

Solidarity and Categorization

**Solidarity Perceptions and Categorization Practices
among Danish Social Workers**

Marie Østergaard Møller

PhD Dissertation

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Forlaget Politica
c/o Department of Political Science
Aarhus University
Bartholins Allé 7
DK-8000 Århus C
Danmark

Tel. +45 8942 1253

Fax +45 8613 9839

e-mail: politica@ps.au.dk

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Marie Østergaard Møller

Chapter 1

Introduction

We may state very generally that people should work, or have compassion for others, etc., but we cannot determine precisely the manner or extent to which they should do so. Consequently there is room here for variations and shades of meaning (Durkheim 1984: 38).

Politics is a battle about who gets what, when, and how. It is about positioning interests, attitudes and values, and basically it is about making everybody in a given political society work and contribute, in order to make allocations of resources both possible and legitimate (Laswell 1936). The agents of politics include politicians, bureaucrats and voters. One group of bureaucrats is important, namely the ones who interact daily with citizens and who act as the liaison between them and government.

In *Street-Level Bureaucracy*, Michael Lipsky lays out why it is important to study policy-making at the lowest levels of bureaucracy: the street-level bureaucrat transforms political intentions into real life actions affecting people's lives at home, in hospitals, in families, prisons, schools, libraries etc. In other words, it is at the street-level bureaucracy that political decisions become real by transforming the stories of citizens into administrative categories of public services. Lipsky defines street-level bureaucrats as:

[P]ublic service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work (Lipsky 1980: 3).

The central thing to notice about the work of street-level bureaucrats is that they make these discretionary decisions in an environment of incentives, pressures and obstacles (Lipsky 1980: 23-25). Such incentives, pressures and obstacles consist of regulating institutions such as the law, the street-level bureaucrats' professional norms, the organizational conditions at the single workplace and of course, by the group of citizens they are facing in their daily professional lives. No matter how these factors are structured in practice, street-level bureaucrats have to make policy become real. Their work is to make decisions about entitlement to public services and to political privileges, for example exemptions from a general obligation to work. The general question often raised is what impact individual factors such as gender, social background and policy preferences have for street-level bureaucrats' decisions about entitlement. However, individual factors such as the perceptions of others may as well play a role in the way street-level bureaucrats decide. Social perceptions are commonly shared knowledge about how to interpret and

how to relate to other people's behavior and they can be seen as important 'navigation tools', which link the individual to the world in a meaningful way. Within the realm of street bureaucracy where assistance-seeking citizens are judged and evaluated in relation to the law, such perceptions may influence the way the street-level bureaucrat approaches the citizen. In such instances, social perceptions are more precisely understood as solidarity perceptions that are used to understand the relation between the assistance-seeking citizen and the state.

This dissertation is about how street-level bureaucrats categorize assistance-seeking citizens. What is the impact of the law, the political discourse and professional norms on street level bureaucrats' compassion for others and determinations about obligations to work? I argue that among these factors influencing the discretion of the street-level bureaucrat, solidarity perceptions should be included as well. The fundamental problem in this dissertation is hence to understand the impact of solidarity perceptions on the policy-making process at the street-level bureaucracy, where entitlements to political and social rights are determined.

Two questions are central to my research. First, do different solidarity perceptions affect and structure the way society in general and street-level bureaucrats specifically understand political and social problems? And second, what impact do social workers' solidarity perceptions have on the way citizens' requests are perceived and managed within the frame of the law? This dissertation focuses on social policy and public administration of citizens who seek unemployment and disability assistance. Are problems of illness and unemployment perceived as structural barriers preventing some citizens from participating in democracy on equal terms with the majority? Or are they perceived as associated with individual barriers preventing particular citizens from contributing to society? Generally speaking, social scientists expect that the way social problems are defined also defines the way they are solved. If social problems are perceived as related to structural conditions, they are represented in terms of structural contexts such as the labor market, corporative organizations, and economic conjunctions. On the other hand, if social problems are associated with individual factors, they are represented in terms of individual duties and abilities. Studies suggest that such differences in perceptions of the nature of social problems have consequences for support and attitudes towards the welfare state in general and towards the assistance-seeking citizen in particular (Stone 1984; 2002; Torfing 2004; Goul Andersen 1999; 2008).

[S]upport for the welfare state depends on what may be broadly labeled performance of the welfare state: (perceived) justice of distribution of taxes and

benefits, efficiency, and sustainability. As several of these variables are not experienced directly, by the individual, this leaves considerable room for political discourse (Goul Andersen 2008: 75).

If both compassion for others and standards of work obligations vary in society, as Durkheim claimed, then a social problem such as unemployment can be seen as a potential political battlefield about who shapes the ‘shades of meaning’ – and which standards and perceptions should prevail. Ultimately, this becomes a battle about defining what is meant by solidarity (for example caring and reciprocal relations opposed to procedural rights and interdependent relations), and consequently how such meanings become decisive in the categorization of citizens. Are assistance-seeking citizens seen as ‘one of us’ – or are they perceived as ‘one of those’ who challenge social cohesion in society by their failure to contribute to the common welfare?

The study relates to the developments in Danish social policy during the last 15 years. Literature suggests that there has been a shift in the way unemployment is perceived politically. Up until the 1990s unemployment was seen as a normal and integral part of society. From the 1990s and until recently (early 2009), unemployment became defined as a disintegrating force in society. Unemployment was seen as a threat to social cohesion. Even though this shift is not the object of the study, it does speak directly to it. The changed rhetoric of the welfare state (Eriksen 1996: 56-57) has motivated the question of what impact different solidarity perceptions have on the way categorization is carried out in a context of formal rules and political discourses about social problems by the political agents commonly defined as street level bureaucrats.

1.1 From passive to active social policy

In early 1997, a shift in social policy occurred in Denmark as well as in a number of other western welfare states. The shift was framed as the introduction of the so-called ‘active line’ as discursively opposed to a former ‘passive line’. About six years later in 2003, a new and fundamentally different measurement method was put into place for social workers to use in managing clients. The shift was replaced centrally-formulated categories of handicaps and corresponding cash benefit rates with neo-liberal management tools such as *partnerships* between the social worker, the social client, and the labor market, and more complex and discretionary methods for determining eligibility and benefits. The policy goal changed from a question of allocating ‘the right’ economic compensation to the citizens who became victims of the ‘structural unemployment’ to a question of assisting the unemployed in find-

ing the quickest way (back) to the labor market (Torfing 2004: 177-184; Hohnen 2007).

This policy shift can be clearly identified in policy documents. Below is an example of the rhetoric about unemployment before the change. The example is from a policy document about the policy towards unemployed citizens in the early 1990s. Here the effort is seen as an integrative part of society promoting a welfare perspective, where the relationship between society - at large and publicly supported citizens is represented as follows:

[T]he unemployed are a resource, they are a labor force, which of course are not used – but that does not have to be blamed on the particular individual. To give the unemployed responsibility or ‘blame’ for a societal and a structural problem is completely meaningless. If we follow up on this way of thinking, it might call for a mentality change to overcome the unemployment. At least more jobs are required. In order to do so we should not ask: What can we do to unemployment? But instead: What use can we get from unemployment, while it is there? Exactly ‘unemployment’, not ‘the unemployed’, the individuals (Ministry of Social Affairs 1993: 17).¹

The quote illustrates a strong and clear perception of unemployment as a problem for which the citizen is not held to blame.

In opposition to this unemployment perspective is the following statement from a publication of the Ministry of Employment in 2004. Its purpose is to explain to the public the principles and the meanings of the new active social policy. The relationship between society - at large and publically supported citizens is labeled ‘quid pro quo’ (in Danish ‘noget-for noget’) and unemployment is represented instead as a matter of individual responsibility and blame:

The time has come to better appreciate the ordinary extra effort that takes part in making a better cohesion in society, and in making us to a greater extent say no, when shared rules are not being respected. (...) The ‘quid pro quo’ principle builds on trust towards citizens and firms. A reliance in that they are consciously aware of their responsibility not just towards themselves, but also towards society. The purpose is first and foremost to render visible this responsibility in relation to citizens and firms. ‘Quid pro quo’ will in a wide variety of situations be able to make visible how both the single individual and society can gain from a certain behavior. (...) In short: With ‘quid pro quo’, society *rewards those who can [work] and want to [work] punishes those who are capable [of working] but won’t [work] and helps those, who want to [work], but can’t [work]* (Regeringen 2004: 2 [emphasis added]).

¹ All quotes from Danish policy documents have been translated from Danish by the author.

The quote highlights how the social compact must be understood as a collection of individual relationships between each citizen and society. There is no difference between what benefits the citizen and what benefits the state, but instead a series of principles and guidelines for how the moral relations between society and the citizen should be interpreted are mentioned. The anchoring point in the quote and in the discourse is the '*will*' to work. This goal of determining eligibility based on individual resources and imposing specific work norms was carried out by dismantling all former administrative categories of who had the right to receive what, when, and how (Bang 2002 :7).

According to the intention of the law, through these methods all assistance-seeking citizens should be treated as 'a single category' by the social worker. The new political perception of the role of the social worker required a strengthened individualized examination of the citizen, while at the same time managing social services as usual, i.e. as primarily based on the social worker's professional discretion to determine eligibility. More importantly though, the new view also entailed a redefinition of the status of the individual. In the new *active* social labor evaluation process, the determination of eligibility among citizens was changed from evaluating the citizen's concrete employability to determining his or her general working capacity. To enhance the intent of the law in administrative casework new policy tools included the *resource profiling method*, the *means of evaluating working capacity*, and the concept of *partnership between social worker, social client, and the labor market* (Bang 2002: 52; Institut for Serviceudvikling 2006: 4-5).

The reason for studying categorization practice is to understand how such perceptions of social problems as illustrated in the two policy documents affect actual policy making at the street-level bureaucracy. This relation between social workers' categorization of assistance-seeking citizens and the general implementation of a national policy is but a small corner of social policy research. In the present study, this corner of social policy is defined as 'solidarity policy'. The term 'solidarity policy' is constructed strictly for analytical reasons, and it is used to distinguish the focus from pure implementation studies, institutional studies, and interaction studies even though the topic in the dissertation cannot be completely separated from these established perspectives on social policy (Winter & Lehmann Nielsen 2008; Rothstein 1998; Mik-Meyer 2004). The ambition is to develop a theoretical argument about the impact of social workers' solidarity perceptions on the way assistance-seeking citizens are categorized. The empirical study of the argument is anchored in street-level bureaucracy, more specifically among social workers working in Danish municipalities and job centers where they administer the

laws of sickness benefits and active social policy by evaluating the working capacities of the unemployed and/or sick assistance-seeking citizens.

1.1.1 The crisis of legitimacy in the 1980s

An essential context of the policy shift from 'passive to active social policy' appears to be a general rise of a legitimacy crisis of disability pension programs together with a fear that the balance of society has been displaced (Stone 1984: 7). The crisis started in the beginning of the 1980s and the fear was related to the perception of a disturbed balance in society's distributive system (Stone 1984: 15). In Denmark the discourse of the crisis and the public fear is often abbreviated as *the new 2/3-society*, describing an anomic society without a decent economic and moral future, where an increasing part of the population is being publically supported by a decreasing number of people (Goul Andersen 1995; 1996: 155; 1998: 22).

Between the early 1980s and the 1990s, a (paradigm) shift occurred in Danish social policy. The development has been characterized as a shift from 'welfare to workfare', where ideas such as 'integration', 'participation', and 'activation' became central concepts in the discussion of social-political problems and solutions (Loftager 2004: 93). The shift in social policy happened not just in Denmark, but also in many other welfare states. According to comparative research on differences and similarities of welfare programs in the US and the UK, the new social-political ideas in Denmark seem comparable, because they are nourished by the same proclaimed crisis of legitimacy, which during the 1980s began to influence how social services in general and disability programs in particular were being perceived as causing laziness, deception and fraud in western welfare states (Stone 1984: 7-28). Essentially, the crisis had to do with how the increasing numbers of social welfare recipients was understood as a result of institutional and economic 'perverse' incentives (Stone 1984: 8).

The Danish strategy of public management of social care during the 1990s seemed to characterize a shift from a universalistic right to social care to a residual focus on deservingness, first by implementing the active labor market policy in 1994, and second by implementing the active social policy in 1997. At the administrative level, the strategy aimed to implement a method to manage not only social expenses more efficiently, but also to control street level bureaucrats (social workers) and their conduct through policy tools such as the already mentioned detailed methods of *resource profiling*, *means of evaluating working capacity*, and through individual-based casework as for example the *partnership between the unemployed and the labor market*. The political objective of the strategy was to make the public sector more professional, and perhaps more importantly, to address the crisis of legitimacy,

which had continued to flare up since the beginning of the 1980s both in the political and in the public discourse as well as in academic circles concerned with neo-liberal approaches to the welfare state (Murray 1984: 69-82).

The basic principle of active social policy can hence be summarized as a fusion of a communitarian commitment of the individual and an economic approach to solving social and political problems (Loftager 2004: 93). The goal of the policy is hence to achieve a more resourceful public sector by empowering the assistance-seeking citizen with personal responsibility. The argument for giving the assistance-seeking citizen the responsibility for his/her social situation is that psychological: Having responsibility is believed to empower the citizen to access the labor market, and also to regain control in life (Goul Andersen 1996).

The policy intention is therefore embedded in a discourse about how empowering citizens is accomplished by demanding that they take responsibility for their unemployment and health. Sociologically speaking, the active strategy can be seen as an attempt to replace a juridical, universalistic relationship of legitimacy between society and the inferior (assistance-seeking) citizen with a political communitarian, residual logic. Seen from this perspective, the strategy ends up combining a neo-liberal critique of the traditional welfare state with a communitarian critique of neo-liberalism. In the Danish context, this has been transformed into a principle of encouraging close social communities – discursively speaking – on behalf of the abstract state-governed hierarchical systems. At the extreme, the strength of the alliance between the two apparently distinct logics suggests that this has nothing to do with solving social problems, so much as it has to do with finding a political ‘window’ to change the status of the individual and consequently the social norms, that regulate the legitimate relationship between society and the citizen both within and beyond the normative context of the political system. In sum, I situate my research within this reading of the legitimacy crisis in order to study how perceptions of solidarity arrange the way citizens’ problems and needs are evaluated and acted upon in the political system.

I argue that the legitimacy crisis should be read through a concept of solidarity using Stone’s policy analysis of the general rise of the crisis in welfare programs to understand the current ‘shades of meanings’ as they become influential in concrete categorization practices in social policy today. No matter how the crisis was rooted economically, whether it was in increasing numbers of citizens receiving public welfare or in increasing public expenses, there was a crisis of legitimacy during the 1980s. Basically, it does not matter what was the ‘real’ ontological basis behind the experienced crisis. The crisis – even just as a discourse – most seemingly was a profound contributory cause of the

policy window that allowed changing social policies in the western welfare states in general and in Denmark in particular, because the fear of *the 2/3 society* constituted the basis of representing an increasing ‘new’ social problem, which became successfully framed as a problem that needed to be dealt with politically.²

During the last 15 years the period has been characterized by more policy implementation of active social policy. The crux of the crisis, no matter what was the ‘real’ extent, was the perception that there was a huge and intolerable increase in the expenses of social benefits, which again most seemingly had to do with the fear of *the 2/3-society*, where work – the primary resource to redistribute – was seen as being unjustly distributed on far too few shoulders. The fear and the common perception of the intolerable increase in public expenses was successfully formed into a political argument, which was used to change not only the legislation on active social policy (from the Social Assistance Act to Social Service Act) and the policy tools in the implementation process, but also the entire idea of social policy after the 1980s.

1.2 Perceptions of social problems

Citizens who wish to contribute to the common good are only willing to do so if they do not believe others will make undue advantage of their solidarity. A minority will not behave solidaristically if the majority is unsolidaristic. It is heroic, but meaningless, to be the only one who defends the country. There is a certain threshold that must be crossed: citizens must be persuaded that others will also contribute before they are willing to pitch in themselves (Rothstein 1998: 163).

With the legitimacy crisis, such basic relations between contributors and non-contributors became the topic in the political discourse about the ‘just’ society. Even though there were increases in costs of welfare in general and of social welfare programs as well as in the numbers receiving welfare, GDP increased as well (see Table A1). When these developments are considered together, the extent of the legitimacy crisis seems less dramatic than if one analyzes the increases in costs and numbers separated from the corresponding development in GDP. This does not ‘prove’ that the implementation of active social policy has no effect on keeping the costs and the numbers in control,

² John Kingdon’s concept of a ‘policy window’ describes the merging between the three openings: solution (policy formulation), parliamentary basis (law-making) and problem (public and professional discourses) as conditions for major policy changes. Starting from the discourse of legitimacy crisis during the 1980s according to this concept it may be said to constitute a so-called ‘policy window’ that facilitated the major changes in social policy, as well as its implementation (Kingdon 1995: 168-170).

but it indicates how there is a potential room for ‘shades of meaning’ about what the real problem is (Larsen & Goul Andersen 2009). It is this political and symbolic essence of the legitimacy crisis rather than the economic and social basis, which is the object of interest in the following.

In addition to this symbolic side of the legitimacy crisis, the active social policy, which was introduced in 1997, does not seem to have reduced the number of people on early retirement when compared to the labor force (see Table A1). The policy seems to be categorical in the sense that it is meant to promote certain principles and values of which are seen as inherent goals no matter the policy consequences. Contrary to such a categorical policy is a pragmatic policy that seeks to solve a certain social problem defined by ‘the field’ (and not by public opinion or law makers). Here a negative evaluation of its effectiveness will more likely make the lawmakers reconsider the policy and change it in accordance with the prescriptions of a given evaluation. The reason is that pragmatic policies have no particular impact on the public opinion. In relation to the active social policy it seems to correspond to a categorical rather to a pragmatic policy type. A characteristic, which is also identified in an official document by the Ministry of Social Affairs on the arguments behind the active social policy:

[The intention is] to make people join in meaningful (work) communities (...) this means that participation in communities is an objective in itself, because it is assumed to be good for everyone – even though it does not lead the client to be self-supportive (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2000: 50-51 cit. in Loftager 2004: 98).

The political premise behind the active social policy is that, social problems first and foremost are perceived as caused by attitudes and motivations of the individual and only secondarily by possible handicaps or general health-related disabilities. In the same way, social services are perceived as dependent on the efficiency of the social worker to realize motivating strategies for the client.

As already mentioned, the developments in costs and numbers of citizens, who receive an early retirement pension seem to be less dramatic when compared to the increase in GDP and labor force. This highlights why it is interesting to understand how and why the perceptions of ‘who (should) get what, when and how’ of the social service have changed. As Stone notes:

Many public problems are in fact things that have been tolerated for decades, if not centuries – alcoholism, child abuse, wife beating, elder abuse, environmental degradation, unequal access to health care, poor public schools, and congested cities, to name a few. Apparently dramatic growth rates in these problems re-

flect a decline in social tolerance of the phenomenon more than an increase in the phenomenon itself (Stone 2002: 179).

Stone argues why 'social tolerance' becomes defining of social problems. Inspired by her, I suggest that in order to learn more about this relationship we must understand not only how social tolerance works, but also how perceptions of solidarity influence the perceptions of social problems, which constitute important boundaries of categorical resolutions at the street-level bureaucracy.

The legitimacy crisis of the relationship between work distribution and help distribution is not a unique Danish phenomenon as displayed by Stone (1984). The universal factor in the problem perception across countries is that too many people use welfare services. One common standard explanation is that it has become too easy and too attractive to access the services for the assumed 'welfare maximizing' individual. The theory is rooted in the concept of the rational 'economic man' for whom the social services simply are too financially attractive not to try to access. In this line of reasoning welfare services are expected to create 'perverse incentives' that will encourage able-bodied individuals to pursue social aid instead of regular jobs (Murray 1984: 178-191). This type of explanation places itself in the general neo-liberal critique of the welfare state, which most probably carried some of the seeds to the perception of a legitimacy crisis during the 1980s.

Certain social groups are discussed both publicly and politically as concrete examples of social, demoralizing problems. Among such social groups are citizens suffering from contested pain conditions. Even specialists in the health care system talk about them as suffering from 'social symptoms' of a presumed 'state of crisis' implying that welfare programs and insurance may prolong and even be a co-culprit to their pain condition (Bang 2002: 35; Malleon 2002: 38). Again, the argument is that social services cause so-called perverse incentives which will encourage social workers to place far too many 'healthy' citizens on early retirement (Ehlers 2005). Along this line, social services are assumed to create incentives for citizens to malingering and to use sick roles in order to obtain a social and a political right and benefit for 'free'. The chronic pain patient is an example of a malingering stereotype in which assistance-seeking citizens with medically contested illnesses belong. A previous study further suggests how chronic pain patients create a management problem for the social worker and the doctor because of their contested and unexplained pain (Østergaard 2005: 53).

A problem characteristic such as chronic pain is therefore expected to contain a narrative of a social rather than a medical nature. Furthermore, such a contested narrative is expected to trigger negative solidarity percep-

tions as well as a concrete example to be used in the social construction of what constitutes the elements of social burdens and problems of deception. Thus, not only the law and the political discourse are expected to condition and arrange the way solidarity perceptions affect categorization practice among social workers. In particular it seems to be the contested narrative of for example the group of chronic pain patients which become interesting in the study of how 'solidarity policy' is executed: Despite the fact that the costs of chronic pain patients to the social and health systems are relatively small and that there are very few of them compared to all other categories in the social system, they still seem to be the absolute dominant 'framing' group in the public and professional discourse on the 'easing social policy' (Østergaard 2005: 8). In addition, chronic pain patients are negatively portrayed in a moral discourse as being untruthful concerning their motives for applying for social services. Consequently, an automatic suspicion is directed towards them, a suspicion nourished by the fact that their discomfort is typically part of a family of 'contested diagnoses', which includes diagnoses such as fibromyalgia, whiplash, and chronic fatigue syndrome.

The social system's problem of managing contested pain patients may help us understand some general aspects of how solidarity perceptions work in 'practice' towards economically and socially inferior citizens. This group is therefore a well-suited case to trace solidarity perceptions and to study the boundaries of political categories and the shades of meaning used by the social worker who administer active social policy.

Above all, the underlying reason for exploring the problem through the case of chronic pain patients is that this group is used both in the political system and in public opinion to define the boundaries of solidarity. I further argue that boundaries for fair aid to publicly-supported citizens have to be analyzed in the described context of active social policy in order to understand how solidarity principles in general are negotiated and constructed for what will be perceived as a just redistribution of solidarity and social services. The theoretical claim is that the case of chronic pain displays how society constructs and transforms the requirements for what an assistance-seeking citizen has to do in order to receive some of the surplus produced by the self-supporting citizens in society.

1.2.1 Solidarity and categorization

But what is this policy-changing story basically a case of? The dissertation will draw on the solidarity concepts of Emile Durkheim and on his distinction between a mechanical and an organic form of solidarity. The difference between the two solidarity forms has to do with the context of the exchange system of assistance and with the principles of what combines society and the

individual. Mechanical solidarity is characterized by face-to-face exchanges of benefits, where the giver and the receiver are known to each other. The exchange system here presupposes a visible relationship of inequality where the giver of benefits receives recognition for being 'a merciful giver' from the receiver. In that sense the giver of benefits needs the receiver's thankfulness as a symbol denoting that the receiver justifies the giver's economic and social superiority. On the other hand the receiver of benefits needs the giver in order to sustain living standards and eventually to become included in society by demonstrating that he or she knows and accepts the dominant social rules and norms. Durkheim conceptualized solidarity in this sense as 'mechanical' since it is represented in a one-to-one relationship between giver and receiver at a local community-level, where it is the mutual dependency between rich/superior and poor/inferior that defines the symbolic internal boundaries of society in general and the normative meanings of eligibility criteria for public assistance in particular. The terms on which benefits are given are here exclusive, meaning that if the applying citizen does not meet the minimum demands from the giver, he or she will be excluded from participating in the solidarity producing exchange system. Consequently, a citizen who 'refuses' to meet the normative standards of inclusion will not be eligible for any benefits at all. The production of mechanical solidarity therefore also presupposes a community of shared social norms and, paradoxically, with that, social inequality (the basic social relation is the wealthy giver and the poor receiver). This form of solidarity is likely to be generated in the absence of a representation of a strong state and a labor divided society – theory says!

In Durkheim's theory, organic solidarity is characterized by abstract exchanges of benefits, where there is no personal relation between the giver and the receiver. Of course, Durkheim never thought about modern welfare states. However, if the theory is applied to present welfare states, an organic solidarity characterizes a relationship which is rendered anonymous through systems such as the general taxpayer system and through universalistic rights to social services. Thus, the exchange system presupposes an abstract community consisting of equal citizens, where the giver of benefits (the state) in return receives recognition and legitimacy from the receiver (citizen) to continue benefiting all citizens through universalistic social services independent of social and economic status. Historically, such systems of 'organic', redistributive logic have been financed by income taxes. Solidarity in this sense is conceptualized as 'organic' because it is based on a single principle of equal rights among citizens and not on concrete personal relations, as is the case with mechanical solidarity.

Durkheim's intention with his distinction between the two forms of solidarity was to explain why society would not fall apart morally with the ongoing division of labor in society. If that was to be understood as a strictly empirical question, history has now given the answer and shown that he was right about society not falling apart morally as the division of labor grew increasingly complex. But when it comes to his argument about how the form of solidarity would follow the degree of labor division in society, meaning that complex, differentiated modern societies would eventually produce more organic solidarity and more room for individuality among citizens, the theory may have been too optimistic. It seems that both kinds of solidarity exist simultaneously in society as well as in the political system, and that the need for mechanical solidarity still prevails despite the modern, highly differentiated and individualized social reality of today.

1.3 Theoretical claim and expectations

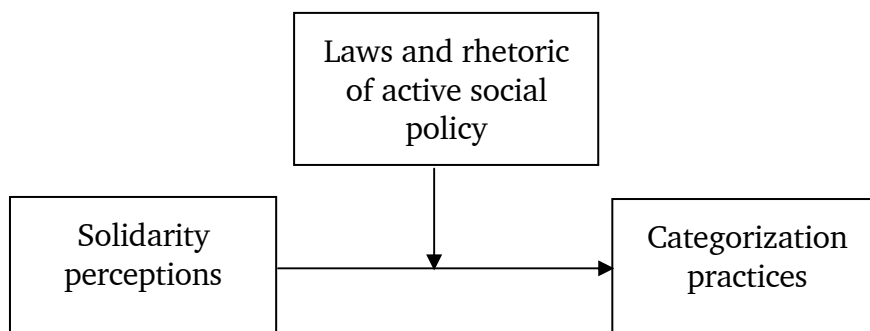
The theoretical claim is that solidarity perceptions affect categorization practices, because solidarity is a constituting mechanism when social and political shades of meanings are interpreted and constructed. The way such constructions become effective in practice are through categorizations selecting who belongs to which group in accordance with standards of eligibility. However, because representations of solidarity correspond to different needs of social cohesion in society and since these needs vary in accordance with organizational and institutional contexts, solidarity perceptions are expected to vary as well. Thus, laws and normative rules of behavior expressed in political discourses are expected to condition the way solidarity perceptions affect categorization practices. These factors constitute the conditional variable in the theoretical model. Hence, the theoretical question is how such institutions are expected to arrange and condition this relation between solidarity perception and categorization practice? The empirical challenge hence becomes to study this theoretical claim. But is it at all possible to 'see' solidarity and even more crucial, to see how it looks like at the individual level?

Science studies heat through the variations in volume that changes in temperature cause in bodies, electricity through its physical and chemical effects, and force through movement. Why should solidarity prove an exception? (Durkheim 1984: 26).

I trace solidarity perceptions and identify them as symbolic and metaphorical rhetoric about social cohesion, community needs, and sayings about compassion and interdependencies between the citizen and the state. The question is a matter of how meanings are constructed and used in representations of social problems, and consequently how such constructions turn into perceptions

of solidarity, which affects the actual policy-making towards assistance-seeking citizens. On a more concrete level, the question is how unemployed citizens with health problems are actually being categorized in a political era when society is largely represented as being threatened by individuals who use sick roles to free ride on welfare benefits from tax payers, who are perceived as the primary financers of the services. What impact does this perception of deception, which connects the reasons for increasing sick-leave with individual factors such as ‘will to work’ and ‘attitude toward the whole of society’ have on the categorization practice of social workers who administer the laws of sickness benefits and active social policy?

Figure 1.1. Theoretical model



The theoretical claim is that solidarity affects categorization at a structural level. However, structural relations such as solidarity and categorization are expected to exist in different levels in society among them at the individual level. Consequently, in order to understand how differences in solidarity perceptions correlate with different categorization practices, the theoretical claim is studied through an analysis of variance at the individual level using a well-suited comparison of contested and non-contested chronic pain narratives in a qualitative study of social workers. Solidarity is therefore studied as ‘perceptions’ and categorization as ‘practices’ among street-level bureaucrats.

1.3.1 Empirical questions and data sources

Inspired by the solidarity theory of Durkheim, I aim to develop an empirically grounded understanding of how solidarity works in practice through analyses of the discursive battlefield about who can receive what, when and how in unemployment benefits. To visualize the relationship between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices, I used an interview based study of policy-making among street-level bureaucrats in active social policy. I used chronic pain as an ‘injected problem’ in order to be able to trace the mechanisms in the relationship. My aim is to be able to read solidarity through the way social workers perceive chronic pain patients and justify their categoriza-

tion practices. I hope to contribute to a more general understanding of how categorization practices are shaped by solidarity perceptions. In addition, I hope to contribute to the general knowledge about how social policy influences the way categorization practices are affected by perceptions of solidarity. Summed up this relationship constitutes what I initially defined as ‘solidarity policy’.

The empirical foundation in the dissertation is a qualitative study of 24 social workers, who administer active social policy as well as policy documents, social laws and guidelines of relevant policy tools. Through the use of vignettes describing chronic pain patients, solidarity perceptions and categorization are studied both within and across the interviews.

1.3.2 Structure

The dissertation is organized in a theoretical and an empirical part. Part One sets out categorization (Chapter 2), solidarity (Chapter 3), solidarity in the welfare state (Chapter 4), political institutions such as governmental rhetoric and the current active social policy (Chapter 5). This part develops the argument about why the impact of solidarity perceptions on categorization practices is plausible and how this relationship is expected to be influenced by political regulative and normative institutions such as the laws of active social policy and the political discourse about the aim and the idea of the policy. Finally in part One, the two models of analysis as well as the theoretical expectations are presented.

The analytical part starts by presenting the research design (Chapter 6). Then the model of analysis is studied in the following chapters: Chapter 7 analyzes the variation of categorization practice and Chapter 8 studies solidarity perceptions through a measure of the social workers’ collective orientations as well as the relation between perceptions and categorization practices. In Chapter 9, solidarity perceptions are measured through the social workers’ use of their professional norms as well as the relation to categorization practices. Finally in Chapter 10, the argument is studied through an analysis of social workers’ pain stereotypes and evaluation practices. The structure of the chapters is based on the general models of analysis using both cross-case and within-case analyses to study the problem and the theoretical argument. The dissertation contains an appendix of tables, figures and displays from the analyses, which are not included in the text. All interview transcripts are in Danish and are anonymous. However, they can be made available for the purpose of documentation through the author.

Chapter 2

Categorization and policy-making in the welfare state

Studying categorization is motivated by a profound curiosity in tracing politics in everyday life. On what basis does a person judge another's social and political standard? Are such judgments related to outcomes that are earned or achieved as products of a person's actions (Feather 2008: 1231)? Or are they related to an external frame of reference involving an agreed-upon body of law or social norms (Feather 2008: 1232)? What determines the particular characteristic used in a certain categorization? In other words which criteria affect the way people categorize other people? Or what kinds of criteria make people go into certain groupings and why?

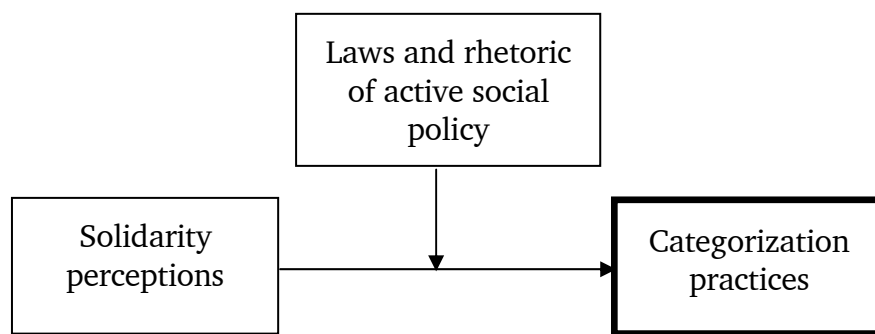
Literature on political psychology as well as classic sociological theory suggests two qualitatively different types of judgment: 'deservingness' which describes the individual, moral dimension between people, and 'entitlement' which describes a collective, agreed-upon, moral dimension between groups and the law. When a judgment is related to a deservingness criterion about a person's performance, it produces different kinds of categorization as opposed to if it is related to an entitlement criterion about his or her rights. When it comes to categorization in the political system, it becomes a crucial and relevant matter since political and bureaucratic judgments reflect not only a legal, but also a legitimate frame in society. The legal frame is not surprisingly related to an entitlement-based reasoning since the law treats everybody in similar situations equally and therefore does not consider either personal efforts or guilt as compared to a deservingness-based reasoning. However, many policies today – especially social policies – portray deservingness criteria and performance tests encouraging people to make judgments that consider whether an outcome is earned or achieved as products of a person's actions instead of related to an external frame of reference involving an agreed-upon body of law, social norms, and formal or informal laws.

The question of which criteria determine a categorization practice is well explored within the fields of political psychology, deservingness studies and social psychology. Recent research of perceived legitimacy provides evidence to expand the deservingness theory to include the distinction between 'deservingness' and 'entitlement'. Deservingness criteria such as 'need', 'age', 'reciprocity', 'responsibility' together with entitlement criteria such as 'equality', 'individual rights', and 'the law' are suggested to prevail when people categorize who they think deserve or is entitled to public support in moral, political and economic terms (Rothstein 1998; Feather 2008; van Oorschot 2006;

Schneider & Ingram 1993) These findings support the general idea of this study, which is to understand how institutions condition the way solidarity affects categorization. The findings sustain the theoretical argument, because they show how there is a difference between an abstract and a concrete solidarity reflecting entitlement judgments and deservingness judgments towards other people.

Chapter 2 consists of six parts and a summary. Part 2.1 specifies which aspects of categorization the empirical analyses seek to grasp. It clarifies why the locus of the empirical study is neither depicting ‘pure’ behavior nor public opinion, but rather the particular discretion or judgment that is put into discursive practice in a specific social context in the political system. Theoretically, the focus of the theoretical model is on discussing approaches and studies on categorization practices in order to introduce to what we know about the object under study:

Figure 2.1. Theoretical model



Categorization is far from an unambiguous concept in the literature concerned with how individuals judge each other. The approaches vary both in respect of theoretical and empirical interests. However, all approaches share a similar concern of what defines a certain categorization and also how and why it can affect the selection of what counts as legitimate claims put forward by for example assistance-seeking citizens.

Besides the literature about street-level bureaucracy, the chapter includes a presentation of a sociological literature treating categorization as a process of constructing institutional identities. This perspective is commonly referred to as ‘system – client’ research and has made a constructive contribution to understanding what happens when the bureaucratic system interacts with a social client. I argue that these power analyses contribute to the general understanding of categorization, because they deal with how client performance is evaluated in order to judge administrative entitlement (Järvinen et al. 2002; Mik-Meyer 2004; Carsten 2002).

In the following parts I present and discuss the theories concerned with categorization and relate them to my argument to view categorization as a social and a political practice, which decides who is 'in' and who is 'out' of access to certain rights, obligations, and deserving attitudes. I close the chapter by summing up briefly on the points presented.

2.1 Categorization in street-level bureaucracy

Categorizing basically means to group objects together, which share a specific characteristic (Stone 2002: 164). This means that a category relies on a kind of membership defining the basic eligibility principle on who to include in a particular category. 'Age' is an example of a shared characteristic defining the inclusion criteria into the category of elderly pension. Another example is 'severe, chronic illnesses' as a criterion for entering a category of entitled pain treatment. Where the first category is easily defined, the second is much fuzzier and involves some kind of criteria based evaluation in order to decide whether an individual belongs to a category which gives access to benefiting treatment. A category thus has some kind of value which is being transferred to the individuals or objects in the category. As in the two examples above, this ascribed value can be positive as constituting certain political and social rights, but it can also have a negative value. For example the characteristic of being a young, single mother may trigger an unwilling entrance into a stigmatized category describing more than just the civil status of the person. When a person is labelled based on a characteristic defining a negative category, it clearly makes a different categorization context. A categorization can hence be said to work by selecting certain aspects in favor of others and by assigning the individual with collective attributes, which reflects the identity of a certain group more than a concrete experience and observation of the particular individual:

There are a number of ways in which collective attributes function. One is in terms of stereotypes. Stereotypes are not necessarily false. Rather they are ways of organizing and selecting aspects or characteristics that individuals are seen to be endowed with because they are placed or classified into a particular category. The characteristics are not derived from observation or experience of the individual. Or to put it in another way, the experience and observation of the individual is always overdetermined by the attribution, in an a priori fashion, of certain characteristics (Anthias 1998: 518).

The quote defines very well the way categorization is conceptualized in the following as well as how categorization practices are identified and studied in the empirical analyses. In the empirical analyses I focus merely on categorization as it appears in the political system's 'delivery station' and where the

practice comes down to a question of who is given access to benefits both politically and socially.

2.1.1 Aspects of political categorization

The primary aspect of categorization is that it signifies the process of such a grouping mechanism as both a classifying and a political practice as described above. It is classifying because it separates things and individuals in different classes and often transform highly complex subjects into simple numbers based on a shared characteristic. And it is political because grouping together individuals based on shared characteristics or common interest is what defines a value oriented political practice. Categorization then involves questions of eligibility and membership as well as a way of objectifying precisely the profound political value for determining who has the right to receive some kind of benefit or beneficial attitude.

Besides this political and subjective aspect, a second aspect of categorization is its assumed ability as a mechanism to reduce ambiguity in a given situation. Can a person suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome be classified as being disabled, or is he or she classified as malingering in order to obtain 'free' political and social rights? Well, according to Stone, it depends on several factors including group comparison. Is the person comparable to other disabled people such as for example paraplegics with severe visible physical deficiencies, or is the person comparable to the group of elderly people, who has been contributing to society through the workforce all their life before entering the category of elderly entitled to certain political and social rights? (Stone 1984: 19) Again, it most seemingly depends on whether the criteria for this category include chronic fatigue syndrome and paraplegia as similar or whether the membership of the disability category is based on a reciprocal perspective of the relation between the state and the citizen. No matter what, it is only rarely free of some kind of ambiguity and situational assessment to decide who belongs to a certain category.

In addition to the ability to reduce ambiguity and the political aspect of categorization it is also studied as a social process such as e.g. stigmatization, or inclusion and exclusion. Similar to a stigmatizing process in an organization, a family or within a state, categorization can be seen as making and creating a boundary between those who belong and those who do not belong.

This fundamental judging aspect of categorization makes it an important mechanism in the political system for least two reasons: first because it enables a rational bureaucratic system to act 'humanely' in the rule-based management and distribution of political rights, and because it has the potential of selecting between legally equal individuals. In both cases categorization posits potential for ascribing both positive and negative value to an indi-

vidual, which makes categorization in the political system distinctive, because categorization in this system gives rise to both rights and sanctions.

Even though the empirical focus is kept at the political system's delivery station as the street-level bureaucracy, this does not mean that categorization only exists in the political, bureaucratic system. On the contrary, it takes place all the time everywhere in society where individuals interact. But in the bureaucratic system, categorization means giving some people political and social rights on behalf of others. Hence, bureaucracy is the locus where factors such as solidarity, economic surplus and social security are transformed and distributed from public opinion, voting behavior, policy-making, national budgets, welfare programs into concrete actions and outcome towards 'real' citizens.

2.1.2 Categorization as bureaucratic and political practice

Thus, categorization in the political system has political consequences in the form of distributive and moral effects. The daily interactions in organizations, unions and in families are far from unimportant when it comes to studying categorization in broad and general terms. In opposition to this 'common' or ordinary categorization between individuals in general, the categorization practice in the bureaucratic political system represents an important part of the formal as well as the informal relation between the state and the citizen. This relation includes the power to regulate the level of political and social rights between groups and classes in society. More precisely, borrowing a central claim from the theory of street-level bureaucracy, I argue accordingly, that it is at the street-level of bureaucracy the 'real' transaction and realization of politics between the state and the citizen is construed and consequently where the categorization practice has not only a moral, but also a political and a social outcome (Lipsky 1980: 3). Furthermore I argue that the consequences of categorization concern not only the assistance-seeking citizen, but also society in general, because the practice of categorization represents fundamental standards for how 'we' as society treat assistance-seeking citizens.

However, even though we have knowledge about what criteria the general population prefers in relation to what counts as a legitimate claim for public service, and about how these criteria are connected to perceptions of other people, we know very little about what happens to the criteria when being processed through an administration at the street-level bureaucracy.

What happens when criteria for deservingness meet the criteria of legality and legitimacy, which characterizes the public administration? Can they interact without creating political conflicts and if so why and how is that possible? What is the impact of the street-level bureaucrats' professional norms on

the way they categorize and how do these norms correspond with a particular political intention behind a categorical logic?

The notion that society distinguishes between ‘the deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ [...] is generally accepted by students of social policy. Less well recognized are ways in which social policies, through symbols and practice, construct and reconstruct the *precepts* around which these distinctions are made (Brodin 1993).

What is the effect of the way political discourses and the intention with a welfare program condition categorization practice? What happens to categorization when deservingness criteria are used explicitly in laws and governmental discourses as tools to govern practice in the street-level bureaucracy?

From the perspective of the political system, a categorization signifies the mechanism which conditions/determines the outcome of an administrative decision within the framework of a particular law. My object of investigation is neither public opinion nor individual behavior but precisely categorization practice of street-level bureaucrats. The understanding of categorization presented so far as a political and social selection practice corresponds very well with the definition put forward by Stone:

We categorize by selecting important characteristics and asking whether the object to be classified is substantially like other objects in the category. Categorization thus involves the establishment of boundaries in the form of rules or criteria that tell whether something belongs or not (Stone 2002: 164).

Categorizations thus signify an action of judgment based on collective, represented meaning and hence share some characteristics of both opinion and behavior. Just as an opinion expresses a value and a preference of something over another, but no action of any kind, so does a categorization. Still, categorization shares some behavioral aspects since it is a practice connecting more directly to a certain behavioral preference than is the case of a public opinion. However, this aspect only reflects the process and structure in which categorization is embedded and not the causal mechanism of the phenomenon. The causal understanding of categorization follows the argument that solidarity perceptions affect the way categorization practices are organized and executed, but never directly, because the categorization practice in street-level bureaucracy is always conditioned by political regulative institutions such as the laws, but also by normative institutions such as the political dominating discourse and the social workers professional norms (Scott 1995: 52). The understanding of institutions is inspired by Richard Scott’s distinction between regulative and normative institutions. The concept will be fur-

ther explained in relation to the presentation of the actual governing institutions in the field of social policy in Chapter 5.

2.1.3 Categorization as classification

Standing on the shoulders of Durkheim and Mauss, I use their emphasis on seeing a classifying logic as a fundamentally arbitrary relation between form and meaning (Durkheim & Mauss 1963). A classifying scheme is presumed to affect the way objects and individuals are separated into different categories and not the other way around: forms such as objects and individuals do not affect the way meaning structures society. This unidirectional thesis clearly understates the power of resistance from the material world. The argument here is that neither objects nor individuals will allow stereotyped and negative categorizations in the long run. Nevertheless, this argument is implicitly provided in the theory of Durkheim and Mauss in their emphasis on arbitrariness in the relation. However, they fail to develop the argument as an equally important aspect of their theory of how meanings affect forms. Durkheim and Mauss understand the relation between form and meaning as arbitrary, because they also put emphasis on how forms and social reality in practice can refuse to be categorized according to meanings embedded in classifying schemes. Put differently, categorization both averts and makes legitimate conflicts in the social order according to the classification theory.

If categorization in the political bureaucratic system refers to an arbitrary meaning vs. form relation, the meaning and not the material form will trigger the mechanism which becomes decisive in a categorization. Of course until tested empirically it remains an unsupported claim. So far, it may be used to set up a thesis as a tool to study if any systematically differentiated treatments in a given political, administrative, and legal context can be found. Yet, I do not expect potential variation in categorization practice to express direct offenses, but more likely expressions of group discretion (shared social information of target population), based on selected criteria at the expense of making the mandatory individual discretion.

According to Durkheim and Mauss, a basic characteristic of a classification is its ability to sustain collective representations. They define a classifying practice as an action that arranges things:

[I]n groups which are distinct from each other, and are separated by clearly determined lines of demarcation' (Durkheim & Mauss 1963: 4) and further: '[...] to classify is not only to form groups; it means arranging these groups according to particular relations (Durkheim & Mauss 1963: 8).

Classifications are here seen as social constructs meaning that the aim of their function is primarily to reproduce a social and not a psychological order. Durkheim and Mauss further say that:

It is enough to examine the very idea of classification to understand that man could not have found its essential elements in himself (Durkheim & Mauss 1963: 7).

The argument why classification has a social and not a psychological cause is that the logical structure of a classifying scheme reflects symbolic (based on former logical organization of things) social arrangements outside the 'human mind'. However, it does not mean that classification, as a social function, does not have psychological implications for the individual. The argument is that the psychological aspect lies outside of an explaining ambition of the phenomenon of classificatory practice. Related to the problem presented in Chapter 1, it means that when public criteria for deservingness is measured by voters' opinions and explained with reference to psychological in- and out-group theory, the function of judgment is displaced from the collective and hence political agenda, and isolated as a mere psychological phenomenon. According to Durkheim and Mauss, the collectiveness of a classifying order makes it political and class-oriented – and hence exceeds a mere psychological phenomenon. This understanding of the mechanism making up a categorization practice hence goes well along with the aspects deducted from both Anthias' and Stone's approaches to categorization.

Following this grasp, understanding categorization as embedded in deservingness and entitlement criteria, it becomes interesting to study if and why there is any variation in practice. Such an analysis has evident democratic motives in the sense that it becomes relevant to evaluate if the fundamental solidaristic principle of equal treatment is sustained despite of such potential variations in the way street-level bureaucrats make policy through their practice of categorization. The influence of a political aspect in judging practices cannot be overemphasized in this context. It is regarded a core feature of categorization implying that whoever has the power to determine the selection criteria also maintain the power to control the classifying mechanisms in the political system. This observation hence suggests that it is the selection of criteria, which is fundamental in a categorization practice.

2.1.4 Defining aspects in categorization as my object of study

So far, categorization as the object of study has been defined as a mechanism using symbolic representations as a means to integrate social groups into categories based on selected social criteria. In the following five central aspects defining categorization as my dependent variable in the dissertation will be

described before presenting selected parts of the essential empirical studies of categorization. The five aspects of a categorization, which make up the theoretical understanding of the phenomenon, are the following:

1. Ambiguity in the sense of grasping the fundamental political nature of a category caused by a gap between the logical structure in the symbolic representation (popular images), and the logical structure of the organization (the existing categories).
2. A practice reflecting how the substance of categorization has to do with action and relations, but must be distinguished from both opinion and behavior.
3. Orientation in the sense of reflecting the perceptions which dominate the judging individual.
4. The social construction of target populations as e.g. popular images of persons and groups whose behavior and well-being are affected by public policy, and finally;
5. Discretion or estimation as the mandatory use of subjectivity in judging another citizens' eligibility to social welfare.

Together, the five criteria constitute a frame of my fundamental epistemological and theoretical understanding of categorization as a phenomenon. The following part will introduce theoretical and empirical studies on categorization as they have developed within the field of public opinion in order to obtain contemporary and empirically based knowledge of the problem studied.

Definitions and empirical results on different aspects of categorization in the literature suggest there are certain significant criteria and conditions that characterize the phenomenon. The criteria relate to some personal feelings of deservingness together with a set of socially shared perceptions of responsibility (target populations) and to objective standards of entitlement such as equal rights for equal individuals. However valid, precise and evident the findings, they all seem to understate the political nature of categorization. I argue that categorizations are practices of fundamental political selections, where some aspects are valued higher than others. And, as also suggested in the studies to be presented, such valuations reflect how social conventions and moral values are used as measurements of how to perceive and hence classify the assistance-seeking citizen.

Durkheim and Mauss' presentation of classification also underlines the political nature of the phenomenon. They argue and set out how there is a gap between the logical structure in the symbolic representation of the social order (perception of social categories), and the logical structure of the organ-

ization which integrates the particular social groups using symbolic representations as a means of categorization. In Durkheim and Mauss' formulation:

The reasons which have led to the establishment of the categories have been forgotten, but the category persists and is applied, well or ill, to new ideas [...]' (Durkheim & Mauss 1963: 21).

This quote sustains the discussion of how they view symbolic classifications as persistent enough to affect even our ideas about the world. Thus, it is suggested that even new principles and e.g. new policies and policy tools are shaped in the shadow of existing classificatory social conditions. As should be clear by now, I intend to follow part of this understanding of categorization as a strong device even when it comes to how 'new' ideas are always somehow part of the already existing classificatory schemes.

2.2 Public opinion in the welfare state

There is a broad social scientific interest in understanding the character and consequences of categorizing citizens. Above all this is a matter of explaining and understanding individual categorization of other individuals. The interest typically goes in two directions. Either it seeks to explain and understand ordinary citizens' categorization of fellow citizens, or it tries to find out how professionals categorize citizens in assistance-seeking situations.

Several scholars have pointed out how categorization is a general matter characterizing every (welfare) state that consists of both an organized help system and a work-based production system (Stone 1984: 3-7, Lipsky 1989: 13-16; Brodtkin 1993; Meershoek et al. 2007). Thus, the problem presented in Chapter 1 is scarcely a single Danish case caused by special historical developments or specific welfare programs. It is rather a case of the general welfare state dispute of determining and protecting whoever is considered eligible for public welfare. Despite this general welfare state account, theoretical perspectives and understanding of categorization in the political system is only fragmentary. Furthermore, there is no agreement of what causes it or how to understand it.

The research field dealing with public opinion and categorization includes a comprehensive welfare state research rooted in the input/output relation between the political system and its citizens. More precisely the anchor in this research is at the voter level within the field of political opinion formation. Here the object of investigation is the citizen's judgment of assistance-seeking citizens. Even though the object is not a judgment practice within the political system as such, the argument for studying these judgments at a voter level is that it portrays a picture of fundamental societal legitimacy, implying a correlation between citizens' judgment patterns towards public benefits and the

character and legitimacy of current welfare programs. (Petersen 2007; van Oorschot 2006; Appelbaum 2001: 419). In measuring the precise deservingness criteria in the population, one of the prevailing authors in the field, van Oorschot argues:

[T]he public's answers to 'who should get what and why?', would help policy makers to predict the likely legitimacy of any change in social arrangements (van Oorschot 2000: 34).

This, however, presupposes that the answers reflect an explanatory factor which actually connects the citizen and the state in a legitimate relationship. As I will argue in Chapter 4, there are several theoretical and empirical reasons why we should be careful in believing that the public answers to 'who should get, what and why' are a shortcut to visualizing and predicting future societal legitimacy. The method of measurement in this tradition is survey questions asking about the degree of deservingness in the population towards particular social groups such as for example ethnic groups, unemployed people, disabled or elderly.³

The overall empirical motivation in this literature stems from an identification of a shift in European countries where access to universal protection schemes has been limited and replaced by more selective and conditional social protection programs. According to van Oorschot, policy makers are no longer preoccupied with the problem of funding, but rather with the problem of allocating the welfare 'fairly' among citizens (van Oorschot 2000: 34). As a consequence, we see a solidarity driven, rather than an interest driven, understanding of variation and patterns in explaining the public's preferred deservingness criteria. This standpoint has been supported by survey data showing evidence that citizens tend to support common welfare despite of their own (material) interests (Petersen et al. 2007: 33). The theoretical perspective of citizens making judgment as a matter of solidarity instead of out of their own interests links to the theoretical framework in Chapter 3.

Following this, within the last decade, the concept of deservingness has come to play a central role in political studies of the welfare state (van Oorschot 2000; Petersen 2007; Feather 2003). The deservingness concept covers an interest in how the balance between work and social welfare is sustained in society. Thus, it reformulates one of the classic questions in political science: 'who gets what, when, and how?' (Lasswell 1936) into 'who should get what, when, and why?' (van Oorschot 2000: 34). This normative attribute

³ By way of example, the questions ask when and why the normal voter/citizen thinks a assistance-seeking citizen deserves a public support and what is the condition for this deservingness?

of 'should', however, is not explicitly reflected upon. Instead the theoretical perspective is concentrated at a 'mapping' level describing correlations between deservingness mechanisms and welfare state support.

According to van Oorschot, the reason why it makes sense to reformulate this classic question is that:

[T]his new conditionality shows that nowadays, well after the fiscal crisis of the 1980s, policy makers are more preoccupied with the problems of the rationing of welfare than with the problem of getting it funded (van Oorschot 2000:34).

Yet, it seems unclear how the link between policy-makers and deservingness opinion relate to each other or why it is explained with reference to these correlations. In other words: why is it interesting from a political scientific perspective to know the public opinion on deservingness criteria, when we do not know what mechanisms public opinion actually reflects? This question is raised more systematically in Chapter 3, since it becomes important when specifying my own theoretical understanding of the phenomenon and consequently my empirical investigation of the phenomenon.

The theoretical interests within deservingness literature is to explain voter behavior through empirical investigations of the populations' opinion of whom deserves welfare, and of which groups are most likely to be considered deserving a public support. Within this research community, some authors have already become classical as a starting point of analyzing these questions. Among them are van Oorschot and his study from 2000, where he extends and refines the theoretical knowledge about what characterizes the deserving from the non-deserving poor.

His empirical study builds on De Swaan and Will; two other prevailing researchers within deservingness theory (De Swaan 1988; Will 1993). In De Swaan's historical study on the development of modern welfare states, he describes three criteria found to be present in almost all classifications of the deserving versus the non-deserving poor: 'disability as a matter of physical incapacity', 'proximity', and 'docility in the sense of being able to present oneself as a humble receiver' (De Swaan referred to in van Oorschot 2000: 35). In Will's later empirical study (1993) of public perceptions of the deserving poor in America the following five deservingness criteria are suggested: 'control' in the sense of how much control the assistance-seeking individual is presumed to have over the situation: the less control the more deserving and vice versa; 'need' as a question of suffering, 'identity', 'attitude' and 'reciprocity' reflecting a kind of 'pay back' relationship between the giver and the receiver (Will referred to by van Oorschot 2000: 36). In van Oorschot's own study from 2000 he finds strongest support for the following three criteria: 'control', 'identity' and 'reciprocity'. He sums up his findings by describing a

likely reaction from the Dutch public to the question of deservingness in three questions: 1) ‘why are you in need?’ 2) ‘are you one of us?’ and 3) ‘what have you done or can you do for us?’ The most prevailing criteria according to this literature and theory of deservingness can then be displayed as follows:

Table 2.1. Prevailing criteria on public opinions’ deservingness judgments

Studies:	De Swaan (1988)	Will (1993)	van Oorschot (2000)	Petersen et al. (2007)
Prevailing deservingness criteria:	Disability	Control	Control	Disability
	Proximity	Need	Identity	Age
	Docility	Identity	Reciprocity	Reciprocity
		Attitude Reciprocity		

The empirical findings at voter level in a Danish study suggest strongest support towards financing public support for citizens who fall into three categories: ‘disabled’, ‘elderly’, or ‘citizens, who have worked several years’ (reciprocity) (Petersen et al. 2007: 44-45). These results are interesting and support the above-mentioned international evidence and they are also comparable to a study made by Jørgen Goul Andersen. His findings support the theoretical conclusion in deservingness literature claiming that this phenomenon is better explained by solidarity than by interests (Goul Andersen 2008: 111-112). However, as I will argue later, Goul Andersen’s theoretical and analytical perspective as well as his measurements of welfare state support may capture a logic of entitlement and not a logic of deservingness. In Chapter 3 the argument is that the primary difference between these two studies is related to the concept of solidarity. Where van Oorschot investigates citizens’ opinions to other welfare subjects as a question of how they perceive of other individuals moral standards based on evaluations of their efforts and achievements (or lack of the same), Goul Andersen investigates citizens’ opinions to existing welfare systems and welfare goods as a matter of how individuals relate to external factors as an agreed-upon body or law, social norms etc. as define judgments by entitlement. (Goul Andersen 2008: 111).

The results displayed above are very interesting in relation to understanding fundamental public criteria for judging deservingness of assistance-seeking citizens. However, I argue that interpretation of public opinion measured by a questionnaire (survey) is a very abstract task because the relationship between opinions and actual behavior is both theoretically unclear and empirically difficult to prove. The obvious question regarding the connection between opinion and behavior is of course if opinions on ‘who deserves what

and why?’ will ever be transformed to actual voting behavior or overt social conflict if for example a majority of the population find people on welfare undeserving?

Further, the question is which exchange mechanism between the publicly supported citizen and the state is captured in this literature? Since it is plausible that the essential criteria for a decision on ‘who gets what, when and why?’ is found in the relationship between the state and the citizen, I argue that public opinion is too abstract and too vague a concept to explain the connection between public categorization and the judgment criteria used to manage assistance-seeking citizens in the administrative system. Instead I argue that organizational contexts within the political system appear more fruitful and concrete locations to look for categorization criteria than in opinion polls, because it is in such contexts rather than among citizens that society exchange solidarity with assistance-seeking citizens. Thus it seems more relevant to investigate how and if these criteria are being used in administrative practice e.g. towards ‘the disabled’ or ‘the elderly’, than in a survey measuring public opinion.

As already mentioned, deservingness literature is a political scientific approach to the study of categorization viewed as a question of support to the welfare state. In practice the question here is measured in surveys asking questions about the population’s opinions about specific welfare recipients. The literature demonstrate how welfare state support cannot be explained with interests and suggests instead that solidarity affects the way citizens relate to and support the welfare state. In addition, this theory contributes to the knowledge of how and when opinion can affect politics and not least to a broader empirically grounded understanding of what can affect the level of tolerance in the public opinion.

When scholars within the field explain this effect, they tend to use a psychological model describing how it is possible for the human brain to handle an increasingly complex reality in the sense of capacity to judge other peoples’ contribution to the collective welfare through selective information on age, work intensity (reciprocity), in-group relations etc. The following part presents central elements from this social psychological approach to categorization.

2.3 Perceptions of needy citizens

Some scholars representing deservingness theory has criticized the lack of psychological theoretical understanding of what explains the deservingness criteria (Larsen 2006: 145; van Oorschot 2000). However, there is a direction within the deservingness literature which exactly presents such a psychological explanatory framework in analyzing and explaining categorization (Wei-

mer 1995; Feather & Johnstone 2001; Feather et al. 2007). Here a central empirical interest is to find out how professionals within the political system judge individuals. This direction is rooted in social psychological labeling theory, as well as in in- and out-group theory (Murphy-Berman et al. 2002), and their theoretical contribution to understand categorization goes beyond an interest of voter opinion in the welfare state. The focal point in the social psychological tradition is to explain variance in deservingness as it appears in different institutional and organizational settings. One of the most preferred settings of analysis is the health system and the health profession. A distinctive objective is to document actual variance between doctors' judging behavior and to explain why health professionals are not making similar discretions when it comes to decide whether a patient is considered deserving or undeserving in order to receive the optimal treatment required by law (Feather et al. 2007; Feather & Johnstone 2001). Thus, the key aim is to explain what causes a certain judgment instead of another.

The research is rooted in common sense understandings of certain sentiments or feelings such as for example anger, envy, fear or responsibility (Weimer 1995; Feather 2008; van Dijk et al. 2006). The sentiment used in these investigations tends to reflect a collective understanding and is chosen as a tool to analyze variance, co-variance and even causality in experimental studies often using vignettes as a method. Responsibility, for example, is used in Bernard Weimer's classic book on *Judgments of Responsibility* (1995) as a case, which he argues grasps the exact mechanisms constituting a social judgment. Hence, categorization is defined more concrete in this social psychological direction than what was the case in the public opinion direction within deservingness literature, namely as a labeling practice related to shared or collective feelings in society.

Even though the social psychological understanding of categorization is different both from the public opinion approach and the definition of discretion, the empirical research stemming from this understanding has contributed to several crucial dimensions of what characterizes categorization. But also the theoretical knowledge of categorization, when it comes to the social psychological aspects of individuals' capacities and reasons to judge other people has been qualitatively enlarged through this research (Feather et al. 2007).

The next part presents some core results from this tradition of what constitutes categorization as a type of social judgment. More precisely, the part treats the psychological role of responsibility as a value affecting 'grouping-behavior' in deservingness judgments. The ambition is first to open up the box of categorization with reference to psychological empirical studies and,

next to sociological studies, which focuses on the persistence and the reflections of social stereotypes. And as I argue, using primarily Durkheim and Mauss, such stereotypes are assumed to exist inside society but outside the human brain so to speak.

2.3.1 The psychological role of responsibility in categorization

Some health professionals have negative views of individuals with stigmatized conditions (Feather et al. 2007: 163; Feather & Johnstone 2001: 765), which might cause an unequal treatment. Within the social psychological direction of deservingness theory evidence is found suggesting there is a systematic unequal use of treatment, caused by non-objective categorization practice. This behavior relates the professional judgments to personal views rather than to objective evaluations. Furthermore, there is evidence for claiming that this categorization practice is closely linked to responsibility:

[T]he large research literature on the antecedents of helping behaviors suggests that attributions of responsibility for a stigmatized condition play a central role in people's willingness to provide assistance and support (Feather et al. 2007: 164).

Just as Weiner (1995), Lauren Appelbaum focuses on the role played by responsibility in her analysis of judgment patterns in social interactions. She shows how attributions for responsibility for neediness and the belief in a just world affect respondents' perceptions of deservingness of different groups of people (Appelbaum 2002: 204). This research indicates how there seems to be an interplay between psychological affections and social perceptions. Hence, the perspective implies that a psychological as well as a social theoretical reflection is required in order to understand how categorization influences not only the single individual, but is also a central element of our democratic society.

Nowadays there is a solid agreement in social psychology that you cannot separate cognitive judgment structures from emotional since, apparently, they represent identical neurological mechanisms in the brain. Feather further suggests that since this might be the case, it makes good sense to claim that institutional rules have an effect on emotional reactions to other people. It indicates that social context does make a difference:

Judgments of deservingness and entitlement both depend upon information that comes from the social context (Feather et al. 2003: 383).

Based on these findings suggesting that institutions matter, there is a potential for studying how political institutions as separate potential factors condi-

tion the activation of a sentiment causing either deservingness or entitlement judgment.

In Chapter 3, the theoretical explanatory framework incorporates central elements from the investigations as e.g. the causal relation between perceptions and judgments. This aspect becomes highly important in my study of categorization since it pays attention to the fact that deservingness is not ‘just’ an affect or an objective perception, but rather a consequence of a conditional interplay between social stimuli and psychological dispositions, which according to Weiner signifies how affections are activated by some kind of social event. Furthermore, the knowledge of why it makes sense to distinguish between entitlement and deservingness is very important in developing my explanatory framework, which consists of different forms of solidarity and institutions.

2.3.2 The distinction between deservingness and entitlement

The awareness in deservingness research on categorization embedded in social psychology of the distinction between ‘deservingness and entitlement’ makes categorization clearer as a phenomenon. It is suggested that it has both psychological and social dimensions in the sense that it is facilitated psychologically in the brain of the individual, but the facilitation process is activated by something outside the brain – some kind of social event. The consequence of these two conditions determines the form of the judgment: deservingness or entitlement. According to Weiner, the trade-off between the psychological and the social impact of the phenomenon has to do with factors such as ‘responsibility’, which he defines as a concrete perception causing certain affections to react towards specific types of judgment (Weiner 1995: 5). If e.g. a person is portrayed as an AIDS patient it matters according to Weiner if the person is seen as having a self-inflicted disease because he or she has chosen a ‘dangerous’ sexuality, or if the person is seen as the victim of an epidemic for which he or she cannot be held responsible.

‘Responsibility’ then, is not perceived by Weiner as a mere psychological factor, but as a perception that cannot be separated from the social context. Feather makes a similar theoretical distinction between the social and the psychological dimension. However, he does not use ‘responsibility’ as the factor affecting sentiments, instead he distinguishes between judgments caused by a valued behavior or by an external framework. He describes it like this:

[J]udgments of deservingness and judgments of entitlements are based on different sorts of information, deservingness relating to positive or negative outcomes that follow a person’s positively or negatively valued behavior, and en-

itlement relating to an external framework of social norms, rules, and rights for which there is a high degree of consensus (Feather 2003: 384).

This separation of categorization as either reflecting a set of values (psychological dimension) or an external framework (social dimension) makes it interesting when specifying the problem presented here: what determines the criteria used to select which characteristics that has to be met in order to fit one category and not another?

In Chapter 3, this perspective is further developed in relation to the theoretical explanatory framework put forward using mainly the newest evidence produced within political psychology suggesting that:

deservingness theory [extends] to a new area and provides evidence for the distinction between deservingness and entitlement (Feather 2008: 1230).

2.3.3 Social construction of target populations

As presented in part 2.3.1, prominent scholars within social psychology suggest that we make a distinction between judgments based on ‘entitlement’ and ‘deservingness’ respectively. The reason for doing this is both empirically and theoretically grounded. It is found empirically evident that categorization differs qualitatively; depending on the individual’s conception of factors such as responsibility, but also on the institutional setting surrounding the individual. Theoretically, this indicates how the individual conception is informed not solely from the psychological system, but also from the social system – as external social stimuli affecting the individual.

The notion of a social dimension in categorization is not pursued as part of their explanatory framework within this social psychological perspective. However, another literature exists commonly referred to as ‘social constructions of target populations’, which exactly focuses on the perception aspects of a social judgment. The research contributes to classic public administrative theories on the relation between costs and redistribution of welfare services and to sociological theory concerned with the meaning and the making of social constructions into stereotypes. The question asked is not how the public opinion reacts to certain stereotypes, but instead how and why the political system makes use of social constructions as a means to push through public policies (Schneider & Ingram 1993; Collins 1989; Murray 1988). The literature describes these particular constructions as ‘target populations’. It concretizes how it is not just the phenomenon of judging or making social constructions in general that interest them, but instead it is how social constructions of positive and negative stereotypes matter in the relation between the population and the policy makers. Schneider & Ingram use the concept ‘target populations’ to specify their claim that social constructions affect policy mak-

ers' choice of policy tools and their categorization of social problems. Defining elements in categorization, according to them, are factors like 'popular images' and 'cultural characterizations':

Social construction of target populations refers to the cultural characterizations or popular images of the persons or groups whose behavior and well-being are affected by public policy (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 334).

This thesis is sustained by an analysis of the impact of negatively framed groups on the possibility of cutting welfare costs (Jensen 2007). In the article it is shown that it is possible to eliminate support for a negatively portrayed target population by demonstrating that costs can be reduced if the target population of the policy corresponds with a negative view commonly shared by a majority of the population (Jensen 2007: 154). This finding raises fundamental questions to the classical theory in public administration which anticipates costs in general to be difficult to cut down because they also represent a right as an entitlement.

Factors such as 'deservingness' and 'responsibility' are central in the approach of social constructions of 'target populations'. Against the deservingness theory where focus is on the internal psychological mechanisms of a judgment, the theory of social construction analyzes judgments as primarily defined by criteria constructed *outside* the individual mind, in the social structure presenting a 'symbolic truth' about the world (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 343). According to this theory, who people think deserve welfare is explained by the value added to the social construction of the group containing the particular individual. Here 'responsibility' is not seen as an individual perception, as it was the case in the social psychological literature, but rather as a political concept capable of transforming a particular target population's claim on entitlement into receivers with responsibility for their need (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 345). The logic is that whoever has the responsibility (of a social problem) also has the blame and therefore the obligation to fix it.

'The individual's orientation (world view)', 'deservingness' and 'responsibility' are significant factors in both the social psychological literature and in the social constructivist approach. In the first literature, where orientation reflected the directive element in a perception, it makes the link between government and participation in the social constructivist approach. 'Orientation' is here understood as a result of the meaning of citizenship, which again is influenced by information such as agenda, policy tools, policy rationales etc. According to the theory, the shaping of target populations happens when negative information on a target group inform subjects who share certain characteristics of a group about their status as citizens and how they are like-

ly to be treated by government. In other words, not only does negative information ascribe stigmatized value to the target population, it also construes the meaning of how one should expect them to be treated by government as information about whether they are deserving or undeserving of a certain welfare (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 340). This portrays a central element of the theory, namely how target populations are *considered* active in constructing themselves within the limits of a particular stereotyped group.

2.3.4 Carriers of social constructions

The main carrier of social constructions however, is not claimed to be the single self-constructing individual, but instead carriers such as for example the media, movies, literature, and music (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 343). This sustains the claim tested in the study mentioned above why it is not always true that government cannot cut welfare programs because of path dependencies or voter preferences (Jensen 2007).

Table 2.2. Social constructions and political power: types of target populations

		Constructions	
		Positive	Negative
Power	Strong	Advantaged: The elderly, business, veterans, scientists	Contenders: The rich, big unions, minorities, cultural elites, moral majority
	Weak	Dependents: Children, mothers, disabled	Deviants: Criminals, drug addicts, communists, flag burners, gangs

Schneider & Ingram 1993: 336.

Regarding the problem of who should get what and why, according to this approach, policy-makers use non-formalized information stemming from the carriers about social problems and not least the symbolic meaning of them (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 341). Schneider & Ingram argue for the presence of four general types of target population viewed from the perspective of both the political system and the public opinion on the question of deservingness. The four general types are: 1) the Advantaged; 2) the Contenders; 3) the Dependents; and 4) the Deviants (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 336).

The fundamental point in this approach is twofold. First, substantiating the function of the social constructions, and second, establishing how they appear to others including policy-makers and experts, who should be making a professional discretion of the citizens' need based on objective selective criteria and not on stereotyped information.

Experts do not escape social constructions, either; and the constructions they hold color which goals they think are important and which targets they believe are the most logically connected to the goals. The tools that experts think will motivate the targets rest on assumptions about behaviour that are influenced by social constructions [...] Thus, social constructions (as well as power) influence the logic of policy, and expertise does not negate the influence of constructions on policy design even in highly non-political contexts (Schneider & Ingram 1993: 345).

Even though the perspective presented here is part of a policy analysis strategy as well as part of social constructivism where the locus of study and the fundamental question of explaining effects of categorization is at the level of policy-making, I find their results and perspectives fruitful in order to substantiate knowledge about crucial conditions and defining aspects of categorization in the political system. Therefore, the next part will present the theory of discretion in street-level bureaucracy in order to narrow down, not only the substance of the object studied in the upcoming chapters, but also which part of the political system I intend to subject to my empirical investigation of categorization.

2.4 Discretion in street-level bureaucracy

Categorization of citizens in the welfare state is a theme that spans from studies of public opinion over experimental psychology to policy implementation in Street-Level Bureaucracies. In a Danish context, there has been a sociological contribution to these categorization studies, which investigates the phenomenon as an interplay/interaction between ‘the system and the social client’. The theoretical perspective is power-oriented, and the main ambition is to reveal how informal power structures affect the categorization of social clients (Järvinen & Mortensen 2002; Mik-Meyer 2003; 2004; Carstens 2002; Järvinen et al. 2002)

Apart from the studies on informal power relations between ‘the system and the client’, there is a solid political scientific literature about categorization with a theoretical point of departure in the implementation phase. The implementation perspective includes a wide range of areas spanning from outcome analyses, regulation studies to evaluation of public policy effects (outcome studies) (Winter & Lehman Nielsen 2008; Knudsen 2007).

Even though studies in Street-Level Bureaucracy and ‘system-client’ research relations have mutual interests in describing and explaining categorization, their understanding of categorization differ. Unlike the international implementation studies in street-level bureaucracy, the system-client approach seeks to describe and theoretically understand what happens in a categorization practice in the political system mainly seen from a client-

perspective. Contrasting the ‘system-client’ research, implementation studies in street-level bureaucracy seek to explain categorization as the outcome of different affecting factors of both individual and structural character, and most seen from the political system’s perspective.

In the following two parts, I introduce first the research on the construction of institutional identities relating briefly to the former part on target populations. Next, I describe why the implantation studies of discretion are relevant to my study of categorization in the political system. Both sets of literature are based on what Michael Lipsky has defined as street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky 1980).

2.4.1 Constructing institutional identities

In adapting a client-perspective to what is going on when street-level bureaucrats make discretion of clients in the political system, we realize how the discretion is embedded in informal power structures as well as in the available institutional settings. The ‘system-client’ literature has made a central contribution to understanding the phenomenon of categorization regarding the use of client-perceptions and institutional norms for managing certain types of social problems (Mik-Meyer 2003).

The empirical analyses suggest that it is very difficult for a client to maintain his or her own problem definition during the interaction with the street-level bureaucrats, who tend to take over not only the problem definition, but also the social meaning of it. This implies how the problems of assistance-seeking citizens are seen not from the perspective of the particular problem, but instead from the view of the solutions available in the systems, including both therapeutic evaluations and moral perceptions of the problems presented (Mik-Meyer 2003; Järvinen 2003; Villadsen 2003; Carstens 2002).

This is best characterized as a theoretical perspective, which uses the idea of a ‘construction of institutional identity’ to signify what I have treated as ‘categorization’ throughout the chapter. The phenomenon of a constructed institutional identity shares the same characteristics as a social construction insofar as we are only interested in describing how social meaning is an *ascribed* value and not something stemming from the individual’s own perception. However, the ‘system-client’ research develops their power analytical approach with the explicit intention of revealing the restrictive power of the administrative system including both legal and normative structures. Nevertheless, in downplaying the role of legally produced formal power structures the approach comes close associating this form of legal power with an illegitimate restriction of the individual’s opportunity to maintain the problem definition.

This approach does indeed contribute to the understanding of the central aspects of categorization by visualizing how and when institutional identities are being constructed. Thus, it gives a crucial input to the understanding of why and how a categorization practice produces a number of unintended negative effects in the political system. However, even though this approach is embedded in power theory, almost no attention is paid to the (normative) function of the political system as an overall democratic structure, where political decisions are transformed into legal administrative categories for management of – as in my case – assistance-seeking citizens. Consequently, as argued above, these studies remain blind towards fundamental conditions in categorization in the political system, when administrative interventions are perceived as undermining fundamental rights of the citizen. The opposite argument exists in street-level theory, where the legal structure is understood as assuring the citizens of legal rights.

2.4.2 Categorization as administrative decision-making

Even though this approach only rarely mentions categorization as a phenomenon, I argue, based on Lipsky's work on Street-Level Bureaucracy, that the description of the distinction between mandatory discretion and discretion practice capture a defining element of what characterizes a categorization. According to Lipsky, discretion practice is the ultimate transformation of a political decision into real policy-making and therefore it portrays an important part of my understanding of bureaucratic and political categorization that deals exactly with making a decision about whether an individual belongs or not to a certain group that gives access to an amount of political and social rights.

The claim in street-level bureaucracy theory is that policy does not become real until citizens are affected by it in their daily life (Lipsky 1980: 4). Thus, the central political agents are those who meet the citizen through bureaucracy, so to speak. Furthermore, what characterizes categorization according to this approach is the discretion of clients, which order them into separate categories with related political rights. This indicates a subjective dimension in discretion, which is supposed to guarantee how every client can be treated individually as citizens with law given social rights under the condition that they fulfill specific objective criteria. In this sense, discretion is a tool to prevent discriminatory categorization based on for example prejudice about a target population, which may facilitate a categorization of an individual as belonging to a group with already ascribed values (discretion based on a social stereotype).

However, even though the discretion is formally thought to guarantee a fair distribution of resources and a just categorization, it is exactly indications

of lack of such effects that makes the starting point of analyzing the mechanism of categorization in the theory:

A critical reality of [...] social policy is that eligibility for assistance is necessarily subjective, and to a degree, ambiguous. [...] Contemporary social policy is usually written to facilitate, as much as possible, the fair distribution of resources. In short this means treating similar situated people alike. The most common way to insure fairness in social policy distributions is to make eligibility contingent on some unambiguous, knowable circumstances of the individual (Lipsky & Smith 1989: 11).

Following the point given in this quote, categorization is what happens before street-level bureaucrats make their final discretion as the ‘real’ decision about what kind of social service a particular citizen should get. Research on the topic suggests that in making this discretion they use more than just the law. They tend to use other forms of available tools rather than just the formal ones including personal and social information about stereotyped meaning of their citizens.

I suggest that categorization can be defined as a practice that precedes the discretion in street-level bureaucracy theory and therefore is not linked directly to behavior, but more to the reproduction of certain social information about the assistance-seeking citizens.

2.5 Summary

Scholars of the deservingness theory argue that by asking people who they think deserve social welfare you can obtain information about the legitimate relation between the state and the citizen. By looking at the public’s preferred criteria for who deserves what and why, we obtain knowledge about how people relate morally to their co-citizens.

However, a lot of scholars do not motivate their interest in categorization as especially related to the political system. In social psychology, attention is paid to the psychological relations inside the human mind as well as to the neurological function of the brain. This tradition has a causal model showing how external stimuli (social events) is expected to form the human perception, which then turns on certain affections for preferred judgments of other people. According to this research field, this is what makes the crucial and interesting aspect of a categorization. Both scholars make a contribution to political psychology about what motivate voters and individuals in their categorization practice.

The criteria, which these research fields have found evident, are used in the development of the vignettes, which are applied in my empirical study of categorization. However, as indicated in the beginning of this chapter and as

I will argue in the next, the deservingness criteria (age, need, and reciprocity) found and documented within political psychology only grasps one dimension of categorization practice. Another dimension is present and documented as well in the social psychology research, supported by street-level bureaucracy theory, which suggests distinguishing between ‘deservingness’ and ‘entitlement’.

In the following three chapters, existing approaches and knowledge about what explains categorization will be presented. The chapters introduce how categorization and variation in categorization is conceptualized and explained by different theoretical approaches and questions. The chapters provide the theoretical context and basis for developing a theoretical framework which will be used to analyze the empirical question in the forthcoming analyses of categorization practice at the level of street-bureaucracy.

The focus in the following three chapters is to present how this problem has been analyzed, understood, and explained, and of course my argument for choice and construction of the theoretical frame according to which categorization as a social process and as a judgment practice will be analyzed and examined empirically.

Chapter 3

Solidarity and categorization

In the previous chapter categorization was set out theoretically and explained as a phenomenon and an empirical practice, which will be studied at the street-level bureaucracy. The theoretical approaches and the empirical evidence suggested how practices of individual categorization are characterized by two fundamentally different judgment criteria: ‘entitlement’ and ‘deservingness’.

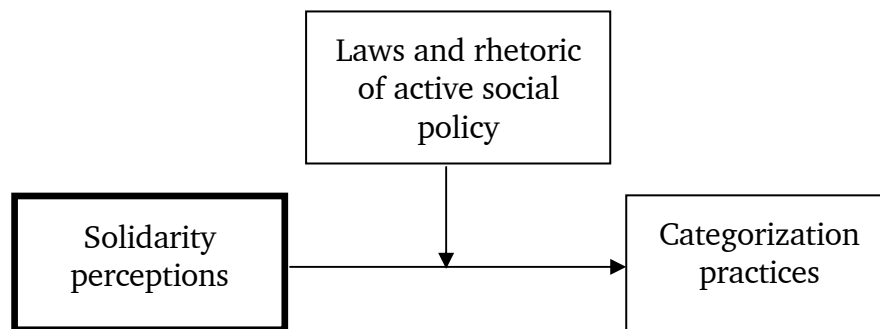
The present chapter focuses on solidarity. The objective is to develop a theoretical framework to study the problem presented in the introductory Chapter 1. The problem was presented as a matter of understanding how representations of social problems in the dominating political rhetoric affect the actual policy-making towards social clients. At an individual level, the question is what it means to the actual administration of citizens on welfare with health problems when the concrete political rhetoric is structured around a story telling how the social cohesion in society is being threatened by an increasing sick leave? This problem was explained as being of particular interest to understanding categorization practice in street level bureaucracies. Next, solidarity was argued as an alternative explanation for an economic and social angle to differences in categorization practice. The argument is that it is the normative relation between the state and the citizen⁴, which seems to describe and characterize this political presentation of a threatened societal cohesion. The dominating rhetoric was described as a shift from describing mainly structural interdependencies between the state and the citizen to describing a relation mainly in an actor-oriented moral relationship. Hence Chapter 1 suggested solidarity instead of costs and numbers as an alternative explanation for variations in eligibility criteria determining categorization. To substantiate the choice of studying solidarity as an alternative explanation, a burden measure was presented, which showed that the relational development in costs, numbers, population and GDP in this area has been surprisingly stable. Therefore, politico economical factors are by no means obvious explanations of the rhetorical shift in social policy about the need for tightening up access to social welfare. However, the rhetorical political shift is not defining the frame of study. Instead the frame of study seeks

⁴ Durkheim consistently uses the term the ‘Individual’ in his writings. However, this dissertation is confined to referring to the individual in its role as either a (assistance-seeking) citizen or a street-level bureaucrat. Therefore I most often refer to the ‘citizen’ and the ‘street-level bureaucrat’ (social worker) instead of generally to the broader term ‘individual’.

to explore what happens to categorization practice within the institutional context of active social policy and within this dominating political rhetoric.

Studies on solidarity often focus on finding the causes for it. The same is true in Durkheim's writing on the subject. Solidarity is consistently explained with reference to institutions, culture, history, social, political, and moral economies (Rothstein 1998; March & Olson 1989: 127; Thompson et al. 1990: 135-137; Parsons 1964: 77, 96-97; Esping-Andersen 1990: 22; Goul Andersen 2003: 82-85; Durkheim 1984). However, in my study solidarity is not the problem investigated but instead it plays the role as the explanatory factor of categorization practice. Below I re-introduce my basic theoretical model in order to visualize the focus of Chapter 3 and the theoretical relationship between solidarity and categorization practice.

Figure 3.1. Theoretical model



The figure portrays the theoretical architecture of this dissertation with *solidarity* highlighted as an indication of focus in Chapter 3 and *institutions* as the final brick in my model, which is also the centre of attention in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5 I present my model of analysis as well as the analytical strategies designed to study this theoretical model. In the following solidarity will be set out as the explaining and independent variable in the theoretical argument.

Solidarity is a phenomenon that signifies a range of different values in literatures and theoretical frameworks. I argue that this omnipotent character of solidarity is related to its use as an inclusive term describing relatively different functions and mechanisms in society. Some of the functions ascribed to solidarity are: individual relations; community relations; state relations; corporation relations; as well as family and international relations. All mentioned types of relationships coexist in modern society and solidarity is often one of the usual suspects when explanations of coexistence in societies are debated. However, based on the work of Emilie Durkheim, I argue that in accordance with different types of relationships, the solidarity content differs. Solidarity between individuals is different depending on whether the purpose

of normative integration is between and within social organizations including associations and families, or whether it is between the citizen and the state.

In this chapter I claim that solidarity must be grasped and analyzed in accordance with the particular needs for normative integration at stake. In this sense the theoretical argument subscribes to a functional explanation. Thus, the content of solidarity depends on what kind of need for cohesion and normative integration the particular community demands. In accordance with this thesis, I argue, that the first step is to explore the particular needs for bonding and grouping in order to understand what explains a categorization practice in the political system. What kinds of communities dominate the field of social policy in the political system and how do these communities interact at a symbolic and administrative level? The next step then is to find out what types of solidarities (metaphorically) actually correspond to these communities in the concrete institutional setting of a particular categorization practice.

Hence, the expected relationship between solidarity and categorization will be explained in this chapter. Basically, the chapter ends up suggesting a theoretical model that predicts a relationship between different *forms* of solidarity form and different *practices* of categorization. The case for these relationships reflects and refers back to Chapter 2 about categorization. Graphically the expected relationships can be presented like this:

Table 3.1. Expected relationship between solidarity and categorization without context

Solidarity form:	Mechanical	Organic
Categorization practice:	Deservingness criteria	Entitlement criteria

However, this is hardly the empirical pattern I will find since the model does not take into account the social and political context of the theoretical relationship between solidarity form and categorization practice. The crucial context I need to understand and describe in order to be able to study my theoretical model empirically is the dominating collective consciousnesses and metaphorical representations of cohesion in current social policy. Specifically, the unavoidable affecting context of the relation between solidarity form and categorization practice is assumed to be essential institutions governing the administrative system. Administration is the locus of categorization practice and this is where political intentions are being transformed into real practices and consequently into concrete behavior. In order to understand how street-level bureaucrats' use their obligation of individual discretion as well as their obligation to implement the intention of the law, I intend to trace their initial

perception of community standards and collective orientations as expressions of how solidarity materializes itself in the form of perceptions at an individual level. This will be done in order to be able to evaluate and compare how solidarity forms as perceptions affect categorization practice at an empirically accessible individual level. The way the relation is studied and made operational between a structural interest in solidarity and an empirical study at an individual level is of course important. In the second part of the dissertation, the theoretical, expected relationships are therefore arranged and explored empirically.

Thus, the aim of this chapter is twofold: 1) to explain why solidarity functions as an identity and collectivity producing mechanism, and 2) to argue why solidarity must be defined – not by an inherent normative preference or content as such – but instead by its potential to represent community values and integrative normative dispositions through institutions such as metaphors, symbolic and rhetorical statements about social cohesion. These two fundamental purposes serve as my general theoretical framework to study categorization practice at the street-level bureaucracy. The intention of analyzing solidarity as latent forms that arrange which criteria are used in categorization practices differs from most of the current approaches and understandings of solidarity. Solidarity is most commonly understood as a particular value of integration or as a value of tolerance. Hence, the dominant position operates with a substantial definition of solidarity as e.g. ‘tolerance towards diversity’, ‘shared habits on moral issues’ or as a ‘civic minimum’. Consequently, all the non-identifications of these values tend to be interpreted as lacks of solidarity, instead of as other forms (White 2003: 19; Juul 2002: 19-21).

Conversely, I argue that there is always solidarity engaged in a community bonding structure. It is the form and the content and not the phenomenon of bonding itself that differs. This position is developed and inspired by Durkheim’s classic concepts of mechanical and organic solidarity.

In the following argument I present Durkheim’s theory of solidarity by suggesting that solidarity is a fortifying mechanism of values born out of organizations’ social practices. The essence in this fortifying capacity is expected to be metaphorical language and symbols about cohesion. Iseult Honohan speaks of three fundamental metaphorical languages about solidarity: 1) Solidarity metaphors that represent values of bonding individuals within a community; 2) solidarity metaphors representing values of bridging between communities; and 3) solidarity metaphors that represent values of linking different socially positioned individuals together in a greater normatively undefined society (Honohan 2008: 79).

3.1 Theoretical focus on solidarity and chapter progress

Chapter 3 consists of three parts and a summary. In part 3.1 the first part of Durkheim's theory on mechanical solidarity is introduced as the form of solidarity binding individuals together in smaller non-divided communities such as families, social networks and organizations. Durkheim describes this solidarity form as dominating in social organizations such as corporations or secondary groups. This part explains why mechanical solidarity stimulates a need to repress and sanction norm violations and why the individual in order to stay or become integrated must identify himself strongly with the group defining collective identity. Next, the 'cult of the individual' as a form of modern worship will be dealt with. In the end of part 3.1 the conceptual tools will be related to the presentation of deservingness criteria in Chapter 2, and it will be demonstrated why this type of criteria correspond to a mechanical logic of solidarity.

