does not only represent itself in the area of Brøndby Strand. Apparently, this is also a tendency across the nation (Justitsministeriets Forskningskontor, 2017).

Therefore, I see it necessary to not only look at my empirical data in a local setting, but also in the bigger picture of how our society is transforming, in regard to the experience of security. I have formulated the following research question:

- *Why is the experience of insecurity increasing among residents in the Danish social housing area of Brøndby Strand, when crime rates are lower than they have been for many years, and how do we explain this tendency on a more general level in the late modern society?*

With the aim of answering this research question, I have also formulated more particular working questions, in order to help guide the process of research. The working questions can hopefully also guide the reader through this thesis. They are as follows:

- *How do we explain resident's distrust in law enforcement and authorities?*
- *How does the large number of immigrants and descendants in social housing areas affect the experience of insecurity among Danish residents?*
- *How does neighbourly relations and the sense of community affect the experience of (in)security?*

1.2 Project methodology

The working questions have been formulated subsequently of my collection of empirical data, and they may therefore come across as oddly specific. I chose to go about my data collecting inductively, and I will explain my reasoning behind this in my methodological chapter. With very little prior knowledge apart from the data from the Security Survey, I went out to Brøndby Strand and interviewed residents about their perception of security in the neighbourhood. I chose interviewees that were tenant board members, mainly because of their voluntary social engagement in the neighbourhood, but also because they, to some extent, are local representatives, since they are democratically elected by all the other residents to make important decisions on behalf of the neighbourhood. What I came to learn through the interviews was that they also bring a quite long historical context to their interview responses and stories about the neighbourhood. All the interviewees have lived more than 25 years in the neighbourhood, which is interesting seeing that they have experienced changes in the neighbourhood through a much longer period of time than most other Danish people live in the same place (Gregersen & Johansen, 2019).

The interviewees shed a light on some different topics regarding the experienced security in Brøndby Strand. The topics that I found most interesting and relevant are the ones that I have included in the working questions. I also find these topics to be of great analytical value, since they may also represent something larger in our society, as opposed to e.g., specific architectural design of how streetlights are placed in Brøndby Strand, which the interviewees also explained as factors of insecurity among residents.

I intend to pick out relevant quotes and themes from the interviews that I have conducted, analyse and compare these to quantitative data from either local or national statistics. In the balance between specific personal quotes from interviewees and more general representative data, I also intend to apply relevant theory that can say something about our late modern society as a whole. Thereby the analysis will not only be relevant for Brøndby Strand, a specific Danish social housing area, but also for the rest of society, in regard to the experience of security in neighbourhoods. I have attempted to include the very specific geographical context alongside our general society in my research question, and I therefore intend to answer this through a combination of specific empirical data and broader sociological theory.

As I have already suggested through my working questions, I will conduct my analysis thematically. I have chosen to answer the working questions in a specific order based on the

narrative that I find relevant to answer my overall research question. Thematically as well as theoretically, the narrative of my analysis will start at the more practical and individual experience of (in)security and gradually move towards a more abstract and societal experience of (in)security.

1.3 Theory and its role in the project

I will now briefly account for my selected theory, how these theories will be applied in my analysis and thereby how I intend for them to help me answer my working questions and lastly my research question. All theories and use thereof will be explained in detail in my theoretical chapter.

As it was made clear in the responses to the Security Survey from 2019 (SocialRespons, 2019: 52), residents from Brøndby Strand increasingly experience crime as a problem in the area. The interviewees also talked about crime in their neighbourhood, and they all expressed some extent of dissatisfaction or distrust in local law enforcement, and all had stories about times where they had been in need of police action but were asked by police to take action themselves and did not receive help. As new political proposals have been made on this specific topic, I will also be discussing their relevance to this topic. Distrust in law enforcement and the governmental security proposals could surely be analysed in many ways and through a broad variety of theoretical frameworks, but I have chosen to look at this disbelief or distrust through sociological theory and take use of the theoretical notions of *risk society* by Ulrich Beck and *reflexivity* by Anthony Giddens. The risk society is a term coined by both Beck and Giddens. It explains how the late modern society is defined by increasing risks and potential catastrophes, and also how we as inhabitants of the risk society are losing faith in experts to inform us about the oncoming catastrophes as well as protect us from them. In combination with the notion of reflexivity, which explains how the late modern individual is increasingly exposed to the pluralisation of choice and through that make more individual choices on who or what to believe, I will use this theoretical framework to account for the interviewees' distrust in law enforcement and authorities.

Another topic that I have already touched upon in this introduction but also came up in every single interview is the problem field concerning ethnic grouping and the large number of immigrants and descendants living in Brøndby Strand. What I found through the interviews is that the interviewees, who are all of Danish descent, talked about groups of non-western men as the main source of insecurity in the streets of Brøndby Strand. They

also talked about specific examples where misunderstandings had occurred and pointed out how especially the language and behaviour expressed by these men could be intimidating to them and other residents. One interviewee even said that she never leaves her house after dark because of these men. Zygmunt Bauman has theorised *the stranger* as someone who is disturbing order, and his theory on *modernity and ambivalence* sheds an interesting light on the analysis of this topic of ethnic grouping. He talks about how the stranger can bring “the outside” into “the inside” and thereby destroys the sense of order and comfort. This analysis is very relevant to the statements made by some of the interviewees and is also relevant to a broader discussion of integration of non-western immigrants in a previously Danish dominated neighbourhood.

The interviewees, some more than others, claimed that neighbourly relations have a great impact on how residents experience security in their neighbourhood. Through the years that the interviewees have been living in Brøndby Strand, they have experienced that there is less communication between neighbours than before which they see as a challenge to the residents’ experience of security. I will analyse this aspect of (in)security through Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of *social capital*, where relationships and social interactions play a big role in how identity, trust and security is formed in communities. I will also include Catarina Kinwall’s notion of *ontological security*, because this concept seeks to explain why the rapid globalisation and demographic change in our communities will affect our experience of security. In a late modern context, we no longer have substantial traditional community structures to affirm our identities in, and so we experience ontological insecurity. Through this concept, I can analyse the increasing experience of insecurity in the “micro-cosmos” of Brøndby Strand, but also elevate the discussion to a more general macro context.

In this introduction I have divided the theory quite strictly by topic. I intend to keep this structure throughout my analysis, but the theories have overlaps, and so do the topics, so I will also apply some theories in several different sections and try to refer back and forward between the different topics.

It is my intention that this way of conducting the analysis will result in a discussion where all the different topics have been elevated to such a point where it is possible to compare and collect all the analytical material, and then finally answer the overall research question.

2 Methodology

Before we delve into the theory and analysis, I will present the methodology that I have applied to this research. This is to give the reader a thorough understanding of the chronological order in which I will make my arguments, but also how I have come to do this research and how I will go about answering my research question. This chapter will explain how I initiated my research, how I collected my empirical data, how I limited the scope of the research, how I chose theory, and how I will conduct the analysis in this research paper. I will also give reasoning as to why I have made the choices that I have.

2.1 Initiating the research

As I have explained in my introduction, my interest in the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand stems from the time I have spent working there, but also how the neighbourhood has been portrayed in the media and on the political scene. I had some former knowledge about the area, but not a whole lot, and I knew some residents, but not that many. When I read into research about the neighbourhood that had previously been done, I found that the topic of security came up. There had been conducted a massive security survey as recently as in 2019 which showed that insecurity among residents was increasing in comparison to the survey that had been completed in 2016. I found this interesting because I had also heard that crime rates were lower than they had been for many years. On the surface, this presented a paradox which I wanted to investigate further.

I decided to collect empirical data through the use of qualitative interviews with residents, because I had a hope that these interviews could bring some depth to my understanding of the residents' experience of insecurity. One could therefore argue that I went about my initial stage of research with an abductive methodology, because I observed a tendency in the quantitative surveys which in my understanding did not correlate with the knowledge I had about the decreasing of crime. If the interviewees could provide a further explanation of the experience of insecurity in Brøndby Strand, those explanations could perhaps give reason to why the insecurity was increasing in the neighbourhood.

2.2 Qualitative interviews

I already had quantitative data that stated that the experience of insecurity was increasing among residents of Brøndby Strand, but the survey answers did not explain the sources of insecurity or specifically why residents were experiencing the neighbourhood as more

insecure. I therefore decided to conduct qualitative interviews with residents in hope that they could provide more detailed explanations.

The individuals whom I chose to interview are all members of the local tenant boards. I chose to interview these persons specifically because of their role as representatives for the local community. Tenant board members are democratically elected by the other residents and they have mandate to make decisions on behalf of the estates and the neighbourhood in general. They can also be characterised as mediators of the other tenants, since they are involved not only in the process of decision making, but also because they receive complaints, opinions and suggestions from other tenants. I would however not argue that their statements or personal stories could ever be representative of the neighbourhood as a whole. The interviewees, Claus, Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten and Christina, are all above the age of 40 and they are all of Danish descent. Their interview responses and their stories cannot and should not be generalised, and it is quite likely that I would have gotten very different responses if I was to interview other residents. Their responses are therefore not representative, but they are nonetheless relevant. They are relevant because all five interviewees are in fact residents in Brøndby Strand, and their experience of the neighbourhood might serve just as relevant as any other experience.

I initially wanted to interview representatives from all the nine tenant boards in Brøndby Strand, but because of the situation with corona and maybe other factors, it proved quite hard to get a hold of representatives from all the different tenant boards. It is worth noting that the corona situation has been particularly bad in Brøndby Strand (Beck, 2021). As I did not have an endless amount of time to collect empirical data, I would have to settle with five interview persons, but as it will hopefully show through my analysis, the responses that I got represent different experiences and point of views.

My initial intention with the qualitative interviews was to conduct the interviews as focus group interviews. The intention of a focus group interview is to present several different aspects in one setting, and the group dynamic may add to a livelier discussion, because the interviewees do not necessarily agree on all matters (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015: 205-206), which I thought could be interesting when we were to discuss the topic of security. I also hoped that the focus group interview would spark some more spontaneous responses and expressive opinions, because the interviewees would be motivated or inspired by the conversation happening between them. I did one focus group interview with three people; Torben, Jens Erik and Bitten, and I do think that the fluent conversation may have

introduced new perspectives and reflections that would not have come up in an individual interview.

The two other interviews that I conducted with Claus and Christina were both individual interviews. It is difficult to say now if it would have improved the quality of the interviews to do them as focus group interviews. A positive side of the individual interviews is however that there could be less of a hierarchy present in the interview setting compared to in a focus group interview.

The interview guide that I used can be found in the appendix, but as I wanted a more loosely structured interview that opened up for interviewees to delve into stories, I would say that the interviews can be characterised as narrative interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015: 209). Throughout the interviews I asked the interviewees to describe the situations they mentioned in relation to the topic of security. The interviews however also hold characteristics of conceptual interviews in which the interviewees reflect upon the concept of security, and how this concept related to their local context (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015: 207).

2.2.1 Translation

I chose to conduct the interviews in Danish for different reasons. One reason being, that I believe that the interviewees would be more comfortable speaking in their native tongue and would have an easier time expressing their feelings and opinions in Danish. Another reason being, that there are numerous words that I have had a hard time translating myself, because they are so specifically related to the Danish social housing model. My thoughts on this were that using these words in English could have caused unnecessary confusion in the conversation between me and the interviewees.

All original interviews in Danish can be heard in the attached audio files (Christina.m4a, Claus.m4a, Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a). For the purpose of making a coherent analysis where everything could be understood by the reader, I chose to translate all the quotes used in the analysis. I recognise that this practice can be described as me taking liberties, because certain meanings or feelings can be lost in translation. I also want the reader to know that not all quotes are directly translated, because as it is with translation, some phrasings or utterings in Danish do not make sense if they are directly translated to English. Even though I have attempted to stay as close to the original quote as possible, some quotes may have been slightly rephrased in order for them to semantically make sense to the reader.

2.3 Limitations of research topics

After conducting my interviews, I sat down and listened them through and wrote down quotes that I thought had great analytical value. I grouped the quotes and tried to find more general topics under which I could categorise these quotes. In order to answer my research question, I saw it necessary to find sub-topics relating to security, because security as a whole is too broad of a topic to analyse in a thesis. The topics that I ended up choosing are the ones that are reflected in my working questions: law enforcement, ethnicity and neighbourly relations. I chose these topics because they were central topics of discussion in all interviews, but also because I believe that they represent different aspects of the overall topic of security. They include the individual experience of (in)security, the more community-based experience, and also developments that are happening in our society as a whole.

During the interviews many other interesting topics relating to experience of security came up in conversation such as: The media's influence, the corona pandemic, the mobility between different housing areas, the Danish ghetto laws, and the discursual use of "security". These are all topics that I would have liked to research, but I had to put my limits of research somewhere, and these topics did not make the cut no matter how interesting they may seem.

