

## Adolescents' outdoor recreation – a comparative study

Sandra Gentin<sup>1</sup>

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When visiting Danish parks and landscapes it becomes obvious that the outdoor recreation of immigrants and their descendents differs from that of ethnic Danes. Since the beginning of 1980s North American Scholars have investigated the differences in recreational behaviour and needs of African, Hispanic, Asian and European Americans (e.g. Washburne 1978, Carr & Williams 1993, Floyd 1998, Stodolska 2000, Walker et al. 2001). However, this tradition has not had any impact on studies of outdoor recreation in Denmark although it dates back to the 1970s (e.g. Koch 1978, Jensen 1999, Kaae & Møller Madsen 2003) and probably comprises of information about the habits, preferences and demands also of non-ethnic Danes. Consequently, Danish policy makers and park- and landscape planners and managers are not able to satisfy the recreational demands of immigrants and their descendents on an informed basis.

This comparative study of adolescent ethnic Danes, immigrants and descendents encounter with outdoor recreation is the first study of its kind in Denmark. Results show that there seems to be a need for re-thinking the planning for outdoor recreation in the municipalities. The existing administrative system, where each department of a municipality is only responsible for one aspect of life, seems not to work for non-ethnic Danes as they describe barriers for participation in outdoor recreation crossing administrative boundaries. To overcome these barriers, collaboration between the different departments of the municipalities (culture and leisure; social and health; and park and landscape) seems to be necessary.

The study has been conducted as a qualitative case-study (Kvale 1983, Yin 2003) of two scout groups, one in Varde (Western Jutland) and one in Copenhagen. The first group was initiated in the neighbourhood and the latter by an organisation. Preliminary findings show that the group originating from the neighbourhood was the most successful in maintaining adolescent immigrants and descendents as members. Part of the reason was found to be in the first contact between a new member and the organisation and the way outdoor recreation is introduced. Interviews showed further that fear of dangerous animals in nature is one of the reasons why adolescent immigrants and descendents do not engage in outdoor recreation as often as adolescent ethnic Danes do. However, embodiment of outdoor recreation skills and the development of these are therefore important for especially the adolescent immigrants and descendents, because embodiment of outdoor recreation activities leads to lesser or no fear of animals in nature. The results will be further analysed with regard to adolescents' motivation for outdoor recreation and potential barriers with respect to participation in outdoor recreation activities. Results of the interviews will be validated through questionnaires with 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade pupils (age 14-17 years) in schools in both case areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Forest & Landscape Denmark, University of Copenhagen, Rolighedsvej 23, 1958 Frederiksberg C, Denmark, [sgentin@life.ku.dk](mailto:sgentin@life.ku.dk)

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