Part 3.2 presents the second part of the theory: organic solidarity. Here, it is explained why division of labor, according to Durkheim, causes a different solidarity form that evokes different social needs for cohesion needs than what can be met by a mechanical form of solidarity. It is the ambition to clarify how solidarity on a broad level is concerned with the same social and political phenomenon: to integrate individuals normatively within society. But as these societies or communities differ in both purpose and character so do the needs and the content of solidarity. Even though the need for cohesion is present in both forms, it must be met in labor divided societies by a mechanism able to unite many different groupings of shared habits instead of producing bonds within one group already sharing the same habits. To make this point clear, part 3.2.1 deals explicitly with the role of corporations. Durkheim argues that corporations are types of communities that handle both mechanical and organic logics of solidarity. The mechanical logic is derived by the fact that a corporation includes individuals sharing everyday habits and professional lives, moralities and ethics. The organic logic is caused by the fact, that the same corporation completes a specialized function within the frame of a particular nation. Next, I once again relate theory with Chapter 2's findings. Here, entitlement criteria are analyzed as corresponding to an organic logic of solidarity.

Part 3.3 introduces the main elements in the concept of solidarity, which will be used to study categorization at the street-level bureaucracy. The part continues to draw on the theory of solidarity as developed by Durkheim. Principally it emphasizes the distinction of solidarity as corresponding to two fundamentally different needs for normative integration in society. Either solidarity is derived from a labor-divided society (organic solidarity) or from a

community without division of labor (mechanical solidarity). The theoretical difference between a labor divided and a non-labor divided society is the general key I use to explore how different elements in solidarity matter in different communities. The main elements I subtract from the concept of solidarity are 'collective consciousness', 'representation', 'professional ethics', 'social cohesion' and 'social tolerance'.

3.1.1 Mechanical solidarity

Durkheim's intention with the distinction between two forms of solidarity was to argue why society would not fall apart morally despite of an impending division of labor in society during the industrialization period (Durkheim 1984: introduction). As a strictly empirical question, history has now given the answer and shown that he was right about society not falling apart morally as labor functions divided and increased. The absence of an overall face-to-face production of solidarity did cause neither disintegration nor permanent riots. But when it comes to his argument of how the form of solidarity would follow the degree of labor division in society meaning that complex, differentiated modern societies would produce organic solidarity and simple societies mechanical solidarity, the theory, however, has not been proven true. In complex, modern societies such as the Danish, welfare programs with a mechanical, and not an organic solidarity profile and logic have been successfully implemented. Such programs are, as will be dealt with explicitly in Chapter 4, typically defined as being selective and based in either residual or insurance logic of redistribution.

Modern communities' need for mechanical solidarity

In Durkheim's later writings, among them the second preface to his work *The Division of Labour in Society* (1984), he explains the presence of mechanical solidarity in society. Based on his anthropological writings on *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* he can be criticized for underestimating the function of mechanical solidarity in modern society. His argument is how the transformation of primitive and small sized communities into larger and more complex social communities along with a change in economic structures also involves a transgression from mechanical to organic solidarity (Durkheim 1984: 238). However, this very strict causal understanding of how labor division causes organic solidarity and represses communities' needs for mechanical solidarity has been questioned by anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists (Thompson et al. 1990: 136). The critique is both empirically and theoretically motivated. It argues that a mechanical-based solidarity along with strong collective consciousnesses continue to exist no matter the degree of labor division, because the phenomenon of people sharing norms

and beliefs are not something primitive, but a human condition independent of the surrounding political and social organizations.

However, even though often overlooked in the critique of Durkheim's thesis, he actually did modify his social evolutionary argument (Durkheim 1984: preface to the second edition). He modified his own theory, where it predicts a total transformation of mechanical into organic solidarity in modern labor-divided societies by pointing at the function of corporations as social organizations producing and reproducing both forms of solidarity. He suggested corporations as examples of social organizations, which are carriers of both organic and mechanical solidarity. Individuals who are attracted to each other by similarities bond corporations as well as small normative groups such as the family. But at the same time, corporations exist in an interdependent relationship with other guilds, organizations, and the state as well as with society in general. The modified argument developed by Durkheim hence is that if we understand the corporations and their needs for both mechanical and organic solidarity we can also comprehend the coexistence of both solidarity forms in modern society. The role of corporations is consequently explained with reference to his original argument about how collective consciousness bonds individuals together around a set of shared norms and needs. The analogy between individual cults and modern organizations is essential in his modification. Besides being internally integrated through mechanical needs for cohesion, he says that the basic function of corporations and unions in modern society is organic: each corporation is a specialized system capable of performing socially needed functions for the whole of society and vice versa (Durkheim 2001: 65-76).

So, Durkheim does modify his theory on the division of labor in society by stating that mechanical solidarity is certainly present in modern societies just not as the central logic that combines society with the state as a whole. Here it is important to keep in mind that the State is by no means the organ, which represents the collective consciousness of society as a whole, but rather an organ which is the centre dealing with abstract and vague representations of all communities in society. It is society that is the whole and not the State in Durkheim's theory. The important thing to establish here is that in modern societies mechanical solidarity still exists as a functional integrating logic within smaller communities – among them within associations. Without secondary groups such as churches, guilds, professions, unions, trade organizations etc. no integrative relation between the state and the individual can exist and without the state there is no possibility for representing a differentiated labor-divided society.

The reason why he modified the thesis might be two-fold. First of all he was (and still is) criticized for understating how even primitive communities had standards for interdependent exchange systems and hence needs for organic solidarity (Poulsen 2003: 123; Cosmides & Tooby 1992). Second, he realized that simply because corporations during his time (19th century) were weak there was no evidence for blaming modern society. The corporations' weak position in society during the 18th and 19th centuries was more likely to be a result of concrete political circumstances that might change again for the benefit of corporations. Accordingly, his modification of the clear distinction between organic and mechanical solidarity as a 1:1 relationship with the size of a community and the degree of labor division probably had a lot to do with how he apparently had undervalued (for reasons irrelevant in this theoretical context) the role of these corporations in society as a whole.

Revenge and punishment

But what is mechanical solidarity? According to Durkheim solidarity has to do with rules of sanctions. Either solidarity is constructed and re-constructed based on rules for punishments or on rules for restitution. In the following, mechanical solidarity will be explained not so much in a juridical frame, but within a political frame with focus on the presumed relationship between the individual and the state as it appears in a mechanical logic. Durkheim says that the general rule of sanction in mechanical solidarity is punishment, because revenge is the fundamental integrative logic, when cohesion and collective consciousness are depending on shared ways of living and thinking. Any deviation from such shared norms makes the bonds fragile by exposing both disrespect towards the ruling norms, but also that the particular norms of living could be different from what they are. The reason why punishment as a symbol of society's revenge and intolerance towards norm-violators is rational in a mechanical solidarity relation has to do with the fragility of these communities. Without an intolerant approach to deviating individuals, the shared understanding of meaning becomes questioned. The point is that as long as such norm-based communities exist (families, churches etc.) revenge and punishment is present even in modern labor-divided societies. Therefore, even though labor division does create another level of social integration based on attraction by differences instead of by similarities, it does not imply that needs for normative integration at the smaller community levels disappear. In other words: all though labor division causes specialized corporations and creates political economies, face-to-face relations, families and small homogenous social entities still make part of society and thus, society as a whole still needs mechanical corresponding solidarity (Durkheim 1984: 238).

To study how solidarity affects categorization practice, focus will be on the part of the theory that explains solidarity as a capacity of correspondence to different needs of cohesion and to different needs of representation of meaning (collective consciousness). Having said that, the following 6 elements will be used explicitly as essential characteristics of mechanical solidarity; 1) the ‘cult of the individual’; 2) the representation of shared values and habits in small norm-based communities; 3) a high identification with collective identities; 4) low tolerance of deviance from collective identities and a corresponding high aversion toward other ways of living, performing and doing things; 5) high tolerance toward similar individuals (attraction by similarity); 6) low interdependency between individual and the collective, and 7) repressive law (revenge and punishment) as the predominant form of rule sanction (Durkheim 1984: Chapter 2; 1995: 273-75, 426-27).

Mechanical metaphors of solidarity

Certainly [avenging and expiation] only express its nature metaphorically, but the metaphor is not without truth (Durkheim 1984: 57).

Durkheim mentions in his chapter on mechanical solidarity – or on the function of social cohesion deriving from an attraction by similarities among the individuals in society – that the penal law is the symbol of this kind of solidarity. A symbol is something such as an object, picture, written word, sound, or particular mark that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention. Stone defines it as:

[A]nything that stands for something else. Its meaning depends on how people interpret it, use it, or respond to it. It can be an object, a person, a place, a word, a song, an event, even a logo on a T-shirt. The meaning of a symbol is not intrinsic to it, but is invested in it by the people who use it. In that sense, symbols are collectively created. Any good symbolic device, one that works to capture the imagination, also shapes our perceptions and suspends scepticism, at least temporarily. Those effects are what make symbols political devices. They are means of influence and control, even though it is often hard to tell with symbols exactly who is influencing whom (Stone 2002: 137).

Durkheim says it is this sort of solidarity which the repressive law expresses (Durkheim 1984: 61). However, it is not the penal law itself, but shared understandings of what constitute natural unities that nourish the metaphor of ‘avenging and expiation’ and which the penal law only symbolizes. Furthermore, these understandings of natural entities or common sensed communities come down to be about policies as the rules for exchange of benefits. Thus, instead of focusing on the repressive side of the penal law system as the avenger of offenses towards the common consciousness, the metaphors of

solidarity as symbols of communities may serve as yet another way to learn about solidarity mechanisms and hence its potential of making a difference in concrete practices of categorization. In other words: if the penal law is the negative proxy for mechanical solidarity, metaphors of bonding rituals and values of sharing may be its positive proxy. Metaphors are different from symbols inasmuch as they are about seeing a likeness between two things. Stone defines it as:

[E]ssential to classification and counting. To make a metaphor is also to make a political claim: 'There is a likeness that is important' (Stone 2002: 138).

In this respect mechanical solidarity represents an ideal of an individualized, intimate face-to-face exchange of benefits. But since it is (for obvious reasons) impossible to make everybody within a society interact before a transaction of benefits is made (public services in general), symbols and metaphorical references are needed to substitute this lack of physical interaction. In this respect, communities develop substitutes for this ideal face-to-face exchange in the form of symbols and metaphorical language capable of designating such close relationships between the giver and the receiver. Metaphors of brotherhood, consanguinity and family are examples where the giver and the receiver are perceived as known to each other.⁵ The basic principle in this form of exchange system is the visible relationship of inequality. Here the giver of benefits in return receives recognition for being 'a merciful giver' from the receiver. In that sense the giver of benefits needs the receiver's thankfulness as a symbol of him legitimating the giver's economical and social superiority. This symbol of 'a merciful giver' sustains a legitimate relation based in social and political inequality. It is the mercifulness of the giver which dominates and regulates prevailing norms of the community, and hence the extent of these giving structures signifies the boundaries for solidarity. On the other hand, the receiver of benefits needs the giver in order to maintain life standards and eventually to become included in society by adapting the role of the 'docile' receiver and accordingly be able to meet the ruling criteria of eligibility. Thus, the strength of such roles relies on the metaphorical language about what can be deduced from such different social stereotypes as 'the docile', 'the old', 'the disabled' etc. (see figure 2.2 and table 2.2, Chapter 2).

⁵ Marcel Mauss challenges this unidirectional perception of the benefits of 'to give', where the giver is seen as losing resources in the transfer to the receiver. He basically argues how the gift creates dependencies in favor of the giver and not vice versa (Mauss 2006).

In this sense Durkheim conceptualized solidarity as ‘mechanical’ since it is perceived as produced in a one-to-one relationship between giver and receiver at a local community-level. In this mechanical exchange system the poor’s dependency of the rich defines community boundaries metaphorically speaking. Thus, in a mechanical logic the *giver* can be said to need the receiver for moral reasons and the *receiver* to need the giver for political and economic reasons.⁶ The conditions, of which benefits are given to a receiver, are here exclusive, meaning that if the applying receiver does meet the minimum demands from the giver, he or she will be excluded from participating in the solidarity producing exchange system. Consequently, no benefits will be received at all. Therefore, the production of mechanical solidarity presupposes a community of shared social norms. Causally speaking, it is the community of shared norms that needs a form of solidarity capable of representing the essential bond of coherence: attraction by similarity. Paradoxically the basic relationship in a mechanical bonded community, seen from the perspective of exchange mechanisms, is social inequality (the basic figure is the wealthy giver (as the responsible father) and the poor receiver (as the dependent child) and not social equality. The dimension of similarity is different in the sense that it refers to a normative identity between values and norms and not to a dimension of equality in the meaning of equal rights and equal possibilities to act as citizens.

Besides this figure of visible dependency between the giver and the receiver, mechanical solidarity is also defined as a ‘collective orientation form which presupposes a high level of representation of collective identity. From a plural and right-based perspective of the social, the political effect of such a high degree of matching identities between a common consciousness and an individual consciousness is most likely to result in a systematic discrimination towards certain social groups and individuals, who deviate from the collective identity. However, from a mechanical perspective, the reasons for categorizing between individuals and social groups based on normative belongings are of course legitimate. The reason is that the discrimination towards normative deviance is the defining mechanism of the identity of the community itself. In Chapter 2, this mechanism was explained with reference to van Oorschoot as a fundamental question put forward by individuals when deservingness is evaluated: ‘Are you one of us and what can you do for us? Similarly, Talcot Parsons says about measuring (mechanical) solidarity that it always involves:

[P]osing the question of confidence?; ‘are you one of us or not? Your attitude on this question decides (Parsons 1964: 97).

⁶ As will be clarified in the discussion in Chapter 4, this distinction relates to a distinction between the moral and the political economy of solidarity.

Compared to the puzzle presented in Chapter 1 about why current social and labor policies are dominated by mechanical, collective orientations (mechanical solidarity), the basic question in relation to understanding categorization practice at the street-level bureaucracy becomes: what happens to individuals, who deviate from the common norm about social inclusion through work? In continuation of this empirical question, the theoretical question now seems to be how such a mechanical social policy is able to condition and affect practice when it passes through an administration based on egalitarian principles of equal treatment and obligations of individual (opposed to group) discretion?

The cult and the worship of the individual

If the current active social policy can rightly be characterized as subscribing to a mechanical logic of solidarity, where does this leave the individual? It is both well known and well-described in the literature (e.g. the system-client literature) how the individual is being worshipped through individualized motivation strategies and personal action plans aiming at prolonging and empowering what is assumed to be inner strengths of the individual. Such strategies characterize current social and labor policy, probably better known as the ‘the activation strategy’. The political purpose of the active strategies is to prevent sick leave and unemployment. However, according to Durkheim’s thesis of mechanical solidarity, such individualizing strategies arrange a potential of discriminating normative deviating citizens. In relation to understanding mechanical solidarity, such empowering strategies exemplify a crucial mechanism because the underlying assumption of an individualized motivation plan is that each citizen is treated not as a private person, but as a public individual, who has ‘lost’ contact with what could be called ‘the inner sense of collective consciousness’.

Theoretically speaking, motivational plans for each individual aim at re-establishing an identity between the individual and society. In this perspective, individualized action plans work as tools to find and re-discover the assumed hidden mental resources and positive attitudes in the individual toward society. In this way it exemplifies a ‘cult of the individual’ where the citizen as an individual and not as a person is being worshipped. Durkheim distinguishes the individual and the person as follows:

What we have from society we have in common with our fellow men, so it is far from true that the more individualized we are, the more personal we are. The two terms are by no means synonymous. In a sense, they oppose more than they imply one another. Passion individualizes and yet enslaves. Our sensations are in their essence individual. But the more emancipated we are from the

senses, and the more capable we are of thinking and acting conceptually, the more we are persons (Durkheim 1995: 275).

In this respect, the perception of the citizen in active social policy is mechanical, because the management is characterized by strategies aiming at individualizing the citizens in accordance with the dominating communitarian norms of work and motivation. Instead citizens could be supported in remaining autonomous persons despite of whatever states of unemployment or illnesses are preventing them from being self-supportive.

Because no individual is sufficient unto himself, it is from society that he receives all that is needful, just as it is for society that he labours' (Durkheim 1984: 173).

In activation policy the individual is worshipped and treated almost as something sacred who receives special action and for whom personal motivational programs are developed. In seeking a normative integration, the question is what kind of integration is achieved and furthermore what is the possibility for such a policy to make an identity between realities such as the individual and the societal reality. The embedded perception of assistance-seeking citizens in the active policy is structured around a 'cult of the individual', where individual capacities and norms are worshipped through individualized motivation and action plans. The political rhetoric and the administrative rules treat the assistance-seeking citizen as if he or she has lost connection to the basic values defining society. Consequently, because the policy draws on a mechanical logic of solidarity, the 'cult of the individual' is characterized by specific values, which are expected to describe how every member of society understands the 'right' and the 'solidaristic' way to be an individual. Hence the citizen in such rhetorical settings becomes a member and is treated as an individual rather than as a person. The mechanical logic in such a perception of the individual is that:

If the individual is not distinct from the group, it is because the individual consciousness is almost indistinct from the collective consciousness (Durkheim 1984: 142).

However, as will be described in Chapter 4, the general way the Danish administration of welfare is organized corresponds to an organic logic, embedded in civic ethics about privacy and equal rights to be treated as persons by the state. What becomes the dominating expression in the street level bureaucrats' solidarity perceptions remains an empirical question to be studied in Chapter 8. For now it is important to notice how the 'cult of the individual' has a social source corresponding to a mechanical logic of solidarity. However, it constitutes a certain source of integration, which is expected to support

the collective consciousness of organic linked societies. In the organic form of solidarity it is the idea of the individual as 'sacred' that commit the members to worshipping the 'cult of the individual'. In the following, mechanical solidarity is set out in relation to corporations, because they represent the type of social organization where individuals are members of a shared collectivity, the identities of which depend on legitimate representations of bonding and bridging mechanisms between members of small, norm-based corporations.

Corporations' need for bonding and bridging

In a study of member types in The Danish Federation of Trade Unions from 1993 the puzzling question is how to continue doing professional politics when the members no longer are compatible with the classic prototype of a worker? The members no longer share the same conditions, norms or values and the typical 'hourly-paid, collectivistic, materialistically oriented male member' (Bild et al. 1993: 3) has become one type among other types instead of being the definer of the community. This particular study is worth mentioning in this context not so much for all the different worker types it portrays as a modern labor union, but for its epistemological position as an example of how solidarity and community are perceived by researchers and members of what Durkheim emphasizes as the missing link in modern labor-divided societies. The study suggests two trends to be present among members and corporations: 1. Corporation members are generally supportive of an organic solidarity (measured by their support of universal values) 2. Corporations tend to be so big that they consist of many different groupings of individuals instead of one norm-based grouping. The latter trend does require, according to Durkheim's solidarity theory, a different need for solidarity that is based in general compensatory sanctions instead of repressive sanctions of particular norm breaks.

From the theoretical perspective discussed above, the problem portrayed in the example from the study about the challenges of how to meet future political demands for a professional corporation such as The Danish Federation of Trade Unions is an example of disintegration caused by the lack of such common normative ground. According to the thesis of mechanical bonding and bridging, the reason why it becomes problematic for corporations to include a range of different norms and life styles of the different workers is that corporations do not have a labor divided internal structure with interdependent members. In other words, because they are gathered in the community (the corporation) for benefitting reasons related to their specific profession, the grouping rationality is not organic, but precisely mechanical. Just as members in a family are subjects to share social norms so are members in a corporation. But, as the study of The Danish Federation of Trade Unions also

demonstrates this is not entirely the case either. However, for the purpose of my argument, this is not the important issue here. What is important is to substantiate why it is plausible to expect mechanical solidarity to play a normative integrative function (instead of a pathological structure) even in a modern society. Furthermore, it should be substantiated why it is also reasonable to assume mechanical solidarity as a phenomenon that does not have to compete with other solidarity forms, but as something related to bonding individuals in communities based on norms and rituals for everyday life. Corporations may be the best example, not of mechanical solidarity as such, but of the integration between norm-based and right-based communities in modern labor-divided societies (see Figure 3.2).

Mechanical solidarity in modern societies

Durkheim makes an analogy between the corporations in the 19th century and the roman guild. He explains why the basis of legitimacy on the one hand is shared norms (attraction by similarity and not difference), and on the other hand is a defining consciousness about interdependency, where the fundamental purpose of the corporation is to achieve political representation and rights in society as a whole. In other words, Corporations are social organizations that are being internally bonded in a mechanical logic and at the same time externally linked to other corporations, the State and the families of their members. Corporations are entities based on shared norms, but navigating in a social and political context of organic interdependencies. When this distinction is compared to Chapter 2 about categorization practice, it indicates how the individual citizen is engaged in different social organizations at the same time and hence subject to many different needs for solidarity and selection criteria relying on shared feelings about what is mispriced and what is esteemed in the particular community at stake. The interesting question in this discussion is of course what determines the concrete criteria used as well as the strength of a particular solidarity perception in a categorization practice? Is the used criterion tricked by a substantial norm or by a right-based community orientation? In order to develop this question into an empirical expectation, the argument pursues the idea of understanding why the modern individual is normatively integrated in mechanical communities at the same time as being a citizen (as a person) in a welfare state.

The core argument in Durkheim's modified theory on mechanical solidarity is that the way corporations function on the basis of shared interests and shared values⁷ serves not only economic objectives, but also moral ones. A

⁷ Values in this sense are used as habits in everyday life and not in the meaning of proclaimed values without a practical basis.

corporation is therefore by definition a community of shared values, habits and economic interests. But at the same time, all corporations share a common interest in affecting the state politically in order to get privileges and regulations to meet the needs they cannot fulfill for themselves. In that sense corporations are like huge families with shared norms and habits in everyday life, although they stem from their professional and not their family lives. According to Durkheim, besides the size of the community, the difference lies in the fact that corporations are members (actors/subjects) of society as well as participants in a market. In this way they are part of a bigger exchange system than just their own internal community. Thus, a corporation is part of a labor divided society where it depends on other communities (other corporations such as health unions, pension unions, food unions, religious unions etc.). This factor makes corporations act more like big communities promoting individual civic rights rather than (just) promoting shared norms. Theoretically speaking, corporations have a rational need for transgressing pure bonding and bridging mechanisms between members and other corporations because they are fundamentally dependent on other functions performed in society. Corporations have a need for being linked to the bigger society as a whole and therefore a need for having access to metaphorical language about organic solidarity too.

In relation to my theoretical framework the important thing to notice here is that the individual in modern society takes part not just in one community, but also in communities such as social networks, families and corporations. This means that grouping engagement in Durkheim's theory is not seen as a zero-sum-game, where integration in one system prevents opportunities for further integrations. With exclusion mechanisms it is the same: not being part of a particular community does not exclude you from other communities. Mechanical solidarity then is not only related to primitive labor-undivided societies, but it is also present in modern societies for good (functional) reasons. Just after quoting Auguste Comte for saying that:

co-operation, far from being able to produce a society, supposes necessarily its spontaneous establishment beforehand

Durkheim says about the causes for the presence of both forms in society:

What draws men together are mechanical forces and instinctive forces such as the affinity of blood, attachment to the same soil, the cult of their ancestors, a commonality of habits, etc. It is only when the group has been formed on these bases that co-operation becomes organized (Durkheim 1984: 219).

One might go even further and argue that mechanical solidarity itself is the fundamental prerequisite for social cohesion in modern labor-divided socie-

ties and not just a bi-product of a departed state form since every society contains different groups of shared norms and beliefs. I place my reading of Durkheim in addition to these corrections emphasizing how mechanical solidarity should not be thought of as rival to more abstract forms of solidarity, but rather as a bonding and bridging mechanism capable of meeting special social needs for cohesion irreplaceable by any other mechanism.

3.1.2 Deservingness criteria

Compared to the discussion in Chapter 2 about categorization practices based on deservingness criteria I now intend to relate this discussion to the theory of mechanical solidarity. As explained in Chapter 2, the field of political psychology pays a lot of interest in studying and explaining differences in deservingness behavior psychologically. However, as also mentioned in Chapter 2, the literature has shown evidence for separating deservingness behavior from judgments made with reference to higher non-personal laws. It is here suggested that institutional frames as the law, social norms and moral standards should be included as independent variables in studies of categorization practices. The following focuses on deservingness criteria alone and later in part 3.2.2 entitlement criteria will be related to the theory of organic solidarity.

As also mentioned in Chapter 2, there are both theoretical and empirical reasons for assuming that institutions are the factors arranging which type of judgment that is being used in a given categorization practice. In spite of the fact that a mere psychological explanation is pursued, the literature has a lot to offer a political scientific approach to understanding categorization practice, because apparently deservingness criteria are still prevailing in modern welfare states. van Oorschot makes the following comparison between the British poor law of 1834 and contemporary opinion surveys to support this observation:

Early poor Laws, like the British Poor law of 1834 or the Dutch Armenwet of 1854, often implicitly or explicitly distinguished between those categories of poor people who were seen to be deserving of relief – aged, sick and infirm people, children, in short 'impotent poor' – and those who were regarded as undeserving – unemployed people, idle paupers, those capable of work (...). These perceptions still persist among the public at large, as was found by Coughlin (1980) and Pettersen (1995) in their international comparative studies of opinion surveys on welfare state issues (van Oorschot 2000: 35).

van Oorschot's quote indicates how deservingness and logics of reciprocity corresponding to a mechanical form of solidarity still exist in modern society. The reason why it is a mechanical logic is because the judgment of the deserving 'impotent poor' is based on principles of measuring the degree of dev-

iation from a particular collective identity (the normal self-sufficient individual). Such criteria as attitudes moral correspondence between the giver and the receiver are significant in mechanical solidarity.

Durkheim's writings of corporations, as the examples of how and why different forms of solidarity coexist in modern societies, and the distinction between deservingness and entitlement in welfare state studies of political psychological behavior, are touching upon the same insight: the individual is engaged and bound to different organizational settings (small communities and big societies including citizenship, see e.g. Durkheim 1984: 238) and hence capable of shifting between rationalities and logics for social cohesion and solidarity. Therefore the studies of deservingness are still relevant in welfare studies and relevant to my study of what conditions the relation between solidarity perception and categorization practice in street level bureaucracies. How do such institutions as professional ethics (corporate shared norms), political discourses, formal rules and stereotyped meanings arrange the way the social worker's collective orientation (solidarity preference) affect his or her categorization of citizens?

Studies on deservingness suggest criteria such as 'docility', 'age', 'disability', 'control', 'identity', 'proximity', 'attitude' and 'reciprocity' as essential to the public about who deserves welfare. All these criteria have in common that they connote judgments of individuals in the way Durkheim understands mechanical solidarity and collective identity or common consciousness, as also discussed below in part 3.3. When criteria such as 'docility', 'disability', 'identity' and 'attitude' are defining, it is because they designate how individuals should behave in order to remain legitimately included in a community based on specific norms for interaction. In this sense, the individual, who is categorized by a deservingness criterion, is being evaluated on how much or how little he or she deviates from a collective identity and how much damage the deviation has made to the 'cult of the individual'. This equalizes a judgment where individual differences are punished and potential norm violations are revenged through undeserving categories such as 'lacking the right attitude', 'self-responsibility for sickness' etc. The starting point for such a categorization is hence normative similarity in contrast to a categorization based on entitlement criteria, where the starting point is perception of the citizen as a private person with universal rights such as juridical equality.

Based on Durkheim's solidarity theory, this type of categorization is what should be expected to characterize mechanically bonded communities because they rely on sharing habits and beliefs in close reciprocated patterns for social interaction of the same kind as in families, where visitors and members are expected to behave and adapt to the ruling way of for example eating and

doing things. When people are asked in opinion surveys about who they think deserve welfare, it is expected that they use a judgment pattern corresponding to how they judge in the close small communities in which all people spend most of their (daily) lives (Feather 2003, 2008; van Oorschoot 2000, 2006; Durkheim 1984: 238). However, this may not lead to conclude that they never judge according to organic logic of solidarity as they probably would in accordance to questions about universal welfare programs.

In the empirical part of the dissertation, the way these two distinct forms of solidarity affect categorization is studied. Is the representation of cohesion derived from a corporative interdependent system with needs of organic solidarity, or is solidarity derived from particular pluralistic organized group-based norms equivalent to needs for mechanical solidarity? These questions shape my theoretical expectations but as Chapter 5 will explore in detail, it may not be as simple as that since all street level bureaucrats, no matter if they use organic or mechanical metaphorical language, are professionals with professional ethics, but they also private persons as well as subjects to an administrative system with its own inherent solidarity intention.

The notion of organic solidarity has already been touched upon. But what is exactly the difference between a mechanical and an organic form of solidarity and what are the similarities? In the next part, the concept of organic solidarity is presented along with a discussion of what current needs of social cohesion it is likely to correspond to.

3.2 Organic solidarity

Everybody knows that we like what resembles us, those who think and feel as we do. But the opposite phenomenon is no less frequently encountered. Very often we happen to feel drawn to people who do not resemble us, precisely because they do *not* do so (...) [w]hat demonstrates these opposing doctrines is the fact that both forms of friendship exist in nature. Dissimilarity, just like resemblance, can be a cause of mutual attraction (...) However, not every kind of dissimilarity is sufficient to bring this about (...) Thus only differences of a certain kind incline us towards one another. These are those which, instead of mutually opposing and excluding one another, complement one another (Durkheim 1984: 16).

In the organic form of solidarity Durkheim says that the basic attraction between people is difference and not similarity as in the mechanical form. In relation to a welfare state approach, the main differences between mechanical and organic forms of solidarity can be said to have to do with how help exchange systems are organized, and with the dominating rules of sanctioning norm violations as well as with the content of symbols and the metaphorical language combining the individual to society.

In Durkheim's theory, organic solidarity is characterized as a corresponding mechanism to need for cohesion in abstract communities with a high degree of division of labor. Individuals in such abstract communities are highly specialized through their involvement in different productions and educational trainings. This condition of diversity (specialization) causes an absence of shared social norms and consciousnesses (Durkheim 1984: Chapter 3). However, instead of shared norms, interdependency between individuals and communities are created and with that needs for organic solidarity. The cohesion is then perceived as made through a representation of interdependency instead of through social norms for living and believing. Even though the distance may be relatively bigger between individuals in organic relations than in mechanical relations, the argument is that this is more of a symbolic than of a geographic, social reality.

Theoretically speaking, it is not the community size but the division of labor which causes organic solidarity, although it is likely that community size increases with the degree of specialization and labor division (Durkheim 1984: 277).⁸ From these observations, it would be misleading to emphasize physical distance between individuals as well as the numbers of individuals in a society as indicator of the dominating type of solidarity. Instead, the dominating metaphorical language about what constitute normal interaction patterns and symbols of the basic defining social relation in a society could be studied in order to understand basic solidarity patterns in a given society. In opposition to mechanical societies where symbols were reflecting (non-existing) face-to-face interactions (through symbols of brotherhood, common land, consanguinity etc.), organic societies are linked by metaphorical language about interdependency and about equal, social and political rights. Thus, the correlating symbols of organic solidarity must be expected to represent benefits of such interdependent relations. On the contrary, following the theoretical explanations, symbols of close communities representing particular norms would presumably destabilize the linking potential of the symbol itself, because labor divided societies need solidarity to represent cohesion despite of an absent common consciousness. However, this does not mean that there are no collective consciousnesses present in organically linked societies. As will be explained later, labor-divided societies are (still) filled with common social consciousnesses. But in comparison to a mechanically bonded community there is no common consciousness that possesses

⁸ Specialization is not identical to labor division. Durkheim gives examples and argues for what he calls pathological or forced division of labor. Some types of industries, mafia businesses (parallels state systems) are mentioned (Durkheim 1984: 326).

the same power of solidarity-making as the mechanical community. Following this argument, one could argue from a second order observation of what brings interdependency to sway in organic solidarity that it is precisely the presence of a common consciousness which constitutes the entity as for example the 'cult of the individual'.

In the final part of this chapter, the organ of the State is discussed to clarify what power of representation and what role in society a modern bureaucratic state organ is expected to establish.

Solidarity in this form is conceptualized as 'organic' because it is based on interdependency between individuals, communities and the state. However, even though particular norms are absent as the fundamental glue of cohesion it cannot be concluded that there is no common ground in an organic, coherent identity. Instead of a dominating 'cult of the individual' as is the case in the mechanical solidarity form, the organic form does not worship the individual according to certain norms, but rather perceives the individual as a person with an acknowledged autonomous individuality. However, even though this constitutes a theoretical difference, the 'sacred' status of the individual in modern labor-divided societies such as the Danish is being worshipped in practice as comparable to the 'cult of the individual'. The reason why this does not become a threat to the combining forces is that the norm of the single individual or how well he/she internalizes an external idea of normative integration does not designate the legitimacy in the coherent social entity. Durkheim explains it as a matter of understanding different sources of social life:

Social life is derived from a dual source, the similarity of individual consciousness and the social division of labour. In the first case the individual is socialized because, lacking any individuality of his own, he is mixed up with his fellows in the same collective type. In the second case it is because, whilst his physiognomy and his activities are personal to him, distinguishing him from others, he depends upon them to the very extent that he is distinguished from them, and consequently upon the society that is the result of their combining together (Durkheim 1984: 172).

3.2.1 Defining aspects of organic solidarity

Besides the 'cult of the individual', Durkheim uses patriotism as another example of what constitutes a common ground in a modern and labor-divided society. He argues that patriotism can be compared to a civic form of religion because like in a religion where saints, sacrifices and norms for avengement are defining, the same is true for patriotism.

As was also the case in mechanical solidarity, the rules of sanctions visualize organic solidarity. These rules are characterized as restitutory rules

aiming at restoring the damage caused by a particular violation. Civilian sanctions are expressions of such restitutory rules.

As for the other kind of sanctions [regulating organic solidarity], they do not necessarily imply any suffering on the part of the penetrator, but merely consist in *restoring the previous state of affairs*, re-establishing relationships that have been disturbed from their normal form. This is done either by forcibly redressing the action impugned, restoring it to the type from which it has deviated, or by annulling it, that is depriving it of all social value (Durkheim 1984: 29).

Besides interdependency and civic religious elements such as patriotism instead of shared habits and labor functions, the relation between givers and receivers of welfare exemplifies another difference between the two forms. In an organic, coherent society the exchanges of benefits are made in specialized and rationalized systems for help, and are themselves part of an interdependent whole. Where everybody should be able to judge about eligibility (norms of exchange) in mechanical communities only specialized personnel poses such knowledge in an organic society. Here, no personal relation between the giver and the receiver is expected to guarantee a legitimate exchange relation. On the other hand, the relationship is rendered anonymous through e.g. the general taxpayer system and through universal rights to social services. This is because the exchange system presupposes an abstract community consisting of equal citizens, where the giver of benefits (the state) in return receives recognition and legitimacy from the receivers (the citizens) to continue benefiting the citizens through social services independent of social and economic status. Historically in Denmark and in comparable welfare states, these services have been financed by an income-dependent high-level tax system.

In modern welfare states, receivers of welfare are typically categorized as being functionally disabled (as opposed to being categorized as deserving for compassionate reasons). Consequently they are legitimately excused from participating in the labor market even though they often continue to pay personal taxes off their welfare. The reason for this is both economic and moral: economic because taxes circulate more money and moral because welfare recipients continue to be considered as equally participating citizens in society (Stone 1984: 20). The welfare service is given to the needy person in compensation for lost work ability, and not out of feelings of deservingness as is often the case in mechanical programs designed to bond and bridge between mechanically coherent communities.

Apart from these methods of identifying organic solidarity, five other important characteristics define organic solidarity. First, in labor-divided societies organic solidarity is expected to 1) represent a set of shared rights (in

opposition to mechanical solidarity, which represents shared norms). In theoretical terms the need for representation of rights instead of habits is caused by 2) low identification with a common identity, since individuals are identifying themselves with several different collectives representing norms and specialization connected to their jobs, educational trainings and family lives. Put differently, in a labor-divided society people do not share the same habits, but the same rights of being allowed to be different in ways of norms and values for living. A third characteristic is 3) high tolerance of deviation and a corresponding low aversion towards different norms and 'competitive' community logics. The fourth characteristic is related to a presumed 4) high tolerance towards specialization and hence to the norm of interdependency between individuals and communities. As a consequence of the fourth aspect it becomes a condition that there exist a relatively 5) high interdependency between the individual and the collective – here representing society as a whole. The whole is more dependent of the single individual in an organic coherent society than in a mechanical, coherent community, since in the first everybody, theoretically speaking, perform a specialized function and hence are hard to replace, and in the second form, everybody share the same functions and habits and are hence easily replaced by another member of 'the horde'.

In Chapter 4 welfare state programs according to the literature of welfare state studies is discussed and explained with reference to Durkheim's solidarity forms (following the typology of Esping-Andersen and empirical studies on universalism in welfare states). As will be described, Denmark may be characterized in general as a welfare state with an organic structure, characterized by interdependent relations between citizens and between citizens and the state. However, Denmark also implements welfare programs with a residual character, corresponding to a political conviction of a mechanical need for cohesion.

However, in order to find out how to measure such relations and interrelations between solidarity perception and categorization practice it is important to realize what form of solidarity one wants to study. As discussed in Chapter 2 and again in Chapter 4, different measures for social cohesion produce different interpretations of welfare state solidarity. But instead of thinking about solidarity as an inherent phenomenon leaving other forms of coherence unexplained, my argument is to design a study which makes room for measuring variance on solidarity (instead of measuring either mechanical or organic solidarity, I intend to capture both). Opposed to such a variance study of solidarity, other studies seek to measure degrees of charity and volunteering work along with studies of individuals' perceptions of deserving-

ness. Here, the mechanical solidarity and its social sources are being measured through questions about individuals' mechanical needs for cohesion. In contrast to such measurements are degrees of marginalization within society along with quantitative or qualitative questions about entitlement to social and political rights to public support. By neglecting the differences in how people are attached differently to each other in domestic, professional, national, past and in today's social relations, all varieties become indistinguishable and consequently it gets impossible to perceive anything beyond what is common to all varieties, namely the tendency to sociability (Durkheim 1984: 26-27). To avoid such imprecise interpretations of solidarity, it becomes defining for the quality of the study to design a study capable of measuring both forms of logic and social sources of solidarity. However, to understand how such variance may appear at an individual level, the following discussion is about organic metaphors of solidarity because such metaphors together with symbols of organic logics are assumed to be the concrete visible effects of what is defining for organic solidarity as was also the case for mechanical solidarity.

3.2.2 Metaphors of organic solidarity

However, social solidarity is a wholly moral phenomenon which by itself is not amenable to exact observation and especially not to measurement. To arrive at this classification, as well as this comparison, we must therefore substitute for this internal datum, which escapes us, an external one which symbolizes it, and then the former through the latter. That visible symbol is the law. Indeed where social solidarity exists, in spite of its non-material nature, it does not remain in a state of pure potentiality, but shows its presence through perceptible effects (Durkheim 1984: 24).

Durkheim says about measuring solidarity that the law is the best visible symbol representing it. In relation to an organic form it is not the penal law but the restitutory law that symbolizes solidarity. Besides the law, Durkheim uses the body as a very concrete symbol of organic solidarity (Durkheim 1984). The analogy he makes is between the ways organs, tissues and vital systems function as interdependent entities, where each part constitutes specialized organizations of norms and functions. But in order to continue to function autonomously each part depends on all the other parts' ability to function as well. This is the picture of how Durkheim describes the coherence in a labor-divided society. Out of spontaneous (in the sense of according to community norms) and not forced labor division (as in complex organization with no respect of the rules and norms that govern the individuals living/

working in the organization), a complex coherent identity of different groupings of shared norms develops.

As previously argued regarding metaphors and symbols of mechanical solidarity, concrete policies may constitute a window for studying positive expressions of solidarity as well. Thus, when duties such as objectivity, rationality and equality are represented symbolically, they are designating bonds of organic solidarity. By way of example, Honohan suggest 'The ship of state' (2008:7 2) as a classic example of a symbol embedded in a metaphorical language, which represents social bonds corresponding to what Durkheim defines as organic needs for cohesion. According to Honohan, 'The ship of state', functions by representing forces and pictures of what link rather different positioned individuals together by a higher order of justice, objectivity and rationality.⁹

The challenge of detecting current metaphors and symbols for organic solidarity is two-fold. The first challenge is to decide the analytical level of representations. On the highest level of representation, all kinds of solidarity are about collective identity and about unifying people within potential identities. However, on 'lower' levels such as in public policies and in juridical levels, I argue that solidarity representations in modern societies are about embracing a range of differences among citizens without negative or positive discrimination. Therefore, the body metaphor may still be the best expression of organic solidarity together with phrases about broadness and protection of privacy and rights to personal integrity referring to rights for normative deviations.

The second challenge has to do with where to look for them. As already mentioned I am not interested in reading laws as symbols, because they designate only a corner of solidarity, namely when it is violated. Instead different materials such as governmental documents, surveys, individual statements etc. are possible spots to study. In Chapter 5 I suggest doing qualitative studies of street level bureaucrats' collective orientations and of their use of professional norms and of public policy documents' use of metaphors and symbols about solidarity, because both types are embedded in social and political conditions, where individuals have to make decisions about eligibility.

Besides the symbols of 'The ship of state' and 'the body', other examples of representations of organic solidarity are metaphors of interdependency such as sayings about 'linking together', 'attraction by differences' and 'being

⁹ The symbol establishes a similarity between the state and the steering of a ship as just like any other 'craft' or 'profession' – in particular, that of a politician. It is ultimately seen, then, that the 'ship of state' metaphor is a cautionary tale against rule by anything other than an enlightened, benevolent higher law (Miller 2003).

in the same boat'. A last and presumably empirically important example of how organic solidarity is being symbolized is through symbols of hierarchy, government and bureaucracy. The way hierarchy becomes a symbol of organic solidarity is maybe best explained through pointing at a difference between a meritocratic and an ascriptive way of giving status. In a hierarchy the individual achieves status because of the function filled out (as in a meritocracy) and not because of ascribed individual values (such ascribed values are inseparable from social stereotypes from which the values stem). As soon as a job function is performed, it is the particular job and not the person holding the job from which the status stems. Related to them are bureaucratic roles as opposed to individual roles as examples of the difference between worshipping the individual because of great resemblance between the individual and the collective and a professional role achieved because of a great specialized performance perceived to benefit a larger complex social organization. The latter describes the value of hierarchical status. Symbols designating such values and statuses correspond to an organic logic of solidarity because they point at the virtue of working for the cause of everybody from a higher organ of justice as opposed to 'just' benefitting oneself.

Corporations' needs for linking and mutual exchange

The overall point in this chapter is the notion of understanding solidarity as a phenomenon stemming from different social sources such as different types of communities and social organizations. Previously I focused on the family as an example of a social organization based on attractions by similarities. Besides being a concrete social organization, the family is also a symbol used in other relations to describe a mechanical need for cohesion. I also referred to Durkheim's theoretical modifications where he uses corporations to explain why even modern societies have needs for both mechanical and organic solidarities. Despite being mechanically bonded corporations are also linked in an organic, social organization. They are integrated as interdependent entities in a social and political reality, which require corporations to respond to organic needs of cohesion and not only mechanical ones. Having said that, at the bottom line, corporations may be the most interesting and important type of social organization to comprehend in order to fully understand, and maybe even explain in causal terms, how the mechanical and the organic solidarity are coexisting solidarities in modern society. In order to study such a corporation's use of 'bonding', 'bridging' and 'linking' metaphors and symbols of social cohesion individuals from a concrete profession of social work can and will be selected.

3.2.3 Entitlement criteria

Compared to the points outlined in Chapter 2 regarding the distinction between deservingness and entitlement criteria used in psychological experiments of categorization practice, I now intend to relate that discussion to the explanation of what defines an organic solidarity. Now, it should be comprehensible what it means, theoretically speaking, to categorize through the use of entitlement criteria. Even though Rothstein and others code social norms as belonging to the category of entitlement criteria, I argue that the way they refer to them are in the meaning of social and political rights and not as shared sets of habitual doings. In this meaning of the concept, entitlement criteria are objectified criteria about individuals' juridical relations in different institutional and organizational settings such as in state bureaucracy, in labor market relations and in labor union relations. Furthermore, these relationships are characterized by linking individuals not directly to the state, but through formal institutions like the above mentioned and in relation to surrounding and determining structures of employment, professional contexts, measurements of work capacity etc.

The shaping factor in a categorization, when entitlement is used as a criterion, is a formal equality between individuals. This personal status is achieved through the law and it is substantially different from the status achieved by e.g. attitude, reciprocity or other individualized deservingness criteria expected to shape a mechanical categorization. The normative differences between the citizens about to be categorized are not important when entitlement criteria are being used. It is the citizen as a person capable of being and respected as an autonomous and private subject who is categorized. And the normative reference made to justify the relation is not based on individual qualities and deservingness criteria where the individual as such is the center of a cult worshiping particular normative qualities supposed to characterize all deserving citizens in society, but instead it is made with reference to a higher principle of an external law expressing universal civic rights. This of course also represents an example of a 'cult of the individual'.

Partial summary

Now, both forms of solidarity have been discussed as they have been developed and modified by Durkheim. Also, the two forms of solidarity have been discussed in association with my empirical questions about street-level bureaucrats' categorization practice of clients in the social system. Below the essential and defining differences between the two forms of solidarity is presented in Table 3.2. The table is meant as a simplifying theoretical overview

and as a tool in the following steps transforming solidarity into an operational concept.

Table 3.2. Essential aspects of the differences between mechanical and organic logics

		Solidarity form:	
		Mechanical (No division of labor)	Organic (Division of labor)
Essential aspects	Relation type	Similarities	Differences
	Level of representation of collective identity in the individual	High	Low
	Level of individualization and deviation from collective identity (The State)	Low	High
	Level of interdependency between state and individual	Low	High
Type of sanction rules		Repressive	Restitutory

Durkheim 1984: Based on Chapters 2 and 3.

The table shows the essential aspects of mechanical versus organic solidarity used in order to further isolate what makes the difference in solidarity when public welfare is being redistributed. In Chapter 4 the concrete political and historical context in which the active social policy was formulated and implemented in Denmark is described. In this presentation table 1's depictions of solidarity will be brought into play to read differences and similarities between social policies and solidarity logics. Evidence of organic solidarity will be given through references in policies to common rights as criteria for categorization practice about eligibility to social welfare. In contrast to such references is evidence of mechanical solidarity. Traces of this solidarity form will be identified when references are made to shared habits as conditions for making judgments about eligibility.

In the final part of this chapter, I subtract the fundamental elements in solidarity as a representing mechanism with a special focus on the state as the organ in society that holds the task of representing the wholeness of a modern labor-divided society. The purpose of this part is to develop a theoretical frame capable of analyzing solidarity within the actual institutional context, as is the focus of my empirical study.

Solidarity and categorization practice are social conditions. This means that both phenomena occur everywhere in society and not just in the state organ. However, in order to be more specific of what conditions solidarity in a concrete bureaucratic setting such as street-level bureaucracy, the theory of solidarity must be explained in terms of specifying the implications of solidarity in a bureaucratic state context.

3.3 Solidarity and the state

Emile Durkheim says about society that:

[T]he very purpose of society, (...) is to eliminate or at least to moderate warfare among men, by subjecting the individual law of the strongest to a higher law (Durkheim 1984: xxxiii).

Solidarity, he argues, is such a mechanism capable of subjecting the individual to a higher law.

Besides this aim of talking and using solidarity as a tool to explore categorization empirically and not just to discuss it normatively, the chapter has discussed some of the central perspectives related to the welfare state's capacity to be the sway that represent such a higher law.

Apart from Durkheim, who wrote on solidarity as 'the initial problem which sociology must address' (Traugott 1994: 9), Auguste Comte formulated sociology as the study of social systems:

'[E]ach of the numerous social elements (...) is always conceived as relative to all others, to which it is bound in fundamental solidarity' (Comte cit. in: Thompson et al. 1990: 113).

Thus, it seems plausible to understand solidarity as more than just a historical phenomenon, but rather as a universal social condition present in every society. Comte argues, 'where there is a system there is solidarity' (Comte 1974: 158). Talcott Parson's concept of solidarity goes well in hand with Durkheim's notion of the concept as a 'bonding mechanism' and he even develops part of the theory, which Durkheim left partly untouched. Parson's contribution is about the interactions of solidarity relations in everyday life and about how to measure these interactions at an individual level. In my case I raise a similar question: how can I study the difference between a mechanical and an organic perception of solidarity in action? Parsons' contribution concerns the difficulty in seeing an abstract form of solidarity in studies of categorization actions where we could expect a concrete expression of solidarity to exist. In order to answer this question he uses a concept of 'collectivity-orientation'. He defines 'collectivity-orientation' in an operational sentence of how to ask about it as follows:

[C]ollectivity-orientation, as it were, involves posing the ‘question of confidence’; ‘are you one of us or not? Your attitude on this question decides (Parsons 1964: 97).

This concept of ‘collective orientation’ designates the balance between collective and individual agreement of the reasonability in applying certain criteria to access a given community. In his understanding of collectivity, a community where solidarity is not considered as a value in itself, ‘self-orientation’ becomes an operational way to visualize solidarity at the individual level. Parsons uses the difference between ‘self-orientation’ and ‘collective-orientation’ to distinguish between high and low moral entities:

The case of self-orientation is the case where, in the choice in question, which alternative is chosen is felt to be or defined as *indifferent* as far as the integrity of a valued social system of action is concerned. That of collective-orientation on the other hand is that where such integrity is defined as being involved, so that the actor who chooses one side is violating his *responsibilities*, to the system as a unit and its participant members. It is only when an action system involves *solidarity* in this sense that its members define certain actions as required in the interest of the integrity of the system itself, and others as incompatible with that integrity – with the result that sanctions are organized about this definition. Such a system will be called ‘collectivity’ (Parsons 1994: 97).

Hence, individuals are perceived as being differently obligated depending on the particular community. This point may have been slightly over-emphasized throughout this chapter as well. However, the notion that different communities have different bonding needs is often overlooked in both theory and empirical research on solidarity. The issue is to define solidarity as a corresponding mechanism to needs of cohesion only present in moral relationships and hence only where a ‘collective-orientation’ is required of the individual. Therefore, solidarity is a function derived from both norm-shared communities, but also out of labor-divided communities, where the needs are different as they are connected not with rules of sanctioning norm-violations, but with managing rules of a certain universal character capable of integrating individuals situated in different norm-based groups in society.

In the following parts the basic elements of solidarity are dealt with separately. First of all, the aim of these parts is to explain how solidarity is not solely an individual characteristic of how good, tolerant and open a person should be towards others in society, but also a social mechanism describing a means to fulfill a rational purpose of integration in labor-divided societies. The three elements to be presented in the following are ‘collective consciousness’, ‘social cohesion’ and ‘professional ethics’.

3.3.1 Collective consciousness

Durkheim says about collective consciousness that it basically consists of a set of shared feelings of condemnation in the public (Durkheim 1984: 34). The law is the symbol of what constitutes such a set of shared feelings of condemnation. The rules that correspond to laws of this kind is that of repressive sanctioning, which designates the punishment of an act of crime without putting forward any questions of obligation. The reason why this is rational is because it is a crime that offends the public's collective consciousness, and hence it is assumed to be a known and shared norm among everybody (Durkheim 1984: 35). Consequently, Durkheim explains that an act becomes criminal in the second it offends the strong well-defined state of the collective consciousness (Durkheim 1984: 39).

During Durkheim's authorship certain fundamental shifts occurred in his analytical approach to society. Among them is his understanding of 'collective consciousness'. In his work on *The Division of Labor in Society*, his approach shifted in favor of understanding collective consciousness as something not inherently related to primitive societies.¹⁰ In this way of approaching collective consciousness he largely takes over and develops the conception of the 'the general will' by Rousseau and the meaning of Comte's concept of the 'consensus' (Coser 1984: xix). Durkheim thereby continues to use the concept of collective consciousness to describe a form of glue that binds people together in mechanical solidarity (Coser 1984: xix). As explained above, if mechanical solidarity is something that coexist in modern labor-divided societies with or maybe even as the basis of organic solidarity, collective consciousness continues to play an important role even today.

In some places in *The Division of Labor in Society*, he tends to maintain this approach by suggesting how the collective consciousness as a function would largely be replaced by interdependency between individuals situated in different communities. Undoubtedly, he is not entirely clear about this, for which he has also been criticized both by co-fellows and contemporary writings of his works (Thompson et al. 1990). However, and as I explained already in the part about the role of corporations, he did correct himself by making a new preface to *The Division of Labor in Society*, where a main ambition was to clarify that although the collective consciousness in modern societies no longer can fulfill the same inclusive function by defining specific norms for the sake of the whole society, it is still needed as a phenomenon that can coordinate and integrate society as a whole (Coser 1984: xix).

¹⁰ However, despite of this modification he tends to continue to reproduce this former understanding of collective consciousness as something inherently characterizing mechanical 'lower' societies.

That being said, the relationship between the state's ability to represent society as a whole, and the concept of collective consciousness, will be discussed theoretically.

The state's representation of collective consciousness

The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own. It can be termed the collective or common consciousness (...) thus it is something totally different from the consciousness of individuals, although it is only realised in individuals (Durkheim 1984: 38-39).

There are two central aspects in this definition of collective consciousness that must be noticed. The first aspect is about its ontology as a totality of beliefs common to the commons in a society. The second aspect is about the epistemology of such a collective consciousness. Regarding the first aspect it means that not all the members in a society need to have access to this totality of beliefs. It is enough if the totalities of beliefs are common to the average or what in contemporary society could refer to the 'normal members' of society. About the second epistemological aspect of collective consciousness, the clue is to distinguish between a psychological and a social consciousness. Even though the collective consciousness is 'given' to the individual it is the individual's mind that realizes the meaning of the social. But the social is something different from the psychological even though always interacting in order to sustain each other.

The State is above all an organ of reflection (...) [I]t is intelligence substituted for an obscure instinct (Durkheim 1990: 46).

If this is a valid description of the State, it is crucial to understand what is meant by the word 'reflection'. Is the state a mirror of society, or does it mean that the state represents society as a second order observation of society? In accordance with Durkheim's other sayings about the state, the role of the state and the role of metaphorical language I read his use of reflection as analogous to the meaning of representation as a second order observation. Thus, the state must be defined as an organ, which can transform certain aspects of the social reality into a more clear, rational and condensed picture of the particular issue. In doing this, the state uses more than its legal power, namely its capacity to generate legitimate descriptions of social and political virtues so vaguely and broadly formulated that they become potentially applicable to all citizens. Such legitimate descriptions are the tools used by the state to represent e.g. community values and inclusion criteria among different social organizations within society. More commonly these descriptions are unders-

stood as metaphors and symbols (compare to previous parts on symbolic and metaphorical representations of mechanical and organic solidarity). In this respect, metaphors of solidarity become essential tools for the state's capacity not only to re-present, but also to correspond to different social systems' needs for visualizing their inclusion criteria as well as their norms and values for community cohesion. The state's crucial function thus is comparable to that of the central nervous system in the body. Just as the central nervous system is special and unlike all other body functions, the state's function is about interpretation and integration of the meaning of all other social functions in society as a whole.

As already discussed above, there are specific metaphors for solidarity referring to different community values, among them 'family', 'brotherhood', 'bridging', 'linking' and 'bonding'. These specific ways of talking about social cohesion illuminate which virtues and rules of socializing the individuals are expected to internalize in order to be (and to remain) normatively integrated in society. Apart from this, the metaphors can also inform about more abstract values in community corresponding to an organic solidarity form. Such values are at the same time explicit, legal rules about fundamental civil and democratic rights, and vague guidelines for how to perform in order to maintain eligibility to concrete political and social rights.

In this respect, as also discussed in part 3.2, Durkheim thinks about modern ruling as comparable to religious ruling and what he saw as replacing specific norms was a kind of 'civic religion', which executed its values through education and other common shared activities within the State as a bureaucratic organ instead of as shared rituals within e.g. a church or a family.

In Durkheim's book *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*, this analytical shift is more apparent compared to *The Division of Labor in Society*. Here he basically defines the state as a moral institution with the function of representing society's collective consciousnesses. As a classic example of this, he argues that patriotism should be perceived as a state cult serving exactly this function of reproducing common values and collective consciousness in bigger complex societies:

Now, patriotism is precisely the ideas and feelings as a whole which bind the individual to a certain State (...) If there is no clearly defined society there with a consciousness of itself to remind him continually of his duties and to make him realize the need for rules, how should he be aware of all this? (Durkheim 2001:73).

Durkheim argues this kind of bonding activity within the State to provide even highly heterogeneous and labor-divided societies with necessary common values. States characterized by heterogeneous populations, who are per-

forming different roles and tasks in society in their everyday life also need to be capable of binding every individual to a certain shared state (of mind). In other words: Durkheim (after writing *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*) approaches collective consciousness as a virtue of how social groups share values even in labor divided societies (Coser 1984: xix).

However, having said that, common values in a society serve a function in all societies no matter the level of differentiation (division of labor). This does not mean that the state itself becomes the centre of a societal common consciousness. On the contrary, the state produces its own consciousness while maintaining the role of representing collective consciousnesses in society. This task of 'representation' must be separated from that of 'presentation'. The state does not make collective consciousnesses of society but only of itself as a special bureaucratic organ. This may be explained with reference to an organic metaphor of the resemblance between the role of the state in society compared with the functioning of the central nervous system in the body. It is the state that portrays all the different collective consciousnesses of society. Durkheim explains it as follows:

It is not accurate to say that the State embodies the collective consciousness for that goes beyond the State at every point. In the main, that consciousness is diffused: there is at all times a vast numbers of social sentiments and social states of minds (*états*) of all kinds, of which the State hears only a faint echo. The State is the centre only of a particular kind of consciousness, of one that is limited but higher, clearer and with a more vivid sense of itself. (...) To sum up, we can therefore say that the State is a special organ whose responsibility it is to work out certain representations which hold good for the collectivity. These representations are distinguished from the other collective representations by their higher degree of consciousness and reflection (Durkheim 1996: 40).

Therefore, it becomes indispensable to find out how and through which organs such representations of collectivity are being materialized in order to study solidarity correspondences in current societies. In Chapter 5 this approach is developed, since it is crucial to trace representations of shared values in society when categorization practice is studied at the street-level bureaucracy. Therefore the 'voice' of government', becomes of special interest in this context. What purposes in society is the street-level bureaucrat aiming at when he or she judges among assistance-seeking citizens? What metaphors and arguments are used to represent the state, the citizen and the 'commons'? Are they using representations of the state to produce repressive law or to produce equal rights? How does information of the common consciousness get filtered in order to function in the context of categorization practice, and finally are they using collective consciousness from other organs or

communities within society? This type of questions is essential to my research question about the relation between solidarity perception and categorization practice because, in an operational form, solidarity has to do with shared norms or rights for doing things. In continuation, it has to do with the character of finding out which criteria are being used. Is a categorization practice based on protecting moral standards or on rectifying functional disabilities?

Chapter 5 seeks to develop this theoretical tool and the empirical chapters intend to use it. In the following discussion of essential elements in solidarity, 'professional ethics' (better known through empirical studies as professional norms) is introduced along with a following up on the concept of social cohesion.

3.3.2 Professional ethics

However, the rules of professional morality and law are categorical, like the others. They force the individual to act in accordance with ends that are not for his own, to make concessions, to agree to compromises, to take into account interests superior to his own. Consequently, even where society rests wholly upon the division of labour, it does not resolve itself into a myriad of atoms juxtaposed together, between which only external and transitory contact can be established. The members are linked by ties that extend well beyond the very brief moment when the act of exchange is being accomplished. Each one of the functions that the members exercise is constantly dependent upon others and constitutes with them a solidly linked system. Consequently the nature of the task selected derives from duties that are permanent. Because we fulfil this or that domestic or social function we are caught up in a network of obligations from which we have no right to disengage ourselves. There is above all one organ in regard to which our state of dependence continues to grow: this is the state. The points where we come into contact with it are multiplied, as well as the occasions when it is charged with reminding us of the sentiment of our common solidarity (Durkheim 1984: 173).

Another important and defining aspect of solidarity is professional ethics. Or to be more precise: the way in which an individual acts in accordance with certain professional norms. This is an aspect of a solidarity relation between a (professional) community and the individuals as members of that community. In a pure theoretical understanding of professional ethics, they can be seen as either a combining force among professionals as members of a mechanical community, or as a specialized force separating them as individuals from other professional groups as in an organic society. Thus, professional ethics are important as elements of solidarity when it comes to secondary groups such as corporations or similar communities where the sharing of work style and everyday professional habits constitutes the particular professional social or-

ganization as well as distinguishes it from the rest of society (Durkheim 2001: 1-41).

Professional ethics are typical study objects within the social sciences, even though here they tend to be identified and analyzed as professional norms measured mainly by their professional status (Knudsen 2007; EVA 2001). The status deriving from a profession tends to be understood as more than just from the formalized education creating the professionals. Informal rules and norms about 'best practice', known and shared (accepted) by everyone in a particular professional community are also assumed to define the professional's status. However, I argue that professional informal rules and norms correspond to what Durkheim explains as professional ethics. They designate what a professional ethic does according to Durkheim. Professional ethics appoint to the function of an authority within the body or the mind of the individual (Durkheim 2001). Thus, professional ethics are individual features because individuals carry them out. However, according to Durkheim, individuals do not create professional ethics themselves. Professional ethics are created by the profession's community and hence adapted by the professionals belonging to the community as accessible values or normative standards for doing things properly in practice. This does not mean that such professional ethics cannot be changed or modeled by individuals. On the contrary, it is through the practical use and misuse of such ethics that the meaning and coherent capacity is constantly produced and re-produced.

Social cohesion

Consequently, the general question about solidarity in the state, the family and in the corporation is what binds these communities together? Ultimately this comes down to the question of what attracts these individuals to one another? As already described, Durkheim portrays two kinds of friendship. One is based on 'attraction by similarities', and the other is based on 'attraction by differences'. Besides this fundamental distinction of what attracts individuals to each other, other crucial dimensions are worth mentioning when examining what binds society together. Need is such a dimension. Does a certain need have moral, economic or other reasons?

Above, collective consciousness was explained as a force consisting of shared values. It is difficult to measure and defining the concrete content of it is even more difficult. Collective consciousness is best defined as different organs' capabilities of representing consciousness. Then, collective consciousness only becomes real when represented (and hence interpreted) by a higher organ such as the state. But in order to understand what a collective consciousness does to a community, social cohesion may provide the answer. I argue that the ability of social cohesion is (still) a fundamental aspect of the

modern welfare state. This ability is to reproduce social and economic structures combining the individual, corporations and each other to the state in a way that is both stable and perceived as legitimate by the public in general.

Just as solidarity is being considered a universal social condition so is cohesion. It is the way cohesion is maintained and construed that varies and not the phenomenon of cohesion itself. In the next and final part, 'social tolerance' is discussed because tolerance has to do with the capacity of tolerating influences from other forms of existences and presences. The reason why tolerance as a capacity to tolerate irritation is important in this context is because such a capacity is expected to vary in accordance with solidarity form: the more labor-divided and hence complex 'whole', the bigger the capacity to tolerate local irritations, and the less labor-divided and more of a 'horde', the lesser the capacity to tolerate irritation. In other words, organically organized societies are more tolerant towards normative 'violations' than is the case in mechanical communities.

Social tolerance

Tolerance is often viewed as a basic element in social cohesion. Individuals are expected to tolerate other individuals in order to engage in committing communities together. But what does that mean? Tolerance may have yet another meaning. At the individual level solidarity is typically associated with trust and tolerance. At state level, solidarity becomes a question of social cohesion and legitimacy, and at corporate level (along with the family-level) solidarity signifies shared values and common goals. Let me explain: solidarity cannot be reduced to a single mechanism that applies equally to all social and human affairs. Solidarity may reflect shared elements but how these elements are integrated into a whole differ according to the type of social and individual grouping we are talking about, which can be compared to the way Durkheim explains solidarity as stemming from different social sources.

However, solidarity tends to associate a statement of tolerance. Often it relates to a normative dimension suggesting that we should be more tolerant towards others in order to be less prejudiced against unknown individuals we find different from ourselves as in the meaning of deviating normatively from ourselves. This is definitely also a political question about conflicts and power interests as well as it is a question of what makes a coherent, legitimate social society. Related to this is the question of how integrated individuals should be in order to contract an alliance with other people? And how strong should the bonds be between them in order to be able to use the same symbols of solidarity? What is the possibility and the rationality of producing and sustaining individuality as private habits and norms and still belong to an embracing community? All these questions arise out of classic sociological theo-

ries about social cohesion, tolerance and solidarity in general (Comte 1974; Durkheim 1984; Parsons 1964). But they also generate interesting empirical questions with the potential of reaching beyond these theoretical – sometimes almost symmetrical discussions about mechanical solidarity/ deservingness criteria and organic solidarity/entitlement criteria. Along with these political questions, the potential of developing more precise concepts and criteria for how to think about social cohesion and solidarity in modern labor-divided society seem to arise as well.

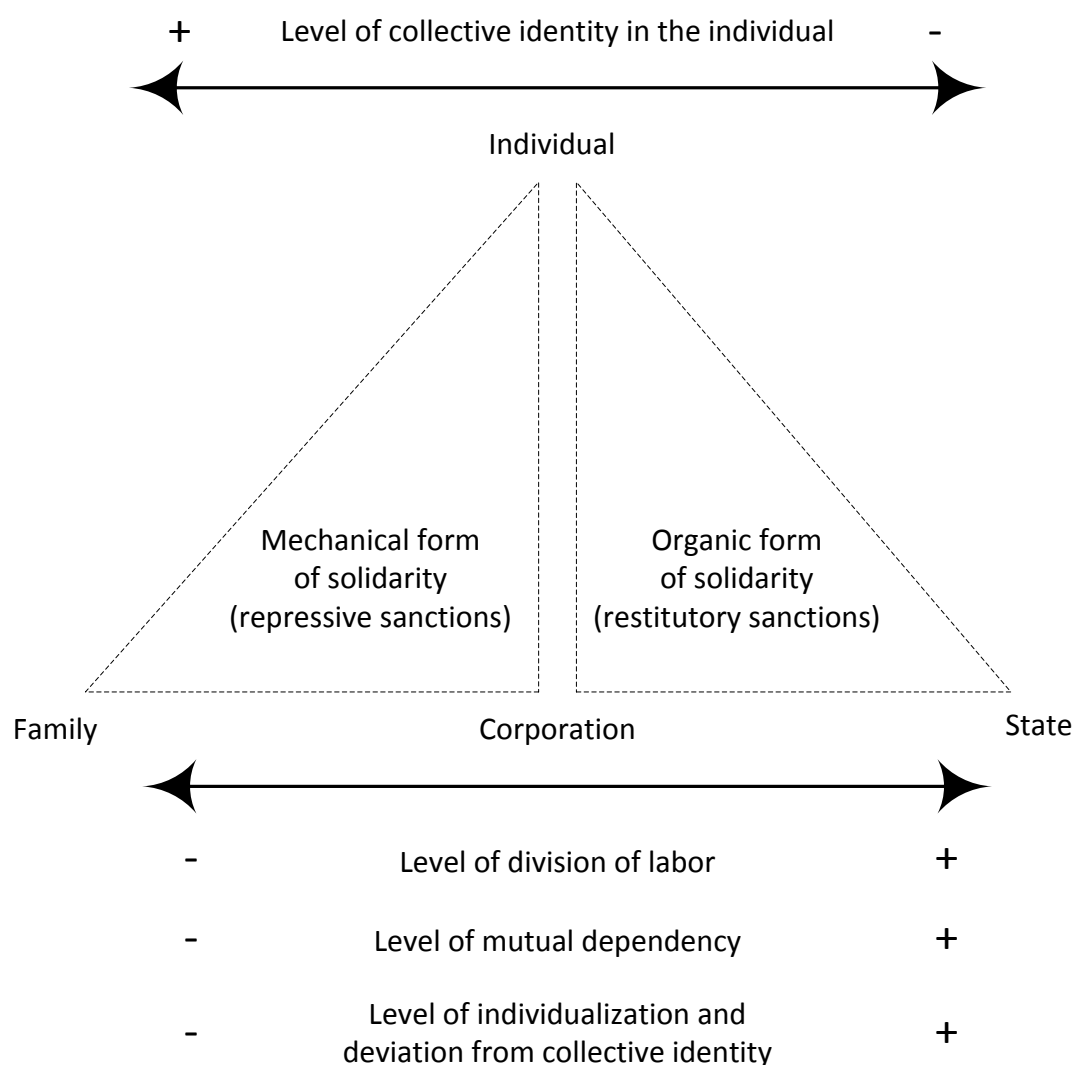
3.4 Summary

Even though solidarity is generally understood as an inclusive term for bonding individuals, it differs in its function to correspond to different needs of cohesion in social organizations such as the state, the family and in corporations. Inspired by Durkheim's own modification of the social evolutionist theory, I reject his original understanding of societies going from mechanical to organic societies and instead emphasize his modifications in direction of understanding mechanical and organic solidarity as coexisting rather than opposing sources of cohesion.

In Figure 3.2 the central elements of this chapter is displaced graphically. The figure visualizes fundamental domains of solidarity sways in society and illustrates the positions of the essential elements in a modern labor divided society: 1) the individual, 2) the state, 3) the corporation, and 4) the family. The aim of the figure is to visualize how the state is not the whole of society, but only a dimension of society as is also the case for the individual and for smaller communities such as families and corporations. In addition, the figure seeks to clarify how secondary groups like corporations, according to Durkheim, play this central 'connecting role' between the state, the family and the individual as a bonding mechanism within communities, a bridging mechanism between communities, and as a mechanism linking social positions together in society as a whole.

The figure splits up society in two halves in order to show how there is both mechanical and organic solidarity in modern societies. The mechanical solidarity is located in the left side, where the family is the strongest community and organic solidarity is located in the right side of the figure, where the state signifies the strongest community. Connected to the forms of solidarity are rules of sanctioning.

Figure 3.2. Mechanical and organic communities



Source: Based on Durkheim (1984): Preface to the Second Edition

Durkheim suggests studying solidarity through these rules, since they are visible and available in contrast to solidarity itself. He suggests the legal system as an indicator to measure solidarity: The more repressive law in a society the more mechanical solidarity, and the more restitutory law the more of organic solidarity. The argument is that mechanical communities are bonded in substantial norms for living and judging and thus they do not tolerate deviations of any kind, because transgressions will insult the inner meaning – or the cult – of the collective consciousness. The argument for the relation between restitutory law and organic solidarity is that most offenses are only marginal offenses with a capacity of threatening only some parts of the common consciousness. Consequently, the sanction is determined in relation to the damage produced by the crime and not upon the executer of the crime him/herself. Such organic sanctions have some kind of inherent status quo logic in

contrast to the logic of mechanical punishment, which is based on protecting values perceived as inherited from the ancestors of the past. Where this leaves progress is a good question, however it reaches beyond the problem studied here.

In this chapter focus has been on solidarity. The ambition was to clarify concepts of solidarity forms and types of community-based relations. In connection to this, I argue that both social problems and political solutions differ in accordance to the patterns of solidarity that structure/dominate a given policy. The empirical questions raised in the empirical part of the dissertation are mainly based on this chapter's theoretical explanation of why perceptions of solidarity are expected to affect the categorization practice of citizens at the street-level bureaucracy. The chapter introduced Durkheim's theory on solidarity forms as well as the relation between these concepts and the categorizing criteria of deservingness and entitlement. The claim is that deservingness corresponds to a mechanical solidarity perception and entitlement to an organic solidarity perception. Following the parts on differences between forms and concepts, the chapter's final parts explain what specific features and elements in solidarity I subtract from the theory. 'Collective consciousness', 'social cohesion' and 'professional ethics' were the three crucial elements, which I intend to make operational as measures of solidarity in the empirical studies in the empirical part.

In order to make those studies, I need to develop the theoretical tools for handling the influence of fixed and variable institutions in the political system. Chapter 4 and 5 is concerned with how I expect such fixed and variable institutions to arrange the relation between solidarity and categorization.

Chapter 4

Solidarity in the welfare state

So, according to the discussions in Chapter 3, society contains two bases of solidarity. One basis is organic and constitutes an interdependent ‘reality’ and the other basis is mechanical and makes up the reciprocal ‘reality’ of society. Therefore, the welfare state can be said to include solidarity stemming from two different social sources: attraction by similarities, which is the mechanical source of solidarity and attraction by differences, which is the organic source of solidarity. The first source exists where shared norms dominate the relations between individuals, and the second source exists where interdependency between individuals characterizes the reasons to interact. This chapter presents different measurements of solidarity in order to be able to describe Denmark from a solidarity perspective.

More concretely Chapter 4 is about how solidarity as a concept is used in welfare state studies to measure social cohesion and public support. The chapter focuses on explaining how central aspects of solidarity tend to play a role typically embedded in studies on tax relations, welfare distributions, and within reciprocity studies. It is my ambition in this chapter to introduce part of this research, which makes a huge contribution to our common understanding and knowledge of solidarity as a producer of social, legitimate cohesion in modern society. The chapter continues some of the points given in Chapters 2 and 3 regarding the measurement of categorization and the concept of solidarity. In Chapter 3, I argued why deservingness and entitlement criteria express different corporate spirits: deservingness is expected to express criteria for how to strengthen a representation of social bonds as they appear in undifferentiated, reciprocal norm-based communities such as families and (often) small N-number societies; e.g. a village or local unions. Entitlement, on the other hand, is expected to express criteria used to reinforce representations of differentiated, interdependent right-based communities, as we know from secondary groups such as for example interests groups, the state and usually bigger N-number societies; e.g. big cities or global unions.

Contemporary studies on solidarity in welfare states distinguish between three models of welfare systems with corresponding different bases for social cohesion in society. In the so-called residual model, welfare services are meant to apply for target populations instead of for all citizens, as is the case in the universal and the insurance-based model. But as I will set out, both the universal and the residual model share the basic criteria for eligibility depending on citizenship in contrast to the insurance-based one, where contribution becomes defining for the criteria for eligibility.

In order to trace how solidarity matters in everyday categorization practice these different welfare state models as well as the measurement of them are important tools to frame the study of what happens at the street-level bureaucracy. Even though the aggregated level of analysis does not inform much about the internal differences at the institutional and individual levels, they are crucial to understand the general mechanisms in the relationship between the welfare state and assistance-seeking citizens.

The literature on welfare and redistribution is vast in respect of both theoretical and empirical developments. Research on the welfare state's patterns of solidarity typically involves institutional, economic and normative approaches. Distinctive ways of making solidarity operational are through foci on cohesion, integration and public support using classic comparative methods to analyze similarities and differences between welfare states. The usual comparative approach is characterized by differentiating between types of welfare states based on their economic and institutional patterns of redistribution and exchange mechanisms between self-supporting and publicly supported citizens (Esping-Andersen 1990; Goul Andersen 1999).

In the following, I describe parts of the literature concerned with measuring solidarity in the modern welfare state. Of course no measure is a mere reflection of 'reality', but depends on the theoretical approach to the phenomenon studied. This holds true in welfare studies as well. Therefore, the theoretical understanding of solidarity will be used to characterize the different welfare regimes in the literature.

Besides this overall purpose of clarifying solidarity as a concept and as my tool for making empirical studies, this chapter tries to elaborate expectation about the potential relation between criteria selection and solidarity within a certain political institutional context. I argue why I expect the differences in categorization practice, as presented in Chapter 2, to depend on which types of community are used by street-level bureaucrats to represent their solidarity perceptions. For that reason, I start my argument by introducing contemporary welfare states' studies of solidarity to show how this literature characterizes and distinguishes between different types of welfare regimes and corresponding exchange logics between the citizen and the state. Here I seek to demonstrate how solidarity is commonly understood not as a corresponding mechanism to grouping and bonding needs in society, but as an intrinsically, omnipotent inclusive category measured as a degree of either 'well-being' or degree of 'active participations'. Even though I do not integrate this normative understanding of solidarity into the theoretical framework, I base parts of my empirical investigation on the empirical findings within the field of welfare studies. As such these studies have created an important window for

looking at how fundamental solidarity producing mechanisms at the organizational, administrative and corporate level functions in a modern labor-divided society as e.g. Denmark (Christiansen 2006; Esping-Andersen 1990; Goul Andersen 1997, 2003; Scruggs 2002).

In welfare studies, as in public opinion and in administration studies, the ‘core judgment’ in a categorization practice is measured differently reflecting the particular theoretical framework. Such measurements include ‘public opinion’, ‘individual discretion’ and ‘administrative categorization’. Following my argument of viewing solidarity not as a *presenter* but as a *re-presenter* of normative values, these differences between analytical levels become less important than the ability to trace dominant differences in community understandings and assumptions about community.

In other words, I argue that there is an empirical similarity to categorization practice between all three analytical levels of ‘public opinion’, ‘discretion’ and ‘categorization practice’. Furthermore, I argue that dominating values for sharing and bonding can be expected to affect categorization practice not only at an individual level of street bureaucracy, but in general.

4.1 Regime types in welfare state literature

Solidarity production is generally perceived as a phenomenon related to how the welfare state is organized. Esping-Andersen distinguishes between different types of welfare regimes based on the organizational structure of redistribution and the patterns of payments. The universalistic (social-liberal) model, the continental (conservative) insurance-based model and the residual (liberal) model are exemplars of current welfare states, each of which represents a regime type. The universalistic – or the social-liberal model has been measured as the dominating regime type in Scandinavia, whereas the insurance-based or the conservative model has been measured as the dominating regime type in countries such as Germany. The residual or the liberal model is typically connected to measurements of welfare states such as the US and Australia. Below is a table showing the basic principles for distinguishing between them in relation to the redistributive structure. They are both common and broad analytical tools for exploring differences between political publics and democracies in modern welfare states. In addition, the table displays the two crucial dimensions of what is assumed to link the citizens’ obligations and rights to the welfare state.

Back in 1893, Durkheim suggested (1984) that the patterns of solidarity were assumed to depend on the extent of labor division in society. However, based on current welfare state research, here represented by Esping-Andersen’s welfare model typologies, it seems that such outlines of solidarity (understood as redistribution systems) depend on several other factors such

as organizational, political and discursive institutions than just on the level of division of labor in society.

Table 4.1. Three welfare models: the universal, the social insurance, and the residual model

Welfare model	Basic Principles		
	Recipients of welfare services:	Entitlement criteria:	
	Universal, social-liberal	Everybody	Citizenship
	Insurance-based, conservative	Everybody	Contribution
	Residual, liberal	Target populations	Citizenship

Source: Based on Goul Andersen 1997: 9.

Esping-Andersen's three partitions of welfare states have had an enormous impact on the basic understanding of the varying purposes and the range of capacities of modern welfare states. His welfare state typologies are well known and used as perspectives on how to distinguish welfare states from each other on variables concerning reciprocity, exchange systems, and level of social security (Esping-Andersen 1990: 26-28). The welfare regime typologies are derived from both institutional and economic patterns of redistribution and structural engagement of social insurance in society. Besides this general interest in policy areas, in partisan structures and in voter behavior, Esping-Andersen emphasizes how social cohesion and normative integration depends not only on a stable economic structure (political economy), but also on the legitimate social and political structures of a society (moral economy) (Esping-Andersen 1990: 9-26).

In large N country-comparative welfare state studies, Denmark is typically referred to as an example of a universal model, where the US and Australia represent examples of a residual model. Denmark is usually categorized as a universal welfare state because of prevailing universal public services such as pensions programs, state funded education programs, day care solutions etc. However, as the following will show, it is a definitional question how to weigh universal contra residual and insurance-based elements in the particular welfare programs. As will be described in Chapter 5, residual elements in welfare programs have become more prominent in Danish social and labor policies. The distinctions behind the regime types correspond to some degree to how the difference between solidarity forms is described by Durkheim. They are both based on similar aspects of social cohesion where universality and organic solidarity on one side, and residual regimes and mechanic soli-

clarity on the other seem to be two expressions of the same logic of social cohesion. However, the puzzling thing seen from a Durkheim inspired perspective is that all three countries (US, Germany and Denmark) share the characteristic of being highly labor-divided politically and socially differentiated modern societies. This suggests that these theoretical comparisons cannot describe labor-divided modern societies such as the US and Australia. According to the same logic of theoretical comparison, residual regimes should correspond to a mechanical solidarity form. But both types share fundamental characteristics corresponding to organic solidarity because the labor division between labor market and help system is based on distinct, corporative interests reflecting different needs of cohesion according to the particular function and interest which combines each organization. Both the US and Australia contain such functions at least as much as Denmark and Germany. The same type of 'inconsistence' characterizes the insurance-based model if you read the defining aspects through the concepts of mechanical and organic solidarity. The 'contribution' aspect of the insurance-based model constitutes a typical, reciprocal logic embedded in the mechanical form of solidarity as the basic eligibility criteria. The population of recipients on the other hand is 'everybody' who would characterize a typical, organic way of relating the citizen to the welfare state.

In addition, all modern welfare states including countries such as Australia and the US have developed civil laws to regulate a majority of the social interactions in society, which indicates an existence of an organic solidarity according to Durkheim. Among other things this suggests that neither the division of labor nor the prevailing regime type characteristics alone can predict the effect of solidarity on assistance-seeking citizens in society. Therefore, it may be fruitful not to view them as exclusive categories but rather as co-existing logics in society. This condition of 'co-existence' creates a need for further confinement.

According to Goul Andersen and Esping-Andersen there are solid arguments for defining DK as a predominantly universal regime. Among them are qualities as the citizenship-based pension system and the flat-rate service of the state's education fund (Goul Andersen 1997: 21; Esping-Andersen 1990: 28). In contrast to this, the residual regime dominates most welfare programs in the US describing citizenship-based rights, but almost always connected to negative selection criteria for eligibility defined by stereotyped target groups (Esping-Andersen 1990: 26). However, both types of programs exist in both countries with varying impact. In Denmark for example, two redistributive social welfare systems exist beside the citizenship-based pension system. Social welfare is a citizenship-based program aimed at target groups, and be-

cause the extent of support is very limited the program share fundamental elements with a residual program. The third program of sickness benefits is based on the eligibility criteria of contribution, which is identical to the bearing principle of an insurance-based program (Esping-Andersen 1990: 27). In this respect Denmark's three welfare programs managing unemployed and disabled citizens actually correspond to these three defining welfare state models.

However, in accordance with this Durkheim-inspired understanding of residual, insurance-based and universal logics, such analytical differences in the existing redistributive institutions should not be taken as conclusive because the legal structure and the relation between restitutory and repressive law is expected to matter as well. When the focus is strictly on the juridical impact and character of the relations between the citizen and the (welfare) state, the interpretation of what characterizes welfare states such as the US and Denmark may change substantially. In relation to the US, the opposite classification may occur because the extent of the US use of restitutory relations such as legal proceedings between the citizens are enormous compared to Denmark, and, in this perspective, the production of universal rights are more dominating than would be expected to be the case in Denmark. In Denmark, the social system has a tradition of compensation following a similar logic of restitution, but even so, social cases are – compared to the US – very rarely given a juridical review.¹¹ This is of course an empirical question whether or not it reduces the extent of universality. When following the strict theoretical argument, the lack of legal structuring of social policy may be expected to reduce the production of universality and instead meet the criteria of a prevailing mechanical solidarity.

Apparently, it is important to trace not only one type of regime and one form of solidarity but rather both in order to understand how these mechanisms vary in strength and representation within a particular welfare program. Also it is important to understand on which level they exist in relation to determine how they influence and arrange the way citizens are being perceived and categorized at an individual level. The question then is how these representations of solidarity interact with redistributive institutions, administrative principles, and organizational structure of benefit payments in practice.

¹¹ This comparison is strictly analytical and based on the observation of differences between the two countries' avenues of appeal for citizens' on welfare. In Denmark, The National Social Appeals Board is a board of appeal for administrative decisions. Citizens with complaints about welfare services cannot have their cases juridically reviewed before they have been tried in The Danish National Social Appeals Board (www.ast.dk).

4.1.1 The Danish case

In relation to the case of Denmark it is puzzling to notice how the dominating principles and ideas of the current active social policy are more similar to welfare programs in residual and insurance-based regimes. On the one hand, as a general rule, only employed insured citizens have rights to sickness benefits as in an insurance-based regime, and, on the other hand, the non-insured unemployed are eligible to social welfare through programs, which are aimed at targeted groups. This is precisely a trait that characterizes a residual regime. Furthermore, in relation to the policy field studied in this context, the Danish active social policy corresponds to the ideal of 'active participation' as opposed to 'passive membership'. This is a distinction that has a transatlantic origin (US) combining both communitarian values with theory of new public management (Torfing 2004: 171-174). A form of alliance, which at first sight seems incompatible with the way Denmark traditionally has handled the publicly supported and redistributed among citizens, but which has shown in practice to be surprisingly easily implemented (Villadsen 2004: 61-66).

Despite of the non-universalistic principles in Danish active social policy, Denmark is still compared to countries with lower levels of social insurance and hence interpreted as a universal case. This, of course makes good sense, since a comparison always reflect a relative position, and in this case Denmark continues to score high on the universal parameter (including unionization of workers) compared to countries such as the UK and Australia (Scruggs 2002: 277). However, these macro studies have quite different comparative interests and for their purpose it makes very good sense to reduce states to units without internal differences. The point here is simply to argue why it becomes impossible to discover variance in solidarity logics within each welfare state based on such analyses alone. As mentioned above, the Danish welfare state contains all three defining logics of the dominating welfare state typology as the universal, the insurance-based, and the residual components. Because of the different logics, it seems fruitful to study how these elements characterize the particular welfare program governing the practice under study. In this case the programs, which set the regulative and the normative boundaries for how the social workers' must perform their categorization practice of assistance-seeking citizens in the active social policy.

However, Esping-Andersen's classic distinctions between universal, insurance-based, and residual types of welfare regimes are still relevant to the problem studied here because of the capacity to identify structural and interest-based mechanisms in the way solidarity is present in the current regulative structures in e.g. the Danish street-level bureaucracy. In this case, the concept of universalism is of special interest because this type corresponds to

a perception of social cohesion, which depends on organizational patterns of interdependency and not on interpersonal levels of tolerance and personal values. Therefore, universalism in this respect reflects the dimension of social rights, which the former chapter argued, is connected to the use of entitlement criteria and to the logic of organic solidarity in a categorization practice. Furthermore, universalism describes a dimension of solidarity comparable to the argument put forward by Durkheim of why modern, complex societies do not fall apart despite of a lack of particular shared values which usually define how social target groups are constructed and used in selective policies (Durkheim 1984).

In this respect, the next discussion of universalism construes the theoretical linkage to categorization criteria characterized by entitlement. Universalism is therefore also understood as a logic that triggers the use of entitlement criteria in contrast to residual and social-insurance-based welfare logic that will be expected as a logic causing the use of deservingness criteria in a particular categorization practice.