2.4 Methodology of analysis

Having categorised the relevant quotes that I wanted to analyse under working questions and topics, I looked for more quantitative data which could assist the analysis in becoming a bit more representative and explanatory so that I would not be left with an analysis that only explained five individual experiences of (in)security. The use of surveys and statistics will prove helpful in the analysis, as I can then compare the statements made by interviewees to quantitative data, and thereby hopefully elevate the analysis to a more general level. I will not only try to elevate the analysis by comparing the qualitative data to quantitative data. A majority of my analysis will be conducted through relevant theory which will serve as not only an analytical tool to understand the empirical data, but also as a way to say something about our society as a whole in regard to the experience of insecurity in contemporary times.

As the reader will notice I have chosen to organise the theory to be correspondent to my working questions and topics of research. The theories do however overlap with the

different research topics and the reader will notice that one theory is not strictly used in one specific subchapter of the analysis but may be applied in various different ways throughout the analysis.

Even though I will use quantitative data and sociological theory throughout my analysis, I would still argue that my analysis is mostly characterised by being inductive. Throughout most of my analysis, I will take outset in the specific quotes provided by interviewees and then give these quotes meaning and significance through a more quantitative data set and/or explain them through relevant theory. My reasons for choosing to take outset in the individual experience and the interview statements, is that these statements laid the foundations for my research questions, and since they were the reasons for formulating the working questions that I did, it seemed natural to analytically take the outset in these individual statements as well.

My intentions are to conduct an analysis of the collected empirical data which says something about the individual's experience of insecurity, or through the quantitative data, something about a community or nation's experience of insecurity. In this sense I will cover the micro aspect of the topic, but my intentions are, that following the quantitative data and comparing the micro perspective of the topics to relevant theory which deals more broadly with societal development, the analysis will also be able to say something about our societies' macro structures and how we can understand the increase of insecurity in the bigger picture.

Following this methodological chapter, the disposition will be as follows:

1. A chapter about Brøndby Strand as a neighbourhood which will provide the reader with some contextual knowledge about the place from where my research began.
2. A theoretical chapter that thoroughly walks the reader through the theory which I have chosen to apply to this research. I will explain core concepts of the theories and their relevance to my research.
3. The analytical chapter wherein I will answer my working questions through analysing statements made by interviewees, as well as relevant quantitative data, and how these can be understood through the theoretical framework. Each subchapter in the analysis will be followed by a sub-conclusion where I will summarise the main findings from the analysis.

4. A discussion where I will return to my initial intentions with the research and reflect on whether the findings throughout the analysis can be helpful in responding to my overall research question. In this chapter I will also compare results from the analysis and discuss overlaps and similarities if they are present. I will reflect upon my methodological approach to my research and whether the analysis' argumentative narrative is sound.
5. A conclusion where I will summarise this entire research and answer the research question.

3 The neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand

As I have briefly touched upon in my introduction, the area from where my thesis takes its outset, is the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand. My decision to choose this particular neighbourhood was partly based on my involvement with social work in the area throughout the last year and half. I therefore have personal contacts and some prior knowledge about the neighbourhood. However, I also chose to gather empirical data from this specific neighbourhood because of its characteristics as a large social housing area with great diversity in ethnic descent and its public image as a Danish “ghetto”.

In this chapter I will introduce the reader to a bit of the historical development of Brøndby Strand as a neighbourhood. I will also touch upon the area’s demography and other statistics relevant to this specific research. Hopefully this chapter will serve the reader with some useful background knowledge about the neighbourhood, and perhaps give the reader the opportunity to compare it to other neighbourhoods, with its similarities and differences to other social housing areas.

3.1 Worker families are moving out of the city

In the beginning of the 1960s Danish families were beginning to experience brighter economic times and practices such as rationing from the times during and after the second world war were eradicated. The Danish welfare system was blossoming, and more families than ever before could afford items such as private cars and televisions. There was also an ongoing mass migration from the countryside to the bigger cities, in particular to the capital, Copenhagen. The industrialisation had initially brought workers to the cities, but as the working families began to earn more, they also wanted something bigger and better to live in than what central Copenhagen could accommodate them with (Bertelsen, 1997: 59).

3.2 Unpopular concrete

Following the establishment of other big building projects in the periphery of Copenhagen like Bellahøj, Gladsaxeplanen and Albertslundplanen, it was settled that also the area of Brøndby Strand should house a big new building project. The plan to build a very big housing project that would be able to house up to 17.000 residents was initiated in 1964 and the construction of Brøndby Strand Parkerne were finalised in 1974 (“Brøndby Strands historie”, n.d.). The architect, Svend Høgsbro, wanted to create the entire housing area in a look of raw concrete, to which his idea was that the residents and their items such as balcony

flower boxes or curtains should bring colour to the neighbourhood. Along with the fairly limited access to local shopping opportunities and the fairly high rental prices, the concrete did not fall into everyone's taste. Even though a new S-train station opened in Brøndby Strand in 1972 and they lowered the rental prices in order to make it more affordable for working families, the apartments were not filled until 1987 (La Cour, n.d.) ("Byerne langs Køge Bugt: Brøndby Strand", n.d.). As it turns out, the speed and new building technologies with which the neighbourhood had been built still brings consequences today. The buildings of Brøndby Strand Parkerne have undergone several big renovations, and the newest renovation plan also includes the demolition of five out of twelve of the iconic high-rise buildings, because PCB levels are so high that they could be damaging to the residents' health (Brøndby Strand Parkerne: HP4 Foreløbig Helhedsplan, 2013).

3.3 Demography of Brøndby Strand

Brøndby Strand is in fact a neighbourhood that also includes a large residential area with privately owned villas. In this research I will however mainly focus on the specific social housing area in Brøndby Strand known as Brøndby Strand Parkerne (in english: Brøndby Strand Parks), which is a social housing area. I have however never encountered anyone who particularly calls them that, so I will refer to the neighbourhood as just Brøndby Strand. The Danish social housing model is defined by affordable housing and equal access to waiting lists for everyone, which means that the social demography of these areas typically includes more residents with lower income than the national average ("In English", n.d.).

When it comes to explaining the demography of Brøndby Strand and the change that has happened over time, I do not have access to a lot of demographic data about this specific neighbourhood. Through local development plans I have access to data about the neighbourhood's demography in the latter years, but if I am to look at a change that has occurred through decades, I only have access to data that entails the entire municipality of Brøndby. I will therefore refer to both data sets, but I will make it clear whether the demographic data is about the specific neighbourhood or the municipality in its entirety.

Brøndby Strand Parkerne house approximately 7500 people, where the municipality has a total population of 34.000 ("Brøndby Strand: Den planlagte by", n.d.). Compared to the surrounding municipality, Brøndby Strand Parkerne has more children under the age of 18 and less elderly people than the rest of the municipality, and residents under the age of 30 make up more than 40% of the total amount of residents (SocialRespons, 2019: 12). The

neighbourhood is characterised by having more residents with lower income than the rest of the municipality and also many more residents who are immigrants or descendants of immigrants compared to the rest of the municipality (Brøndby Strand Parkerne: HP4 Foreløbig Helhedsplan, 2013). The number of immigrants and descendants is also rising a lot, and it now outnumbers the number of residents of Danish descent (SocialRespons, 2019: 16).

Concerning crime statistics, there are some uncertainties of the data, since the police do not track crime rates based on a single neighbourhood, but only on behalf of municipalities. There is however a general fall in reported crimes, criminal charges and verdicts in the neighbourhood from 2016 to 2019 (SocialRespons, 2019: 17), and as I have previously stated, the municipality is also seeing less reports, charges and verdicts throughout the years (Appendix 1).

3.4 Brøndby Strand in the centre of political discussions

The number of immigrants and descendants living in Brøndby Strand have been topic of political discussion several times to which one can see references to in the parliament negotiations from 2017 (“F 21 Om antal beboere i Brøndby Strand med indvandrerbaggrund”, 2017). Here it was discussed whether it is a problem that the number of immigrants and descendants is outnumbering that of the Danish residents, where the some of the right wing parties’ representants hold the perspective that there is a counterculture in Brøndby Strand, and that the large number of immigrants and descendants is a cultural problem for the neighbourhood, but also for the rest of the nation. The left-wing parties’ representants argue that the many of descendants of immigrants could be characterised as Danish as they are law abiding citizens who have been born in Denmark, and they also point to the fact that they believe that the problems that can be seen in Brøndby Strand is not as much a cultural problem as it is a social problem (“F 21 Om antal beboere i Brøndby Strand med indvandrerbaggrund”, 2017).

3.5 Social housing projects and tenant democracy

I have previously stated that Brøndby Strand is not on the government’s official list over ghettos or vulnerable housing areas (“Hvem er på ghettolisten 2020?”, n.d.). The neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand however still have a social housing project, Brøndby Strand Projektet, through which employees in Brøndby Strand work to promote things such

as security, satisfaction, education, employment, crime prevention, and parental support among residents (“Den boligsociale helhedsplan”, n.d.). The social housing project can take on initiatives such as youth activities, legal support for families, career counseling, etc.

My involvement with Brønd Strand Projektet has been through youth communities and youth engagement, where I have worked together with a group of young people who want more activities for young people in Brøndby Strand, but also want to change the reputation that the neighbourhood has in the surrounding neighbourhoods (“Brøndby Strand Ungefællesskab”, n.d.). Changing a narrative about an entire neighbourhood can be challenging to do when you are only 10 young people, and back in September 2019 the youth community reached out to the established tenant democracy in order to make an alliance where both parts could benefit from each other's knowledge and outreach.

The established tenant democracy is an integral part of the Danish social housing model, where members of the tenant boards are democratically elected by all tenants in the estate, and they then have the mandate to make essential decisions on behalf of the estates (“In English”, n.d.). The individuals whom I have interviewed for this research are all members of tenant boards in Brøndby Strand. The different estates in Brøndby Strand have their own tenant boards, but the different tenant boards are also members of a coalition called De 9 (in English: The 9), a name that represents the nine different estates (“De 9-partnerskabet”, n.d.). Through this coalition they make decisions on behalf of the entire neighbourhood, and the tenant boards therefore hold quite a significant amount of power in how the development of the neighbourhood is going to be directed.

I hope that this brief description of Brøndby Strand as a neighbourhood will serve helpful for the reader and provide some knowledge about the contextual setting in which I am conducting this research.

4 Theory

In my introduction, I have briefly accounted for my choice of theory, their relevance and explained how the different theories will be put into use throughout my analysis. In this chapter I will thoroughly walk the reader through relevant theoretical concepts. I also intend to establish a clear correlation between the chosen theory and the empirical data, and thereby clarify my argumentative narrative for the reader before delving into the actual analysis.

The structure of this chapter will resemble the structure of my working questions, and I will account for the different theoretical perspectives thematically. Notice however that the entire theoretical framework, to some extent, has been chosen by its ability to say something about the human experience of (in)security.

4.1 Human security

As the reader will have noticed, my research question entails the notion of a late modern society. Throughout this chapter I will account for different theoretical perspectives that, to some extent, all say something about the human experience of living in a late modern society. My theoretical focus will remain on that of (in)security, and I therefore find it necessary to clarify my approach to this specific notion because of its relevance throughout this entire research.

When the Cold War ended in the early 1990s there was an emergence of a new perspective on the matter of security. The conflict between two massive superpowers had been central through many years, and the overhanging fear of a nuclear war had been considered one of the greatest threats to global security. Threats were no longer solely made up of “national security matters”, where one state could oppose a security threat to another. What could now be considered the more gratifying threats were things such as poverty, inequality, environmental disasters, internal conflicts and diseases. What also defined these types of threats was that they were not only a security matter for the state in its entirety, but also to “people” (Betts, 2009: 66).

As a result of this shift in the view on security, the notion of *human security* surfaced. It was first materialised by the United Nations Development Programme in 1994, and then later in 2003 given more importance, when the first report by the Commission on Human Security was released (Betts, 2009: 66). They define human security as following:

“to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms - freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.” (Commission of Human Security, 2003: 4).

In its core significance there are two new aspects to human security which had not previously been conceptualised on the matter of security. First of all, there is the aspect in which the individual is central to the understanding of security. Rather than the state, the individual human being is now seen as the main referent object of security. Secondly, human security also entails new security threats that are not only relevant to the state’s national military security. These new security threats could be, as I previously mentioned, related to e.g., environment, economics, politics, health, etc. (Betts, 2009: 67).

I believe that the notion of human security and its contents proves relevant to my research because it broadens the mention of security to a wider extent than traditional security studies, which are more concerned with national security in relation to interstate military conflict. Human security’s focus on the individual as the referent object of security also proves relevant to the way in which I have collected my empirical data and therefore gives leeway for an analysis with outset in the individual experience of security, as opposed to a matter of state security.

4.2 Distrust in law enforcement and authorities

As I have briefly accounted for in the introduction, the interviewees all expressed some dissatisfaction with law enforcement’s involvement in the neighbourhood. Either based on bad personal experiences or a broader sense of distrust in authorities in relation to how police resources are being distributed in society. In order to analyse this dissatisfaction and distrust in law enforcement, I have chosen two main theoretical notions that I believe are complementary to each other in explaining why people experience insecurity and how that is related to their distrust in law enforcement or authorities. These two theoretical notions being that of *risk society* by Ulrich Beck, and Anthony Giddens’ *reflexivity*. I will now account

for some of the theories' relevant key points and thereby hopefully clarify their significance to the topic of *distrust in law enforcement and authorities*.