The research in welfare state regimes can hence be said to be born out of a strong focus on the material bases for cohesion, however during the 1990s, Esping-Andersen and Goul Andersen seem to leave behind the strong weight on political economy and insurance structures in favor of a more theoretical focus on the moral economy in welfare states. An example of this shift is the why-question put forward by Esping-Andersen in *Why we need a New Welfare State?* (2002: 2). The shift engenders not only a different theoretical but also a different empirical focus. As a replacement for economic and organizational structures, the accumulated value of 'active participation' in society dominates as explanatory factors of solidarity in their respective analyses of the welfare state. The objective of analyzing the value of 'active participation' becomes influential in Goul Andersen's later studies of the Danish welfare state as well (Goul Andersen 2008).

In continuation of these macro regime comparisons, Goul Andersen argues why Denmark is capable of avoiding a lot of the negative effects during times of high unemployment which characterizes other in-equality-generating policies in Anglo-Saxon countries. According to his argument, the reason is that apparently universalism has positive effects on the social cohesion during periods of high unemployment (Goul Andersen 1996: 45).¹² This strong interest in understanding universalism, however, may overshadow other ele-

¹² If this there is evidence for this thesis, then the current empirical studies are performed during economic conditions causing inconveniences to the impact of universalism on the social cohesion, because data has been collected during a historical low unemployment rate in August/September 2007.

ments also present in the Danish welfare state concerning anti-universal residual principles or particularistic principles, which correspond to mechanical representations of social cohesion. However, with the focus of 'active participation' as a measure of solidarity, Goul Andersen actually shows how particularistic values matter in the Danish welfare state. His reason for making, what he himself calls a 'fundamental discussion of universalism', and the shift in focus from the political to the moral economy seems to be related to the problem of the omnipotent character of the three-partitions of the welfare state, namely that a lot of the current differences between welfare states cannot be explained by the classic three partitions of universal, insurance-based, and residual regime types. The focus and interest in what the voters and the public feels, thinks and obviously votes for regarding welfare services, dominate the focus of the analyses of the moral economy. The general conclusion points at that it is the residual rather than the universal components of welfare logic, which the public perceives as 'just' criteria for eligibility. However, the conclusions were based on questions about deservingness and statistical reports about the degree of volunteering work and active participation in society. Altogether this made Goul Andersen conclude, 'The public legitimacy in the welfare state is considerably more declining than the case in the 1980'ties' (Goul Andersen 1997: 6).

If universalism has shown to have positive effects on minimizing social and political costs during periods of high unemployment, the obvious question is what happens in times of low unemployment? Could it be that universalism needs unemployment in order to be effective and legitimate, and that the lack of such a condition diminishes the need and the legitimacy for universalism? This is a very interesting and important empirical question, which aims at answering fundamental questions about the relation between the citizens and the welfare state. However, because the current empirical setting takes place under a period of low unemployment, the question exceeds the potential of the research design in the empirical study because no comparisons are made to other high unemployment periods.

Mechanical and organic solidarity in the welfare state

However, in a later study from 1999 Andersen et al. concludes that even in periods with low unemployment there is a general strong support for the welfare state with only few areas where the voters want cut backs. Aversion towards the welfare state is found to be concentrated around the area of social exploitation (Andersen et al. 1999: 188). In this analysis the focus on policy area opens up the possibility of identifying elements in the moral economy as well. As a within-case analysis, the study is suitable to explore more about how the moral and the political economy exist simultaneously within a single

welfare state. Nevertheless, as I will argue in the following, the strict distinction between political and moral economy may undermine the possibility of studying how the political economy affects the social cohesion in society as well as a strict separation of the two economies exclude the possibility of seeing the impact of the moral economy on the political economy. This type of analysis applies to a voter level about voter preferences and issue politics but also to a structural group and organizational level about corporative, interdependent relations.

Based on Durkheim's theory of solidarity, types of communities are preferred as analytical identities to economies because according to Durkheim morality exists, when individuals' actions systematically affect other individuals within the same community. The moral economy is therefore understood as interrelated with the political economy because it is concerned with the redistributive mechanisms between the members of a society and should therefore not be seen as distinct, separable phenomena. In this respect Goul Andersen is seen as in opposition to Durkheim's understanding of 'morality' because Goul Andersen understands moral issues as including expressions of individual feelings of aversion. Incest is an example, which is not necessarily a moral issue according to Durkheim, but most likely could be defined as one by Goul Andersen. The reason why, according to Durkheim, feelings of aversion towards for example incest is not related to morality is that even though incest awakes contempt and collective aversions and demands for revenge, it is precisely not a social, but an individual instance of contempt. And according to Durkheim, what is moral must include a social (redistributive) and not only a psychological impact on society.

Compared to Chapter 1 where the politically perceived legitimacy crisis in the Danish welfare state was outlined, I therefore suggest not to see demands for cutbacks, fear of uncontrollable costs as proxies for residual preferences on behalf of universal ones. However, this does not mean that political rhetoric cannot be based on particularistic values instead of universal ones aiming at making the connection political. The point is that it constitutes an act of political agenda setting and not a description of a logical relationship between welfare state models and political and moral economies as such. By this is implied that within a welfare state you will find both particularistic and universal logics of cohesion and for good reasons according to Durkheim (and Goul Andersen's analyses as well). If both universal and particularistic logics correspond to needs within society, neither of them should be seen as exclusive categories. Analytically speaking, it implies that the type of community is being represented by a certain value of social cohesion evoking a measure of mechanical solidarity, whereas a study of the organizational

structure and its relatedness to the moral economy would stimulate a measure of organic solidarity. Consequently, since it is plausible to argue that a welfare state consists of many small and big (simple and complex) communities and social organizations, it becomes plausible to presume the existence of both mechanical (measured at residual programs) and organic (measured at universalistic programs) logics to be simultaneously legitimated in the public. Differently put, at an individual level such differences would depend on whether the concrete statement from a voter for example corresponds to an issue defined by family values, or, on the other hand, as issues defining interdependent corporative or state values respectively. In other words, if both organic and mechanical solidarity exist in society, both forms are expected to exist as solidarity perceptions in the minds of the voters' as well. This argument is fully developed in Chapter 5 about the impact of how public problems are constructed within essential discursive frames, which connote certain communal values stemming from e.g. perceptions of the family or the more abstract society. Chapter 5 explains why it matters how a problem is defined in relation to what type of communal value which is being activated in the discourse. Theoretically speaking, if this is the case, it means that a too intense theoretical focus on moral values and voter preferences, along with a too broad focus on organizational structures and interdependent relations may preclude capturing the phenomenon of solidarity as a varying mechanism.

This brings the argument back to the discussion of how to measure and analyze the question of society's burden of non-working citizens presented in Chapter 1: If costs and organizational settings are analyzed separately from a theory of the moral economy, the numbers alone suggest a relative high stability that does not in any rational way explain the tendency to tighten up welfare services. What can be seen as associated to this Goul Andersen argues that tax pressure does not inform us about the relationship between solidarity form and regime type, because he says that:

It is made clear how it is citizenship and in the end democracy, which is the fundamental consideration behind the universal model (Goul Andersen 1997: 18).

And in continuation of this objective, Goul Andersen emphasizes that economy alone does not help us evaluate welfare regimes because costs and principles do not go hand in hand following a certain scheme of costs and benefits. He says:

It is quite true that ususally a universal welfare state model is expensive, but so are the other welfare models, and the Danish social costs do not differ signi-

fificantly from the costs in other northwestern european contries. It is possible to make cutbacks without overruling universalism, and conversely universalism can be thrown away without achieving any cutbacks at all (Goul Andersen 1997: 7).

Following these notions I suggest that the political representations of social problems must be studied more carefully together with the particular welfare program implemented, instead of relying on a positive correlation between for example costs and solidarity logic in order to capture the solidarity impact on the concrete discretion made by street-level bureaucrats, which in this case are social workers. In a universal regime, needs for tightening rules and access may exist with profound universal principles for equal access to welfare. In the same way, more generous approaches to social problems can reflect residual logics based on targeting benefits to special groups in society (Rothstein 1998: 162).

4.2 Measurements of solidarity

Thus, welfare states must be seen as interwoven in two distinct economies: the political economy and the moral economy. In a Danish context, Goul Andersen has dedicated his research to the question of (organic) cohesion and (mechanical) support for the Danish Welfare state (see for example 1997; 1999; 1998; 2003). As we know, social cohesion and solidarity are not particularly easy phenomena to observe. Generally speaking, two methods dominate the attempts to identify patterns of solidarity. One method of measuring solidarity is surveys where citizens are asked questions about how much or little they support different aspects of welfare institutions e.g. libraries, schools, hospitals, but also transference systems such as flat-rate pensions, insurance-based pensions, and targeted pensions. Often this method is combined with questions that imply prioritizing between cut backs and more spending on several policy areas. Related to this method are surveys or interviews asking citizens about who they think deserve welfare services (van Oorschoot 2000; Petersen et al. 2007). The difference between them is mainly related to theoretical interests: where the first method aims at collecting a system support measure, the second aims at measuring citizens' moral dispositions regarding welfare.

In addition to these two methods, researchers tend to use statistical evidence to support their survey measurements. In this relation 'marginalization' is used as a proxy of social exclusion and labor exclusion, which again is taken as a structural indication of social cohesion. If the measure of marginalization tends to be increasing, it is regarded as an indication of a threat to the

social cohesion in society and vice versa.¹³ In making the question of cohesion operational, Goul Andersen differentiates between distinct levels of marginalization as a measure of social cohesion. Hence marginalization can be either social, political or labor-market driven. In opposition to traditional perspectives on marginalization, Goul Andersen argues and shows evidence that exclusion from one system does not per se stimulate an unending exclusion process from all other social systems (Goul Andersen 2003: 179). Compared to the explanations of solidarity in Chapter 3, such measurements could be interpreted as measures of organic solidarity. In these studies he finds that it is the economic variables that explain why marginalized people in Denmark seem to score higher on a so-called 'well-being' parameter when compared to other countries (Goul Andersen 2003: 268). Theoretically speaking, he explains these findings with reference to the existence of a universal exchange system and a high level of individual right-based social security institutions compared to other countries (Goul Andersen 2003: 206-207).

Another corresponding measure of cohesion often used in accordance with the measurement of citizens' feelings of deservingness is the measure of 'degree of charity works in society' (see for example Boje et al. 2006: 20-30; Koch-Nielsen 2006; Christensen 2006). Theoretically speaking, more voluntary work is expected to indicate strong social bonds in society and vice versa. Here it is the extent of volunteering participation in local communities that is expected to generate fundamental social bonds between members in a society. Metaphorically speaking, the bond of the family generates this understanding of cohesion because it is the intimate and private caring for other individuals that is conceived as generating the combining force in society as such.¹⁴

Comparing these main methods of measuring social cohesion, the measure of the extent of 'charity' (volunteer work) in a society seems to correspond to an understanding of solidarity where cohesion is understood as a

¹³ Health studies in economic inequalities share this interest in measuring the effects of social and political inequalities and findings support the hypothesis that an increase in relative inequality affects the whole of the population negatively (Tarlov & Peter 2000: xv).

¹⁴ There is an ongoing discussion about this understanding of social cohesion in the American literature of the communitarian political grounds for building society, which is closely connected to the aim of measuring solidarity as deriving from 'active participation' in local communities. However, the literature is based on a radically different social reality than the Danish one, primarily concerning the (lack of) homogeneity in local governments and communities. In the US the social diversity is usually regarded as bigger than in DK, which challenges the possibilities and the needs of representing social cohesion through close family bonds between the citizens (Bella et al. 1986: 251).

bonding or a bridging mechanism. I argue that it relates to what is generally referred to in welfare state studies as residual welfare logic. Contrary to the above, the measure of 'marginalization', presupposes a 'we' as in a greater complex social society where solidarity first and foremost is understood as an organic, linking mechanism between different social positions within an abstract society such as e.g. a welfare state. Compared to the classic welfare state types such a measure of marginalization visualizes universal and not residual welfare logics. In contrast, a measure of 'charity' compared to types of welfare regimes visualizes residual welfare logic and a mechanical solidarity form. However, compared to the studies in welfare state models, I argue that these measures of charity work and marginalization reflect more than just the objectified rationalities of participation (charity) and non-participation (marginalization); namely profound political and ideological reasons for redistributing welfare.

The attempt to study solidarity of course raises methodological questions about how to make the concept operational for measurement. Measurements of solidarity reflect how the concept is theoretically understood and which element of solidarity the researcher emphasizes. It becomes essential that such methodological choices contain a discussion of how data and methods of collecting data correspond to the theoretical concept studied. Studies, which measure solidarity through marginalization statistics, where degree of marginalization is used as an indicator of social cohesion and as a proxy for solidarity, differ from studies of solidarity as a macro concept of tolerance and as a sort of detector of the strength of philanthropic behavior. And for this reason analyses of degree of volunteer work in society is typically selected as an indicator of social cohesion in society, when solidarity is basically understood as mechanical representations of normative values. The interest in discovering fundamental patterns of solidarity in the modern welfare state motivates both ways of measurements. However, as I already argued in Chapter 3, both tolerance and integration make parts of solidarity and it is the actual measurement of either marginalization or volunteer engagement that reflect different (mechanical or organic) mechanisms. Therefore these should not be taken as indicators of the same form of solidarity, but as indicators of different shared community values and public standards for how to behave and interact socially.

Summed up the point is that researchers' interest in explaining how and why the welfare state does not fall apart tend to focus on either mechanical or organic reasons.

4.2.1 Political and moral dimensions in the concept of solidarity

Hence, measures of solidarity tend to reflect either organizational structures (part of the political economy) or deservingness attitudes (part of the moral economy). However, inspired by Durkheim's understanding of solidarity I put forward my expectations about how and why morality and political economy are interrelated. This is inspired by the arguments put forward in this chapter that our morality, values, and political preferences are being shaped by the way institutional settings arrange social interaction between the state and the citizen as well as between individuals in general (Goul Andersen 1997; Esping-Andersen 1990). Ultimately, these different welfare state regime types, which govern both the moral and the political logic of the exchange mechanisms, have been suggested to explain some of the differences in for example 'well-being' among unemployed in comparable welfare states or the potential (but not verified) unending exclusion process. Basically, this is an institutional explanation much similar to the arguments put forward by Bo Rothstein in his understandings of the moral logic of the universal welfare state (Rothstein 1996: 106-114) and in accordance with his argument about institutions as fundamental facilitators of social judgments in a particular categorizing moment (Rothstein 1998: 134)

The reasons why the moral economy seems to matter more than political economy in the welfare state studies, which seek to explain the benefits of social exchange patterns, are probably first and foremost related to which part and in which direction this relation is studied (Rothstein 1998: 280-281). Either the political economy including institutions for economic exchanges and organizations of social welfare is perceived as a means to create and sustain morality in society, or the moral economy including norms and levels of tolerance is perceived as a means to balance a just economic redistribution. Either way these two economies seem to be interrelated and difficult to separate. Literature understands them as interdependent factors of the production of solidarity and social cohesion in society. Hence the analytical gain of separating them into different variables may blur the picture when distinguishing between the political and moral dimensions of an economy.

The meaning of how the welfare state organizes access and strategies for how to achieve these public services can hence be studied through measures of support and legitimacy in the welfare state. Theoretically speaking, it is essential to my further conceptualization to include how the organization of exchange and access to benefits are arranging the way street-level bureaucrats' solidarity perceptions shape the way they categorize assistance-seeking citizens. Hence it becomes central to understand how the corporative structure between the state and the citizen in welfare programs structure the re-

gulative frames of categorization practice in a street level bureaucracy, because this relation is exactly assumed to reflect a structural relation between solidarity and categorization in society with political and social impact of society beyond the street-level bureaucracy.

Consequently, a crucial point to keep in mind is that when the public is asked about deservingness they will probably reply within a discourse of deservingness relating their judgment to a collective orientation based on mechanical criteria for social legitimacy. However, such measurements do not capture organic solidarity. The implication of this point is to expect that when public opinions are used to claim that we have a legitimate crisis, it is important to notice which dimension of legitimacy is actually being measured; e.g. either a mechanical or an organic representation of identity and cohesion.

Still, these studies of deservingness and universal welfare states do at some aspects point at the same as what Durkheim realized in relation to his modified social evolutionary argument, namely how individuals' collective orientations are multiple and changing according to context and institutional setting. In addition, welfare regimes as they have been developed by Esping-Andersen study the impact of exchange systems on society. Such studies are crucial in understanding how the individual and the state are organized at a structural level and how political institutions regulate this relationship in practice – where the state actually meets the citizen.

Nevertheless, even though such welfare state typologies illustrate both classificatory criteria and principles of solidarity, they do not inform us much about different levels in the moral and the political economy. As suggested by the theory of solidarity developed by Durkheim such information is essential if one wants to understand particular aspects of the relationship between the individual and the state, as is the intention in the following empirical part. In the following Chapter 5, the 'voice of government' as well as the governing political institutions of active social policy such as the laws and essential consolidated acts are described and analyzed in relation to describing the actual institutional context of which the street-level bureaucrats must administrate the active social policy.

4.3 Summary

The welfare state typology developed by Esping-Andersen was a starting point for describing how solidarity in contemporary welfare states is studied and measured. In continuation of Esping-Andersen's distinctions, studies of the Danish welfare state were discussed mainly in relation to Goul Andersen. He builds on the same assumptions about the welfare state as Esping-Andersen. Accordingly, I have argued that there are different measurements of solidarity. One type of measurement aims at measuring solidarity through

corporative structures and support for service institutions. Another type of measurement seeks to capture individual solidarity through a measure of deservingness and extent of private charity and volunteer work in society. The difference between measuring who people think deserve welfare and what public services people think is preferable is important to the argument I make about solidarity being more than an intrinsic normative phenomenon of 'face-to-face recognition' as some scholars think (Juul 2002: 19).

Based on the chapter's explanations, I suggest that these empirical studies of solidarity in contemporary welfare states tend to use public opinions about deservingness as a proxy to measure a mechanical solidarity and public opinions about entitlement and general welfare as a proxy to measure an organic solidarity. Besides these two measurements of the bases of solidarity I have argued that different types of statistical data are used to support such measurements of either an organic or a mechanical logic. Reports on the developments of marginalization were said to measure an organic solidarity because marginalization measures degree of deviation from an organically linked, complex 'whole'. In opposition to this, reports on level of volunteering work and charity engagement in society were mentioned as a measure of mechanical solidarity, because charity and community-based free social work reproduce what I explained as the fundamental relationship in a mechanical community: that of the wealthy, merciful giver (father/state), and the docile receiver (child/citizen).

The perspective in the following concerns the expected differences and variations at the individual level of policy-making in relation to grasping the existent solidarity logic embedded in the Danish organizational structure and institutional settings for welfare. The context is Danish active social policy in which a current focus on target groups, reciprocal relations between citizens and the state, as well as the value of 'activism' are defining attributes of the policy design of active social policy. Such values seem to contradict the basic principles in the universal model, which at a general level characterizes Denmark. In saying this, I therefore introduce a different grasp on solidarity capable of describing not only macro-structural differences, but also differences in institutional settings. This is done by leaving behind the measures of the political and moral bases of solidarity, as both the redistributive effects and the public support to the welfare state. Instead I intent to grasp the symbolic representations of solidarity as they appear in the form of perceptions in order to be able to study how solidarity matters in categorization practices in the administration of active social policy by social workers.

However, before the empirical studies of solidarity perceptions and categorization practices, the following Chapter 5, describes the institutional con-

text of the study. Special attention is paid to analyze the political representations of what (should) combine the citizen and society as well as to the concrete laws governing the field of active social policy.

Chapter 5

The welfare program of active social policy

Solidarity forms appear in different shapes in society. Chapter 4 focused on how welfare state research studies public support and redistributive mechanisms, which I argued can be seen as measures of solidarity. In the current chapter the political and institutional climate of the welfare program of active social policy will be related both to the welfare state typologies described in Chapter 4 and to the theory of solidarity as explained in Chapter 3. In addition, Chapter 5 seeks to describe the institutional context of active social policy that sets the regulative and the normative frame of how the social worker make decisions about the working capacities of assistance-seeking citizens and about entitlement to permanent social benefits. The empirical studies of the impact of solidarity perceptions on the social workers categorization practices are performed within this 'fixed' institutional context. The study seeks to explore variations in categorization practices 'within the law' and within this institutional context. Part of this 'fixed' context is the organizational arrangement of public help. Speaking in general terms, solidarity can be seen as representing a mechanical form of solidarity, when public help is provided to certain social groups such as the elderly and the disabled people, because they are perceived as deserving. However, when public support is arranged according to either corporative memberships or universal criteria for eligibility welfare can be seen as part of an organic solidarity form. Not out of deservingness reasons, but because unemployed citizens are perceived as entitled to public support and because they do not pose a threat to the state's representation of society's 'collective consciousness'. As should be clear by now, both ways of perceiving the relation between legitimate reasons to give public support to unemployed and disabled citizens exist simultaneously in the (Danish) welfare state.

Thus, besides the rationality of a public organized assistance-system there are mechanical normative institutions, which shape the legitimate way of how rights to welfare are perceived by the public. However, the entire idea of separating the task of supporting non-working citizens from the family domain can be seen as organic. This differentiation process of organizing assistance as family obligations to the current way of organizing assistance as a public obligation has succeeded partly because of interest and power struggles between different associations and their corporative relations to the state. Literature describes aspects of this corporative constellation as the 'Ghent system', which denotes a corporative structure where trade and labor unions have the main responsibility for unemployment benefits instead of the

government or the families. In Denmark, this characterizes the dominant form of unemployment organization as well as in Finland, Iceland and Sweden as well (Scruggs 2002). In Denmark as in most cases, unemployment funds held by labor federations are regulated and subsidized (up to 2/3) by the national government. Moreover, this system is used in literature to explain why union memberships are relatively higher in countries with the 'Ghent system' because, in order to be entitled to receive benefits, workers must be members of a labor federation. Seen in the light of solidarity, such an organizational arrangement is expected to reinforce and represent an organic form of solidarity. Therefore, the 'Ghent system' can also be seen as an organizational symbol of an organic solidarity in society, by setting out a link between the organized union members and the state. According to Durkheim and as discussed in Chapter 3, this is supposed to strengthen interdependent relations between associations, the members, and the state. In opposition to such an arrangement is a mechanical representation of solidarity, where each individual in society is assumed to make a difference (and therefore also a potential threat, when the sacred values are not reflected in the attitude and behavior of the individual) to the 'collective consciousness' of society. The argument is henceforth, as will also be shown in the following, that the state is engaged in both solidarity-producing arrangements through different forms of symbolic representations ranging from laws to policy documents.

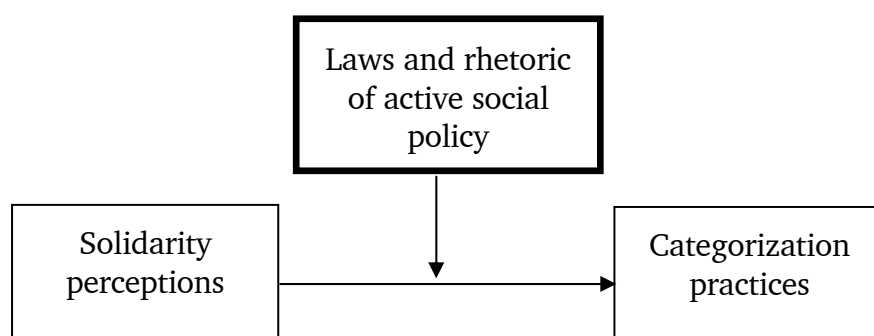
This chapter presents the dominating political institutions counting the specific laws that constitute the welfare program of active social policy, the available policy tools, the social workers' professionalism as well as the political expectations and perceptions of how they should use and interpret their professionalism. Finally, the chapter presents the dominating political discourse about how the current government defines public problems as well as the intention behind why and how they should be solved.

As clarified in Chapter 4, welfare state studies tend to measure solidarity as an inherent value and not as a representative logic. I argued how this may cause to a misleading 'over-assignment' of the dominating attribute when the aim is to study particular welfare state programs. The aim of this chapter is therefore to present the governing institutions of the street-level bureaucracy administering the active social policy. Below, the theoretical model is introduced highlighting the conditional variable. The chapter ends by explaining how this model is sought examined empirically by introducing two models for analysis.

The aim of the chapter is hence to clarify the context in which the social workers administer active social policy. A special challenge in this relation is to clarify the typological differences between these institutions and in particu-

lar the character of a policy document describing the governmental rhetoric of how public problems should be perceived in general and by the administration in particular. The document has a special character, which will be displayed in the following discussion of how to characterize the institutions under study.

Figure 5.1. Theoretical model



5.1 Regulative and normative institutions

There is a general consensus on defining institutions as structural mechanisms capable of shaping and conditioning the ways individuals behave in social settings (Nielsen 2002: 21-25). Moreover it has become commonly recognized that such a structural impact differs according to specific parameters such as the extent of formalization as well as to the hierarchical relation between the actors in a given institution (Scott 1995: 52). In practice these differences are related to how the possibilities of sanctions are organized (Nielsen 2002: 22). Moreover, institutions have a general character of 'regulation' and 'normativity', which basically refer to their value-directing intentions to shape the behavior and way of thinking of individuals (Stone 2002). Within the context of the political system, Scott has described a distinction between regulative and normative institutions primarily addressing whether or not the individual follows the rules because of an 'inner voice' or a social obligation – or whether the individual follows the rules because a violation will be legally sanctioned. The institutions of the active social policy; the laws and the government orders such as the *means of evaluating working capacities* have a distinct regulative character. However, as any institution, they also contain clear normative elements. A special characteristic of laws and orders is that they can be legally sanctioned. Thus, there are institutions without this option of enforcement and yet they 'work' as institutions. Among them are for example guidance notes counting policy discourses such as the *quid pro quo* document and guidance notes such as the *referral guide*. Both institutions have a clear normative content. However, if the interpretations and their

suggestions are violated there are no sanctioning options. Consequently, the difference between them is related to their degree of formality in the sense of whether the incentive to obey the rules is external (legal sanctioning) or internal (social obligation) (Lehmann Nielsen 2002: 21). Richard Scott separates institutions according to regulative and normative contents (1995: 35). This applies very well to professional norms inasmuch as they are stemming from the field of social work. However they too have a regulative potential but in a different way: they shape and condition the way professionals think about their work, but without any direct sanctioning options.

However, the policy discourse of *quid pro quo* is difficult to grasp with an institutional typology. It stems from the principal, in this case the government, but it has no legal authority in relation to sanctioning individuals who do not agree or do not act according to the behavioral and the perceptive directions. It is an example of an institution which works through informal ways of shaping and conditioning the individuals' behavior, and it is addressed by a formal institution holding the key to the door of regulation: the Parliament. Instead of trying to make the document fit a typology of institutions, it should simply be noticed that in relation to the normally used distinctions and definitions of institutions this is a special document. It is issued by the government and it can be characterized as the government's perception of how 'the world goes round'. Documents, which explicitly relate a general political strategy to concrete policy considerations behind a particular law are difficult to define. The policy document of *quid pro quo* hence describes not only how the administration should interpret the law, but also the social and political perceptions of what define public and hence social problems. Therefore, I suggest that the current main institutions related to the welfare program of active social policy can be defined in accordance with the answers to the following two questions:

1. Is there a hierarchical relation between addressee and recipient?
2. Can potential violations of the rules be legally sanctioned?

In the concrete case of the government's policy document *quid pro quo*, the answer to the first question is yes and the answer to the second is no. It is addressed by government but is not related to any concrete regulative mechanism besides connoting to normative perceptions of 'best practice' and to a 'social obligation' to behave in accordance with the intentions described in the document. In relation to both the active social policy laws and the government order of *means of evaluating working capacity*, the answers to both questions are 'yes'. However in the case of the policy tool of the *referral guide*

the answers are 'yes' to the first question and a possible 'yes' to the next. The guidance note may be presented as 'pure inspiration', however it is unlikely that a violation of 'this inspiration' would occur without any legal consequences. In relation to the final institution of 'professional norms' the answers to both questions would be 'no'. However, in the following, I am not introducing the professional norms as they look like in the field, but only how they are shaped by the educational content of 'social work'. Even though all official announcements are part of the hierarchical system, the content of professionalism in for example social work stems from the field of social work itself. Therefore, the answer to the first question becomes a 'no'.

In this sense, there is a hint of regulation and formalization attached to a document as *quid pro quo* stemming from the government, because of its addressee: in this case the principal. Nevertheless, there are no legally sanctions or coercive mechanisms ascribed to this type of document. In other words, a policy document describing the idea of government has no legal authority. What the governmental discourse does is aiming at translating concrete policy intentions into a larger political strategy of government using for example the formalized channels of communications to 'spread the discourse'. However, such a discourse has no formalized options for sanctions. Instead, as I will illustrate in the following analysis of the document, it connotes the recipients' worldviews through metaphors and symbols, which, politically speaking, is 'taken for granted' and assumed to reflect 'culturally supported' values shared by the majority of the public. Nevertheless, in practice, such a discourse is of course made within the purpose of working as a tool to shape moral and professional judgments of 'the world' and it therefore contains a crucial aspect of a normative institution (Scott 1995: 52).

Guidance directions such as the *means of evaluating working capacities* and the referral guide are in this optic easier to handle. They are used to connect law intention with actual work conditions and even though they are interpretations of the law, they are still part of the institutional content of a policy program. Therefore, the active social law as well as the guidance notes used in practice will be presented and analyzed to understand the formalized political institutions governing the area of active social policy today.

However, even though the basis of legitimacy of formal rules such as the active social laws were said to be legally sanctioned, Stone argues that such examples of regulative institutions must also be legitimate in the sense of complying with the normative basis. This point aims at another perspective of institutions than what was presented above: according to Stone, a certain correspondence must exist to secure efficiency. Some kind of 'shared ground' must exist between for example the normative institutions shaping the pro-

fessionalism of social workers in this case and the legally sanctioned rules they are subjected to follow in their daily work. According to Stone, this function of ‘merging different bases of legitimacy’ is what scales down political conflicts in ‘real life’. According to Stone, a rule is hence considered legitimate, when the intention of it corresponds to the individual’s perception of right and wrong and hence the legitimate rule is perceived as a tool to achieve certain political goals.

Rules are indirect commands that work over time (...) Rules derive their enormous power from legitimacy, the quality of being perceived as good and right by those whose behavior they are meant to control. Legitimacy binds rule-follower to rule-maker (...) Legitimacy is in some sense the political scientist’s equivalent of the economist’s invisible hand: we know it exists as a force that holds societies together, but we cannot give very satisfactory explanations of how to create it or why it is sometimes very strong and sometimes seems to disappear. Nevertheless, we can say that rules work best when they are perceived as legitimate (Stone 2002: 285).

From this perspective, regulative formal rules, and governmental normative policy documents can both be legitimate for as long as they can be used by individuals to express an argument that link the given political intention to a concrete act or practice.

In order to gain more knowledge about the institutional arrangements in the welfare program of active social policy and of their interaction, the street-level bureaucracy in the active social policy is a suitable locus for study. This gives opportunity to analyze the particular institutional set-up expected to condition the relationship between solidarity form and categorization practice in Danish Job centers. The street level makes the context where the bureaucrats meet the citizens, and therefore it is also the place where rules and social constructions of the deserving and the ‘truly needy’ meet the private stories of suffering, misery, and complaints of the assistance-seeking citizens, who claim a need for public help and welfare.¹⁵

5.2 Laws of active social policy

Literature suggests that societies always have tried to prevent citizens from destabilizing the collective consciousness as regards violation of the political

¹⁵ Whether they actual have a right to raise demands for economic compensation and political rights to sustain their living standard is not part of the question here and will not be included as a component in the following descriptions or analyses of active social policy. The perspective is kept down to a study of how the individual street level of bureaucracy responds to certain political institutions of importance and to fictive client cases.

incentives to work and contribution to the common welfare (Stone 1984). This is another way of saying that the reciprocal logic of solidarity has always been supported by society. Literature also suggests that the public perceives certain social groups as more deserving than others to public support without questioning their lack of contribution. According to the deservingness literature, the two most defining social groups contain ‘the elderly’ and ‘the sick’ (van Oorschoot 2000; Petersen et al. 2007).¹⁶ At an individual level, however, empirical studies show that such distinctions between deserving and non-deserving social groups are difficult to establish objectively (Meershoek et al. 2007; Mik-Meyer 2003). The question of studying access to welfare hence becomes a question of analyzing how the entitlement criteria to public support are organized in particular welfare programs and supported through the particular institutions in the programs. Consequently it becomes a matter of identifying how these arrangements create reasons for grouping citizens into different categories at an individual level. Compared to Chapter 4, welfare programs are often analyzed as expressions of macro welfare state regime typologies, typically defined by type of economic redistribution and public help-mechanisms. The basic difference was hence identified as being between the universal and the residual model’s criterion of eligibility.

Ultimately public support is about on what legitimate basis it should be possible to exclude some citizens from contributing to society through work by giving them social and political rights and privileges to continue being equal members of society (Stone 1984). In the following, the three current laws in the field of active social policy are described: 1) law of sickness benefits; 2) law of active social policy (social welfare); and 3) law of active job creation effort. The three laws exemplify regulative institutions designed to structure the legal frame of the categorization practice of social workers. Their target groups are not identical, however the laws all aim at supporting organized as well as non-organized citizens who are disabled, sick or by other reasons unemployed.

5.2.1 Law of sickness benefits

Sickness benefit applicants are categorized according to their concrete prognoses for returning to the labor market and unemployed according to their matching capacity with the labor market. In practice, this means that only citizens with a clear labor market prognosis do not get to meet a street-level bureaucrat. Instead, they are categorized in accordance with a judgment based on health documents as a case that either returns or never returns to

¹⁶ Children are not included as a category, because modern welfare states do not count or treat children as workers.

the labor market. However, at some point, the assistance-seeking citizens, who are included in Category 2, will meet with a social worker, and the majority will have their working capacities clarified as part of the decision-making about the right to sickness benefits. This practice most likely includes the majority of the unemployed sick citizens because the required exact prognoses for future labor engagement only in practice includes terminal patients and short-termed disabled persons (broken legs, broken arms, surgery recovery etc.). The law of sickness benefits is designed to do as follows:

to pay economic compensation by absence because of illness/sickness, to assist in getting the unfit for work to regain his or her labor ability and to return to the labor force as quickly as possible and to support the partnership between municipalities, firms, and other relevant actors to reduce and prevent sickness absence (Law no 563 of 09/066/2006, Chapter 1, §1).

The law of sickness benefits supports a right to remain a legitimate member of a political society despite of working incapacities. The individual in this law is not compared to a collective consciousness, but is instead acknowledged as a person with functional limitations. The following lists the target groups of the active social law:

- 1) wage earners
- 2) self-employed tradesmen
- 3) unemployed with a right to unemployment benefit.
- 4) persons, who have brought on an industrial injury, which is covered by law of industrial injury insurance or law of protection of consequences of industrial injury (Law no 563 of 09/066/2006, Chapter 2, §2).

This law exemplifies elements of both universalism and insurance-based principles, because the eligibility criteria are based on a right to unemployment benefit, which is achieved through unemployment insurance. This means that clarification of whether or not a citizen is entitled to sickness benefit can take place only for citizens from the target groups. This right thus depends on whether the required criteria for illness or disability are met by the assistance-seeking citizen. In practice, the categorization practice of citizens applying for sickness benefits therefore depends on professional judgment of what counts as illness and disability.

In relation to the defining welfare state typologies, the law exemplifies an insurance-based program because the eligibility criterion is based on contribution through unemployment insurance. The law of sickness benefits hence represents both mechanical and organic perceptions. On the one hand, the target group criterion is unambiguous and based on an assessment of equal rights to organized, sick unemployed persons, which ascribes to an organic

logic. However, on the other hand, the design of the law displays more ambiguous criteria as for example when illness and disability are the criteria evaluated. The lack of means testing also makes the law more universal and less residual. This means that the eligibility under this law does not depend on the citizen's economy. The law of sickness benefits hence shares the basic characteristic of an insurance-based welfare model inasmuch as 'insurance' through union membership is a condition for eligibility. In relation to forms of solidarity, the law connotes an organic logic since it is a program related to an interdependent arrangement between labor unions and the employers' association. However, the lack of universal rights together with the focus of disability criteria connotes the law to a mechanical solidarity form, because the benefit is targeted through criteria testing and political differentiations (between members and non-members).

5.2.2 Law of active social policy (social welfare)

The law of active social policy governs the right to social welfare. It is based on a principle of unemployment prevention, and on a principle of obligation for active job seeking. The law is designed to do as follows:

to prevent that persons who have or may get difficulties in sustaining a job get a need for assistance to be supported, and
to create an economic safety net for anyone who in no other way can provide what is necessary for oneself and one's family (Act No. 1460 of 12/12/2007, Chapter 1, §1)

The law is not targeted at particular social groups, but is a residual right applicable to every citizen residing in Denmark. In order to be considered eligible to receive social welfare, the following basic conditions must be met:

- 1) the applicant has experienced changes e.g. in relation to disability, unemployment or discontinuance of co-habitation,
- 2) the changes have left the applicant without opportunity to provide what is necessary to support oneself or one's family, and
- 3) the need is not being covered through other benefits (Act No. 1460 of 12/12/2007, Chapter 4, §11).

These basic conditions show an example of a means-tested residual program, where the economic status of the citizen is a decisive criterion for eligibility. In addition, 'need' and 'cooperation' are added as extra conditions to the means testing, which challenge the universal character of citizenship-based eligibility, because these criteria point at targeting the benefits to the 'truly needy' assistance-seeking citizens. In addition to these three basic criteria of eligibility, the following conditions must also be met:

(1) it is a condition to receive assistance according to section 11, that the applicant and spouse do not have a fair job offer, and that they are actively trying to use their work opportunities. (2) The municipality has an obligation to judge whether a person, who has applied for assistance or receives assistance under section 11 still meets the conditions for the assistance by using the work opportunities, if the person:

- refuses an arranged job,
- stays away from a job interview or a CV-interview with the state or the municipality in the job center or with another actor or from a judgment of availability with the municipality in the job center,
- stays away from a follow-up interview in the municipality,
- abstains from communicating to the state in the job center, the municipality or the employer in cases of disability, where the unemployed has been giving an offer provided by the statute of an active job creation effort or shall encounter a job interview with an employer,
- abstains from informing about disability to the municipality in cases, where the unemployed is summoned to a disability follow-up interview or
- refuses or stays away from participating in arrangements as part of a disability follow-up interview (Act No. 1460 of 12/12/2007, Chapter 4, §13).

If these conditions are violated by the citizen while receiving social welfare, sanctions can be executed as payments reductions or even as termination of benefit payment (Act No. 1460 of 12/12/2007, Chapter 4, §41).

The law of active social policy thus consists mainly of residual components, because of the way the eligibility criteria are conditioned and because of the presence of economic sanctions as a regulatory institution. This law hence makes an example of a residual law that aims at selecting the 'truly needy' from the 'self-imposed needy'. The law is therefore best characterized as a residual law that corresponds to a mechanical logic of solidarity.

Even though means testing in social welfare has always been part of the way eligibility was determined, one should notice that the impact has shifted on several areas: the character of the casework is not means testing of the assistance-seeking citizens' financial needs as much as it is 'need' and 'cooperation' testing of assistance-seeking citizens in order to clarify 'the reality' of their working capacity. This shift has been analyzed in sociological literature as examples of a reappearance of philanthropic institutions and as a mechanical solidarity form, which dominated the regulation between the state and the assistance-seeking citizens prior to the development of the Danish social liberal welfare regime (Villadsen 2004). The primary aim of the social worker according to the law is to evaluate how assistance-seeking citizens can be legitimately excused from not contributing to society. In this sense, the law of active social policy draws on a reciprocal, mechanical logic of solidarity that

corresponds to a residual welfare program, but also to an insurance-based principle of targeting benefits to ‘truly needy’ citizens.

5.2.3 Law of an active job creation effort

The final law, which is of special importance to the categorization study, is the law of active job creation effort. The law is designed to do as follows:

To contribute to an efficient labor market by 1) assisting job applicants to get a job, 2) give service to private and public employers, who seek manpower, or who seek to maintain employees in employment, 3) assist cash- and start welfare benefit recipients and unemployed employment benefit claimants as quickly and effectively as possible, to obtain employment to be able to support themselves and their family, and 4) support persons with special needs for assistance to get a job because of limitations in working capacity (Act No. 439 of 29/05/2008, Chapter 1, §1).

The law is designed to embrace all unemployed as well as citizens on sick leave except those, who are terminal or have been evaluated as candidates for incapacity benefit (Act no 439 of 29/05/2008, Chapter 2). This law is more difficult to describe than the previous two, because it is designed to benefit the labor market and not the citizens. This law lies between being a law and a policy tool in the sense that it aims at describing the boundaries for which citizens (target group) should be exposed to the central policy tools in active social policy. In this respect, the law is a means to support ‘need testing’ program and therefore it must be seen as primarily supporting a residual program, which again supports a mechanical perception of what defines ‘the truly needy’. The object of the law is also to support an effective evaluation of manpower problems, which could of course be both a symbol of organic and mechanical solidarity: organic, because both the labor unions and their members have an interest in supporting employment strategies; but mechanical, because the means to do so will erase the difference between the labor market and the individual needs for employment.

In the next part, the policy tools available for social workers at the job centers that administer the above-mentioned laws will be presented.

5.3 Policy tools in active social policy

Within governing regulative political institutions, formal rules and government orders are of course the most regulative ones compared to policy tools such as guidance notes and white papers, which exist to assist bureaucrats in their decision-making process. The field of active social policy makes no difference at this point. Street-level bureaucrats, who meet and evaluate the unemployed, base their judgments within the frame of the above-mentioned

laws and orders. However, the policy tools work as essential supplements in the professional policy-making, where the laws must be interpreted and form the basis for real-life decisions. One could say that policy tools help the street-level bureaucrat – the social worker in this case – to link between the intention with the law and the administrative ‘reality’ as well as they are used to link the ‘social reality’ of the citizen to the political intentions described in the law. Social workers in this field make decisions about for example availability or an active job creation effort. In the field of active social policy, two essential tools to realize the implementation of the intended policy: the *means of evaluating working capacity*, and the *referral guide*.

The *means of evaluating working capacity* is a tool to help social workers evaluate the working capacity of citizens in a systematic and similar way, and the means aim primarily at securing the legal rights of the citizen. The *referral guide* is meant to assist social workers that evaluate disabled citizens to make judgments about the assumed long-term impact of the disability on the working capacity. Both documents make part of the guidance notes used under the law of active social policy, the law of an active job creation effort, and the law of sickness benefits.

5.3.1 Means of evaluating working capacity

However, because of the abolition of freedom of methods in the field of active social policy, the *means of evaluating working capacity* is in practice a government order with a dense regulative character. The *means of evaluating working capacity* is described as stemming from the following:

[T]he value change in social policy, which was introduced in the beginning of the 1980s and as the social reform in 1998 and latest the agreement about the broad/elastic labor market and the incapacity benefit reform are expressions of (...) The view of human nature can be formulated in the active sentence: ‘I can’. ‘I can’ means that all humans can do something (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 21).

The means of evaluating working capacity is designed to do as follows:

[E]nsure that persons, which have a connection with the labor market, in reality also get an opportunity to use this working capacity through a job (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 20).

In addition the *means of evaluating working capacity* is intended to support the following:

A clarification and a development process in cooperation with the citizen. The aim is to clarify or develop the working capacity in preparation of full or partial self-support.

And finally the purpose of the means in relation to the social worker is to be able to perform a qualified service:

A qualified and systematic documentation through the entire process of case-work. The aim is to be able to make correct decisions about the grounding of support (Social Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 20).

Besides describing the design, the intention, and the purpose of the policy tool, the document includes a definition of what is politically meant by 'working capacity'.

Working capacity is defined as follows:

[T]he capacity to meet the demands of the labor market in order to carry out different concretely specified tasks in preparation of earning an income to be self-supported (explanatory memorandum to the reform of early retirement pension (guidance notes No. 137) and change of active law (guidance notes no. 136)).

The introduction of the *means of evaluating working capacity* in 2001 did not only break with former values in social policy, but also, as already mentioned, with the freedom of method in the casework of social workers. Since this freedom of method was perceived as partly responsible for discriminating decision-making among street-level bureaucrats, the *means of evaluating working capacity* was presented as a tool to prevent discrimination between citizens and to strengthen their legal rights. Part of the method has been presented as a tool to make a resource profile of assistance-seeking citizens with a threatened working capacity. Official standards are applied when describing the case of a citizen and the basic principle as to focus more on the citizens' resources and only to a lesser degree on their limitations. The objective in evaluating working capacities is hence to make the social worker capable of creating a comprehensive evaluation of the citizen's resources and needs for assistance to get back into the labor force. Therefore, the intention is to make what is described in the note as a 'match' between the labor market's needs and the unemployed citizen's working capacity (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 16; 32). In practice, this 'match' is made between the resource descriptions in the resource profile of the citizen and the employer's manpower seeking, which is arranged by the job centre.

The categorizing principle in the means of evaluating working capacity is to classify 12 aspects of the citizen:

1) education, 2) labor market experience, 3) interests, 4) social competences, 5) change capacity, 6) learning ability, 7) relevant job wishes, 8) performance ex-

pectations, 9) work identity, 10) housing- and financial situation, 11) social network, and 12) health¹⁷ (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 41-52).

The means of evaluating working capacity is used when the labor ability is seen as threatened in relation to both insured and uninsured citizens. The action categories used by social workers administering the law of active social policy are the MATCH-categories, which classify citizens into five categories describing degrees of matching capacities with the labor market. Category 1 equals a direct match, and Category 5 includes citizens estimated as having no matching capacity at all with the labor market. Citizens in Category 2 tend to be administered as citizens in Category 1 and citizens categorized as 4 together with citizens in Category 5. Category 3 displays a grey zone, where citizens with ambiguous characteristics and problems are being classified (National Labour Market Authority (nd): 7). Category 2 can be compared to the Category 2 in the administration of sickness benefits, which includes sick, insured citizens with an unclear labor market prognosis. Thus, the resource profile method based on evaluating the 12 components is also used here to clarify and evaluate the working capacity and the further categorization (as a Category 1 or 3 in the sickness benefit system) of the citizen.

5.3.2 Referral guide

Besides the *means of evaluating working capacity*, which used a hierarchical 5-step categorization scheme based on descriptions of the citizen's match with the labor market, there is yet another important guidance note. This applies especially to casework with sickness benefits (but also to social welfare, when health becomes an issue in casework) and reflects three categories. The classifying principle in the referral guide is labor prognosis. Category 1 includes citizens with a clear and positive prognosis in relation to re-entering the market: disabled claimants with for example a broken leg or other similar disabilities. Category 2 includes risk cases (and are typically profiled using the match-categories described in the previous section), and Category 3 includes assistance-seeking citizens with a negative labor market prognosis. The last category counts disabilities such as for example terminal cancer patients (National Labour Market Authority 2009). The guide is made in order to describe diagnoses in relation to treatment options to assist social workers in making a match between the disability profile of the citizen and the political institutional perception of what counts as a 'real' disability. In this respect, the guide is a shortcut to information about where to gather health docu-

¹⁷ In Chapter 10, 'health' is used as a case to study evaluation practice in the casework of social workers from the laws of sickness benefits and social welfare. In both laws, health constitutes the dominant reasons why citizens seek public support.

ments about sick and disabled citizens. In addition, social workers can find descriptions of when a diagnosis can be expected to be serious and when a diagnosis is expected to cover a 'negative motivational attitude' toward returning to the labor market. In this sense, the tool helps the social worker understand medical reasoning during evaluation processes of citizens with health issues. The referral guide is described as follows:

[an] assisting tool in the casework of sickness benefits, which support both visitation/re-visitiation, categorization and follow-up in current casework of sickness benefits (National Labour Market Authority 2009).

The guide describes diagnoses as well as the expected patterns of sick roles associated with certain types of illnesses. Thereby the guide is an important policy tool to select the 'truly needy' from 'the others' by exposing examples of alerting signs of potential malingering attitudes in a case. In particular, pain and chronic fatigue diagnoses are mentioned as diagnoses 'typically' used by potential malingering citizens. These diagnoses are also included as examples of Category 2 cases, which define the risk category with respect to labor market prognosis (National Labour Market Authority 2009: section about chronic pain such as fibromyalgia and whiplash).

The laws and the policy tools stem from the law-making process in the political system, and thus they reflect the dominating political ideas, interests, and intentions. They also embody what welfare state studies refers to as a welfare program's policy theory, and they visualize the essence of the principles used in welfare state literature to distinguish between different welfare state regimes as discussed in Chapter 4. Besides the obvious institutional characteristics of laws and guidance notes, they also reflect communal values about what count as the basis of solidarity. They do so by articulating certain communal and universal values that represent certain types of normative relations between the citizen and the state. In the following, some conclusive remarks are made on the expected impacts of the formal, regulative political institutions.

In Denmark, the current active social policy is designed to 'bridge between the unemployed and the labor market'. The perspective is 'activism' and 'resources' and originates from an opposition to former rhetoric and policy intentions retrospectively conceived as embedded in 'passivism' and 'limitations'.¹⁸ This storytelling inscribes the current social policy in a mechanical

¹⁸ Please note that these attributes of passivism have been assigned to the former policy line by the political promoters of the current line in order to devaluate the former political worldview and to frame the current policy line as progressive and future-oriented.

form of solidarity, because the status of the individual as a person is reduced to a role of supporting the communal values of society as they are framed by the policy. The deviations from the collective consciousness about working motivation are being sanctioned in the law of active social policy and supported through the policy tools of the *means of evaluating working capacities* and the *referral guide*.

To summarize at this point, the welfare program of active social policy seems to be primarily embedded in an idea about deservingness to welfare.

The difference between the target groups described in the three laws and the categories described in the guidance notes is rather abstract in the sense that the laws refer to a level of intentions corresponding to the rhetorical categories in the policy-making process. On the other hand, the guidance notes refer to a practice aiming at describing real citizens and therefore set out what has been described as ‘action categories’ by Martin Rein and Donald Schon (1996). The actual difference between the laws of active social policy and the political discourse about the policy has not yet been discussed. Before I introduce what will be referred to as the ‘voice of government’, the following part briefly presents the normative and informal institution of the social workers’ ‘own’ professional norms.

5.4 The professionalism of social work

Even though the empirical studies do not aim at evaluating the degree of correspondence between the professional norms of social work and the political expectation how social workers fill out their professional role, it becomes important to draw up the fundamental content in order to know what ‘to look for’ in the empirical study. As will be described in the end of this chapter, the social workers’ use of professional norms is one of the three measures of solidarity perceptions in the empirical analyses.

In Chapter 3 corporations were explained as entities where the individuals are mechanically bonded as equal members of e.g. an association sharing the same interests and professional ethics. Corporations were also described as associations linked in organic solidarity through perceptions of professional knowledge about social problems, relations, and causal relations. Thus, social workers are members of a professional corporation based on shared ethics for practice, and at the same time they represent a corporative ethic of social work in society. This suggests how they have reasons to categorize citizens in accordance with both internal (mechanical) and external (organic) rationalities. The empirical question of course is which one of these rationalities dominates when the social worker categorizes assistance-seeking citizens. Nevertheless, before such a question can be dealt with empirically, the content of their professionalism must be known in order to find out what to ex-

pect from the differences in their concrete use of professional norms. Also, it is important to find out what to expect in relation to how such norms are involved in the way solidarity affects categorization practice.

A distinction between social workers' authoritative role and their social professional role is appropriate in order to understand their different roles as street-level bureaucrats. This is done analytically by distinguishing between administrative and social pedagogical norms: the first type of norm reflects a rule-based norm, and the second type reflects a help-based norm. The reason why help-based norms are considered social pedagogical is because the education of social workers is structured around exercising professional efforts towards assistance-seeking citizens by making what is defined as 'a comprehensive perspective' of the citizen. And the reason why rule-based norms are considered as administrative is because the education aims at educating street-level bureaucrats, who administer and work within a legal frame.

5.4.1 The professional basis of diplomas and bachelors of social work

Chapter 9 will give an analysis of the social workers' use of professional norms as a tracer of solidarity perceptions according to an argument about how aspects of both rule-based and social pedagogical norms are associated with performing the job as a social worker in the welfare program of active social policy. Chapter 9 explains how this distinction is expected to relate to different solidarity perceptions representing organic and a mechanical forms of solidarity.

In Denmark, social workers can take an education as either diplomas or bachelors of social work. The education of bachelor of social work is administered by the Professional College of Social Work and the education of diploma of social work, is administered by the Danish School of Public Administration (EVA 2001: 9). The differences between the two educations are fewer than the similarities. The differences are related to the organization of the education and to the admission requirements (Knudsen 2007: 42) The two educations are very similar and they target the same administrative and social tasks in public administration and in street-level bureaucracies. Both educations include the following fields:

1. social work;
2. psychological and psychiatric field,
3. legal field, and
4. social science field (Act no. 1004: § 6; Act no. 536: § 8).

Accordingly, the social workers must acquire knowledge of how the fields understand the relations between society and the individual. Moreover, in

relation to the social science field, the social worker must adapt an understanding of how social problems are related to the conditions of the labor market policy. However, literature suggests that in practice social workers are 'split' between an authoritative role and a caseworker role. Furthermore, this difference corresponds to the difference between a social pedagogical and an administrative approach. An evaluation shows how this difference seems to correlate with educational background in the sense that a social worker educated as a bachelor from the Professional College of Social Work is influenced by a social pedagogical rather than an administrative approach. In contrast, social workers educated as diplomas from the Danish School of Public Administration were more inclined to act as an authority than as a caseworker towards the assistance-seeking citizen (EVA 2001: 100). However, studies point in different directions. A study rejects the thesis that bachelors identify themselves less with the authoritative role than the diplomas (Knudsen 2007: 83). As for the theoretical argument, I do not expect the found difference to prevail. Perceptions of both solidarity forms are expected to exist in all people including social workers, and their reason to express solidarity perceptions through their use professional norms is hence also expected to characterize all kinds of social workers regardless of educational background. However, in order to be able to establish this assumption, social workers must be selected from both educations to make sure that the potential findings are not caused by differences in educational background. The important thing here is simply to make clear that both educations contain administrative and social pedagogical elements. Therefore, I expect that social workers' use of both types of professional norms regardless of their educational background.

The way I expect these professional norms to contain solidarity perceptions are as follows: From the perspective of the laws and the policy tools of active social policy, I expect an administrative and rule-based professional norm to activate a mechanical solidarity perception, because the actual regulative institutions are dominated by what has been described as a residual and a mechanical logic. However, when and if social workers use a social pedagogical approach, which means to understand the individual from many perspectives and to make a professional comprehensive evaluation, I expect that they do so in accordance with an organic solidarity perception. Such an approach requires that the person is perceived through many perspectives and not through a comparison with particular communal values.

In the following, the opaque institutions such as the policy document *quid pro quo* written by the government and a description from the Ministry of Social Affairs about the political perception of social work will be set forth. As will become clear, this perception captures a social pedagogical logic of pro-

fessionalism, which to a certain degree complies with the educational descriptions of the professionalism of the field.

5.5 The political construction of public problems

Not only institutions come in many different shapes and forms. The same can be said about the political perceptions of public problems. This makes them difficult to trace directly in relation to for example the impact on the institutional context of the welfare program of active social policy. The following gives two examples of such political perceptions of public and social problems. The first example relates to the political perception of how it is politically expected and defined how the social worker should use their professional norms. The second example is about how the government (2004) presents the perception of what counts as problems and solutions.

Generally speaking, all public problems become social problems, because they are defined as negatives in contrast to selected positive values shared by society. As a society develops and changes, so do the scope and the content of social problems. What is perceived as a social problem in one period can hence be conceived as normal in another period.¹⁹ Public policies reflect aspects of social and public values, which first of all constitute the legal frame of a given social problem. The role of the state in such matters can be analyzed from many perspectives; including from a regulative and a normative point of view. To exemplify this point, in the following quote Durkheim refers to the state as an organ, which makes representations (materialized through regulative and normative institutions) of the social world in ways that make the majority of citizens identify with the bearing values and norms:

[T]he State is a special organ whose responsibility it is to work out certain representations which hold good for the collectivity (Durkheim 1996: 40) .

Such representations describe perceptions of good performance, standards of competence, interests, as well as perceptions of the problem solving heroes and the problem causing blamers. In social policy this is the case as well.

5.5.1 Causal stories in public policy

Rothstein argues that one must grasp a welfare program's 'causal theory' or its 'policy theory' in order to study its chances of success in the implementation process (Rothstein 1998: 74). Stone is occupied with a similar aspect: the symbolic reality of public policies (Stone 2002: 140-141). Both of these

¹⁹ Examples of phenomena, which have been identified as social problems in some periods, but not in other periods are: homosexuality, masturbation, child abuse etc. (Conrad 2007).

notions point to an identity between the welfare program's (the active social policy) 'causal theory' and the individuals' (the social workers) perceptions of what defines the particular problem. In that sense a welfare program such as the active social policy is said to embrace a sense of justice combining the practical rationality among social workers with the political rationality behind the law.

It is said among policy analysts, that a program's *causal theory*, or its *policy theory*, must be correct for its successful implementation to be possible. Providing the unemployed, for example, with a type of training not demanded on the labor market would not seem to enhance their prospects for finding work, even if the training itself is of high quality (Rothstein 1998: 74).

It is not entirely clear what Rothstein means by a 'successful implementation' however it may be a 'legitimate implementation'. From this quote we can hence deduct the thesis that the intensified focus on labor activation demands in the active social policy may reduce the possibility for a 'legitimate' implementation, if it turns out that the aim of the efforts are political rather than labor market focused. In other words, if job activation does not integrate citizens into the labor market, the program's legitimacy and the implementation success rate is expected to decrease. The political basis of every policy hence represents certain reasons for why and how society should intervene in assistance-seeking citizens' lives in order to enhance their prospects for finding a job. In this relation, the basic starting point in an effective policy is to pin out and confine the symbolic boundaries for which types of causality perceptions of the social that count as 'reality', and furthermore as objects within the realm of the policy. In practice, such perceptions, in order to be effective of course must be 'attached' to the principle of a given program, which connote certain worldviews. To achieve this, the policy-maker must know which causal stories are accepted as legitimate and 'taken for granted' by a majority of the public. In that respect, perception of causality becomes a matter of solidarity where the policy maker can choose to ground a perception of what is believed to 'make the social world go round' to a representation of either an interdependent reality or a reciprocal reality. Both forms of solidarity perceptions are expected to exist in society. However, it is not an easy task to predict exactly how such causal perceptions of solidarity affect an actual categorization practice in 'real' life. The empirical question becomes how a worldview understanding affects a categorization in practice. What role does the perception of causality and solidarity play in relation to categorization?

Categorical resolution allows for the provision of welfare to categories of citizens without having to define them as lesser citizens. The innovation of the

modern welfare state was the invention of categories of *faultlessness* in which a person could be both citizen and in need (Stone 1984: 24).

The categorization practice within the field of social policy can hence be said to have to do with identifying those with a legitimate reason not to work. This implies how the principles behind a legitimate boundary drawing in categorization practices of welfare programs is about setting out social and political rights and about preventing 'disadvantaged' citizens from being economically marginalized and socially excluded from 'the good society'.

Finally, a social observer cannot fail to notice that disability entails (or may entail) at least as much political privilege because, as an administrative category, it carries with it permission to enter the need-based system. It can also provide exemption from other things people normally consider worth avoiding: military service, debt, and criminal liability. Disability programs are political precisely because they allocate these privileges. The evolution of contemporary programs must be seen in this context, and the intense political interest in disability benefit programs in recent years can be understood if we see that the fight is about privilege rather than handicap or stigma (Stone 1984: 28).

In addition to this legitimate 'exemption'-making, it becomes understandable why the boundary drawing in social policy always considers which types of disabilities to categorize as not being self-inflicted. Furthermore, because of the political character of boundary drawing in categorization practice, which constitute and represent the general principle of the legitimate exemption from contribution to the labor market, the study of such practices must be identified in casework where the boundary is fuzzy and ambiguous. In the available policy tools advising the social workers how to categorize citizens according to the law of active social policy, certain social groups are described as marking this fuzzy boundary. This includes framing of particular groups, which include chronic pain patients with contested diagnoses. They are portrayed as suffering from problems that are not recognized as legitimate excuses not to work. Social problems of this character are not perceived as eligible to welfare, because pain – in this case – is framed as an individual and a psychological matter and not as a social problem objectified adequately enough to be proved as not being self-inflicted. Instead, they are framed as individual barriers within the same type of categories such as 'motivational problems', 'free rider' incentives and resistant attitudes (National Labour Market Authority 2009).

According to Stone, the basic dilemma in welfare policy is how to define a social problem and consequently how to distinguish it from an individual problem, because only problems of a social character are considered as public responsibilities that make such problems eligible to public help-strategies.

This aspect of what shapes a boundary drawing in the political decision-making at the street-level bureaucracy is related to Rothstein's notion of the role played by the social perception of 'self-responsibility' as well as to the thesis that ordinary human problems become medicalized by society in the attempt to provide assistance-seeking citizens with 'objective and legitimate excuses not to work' (Conrad 2007). However, they focus on another aspect of the problem: what happens when professionals turn ordinary problems into illness and diagnoses and thereby take away the citizens' fundamental right of self-determination and self-responsibility.

Nevertheless, the degree and the type of tolerance towards disability is here assumed to depend on the character of the normative and informal institutions reflecting the political perception of social problems, the regulative and formal institutions constituting the particular welfare program including the particular policy tools available to the social workers. Consequently, these institutions reflect general perceptions of social problems. By tolerating only some types of needs, they can activate certain public perceptions of deservingness and entitlement with a political purpose. Brodtkin (1993); van Oorschoot (2000), Schneider and Ingram (1993) all pointed at a similar political function of the relation between public policies and public perceptions through their studies of the impact of deservingness criteria and the aim of social constructions of target populations in the political system.

Ultimately, this is a question of how and for what purpose individuals are put into different categories. Even though Stone does not explicitly include solidarity as a concept in her analyses, I argue that she deals with essential aspects of policy-making similar to the study of how and why solidarity perceptions are expected to matter in relation to categorization of assistance-seeking citizens. Stone regards battles over disability categories as being related to a symbolic boundary drawing between those who contribute and those who do not. The relationship between these two systems, however, is perceived as interdependent in her studies and seems to reflect very well what Durkheim understands as organic solidarity. However, she also points out the symbolic reality of the reciprocal distinction between contributors and non-contributors. What is important in this context is the fundamental thesis that what has a symbolic value also possesses a power to affect 'reality' as already discussed in relation to Durkheim's concepts of representations of solidarity in Chapter 3. Moreover, because a symbolic value has a political character, the distinction between contributors and non-contributors is constructed through discursively linking the political aim with what can be expected to be 'taken for granted' by the public. This is typically done in policy documents by making metaphorical references to perceptions of who are the

heroes, the blamers, and the deserving needy as well as to socially shared perceptions of malingering and undeserving individuals. In other words, the symbolic power of a social construction is expected to make social stereotypes effective tools to integrate and combine political and social purposes even within bureaucratic, weberian contexts such as the street-level bureaucracy.

At this point, where solidarity and institutions supporting an organic solidarity such as the idea and the concrete administration behind the public organization of welfare are rarely mentioned, it is important to notice that the nature of constructing social problems through stereotypes of socially shared feelings of reciprocal justice is basically mechanical. The process of defining the deserving compared to the process of defining universal principles for entitlement is done with reference to shared perceptions of what makes integration in small, norm-based communities such as the reciprocal institutions in a family or in another similar social group, where the value of the whole is formulated as depending on the value of the individual. Therefore, social constructions of stereotypes almost automatically activates a mechanic logic of solidarity, because the dependent citizen associates a state of defenselessness, which reminds most people of how they relate to weaker family members such as children or frail old parents. Such associations combine our compassion for others with obligations from our family lives. Hence they prevail over connotations to our abstract national identity and over our narrow group and self interests, which are located in different kinds of rational memberships of communities and associations. In opposition to such an activation of mechanical solidarity is the framing of unemployment as a structural and universal social problem.

Henceforth, in order to be able to capture such defining associations of the public and of the individuals, it may be fruitful to approach the matter as fundamental 'struggles for the control of ambiguity' (Stone 2002: 138). If the interpretation scheme of a certain arbitrary description is controlled, then it enhances the definition power of what is counted as objects and subjects in a given political context.

Consequently, social problems are political due to their ability to reflect particular values and boundaries for what can be tolerated within a given community. The identity or the social cohesion of such a community hence becomes defining for what is perceived as a problem. The communications of such problems are an equivalent to Durkheim's argument about symbolic and metaphorical representations of solidarity. For that reason, I argue that the process of communicating social problems can be seen as an act of solidarity (re)production through a politically representative problem definition. To substantiate this argument, I refer to Stone, who defines a particular problem

definition as a matter of making a political strategy normatively powerful and legally regulative:

Problem definition is a matter of representation because every description of a situation is a portrayal from only one of many points of view. Problem definition is strategic because groups, individuals, and government agencies deliberately and consciously fashion portrayals so as to promote their favored course of action (Stone 2002: 133).

Moreover, a social problem is often explained in accordance with a causal presentation of cause, conditions and effects. In the following, some of the prevailing causal stories about current social problems are presented in relation to first the political perception of professionalism in social work and next in relation to a government policy document published in 2004.

5.5.2 Political perception of professionalism in social work

In part 5.4 the basic elements of the content of the social workers professionalism was described in relation to the announcements of the field. However, in order to describe the 'fixed' institutional context of the active social policy welfare program, the following describes the political system's perception of what defines professionalism in social work. Even though the political document of *quid pro quo* describes a reciprocal representation of solidarity, which is expected to matter as a normative institution, the political perception of the professional norms of social workers is described in order to show how it draws on perceptions of social problems related to the aspect of an organic solidarity about the 'cult of the individual'. The current descriptions of the political perception of the social workers' professional norms are included with the purpose of showing how the political system addresses different solidarity perceptions within the same welfare program.

As described in the previous part, the policy tool of *means of evaluating working capacity* is based on an assumption about the social workers' professional norms. According to the Ministry of Social Affairs, social professionalism is expected to include knowledge about the following:

- social relations, among these knowledge about how social problems appear and how they are solved.
- labor market relations.
- organizations, cultures and processes.
- psychological relations.
- communication, dialogue with and human resource building.
- legislation, including administrative law and due process law as well as casework and exercise of authority.
- methods in social work (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 36).

In addition to these elements, which the policy document use to define and confine what should be perceived as professionalism in social work, social workers are expected to be capable of judging citizens objectively leaving subjective attitudes aside:

The social worker must in the job exercise be aware that the discretions made in the casework is not due to personal attitudes and values, but to professional explanations and frames of understanding as well as to reflected experience from practice (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 36).

The policy tool from the Ministry of Social Affairs ultimately defines a social professional judgment of a citizen's working capacity as:

A professional discretion is a social worker's judgment of the information and documentaion gathered to evaluate the resources of the citizen in relation to the labor market. The judgment is not causal. It is based on the information of the citizen and the collaborator, analyzed and compared to the social worker's social professional knowledge and experience from practice (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 37).

Even though the active social policy until now has been characterized as dominated by mechanical solidarity, the role of the social worker is presented by the Ministry of Social Affairs as a person with a professionalism that corresponds to an organic form of solidarity using a social pedagogical approach to the assistance-seeking citizen, because professional 'knowledge about how social problems appear' presupposes a functional perspective on the citizen's disabilities rather than a particular normative perspective. In opposition to the social professional function, the social worker is also expected to act as an authority. Thus, the social worker must perform a double role as an authoritative 'gate keeper' between the distribution of work and the distribution of care, and as a social professional, who to some degree has to act as the advocate of the citizen to assist the assistance-seeking citizen in getting back into the labor market. In the empirical analyses, the difference in the way social workers use their professional norms is identified according to whether the social worker is predominantly influenced by norms with an administrative, rule-based logic or with a social pedagogical, help-based logic when making professional judgments that shape their categorization practice.

The final document to be presented in this context is the government document that gives an example of a normative institution that falls between the distinction of a regulative and a normative political institution. It shares the characteristic of stemming from the principal of the state with formal rules. However, as a document it has no legal authority besides an interpretative impact on how to transform the policy intention into real policy In the

following, the metaphors and symbols are analyzed in order to illustrate how the government is constructing public and social problems and how these constructions become associated to an omnipotent political strategy of defining the normative relation between the citizen and the state.

5.5.3 The voice of government: ‘*quid pro quo*’

The *quid pro quo* discourse is a government policy document describing 57 initiatives, which are meant to take part in stimulating ‘the exceptional effort from which we all benefit’. The document is a presentation of the political core values in all public policies describing the relation between the state and the citizen. The political document is hence also intended to describe the preferred and intended political attitude in the administration of assistance-seeking citizens. The story line in the document is ‘help’, ‘reward’, and ‘punishment’ and the document is targeted to firms, citizens and public servants in situations where ‘one wishes to encourage the general intention with the law (Regeringen 2004). The document suggests three types of situations where that may be relevant:

1. in situations, where citizens and firms could be sanctioned for not bringing ‘order in one’s house’
2. in situations, where public firms and organizations should be rewarded for doing an exceptional effort, and
3. in situations, where citizens and firms must be motivated through ‘reward arrangements’ in order to do an exceptional effort (2004: 13).

The political aim in the document is to be explicit about the government’s stand on what makes good social cohesion in society. The document addresses ‘citizens’, ‘firms’, ‘public and private organizations’ and thereby defines not only the constituent parts that the government believes society to consist of, but also who will be the deserving welfare recipients. Compared to other political documents where subjects such as ‘children’, ‘young people’, ‘the elderly’, ‘economic and social conditions’ are made political objects, this document confines the elements of the political society to include only these very general and hardly comparable categories. The document’s consistent style of addressing these four groups creates a powerful frame to define and to narrow down the content of society. This is an effective discursive tool in order to be able to determine the nature of the coherent constitutive components of society. Moreover, it creates a political and social identity that ultimately corresponds perfectly with these social constructions of society’s defining components. In other words, the document creates a social reality from which representations of solidarity is consequently needed. The four groups work discursively as signifiers for the whole of society, because they are

based on aspects that can be applied to all individuals and activities in society. In addition, the signifiers function as dividers between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ individuals as well as between ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ activities. Society is hence perceived as containing the following:

citizens: good individuals and bad individuals.

firms and organizations: positive activities and negative activities.

All citizens are hence defined in relation to how they perform in these situations, and similarly all structural phenomena such as social and economic conditions are measured by their outcome of positive or negative activities. Social groups, which usually tend to state political demands, are thereby excluded as political actors in the discourse. The classic political groupings and distinctions between for example categories such as ‘children’, ‘young people’, ‘the elderly’ and ‘the disabled’ are merged into one category of the citizen.

In the preface of the document, the leading principle in the regulation of social activities within society is made explicit. This leading principle is called *quid pro quo*. The preface is used to draw up the political battle lines discursively. As in all kinds of battles, the document defines an enemy. In the preface of the document, the enemy is presented as the negative phenomenon of *consequential vagueness* (1.line 5. Passage, preface). In the following lines the enemy becomes more concrete as the individual who *does not care about the common rules* (1.line 6. Passage, preface). In the last passage such an individual is compared to what Ernesto Laclau has conceptualized as the hegemonic subject, which constitutes the defining ‘us’ (Laclau & Mouffe 1985: 133). ‘Us’ is presented in the document as the part of society representing the ‘good individuals’ and the ‘positive social activities’.

The way the enemy (or the ‘other’) is referred to as -the *consequential vagueness* and the individual who *does not care about the common rules* – is compared to ‘us’ – the hegemonic subject, is in the form of someone who *does an exceptional effort* and who *brings order to the house*. This is done discursively through the construction of a three-line category. As the defining groups of society this three-line scheme of categorization is capable of including all individuals and all activities in society as well as it is capable of distinguishing between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ elements. In order to make the enemy (the ‘other’) comparable to ‘us’ (the hegemonic subject) and hence operational as an effective political tool to evaluate citizen’s moral standards, the distinctions are turned into three basic categories:

society rewards those, who will [work] and can [work]

society helps those, who will [work], but cannot [work]

and soceity punishes those, who can [work] but will not [work] (lines 4- 6, 9. Passage, part 1).

In the preface the signification scheme is constructed for what defines society and what social problems should be suppressed, but also what kind of social and political behavior should be rewarded and punished respectively.²⁰ Ultimately, what Laclau characterizes as ‘a chain of equivalences’ is made between those, *who do not care about the common rules* with *untidiness, disgusting conducts*, and *lack of self-control* as an opposition to those who *bring order to the house* and who *make a positive difference*, which designate the ones who can be named *the decent* (Laclau 1985: 130). In the preface the document hence makes a discursive opposition between *orderliness* and *disorderliness*, which can be used as a political tool to create social order by setting out the criteria for judging between good and bad individual behavior.

In the document’s following section *The aim of ‘quid pro quo’*, the values are made explicit. Here the orderliness theme is continued as a presentation of *trust* as the mechanism explained to be able to ensure the social cohesion in society:

The ‘quid pro quo’ principle builds on trust in citizens and firms. Trust that they are aware of their responsibility – not just towards themselves, but towards society (section 1, line 5, part 1).

Trust is here presented as the central key to ensure a leading principle in society. The concept refers to responsibility, which the addressee (the government) assumes to be known by both citizens and firms. In this sense the meaning of the trust concept is taken for granted as something ‘we’ all know what signifies. But the discursive use of the word ‘trust’ also refers to a merger between the individual and society, because the interests and reasons for both entities are designated as identical. This figure of merging apparently different identities in the political and social reality can be seen as a genealogy of the role of self-responsibility in the welfare state.²¹ It was ‘born’ as an

²⁰ In the following concrete focus areas, you can become ‘hegemonic’ or as it is formulated in the text you can make a positive difference: 1) in relation to integrating ‘new Danes’; 2) in relation to the working environment; and 3) in relation to the environment. In the areas where ‘the Other’ – as the one who *does not care about the common rules* and the *consequential vagueness* – dominate and threaten society five categories are mentioned: 1) pollution; 2) bad working environment; 3) irresponsible food handling practices; 4) violence; and 5) crime.

²¹ Jens Erik Kristensen has argued that such a merging identity is a characteristic which must be seen in relation to an integration between an American political communitarism (Bellah et al. 1986) and a British governance paradigm better known as ‘the third way’ (Kristensen 1996).

authority with responsibility for its subjects, which was later – during the neo-liberal political trends in the 1980s and the 1990s – transformed into self-responsibility in the sense that the state could no longer be held responsible for the individual. Now, the individual should take responsibility for its own life. Communitarism creates the latest displacement in this genealogy of responsibility, which is based on the idea that the individual should take responsibility – not only for its own sake, but also for the sake of society. In the light of this genealogy of the role of self-responsibility, the document represents an example of a displacement of responsibility. It does so by setting out explicitly why society becomes the responsibility of each individual. Or in the language of Durkheim how the will of the collective depends on the will of the individual, because they are integrated through reciprocal relations with a common will and an identical collective consciousness.

‘Quid pro quo’ will in a number of situations contribute in rendering visible how each individual and society can benefit from a certain behavior (section 1, line 1- 4, part 2).

Trust and responsibility are hence embedded in the signification scheme for what defines a particular preferable behavior. This is rendered visible by linking *trust* and *responsibility* in a political project about visualizing the good examples and by *releasing* resources to punish those, who act *neglectfully* in relation to the political focus areas (section 1, line 5, part 6).

The document clarifies how social problems are primarily related to norm breaks performed by criminals. The traditional political room occupied by other categories of social problems is thereby discursively closed. Such traditional categories count the undefined group of the marginalized, the poor, the stigmatized, the disabled etc. The designation of these unambiguous and ‘clear’ law breakers closes the discursive room for whom can be counted as a social problem. The political room is confined and so is the potential resistance towards the ‘political project’ as it appears in the document. In addition to this effective confinement of the political room, the designated group is characterized by being very poorly organized, which eliminates the room for asserting political demands. On a political strategic level, the document hence designates an omnipotent category of social problems incapable of making policy and political resistance.

To summarize at this point, the section determines the general social and political problems, which must be dealt with by society in order to create social cohesion. These problems are constructed as consisting of ‘bad citizens’ and ‘negative activities’ (firms and organizations) that make a negative difference by not *bringing housing order* or by not *caring about the common rules*. The solutions to these problems are precisely capable of rendering visi-

ble the exact value and purpose of *quid pro quo*. In theory, the political perception of what defines social problems reinforces the value of what is meant and represented by 'social cohesion' in society, and they discursively legitimize the hegemonic status of the government.

5.5.4 Metaphors, narratives and symbols

The political discourse of *quid pro quo* uses certain symbols, narratives and metaphors to structure the meaning of the text. The document uses a language where almost each sentence has an ascribed symbolic and metaphorical meaning. By way of example, words and sayings about solidarity constitute the meaning described in the current discourse analysis. Among such words and sayings are the following:

- 'to kill enthusiasts. (Regeringen 2004: 3, 4. section)
- 'to botch one's work environment'. (p. 5, 6. section)
- 'to create a situation where it pays off to be self-supportive'. (p. 6, 3. section)
- 'killing for the sense of responsibility'. (p. 6, 5. section)
- 'let the hammer fall'. (p. 6, 5. section), plus
- 'acidified by public regulation'. (p. 6, 7. section)

The common denominator of the selected sayings is that they are designating the values, which justify the strategies of the document. As an example the first saying *to kill enthusiasts* does not only designate a killing, but also that we are dealing with something positive namely enthusiasts. An enthusiastic person is someone with a burning passion, someone who creates things, who represents development and progress, and ultimately these virtues connote to nothing less but 'survival'. When using a saying such as *to kill enthusiasts* associations to fatal risks are provoked. If such enthusiastic persons are killed, the survival of society is put at risk. The document uses metaphors, such as *to kill enthusiasts* in a political context where the verb 'kill' connotes a metaphor of death, which portrays a fundamental political violation. The metaphor appears in the preface of the document that presents the value of the leading principle of *quid pro quo*. Instead of referring to rational problems such as a reason to implement a new public means of regulation, the metaphor about the impending 'killing' is used as a threat. In this respect, the metaphor replaces a confined argument for why society must be regulated according to the principle of *quid pro quo*. Thus, the metaphor indicates and underlying more serious purpose than just simple detail regulations of small problems. This is about nothing less than the survival of society.

Another metaphor that supports the meaning of the value of *quid pro quo* is *to create a situation, where it pays off to be self-supportive* (p. 6, 3. section). Several meanings are dominating in this expression. First, the reference

to 'creation' denotes a state it is possible to change by those who have the will to do so. 'Creation' is a metaphor about how to become omnipotent in one's own life. By using such a powerful reference, all connotations to conditional factors that could excuse an individual 'failure' or 'disability' is hereby erased. Situations are perceived to be actively created by the individuals (in contrast to being caused by structures), and they are discursively opposed to something dead, without progress, and passive.²² In the last part of the phrase *where it pays off to be self-supportive*, the meaning is expressed through an economic metaphor to *pay off*. In these situations the question of public support is transformed into a question of economic incentives, which Stone points at as a typical power strategy aiming at de-politicizing certain dangerous political issues (Stone 1984: 22).

Further, the expression *killing for the sense of responsibility* is used (p. 6, 5. section). Again the dramatic death metaphor is used. However, now it is not the enthusiasts but the sense of responsibility at risk of being killed if nothing is done to prevent it. But what means should be used to prevent such a killing from happening? The answer follows immediately with the expression *Let the hammer fall* (p. 6, 5. section). In Danish, the expression is used to refer to a decisive intervention. The hammer is a symbol of the authoritative father's instinctive feeling of 'enough is enough', and at the same time it refers to the gavel used by the judge in a courtroom (in Danish the word 'hammer' is used in both cases). The first expression is associated with a conservative family structure where the head of the family can '*let the hammer fall*.' The other expression makes an association to the justice of the courtroom including the value of guaranteeing the individual legal rights of being a liberal and a free citizen. The hammer is hence a symbol capable of including several contrasting logics, and thereby it becomes an effective political tool to embrace and represent public opinions about fundamental moral standards.

The final expression to be mentioned from the document is the phrase *acidified by public regulation* (6, 7. section). The saying appears as an explanation of why it is not always possible to appreciate the *exceptional effort* and how this reason is related to the conception of the damaging *consequential vagueness*, which constitutes 'the Other' in the document. The metaphor 'acidified' makes an association to an act of poisoning someone. When something has become acidified, it is understood as if something impure has been put into an original mixture. The original has been poisoned and exposed to a destructive violation, which is perceived as a threat to the original and natu-

²² This opposition can be compared to the political promotion of the actual 'active' social policy as a policy that breaks with a former 'passive' policy.

ral balance. The discourse about poisoning and acidifying things ultimately becomes condensed in a worldview about a 'natural balance', which should not be disturbed. The document uses the metaphor to describe the public administration as a poison spilt all over the 'natural balanced' good incentive and good will of the citizen as well as on the good incentives stemming from non-governmental communal values. The metaphor constitutes a mechanism that creates contempt and distance to the former political project as well as to the 'threatening' part of the political society.

The symbolic and the narrative structure of the document is characterized by linking a general fear of the killing with the contempt of something impure. A pattern that consists of the basic elements needed to elevate common regulations to moral narratives about whom and which values should be tolerated in society. What is not part of the hegemonic structure is something different, and this otherness is perceived as in itself capable of killing and acidifying the fundamental motivation and survival power of the state.

The framing of social problems in the political discourse of *quid pro quo* merges the social reality into an individual reality. This means that the rhetoric leaves out external causes for social problems, and consequently the individual becomes responsible not only for himself but for the cohesion in society. Compared to the identity between the individual and society as a bearing mechanism of mechanical solidarity, this displacement of the state's responsibility to the individual makes a good example of how the modern 'cult of the individual' can be used within a mechanical representation of society, instead of as a supportive basis for an organic solidarity. In addition, the three-line division of individuals seems to correspond to a mechanical logic of solidarity, because the categorizing principle represents a tool to measure how well internalized the will of the collectivity is in each individual.

In many ways, this discourse analysis is a prolongation of Chapter 1. I argue that the political discursive content of active social policy constitutes more mechanical than organic logics of solidarity. In opposition to this mechanical dominance are the values embedded in the welfare system's organizational structure. The labor market structure is based in political representations of interest groups, which again represent their members. The public administration of the labor market system also corresponds to an organic solidarity linking members with different professional ethics and different working capabilities. Moreover, the modern 'cult of the individual' still constitutes the normative political institutions such as the social workers' professionalism, where the status of the individual as something 'sacred' anchors the professional governed obligation to 'help'. This is interpreted as sustaining an organic form of solidarity.

However, we do not know much about to what extent political representations of solidarity as expressed in this government policy document will affect the policy programs or the caseworkers that administer social policy. We know that it expresses the leading principles of the government in charge and that the basic principle *quid pro quo* is structuring the way social problems are defined and are being used to portray the identity of the political society. Neither do we know to what extent it takes place. Therefore, it is essential to perceive the discourse as a context, which must be expected to have an impact on all individuals and activities in society – including the social workers in the field of social policy.

5.6 Theoretical expectations and research questions

The overall claim is that solidarity perceptions among social workers affect their categorization practices and that institutions such as the laws and political rhetoric about social problems as well as expectations to the social workers' professional norms condition this state of affairs. Solidarity perceptions are made operational through identification of social workers' collective orientation and their use of professional norms. Categorization practice is made operational as assistance-seeking citizen approach and as intention with clarification practice. The varying conditional institutions in the study are the laws of sickness benefits and active social policy (social welfare). In the empirical part of the dissertation, the theoretical model will be studied through qualitative cross case and within case analyses of categorization practice among social workers.

The institutional context of the welfare program of active social policy has been described as mainly dominated by residual welfare logic and by a mechanical solidarity form. The purpose of targeting public services has hence been explained to be mainly about allocating resources to those, who are perceived politically as the 'truly needy', and thereby avoiding allocation of resources to groups, who do not meet such deservingness criteria. The loci of investigation – Danish Job centers and municipalities are responsible for evaluating the working capacity of sick and unemployed citizens. They administer two different laws: the law of sickness benefits, which aims at sick citizens with an unemployment insurance, and the law of active social policy (social welfare), which aims at everyone who cannot provide for themselves. The two laws are expected to enhance solidarity perceptions differently. The sickness benefit law is expected to nourish more organic than mechanical arguments about categorization practice, because it is based in a strong corporative tradition between private unions and the state. In addition, it is an insurance-based law, which may activate a use of entitlement criteria instead of deservingness. These expectations are supported by empirical studies about

deservingness (Petersen et al. 2007; Larsen 2006). The law governing the access to social welfare on the other hand has been characterized as residual and primarily based on targeting benefits to the 'truly needy' citizens. This makes the law correspond to a fundamental mechanical solidarity idea where the basic characteristic of reciprocity in the welfare program can be compared to a reciprocal relation between the giving father (the state) and the receiving child (the assistance-seeking citizen). The welfare program of active social policy has therefore been analyzed as organized and dominated by both mechanical and organic forms of solidarity.

The reason why this empirical study at an individual level becomes fruitful to the theoretical argument that solidarity shapes categorization is that, according to theory, all structures have individual manifestations. This implicates that the theory should be expected to predict relations at different analytical levels including the individual one. Since individuals are involved in both organic and mechanical communities and hence are capable of expressing solidarity as mechanical and organic logics, I furthermore expect each social worker to be able to express both organic and mechanical solidarity perceptions. The categorization, which in practice signifies the process of classifying the citizen initiated by the social worker, becomes a crucial locus of study when trying to establish where and how the boundary of solidarity is settled, and when trying to establish which type of solidarity becomes dominating. In the particular situation, it is a question of how the social worker judges the single citizen's need for assistance in relation to the law-based standard of when society thinks one is disabled enough to receive public support, and not at least how this boundary is being constructed.

I suggest casework of active social policy at the street-level bureaucracy as a place to study how solidarity matters in contemporary society. The current active social policy consists of both regulative and normative institutions for how society treats individuals in need, and it represents collective shared metaphors of solidarity. Consequently, I argue that active social policy is about solidarity at all three levels discussed so far: reciprocal relations between individuals; redistributive relations between the state and the individual; and communities of shared norms of professional performance; e.g. in corporate organizations (see figure 3.2). The group of social workers constitutes a profession or an association, which according to Chapter 3, most likely integrates its members through a mechanical solidarity. However, simultaneously it is bridged with other associations and with society through interdependent organic solidarity relations. Besides the fact that a profession is suitable for studying different forms of solidarity in action, the group of assistance-seeking citizens makes an interesting case in relation to understanding

categorization practice through solidarity theory. The basic reason is that a 'needy person' almost categorically invokes feelings such as empathy, deservingness, and trust. At the same time, however, a 'needy person' may also activate perceptions of just rules about universal rights to support when one cannot provide for oneself.

The operational version of this theoretical puzzle becomes a question of how presentations of solidarity affect the actual policy making at the street-level bureaucracy. This is a question of how assistance-seeking citizens are managed in the public administration. Thus, the problem presented in Chapter 1 about what influences the political picture of social cohesion have on the categorization practices of assistance-seeking citizens are now turned into the following research questions:

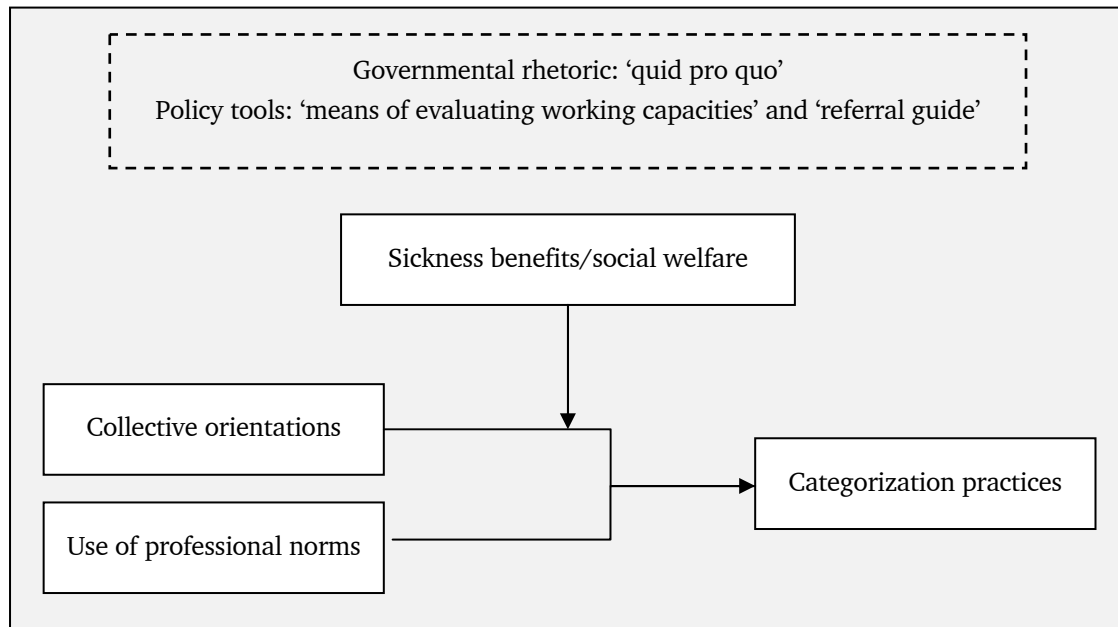
1. What differences can be identified between social workers' categorization practice of their clients?
2. What differences describe the social workers' collective orientations, and how do they shape their ways of categorizing assistance-seeking citizens?
3. What differences describe the social workers' professional norms, and how do they shape their ways of categorizing assistance-seeking citizens?
4. Why do stereotypes about chronic pain reinforce solidarity perceptions about deservingness, and how do they affect social workers' clarification practice?

The theoretical expectations to the answers of these questions are as follows: in cases where social workers use collective orientations of an abstract, differentiated society or social pedagogical norms, they will apply organic solidarity perceptions to argue for a comprehensive approach to the assistance-seeking citizen. In contrast, when social workers express a concrete, collective orientation representing either the workplace or a reciprocal relation between the assistance-seeking citizen and the state, or when they use administrative rule-based norms to argue for a categorization practice, they will be inclined to do so within a mechanical reasoned argument for a stereotyped categorization practice of the client. Moreover, I expect these types of relations to be conditioned by the concrete law they are administering. The law of sickness benefit is expected to encourage an organic solidarity perception of the assistance-seeking citizen, whereas the law of active social policy (social welfare) is expected to reinforce a mechanical dominated solidarity perception of the assistance-seeking citizen. These relations will be studied on the basis of the analytical model presented in Figure 5.2.

However, since the domination of regulative and normative institutions in the institutional context is anticipated to reinforce a mechanical solidarity form, I expect to trace more mechanical than organic perceptions of solidarity. In order to study such a mechanical dominated perception of the assis-

tance-seeking citizen in detail, another set of expectations related to stereotyped perceptions of assistance-seeking citizens are studied. This is done by using vignettes in the interviews describing narratives about chronic pain patients.

Figure 5.2. Model of analysis for Chapters 8 and 9



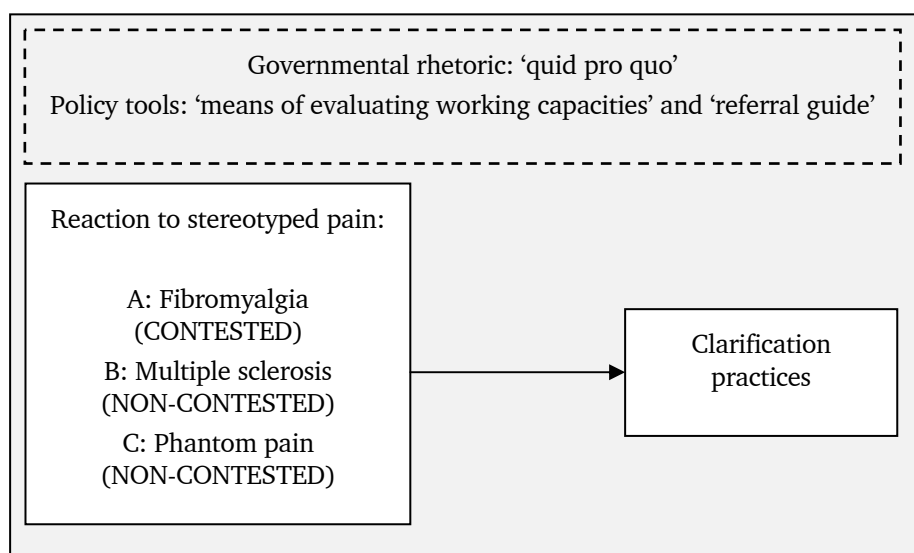
Note: Collective orientation is analyzed in Chapter 8 and use of professional norm in Chapter 9.

This group is a suitable case because the perception of chronic pain patients is institutionalized in several discursive settings. In the regulative and normative institutions, they function as symbols of what constitute ‘consequential vagueness’ in society. I therefore expect this particular group to constitute a potentially vulnerable point in the active social policy because it has an inaccessibly high level of private knowledge and a correspondingly low level of professional knowledge. The reason is that it is a fundamental human condition that we cannot feel the pain of others. Hence, we are left to trust the descriptions made by people in pain when they claim to be incapable of working because of it (Sontag 2003). However, since all rights to public support are evaluated according to objective measurements, this group frames the negative group which constitutes the dynamic power of ‘we, who contribute and those, who won’t’ in the political *quid pro quo* discourse and in the current policy tools supporting the law of active social policy. They do so by setting out the boundaries for tolerance of social problems and by exemplifying the limit of tolerance in the ‘cult of the individual’.

By varying the stereotypes around contested and non-contested pain, I expect to capture different stereotyped reactions towards the narratives in the vignettes. More precisely, I expect the social workers to react empathically by using a discourse of deservingness towards the non-contested pain stereotypes. These are presented as a client with multiple sclerosis and a client who has lost an arm in a car accident and who suffers from phantom pain. In contrast, I expect the social workers to react suspiciously and with aversion towards the contested pain narrative, which is presented as a client with fibromyalgia. Furthermore, I expect them to use different strategies of clarifications depending on their reactions towards the presented narrative. These reactions will be studied on the basis of the model of analysis in Figure 5.3.

In both models of analysis, the institutional context described in this chapter is displayed in the above figure. The reason is that the impact is not being studied directly, because I have no possibilities of comparing the context to other periods or other countries. However, I still expect that the context matters to the relations between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices, as they occur among social workers administering the welfare program of active social policy. The notions made about the institutional context will be used in the analyses when a clear relation to e.g. a discursive expression or a reference to a policy tool is identifiable.

Figure 5.3. Model of analysis for Chapter 10



Note: The social workers' reactions towards stereotyped pain types are analyzed in Chapter 10.

The theoretical concepts are made traceable as statements in an interview study. After the initial univariate analysis of categorization practice, the variance and differences that characterize the dependent variable should be

clear. Next, it becomes possible to study the variance through the two models of analyses to determine how solidarity perceptions will shape the categorization practice of the social workers in the collected interviews.

5.7 Summary

It is not only in research you can find dominating solidarity perspectives. In the political institutions such as the regulative law, the policy tools, in professional norms and in the political discourse, certain pictures of solidarity can be identified as well. In relation to this chapter's descriptions and analyses of solidarity perceptions in the welfare program of active social policy, it seems plausible to assume that each institution will trigger solidarity perceptions differently depending on the individual's dominating solidarity perception. The two laws governing the administration of sick and unemployed assistance-seeking citizens have been described as corresponding to an insurance-based, corporate and organic based welfare regime and to a residual, reciprocal and mechanical based welfare regime.

The empirical question put forward in my analyses is what determines social workers categorization practice? How do street-level bureaucrats such as social workers decide whether an assistance-seeking citizen is posing a threat to society by trying to exploit the system and gaining free political and social rights, or whether the citizen may be judged as legitimately entitled to public welfare? How does collective orientation as individual expressions of solidarity perceptions structure approaches to the citizen and to the evaluation processes? Does the social worker use entitlement criteria or deservingness criteria when questions of eligibility to public support are being determined?

What happens to the variation in solidarity and categorization when the redistributive institutions in a society are universal, but when certain welfare programs are insurance-based or residual, and when the rhetoric in the government discourse represents social problems as being of a mechanical nature thus manifesting a reciprocal relation between 'us and them'? The political institutional context of the problem under study has been described in this chapter. In the following, these circumstances are studied within this context through a research design holding the unvarying institutions such as the 'voice of government' and the policy tools of *means of evaluating working capacities* and the *referral guide* constant, but using the variance of laws in the welfare program to control for whether such formal and regulative institutions condition the expected relations under study. Chapter 6 is the first chapter of the empirical part of the dissertation. The chapter introduces the research design of the analyses, which will be presented in the following Chapters 7-10.

Chapter 6

Research design, data collection and data processing

The argument that disability is a socially created category does not deny that certain characteristics of individuals significantly limit their ability to function. But to view disability as a social constructed phenomenon is to focus on a different set of questions: one asks not what is 'wrong' with some individuals, but why social institutions respond to some individuals differently than to others (Stone 1984: 27).

The quote illustrates very well how the social constructivist approaches a social phenomenon as a matter of observing perceptions rather than qualities of individuals. In addition it exemplifies the purpose and the approach of the current empirical study, which focuses on perceptions of solidarity and arguments about categorization. The study is based on a qualitative study of 24 social workers from 20 Danish municipalities. The method is cross-case and within-case comparisons using an experimental design to improve the possibility of analyzing the mechanisms facilitating the processes of categorization practice.

The study is designed to optimize the possibility to trace categorization practice among social workers as well as to understand the meaning and the extent of significance solidarity perceptions have for categorization practice. Furthermore, the case selection is organized in order to create variance on attributes of special relevance to the independent and conditional variables: formal rules and professional norms. In order to enhance the general study the research design includes three case descriptions (vignettes) of different types of chronic pain. The case of chronic pain is selected because it appears to be a well-suited case for studying the effect of different solidarity perceptions. The vignettes are used as randomly given 'treatments' to create the variation under study, otherwise difficult to select beforehand.

The chapter consists of five parts. The first part explains how the theoretical measure of solidarity perception and categorization practice is being traced empirically. It also explains the arguments for selecting chronic pain narratives as a well-suited case. Part two describes the research design and part three the data collection. Parts four and five present the processes of analysis as well as the efforts to enhance the robustness of the analyses.

6.1 Identifying solidarity perceptions and categorization in practice statements

Even though solidarity and categorization are distinct phenomena, they share a characteristic of becoming real through expressions of social, constructed meanings such as worldviews and stereotypes. Methodologically, the measurement of such diffuse realities is achieved through identifying metaphors, symbols and rhetoric about how and why some individuals are considered as eligible where others again are denied access to categories of social and political privileges. However, the difference between solidarity and categorization is bigger than the similarity in terms of expression modes. Where solidarity perception reflects an individual's reason to relate to another person, categorization practice is about the reasons why objects are classified in distinct ways. Here the two main types of selective criteria describe a difference between classifying objects based on deservingness or based on entitlement. The identification of the criteria used in e.g. an interaction between a street level bureaucrat and a citizen should thus depict the character of a subsequent categorization. However, as argued in the theoretical argument, deservingness and entitlement may be too unclear concepts as operational tracers of variation in categorization practice. Actually, according to the theoretical explanation of the relationship a strong correlation with perceptions of solidarity may be found. This possible finding indicates that a measure of the dependent variable 'categorization practice' as based on the social workers' use of selective criteria may induce a problem of self-explanation into the study (problem of endogeneity). This is another way of saying that it can be impossible to distinguish between the independent and the dependent variable. Therefore, the empirical study may be better studied by finding another tracer of categorization practice. Hence, the categorization practice will instead be based on measuring the use of evaluation practice of the social worker as either reflecting an individualized or a stereotyped approach to the citizen.

Categorization practice is traced through the social workers' evaluation of clients' working capacities, because evaluating working capacities is the empirical scene of putting clients into different categories according to the active social law. The measures of solidarity and categorization are used to organize and target the questions in the interview guide used to collect data for the following empirical analyses. By tracing metaphors, symbols, use of professional norms and use of rhetoric about solidarity perceptions and categorization practice the relationship is analyzed. The governing concrete formal laws are analyzed for their conditional effects on the relation between solidarity and categorization practice.

The difference between theoretical concepts, questions in an interview guide and coding strategies must be dealt with in a way that optimizes the measurement or the construct validity of the study (Bryman 2004: 28). This means that the steps from abstract theoretical concepts to the coding of statements in the interview must be made operational in order to ‘securing a close approximation of the empirical world (...) that is procedurally ‘trustworthy’ (Lofland et al. 2006: 169). This includes the steps and connections between the theoretical concepts, the interview questions capable of connecting to everyday life language and the operational nodes of the link between the theoretical model and the model of analysis. The concrete operational procedure for each concept under study is not presented here but will be introduced before each analysis. In the study the intention has been to enable identification of perceptions of solidarity, of influence of institutions, and of statements about categorization practices during the interviews.

6.1.1 Pain as a well-suited case for studying solidarity perceptions

It is not very complicated to determine whether a citizen is entitled to a public welfare if the criterion is ‘age’ or ‘membership’. Does the citizen have the required age or not and is the citizen insured to receive a given service or not? However, it is far more complicated for the political system in general and for the social worker in particular to determine whether a citizen is ‘sick enough’ to enter the political and the social benefitting category of ‘disability’. Quite simply, it is not possible to use an objective standard to decide whether a case meets the criteria of what is socially and hence also politically construed as legitimate disability. As soon as no objective standard can be used to determine eligibility, deciding whether a case falls inside or outside this category becomes a question of a political nature – as a matter of group belongings, group identifications and hence also a matter of solidarity.²³

By the time classifications of disability came into being in the nineteenth century and by the time these recognized conditions were applied as specific eligibility criteria, the conditions were already firmly linked in the public consciousness with the possibility of deception. The connection between disability and deception meant that the very category of disability was developed to incorporate a mechanism for distinguishing the genuine from the artificial (Stone 1984: 32).

²³ These cases involve a high degree of representation of subjectivity and a low degree of medical documentation. Certain psychological disabilities such as ‘stress’, ‘worn-out states’ and chronic fatigue syndromes count as typical cases as well as the experience of being in chronic pain, which was the case selected for the study.

Literature suggests that cases such as chronic pain evoke political decisions and hence possibly also perceptions of solidarity. The process of transforming private suffering into a public category of political and social privileges becomes particularly apparent in cases of contested chronic pain. In a previous study, I found that chronic pain narratives stimulated the respondents to use solidarity perceptions to explain their practice of evaluation to me. Contested chronic pain hence becomes a well-suited case to study the disability category, because it challenges the use of objective measurements. To substantiate this choice of case, the study suggested that individuals suffering from a contested chronic pain illness are more likely to be categorized in advance as a resistant and deceptive, cheating 'welfare free-rider' than others (Østergaard 2005: 8; Møller Østergaard 2009: 10).

In this context of active social policy, social workers, who manage the administrative conditions around a citizens' private pain may display an example of how solidarity with recipients of social welfare works in practice. Solidarity in this sense manifests itself as perceptions of how to perceive the pain status. In concrete terms, the empirical study must seek to capture the scene where the social worker explains how the boundary is managed: How much pain should society expect a person to tolerate? (Stone 1984: 137). A further substantiation that this is a fruitful locus when studying the relation between solidarity perceptions and categorization practice is that pain in particular as well as disability in general are fundamental political categories involving aspects of both legitimacy and economics.

When eligibility for disability benefits is based on pain, three questions become important. First, does the claimant 'really have' pain? Second, how much pain should society expect a person to tolerate? And third, should society expect all people to tolerate the same amount of pain? (Stone 1984: 137).

The reason why putting pain under administration constitutes a genuine political problem is that pain is a common reason why people cannot manage a job and therefore the reason why they apply for social services. Consequently, the contested chronic pain patient appears to be especially problematic to subject to evaluation and clarification in relation to other social groups, e.g. the (non-contested) mentally ill, drug addicts or (non-contested) handicapped, because the narrative of a chronic pain patient displays a weakness in the active social policy when a pain condition is being claimed without any evidence (medical documentation) to provide the social worker with (Østergaard 2005: 44).

Based on these observations, the case of chronic pain is selected and included in the research design as a well-suited tracer of the theoretical argument. I argue that it is the ambiguous aspect of chronic pain, which induces a

test of the character of the ‘cult of the individual’ into the study, and evokes symbols and metaphors about whether or not the ‘case’ threatens the professional identity of the social worker. As explained in Chapter 3, the ‘cult of the individual’ can represent both mechanical and organic perceptions of solidarity and can therefore be used to trace differences in dominating solidarity perceptions among the social workers. These special attributes of chronic pain constitute some important aspects of the variation the empirical study seeks to explore.

Chronic pain is therefore a well-suited case to portray how moral questions of eligibility are discussed among individuals. The aim of using a disability such as chronic pain is to be able to study the impact of the political institutions when social workers at for example a job center are evaluating the working capacities of citizens.

6.2 Research design

One of the main challenges in empirical research is to create a design that optimizes the possibility of finding variation, which the theoretical argument can explain. In order to study whether a difference in solidarity perception makes a difference in the way citizens are being categorized, the study must be designed in a way that entail different forms of solidarity perceptions and categorization practices. In addition, the study must be able to include variations in the institutions that are expected to arrange this relationship. However, not all of the institutions vary.

As explained in Chapter 5, the concrete analysis context puts ‘natural’ limits on which conditional variables can actually vary. This is the case for the welfare program of active social policy and for the government’s political discourse *quid pro quo*. These variables constitute the analysis context and are what I refer to as ‘fixed political institutions’. Besides these fixed institutions, there are natural varying institutions such as the governing formal rules and the professional norms at the level of social workers.

6.2.1 Case selection

The cases in the study are social workers that administer the welfare program of active social policy in Danish municipalities. The selection of social workers is based on a criterion of municipality size and a criterion of geographic dispersion. Municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants were selected. In Denmark there are 36 municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. Both criteria seek to strengthen the selection of similar and comparable cases located in social realities that is expected to embrace a variety of social problems. The argument is to reduce the risk of selecting municipalities dominated by special local problems. This is expected to be more likely in smaller

municipalities than in bigger municipalities. The population of the 36 selected municipalities contained 44 potential respondents. The selection of respondents – the social workers – is based on two criteria again in quest of a most similar case design. The first selection criterion is that the social worker uses the policy tool *means of evaluating working capacity* and the *resource profiling method*. The second criterion is that the social worker administers ‘hard cases’. ‘Hard cases’ are referring to category 2 clients in the sickness benefits program and to categories 2, 3 and 4 clients in the social welfare program. Since the argument has no interests in studying variance among social workers within the same organizational context (the same job centre/municipality), one social worker from each division in the municipalities were selected. Few of the municipalities had more than one division and that is why the total number of potential respondents exceeds the number of potential municipalities. Among the population of 44 potential respondents, 24 agreed to participate in an interview. Some of them however were located in the same division. The total number of represented municipalities in the study is 20. Besides selecting the right type of social worker, the criteria assured that the selected social workers administer either the law of active social policy (social welfare) or the law on sickness benefits.

Categorization practice

The identification of variance on the dependent variable will be achieved through questions framed to encourage the respondents to be specific about their practice, and by using concrete cases about different chronic pain types. If any variance occurs, questions about concrete ‘hard cases’ are expected to bring it forward. In order to exclude that the respondents are chosen because they confirm the theoretical expectations and to maximize the variation on the independent variables, the design does not select the cases based on categorization practice as the dependent variable. In other words, the case selection alone does not ensure that any variance exists at all. Hence, the identification of variance depends on the method of data collection and the questions asked about categorization practice.

Solidarity perception

Within this frame of study it has not been possible beforehand to assure variation on the independent variable of solidarity perceptions. Using vignettes compensates for this by introducing a well-suited case to stimulate the respondents to portray their solidarity perceptions during the interview. In the theoretical argument, different solidarity perceptions corresponding to both mechanical and organic solidarity are expected to exist simultaneously at a structural and at an individual level. Thus, besides the use of vignettes, the

selection of respondents has been based on formal rules and professional status. The identification of variance on solidarity perception as the independent variable hence depends on designing an optimal data collection using questions to incite different solidarity perceptions.

Professional norms

There are different evaluations of what professional status of social workers means in relation to their professional norms (Knudsen 2007; EVA 2001). In Denmark social workers can achieve their professional status from a professional college of social work or from a school of public administration.²⁴ Some studies suggest that the difference in educational background correspond to a difference in professional identity as dominated by either an authority role performance (administrative college norm) or a social pedagogical role performance (social professional college norm) (EVA 2001), while other studies find no correlation (Knudsen 2007). In order to exclude the possibility that professional status explains the variation on how the social workers use their professional norms, educational background is therefore used as criterion for selection of social workers. This is done to enhance the possibility of controlling the variation on the independent variable. Out of the 24 respondents, 16 are educated from the social professional college and eight are administrative personnel with supplementary training at the administrative college.

Formal rules

Formal rules constitute the conditional variable in the analyses of solidarity and categorization practice. To ensure variation on formal rules, the last case selection criterion was that the respondent administers either the law of active social policy (social welfare) or the law of sickness benefits. Out of the 24 respondents, eight administer the law of active social policy (social welfare), 13 administer law of sickness benefits, and three administer both sets of formal rules. The difference in formal rules includes a difference in the formalized use of action classifying practices. In the administration of social welfare, social workers divide citizens into five match categories reflecting a degree of labor market readiness, whereas in the administration of sickness benefits the social workers use an action classifying practice based on medical reports about labor and health prognoses dividing citizens into 3 categories.

However, yet another varying institutional factor is included in the research design. This factor is included in the design as vignettes portraying client cases with different pain types. The vignettes serve several methodolog-

²⁴ A professional college of social work = En social højskole; a school of public administration = en forvaltningshøjskole.

ical functions among them the ability to create a fulfilling variation on solidarity perceptions as well as to optimize the abilities to do both cross-case and within-case analyses of the way social meaning about different aspects of social workers' practice affect categorization practices.

6.2.2 Constructing variation using vignettes about chronic pain

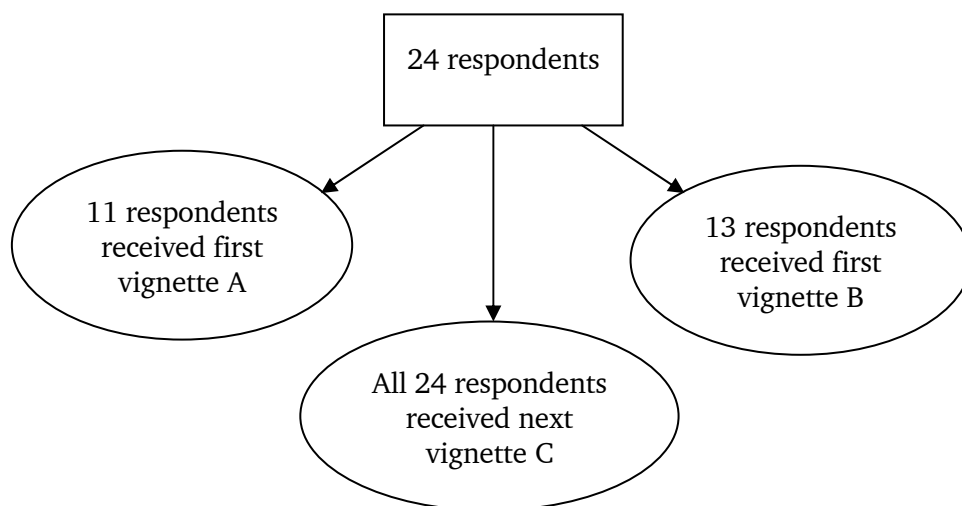
To strengthen the general research design, controlled variation is created in the form of vignettes. The last 20 years the methods of using an experimental design has become more common in social science research (Petersen et al. 2007; McGraw 1996; Serritzlew 2003). This includes qualitative research where the use of experimental analysis is increasing as a standard method (Conrad & Schneider 1992: 59-60; King et al. 2004; Finch 1987; Barter & Renold 1999). The basic goal of using an experimental design concerns the possibility of anchoring the independent variables in a research design. This creates a possibility of controlling precisely what variables one wants to explore systematically. In a quantitative logic this means that the researcher more or less eliminates the need of controlling for the influence of other potential (but not part of the argument under study) independent variables. In a qualitative setting such as the following, the experimental logic opens an ability to study how certain aspects of a variable (citizen in chronic pain) affect the practice under study. In qualitative research, the openness of the data collection and the inductive character of the following analyses are often defining. However, when the problem under study is a concrete theoretical argument, the need for standardization and deductive strategies are often preferred to inductive methods, e.g. the Grounded Theory method (Olsen 2002: 111). An experimental method facilitates the research process in respect of standardizing the research design and optimizing the measurement validity of the social phenomena under study. In the current study the method is used to standardize the stimuli given to the 24 respondents. Besides that and maybe most important is the possibility to construct the precise variation of interest in the stimuli.

In the study, the stimuli given to the respondents are vignettes. Finch (1987: 105) describes vignettes as 'short stories about hypothetical characters in specified circumstances, to whose situation the interviewee is invited to respond'. Barter & Renold argue 'The vignette technique is a method that can elicit perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes from responses or comments to stories depicting scenarios and situations' (Barter & Renold 1999: 2). The use of vignettes in the study of solidarity perceptions and categorization practice is thus preferred out of two reasons. First of all, because the collected observations must exactly contain knowledge about the respondents' choice of action which allows for investigation of the particular context that situates

the social setting. At the same time, the observations must elucidate the influential independent variables in the constructed situation. Second, vignettes are preferred because of the obvious advantages in getting a rich and precise basis of information to explore and clarify individual judgments in relation to moral dilemmas and political reasoning.

As explained above the experience of other's chronic pain is expected to provoke statements about solidarity perceptions. Three vignettes were constructed with varying diagnoses of chronic pain. The selection criterion was recognition and the diagnoses reflect a distinction between a contested chronic pain and two non-contested chronic pains emphasizing different aspects of non-contestedness. Consequently, the 24 respondents were exposed randomly to a combination of two vignettes. One group received vignette combination AC and another group received vignette combination BC. The ordering of the stimuli was thereby standardized. Prior to the data collection 30 envelopes with vignettes were created and mixed randomly. This had two purposes. First of all, the selection of exposure groups was randomized and second, I was blinded beforehand and consequently a potential bias was reduced in relation to inducing my expectations to the respondent's perceptions before the vignettes were introduced during the interview. In practice I took an envelope before each interview by chance. The envelope with the two vignettes remained closed until it was opened by the respondent. The placement and the use of vignettes in the research design is shown in Figure 6.1 below.

Figure 6.1. Variation on pain type



$n = 48$. Note: the number of vignette cases (48) differs from the number of respondents (24). Each respondent received two vignettes: 24 received C, 11 received A and 13 received B, total 48 vignette cases.

The respondents hence received two different combinations of vignettes systematically. The placement of vignettes in a survey or in an interview guide naturally depends on the purpose. If the vignettes are used as structuring stimuli of all the questions asked, they must be placed in the beginning of the data collecting process. If they are used to 'test' the pattern of the respondent's reasoning, they are placed in the end of the interview. However, in the present design they were placed in the middle, because I wanted to learn something about both the pattern of reasoning and their working conditions before 'a strong frame' was induced into the conversation. Furthermore, I wanted to learn about their reactions towards the stimuli as a matter of the possibility to learn about differences in their perceptions of solidarity as well, and about how they argued they would categorize the fictive cases. Therefore, the vignettes were not induced from the beginning but introduced as questions number four and five out of 10.

The constructed variation in the three vignettes A, B and C constitutes a methodological possibility to study systematically how the respondents argue they will categorize the cases. The function of using vignettes A and B separately is to be able to compare the two groups of respondents on this parameter. Vignette C, which is given as the second stimulus to all respondents creates an option of comparison within cases and between cases. The reactions towards C can be analyzed and compared to the priming vignette (A or B). Even though the substantial reason to use vignettes is to compare A and B, vignette C is included in order to achieve these different comparative advantages and to anchor the interview around certain attributive characteristics of a case.

6.3 Collecting data

In May 2007 the directors of social services in the selected 36 municipalities were enquired by email to give permission to contact one or more social workers. 20 municipalities agreed to let me make contact to a social worker and 24 appointments were finally made. The respondents were contacted by email using the enquiry with a letter describing the aim of the data collection along with a short description of the theoretical and the empirical study as well as the criteria of guaranteeing anonymity to participants in the study. The respondents were not informed about the use of vignettes beforehand. The 24 interviews were conducted between August and October 2007 always at the work place of the respondent. The scene of the interview was thereby set and controlled by the respondent, and in my capacity as researcher, I adjusted my intervening role in accordance with standard ethics of how to behave as a visitor of a busy and important person. This implied that the length

of the interview was kept down to approximately one hour to cause as little inconvenience as possible with respect to the respondent.

Initially, all respondents were promised anonymity regarding both names and municipality affiliation and this agreement was repeated before introducing the interview guide. Now, the respondent was told that fictive cases would be handed out during the interview, but nothing was said about the concrete content or about the experimental design of placements or the randomized stimuli. All interviews were recorded on mp3 device and the recorder was turned on immediately after the general introduction. The typical interview situation was characterized by a high level of confidentiality, which developed rich and detailed conversations. There was always coffee on the table and only in few cases did colleagues or a phone interrupt the interview. In these cases the recorder was paused and the interview continued after the interruption.

6.3.1 Interview guide: asking questions

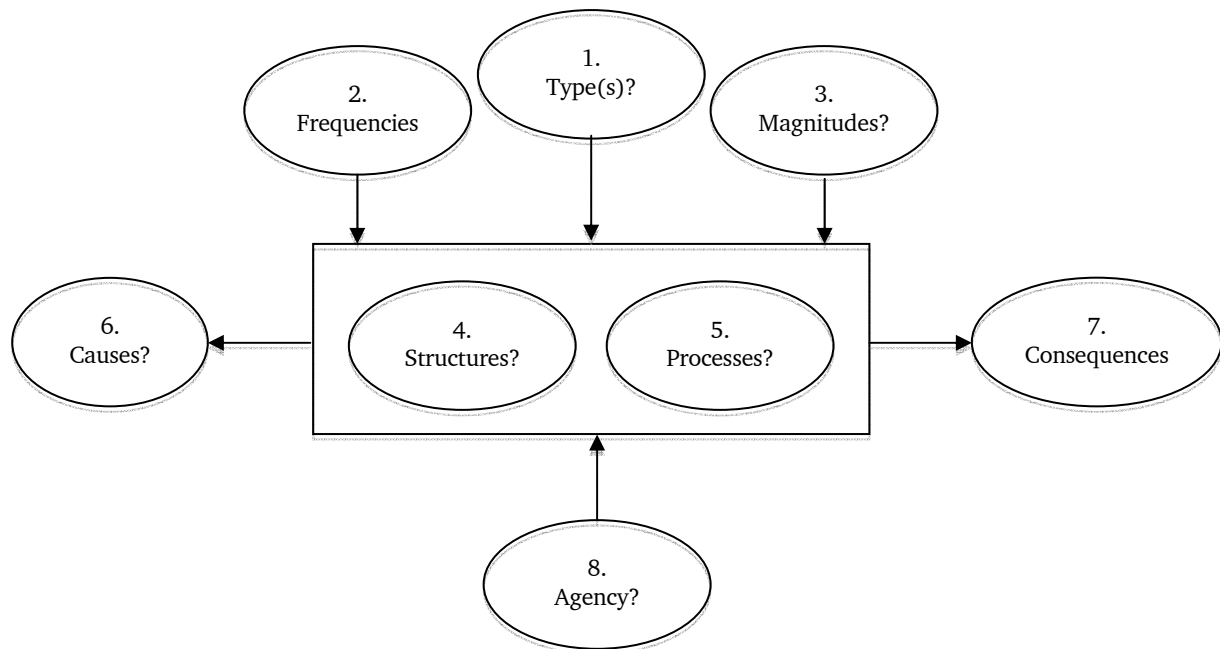
Evaluation of working capacity constitutes the ‘real-world’ practice for reference when solidarity perceptions and categorization practices are the issues under study.

To the purpose of gathering data an interview guide was therefore developed. The structure of the guide has been developed in order to answer relatively specific research questions. However, all questions are open-ended and follow-up questions were included to strengthen the information about the respondents’ answers and perceptions, but also to build in a certain degree of openness and possibility of exceeding the particular questions in the guide. This aspect together with the open-ended questions makes the guide ‘semi structural’.

The construction of the interview guide is inspired by Lofland et al.’s (2006: 144-168) strategy of ‘asking questions’. The strategy describes how one optimizes the connection between the theoretical interests in certain aspects and dimensions into the interview with everyday life terms. The structure of the guide is based on eight theoretical questions. These main questions concern three categories, which seek to capture 1) Frequency and magnitude questions, which ask about how often the respondents observe working evaluations and its strength or size; 2) structure and process questions, which ask about how working evaluation is organized and how it evolves or operates over time; and 3) questions about cause and consequence asking what factors account for the occurrence or development of working evaluation and what effects working evaluation has for the respondent. The last question falls outside the three categories because it asks about ‘human agency’. This question is included in order to de-objectify the former seven ques-

tions, which are mainly passive and objectifying of the working evaluation practice (Lofland et al. 2006: 144-145).

Figure 6.2. Eight basic questions in the interview guide



Source: Lofland et al. 2006: 145, Figure 7.1.

During the process of transforming the eight basic questions into practical questions, three interview guides were developed. Each one of them represented a step from theoretical terms to concrete everyday life questions capable of connecting to the practice of social workers in Danish Job centers (Kvale 1997: 33-139). In order to create these questions, an explorative study of the visitation practice of chronic pain patients was used as inspiration to frame and formulate the questions. It has been a goal to have the questions live up to a criterion regarding a balance between being perceived as simple commonalities and as irritating the respondent's self-image of producing 'obvious' practices.

After the third revision of the interview guide, it was tested on a social worker who gave (many and constructive) comments during the interview about precision of references in order to avoid misperceptions and ambivalent terms which could trigger different associations especially concerning the evaluation practice and the clarification methods. The interview guide was finally revised according to the test interview, and the attributes describing the stories in the vignettes were given a final adjustment before the 24 respondents were interviewed (see interview guide in Appendix A2).

6.3.2 Selection of vignette characteristics

The vignettes have served a double purpose as a constituent part of the research design and as a tool to collect data about social workers' working evaluation practices. The three vignettes were designed in accordance with the considerations of chronic pain as a special case to trace solidarity perceptions with and in accordance with eight general principles of how to construct vignettes. According to literature, vignettes must 1) appear plausible and real; 2) avoid eccentric characters, but reflect 'mundane' occurrences; 3) contain sufficient context; 4) relate to personal experience; 5) be presented in an appropriate format; 6) allow the 'freedom' to express how respondents think they would actually respond in that situation; 7) be internally consistent and not too complex, and finally 8) a control vignette can be included to see if any significant differences emerge (Barter & Renold 1999: 4).

Two central selection criteria determined the pain diagnoses of the vignettes. First of all the pain aspect of the diagnoses should be difficult to document, and second the diagnoses should be adequately difficult to measure in a way that make them capable of being (mis)used to malingering an incapability of working. Out of a number of possible diagnoses, where pain is a central symptom, fibromyalgia, multiple sclerosis (MS), and neurological phantom pain were selected for the three vignettes. Vignette A describes a story of a woman with fibromyalgia, which is a diagnosis associated with a motivation biased simulated state of chronic pain (Ehlers 2000). In addition, fibromyalgia (including other contested diagnoses such as whiplash and chronic fatigue syndrome) has been a framing group to discuss society's redistributive problems. Differently put, fibromyalgia is expected to constitute a distinct stereotype about the anti-ideal of the good and responsible citizen, who *wants* to contribute to society by doing an extra effort (compare to the description of the governmental discourse of *quid pro quo* in Chapter 5). Besides being negatively associated with lack of motivation, deception and self-responsibility, the diagnosis is described in the referral guide as an example of a 'hard case'. In administrative terms, a 'hard case' refers to a case that is not easy to categorize, because of arbitrariness/ambiguity. Vignette B describes a story of a woman with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). MS is a well-known diagnosis such as fibromyalgia, but contrary to fibromyalgia MS is associated with compassion for the sufferer, bad luck and hence with a situation, which cannot be blamed on the bearer of the disease. In addition fibromyalgia and MS share chronic pain and cognitive difficulties as a central problem. The third vignette C describes a story of a woman who has lost her arm in a car accident and consequently suffers from chronic phantom pains and cognitive difficulties as well. In relation to meeting the criteria of variation in recogni-

tion, this is met by selecting fibromyalgia, which is a contested diagnosis and MS, which is a non-contested diagnosis. The control vignette displaying an example of phantom pain is also a non-contested diagnosis, however it is most likely perceived as more 'strange' than MS and less 'strange' than fibromyalgia to lay people (non-medical opinion). The selection of needs and diagnoses in the vignettes was done under supervision of professor in medical sociology Peter Conrad, Brandeis University and MD, Phd.-fellow in chronic pain research at the pain clinic, Aarhus University Hospital Lise Gormsen. Besides diagnosis, which is the varying aspect in the three designs, the vignettes contain a number of non-varying elements such as gender, civil status, children, sick leave information, professional and educational status, social service preferences (they are all three described as wanting to apply for an early retirement pension), self-estimated health, assistive devices, cognitive problems, and a description of experienced work consequences (see vignettes A, B and C in Appendix A3).

6.4 Data processing

The data processing has been managed through the software program NVivo (Andersen & Binderkrantz 2008). Even though this is a qualitative study based on a relative small N, there has been a need for systematizing the data processing in order to assess and analyze the relative big amount of material. The transcribed interviews have a volume of approximately 600 pages. With the included experimental logic of the vignettes the possibility of creating cases (respondent-vignette cases) within cases (respondents) the strategy has been to use a data processing method allowing both variance analyses and 'grounded' selection of illuminating quotes and within-cases comparisons. In other words: in order to be able to compare the social workers' perceptions of solidarity and their categorization practices as well as to be able to compare each social worker's different perceptions of solidarity and use of categorization practice, NVivo has been the organizing tool in this process.

6.4.1 Transcription

The transformation of recorded interviews into text material is done by transcription. All 24 interviews were transcribed according to guidelines developed as a manual to standardize the transcriptions. This was of special importance, because four research assistants transcribed 18 out of the 24 interviews. However, because they followed the developed principles of transcriptions there were no systematical differences between the transcribed texts.

This process of 'writing up the interview' is a basic protection and organization of data (Lofland et al. 2006: 107-108). It is commonly recommended that the researcher transcribe all interviews alone. However, because of the

time-consuming aspect of this process it is typical to use research assistants, as was also the case in this study. In such instances it is important that the researcher re-listen through the interviews in order to check up on errors and misperceptions in the transcriptions. This was done and several non-systematical errors were detected and corrected according to the sound file.

6.4.2 Coding

After the interviews were organized as transcriptions the process of getting a detailed and systematic overview began. This phase is determining for the potential of the following analyses. The coding process creates the 'building blocks' of the analyses and reflects the theoretical reasoning behind the data collection. The process has three main phases: 1) The establishment of a data matrix to gather both interviews (sound files) and transcriptions, 2) an open coding of the transcriptions, and 3) a focused coding of the transcriptions.

NVivo was used to establish a data matrix, where both transcriptions, sound files, home pages of the represented job centre and municipalities were organized in one file. Next, the transcriptions were coded through an open strategy. This strategy is inspired by the method of 'grounded theory' as described by Charmaz (2006), and by what Lofland et al. (2006: 201) refers to as 'initial coding'.

Because of the deductive research design each question represented a theoretical interest. Each question (now in the form of an answer) was therefore coded in order to be able to subtract how all or some cases responded to a particular question. At this point the data was superficially organized and the 'real' open coding of themes, words, expressions, action descriptions and not least use of symbols, metaphorical rhetoric began. Inspired by David and Sutton's (2004) coding strategies a coding frame was developed. The strategy was to develop different kinds of codes in data and the process was to move from an inductive to a deductive coding of data (David & Sutton 2004: 204). Basically, the process contained an initial/open coding (inductive approach to data), a thematic coding and a focused coding (deductive approach to data). The thematic codes were hence selected based on the open codes, which of course to some degree were themselves coded based on relevance. In this sense it would be pretentious to present the initial coding strategy as in the pure meaning of it; namely as a totally theory free empirical voice.

The challenge of the coding process has been to stop coding. Open coding work as an inspiration process to the following focused coding, but the process can very easily continue towards a dead end, because you continue to discover actions, processes, themes and expressions. Next, a concrete thematic coding process was initiated. Examples of such thematic codes are 'to gain the citizen's trust', 'the agenda of the client' and 'the aimless clarification'.

These codes were also classified as metaphors used by the respondents, because they stem from an attempt to describe the meaning of their working situations ‘in different words’ to me.

After the theoretical process was started, I kept going back to the initial coding strategy in order to continuously develop and specify the theoretical coding procedure. In this sense the initial coding process works as a tool to steer the following focused coding, but in practice it goes both ways. New ideas and theoretical perspectives can in advantage be ‘tested’ by going back to an initial coding to see ‘how it works’ in general in the other interviews or in other parts of the same interview.

At a certain time, (I simply decided for a date and time when the initial coding should stop) ideas, classifications, relationships, comparisons and certain interview parts must become ready to be studied through a more focused coding. And finally, the third and focused coding begins. Charmaz (2006) characterizes the focused coding as more controlled, selective and conceptual in relation to the initial/open coding:

Focused coding means using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amount of data. One goal is to determine the adequacy of those codes (Charmaz 2006: 57).

Lofland et al. (2006) compare the initial and the focused coding as a matter of what questions the researcher asks to the transcribed text:

Table 6.1. Initial and focused coding

Questions	
Initial/open coding	Focused coding
What is this and what does it represent?	→ Of what topic, unit or aspect is this an instance?
What is this an example of?	→ What question about a topic does this item of data suggest?
What is going on?	→ What sort of an answer to a question about a topic does this item of data suggest (i.e. what proposition is suggested?)

Source: Lofland et al. (2006: 201).

Finally, the coding strategy for studying the models of analysis was developed. The coding of symbols, metaphors and rhetoric were substantially informative. This process helped gaining an overview of how perceptions of solidarity were expressed and used as arguments for how and why the respondents evaluated as they told me they would do based on the vignettes and based on the general questions asked during the interview. Of special impor-

tance was a code of 'the social workers client stories'. This code reflects defining examples for the respondents and became guiding in the final operationalization of the crucial factors (collective orientation, categorization practice and professional norms) under study. The social workers' use of their professional norms, sayings about collective orientation towards their work place, towards the clients, and towards what they understood as 'society' was ultimately coded. This last coding strategy was developed and executed almost 18 months after the initial coding process had begun.

Cross-case and within-case analyses

Cross-case analyses refer to analyses between cases – as between the respondents in the study. There are two fundamental reasons why cross-case analyses were performed: first, to enhance the internal validity of the measures of variation; second, to ground the developed understandings and explanations in all cases (Huberman & Miles 1994: 173).

The first type of cross-case analyses done was univariate analyses. They displayed how the attributive differences were distributed between cases on central codes such as categorization practice, use of professional norms, and collective orientation. The variance was hence described aiming at the next level of analysis about how the differences corresponded. These analyses were bivariate and described very well the relationships between cases on selected, varying attributes. Finally a super condensed matrix was developed, which displayed the general pattern of relationships between the attributive differences of all the cases. This became possible because a series of within-case analyses were done to analyze how the processes of the independent factor were related to the dependent variable in a case. The analyzing tool was thick descriptions and they were used as a tool to explain how and why the found relationships in the cross-case analyses appeared as they did.

Naturally there is no clear or clean boundary between describing and explaining: the researcher typically moves from through a series of analysis episodes that condense more and more data into a more and more coherent understanding of what, how, and why (Huberman & Miles 1994: 91).

The process of making good descriptions and at the same time analyzing the orders and patterns of attributes was a challenging task. However, by using the method of step-wise condensing of the texts 'behind' the cross-case analyses, it became possible to demonstrate 'general' mechanisms in only one quote. The tension between the unique and the universal was hence used as a force to gain knowledge about both within-case variance and cross-case variance. Analyzing the argument for categorization practice in one case was used to check whether or not this relationship existed in other cases. Finally

this information was used to compare all the cases on such a relationship. The use of vignettes helped facilitating both cross-case and within-case analyses.

6.4.3 Displays

A display is ‘a visual format that presents information systematically so the user can draw valid conclusions and take needed action’ (Huberman & Miles 1994: 91).

Working out displays of relationships and condensed text are what both cross-case analyses and within-case analyses are about. They *are* the analyses (Dahler-Larsen 2002: 32-60). In the study, mainly two types of displays were used. Content displays and numerical matrix displays. Content displays were used to condense qualitative information about cases in relation to different attributes. For example the attributes of the node ‘categorization practice’ were displayed by content exemplifying both the character of variance and how this variance was distributed on the cases. The numerical matrix was used when large amounts of qualitative information were displayed. In practice each analysis used both types of displays. This made the connection between the analytical steps and the conclusions easy to follow and it made the claimed correlations between cases and attributes transparent (Huberman & Miles 1994: 102).

6.5 Robustness of analyses

The robustness of the analyses was an ongoing theme during the elaboration of the research design, the data collecting process, and the displays of analyses. How valid and reliable are the vignettes, the questions, the displays and not least the conclusions? In the appendix all displays used to develop the analyses are listed including the casebook (displayed as A13 and A14). The complete Node Report can be made available for the purpose of documentation through the author.

6.5.1 Methodological analysis triangulation

Assigning attributes to the cases was a special challenge regarding how to ensure and optimize the robustness of the analyses. The basic question was to interpret the distribution of nodes and the variation in nodes in relation to the cases? In practice I used a method of triangulating the displays before the attributes were assigned to cases. Before each attribute was assigned to a case (this concerns the variation ‘discovered’ in data and not the external attributes such as vignette combination, gender, professional status etc.), e.g. ‘stereotyped categorization practice’ and ‘mechanical collective orientation’, two displays were worked out. One display showed the node variation (for

example in categorization practice) in numerical terms as how often the cases/the respondents used a certain practice. Another display illustrated the condensed content of the same variation. First of all the degree of confinement was decided as a question of the scale between one pole of practice to another pole of practice. Almost in all instances I made a scale of four qualities (attributes). Next, an empty matrix displaying cases and attributes was developed and based on a qualitative reading of the content display. I assigned each case with an attribute using the letter 'A'. Then I analyzed the numerical display using a quantitative logic and assigned all cases again using the letter 'B'. This made a matrix full of 'As' and 'Bs'. In cells containing both an 'A' and a 'B' I chose to assign the case with the particular attribute. In cases where 'A' and 'b' were located in different cells I went back to the content display and the numerical display and re-evaluated my analysis. Based on this re-evaluation, I made a decision of which designation (A or B) was most correct and I finally assigned the case in accordance with the re-evaluation. In order to enhance transparency I moved the 'losing' cell to the 'winning' cell. This makes it possible to see whether it was the numerical or the content display that became decisive (see Displays A5, A7 and A9 in Appendix).

In relation to the other analyzing processes, step-wise developments of the interview guide, the vignettes, and the questions allowing supervisors and colleagues to comment and criticize the designs was made to enhance the quality and the general robustness of the measures in the study.

6.5.2 Reliability and signification tests

Part of the robustness is the extent of validity and reliability in the study. Concerning the intra reliability of the codes a number of cases was selected by chance and recoded in relation to all nodes used in the study of the two models of analysis. The results of the recoding were acceptable in all cases. The intra code reliability inform about the 'extent to which the different judges tend to assign exactly the same rating to each object' (Lombard et al. 2005). Normally, the intra code reliability tests are used in quantitative content analysis where auto coding is used. The measures inform about how the exact same number of words is assigned with the same attribute. However, the measures are less informing when codes include whole sentences confined by an exact meaning or expression as was the case in the current study. The measures are, however, included but they must be interpreted with some reservation because the relatively low coefficients are often caused by insignificant differences between the node and the recoding of the node. In addition to the measures of kappa and percentage (dis)agreements, I re-evaluated all mismatches and commented them in the following text.

Reliability is a necessary (although not sufficient) criterion for validity in the study. Without reliable data all conclusions must be questioned (Lombard et al. 2005). In order to enhance the validity of the study in general and the measures of the study in particular several methods were used.

The interview guide was tested before the 24 respondents were interviewed. The use of vignettes is expected to enhance the internal validity of the study, but the question in all experimental settings is always how well the constructed variance corresponds to the variation outside the analytical settings. In relation to the used vignettes, the critical question is whether it is plausible that the respondents would react in a similar way towards a 'real' chronic pain patient? The vignettes were afterwards 'tested' on a group of health and social service personnel and their perceptions of the differences in the stories were comparable to the perceptions found in the study.

Chapter 7

Categorization practice among street-level bureaucrats

Chapter 7 is the first chapter in the dissertation's empirical part. The empirical part seeks to ground and study the theoretical argument developed in the previous Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5. The structure of the empirical analyses is derived from the two models of analysis presented in the last part of Chapter 5.

The matter of understanding categorization practice is raised as a question of how social workers put citizens into different categories. Furthermore, it is a matter of understanding what aspects of a categorization practice makes it different from another practice. The categorization practice of social workers is analyzed within a context of corporative and procedural structures corresponding to an organic logic of solidarity. However, as explained in Chapter 5, the current political discourse of social cohesion does not correspond to an organic, but rather to a mechanical form of solidarity (*Quid pro quo* policy). The same is true for the idea behind active social policy, which was characterized as a selective welfare program focusing on target groups of the 'truly' needy.

Categorization refers to a judging practice between individuals. Literature and empirical evidence suggest a distinction between deservingness and entitlement as two different kinds of criteria used by individuals to ground their categorization of other individuals. However, categorization practice may be better identified empirically through codes of classifying narratives related to the social workers' evaluation practice than through a coding of criteria use.

The present analysis of categorization practice finds that there is a variation, both within the interviews and between interviews. The difference in categorization practice is measured on a continuum between an individualized and a stereotyped practice. On this continuum the majority of interviews (19 out of 24) use a practice closest to the stereotyped pole and only five interviews use a practice closest to the individualized pole. However, the within-case analyses show that in the majority of interviews (15) there are internal variations in the use of practice. Thus, only in nine interviews the social worker consistently used stereotyped practice all through the interview. These findings will be further analyzed in Chapters 8-10.

This chapter presents the operational steps behind grasping the concept of categorization empirically. The analysis focuses on the internal variation in categorization practice, and on the variation between interviews. The chapter sets the scene for the kind and degree of variance the following analyses seek

to explain and understand. This part thus introduces the first step in analyzing the theoretical argument at the street-level bureaucracy.

Analytically speaking, the current analysis is carried out with the purpose of understanding the meaning of categorization practices as it is portrayed by social workers, and to contribute to the complete variance analysis of the relationship between solidarity, categorization, and institutions.

7.1 Categorization as practice

The interview guide's middle part was dedicated to questions about categorizations. The first part of the questions were descriptive trying to identify amount, volume, and intensity of categorization practices, and the second part was structured around vignettes describing fictive assistance-seeking citizen cases. The questions aimed at getting as much information as possible about the social workers' perception of causality and legitimacy of their categorization practice. The questions about concrete doings and strategies for clarification and evaluation (the empirical activity describing categorization practice) were always followed up by 'why'-questions and 'could you please explain that in detail for me'-questions, because such questions will compel the social workers to articulate not only arguments, but also their intermediate lines of figures making up the arguments.

The theoretical understanding and expectation about the relation between solidarity perception and categorization practice involves a number of expected correlations, which will be studied in the following chapters. In relation to this initial analysis it is of special importance to mention two of them. The use of deservingness criteria is expected to correlate with a mechanical solidarity perception. Second, the use of entitlement criteria is expected to correlate with an organic solidarity perception. However, because criteria designate the reason for a categorization they cannot, in an empirical sense, be taken as identical to the categorization practice. In other words, the criteria appear before the actual categorization and are used by the social workers as explanations for why they choose to make a concrete categorization. This means that it becomes practically difficult to separate an expression of criteria use from an expression of a solidarity perception, even though they are separated phenomena in a theoretical sense. Thus, making categorization operational through the criteria used by the social workers may give an imprecise measure of categorization. Instead, categorization practice was measured by the consequence of the criteria used as either a *stereotyped* or an *individualized* categorization practice. The measure of categorization practice as either stereotyped or individualized is hence the operational versions of deservingness and entitlement criteria respectively. The identification of the social workers' concrete sayings about what they intend to do about an assis-

tance-seeking citizen is hence better captured through their decision-making processes, where the classifying logic and citizen approach ultimately constitute their categorization practice. Consequently, the use of deservingness criteria was made operational as a stereotyped practice because a deservingness criterion functions by ascribing general perceptions of deservingness values to the concrete assistance-seeking citizen. The way such a criterion structures a categorization practice is by referring to concrete positive stereotypes for example about 'the elderly, who have served society all their lives' or the sick who 'are not to blame' for their disabilities or to concrete negative stereotypes as for example 'those, who malingering their disability' or 'those, who are raised not to do an extra effort'. Such stereotypes reflect examples of deserving and undeserving values. Thus, by identifying use of stereotyped categorization practice the theoretical measure of deservingness was better captured.

In opposition to the use of deservingness is the use of entitlement criteria. This type of criteria was made operational through a measure of individualized categorization practice because an entitlement criterion manifests itself as a reference to an abstract social norm, usually about procedural or civic rights causing the social worker to approach the assistance-seeking citizen as a legal subject and not as a confirmative example of a stereotype. In practice this manifests itself through references to functional aspects of problems instead of through references to moral and social aspects of problems. Thus, the measure of individualized categorization practice became a fruitful tracer of entitlement criteria. Furthermore, this way of making deservingness and entitlement operational as empirical traces of different kinds of categorization practices was inspired by Anthias, who defines the difference between an individualized and a stereotyped categorization practice by the following aspects:

There are a number of ways in which collective attributes function. One is in terms of stereotypes. Stereotypes are not necessarily false. Rather they are ways of organizing and selecting aspects or characteristics that individuals are seen to be endowed with **because** they are placed or classified into a particular category. The characteristics are not derived from observation or experience of the individual. Or to put it in another way, the experience and observation of the individual is always overdetermined by the attribution, in an a priori fashion, of certain characteristics (Anthias 1998: 518).

Categorization practice was hence measured in accordance with Anthias' description of the difference between a stereotyped and an individualized categorization practice. The measure is believed to be more sensitive than a criteria measure to capturing the perception and pre-judgment aspects of the social workers' discretionary practice.

In the analysis, stereotyped and individualized categorization practice was identified through coding of statements either reflecting an individualized assistance-seeking citizen perception causing the social worker to judge how external factors affect the concrete assistance-seeking citizen, or an assistance-seeking citizen perception causing the social worker to equate the assistance-seeking citizen beforehand with certain stereotyped characteristics and associated values.

7.2 Coding and analyzing categorization practice

The first step in the analysis was to develop a coding display of all statements about categorization as either a stereotyped or an individualized categorization practice for all 24 interviews. This coding display was hence condensed using a stepwise strategy of analytical selection into Display 7.1. Next, each interview was assigned with an attribute of dominating categorization practice, using both a quantitative and a qualitative method of selection. First, all interviews were assigned with an attribute based on the condensed coding display. Next, all interviews were assigned with an attribute based on the numerical display of numbers of words and coding references about stereotyped and individual categorization practice. In most interviews (20), the attributes assigned based on both methods were identical but in four interviews the assignments differed. These four interviews were then re-evaluated and finally given an attribute. Display A5 shows the procedure and the outcome of the re-evaluation (see Appendix A5).

In the following, four selected interviews from the analyzed coding display of categorization practices is presented. The purpose of developing a coding display was to concentrate the content of categorization into a point where it makes sense to represent each interview by an attribute value of the dominating categorization practice. This exercise was hence carried out and followed by a univariate analysis describing the differences in categorization practices as they appear in the interview data.

7.2.1 Individualized and stereotyped categorization practices

The node 'categorization practice' coded practice as either stereotyped or individualized for all 24 social workers. In the first coding query, a document of 180 pages was created and this display was afterwards condensed in three steps from 180 pages into 20 pages. Ultimately the most descriptive and illuminating statements of the varying forms of practice were selected. Display 7.1 shows the outcome of the analysis based on four interviews each representing an aspect of the variation.

Stereotyped categorization practice

The difference between a stereotyped and an individualized categorization practice was judged and evaluated in all interviews by identifying specific aspects of the social workers' narratives about their practice. Below are two quotes exemplifying how the difference in narratives has been measured throughout the interviews. The first quote is made by Interview 10 and the statement was coded as a stereotyped categorization practice:

As mentioned to you earlier I think that one of them is being clarified for the purpose of proving that no working capacity is left. And the other one is being clarified with that in mind to show that there is a working capacity. (...) So, there is a boundary between the two of them because one knows that with MS, she will keep getting worse and worse (...) And just because one loses an arm, this does not mean that everything will come to an end; it is tragic, and it really requires a total change of one's life, but it does not come to an end and it is possible to keep a completely normal life going (...) (Interview 10, question 4.1; Display 7.2, column 2).

The quote illustrates a categorization practice, where three aspects were defining for classifying the sequence as stereotyped. The first aspect is about the social worker's understanding of 'the purpose' of clarification. The social worker says that the purpose of the work testing differ according to what the outcome of the clarification should reach and document. The conclusion of the work testing (the evaluation of the assistance-seeking citizen) is hence made in advance. Either the clarification is used to demonstrate that the assistance-seeking citizen has no working capacities or it is used to demonstrate that she has working capacities. This is important, because descriptions of working capacities are the concrete basis of judging whether or not criteria of eligibility to social services such as early retirement pension or flex job²⁵ are met by the assistance-seeking citizen. In the quote, the social worker gives the impression that she knows beforehand what kind of evaluation of the assistance-seeking citizen she will end up with. Consequently, the whole process of clarification becomes irrelevant in the sense that it only confirms what was already expected by the social worker in the first place. The clarification is hence reduced to a confirming tool about an already made evaluation as well as a matter of 'simply' following the law. In other words, the clarification is here used to confirm a judgment, which has already been made by the social

²⁵ A citizen, who can no longer work as much as the person used to do because of disability, but is not entitled to early retirement pension, is entitled to receive a flex job arrangement. The arrangement means a regular 37 hour work week, however with certain flexibility. The workplace receives a refund (50-75 pct. of the wage bill) from the municipality (Act No. 439, Chapters 13, Sections 69-75).

worker. This makes part of a stereotyped practice because in order to know beforehand what the clarification should conclude, it implies that the social worker's impression of the assistance-seeking citizen becomes determining for the outcome of the categorization even before the policy tool of *means of evaluating working capacities* has been used.

The second dominating aspect that makes this practice stereotyped is the use of a commonality about health related consequences. Even though explaining why individuals respond differently to the same disease is a common puzzle in the medical profession, this insight does not apply to the way the social worker in the quote distinguishes and describes the differences between – in this case – an assistance-seeking citizen with MS and a handicapped assistance-seeking citizen. Here, the social worker uses the phrase 'one knows', which situates the judgment as common sense knowledge 'we all' are expected to have access to and approve of. And because 'one knows' that MS gets worse, but to lose an arm does not mean 'that everything will come to an end', the categorization of the two interviews must accordingly reflect this distinction. The MS case is characterized as a deteriorating condition in opposition to the handicapped case, which is characterized as a 'tragic' and a stationary condition. This distinction may not seem important outside this context, where a 'tragic' stationary condition can be felt as just as bad as an aggravating condition. But within this particular context of professional casework, it becomes the defining reason for the social worker to put them into two different categories. Furthermore, the law requires that stationary conditions are classified as cases, which should not be work tested. If a condition is stationary, the assistance-seeking citizen shall either receive a social service or be declared ready to enter the labor market on normal conditions. But even though the social worker concludes in advance that the handicapped assistance-seeking citizen belongs to the 'stationary category', the social worker still suggests to work test her with the purpose of documentation.

The third defining aspect in this quote is about normative dominance. With reference to the handicapped case, the social worker says as follows:

And just because one loses an arm, this does not mean that everything will come to an end, it is tragic, and it really requires a total change of one's life, but it does not come to an end and it is possible to keep a completely normal life going.

The social worker's understanding of what constitutes a 'completely normal life' is used explicitly and proposed as a standard toward the citizen. The social worker's perception of 'a completely normal life' will hence either correspond to or overrule the assistance-seeking citizen's own perception of a 'completely normal life'. In doing this the social worker demonstrates an act of

comparing her own perception of ‘a completely normal life’ with that of the citizen. In doing so the social worker avoids to take into account how the handicap affects this particular assistance-seeking citizen’s capacities to actually function normally.

Altogether these three aspects: 1) the confirmative use of work testing; 2) the use of commonalities; and 3) the use of normative dominance meet the criteria of classifying the sequence as an example of a stereotyped categorization practice.

Individualized categorization practice

In opposition to such a stereotyped categorization practice, an individualized categorization practice contains a quite different logic of judgment as can be seen in this statement made by the social worker in Interview 2:

So, they are not treated in similar ways here. It is ALWAYS an individual judgment of each citizen, who comes here (...). It is simply based on who you are talking to, what has happened and what does the medical documents say? What I do is based on a concrete individual judgment that considers every single case in relation to how you choose to activate the clients. – It could be that I have one with chronic pain, which has been excused from being available [for the labor market], and another three, where I say that now you have to get moving (Interview 2; question 7; Display 7.2, column 3).

In the quote the social worker explains to me why assistance-seeking citizens are not treated in similar ways. Even though the first quote stems from question 4.1 about differences between assistance-seeking citizens, and question 7 about similar treatment respectively, they both seek to collect information about the same thing: whether or not there are reasons to differentiate categorization practices. The dominating difference between the two quotes concerns the meaning of the initial citizen approach. There are two defining aspects in the current quote, which should be noticed. The first aspect concerns an informative use of work testing, where the social worker explains why assistance-seeking citizens are not treated in similar ways:

[I]t is ALWAYS an individual judgment of each citizen, who comes here.

Through such sayings, the social worker positions herself as more in line with the intended purpose of work testing, which is to evaluate the concrete working consequences of a certain condition. In categorizing the citizen, the social worker uses a criterion of finding out how different people react differently to the same problem. She does that when she emphasises that the same problem type (chronic pain) could easily be met with different demands. The underlining argument seems to be that she expects pain to affect people’s lives in

different ways and that it is the difference in consequences and not in diagnoses, which make up the criterion for how to categorize the assistance-seeking citizens.

The second aspect in the quote, which defines the sequence as an example of an individualized categorization practice is about the use of 'in relation to':

It is a concrete individual judgment that considers every single case in relation to how you choose to activate the clients.

The sentence expresses how a link is made between the use of the policy tool of testing work capacities and the concrete case it is applied to. If one compares this aspect to the stereotyped aspect of normative dominance, the difference lies in the way the citizen is being coupled with the aim of work testing. In the first instance, the justifying mechanism is situated in a commonality about 'normal life', where the assistance-seeking citizen is being included in this normative commonality based on the expectation that she should know what is meant by a 'completely normal life'. At the same time, however, the assistance-seeking citizen is excluded, because the reason why she is at the Job centre thereby demonstrates that she does not live up to such common norms. In the second instance, the assistance-seeking citizen's normative position is not included in the judgment. Here the social worker only involves specific aspects of her situation such as medical aspects and 'what has happened' to her judgment of the assistance-seeking citizen. Furthermore, these dimensions are not being substantially judged by the social worker, but are only seen as factors that must conform to a certain evaluation process. The object of judgment is here 'the relation' between the citizens' problems and the aim of the work testing, which is contrary to the former case, where the object of judgment was the concrete characteristics of the citizen.

The crucial difference between the two kinds of practice is between whether the assistance-seeking citizen is identified as belonging to a stereotype and evaluated in accordance with an already shaped understanding of what should be the outcome of a work testing, or whether the categorization of the citizen is performed as a basis of doing an individual discretion of how certain external factors such as health problems and social problems affect the working capacities of this concrete individual.

In the interviews, it differs how strong the difference is between a stereotyped and an individualized practice as described above. In some interviews, the difference is definite but in other interviews the differences are more indistinct. The degree of difference between a social worker's uses of individualized and stereotyped categorization practice respectively, is therefore best

understood on a continuum. Sometimes it is evident that an expression correctly classified as a stereotyped practice implicitly reveals that the sayings simply reflect that the social worker is familiar with another type of categorization practice and vice versa. The within-case analyses are particularly concerned with how to interpret and classify such 'differences in differences'.

7.2.2 Differences in categorization practice within the interviews

In general the collected interviews consist of extremely informative storylines and internal references when trying to understand a practice such as categorization. In this way each interview presents a motif, a narrative, and a solution to a problem. The way these components in a story are linked, some important aspects of the social workers' perceptions of causality are expressed. When a social worker told a story about an assistance-seeking citizen, it was always a carefully selected case which symbolized a general principle, a problem, or a recipe on how the social worker believed a success story could be created. Usually the social worker used the stories later on in the interview in order to substantiate the general point of the story. In this way, the social workers used narratives to explain their reasoning but also in order to justify their decisions. The stories of causal relations within each interview should of course not be confused with an objective causality. They refer to the social worker's perceptions of how things are and should be related. These perceptions portray the building blocks when a categorization practice is described and justified in relation to their practices of work testing.

Display 7.1 was developed to analyze the important aspects of the differences in social workers' categorization practice. Each interview in the display is selected to represent an attribute on a continuum between a stereotype-dominated and an individualized dominated practice.

You cannot just base a decision on diagnosis alone

Interview 6 represents one of the interviews with almost zero variation in categorization practice. Even though the questions were constructed to capture different perspectives and motives about reasons to categorize, this social worker expressed nearly only individualized practice. The single place where the social worker did express what was coded as a stereotyped practice was about the focus on target groups where he says that:

[I]t makes a difference if one is less than 25 or 30 in relation to which target group one belongs, or whether one is a match one to three or a match four to five.

Display 7.1. Coding display of the categorization practices of selected interviews

Categorization practice:		
Interview:	Individualized	Stereotyped
6. Individualized attribute	<p>So, do we talk about PTSD, schizophrenia, depression, a 'life ache' or what? I think it is decisive to describe what we are talking about. But again, a diagnosis is one thing, the way it affects the individual is another, and the two can be very different. Then we are compelled to try to find out how the diagnosis is going to affect you and in relation to your capacities to handle a job. Basically I think that this is a very logical thing to do (...) that you have to – you cannot just base a decision of pension on a diagnosis alone (...) I think that would be to incapacitate people and to stigmatize people if you claimed that simply because they have a certain diagnosis they were automatically put into some kind of category. I think it should be found out how it specifically affects the capacity to handle a job. I think that is much more fair.</p>	<p>This is my personal version of it that it has become possible in relation to some of the target groups, in a very concrete way to do things we could not do before. For example it is now possible to use several education offers to some people (...) In addition, [work testing] has become much more focused on target groups than what used to be the case. REALLY focused on target groups, which means that you must always watch your steps. Because it makes a difference if one is less than 25 or 30 in relation to which target group one belongs or whether one is a match one to three or a match four to five.</p>
22. Individualized/ stereotyped attribute	<p>Basically, I find cases where you have a fruitful cooperation and where you fairly agree that doing these kinds of activities is necessary (...) And if you receive a positive feedback from the consultants, who do the follow-up, or if I am doing it myself. So, when I get a really good description of what has been going on, in such cases I think it usually works out well, because then I can actually use the information to something.</p>	<p>Among other things of course it also depends on how I assign a task (...). If I am not really prepared and if I haven't thought it through before I choose a referral to a work testing institution (...) And I pass on my idea about the case, and then of course I cannot expect to get something precise in return (...). So this is about me being clear on the case BEFORE I refer people [to work testing]. What do I want with this case?</p>

1. Stereotyped/ individualized attribute	Basically, what might be the difference between them is what they are capable of doing – based on the fact that she is missing an arm – because it also makes a difference whether she normally uses her right or her left arm.	Of course I write down what I want them to find out in the particular referral. Yeah right, yes, she has a diagnosis. ‘I discovered my diagnosis in a magazine’. No, (slight laughter). Well, there are some discussions about this fibromyalgia. Therefore that case could get complicated, because not all doctors recognize fibromyalgia, but we do not have them here as much as we had earlier. Apparently, it is not so pervasive anymore – You see, we have something like diagnoses of fashion, which flare up from time to time.
21. Stereotyped attribute	Because, even though the law expects me to offer them reiterate work testing in order to document that they have a generally reduced working capacity within all occupations, there is no idea in ordering a girl like her about, provided that you can tell, based on the existing information, that her working capacity is reduced (...). Then she might quietly be on her way to receiving an early retirement pension.	If people complain and if their subjective complaints do not quite conform with the objective findings, then, this gives me an idea that something, does not quite correspond. And then of course I start to make a resource profile including a description of how this case <i>really</i> adds up. And then it is about time to give them some initiatives (...) and here I use external agents to follow them closely during a work testing and to give me a description of how things add up. And if they still indicate many subjective complaints in opposition to the objective findings, I approach people directly and ask them ‘what is this really about?’ And then I simply use the no-nonsense approach. ‘Is this about a work injury insurance case? Is that the reason blocking this cooperation? Is this about you having some totally different expectations, because I suspect that the real reason is that you are speculating in flex jobs’. Because this [categorization] is also about communication (...). It is about daring to ask people questions and to approach them directly and say ‘I suspect that this is the real issue. Tell me, is this true or is it not true?’

However, as also appears from Display 7.1, the context of the stereotyped statement is that he describes to me what has become the dominating way of managing assistance-seeking citizens. When describing the use of target groups, he overcompensates the expression by saying, 'REALLY focused on target groups', which indicates that, according to him, the existing categorization practice is not the right way to evaluate assistance-seeking citizens.

The social worker's answers and explanations of the way he work tests assistance-seeking citizens are almost consistently individualized. He communicates clearly compared to the other social workers, which can be exemplified through his use of the term 'life ache' (in Danish: 'ondt i livet'). It is a widely used expression in Denmark, which was coined as a pejorative description of malingering women by neuropsychologist Lise Ehlers (2000). The phrase refers to a particular social group of middle-aged women with contested diagnoses such as fibromyalgia and whiplash. This particular framing group is also used to discuss social problems outside a Danish context as e.g. in the US, where the discourse however is a bit different than in Denmark. Here, the problems related to 'life aching' people is intensively linked to the insurance companies and to a lesser degree (compared to Denmark) with the welfare state (Barker 2005: 46; Malleson 2002: 152). In general the description is used to explain especially women's coping problems, which are expected to be associated with a wide-ranging displeasure with life, combined with an aim to be excused from 'normal' social obligations (family life) as well as from the labor market (civic life). The expression is hence used to designate malingering people in general, who are suspected of deliberately using a sick role to avoid social and labor engagement. Ordinary people as well as professionals tend to use the term when questions of deceptions, malingering and social fraud are being *implicitly* discussed (Østergaard 2005: 43; Dalsgaard 2005: 104).

However, the interesting aspect in Interview 6 is how the social worker manages to make a reference to this highly contentious expression without actually using it to express a stereotyped categorization practice. His use of 'life ache' is not associated to a stereotyped categorization practice, which is the typical use of the expression in the other interviews. He lists a number of contested diagnoses: PTSD, schizophrenia, depression, and 'life ache', and then he explains that these diagnoses should not be determining for the way assistance-seeking citizens are managed:

But again, a diagnosis is one thing, the way it affects the individual is another, and the two can be very different.

Similarly, as underlined in the second aspect of an individualized practice, he sets out the relation between a condition (the problem) and the obligation to

'be active' as the object of the categorization practice. In the end of the sequence, he explains why he thinks assistance-seeking citizens should be categorized in accordance with how a condition affects them individually. What is remarkable here is how he uses references to general principles of justice and fairness:

I think that would be to incapacitate people and to stigmatize people if you claimed that simply because they have a certain diagnosis they were automatically put into some kind of category.

Instead of using an explicit reference to the intention of the law as most social workers tend to do in relation to this question, he uses an abstract external reference to a social norm about individual justice. This corresponds precisely to the form of categorization predicted by the use of such a reference or what Chapter 2 discussed as an entitlement-based judgment.

I can actually use the information to do something

Contrary to using an abstract norm is using a concrete policy tool. The social worker in Interview 22 is much more concerned with the policy tools than the social worker in Interview 6, and she makes a good example of this difference. Among the available policy tools of assistance-seeking citizen categorization, the development of 'good descriptions' of working capacities, resources, and activities is the absolutely prevailing and preferred tool for the social workers in general and to Interview 22 in particular. Descriptions were a dominant issue for this social worker both when she expressed individualized and stereotyped categorization practices. The 'description' seemed to involve more than just a practical tool for this social worker, because she continued to structure her answers about problems, principles, narratives and recommendations around a narrative about the 'good description'. Even though it may not appear evident from reading the quote in Display 7.1 alone, the social worker gave the impression of being very troubled by the fact that social workers do not have any unambiguous measurement methods in their work. To her, the 'good description' became a substitute for this lack of methods.

During the interview, it became clear how the social worker was very fixated with the descriptive part of categorizing assistance-seeking citizens. This aspect describes her as a social worker, who exercises an individualized practice, because she seems to want to create a distance between her subjective evaluations and the citizens' subjective experiences through the means of the 'good description'. To her the description becomes a substitute and an idealized proxy for the non-existing subject-free laboratory. As this social worker practically feels contempt for such a subjective dimension, which she by the

way clearly understands as a hindrance to ever achieving a just decision-making, the 'good description' becomes the lesser evil she believes is the closest you can get to see justice fulfilled. However, in her eagerness to make the 'good description' she (maybe) unintendedly devaluates all other agents in the work testing program. Because of the way she expresses this low recognition of the other agents, she actually from time to time (and maybe paradoxically) becomes quite stereotyped in her sayings about practice.

So, this is about me being clear on the case BEFORE I refer people [to work testing].

In this sentence she expresses a stereotyped categorization practice because of how it refers to a confirming use of work testing as described in the quote from Interview 10. Even though she wants to be as precise as possible in her categorization practice and with that she explicitly means as 'rightful' as possible in the sense of not letting subjective factors such as compassions, pre-judgments etc. influence her description, she ends up letting her own subjective judgment overrule the other agents' judgments and ultimately she decides for herself what is the right categorization of the assistance-seeking citizen. In her wholeheartedness to accomplish this, she 'accidentally' becomes stereotyped in her practice:

Among other things of course it also depends on how I assign a task (...). If I am not really prepared and if I haven't thought it through before I choose a referral to a work testing institution (...) And I pass on my idea about the case, and then of course I cannot expect to get something precise in return.

Here she refers to the fact that if she has not prepared the objective of the work testing and hence the confirmation of what she already knows about the case, she simply refuses the information. In doing so she manifests a stereotyped categorization practice, because she makes the decision on how the assistance-seeking citizen should be interpreted even before the work testing process begins.

Ultimately, what makes her more a performer of an individualized than a stereotyped categorization practice is the fact that her expressions overall correspond more to a relational practice, where the object of the categorization becomes the relation between the assistance-seeking citizens' problems and the obligations instead of being based on a stereotyped interpretation. In addition, she also intends to use the work testing in an informative way even though it appeared some places in the interview as a confirming practice as discussed above. Finally, and to support that she is classified (by me) as being closer to an individualized than to a stereotyped position is a reference she makes about cooperation:

Basically, I find cases where you have a fruitful cooperation and where you fairly agree that doing these kinds of activities is necessary (...) And if you receive a positive feedback from the consultants, who do the follow-up, or if I am doing it myself. So, when I get a really good description of what has been going on, in such cases I think it usually works out well.

She says that a fruitful co-operation between her and the assistance-seeking citizen is important to create the possibility of making 'the good description', and when this relationship functions she 'can actually use the information to do something'. This implies a categorization practice, which is not based on stereotyped information about the citizen, but rather on collected information that is being sensitive to creating a fruitful cooperation between them. Consequently, Interview 22 was assigned with an attribute of individualized/stereotyped categorization practice, indicating that the interview contains stereotyped elements, but it is far more close to the position of individualized-dominated than to stereotypical-dominated practice on a continuum.

You see, we have something like diagnoses of fashion

In Interview 1, the social worker uses an individualized categorization practice when he says that the way the handicapped case should be managed depends on the concrete consequences. In the following the social worker is talking about one of the fictive cases introduced into the interview about a woman, who has lost her arm in a car accident:

Basically, what may be the difference between them is what they are capable of doing – based on the fact that she is missing an arm – because it also makes a difference whether she normally uses her right or her left arm.

In choosing such a factor as determining, the social worker expresses a citizen approach where it is the relation between the impact of the lost arm and the external obligations (activation obligations) as the object of categorization. The implied logic seems to be that if the assistance-seeking citizen normally uses the arm she has lost she will be more handicapped than if she has lost the arm she normally does not use. The purpose is also described as a matter of functionality, because the social worker is referring it to the capabilities of the citizen. Even though this may sound as a factor that applies to both a stereotyped and an individualized categorization practice, the analyses showed a difference here. Where capabilities were described as crucial in a practice it was associated with an individualized approach and instead of capabilities it was motivational skills, which were being emphasized as the prevailing parameters in stereotyped practices.

But the social worker in Interview 1 is far from only expressing a use of an individualized categorization practice. In his response to the introductive,

fictive fibromyalgia case, he draws on a stereotype about malingering women from the beginning of his comment:

Yeah right, she has a diagnosis. I discovered my diagnosis in a magazine.

The phrase is pejorative towards the problem of the assistance-seeking citizen, because it associates the content of the diagnosis with the content of a magazine. Fibromyalgia is here used in a pejorative sense as a signifier of a person, who gets her information and descriptions of her health from an illegitimate, non medical source, namely from a magazine, which is not where the 'real' diagnoses are described and explained. The social worker continues to be uncomplimentary toward the fictive assistance-seeking citizen when he says that *apparently* they [the social workers] do not have so many of them anymore and then he explains to me why:

Well, there are some discussions about this fibromyalgia. Therefore that case could get complicated, because not all doctors recognize fibromyalgia, but we do not have them here as much as we had earlier. Apparently, it is not so pervasive anymore – You see, we have something like diagnoses of fashion, which flare up from time to time.

In saying this, he equalizes the problem of the assistance-seeking citizen to a passing fad. Thereby he devaluates the problems to a level compared to children's silly ideas and crazy whims, however leaving out the usual sympathy and tolerance one has with children.

He uses a similar aspect of normative dominance as in the quote from Interview 10, because he judges the social value of the diagnosis (instead of its medical value) and interprets the bearer of the diagnosis in accordance with that particular (negative) value. In other words, he uses a stereotype of malingering where he ascribes the negative meaning of 'malingering' not only to the fibromyalgia diagnosis, but also to the diagnosed citizen. Consequently, the categorization practice becomes an outcome of a prejudgment as a prejudice about a perception of lazy people who has nothing else to do, but to invent symptoms for the sake of getting attention. In this sense, his approach is equivalent to the negatively constructed meaning of the expression 'life ache' presented above. However, when referring to such a stereotypical image, he actually makes a stereotyped categorization of the citizen.

The important thing to notice about Interview 1 is that even though the social worker may be inclined to perform a stereotyped categorization practice, he does use statements and arguments, which indicates an individualized practice as exemplified in the quote about the lost arm. Consequently, interview one was assigned with an attribute of stereotyped/individualized categorization practice, indicating that the interview contains individualized

elements, but is far more close to the position of stereotypical-dominated than to an individualized-dominated practice on a continuum.

I simply use the no-nonsense approach

One of the prevailing themes for the social worker in Interview 21 was about a discrepancy between subjective experiences and objective findings related to certain types of problems:

If people complain and if their subjective complaints do not quite conform to the objective findings, then, this gives me an idea that something does not quite correspond here.

The social worker's narrative about the problematic case was situated in an understanding of a discrepancy between the assistance-seeking citizen's story of suffering and the objective truth about it. This theme is also a narrative about a general discrepancy between 'those who do nothing' and the ones who 'do it all'. The narrative has a very political nature, because it connotes a fundamental conflict between opposed social groups in society. Those 'who want to contribute to society' opposed to 'those who only want to free-ride' at the expense of the first group. In a similar and comparable sequence taken from Interview 15, the social worker in this interview explains to me why she believes there are such 'fundamental differences' between people:

So, there are some people, there are some people who are raised to always deliver something good. You want to fight to the finish. You fight your way to work every single day, even though it is tough. (...) This is how someone has it, and others, they have a more careless relation to what your contributive obligations are towards society – and so this is how it is (Interview 15, Display 7.2, column 2).

This theme implicates a very political discussion, which manifests a conflict between two opposite groups. However, by telling this story through sayings about a discrepancy between subjective experiences and measurements problems, the social worker manages to depoliticize the discussion by relating it to a recognized problem in professional circles; medicine and psychology. In these professions the problem of discrepancy is a matter of the internal validity of available measurement methods used to capture for instance patients' pains perceptions and their consequences for their general health.

However, as put forward by the social worker, the problem seems to contain more aspects than just a matter of coordinating a discrepancy, because of the way the problem description is followed by a statement about what she will actually do about it:

And then of course I start to make a resource profile including a description of how this case *really* adds up. And then it is about time to give them some initiatives.

By turning the problem of discrepancy into a matter of activation, she indicates how it has nothing to do with a professional concern about a measurement's internal validity, but rather a matter of changing what she believes to be a citizen's immoral attitude. Furthermore, the expression illustrates how she intends to get this group activated in concrete terms. She implies that the group, which is defined by this stereotype about a lazy group of complaining people, correspond to the characteristics of her more difficult and 'immeasurable' assistance-seeking citizens. Although she presents the group as quite dense, the concrete individuals belonging to the group is assumed to be clever enough to try to cover up their real motives which she indicates is about gaining free and undeserved political and social privileges. The way she expects assistance-seeking citizens to pursue this goal is by using a sick role to pretend they are something they are *really* not – namely in *real* pain. According to her, what makes this group ineligible and undeserving, is precisely that they are not perceived as being 'truly' needy. This 'revealing' narrative is hence applied by the social worker to describe and to categorize the assistance-seeking citizen discussed.

The quote above interestingly shows how, in the general narrative, she assumes that the resource profile can solve the portrayed problem of discrepancy. She assumes this when she explains why writing down the citizens' resources is a tool to diminish the gap between the private experience and the objective facts about the (immeasurable) pain. Even though it can seem hard to follow the explanatory logic, it must mean that in case writing down the resources does diminish the discrepancy, it must be because the social worker manages to change the experience of complaints of the assistance-seeking citizen. Because it is evident that the process of writing down the resources has no effect on the 'immeasurable' pain, since a resource profile clearly does not affect the methods of measurements in the medical profession. To put it differently, the way the social worker portrays the problem there are two variables in the dysfunctional equation: The assistance-seeking citizen's subjective experience of her pain, and the medical profession's measurement of it. The only variable the social worker has access to affecting is of course the assistance-seeking citizen's subjective experience.

For the social worker, the purpose of using a resource profile is hence to change nothing less but the assistance-seeking citizen's experience of complaints. By doing so she also succeeds in solving the problem as she portrays it: namely to reveal the assistance-seeking citizens' habits and incentives to

fake their complaints. Furthermore, the social worker here demonstrates a high level of confidence in herself and in the ability of her judgments to find out the truth about the complaints of the citizen. This truth is expected to arise from her description. Should this not occur, e.g. if the resource profile does not reveal the truth and thus does not solve the problem of the discrepancy between an experienced subjective dimension and an objective dimension, then the social worker positions herself as the consistent 'no-bullshit' kind of type, who does not hesitate to use stronger means:

And if they still indicate many subjective complaints in opposition to the objective findings, I approach people directly and ask them 'what is this really about?' And then I simply use the no-nonsense approach. 'Is this about a work injury insurance case? Is that the reason blocking this cooperation? Is this about you having some totally different expectations, because I suspect that the real reason is that you are speculating in flex jobs'

Another interesting aspect one should notice about this narrative is that even though she is referring to a general practice of how to use the resource profile in a work testing process, she chooses to present it differently. She describes the process as a battlefield, where she is the head of command in 'unsettling the truth' about the assistance-seeking citizen. A truth, which the social worker assumes is about an assistance-seeking citizen, who fakes her complaints in order to realize her cheating motif about free social and political privileges. In other words, the social worker twists her narratives about practice from a normal procedural one into a detective piece of policy work. An example of this is when she explains her reasons for the way she categorizes by emphasizing what she thinks categorization is really about:

Because this [evaluation] is also about daring to ask people question and to approach them directly and say 'I suspect that this is the real issue. Tell me, is this true or is it not true?'

Characteristic of the way she relates to assistance-seeking citizens is suspicion guiding her mission to reveal the assistance-seeking citizens' 'real' motif for complaining. This is also seen as another example of the aspect of normative dominance, because she expresses an insensitive relation to the assistance-seeking citizen's problem and problem perception.

In this sense, her categorization practice constitutes the diametrically opposed practice compared to the individualized-dominated practice, where it is the relation between the citizen's experienced problems and the external world's (society's) interpretation of them and the obligations that follow from this, which makes the object of the categorization. Instead in her case, she judges the citizen alone by her suspiciousness with reference to a socially

constructed meaning of the malingering woman with a 'life ache'. Even though she does not use the expression 'life ache', the concern about the discrepancy between subjective experience and objective measures are related to the discourse about the malingering women, where especially diagnoses involving immeasurable complaints such as contested chronic pains are used as a framing group to talk about normative discrepancies as well as a 'safe' and depoliticized room to discuss and to portray policy problems. This is an example of what Stone describes as a common feature of why individuals define and fight against policy problems in depoliticized narratives (Stone 2002: 138). By 'covering up' big political conflicts into the details of for example a policy tool or parts of a commonality, the political rhetoric vanishes into being a depoliticized narrative: for example when Interview 21 uses a professional dispute about measurements she manages to make her political aspects seem objective and beyond dispute.

When social workers were very stereotyped in their categorization practice they almost never used statements that associated an individualized categorization practice. In other words, only little variation was found in interviews with a predominantly stereotyped practice. As a whole, this characterizes Interview 21 as well. However, having said that, in a single sequence the social worker does use a logic which connotes to an individualized practice. This was for example the case when she talked about 'an obvious case':

[T]here is no idea in ordering a girl like her about, provided that you can tell, based on the existing information, that her working capacity is reduced.