4.2.1 Risk society

I have recently described how there in the approach of human security is a focus on the individual's security rather than the state's security, and how, with the introduction of human security, new types of threats are considered relevant. This correlates with German sociologist Ulrich Beck's concept, *risk society*.

In his book *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* from 1992, Beck argues that we, particularly in the Western world since the 1970s, have been in a transition from a society where distribution of wealth was central, to a society where the distribution of risks is dominant. The growing wealth in the West and the implementation of welfare states has generally led to less concern about "putting food on the table" and life-threatening poverty. However, this has come with a high price on other aspects. Beck points to the fact that the focused ambitions to eradicate hunger and poverty has been accompanied by an overproduction of goods and an overdevelopment of techno-scientific methods. Overproduction and overdevelopment have already had detrimental side effects to e.g., our environment, and he argues that the tunnel vision on overcoming poverty has resulted in a disregard towards these side effects. In contemporary times we are however becoming more aware of these side effects, and as a consequence of this, we are now living in a risk society (Beck, 1992: 20).

According to Beck we do however need to distinguish between this contemporary understanding of risk and the understanding of insecurities or threats to human existence in general. Naturally, humans have always experienced threat and insecurity, and many threats and insecurities were in fact deadlier earlier in time. Premature death from illness or starvation are examples of threats that previously were much bigger. What he calls the *semantics of risk* is defined by uncertainty and probability. The future threats that we are now mainly concerned with are threats that we, to some extent, are in fact complicit in creating ourselves, through the process of modernisation and industrialisation (Beck, 2009: 4).

In this sense the concept of risk is in its nature reflexive and relates closely to the concept of reflexive modernisation. We as humans started the modernisation process, and these new threats and insecurities are inflicted upon us by modernisation itself (Beck, 1992: 21).

Initially Beck was very occupied with the risks of environmental change that followed the industrialisation's pollution and CO₂ emissions. The risks of natural disasters and global climate change also serve as great examples of reflexive modernity and how we as humans are facing large scale self-inflicted challenges as a result of modern development. But other global risks such as financial crises or terrorism are also very present in contemporary society (Beck, 2009: 25).

These *new risks* as he defines them are characterised by being anticipations of hypothetical catastrophes. We cannot know precisely when, where or how these catastrophes will occur, which leads to a global insecurity (Beck, 2009: 52).

Since the new global risks relate to reflexive modernisation, the authorities that are supposed to protect us from danger and risks, are becoming both the aggressor and the protector, which makes them hard to trust. Science, business, military, mass media, legal systems and political institutions are one hand who we consider the managers of risk, but they may also be the sources of risk.

According to Beck this results in a new form of individualisation, where individuals have to make their own decisions due to the many uncertainties of our global risk society. People can no longer trust the previously mentioned "experts" who are supposed to inform us about risk and protect us from risk, because they play an essential part in creating that risk (Beck, 2009: 54).

Risk society holds importance to my forthcoming analysis in many ways and could be applied to an analysis of increasing insecurity in general. Where I find its relevance to the topic of distrust in law enforcement, and thereby also governance of this matter, is especially in the concept of risks as central to reflexive modernisation, as I have just described. I will now elaborate on the concept of reflexivity through Anthony Giddens' theory.

4.2.2 Reflexivity

English sociologist Anthony Giddens conceptualises reflexivity within the same realm of modernity as Ulrich Beck, and the two have also done collaborative work on the book *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Traditions and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. For the purpose of answering my working question concerning distrust in law enforcement, I did however turn to his book from 1991, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. I find that his argumentation about the individual's experience of reflexivity in the late modernity and self-identity is relevant to my analysis of an individual's experience

of insecurity and an individual's distrust in law enforcement or politics about the distribution of law enforcement.

Giddens argues that we now live in a late modernity and thereby also a post-traditional order. This results in an individual reflexivity, where we have to make our own decisions about how we want to live our lives on a daily basis - what we want to eat, what we want to wear, how we want to act, what we want to believe, etc. We thereby are confronted with developing our self-identities throughout our entire lives (Giddens, 1991: 14).

He further explains this *plurality of choices*, that we as individuals in late modernity are confronted with deriving from four main sources:

First, individuals are living in a post-traditional order, where there are no longer "givens" as to how to live your life. Therefore, individuals can take alternative routes to finding their own identity and way of life (Giddens, 1991: 82).

Second, there is the segmentation and diversity of social life. Because the late modern individual no longer is so closely bound to one specific social setting due to their work, family structure, etc., the individual nowadays usually moves between different milieux throughout their life. Local community is no longer our only social arena, and we increasingly tend to separate private and public domain (Giddens, 1991: 83).

Third, there is the pluralisation of belief systems, which in this sense means that we are becoming more reflective about the knowledge that we are consuming. As a result of this, there is now an existing doubt and uncertainty in authorities and experts - not only because we as individuals become more reflective, but also because these authorities and experts often disagree and dispute each other's arguments (Giddens, 1991: 83-84).

Fourth, we are being more exposed to what he calls *mediated experience*. With the globalisation of mass media, we are hearing more about what goes on in the entire world around us. He mentions television and newspapers, but what is probably even more relevant now, is the internet as our primary news outlet. This globalisation of media results in a more direct experience of events and development worldwide, and late modern individuals can thereby have the experience of being a direct audience of events happening quite far away from their own lived experiences (Giddens, 1991: 84).

Particularly the last two sources that I have accounted for, I believe are important to discuss the topics of knowledge and trust. Specifically, what is accepted as knowledge and how we put our trust in experts and authorities such as the government or law enforcement.

As Giddens explains, scientific knowledge in the late modern society is never certain, since it is always open for revision or being written off completely. This creates a doubt in knowledge, not only for scientists but also for ordinary citizens (Giddens, 1991: 21). This is relevant to my research because it, at least partly, explains why individuals would not be trusting new national bills or reforms. I will elaborate analytically on this matter in a later chapter. It is however important to note that Giddens does not say that late modern individuals are always critical and sceptical towards knowledge and institutions. He explains that it is often a mix of, on one hand being sceptic or against something completely, and then on the other hand entirely trusting other institutions of knowledge (Giddens, 1991: 23).

When trust is so closely interlinked with our day-to-day choices, and we experience this broad plurality of choices, Giddens argues that this also affects our experience of security. He states that trust and security, and risk and danger are closely related, and thereby affect each other either positively or negatively (Giddens, 1991: 19).

Trusting an authority in this sense signifies that you are counting on that authority to protect you from risks, but with the plurality of authorities and expertise, it can be difficult for the late modern individual to be certain about the determining the “right” authority to trust. Thereby there is no longer any authority that can be an actual alternative to the individual’s uncertainty and insecurity (Giddens, 1991: 194-195).

I have now accounted for the two theoretical perspectives by Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens - risk society and reflexivity. Tying these two theories together, I believe that they may come of good use, when I attempt to answer the question *how do we explain resident’s distrust in law enforcement and authorities?*

4.3 The stranger in our neighbourhood

In the introduction I briefly presented the topic of insecurity among residents as a result of gaps between different ethnic groups. Brøndby Strand is a housing area that stands out on its large number of immigrants and descendants of immigrants living there. In fact, the number of residents that are immigrants or descendants make up more than 50% of the total

population of the neighbourhood (SocialRespons, 2019: 16). As I have touched upon earlier, this has been the outset for political discussions, but it is also something that holds an importance to the residents whom I have interviewed. Not that all interviewees have necessarily expressed that they see the large number of immigrants or descendants as a problem in itself, but more so that it results in misunderstandings and an experience of insecurity among some residents. I will of course elucidate this matter thoroughly in my analytical chapter. As for now, I will elaborate on my choice of theory through which I aspire to analyse this matter.

Previously mentioned concepts by Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck certainly also prove relevant for understanding why a large number of immigrants or descendants would oppose a threat to Danish residents. Giddens' notion of *mediated experience*, where global mass media deeply affect our perspective and experience of the rest of the world, thereby also other ethnic groups and their comings and goings. Beck's perspective on "new risks" also proves relevant to the topic, since especially terrorism has gravely affected how we in the West now perceive the Middle East, and thereby also Middle Eastern immigrants and their descendants in this country (Hauptman, 2013: 125-142).

Even so, I still look to sociologist Zygmunt Bauman and his work from 1991, *Modernity and Ambivalence*. His concepts of *modernity* and *ambivalence* do not stray too far from those of Giddens and Beck, but he does dwell on the concept of *the stranger*, which I found particularly relevant to this aspect of my research. I will now briefly introduce his theoretical framework, but mostly focus on mention of *the stranger*.

As a student I have always been interested in minority culture and the lived experiences of ethnic minorities. In my job I am also occupied with supporting and promoting young minority voices. However, I find that Zygmunt Bauman's theories do a great job of explaining the "majority perspective" on *the stranger*, which to me, is of extreme relevance to the analysis that I am conducting. If I am to try to understand why insecurity is increasing among residents, and why some of that insecurity is rooted in the gap between ethnic groups, I shall also seek to understand why the majority population could see the ethnic minorities as threats.

4.3.1 Ambivalence and modernity

To understand Bauman's concept of *the stranger*, I find an importance in briefly introducing its correlation to his position on the concepts of *ambivalence* and *modernity*, because these are indeed also relevant to this research.

As he states, ambivalence is closely connected to the abilities of classifying and naming things. When we classify, we put certain things into certain structures, and this gives a sense of order. When we on the other hand are not able to classify, or when two or more options both can be good or bad alternatives, we experience ambivalence. With this ambivalence follows an uncertainty that can be experienced as a discomfort or a disorder. According to Bauman, this can result in anxiety where ambivalence is a threat to the order we're pursuing in life (Bauman, 1991: 1-2).

Modernity, on the other hand, is a time in our existence where order is very central. Bauman writes: "We can think of modernity as of a time when order - of the world, of the human habitat, of the human self, and of the connection between all three - is *reflected upon*..." (Bauman, 1991: 5). We as humans are occupied with finding order in our existence, and we reflect upon that to an extent where we do not necessarily find order in things but also find chaos. These two, order and chaos, become what Bauman refers to as *modern twins* (Bauman, 1991: 4), and in this lies the ambivalence. In our quest to find order, we also encounter ambivalence, which becomes a crucial concern to our modern practice (Bauman, 1991: 15). Bauman argues that we in modern practices, through e.g., politics and science look to eradicate ambivalence by clearly defining and categorising things. This is however not always possible and therefore results in an intolerance or de-legitimation towards the things that we cannot define (Bauman, 1991: 7-8).

4.3.2 The stranger

This intolerance may be directed towards *the stranger*, whom Bauman calls "the bane of modernity" (Bauman, 1991: 61).

The stranger is no friend nor enemy. The stranger is positioned between oppositions and therefore cannot be clearly defined, which in this sense also means that the stranger possesses qualities of ambivalence (Bauman, 1991: 53). The stranger can be seen as a part of what Bauman calls *undecidables*. They cannot clearly be defined, and therefore oppose a great threat to the modern practice of order. The undecidables exposes how flawed the

system of order and categorising in fact is, and they carry with them the unknown or the outside into the inside, which can lead to a fear of an oncoming chaos (Bauman, 1991: 56).

Immigrants and descendants living in social housing areas are a great example of undecidables or strangers, because they often possess plural national identities, but also because they are not nomads who are merely coming through. They are there to stay, and they are permanently bringing the outside into the inside. The stranger thereby compromises our sense of spatial order, not because he comes, but because he settles (Bauman, 1991: 59).

Bauman also mentions what you could call “modern coping mechanisms” towards the stranger and the suspicion of chaos that the stranger brings with him. Since a full segregation or separation is not possible (Bauman, 1991: 57), or at least have not been successful anywhere yet (Bauman, 1991: 65), other more or less conscious strategies have been put into effect.

Stigma is something that can be placed upon someone as categorical identity signals that are deemed inferior, undesirable or bad. Stigma disqualifies certain people and is therefore a suitable weapon against the stranger. Stigmatisation can legitimise exclusion, which can be directly used upon strangers (Bauman, 1991: 67). Exclusion can of course be done in many ways - exclusion from social communities, exclusion from decision making, exclusion from welfare benefits, etc. Another mechanism can be that of assimilation. Although this, to some extent, contradicts stigmatisation, because it allows for anyone to obtain the identity signals and values that are appreciated in a specific context, it is still recognised as a solution to eradicate the stranger, and thereby the threat to order (Bauman, 1991: 69-70).

Zygmunt Bauman’s concept of the stranger proves relevant to understand how immigrants and descendants can be seen as a threat to the order of things, and why that causes insecurity among residents of Danish descent in a neighbourhood. I will elaborate more on this specific matter in my analytical chapter, where I will apply this theoretical framework to specific examples from my empirical data.