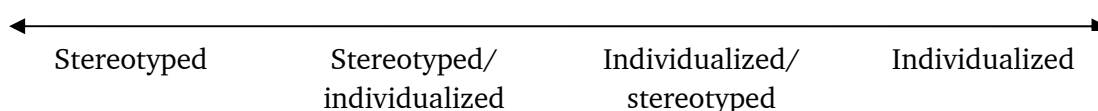
Here, the social worker expresses an example of what many social workers described as 'a meaningless clarification'. This phrase was often used to 'excuse' an easy work testing, which also seems to be the case here. However, the statement connotes an individualized categorization practice more than to a stereotyped one because of the way she refers to external documents describing the citizen. Consequently, this rather ambiguous expression of an individualized practice must be classified as being quite weak compared to the dominating examples of individualized categorization practices in the other interviews. Basically, this means that even though elements of individualized practice can be traced in her statements, classifying her practice as being generally stereotyped makes sense. Analytically speaking, the same goes for the weak character of the stereotyped practice analyzed in Interview 6, where the social worker generally used a strong individualized practice. This indicates that social workers with 'strong and consistent voices' of either individualized or stereotyped expressions about categorization practices only vaguely deviate from their preferred practice. In many ways this seems to be intuitively logical. In the following analyses, this is studied more specific and

in comparisons to other aspects of social workers' categorization practices such as their general collective orientation and their professional norms. However, before these other aspects become relevant to the analysis, the general picture of how categorization practice differentiates among the social workers in general are presented.

7.2.3 Distribution of interviews regarding categorization practice

The within-case analyses demonstrate how variation in categorization practice exists within almost each interview and is far from being an unambiguous, clear 'attribute' to assign. Social workers tend to use both an individualized and a stereotyped practice. However, having said that, it should also be evident by now that the impact of the variation differs. These differences between interviews can hence be displayed on a categorization practice continuum as follows:

Figure 7.1. Continuum of categorization practices



To illustrate the degree of variation of the interviews on categorization practice, a display was developed describing the distribution of interviews on the four attributive values (the process of attribute assignment is shown in Display A5 in Appendix).

Display 7.2. Distribution of interviews regarding categorization practice

	Categorization practice:			
	Stereotyped	Stereotyped/ individualized	Individualized/ stereotyped	Individualized
Distribution of interviews	3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24	1, 4, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18	2, 11, 22	6, 14
Total	10	9	3	2

n = 24.

The display must be understood as positions on a continuum. From Display 7.2 it appears there is more stereotyped categorization practice than individualized categorization practice. In fact, only two interviews were classified as dominated by individualized categorization practice whereas ten interviews were classified as dominated by stereotyped categorization practice. Half of the social workers (12) were classified on the continuum's middle po-

sitions. Nine interviews were classified as being closest to a dominated stereotyped practice (stereotyped/individualized), and three social workers were classified as being closest to an individualized practice. Thus, only five social workers were assigned with attributes closest to the position of an individualized dominated categorization practice.

Summed up, the cross-case analysis of categorization practice showed a variation on the dependent variable. Social workers do categorize in different ways in the interviews collected. Furthermore, they use different narratives and logics when talking about categorization practice. The difference in judgment narrative was classified as a difference between a stereotyped and an individualized categorization practice. The continuum of individualized and stereotyped categorization practices showed a dominance of stereotyped practice. At the poles of this continuum stereotyped categorization practice is presented by 19 interviews whereas the pole of individual categorization practice counts for only five cases. This indicates that stereotyped categorization practice is the dominating categorization practice used by social workers in the collected interviews. Finally, Display 7.2 showed that between the poles of stereotyped and individualized categorization, the social workers perform both stereotyped and individualized practices in 12 interviews (half of the interviews). This may indicate that their categorization practices are shaped by different factors. Sometimes the social worker expressed a stereotyped and at other times an individualized categorization practice. Something thus affects whether a stereotyped or an individualized categorization practice is performed by the social worker. To put it differently, when a social worker uses both types of practice, it is plausible to suggest that something conditions which practice is preferred by the social worker.

Coding intra-reliability of categorization practice

Having coded all interviews for stereotyped and individualized categorization practice, a reliability test was done comparing a re-coding of categorization practice. Based on the distribution of interviews on attributive values on categorization practice (see Display 7.2) three interviews assigned with different attributes were selected: Interviews 1, 6 and 24. The results of the reliability tests were an agreement between 99.99 pct. and 78.82 pct. An evaluation of the disagreements revealed that the lowest agreement score on 78.82 pct. was caused by a double coding of individual categorization practice in Interview 6. Here, statements about individualized casework were coded as individualized categorization practice in the new coding and as a social pedagogical norm in the old coding. The concrete sequence of double coding is in a grey zone between a professional norm and a categorization practice; however I concluded that the original coding was the most precise one, and that

the recoding overemphasized the professional connotations in the sequence. The rest of the disagreement percentages can be explained by small differences in lines and words coded in the setting of the main text and hence they do not express 'real' disagreements, but rather unavoidable mismatches in coding precision.

7.3 Summary

The univariate analysis of categorization practice among street-level bureaucrats demonstrated a variation in the way social workers categorize citizens. Variation was found both within the single interviews and between them. This means that even though the classification of social workers was based on their dominating categorization practice, almost all social workers used narratives of both an individualized and a stereotyped character. The dominating picture shows social workers to be more inclined to use stereotyped categorization practice. This is done by referring to socially constructed stereotypes of mainly malingering people, who are perceived as (mis)using a sick role to achieve undeserved benefits.

The cross-case analyses showed variations of categorization practice, but so did the within-case analyses. This indicates that, on the one hand, certain types of practices tend to dominate social workers, and, on the other hand, the same type of variation that characterizes the difference between interviews exists within 15 out of the 24 interviews. Only nine interviews consistently used a stereotyped categorization practice and none where an individualized practice was present alone. Consequently, variation as regards character and distribution is shown to be predominantly stereotyped over individualized categorization. This accounts for the variation found both within the interviews and between interviews. The character of the difference between practices was basically reflected in the way the social worker perceived of the purpose of the work testing. Either the work testing was seen as a documentation tool of an already performed stereotyped categorization of the assisting-seeking citizen, or it was seen as a tool in an individualized practice to collect further information about the citizen.

Subsequently, the two institutions that vary in the study: professional norms and formal rules will be analyzed for variation and in relation to categorization practice. This will be done in order to analyze patterns of correlations and distribution of interviews on selected attributes. Within-case analyses of how the social workers use their professional norms when they explain about categorization practices and bivariate cross-case matrix analysis based in the representative statements are the methods which will be used. The next analysis is interesting in order to see how the social workers' collective orientations are related to the way they argue they will categorize their

assistance-seeking citizens. This comparison adds a fundamental brick to be able to study the theoretical argument about how different solidarity perceptions are expected to create different practices of categorization towards the assistance-seeking citizens.

Chapter 8

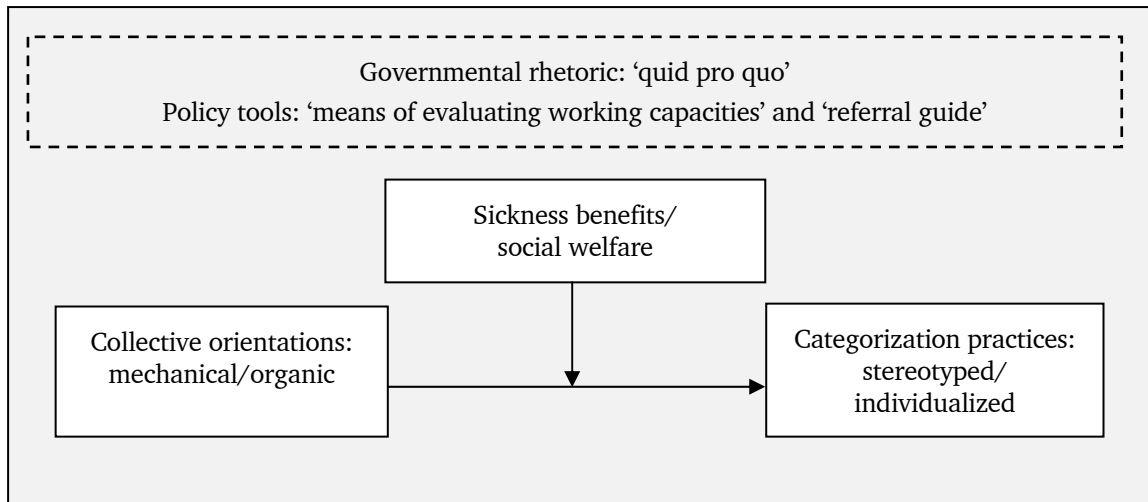
Collective orientations and categorization practices

The differences in how the social workers argue they would categorize assistance-seeking citizens are expected to depend on what they perceive as legitimate and integrative forces in society or what has been conceptualized as perceptions of solidarity. In the current chapter, the perceptions of solidarity indicated by the social workers are identified in the interviews and analyzed in relation to the categorization practices. Two expressions of solidarity are measured and analyzed in relation to the categorization practices: collective orientation and professional norms. In Chapter 8, the collective orientation is the independent variable, while professional norms are examined in Chapter 9 as the independent variable explaining the differences in categorization practices. In both chapters, formal rules (social welfare and sickness benefits) are analyzed for whether they condition the relationships between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices. Based on the description of the welfare program of active social policy in Chapter 5, the law of active social policy (social welfare) is hence expected to strengthen the relationship between a mechanical collective orientation and a stereotyped categorization practice, and the law of sickness benefits is thought to strengthen the relationship between organic collective orientation and an individualized categorization practice. Social welfare was described as a reduced and residual support associated with logics of deservingness and thereby with a mechanical logic of solidarity. In contrast, sickness benefits were described as insurance-based with relative strong corporative ties between labor unions, the employer's association and the state. Consequently, the agreements made by these associations are expected to strengthening a representation of logic of entitlement in the law and thus with an organic logic of solidarity. The analysis performed is presented visually in Figure 8.1.

The general picture is that the perceptions involving a dominating mechanical collective orientation correlate with stereotype-dominated categorization practices, while the perceptions involving a dominant organic collective orientation correlate with individualized-dominated categorization practice. However, the relations between mechanically shaped perceptions and stereotyped categorization practices are more prevalent than the relationship between organically shaped perceptions and individualized practice. This is true from both numerical and textual perspectives. Despite obvious quantitative limitations when comparing the 24 interviews, the qualitative comparisons point toward the expected relationship. The indication that mechanical

solidarity and stereotyped categorization seem to thrive more than other types of relationships points towards formal rules as a conditional factor.

Figure 8.1. Solidarity perceptions and categorization practices



Chapter 8: Analysis 2.

Nevertheless, there is no clear basis to suggest that sickness benefits or social welfare systematically condition the relationship, because some of the unexplained relations remain unexplained even when compared to formal rules. That said, however, in the last analysis comparing the relationships between perceptions of solidarity, categorization practices and formal rules, the concentration of mechanical and stereotyped relations on sickness benefits became evident. Consequently, the bottom line in the analyses is that the manner with which solidarity perceptions have been measured in this chapter – as a matter of collective orientation – relates very well to the expected categorization practice; however, the conditional effect of formal rules is less clear. There appears to be a tendency for organic collective orientation and individualized practice to thrive better under the rules of social welfare (and vice versa with mechanical collective orientation). Comparing the formal rules to the types of relationships substantiated this tendency.

The chapter presents four analyses of collective orientations. Following the description of categorization practices in Chapter 7, the focus is on the meaning of collective orientation in relation to the categorization practice. First, a univariate analysis of collective orientation is carried out using both cross-case and within-case analysis. Next, the relationship to categorization practice is analyzed using a bivariate logic of comparison. The third analysis codes the identified relations and explores how they are manifested in the interviews. Conducting a univariate analysis of the relationships as collectively oriented arguments about categorization practices provides this compari-

son. Finally, the fourth analysis examines how formal rules correlate with these relationships. The chapter ends with a summary.

8.1. Perceptions of solidarity as collective orientations

The theoretical concept of solidarity was introduced in Chapter 3. Here, it was explained why two different forms of solidarity seem to exist stemming from two different social sources: one from an attraction to differences, the other from an attraction to similarities.

Everybody knows that we like what resembles us, those who think and feel as we do. But the opposite phenomenon is no less frequently encountered. Very often we happen to feel drawn to people who do not resemble us, precisely because they do *not* do so (...) [w]hat demonstrates these opposing doctrines is the fact that both forms of friendship exist in nature. Dissimilarity, just like resemblance, can be a cause of mutual attraction (...) However, not every kind of dissimilarity is sufficient to bring this about (...) Thus only differences of a certain kind incline us towards one another. These are those which, instead of mutually opposing and excluding one another, complement one another (Durkheim 1984: 16).

These two social sources constitute the basic mechanisms in organic and mechanical solidarity, respectively. In the empirical analyses, the main elements in the concept of solidarity are used to measure (code) the social workers' expressions in the interviews. As regards the measure of mechanical solidarity, the following aspects drawn from Chapter 3 have been central in the coding process:

1. the representation of symbols describing shared values and habits (as opposed to organic solidarity, which represents shared rights) in small, norm-based communities;
2. a high degree of identification with collective identities;
3. low tolerance of deviance from collective identities and a corresponding high aversion toward other ways of living, performing and doing things;
4. high tolerance toward similar individuals (attraction to similarity);
5. low interdependency between the individual and the collective; and
6. repressive law (revenge and punishment) as the predominant form of sanction.

These six qualities characterizing mechanical solidarity are expected to shape a stereotypical categorization practice, because they all presuppose a normative basis of comparison with the assistance-seeking citizen to the extent where stereotyped interpretations of reasons and problems become the leading tool in the evaluation of the capacity of the individual to work. Conversely, the measure of organic solidarity in the collective orientations of the social

workers has been identified through the following aspects also deduced from Chapter 3:

1. the representation of shared rights (in opposition to mechanical solidarity, which represents shared norms). Theoretically speaking, the need for the representation of rights instead of habits was explained as being caused by
2. low identification with a common identity, since individuals are identifying themselves with several different collectives representing norms of specialization connected to their jobs, educational trainings and family lives. As opposed to a mechanical, bonded community, people linked in organic relations are not expected to share the same habits, but instead the same rights of being allowed to be different in terms of norms and values for living.
3. high tolerance of deviation and a corresponding low aversion towards different norms and 'competitive' community logics.
4. high tolerance towards specialization and hence towards the norm of interdependency between individuals and communities. As a consequence of the fourth aspect, it becomes a condition that there is a relatively
5. high interdependency between the individual and the collective – here representing society as a whole.

When these aspects prevail in the identified collective orientations, they are expected to arrange an individualized categorization practice. This is because societal coherence does not depend on the normative quality of the assistance-seeking individual. This condition is expected to lead to a judgment process wherein the problem definition and the reasons for seeking assistance are factors that go beyond the evaluation of the capacity of the individual citizens to work.

In addition to statements about legitimacy and integrative forces, the identification of collective orientations in the interviews was based on metaphors about communities as well as narratives about the individual. Narratives about the individual have turned out to provide a very good indicator of the distinction between mechanical and organic collective orientations. The various ascribed meanings in the narratives revealed whether or not the social worker compared the individual (mainly in the fictive cases from the vignettes) to a shared set of norms, as in a mechanical form of solidarity, or to an independent society, as in the organic form of solidarity.

8.2 Coding and the analysis of collective orientations

The first step in the analysis was to develop a coding display of all of the statements about collective orientation as either a mechanical or organic collective orientation for all 24 interviews. This coding display was then condensed using a stepwise strategy of analytical selection into Display 8.1. Next, each interview was assigned an attribute in terms of the predominant collec-

tive orientation using both a quantitative and qualitative method of selection. First, all of the interviews were assigned an attribute based on the condensed coding display; next, all of the interviews were assigned an attribute based on the numerical display of the numbers of words and coding references about mechanical and organic collective orientations. In most of the interviews (15), the attributes assigned based on both methods were identical, but the assignments differed in nine of the interviews. These nine interviews were then re-evaluated and finally given an attribute. Display A7 shows the procedure and outcome of the re-evaluation (see Appendix).

After coding all of the cases for the mechanical and organic categorization practices, a reliability test was carried out comparing the re-coding and original coding of the collective orientation. Based on the distribution of cases on attributes on collective orientation (see Display 8.2), three interviews which were assigned with different attributes were selected for the reliability test (interviews 10, 11 and 23). The results of the reliability tests were an agreement between 93.78 pct. and 99.85 pct. An evaluation of the disagreement percentages revealed that the lowest agreement score (93.78 pct.) was caused by imprecision in the coded context of the substantial expression. All of the disagreements can therefore be explained by small differences in lines and words coded around the main text. Hence, they do not express 'real' disagreements, but rather unavoidable mismatches in the coding precision.

The basic univariate analysis of collective orientation is presented in the following. Four interviews were selected on the basis of the criterion that each of them represents one of the four attributes assigned to all 24 interviews. The display is based on the analyzed coding of collective orientation. The coding display was developed in order to concentrate the content of collective orientation to the point where it makes sense to represent each interview using an attribute from the dominating collective orientation.

8.2.1 Organic and mechanical collective orientations

The 'collective orientation' node coded statements as either mechanical or organic for all 24 social workers. The first coding query produced a 195-page document. This display was then condensed in three steps, reducing it to 20 pages. Ultimately, the most descriptive and illuminating statements illustrating the various practices were selected. Display 8.1 below shows the outcome of the analysis based on four interviews, each representing an aspect of the variation. Several of the defining aspects that became evident during the analytical work constitute the differences between mechanical and organic orientation. As was also the case in the previous analysis of categorization practices, the social workers' statements pertaining to collective orientation were embedded in storytelling about society, communal values and their percep-

tion of civic duties and purposes. These narratives about civic duties were basically about legitimacy and perceptions of integrative logics between society and the individual. The society referred to occasionally signified the state, while at other times it signified communal values or norm-shared communities of a mechanical character. These defining aspects of mechanical and organic orientation are explained in the following.

Mechanical collective orientation

The difference between mechanical and organic collective orientation was judged and evaluated in all of the interviews by identifying specific aspects of the social workers' narratives regarding their collective orientations. Three quotes exemplifying narratives which were coded as mechanical collective orientation are presented in the following. The quotes typify how I evaluated and measured the mechanical statements for all 24 interviews. The first quote is made by Interview 12 and selected to embody the aspect of mechanical collective orientation wherein the respective purposes of the individual and society are perceived as identical:

I think that society – this is my personal opinion (...) Society should aim for everyone with some working ability left to use this working ability. For the sake of society as well as for their own sake (...) Because I believe that – both mentally and socially – it is best for people to have a job. And to have a social life in a workplace in one way or another (Interview 12, column 2, Display 8.2).

The social worker in this quote refers to society as an actor with a mind of its own – or with a collective consciousness. Furthermore, the core value about work and contribution is connected to the assistance-seeking individual. The quote provides an example of how the intensified focus on the contribution of work is justified from a mechanically oriented perspective. The social worker is more concerned about sustaining the communal values of work than the assistance-seeking individual's degree of malfunctioning. This is because she does not distinguish between the respective purposes of the society and the individual:

Society should aim for everybody with some remaining working capacity to use this working capacity. For the sake of society as well as for their own sake.

In this respect, the needs of society are compared to the needs of the individual. This is a mechanical orientation, because it presupposes a shared communal basis of values and norms – and hence a solidarity stemming from a profound attraction based on similarities. The social worker refers to a particular normative argument instead of a rational or economic argument when justifying the importance of drawing upon the working capacity of every in-

dividual. The quote touches upon the second aspect of a mechanical collective orientation, i.e. the identification between a collective consciousness and the individual.

The assumed similarity between the communal value of work as the core integrative logic in society and the individual is an equivalence that can be compared to the rhetoric of the political discourse in the government document *quid pro quo*. Here too, the understanding of what brings the individual and society together is the will of the individual to support and contribute to society's sacred value, which in this rhetoric is work. The quote exemplifies how the value of society is perceived as depending not on individualistic values – as would be the case in an organically orientated perception – but on the quality of communal life. Compared to the analysis of *quid pro quo*, the statement illustrates a perception of solidarity according to which society is represented by the shared communal values of firms, families and organizations. This aspect of seeing the values of the individual and the values of society as identical dominates the mechanical collective orientation. The consequence of this similarity between society and the individual is the logic in the categorization practice whereby the individuals are evaluated in terms of the extent to which they deviate from these values. Again, this can be compared to the statements of *quid pro quo*, where it was explained how:

In a number of situations, *quid pro quo* will contribute to rendering visible how each individual and society can benefit from a certain behavior. (Regeringen 2004, section 1, line 1-4, part 2)

The basic idea of connecting a certain behavior to a societal benefit is a mechanical figure, because it reduces the realm of society to a matter of political values (or norm-based policy-making). This is exemplified in the following quote from the social worker in Interview 17. The quote typifies how social workers make this identification between the individual and society in practice. The quote below is made while explaining to me the value of holding a job.

I don't think it should be easy to get a social service right away. That is, I think there is a psychological aspect of receiving social welfare benefits (...) Yes, something negative (...) It has a kind of self-perpetuating effect (...) in relation to your self-worth and your self-perception. Therefore, if I were to suffer an accident – I would definitely rather take care of myself and maybe find a part-time job as opposed to a flex job (...) I would really rather have the strength and self-satisfaction of fending for myself (Interview 17, column 2, Display 8.2).

This quote substantiates the emphasis in the previous quote on how a certain social norm becomes a guiding line to understanding both the purpose of the

individual and society together with the negative self-perpetuating effect of social welfare benefits. The psychological value of work is perceived here as being so enormous that the costs of not working are understood not only in financial terms but also in terms of 'your self-worth and your self-perception'. The crucial thing to notice in relation to why it is identified as a mechanical orientation is the fundamental perception of reciprocity – as opposed to interdependency – as the glue bonding the individual and society together. If receiving assistance for not being able to work is clearly conceived as a subverting mechanism, then it becomes a symbol of a reciprocal precondition of solidarity, where the combining force depends on the will of all of the members to be part of the whole.

In addition to this defining aspect of mechanical solidarity related to the aspect of a high level of identification between the individual and society, the social worker in the quote demonstrates her low tolerance of deviance from this supposedly shared value of the worth of working:

That is, I think there is a psychological aspect related to receiving social welfare (...) Yes, something negative (...) It has a kind of self-perpetuating effect (...) in relation to your self-worth and your self-perception.

Here, the social worker clarifies her perception of solidarity towards non-working (and hence, deviating) individuals. This indicates a perception of solidarity involving dissociation from other ways of living, performing and doing things, which again must be seen in relation to the basic characteristic of mechanical solidarity; namely, to its social source of attraction by similarities. The use of one's own standards to justify particular values is typically characteristic of those with a low level of toleration of other norms. This also becomes apparent in the quote drawn from Interview 17, where the social worker refers to her own norms as standards for comparison with the purpose and needs of the assistance-seeking citizen. This presupposes a perception of solidarity whereby it is not expected – or accepted – that individuals subscribe to different norms. Moreover, the quote illustrates an embedded sense of opposition between weakness and strength, which is applied to the value of social welfare benefits:

I would definitely rather get by on my own, and maybe get a part-time job as opposed to a flex job (...) I would really rather have the strength and self-satisfaction of being able to fend for myself.

Consequently, when a citizen expresses interest in a flex job, the social worker evaluates such an attitude as being weak as compared to an expression of determination to fend for oneself by e.g. working part-time and accepting the lost income without involving the social system. This is considered to be a

measure of an individual's strength, even though the basis of the measure is purely symbolic, excluding any objective measurements of weakness and strength as matters of actual working capacity. This perception reveals the basic figure in a mechanical relationship between the merciful giver and the humble receiver as described in Chapter 3 (here in the form of the social worker and the assistance-seeking citizen). In this symbolic relationship, it is the presence of a humble attitude and the individual's acceptance of their weakness that constitutes the legitimate exchange mechanism of help. This means that there is no alternative to weakness in such a relation when social benefits are received. Hence, the worth of the individual as an equal citizen is reduced due to their inferior role as humble receiver. However, the social workers occasionally encounter citizens with attitudes related more to a discourse of equal civic rights than the weak and humble applicant for social welfare benefits. When the social worker has a mechanically dominated collective orientation, the response towards such attitudes is often indignant. This is illustrated in the following quote from Interview 8:

[S]ome people say, 'Well, I have a RIGHT to my pension!' And then they think that we pull out a drawer addressed to Mrs. Jensen. And as we get to talking about it so that it becomes clear what it means to get a pension (...) the extent to which their ability to work must be reduced, then many people realize that this might not be where they are (Interview 8, column 3, Display 8.2).

The image of the strong giver and weak receiver also becomes clear in this quote. As explained in Chapter 3, this kind of a mechanical relationship cannot tolerate an equal rights-based exchange relationship between giver and receiver. There are three main reasons to expect this to be the case. First, in a mechanical relationship, the giver applies their own standards to judge the needy person and hence introduce their own norms to the exchange mechanism. This involves a certain risk of destabilizing the legitimacy of the giver should the receiver not comply with these norms. Secondly, it is because a rights-based relationship would erase the fundamental dichotomy between the strong and the weak, between giver and receiver, which again could involve a destabilizing risk regarding the integrity of the giver. And finally, it is because mechanical solidarity depends on reciprocal exchanges, and hence each individual making a visible effort in order to be perceived as a co-producer of legitimacy. When worth is judged according to reciprocal relations, then non-contributing individuals must be perceived as inferior and poorly equipped persons. They are to receive benefits out of mercy and not respected on equal terms with the contributing individuals. Obviously, this perception of exchange mechanisms and solidarity depends upon a very spe-

cific understanding of contribution, which emphasizes certain values such as working activities and excludes other forms of social contributions.

[B]ut the point where it gets too much is when somebody thinks that now I want to have MY pension. And then I wonder, 'What makes you think it is YOUR pension?' (Interview 8, column 2, Display 8.2)

This quote simply provides another example of the same indignant attitude towards citizens who speak within a discourse presupposing a rights-based, equal relationship. It illustrates another example of how rights-based perceptions and discourses are seen as threats to the co-operation between social workers and clients; and consequently also as threats against the core value of the 'work-community based' mechanical solidarity. This becomes apparent in the quote in terms of the social worker's obvious indignation towards attitudes signaling a rights-based understanding of social help.

These aspects of mechanical orientation share in common that the social worker identifies the society-individual relationship as being grounded in common shared norms regarding the value of work as an end unto itself as opposed to e.g. a means to live as private persons outside the realm of the public. The role of the social worker is hence identified in the quotes as a position wherein there is no difference between the private and public dimensions of the claims made by assistance-seeking individuals. All claims for assistance are evaluated according to the need and the common good of society as identical to the need and the value of the individual.

Organic collective orientation

In opposition to this vague or non-existing difference between the private and public dimensions of claims for assistance, there is another type of collective orientation. This type was identified in the interviews as organic collective orientation. The main characteristic of this type of collective orientation is the social worker's orientation towards the values of the political system and towards the integrity of the social client as a citizen.

I do think that I have influence as a citizen, because I take part in deciding who is sitting in parliament. But sometimes I also think that we, as a professional group, are able to affect the decision-makers, because we do, we do actually work with this on a daily basis. In that context, we can also invoke the experiences we have gathered or that we believe we know something about some issues (Interview 6, column 5, Display 8.2)

In the quote, the social worker speaks from a political position as a voter and from a professional position as a social worker. He implicitly connects a theme concerning the type of knowledge defining his workplace as special

knowledge, which is conceived as being different from common knowledge. This corresponds to an organic collective orientation, because it presupposes a concept of specialization whereby social workers perceive themselves as actors performing special tasks within society as opposed to common members of a shared normative entity, as was the case in the mechanically oriented statements. As such, the quote exemplifies a reference to a society corresponding to an organically linked solidarity, namely the labor-divided society perceived as a complex and 'big' entity in which individuals are involved and integrated through different functions as either professionals, family members or as voters. As the next quote demonstrates, however, the individual holds a special position in organically orientated statements as the abstract integrating value of society:

It is sometimes 'overkill', because we have situations where it becomes clear that they cannot [work], but where they must anyhow and where you can say that it becomes unnecessary to drag them through these things – also because it costs them something and it costs resources. In such cases, I think it is obvious to say that it is needless (...) there are no possibilities for them in the labor market, as I see it (...) Just give them a pension and leave them alone. They are really feeling bad. (Interview 1, column 5, Display 8.2)

This quote illustrates an important aspect of an organic orientation, namely the presumed high interdependence between society and the individual. In the quote, it becomes evident that the costs and resources are conceived as factors in a legitimate exchange relationship. The reference to this cost-benefit logic implies that political economic costs are expected to affect the moral relations between the assistance-seeking citizen and the state:

[A]lso because it costs them something and it costs resources.

This orientation towards a political and moral economy presupposes a perception of a labor-divided society, where the state should protect the individual from being suppressed by 'other' dominant norms than its own. It becomes evident in the quote how the social worker perceives the assistance-seeking citizen as an abstract object rather than as a concrete subject, which can be judged according to their own or any other political values. The individual is identified as a person that should be 'left alone', though without connecting this suggestion to a sort of punishment as would be the case within a mechanical collective orientation:

Just give them a pension and leave them alone.

The costs of applying working norms to sick individuals are considered to be very high, because doing so affects the dominating integrating value of the

individualized and private person negatively. In other words, it is the idea of the 'cult of the individual' that sustains an organic orientation in a very different way than is the case in a mechanical orientation. As opposed to the mechanical logic, where the individual must internalize the collective identity in order to protect the 'greater whole', the individual holds another position in an organic orientation as a 'whole entity' in itself, which should be protected against normative violation from e.g. the state or other prevailing communal values. In this perspective, the protesting statement in the following part of the quote should be considered:

I think it is obvious to say that it is needless (...) there are no possibilities for them in the labor market, as I see it (...) Just give them a pension and leave them alone. They are really feeling bad.

This also illustrates the defining aspect of organic solidarity as the normative function of why the individual is expected to have a low identification with common identities other than their own. In an organic orientation towards collectivities, individuals are perceived as objects which identify themselves with numerous different collectives representing norms of specialization connected to their jobs, educational trainings and family lives. As opposed to the logic behind a mechanically bonded community, people linked in organic relations are not perceived as subjects sharing the same habits, but instead as sharing the same right to be allowed to be different in ways of norms and values for living. The individual's perception seems to hold a different value as a supporting virtue of an organic orientation than in a mechanical orientation. In the former, the individual is perceived as sacred in the sense that they should be protected from the forces threatening their individuality as a person. In the second case, the individual is perceived as the locus of making the communal values of society come alive. This requires the individual identifying closely with these core values and accordingly developing only a vague personality in the Durkheimian sense as something apart from the collective consciousness.

8.2.2 Different collective orientations in the interviews

In the following, these described aspects of collective orientation are used to analyze the variations in the individual interviews and between the interviews. Based on the focused coding of collective orientation, it became clear how the social workers generally used both mechanical and organic collective orientations. This was also expected on the basis of the theoretical explanations. Further along these lines, it also became evident that there are significant differences between the impact of the meaning and volume of the existence of mechanical and organic collective orientation, respectively. In this

respect, the variations in the collective orientation follow the same pattern as was the case with the variations in the categorization practices.

Display 8.1 was developed in order to analyze the important aspects of the differences in the collective orientations of the social workers. Each interview in the display was selected to represent an attribute on a continuum between a mechanical and an organic collective orientation. The selection criterion for the four interviews has been to present the dominating type of variation in the 24 interviews.

Sometimes I think you forget about the individual

Interview 11 was selected to describe the content of an organic attribute. The prevailing theme in Interview 11 concentrated on the role of the individual and the role of legislation. Even though the social worker generally expressed collective orientations of an organic character, there were also statements which were coded as mechanical orientations. In these instances, the social worker embedded an 'us-them' orientation when referring to her identity as a member of an organization of social workers. Moreover, she occasionally used a normative depiction of the general value of work to portray the individual:

We are interested in their employment (...) and we have to draw up employment plans and we have to get them employed or give them training or something else other than the permanent support. You can say that, roughly speaking, we are not interested in all of the other things (...) But of course you are [anyway], you also talk about other things.

The mechanical aspects of this sentence refer to the designation of the citizen as a working subject. As indicated in the last part of the quote, however, the social worker does not seem to really mean what she just said in as much as she immediately modifies her mechanical reference by saying:

But of course you are [anyway], you also talk about other things.

She does talk about other things with the citizen, even though she is supposed to ignore any other subjects that cannot be documented as work-related. This indicates that she understands the purpose of her job differently than as described. In addition to possibly making her a difficult employee to govern, this also suggests an autonomous aspect of her personality. This corresponds better to an organic collective orientation than to a mechanical collective orientation. In a similar sequence in the quote, the social worker refers to the purpose of the policy.

Display 8.1. Coding display of the collective orientations in selected interviews

Collective orientation		
Interview:	Organic	Mechanical
11. Organic attribute	<p>Yes, I think that the labor market-directed [efforts] serve a purpose for society, because you can clearly feel that the demands have become tougher and tougher and tougher. And it has become more difficult to get a pension today than it was five years ago. Or ten years ago. Because there is a demand or a need for a larger labor force – people must therefore work at almost any price. And that is hard to work with when you are dealing with a person who is really, really bad. And to say: ‘Well, you have to work. You are able to work 12 hours and you must do so’. I think that is really hard (...) Sometimes I think you forget about the individual and what is best for the individual. But the legislation demands that you must be subsequently work-tested if you just as a minimum can work so and so much. Well, then you have to use [that capacity to work].</p>	<p>Roughly speaking, we are not interested in how they [are], how things work out at home, or whether they need something more. We are interested in their employment (...) and we have to make out employment plans and get them employed or give them training or something other than the permanent support. You can say that, roughly speaking, we are not interested in all of the other things (...) But of course you are [anyway]. You talk about other things, too. But what it says in the labor market portal about the points in there, which are in agreement with the measurement of the capacity to work, those are the things we need to know about. And everything else, well, of course that’s something that you talk about. The citizens need it, because otherwise it sometimes blocks too much, right? (...) With that also the fact that we have nothing to do with their finances (...) That is actually really a nice dividing line for us. It is deeply frustrating for many of the citizens, but I can say: ‘You might have a bunch of unpaid bills, but I don’t have the authority to pay them’.</p>
15. Organic/ mechanical attribute	<p>I am really amazed by all of the myths regarding the social area and the refugee-immigrant field, but apparently they continue to exist. And I don’t have the answer why. There is really nothing for us to do but to provide information, but I doubt it changes anything. Because people don’t have it as close to them like we do and the hospitals and (...) doctors and people do who meet the people in this particular situation. I think they’re the only ones who have the [right] knowledge, which makes them able to [meet them without distrust].</p>	<p>Oh, there’s always the financial aspect right? Not all of them can end up getting an early retirement pension, as used to be the case (...) That is, partly it is because idleness is the tool of the devil. That might not be entirely true, but there’s something about all of us needing to contribute with what we can (...) Therefore, there is something to the flex job philosophy that you must contribute with whatever you can (...) I think it’s fine that people get a salary for working one-third of what is normal. If you can’t work more than one-third [of the normal time], then I think that’s fair enough.</p>

19. Mechanical/ organic attribute	<p>Because of the lack of manpower, far more people are dragged into the labor market. That means that much more money is spent on sickness benefits, for example if they have become sicker. More sick citizens, because there are no special functions left like in the old days, where there was the janitor, who swept the yard and things like that. No, now they have to remember to take a safety course and a hygiene course (...) All of these demands push people out. Those who could fit a job before – who were a bit difficult to place – they are now dragged in too. And then we have them here now. In that sense, the citizens we manage have become more difficult (...) And it has become more difficult to place them out there, because the small functions they have been used to doing aren't there anymore.</p>	<p>It's difficult for people when they're hurting psychologically. Because they don't feel that it's equally important or equally serious as in the case of a physical injury. It's easier to explain to people, 'I'm in pain, because I broke my leg' (...) rather than 'I'm in so much pain that I can't cope with it' (...) So, this is very difficult. So we spend a lot of time on things like that – really explaining to people that you're a whole person and things are related in the sense that if you are hurt physically, it can affect you psychologically and vice versa (...) And it would be unnatural if it didn't, given that it's interrelated (...) For example, right now I have a young girl with very severe allergies. She can't stand anything. She also has an intestinal disease, which means that she has very frequent bowel movements. And she refuses to be tested for work, because she's afraid everything will go wrong if she isn't close to a toilet. It affects her psychologically (...) but she denies it's affecting her psychologically, because it is her physical problem. And I have a hard time trying to convince her that of course it affects her psychologically. And I have actually had her a whole year by now. And it was first just recently that I succeeded in making her realize that it's a good idea to get a psychological examination, too (...) I think she needs some help to talk about all these things.</p>
7. Mechanical attribute	<p>You are [entitled], if you have so many limitations in your functional level and your workability that you cannot find a job yourself and cannot enter the labor market on ordinary terms (...) Then I think you are entitled to support (...) Support DOES NOT need to be very big (...) it's possible that even a small amount of support can make a difference (...) And then I think that if this is what it takes to elevate this citizen and be able to say, 'Now it's going well' (...) Then, I think it's a really good investment.</p>	<p>I really think it's so miserable when you can't move them [i.e. make a difference]. If you can just move them A LITTLE BIT (...) I think that the worst thing you can do is to put such people on disability. It's a BAD stigma to get, and then you'll have to live like a chronically ill person for the rest of your life. This is not a good life (...) I don't think it is.</p>

In so doing, she talks about the idea and the objective, even though she tries to deliver a 'truthful' summary of the policy intentions as in the sentence:

We are interested in their employment (...) and we have to draw up employment plans and we have to get them employed or give them training or something else other than the permanent support.

She keeps 'falling back' to a more critical position. This is a very good example of how the distinct cases of organic collective orientation include mechanical statements in their answers. The organic orientation is far more pervasive, however, when she explains the purpose of the labor-directed policy:

Yes, I think that the labor market-directed [efforts] serve a purpose for society, because you can clearly feel that the demands have become tougher and tougher and tougher. And it is more difficult to get a pension today than it was five years ago. Or ten years ago – because there's a demand or a need for a bigger labor force. People therefore have to work at almost any price.

Despite the attempt to reproduce a politically correct presentation of the active social policy, the social worker relates the 'purpose of the efforts' to an individual 'price'. The connection is made negatively and designates a perception of the interests of society and the interests of the individual as separate things, which is exactly the common ground in an organic collective orientation. The social worker also expresses a concern about this in a manner implying that the idea behind the labor-directed efforts violates the integrity of the individual. By doing so, the social worker portrays the individual as a being requiring protection from violation and worshipped as a principle:

And that is hard to work with when you are dealing with a person who is really, really bad. And to say, 'Well, you have to work. You're able to work 12 hours, and that you must'. I think that's really hard (...) Sometimes I think you forget about the individual and what's best for the individual.

The social worker expresses resistance when emphasizing the missing justice in making a sick person work for the sake of society. The resistance or the discomfort designates a different perspective on the individual and hence a different logic regarding the integrative forces between the individual and society than is typical in mechanical collective orientation. The social worker conceives this force as being suppressed by the current policy, as she says that:

Sometimes I think you forget about the individual and what's best for the individual.

The social worker's dominating collective orientation is expressed through this negative description of the effect of the intensified evaluation effort and

the focus of work towards assistance-seeking citizens, because she reveals in the quote that it is the individual and what is best for the individual which must be considered as the important consideration. And apparently she disagrees with the argument that a labor-intensive effort towards the individual qualifies to do that. On this matter, she distinguishes herself from the prevailing description of the individuals in the interviews.

The last aspect of why this interview was assigned an organic attribute is her reference to how she perceives the legislation. This perception suggests her view on formal rules as only a part of the picture instead of representing the only way to ensure 'just' policy making. Again, this substantiates the classification of the interview as organic, because such a reference requires a collective orientation towards a more complex whole including several normative bases, interests and reasons.

I am really amazed by all of the myths regarding the social area

The existence of organic and mechanical collective orientations where the organic orientation dominates qualified an interview to be assigned with an organic/mechanical attribute. The social worker in Interview 15 generally expressed an organic sense of what combines the individual and society, but not without prevailing statements of either reciprocal rhetoric or the use of common sense-based knowledge to describe the social field. As an example of the social worker's organic collective orientation, he brought up the theme of rationality and specialization in his explanations to me about the difficulties he encounters in his job. The social worker uses rationality as a perception of knowledge that is associated with objectivity and truth; and accordingly, a type of knowledge which is perceived as being in opposition to 'untrue' myths about collective feelings of fear and discomfort:

I am really amazed by all of the myths regarding the social area and the refugee-immigrant field, but apparently they continue to exist. And I don't have the answer to why this is the case. We can't really do anything other than provide information, but I doubt it changes anything.

The social worker seems to distinguish between two sources of knowledge in this quote. The one source refers to the myths about the social field which are felt to persist and which the social worker must deal with continually in his daily work. His tool for doing so is to use an alternative source of knowledge, namely information. This distinction constitutes a defining aspect of an organic perception of solidarity, because the use of rational knowledge as a source for legitimizing his actions draws on a worldview in which labor-division is assumed to be a social condition. This draws parallels to metaphorical expressions about interdependencies as the force dominating social inte-

gration. In the interview, the social worker refers to such understandings when explaining that he does not believe that ordinary people can relate to social problems. He explains this in the following:

Because people don't have it as close to them like we do and the hospitals and (...) doctors and people do who meet the people in this particular situation.

He thus defines the challenge of his job as being to fight against the profound logics of irrationality. Moreover, he includes other professionals and realms of society in a manner that points towards an organic labor-divided perception of society.

It is also interesting to notice how he perceives the relationships between the assistance-seeking citizen and ordinary (contributing) people. He claims that people cannot identify themselves with social problems. For this reason, they relate to the field via myths of distrust about the area. This means that he does not understand the value of the assistance-seeking citizen and society as relying on the same value of normative integration as would be the case with a mechanical orientation. There is a normative difference between them, which only professionals can deal with properly, according to his organic collective orientation:

I think they are the only ones who have the [right] knowledge, which makes them able to meet them [without distrust].

Here, he mentions 'the right knowledge', thereby emphasizing specialization. Theoretically speaking, this aspect is similar to 'information' seen from an organic collective orientation. By referring to a certain type of knowledge, he clarifies that it is a type of knowledge which is based on professional standards, not common values. Generally speaking, this designated a distinction in the interviews between the social workers who used and referred to common human values to describe the relationship between society and their categorization practices and those who applied specialized knowledge to argue for their categorization practices. In relation to the mechanical/organic solidarity distinction, this difference is an empirical expression of how the perception of specialization works as a positive precondition for social integration.

However, the social worker in Interview 15 was ultimately assigned the attribute organic/mechanical, because there are substantial elements of mechanical collective orientation present in his rhetoric regarding collective orientation:

It's partly because idleness is the tool of the devil. That might not be entirely true, but there is something to the idea that we all have to contribute according

to our ability (...) There is therefore also something to the flex job philosophy that you must contribute with whatever you can.

Here, the social worker refers to a substantial value about reciprocal exchange relations by using the 'idleness is the tool of the devil' metaphor. Even though he says that he does not think it is entirely true, he uses it as a designation of his collective orientation towards what kind and to what degree particular civic obligations should be expected from assistance-seeking individuals. By stating that:

Therefore there is something to the flex job philosophy that you must contribute according to your ability.

He understands the integrative forces in society as relying on everyone being willing to work and contribute. And again, as was also the case in the initial description of what constitutes a mechanical collective orientation, this kind of logic of reciprocal exchange relations is characterized by a very narrow understanding of the possible content of contribution. In this context, the contribution is measured in terms of work. The following statement, drawn from Interview 8, exemplifies the moral value behind this reciprocal norm:

It's because they're tired and sick. And now they think they're tired enough to get a pension, right? And 'they've slaved away all their lives' – all of the usual arguments, right? (...) And like I said, they might be sick, but they're just not so sick that they can't take some kind of work (...) So, I think that – regardless of how you look at it, it's extremely important that we are as close to the sick citizens as possible, because there's nothing worse than being left alone (...) So someone has to be breathing down their necks some way or another. Then they're allowed to be mad at us. That we can take without a problem. (Interview 8, column 2, Display 8.2)

The quote describes the content of a reciprocal statement about the value of work as defining what is perceived as a good attitude towards society. The perception of society as a value-based community relying on the full support of its members is prevalent. There is a kind of 'emergency' logic embedded in this kind of rhetoric, as the need to get the sick and disabled to contribute to society by working is presented as being necessary to prevent society from falling apart. Again, the connotations and metaphorical language about a state of panic can be compared to the government *quid pro quo* rhetoric, which similarly states that passivity in the sense of unemployment is 'killing the sense of responsibility' (Regeringen 2004, 6, 5. afsnit). The metaphorical reference to death emphasizing the importance of why reciprocal relations must be nourished is obviously a particularly strong rhetorical tool invoking

all of the social activities in society to be concerned with the potential risk of society falling apart morally unless ‘we all contribute’.

The next quote, drawn from Interview 13, presents a different aspect related to the theme of reciprocal benefits. The argument is that the individual benefits from being ‘forced’ or ‘motivated’ to enter a reciprocal relationship. By adding this aspect to the rhetoric, the social worker typifies an example of how the integration between society and the individual looks like from the perspective of a mechanical collective orientation:

[W]e lack manpower. And I think it’s important that you contribute to society – how do you say it – everything fits together (...) we pay for a high level of health; well for a good safety net and an expensive health system and things like that. And I think that if you can somehow contribute to that, then I think you should (...) And then somehow, I think that people are generally better off being active in their daily lives than to stay home and do nothing (...) [And] if [the contribution] can be set by their level or according to what they are able to do, right? Then I think it’s better that they have a flex job working 4-5 hours a week or 3-4 hours a week than if they just stay at home and receive a full pension (...) and do nothing at all. (Interview 13, column 3, Display 8.2)

The description illustrates a very important aspect regarding mechanical collective oriented social workers: Even though the theory of mechanical solidarity explains how the profound symbol is the social sanction of punishment, the social worker’s statements in this quote are obviously not to be understood in terms of punishment. On the contrary, she does not conceive of activation as a form of punishment but rather as an offer to provide the unemployed with a better life. The crucial point is not analyzing the paternalistic undertones in this statement, but rather to clarify how deeply this logic of reciprocity appears to be rooted in the minds of the social workers (and hence probably also in the heads of everybody else). They genuinely believe that it is best for their social clients to be activated and therefore interpret any resistance against activation as evidence of individuals who are ‘unmovable’ and ‘beyond reach’.

As summed up in Interview 15, it was the predominant sense of organic collective orientation that earned the interview an organic/mechanical attribute. In the next analysis, the relationship between mechanical and organic components is reversed so that it gives an example of interviews that are dominated by mechanical rhetoric but still containing defining references to an organic logic.

She denies it is affecting her psychologically

Interview 19 was selected to demonstrate the attribution of a mechanical/organic collective orientation. The prevailing aspects of the social worker's mechanical collective orientation were concentrated in the comparisons of substantial causal understandings of the human nature and the interpretations of the assistance-seeking citizens' problems.

[W]e spend a lot of time on things like that – to really explain to people that you're a whole person and things are related in the sense that if you're hurt physically, it can affect you psychologically and vice versa (...) And it would be unnatural if it didn't, given that it's interrelated.

The presentation of tautological reasoning generally seemed to define the statements about the social workers' basic values. Metaphors about 'human existence' were often used to sustain such basic and self-evident values. In the above, the social worker expresses her basic perception of the human condition as a bio-social-psychological entity, where every dimension depends on everything else. Even though this perception could seem to entail an organic perception of an interdependent system, the social worker's reasoning is actually used to strengthen a mechanical collective orientation. The will to work continues to dominate as the core value in the interview, and it overshadows all of the other potential components, as will be exemplified below. She uses her description of the 'natural' way the body works to symbolize her political worldview. She does so by claiming that people ought to realize that physical injuries and psychological problems are interrelated. Once they comprehend this, they are believed to be able to regain responsibility – not just of their body, but of their social and normative qualities as well. The mechanism perceived to facilitate this process is by reclaiming control over the psychological dimension.

It is hardly difficult to see how the psychological dimension is perceived as the dominating 'control tower' of the body. By forwarding this bodily perception, the individual in pain or under stress can be made responsible for initiating this process of reclaiming power over the experienced body in the direction of coping and bearing the physical injuries or pain more easily; and hence becoming capable of (re)entering the labor force as a healthy 'contributor'. This collective orientation became evident in a statement in which the social worker referred to a client to explain to me how clients can resist to receive help to regain control over the psychological dimensions of their disabilities:

[S]he has an intestinal disease, which means that she has very frequent bowel movements. And she refuses to be tested for work, because she's afraid every-

thing will go wrong if she isn't close to a toilet. It affects her psychologically (...) but she denies it is affecting her psychologically, because it is her physical problem.

This quote is selected on the grounds that it highlights how strongly a particular worldview – or bodily perception – can be used in relation to a concrete problem. In the story, the social worker describes a young woman suffering from allergies and frequent bowel movements. Anyone who has experienced such a problem knows exactly how physical this problem is, and no matter how it affects you psychologically, most people would think of the main problem as having a substantial physical character. Despite this rather clear example of a physical problem, however, the social worker is actually mentioning it in order to demonstrate the opposite case: Citizens who resist accepting that the cause of their reduced working capacities has a psychological dimension as opposed to the physical cause. The robust character of the social worker's interpretation suggests a very strong mechanical collective orientation in the sense that even a very obvious physical problem is reduced to a matter of psychology and attitude, which again is used as a metaphor for low motivation. The social worker attributes the assistance-seeking citizen's problem more to her attitude than the physical limitations connected to her allergies and frequent bowel movements. Towards the end of the narrative, the social worker explains how her 'diagnosis' was ultimately confirmed:

I have a hard time convincing her that it obviously affects her psychologically – and I have actually had her a whole year by now. And it is first recently that I have succeeded in making her realize that it would be a good idea for her to also receive a psychological examination in order to help her exact needs, because I think she needs some help to talk about all of these things.

She is finally able to make the client realize that her initial definition of her problem was correct; the fact that the client finally (after a year) consents to receiving a psychological examination is perceived as confirming this. The social worker does not consider the obvious possibility that the assistance-seeking citizen has no alternative after a year of fighting over the definition of her problem. But again, based on the entire interview, this must be understood in relation to the social worker's genuine attempts at helping the citizen and that the effort to make her recognize her psychological problems are made on the basis of common sense and pure intentions aimed at improving the life of the young woman. A similar perspective on the power of attitude is present in Interview 8, though here the social worker is far more suspicious regarding the citizens' incentives at the job centre:

Sometimes I think it's hard to understand – if I can express myself in an unusually unflattering way – the 'cry babies'. At times it can be difficult to say: 'Pull yourself together, damn it!' (...) And sometimes I ask myself: where does it all stop? Because most people would probably say that they are awfully happy to be helped and so on and so forth. But there are also those who think it's terrible, 'Please just leave me alone' (...) As a social worker, I find that very hard to understand. (Interview 8, column 2, Display 8.2)

There is a substantial difference between the almost naïve interpretation of the young woman's problem in Interview 19 and the general perception of 'cry babies' in Interview 8. Nevertheless, they share the weighting of attitude as a parameter that must be evaluated and worked with in order to clarify the assistance-seeking citizens' 'real' problems. Furthermore, the help-dimension exists in both interviews as a matter of making the assistance-seeking citizens realize how to behave in relation to the reasonable demands made by society, themselves and the job centre. There are obvious reasons why the focus on attitude becomes a strong tool for the social worker. The main reason, however, is that by turning all aspects of the assistance-seeking citizen's need primarily into a question of attitude, the responsibility for the correct categorization is transferred from the social worker to the citizen.

Nevertheless, despite these rather strong indications of a predominantly mechanical collective orientation in Interview 19, the social worker did express refined examples of organic collective orientation in relation to the normative role of specialization:

Far more people are dragged out into the labor market because of the lack of manpower, which means that many more spend more time on sick leave, for example, if they have become more sick. More sick citizens, because there are no special functions left as in the old days, where there was the janitor, who swept the yard and things like that. No, now they have to remember to take a safety course and a hygiene course (...) All of these demands push people out, and consequently those who could fit a job before, who were a bit difficult they are now dragged in too.

In this statement, the social workers present a functional perspective of matching the unemployed with the labor market in a way that transcends a pure normative purpose of work as an end unto itself. Furthermore, the quote illustrates how the economic situation is used to explain and contextualize the conditions the social worker is working under. This is also interpreted as a symbol of an organic collective orientation, because the perception of social integration and legitimacy is made with reference to a bigger and more complex, specialized and labor-divided whole than was the case in the previous

quote describing a moral relationship between the citizen's qualities and the needs of society.

Based on such differences in collective orientation, the interview is assigned a mechanical/organic attribute. In the final within-case analysis of collective orientation, the attribution of mechanical collective orientation is described.

[Early retirement pension] is a BAD stigma to get

Interview 7 represents an example of a mechanical attribute. This attribute differs from the previous attributes in the sense that an insignificant number of statements of an organic orientation have been identified. In the interviews assigned with a mechanical attribute, the social workers generally indicated that they experience resistance from the assistance-seeking citizens despite strong incentives to help them overcome what the social workers perceived as their main problems. The following sequence from Interview 7 exemplifies this:

I really think it's so miserable when you can't make them budge. If you can just move them A LITTLE BIT (...) I think that the worst thing you can do is to give such people an early retirement pension. It is a BAD stigma to get. And then you have to live like that for the rest of your life. This is not a good life (...) I don't think it is.

The normative and paternalistic perception of the assistance-seeking citizen prevails in the quote, where the social worker designates the essence of a bad life as being a life on social welfare. It signifies a mechanical collective orientation, because the social worker assumes a negative perception of non-contributing individuals to be excluded from 'a good life' beforehand. Furthermore, by designating the negative consequences of an early retirement pension as having to live 'like that for the rest of your life', she displays a mechanical perception of what causes a marginalization process. By excluding a citizen from the opportunity to contribute to society (for example by receiving an early retirement pension), the social worker sees herself as a co-culprit in the social marginalization of the citizen. Again, this offers an example of how the needs of the assistance-seeking citizen are perceived as being identical to society's need for reciprocity.

In the next quote, the social worker from Interview 17 expresses a similar normative attitude towards assistance-seeking citizens. She does so by equating a metaphor for disease with the reason for unemployment:

My approach is that the most important thing for a person – for most people – is to have a job. That is, you inevitably get sick if you spend all your time at home and not do anything and lead a passive life. So if you follow the immediate self-

perception of the citizen– there must be, damn there must be a valid basis to claim that the condition is permanent. Because in many cases, you could just go along with (...) the client, but in reality you would be doing them a disservice. So it's like, it's connected to whether to feel sorry for her. But what is there really to feel sorry for? That is, I think you should feel sorry for her if we just give her passive support. Damn it, I think that would be something to feel sorry about. Instead of doing everything we can to turn [their attitude] upside down (...) to turn their thinking around. And this has nothing to do with them being conmen or anything like that. There is simply a need for us to have some tools (...) that make us capable of helping them, to actually turn their thinking around (...) to be able to motivate [them] right? (Interview 17, column 2, Display 8.2).

Here, the social worker connects her explanation of why it is bad to simply grant an early retirement pension to people to a question of whether or not you should feel sorry for the citizen. This is an example of a logic of deservingness corresponding to a perception of mechanical solidarity, because she uses her own standards to compare the quality of the citizen and does so in a manner whereby she assumes that her standards are identical to those of society. Furthermore, the basic figure of a mechanical relationship between the merciful giver and humble receiver appears to shape her collective orientation, because she mentions that 'it has nothing to do with them being conmen'. She hereby demonstrates how the attitudes and incentives of the assistance-seeking citizens matter for how she perceives the bases for her evaluations. In addition to this aspect of involving attitude as a central parameter, Interview 17 provides a good example of how the perception of the body is used to express an ethical interpretation of the social reality. Furthermore, the social worker explains how she perceives the society/individual relationship as not only a moral relationship, but also a relationship with an objective basis. According to this perspective, the social worker's understanding of the causality of illness may be interpreted as that which leads her to claim that unemployment causes sickness; not the other way around:

[Y]ou inevitably get sick if you spend all your time at home and not do anything and lead a passive life.

This causal perception of illness is perceived as caused by passivity as when people stay at home and 'do nothing'. And even though there may be some rational logic in the observation, the crucial point in this context is to demonstrate how the social workers prefer to objectify clearly normative assumptions about the 'true reasons' why some people have no capacity to work. In other words, they are sick because they are unemployed. Hence, the opposite

perception – that people are unemployed because they are sick – is considered to be a misperception of ‘reality’.

As was also the case in the previous analysis, the assistance-seeking citizens’ attitudes are emphasized as an important aspect in the social worker’s description of the difficulties in her job. Again, this is comparable to the studies of deservingness, where those with humble attitudes were found to be more deserving.

Even though the interview was assigned a mechanical attribute, there were examples of statements that were accurately coded as organic collective orientation. The following quote provides an example of a social worker using rhetoric of functionality and entitlement in a manner that connects to a rights-based understanding of an organic society:

You’re [entitled] if you have so many limitations in your functional level and your workability that you can’t find a job on your own and can’t enter the labor market on ordinary terms (...) Then I think you’re entitled to support.

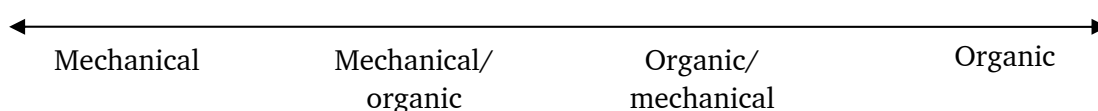
However, these ‘organic’ considerations are inferior to the mechanically oriented logic, because the quote describes an exception in the interview – not the general way this social worker expressed her views of why and when a social service should be provided as a legitimate alternative for an ill citizen. However, a crucial point from a theoretical perspective is that even in very strong mechanically oriented ‘minds’, you can identify organic orientations and vice versa. This suggests how individuals cannot be divided into two distinct categories of collective orientation but must instead be analyzed so that most individuals draw on both logics. As this analysis also suggests, however, the two orientations have very different impacts. Thus far, this supports the theoretical understanding that both forms of solidarity are simultaneously present in society as well as in the minds of individuals.

In summary, then, the differences between and within the coded collective orientation interviews have revealed that social workers are able to use both mechanical and organic collective orientations, though to very varying degrees. In the following part, the interviews are displayed in relation to the assignment of collective orientation.

8.2.3 Distribution of interviews regarding collective orientation

These within-case analyses demonstrate how the variation in collective orientation exists in almost every interview. As also expected, social workers tend to express both mechanical and organic collective orientations. Having said that, however, the extent to which there is a difference in the strength of the variation should also be evident by now. These differences between the interviews can also be displayed on a collective orientation continuum:

Figure 8.2. Continuum of collective orientations



Display 8.2 below illustrates the existing variation between the interviews. The display was developed to describe the distribution of interviews in relation to the four attributive qualities. The methodological analytical triangulation process of attribute assignment is shown in Display A6 and A7 (see Appendix). Display 8.2 illustrates the variation in collective orientation and reflects the different degrees of mechanical and organic collective orientations of social workers in the interviews. The display must be understood as positions on the continuum displayed above. Based on Display 8.2, it is easy to see that the distribution is slanted in the direction of mechanical collective orientation. In fact, there were only three interviews classified as being dominated by organic collective orientation alone, whereas nine interviews were classified as being solely dominated by a mechanical collective orientation.

Display 8.2. Distribution of interviews regarding collective orientation

	Collective orientation:			
	Mechanical	Mechanical/organic	Organic/mechanical	Organic
Distribution of interviews	5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 17, 22, 23, 24	3, 10, 13, 16, 18, 19, 21	2, 4, 14, 15, 20	1, 6, 11
Total	9	7	5	3

n = 24.

The cross-case analysis of collective orientation hence reveals that there is variation in relation to collective orientation. Social workers express their collective orientation differently. This became evident in the coding of the different references in the narratives about communal values and the content of society. The main difference in the solidarity narrative was classified as a difference between a mechanical and organic collective orientation. The mechanical/organic collective orientation continuum reveals this mechanical collective orientation dominance. At the poles of this continuum, mechanical collective orientation was presented in 16 interviews, whereas the organic collective orientation pole counts for eight interviews. This indicates that mechanical collective orientation is the predominant collective orientation referred to by social workers in the collected interviews. Finally, Display 8.2 shows that between the poles of mechanical and organic collective orientation, there are 12 interviews in which the social workers refer to both mechanical and organic collective orientation to the degree that they were as-

signed with mixed attributes of either organic/mechanical or mechanical/organic qualities depending on the predominant orientation.

The interesting question so far is how to interpret these mixed attributes. They possibly indicate that the social workers' collective orientations are shaped by different factors. The social workers expressed a mechanical and, in some situations, an organic collective orientation. Based on the display, it is plausible to suggest that something is causing whether a mechanical or an organic collective orientation is activated in the mind of the social worker. In other words, when a social worker uses both mechanical and organic collective orientation, it is conceivable to assume the reason to be that something conditions the preferred orientation. However, the explanation of collective orientation itself exceeds both the theoretical argument and the empirical analysis. But that which will be analyzed more carefully in part 8.3 is the mechanism of linking collective orientation to a categorization practice. In these in-depth analyses of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable, the conditional effect of formal rules becomes interesting to study in relation to the relationships that have been found. Before these textual analyses are performed, however, the following presents the bivariate analysis of collective orientation and categorization practices as they have been analyzed so far.

8.3 Collective orientations and categorization practices

By now, it is possible to present the result of a comparison between collective orientation and categorization practice and to arrange the comparison according to formal rules. If collective orientation shapes how a categorization practice is presented, I expect a bivariate matrix analysis to reveal a correlation between a mechanical orientation and a stereotyped practice and between an organic orientation and an individualized practice. Further along these lines, a display was developed to show how the relations appear in the context of formal rules. This analysis was carried out as an attribute display of the variable collective orientation, categorization practice and formal rules. The role of formal rules is expected to be conditional in the sense that organically dominated orientations and individualized categorization practices would thrive better under the insurance-based sickness benefits and mechanically dominated orientations, whereas stereotyped categorization practices would prevail under the residual social welfare. These expectations as well as a description of formal rules will be presented after the bivariate analysis.

8.3.1 Correspondence between orientations and practices

Thus far, I have analyzed the variations in collective orientation and categorization practices between the interviews and within the individual interviews.

The interesting thing, of course, is whether the expected correspondence between collective orientation and categorization practices can be observed. In the following, the result of the very first analysis of the relations between them is presented. The display visualizes the extent to which it is reasonable to continue to claim that perceptions of solidarity (here measured as collective orientations) shape the categorization practices among social workers. The analysis suggests that collective orientation does correlate very well with the expected logic of correspondence. Actually, there are 12 interviews in which the correspondence is perfectly as expected (the bolded numbers in Display 8.3), but it also shows that of the remaining 12 interviews, seven of the interviews relate to each other in the expected direction. This is for example the case with the two interviews placed in the second column, first row, describing a correspondence between a mechanical collective orientation and a stereotype-dominated orientation, but including individualized categorization practice.

Display 8.3. Bivariate analysis of collective orientation and categorization practice

Collective orientation	Categorization practice			
	Stereotyped	Stereotyped/ Individualized	Individualized/ Stereotyped	Individualized
Mechanical	6	2	1	0
Mechanical/Organic	3	4	0	0
Organic/Mechanical	1	2	1	1
Organic	0	1	1	1
Total	10	9	3	2

n = 24.

Theoretically speaking, these social workers were not expected to demonstrate an individualized categorization practice, because their solidarity perceptions have been identified as mechanically dominated. But despite the existence of individualized practice, it remains the stereotyped practice that is the most dominating practice. The correlation therefore follows the expected direction of the collective orientation. The same holds true for the social worker in the fourth column, third row displaying the relation between an organic/mechanical collective orientation and an individualized categorization practice. The social worker was expected to demonstrate stereotyped practice as well, however because she is dominated by organic collective orientation her practice falls out in the expected direction. In five of the interviews, however, the identified relationship between collective orientation and categorization practice does not meet the theoretical expectations (the

italicized numbers in Display 8.3). In these interviews, the predominant collective orientation corresponds to the opposite of the expected practice. Before carrying out a more detailed analysis of the relationships between the social workers' solidarity perceptions and their descriptions of categorization practices, they are displayed in relation to formal rules in order to see whether or not this variable corresponds better with categorization practice than was the case with collective orientation. Were this the case, it would indicate that formal rules are more important than collective orientation to explain differences in categorization practices.

The conditional effect of formal rules

The welfare program of active social policy is the common political context of the social workers in the interviews. This welfare program was described in Chapter 5 as primarily entailing a welfare logic that subscribes to a mechanical perception of solidarity. The program was also described as containing a strong discourse regarding 'human existence' and 'society' as well as a policy corresponding very well in some respects to the government's solidarity-political discourse *quid pro quo*. The *quid pro quo* document was analyzed as an example of a mechanical rhetoric equating the purpose of the citizen with the purpose of society. However, the welfare program of active policy was also analyzed as representing a policy idea that corresponds in certain fields to organic elements such as the priority of the individual before 'the system' and as emphasizing (active) citizenship. Obviously, that which is interesting in both cases is how such abstract forces such as a policy and a government document actually shape how social solidarity is expressed in practice towards assistance-seeking citizens. In addition to all of the methodological challenges surrounding this question, there is also a theoretical and analytical question about how to identify the rather abstract impact of rhetoric and discursive policy intentions in practice. One place to look for such impacts is in the formal rules governing the administrative and professional decisions made by the social workers in practice.

Even though all of the interviewed social workers manage the welfare program of active social policy and hence are exposed equally to the general policy intentions in their work, there are differences at the formal level. The social workers manage either the law of active social policy (social welfare) or the law of sickness benefits. Eight of the social workers administer social welfare, which includes a formalized use of an action-classifying practice dividing citizens into five different match categories based on the degree of social and health problems. 13 of the social workers administer sickness benefits involving the use of an action-classifying practice based on medical reports about labor and health prognoses, which divides citizens into three dif-

ferent categories. The three remaining social workers administer both sets of formal rules.

This difference in the formal rules between social welfare and sickness benefits is expected to result in different categorization practices, because they are expected to affect the relationship between solidarity and categorization differently. Since social welfare and sickness benefits are embedded in – and hence support – very different associations and administrative categories, they are also expected to correlate differently with categorization practices. The formal rules managing social welfare are hence expected to strengthen the relationship between a mechanical collective orientation and a stereotyped categorization practice, and the formal rules governing sickness benefits are thought to strengthen the relationship between organic collective orientation and an individualized categorization practice. The background for these expectations was presented in Chapter 5, the basic idea being that because social welfare is a reduced and residual support, it is more associated with logics of deservingness than logics of entitlement. In contrast, the arrangement of the regulation of sickness benefits is insurance-based and is based in corporative relations between private labor unions, the employer's association and the state. Sickness benefits involve a policy agenda involving strong interest groups. Consequently, the agreements made by these associations are expected to be reflected in the legislation in the direction of strengthening a logic of entitlement and weakening a logic of deservingness.

In accordance with the theoretical argument regarding the correspondence between a logic of deservingness and a mechanical solidarity as well as the correspondence between a logic of entitlement and organic solidarity, I therefore expect these patterns to be reflected in how social welfare and sickness benefits affect the relationship being studied.

Formal rules were identified in the beginning of each interview by asking the social worker which field of the welfare program of active social law they administered. Based on this information, each interview was assigned a formal rule attribute. Display 8.4 is a brief presentation of the result of the combined analysis of collective orientation and categorization practice sorted in relation to the formal rules.

The display does not indicate that the formal rules have a systematic effect on the relationship between collective orientation and categorization practice. However, it does indicate an interesting finding, namely that the predominant type of relations between mechanical collective orientation and stereotyped practice exists among the social workers administering sickness benefits but not among the social workers administering social welfare.

Display 8.4. Collective orientations, categorization practices and formal rules

Interview:	Collective orientation X	Categorization practice Y	Formal rules Conditional variable
1	Organic	Stereotyped/Individualized	Sickness benefits
3	Mechanical/Organic	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
5	Mechanical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
7	Mechanical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
8	Mechanical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
9	Mechanical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
10	Mechanical/Organic	Stereotyped/Individualized	Sickness benefits
13	Mechanical/Organic	Stereotyped/Individualized	Sickness benefits
14	Organic/Mechanical	Individualized	Sickness benefits
19	Mechanical/Organic	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
20	Organic/Mechanical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
21	Mechanical/Organic	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
24	Mechanical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits

Case:	Collective orientation X	Categorization practice Y	Formal rules Conditional variable
2	Organic/Mechanical	Individualized/Stereotyped	Social welfare
4	Organic/Mechanical	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
6	Organic	Individualized	Social welfare
11	Organic	Individualized/Stereotyped	Social welfare
15	Organic/Mechanical	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
16	Mechanical/Organic	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
18	Mechanical/Organic	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
22	Mechanical	Individualized/Stereotyped	Social welfare

Case:	Collective orientation X	Categorization practice Y	Formal rules Conditional variable
12	Mechanical	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare/ Sickness benefits
17	Mechanical	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare/ Sickness benefits
23	Mechanical	Stereotyped	Social welfare/ Sickness benefits

This contradicts my expectations. It appears as though the formal rules for sickness benefits seem to make the mechanical logic of solidarity thrive better and more consistently with a stereotyped categorization practice than is the

case with organic solidarity. Of the 13 social workers administering sickness benefits, individualized practice is only predominant in one interview.

However, there are two interviews in which the organic orientation predominates, which indicates that the sickness benefits rules have conditioned the relation in respect to reversing the expected correspondence in the direction of stereotyped practice. This is suggested with reference to the qualities expressed in Interview 20 in Display 8.4 Regarding the distribution of the variable in relation to social welfare, the tendency that my expectations should have been reversed is supported. In the social welfare group, the concentration of interviews dominated by individualized categorization practice is greater than in the other groups. Again, this points to the opposite conditional effect of formal rules than was expected.

8.4 Collective-oriented arguments for categorization practices

Both the collective orientations and categorization practices have now been analyzed for all of the interviews. An expression of a collective orientation was occasionally made independently of an explanation of a categorization practice, and categorization practices were sometimes ‘only’ described in technical details, thereby excluding an explicit argument. In most of the cases, however, both of the variables were linked together as in a ‘traditional’ argument containing expressions of collective orientation and categorization practice as displayed above in the numerical display. In the following, the relationship itself is being studied. Even though it can be seen as an in-depth study of the bivariate relationship between collective orientation and categorization practice, the actual analytical method has been performed as a univariate analysis of the relationships as expressions of collective-oriented arguments regarding the categorization practice.

The hierarchical node ‘relationships’ included statements about collective orientation and categorization practice. The identification of these nodes was made using node queries for the bivariate analysis (based on Display 8.3). In the first coding query, a 56-page document was created. This display was subsequently condensed in three steps from 56 pages to five pages. Ultimately, the most descriptive and representative relationships (arguments) were selected.

8.4.1 Distribution of interviews in terms of type of relationship

Display 8.5 shows the distribution of interviews for all of the existing types of relationships (arguments) in the interviews:

Display 8.5. Distribution of interviews in terms of type of relationship

Type of relationship	Interviews	Numbers
Mechanical – Stereotyped	5, 7, 8, 9, 23, 24	6
Mechanical – Stereotyped/Individualized	12, 17	2
<i>Mechanical – Individualized/Stereotyped</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>1</i>
Mechanical/Organic – Stereotyped	3, 19, 21	3
Mechanical/Organic – Stereotyped/Individualized	10, 13, 16, 18	4
<i>Organic/Mechanical – Stereotyped</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Organic/Mechanical – Stereotyped/Individualized</i>	<i>4, 15</i>	<i>2</i>
Organic/Mechanical – Individualized/Stereotyped	2	1
Organic/Mechanical – Individualized	14	1
<i>Organic – Stereotyped/Individualized</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
Organic – Individualized/Stereotyped	11	1
Organic – Individualized	6	1
Total	24	24

n = 24.

Theoretically speaking, there are two main types of relationships: Those which are dominated by an organic collective orientation and an individualized categorization practice and those dominated by a mechanical collective orientation and a stereotyped categorization practice. Nevertheless, they are not equally represented in the interviews. In addition to these two ‘clear’ main types, there are another two types of relationships which corresponded as expected. These are the relationships in which the predominant collective orientation relation corresponds to the expected dominating type of categorization practice. Of the 24 interviews, 12 met the expected correspondence. These types of relationships, which matched exactly as expected, are indicated in bold in Display 8.5 and include the following four types of relationships: mechanical–stereotyped (MS), mechanical/organic–stereotyped/individualized (MOSI), organic/mechanical-individualized/stereotyped (OMIS) and, finally, organic-individualized (OI). Out of the last 12 interviews, however, only five of them portray directly unexpected types of relationships. These are italicized in Display 8.5 and include the following four types of relationships: mechanical-individualized/stereotyped (MIS), organic/mechanical-stereotyped (OMS), organic/mechanical-stereotyped/individualized (OMSI) and organic-stereotyped/individualized (OSI). The remaining seven interviews do not meet the theoretical expectations perfectly; however, the pre-

dominant collective orientation still shapes the predominant categorization practice to a significant extent. These seven interviews are represented in the last four types of relationships: mechanical-stereotyped/individualized (MSI), mechanical/organic-stereotyped (MOS), organic/mechanical-individualized (OMI) and, finally, in organic-individualized/stereotyped (OIS).

The results of the analysis are based on the bivariate analysis of collective orientation and categorization practice. Again, the point is to emphasize how collective orientation seems to shape how social workers argue they categorize their clients. Of the 24 interviews, only five seem to follow a different pattern of correspondence than what was expected. In the following, the analysis takes a step into the relationships in order to see how they appear in practice as collective-oriented arguments about categorization practice.

8.4.2 Relationships as types of arguments

All relationships between statements pertaining to collective orientation and categorization practice constitute what is normally understood as an argument. Methodologically speaking, such an argument consists of an affecting cause and an affected output: The argument begins with a worldview or a state-of-affairs description followed by a diagnosis or a problem definition and ends with a description of the consequences of that particular problem. In this context, the relationships between collective orientations (as a statement about the social workers' worldviews) and categorization practices (as statements about the consequences of these worldviews) are analyzed as articulated arguments. As mentioned there are two main types of such arguments, namely one designating a complex, professionalized and labor-divided society and another expressing a norm-based community based on a representation of a collective consciousness. In the first type, the categorization practice is an outcome of specialized and rights-based evaluations; in the second type, it is produced in the form of evaluations of deviations from the legitimate basis of shared norms.

Display 8.6 shows the outcome of the analysis based on four interviews, each representing the main arguments according to the bivariate and conditional analysis (Displays 8.3 and 8.4).

Display 8.6. Condensed content display of main types of relationships

Collective orientation – categorization practice:	Content of relationships:
Mechanical – Stereotyped (Interview 23)	<p>If we look at the media (...) both at TV and the printed press, then there are a lot of articles about – another concept, which was used in the 90s – about ‘life ache’ (...) And apparently only women had ‘life aches’ (...) never men. But I think that as the labor market gets more and more forced to – well, then this may create more problems about diseases just like this stress problem, too. And the question is whether or not it is ‘in’ to talk about stress and related conditions, or whether it is still ‘we don’t talk about such issues’ (...) because it’s embarrassing to admit ‘that I can’t manage the same as my colleagues sitting next to me’ (...) that it’s still really a taboo (...) But then there are diseases such as the one with the arm (...) where it is physically evident that [something] is missing. This is quite terrible and horrible (...) and we can actually see it on you (...) contrary to this [stress] (...) and it is also very typical that ‘Well, we can see that you’re sick and you can’t walk. You’re in a wheel chair. But what are you doing at home? (...) Well, you look fit and healthy’. But therefore you can still have a SEVERE psychiatric diagnosis which leaves you totally depressed, but you can’t see it, so I don’t think that we as a society – I think that we do have an understanding and sympathy to a certain point and we want to be able to grasp it. But I also believe you must recognize that society simply can’t grasp it anymore at some point (...) and that there are several reasons why this is the case, such as ‘Well now, there are too many [on welfare]’, or ‘Now I have to work harder in order to support someone to be able to just stay at home’. In other words, all of the old-fashioned classic stuff comes up.</p>
Mechanical/ Organic - Stereotyped/ Individualized (Interview 13)	<p>Well, [the tightening] may not be so closely connected to the social policy after all. This is not only about some changed municipalities. It may be Denmark, which has changed. Really, as I see it, I think that everyone in this country knows that when they get old, there will not be anyone to pay for my retirement/state/old age pension (...) That’s what we’re talking about all the time. It means that we must get every living thing out in the labor market. Generally speaking, I think that’s good, because I believe that it’s good to work. I think we have a need to feel used (...) and appreciated. And this is the existing culture in Denmark. I don’t think that we can do anything to change that (...) anyway. I think [change] may take a couple of hundred years. But this is the principal culture here, and I think you should hold on to that. And I believe it has a lot of healthy aspects. But I also think that something has happened in the direction where – that is, from the massive unemployment in the late 60s and early 70s (...) and in the 80s (...) where it has become less controversial to be sick; where it has become more accepted, not just in the public administration and social welfare offices (...) but also more generally. To the point where everyone looks after their own interests more than what used to be the case. And when you connect this to the predominant labor market policy, which flows through [the system] all the way from <i>Christiansborg</i> [the Danish Parliament] (...) and down to the social worker’s table (...) then I think there is pressure – a lot of factors – which make you push even harder. Because as an employee, you have to comply with administrative rules, demands of productivity and procedural rights.</p>

Organic/ Mechanical – Individualized/ Stereotyped (Interview 2)	I think that when it is such a typically physical disease, where people end up in a wheelchair, suffer an accident or something like that, something to ‘feel-sorry-for’ kind of thing, where people are disabled, have sclerosis (...) then I think society would be pleased to pay for it. I think there’s a broad understanding for such conditions. It’s when you can’t really see it. When a person has social problems – for example an abuser, a homeless person, an alcoholic – Well, someone who receives social welfare benefits for many years, but you can’t see anything wrong physically (...) The physical diseases are much more accepted than the other conditions. I think society will pay for those with pleasure. We have always been willing to do so. That is, if they are disabled (...) then society compensates. It’s a kind of OK thing to have right? (...) But the others, the immigrants, the refugees and (...) well, clients with social problems and things like that – I don’t think there’s much tolerance for such things in society (...) Why aren’t they doing anything? Can’t they be bothered to do something? And the way of thinking is that they can just go to the job centre and then they can get whatever they want to (...) But that’s totally wrong. The demands and formal rules have never been tighter (...) including the existing sanctions. People’s help is being deducted, and the help has been reduced. Social welfare and ‘start help’ have never been as low as they are right now (...) and really, I’ll be after you!
Organic – Individualized (Interview 6)	Yes, I think it’s the same for them as for everybody else. If you want an early retirement pension, then we’re compelled to try and find out what’s what and how it will affect you specifically and how it will affect your ability to handle a job. And to some point, I find that very logical (...) this is how I see it, that you have to do so. Based on a diagnosis alone, you can’t conclude that you should have a pension. I actually think that if you did so – if you said: ‘Well, you have PTSD or you have a depression. Ohhh, then you should have a pension or a flex job’ (...) I actually think that would be... I think that would be to undervalue people. Actually, I think that would kind of paternalistic (...) That would also stigmatize people – if you actually put people into a certain box [category] because they have a particular diagnosis.

The organic argument for an individualized categorization practice

Interview 6 was the only interview which was assigned both an organic collective orientation and an individualized categorization practice. Nevertheless, as the previous analysis has shown, this does not mean that there is no stereotyped or mechanical collective orientation found in the interview. In the concrete interview, this was the case for categorization practice but not for collective orientation. In other words, none of the statements were coded as mechanical solidarity, but insignificantly few as stereotyped categorization practice. This indicates that a clear relationship between organic collective orientation and individualized categorization practice is less common among the social workers in general compared to mechanically based arguments about stereotyped practices. Moreover, even though Interview 6 was assigned as described, the social worker’s answers were not particularly argumentative. When asked questions that made the other respondents give detailed arguments about their collective orientations, he answered in few words. Be-

low is an example of his way of presenting a rather organic argument for an individualized categorization practice:

Yes, I think it's the same for them as for everybody else. If you want an early retirement pension, then we're compelled to try and find out what's what and how it will affect you specifically and how it will affect your ability to handle a job. And to some point, I find that very logical.

First of all, he uses an argument of equality to position his collective orientation when stating that 'it's the same for them as for everybody else'. Next, he refers to specialized and rational knowledge when explaining the conditions that must be met in order to qualify for public support: 'we are compelled to try and find out what's what'. In the following sentence, this organic representation of equal rights is used to shape his designation of the purpose of an evaluation, namely to be able to find out 'how it will affect you specially and how it will affect your ability to handle a job'. This indicates an individualized style of categorizing, because he emphasizes that it is the relation between the actual limitations and the concrete individual which must be evaluated in respect of determining the working capacity.

The mechanical argument for a stereotyped categorization practice

In contrast to such an organic argument, it was far easier to identify strong and clear arguments of a mechanically oriented character. The mechanical argument is generally characterized by an explicit comparison of the individual and society from a normative point of view, which often does that individual conditions are not respected in the argument. Interview 23 provides an example:

But therefore you can still have a SEVERE psychiatric diagnosis which leaves you totally depressed, but you can't see it, so I don't think that we as a society – I think that we do have an understanding and sympathy to a certain point and we want to be able to grasp it. But I also believe you must recognize that society simply can't grasp it anymore as some point (...) and that there are several reasons why this is the case, such as 'Well now, there are too many [on welfare]', or 'Now I have to work harder in order to support someone to be able to just stay at home'. In other words, all of the old-fashioned classic stuff comes up.

The social worker refers to an individual situation in order to describe why society cannot be expected to tolerate individual suffering. This is interpreted as a mechanical orientation, both because the social worker represents society by referring to a single collective consciousness as when she says that:

at some point, society simply can't grasp it anymore.

She also prioritizes the needs of society before the concerns of the individual by referring to using the boundary of toleration that can be expected of society. I interpret this as being opposed to an organic perspective, where I would expect the social worker to refer to the limits of the capacities of the individual (instead of society's normative capacities) as the important issue at stake. In the following quote from Interview 8, the social worker explains her task to concern not only people's attitudes, but also how they perceive of society:

Yes, I believe very much that a lot of what we do in the sickness benefits department has to do with people's attitudes to how they feel and how they perceive of themselves in society (...) Because if they perceive of themselves as people who can make it, then they damned well do so (...) But if they perceive themselves in relation to these idiots [at the sickness benefits department], and 'I'm sick', and so on and so forth, then they do not make it (...) In such cases we can stand on our head [and it doesn't make a difference] (Interview 8, column 2, Display 8.2).

The quote denotes an example of a mechanical argument for a stereotyped categorization practice. This argument receives its meaning from a representation of a belief according to which 'faith will move mountains'. The range of problems is reduced to a matter of 'attitude':

Because if they perceive of themselves as people who can make it, then they damned well do so.

The dimension of physical and psychological constraints become irrelevant to the social worker's categorization practice in as much as she thinks attitude is not merely a proxy for the assistance-seeking citizens' 'real' problems, but also the problem and potential solution, as such. This strong concern about attitudes assumes a mechanical collective orientation against a certain defined set of values, and it is followed by a stereotyped categorization practice based on a judgment of how close the particular individual is from this concerned value describing the collective consciousness of the mechanical solidarity.

Between these two main types of relationships, however, there are other examples displaying other sides of the mechanism between collective orientation and categorization practice. Below, the two mixed types of arguments will be compared and analyzed.

When I get old, there is no one to pay for my state pension

Interview 13 exemplifies the type of relationship that has been assigned by the attributive of mechanical/organic collective orientation and stereotyped/individualized categorization practice. The quote typifies the weight between these different elements as they generally appear in the interviews assigned with this attribute.

The quote in the headline designates the social worker's diagnosis of the current social policy situation. The statement shares the characteristics of a typical story of decline, where the problem is framed by a narrative regarding 'the old days', where everything was possible in contrast to 'today', where we must pay the consequences of the former unrestrained habits of 'giving away public support' by tightening up our rules and concerns in order to preserve the normative basis of our common welfare. According to Stone, the story of decline is a typical political narrative, which is used to argue for a certain perception of reality using the tool of metaphorical language:

In the beginning, things were pretty good. But they got worse. In fact right now, they are nearly intolerable. Something must be done. (Stone 2002: 138)

The following is an example of such a story of decline. The social worker uses the story to frame a legitimate and general problem and then to explain why the problem should be met by a certain reaction (a solution):

That's what we're talking about all the time. It means that we must get every living thing out in the labor market. Generally speaking, I think that's good, because I believe that it's good to work. I think we have a need to feel used (...) and appreciated. And this is the existing culture in Denmark (...) But I also think that something has happened in the direction where – that is, from the massive unemployment in the late 60s and early 70s (...) and in the 80s (...) where it has become less controversial to be sick; where it has become more accepted, not just in the public administration and social welfare offices (...) but also more generally. To the point where everyone looks after their own interests more than what used to be the case.

In the last part, yet another level of reason and justification is added to the argument. This layer is about the social worker's causal understanding of society. She uses her own standards, as when she explains, 'I think we have to feel used (...) and appreciated'. Moreover, she substantiates her own standard by referring to the 'existing culture' in order to justify why the current activation policy corresponds very well to our culture of contribution in Denmark. Here, she is referring to the norm of working as the general (legitimate) way to contribute. By doing so, she is also explaining that her categorization of assistance-seeking citizens must be seen in the light of this agreement in the general tightening of the rules:

then I think there's pressure – a lot of factors – which make you push even harder. Because as an employee, you are met by demands regarding the administration and results and demands regarding rights.

Nevertheless, the words she uses in the quote also connect to some of the defining elements in an organic perception of society, because she identifies

herself in the quote as ‘an employee’ as opposed to a representative of the collective consciousness described earlier. This identification of what points towards an individualized categorization practice also follows a description of society perceived as an interdependent whole as opposed to a defined normative community:

But I also think that something has happened in the direction where – that is, from the massive unemployment in the late 60s and early 70s (...) and in the 80s (...) where it has become less controversial to be sick; where it has become more accepted, not just in the public administration and social welfare offices (...) but also more generally. To the point where everyone looks after their own interests more than what used to be the case. And when you connect this to the predominant labor market policy, which flows through [the system] all the way from *Christiansborg* (...) and down to the social worker’s table.

In this quote, she expresses a collective orientation of an organic character; but as initially analyzed the general weight of her arguments points out that the mechanical reasons for her categorization practice are predominant. The opposite case is analyzed in the following. Here, it is the organic and individualized aspects which have been interpreted as decisive for the social worker’s predominant argumentative structure.

I don’t think there’s much tolerance for such things out in society

This relationship of organic/mechanical collective orientation and individualized/stereotyped categorization practice is the second ‘clear’ example of a mixed argument. Also in this interview, however, the organic and individualized relations dominate as compared to the mechanical and stereotyped relations. This interview is of special interest, because it portrays the same themes as the previous interview as regards the extent of society’s toleration, but with the opposite impact, so to speak:

I think society will willingly pay for them. We’ve always been willing to do that.

The crucial thing to notice about this interview is the argumentative technique the social worker uses to portray her collective orientation. She bases her narrative on a mechanical perception of society by referring to the predominant values of deservingness. But she does so in order to arrive at a different diagnosis than was the case in the previous interview. In other words, she builds up her narrative within the frame of describing the frailty of society towards tolerating contested diseases and ambiguous conditions of assistance-seeking citizens. She then concludes that the ‘mechanical’ reaction towards citizens is wrong:

And the way of thinking is that they can just go to the job centre and then they can get whatever they want to (...) But that's totally wrong. The demands and formal rules have never been tighter (...) including the existing sanctions. People's help is being deducted, and the help has been reduced. Social welfare and 'start help' have never been as low as they are right now (...) and really, I'll be after you!

Even though this is a very implicit way of designating an organic collective orientation, it is identified as organic. This is mainly because she does not identify herself with the mechanically described society, but to a society containing different positions:

But the others – the immigrants, the refugees and (...) well, clients with social problems and things like that – I don't think there's much tolerance for such things out in society.

By indicating a distance between the society that is 'out there' and certain social groups, she actually expresses in a very subtle manner how the mechanical logic is perceived as a 'reality condition' she must deal with, though without identifying herself with the logic of solidarity embedded in the description. In this sense, Interview 2 typifies how the mechanical and organic collective orientations coexist in the interview and how the coding weight for and against how the interview should be analyzed in accordance with the theoretical argument.

In other words, it would appear as though both Interviews 2 and 13 display mixed arguments. Even though 'unclear' cases are normally understood as being of less value from a certain research-oriented point of view, they are the ones in this case that are best explained theoretically in the sense that they display exactly how both forms of solidarity perceptions are represented in the arguments of the same individual. The organic argument prevails on some occasions, while the mechanical argument dominates in others. With respect to the theoretical argument, however, the important thing is that in most of the interviews (19), the previous argumentative premise about one of the dominating solidarity perceptions explains the subsequent practice of categorization as either stereotyped or individualized.

8.3.3 Formal rules and the relationship

Compared to the analysis of the conditional effect of formal rules in the previous analysis in 8.2, the following differs both in respect to the independent and dependent variables. Based on the findings and coding of the relationships between collective orientation and categorization practice, a bivariate analysis was performed. The analysis treated formal rules as the independent variable explaining the relationship as the dependent variable. In this analy-

sis, all of the relations between solidarity and categorization are presented as different types of relationships, as they were coded in the interviews.

Correspondence between formal rules and arguments

The next analysis is comparing the collective oriented arguments for categorization practices to formal rules. This is done in order to learn more about the tendency described in part 8.2 about why social welfare seems to nurture how an organic solidarity perception shapes an individualized practice and why sickness benefits seem to motivate a mechanical-stereotyped relationship.

Even though there was no indication of a systematic conditional effect of formal rules when separately compared to the variables of collective orientation and categorization practice, a different image might appear when formal rules are compared to the coupling of the variables as collective-oriented arguments of categorization practice. The reason is that the measurement (the node) of the relationship has excluded all sayings of both collective orientation and categorization practices that were not coupled into an argument by the social workers. Thus the relationship only contains collective orientation and categorization practice expressed in 'near content' of each other leaving out many of the observations of expressions of collective orientations and categorization practices, which were made independent of each other.

Display 8.7. Collective orientation and categorization practice in relation to formal rules

Formal rule	Relationship											
	M S	M SI	M IS	MO S	MO SI	OM S	OM SI	OM IS	OM I	O SI	O IS	O I
Social welfare	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	1
Sickness benefits	5	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Social welfare and sickness benefits	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total (24)	6	2	1	3	4	1	2	1	1	1	1	1

n = 24. M = mechanical collective orientation; O = organic collective orientation; S = stereotyped categorization practice; I = individualized categorization practice.

Display 8.7 reveals several interesting findings. First of all, the tendency in Display 8.4 that the expected conditional effects of formal rules work in the opposite direction is substantiated in this analysis, because the relationship has now been analyzed and sorted based on both qualitative and quantitative methods of attribute assignments. First of all, Display 8.7 shows that none of the relationships regarding the mechanical dominated collective orientation

and stereotyped dominated categorization practice exist under the rules of social welfare, but under the law of sickness benefits; and secondly, four of the five individualized dominated categorization practices are now identified under the formal rules of social welfare. It is only the individualized dominated relationship of organic/mechanical – individualized practice in column 9, second row, which is under the law of sickness benefits. However, the results do not provide the basis for broader conclusions. In relation to social welfare, column 7, first row shows there are two cases of relationships of organically dominated collective orientations and dominated stereotyped practice. This suggests that the formal rules have a different impact namely in the direction of the initial theoretical expectations. However, the tentative conclusion that even though the initial (and to some degree more accurate) picture of the conditional effect in Display 8.4 did not indicate a systematic conditional effect, the tendency that mechanically dominated arguments about stereotyped practices thrive better under the formal rules of sickness benefits and vice versa with organic arguments is supported in this display. The residual characteristic of the law of active social policy as well as the insurance-based and corporative context of the law of sickness benefits do not seem to be defining for the correspondences between solidarity and categorization practices. However since there is a tendency to the opposite pattern this suggests that something else about the formal rules condition whether a mechanical dominated or an organic dominated argument for a stereotyped and an individualized categorization practice occurs respectively. In Chapter 9 I will return to this question.

8.5 Summary

Social workers tend to use their collective orientation in relation to their categorization practice. There is a correlation between the organic collective orientation and the individualized categorization practice as well as between the mechanical collective orientation and the stereotyped categorization practice. However, only seven (out of 24) interviews indicated a ‘pure’ relationship, whereas 17 of the interviews included more than one type of orientation or practice. This meets the theoretical understanding of solidarity very well, because it was expected that people generally have both mechanical and organic solidarity perceptions. 12 of these 17 interviews were characterized by the expected correlative structure. In accordance with the theoretical argument, this means that, in most cases, a mechanical perception shaped a stereotyped practice and vice versa. Having said that, there were five interviews in which the categorization practice could not be explained by collective orientation. As appeared to be a tendency in the analyses of the formal rules, however, three of these five unexplained interviews correlate with formal

rules and not with collective orientation. This may be understood in the light of the rather surprising tendency that the relationships of dominating mechanical orientation and stereotyped practice thrive better in the field of sickness benefits than in the field of social welfare. However, the conditional impact of formal rules is neither clear nor systematic in relation to categorization practice. Therefore, generally speaking, the analyses showed that collective orientation is a stronger indicator of the subsequent type of categorization practice than is the particular formal rule the social workers administer.

How such orientations shape a practice was exemplified through the textual analysis of the dominating types of arguments. Here, the tentative conclusion is that it seems to be easier to make a mechanical argument about the purpose of evaluation and hence for how social workers categorize assistance-seeking citizens than that which appears to be the case with organic arguments. This can be explained by the agreement between the social workers' mechanical solidarity perceptions and the general mechanical idea between the welfare program of active social policy. But this explanation does not explain the correlation between the organic dominated solidarity perceptions and the individualized categorization practices.

One of the reasons may relate to the use of vignettes, which are designed to stimulate a logic of deservingness. The impact of the vignettes and the concrete meanings of disability and perceptions of sickness will be analyzed in Chapter 10. In the following, in Chapter 9, the study of the impact of perceptions of solidarity on categorization practice is continued, however this time with a greater focus on trying to explain the correlation between organic solidarity perceptions and individualized categorization practice.

Chapter 9

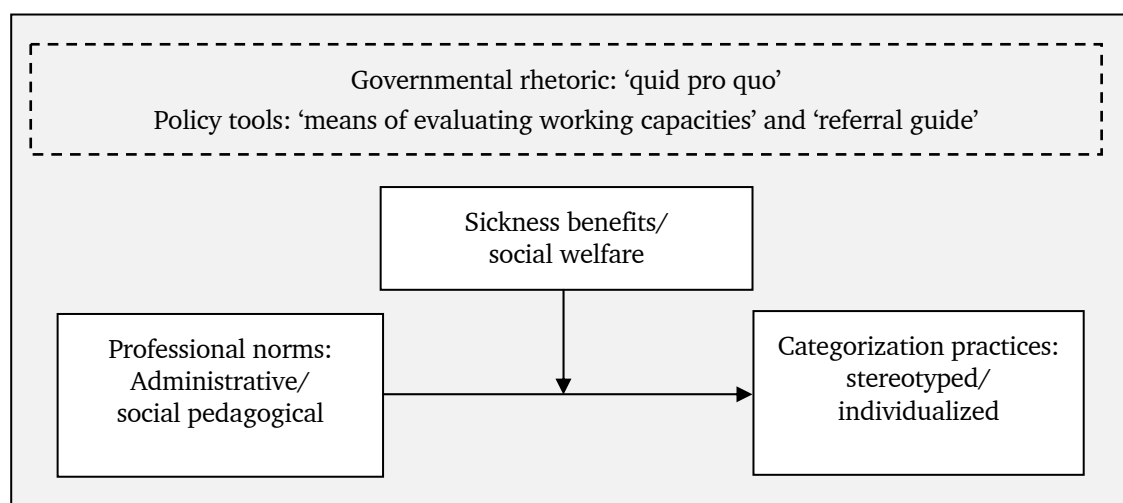
Professional norms and categorization practices

Collective orientation was my first measure of how the social workers perceived solidarity. In this chapter, I will analyze how the social workers use professional norms as another indicator of solidarity perceptions. Where the preceding chapter focused on rather general statements about integrative forces and statements about legitimacy and society, the current chapter is more sensitive to the conditions the social workers work under. Here, more concrete statements about how the social workers use their professional norms provide the measure of solidarity.

The differences between the social workers' references to their professional norms were identified between an administrative and social-pedagogical professionalism. The analyzed content of professional norms was hence reduced to an identification of help-based and rule-based norms of professionalism. Do the social workers refer to a professional norm in order to explain the extent of specialized knowledge about the professional management of the problems of assistance-seeking citizens, or do they refer to a professional norm as a matter of following the letter of the law and live up to the political intention behind the legislation? In the next part I argue why such differences also represent differences in perceptions of solidarity as they have been explained thus far. In the current chapter, the social workers' perceptions of solidarity are therefore identified in the interviews not as collective orientations – as was the case in Chapter 8 – but as descriptions of professionalism in relation to their categorization practice. Again, the relations between solidarity perceptions (here indicated by professional norms) and categorization practices are compared to the formal rules in order to see whether they condition the relationships between perceptions of solidarity and the categorization practices. In this chapter, the analysis performed can be presented visually as in Figure 9.1.

Chapter 9 falls in four parts. First, a univariate analysis of the professional norms is carried out. The method is cross-case and within-case analysis, the aim of which is to understand the content of the variations in the professional norms within the interviews as well as between them. The analysis is concluded by assigning attribute values for professional norms to each interview. In the second part, the professional norms are analyzed in relation to the categorization practice, first in a bivariate matrix and next in a combined matrix including formal rules as the conditional variable. In part three, a univariate analysis of the relationship between professional norms and categorization practices is carried out.

Figure 9.1. Professional norms and categorization practices



Chapter 9: Analysis 3.

This part aims at understanding the mechanisms of how social workers draw upon their professional norms in relation to their categorization practice. This part seeks to explore the differences in types of arguments between professional norms and categorization practices. Finally, this part analyzes how the relationships between professional norms and categorization practices relate to formal rules. The last part of the analysis includes a presentation of the relations between professional norms and the collective orientation in order to determine the extent to which the two indicators of solidarity perceptions are merging. The chapter ends with a conclusion pointing towards the next and final analysis of the meaning of pain narratives in relation to understanding the variations in the categorization practices.

Solidarity perceptions as professional norms

The organization of a social welfare system corresponds theoretically to an organic solidarity form in which the obligation or responsibility to support the unemployed and disabled has been transferred from the family to the public authority. This process of ‘de-familiarizing’ central care and health functions is understood as part of the labor division process stimulating the development of organic solidarity between citizens in e.g. a welfare state. In this perspective, the street-level bureaucrats performing this function of channeling and transforming public support into concrete individual assistance arrangements are expected to identify their professional ethics with an organic perception of solidarity. In other words, the professional norms governing social work are expected to reflect organic solidarity perceptions in as much as the social workers identify themselves as professionals responsible

for a specialized assistance task in a labor-divided society. Seen in the light of the previous collective orientation analysis, the result was that the observed variation was skewed in favor of a mechanical solidarity. Based on this study, it is difficult to say how much influence the idea behind the welfare program of active social policy and the *quid pro quo* rhetoric have shaped the social workers' collective orientations in the direction of a mechanical solidarity perception. However, the same holds in the following analysis of professional norms. Here, the opposite case dominates, i.e. the social workers are embedded within this context of a labor-divided rationality, which is expected to nourish an organic logic of solidarity. Where the previous analysis of collective orientation could be assumed to activate more mechanical (than organic) perceptions of solidarity due to the mechanical logic of solidarity embedded in the active social policy discourse, the current analysis of professional norms is assumed to activate organic solidarity (more than mechanical solidarity) due to the labor-divided and de-familiarized, individual-rights-based context of social workers.

The expectations regarding the professional skills of social workers include both social and legislative dimensions, as expressed in a policy document from the Ministry of Social Affairs in which social professionalism is described as including knowledge about:

- Social relations, including knowledge about how social problems appear and how they are solved
- Labor market relations
- Organizations, cultures and processes
- Psychological relations
- Communication, dialogue and development of people
- Legislation, including administrative law and due process law, as well as casework and the exercise of authority
- Social work methods (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 36).

In addition to this content of social professionalism – and hence what is expected by the political system to define the social workers' professionalism – the manner in which they are supposed to execute this professionalism is portrayed below in a quote stemming from the same policy document. Here, it is not the content of professionalism that is described, but rather the ethical aspect of how to use these professional skills in accordance with legal standards. The expectation here is that the social workers are capable of judging citizens objectively, leaving subjective attitudes aside.

In the exercise of their work, the social worker must be aware that the discretions made in the casework are not due to personal attitudes and values, but to

professional explanations and frames of understanding as well as to reflected experience from practice. (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 36)

Here, it becomes explicitly clear how the social worker is to use professional explanations – as opposed to personal attitudes and values – when using their discretion to categorize citizens. A social professional judgment of a citizen's capacity to work is hence defined in the document as:

A professional discretion is a social worker's judgment of the information and documentaion gathered to evaluate the resources of the citizen in relation to the labor market. The judgment is not casual. It is based on the information provided by the citizen and the collaborator, analyzed and compared with the social worker's social professional knowledge and experience from practice. (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 37)

These components stemming from a defining policy document describing the predominant aspects of a social worker's professional skills are conceived and have been coded as social pedagogical professionalism in the following.

As explained in Chapters 3 and 5, however, there is also reason to expect mechanical solidarity to thrive in the professional norms of street-level bureaucrats. First, because associations are held together by shared norms and interests, which are expected to nurture a mechanical logic of social cohesion. Second, because the policy intention and the concrete rules constituting the welfare program of active social policy aim at using individual responsibility to prevent the expansion of public support at the individual level. The articulation of 'self-responsibility' in the rhetoric draws on a mechanical solidarity represented by certain empathetic values and relating to 'similar' others in a manner that is comparable to the solidarity bonds between the individual and their family. Just as the family member must adapt to certain values and normative preferences in order to remain legitimately included in the family, so also must the assistance-seeking citizen adapt to certain values in order to be considered deserving of social welfare. In relation to the expected variations in the professional norms in the interviews, I therefore interpret statements referring to and using the concrete rules to argue for their categorization practice as expressions of mechanical perceptions of solidarity, here identified as an administrative, rule-based professional norm. In cases in which the rules are used as exclusive standards, it is expected that only when the assistance-seeking citizen meets the criteria of being perceived as deserving that the social worker initiates assistance strategies instead of rule-confirming strategies.

It might initially seem as though combining a rule-based norm with mechanical (as opposed to organic) solidarity is contra-intuitive. As explained in the above, however, this is because the policy intention behind the rules fa-

vors a mechanical logic as opposed to an organic logic of solidarity towards assistance-seeking citizens. Moreover, the focus of rules on social pedagogical assistance strategies is assumed to involve a mechanical solidarity, because only those perceived as deserving are exempted from the recently tightened rules, whereas those perceived as being undeserving are managed exactly according to the formal rules – or to the letter of the law. The legislation pertaining to active job creation provides an example of why I argue that the policy intention is embedded in a perception of society in accordance with mechanical solidarity. The law is designed to:

[C]ontribute to an efficient labor market by 1) assisting job applicants to get a job; 2) providing service to private and public employers who seek manpower or seek to maintain employees in employment; 3) assisting the recipients of social welfare and unemployed insurance as quickly and effectively as possible to return to employment to enable them to support themselves and their family; and 4) supporting persons who, because of a limited working capacity, have special needs for assistance in gaining employment (LBK nr 439 of 29/05/2008, Chapter 1, section 1).

The policy intention behind this law is to ‘contribute to an efficient labor market’. This identifies the citizen’s rights and obligations with the needs of society. Compared to the theoretical explanation of solidarity, this priority qualifies as policy that fortifies and represents a mechanically bonded solidarity, where society and the individual become integrated through certain shared communal values assumed to be to mutual benefit. The following is an example from the policy document analyzed in Chapter 5, where the general policy dilemma of boundary making is transformed into an effective policy tool aiming at ‘everybody’ who must evaluate the moral standards of the citizenry. The boundary making (or what is generally known as the individual discretion) is transformed here into three basic political categories reducing the matter of ‘objective’ limitations to a question of will:

- Society rewards those who will (work) and can (work);
- Society helps those who will (work) but cannot (work); and
- Society punishes those who can (work) but will not (work) (Regeringen 2004: Lines 4- 6, 9. Passage, part 1).

Even though these categories stem from a government document, they have no legal status as administrative categories as explained in Chapter 5. They can be defined as pure rhetorical categories representing mechanical perceptions of solidarity in plain words: society is represented as the rewarding, helping and punishing actor; and consequently as possessing the will and

power to judge among 'us'. The quality of each individual is hence determined in a comparison to the communal values praised by 'society'.

So there are reasons to expect both forms of solidarity to prevail among the professional norms of social workers. Following the general theory of solidarity as explained in the theoretical part of the dissertation, associations and professions are explained as fruitful loci in which to study contexts in which both mechanical and organic solidarity is expected to exist as cohesive mechanisms. In the current study, the social work profession counts as such an association.

Theoretically speaking, the examination of the professional norms governing social workers is thus expected to be a good indicator of the logics of organic solidarity. The bottom line is that the constitution of a professionalized assistance system is per definition an organic structure. As explained in Chapter 3 and as described above, however, mechanical reasoning is expected to exist within this organically constituted system, both because social workers as a professional group share the same habits of practice and because the articulated mechanical figures of self-responsibility in the legislation as well as solidarity based on communal values in the rhetorical categories presented by the government.

The predominant difference between an administrative professional norm and a social pedagogical professional norm thus becomes a question of tracing the primary identification of the social workers with the community they perceive themselves as a member of and as representing their professional identity. The expression of a social pedagogical norm is hence identified when a social worker makes reference to the general professional community of social work, which is an abstract community that goes beyond their concrete workplace. Conversely, some of the social workers express an administrative norm in which they identify themselves with the administrative system in accordance with the policy intention behind the law. Such identification tends to be more closely associated with the physical confines of the workplace, even though the embedded values in the policy intention obviously also exist beyond the workplace.

9.1 Coding and analysis of professional norms

The first step of the analysis was to develop a coding display of all of the statements about how social workers draw on professional norms in the case of all 24 interviews. This coding display was then condensed using a stepwise strategy of analytical selection, as presented in Display 9.1. Next, each interview was assigned an attribute relating to the predominant use of the professional norms using both quantitative and qualitative methods of selection. First, all of the interviews were assigned an attribute based on the condensed

coding display; next, all of the interviews were assigned an attribute based on the numerical display of the number of words and coding references about administrative and social pedagogical professional norms. The assignment of attributes using both methods was identical for 15 of the interviews. However, the assignments differed in nine of the interviews, which were subsequently re-evaluated and given an attribute. Display A8 and A9 illustrates the procedure and the outcome of the re-evaluation (see Appendix).

After coding all of the cases for administrative and social pedagogical norms, a reliability test was conducted to compare a re-coding of the professional norms. Based on the distribution of interviews in relation to attributive values relating to professional norms (see Display 9.2), three interviews assigned with different attributes were selected. The interviews were numbers 7, 19 and 20. The result of the reliability tests was an agreement between 98.22 pct. and 99.16 pct. An evaluation of the disagreements revealed that the lowest agreement score (98.22 pct.) was caused by imprecision in the coded context surrounding the main statement. The rest of the disagreement percentages can also be accounted for by small differences in lines and words coded in the surrounding of the main text; hence, they do not express 'real' disagreements, but rather unavoidable mismatches in the coding precision.

9.1.1 Administrative and social pedagogical norms

The node 'professional norm' coded statements about the social workers' professional norms as either administrative or social pedagogical for all 24 social workers. The first coding query produced a 199-page document. This display was then condensed to 17 pages in three steps. Ultimately, the most descriptive and illuminating statements of the varying forms of practice were selected. Display 9.1 below illustrates the outcome of the analysis based on four interviews, each representing an aspect of the variation.

I described the case selection in Chapter 6, including how the educational background of social workers varies. Hence, social workers can have an administrative background or a social pedagogical education from a school of social work. In addition to this information about the social workers' respective educational backgrounds, the interview guide included questions aimed at exploring how they practice their professionalism and how it can be used to explain their categorization practice. The questions were developed in order to get the social worker to explain their approach to the assistance-seeking citizens, particularly regarding their professional decisions and arguments (see Interview Guide in Appendix A2).

In the following analysis, professional norms are thus divided into administrative and social pedagogical norms in which statements were coded according to whether the social workers identified themselves as the promoters

of certain rules or as caseworkers with specialized social pedagogical knowledge (see the node report in Appendix A4).

Administrative professional norm

The coding process resulted in the identification of two predominant aspects of an administrative professional norm. One aspect was the use of references to the administrative categories, e.g. match groups or target groups, together with a tendency to stick to the letter of the law. Another aspect was a (negative) judgment of the abilities of other professionals to evaluate, as well as a tendency to conceive the meaning of professional identity as related both to a professional re-adjustment and a normative re-adjustment. In the following, three quotes have been selected to describe some of these defining aspects of an administrative professional norm. A sequence from Interview 16 is presented below, where the social worker explains the conditions for a professionally interesting interaction she has experienced with an assistance-seeking citizen:

Well, that is (...) when you're active and you listen and it turns into an equal relationship (...) I'm aware of the fact that we have power. That's just the way it is (...) I don't have any problems recognizing that. I think we have to recognize it. But where it becomes equal is when we are professionals and present some choices to people. Basically, we're the promoters of a system, where we say: 'You have these options to choose between'. Obviously, we have to be able to present this in a decent way. And then there's the possibility that you don't choose. And if you don't choose, then I choose for you (...) because this is what I'm hired to do (...) and – when the citizen actually has the courage to make the active choice from inclination and responsibility – and not because we force them to do so – then I think (...) it's straight forward (...) when it gets interesting – that's when it also becomes professionally interesting. (Interview 16, column 2, Display 9.2)

This quote illustrates the second aspect of what characterizes an administrative professional norm, because the social worker emphasizes the will to re-adjust to a certain set of rules as being essential for her professional satisfaction. The context of the quote is a sequence in which the social worker is asked about her understanding of her role as a social worker. First, she mentions the importance of establishing 'an equal relationship' despite the asymmetrical balance of power:

[W]hen you're active and you listen and it turns into an equal relationship (...) I'm aware of the fact that we have power. That's just the way it is (...) I don't have any problems recognizing that. I think we have to recognize it. But where it becomes equal is when we are professionals and present some choices to people.

The social worker hereby clarifies the potential of establishing an equal relationship with the assistance-seeking citizen with reference to which preconditions must be met in order for that to happen. The citizen must be active and listen to the social worker's presentation of options. This aspect of an administrative norm is identified as a focus on:

Basically, we're the promoters of a system, where we say: 'You have these options to choose between'.

The identification of a 'we' – as opposed to an 'I' – as the promoters of a system indicates a primary identification with the rule as an end unto itself as opposed to a means for providing social assistance, which would be the counter case when applying a social pedagogical professional norm.

And then there's the possibility that you don't choose. And if you don't choose, then I choose for you (...) because this is what I'm hired to do (...) and – when the citizen actually has the courage to make the active choice from inclination and responsibility – and not because we force them to do so – then I think (...) it's straight forward (...) when it gets interesting – that's when it also becomes professionally interesting.

This sequence from the quote provides a clear example of an administrative professional norm, because the social worker identifies herself with a role comparable to that of society as forwarded in the three-partition category scheme in the *quid pro quo* document. The reason why her role is comparable to the role played by society in the document is her shifts between a rewarding, assisting and punishing authority in her assistance-seeking citizen approach. As long as the assistance-seeking citizen acts out of inclination, the role of authority is rewarding and helping. But if the citizen does not choose meaning and does not act out of a sense of responsibility, then the social worker assumes an attitude towards the assistance-seeking citizen which may be conceived as punishing – or at least going against the will of the citizen. Moreover, she says that the point where it gets professionally interesting is when the citizen:

[A]ctually has the courage to make the active choice from inclination and responsibility – and not because we force them to do so.

The social worker perceives the willingness of the citizens to internalize the value of assuming responsibility for themselves and active citizenship out of a desire to be responsible as a precondition for her to be able to practice her professionalism in an interesting manner. That is, in a manner whereby she can present the citizen with a number of concrete activation opportunities and evaluation strategies. In this sense, she expresses both a dominating

loyalty with the intention of the policy as well as with the concrete rules. In other words, she identifies herself more with the role of an authority than with that of a caseworker. This characteristic in a professional identity is identified as a 'normative re-adjustment' ambition on behalf of the assistance-seeking citizens. Again, the preference to work within a power-less context or an equal relationship with the citizen is important to her, as when she explains that she prefers assistance-seeking citizens to make the active choice – from inclination – and not because the social worker forces them to do so.

The following quote provides yet another example of how the use of an administrative professional norm entails a primary identification with the existing rules instead of with the particular problems of the assistance-seeking citizen:

She wants to receive an early retirement pension (...) But she won't get one, no (laughing). It's just because it's so difficult to get a pension today, right? That is, before we even get to clarify that. Of course she needs to know which criteria must be met in order to receive an early retirement pension. And then we must find out if she can return [to the labor market] as a social and health care helper. (Interview 9, column 2, Display 9.2)

The quote is drawn from Interview 9 and selected in order to demonstrate the rule-based aspect of an administrative professional norm. Here, the social worker wants to initiate the interaction/meeting with the assistance-seeking citizen by clarifying the criteria for granting an early retirement pension to the citizen instead of e.g. initially clarifying the extent of the problem. The following quote drawn from Interview 11 provides another example of a rule-based norm, where the social worker primarily sees herself as promoting a set of rules instead of exploiting a set of tools for assistance:

Especially the people who have been here for many years and don't understand that the rules have changed. Now you have to [work]. A lot of them have received social welfare without ever showing their faces at the municipality [office], because they didn't have to. Now, they must come (...) at least every third month, right? (...) So it's difficult to make them realize, 'So, this is the way things are now. The rules are different'. Right? (Interview 11, column 3, Display 9.2).

Here, the social worker also exemplifies the aspect of an administrative professional norm emphasizing the willingness of the assistance-seeking citizen and social worker alike to re-adjust normatively. The assistance-seeking citizens are to adapt to the new rules in order to remain eligible for social welfare, even though it has nothing directly to do with enhancing their capacity to work.

Again, this quote exemplifies the dominant position of rules as opposed to assistance, which constitutes the other dictating professional norm among the social workers: a social pedagogical norm.

Social pedagogical professional norms

As opposed to these aspects of administrative professionalism, three prevailing aspects characterize a social pedagogical professional norm. The first aspect is when the social worker ‘reads’ the assistance-seeking citizen from a social pedagogical perspective, i.e. interprets the assistance-seeking citizens’ actions and motives without a subsequent negative judgment of a stigmatizing nature. The second aspect is the use of individual discretion, and the third aspect refers to a habit of conceptualizing the discourse in a social pedagogical language. However, the strongest signifier of a social pedagogical professional norm in the interviews was the tendency to use an assistance-based norm to justify the actions taken towards the citizens. The quote below is drawn from Interview 14:

They may have a hard time returning to something similar. And then you have to help them get started with something else (Interview 14, column 4, Display 9.2).

The crucial thing to notice here is the reference to help instead of to a rule, as was the general reference in the quotes portraying the administrative professional norms. As an alternative to informing the assistance-seeking citizen regarding the criteria for receiving public assistance, this social worker identifies herself with the role of finding a way to help the citizen. While it is impossible to determine whether there would be any differences in the actual outcome of the two diverse approaches, there is a remarkable difference between them with respect to the description of the social worker-assistance-seeking citizen interaction. This difference can be described with reference to the components of social professionalism, where the aspects of legislation, administrative law and the exercise of authority are less defining than that which has been identified as being the case when social workers did or said things in keeping with an administrative professional norm.

The question of who is perceived as being responsible for solving ‘the situation’ is another aspect distinguishing administrative and social pedagogical professionalism. In the former, the tendency was for the social worker to adapt to the discourse of ‘self-responsibility’ embedded in both the policy tools and active social policy legislation. Within this discursive framing of social problems, the assistance-seeking citizen alone is seen as bearing the responsibility for solving the problem of disability and unemployment with the exception of very specific situations in which the assistance-seeking citizens

have a detailed diagnosis and prognosis for the development of their disability (e.g. terminal cancer patients or patients with specified recovery plans). Outside of this discursive frame of self-responsibility, the social worker appears to hold an expanded view of who can be held responsible for ‘solving the case’ in the sense of helping the assistance-seeking citizen return to the labor market or apply for the appropriate public assistance. The social worker in Interview 22 demonstrates just such an expanded view of responsibility, when arguing that:

Well, at first I would think that this is a case where, from the municipality’s side, you would have to help her somehow, right? Because this isn’t someone who can simply return to the labor market again (...) So this is someone where you have to initiate something (...) exactly some kind of clarification right? (Interview 22, column 3, Display 9.2).

Here, the social worker’s statement reveals the claimed correspondence between a social pedagogical professional norm and a perception of organic solidarity, because she identifies the municipality as a legitimate actor providing assistance. This is interpreted as a sign of a perception of organic solidarity on the grounds that the extent of the value of society exceeds the mere value of self-responsibility and motivated active citizenship. She also refers to a question of ‘help’ – instead of to a question about informing the assistance-seeking citizen about eligibility criteria, as would be expected in accordance with the rationality of the administrative professional norm.

Another example of how the use of an assistance-based norm serves as a defining aspect of a social pedagogical professional norm is found in the following quote from Interview 18:

[I] would have to write – the problem about exactly this person and ask what are the help options. And then you’ll get some kind of invitation to hold a meeting to discuss [the problem] either with or without her (...) in order to refer her to some kind of help (...) because she’s most likely not to be capable of managing her everyday life at home – and she has sleeping problems and cognitive problems. I would get an evaluation of whether this could be related to neck or head trauma. Or whether other problems could also be related (Interview 18, column 4, Display 9.2).

In addition to the reference in the quote to ‘help’, the social worker is indicating that she recognizes other types of specialized knowledge than her own when mentioning the invitation to hold a meeting to discuss the problem. In many interviews, the involvement of other professionals was presented as a negative – often as potentially threatening the authority of the social worker. In accordance with the distinction presented between administrative and social pedagogical professional norms, the reserved relation to other profes-

sional groups, suggests a mechanically based perception of solidarity. But it also suggests the use of an administrative professional norm, whereas the way the social worker in Interview 18 mentions the meeting without further comments indicates a social pedagogical norm, where her professional identity as a specialized facilitator of assistance is not conceived as being threatened by other professionals (e.g. doctors or physiotherapists). In other words, she does not seem intimidated by the prospect of being judged by other professionals, instead seeing them as contributing to her casework. This goes well in hand with the original intention behind the active social law, which involves the examination of several (12) aspects before ultimately arriving at the final categorization of the assistance-seeking citizen.

In the last example of what defines a social pedagogical professional norm, the social worker expresses implicit resistance towards the formal rule of social welfare. The critique points towards the fact that even though the policy is designed to make a comprehensive assistance-seeking citizen evaluation by including several aspects (12) of the citizen (corresponding very well with a social pedagogical professionalism), the purpose of the evaluation focuses on the labor-related aspects, ignoring everything else. This kind of resistance in relation to a strong social pedagogical professional identity is to be expected, because ignoring the assistance-seeking citizen's non-labor-related intentions beforehand contradicts the perception embedded in social pedagogical professionalism about which conditions must be present in order to do good social work. The social worker expresses his resistance:

Or they'll get social problems exactly BECAUSE of that disease. (...) Then it's difficult to stay out of guiding counseling about relationships and other things and economy without talking about their social welfare or what do I know what they could get. But, financial problems, family problems, auditing problems (...) housing problems (...) That is, the home is essential in order to hold a job in the first place (...) So this is difficult to ignore (Interview 15, column 2, Display 9.2).

Here, the social worker refers to a classic social pedagogical cause-and-effect understanding of social problems. He forwards an integrated perspective of what influences the ability of the assistance-seeking citizen to perform. Moreover, the quote substantiates the same aspect about an open mind towards examining the functional reasons before arriving at a normative conclusion about the assistance-seeking citizen's motivation.

In the following, the various aspects defining how the social workers use professional norms are analyzed in relation to the most pronounced differences between the interviews and within the interviews.

9.1.2 Differences in professional norms within the interviews

In the following, these aspects of professional norms were used to analyze the variation within and between the interviews. Based on the focused coding of professional norms, it became clear how the social workers generally used both administrative and social pedagogical norms. This was also expected based on the theoretical explanations. Further along these lines, it also became evident how there are significant differences in terms of the impact and volume of the existence of administrative and social pedagogical professional norms, respectively. Compared to the previous analysis of collective orientation, however, the current analysis displays a more even distribution of variation. This suggests that professional norms are more disposed to activate organic solidarity as compared to collective orientation. This confirms the theoretical argument about professions being part of a labor-divided society – and hence part of the mechanism producing the material foundation for organic solidarity.

Display 9.1 was developed to analyze the important aspects of the differences in social workers' statements about their professional norms. Each interview in the display was selected to represent an attribute on a continuum between administrative and social pedagogical professional norms. The selection criterion for the four interviews has been to present the dominating type of variation in the 24 interviews.

I can't include how it affects them financially, but it's hard not to

The social worker in Interview 14 displayed a generally resistant approach to her workplace and towards the formal rules for sickness benefits. She also explained how she was working under conditions which she felt were in conflict with her professional standards. The crucial thing to notice in respect to the use of professional norms was that the statements made by this social worker – much more than the other social workers dominated by the use of social pedagogical professional norms, actually tried not to compromise the component of legislation. In other words, instead of 'choosing' between obviously conflicting aims, she attempted to fulfill all of them, which apparently caused problems for her. While seeking to inform the assistance-seeking citizens about the basics of the tightened criteria, she insisted on using a social pedagogical approach. These conflicting ends may explain why this interview was assigned the attribute of organic/mechanical collective orientation, whereas the interview in this analysis is assigned a 'pure' social pedagogical professionalism, because the resistance toward 'the system' was expressed in terms of a clearly mechanical 'us/them' perception of solidarity.

Display 9.1. Coding display of professional norms in selected interviews

Professional norms	
Interview	Social pedagogical
14. Social pedagogical attribute	<p>(I) know very well that I can't include how it affects them financially [in my judgments], but it's hard not to (...) because it can and will cause people to fall on a social welfare level (...) they will not be able to keep their home – but will have to house their family anyway. It will count as an extra burden (...) Of course, I am not allowed to judge based on that [financial aspects]. And I don't do so. But I can't totally. I can't ignore it completely.</p>
	Administrative
2. Social pedagogical/administrative attribute	<p>Even before starting to talk to her about a pension, I would probably say to her: 'Once I have some more information, then we'll start talking about what you want to talk to me about. But as long [as I don't have all the information], I can't talk to you about it' (...) Then I'll ask about some more things related to her health and her situation etc. Then I'll inform her about the flex [job] rules, that is, about an early retirement pension (...) what the rules are actually like today. Then I must tell her, 'You can no longer get an early retirement pension without having been clarified in a work experience first. However, you're welcome to apply for a pension and have the application processed, but I can almost tell you for sure that they'll get back to me and say that you must go through a test before we can see what your working capacity is like (...) If you still insist that is what you want, then of course I will send it to them. However, this will require that I make (...) a small 'resource profile' on you, but if you want to apply based on the existing material, I am not expected to gather any further information about you at all'.</p> <p>This [judging where things are going] is what I'm hired to do here. I must judge continually: Are people receiving the correct support or should they be supported differently? (...) This is what I must do. This is my responsibility. Jimmy and Johnny and Brian [the names denote low social class and cognitive skills] – they can't figure it out. They can't figure anything out when faced with this huge body of laws. This is something I have to figure out for them (...) in order to make a case go smoothly. It may start as activation, which, you may say, is the least radical arrangement (...) I do this in order to see whether the person concerned is stable (...) That is, how often can he show up and things like that? (...) Can he do it? Then we start to find out: Well, how does it look in this situation? (...) How much [help] is needed? And sometimes it transfers to a case of rehabilitation, and then we find out that we cannot retrain any capacity to work. It's permanently reduced, and there are medical documents or a psychological examination (...) and then it gradually becomes a flex job. And I'm the one who has to make sure to it is all described in the resource profile (...) including collecting this information.</p>

3. Administrative/ social pedagogical attribute	<p>Yes, the professionalism also suffers a lot from [all of the follow-up deadlines]. But you can also say that especially after the job centers have come, our focus has to be only on work. Well, the fact that you, as a social worker, are trained to take a comprehensive view and have all-around knowledge and things like that. You don't use those skills very much here. You don't do so, because our focus is on what it's all about – getting a job. Get well and get a job. All the stuff about making a comprehensive view [of the citizen] – you don't do that very much anymore (...) Even though we must pay attention to whether they should be offered counseling in relation to housing benefits and child benefits. And of course we must pay attention to whether there are children in the home who may suffer from having an alcoholic mother and then send a letter of concern to the family counseling, right? To tell them whether we think there are some children who are being exposed to neglect. In such cases, we have to be there anyway (...) without doing anything (...) So it's like that.</p>	<p>Those who refer to whether this case is a Category 1, 2 or 3 (...) and as soon as it's beyond a Cat. 1 case, well... then it's handed over to a social worker. And when I get it, we call in almost everybody who's here for the first time in order to put a face on the person and have a face-to-face interview (...) and then we can make an evaluation based on that (...) The first interview may only be a [so-called] section 8 interview, where we kind of have a follow-up talk, but the interview could also become so comprehensive that we initiate a section 16, where we make a plan, that is, where we decide what the aim should be here. And how big the plan is going to be may vary (...) a Cat. 2 client we would of course have to meet (...) whereas in principle, a Cat. 3 client could be done over the phone (...) And again, this is a decision to be made, because if it is a cancer patient (...) well I have had – this is just a tangent – I've had a 3-year project on an oncology ward, so I know a lot about what it means to be a cancer patient.</p>
17. Administrative attribute	<p>As a starting point, it's good enough. That is, [the stricter regulations] give the citizens some legal rights, but they also make things complicated. That is, there are so many administrative steps in the casework, which make us focus on them instead (...) and the thing about having an interview with the citizen and think in development and motivational skills- it's not always easy to make time for that part too (...) It really isn't.</p>	<p>I think it has more to do with this way of thinking, that is, whether you're capable of adapting yourself to this way of thinking. And I think that just as many newly qualified have a hard time adapting to this resource thinking (...) and just as many of the old and hardened, who find it easy (...) Well, I hate to say it, because the negative perception of social workers still [dominates], that is, that they're seen as the citizen's advocate right? (...) And this is still what you [learn] when studying social work (...) We're capable of doing many, many things, which you can see is also demanded here (...) That is, learning to keep a professional distance; not to be overwhelmed by the citizen's problem-fixation. I think that happens no matter whether you are a social worker, an academic or whatever (...) That is, you get overwhelmed by the sense of the problem (...) yes, you do, and now we're starting to focus on 'collegial supervision', and I think that's good. And I think that's something that can help you keep a professional distance and has nothing to do with being cold or anything (...) like that.</p>

The following quote provides an example of how she attempts to live up to both the policy and her profound social pedagogical professionalism:

[I] know very well that I can't include how it affects them financially [in my judgments], but it's hard not to (...) because it can and will cause people to fall on a social welfare level (...) they will not be able to keep their home – but will have to house their family anyway. It will count as an extra burden (...) Of course, I am not allowed to judge based on that [financial aspects]. And I don't do so. But I can't totally. I can't ignore it completely.

First, the social worker clarifies her awareness that she cannot ignore the formal rules about which elements must count in her assistance-seeking citizen evaluation, namely the financial conditions. Nevertheless, she says that it is difficult not to include them, because she understands these conditions as part of making a 'correct' judgment as seen from a social pedagogical perspective. She sees the intention of the law as being in conflict with good categorization. As she explains, 'it will count as an extra weight', pointing out how she views the current regulation as placing obstacles in the way of her social pedagogical professionalism. A similar sense of tension was expressed by the social worker in Interview 18, who framed the issue within a broader economic discourse:

Nothing's better about being down there [social welfare]. It's more expensive to be in the sickness benefits system than in the social welfare system. But the classification costs the same. But it's more expensive to have a long duration case than a social welfare case (...) And that's why the more difficult cases – where things are rather unspecific, where there are both something psychological and something psychosomatic and maybe a physical disability on top of everything else, which can be extremely difficult to clarify in sickness benefits [system] – sometimes end down here (...) after the 52 weeks (...). In such cases, you could actually argue that they should have stretched themselves beyond the rules of long duration, because the person is really, really sick and it probably turns out that we must clarify the person in relation to early retirement anyway. But we further marginalize the person socially, because now they experience another financial decline – in relation to their disability (Interview 18, column 4, Display 9.2).

The quote supports the aspect forwarded in Interview 14 about conflicting considerations stemming from the guiding demands pertaining to duration and the documentation of chronic disabilities. She points out an aspect which only becomes visible within a perspective of social pedagogical professionalism, namely, how the demands can produce – and possibly reinforce – social problems. However, such criticism is invisible under the dominance of an administrative professionalism, because the rule-based approach excludes all

other concerns. The only concerns that matter are those which are described in the rules. In this particular case, this means that in the absence of the documentation [prognosis] of permanently reduced working capacity, it is out of the hands of the sickness benefits administrators to compensate the sick, assistance-seeking citizen. Seen from a discourse analytical approach, the room for critique is determined by the construction of what counts as a social problem, which in this case differs according to which professional norm is referred to.

As already mentioned, however, there are sequences in Interview 14 in which the social worker refers to an administrative professionalism. For example, when she says that:

I would probably say to her: ‘Once I have some more information, then we’ll start talking about what you want to talk to me about. But as long [as I don’t have all the information], I can’t talk to you about it’ (...) Then I’ll ask about some more things related to her health and her situation etc. Then I’ll inform her about the flex [job] rules, that is, about an early retirement pension (...) what the rules are actually like today. Then I must tell her, ‘You can no longer get an early retirement pension without having been clarified in a work experience first’.

Again, this exemplifies how she attempts to meet the conditions of the formal rules, while at the same time expressing that it makes her compromise her social pedagogical professionalism:

Then I must tell her, ‘You can no longer get an early retirement pension without having been clarified in a work experience first’.

This statement clearly illustrates how she follows the rules even though she has not been ‘re-adjusted’ professionally, as several of the other social workers explicitly mentioned as a prerequisite for doing good casework under the active social policy legislation. In other words, in order not to avoid conflict between the intention of the policy and one’s professional norms, the use of an administrative professionalism together with a mechanical collective orientation seems to realize that better than the use of social pedagogical norms and an organic collective orientation.

In the next analysis, the attribute of a social pedagogical/administrative professional norm is described in order to clarify the content of a social pedagogical-dominated use of professionalism, including a minor – though significant – use of an administrative professional norm.

They can’t figure anything out when facing this huge body of laws

The social worker in Interview 2 had a tendency to make ambiguous references to professional norms. This made the statements more difficult to ana-

lyze than was the case with the other social workers. The headline offers an example of this: on the one hand, by referring to ‘this huge body of laws’, she identifies herself as a promoter of a system. On the other hand, the expression could indicate a social pedagogical sensitivity toward the fact that bureaucracy is distant from most people – especially for the citizens with a weak social basis.

The social worker in Interview 2 speaks from a different perspective than was the case in the previous analysis of Interview 14. She uses real situations to exemplify her practice, as in the following:

If it turns out to be someone with whom I cannot start anything directed at the labor market, then I refer the case to the Social Integration division (...) which is a treatment group at City Hall (...) So this is how we have chosen to do things here.

Compared to the conflicting situation experienced by the social worker in Interview 14, it is interesting to note the absence of ‘system resistance’ as well as the much lesser degree of professional ‘discomfort’ in this case. By the end of the quote, the social worker herself possibly provides the answer as to why this is so:

So this is how we have chosen to do things here.

Obviously, she is not alone in performing ‘traditional’ social pedagogical casework, as seemed to be the case in Interview 14. However, this is possibly due to the fact that she is administering social welfare as opposed to sickness benefits, as was the case with the social worker in Interview 14. The duration and documentation criteria for disability are used differently under the formal rules of social welfare. In other words, she seems to be supported in her professionalism, as opposed to the social worker in Interview 14, who expressed clear resistance towards the policy intention and rules of the law as well as the conditions in her workplace.

However, she may also be ‘closer’ to a re-adjusted position than the former social worker in Interview 14, because she did refer to administrative professional norms without simultaneously expressing discomfort or conflict:

This [judging where things are going] is what I’m hired to do here. I must judge continually: Are people receiving the correct support or should they be supported differently? (...) This is what I must do. This is my responsibility. Jimmy and Johnny and Brian [the names denote low social class and cognitive skills] – they can’t figure it out. They can’t figure anything out when faced with this huge body of laws. This is something I have to figure out for them (...) in order to make a case go smoothly.

While implying that some citizens do not have the cognitive skills to understand their rights and obligations (i.e. by using the names 'Jimmy, Johnny and Brian', names which denote low social class and cognitive skills in the Danish context), she still uses the 'body of law' as a tool for interaction. This obviously signifies a rule-based norm. Having said that, she does so in a manner that is difficult to compare with how administrative norms are generally used, because she consistently speaks within the social pedagogical discourse of social problems and responsibility in a manner according to which the impact of the assistance-seeking citizen's self-responsibility does not play the determining role for her categorization practice. The reference to rules should therefore be seen more in agreement with her social pedagogical professionalism than as a definer of a predominant administrative professionalism.

The social worker in Interview 1 used social pedagogical norms in a manner that was traced through an identification of his political resistance towards the social policy. It displays the same kind of tension often seen among the social workers who are dominated by a social pedagogical perspective, namely tension between fulfilling the letter of law and simultaneously living up to perceptions of what constitutes their professional ethics. The quote below illustrates this:

I have a conspiracy theory (...) regarding politics. Well, lately we've gone from making social policy to employment policy (...) this means that what we're doing is solely a question of getting people into the labor market. We're not here primarily to help people. We're here to control their entitlement to the services they're receiving and to ensure they're not passive and at home (...) Well, this is the development that has taken place, and I've followed it closely. The existing options for assistance are being overshadowed by demands to control and to get people out [into the labor market]. But of course this is a political issue, and I do have my political opinion, which may not be totally in line with the inherent tendency in the current policy (...) Well, the fact is that there is legislation that I have to follow (Interview 1, column 3, Display 9.2).

No matter the magnitude of the resistance towards the developments in social policy, the social worker continues to identify himself with a role of authority, i.e. he still accepts the current legislation and follows it. The way it works out for him – to be 'against' the spirit of the law but follow it regardless – may be explained by his explicit political resistance:

Well, this is the development that has taken place, and I've followed it closely. The existing options for assistance are overshadowed by demands to control and to get people out [into the labor market]. But of course this is a political issue, and I do have my political opinion, which may not be totally in line with

the inherent tendency in the current policy (...) Well, the fact is that there is legislation that I have to follow.

He sorts out the conflict without losing integrity by emphasizing the discrepancy between his own political opinion and ‘the inherent tendency in the current policy’. By doing so, he makes an escape of turning his practice into a professional ethical issue, because he recognizes the fundamental legislative dimension of his professionalism. He thus seems to be able to create distance between his professionalism and his political opinion, even though the latter actually constitutes the defense of why he must compromise the performing of the former.

Below is an interview in which rules play a more defining role in relation to the social worker’s professional norms. It provides an example of an interview assigned with the attribute of an administrative-dominated professional norm that still contains defining aspects of a social pedagogical professionalism.

The interview could also become so comprehensive that we initiate a section 16

The social worker in Interview 3 was assigned an administrative/social pedagogical attribute, because her references to professional norms were dominated by an administrative, rule-based reasoning. However, she still expressed substantial social pedagogical professional views. An example of one such social pedagogical norm comes to light in the following:

Yes, the professionalism suffers a lot from [all of the follow-up deadlines] too, but also – you can say that especially after the job centers have come – our focus has to be only on job. Well, the fact that you, as a social worker, are trained to take a comprehensive view and have all-around knowledge and things like that. You don’t use those skills very much here. You don’t do so, because our focus is on what it’s all about: getting a job. Get well and get a job. All that about taking a comprehensive view [of the citizen] – you don’t do that very much anymore.

The social worker states directly in the quote what many social workers only hint at, namely, that social workers’ basic knowledge and skills – their social pedagogical professional norms – are no longer useful in the job centers.

Well, the fact that you, as a social worker, are trained to take a comprehensive view and have all-around knowledge and things like that. You don’t use those skills very much here.

In the following, she explains why this is so by referring to the purpose of the legislation and the intention of the policy when saying:

You don't do so, because our focus is on what it's all about: getting a job. Get well and get a job.

Even though she very clearly refers to social pedagogical professional norms, she does not do so in a resistant manner (as for example was the case in Interview 14). It is far from evident that she sees the development as undermining her professional identity. On the contrary, it is more likely that she has 're-adjusted' her professionalism and professional identity with the resource thinking and mentality within the discourse of 'self-responsibility' defining the idea behind the purpose of the job centers. This appears to be the case when her references to administrative norms are included in the analysis.

The first interview may only be a [so-called] section 8 interview, where we kind of have a follow-up talk, but the interview could also become so comprehensive that we initiate a section 16, where we make a plan, that is, where we decide what the aim should be here. And how big the plan is going to be may vary (...) a Cat. 2 client we would of course have to meet (...) whereas in principle, a Cat. 3 client could be done over the phone (...).

The quote clarifies how the comprehensive approach to the assistance-seeking citizen is substituted by a categorical 'sorting' logic stemming from the formal rules. However, how much reduction in complexity this actually brings about is an empirical question that exceeds the current empirical material. One could imagine that the proportion of Cat. 2 clients exceeds the numbers of both Cat. 1 and 3 clients substantially; hence, few assistance-seeking citizens can actually be taken care of over the phone. Excluding the option of using traditional social pedagogical skills such as the comprehensive evaluation may then cause more difficult work conditions than the policy intended.

Another important aspect defining the interview, as being dominated by an administrative professional norm is the reference to project work, where she was employed on an oncology ward in a hospital:

And again, this is a decision to be made, because if it is a cancer patient (...) well I have had – this is just a tangent – I've had a 3-year project on an oncology ward, so I know a lot about what it means to be a cancer patient.

This statement counts as an administrative aspect for two reasons. First, she relates her client-understanding to a particular project, where she gained insight into 'what it means to be a cancer patient' in a way that makes clear that this is something beyond what can be expected of an ordinary social worker. This would not have been expected if she had applied ordinary social pedagogical standards, since a dominating aspect here is to include all of the

varieties of assistance-seeking citizen perspectives in the judgment, which is precisely excluded from an administrative norm. Secondly, the type of patient (a cancer patient) meets the deservingness criteria embedded in the administrative norm, where only those with clear medical documentation for their inability to be held responsible for their disability – and consequently their unemployment – count as eligible for assistance strategies. Moreover, cancer is one of the conditions mentioned in the referral guide as deserving a less strict evaluation and a candidate for exemption from the strict documentation and activation rules in the active social policy legislation.

The following quote from Interview 19 serves to substantiate this latter reason, i.e. why certain diagnoses and conditions meet institutionalized deservingness criteria when the social worker can make a simple evaluation. Here, the example provided by the social worker clearly does not meet such deservingness criteria, as she describes the interaction as follows:

It's difficult when people are dismissive [to the idea] from the beginning. In particular, there are many physically ill, unwell people who say: 'You can't really want to work test me! You can see that I'm missing both my arms and half a leg!' And then, when you say, 'Sorry, the law requires it', and 'Now, we must...', or 'It may be possible to...', they [the clients] respond: 'Good heavens, what do you want me to do in the labor market?' To which you can only respond, 'How the Hell should I know? But this is just the way it is. And that's how it's going to be' (Interview 10, column 2, Display 9.2).

This assistance-seeking citizen is 'still' being framed within the 'self-responsibility' discourse, despite being described as suffering from evident and objective physical limitations. However, because the social worker refers to a rule-based norm corresponding to an administrative professionalism, she understands the example as a demonstration of client resistance. The social worker interprets the assistance-seeking citizen's attitude and unwillingness to re-adjust normatively to the basic idea of self-help embedded in the policy intention behind the law of active social policy as the cause of the difficult 'situation'.

Interview 17 is described in the last analysis of the 'pure' administrative professional norm attribute, including substantiating examples from Interview 12, which was also assigned an administrative attribute.

The negative perception of social workers still [dominates]

Interview 17 was selected in order to describe a predominant theme among several of the social workers about a will to re-adjust professionally and normatively to the 'new' resource management worldview. This has already been

touched upon in the previous analyses. The social worker in Interview 17 expresses the purpose of re-adjustment as a matter of:

I think it has more to do with this way of thinking; that is, whether you're able to adapt to this way of thinking. And I think that just as many newly qualified [social workers] have a hard time adapting to this resource mentality (...) and just as many of the old and hardened [social workers] find it easy.

Accordingly, she exemplifies how this mentality reinforces a negative myth in the public about the social workers being an advocate for the assistance-seeking citizen, and she argues how the social work degree program (i.e. the education) itself is seen as a barrier to adapting to the new way of thinking:

Well, I hate to say it, because the negative perception of social workers still [dominates], that is, that they're seen as the citizen's advocate right? (...) And this is still what you [learn] when studying social work.

The social worker also explains how they deal with the consequence of excluding the assistance-seeking citizen perspective due to the dominance of administrative professionalism:

That is, learning to keep a professional distance; not to be overwhelmed by the citizen's problem-fixation. I think that happens no matter whether you are a social worker, an academic or whatever (...) That is, you get overwhelmed by the sense of the problem (...) yes, you do, and now we're starting to focus on 'collegial supervision', and I think that's good. And I think that's something that can help you keep a professional distance and has nothing to do with being cold or anything (...) like that.

An obvious consequence of this very strict administrative assistance-seeking citizen focus is obviously the forced exclusion of performing a comprehensive profile of the citizen. This seems to activate feelings of deservingness towards those assistance-seeking citizen types where they are 'evidently' not to blame for their social problems. However, one of the consequences of applying a deservingness logic instead of a comprehensive professional approach may be the social worker's personal feelings. This comes forth in the above quote. But instead of identifying the emotional overload as a consequence of the forced separation of how human and social aspects must count in a judgment, the social worker analyzes the 'overload' as an expression of the 'human' tendency to fixate on problems instead of solutions. The quote offers an example of how the use of pure administrative professionalism seems to reinforce a dysfunctional interaction as well as an assistance-seeking citizen resistance against the purpose of the legislation when any evidence of comprehensive casework is interpreted as 'emotional overload' stemming from a habit of fixating on problems.

The following is a situation drawn from Interview 12, where the assistance-seeking citizen referred to has a clear prognosis and hence causes no problems for the social worker to exclude a self-responsibility or any risk of overloading the casework with feelings:

Well, the most straightforward case is the most tragic case. That is, when you get a cancer case with a medical statement describing a person suffering from advanced lung cancer or whatever. The prognosis is very bad – it's a question of weeks or months (...) Professionally speaking, that is the most straightforward case for me to handle (...) Because it simply has to go through. Here, we are of the opinion that it should not be a question of first getting it to our medical consultant (...) It should just be presented at our next meeting (...) and assigned (...) This might be the most straightforward case (...) if you ask as you do (..) But of course it's also the saddest one (Interview 12, column 1, Display 9.2).

Besides portraying how the exact prognosis is a precondition for good, straightforward casework, the quote also illustrates how the administrative professional norm can function without being based on a help-based norm. Moreover, the quote depicts how the quality of the assistance-seeking citizen's life is irrelevant as long as it is conceived as a clear and unambiguous case as opposed to dubious cases in which the content of the citizen's life becomes an important parameter, as in the following:

They're supposed to be there for three months [work training], but they've only been there – effectively – for 18 days (...) The rest of the time, they've been on sick leave or (...) they've arrived in the morning but gone home after half an hour (...) In such cases, we have a weak foundation upon which to make our decision. We may be forced to conclude that we can't decide anything on that basis. We need to try to figure out something else to do. Then we sometimes refer to our lifestyle centers (...) They might be able to see if it has something to do with motivation (...) If it's the person who is not motivated to move on and be clarified, right? And then, our lifestyle center here in town is pretty good at keeping an intense focus on physical training, but also to keep a mental focus and give them some inputs on how to take care of their own life – be motivated, find substance in life, and specify the meaning of such things (Interview 12, column 1, Display 9.2).

The possibility that they had a 'weak foundation upon which to make our decision' because the work-tested citizen could not perform the test is not considered here. This suggests that the assistance-seeking citizen the social worker had in mind did not have adequate medical documentation or did not suffer from a deserving disability. In such cases – where neither deservingness logics nor objective documentation are present – there are no exceptions

from the formal rules for work-testing the assistance-seeking citizen until the individual's capacity to work is objectively clarified.

However, a number of references to professional norms were identified in Interview 17 as being social pedagogical. The social worker expressed dissatisfaction with the current working conditions, which provoked her to apply social pedagogical reasoning about an assistance-seeking citizen concern, as in the following:

[T]here are so many administrative steps in the casework which make us focus on them instead (...) and the thing about having an interview with the citizen and thinking in terms of development and motivational skills – it's not always easy to also find the time for that part (...) It really isn't.

There is no doubt, however, that this reference to a social pedagogical professional norm is both vague and subordinate to the social worker's administrative professionalism, because the quote describes an exception in the interview, not how this social worker generally expressed her professional norms for how social services are provided to assistance-seeking citizens. However, this is a crucial point as seen from a theoretical perspective – that even when the use of administrative professional norms is very predominant, you can still identify social pedagogical professionalism (and vice versa). This was also the case in the previous analysis of collective orientation, suggesting how individuals cannot be divided into two distinct categories of professionalism, but must be analyzed within a design capable of tracing them as separate phenomena within the same case, so to speak. Again, this analysis supports the theoretical understanding that both forms of solidarity are simultaneously present in society; as well as in the minds of individuals when 'measured' by the social workers collective orientation as well as when traced through their use of professional norms.

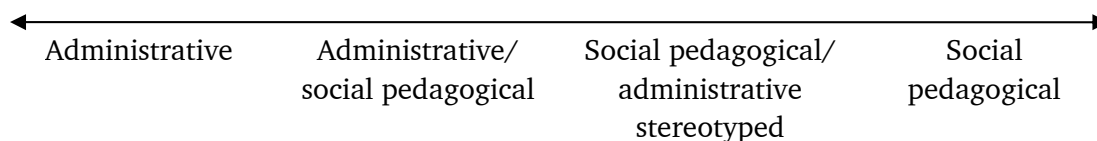
To sum things up at this point, the differences in content between and within the coded professional norms in the interviews have shown that social workers are capable of using both administrative and social pedagogical professional norms, though with rather varying density. In the following, the interviews are displayed in relation to the attribute quality of the professional norms.

9.1.3 Distribution of interviews regarding professional norms

This within-case analysis demonstrates how the variation in professional norms exists within almost every interview. As also expected, social workers tend to be mindful of both administrative and social pedagogical professional norms. That said, however, the extent to which there is a difference in the strength of the variation should also be evident by now. These differences

between the interviews can be displayed on a professional norm continuum as in the following:

Figure 9.2. Continuum of professional norms



Display 9.2 illustrates the variation existing between the interviews. The display was developed to describe the distribution of interviews in relation to the four attributive qualities. The methodological analytical triangulation process of attribute assignment is presented in Display A9 (see Appendix). Display 9.2 illustrates the variation in professional norms and reflects the different degrees of administrative and social pedagogical professional norms expressed by the social workers in the interviews. The display must be understood as positions on the continuum displayed above. Based on Display 9.2, it becomes easy to see that the distribution is less slanted in the direction of administrative professional norms than was the case in the previous analysis of collective orientation towards mechanical collective orientation (see Display 8.2). In fact, there are four interviews classified as being dominated by social pedagogical professional norms alone, whereas seven interviews were classified as only dominated by an administrative professional norm.

Display 9.2. Distribution of interviews regarding professional norms

Professional norms:				
	Administrative	Adm.Soc	Soc.Adm	Social pedagogical
Distribution of cases	7, 8, 12, 13, 17, 23, 24	3, 5, 9, 10, 15, 16, 21	1, 2, 4, 11, 19, 22	6, 14, 18, 20
Total	7	7	6	4

n = 24.

This shows that there is more variation to analyze on the continuum of professional norms than was the case in the collective orientation analysis. This meets my expectations about professional norms being well suited to tracing perceptions of organic solidarity, because the professionalism in the social system is embedded in an organizational structure corresponding to an organic form of solidarity. Here, assistance is organized as a public – and hence de-familiarized – responsibility, which is expected to activate representations of organic solidarity, which in turn is expected to conflict with the mechanical

rhetoric in, for example, the government discourse behind the formal rules structuring the policy at the street-bureaucrat level.

The difference between an administrative professional norm and a social pedagogical norm has been analyzed as a matter of whether the social worker bases their professionalism upon a help-based or rule-based norm. The former was seen as an expression of social pedagogical professionalism corresponding to an organic form of solidarity, where society and social assistance were perceived as interdependent and representing individual rights as opposed to communal values.

As will be analyzed more carefully in part 9.3, there is also the mechanism linking professional norms to categorization practices. In this in-depth analysis of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the conditional effect of formal rules becomes interesting to study in relation to the observed relationships. Before these textual analyses are performed, however, the bivariate analysis of professional norms and categorization practices are presented as they have been analyzed thus far.

9.2 Professional norms and categorization practices

It now becomes possible to present the result of a comparison between professional norms and categorization practices and to arrange the comparison according to the formal rules. If a professional norm shapes the presentation of a categorization practice, a bivariate matrix analysis is expected to reveal such a correspondence between an administrative professional norm and a stereotyped practice as well as between a social pedagogical norm and an individualized practice. Further along these lines, a display was developed in order to show how the relations appear in the context of formal rules. This analysis was carried out as an attribute display of the variables: professional norms, categorization practices and formal rules. The role of formal rules was initially expected to be conditional in the sense that social-pedagogical-dominated norms related to individualized categorization practices would thrive better under the sickness benefits legislation while administrative-dominated norms related to a stereotyped categorization practice would prevail under the social welfare legislation. However, as became evident in the previous analysis of collective orientation, this was not the case in the collected interviews. I therefore also expect formal rules to have an impact on the relationship between professional norms and categorization practice in a similar manner, as was the case between collective orientation and categorization practice. This means that social pedagogical professional norms and an individualized categorization practice are expected to prevail under the social welfare legislation and administrative professional norms and stereotyped categorization practice to dominate under the sickness benefits legislation.

9.2.1 Relations between professional norms and categorization practices

Thus far, the variation in professional norms has been analyzed between the interviews and within the interviews. That which is interesting, of course, is whether the expected correspondence exists between a professional norm and categorization practice. In the following, the result of the first analysis of the relations between them is presented. The display illustrates the extent to which it is reasonable to continue to claim that perceptions of solidarity (here measured in terms of professional norms) shape the categorization practices among social workers.

The analysis suggests that professional norms correspond very well with the expected logic of association. As was also the case in the bivariate analysis of collective orientation and categorization practice, there are actually 12 interviews in which the correspondence is perfectly as expected (the bold figures in Display 9.3). Moreover, the display reveals that out of the remaining 12, seven of the interviews relate to each other in the expected direction. This is for example the case with the three interviews in the second column, first row, indicating a correspondence between an administrative professional norm and a stereotype-dominated norm, but including individualized categorization practice. Theoretically, these social workers were not expected to express individualized categorization practices at all, because their perceptions of solidarity have been identified only through an administrative professional norm. Despite the existence of individualized practice, the stereotyped practice still dominates. The correlation therefore follows the expected direction of the professional norm. The same holds true for the four identified interviews in the relation between administrative/social pedagogical and a stereotyped categorization practice (second column, first row).

However, the identified relationship between professional norm and categorization practice does not meet the theoretical expectations in five of the interviews (the italicized figures in Display 9.3). In these interviews, the predominant professional norm corresponds to the opposite form of practice expected. Before analyzing these relationships between the social workers' statements regarding their use of professional norms along with their descriptions of categorization practices in greater detail, they are displayed in relation to formal rules in order to see whether this variable corresponds better with categorization practice than was the case with professional norms. Should this be the case, it would indicate that formal rules are more significant than professional norms for explaining the differences in categorization practices as they appear in the interviews.

Display 9.3. Bivariate analysis of professional norm and categorization practice

Professional norm	Categorization practice			
	Stereotyped	Stereotyped/ Individualized	Individualized/ Stereotyped	Individualized
Administrative	4	3	0	0
Adm/Soc	4	3	0	0
Soc/Adm	1	2	3	0
Social pedagogical	1	1	0	2
Total	10	9	3	2

n = 24.

The conditional effects of formal rules

I expect this difference in formal rules between social welfare and sickness benefits to be reflected in different practices of categorization, because they are expected to condition the relationship between solidarity and categorization differently. Chapter 8 described social welfare and sickness benefits as being embedded in and supporting very different associations and administrative categories. They were therefore also expected to correlate differently with categorization practice. The formal rules for managing social welfare were theoretically expected to strengthen the relationship between a mechanical solidarity perception and a stereotyped categorization practice, and the formal rules for sickness benefits were thought to strengthen the relationship between organic collective orientation and an individualized categorization practice.

The background for these expectations was presented in Chapter 5. The basic idea was that because social welfare is reduced and residual, it is more associated with logics of deservingness than logics of entitlements. Conversely, the sickness benefits legislation is the result of the corporative relations between private labor unions, the employer's association and the state. This involves a policy agenda with strong interest groups. Consequently, the agreements made by these associations are expected to be somehow reflected in the legislation in the direction of strengthening a logic of entitlement. As already described, however, these expectations were not met in Chapter 8. The reason why a reversed pattern of correspondence resulted from the analysis may be explained in relation to the textual analysis. The textual analysis reveals how a perception of mechanical solidarity is more easily activated than a perception of organic solidarity when sick, assistance-seeking citizens are being categorized under the sickness benefits legislation, because sickness and disability appear to be constructed as a social problem framed within a

psychological discourse about motivation and self-responsibility in accordance with the formal rules. The opposite case does not prevail among the social workers administering social welfare. In these interviews, a perception of organic solidarity was easier triggered as an argument for an individualized categorization practice, because the definition of the problem was more about compensating assistance-seeking citizens, who were perceived by the social workers as otherwise lost by society. In addition, the psychological discourse and construction of social problems and self-responsibility did not appear with the same intensity among the social workers administering social welfare.

It seems reasonable to modify the theoretical argument about formal rules in respect to these findings, and I argue that it is the institutionalization of problem definition that explains what triggers the dominating solidarity perception instead of claiming that the general organizational characteristics determine the extent and form of solidarity. Because the constituting rules for sickness benefits and the influential discourse of ‘if you really want you can do it’ seems to fortify the perception of the service as relying on a deservingness logic, where service is provided only to those perceived as being ‘really’ sick and disabled, it becomes a matter of judging the boundaries of what counts as a disease. It also becomes a matter of deciding how much disability society expects an individual to endure before public support is regarded as legitimate. Moreover, the sickness benefits legislation seems to be perceived as a ‘treasure’ among the social workers, especially when compared to social welfare. This may indicate that the kind of perceptions of solidarity that are being activated depend on whether the support ‘has a reputation’ of being economically attractive or not. However, the study of the impact of formal rules is beyond the problem and research design in this dissertation. For now, the conditional effect of the formal rules for social welfare and sickness benefits is analyzed in relation to the professional norms and categorization practices in order to scrutinize whether the same tendency appears as in the previous analysis. Please keep in mind that the theoretical argument is that there is correspondence between social pedagogical norms and a perception of organic solidarity, as well as correspondence between administrative professional norms and a perception of mechanical solidarity. Consequently, as in the preceding analysis, it makes good sense to expect a similar pattern in how social welfare and sickness benefits have an impact on the relationship being studied (see Display 9.4).

Display 9.4. Professional norms, categorization practices and formal rules

Interview:	Professional norms X	Categorization practices Y	Formal rules Conditional variable
14	Social pedagogical	Individualized	Sickness benefits
7	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
8	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
24	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
3	Adm/Soc	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
5	Adm/Soc	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
9	Adm/Soc	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
21	Adm/Soc	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
20	Social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
19	Soc/Adm	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
13	Administrative	Stereotyped/Individualized	Sickness benefits
10	Adm/Soc	Stereotyped/Individualized	Sickness benefits
1	Soc/Adm	Stereotyped/Individualized	Sickness benefits
Interview:	Professional norms X	Categorization practices Y	Formal rules Conditional variable
6	Social pedagogical	Individualized	Social welfare
2	Soc/Adm	Individualized/Stereotyped	Social welfare
11	Soc/Adm	Individualized/Stereotyped	Social welfare
22	Soc/Adm	Individualized/Stereotyped	Social welfare
15	Adm/Soc	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
16	Adm/Soc	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
18	Social pedagogical	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
4	Soc/Adm	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare
Interview:	Professional norms X	Categorization practices Y	Formal rules Conditional variable
23	Administrative	Stereotyped	Social welfare/ sickness benefits
12	Administrative	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare/ sickness benefits
17	Administrative	Stereotyped/Individualized	Social welfare/ sickness benefits

Display 9.4 reveals an interesting finding as compared to the previous combined analysis of the conditional effect of formal rules in relation to collective orientation and categorization practice (Display 8.4). According to Display 8.4, there was a tendency – but no systematically conditional effect – for for-

mal rules to be capable of shaping the mixed expressions of perceptions of solidarity in the direction of either stereotyped or individualized categorization practices. This ought to imply how social welfare and sickness benefits reinforce different perceptions of solidarity among social workers. In the current analysis of the correspondence between professional norms and categorization practices, the impact of formal rules appears to be more than a mere tendency to shape the relations in the expected direction.

Again, this shows how the formal rules for sickness benefits appear to make the mechanical logic of solidarity thrive better – and more consistently – with a stereotyped categorization practice than is the case with organic solidarity. Of the 13 social workers administering sickness benefits, individualized practice dominates in only one interview. And of the eight social workers administering social welfare rules, none of the ‘pure’ stereotyped categorization practices were present. Moreover, Interviews 1 and 20 display a social-pedagogical-dominated professional norm and a stereotyped categorization practice, which tentatively could be explained by the conditional effect of the formal rules for sickness benefits. The argument here is that the correspondence of the formal rule to mechanical solidarity fortifies the administrative professionalism expressed by the social worker, who therefore carries out a stereotyped categorization practice despite the fact that her professional norms are dominated more by social pedagogical professionalism.

Then again, given the small *n*, no general conclusions can be made based on Display 9.4. Yet the display points towards the observation that formal rules do explain aspects of the variation in categorization practice, though no more than the professional norms. Interviews 14, 15 and 16 present three interviews in which the expected relationship between the perception of solidarity and categorization practice is met, though under the opposite formal rule. Here, the expected relationship between professional norms and categorization practices exists under the ‘wrong’ formal rules, so to speak. Furthermore, the unexpected relations may be explained by formal rules in another three cases (Interviews 1, 19 and 20). In this sense, the display supports the general thesis that the perception of solidarity matters in relation to categorization practice. However, the systematic impact of formal rules opens up for questions about how exactly this happens in practice. This renders the following analysis of the bivariate relationship between the professional-based arguments for categorization practice and formal rules even more crucial, because it depicts the exact sequences in the interviews in which the relationships between professional norms and categorization practices are actually seen in comparison with formal rules.

Finally, this combined analysis supports the tendency found in the previous chapter about how formal rules appear to shape the relationships. It has become clear that the expectation that social welfare strengthens the relationship between mechanical solidarity and stereotyped practice is far from evident, based on both Displays 8.4 and 9.4. In the following, these descriptive findings will be studied in detail by examining the textual basis of the relations between professional norms and categorization practices. Analytically speaking, it is now how the social workers themselves use the theoretical variable of professional norms and categorization practices in the interview, which is extracted and analyzed instead of the full amount of the coded material, as has been the basis of the analysis thus far.

9.3 Arguments about categorization practices

The social workers argued continuously when talking about their jobs. At times they used general commonalities to frame the content and importance of their practice while at other times they develop an argument describing a state of affairs, an interruption of a state of affairs – or a cause of why an act of intervention in the form of a clarification was required. In the course of the interviewing process, the main challenge was to use the interview questions in order to steer the social workers in the direction of making them argue within the frame of collective orientation and professionalism. In the previous chapter, the arguments about categorization practices framed within a discourse of collective orientation were identified and analyzed. The intention now becomes the analysis of how they use their professionalism when arguing for a certain way of categorizing assistance-seeking citizens. As was also the case with collective orientation, the social worker sometimes expressed a professional norm independently of a statement regarding a categorization practice. These sequences are excluded from the current analysis, as are the descriptions of the categorization practices, which were ‘only’ described in technical detail, leaving out any explicit argument. In most of the cases, however, both of the variables were linked together as in a ‘traditional’ argument including expressions of both a professional norm and a categorization practice.

In the following, then, it is no longer the total amount of coded material that is being studied, but only the sequences in which the social workers actually relate a professional norm to a categorization practice. In other words, the textual analysis is now reduced to only including textual material in which the relationship between professional norms and categorization practices is related to each other in the interview instead of as in the preceding analyses, where the total number of expressions of professional norms and categorization practices were compared. The analysis is similar to the analysis

in Chapter 8, part 8.3. Again, this type of analysis can be viewed as an in-depth study of the bivariate relationship between professional norm and categorization practice; however, as was also the method applied in Chapter 8, the analysis has been performed as a univariate analysis of the relationships as expressions of professional-based arguments regarding categorization practice.

The hierarchical node ‘professional norm and categorization practice’ included all of the statements about professional norms and categorization practices. The identification of these nodes was carried out by querying the nodes of the bivariate analysis (based on Display 9.3). The first coding query produced a 40-page document. This display was then condensed from 40 to 20 pages in three steps. Ultimately, the most descriptive and representative relationships (arguments) were selected.

9.3.1 Distribution of interviews in terms of type of relationship

Display 9.5 shows the distribution of interviews in relation to all of the existing types of relationships (arguments) in the interviews:

Display 9.5. Distribution of interviews in terms of type of relationship

Type of relationship	Interviews	Numbers
Administrative – Stereotyped	7, 8, 23, 24	4
Administrative – Stereotyped/Individualized	12, 13, 17	3
Adm/Soc – Stereotyped	3, 5, 9, 21	4
Adm/Soc – Stereotyped/Individualized	10, 15, 16	3
<i>Soc/Adm – Stereotyped</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Soc/Adm – Stereotyped/Individualized</i>	<i>1, 4</i>	<i>2</i>
Soc/Adm – Individualized/Stereotyped	2, 11, 22	3
<i>Social pedagogical – Stereotyped</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Social pedagogical – Stereotyped/Individualized</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>1</i>
Social pedagogical – Individualized	6, 14	2
Total	24	24

n = 24.

Theoretically speaking, there are two main types of relationships: Those that are dominated by social pedagogical professional norms and an individualized categorization practice and those which were dominated by administrative professional norms and a stereotyped categorization practice. Nevertheless, they are not equally represented in the interviews. In addition to these two ‘clear’ main types, two other types of relationships are present, which

corresponded as expected. These are the relationships in which the dominating professional norm corresponded to the expected predominant type of categorization practice.

12 of the 24 interviews met the expected correspondence perfectly. These types of relationships, which matched exactly as expected, are in bold in Display 9.5 and include the following four types of relationships: Administrative-stereotyped (A S), Administrative/social pedagogical-stereotyped/individualized (ASP SI), social pedagogical/administrative-individualized/stereotyped (SPA IS) and finally social pedagogical-individualized (SP I). However, only five of the last 12 interviews portrayed a directly unexpected type of relationship. These interviews are italicized in Display 9.5 and include the following four types of relationships: Social pedagogical/administrative-stereotyped (SPA S), social pedagogical/administrative-stereotyped/individualized (SPA SI), social pedagogical-stereotyped (SP S) and social pedagogical-stereotyped/individualized (SP SI). The remaining seven interviews do not meet the theoretical expectations perfectly; however, the predominant use of the professional norms continues to shape the identified categorization practice to a significant extent, as expected. These seven interviews are represented by the last two types of relationships: Administrative-stereotyped/ individualized (A SI) and administrative/social pedagogical-stereotyped (ASP S).

The results of the analysis are based on the bivariate analysis of professional norms and categorization practices. Again, the point is to emphasize how professional norms seem to shape how the social workers argue their categorization of assistance-seeking citizens. Only five of the 24 interviews seem to follow a different pattern of correspondence than what had been expected. However, it is interesting to note how all four unexpected relationships (containing the five italicized interviews in the display) are dominated by a social pedagogical professional norm and none of them by an administrative norm. This suggests that it is the use of social pedagogical professionalism, which is most likely to be modified or lose influence in the categorization practice. However, in light of the idea and policy tools sustaining the active social policy, this is not surprising, because despite the formal job descriptions for the social workers describing a 'classic' social pedagogical professionalism, the practical tools all support the use of rule-based norms and a legislative priority corresponding to an administrative professionalism; and hence to a perception of mechanical solidarity.

In the following, the analysis takes a step further into the different relationships in order to see how they appeared in the interviews as professional normative arguments about categorization practices.

9.3.2 Professional arguments for categorization practices

The identified relationships between the statement of professional norms and categorization practices constitute different kinds of arguments, because they contain the defining components of an argument: an affecting cause and an affected output. An argument about a categorization practice typically starts with exposing a worldview or a state-of-affairs description. This sets the frame of the problem (e.g. the assistance-seeking citizen's employability) by constructing a normative scheme of options (e.g. intervention strategies) as well as a diagnosis or a problem definition. The argument ends with a description of the consequences of that particular problem (e.g. positive or negative evaluations). In this context, the relationships between professional norms (as a statement regarding the professional identities and professional habits of the social workers) and categorizations practices (as statements regarding the consequences of these worldviews) are analyzed as articulated arguments. As already mentioned, there are two main types of such arguments: one designating a complex, professionalized and labor-divided society and another expressing a norm-based community based on a representation of a shared collective consciousness. In the former, the categorization practice is an outcome of specialized and rights-based evaluations; in the second type, the categorization practice is made based on evaluations of deviations from the legitimate basis of shared norms.

Display 9.6 illustrates the outcome of the analysis based on four interviews, each representing the main types of arguments according to the bivariate and conditional analysis (Displays 9.3 and 9.4).

This first argument analysis explores an assistance-based argument for an individualized categorization practice. Even though the volume of social pedagogical professional norms was identified as being greater than the content of organic collective orientation, only two interviews were assigned with both 'pure' social pedagogical and individualized attributes. However, almost all of the interviews contained elements of social pedagogical professionalism to a greater or lesser degree.

We do actually make the same demands, right?

But you can still understand this

Interview 6, which was one of the two 'pure' examples of social pedagogical professionalism, exemplifies how the comprehensive assistance-seeking citizen perspective – which was characterized as a defining aspect of a social pedagogical professional norm – sets out the space for legitimate intervention towards an assistance-seeking citizen who is about to be individually categorized:

[M]any women – or SOME women if they're involved in a divorce or something like that, where the woman becomes a single provider with one, two or three children – then obviously it matters that you're a single mother with three children (...) in relation to what she thinks she can manage (...) That is, we don't approach it so concretely and say: 'Well, you have three children, so you can't manage' (...) We do actually make the same demands, right? But still, you can have an understanding for this, because you have three children and you're alone with them and then you have plenty to do (...) including on the home front, but also when you're off (...) Under such conditions, I think THIS could matter.

This argument for why the assistance-seeking citizen ought to be categorized based on an individualized decision relating to the concrete impact certain problems have for the citizen clearly illustrates how the professional approach must be social pedagogical in order to place the same demands on everybody while at the same time taking individual considerations. The social worker explains the approach by providing concrete examples of how typical stereotypes, such as the single mother with several children, should not be categorized as such, but rather treated like a citizen with particular problems. This is another way of saying that, for this social worker, the relationship between professional norm and categorization practice is not a matter of making an exception for some deserving assistance-seeking citizens from the general rules as much as it is a question of treating individuals differently in relation to their problems in order to make the same demands:

We do actually make the same demands, right? But you can still understand this.

Moreover, this norm about placing the same demands while extending individual consideration also defines what has been referred to as the comprehensive assistance-seeking citizen perspective, which the social worker demonstrates by stating that:

Under such conditions, I think THIS could matter.

The conditions here are integrated as part of the foundation for the categorization practice, which are typically excluded from administrative arguments. Here, 'conditions' are perceived as being circumstances that take away from the core focus of the labor-directed effort and are understood as causing the social worker to focus on problems instead of empowering solutions.

Display 9.6. Condensed content display of main types of relationships

Professional norm and categorization practice:

Content of relationships:

Social pedagogical professional norm

Well, I do think that you can say that – and not because they're women, but because this is how I often experience it; that many women – or SOME women if they're involved in a divorce or something like that, where the woman becomes a single provider with one, two or three children – then obviously it matters that you're a single mother with three children (...) in relation to what she thinks she can manage (...) That is, we don't approach it so concretely and say: 'Well, you have three children, so you can't manage' (...) We do actually make the same demands, right? But still, you can have an understanding for this, because you have three children and you're alone with them and then you have plenty to do (...) including on the home front, but also when you're off (...) Under such conditions, I think THIS could matter. I could also imagine that if you have a different ethnic background – and not necessarily because you have that [a different ethnic background], but because then you may find the language difficult. This could cause further complications. (...) Because this could be the cause of misunderstandings (...) It is obvious that in a course of clarification, where you have to – well there's a descriptive part, which I'm not necessarily doing myself. I must therefore gather information from other places. In such cases, it is obvious (...) to the extent that I know of, whether we are talking about PTSD, schizophrenia, depression or something like that. 'Life ache', or whatever it might be. Well, I think it is decisive to put what we are talking about into words. But again – diagnosis is one thing, how it finds expression in the individual can be something entirely different.

(Interview 6)

Social pedagogical/ Administrative professional norm

[I: Can't you send them for drug treatment?] You can't do that unless... YES, you can motivate them, and if they're motivated to do it. But first, you must have this talk about motivation. Say: 'If you're interested, then I have an offer for you'. If they are [motivated], then you can do it. But if they don't want to, then there's really nothing I can do. I could punish them, but the question is whether anything good will ultimately come from that, right? And most of them do show up and keep up the few things they have to do as a minimum. And then you can, well, then I don't really have any options. [I: What kind of things do they have to keep up?] Well, something like an interview, a contact talk, a three-month follow-up (...) and if they keep it up, then it's also a kind of... well it's (...) well, then there's nothing we can really do (...) It's really... it's really a difficult job to put someone outside and tell him: 'Well, you're no longer entitled, because you drink alcohol'. That doesn't make his life any better. That doesn't help him in any way.

Individualized/

Stereotyped categorization practice

(Interview 11)

Administrative/ Social pedagogical professional norm	But I think there are citizens who feel they're under pressure. But I think you can set some of it right – or you can hinder or maybe prevent people from feeling pressure – by making clear what you're hired to do. But you can't state your position clearly before you know it yourself and have made up your mind (...) and found peace in (...) how can you say it? I don't know if you can follow me here? (...) Five years ago, a manager approached me and said – while I was working with sickness benefits for a short period. I've always worked with those far away from the labor market – then he says to me: 'I think you should tell people that it's your job to get them out of that chair and out.' But no, I would certainly not say so, because I was actually a social worker, you see. [I: But why were you in a conflict with your role back then?] Well, because this was how I thought of things, I didn't want to push people around. I saw myself more as – maybe not as their advocate, but I should definitely speak for their cause (...) This was maybe five, six years ago (...) And then I don't know why I did it, but then I tried it, and then I re-adjusted to it. And consequently, I tried it as an opening in an interview, which I could almost use as a standard opening every time I had a meeting with an individual on sick leave – that is, a recipient of sickness benefits – and then of course I didn't start by saying: 'Now listen – I'm going to get you out!' But of course also have respect for seriously sick people (...) the terminal people. In other words, there are situations where you don't say it, but simply make it clear during the first interview that we have a common task here. I must make sure and you must make sure and we must find out together how to do it. And then – hardly to my surprise – but anyway, it was a bit annoying to have to admit to my boss... No, I'm just kidding (...) that he was right (...) And then I realized something I knew very well from my education – that if you talk within the same frame and hold the same goals, then the chances are greater that you'll achieve results together, right? (...) And even though I wouldn't say it was a huge AHA-experience for me, I did realize that it worked. And it has worked ever since.
Administrative professional norm	She is a Cat. 2 [vignette A]. (...) Yes, I think so. That is, she isn't someone I associate with pension in any way. [I: Why not?] Simply because, well... exactly because there must be something medical then. There must be something medical documenting that she really can't move herself – her arms or her legs at all. In other words, really not capable of doing anything. And I simply just don't think this is the case. There must be something she's capable of doing (...) Yes. With her, my hope is that there would be something that could make her realize that the social and health care help education is not very good when you have a disability such she has, right? (...) It's hard physical work (...) But maybe she has some other interests. Maybe some office work, something which (...) isn't physically demanding right? (...) and where she had the courage to complete another education (...) Or she should take something as an unskilled worker if she doesn't want to take an education. As an unskilled worker with all the required protective considerations. But lighter work, right? (...) Yes. [I: So, you are considering rehabilitation?] Yes. If she is interested, then rehabilitation. But work testing to begin with. Find out what she CAN do. How much can she cope with (...) within some different areas. Find out what it is with her. What's really wrong with her. What will she be capable of working with in the future?
Stereotyped/ Individualized categorization practice (Interview 16)	
Administrative professional norm	
Stereotyped categorization practice (Interview 24)	

This argumentative mechanism can be substantiated using an example taken from Interview 14, where the social worker explains how she justifies making an effort even though it contradicts the exact letter – but according to her, not the spirit – of the law:

I had one with urinary tract problems. She had this inflammation condition in her body for almost 1½ years. Well, in her case, we know that she'll recover and that it won't be permanent (...) But she's simply deathly tired after this year and a half, so her body can't cope with me saying 'Go sign up for an unemployment fund' (...) Instead, I say: 'Well, let's do some easy training to get back into the labor market', because after such a long sick period, not because I think it's permanent, because she'll get better (...) So, this is not a permanent case. I therefore also described how she does not have a permanently reduced employability, but her employability is reduced right now due to her long-term sickness. So a case does not have to be totally stationary before we make an effort (Interview 14, column 4, Display 9.2).

This quote provides an example of how the social pedagogical professional norm allows the social worker to interpret the law instead of following it literally. It is also interesting to see how there is no trace of resistance towards the spirit of the law. On the contrary, the social worker uses the law as a tool to empower the assistance-seeking citizen to enter the labor market, though not following the terms of it literally. This clearly exemplifies the justifying logic in a social pedagogical approach to categorizing assistance-seeking citizens individually. In other words, the crucial justification in this type of argument is based on a long-term perspective of fulfilling the law instead of a short-term perspective. This is crucial for her argument, of course, because at short notice, the exemption from, for example, the 'duration rule' contradicts the intention behind the rule. However, in a long-term perspective, the exception is made in order to actually empower the assistance-seeking citizen to get back into the labor market.