4.4 Neighbourly relations and the sense of community

Through my collection of empirical data, I have continuously found that neighbourly relations and the sense of community in the neighbourhood plays a vital role in the resident’s experience of security. As I have mentioned about the other topics in this research,

the theory that I am applying here is not only relevant to this topic, but overlaps with the other topics, and analytically the different theories can be applied in many different ways. I have however chosen Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *social capital*, because it proves relevant to the analysis of how the residents own and accumulate social relationships and networks, and through that experience security or insecurity. Interviewees did however also mention that they believe that neighbourly relations are not as good as they used to be, and that this also leads to mistrust and insecurity among residents. The concept of *ontological security* comes of relevance to this matter. There is some historicity to this concept, because it sheds a light on the change that we as communities and society have gone through facing the globalisation. As my empirical data implies, the experience of security is decreasing, and Catarina Kinnvall's take on the concept of ontological security is shedding a light on this matter, which is of great use to the research that I am conducting. I will now elaborate on the two theories and introduce the reader to key elements.

4.4.1 Social capital

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu hardly needs an introduction, as his work has had a profound influence on Western sociology and academia for a quite a while now. I find that his concept of *capital*, specifically *social capital*, is very much appropriate in this research, as it can illuminate the topic of neighbourly relations and the importance of community.

I will steer clear of elaborating on Bourdieu's entire conceptual framework, and will therefore not touch upon neither *habitus*, *field* nor the other types of *capital*.

Social capital is one out of Bourdieu's three types of capital, the two others being *economic capital* and *cultural capital*. As goes for all three types, capital is understood as resources that an individual or a community can accumulate through labour or inheritance. This accumulation of capital takes time, and the ability to produce and reproduce capital is not equal to everyone (Bourdieu, 2018: 78). I will elaborate on how this applies to the concept of social capital, after I have explained the basics of the concept.

Bourdieu explains: "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition..." (Bourdieu, 2018: 84). An individual or a group of individuals can therefore accumulate or inherit relationships and networks, and these can be seen as useful resources in order to gain both material and symbolic profits for the individual or group. Material profits that can be obtained through social networks could be

a cheaper or even free service, such as a car reparation. Symbolic profits could be that of social recognition through association with a specific notable name or club (Bourdieu, 2018: 84).

So how do these networks of relationships form and how do they last? Bourdieu argues that they are the outcome of several investments made by the individual or group. We make more or less conscious strategies to invest in our social networks, and thereby reap the benefits of these networks. These strategies of investment can be exchanges of marriage, words, gifts, and the benefits of these exchanges can be things such as respect, friendship, knowledge and rights. The strategies applied in a certain group define and reproduce the character of the group, but it also sets the limit of the group. These exchanges and investments will not take place outside the group, and thereby we also exclude others from the groups. When we introduce new members to our networks or groups, a redefinition of the group's identity and its limits can occur (Bourdieu, 2018: 85).

This is particularly relevant when we are looking into the composition of a neighbourhood. When the demography of a neighbourhood is changing and new groups of residents are moving in, such as immigrants, they can either change the identity of the group as a whole, or it can assert the limits of the group and create a division in the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood's general identity will inevitably change, but it can take time for members/residents to adjust.

As I have previously stated, social capital just like the other types of capital, are not equally distributed, because social capital can also be inherited. Individuals or groups who possess inherited social capital already have an established name and network, and therefore their notability and networks can reproduce with more ease than for those who do not inherit great capacities of social capital (Bourdieu, 2018: 85).

Understanding social capital as a factor in the experience of security among residents in a neighbourhood is central because the concept entails some interpretations of an individual or a group's capacity of resources in their given setting. The concept of social capital can give comprehension of how a neighbourhood's identity is formed, defined and limited, and therefore serve importance in trying to analyse the experience of security through neighbourly relations and the sense of community, and also partly how these have changed through time.

I did however find that there was something else to this topic of neighbourly relations and community in the neighbourhood that Bourdieu's social capital could not entirely explain. The way in which the experience of insecurity is increasing steadily, not just on a local level, but also on a national, possibly even global level, could not directly be analysed through Bourdieu's concept, and I instead looked elsewhere for an explanation.

4.4.2 Ontological security

The concept of ontological security was coined by Anthony Giddens, whom I have previously referred to. It can be defined as an individual's fundamental feeling of safety, which also includes trusting other people around you. Ontological security is essential for a person to uphold a state of psychological well-being, and it is also necessary in order to experience having a purpose in life and thereby avoid existential anxiety (Giddens, 1991: 38-39).

I find that Catarina Kinnvall's takes on the concept is particularly relevant to this research because of her focus on globalisation and new global issues. She links these processes to the more local group formations and how these play a role in the experience of security, which goes hand in hand with the research that I am conducting in regard to the experience of security in a neighbourhood, but also in the bigger global picture.

Catarina Kinnvall explains how the increasing globalisation of economics and politics are becoming more localised, in the sense that ordinary people are, now more than ever, experiencing and seeing the consequences of globalisation in their everyday life (Kinnvall, 2004: 742).

Globalisation is affecting and destabilising people's everyday lives because of three main characteristics of globalisation. First, the scale in which linkages are made between different societies across the globe is larger than we have ever experienced before. That is both economically, politically and socially. Secondly, the rapid speed with which these linkages are happening is also faster than ever before. Thirdly, she talks about how our cognitive understanding of the world has changed, and that we now understand the world as much smaller, which means that we are also more inclined to be affected by events happening elsewhere in the world (Kinnvall, 2004: 742). Events such as unemployment or conflict in another continent can rapidly have consequences for our society where we might experience an influx of immigration (Kinnvall, 2004: 743).

She also argues that even though democratisation processes have brought with them numerous positive effects, they have also brought with them consequences of destabilisation because previous hierarchical structures are disappearing. This can lead to the uncertainty as to who holds the power, but also that traditional structures of communities are breaking up. All the above mentioned can lead to people feeling more left to themselves in order to make important life decisions, whereas before they could count more on their community for support (Kinnvall, 2004: 743-744).

Much like Zygmunt Bauman, Kinnvall is interested in the identity construction that follows the group membership and definition of the “we”-group and “the other”-group, which I will therefore not explain further, as this has already been touched upon. She does however unfold the concept of identity construction in an interesting manner, which is different from the one of Bauman. Kinnvall states that in times of uncertainty and existential anxiety (e.g., globalisation), people will contrast themselves to others on both a structural level and a psychological level, and she argues that in times of existential uncertainty and ontological insecurity, people may find comfort in processes of *securitising subjectivity*, which basically means looking for a certain and stable identity (Kinnvall, 2004: 749-755).

This may result in some sort of essentialism of both an individual identity or a group identity, even though we, at least in Europe, have tended to move towards more secularised and individual based societies.

After the fall of the absolute monarchies European states were very occupied with nationalism, drawing borders and unifying their “people” (Kinnvall, 2004: 757).

In that way, religion shares many characteristics with nationalism, as also religion clearly define “our community” in opposition to other communities (e.g., other nationalities, other beliefs). They can both, if successful, serve ontological security through homogeneity of group identity and thereby eliminate existential anxiety (Kinnvall, 2004: 758).

Religion specifically also gives the individual an “objective truth”, which can be a great relief in the search of meaning of life. The religious scripts or words of God chooses what is right and what is wrong. To speak of a homogenic body of a religious group or nation is not really all that relevant anymore. They may exist, but society has in general become more secularised. A process which is continually being sped up by modern developments such as globalisation, privatisation and consumerism (Kinnvall, 2004: 759).

But since these same modern developments apparently also bring with them existential anxiety and ontological insecurity, Kinnvall argues that we are now seeing a re-emergence of religion and nationalism, where both redefine themselves and are reconceptualised. An example of this could be the linkage between nationality, culture and religion being done by many European right-wing politicians these years, rather than focusing on race (Kinnvall, 2004: 760-761).

In the Danish political debate, there has been a tendency, particularly among the right-wing parties, to talk about “Danishness” as an identity signifier that you can have inherently or obtain through assimilating to a number of different values and practices. These values and practices are related to cultural and religious practice, privately and publicly alike, and there is often a very distinctive link between culture and religion, where these contradict that of being a member of the national community of Denmark.

Kinnvall also argues that the “national character” is often gendered, and that for example men of Middle Eastern origin are likely to be framed as the terrorist or criminals (Kinnvall, 2004: 761).

Through Kinnvall’s take on ontological security, globalisation and secularisation are affecting our social lives and the way we perceive our subjective and group identities. These are not as clear as before, which leads to ontological insecurity and existential anxiety. All of the above mentioned is relevant and interesting to my entire analysis, and could be applied many ways, but I find it of particular importance to look at how we experience insecurity as a result of a decline in neighbourly relations and community identity.

5 Analysis

In the following chapter I will proceed to answering my research question through analysis of the collected empirical data, which consists of interviews conducted in Brøndby Strand, quantitative data and relevant studies. Relevant theory will be applied as an analytical tool but also to heighten the analysis to a more societal level. As the reader may remember from the introduction, my interest surrounded the paradoxical nature of a rise in insecurity meanwhile a decrease in criminality is happening. My research question is as follows:

Why is the experience of insecurity increasing among residents in the Danish social housing area of Brøndby Strand, when crime rates are lower than they have been for many years, and how do we explain this tendency on a more general level in the late modern society?

The narrative structure of this analysis will take outset in the empirical data that I have collected through interviews of residents from the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand. I will then compare the statements given by interviewees with relevant data from broader quantitative studies and statistics, and then attempt to heighten all this data to a more abstract level through analysis with the theoretical framework for which I have already accounted. My intention is to guide the reader through an analysis that builds up arguments in the structure of 1) Individual experience 2) Community based or national knowledge 3) Societal or global structures. I am however aware that an argumentative structure is not always linear, and sometimes the order might be slightly different, or one step might even be irrelevant.

The analysis will be built up around my working questions, and the subchapters in this analysis will be framed through these exact questions. Through answering my working questions, I will finally collect the findings in a discussion-based chapter, and through that be able to answer my initial research question conclusively. Before delving into the actual analysis, I will though briefly introduce the five interviewees, so that the reader understands the references that I will be making throughout my analysis.

5.1 Interviewees

As I have explained in my methodological chapter, I have chosen the five interviewees based on their voluntary involvement in the tenant boards in Brøndby Strand. They are all above 40 years of age and have been living in Brøndby Strand for many years.

Torben, Jens Erik and Bitten were interviewed together as a group, whereas the interviews with Claus and Christina were done individually.

Torben is a man who has retired and volunteers in several projects such as Danish Refugee Council and an initiative against food waste. He is also the chairman of the tenant board for estates number 605 (in Danish: “boligafdelingsbestyrelse”) and has been involved in the tenant democracy (in Danish: “beboerdemokrati”) since 2004. He has lived in Brøndby Strand since 1986.

Jens Erik is also a retired man who has lived in Brøndby Strand since 1976. He has been involved with tenant democracy for the past five years, and he is in the same tenant board as Torben.

Bitten is a self-employed woman who owns local businesses such as the ice cream shop near the beach. She is the chairwoman of the tenant board in the estates T13, and she has been a part of the tenant democracy since 1998. She has lived in Brøndby Strand since 1995.

Claus is working at a CHP (=Combined Heat and Power) plant, where he recently celebrated his 40 years anniversary. He is also a union representative in 3F, a Danish union, and he has been taking part in the tenant democracy since the late 80s, and he is in the tenant board of the estates 606. He has lived in Brøndby Strand since 1975.

Christina is working in a supermarket as part of her job trials that are required to receive unemployment benefits. She has been living in Brøndby Strand since 1996 and she has been involved with tenant democracy for five to seven years. Her tenant board is linked to the estates 607.

I will be referencing these interviewees by their first name throughout the analysis, and I will, if necessary, also refer back to some of these personal details about them if they become of relevance to their statements.

5.2 Distrust in law enforcement and authorities

Even though the topic of security is much broader than that of keeping down crime and protecting national borders, a more traditional understanding of security might be that of keeping citizens safe from crime. Through the interviews that I conducted with residents in Brøndby Strand I found that there existed some distrust, or at least dissatisfaction, with the

law enforcement and the authorities who are distributing resources to law enforcement. I therefore asked the question:

How do we explain resident's distrust in law enforcement and authorities?

This is the question that I intend to answer in this subchapter. I will touch on subjects such as the role of new types of crime, raised awareness about crime, mediated experiences of crime, the role of the police and policy makers actions towards crime and criminal behaviour in the neighbourhood.

5.2.1 New crime, new risks

When interviewing people who have been residents in the same neighbourhood for 25 years or more, the experience of change through time seems inevitable as a topic of questioning and research. When I asked Christina, the person among the interviewees who experiences Brøndby Strand as particularly unsafe, about whether she thought that the neighbourhood had become more or less unsafe throughout her time living there, she responded: "I think it has become worse. I mean, within the past 5 years it has become very bad here." (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:11:58). It is here relevant to mention that she does not stand alone with this perspective. In the survey about security in Brøndby Strand, the amount of people who experienced crime as a problem in the neighbourhood increased from 41% in 2016 to 53% in 2019 (SocialRespons, 2019: 52), even though crime statistics show that criminality in Brøndby is decreasing (Appendix 1). Christina proceeds to talk about why she thinks it has become worse within the last few years, and specifically indicates that the large groups of people in the streets, whom she is assuming are selling drugs, have become a more frequent appearance. Torben also mentions drug dealing in the neighbourhood's parking lots as an issue that makes residents nervous (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:17:40), and in my interview with Claus he also mentions the relation between the most recent shootings and drug related crime (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:20:10).

This is interesting because drug related crime has not significantly increased throughout the years (Sundhedsstyrelsen, 2017: 34). This may nonetheless say something about the interviewees' awareness of drug criminality as a societal issue. In this manner we can view drugs and drug related crime as a new type of risk to society. Viewing drug related crime as a new risk comes of relevance because it shares characteristics with other new risks, since it is, to some extent, a product of our own technological development. Even though the

American “war on drugs” was an attempt to completely eradicate drugs, it miserably failed to do so (“War on drugs”, n.d.), and I believe that this has been embedded in our collective memory. Alongside a widespread and heightened awareness about the problems of drug related crime, we also experience that the authorities who are supposed to handle this problem, are not capable of doing so, as we saw with the example of the “war on drugs”. We can understand this through Anthony Giddens’ notion on reflexivity, as he illustrates how the contesting knowledge and expertise can lead to distrust in authorities and create a further insecurity among ordinary people (Giddens, 1991: 83-84), which we then see the result of in the interviewees’ expression of insecurity specifically surrounding this specific type of crime.

5.2.2 Raised awareness and mediated experiences

As the former example of raised awareness about drugs and drug related crime also illustrates, there is a tendency in late modern society to be more affected about issues happening far away from us than before. All interviewees expressed that the experience of insecurity, either for themselves or for the other residents whom they were talking about, was a result of hearing about crime through others or mass media.

In my interview with Christina, she told me about a specific area in the neighbourhood which she thinks is particularly unsafe. The area is a 2,5 km long green area that runs through the entire neighbourhood with bike lanes and footpaths, and it connects Brøndby Strand from one end to another. She specifically stated that she would never walk there alone, and that she would also not recommend anyone else to go there. Her reason for this is that she has read or heard about various assaults in this area, and that specifically women and elderly are being targeted (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:16:37). I have not been able to find information about assaults of this kind in this area myself, but I will also not dispute Christina’s claims or say that these things did not happen. They easily could have, and I just have not been able to find information about it. Her experience of insecurity through hearing or reading about these stories is very real, and it might be relevant to look at this through Giddens’ concept of mediated experience. He argues that we as citizens in the late modern society are more exposed to mass media and thereby have a raised awareness about what goes on in the world around us (Giddens, 1991: 84). Understanding Christina’s statements through this notion of a mediated experience makes sense, because it affects her practical life directly. She has heard or read about assaults in this green area, and as result

of that she avoids going to that area entirely. The mediated experience therefore is not just something that she hears about, but she explains it as something to which she is basically a direct audience.

In the interview with Torben, Jens Erik and Bitten, we also touched on this matter of mediated experience a bit more directly. All three of them think of Brøndby Strand as a safe neighbourhood and agrees that the experience of insecurity among residents is strongly affected by our fairly new and large intake of mass media through Facebook. About the experience of crime as a local issue in Brøndby Strand, Jens Erik said:

“It also depends on where you read, because I have noticed that on Facebook, there are often posts where I think: ‘this is something that is going to make people feel unsafe’. There are [posts about] car burnings, there are robberies, there are police chases, and god knows what.” (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:14:41).

When I asked him about whether all of these crimes are happening in Brøndby Strand, he explained how they are in fact not very often occurrences from Brøndby Strand, but rather from all over the western suburban Copenhagen. The mediated experience and the effects of mass media in late modernity is made very clear with this example, and social media such as Facebook is a very specific instrument in mediating experiences to people’s private sphere. Through Giddens’ understanding of mediated experiences and mass media, we can see how the experience of insecurity draws closer to the late modern individual, but I believe that the birth of social medias such as Facebook draws the experience even closer nowadays, since we are now reading the news and getting information on our “private” smartphones in our very personalised news feed.

5.2.3 The local role of law enforcement

I have now touched upon the aspect of drug related crime as a new type of risk to the neighbourhood, and I have also shed a light on the processes of mediated experiences. But what is the role of the police in this? And how do the interviewees view the police and their effort to stop local crime and enforce local security?

Christina has experienced a change of attitude towards police among young people. She stated: “There is not the same respect towards the police and authorities as when I was young. [...] Now they [the police] just get the middle finger and get told: “yeah, just shut up, you shitty cop”, or something like that.” (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:13:20).

To her, this is worrisome because it means that the police then hold less power towards doing something about criminal behaviour in the area. When I asked more about this change in attitude, she did however also think that the numbers and resources of local police would greatly affect this attitude (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:33:27).

The numbers of police and their interference with crime in the neighbourhood is something that came up several times during my interviews. In my interview with Torben, Jens Erik and Bitten they mentioned that residents in Brøndby Strand, more often now than before, have the experience that they if they call the police and report something criminal, the police show up after several hours or not at all, or the residents are asked by the police to handle the situations themselves (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten, 2020: 01:01:36). Talking about this specific matter, they also share numerous personal accounts of times when they have contacted the police about criminal behaviour and have been baffled by the response that they have gotten, where the police has told them to either fix the problem themselves or to document the incident and then send it to the police (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten, 2020: 01:04:02).

This is naturally seen as a big break in trust towards the police, and the interviewees experience this as if they are being under prioritised and left to themselves in making the right decision. This correlates with Giddens' understanding of modern self-identity processes. When we have to make all our moves and decisions based on our own gut-feeling, we tend to become insecure or uncertain (Giddens, 1991: 19).

The experience of under prioritisation from the police is however not only linked to the personal experience of calling the police and receiving rejection. Jens Erik and Torben's experience of under prioritisation also comes from their knowledge about how police resources are distributed in Denmark. It is certainly true that police resources that have been redistributed on a national scale, as resources are being put into recruiting other types of employees and less police officers (Jensen, 2017). Jens Erik's impression of the distribution is also that more of the resources that were formerly put into local police work is not being spent on e.g., protecting the synagogue in Copenhagen (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten, 2020: 01:02:04). This impression of distribution of resources can be understood through Ulrich Beck's notion of risk distribution. In our movement towards a risk society, we as humans are occupied with the distribution of risk rather than wealth (Beck, 1992: 20), and if we imply that thought to Jens Erik's statements, we can see that he is concerned with his own experience of security, as resources are now being moved towards taking care of other risks.

His impression of this distribution can however also be explained through Giddens' notion of reflexivity. Jens Erik's reflections on how authorities are redistributing police resources says something about his distrust in the authorities' expertise to make the right priorities.

5.2.4 Politics of law enforcement

If we are to talk about law enforcement and how their resources affect the local experience of security, it is also relevant to say something about the policy makers who decide how these resources are being spent, and how we trust politicians to make those decisions.

For context I will now briefly introduce the new political proposals that have been made in order to give citizens an experience of security. The increase in insecurity has not gone unheard by politicians, and the social democratic government that we have had since 2019 has, just like the previous liberal/conservative government, made numerous proposals to give the law enforcement more resources to bring down the experience of insecurity among Danish citizens. Key points from these political proposals on the matter of law enforcement and security are initiatives such as more local police officers, more surveillance through either security cameras or phone tapping, bans on gathering in groups in specific areas and faster case reviews. The last one connected not only with faster case reviews in legal cases, but also as enabling tenant boards to move out residents with convictions (Justitsministeriet, 2018) (Justitsministeriet, 2019) (Regeringen, 2020).

Although these proposals have received criticism (Gilliam, Khawaja, Mørck & Soei, 2020), they have been received well among most political parties with the exception of Enhedslisten and Radikale Venstre (Mogensen, 2019).

As I had heard of these new proposals, I was interested to hear what the interviewees from Brøndby Strand thought about them since they were expressing dissatisfaction with the law enforcement's engagement in their neighbourhood.

Christina said that she would appreciate this new initiative a lot and remembers back on a time where there was a bigger presence of local police officers (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:32:42). She thereby has a high level of trust in the police, and to her the police can bring up security in the neighbourhood. This is not inconsistent with Giddens' view on trust in authorities. He says that we in the late modern society tend to distrust some things a lot, but on the other hand can put our entire trust in other things (Giddens, 1991: 23). That is to say, that Christina has made a choice to trust law enforcement, perhaps over other residents in

the area, that she thinks as sources of insecurity. I will go into detail with this matter in the next chapter about ethnicity.

Claus also thinks that the new proposals will be beneficial to the tenant boards, who then can make the process of getting criminals moved out of the neighbourhood faster (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:19:32).

On the other hand, Torben does not believe that these new proposals will have an actual effect on the level of security in the area. In fact, he considers them as nothing more than symbolic political statements (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 01:07:33). Like Christina he also talks about former times where they had more local police officers, but he is critical of the numbers of local police officers in the new proposals. He does not believe that they will feel a change from this in Brøndby Strand (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 01:05:50).

We can understand his distrust in the effects of new political proposals through Giddens' theoretical framework and his mention of the modern pluralisation of belief systems (Giddens, 1991: 83-84). Torben's doubt in the new political proposals and disbelief in how efficient they will be may stem from the late modern nature in which politicians and experts alike are disagreeing and disputing each other's arguments all the time. That can be a factor in his uncertainty and doubt in their capability to make the "right" decision.

5.2.5 Sub-conclusion

To sum up this subchapter and to answer the working question "How do we explain resident's distrust in law enforcement and authorities?", I will now briefly account for the main findings.

Residents in Brøndby Strand are increasingly experiencing crime as a problem in their neighbourhood. On the contrary, crime statistics show that criminality in the area is falling. Through interviews I have found that new types of crime, e.g., that of drug related crime, are a concern to the residents even though drug related crime may not have increased much on a national scale. I have argued that drug related crime may be viewed as a new risk to society since it, to some extent, is a product of our modern technological development. I have also suggested that drug related crime be viewed as a societal problem that authorities have not been successful in eradicating, which has led to distrust in authorities.

I have also found that experiences of insecurity might not be characterised as direct, personal experiences, but more often can be characterised as mediated experiences. Reading

and hearing about crime through mass media and particularly social media may cause the residents to experience the neighbourhood as more insecure, which might explain why crime rates are falling while the experience of insecurity is increasing.

Through the interviewees' expressions of dissatisfaction or distrust in the police, we hear that the inefficiency or at times even neglect of the police causes frustration, because the individual may be left a lot on their own to make the right decision. The distribution of police resources also causes frustration and distrust in law enforcement and authorities. This also relates to the political aspect of distribution of risks and security, where the interviewees either show support or disbelief in the new political proposals on security and law enforcement.

5.3 Ethnicity and the stranger in our neighbourhood

Brøndby Strand is a neighbourhood where the number of immigrants and descendants outnumber that of residents with Danish origins. Therefore, the neighbourhood has also been a topic for political discussion ("F21 Om antal beboere i Brøndby Strand med indvandrerbaggrund", 2017). The topic of ethnicity and ethnic grouping also came up during the interviews that I conducted in Brøndby Strand, and I therefore found it relevant to ask the following question:

How does the large number of immigrants and descendants in social housing areas affect the experience of insecurity among Danish residents?

I am going to be answering this question through relevant empirical data and theory in the following chapter. In the context of talking about ethnicity, I believe that it is relevant to mention that all five interviewees are of Danish descent. They are therefore not representative for the neighbourhood as a whole, but they are indeed relevant to the perspective of ethnicity and grouping in Brøndby Strand, because they still represent the majority, if you categorise people after national origin and not just immigrant/non-immigrant.

5.3.1 The undecidable

It became apparent to me through the interviews that some people in the neighbourhood might be causing insecurity to others not just because of their behaviour but also because of

their appearance, in the sense that they appear “different”. In my interview with Torben, I asked him what he meant about “different”, and he responded: “Well, some of them look like some type of American gangster, [...] and they are very loud spoken and open in their language and use phrases that the rest of us cannot understand.” (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:11:40). He then moves on to explain a specific example where some boy had shouted at him that he wanted to fuck Torben’s cowboy hat, and how Torben did not understand what that meant at all. Torben said that he had then chosen to take it like a compliment and had simply thanked the boy. It did however resonate with him, because like he explained it in the interview, things like that can be uncomfortable to some people and that might lead to an experience of insecurity (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:11:52).

I tend to agree with Torben on this matter. I am not entirely sure that I myself would be so cool about this kind of situation as he was, and I believe that others might find this extremely uncomfortable as well. If we are to further understand this example, we may analyse it through Zygmunt Bauman’s concept of *the undecidable* (Bauman, 1991: 56). This young and loud “American gangster” disturbs with our sense of order. Just the characterisation of an “American gangster” does not correlate well with what we would usually define as resident in a Danish housing area, and that in itself may cause a discomfort or sense of insecurity. The behaviour and language of the boy may also lead to a misunderstanding from Torben, and even though he handled it with calmness he was still unable to categorise the behaviour. It could have been friendly, but it could also have been unfriendly. This makes it hard to define and according to Bauman this may cause a fear within the recipient of this stranger’s yelling (Bauman, 1991: 56).