In contrast to this 'follow the spirit – but not the letter – of the law' sense of justice embedded in the social pedagogical professional argument for an individualized categorization practice, the administrative professional argument follows a different pattern of logic and sense of justification.

What's really wrong with her?

The following argument analysis examines an example of a rule-based argument for a stereotyped categorization practice. When the social worker framed a problem within a discourse of an administrative professional norm, there were very often traces of resistance towards the assistance-seeking citizens instead of towards the law, as is often identified in social pedagogical based arguments. The reason seems to be straightforward, because when the

social worker reflects her professional standards in terms of how well she follows the letter of the law, she then sees any case in which she must deviate from the law as an attack on her professional integrity. She would therefore rather blame the citizen than compromise her professionalism by bending the rules. This seems to cause a lot of frustration towards the assistance-seeking citizens, who are perceived as lacking the required cooperative will and motivation to get better. In this sense, the more correctly the social worker attempts to follow the rules, the less the room for individual discretion. The following quote gives an example of how the rules for documentation reduce the discretion of the social worker to a matter of reading a medical document:

[S]he isn't someone I associate with a pension in any way. [I: Why not?] Simply because, well... exactly because there must be something medical then. There must be something medical documenting that she really can't move herself – her arms or her legs at all. In other words, really not capable of doing anything. And I simply just don't think this is the case. There must be something she's capable of doing (...) Yes.

If you do follow the letter of the law, there are no exceptions to when treatments and work testing should stop, because the law states that all options must be exhausted before a supportive effort is even considered. In practice, there will always be another job and another treatment to try. The initiation of supportive efforts therefore depends on the discretion of the social worker. However, determining when 'enough is enough' is far from an objective, clear-cut boundary. On the contrary, there are different interpretations of where this boundary lies, and one of these differences seems to be reflected in the differences in the use of professional norms.

It appears as though when a social worker such as the one in Interview 24 uses an administrative professional norm in order to argue for a categorization practice, it causes her to use her 'common sense' when determining the boundary for exceptions from the rule. In so doing, the individual decision behind the categorization practice becomes a matter of personal feelings and commonalities about social stereotypes instead of a comprehensive evaluation of the concrete case. In other words, when a professional norm excludes an assistance-based approach to the assistance-seeking citizen, the social worker must base her boundary drawing about when 'enough is enough' on which associations the particular assistance-seeking citizen activates in her mind. This is rather undefined, then; what serves as the basis of the categorization practice. This is exemplified in the following:

[S]he isn't someone I associate with a pension in any way.

Based on this quote, it is impossible to see whom it is she then associates with an early retirement pension. In Chapter 10, however, the analysis seeks to study certain strong stereotypes in order to address this fuzzy question. For now, the focus remains on the impact of professional norms in her argument. After stating the direction of her association as something not pointing towards an early retirement pension, the following states the consequences of her conception of the current state of affairs:

With her, my hope is that there would be something that could make her realize that the social and health care help education is not very good when you have a disability such she has, right? (...) It's hard physical work (...) But maybe she has some other interests. Maybe some office work, something which (...) isn't physically demanding right? (...) and where she had the courage to complete another education (...) Or she should take something as an unskilled worker if she doesn't want to take an education. As an unskilled worker with all the required protective considerations. But lighter work, right? (...) Yes.

The sequence reveals how the social worker draws on an administrative norm about seeking the solution to the problem with a certain rule, namely to matching job and assistance-seeking citizen. The primary concern is with the citizen's capacity to re-adjust normatively to her pain-related problems in order to 'have the courage to complete another education'. Make note of how she uses the word of 'courage' instead of, for example, capacity to readjust, which seems to denote both the premise of the social worker's perception of successful casework as well as her use of a stereotyped categorization practice. It is not a question of objective matters, but a question of the self-responsible citizen's normative decisions to choose to take another education on the basis of their free will and courage. Having framed the problem within this setting, the social worker connects the core issue as being about the assistance-seeking citizen missing a quality such as courage. This indicates how she has already made up her mind about the assistance-seeking citizen even before she has been evaluated, which again corresponds to a stereotyped categorization practice. The assistance-seeking citizen clearly does not meet the criteria of deserving assistance, and those who do not meet such criteria are typically regarded as the main target group of the strict practice, namely those believed to suffer mainly from an attitude problem. Moreover, the aspect of administrative professionalism about making an equal relationship as a premise for 'performing a professional and interesting job' is hinted at.

By now, it appears plausible to suggest that administrative professionalism tends to function as a shelter for promoting certain particularistic values with the assistance-seeking citizen instead of developing effective assistance strategies towards the labor market, rehabilitation or an early retirement

pension. In other words, by insisting on making the categorization practice based on a rule-based norm about following the letter of the law, the actual sensitivity towards a concrete assistance-seeking citizen relies on particular values about deservingness instead of universal criteria about entitlement. One of the obvious side effects of using particular(istic) values to judge the content of the problem is that the assistance-seeking citizen approach comes to be dominated by a fundamental suspicion about belonging. Is the citizen ‘one of us’ (with the will to contribute and work for the society)? Or ‘one of them’ (who wants to free-ride on behalf of society)?

The next sentence provides an example of what the identified embedded suspiciousness towards the assistance-seeking citizen looks like. It also gives an example of how assistance-seeking citizens are being managed in accordance with the letter of the law as soon as the assistance-seeking citizen does not appeal to any sense of deservingness.

Find out what she CAN do. How much can she cope with (...) within some different areas. Find out what it is with her. What’s really wrong with her. What will she be capable of working with in the future?

The question is posed as directed towards the assistance-seeking citizen’s moral standards towards society because of how the social worker asks about the reality of her disability. By framing the matter as a question of ‘what’s really wrong with her?’, the social worker reveals how she suspects that nothing is actually wrong with her – except her motivation to re-adjust her willingness to contribute:

What will she be capable of working with in the future?

Arguments containing significant amount of both kinds of categorization practices and professional norms are analyzed in the following. They have been assigned with attributes between the two ‘pure’ poles on the continuums regarding both practice and norms.

I could sanction them, but will anything good ultimately come out of that?

There were three interviews recognized as using social-pedagogical-dominated – but containing significant elements of administrative – reasoning about a categorization practice identified as primarily dominated by an individualized practice, but also containing elements of a stereotyped practice. Below is a sequence taken from interview 16 describing an argument drawing primary on a social pedagogical professional norm and hinting at an individualized categorization practice:

[I: Can’t you send them for drug treatment?] You can’t do that unless... YES, you can motivate them, and if they’re motivated to do it. But first, you must

have this talk about motivation. Say: 'If you're interested, then I have an offer for you'. If they are [motivated], then you can do it. But if they don't want to, then there's really nothing I can do. I could punish them, but the question is whether anything good will ultimately come from that, right? And most of them do show up and keep up the few things they have to do as a minimum. And then you can, well, then I don't really have any options.

If this description of 'the state of affairs' is compared to the previous description in relation to the role played by motivation, one sees a difference between how the type of problem is defined and which intervention strategies are being suggested. Where the former argument was to get the assistance-seeking citizen motivated in order to find out what was 'really' wrong with them, this argument seems to be that, at a certain point, the question of motivation is beyond the social worker's responsibility. The main difference appears to be related to their professional identities. Where the former social worker saw it as being important to make the assistance-seeking citizen re-adjust in order to accommodate a job match, this social worker frames the situation in a long-term perspective characterizing the use of a social pedagogical professional norm. She refers to her opportunity to using sanctions towards non-motivated assistance-seeking citizens, but she then immediately concludes that nothing good will ultimately come from doing so. She thus implicitly draws upon social pedagogical knowledge about social relations, problems and solutions, where the short-term intervention may become a hindrance for a long-term positive effect.

Another important difference between them may be the formal rules. The former example was taken from an interview in which the social workers administered sickness benefits, whereas the current example is from an interview in which the social worker administers social welfare benefits. Even though it is beyond the scope of this study to analyze the qualitative implications of this difference, I tentatively suggest that both the difference in administrative categories (the difference in target groups and match categories) and the difference between the assistance-seeking citizens may explain part of the difference. The difference may affect which professional norm and categorization ultimately dominate. This is the same as arguing that formal rules condition the strength and type of relation between the professional norm that was drawn upon and the categorization practice that was followed.

In the following, the social worker completes her argument as to why she does not always follow the letter of the law, which would make her use the sanction options in some situations by implicitly drawing upon an assistance-based norm regarding the purpose of her job:

[I: What kind of things do they have to keep up?] Well, something like an interview, a contact talk, a three-month follow-up (...) and if they keep it up, then it's also a kind of... well it's (...) well, then there's nothing we can really do (...) It's really... it's really a difficult job to put someone outside and tell him: 'Well, you're no longer entitled, because you drink alcohol'. That doesn't make his life any better. That doesn't help him in any way.

Instead of framing the issue in terms of whether the assistance-seeking citizens keep their meeting obligations with the assistance system as a matter of a willingness to cooperate, which would most likely be the case under a rule-based professional norm, she frames the matter in terms of consideration to the citizen, where the concrete problem [alcohol problem] weighs the most. Finally, by doing so, the center of attention becomes the future consequences for the assistance-seeking citizen instead of, for example, the future state of a mechanically bonded society. In such a case, the situation, where an assistance-seeking citizen does not live up to their obligation, would be considered as a violation of the law against the communal values sustaining society as it is conceived within a perception of mechanical solidarity. However, this is not the case in the quote. On the contrary, only the individual consequences are considered.

In the following, another mixed main argument is presented. This time it is the administrative- and stereotyped-dominated relationship containing significant elements of both social pedagogical professionalism and individualized categorization practice that is being analyzed.

I could almost use [this opening] as a standard opening every time

I have a meeting with an individual on sick-leave

This relationship contained arguments in which the social workers had experienced a shift in their professional identity. Many of their statements therefore correspond to a social pedagogical professional norm and an individualized categorization practice, even though the references were often made as examples of how they used to think and act in comparison to their 'new' or re-adjusted professional identity. Interview 16 provides a good example of this type. In the following quote, the social worker explains how she deals with the assistance-seeking citizens who feel pressured by the current, stricter rules:

But I think there are citizens who feel they're under pressure. But I think you can set some of it right – or you can hinder or maybe prevent people from feeling pressure – by making clear what you're hired to do. But you can't state your position clearly before you know it yourself and have made up your mind (...) and found peace in (...) how can you say it? I don't know if you can follow me here?

The interesting aspect of this professional argument is the connection drawn by the social worker between the assistance-seeking citizens' sense of reality and the description of her own working conditions. She argues how she thinks a solution to the problem [assistance-seeking citizens who feel pressured] would be to reduce the pressure on assistance-seeking citizens by making them understand the conditions she is working under:

[Y]ou can hinder or maybe prevent people from feeling pressure – by making clear what you're hired to do.

This solution is based upon an assumption of the possibility of achieving a power-free dialogue between the social worker and the assistance-seeking citizen; and consequently, that an equal relationship could be established between them. This assumption relies on a perception of mechanical solidarity, where the common good is believed to be perceived identically by both sides – by the social worker as well as by the citizen. However, the idea that explaining how tough the working situation and the formal rules are at the job centers to the assistance-seeking citizens would help them to feel less pressure presumably underemphasizes the differences in need and interests between the social worker and the assistance-seeking individual.

In addition to this rather naïve understanding of what the description of the social worker's working conditions to the assistance-seeking citizen can accomplish, the following quote illustrates how the social worker has experienced a conversion in relation to the purpose and means of her job as a social worker. It shows a very strong example of a professional re-adjustment that has entailed a completely new professional identity:

Five years ago, a manager approached me and said – while I was working with sickness benefits for a short period. I've always worked with those far away from the labor market – then he says to me: 'I think you should tell people that it's your job to get them out of that chair and out.' But no, I would certainly not say so, because I was actually a social worker, you see.

As to the question of why this suggestion was in conflict with her professional identity, she explains:

Well, because this was how I thought of things, I didn't want to push people around. I saw myself more as – maybe not as their advocate, but I should definitely speak for their cause (...) This was maybe five, six years ago (...) And then I don't know why I did it, but then I tried it, and then I re-adjusted to it. And consequently, I tried it as an opening in an interview, which I could almost use as a standard opening every time I had a meeting with an individual on sick leave – that is, a recipient of sickness benefits – and then of course I didn't start by saying: 'Now listen – I'm going to get you out!' But of course also have re-

spect for seriously sick people (...) the terminal people. In other words, there are situations where you don't say it.

She draws a line between seriously sick people and the others, who are obviously not perceived as seriously sick. This is a muddy distinction, of course, which evokes all kinds of arbitrary criteria for determining a serious sickness. However, she does denote how she distinguishes between them by referring to the group of terminally ill as sick people who have a documented prognosis for when they are dying. By using such a 'clear' criterion, she both fulfils the letter of the law as well as making her stereotyped categorization practice objective and in accordance with administrative and rule-based professional norms.

In the following sequence, the social worker finally describes her re-adjusted professional norms through a re-interpretation of her 'old' professional norms as actually corresponding very well to her converted professional identity:

[B]ut simply make it clear during the first interview that we have a common task here. I must make sure and you must make sure and we must find out together how to do it. And then – hardly to my surprise – but anyway, it was a bit annoying to have to admit to my boss... No, I'm just kidding (...) that he was right (...) And then I realized something I knew very well from my education – that if you talk within the same frame and hold the same goals, then the chances are greater that you'll achieve results together, right? (...) And even though I wouldn't say it was a huge AHA-experience for me, I did realize that it worked. And it has worked ever since.

The act of re-interpreting her educational foundations in a manner compatible with the idea behind the welfare program of active social policy is supported in the aspect of a perception of mechanical solidarity; in other words, being symbolized by the idea of 'what benefits society benefits you' and vice versa. A final aspect of this particular argument is the lack of a differentiated citizen approach. According to her argument, assistance-seeking citizens come in two main types: either as suffering from a serious sickness or as simply suffering from conditions which are categorized as a condition which should be kept out of the public realm. This characteristic denotes an aspect of the stereotyped categorization practice very well.

As already mentioned, there are differences between the arguments forwarded by the social workers which may be related to which formal rules they are administering. The coded material of the relationship is compared in the following to formal rules in order to see how the relationship appears.

9.3.3 Formal rules and the relationships

Compared to the analysis of the conditional effect of formal rules in the previous analysis in 9.2, the following analysis differs in respect to both the independent and dependent variables. Based on the findings and the coding of the relationships between professional norms and categorization practices, a bivariate analysis was performed treating formal rules as the independent variable explaining the relationship as the dependent variable. In this analysis, all of the relationships between solidarity and categorization are presented as the different types of relationships as they were coded in the interviews and as they have been analyzed thus far.

Correspondence between formal rules and types of relationships

The next analysis compares the relationships between professional norms and categorization practices to formal rules. This comparison is interesting in order to learn more about the tendency described in parts 8.2 and 9.2 about why social welfare seems to nurture how an organic solidarity perception shapes an individualized practice and why sickness benefits seem to motivate a mechanical solidarity perception to nourish a stereotyped categorization practice.

Compared to analysis 8.2, a systematic conditional effect of formal rules was found in analysis 9.2 regarding the correspondence between professional norms and categorization practices. As was also the case in Chapter 8, however, it may appear different when formal rules are compared to the coupling of the variables as normative professional arguments for categorization practice. In accordance with the findings in Chapter 8, the organic and mechanical arguments – as well as the inconsistent arguments – are expected to correlate better with formal rules in this analysis than in the preceding analysis. This is expected on the grounds that the relationships consist of the text sequences from the social workers' own arguments as opposed to the total amount of both separated and combined expressions of professional norms and categorization practices. In other words, because any coded expressions out of 'argumentative context', so to speak, are eliminated from the comparison, it must be plausible to expect that as long as formal rules do matter as a conditional factor, they should appear more strongly related to sequences actually containing the relationship.

Display 9.7 casts light on several interesting findings. The tendency outlined in the preceding analyses that the expected conditional effects of formal rules work in opposing directions is again substantiated in this analysis. First of all, none of the relationships between administrative professionalism and stereotyped practice exist under the social welfare rules; and secondly, four

out of five individual-dominated categorization practices are now identified under the formal rules of social welfare. However, the results should not lead to greater conclusions. In relation to social welfare, there are two types of relationships between a social-pedagogical-dominated professional norm and a dominating stereotyped practice (first row, columns six and nine). This weakens the interpretation of the conditional effect of formal rules but strengthens the interpretation of how professional norms shape the categorization practice. However, the tentative conclusion that even though the first analysis presented in Display 8.4 did not indicate a systematic conditional effect, the tendency for mechanically dominated arguments about stereotyped practice to thrive better under the formal rules for sickness benefits and vice versa with organic arguments is supported in this display, where 16 interviews do conform this tendency (the observations in bold print).

Display 9.7. Professional norm and categorization practice in relation to formal rules

Formal rule	Relationship									
	A S	A SI	ASP S	ASP SI	SPA S	SPA SI	SPA IS	SP S	SP SI	SP I
Social welfare	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	0	1	1
Sickness benefits	3	1	4	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
Social welfare and sickness benefits	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total (24)	4	3	4	3	1	2	3	1	1	2

n = 24. A = Administrative professional norm; SP = Social pedagogical professional norm; S = Stereotyped categorization practice; I = Individualized categorization practice.

As has now been illustrated in the last two chapters, there is a tendency that even though most social workers indicate perceptions of both organic and mechanical solidarity, the extent to which the predominant perception corresponds to the expected categorization practice depends on the set of formal rules. In other words, it seems as though formal rules do have the power to strengthen or weaken the relationship between a perception of solidarity and a categorization practice.

The crucial question at this point, of course, becomes the extent to which the two measures of perceptions of solidarity – collective orientation and professional norms – capture the same kind of solidarity and to what extent they measure it differently. Even though the theoretical arguments are made for why this should be the case, actually determining the exact construe validity of the measures is obviously a methodological challenge. Nevertheless, based

on the attributive assignments of the interviews, a bivariate matrix may indicate how collective orientation and professional norms relate to each other.

Display 9.8. Collective orientation and professional norms

Collective orientation	Professional norm			
	Administrative	Administrative/ Social pedagogical	Social pedagogical/ Administrative	Social pedagogical
Mechanical	6	2	<i>1</i>	0
Mechanical/ Organic	1	4	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
Organic/ Mechanical	0	<i>1</i>	2	2
Organic	0	0	2	1

n = 24.

Apparently, the two measures largely capture the same aspects in interviews as expected from the theoretical arguments. Both a mechanical collective orientation and an administrative professional norm were applied in order to capture the perceptions of mechanical solidarity among the social workers. The upper grey field in Display 9.8 shows that this seems to have been the case. 13 of the 14 interviews, which were associated with a mechanical form of solidarity have been identified as so through both the measure of collective orientation and the measure of professional norms. The same seems to characterize the measures of perceptions of organic solidarity. The lower grey field in Display 9.8 shows how seven of the ten interviews associated with an organic form of solidarity were identified by both measures.

The display also includes another interesting finding. It reveals the initial finding that the distribution of differences between the interviews in relation to the professional norm attribute is less skewed than was the case with the distribution of collective orientation in the previous chapter. The remaining three interviews in the upper white field illustrate the concrete cases, which made the distribution of professional norms appear less skewed than the distribution of collective orientation in the previous chapter.

Based on this comparison, I tentatively conclude that both measures capture the perceptions of solidarity in slightly different ways. The appearance of the four non-corresponding interviews suggests that perceptions of solidarity may appear in different forms and density within the same mind, so to speak. As regards the three interviews in the upper grey field, I will expect the reason these interviews were coded as mechanically dominated in relation to collective orientation to have something to do with cases of strong organizational identifications; and at the same time, strong social pedagogical identi-

ties. Following the anomalies in the analysis goes beyond the problem studied, but they possibly constitute very interesting cases for future studies on how to understand and explain aspects of the relationship between solidarity and categorization.

9.4 Summary

Thus far, two perspectives of solidarity have been measured as 'collective orientation' and 'professional norms'. The overall conclusion is that mechanical solidarity perceptions dominate when social workers explain why and how they place assistance-seeking citizens in different categories of privileges and obligations. This provides good support to the theoretical argument and expectations whereby the current context was expected to nourish mechanical over organic solidarity perceptions. In relation to this, 'formal rule' has (again) served as a proxy for analyzing how a political institution shapes the relations between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices. The results indicate that formal rules do matter in relation to which practice is encouraged. As already written, however, there are also examples from interviews that contradict this, supporting instead the thesis that solidarity perception trumps the impact of formal rules. Regarding the explanation of the correlation between organic solidarity perceptions and individualized categorization practice this analysis has brought light upon how the normative and regulative institutions in the active social policy actually contain social pedagogical norms, which organic minded social workers draw upon in their individualized categorization practice. This reveals an interesting polyvalent capacity of the welfare program to address mainly mechanical intentions, while at the same time connoting social pedagogical professionalism. In doing so, the organic minded social workers can make decisions within the mechanical dominated law without compromising their professional identity. Additionally, the different meanings of the status of the individual in the two solidarity perceptions seems to display very well the tension between the mechanical and the organic 'purpose' of the 'cult of the individual'. Either the assistance-seeking citizen was seen as part of a mechanical 'quid pro quo' cult or as part of a 'comprehensive' and interdependent society. In the first case the boundary between assistance and paternalism seemed fragile, while in the latter case it was the boundary between assistance and avoidance of making a normative judgment of the assistance-seeking citizen, which seemed fragile to maintain for the social workers.

At this point in the empirical study of the argument, it has become clear that most of the variation is concentrated at the mechanical and stereotyped ends of the respective continuums. The next analysis therefore seeks to study this variation by performing a specially designed analysis in order to capture

the social workers' reactions towards disability stereotypes. In other words, in order to understand more about how the mechanical solidarity perception works, the next chapter seeks to explore this perception in detail. The focus will be on how social workers react to different pain narratives, which are cases designed to stimulate mechanical reactions towards strong public stereotypes.

Chapter 10

Pain stereotypes and clarification practices

I have a lot of people who come and say, 'I want an early retirement pension. Do you think I can get one?' (...) Well, just like these two here. I tell them, 'I don't know, it depends on your capacity to work (...) What is it like? In order to receive an early retirement pension, your [working capacity] must be ZERO, and there must be no treatment options'. These are the [demands]. It's really difficult to be given [a early retirement pension]. And if there are any possibilities, then they must all be tried out first, so that all of the options are exhausted – all activation options, rehabilitation and flex job options. (Interview 2; vignette C case 24; question four)

Here, the social worker aptly sets out the content of the present analysis, which is about studying the impact of stereotyped perceptions on how social workers categorize assistance-seeking citizens. The quote also accurately describes the legal frame of the social workers' categorization practice.

The previous analyses of the collected interview material indicated that mechanical solidarity perceptions dominate over organic solidarity perceptions. Furthermore, the analyses suggested a relationship between solidarity perception and categorization practice, where a stereotyped practice was found to be more prevalent than an individualized practice. Most of the relationships were hence found concentrated around perceptions of mechanical solidarity (both in relation to collective orientations and in relation to professional norms) and stereotyped categorization practice compared to the presence of organic dominated arguments for an individualized categorization practice. In the current analysis, this dimension of mechanically based arguments for a stereotyped practice is explored further. Using a different indicator of solidarity and categorization practice than has been used thus far does this: the social workers' reactions to stereotyped pain narratives and their subsequent preferred choice of clarification practice. Thus, this chapter offers a special study of the theoretical argument, which has a different analytical structure than the previous three chapters and analyses.

10.1 Stereotyped perceptions of chronic pain

Both in Chapters 1 and 6, pain has been referred to as a special indicator for studying the relationship between solidarity and categorization practice. The basic argument was that the experience of pain generally presents a difficult case – and particularly for street level bureaucrats, such as social workers, who have to evaluate 'others' pain' professionally. This claim and selection of pain as a case is based upon a previous study of the visitation patterns for a chronic pain patient (Østergaard 2005). This study revealed a high degree of

similarity between and within the interviews with doctors and social workers concerning the perception of patients suffering from a contested chronic pain. Fibromyalgia in particular seemed to trigger clear judgmental statements from the social workers. The form and analytical strategy of the current analysis of stereotypes has been primarily conducted on the basis of the experience from this study.

The pain stereotypes are used to outline perceptions of solidarity, though with a main interest in capturing the predominant relation of mechanically based arguments for stereotyped practice. By using vignettes varying in relation to contested or non-contested pain types, it becomes possible to see how this feature (contested vs. non-contested pain types) brings forward different social interpretations of chronic pain and different clarification practices regarding the assistance-seeking citizens in question. Furthermore, by looking more closely at the arguments made by the social workers, I can begin to analyze the workings of solidarity mechanisms – especially the mechanisms related to the ‘cult of the individual’, as conceptualized by Durkheim. Before proceeding to the analysis, I therefore briefly elaborate upon the theoretical perspective relating to these mechanisms. To make my argument clearer I include a number of examples from the interviews in order to prepare the reader for the analysis to come.

In Durkheim’s descriptions of the normative basis shared by members in an organically linked solidarity, the ‘cult of the individual’ nourishes important representations of the collective consciousness of modern society. The ‘cult of the individual’ is the locus where a modern society such as Denmark worships and cultivates its common/shared value: the sanctity of the individual. The fundamental question asked in this chapter can be understood as ‘What happens when the ‘cult of the individual’ is used in policy making at the level of the street-level bureaucratic in order to judge the eligibility of the assistance-seeking citizen for welfare?’ When confronted with pain narratives, it is expected that the boundaries of the sanctity of the ‘cult of the individual’ are broken when the social workers simultaneously seek to fulfill both the purpose of intervention (in order to empower the assistance-seeking citizens) and the purpose of worshipping the individual as a citizen with individual legal rights:

Well, it can get so typically miserable and morally nonsense. However, it’s very individual. Now, I’m the kind of person, who... I’m hardly ever sick and things like that. And I, well it may come when I grow older. But it’s hard to reach someone who has a bad knee or a bad back, [where I] think ‘Hey, it can’t be that bad!’ and stuff like that. However, we can’t make ourselves the judge of that. And it also has to do with how people subjectively see [their pain]. How does having a bad back affect me? And no one can really evaluate pain. It’s very

individually, right? (...) Therefore, I'm also very humble towards people's own statements (Interview 9, question 7.5).

The quote illustrates this dilemma of worshipping the individual while at the same time complying with a professional task of having to intervene in people's 'self-relation' in order to empower them. Even so, this is exactly what the social worker must do if they suspect that it is questionable whether the assistance-seeking citizen genuinely wants to make a contribution to the mechanically grounded core value of the active social policy. The quote also illustrates how chronic pain narratives present a well-suited case for testing the limits of the 'cult of the individual'; and consequently the regulating mechanisms in the relationship between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices. The social worker in the quote expresses respect for the individual's pain, which she says is a very individual matter. Nobody should set themselves as the judges of other's pain. However, she still implies why it is difficult to maintain this respect for 'others' pain', by comparing her own pain management to other's (lack of) pain-coping strategies; who obviously are perceived as having a lower pain threshold than herself. Yet again, she seeks to explain or modify this by suggesting, 'it may come when I grow older'.

Theoretically speaking, this offers an example of how the boundary of the 'cult of the individual' about every citizen's right to create his or her own individuality is negotiated in practice. Seen from the perspective of an organic logic of solidarity, the 'cult of the individual' ought to facilitate the chronic pain patient being perceived as being at least as competent as the social worker to estimate the reality and the consequences of the pain for the individual's working capacity; and consequently, that the social worker would accept the assistance-seeking citizen's narrative of the problem.

In the policy tool *means of evaluating working capacity*, the document describes the 12 elements, which must be used as points of orientation when social workers categorize assistance-seeking citizens. In relation to contested chronic pain, however, it is not even clear which of the 12 elements the phenomenon ought to be classified under.²⁶ It is usually addressed as a health issue, which constitutes the final component in the resource profile. The document defines health as:

Health conditions include physical and psychological illnesses (based on a diagnosis) as well as the citizen's own perception of their health (Ministry of Social Affairs 2001: 50).

²⁶ See Chapter 5, part 5.3 for a description of the 12 elements in the resource profile.

The definition includes two dimensions of health. The first dimension is objective, the other subjective. This means that the definition includes both measurable and non-measurable health conditions, which goes along with medical insight about people's self-estimated health as a surprisingly good indicator of their future health conditions (Idler & Benyamini 1997: 34). As will be shown in the analysis below, however, when evaluating chronic pain stemming from fibromyalgia, the assistance-seeking citizens are not perceived as being ascribed with an initial legitimacy, even though the person in the vignette is described as actually having a diagnosis. In addition to the description of the diagnosis, the assistance-seeking citizen is portrayed in the vignette as making a clear self-estimation indicating poor health. Typically, however, the outcome of the social worker's approach to the assistance-seeking citizen is that the assistance-seeking citizen's condition is interpreted as a psychological problem to be dealt with using psychological means. Consequently, the social interpretation of the pain is that it is resulting from an unhealthy sense of self, understood in terms of the citizen not being able to cope with the suffering and hence incapable of becoming self-supportive *in spite of* a chronic pain condition. Here, it is implicitly understood that because all people experience and cope with pain, it should not be recognized as something special or as something that society should be held responsible for relieving. Moreover, as seen from a mechanical solidarity perspective, the consequence of this categorization is of course that the client will be morally excluded from the 'legitimate society of contributors' and instead portrayed as having existential adjustment difficulties in addition to health-related adjustment difficulties.

As an illustration of this logic within the analysis, the quote provides an example of a social worker talking about how to *legalize* an assistance-seeking citizen's pain in order to be able to present their problem within a causal story whereby the assistance-seeking citizen's unemployment could be exempted from being perceived as the factor causing her pain.

[H]owever, you have to pay attention to another aspect: How far is she [from the labor market]? Because she uses support bandages almost all of the time (...) maybe you could make some of [the pain] go away using other treatments? You don't know what she has been going through on this basis (...) Can you remove it? Can you – legalize her pain? I can figure that out when I receive a specialist opinion from a psychologist or a psychiatrist. Whether or not the condition also has a psychological basis (Interview 18; vignette A case 19, question 4).

The use of the verb 'to legalize' is a very strong expression regarding the boundaries at stake. The negation of what is *legal* is of course that which is

illegal. The meaning of illegal activities can refer to two interpretations: it can be illegal because it has not been legalized *yet*, or it can denote activities, which are criminal and therefore forbidden. The meaning of the word in the quote may lie between these two interpretations. Nevertheless, that which is important to note in this context is how crucial the interpretation of the pain becomes when the following intervention is decided upon.

In contrast to the interpretations of contested pain diagnoses such as fibromyalgia are the non-contested diagnoses. Here, pain is regarded as symptoms of serious diseases. The pain is considered as a pathology, which is not conceived as being related to the personality of the individual, but instead to a 'real' limitation that should be removed in order to relieve the individual's pain. Consequently, the categorization of the assistance-seeking citizen with non-contested pain is expected to be put into practice differently by the social worker in the current study. Such 'legalized' pains are assumed to be perceived as describing an assistance-seeking citizen as having a low working capacity *because of* the pain, whereas the assistance-seeking citizen with contested pain is expected to be evaluated in accordance with a suspicion that the actual problem is an inadequate desire to work which is *causing* the pain.

In addition to these considerations of how the relation to pain is expected to test the boundary of the 'cult of the individual', the phenomenon of contested pain can be related to the previous discussion of the constitution of the 'us/them' relation in a mechanical solidarity perception. In accordance to this relation, I argue that a pain perception is a decisive definer of a community's social boundaries. The argument is inspired by anthropological literature about the social meaning of pain. Here, the basic argument is that people only recognize pain narratives stemming from their own community, whereas they place less significance on the pain narratives stemming from 'the others'. (Scarry 1985; Wall 2000)

In wartime, torture is justified on various pragmatic or tactical grounds, but ultimately it reflects a belief that the pain of an enemy has no status in law or in ethics. The enemy is the Other, and the Other does not feel as we do (...) A black slave woman in 1850 lives in a different relation to pain than does a white Russian magistrate in 1880. A Jew imprisoned in a Nazi death camp in 1943 lives a different relation to pain than does an American cancer patient in 1990 (Morris 1993: 40).

In the present analysis, neither war nor history constitutes part of the analyzed context. However, the quote serves a twofold purpose: first, it connects the puzzle of pain to an 'us/them' relationship whereby the devaluation of the enemy reflects a perception that the pain of 'the other' is inferior to 'our pain'. Second, the quote touches upon an aspect of pain as an isolating state

in the sense that it is a highly individualized condition which is incomparable across time and cultural contexts, though at the same time that is exactly the common condition of all people. Pain is therefore not only *private*, but also a highly *social* phenomenon. The basic assumption of pain in the following analysis is that people in pain tend to back out of their social obligations, causing their surroundings – including the pain bearer’s workplace, friends and family, though also the political system in the shape of a street-level bureaucrat – to react. And the question asked in the following is what happens when the claimed pain is contested. Can an invisible and exclusive private pain be legitimately accepted as a public (and social) matter by society? The table below summarizes the expectations regarding the correlations between the perceptions of pain and solidarity of others:

Table 10.1. Solidarity, pain perception and social interpretation

Solidarity	Pain perception	Social interpretation of the consequence of pain for the assistance-seeking citizen
Mechanical representation of the ‘other’s pain’	Pain is conceived as a normal condition, which should be coped with privately (pain in the sense of suffering)	Low work motivation
Organic representation of ‘our pain’	Pain is conceived as caused by external factors and therefore as an abnormal condition, which should be removed or relieved by society; that is by doctors or social workers (pain in the sense of pathology)	Low work ability

The table is inspired by Morris 1993: 31-56 and Østergaard 2005.

When considering a person in pain from an ‘us/them’ perspective, one would expect the pain of the other to count less than if the other was ‘one of us’. In such a case, there is only one way of determining how to interpret the ethical value of pain: to pose the question of confidence as suggested by Parsons:

‘[A]re you one of us or not? Your attitude on this question decides’ (Parsons 1964: 97).

On the contrary, if the pain is perceived as irrelevant to the observer’s judgment of the pain bearer’s personal and ethical capacities, the pain is expected to be evaluated in order to provide relief or an understanding of the human costs of living with a constant pain. The tricky thing, of course, is that even so, the basic distinction or relation to pain is assumed to be mechanical as

based in an 'us/them' relation: the perception of others' pain. Whether they are seen as 'one of us' is expected to be determined by an organic logic of solidarity. The argument is in accordance with the description of the 'cult of the individual' as a basic mechanical figure, though important as a shared norm to support the collective consciousness in an organically linked solidarity.

10.1.1 Using the vignettes

In the present study, pain type varies with regard to the 'degree of contestedness' of diagnoses of chronic pain as a common symptom. The variation in the independent variable was constructed beforehand in vignettes describing typical assistance-seeking citizen cases. As also described in Chapter 6, these vignettes were presented to the social worker in deliberate order during the interviews. Afterwards, the social worker's reactions to the vignettes were identified using questions pertaining to the extent and purpose of the preferred evaluative practice. The first vignette varied between two randomly selected main groups, and the second vignette was the same for all of the social workers. This resulted in 11 cases of sequences with vignette A, 13 cases of sequences with vignette B and 24 cases of sequences with vignette C. The units of analysis are therefore no longer the 24 interviews as in Chapters 7, 8 and 9, but instead the 48 sequences representing the vignette conversations. In practice, all of the interviews regarding the 48 vignette placements were coded as cases. The order and the vignette combination produced a window for analyzing and comparing their reactions systematically in order to attempt to study which aspects of the vignettes the social workers paid attention to.

Thus, these pain narratives now constitute the independent variable in the analysis. The variable is primarily constructed in order to study the concentrated part of the variation in the previous analyses. Even so, besides the expected potential to trigger a mechanical logic of reciprocity and deservingness, the vignettes are also expected to be useful as a hard test of an organic logic of interdependency and entitlement. In practice, this 'hard test' is performed by comparing the reactions of the pain narratives to the inclusive strength of the 'cult of the individual'. As already discussed in Chapters 3 and 8, the basic logic of the 'cult of the individual' is mechanical, even though it is still a source that is expected to support the collective consciousness dominated by an organic form of solidarity. In other words, despite the profound mechanical logic of the shared norm of the 'cult of the individual', it is precisely a *shared* norm representing an important value in an organically organized modern society such as Denmark. By using both contested and non-contested narratives about assistance-seeking citizens, the expectation is that only the non-contested narratives will pass the 'test' in the sense of not trig-

gering an aim to impose specific normative values upon the assistance-seeking citizens as they appear in the vignette.

The analysis of the governing political institutions in Chapter 5 supports this expectation, because some of the crucial policy tools, including the *referral guide* and the *means of evaluating working capacity*, actually refer to concrete diagnostic examples as a way of explaining the means and aims of the policy. Both Multiple Sclerosis (MS) (vignette and pain type B) and fibromyalgia (vignette and pain type A) are explicitly mentioned in the *referral guide* (National Labour Market Authority 2009). MS is referred to in *the referral guide* as a recognized, well-known disease causing pain, trouble and serious problems for the patient. Here, the social worker is instructed as to how to pursue best treatment and clarification practice. Conversely, fibromyalgia is referred to as a contested disease, where the patient is being lumped together with a classic stereotype of malingering. Here, the social worker is advised to be suspicious about motivational barriers and economic interests in maintaining a 'sick role' (Parsons 1964: 437). Phantom pain, on the other hand (vignette C), is not mentioned in the *referral guide*.

The common denominator in these different diagnoses is the presence of chronic pain as the predominant symptom. However, the main argument here is that because perceptions of certain 'others' pain' are not only informal, but also formally institutionalized, they will tend to favor certain types of non-contested pain, such as MS, while disfavoring contested types of pain such as fibromyalgia. However, the degree of institutionalization of phantom pain is much lower than what characterizes both MS and fibromyalgia, but phantom pain is still expected to be a publicly well-known and accepted pain. Thus, because the actual vignette describes a citizen with phantom pain who has suffered an accident and consequently lost an arm, I expect that this type of pain provokes feelings of empathy among the social workers. I therefore expect that they will react in a manner similar to the MS case. Both phantom pain and MS are hence considered to be non-contested and highly recognizable diagnoses – both in the sense of legitimacy and in the sense of visibility: you can see that a person is missing an arm, and an MS patient will typically be using a wheelchair or other visible support measures.

The studies of deservingness support this expectation, where the evidence supports the claim that accidents in which victims cannot be held responsible are more likely to be perceived as deserving of help than 'victims' who are blamed for their accidents (Feather 2001; 2007).

The following analysis seeks to capture the criteria making up a solidarity perception as well as the evaluative actions following from such criteria. This is chosen in order to study aspects of how perceptions of fairness transform

individual narratives of suffering into public categories of legitimate exemption from the labor market. Further along these lines, Rothstein's notion of how the public discussion of social policy often becomes a question of a general perception of fairness has inspired the research design of the analysis. I argue that such a question reflects how perceptions of solidarity matter in a particular welfare program such as the active social policy.

Where should the line between the needy- and the non-needy be drawn and whether the needy themselves are not to blame for their predicament? (Rothstein 1998: 159)

I expect that the group of chronic pain patients is used to display this line between 'the needy' and 'the non-needy' in the current active social policy. Hence, the group works as a de-facto boundary-drawer between those who should and those who should not receive public support (Rothstein 1998: 158). Moreover, I claim that by studying how social workers suggest they be categorized in practice, I can create an alternate means of studying my theoretical model, precisely because perceptions of others' pain are expected to trigger relations and reactions of a solidary character as in questions such as 'who should we feel sorry for and why?' Additionally, because pain constitutes this very inaccessible private experience and is at the same time an important public concern for the suffering person that may be 'one of us', the vignettes are expected to contribute to an understanding of which criteria are used; and not least for which reasons. Which criteria provoke a 'blame-the-victim' reasoning? Which criteria lead to 'empathy' and 'self-identification'? And not least, what happens to the second vignette (C), which represents a well-known, non-contested disease, as in vignette B, though without being institutionalized?

The three vignettes below are displayed portraying the pattern of differences between them:

Display 10.1 (vignettes): Differences between salient features in the three vignettes

Vignette: No highlighting: the same in all three vignettes; **bold** words: different in all three vignettes; *italicized* words: the same in two vignettes.

A

Imagine a 34-year-old woman with **fibromyalgia**. She is married and has two children living at home. She has been *on sick leave for six months* from her job as a social and health care helper mainly because of *chronic pain in her joints and muscles*. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension, because she does not see herself as being capable of doing her job properly. She now uses **support bandages** almost all of the time, and she has tried all kinds of treatments without getting any better. In addition to her pain, she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems. Her experience now is that if she goes to work or does housework, she ends up in bed for several days.

B

Imagine a 34-year-old woman with **multiple sclerosis** (MS). She is married and has two children living at home. She has been *on sick leave for six months* from her job as a social and health care helper mainly because of *chronic pain in her joints and muscles*. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension because she does not see herself as being capable of doing her job properly. She now uses a **wheelchair** almost all of the time and she has tried all kinds of treatments without getting any better. In addition to her pain, she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems. Her experience now is that if she goes to work or does housework, she ends up in bed for several days.

C

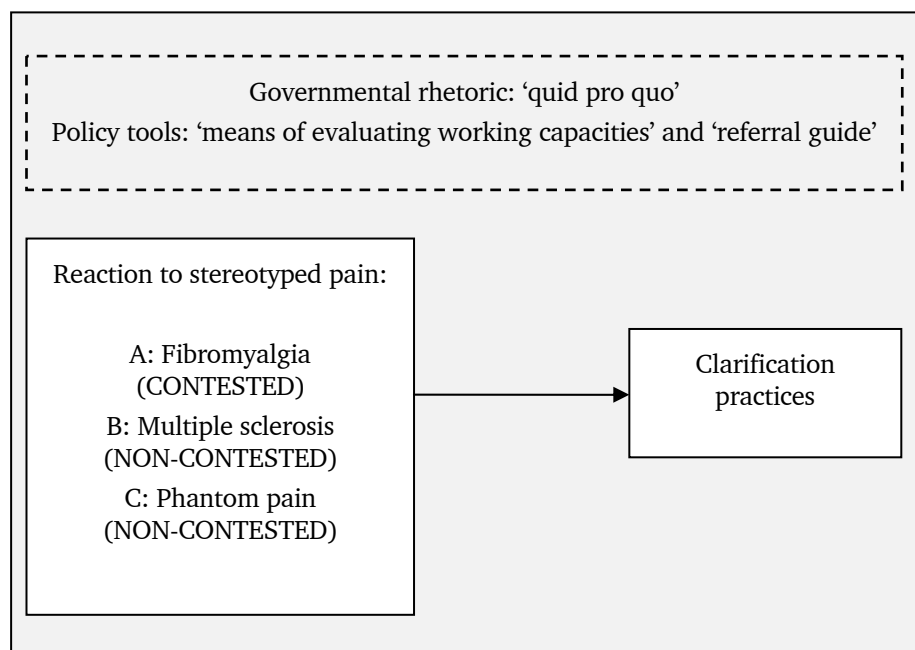
Imagine a 35-year-old woman, who **lost an arm in a traffic accident**. She is married and has three children living at home. She has been **on sick leave since the accident 1½ years ago** from her job as a childcare worker mainly because of **chronic back- and head pains as well as strong phantom pains in her missing arm**. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension because of her handicap. Since the accident, she no longer sees herself as being capable of doing her job properly, since she generally has a lot of trouble just trying to handle the extra pain and extra **difficulties in her everyday routine** that stem from her lost arm. In addition to her pains she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems.

About the display: small differences, e.g. the number of children, are not highlighted.

Theoretically speaking, the main difference between the three vignettes is whether or not the pain is publicly conceived as contested or non-contested. Literature on the field suggests that medical disagreements about the nosology of an illness tend to be reflected in the public through strong social interpretations of a judgmental character (Conrad & Schneider 1992; Conrad 2007). The contestedness label is therefore expected to reinforce a judgmental interpretation of the 'pain-bearer'. The character of the dispute about a particular contested illness such as fibromyalgia is, hence, that it is framed as unreal and unexplainable instead of simply 'still not explained'. By framing

an illness as ‘unexplainable’, strong associations to malingering as the real cause are consequently established as the interpretative key to how to relate to such persons (Birket-Smith 1998: 229-237; interview with Morten Birket-Smith May 2005; interview with Lise Gormsen May 2005; Conrad & Schneider 1992; Østergaard 2005).

Figure 10.1. Pain stereotypes and clarification practices



Chapter 10: Analysis 4.

However, there is a premise for the current analysis which reduces the validity of the comparison of formal rules to the relation between pain stereotype and clarification practice to a certain point: the vignettes describe assistance-seeking citizens on sick leave with health problems of different kinds. This addresses them directly to the social workers, who administer the law of sickness benefits; however, they are only to a lesser degree ‘obvious’ assistance-seeking citizen cases for the social workers administering the social welfare legislation. However, before the questions about the vignettes were posed to the social workers who administered social welfare, I asked all of them explicitly if they could recognize the description and whether it was plausible that they would deal with a problem such as the one described in the vignette. All of them confirmed both that they recognized the descriptions and that they could see themselves with a similar case in their current position. Nevertheless, almost all of them (who administered social welfare) pointed out that the premise would be that the period of sick-leave was longer than described in vignettes A and B, because the assistance-seeking citizens on sick-leave come from the labor market; hence, they start their ‘institution-

al carrier' in the welfare sickness benefits program. In practice, however, they are often neither clarified for permanent assistance nor reported fit for work when the maximum period for sickness benefits is exceeded. For this reason, they often turn up applying for social welfare. In these situations, they will meet a social worker who administers social welfare. However, the length of the sick-leave period may be more influential than is possible to clarify in the following analysis.²⁷

10.1.2 Distribution of vignette cases in terms of categorization practice

As just explained, the aim of the present analysis is to understand and reflect upon how the stereotypes activate different kinds of judging criteria and affect categorization. Until now, the measurement of categorization practice has been based upon a distinction between individualized and stereotyped practice. However, considering the expected power of injecting a strong stereotype into a conversation, the measurement of categorization may not capture enough of the expected variation. The reason is simply that the theoretical expectations about stereotypes point out exploring differences within a stereotyped practice as opposed to between a stereotyped and an individualized practice. Display 10.2 was developed to clarify this matter:

Display 10.2. Pain stereotypes in relation to categorization practices

Categorization practice	Vignette case		
	Fibromyalgia (A)	Sclerosis (B)	Phantom pain (C)
Stereotyped	5	5	10
Stereotyped/Individualized	5	4	9
Individualized/Stereotyped	1	2	3
Individualized	0	2	2
Total:	11	13	24

n = 48.

The display confirms the expectation that most of the variation is concentrated around a stereotyped practice. Of the 48 vignette cases, only ten of them fit an individualized dominated practice. Another measure of categori-

²⁷ No significant relationship between formal rules and the social workers' evaluation practice was found, i.e. there was no difference between the social worker administering social welfare as opposed to those administering sickness benefits in relation to the identified differences in evaluation practice (see Display A12 in Appendix).

zation practice is therefore used in the following. The measure here is ‘clarification practice’. Basically, it can be described as a measure that captures the consequence of the individualized and the stereotyped categorization practice as the concrete effort suggested by the social worker toward the assistance-seeking citizen. In other words, where the measure of categorization practice grasps the approach to the assistance-seeking citizen as either individualized or stereotyped-dominated, then the measure of clarification captures the immediate ‘outcome’ of this ‘approach’.

10.2 Coding and analyzing use of clarification practice

The basis of analyzing the clarification practice used towards the vignette cases was the coding of all statements referring to where and how the social worker suggested they would clarify the particular citizen described in the vignette. The content of the code corresponds to each clarification practice, such as a referral to particular institutions of clarification. This coding facilitated an overview for where the three assistance-seeking citizens were suggested referred to by the social worker in relation to each vignette case. The results are displayed in a table showing the distribution of choice of clarification proposition in relation to pain stereotypes A, B and C (see Appendix A10). The table indicates that the social workers suggest a range of different institutions and efforts toward the assistance-seeking citizens described in the three vignettes. Among such institutions and efforts count e.g.: *clarification seminar*; *crisis management*; *lifestyle/competence center*; *medical test center*; *motivation program*; *general practitioner*; *psychiatrist*; *psychologist*; *rehabilitation institution*; *pain treatment and management* and *clarification on current work place* (See Appendix A10). It also suggests that there is no significant pattern in relation to using certain efforts towards certain assistance-seeking citizens, as otherwise expected. However, the simple fact that the different efforts are used towards all three pain stereotypes says nothing about the aim of the particular referral. In the following, the context surrounding the evaluations is included in the analysis in order to see whether the purpose of a clarification differs according to pain stereotype.

10.2.1 Clarification on hard and soft terms

In the following, the context surrounding the choice of the form of clarification was included in the analysis. This revealed a significant pattern. There was a relationship between how the social workers perceived the assistance-seeking citizen’s own problem perception and the intention of the suggested clarification practice related to the vignette. The social worker sometimes expressed a supportive attitude toward the assistance-seeking citizen presented in the vignette, while at other times the social worker seemed primarily con-

cerned with challenging the problem perception of the assistance-seeking citizen presented in the vignette. The difference was hence coded according to the purpose of the particular clarification strategy as either hard or soft. The following offers an example of how a referral to a rehabilitation institution can be used for both with hard and soft purposes. The example is illustrated through two quotes stemming from two different interviews:

First of all, this is one of those illnesses where I'll say it's a theory that she has this [pain]. It's not something where you can get an accurate test capable of telling you with certainty that this [the pain] is precisely such-and-such an illness (...) She may be a typical person we would refer to our competence center (...) then [to] our rehabilitation institution for supplementary exploration, also in order to obtain an interdisciplinary effort. If you can locate the right [effort] for her, then I would first of all clarify whether there's a chance for rehabilitation (Interview 20; vignette A case 25; question 4)

This exemplifies how the rehabilitation institution and the competence center are used to clarify the assistance-seeking citizen's own perception of her health problems. It is not possible for the social worker to avoid violating the creditability of the assistance-seeking citizen's in this case, because her discretion is that there is a reasonable doubt that there is no real illness. In order to live up to the letter of the law, she therefore intervenes in the assistance-seeking citizen's self-perception of her health by e.g. using a clarification strategy at a rehabilitation institution. This use is assigned with the attribute of hard use of a clarification practice. The following is another example of the same:

This is a pure rehabilitation [case]. In other words, a training plan in order to be able to be preventive and look forward – she shouldn't have her health condition aggravated (...) that could be one model. But her fictitious perception of an early retirement pension as it appears here (...) that makes it a long journey (...) because there's a long way until she can see herself in the labor market, because she's thinking about an early retirement pension (...) and she can't go on and her strength is running out. So this is going to be the hard way for her (...) Her model would be something like: 'It's very likely that you can't work as a social- and health assistant, but we simply document that this is the case' (...) So in this case, you should think more comprehensively about her. So no, she is not entitled to an early retirement pension. And she can't receive an early retirement pension on this basis. (Interview 23; vignette A case 31; question 4)

The social worker is referring to the assistance-seeking citizen description in vignette A (fibromyalgia). As can be read in the quote, the intention with a referral to a clarification institution is to challenge the diagnosis of fibromyalgia – and thereby the assistance-seeking citizen's own perception of her

health. This is made very explicit, because the social worker talks about the assistance-seeking citizen's own sense of health as a 'fictitious perception'.

In contrast to these two examples of a hard use of the rehabilitation institution are two quotes illustrating a soft use. In both of these quotes, it is the assistance-seeking citizen with MS (vignette B) that is being referred to:

The way she describes herself here, she's really bad. And I wonder where I should refer her to. Sometimes we simply use a rehabilitation institution, where they begin by carrying out a social and healthcare examination. They work in a labor-directed manner and they're used to work testing (...) and they [use], for example, their workshop to figure out whether a girl like this can be practically work tested at all? (Interview 13; vignette B case 9, question 4).

In this case, the social worker refers the assistance-seeking citizen to a rehabilitation center in order to document that her perception of her own health should not be challenged. She reveals how she accepts the assistance-seeking citizen's self-perception when the social worker says that the aim of the referral is to find out 'whether a girl like this can be practically work tested at all'. The reference to the assistance-seeking citizen as a 'girl' – as opposed to a 'middle-aged woman' or a 'client' – creates an association to an innocent minor; a person we should treat carefully as we do our own children. The following offers another example of a soft use of a clarification institution:

R: First, they make a seminar for some weeks, and then you get out in practical training. Or you can stay in training at the rehabilitation institution. And she would be one of those they would keep at the institution (...) And then you would test her out and say: 'What can she do? Can she sit at a table and put stuff together?' Her hands might work fine or something like that. She's so young, damn it! But...

I: But you ignore her wish to go on an early retirement pension then?

R: NO. This is done with the intention of getting her an early retirement pension (Interview 4; vignette B case 37, question 4).

The rehabilitation institution is clearly being used for a soft purpose in the two quotes in the sense of easing the total clarification process of the assistance-seeking citizen with MS. The concrete mechanism justifying this approach is the social worker's recognition of the assistance-seeking citizen's perception of her own health.

The different clarification programs can hence be used for either hard or soft purposes reflecting the individual social worker's judgment of the extent and meaning of the respective assistance-seeking citizens' problems as they appear in the vignettes. The social worker thus seems to use the clarification for one of two aims: as a tool to either support or undermine the assistance-seeking citizen's perception of their own health and statements regarding re-

lated problems (the assistance-seeking citizen's own perception of why they lack the ability to provide for themselves). It is therefore expected that only in cases in which the perception of the problem is identical will it be possible to respect the boundaries of the sacred individual – as is the core of the 'cult of the individual'.

Based on this theoretical set-up and the identified differences in the aims of the clarification strategies, the context surrounding each suggested referral was coded as either 'soft' or 'hard' use in accordance with the principle illustrated in the quotes above. In cases where a clarification was being used for a hard purpose, it seemed as though the social worker followed the strict intention behind the law (or an administrative norm, as analyzed in the previous chapter). Conversely, in cases where the social worker used a clarification practice with a soft purpose, it seemed as though the social worker was frustrated about the strict demands of documentation in the legislation. This became evident for example when the social worker ended a statement by posing a question concerning the fairness of the intervention as for example in the last quote displaying a soft purpose. Here the social worker asks whether it is at all possible to rehabilitate 'such a girl'. Moreover, it appears as though the role identification of the social worker as either an authority or a therapist corresponds with the purpose of the clarification strategy. The social worker appears to act and identify herself as an authority when the purpose is hard, but as a therapist when the purpose is soft. Display A11 in Appendix shows the distribution of referral options in relation to the intention of the clarification as it has been explained and illustrated thus far.

After coding all of the cases for 'hard' and 'soft' clarification practices, a reliability test was conducted comparing a re-coding of clarification use. Based on the distribution of cases on attributive values on clarification use, three vignette cases were selected (cases 4, 16 and 18). The results of the reliability tests were an agreement between 93.83 pct. and 99.69 pct. A clarification of the disagreements revealed that the lowest agreement score (93.83 pct.) was caused by missing the coding of certain referrals. This did not change the overall picture, however, and the rest of the disagreement percentages can be explained by small differences in lines and words coded in the surrounding of the main text; hence, they do not express 'real' disagreements, but rather an unavoidable lack of precision of the coded contexts.

That which then becomes interesting, of course, is to see whether the expected pattern between the purpose of a clarification practice and vignette case corresponds as already indicated above.

10.3 Reactions to stereotypes and use of clarification practices

How is the distribution of the use of ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ clarification strategies in relation to the assistance-seeking citizen descriptions in the three vignettes A, B and C? Can the material under study confirm that a contested diagnosis causes a hard use of a clarification practice and vice versa if the diagnosis is non-contested? The display below relates the pain stereotypes embedded in the given vignette to the purpose of the clarification strategies as they have been identified in the interviews:

Display 10.3. Stereotypes and clarification practices

Pain stereotype	Clarification use	
	Hard	Soft
A (fibromyalgia)	11	0
B (sclerosis)	0	13
C (phantom pain)	14	10
Total	25	23

n= 48.

The display shows two things very clearly: first, that the social workers may vary their use of clarification strategies, but when the purpose of their use is included in the analysis, the display shows that they choose a hard approach toward the assistance-seeking citizen described with fibromyalgia as opposed to a soft approach toward the assistance-seeking citizen described with MS. Even though the two stereotypes were selected based on them being strong and distinct enough to provoke a varying outcome, the result is still very strong on this point. That which is somewhat surprising and unexpected is the pattern of the relationship between clarification use and vignette C. This is the second observation that becomes clear in the display: It is impossible to see what characterizes the use of clarifications towards the assistance-seeking citizen described with phantom pain. At this point, one should keep in mind that the comparative logic, which has been incorporated in the analysis to some extent does not apply to the comparison between the two main groups. The 11 social workers receiving the vignette describing a fibromyalgia case did not at any point know of the vignette describing a MS case, which the other main group (13 social workers) received and vice versa. The comparisons they have made are all in relation to vignette C describing the assistance-seeking citizen who lost an arm in an automobile accident. In other words, no matter what the impact of the internal comparison has been for the social workers, it has been the same for both main groups.

10.3.1 Priming effect of stereotypes on use of clarification practice

The social workers apparently use clarification strategies for both hard and soft purposes when suggesting clarification practices for the assistance-seeking citizen with phantom pain described in vignette C. A plausible explanation for this (lack of) pattern relates to the institutions involved. Since this pain type is not included in the job centers' general policy tools for use in the clarification of assistance-seeking citizens with health problems (as are both fibromyalgia and MS), the social interpretation of the phantom pain may depend on other, non-institutionalized perceptions. In other words, where the perception of fibromyalgia and MS is made explicit in the political institutions governing the field of social policy, the same cannot be said to characterize pain type C, because apparently phantom pain is not mentioned directly in any policy documents.

However, there is a crucial detail marking vignette C in the study: Vignette C was always given to the social worker as the second case. In other words, pain type C was always compared to the first given vignette (either A or B). In that manner, vignette C functions as a case that not only was used by the social worker to compare with the other vignette, but always as a case I can use to compare their reactions between the two main groups. Hence, vignette C serves as an indicator of the differences between the two main groups which received either A or B. This circumstance is analyzed in greater detail in the following. The aim is to see whether it makes a difference to the social worker's use of practice towards C if they received a vignette (A or B) as the first case. Display 10.4 shows how the use of clarification appears in relation to C when the former vignette case is incorporated in the analysis.

Display 10.4. Basis of comparison for stereotype C in relation to clarification practice

Basis of comparison for pain stereotype C (phantom pain)	Clarification use	
	Hard	Soft
A (fibromyalgia)	3	8
B (sclerosis)	11	2
Total	14	10

n = 24 cases. $P < 0.005$.

Display 10.4 illustrates how the 'soft' and 'hard' uses of clarification practices relate to pain stereotype C (phantom pain) when the basis of comparison is included (fibromyalgia or MS). The display also shows that the correspondence is significant. When vignette C was compared by the social worker to vignette A, the use of clarification method was usually soft; whereas when it

was compared to vignette B, the use of clarification method was most likely to be hard. In other words, the display shows that if a social worker related to vignette A, they react towards C using a soft clarification strategy. On the other hand, if a social worker has just taken a position towards vignette B, they tend to apply a hard clarification strategy towards vignette C.

The relationship between C and clarification use, which appears to be predominant can be presented in the following figure:

Figure 10.2. Effect of basis of comparison for vignette C



In addition to this finding that the first vignette primed the reaction towards C, it became evident how the social worker weighted different aspects in the vignettes depending on whether or not they believed the assistance-seeking citizen's story as described in the vignettes as being true. It is therefore essential for the further understanding of what is going on when social workers are categorizing assistance-seeking citizens to study this selection of aspects or criteria of eligibility in greater detail. This is especially interesting in relation to the reactions towards vignette C, because this pain type may be representing the most common type in a job center. Not in the sense that there are more people without arms than people with MS or fibromyalgia at the job centers seeking assistance, but in the sense that vignette C represents an under-institutionalized health perception. In practice, most people do not fit a stereotype exactly. Instead, they approach the social system with different health and social problems that may be difficult to classify 100 pct. in accordance with the existing administrative categories. But as the analysis has shown thus far, it seems as though the cases, which are not described in the policy tools are still interpreted according to the social knowledge associating them with either a negative or a positive stereotype. In the following analysis, the focal point will be to analyze the reactions as they appeared in the material. The main point is thus not primarily methodological, but a substantial conclusion regarding how arbitrary or fragile the normal category really is. The next part explores this point in further detail.

10.4 Arguments for hard and soft clarification practices

The literature on the meaning of pain and suffering is vast in both disciplinary and historical extents. It is a theme that unites and separates thinkers,

professionals, scientists and ordinary people, because experiencing pain is a salient trait of humanity, and relieving others of their pain is a fundamental social act (as long as they are not perceived as our enemy). However, there is often disagreement concerning the meaning of pain and social interpretations of others' pain. In this part, the distributive findings are described and discussed in order to see which aspects from the vignettes became decisive in the social workers' reasoning about the meaning of the pain and the subsequent suffering related to it.

The amount of pain and the amount of injury are not tightly coupled. The time course of pain depends on the needs for escape followed by the needs best suited for treatment and recovery. The location of the pain may differ from the location of the damage. The public display of pain has the purpose of informing others of the patient's needs whereas the private suffering assesses the meaning and consequences of the patient's own miserable state. All pain includes an affective quality that depends on the circumstances of the injury and on the character of the victim (Wall 2000: 15).

A neuroscientist presents the theme here. Basically, he clarifies how pain is embedded in both a private and public 'reality' and how the expressions of pain are not easily compared in terms of treatment and recovery. The following is a quote displaying a similar theme as seen from the social worker's perspective at the street-bureaucracy level:

R: I actually believe that there's a massive difference between whether it's something you can see or not (...) And you'd be able to see something like sclerosis to some extent. I don't think there's much understanding for something like fibromyalgia (...) And I don't mind admitting that at the school of social work, you learn that fibromyalgia 'sits between the ears'²⁸. We've had some intense discussions about it (...) So there's still a lot of uncertainty on that one.

I: What are you being taught then? Because even though it might sit between the ears, it still may be...

R: Certainly, well this pain is experienced as very real. But then you can say that it becomes important which diagnosis you get in relation to what assistance you can receive. That is, whether you can get a flex job or a pension, right? (...) In case each medical consultant in each municipality says that – if they have different opinions of fibromyalgia and what it is (...) then it becomes significant.

I: Oh yes, so what you're saying is that what they say depends on which diagnosis the chronic pain is attached to?

²⁸ Often, the social workers who were suspicious towards the intention of the citizen described in vignette A pointed at their heads just above the ear. I interpreted that as the social worker wanting to underline that the character of the psychological aspects of fibromyalgia often discussed was different from non-contested psychological illnesses such as schizophrenia or manic-depression.

R: I think so (...) I think everybody can relate to a man with one leg. But that Jørgen²⁹ over there, who goes around and we can't really see it on him... and depression (...) and back pain. We don't have much respect for this (Interview 4, vignette BC, question 7.2).

The conversational sequence aptly displays the ambiguity relating to the perception of pain. When the social worker says, ‘Well, this pain is experienced as very real’, she is denoting a very refined ambiguity by using the Danish word ‘*reel*’ (here translated as ‘real’). However, even though the Danish word signifies that it is ‘real’, i.e. ‘actual’ or ‘practical’, there is another sense of the word denoting a sense of fairness and properness. By using the word ‘*reel*’, the social worker hence denotes two conflicts stemming from a discrepancy between the social worker’s perception and the assistance-seeking citizen’s perception of their own health: One about reality as opposed to fiction, and the other as opposed to a conflict framed by an experienced discrepancy about the reliability and fairness of the pain narrative put forward by the assistance-seeking citizen and society’s perception of the same.

In the following, arguments of this kind will be analyzed in relation to the findings displayed thus far. However, before presenting the hard clarification of vignette A, the soft clarification of vignette B and the two different main reactions toward vignette C, an overview showing the relations between pain stereotype and the intention of the clarification practice is presented in relation to the vignette cases:

Display 10.5. Relations between pain stereotype and intention of clarification practice

Relations between stereotype and clarification:						
	Hard A	Soft B	Hard (A)C	Hard (B)C	Soft (A)C	Soft (B)C
Distribution of vignette cases	1, 5, 7, 15, 17, 19, 25, 31, 33, 45, 47	3, 9, 11, 13, 21, 23, 27, 29, 37, 35, 39, 41, 43	8, 26, 46	4, 10, 14, 22, 24, 30, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44	2, 6, 16, 18, 20, 32, 34, 48	12, 28
Total	11	13	3	11	8	2

n = 48.

The display illustrates the attributes of each vignette case. The display shows how there are very few ‘outliers’ in the analyses, and no matter how interesting they may be in order to further develop the theoretical understanding of categorization, the following analyses are concerned with exploring the typical relations which have been identified. These main relations are between a

²⁹ The person has been anonymized.

hard use of clarification practice towards vignette A, a soft use of clarification practice towards vignette B, and the primed reactions towards vignette C.

10.4.1 Reactions towards fibromyalgia and MS

The social workers were randomly divided into two groups, each receiving a different vignette combination. One main group received a fibromyalgia and a lost-arm description, while the other main group received a MS and a lost-arm description. There are several potential comparative advantages stemming from this set-up. Based on the analyses made thus far, however, it seems most relevant to compare the two main groups before considering the different reactions toward vignette C. In the following, the first analysis explores the different reactions towards the first given vignette in the interviews by comparing and describing selected quotes from the coded sequences about vignettes A and B. The first part illustrates how the social workers typically evaluated and argued about the assistance-seeking citizen described with fibromyalgia, while the next part illustrates the same about the MS vignette.

[I]t has a lot to do with the will to... having the will in spite of your pain

The group of social workers who received vignette A chose a hard clarification practice towards the assistance-seeking citizen. This can be explained by the contested value of the diagnosis, which is being socially interpreted as denoting an inferior kind of suffering compared to the suffering stemming from other diagnoses, such as MS. The social interpretation of fibromyalgia was also found to be highly institutionalized, because it is described in the policy tool of the *referral guide* as a diagnosis to which the professionals should pay extra attention when clarifying whether these assistance-seeking citizens primarily ‘suffer’ from possible motivational barriers. ‘Motivational barrier’ is generally associated with attempts at ‘milking the system’. In order to understand the mechanism structuring the argument behind a hard practice, a number of quotes have been selected in order to display examples of sequences in which vignette A is interpreted and evaluated with a hard purpose by the social workers. Hence, each quote is selected in order to display the general features behind how the vignette was being reacted to. The following is an example of a reaction, where the contestedness of fibromyalgia structures the hard approach towards the assistance-seeking citizen in vignette A:

Yes, well. She has been on sick-leave for six months. Yes, first, well again this is about this... First, I will have her health clarified and next in relation to the limitations. This is one of these very diffuse illnesses right? (...) ‘Oh well’, you can say every time it’s fibromyalgia. And ‘Oh no not another one’. They’re difficult. They’re really difficult, also because it’s very subjective how people experience

this illness, right? (...) And there are many medical theories about it. And some recognize it, but there are also many doctors who refuse to recognize this illness (...) She wants an early retirement pension, and that [I] know... she won't get it. No (laughing) It's simply because, it's so hard to receive a pension today, right? (...) That is, before we even get to that clarification (Interview 9, vignette case 47, question four).

The quote reveals a pivotal point in all of the hard judgments of the fibromyalgia vignette, namely how the social worker bases the clarification suggestion on the premise that fibromyalgia equals a working capacity. In other words, fibromyalgia is not being compared to the physical possibility of a reduced working capacity, suggesting that even though most of the social workers used the discourse of 'this is a very hard and diffuse case', they all said very similar things about fibromyalgia. This indicates the opposite picture, namely that the diagnosis is very easy to handle and interpret for the social worker. The ambiguity and diffuseness is not a substantial problem, but instead the general frame that structures the argument for approaching the assistance-seeking citizen with suspicion – and consequently to argue for a hard clarification practice. The following offers another example of this discursive setting, which the social worker again initiates by excluding the possibility of associating fibromyalgia with a physical limitation:

Today it isn't easy to receive an early retirement pension. There can't be any working capacity left at all. And that is, first, everything else must be tried to see whether there isn't a chance. So this isn't exactly what she should go for. And inasmuch as she isn't very old, then the smartest thing for her would not be to go home with an early retirement pension (...) No. So, I still think she should start with this resource profile to see whether they can find something she can do, even though she has an illness (...) like fibromyalgia (Interview 24, vignette A case 33, question four).

In addition to showing how the working capacity and fibromyalgia are not initially perceived as negatively related, both quotes designate how the perception of the assistance-seeking citizen is ignored in favor of a social perception of fibromyalgia as a deceptive illness, which is not associated with a legitimate claim for assistance.

The aspect of legitimacy is consistently hinted at in the reactions to fibromyalgia. In order to understand the scheme that structures the social workers' boundary-making for what is perceived as legitimate pain and what constitutes an unfair claim for public assistance from the assistance-seeking citizens, the difference between 'our pain' and 'the others' pain' seems to be a fruitful entrance. In the examples of a hard clarification practice toward vignette A, there was a significant framing of the pain as belonging to a different

– and inferior – community than the social worker’s. Next, a quote illustrates this notion that fibromyalgia pain is associated with ‘the others’ pain and how it is perceived as inferior to ‘our’ pain:

[T]his stinks of her having considerable barriers in relation to the labor market (...) and therefore you should not wait until she has passed 40 weeks of sickness benefits or whatever strange limits there might be. I think you should make a resource profile of such a person immediately (...) I think that she has substantial barriers – somatic, but has some cognitive difficulties it says here – and the cognitive difficulties she has are obviously caused by [she pauses, laughing] the pain she has, too (...) then I would find out what is the essential barrier here. Is it somatic or is it cognitive? And then I would gather some documents and figure out what to do (Interview 16, vignette A case 15, question 4).

In addition to the choice of pejorative remarks and associations made in the quote, as when the social worker says ‘this stinks of her having considerable barriers in relation to the labor market’, the social worker expressed strong body language, signaling how she dissociated herself from the described assistance-seeking citizen. For example, she pauses, laughing, while speaking, and she uses sarcasm as when saying, ‘and the cognitive difficulties she has are obviously caused by [she pauses, laughing] the pain she has, too’. She uses ‘obviously’ in a manner that was clearly intended to send the opposite meaning, namely that the causal relationship between the assistance-seeking citizen’s difficulties and the pain is perceived to be unlikely and unfair.

Another predominant aspect applied to a hard reaction toward vignette A was the judgment of a lack of ‘will’. The following is an example of a social worker arguing how the professional challenge involves making the assistance-seeking citizen find the will to cope with the pain despite the limitations it is causing the assistance-seeking citizen:

Well, this is about us being quite clearly heading towards fibromyalgia – there is – [fumbles for words] well, there’s a psychological superstructure here (...) That is, you can have this, how do I say it, this diagnosis (...) and you can have these pains. But it will be an area where I would be more inclined to think that here you have a chance to work with pain management (...) and that it has a lot do to with the will to, having the will in spite of your pain (Interview 17, vignette A case 17, question 4.1).

The quote contains similar aspects as in the previous quote in relation to signaling dissociation by using ‘rejective’ words such as ‘that is, you can have this, how do I say it, this diagnosis’ and ‘and you can have these pains’. By using relative pronouns such as ‘this diagnosis’ and ‘these pains’, the social worker maintains a distance to the presented problem and reserves the right to reject the problem as something that should be dealt with seriously. Con-

sequently, because the problem is reduced to a non-excusable matter of will, the consequence is described as to keep pushing the assistance-seeking citizen with fibromyalgia:

That is, you shouldn't do that to a person with fibromyalgia, either. That could also worsen her condition – if you pushed her beyond what you could do (...) but to begin with, I would say that she's better off being pushed (...) as much as possible (Interview 17, vignette A case 17, question 4.1).

It is plausible to believe that social workers generally have access to straightforward notions about pain, among them that people in pain are in a state of crisis and stress and should therefore be exposed to a minimum of pressure. However, the social worker in the quote above suggests that the assistance-seeking citizen with fibromyalgia is better off 'being pushed to the limit'. Assuming that she knows about the state of crisis pain generally causes people, especially when it is a chronic state, she clearly does not accept the assistance-seeking citizen's pain problem. Conversely, the purpose of 'pushing' is possibly to make the assistance-seeking citizen reveal the truth about her pain, drawing implicitly on a common torture strategy. If the assistance-seeking citizen is perceived as malingering and faking her symptoms, then a hard clarification strategy is the means by which to uncover her 'real' intentions. This interpretation draws on an understanding whereby the social worker associates fibromyalgia – and consequently the assistance-seeking citizen with a clear financial incentive to pursue an early retirement pension no matter what face (malingering behavior) they will have to come up with in order to gain this reward. This pattern was observed in all of the reactions to vignette A. This perception fits well with another characterization of the assistance-seeking citizen as cunning.

The quote below illustrates another predominant characteristic in the framing of legitimacy in the hard practice towards vignette A. This touches on a perception of illegitimate psychological factors, where the understanding is that if the assistance-seeking citizens' problems relate to psychological issues, then the 'journey' to achieving public support is longer:

Well, I find out whether there really is a psychological superstructure causing this after I get a psychological or psychiatric evaluation (I: And what if this is the case?). Well, then you look into both things and say, 'OK, I can work with this', and then she'll be far from an early retirement pension, because then she'll also have to work with the psychological [aspect] (Interview 18, vignette A case 19, question 4).

The notion that fibromyalgia is associated with suspicion is described thoroughly in anthropological literature, though typically from the perspective of

the person in pain (Barker 2005; Dalsgaard 2005). This observation is also clearly supported in the reactions of the social workers in this material. The following is an example of a social worker expressing resignation to accepting that the assistance-seeking citizen actually has real pain:

[W]ell, she has only been on sick-leave for six months (...) and in order to make sure that she doesn't come to a halt, you have to keep giving her something up here [points to her own head] (...) which fills her more up than all that follows from just going around nursing your own illness (...) Nobody says that because she has pain in her arms, legs and neck as a social and health case helper then – 50 pct. of all social and health care helpers would say the exact same thing (Interview 18, vignette A case 19, question 5).

The social worker approaches the assistance-seeking citizen as a typical member of a community defined by social- and health assistants, which she ascribes with a negative and inferior value of whimpering and malingering people. The quote shows how difficult it is to be approached as an individual if you are categorized beforehand as belonging to a well defined group, because the negative group perception of – in this case, the community of social- and health assistants – becomes ascribed to the person in vignette A prior to a clarification strategy. The consequence, in relation to the boundary making of the 'cult of the individual' as concerned with holding the person's own values private, is a violation of the integrity of the assistance-seeking citizen. This is exemplified in a quote in which it becomes obvious how the social worker disparages the self-perception of the assistance-seeking citizen. This becomes apparent through the use of a sarcastic framing and patronizing remarks, as in the following. Again, the reaction was characterized by pejorative body language used to support how the social worker expressed her low thoughts regarding the assistance-seeking citizen:

[T]he moment where you get for example a specialist's sick note and you pay attention to the memory- and concentration problems, [and it then turns out] that there are no problems with memory or concentration... well, that's really a relief to be told that nothing is wrong with you (...) but that's such a little detail, which a lot of the people are not being relieved by, because they already have a hard and tough time (Interview 23, vignette A case 31, question 5).

Even though it is impossible to determine the exact extent to which the social worker is being pejorative and the extent to which she dissociates herself from the case because she has no other options, the categorizing outcome becomes an attempt at clarifying what the assistance-seeking citizen is 'hiding'. In this sense, the role of the social worker is akin to a detective searching for evidence in support of an arrest of a suspect. And similar to the detective's suspicious interpretation of any testimony, the social worker in the quote in-

initially underrates the claimed reality of the illness of fibromyalgia. In so doing, the contested illness is equated with the assistance-seeking citizen's intention as something that should be contested on equal terms with the illness. The frame of such a hard approach can hence be justified as in the following:

But work testing in the first place. Find out what it is she CAN do. What is she capable of (...) within some other fields? Figure out what it is with her – what's *really* wrong with her? What will she be capable of doing in the future? (Interview 24, vignette A case 33, question 5).

Here, the social worker identifies herself with the role of finding out 'what's *really* wrong with her'. She thus ends up exceeding both her role as therapist, which is to intervene in the lives of the assistance-seeking citizens in order to empower and help them, as well as her role as an authority, which is about basing a judgment of eligibility on objective criteria. In a sense, her role appears to be defined by a purpose of wanting to discover the cause of the problem. This role may be compared to a doctor isolating the source of a symptom: here, the assistance-seeking citizen's unemployment and pain complaints.

In the next part, this analysis is compared to the social workers' reaction to vignette B. As will also become apparent in the following, however, it is difficult to compare the reactions in a one-to-one relationship; as the vignette changed, so did the social worker's language along with the features in the vignettes, which were selected as important. At this point, one should keep in mind that it is still the mechanical logic of solidarity, which is being explored. The previous analysis identified a dimension of mechanical solidarity best described as producing a dissociate relation between 'us' and 'them', where the following analysis captures another dimension of mechanical solidarity, namely that which is producing a compassionate relation between co-citizens. The important thing is to emphasize how these empirical differences are not compared to a distinction between organic and mechanical solidarity, but as differences *within* the mechanical logic of solidarity.

This is really a diagnosis which can give a pension

All 13 social workers who received vignette B reacted towards the described assistance-seeking citizen by proposing a soft clarification strategy. In the following sequence, the social worker picks up the diagnosis from the vignette immediately and connects it legitimately to the possibility of a pension:

This one – this is really a diagnosis that can give a pension. (I: Sclerosis?) Yes, it can. It can be very quiet for some, whereas when it hits others – BANG (...) and then you're so disabled that you can't (...) It's very different (...) But there are

very good specialists within this area, right? So you can get a lot of documentation (Interview 7, vignette B case 43; question 4.1).

According to the social worker, the difference in the impact this diagnosis can have on people means that it does not belong together with fibromyalgia as a contested disease; instead, it is a rather capricious disease that behaves unpredictably. Here, the disease – not the patient – is identified as the ‘enemy’, as opposed to what was generally the case in relation to the hard clarifications of vignette A.

The social workers reviewing vignette B generally presented the ‘problem’ within a discourse of a common sense perception that the assistance-seeking citizen in vignette B ought to be given a soft work test:

[B]ut she won’t avoid being work tested (...) You can say that of course you will have her work tested very gently. After all, she’s not going out 37 hours/week (Interview 7, vignette B case 43; question 4).

The subscription to common-sense reasoning turned out to be a very powerful tool in these matters, because it denotes that this has to do with basic decent human behavior. If you do not follow or agree with such common-sense reactions towards other disabled people, you risk being categorized as inhuman and as a rigid-minded person. The following offers another example of the use of common-sense knowledge in connection with exempting the assistance-seeking citizen in vignette B from the normal, strict rules:

But it’s also because no matter what she does or says, then it’s difficult and stuff like that. So, how to put it? Well, it will always be an individual consideration, when you sit in front of people. But on the face of it, I’d say that the purpose of the work test will be to show that she can’t do anything. Not that she can do something (...) if you understand what I mean – the difference, right? (Interview 10, vignette B case 3; question 4).

In this quote, the social worker accepts the health perception of the assistance-seeking citizen, because she refers to her own statement without ever questioning the reality or fairness of it. The social worker continues along the same lines in the following:

This one with sclerosis – she won’t take long to clarify. That is, ‘We know what we know’, I’m tempted to say. She’s bad. She’s sitting in a wheelchair. She won’t get any better (...) She’ll undergo a fairly short work test (Interview 10, vignette B case 3; question 5.1).

The use of the expression: ‘We know what we know’ may refer to both her professional community as well as a bigger, more abstract community including all loving, caring humans. However, the crucial point in this context is

simply to illustrate the strength of a reference to a basic ‘silent’ knowledge as the fundamental argument for her practice.

In addition to this generally sympathetic attitude towards the MS diagnosis described in the vignette, all of the social workers also took it as ‘serious’, though still always demonstrating how their soft, exempting clarifications were made within the legislative framework. This became evident when referring to the need for a work test, at the same time expressing their sympathy for the assistance-seeking citizen. Nevertheless, in contrast to the hard reactions toward A, almost all of the social workers who evaluated the assistance-seeking citizen in vignette B selected the MS diagnosis, equating it with a threatened working capacity, even before suggesting a clarification. The following is an example of such an equation, where the assistance-seeking citizen with MS is categorized as having a threatened working capacity even before being clarified:

Well, with her there’s no doubt about it. That is, I would immediately think that her working capacity is threatened. And then the resource profile must be initiated immediately in order to get it described. And particularly to have all of her health information collected (...) no doubt about it (...) when she has sclerosis, so this must be gathered right away (...) She’s confined to her bed, wheelchair... this can only go one way. We know it, and it goes fast, right? (...) So in this case, I would immediately think, ‘Well, I’ll try to clarify her’ (Interview 2, vignette B case 23; question 4).

In this quote, the social worker draws on a deathbed metaphor, comparing the assistance-seeking citizen to a dying patient. In so doing, she ascribes legitimacy to the assistance-seeking citizen’s interest in an early retirement pension, as when she gives her an exemption from the labor market, thereby giving her the political and social right to an early retirement pension. Unsurprisingly, the use of a deathbed metaphor is very effective towards creating an understanding and sympathetic frame of the extent and content of the problem. Being associated with a potentially fatal illness makes it relatively easier to make the connection to social and political rights to public assistance. If you are dying, then of course you are entitled to permanent public support. In other words, the deathbed metaphor associates her with a terminal patient, which again is a good symbol to which to anchor reasoning as to why the assistance-seeking citizen ought to be exempted from the strict activation demands. In addition to this, a need for more knowledge about treatment options is also mentioned in the quote in order to signal a good, caring effort. This is very interesting as compared to the typical reactions towards the contested fibromyalgia diagnosis, where none of the social workers mentioned a need for more knowledge about the diagnosis, despite the fact

that it is unexplained and highly debated among doctors and the general public. On the contrary, the social interpretations were so strong that it may never occur as an obvious component in their casework. It seems as though no one wants to know more about it – they have already made up their minds! The opposite case applies to the reaction towards vignette B, even though the diagnosis is described clearly:

Well, first of all, that which is very evident here is her diagnosis. Because it's important that you, as a caseworker, get a feel for what it's like to have sclerosis. You must have knowledge about the area. No doubt about it. You must be sure of your support base in relation to going directly to the medical consultant and saying: 'What does this really mean?' We know where this is going (Interview 21, vignette B case 27; question 4.1).

The non-contested MS diagnosis was a general feature which the social workers noted straight off in this vignette. However, they also typically paid attention to the description of the supportive tool in the vignette: the wheelchair.

The following quote shows how the social worker uses the wheelchair as a symbol of the assistance-seeking citizen's inability to work, which justifies giving her an exemption from activation:

Well, I would to clarify her for a [early retirement pension]. That is, I will say, I will simply try to find out whether or not there is a basis for a pension (...) As simple as that (...) And then I would exempt her from being available (I: from activation?) Yes, I would do that (...) No doubt about it. Though her own doctor will say the same, that is, it's about cooperation. Because – with the medical consultant, she either [shows] she can or she can't, right? I don't think that she can, because she's in a wheelchair (Interview 2, vignette B case 23; question 4).

Even though it may be considered far from evident that a wheelchair is synonymous with an inability to work, the social workers used the chair to denote disability. Conversely, this is a very obvious connection, which most people would follow without question. However, the stereotyped categorization obviously assumes a causal relation that is not perceived as necessary to test beforehand.

In addition to the wheelchair, the social workers' soft use of clarification practice was also often based on an interpretation of the cognitive limitations, which is mentioned in the vignette. Again, they are used to giving the assistance-seeking citizen an exemption from the activation:

[I] will simply get her examined – by a neuropsychologist (...) directly, get her correctly clarified. Because she might have so many concentration problems that it will restrict her generally in relation to all occupations, because you

can't, well, the [concentration ability] must function no matter where you are (Interview 21, vignette B case 27; question 4).

When comparing this quote to the previous analysis of vignette A, the present emphasis on cognitive limitations is rather interesting as it appears in the quote. Here, the cognitive limitations are perceived as a legitimate reason to give her an exemption from activation and work testing. Toward the fibromyalgia case, however, the cognitive limitations were generally understood as the effects of poor will and attitude – never as a functional consequence of pain damage. The cognitive limitations described in vignette A therefore became an argument for a hard clarification. In the following quote, the social worker starts by referring to the wheelchair in the vignette and then proceeds to mention her cognitive problems:

This case... this may be a case, which is slowly becoming, now she's already in a wheelchair, right? And her concentration problems might also be so medically documented that there's nothing further to collect. And then it's a straightforward case (...) But it may also be a case where you'll say: 'Can you handle a flex job, then you must do so' (...) Right? (...) Though she shouldn't be moved to a whole lot of things with sclerosis and so. I don't think so (Interview 7, vignette B case 43; question 5).

This is another example of how the cognitive problems in vignette B are perceived as something that should be 'straightforward' to document and followed by the conclusion that 'though she shouldn't be moved to a whole lot of things when she has sclerosis and so. I don't think so'.

Another interesting framing of vignette B relates to the already mentioned association of the assistance-seeking citizen as a 'girl' as opposed to for example a 'mother' or 'woman'. Compared to the theoretical explanation of how a mechanical representation of solidarity often draws on family metaphors, this denotation suggests that the way the social worker relates to the MS case is a good example of the compassionate dimension of a mechanical solidarity perception. The compassionate framing of the assistance-seeking citizen as 'such a girl' instead of as an adult hence illustrates an example of that which has been described in Chapter 3 as the basic figure in a mechanical solidarity relationship between the merciful father and the innocent, dependent child. The framing of the assistance-seeking citizen as a 'girl' ultimately ascribes a value of innocence to her. The social worker can then legitimately exempt her from the activation demand:

Because even though the law expects me to offer them several work tests in order to document their reduced working capacity in relation to all occupations, there's no reason to order a girl like her around, provided that you can tell, based on the existing information, that her working capacity is reduced (...)

Then she might quietly be on her way to receiving an early retirement pension. (...) And I will tell her: 'We do this together, and then we see where it ends' (Interview 21, vignette B case 27; question 4).

The structure of the frame clearly opens up the possibility of interpreting the 'girl' as an assistance-seeking citizen who is not to be blamed for her trouble. Consequently, she is categorized within a group in which she is: 'quietly on her way to receiving an early retirement pension'. This is interesting, of course, because young people are a special target group of activation strategies, which 'normally' cut through all other concerns with the possible exception of terminal illnesses. However, the example includes the family-based metaphor of the caring parent, who feels and has a responsibility towards the child, which trumps age as a criterion normally used to argue *for* activation.

Summed up at this point, the reactions towards vignette B were generally characterized by *not* being anchored to the information of chronic pain in the vignette. Instead, the social workers paid the most attention to the diagnosis and the wheelchair together with the cognitive problems described in the vignette. These were considered as caused by – that which the social workers generally framed as – a serious disease as opposed to a contested symptom, as was the case among the social workers who reacted to vignette A. The differences between the two vignettes were few in relation to which elements varied between them. That which did vary, however, namely the diagnosis and the supportive means such as the bandages and wheelchair, most likely caused the social worker not only to notice different elements in the vignettes, but also to use very different reasoning as to how to interpret and evaluate the assistance-seeking citizen.