5.3.2 Large groups bringing chaos to our community

All interviewees without exception stated that the main source of insecurity among residents were the gatherings of large groups of boys or men with immigrant background. It is worth mentioning that not all interviewees themselves experience insecurity because of these groups, but as representatives for the community and closely involved with many residents, they are under the impression that this is an issue to many residents.

Christina who especially experiences insecurity as a result of these gatherings of men, feels unsafe to the point where she does not walk alone in the area, especially during night-time

(Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:07:52). This might explain why she welcomes new laws against large gatherings in places such as local parking lots or in front of stores (Regeringen, 2020). These laws can perhaps serve a practical solution to her experience of insecurity, since these gatherings of men are threatening to her. Critiques of the government's new proposal are challenging the narratives and the intentions presented by the prime minister (Gilliam, Khawaja, Mørck & Soei, 2020). Surely enough, all the interviewees that I have spoken with have said that they believe that the large groups of men with immigrant or descendant background are causing insecurity in the neighbourhood, because of their loud behaviour and the way they dress, and giving the police the mandate to remove these groups could solve part of this problem. But as we see in the article previously referenced, several Danish researchers argue that this is not a sustainable solution to expand the experience of security. The prime minister's particular focus on young men with immigrant backgrounds may cause a further racialisation in the police's work in the streets, and the researchers argue that this practice and its discriminatory nature may lead to a strengthening in a counterculture among these young men. It is also worth noting that the police did not request new laws like this. Chairman of the Danish Police Union says that they instead saw more funds and resources going into crime preventive initiatives (Gilliam, Khawaja, Mørck & Soei, 2020).

So, there is an apparent gap in opinions about how to solve this issue between both residents, politicians, academia and law enforcement.

But what is it about these groups of young men that causes insecurity and why do they seem to oppose a threat to other residents? Bauman would certainly argue that they represent "the stranger" (Bauman, 1991: 53). A group of people who possess qualities of ambivalence, since they are for the most part probably born in Denmark but speak foreign languages and behave differently from what may be considered typical or "normal" by other residents, such as Christina. They may also be residents in the neighbourhood themselves, which may further cause insecurity and a sense of disorder to other residents, since these strangers are bringing the outside into the inside, because he brings a new type of behaviour and appearance into the neighbourhood (Bauman, 1991: 59). Understanding why residents may feel insecure about this more frequent occurrence of groups of immigrant men in their neighbourhood can also be done through Bourdieu's notion of social capital. When new members are introduced into our social groups, we might experience insecurity, because the limits of our groups are now being moved. There is a need for a new definition of what the group identity consists of, and that might be difficult for "original" members of the group

to accept or live safely with (Bourdieu, 2018: 85). We can see this in the example with groups of immigrant men in the streets in Brøndby Strand, because the interviewees whom I have spoken to have lived in the neighbourhood before there were many immigrants, both in the neighbourhood, but also in Denmark as a whole, and we might understand their insecurity about it through Bourdieu's understanding of group identity.

Catarina Kinnvall argues that the men in particular are often seen as more threatening to the national group identity (Kinnvall, 2004: 761), and we might now understand why in particular groups of immigrant men oppose a threat to the daily existence and habits of a resident such as Christina, who limits her own access to neighbourhood by avoiding doing grocery shopping and going to the gym in Brøndby Strand (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:25:26).

5.3.3 Prejudice and stigma

Moving on from Kinnvall's argument that men with immigrant backgrounds or men who are Muslims, I want to briefly touch on the topics of prejudice and stigma. In my interview with Torben, Jens Erik and Bitten they unanimously said that they experience a lot of prejudice towards people who have non-Danish roots (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:57:10). This can be exemplified with Christina's statement about immigrants and descendants: "I am in no way racist or something like that, but there are many foreigners living here, or either second, third or fourth generation. Many of them lack some education and training." (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:07:55). This may be defined as prejudice toward a very large group of residents. The stigma she places upon men with foreign roots as uneducated or unmannered may be explained as a coping mechanism towards the potential chaos that these men can bring into her life and community. Through Bauman's use of stigma, we may understand her way of placing these inferior characteristics upon these men, she is merely trying to uphold an order in her modern life in order to keep herself sane and safe (Bauman, 1991: 67). The prejudice and stigma of "the other", also say something about essentialising identities, which is something that Catarina Kinnvall talks about in her theory on the processes of securitising subjectivity (Kinnvall, 2004: 749-755). When a person, like Christina, finds herself feeling insecure in her neighbourhood, she may find comfort in securitising subjectivity, which basically is to resort to an essentialism about her own identity and other's identity.

5.3.4 The gap between ethnic groups

As I have now already touched upon, there is some existence of ethnic grouping and prejudice from one to another. Through my empirical data set I do not have access to the viewpoint of the immigrant or descendant on this matter, and this is the reason for why I am focusing on the prejudice and stigma placed upon immigrants and descendants and not the other way around. One specific part of my interview with Christina did however illuminate her perception of discrimination that was made towards residents of Danish origin. As we were talking about youth clubs and alternative places for young men to hang out, so that they would not group up and spend their time in the parking lots or in front of local shops, she mentions an example about one of her acquaintances' son:

“If their kid came there [the youth club] and he wanted to come inside and be together with the other young people over there, he was rejected and got told ‘well, you cannot come in here’, because he was Danish... or with white skin tone, right?” (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:36:07).

She did not specify whether the reasoning of their rejection in skin color, was her interpretation of the story or whether they had specifically said that. Nonetheless, this is an example where the clearly defined ethnic groups result in discrimination and intolerance. Something that Bauman thinks is completely natural in a late modern society, where we obsess with definition and categorising (Bauman, 1991: 7-8). The white boy in Christina's story might just as well be a “stranger” to the boys in the youth club and therefore be subjected to discriminatory behaviour. What I take from this example, is that there is an existing gap between ethnic groups in Brøndby Strand, and that they are seen as more or less problematic by the individuals that I have talked to. In the security survey from 2019 it was indicated that the majority of residents talk to people with different ethnic backgrounds than themselves and only 10% of the residents never talk to people with different ethnic backgrounds than themselves (SocialRespons, 2019: 37). So even though the interviewees experience a gap between ethnic groups where misunderstandings and prejudice are at stake (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:25:17) (Christina.m4a, 2020: 00:36:28), there is still communication across different ethnic groups. Claus exemplifies this gap between cultural differences and communication in between ethnic groups with a story about the green area where they barbeque during summertime:

“We have this green area between 605 and 606 [housing departments]. There we have all those from ex-Yugoslavia and all those areas down there. They love to barbeque down there. They barbeque a little differently than we do, right? Because then they barbeque a whole goat or

something like that *laughs*. But I mean, there are never any bad words said if you stop by and say hello.” (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:23:55).

In his understanding there is some ethnic grouping happening, but to him that is all natural. As he said at a different time in the interview, he perceives the immigrant or descendants’ grouping as just as natural as when Danes group together (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:21:50).

The fact that people group together with whom they categorise as people they share identity with, goes along well with Bauman’s mention of *friends*. Bauman considers it a normal modern practice to perceive a friend group as somewhere you feel secure and at ease (Bauman, 1991: 53). Claus’ argument about how this gap between ethnic groups is not necessarily problematic, goes along well with this theoretical take on friend or inside groups.

5.3.5 Mediator between different ethnic groups

In my interview with Claus who, as I just illustrated, does not perceive ethnic grouping as a huge problem in the neighbourhood, I came across something else that I found interesting. That was the mentioning of a specific person who could mediate across ethnic differences. Claus, who generally finds the neighbourhood very secure and usually talks to everyone no matter their age, gender or ethnic descent, found himself in a situation last summer where he could not get some kids to behave properly. These kids were sitting on the rough of the kindergarten’s building, and when he told them to get down from there, they responded that should just shut his mouth and that he was just an old idiot. In his story, he then proceeds to talk about how he called Ali, who then came and got the kids down immediately (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:07:55). Not knowing who Ali is, I asked Claus about this person, and he responded:

“That is, ehm, well I don’t really know what he does, but he also has a different ethnic origin, right? He is married to one of our old neighbours’ daughters. I mean, he is Danish married, right? He has a good take on those kids. So, if there is anything, he always says “just call me, then I will come over and handle the situation.” *laughs*. They listen to him. I mean, they normally listen to the rest of us as well, right? But I don’t really know what happened that evening.” (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:08:35).

I think this is an interesting example because this Ali character apparently possesses the mandate to operate with authority between different ethnic and age groups. He is not characterised by belonging to a certain friend or other group, perhaps also because of him

being married to Danish woman. The way Claus characterises him; he sort of holds a status position where he can be the bringer of security and communication between different groups. I would not say that this necessarily contradicts Bauman's theory of modernity and ambivalence, but rather that it says something else, that is not explicitly stated through Bauman's work. It is apparent that Claus still places him in a group of a different ethnicity, and thereby he is not an assimilated person, who completely blends into the "Danish" category. Ali is thereby placed in different friend groups, where his language and physical appearance might put him in a friend group with the kids who he is talking to, and his behaviour and marital status might put him in friend group with Claus. We can also understand this through Bourdieu's concept of social capital (Bourdieu, 2018: 85), because Ali through marriage to Danish woman may have acquired social capital and benefits among other Danish citizens.

I believe that we can also analyse this example through the cultural and linguistic notion of *code switching*. Code switching is a practice that is particularly being used by bilinguals, who switch languages and style of speaking, when they want a specific agenda to come through in the conversation (Scotton, 1988: 151-152).

What Ali does when he is talking to the kids on the roof I would analyse as code switching as a marked choice, where he makes an intentional choice to speak to the kids in a certain manner to gain respect and authority. The same strategy of code switching as a marked choice can also be used to increase solidarity in the conversation (Scotton, 1988: 166-167), and since I was not present in during the specific event, I of course cannot say whether this was his strategy, but the way Claus describes it, it seems more as if he was asserting dominance and authority through his code switching. His characteristics, identity and practice of code switching makes him the perfect mediator between different friend groups, and he might then be able to close some gaps between different ethnic groups, or at least jump between them, which might give relief to the communication between different ethnic groups.

5.3.6 Sub-conclusion

I have now analytically gone through relevant data and theory in order to answer the working question: "How does the large number of immigrants and descendants in social

housing areas affect the experience of insecurity among Danish residents?”, and in this sub-conclusion I will now briefly account for some of the key findings.

All interviewees that I have spoken to are of Danish descent, which means that they are part of the majority population in Denmark. The stranger or undecidable in their neighbourhood therefore often is characterised as an individual or a group of individuals with a different ethnic background than Danish. This stranger, like the boy dressed as an “American gangster”, may cause insecurity and chaos simply by having unrecognisable physical characteristics or by his behaviour that might be strange or out of order to “native” residents with Danish descent.

What I have learned through my research and interviews, large groups of men with immigrant backgrounds are main sources of insecurity for residents, because they possess qualities of ambivalence and thereby are a disturbance to our late modern sense of order. They bring in the unknown to the neighbourhood and they redefine the group’s limits and borders all together, which can also cause insecurity among “original” residents, to the extent where some residents, like Christina, drastically limit her physical activity in the area.

New law proposals have been made in order to solve this issue of large gatherings in parking lots and such, but there are conflicting opinions on whether these laws will be efficient in dealing with the problem of insecurity, or in fact cause new problems such as counterculture among young men as a result of discrimination towards young men with immigrant descent.

Prejudice and stigma are not something that just researchers are illustrating. The interviewees also state that they exist in the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand. This stigmatisation being placed upon immigrants and descendants may however be viewed as a quite natural coping mechanism with uncertainty in our late modern society.

Another late modern tendency in our society is to obsess over categorising and defining what Bauman calls friend groups and the stranger. Most interviewees experience a gap between different ethnic groups, even though it varies whether they see it as a problem or as something that is fine and natural. Nevertheless, it can be viewed through our tendency to categorise and identify with a certain group.

Where this exact model does not completely fit, is with an example from one of the interviews, that shows that certain persons can act as mediators between different ethnic groups, based on their identity characteristics shared with both groups, but also because of

their ability to practice code switching, which might help the communication between different ethnic groups.

5.4 Neighbourly relations and local community in a globalised world

When I conducted interviews in Brøndby Strand it became clear to me that the topics of neighbourly relations and a sense of community in the neighbourhood were closely related to the experience of security or insecurity, which is why I asked the question: “How does neighbourly relations and the sense of community affect the experience of (in)security?”.

These topics of neighbourly relations and sense of community are not completely separated to the topic of ethnic grouping, as they have several overlaps, which I will explain further in this chapter. I did however find it interesting to look at these topics in a broader sense than just in the aspect of ethnicity and its effects on the community. I will therefore delve into demographical development in a broader sense and how this affects the sense of community. I will also touch on social capital and the communication between residents, and how globalisation might affect our local community, and also how local initiatives are being used to support and strengthen neighbourly relations and the local democracy. The interviewees are all involved with tenant democracy and I believe that it is fair to assume that their roles as community representatives also play a part to the degree in which they are interested in community building and improving neighbourly relations.

5.4.1 Demographic change and insecurity

As I have already accounted for in my contextual chapter about Brøndby Strand, the municipality in which the neighbourhood is located have gone through demographic change, something that was also pointed out by Claus in the interview I did with him: “We moved out here back when it was a largely a neighbourhood for children. That was one of the reasons why we moved out here from Copenhagen. There were schools and childcare and things like that, and there was plenty of it.” (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:11:45). Here he describes his and his wife’s motivation to move to the area, which correlates well with entrepreneurs’ intentions with building the Brøndby Strand Parks. When Claus and his family moved to Brøndby Strand in 1975, just after the building of the neighbourhood had been finalised, it was marketed towards families with children, who wanted to get out of the city’s pollution and the small, crowded apartments. This area offered affordable big

apartments, nature nearby while still being located close to the city, so that the parents could still go to work in Copenhagen. What was attractive to Claus and his family was that a lot of families with children, like his own, were moving out to Brøndby Strand as well. While we may see this as natural or a given, that you would want to be among people like yourself, Bourdieu also explains how this is a very strategic process made by most people. Through his concept of social capital, he explains how people invest in social relationships in order to gain something personally (Bourdieu, 2018: 84). In this sense we can analyse Claus and his family's move to Brøndby Strand as an investment made in order to obtain a durable network, for the parents as well as the children. These durable networks made through keeping children in the same local institutions as other families can create bonds and relationships that can be a useful resource (capital) throughout life.

So, what happened to the strong networks and ambitions of the neighbourhood? According to Claus, some of it has to do with the closing of several institutions for children, which is a result of a decrease in the numbers of children in the neighbourhood (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:11:48). It is true that the number of children between the age of 0-5 years of age is falling in the municipality of Brøndby (Appendix 3). We may see this as something that can be destabilising for the local community, because of how central the family aspect was to relation building and networks for the people who initially moved into the neighbourhood. As Catarina Kinnvall would put it, we might experience ontological insecurity through the loss of strong local institutions such as these childcare institutions (Kinnvall, 2004).

Claus also states that the neighbourhood is becoming a retiree neighbourhood, where elderly people are becoming large in numbers (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:12:02). This is not only a tendency in Brøndby Strand, but also a national tendency (Appendix 2). In my interview with Torben, Jens Erik and Bitten, it became clear that lonely elders were of a great concern to her when we were talking about internal communication in the neighbourhood. She explained how they had cases where elderly people had been lying dead in their apartments for up to a month before anyone noticed (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:49:37). Jens Erik further explains these events as a result of what he calls culture among Danes, where we are very individualised and only worry about our own doorstep, as opposed to other cultures, where one would be more aware of the surrounding community (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:52:19). This point is relevant, and we might see this as a consequence of our societal development. Kinnvall argues that we are becoming more individualised and no longer depend on our local communities for support. With the break-

up of more traditional family and community structures, we become more left to ourselves to make important life decisions and also maintain relationships with our network, which might create a feeling of existential anxiety and loneliness (Kinnvall, 2004: 743). This can explain why people may lie dead for weeks before anyone notices, but it can also explain why we experience insecurity because of the lack of more traditional community structures.

The neighbourhood has also changed on the parameter of diversity in ethnicity, which I have already discussed in the previous chapter about the coming of a stranger into the neighbourhood. I do however wish to discuss how this moving in of immigrants might affect the area in relation to how globalisation can cause a sense of insecurity and instability for residents. Where the number of immigrants and descendants made up 5% of Brøndby's population in 1980, that number had increased to 33,1% in 2018 (Beckman, 2019). As I have already concluded, the ethnic grouping and the introduction of the stranger may cause insecurity to residents of Danish descent, but it also highlights how globalisation is increasingly affecting our local communities. Particularly the moving in of refugees may cause an increased awareness about global risks as discussed by Ulrich Beck (Beck, 1992: 20). The refugee can represent global modern crises, where global risks are becoming part of our local communities. This is to say that when refugees from countries such as Afghanistan move into a neighbourhood such as Brøndby Strand, this neighbourhood becomes part of a bigger global crisis, where people are fleeing from a place of conflict that we before globalisation maybe would have nothing to do with. Through Kinnvall's conceptualisation of globalisation, we can understand how we through globalisation must see the world as a smaller place than before, where events elsewhere in the world will have consequences for our own community, faster than we would experience it before (Kinnvall, 2004: 742-743). This is to say that Danish residents may now experience an influx of immigration as a result of a conflict in Afghanistan, and this may have a destabilising effect on the Danish society and lead to ontological insecurity among residents in the neighbourhood who are receiving these refugees.

5.4.2 Individuality and loss of neighbourly relations

Following the argument that globalisation has had an effect on our communities and how we understand our own security within these, I would also like to briefly touch on the decrease in neighbourly relations, as this is something that also came up in interviews about

experiencing the neighbourhood as safe or not. Torben talked about the change that he experienced throughout his life:

“I grew up in Nørrebro and when I was a child everyone knew each other. When I was about 20 years old, all of sudden, nobody knew each other. Nobody knew anything about the people who lived in the apartment next door. We had no contact with each other. Every single little door closed on its own, and everything was completely split into atoms.” (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:26:00).

This was one of those statements that made me reflect on my own upbringing and how I had experienced community in my neighbourhood throughout my life. I was born in 1993, and grew up in central Roskilde, a smaller city 30 km west of Copenhagen. I knew my next-door neighbour because they had children the same age as me, but besides from them I never knew anyone else in my street. In my early 20s I moved to Nørrebro in Copenhagen and for the six years that I lived in the same apartment, I never knew or talked to one single person in the entire apartment building, not even my next-door neighbour. To me, the lack of local community in the neighbourhood has therefore always been a normality, but it was indeed interesting to hear that this had changed over time, and that things were apparently very different previously.

We can connect this loss of neighbourly relations to Giddens’ understanding of our segmentation and diversity of social life. As he states, individuals of the late modern society are no longer very closely bound to specific social settings and communities. The local community is no longer our only social arena, and we have more movement between different milieux, which means that we also separate our private and public lives a lot more (Giddens, 1991: 83). I do not mean to say that this is the only reason why neighbourly relations are less common now than before, but I believe that it is an important factor in understanding this tendency. When I am applying Giddens’ understanding to my own experiences with living in a neighbourhood, I do see correlations. As a child I was occupied with attending sports and music training during my weeknights. I would also have playdates in other parts of the city with friends from my school. My social arenas were not really strongly connected to the specific neighbourhood where I lived, but rather based on personal hobbies or interests. This makes sense if we compare it to Giddens’ understanding of movement between milieux.

5.4.3 Communication and social capital in the neighbourhood

I have already mentioned how the lack of communication can result in loneliness and insecurity among elderly people in the neighbourhood. This specific problem area also relates to the recently described segmentation of social life, where our key social arenas are not necessarily the place where we live, and that might oppose a challenge to elderly people, who might be very bound to their homes.

Another topic that I spoke to interviewees about was that of communication between residents in the streets of the neighbourhood. Claus has done some reflection about how he approaches young people in the neighbourhood, because he believes that a lot of residents experience these young people as threatening as a result of their approach being too confrontative:

“You should always sound out the situation. What type of people are they? And how are you supposed to talk to them? You should not come and be threatening or something like: “What the heck are you kids up to?”. You should always tell them: “Do you think what you are doing is smart?” or something like that. I have often used this one: “What do you think your mom and dad would think about that?”.” (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:10:10).

I see this as an example of building social capital. The way in which Claus is reflecting about his approach to the younger residents in the area can be perceived through Bourdieu’s concept of social capital. Bourdieu says that we are accumulating social capital through an exchange of things, such as words, which can be seen as an investment made in order to gain social capital and increase solidarity and shared community between residents (Bourdieu, 2018: 85). This strategy that Claus is applying in his approach to other residents might therefore increase his sense of network and community in the neighbourhood.

Bourdieu’s understanding of the exchanges and investment made in networks and communities may also be applied to the previously discussed topic of trust in law enforcement. In one of the interviews, Jens Erik nostalgically talks about a local police officer that he remembers from his childhood: “It was very nice during my childhood in Nørrebro. There was this police officer who biked around the neighbourhood. We called him “Proppen” [in English: the cork].” (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 01:07:49). I choose to understand his story as if he perceives the relationship with the local police was closer during his childhood. The use of a personal nickname says something about the relationship that would have been established with this local police officer, and this may be explained through Bourdieu’s notion of social capital as well.

The practice of social exchange of things such as words may however also be used to exclude others from a social group (Bourdieu, 2018: 85), when we for example speak a language or in a manner that is not understandable to others. That is a type of communication between residents which we can see in the example I provided in the analytical subchapter which I named “the undecidable”. The one where a boy yelled at Torben about wanting to fuck his cowboy hat. As Claus also explains in the previously given example, the language that we are using can be excluding and can assert limits to our social community, and then create gaps between social groups and can be excluding. This also relates to my earlier mention of the practice of code switching, which is not always used to gain solidarity, but also can be used to create distance between the person stating something and the recipient. As Torben explained the story, he was quite cool about the situation, but he was certainly aware that this experience could come off as unfriendly and distancing to others, and therefore might result in insecurity (Torben, Jens Erik, Bitten.m4a, 2020: 00:11:52).

5.4.4 Relational community-based democracy

I have mainly delved into how our society is resulting in the experience of insecurity, but I also wanted to briefly illustrate how neighbourly relations can be fostered and how that can lead to an increased security in the community or at least satisfaction with residency in the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand, because the example shows a practice in which we “un-institutionalise” decision making.

In my interview with Claus, he talks about an initiative that the chairman in his tenant board started some years back:

“Outside our chairman’s apartment where we had our barbecuing area and playground, there was a bench [...] Him and I would be sitting down there and then people [residents] could come and ask about whatever they wanted [...] They could come in person and talk to us. It was not the entire board who sat there. It was just Michael [the chairman] and then some evenings I was also down there with him. I was there at least one day a week in the summer months [...] We had the opening hours at the office, but nobody showed up, so we agreed on just moving down into the yard instead of having those opening hours in the tenant boards.” (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:43:05).

I asked him whether people stopped by the bench, to which he answered: “Yes, then people could just come by if they had something that they wanted to ask about. I think

it is of the things that have helped it to not be such a formal thing.” (Claus.m4a, 2020: 00:44:50).

This is a funny example of how local democracy can work better if it is done in a more informal manner. When we are citizens in a world where we experience more and more globalisation and institutionalisation, we can experience ontological insecurity and existential anxiety (Kinnvall, 2004: 742). On the other hand, when the chairman of the tenant board places himself on a bench in the courtyard it can give a sense of proximity to the decision making, which may seem stabilising to residents during a time of global insecurities. It is of course hard to demand any chairman to do this kind of work voluntarily, but surely there are lessons to be learned from this, and maybe sitting on a bench outside during the summer months might be just as comfortable as sitting in an office, and if it fosters a better sense community and security between residents, it might be worthwhile.

5.4.5 Sub-conclusion

So, I have come to answer the final working question: “How does neighbourly relations and the sense of community affect the experience of (in)security?”. As with the other working questions presented in this analysis, I have for the most part taken the outset in statements made by interviewees, then compared these statements to quantitative data and then analysed them more broadly through relevant theory. I will now present my key findings.

The demographic change in a neighbourhood matters, and it affects the residents’ experience of (in)security. In Brøndby Strand, much like other neighbourhoods around the world, demographic change has happened throughout the years. When the building of the neighbourhood was finalised in the 1970s, it was intended to be a family housing area, where families with children would get closer to nature, more affordable living space and good local childcare. Since the number of young children has fallen in the area institutions have closed and the area has become less family oriented, which might cause a destabilising effect on the community.

The demographic change has also resulted in more elderly people living in the neighbourhood alone, and the lack of traditional community structures might lead to loneliness and neglect of these senior residents. The segmentation of our social lives, where the neighbourhood no longer necessarily is central might also oppose a challenge to older people who perhaps spend most of their time in their homes.

The uprising of a great ethnic diversity in a neighbourhood may also cause a sense of insecurity, because e.g., the arrival of refugees is a reminder of the speed of globalisation and how conflicts elsewhere in the world can affect our local community.

I have also found that interviewees are experiencing a decrease in neighbourly relations through time, and reflecting on my own life, I have also never really experienced close neighbourly relations, which may be a result of our tendency to segmentation and diversity in our social arenas.

Networks and relationships in the community can be acquired through the exchange of reflected words. If we bring good intentions when we talk to other people in our proximity, we might accumulate solidarity and social capital, which can be used in building existential security in our neighbourhoods.

Another way to build relations and a sense of community may also be through very direct local democracy, where we remove the formalities and the institutionalisation of our local networks and decision making. This may cause an increase in security among residents.

6 Discussion

In the following chapter I will present the key findings throughout this research and discuss how these different findings can support each other in answering the overall research question. The reader may notice some repetition from the sub-conclusions made along the way during the analytical chapter, but I find it necessary to assemble these here and discuss their relevance to each other, as this may present entirely new aspects of the analysis. I will also review the argumentative narrative throughout the analysis and discuss whether this is adequately sound to make the final conclusions of this research. This chapter will also include a reflection upon the methodology applied throughout this research and I will discuss whether anything should have been done differently in the process.

6.1 The perception of crime and the new risks to society

The distrust or dissatisfaction in law enforcement and authorities that we see among residents in Brøndby Strand can generally be perceived through the residents' increased experience of crime as a problem in the area, whilst they are also experiencing an absence or neglect of local law enforcement. Police data and statistics show that crime is generally decreasing, in the municipality of Brøndby as well as the rest of the country (Appendix 1) (Danmarks Statistik, 2019: 7). The distrust in the police is however increasing across the nation (Rigspolitiet, 2020: 33).

Through my analysis I have argued that the increased experience of crime as a problem in the area and the following distrust in law enforcement may be a result of a change in people's perception of crime. I have analysed how some type of crimes may be perceived as a bigger threat to the neighbourhood than others, and I will now discuss how this may be of great relevance to a larger societal perception of new types of crime.

In my analysis I have highlighted drug related crime as a new type of risk to the neighbourhood, and I will argue that this specific type of crime is of particular interest because it has not been possible for law enforcement to bring down drug related crime. In the analysis I mentioned how the "War on drugs" have proved unsuccessful, and how that may have affected our distrust in authorities to eradicate "the enemy" which in this case is drugs. The US alongside other Western states has not only declared war on drugs, but also on terror ("War on terror", n.d.). Both are examples of states declaring war on concepts, which I will argue is fairly naive, because how will you defeat a concept? I understand that there is more complexity to both "wars", and that the titles were covering more specific

agendas, but by calling it a war, one would presume that there is a defined enemy. “Drugs” and “terror” are not defined enemies but rather concepts, and therefore cannot be beaten in battle. My argument here is that these failed wars on concepts have led to a distrust towards authorities among ordinary citizens. In his theory on *risk society*, Ulrich Beck describes how we in the late modern society tend to find new risks that hypothetically can have catastrophic consequences for the world (Beck, 2009: 52). These new risks could be those of drugs and terror, and as it turns out, the authorities who deemed these new risks as catastrophic threats to society to the extent where they even declared war upon them, are not successful in eradicating these threats. As I have also pointed out in my analysis there is some reflexivity to this issue. The authorities who ring the alarm bell, and then proceeds to warn everyone about the great danger of these new types of risk, plant an awareness about these risks in the mind of the people, but they also are incapable of eliminating the threat, which can only result in people experiencing an immense amount of insecurity, but also a distrust in these authorities.

As I have also pointed out in my analysis, the mediated experience of crime and insecurity may also affect how individuals perceive their neighbourhood as safe or not. In our late modern society, we are increasingly engaging with the world through media such as social media, which may cause the world to seem smaller to us. This perception of the world as smaller should however not only be attributed to our interaction with the media, but also how for example refugees and immigrants are now more widely spread across the world. This is also the case in Brøndby Strand, where the various different ethnicities make up more than half of the neighbourhood’s population. As a result of globalisation and its effects on mobility across the world, the residents of Brøndby Strand are experiencing a significant demographic change of their neighbourhood. Conflicts in other parts of the world may be more inclined to affect our local community than before.

The topic of ethnicity could also be relevant in analysing the increased experience of crime as a problem. When a resident, like Christina, feels unsafe in her neighbourhood because of the gatherings of groups of men with immigrant backgrounds in the streets, it may not only be because they have characteristics of a stranger, who speaks and moves differently than what she is used to. Her insecurity around these groups could also be interpreted as an insecurity toward groups that might be suspected as criminals. She might, more or less consciously, make the assumption that men with immigrant backgrounds are more likely to be involved with gang and drug related crime than other residents. This assumption, if it

is there, is not coming from nowhere, as the number of descendants of immigrants in Denmark who are committing crimes is more than twice as high as the number of citizens with Danish origin who are committing crimes (Danmarks Statistik, 2020: 106). This is to say, that the experience of large groups of men in the parking as sources of insecurity is not only linked to the notion of *the stranger* but also relating to the topic of crime.

6.2 Our modern tendency to categorise and define

As I have just mentioned, the experience that large groups of men with immigrant backgrounds are causing insecurity in the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand may be acquitted to crime statistics but may also be understood through what I choose to call “insecurity profiling”. The link between crime and prejudice is relevant here, because as it has been shown in reports done by The Danish Institute for Human Rights, police are practicing ethnic profiling when they are conducting body searches in visitation areas (Institut for Menneskerettigheder, 2011: 12). I will argue that the prejudice against men with immigrant backgrounds is not only present with police, and that ordinary citizens, like Christina, also carry the prejudice that these men are more likely to be criminal. I cannot say if this prejudice is based on her own experiences, as she did not mention any particular experiences where she had been a victim of a crime, but I will argue that this presumption stems from her mediated experience, where she has heard or read about criminal incidents involving men with immigrant backgrounds, and thereby also feels as if her own personal security is at risk.

Related to the perception of these groups of men as sources of insecurity is the already mentioned notions of *the stranger* or *the undecidable*. These undecidable characters in our neighbourhood can give us a sense of chaos or disorder, by merely existing. Their physical appearance, their behaviour and their language can seem out of the ordinary to other residents of Danish descent, as we have seen in the example with Torben and his cowboy hat, which I thoroughly explained in the analytical chapter. The demographic change which has resulted in many immigrants and descendants living in Brøndby Strand, may therefore cause a sense of chaos or insecurity, because these “outsiders” are bringing with them the outside into the otherwise fairly secure and known inside.

Even though there might be “gaps” between different ethnic groups in Brøndby Strand, as residents tend to group up with people whom they share characteristics with, it is possible for some people to be included in various groups, like Ali, the person who I have described

as a mediator between different groups. His practice of code switching, and social investments have accumulated social capital, and we also see how these investments or exchange of things such as reflected words can result in improved relationships and networks in a community, such as Brøndby Strand. Informal conversation and relation building has also proven useful for the tenant democracy in Brøndby Strand, as we have seen with the example with the chairman on the bench. This is to say that the ethnic diversity is not always perceived as problematic, and there can also exist good relations between residents of different ethnicities, and a good social community can in fact bloom.

6.3 Local communities in times of globalisation

The above-mentioned examples with Ali the mediator and the chairman on the bench show us how neighbourly relations and the sense of community can foster an experience of security among residents. However, among the reasons behind why some people may increasingly experience insecurity, we can also look to the topic of neighbourly relations and sense of community.

I have already discussed the relevance of globalisation in correlation to the demographic change happening with the large presence of immigrants and descendants in Brøndby Strand. There has also been a different type of demographic change in Brøndby, where we are seeing an increase in elders and a decrease in children. As I have already accounted for in my analysis, this demographic change has led to the closing of local childcare institutions, and the residents may experience insecurity as a result of this practical changes happening, because it may be destabilising to the neighbourhood, who was initially intended to be a neighbourhood for modern working families with children.

Staying on the matter of demographics, I would like to inform the reader that the quantitative data used throughout this research holds some uncertainties. My quantitative data about the demographics of Brøndby Strand, are only from recent years (SocialRespons, 2019) (Brøndby Strand Parkerne: HP4 Foreløbig Helhedsplan, 2013). If I wanted to look at the change happening over a longer period of time, which I did, I had to resolve to use demographic statistics from the entire municipality, since Statistics Denmark only has publicly available data from municipalities and not from postal codes.

Central to the sense of community and neighbourly relations and how these affect our experience of security is also the segmentation of our social lives and the increased individualisation in the late modern society. They both play a part in how the loss of

neighbourly relations can result in increased insecurity, as I have shown with the examples of elderly people being increasingly lonely and maybe left dead in apartments for weeks at a time. The increased segmentation of our social lives is also shown through the example of how interviewees have experienced a change in the amount of contact between neighbours throughout their lives. So, the globalisation and ontological insecurity that follows is also central to our understanding of why people are increasingly experiencing insecurity in a world that statistically should become safer.

6.4 A reflection on the research methodology

As I have already accounted for in my methodological chapter, I chose the interview persons for a number of different reasons. I believe that the interviews turned out quite resourceful and that I obtained a lot of detail and knowledge about the neighbourhood and about the experience of (in)security. The interviewees did not have the same experiences of living in the area, which I think was helpful for my understanding of the difference in the neighbourhood experience. They do however share some characteristics. If I wanted to conduct a more comparative analysis, I should probably have sought out interview persons from different age groups or with different ethnic backgrounds, but that would perhaps also have changed the entire analysis. The interviewees role as tenant board members and thereby community mediators made them, to some extent, also capable of talking more broadly about other residents' experiences, which was indeed helpful in order to get a broader picture of the neighbourhood.

In relation to the way I chose to structure my analysis, I think I could have made the analysis more generalisable if I had approached it more deductively. By deductively I mean that I would then have discussed and analysed problem areas through theory and quantitative data, and then using the interview statements as examples of these, rather than being the starting point of every part of the analysis. I do believe that I, to some extent, have succeeded in heightening the analysis to a more general societal level by being very thorough in my introduction of theories and explaining their relevance to the topic of insecurity. Looking back on my analysis now, I do think that it is interesting to think about what kind of analysis I would have ended up with if I had switched around the structure of arguments. The structure that I chose can be explained as such: Individual experience > community or national data > theory about our society. If I had chosen to conduct my analysis deductively, I would instead have started with the theory about our society to explain phenomena or

tendencies, then moved onto how this correlated with the quantitative data and then finally used individual statements from interviews as examples that could elaborate on the individual experience. I recognise that the societal relevance of each topic would perhaps have been more apparent to the reader if I had conducted the analysis like this.

As I explained in my methodological chapter my reasoning behind the decision to use individual quotes as starting points for my analytical argumentations, was that my working questions were formulated on the basis of the knowledge I had gained from conducting the interviews. I do however recognise that I could have chosen to write my analysis more deductively, even though the empirical data was collected in a more abductive manner. I do however think that my analysis still holds relevance for a greater societal context, since I have also incorporated more quantitative data and referenced theory that is not only applicable in the context of the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand throughout the entire analysis and now finally this discussion.

7 Conclusion

In the early process of my research, I set out to learn more about the experience of insecurity among residents in Brøndby Strand. I noticed how there was an increase in the experience of insecurity whilst also a decrease in crime. On the surface of things, this presented an interesting paradox, which I wanted to investigate further. I learned that this was not only a tendency in the specific neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand, but also a tendency that could be detected in the rest of the country, which made me think that maybe there was something large at stake in our society as a whole, and I then formulated the following research question:

Why is the experience of insecurity increasing among residents in the Danish social housing area of Brøndby Strand, when crime rates are lower than they have been for many years, and how do we explain this tendency on a more general level in the late modern society?

In order to answer this question, I decided to conduct qualitative interviews with residents from Brøndby Strand. They provided detailed explanations of their experiences with living in the neighbourhood, both as residents and as tenant board members. Their interview responses provided me with descriptive stories about their own and other's experiences of (in)security. I found quantitative data and statistics that could give information about the broader aspects of the local community and the municipality, and how the general

population experiences (in)security. In order to approach the empirical data that I had collected and to elevate the research to a higher analytical level that could both explain the statements made by interviewees as well as say something about our society's development as a whole, I applied relevant theory. Even though trying to understand why the experience of insecurity is increasing in an otherwise rather secure world, the theoretical framework proved helpful to explain the tendencies and I can conclude the following:

Residents in Brøndby Strand as well as in the rest of Denmark are increasingly experiencing crime as a problem, even though crime rates are decreasing. This can partly be attributed to perception of crime which may have changed as we are living in a society carrying characteristics of a risk society, where the types of crimes we are now confronted with are both products of our modern development and seem unassailable. Our trust in authorities and law enforcement to solve the problems of crime also is falling, and our mediated experiences of crime in late modern times can give us the sense of being closer to the hypothetical catastrophes, than what we may actually be.

The globalisation's effect on our communities, like the neighbourhood of Brøndby Strand, can be seen in a variation of ways, but it has led to an increased mobility in the world, and a neighbourhood like Brøndby Strand has been introduced to large demographic change where the number of immigrants and descendants now make up more than 50% of the total population. This also affects the experience of insecurity among residents of Danish descent as it signals the introduction of strangers into the community. With our modern tendencies to categorise and define, it is possible to experience a sense of chaos and disorder, when there is a large increase in people whom we find hard to define. In this process there can occur misunderstandings and prejudice, and these may lead to a divide between ethnic groups, which further increases the experience of insecurity.

Lastly, I can also conclude that segmentation of our social lives alongside the demographic changes happening in a neighbourhood such as Brøndby Strand, may lead to an increased experience of insecurity. When neighbourly relations are not as close as they may have been in previous times, we may experience insecurity because we can no longer find ontological security in our traditional communities, such as the neighbourhood. The increased individualisation can also take us further away from the experience of a close-knit community, which may result in existential anxiety for the individual.

As the reader will notice, uncovering the increased experience of insecurity among residents in Brøndby Strand is a complex matter, and surely there are an infinite number of other

reasons why we are seeing this tendency in Brøndby Strand, as well as in the rest of the nation. The explanations I have provided through this research may make up only a small fragment of evidence to explain this tendency, but they are nevertheless relevant if we are to understand why the experience of insecurity is increasing.

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