In the final comparative analysis, the attention is focused exclusively on the reactions towards vignette C. On the background of the result of the analysis, which pointed out a priming effect of the first vignette, this analysis becomes even more interesting; not only because of the methodological aspects, but also due to the substantial implication that the 'most normal' and least institutionalized vignette systematically provoked different reactions among the social workers. Where the first comparison between the two first vignettes can be explained precisely by the significant differences between them, the reactions towards vignette C reveal that something other than vignette differences caused the two predominant reactions towards the same vignette. Thus far, the explanation given has been the basis of comparison with the first given vignette. In the following, I will substantiate this result using a selection of typical quotes that can illustrate the two main reactions as they have been identified. The analysis exemplifies the arbitrariness of the under-institutionalized category as well as it shows the room of variation for

the social workers' decisions, when they use a mechanical solidarity perception to argue for a categorization practice.

10.4.2 Reactions towards an accidental loss of an arm

In this part, only the reactions towards the second presented vignette (C) are analyzed and compared. Again, there are several potential comparative advantages stemming from this set-up, but the crucial thing to make note of in this analysis is the differences between the reactions to vignette C. In the following, the second analysis explores these different reactions towards the second given vignette in the interviews by comparing and describing selected quotes from the coded sequences about vignette C. The first part illustrates how social workers typically evaluated and argued when they argued for a hard practice towards vignette A and afterwards used a soft clarification practice towards C. The next part illustrates the opposite of the pattern as it has been analyzed so far: a soft reaction towards the assistance-seeking citizen described in vignette B, which in most cases resulted in a hard clarification practice towards vignette C.

She has lost a lot (...) so she may end up receiving a pension

If suspicion and compassion were the two words that best described the differences between the reactions towards vignettes A and B, then it becomes interesting to see whether the same two nouns can be used to describe the differences between the two reactions towards vignette C; or whether a distinct discursive setting is used when vignette C is being evaluated and interpreted. As the heading above clearly implies, the first part analyzes the soft reaction towards vignette C.

The second vignette presented contains a description of chronic pain, which was a feature the social workers associated with malingering in their hard reactions towards vignette A. However, vignette C also includes a description of the problem being caused by an accident. This component of the vignette may be better compared to the impact of the MS diagnosis in vignette B. As such, it is possible that it is the criteria that trigger a sympathetic and soft attitude towards vignette C.

In the first quote, the social worker justifies her choice of a soft clarification with reference to the traffic accident. The accident is associated with a trauma, which is how she justifies exempting the assistance-seeking citizen in vignette C from the labor market:

Again, you'll have to look into how much she has lost, right? (...) She has lost her occupation; she has lost part of herself (...) That is, find out altogether whether she has had psychological therapy in relation to the accident she expe-

rienced. It is a trauma unto itself to have to change our lifestyle totally (Interview 18, vignette CA case 20; question 4).

However, the initial framing of her reaction is attached to a metaphor of loss, where the missing arm is used to describe other aspects of the assistance-seeking citizen's life beyond the arm. The physical limitation of the missing arm hence constitutes a discursive frame in which she uses the same verb 'to lose' in relation to her unemployment, her self-relation, and not least to her personality. All of these components were often present in the hard clarification of vignette A, though always associated with a negative frame of self-responsibility and malingering. Conversely, the current framing of the expanded loss facilitated an interpretation of the problem as clearly worth a soft public effort. Consequently, the interpretation of losing an arm becomes the defining metaphor the social worker uses in order to ascribe the assistance-seeking citizen with a disability worthy of being legitimately exempted from the general demands of activation:

I'm thinking about whether or not she's successfully treated for her post traumatic stress (...) that is, whether or not she has been successfully treated for the repercussions it has caused her. Because losing a body part is a massive trauma (...) And phantom pain, when it's described as being so strong. I think I'd contact a specialist about it, because I don't know enough about it in order to be able to evaluate how much it can disable her. So I would definitely ally myself with somebody (Interview 16, vignette CA case 16; question 4).

The same discursive setting is used in the quote below, where the social worker connects the lost arm directly with the possibility of a pension. The assistance-seeking citizen is interpreted as a person who has lost 'a lot' beyond the arm, which the social worker presents as entitling her to a pension:

[I]t's hard to tell how bad she is (...) I would say, 'Well, there is probably also a psychological aspect'. She has lost a lot (...) so she may end up receiving a pension. I wouldn't reject that at all (Interview 11, vignette CA case six; question 4).

The next quote offers yet another example of how the accident starts a causal chain of legitimated reasons for why a soft reaction towards the presented assistance-seeking citizen is chosen. The social worker begins by connecting the accident to a 'post traumatic kind of thing', which makes the connection to the accepted perception of the cognitive problems:

Depending on how bad she is, if she's hit hard by some post traumatic kind of thing, then she will have to... Oh, she may not necessarily have to go to a rehabilitation institution, but she may go to a private workplace with an educated

mentor (...) for her. Because I could imagine that she needs, well then she has these cognitive things. She could use some support from a mentor. And if she can work with that, well, that depends on (...) what kind of a person she is (...) She could maybe benefit from being shown that she's needed (...) (Interview 16, vignette C case 16, question 4).

The quote shows a very compassionate reaction to how the cognitive problems become interpreted as legitimate limitations perceived as having a serious character.

The following is the final quote describing a soft reaction towards vignette C. Here, the pain is mentioned in the vignette is actually referred to, though it is not being associated with a contested pain but instead to neurological damage. This sort of pain is considered as more serious/salient than was the case towards the pain in vignette A.

I would be more nervous if there was neurological damage, of course (...) then she shouldn't be pushed to (...) the limit. Because that could have consequences (...) fatal consequences, right? (Interview 17, vignette CA case 18, question 4.1).

This quote should be compared to the same social worker's reaction towards vignette A in relation to the sayings about when and why an assistance-seeking citizen should be pushed to the limit. As in the previous analysis, this social worker suggested that she would push the assistance-seeking citizen in vignette A in order to uncover the truth about her pain. However, her opinion towards the assistance-seeking citizen in vignette C differs on this point. Here, the assistance-seeking citizen should be spared such a hard approach. For as she says: 'That could have consequences (...) fatal consequences, right?'

Generally speaking, the soft reactions towards vignette C contain clear elements of compassion for others as well as respect for the assistance-seeking citizen's self-perception and health perception. This suggests that the basic mechanical mechanism driving the reaction is empathy; however, the acceptance of the assistance-seeking citizen's own health perception also correspond well with the normative basis of the 'cult of the individual', which has been explained as the fundamental mechanical basis of an organically linked society. In the following, the impact of the 'cult of the individual' is further discussed in relation to the hard reactions towards vignette C.

[Y]ou don't get a pension for a one-armed illness

The soft reactions towards vignette C generally subscribed to a disability discourse of a compassionate mechanical logic of solidarity, where empathy and pity became difficult to distinguish from one another. In contrast, the hard reactions towards C were characterized by very different reasoning. Here, the

reactions were much more comparable to the reactions analyzed in relation to vignette A. Not least in relation to which aspects of the vignette were selected by the social worker to anchor the interpretation of vignette C. As was also the case in the reactions towards vignette A, the hard reactions towards vignette C draw on the element of the vignette describing the assistance-seeking citizen's chronic pain problems.

In the first quote describing a hard use of a clarification practice towards vignette C, headaches and back pain are mentioned. These aches constitute some of the classical elements in suspicions of malingering. In the quote, it is interesting how the interpretation of the meaning of the lost arm differs radically from the interpretation in the soft approach, which was primed by vignette A. In this case, where the reaction is primed by vignette B, the meaning of the lost arm is perceived as nothing special that goes beyond the concrete arm. The pain described in the vignette as being associated with the arm is instead interpreted as normal discomfort:

There's no doubt that she should be work tested within a field other than child-care. And then it might turn out that [the work test] shows that she isn't even entitled to a flex job. (...) Because – depending on how much having back pain and headaches affects her, if there really isn't that much to work with, well, then she shouldn't receive a flex job. That is because you can say that those who are born without one arm – they don't receive a pension or a flex job for that reason. That's the way it is. But no doubt about it – she should be given some kind of help (Interview 10, Vignette CB case four; question four).

The same interpretation of the lost arm as a condition that should not be seen as anything other than a functional challenge prevails in the following two quotes:

Yes, this [case] is definitely a bit more difficult. Off-hand, I would say that this is going to be a long haul (...) That is, you don't get a pension for a one-armed illness (...) on the face of it (...) It would depend on a clarification and a long-term course in order to figure out her options if she can't manage it (Interview 7, vignette CB case 44, question 4).

It again becomes evident how the interpretation of the impact of the lost arm differs from the interpretations towards vignette C suggesting a soft strategy. A one-armed illness does not constitute a legitimate exemption according to the social worker in the quote:

Here, it should QUITE SIMPLY be tried out (...) It would require a longer course, and even though a doctor says that she has chronic pain, that's not enough to say that you get a pension for a one-armed illness (...) You simply just don't get that (Interview 7, vignette CB case 44, question 5.1).

When comparing this quote to the aspect of the soft reaction towards vignette C, where the loss of an arm was associated with both the assistance-seeking citizen's psychological and social condition, the difference becomes quite clear. In contrast to the expanded meaning of the lost arm in the soft approach, the social worker here comes to the very opposite interpretation: 'You can't simply say that a person isn't capable of doing anything just because you've lost something'.

Even though the social worker in the following quote selects the pain element from the vignette, she does not use the term 'phantom pain'. Instead, she refers to headaches and back pain in quite the same way the social workers referred to vignette A, namely as indicators of an 'illegal' pain – or at least a contested pain. As they suggested, the assistance-seeking citizens with contested pain should be sent to rehabilitation institutions in order for the case-workers to determine what it is all really about:

I have a lot of clients who have – where there aren't any objective findings. But they simply have pain everywhere (...) Yes. They have headaches, back pain, pain in all the locomotive apparatus. Yes (...) [I] send them out of the house to our rehabilitation institution, where we have doctors employed, psychologists (...) occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers, job consultants (...) Then they get a 10-week clarification course (...) and then they see them all (...) and find out, 'Well, what's this all about? What does it take?' (...) For example, is there some kind of psychological superstructure causing her pain? That is, maybe there's something psychosomatic, which the psychologist may contribute to clarifying, right? (Interview 2, vignette CB case 24, question 4).

Again, this reaction can be compared to the typical hard reaction towards vignette A. The assistance-seeking citizen's primary problem is conceived here as being related to (a lack of) motivation and hence the reason why she prevents herself from getting a job and coping with her pain:

Well, it may certainly reduce her motivation (...) because what has to be worked with here is her motivation – and then we have something called 'Express Care'³⁰. This is quite simply an exercise – well, it's taken care of by physiotherapists. It has to do with asking whether there is some exercise, some physical training that can make – which can reduce the phantom pains (...) And the third and final option is possibly a referral to our rehabilitation institution here in Jarslev,³¹ where you can work cognitively with motivation and with visualizing yourself back into the labor market (...) because she might not be able to hold an ordinary job. She might require rehabilitation in order to regain her to-

³⁰ The institution has been anonymized.

³¹ The city has been anonymized.

tal working capacity. But they can also working with how you deal with chronic pain (Interview 3, vignette CB case 36, question 5).

This is an example of how the social worker sees her problem as primarily about a (lack of) motivation, which is assumed to be the cause preventing her from keeping a job and coping with her pain.

This discursive setting, where motivation becomes negatively related to the length of the described sick-leave period and next to the assistance-seeking citizen's (lack of) will to work ultimately produces a free-rider suspicion instead of a recognition of the lost arm as a legitimate disability. The fundamental perception of the assistance-seeking citizen hence becomes a description of a somewhat lazy person, which again can be compared to someone who does not make the (politically expected) 'extra' effort:

That is, I'd try to motivate her, right? And to do that, I think I'll use a clarifying course, where she simply should have some long talks about where she could picture herself, where, 'What options do I have with this education?' Right? And make some phone calls to different places. Get some help to do these things. She has obviously been gone for a long time (...) The labor market has become big and frightening and really scary for her. And then it's a bit easy to say... well, that it's more pleasant to be able to simply be free of all of it (...) Because, of course she is disabled. But after all, she still has her head and she functions. And she has a life. I'd clarify her through a project, I think. And figure out her options? What could come out if it? (...) And then, of course, it would be something about helping her with some skill development of some kind. If this became necessary (Interview 5, Vignette CB case 40, question 4).

In addition to the perception of the assistance-seeking citizen as being somewhat lazy and as primarily suffering from low work motivation as opposed to a reduced capacity to work, the social worker in the following quote denotes the pain as 'diffuse' and thereby associates the pain with a contested condition. Again, the doubt about the reality of the pain is structuring her approach, for example when she asks, 'what's this about?' Moreover, the social worker clearly does not accept phantom pain as a 'real' diagnosis. She indicates as much when asking whether 'this is something you can assign some diagnosis'. The chain of reasoning hence starts by denoting a lack of (real) diagnosis, which proceeds to an identification of a lack of self esteem, then to a thesis about how exercise could be part of the solution to both the described sleeping problem as a treatment, which finally becomes the constituting frame of legitimizing the preferred clarification strategy towards the assistance-seeking citizen:

Here, it's a bit more diffuse (...) and she has this pain. And you don't really know anything, 'Well, what's this all about?' Is it something you can give a di-

agnosis? Can it be treated? Can she gain some more self-confidence, some training or something else? (...) there's a dormant problem, I think. She – I imagine I would gather something about the treatment options – and then maybe something from a specialist in relation to the same part, namely concentration (...) and everything about how it affects her ability to function (Interview 5, Vignette CB case 40; question 4.1).

As in the case of the evaluations of vignette A, the association with a contested diagnosis is also related to the possibility of cheating. Thus, one social worker compares the case of the lost arm to the MS case and proceeds to discuss how the clarification of the patient will depend on her behavior, suggesting how patients with a contested diagnosis may indeed exaggerate their pain:

R: That is, a patient with sclerosis will have a totally different status (...) no doubt about it.

I: Compared to?

R: Compared to someone else with chronic pain, who says 'I'm on sick leave because of chronic pain'. It depends on how the particular citizen behaves [the respondent laughs] (...) It also depends on what kind of society you're in. And on which social class you belong to and who you associate with. What signals are you sending?

I: Could you go into greater detail about that?

R: Well, you know what it's like when you know about someone in a small community (...) right? Who has been retired because of chronic pain – and an overwork condition

I: It's not much fun?

R: No. Someone like that has, well... I know of a person like that from my earlier municipality, right? (...) And now the person is actually capable of doing a lot of things in the community since receiving the pension. And has gotten a public pension, and where one is active... that sends a very, very bad signal. There's a lot of talk and gossip. It gets really, really hard (...) There's a totally different understanding of sclerosis (...) It's a severely debilitating disease, which you know you'll die from at some point, right? (...) You'll get steadily worse. That's totally different...

I: Totally different?

R: COMPLETELY different.

I: People have another opinion?

R: Yes, they have (Interview 7, vignette BC, question 7.2).

Thus far, the general image of how the social workers relate to the vignettes is that they draw on mechanical solidarity perceptions in quite different ways and with very different outcomes. The outcome is sometimes a suggestion of

a hard clarification practice while at other times a soft clarification practice is suggested.

During the interviews and the development of the analyses, I sometimes wondered about what the social workers' perception of an appropriate pain perception of 'the others' looked like. Not in the sense of how they themselves experienced pain or how they related to their own pain, but exactly how they expected other people to relate to pain. Nevertheless, in the course of the coding process, I did find several expressions of the social workers' perception of what they thought appropriate pain coping looked like. Even though these images of pain have not been part of the general analysis in this chapter, the following two quotes may contribute to the general understanding of what causes social workers to react to others' pain as it has appeared in the collected interviews. The following are two quotes from Interview 8 showing an example of a social worker's personal perception of the appropriate pain behavior of 'others':

Here, in this building, we've had a colleague who lost his arm at a very young age to cancer. And who, by the way, died as a 39-year-old (...) and he slaved away until the end and didn't want a pension (Interview 8, question 5.2).

And she gives another example:

And Johan,³² who we have here, who is blind and makes a huge effort and goes out and gives talks to people about why they can't get a flex job, for example, right? Well, Johan has a personal assistant who makes sure his papers are accessible for him. But that's also the only [assistance] he gets. He takes care of everything else himself, right? (...) And what is it that makes him walk down the hall and – I'm tempted to say (...) is happy and satisfied every day. He lost his sight as a 16-year-old. Why hasn't he lost his courage? (...) This is COOL, really nice (...) And what is it that gives him the quality of life he has, in contrast to others who would sit down and not be able to do anything for the rest of their lives? (...) I think that's really interesting (Interview 8; vignette AC, question 5.2).

The social worker clearly raises a number of basic human questions, which most people wonder about when they hear about other people's complaints and sufferings. In the first quote, she refers to a man who 'slaved away' despite having cancer, a lost arm and probably a lot of pain. He is obviously a hero in her eyes. Again, this is not very difficult to follow, but the standard of will and motivation to work, which she describes as appropriate through the story about the young man, may nonetheless be an unachievable standard to use in relation to assistance-seeking citizens with a poor health perception.

³² The person has been anonymized.

10. 5 Summary

The use of vignettes in the interviews generally contributed to the understanding of what leads to variations in the categorization practices employed by different social workers. The differences in categorization practice were measured in terms of the social workers' use of hard or soft clarification strategies towards fictive cases. The vignettes were constructed as recognizable stereotypes about different diagnoses, where chronic pain was the common symptom. They generally worked as expected in the sense that they did get the social workers to be concrete about which elements in the vignettes they thought to be the most salient. The social workers also understood contested chronic pain as private pain, which was considered to be a normal human condition; something we all have to live and cope with. They therefore tended to dissociate themselves from the contested pain bearers as examples of persons who whimpered and had a 'second agenda', implying that they were malingering in order to gain free, undeserved political and social rights. According to this understanding, pain is implicitly understood as something that 'brings us together as humans'; consequently, whoever demonstrates a wish to escape 'that which brings us together' is perceived as not wanting to belong to the designated community.

The perception of the MS case stands in contrast to this pain perception. Here, the pain was rarely selected from the vignette as a salient feature, even though it was described using the identical words in both vignettes. The social workers generally approached the MS assistance-seeking citizen with empathy and understanding, and their aim of using a clarification practice was to facilitate quick relief for the assistance-seeking citizen in the form of a pension.

These two different types of reactions met the theoretical expectations very well. However, an interesting pattern emerged in relation to the reactions towards the second vignette presented to the social workers. This pattern showed that the social workers made different evaluations as a result of the first vignette presented to them. In most of the cases, this priming effect resulted in the opposite reaction to vignette C as compared to the first reaction. A comparison of these primed reactions has revealed that not only the outcome, but also the concrete aspects of vignette C changed accordingly.

The analysis has opened a window for exploring how strong stereotypes shape the approach to assistance-seeking citizens. The analytical strategy was to focus on what is referred to as 'deservingness criteria' in the literature, and what the previous analyses have shown in relation to a dominating presence of mechanical based arguments for a stereotyped practice. However, the analysis has also hinted at an aspect of how an organic solidarity perception

and a corresponding individualized practice depend on being able to hold the assistance-seeking citizen's problem and health perception 'sacred' in the sense that it must be accepted in order not to violate the boundary of the constituting norm in the 'cult of the individual': to protect the individual from normative interventions.

The next and conclusive chapter aims at gathering all of the threads discussed and analyzed in the dissertation. The impact of the different analytical strategies together with the impact of the theoretical argument will be discussed and commented in relation to the results and the perspectives of the analyses as well as in relation to the general question about how solidarity matters in relation to categorization.

Chapter 11

Conclusion

The fundamental ambition of the dissertation has been to understand the impact of solidarity perceptions on categorization practices of street-level bureaucrats. Other studies suggest that differences in perceptions of the 'nature of social problems' and consequently in the ways to solve them have consequences for support of and attitudes towards the welfare state in general and towards the assistance-seeking citizen in particular (Stone 1984; 2002; Torfing 2004; Goul Andersen 1999; 2008). The analyses in this dissertation support these findings at least regarding the perceptions among social workers administering the welfare program of active social policy.

By introducing the classic work of Emile Durkheim and his distinction between two fundamentally different social sources of societal cohesion, it was possible to differentiate the values social workers used to represent society and the individual. This made the analyses rich in respect to identifying many more variations than if solidarity as a uniform value had structured the study. In addition to the potential of capturing both forms of solidarity, the Durkheimian perspective helped understand why the social workers apparently have accepted the predominantly mechanical idea behind active social policy. By using Durkheim's concepts as the theoretical tool to trace the 'political in the policy', it became possible to see how identities came into existence and for what reasons. The intention of active social policy was represented by mechanical solidarity that bonded with the mechanical mentality of the social workers. This, however, is not the same as saying that the social workers have lost their organic sense of doing comprehensive social work. It simply means that they do not use this solidarity perception as much as the literature may expect when they categorize assistance-seeking citizens within the welfare program of active social policy.

The reason for this has already been suggested. The regulative as well as the normative institutions of active social policy are structured within a discursive frame appealing to mechanical communal values of reciprocity that have high public support and only to a lesser degree to an organic logic of abstract redistribution. The study thus illustrates the theoretical argument that both forms of solidarity exist simultaneously both in society as well as in the minds of the individuals: In practice people seem to hold both kinds of perceptions and are thus capable of using them both. Additionally, the dissertation also illustrates what happens 'within a policy' that primarily appeals to the mechanical rationality of the social workers. The policy evokes a mechanical rationality, which is not conflict-ridden, but corresponds with an existing

sense of solidarity among the social workers. Furthermore, the analyses in the dissertation have shown no conflict between the policy's assumptions of a mechanical basis of solidarity and the social workers' use of mechanical justifications. Even though the social worker may not support the addressee of the policy, this tension did not cause a conflict between the policy assumptions and social workers' policy preferences.

To summarize at this point: In the present study, solidarity perceptions were identified as collective orientations towards the relation between the state and the citizen. In addition solidarity perceptions were identified as embedded in social workers' professional norms as well as in their reactions towards narratives about contested and non-contested pain. In the study, mechanical solidarity dominates practice among the social workers in the study. Their evaluations of assistance-seeking citizens are made within an institutional context under active social policy. The analyses have shown what impact concrete solidarity perceptions of social workers have on the way the citizens' requests are perceived and managed in the welfare program of active social policy as constituted by both regulative and normative institutions: the laws and the 'interpretation key' of solidarity dominating in policy.

When street-level bureaucrats make decisions, solidarity perceptions have shown to be important among the individual factors shaping their policy preferences. Solidarity perceptions not only shape the way social workers understand the problems presented by assistance-seeking citizens, but also determine why and for what reason they suggest a particular evaluation. The analyses have shown how solidarity perceptions can become a factor affecting the outcome of who should receive what, when, and why in terms of social benefits.

11.2 Solidarity perceptions and categorization practices

The focus of this study on public administration of unemployed and sick assistance-seeking citizens has shed light on the impact of institutionalized interpretations of public problems. The analyses have shown that some problems of illness and unemployment are perceived from the outset as different from others by the social worker. These are illnesses such as fibromyalgia and social categories such as 'the unemployed', which generally were identified as presenting motivational and intentional 'problems'. These are examples of categories which were perceived as associated with serious individual barriers. Furthermore, the way such problems were defined by the social workers also reflected the way the social workers suggested to solve them.

The theoretical argument was that the way we feel empathy for others and the standards for work obligations we expect from our co-citizens vary in society as well as between individuals. The structural bases of solidarity such

as the public's support of the welfare state and the redistributive mechanisms were thus seen as factors influencing the way the social workers represented their solidarity perceptions as well. However, as the analyses also showed, these variations are not only related to different realms of society, but were also simultaneously present within each individual.

Since the 1990s, unemployment has become the center of a political battlefield about who shapes the 'shades of the meaning of society' (Durkheim 1984: 38) and the interpretations of the standards and perceptions of the good citizen that should prevail. The institutions that constitute the welfare program of active social policy worked as an example of how this political battle is engaged. The battle concerned defining what is meant by solidarity. Is solidarity mainly considered within a mechanical logic representing values such as 'caring', 'deservingness' and reciprocal relations? Or is solidarity mainly considered as an organic logic representing values such as 'procedural rights', 'entitlement' and interdependent relations? Perceptions became decisive in the categorization of assistance-seeking citizens, because they confined the social workers' focus to a question of whether a particular assistance-seeking citizen was seen as 'one of us', which led the social worker to relate to her with compassion, trust and understanding; or, alternatively the citizen was perceived as 'one of those' who challenge social cohesion in society by her lack of contribution to the common welfare and consequently should be treated with suspicion and contempt. Within an organic logic of solidarity it was about evaluating assistance-seeking citizens, while still perceiving them as 'sacred persons' with different 'challenges'. The question was to what extent assistance-seeking citizens were seen as entitled to help by professionals in order to prevent them from being socially and economically marginalized.

Basically the difference between a mechanical and an organic perception was related to the type of judgment used by the social workers. When solidarity perceptions were dominated by a mechanical logic, the type of judgment was applied to 'everybody' of the particular community, which, as shown in the analysis of the *quid pro quo* document, includes the nation as such. All citizens are here perceived as potential 'judges' of legitimate reasons to seek and receive welfare. The criteria in a mechanical logic are based on what society as such considers a deserving attitude. In contrast, the question of eligibility within an organic logic of solidarity was determined almost exclusively by professional discretion. In an organic solidarity relation, no community or social group is expected to be identical with the collective consciousness of the state. The division of labor which, according to Durkheim's argument, causes these differences, eliminates the possibility of using deservingness as a

legitimate criterion for welfare, because a society's different social groups and different political communities do not agree as to who is deserving and who is not. Instead the judgments stemming from an organic solidarity were based on criteria in a 'higher agreed-upon law' such as legal rights, and to a common idea of the 'cult of the individual'.

11.2.1 Explaining the patterns of correspondence

The two models of analysis studied in Chapters 7 - 10 explored different aspects of the relation between solidarity and categorization and together they offer an understanding of why and when social workers use different solidarity perceptions in their approach towards assistance-seeking citizens. When all the results from the four analyses are compared (see displays A13 and A14 in Appendix) two strong patterns emerge in the relationship between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices. First, primarily mechanical solidarity perceptions tend to correlate with stereotyped categorization practices. This correlation appears to be strongest among social workers administering the law of sickness benefits. Primarily organic solidarity perceptions tend to correlate with individualized categorization practices. This correlation appeared to be strongest among the social workers administering social welfare (the law of active social policy).

This finding was the opposite pattern, from what I had expected theoretically. Based on the analyses, I tentatively conclude that the reason why mechanical based arguments for a stereotyped categorization practice thrives better under the sickness benefits legislation than under the legislation of social welfare is the pervasive 'policy theory' linking disability to unemployment. According to this causal story, sick people are sick because they do not work and not the other way around. This perception relates to fundamental values about 'human existence', where disability and pain are seen as more closely related to the 'common' incentive that 'faith can move mountains' than to medical methods.

The other strong pattern was between kinds of pain in the vignettes and the kinds of clarifying methods social workers proposed to use. The three pain narratives varied on a dimension of contested/non-contested diagnoses. The results showed that when social workers associated a narrative with a contested health condition they became suspicious about the assistance-seeking citizens motivations, which made them suggest that the citizens' motivation should be clarified by tests of their working capacities. In contrast, they suggested testing the work capacities of citizens whom they associated with a non-contested condition, without clarifying their labor motivation in the first place.

However, this strong correlation between the reactions towards the stereotypes and the subsequent use of clarification method was not strongly associated with the social workers' solidarity perceptions and categorization practices in the first model. To explain this discrepancy, I would emphasize that the vignettes were developed with the explicit purpose of exploring the logic in a mechanical argument for categorization by provoking the social workers to react with their mechanical mind. This was done in order to explain the results from the analyses in Chapters 7, 8, and 9, which pointed to a preponderance of mechanical arguments for a stereotyped categorization practice compared to the organic arguments for an individualized categorization practice. Theoretically this made good sense since 'we all' are expected to use both types of solidarity perceptions in our 'daily lives', an idea which was supported by the analyses in Chapters 8 and 9. A comparison of the description in Chapter 7 of the variation of categorization practice with descriptions of the variation of solidarity perceptions in Chapters 8 and 9 showed that almost all social workers expressed both types of perceptions and practices with varying intensity. However, a comparison between the two solidarity measures, collective orientation and professional norms revealed that more organic reasoning was expressed through use of professional norm than through general collective orientation. This was a result that also met the theoretical expectations. The reason is that the professional norms of social work contain a social pedagogical understanding of the assistance-seeking citizen that corresponds to an organic logic of solidarity. In this sense, by being part of the professional social work community, the social workers are inclined to use professional norms reflecting an organic solidarity perception.

The overall result is hence that social workers draw on both organic and mechanical solidarity perceptions in their arguments about categorization and clarification of assistance-seeking citizens. However, the study also shows that the mechanical solidarity perceptions and the stereotyped categorization practices predominate over organic solidarity perceptions and individualized categorization practice. In other words, the study documents that even though the social workers have both mechanical and organic solidarity perceptions, they more often use mechanical based arguments to justify stereotyped categorization practice.

Trying to explain this pattern, the study shows how the government rhetoric and the political tools to implement active social policies support a mechanical approach to assistance-seeking citizens by representing the relation between citizen and the state in a reciprocal 'quid pro quo' discourse. Generally, the social workers comply with this political intention of reading a mechanical logic of solidarity into their casework, because the political mechani-

cal 'interpretation key' corresponds rather than conflicts with the social workers' feelings of 'deservingness' and communal values about work and assistance. However, the political intention to 'turn on' the mechanical solidarity perceptions of social workers leaves the organic 'interpretation key' behind. The study shows that organic arguments for practice are only rarely activated when the social workers described their approach to citizens.

The analysis of the mechanical reasoning in Chapter 10 clarifies this picture even further. The sequences where the preponderance of the social workers' mechanical arguments emerged were identical to the sequences where they were presented for the vignettes. This may explain why the more organic minded social workers also expressed perceptions of mechanical solidarity, because even a strong organic oriented mind reacts in a mechanical mode to social stereotypes. However, it does not explain why many social workers more oriented to mechanical solidarity perception also expressed organic perceptions. I will tentatively suggest the reason is the social pedagogical basis of social work, which draws on an organic logic of solidarity.

In the analysis of pain narratives, social workers selected different aspects from the vignettes depending on whether the health problems were associated with a contested disease such as fibromyalgia or with diffuse pain. For example they reacted differently, either with distrust or compassion, to the woman with a missing arm when the vignette had been primed by another one describing a woman with multiple sclerosis. When the social workers focused on the pain elements described in a pain narrative, they were more likely to be suspicious towards the assistance-seeking citizen's motive and to use more stringent clarification methods.

Additionally, the analyses showed how different solidarity perceptions shaped the reasoning of (almost) all the social workers. Chapter 10 provides a specific example of this. Even social workers who generally expressed organic solidarity perceptions drew on a stereotyped perception of pain when they were exposed to the vignettes (see for example vignette cases 1 and 5 in Display A13). This conformed with my theoretical expectations, namely that both forms of solidarity exist simultaneously in society and that they represent different types of social cohesion and different core values, but remain two clearly different logics. According to Durkheim, the explanation of this difference is that they stem from two different social sources: Attraction to similarities and attractions to differences, which again are explained as related to the degree of labor division in a particular society. The basic conclusion of the dissertation is therefore that the findings support this theoretical notion at an individual level. The study illustrates how these two sources shaped the social workers different approaches to and arguments for their

decisions about eligibility to social and political privileges such as early retirement pension or flex job.

In Chapter 9 professional norms (social pedagogical norms) were seen as containing organic solidarity perceptions, because they stress seeing the relations between society and the individual from different perspectives. The professionalism of social work was hence seen as corresponding to seeing through the lens of an organic solidarity perception. The argument was that because a social pedagogical norm is constituted in the idea of differentiation and difference, the fundamental understanding of the individual is he or she bridges many roles and different sub-communities within society. These norms were used by the social workers to argue for what has been identified as 'individualized' categorization practices. In contrast to this social pedagogical approach was the use of an administrative norm. This norm was seen as corresponding to a mechanical solidarity perception. In the analyses the social workers used the administrative norms with reference to the 'letter of the law' to argue for what was identified as 'stereotyped' categorization practices. By making decisions with reference to the 'letter of the law', they hence complied with the mechanical rhetoric and the policy theory in the active social policy. In contrast, when social workers used social pedagogical norms, their decisions were made within the 'spirit of the law'. This made room for interpretations of the political intention with the policy and hence for a resistant organic interpretation of the law to prevail.

The cult of the individual between private pain and public benefits

In addition to these identifications of solidarity perceptions among the social workers, another type of solidarity was analyzed. The 'cult of the individual' was used to visualize Durkheim's argument that the collective consciousness of an organic solidarity in the end relies on a mechanical sense of sharing a particular value as the source of cohesion. At the end of the day, the 'cult of the individual' is an example explaining why even the organic solidarity depends on a shared value such as the perception of the individual's role in a highly differentiated society. The reason is that the individual in the 'cult of the individual' is far from being an unambiguous subject. Basically the 'cult of the individual' constitutes a mechanical value, which supports the collective consciousness of an organic solidarity; however when the status of the individual becomes well defined and particularistic, the fragile constellation between the mechanical basis and the organic purpose is challenged.

The analysis of pain narratives showed one aspect of this argument, i.e. how fragile the boundary between an organic and a mechanical use of reference to the 'sacred' individual became for the social workers who argued with reference to commonalities for their causal perceptions of what defines the

morality in 'human existence'. Furthermore, the purpose of the suggested clarification method depended on the particular narrative presented to the social worker. More precisely, the social workers structured their approach to citizens with contested disabilities depending on how motivated they believed the assistance-seeking citizen was to re-enter the labor market. This question was hence transformed into a question of how motivated the person was perceived to be when it came to considering her pain as an existential and private condition instead of as a restriction that prevented her from working and consequently from meeting a fundamental public obligation.

In such pain interpretations, the pain was seen as something that should not be 'professionalized' and turned into a public problem; instead it should be handled as a private condition, for which the social worker felt either sympathy or contempt (depending on de facto or primed association to a contested condition). The social workers generally referred to the group of citizens with contested pain as diffuse and outside the usual categories. However, the material also showed that they were treated in very similar 'categorical' ways. In addition the analyses have shown how the social workers' judgments of assistance-seeking citizens' political and social privileges depended on the degree to which such factors as motivation to work and willingness to tolerate the suffering as a private matter became decisive. The intention of the clarifying strategies was made with reference to whether the illness was conceived as 'real' or not, but also according to how the citizens related to their discomfort. The social workers categorized the contested stereotypes such as fibromyalgia and phantom pain when primed by multiple sclerosis as problems of individual character in the mechanical sense of the term. This means that even though the pain was considered as a private matter, the way the citizens related to their private pain became important to the social workers, when they judged them using a mechanical framework, because the individual seen through a mechanical perspective defines not only her own personal value, but also the value of society by actively demonstrating that she does in fact share society's communal values about work and contribution.

In general terms, the social workers anchored their descriptions of the narratives to the way they assumed that the assistance-seeking citizens related to their pain and discomforts. The pain descriptions themselves never counted as limitations creating access to a public category of *legitimate* exemption from the labor market. When the social workers reacted with empathy and when the characteristics of the narrative caused the social worker to judge within a deservingness discourse, it was never claimed with reference to the pain descriptions, but instead to other elements such as the wheelchair

described in vignette B or to the 'tragic' loss of the arm in vignette C (when primed by vignette A describing a woman with fibromyalgia).

To support this analysis of pain as basically constituting a public problem of how to relate to a private pain, the study did not find any significant impact of a functional approach to pain narratives. Nevertheless, I tentatively conclude that when pain is perceived according to an organic logic, it is not articulated as important, but merely as a side effect of other conditions. This suggests that when the respondents were provoked to select the dominating features from the narratives, potential *functional* perceptions of pain were not activated and hence not identified. Social workers constantly related contested pain narratives to suspicions about deception, which explained why it became very easy for the social worker to restrict access to a social service with reference to this malingering stereotype.

When pain is generally perceived by the social workers as a private matter that should be kept as such, the reason is that pain by nature always has to be *told* to another person (the social worker in this case) rather than measured by a doctor. This makes pain less capable of being diagnosed objectively compared to other states of discomfort. Pain and pain-narratives are in a very distinct way open to interpretation.

This impression can be compared to a similar point made by Stone (1984), i.e. that the fundamental problem connected with public administration of private pain is that pain (in most cases) is immeasurable. Consequently when it is a fundamental precondition for the eligibility to public benefits that the disability and the content of any discomfort must be measured objectively, pain narratives provoke the usual practice of categorization by challenging and irritating the rationality of the bureaucratic demands of objectivity and at the same time (in the institutional context of this study) the dominating logic of mechanical solidarity in the welfare program. The attributes associated with contested chronic pain are hence transferred to the particular individual in pain. When the assistance-seeking citizen in the narrative claimed to be in-capable of working, without being able to document why or provide the required evidence for the 'reality' of the claim, the pain analysis in Chapter 10 showed how this created uncertainty. The high level of subjectivity then activated a clear negative mechanical solidarity perception toward the assistance-seeking citizen that which may be best described as a 'dissociation' from the person in pain. The pain analysis hence shows the room for variation for social workers' decisions when they use mechanical-based arguments to categorize assistance-seeking citizens. The analysis of the reactions toward vignette B (the multiple sclerosis narrative) showed another as-

pect of mechanical solidarity reasoning – namely when it caused empathy and positive associations instead of aversion and dissociation.

Summing up, the reactions towards the pain vignettes portray fundamental mechanisms within a mechanical solidarity perception. These mechanisms were reflected in the institutional context of the welfare program as well. The mechanical climate of the welfare program can hence be said to create difficult conditions for organic perceptions to make it through as legitimate and effective perceptions in practice. Seen in this light, the study can be said to perform a hard test of the strength of organic solidarity, not least because the condition of need appeals to fundamental emotional components of a mechanical perception of solidarity. However, to be in need can also, as the analyses of organic collective orientation and use of social pedagogical professionalism showed, activate attitudes of an organic character as entitlements to help, independent of the needy individual's personal values. In this respect the basic lesson learned is that even though mechanical virtues seen at a distance seem more 'human' and reassuring to the person in need, it is also a fragile virtue to rely on because mechanical perceptions can so easily trigger stereotypes and refusals to help, but also because what seems human and reassuring to one individual might seem hostile and wrong to another.

Seen in the light of the results of the mechanical analysis in Chapter 10, it is especially interesting how much organic perceptions of the individual still managed to pierce through as the dominant solidarity perception among the social workers. This demonstrates that the 'cult of the individual' as a supportive value in the organic solidarity is (still) a strong idea, even in a mechanical-dominated climate. Put differently: Even under economic and institutional conditions where universalism and organic solidarity have clear disadvantages within residual and insurance-based welfare programs as well as within the realm of a dominating mechanical political perception of public problems, the analyses have shown that both types of reasoning exist as perceptions of solidarity among the social workers. Nevertheless and as expected, mechanical arguments were strongly overrepresented in solidarity perceptions.

11.3 Policy decisions about eligibility to public welfare

Stone has demonstrated that pain patients represent a particular group in the pension programs, because they challenge the social system's ability to function (Stone 1984: 134-139). In her study, she notices how pain makes a special problem of people when they become object of public administration. This seems to be the case in the Danish example as well.

The literature on street-level bureaucracy suggests that bureaucrats' need to meet political expectations, intentions and on the one hand, formal rules, and their need to confirm to professional norms on the other, causes conflicts

of interests and makes them pursue strategies of resistance. However, this study has documented a different outcome: Apparently the social workers have accepted these new principles for social services and are implementing the active social policy very close to the policy intentions. This is surprising, since implementation studies work from the thesis that street-level bureaucrats have their own policy agenda and cannot automatically be expected to carry out as intended by the law-makers (Lipsky 1980; Winter & Lehman Nielsen 2008; Stone 1984:140). The reason for street-level bureaucrats' high compliance is that the policy intentions in this case appeal to generally mechanical communal values of reciprocity.

The findings of low resistance appears to be that resistance and a high degree of compliance among the social workers in their use of the policy tools must be seen in relation to how effectively the idea behind the active social policy has been accepted by the political system and instilled in the social workers. The idea behind active labor policy was an effort to frame the new policy as promoting the empowerment of society and the individual at the same time. The implementation of active social policy seemed to be exceptionally effective, because it took advantage of polyvalent discourses. This means that the policy was presented by normative institutions, which used references, symbols and metaphorical language to connect to fundamental perceptions of reciprocity as well as to general metaphors about what defines human existence. At this point, it is crucial to notice that the efficiency of the policy appeared more related to common ideas of 'what binds us together in society' and 'what the good life is' than to interests-ridden or economic factors. However, the reason for this is that some of the core characteristics of the active social policy should lead one to expect a reaction of resistance among the social workers. Not only do municipalities risk being financially sanctioned by the state more than previously, but the work load among the social workers has also increased by a boost in demands of productivity and administration. Even so, the philosophy of flex job and the widely shared perception of the social and psychological benefits from working are examples of how the intention of the policy matches ordinary perceptions in basic commonalities about life. In other words, even if the 'real' intention behind the 'quid pro quo' mentality is different from the political opinions of the social workers, there was no severe conflict between the basic communal value framing the policy and the communal values of the social workers.

In this sense, the policy idea of active social policy seems to appeal to 'our' sense of mechanical solidarity, and at the same time to reproduce core values from the field of social work that correspond with typical organic solidarity perceptions. These perceptions are nurtured by discursive representa-

tions of the individual as a subject that is embedded in different social communities, which for the social work profession makes it a virtue to perform a comprehensive evaluation of the assistance-seeking citizen. Such a 'virtue' was also found described in central policy tools such as the document describing *the means of evaluating working capacities*. The discourse of active social policy can hence be interpreted as ambiguous enough to create a normative connection to social workers with a predominately organic solidarity perception and simultaneously evoke a perception of reciprocal fairness. The mechanical-dominated policy can hence make use of its discursive polyvalence by appealing to, and associating the aim of social work with an organic as well as a mechanical solidarity perception. The policy leaves room for shades of meaning and social workers can associate their discretionary practice to either an organic form of solidarity or a mechanical form of solidarity. Either way, by sticking to the process regulating methods of clarification and evaluation, they still end up complying with the policy intentions without experiencing a fundamental conflict of interest and without having their (organic motivated) reasons for doing social work challenged.

To what extent can these findings apply to other fields, areas, periods, or even other countries? The findings of the study may of course be generalized to the job centers covering areas of more than 50,000 inhabitants, which were not included in the interview study. Probably the study's general findings will also be of significance to all the smaller job centers even though they may face particular conditions caused by demographic, social, occupational and other particular factors. Moreover, categorizing assistance-seeking citizens is a necessity for all welfare states. Even under different welfare regimes and in different institutional contexts the question of how to categorize is always present. The relationship between solidarity perceptions and categorization practice is important whenever social assistance depends on an evaluation of disability. The identification of problems and solutions for case workers who make decisions about eligibility to welfare can be fruitful beyond public administration. Insurance companies may encounter similar challenges when determining whether an insured person is entitled to compensation.

However, there are obvious limitations to how far the study can be generalized. This is especially the case in relation to other policy fields where street-level bureaucrats do not have such wide discretion. This includes certain welfare programs within social and labor policy covering 'pure' universal arrangements such as the flat-rate pension in Denmark where age is the only criterion for eligibility. However we do not know what the study would look like under different conditions since the institutional context or the economic structures have not been compared to other periods or other countries with

different or similar contexts. Therefore, the findings should of course be seen in the light of this particular context.

11.3.1 The impact of a different institutional and structural context

The fact that the study has been carried out in a certain institutional context in a period of rapid economic expansion and historically low unemployment rates most likely matters. Basically, this study therefore serves as a picture of what happens in social policy at the street-level bureaucracy under such conditions. However, the study suggests that even if the basic idea of the welfare state rests on an organic assumption of interdependency, the representations of these values have receded into the background in favor of a mechanical based logic of reciprocity. The study hence shows how deeply mechanical solidarity is rooted among street-level bureaucrats even within a professional practice such as social work.

At the moment of this writing, the unemployment rate is rising and complaints about the job centers appear in the media. When the economic conditions change and unemployment is a bigger problem, the question is how easily the governing institutions can be reorganized to activate more organic (in the sense of 'functional') reasoning among social workers. The study therefore calls for a comparison to other economic conditions.

The findings raise other very important questions. What impact do the patterns of categorization have on the *actual* bases of solidarity in society, on the general mechanisms of redistribution (e.g. tax policy, education policy and health policy) and on public support for the welfare state? What are the effects of the new ways assistance-seeking citizens are being clarified and evaluated on work capacities and motivations? Are there, e.g., employment effects of the effort directed at motivational barriers of some citizens, which could not simply be explained by economic conditions? And does turning ambiguous cases into psychological questions instead of treating them as social or health problems have any effect on self-sufficiency in general?

The findings in the dissertation of course also raise an interesting question about variations over time. What is the impact of the political and economic conditions on the relationship between solidarity and categorization? Thirty years ago in Denmark all unemployed were labeled by their education or former occupation as for example 'unemployed nurse' instead of simply as 'unemployed'. The economic conditions were different and most certainly so were the patterns of correspondence between solidarity and categorization.

These questions call for further studies in the field of social workers' professional perceptions in relation to the thesis of how street-level bureaucrats either identify themselves strongly with the citizens or dissociate themselves

from the citizens to cope with their conflictual working situation. Associated with such further studies are the studies of the interaction between system and client. How is a person with a resistant attitude being categorized under the current institutional context of active social policy? Almost by definition, all resistance is probably evaluated as a resource, which should be documented in the resource profile of the citizen and most likely it will activate a negative categorization with respect to both political and social rights.

The results hence first of all point at an interesting thesis about target group behavior: If solidarity perceptions shape categorization practice, then how does categorization shape the attitudes of the assistance-seeking citizen? Is it plausible to suggest that a mechanical-dominated orientation activates a mechanical logic among the assistance-seeking citizen? Might it be reasonable to suggest that assistance-seeking citizens adapt to this new dominant discourse by presenting themselves in deservingness terms, thus reinforcing street-level bureaucrats' propensity to identify them as primarily pursuing illegitimate, manipulative intentional strategies and sick roles to substantiate their need for social service? This process could set up self-fulfilling prophecies and a vicious circle that de-legitimizes social aid.

11.3 Implications of the study

By letting stereotyped information influence the judgmental practice of our political system, we allow for arbitrary criteria and particularistic policy preferences to determine the access to fundamental political and social rights to public services. This is because stereotypes work through over-determined associations of either positive or negative character and hence always trump the particular experience and specific evaluation of the citizen. This way of deciding contradicts fundamental principles of equal access to treatment in the political system as well as an objective evaluation of – in this case – the assistance-seeking citizen's working capacities. When stereotyped associations take over, eligibility for public services is no longer based on the specific experience of the citizen.

The risk of being associated with a negative stereotype is relatively high since many citizens' complaints and reasons for unemployment are fuzzy and their personal reality is hard to measure. The potential consequences of being ascribed such negative values may give the citizen quite a different course through the system compared to that of a citizen disabled enough in a non-contested way to be associated with a positive stereotype. Seen in the light of the empirical findings, mechanical solidarity perceptions go hand in hand with stereotyped categorization practices. One may well ask how many resources society should spend not only to ensure that all citizens work, but also to evaluate how much they *really want* to work.

Appendix

Chapter 1

Table A1. Numbers and expenditures (DKK), early retirement pension 1985-2005

Early retirement/Year	1985	1990	1995*****	2000	2005
Expenditures in millions (current prices)*	13,738	19,365	26,540	28,338	32,825
Numbers**	228,804	245,039	267,212	257,560	246,836
Labor force (age 16-66)***	2,762,506	2,791,968	2,772,781	2,799,958	2,763,327
Numbers/Labor force (%)	8.3	8.8	9.6	9.2	9.0
Expenditures (current prices)/Labor force	4973.00	6936.00	9571.50	10,120.75	118,78.75
GDP per capita (current prices)****	126,841	163,541	194,929	242,384	285,713
Proportions of GDP per capita spent on early retirement pension (%)	2.1	2.3	2.6	2.2	2.1

* Statistics Denmark: Expense index figures are collected from www.statistikbanken.dk/OFF10 except the expense index figures from 1985, which are collected from: Statistics Denmark 1995: 40.

** Statistics Denmark: www.statistikbanken.dk/SAM7.

*** Statistics Denmark: 1995: 21; 2004: 29; 2008 2008: 41.

**** Statistics Denmark: www.statistikbanken.dk/NAT15

***** In 1993 most of the pension services are transformed into a gross basis, including early retirement pension. This means that they change tax status from being tax free to being taxable services. (Statistics Denmark 2004: 150). Ceteris paribus this causes an increase in the State's item of expense to early retirement, but also that the State obtains tax revenue in return. The table is not adjusted according to this gross basis and hence it only measures the debit side of the service. As a burden measure it means that the burden of early retirement pension after 1993 purportedly is lower than what appears as the case in the table above, because it does not take into account the tax revenues from the service (Ministry of Finance 2005; Mortensen 2008: 66).

Chapter 6

Interview guide A2.

The main questions are highlighted and the supplementary questions use normal letters. The *italicized* questions are my methodological questions. They keep me from formulating the questions too far from the intended question.

Start the conversation by specifying

- (1) where the social worker is placed in the decision process: As an evaluator or as an authority?
- (2) what are the primary job tasks for the social worker?
- (3) how much experience does the social worker have within this specific field?
- (4) what kind of educational background does the social worker have

What kind of phenomenon am I looking at? →

1. Please tell me a little about your job on evaluating the working capacity of clients with a health issue?
 - 1.1 Can you give me an example of a straightforward evaluation experience with a client?
 - 1.2 Do you have an impression about what kind of problems are being difficult to evaluate?
 - 1.3 Can you give me an example of a difficult evaluation?

What is the frequency of the phenomenon I am looking at? →

2. Roughly speaking, how many working capacity evaluations do you and your colleagues do every month?
 - 2.1 Again, roughly speaking, how many of the clients apply for early retirement pension?
 - 2.2 And how many of them receive one?

What is the significance of the phenomenon I am looking at? →

3. How central are these working capacity evaluations to your job as you see it?
(Now give the respondent the first vignette – either case A or case B as the basis for questions 4 and 5)
 - A): Imagine a 34 year-old woman with fibromyalgia. She is married and has two children living at home. She has been on sick leave for six months from her job as a social and health care helper mainly because of chronic pain in joints and muscles. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension, because she does not see herself as being capable of doing her job properly. She now uses support bandages almost all of the time, and she has tried all kinds of treatments without getting any better. In addition to her pain, she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems. Her experience now is that if she goes to work or does housework, she ends up in bed for several days.

Or:

B): Imagine a 34-year-old woman with multiple sclerosis (MS). She is married and has two children living at home. She has been on sick leave for six months from her job as a social and health care helper mainly because of chronic pain in joints and muscles. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension because she does not see herself as capable of doing her job properly. She now uses a wheel chair almost all of the time and she has tried all kinds of treatments without getting any better. In addition to her pain, she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems. Her experience now is that if she goes to work or does housework, she ends up in bed for several days.

How is the process of evaluating working capacities organized? →

4. How would you evaluate the working capacity of this client?

How does the process of evaluating working capacities evolve in time? →

5. Having evaluated the working capacity, what will be the next step with this client?

(Give the respondent the next vignette with the normal case in order to make it easier to make comparisons in the interview. When the respondent has finished reading the vignette ask the same questions 4 and 5 again)

C): Imagine a 35 year-old woman, who lost an arm in a traffic accident. She is married and has three children living at home. She has been on sick leave since the accident 1½ years ago from her job as a childcare worker mainly because of chronic back- and head pains as well as strong phantom pain in her missing arm. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension because of her handicap. Since the accident, she no longer sees herself as capable of doing her job properly, since she generally has a lot of trouble just trying to handle the extra pain and extra difficulties in her everyday routine that stem from her lost arm. In addition to her pains she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems.

How is the process of evaluating working capacities organized? →

4. Now, how would you evaluate the working capacity of this client?

Is there a difference in the way the process of evaluating the working capacities takes place, and does it vary in relation to patient type? →

4.1 Do you find that there are some obvious differences between the two clients that have to do with the way the process of evaluating working capacities works?

How does the process of evaluating working capacities evolve in time? →

5. Having evaluated the working capacity, what will be the next step with this client?

Is there a difference in the scope of the process in relation to patient type? →

5.1 Do you experience any characteristic differences between the two clients during and after the evaluation – does one of them require more time than the other – is there a difference in where you will collect more information about them etc.? For example with a medical specialist or maybe putting the client through a psychological special medical examination?

What is the attitude of the street-level bureaucrat to the chronic pain patient/the MS patient/the normal case?

5.2 Can you think of anything that might explain why some clients are harder to evaluate than others and whether gender, age or family status make any difference?

In the presence of what conditions is it likely that the evaluation is made difficult? →

6. Can you say anything about what conditions tend to be present about the client or about the situation when the evaluation of a working capacity process is difficult?

6.1 Can you then also think of what conditions tend to be present about the client or about the situation when you have a straightforward evaluation of a working capacity?

What are the consequences of a process of evaluating working capacities which cannot handle the essential group of clients it was developed to evaluate? →

7. Can you think of any consequences coming from the evaluations you cannot do “by the book” so to speak? How do the hard cases affect your job? Do they have any consequences for your ability to do your job?

7.1 Do you think evaluation of working capacity has any social/political impact on society? For example do you think the obligations to evaluate working capacities serve other purposes than the strictly working related purpose to the client?

What does this the imperfect process of evaluating working capacities mean to my variation, and to the sustainment of the existing social set-up between the street-level bureaucrat and the social client? →

7.2 What do you think society – or people in general think about clients with chronic pain (as fibromyalgia or MS), who receive public support/social services?

7.3 How do you feel about evaluating clients with chronic pain, who apply for public support/social services?

7.4 Are some clients with for example chronic pain treated differently than others? If not, should they be?

7.5 When do you think one is eligible to a social service?

What is the human agency perspective? →

8. What is your experience with how clients present themselves in the evaluation process of working capacities?

9. Finally, I want to ask you if you have worked here long enough to have actually administrated the old social law before the active social policy was implemented

and if so, whether you think there are some essential differences or changes that you think I should know of before we end our conversation.

9.1 In the affirmative, how do you think it was to evaluate the working capacity of social clients under the previous law compared to the present law of active social policy?

10. Are there any other questions I should have asked or comments you want to add?

Vignettes A3.

A): Imagine a 34 year-old woman with fibromyalgia. She is married and has two children living at home. She has been on sick leave for six months from her job as a social and health care helper mainly because of chronic pain in joints and muscles. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension, because she does not see herself as being capable of doing her job properly. She now uses support bandages almost all of the time, and she has tried all kinds of treatments without getting any better. In addition to her pain, she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems. Her experience now is that if she goes to work or does housework, she ends up in bed for several days.

B): Imagine a 34-year-old woman with multiple sclerosis (MS). She is married and has two children living at home. She has been on sick leave for six months from her job as a social and health care helper mainly because of chronic pain in joints and muscles. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension because she does not see herself as capable of doing her job properly. She now uses a wheel chair almost all of the time and she has tried all kinds of treatments without getting any better. In addition to her pain, she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems. Her experience now is that if she goes to work or does housework, she ends up in bed for several days.

C): Imagine a 35 year-old woman, who lost an arm in a traffic accident. She is married and has three children living at home. She has been on sick leave since the accident 1½ years ago from her job as a childcare worker mainly because of chronic back- and head pains as well as strong phantom pain in her missing arm. She wants to apply for an early retirement pension because of her handicap. Since the accident, she no longer sees herself as capable of doing her job properly, since she generally has a lot of trouble just trying to handle the extra pain and extra difficulties in her everyday routine that stem from her lost arm. In addition to her pains she has trouble sleeping, together with memory and concentration problems.

Chapter 7

Display A4. Coding display over respondents' categorization practice (numerical overview)

Interview	Categorization practice			
	Individualized:		Stereotyped	
	Words	Coding references	Words	Coding references
1.	81	1	674	5
2.	1524	7	1092	6
3.	0	0	1196	7
4.	114	1	826	4
5.	0	0	1779	7
6.	1677	9	178	1
7.	0	0	1712	8
8.	0	0	2709	13
9.	0	0	506	4
10.	520	2	2014	11
11.	1124	8	711	5
12.	398	3	1944	7
13.	624	2	1964	10
14.	2402	13	1214	7
15.	398	2	1738	7
16.	573	3	2938	10
17.	1168	3	1977	10
18.	691	5	984	5
19.	0	0	2604	9
20.	0	0	476	2
21.	774	3	2724	5
22.	314	3	347	3
23.	0	0	5486	18
24.	0	0	3411	13
Sum:	12,382	65	41,411	177

n: 24.

Display A5. Assignments of categorization attributes

Interview	Categorization practice attributes			
	Stereotyped (S)	(SI)	(IS)	Individualized (I)
1.		AB		
2.			AB	
3.	AB			
4.		AB		
5.	AB			
6.			B	AB
7.	AB			
8.	AB			
9.	AB			
10.		AB		
11.			AB	
12.		AB		
13.		AB		
14.			B	AB
15.		AB		
16.		AB		
17.		AB		
18.		AB	B	
19.	AB			
20.	AB			
21.	AB	B		
22.			AB	
23.	AB			
24.	AB			
Total:	10	9	3	2

A: Based on content display.

B: Based on numerical display of words and coding references.

(The bold marks indicate where the two judgments did not correspond. The single letters indicate the losing judgment after a re-evaluation).

Chapter 8:

Display A6. Coding display of collective orientations (numerical overview)

Interview	Collective orientations			
	Organic		Mechanical	
	Words	Coding references	Words	Coding references
1.	832	5	174	1
2.	2640	12	839	2
3.	1552	5	818	6
4.	1327	5	455	3
5.	0	0	2248	7
6.	2204	9	0	0
7.	101	1	1901	8
8.	0	0	2764	13
9.	0	0	929	5
10.	232	2	765	4
11.	1094	8	937	4
12.	0	0	3659	15
13.	124	2	2644	17
14.	3834	23	1494	13
15.	1617	5	2467	11
16.	973	6	3984	15
17.	687	2	1855	7
18.	918	2	1054	4
19.	869	3	3899	15
20.	938	4	516	2
21.	684	3	898	5
22.	0	0	1144	6
23.	0	0	6498	16
24.	150	1	4725	16
Sum:	20,776	98	46,667	195

n: 24.

Display A7. Assignment of collective orientation attributes

Interview	Collective orientation attributes			
	Organic	Organic/ mechanical	Mechanical/ organic	Mechanical
1.	AB	B		
2.		AB		
3.			AB	
4.		AB		
5.				AB
6.	AB			
7.			B	AB
8.				AB
9.				AB
10.			AB	A
11.	AB	B		
12.				AB
13.			AB	
14.	A	AB		
15.		AB	B	
16.			AB	
17.			B	AB
18.			AB	
19.			AB	
20.		AB		
21.		A	AB	
22.				AB
23.				AB
24.			B	AB

I alt:

A: Based on text display (judgment of condensed statements).

B: Based on numerical display (judgment of number of words and coding references).
(The bold marks indicate where the two judgments did not correspond. The single letters indicate the losing judgment after a re-evaluation).

Chapter 9

Display A8. Coding display of professional norms (numerical overview)

Interview	Professional norms			
	Administrative norms		Social pedagogical norms	
	Words	Coding references	Words	Coding references
1.	878	7	937	6
2.	734	5	3369	19
3.	1095	5	195	1
4.	292	4	1017	6
5.	948	2	200	1
6.	0	0	1373	8
7.	1184	4	0	0
8.	982	3	0	0
9.	819	3	148	1
10.	2062	8	183	1
11.	1831	9	2765	16
12.	1882	9	0	0
13.	3900	17	0	0
14.	1074	7	6949	28
15.	2624	9	824	4
16.	3406	13	2004	4
17.	569	2	1346	4
18.	394	2	1864	5
19.	1001	4	1506	6
20.	117	1	384	4
21.	610	2	1630	6
22.	171	1	677	4
23.	5661	16	0	0
24.	3815	10	0	0
Sum:	36.049	143	27.371	124

n: 24.

Display A9. Assignments of professional norm attributes

Interview	Professional norm attributes			
	Administrative	Adm/Soc.	Soc/Adm.	Social pedagogical
1.		B	AB	
2.			AB	
3.		AB	A	
4.			AB	
5.		AB		
6.				AB
7.	AB			
8.	AB			
9.		AB		
10.		AB		
11.			AB	
12.	AB			
13.	AB			
14.			B	AB
15.		AB		
16.		AB		
17.	AB		B	
18.			B	AB
19.		A	AB	
20.			B	AB
21.		AB	A	
22.			AB	A
23.	AB			
24.	AB			
Total:	7	7	6	4

A: Based on text display (judgment of condensed statements).

B: Based on numerical display (judgment of number of words and coding references).
 (The bold marks indicate where the two judgments did not correspond. The single letters indicate the losing judgment after a re-evaluation).

Chapter 10

Display A10. Social workers' choice of clarification in relation to vignette cases

Pain stereotype	A (fibro- myalgia)	B (Multiple Sclerosis)	C (phantom pain)
Number of vignette cases	11	13	24
Clarification seminar	1	0	0
Means of evaluating working capacities	2	2	5
Work testing	7	7	11
Exemption from work testing	0	4	0
Home visit	0	2	0
Gathering of medical documents	3	8	8
Job advisor	0	1	2
Crisis management	0	0	4
Lifestyle/competence center	1	0	1
Medical consultant	3	3	3
Medical test center	0	0	1
Mentor system	0	0	1
Motivation program	2	0	5
General practitioner	1	3	5
Psychiatrist	1	0	2
Psychologist	4	0	5
Note reporting fit for work	0	0	1
Resource profile	5	4	4
Rehabilitation institution	9	6	9
Conversation	0	2	3
Pain treatment and management	3	0	8
Medical specialist	8	6	6
Clarification on current work place	1	0	0
Management consultant	0	1	1
Corporate trainee position	3	4	6
total referrals	54	53	91

n = 48. Cell content: count of clarifications.

Display A11. Soft and hard use of clarification strategies

Use of clarification	Hard	Soft
Clarification seminar	1	0
Means of evaluating working capacities	4	4
Work testing	13	10
Exemption from work testing	0	4
Home visit	0	2
Gathering of medical documents	7	10
Job advisor	0	1
Crisis management	1	3
Lifestyle/competence center	2	0
Medical consultant	3	2
Medical test center	1	0
Mentor system	0	1
Motivation program	6	1
General practitioner	3	3
Psychiatrist	1	0
Psychologist	6	3
Note reporting fit for work	0	0
Resource profile	5	4
Rehabilitation institution	14	7
Conversation	2	1
Pain treatment and management	7	2
Medical specialist	7	8
Clarification on current work place	0	0
Management consultant	0	0
Corporate trainee position	5	2
Total referrals	88	68

n = 48.

Display A12. Formal rules and clarification practice

Formal rule	Clarification	
	Hard (Hard A, Hard CB & Hard CA)	Soft (Soft B, Soft CA & Soft CB)
Social welfare	8	8
Sickness benefits	13	13
Total:	21	21

n = 42 (Mixed formal rules are left out).

Chapter 11

Display A13. Combined analysis of first given vignette (A and B)

Social worker	Vignette case	Vignette	Clarification method	Collective orientation	Professional norm	Categorization practice	Formal rule
1.	1.	A	Hard	Organic	Social pedagogical/administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Sickness benefits
11.	5.	A	Hard	Organic	Social pedagogical administrative	Individualized/stereotyped	Social welfare
12.	7.	A	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare and sickness benefits
16.	15.	A	Hard	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
17.	17.	A	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare and sickness benefits
18.	19.	A	Hard	Mechanical/organic	Social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
20.	25.	A	Hard	Organic/mechanical	Social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
24.	33.	A	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
23.	31.	A	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Social welfare and sickness benefits
8.	45.	A	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
9.	47.	A	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
10.	3.	B	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Sickness benefits
13.	9.	B	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Sickness benefits
14.	11.	B	Soft	Organic/mechanical	Social pedagogical	Individualized	Sickness benefits
15.	13.	B	Soft	Organic/mechanical	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
19.	21.	B	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Social pedagogical/administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits

2.	23.	B	Soft	Organic/mechanical	Social pedagogical/administrative	Individualized/stereotyped	Social welfare
21.	27.	B	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
22.	29.	B	Soft	Mechanical	Social pedagogical/administrative	Individualized/stereotyped	Social welfare
3.	35.	B	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
4.	37.	B	Soft	Organic/mechanical	Social pedagogical/administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
5.	39.	B	Soft	Mechanical	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
6.	41.	B	Soft	Organic	Social pedagogical	Individualized	Social welfare
7.	43.	B	Soft	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits

Display A14. Combined analysis of second given vignette (C)

Social worker	Vignette case	Basis of comparison	Clarification method	Collective orientation	Professional norm	Categorization practice	Formal rule
1.	2.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Organic	SP/A	Stereotyped/individualized	Sickness benefits
11.	6.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Organic	SP/A	Individualized/stereotyped	Social welfare
12.	8.	Fibro (A)	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare and sickness benefits
16.	16.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
17.	18.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare and sickness benefits
18.	20.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
20.	26.	Fibro (A)	Hard	Organic/mechanical	Social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
23.	32.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Social welfare and sickness benefits
24.	34.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
8.	46.	Fibro (A)	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
9.	48.	Fibro (A)	Soft	Mechanical	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
10.	4.	MS (B)	Hard	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Sickness benefits
13.	10.	MS (B)	Hard	Mechanical/organic	Administrative	Stereotyped/individualized	Sickness benefits
14.	12.	MS (B)	Soft	Organic/mechanical	Social pedagogical	Individualized	Sickness benefits
15.	14.	MS (B)	Hard	Organic/mechanical	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
19.	22.	MS (B)	Hard	Mechanical/organic	SP/A	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
2.	24.	MS (B)	Hard	Organic/mechanical	SP/A	Individualized/stereotyped	Social welfare

21.	28.	MS (B)	Soft	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
22.	30.	MS (B)	Hard	Mechanical	SP/A	Individualized/stereotyped	Social welfare
3.	36.	MS (B)	Hard	Mechanical/organic	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
4.	38.	MS (B)	Hard	Organic/mechanical	SP/A	Stereotyped/individualized	Social welfare
5.	40.	MS (B)	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative/social pedagogical	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits
6.	42.	MS (B)	Hard	Organic	Social pedagogical	Individualized	Social welfare
7.	44.	MS (B)	Hard	Mechanical	Administrative	Stereotyped	Sickness benefits

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English summary

Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation is about how politics affects individuals at the level of street-bureaucracy in Denmark. It is at the street-level bureaucracy, where political decisions become real by transforming the stories of citizens into administrative categories of public services. What is the impact of the law, the political discourse and the professional norms of street level bureaucrats, when compassions for others and obligations to work are determined? I put forward the argument that among these factors that influence the discretion of the street-level bureaucrat, solidarity perceptions should be included as well. The fundamental question is what impact solidarity perceptions have on the policy-making process at the level of street bureaucracy. The study focuses on social policy and public administration of unemployed and sick assistance-seeking citizens.

Solidarity perceptions are traced and identified as symbolic and metaphorical rhetoric about social cohesion, community needs, and sayings about compassions and interdependencies between the citizen and the state. The study is presented within the political frame of a legitimacy crisis in western welfare states in general and in pension programs in particular. How are representations of social problems turned into perceptions of solidarity affecting the policy-making towards assistance-seeking citizens? On a more concrete level, the question is how the actual administration of unemployed citizens with health problems takes place in a political era dominated by a political representation of solidarity where society is presented as being threatened by individuals who use sick roles to free ride on welfare benefits? The dissertation puts forward the following question: what impact does this perception of deception, which connects the reasons for increasing sick-leave with individual factors such as 'will to work' and 'attitude toward the whole of society' has on the categorization practice of social workers, who administer the laws of sickness benefits and active social policy?

Chapter 2: Categorization and policy-making in the welfare state

Chapter 2 specifies which aspects of categorization the empirical analyses seek to grasp. The literature concerned with how individuals judge each other share a similar concern of what defines a certain categorization and also how and why it affects the selection of what counts as legitimate claims put forward by for example assistance-seeking citizens. The theories concerned with categorization is related to the argument to view categorization as a social and a political practice, which decides who is 'in' and who is 'out' of access to certain rights, obligations, and deserving attitudes. A distinction between 'de-

servingness' and 'entitlement' has been identified empirically as well as concrete criteria (age, need, and reciprocity) typically used in individuals' judgments of other individuals.

Chapter 3: Solidarity and categorization

The aim of Chapter 3 is twofold: 1) to explain why solidarity functions as an identity and collectivity producing mechanism, and 2) to argue why solidarity must be defined – not by an inherent normative preference or content as such – but instead by its potential to represent community values and integrative normative dispositions through institutions such as metaphors, symbolic and rhetorical statements about social cohesion. These two fundamental purposes serve as my general theoretical framework to study categorization practice at the street-level bureaucracy.

The chapter introduces Durkheim's theory on organic and mechanical solidarity forms as well as the relation between these concepts and the categorizing criteria of deservingness and entitlement. The claim is that deservingness corresponds to a mechanical solidarity perception and entitlement to an organic solidarity perception. Moreover, the chapter explains what specific features and elements in solidarity I subtract from the theory. 'Collective consciousness', 'social cohesion' and 'professional ethics' are the three crucial elements, which I intend to make operational as measures of solidarity in the empirical studies.

Chapter 4: Solidarity in the welfare state

Chapter 4 focuses on explaining how central aspects of solidarity tend to play a role typically embedded in studies on tax relations, welfare distributions, and within reciprocity studies. Moreover, the chapter introduces welfare states research, which distinguishes between three models of welfare systems with corresponding different bases for social cohesion in society. In the so-called residual model, welfare services are meant to apply for target populations instead of for all citizens, as is the case in the universal and the insurance-based model.

In addition, the chapter also gives examples of different measurements of solidarity. One type of measurement aims at measuring solidarity through corporative structures and support for service institutions. Another type of measurement seeks to capture individual solidarity through a measure of 'deservingness' and extent of private charity and volunteer work in society. To trace how solidarity matters in everyday categorization practice in these different welfare state models, the measurement of solidarity is important in order to frame the study of what happens at the street-level bureaucracy.

Chapter 5: The welfare program of active social policy

In Chapter 5 the political and institutional climate of the Danish welfare program of active social policy is related both to the welfare state typologies described in Chapter 4 and to the theory of solidarity as explained in Chapter 3. Additionally, the aim of the chapter is to describe the context in which the social workers administer active social policy. The two laws governing the administration of sick and unemployed assistance-seeking citizen are described as corresponding to an insurance-based, corporate and organic based welfare regime and a residual, reciprocal and mechanical based welfare regime respectively. It is expected that these formal rules condition the relation between the social workers solidarity perceptions and categorization practise in a way where organic based arguments for practice prevail under the corporate law of sickness benefits and the mechanical based arguments under the residual law of active social policy (social welfare).

The chapter ends by asking what happens to the variation in solidarity and categorization, when the redistributive institutions in a society are universal, but certain welfare programs are insurance-based or residual and the government discourse represents social problems of a mechanical nature, which manifests a reciprocal relation between ‘us and them’?

Chapter 6: Research design, data collection and data processing

Chapter 6 describes the empirical measures of solidarity perception and categorization practice. In addition the chapter explains the arguments for selecting pain narratives as a well-suited case to study mechanical solidarity perceptions in particular. It describes the research design, the case selection (24 social workers), the data collection (the interview guide) and the processes of analysis as well as the efforts to enhance the robustness of the analyses. The design and the data collection include the use of vignettes in order to enhance the internal validity of the study. The chapter describes the methodology of cross-case and within-case analyses as are the two analytical strategies used in the empirical studies.

Chapter 7: Categorization practice among street-level bureaucrats

The categorization practice of social workers is analyzed in Chapter 7. The analysis of categorization practice finds that there is a variation, both within and between the interviews. The difference in categorization practice is measured on a continuum between an individualized and a stereotype-dominated practice. On this continuum the majority of interviews (19 out of

24) use a practice closest to the stereotype-dominated pole and only five interviews use a practice closest to the individualized-dominated pole.

The character of the difference between practices was basically reflected in the way the social worker perceived of the purpose of clarifying assistance-seeking citizens' capacities to work. Either the clarification methods were seen as a documentation tool of an already performed stereotyped categorization of the citizen, or it was seen as a tool in an individualized practice to collect further information about the citizen.

Chapter 8: Collective orientations and categorization practices

In Chapter 8, the perceptions of solidarity indicated by the social workers are identified in the interviews and analyzed in relation to the categorization practices. The general picture is that the perceptions involving a dominating mechanical collective orientation correlate with stereotype-dominated categorization practices, while the perceptions involving a dominant organic collective orientation correlate with individualized-dominated categorization practice. However, the relations between mechanically shaped perceptions and stereotyped categorization practices are more prevalent than the relationship between organically shaped perceptions and individualized practice. The bottom line in the analyses is that way solidarity perceptions have been measured in this chapter – as a matter of collective orientation – relates very well to the expected categorization practice; however, the conditional effect of formal rules is less clear. There appears to be a tendency for organic collective orientation and individualized practice to thrive better under the rules of social welfare, whereas the relation between a mechanical collective orientation and a stereotyped categorization practice prevails among the social workers administering sickness benefits legislation. Comparing the formal rules to the concrete arguments for categorization practice confirms this tendency.

Chapter 9: Professional norms and categorization practice

In Chapter 9 the social workers' use of professional norms as another tracer of solidarity perceptions is identified and analyzed. Here, concrete statements about the social workers' use of their professional norms make the measure of solidarity. The differences between the social workers' references to their professional norms are identified as differences between an administrative and a social pedagogical professional norm, respectively. A social pedagogical norm is identified as drawing on an organic solidarity, whereas an administrative norm is identified as drawing on a mechanical logic of solidarity. The relations between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices are again

compared to formal rules in order to see whether they condition the relationships between solidarity perceptions and categorization practices. As indicated in Chapter 8 the tendency that social workers' perceptions of organic and mechanical solidarity and the corresponding individualized and stereotyped categorization practice is shaped by formal rules is supported by the analyses in Chapter 9.

The overall conclusion from Chapter 9 is that mechanical solidarity perceptions dominate when social workers explain why and how they put individuals into different categories of privileges and obligations. From the analyses it appears that formal rules do matter in relation to which practice is encouraged.

Chapter 10: Pain stereotypes and clarification practices

Chapter 10 explores the mechanical based arguments for a stereotyped practice, which Chapters 8 and 9 showed prevailed over the organic based arguments. The way this is done is by using another tracer of solidarity and categorization practice than what has been used so far: namely the social workers' reactions to stereotyped pain narratives and their subsequent preferred choice of clarification method. Thus, Chapter 10 is a special study of the theoretical argument and has a different analytical structure compared to the previous three chapters and analyses.

The differences in categorization practice are measured by the social workers use of clarification method toward fictive cases (vignette A: fibromyalgia, vignette B: multiple sclerosis, vignette C: a missing arm). The vignettes were constructed as recognizable stereotypes with different contested and non-contested diagnoses, but with that in common that they all suffered from chronic pain. The social workers dissociate themselves from the contested pain described in the fibromyalgia vignette by referring to suspiciousness about malingering persons with 'second agenda' in order to gain free political and social rights, whereas they associated themselves emphatically with the non-contested multiple sclerosis vignette.

In the first case they use clarification methods to test the 'reality' of the pain, where as in the second case they clarify with the intention of facilitating a quick relief for the assistance-seeking citizen. In relation to the reactions towards the second given vignette describing a woman who has lost an arm an interesting pattern occurred. It shows that the social workers' clarification method differed according to the first given vignette and that this priming effect in most cases resulted in an opposite reaction to vignette C compared to the first reaction. A comparison of how these prime reactions looked like show that not only the outcome, but also the concrete aspects emphasized by

the social worker from vignette C, changed accordingly. The findings show the room of variation for the social workers' discretions, when they use mechanical based arguments to categorize assistance-seeking citizens.

Chapter 11: Conclusion

The conclusion puts the results into perspective of further studies and 'lessons learned'. The overall result is that social workers draw on both organic and mechanical solidarity perceptions in their arguments about categorization and clarification of assistance-seeking citizens. However, the study also shows that the mechanical solidarity perceptions and the stereotyped categorization practices dominate over organic solidarity perceptions and individualized categorization practice. In other words, the study shows that even though the social workers have both mechanical and organic solidarity perceptions, they more often use mechanical based arguments for stereotyped categorization practice. Trying to explain this pattern the study shows how the government rhetoric and the political tools to implement active social policies support a mechanical approach to assistance-seeking citizens by representing the relation between citizen and the state in a reciprocal 'quid pro quo' discourse. Generally, the social workers comply with this political intention of reading a mechanical logic of solidarity into their casework, because the political mechanical 'interpretation key' corresponds rather than conflicts with the social workers' feelings of 'deservingness' and communal values about work and assistance. However, the political intention to 'turn on' the mechanical solidarity perceptions of social workers, leaves the organic 'interpretation key' behind. The study shows that organic arguments for practice are only rarely activated when the social workers described their approach to citizen. The conclusion finally holds a reservation about letting stereotypes, which work through mechanical reasoning, dominate the way social workers are politically expected to meet the citizen: By letting stereotyped information influence the judgmental practice of our political system, we allow arbitrary criteria and particularistic policy preferences to determine the access to fundamental political and social rights to public support. This is because stereotypes work through over-determined associations of either positive or negative character and hence always overtrump the concrete experience and evaluation of the person in front of you. This contradicts with fundamental principles of equal access to treatments in the political system as well as with an objective based evaluation of – in this case – the assistance-seeking citizen's working capacities. When stereotyped associations take over the discretion it is no longer being based on a concrete experience of the citizen.

Dansk resume

Kapitel 1: Indledning

Denne afhandling handler om, hvordan offentlig politik påvirker markarbejdere i Danmark. Det er i markarbejdernes omdannelse af borgeres livshistorier til administrative velfærdsydelseskategorier, at de politiske beslutninger realiseres. Hvad er lovgivningens, den politiske diskurs' og de professionelle normers indvirkning på markarbejderne, når henholdsvis medfølelse og arbejdsforpligtelsen for andre skal bestemmes? Jeg fremsætter det argument, at blandt de faktorer, der påvirker markarbejdernes skøn, bør solidaritetsopfattelser ligeledes inkluderes. Det grundlæggende spørgsmål er, hvilken påvirkning solidaritetsopfattelser har på markarbejdernes udfoldelse af den gældende politik. Studiet fokuserer på socialpolitik og den offentlige administration af ledige og borgere, der søger om sygedagpenge og førtidspension.

Solidaritetsopfattelser spores og identificeres som symbolsk og metaforisk retorik om social sammenhængskraft, fællesskabsbehov og udtalelser om medfølelse og afhængighed mellem borgere og stat. Studiet præsenteres inden for den politiske ramme af de vestlige velfærdsstaters legitimitetskrise i almindelighed og inden for førtidspensionssystemer i særdeleshed. Hvordan omformes repræsentationer af sociale problemer til solidaritetsopfattelser, der påvirker udfoldelsen af politik overfor borgere, der søger hjælp? På et mere konkret plan er spørgsmålet, hvordan den faktiske administration af arbejdsløse borgere med helbredsproblemer foregår i en politisk æra, som domineres af en politisk repræsentation af solidaritet, der præsenterer samfundet som truet af individer, der bruger sygeroller til at få nem adgang til offentlige velfærdsydelser? Afhandlingen stiller det følgende spørgsmål: Hvilken indvirkning har denne opfattelse af bedrag, som forbinder årsager til stigende sygefravær med individuelle faktorer såsom 'viljen til at arbejde' og 'holdning til hele samfundet', på kategoriseringspraksis hos de socialarbejdere, som administrerer lovgivningen om sygedagpenge og aktiv socialpolitik.

Kapitel 2: Kategorisering og udførelse af politik i velfærdsstaten

Kapitel 2 beskriver hvilke aspekter af kategorisering den empiriske analyse søger at få hånd om. Litteraturen, der beskæftiger sig med, hvordan individer bedømmer hinanden, deler en fælles interesse for, hvad der definerer en bestemt kategorisering og hvordan og hvorfor den påvirker udvælgelsen af, hvad som regnes for legitime krav fra for eksempel borgere, der søger hjælp hos det offentlige. Teorierne om kategorisering er relateret til det argument at anse kategorisering som en social og politisk praksis, der bestemmer hvem som er 'inde' og 'ude' i forhold til bestemte rettigheder, forpligtelser og holdninger til, hvem der fortjener hvad. En adskillelse mellem 'fortjenstfuldhed'

og 'berettigelse' er blevet identificeret empirisk såvel som konkrete kriterier (alder, behov og gensidighed) typisk bruges i individers bedømmelse af andre individer.

Kapitel 3: Solidaritet og kategorisering

Formålet med kapitel 3 er tosidet: 1) At forklare hvorfor solidaritet fungerer som en identitets- og fællesskabsproducerende mekanisme og 2) at argumenter for, hvorfor solidaritet må defineres – ikke som en iboende normativ præference eller normativt indhold som sådan – men i stedet gennem dets potentiale til at repræsentere fællesskabsværdier og integrerende normative særtræk gennem institutioner såsom metaforer, symboler og retoriske udtalelser om social sammenhængskraft. Disse to fundamentale formål tjener som min generelle teoretiske ramme til at studere markarbejderes kategoriseringspraksis.

Kapitlet introducerer Durkheims teori om organisk og mekanisk solidaritetsformer såvel som relationen mellem disse begreber og kategoriseringskriterierne om fortjenstfuldhed og berettigelse. Argumentet er, at fortjenstfuldhed korrelerer med en mekanisk solidaritetsopfattelse og berettigelse med en organisk. Endvidere forklarer kapitlet hvilke specifikke træk og elementer i solidaritet, som jeg trækker ud af teorien. 'Kollektiv bevidsthed', 'social sammenhængskraft' og 'professionel etik' er de tre nøgleelementer, som jeg har i sinde at gøre operationelle som mål for solidaritet i de empiriske studier.

Kapitel 4: Solidaritet i velfærdsstaten

Kapitel 4 fokuserer på at forklare hvordan centrale aspekter af solidaritet ser ud til at spille en rolle i studier af skatteforhold, velfærdsfordeling og inden for reciprocitetsstudier. Endvidere introducerer kapitlet velfærdsstatsforskning, som skelner mellem tre velfærdsstatsmodeller med hver sit fundament for social sammenhængskraft i samfundet. I den såkaldt residuelle model, er velfærdsydelser tiltænkt en udvalgt befolkningsgruppe frem for alle borgere, som det er tilfældet i den universelle og den forsikringsbaserede model.

I forlængelse heraf, giver kapitlet også eksempler på forskellige målinger af solidaritet. En type måling søger at måle solidaritet gennem korporative strukturer og støtte til serviceinstitutioner. En anden type søger at indfange individuel solidaritet gennem måling af 'fortjenstfuldhed' og udbredelsen af privat velgørenhed og frivilligt arbejde i samfundet. For at spore, hvordan solidaritet har betydning i den almindelige kategoriseringspraksis i disse velfærdsstatsmodeller, er målingen af solidaritet vigtig for at rammesætte studiet af, hvad der sker på markarbejderniveau.

Kapitel 5: Velfærdsprogrammet aktiv socialpolitik

I kapitel 5 relateres det politiske og institutionelle klima i det danske velfærdsprogram aktiv socialpolitik til både de velfærdsstatsmodeller beskrevet i kapitel 4 og til teorien om solidaritet i kapitel 3. Endvidere er formålet med kapitlet at beskrive konteksten inden for hvilken socialarbejderne administrerer aktiv socialpolitik. De to love, der regulerer administrationen af syge og ledige borgere, der søger hjælp, beskrives i forhold til henholdsvis et forsikringsbaseret, korporativt og organisk baseret velfærdsregime og et residuelt, gensidigt og mekanisk baseret velfærdsregime. Det forventes at disse formelle regler betinger relationen mellem socialarbejdernes solidaritetsopfattelser og kategoriseringspraksis på en måde, hvor organisk baserede praksisargumenter er fremherskende under den korporative lovgivning af sygedagpenge og mekanisk baserede argumenter under den residuelle lovgivning af aktiv socialpolitik.

Kapitlet afsluttes med spørgsmålet om, hvad der sker med variationen i solidaritet og kategorisering, når de omfordelende institutioner i et samfund er universelle, men når bestemte velfærdsprogrammer er forsikringsbaserede eller residuelle og regeringsdiskursen repræsenterer sociale problemer af en mekanisk natur, hvilket manifesterer en gensidig relation mellem 'os og dem'.

Kapitel 6: Forskningsdesign, dataindsamling og databehandling

Kapitel 6 beskriver den empiriske måling af solidaritetsopfattelse og kategoriseringspraksis. Desuden forklarer kapitlet argumenterne for udvælgelsen af smertefortællinger som en egnet case til at undersøge i særdeleshed mekanisk solidaritetsopfattelse. Kapitlet beskriver desuden forskningsdesignet, udvælgelsen af cases (24 socialarbejdere), dataindsamlingen (interviewguiden) og analyseprocessen såvel som arbejdet med at forøge analysens robusthed. Designet og dataindsamlingen indbefatter brugen af vignetter med henblik på at øge studiets interne validitet. Kapitlet beskriver metodologien i *cross-case* og *within-case* analyser som er de to analysestrategier, der anvendes i de empiriske studier.

Kapitel 7: Kategoriseringspraksis blandt markarbejdere

Socialarbejdernes kategoriseringspraksis analyseres i kapitel 7. Analysen af kategoriseringspraksis viser at der er en variation, både inden for og imellem interviewene. Forskellen i kategoriseringspraksis måles på et kontinuum mellem den individualitets- og den stereotypdominerede praksis. På dette kontinuum anvender majoriteten af interviewne (19 ud af 24) en praksis tættest ved den stereotypdominerende ende og kun fem interviews anvender en praksis tættest ved den individualitetsdominerende ende.

Den indholdsmæssige forskel mellem to praksisformer var grundlæggende afspejlet i den måde, hvorpå socialarbejderen opfattede formålet med afklaring af arbejdsevnen hos den borger, som søgte hjælp. Enten blev udredningsmetoderne anset som et redskab til at dokumentere en allerede gennemført stereotyp kategorisering af borgeren eller de blev anset som et redskab i en individualiseret praksis til at indsamle yderligere information om borgeren.

Kapitel 8: Fællesskabsorienteringer og kategoriseringspraksis

I kapitel 8 identificeres og analyseres socialarbejderens indikerede solidaritetsopfattelser i relation til deres kategoriseringspraksis. Det generelle billede er, at opfattelser, som involverer en dominerende mekanisk fællesskabsorientering korrelerer med en stereotypdomineret kategoriseringspraksis, mens opfattelser, der involverer en dominerende organisk fællesskabsorientering korrelerer med individualitetsdomineret kategoriseringspraksis. Relationerne mellem mekanisk formede opfattelser og stereotyp kategoriseringspraksis er imidlertid mere fremherskende end relationerne mellem organisk formede opfattelser og individualiseret praksis. Analysens bundlinje er, at måden hvorpå solidaritetsopfattelser måles i dette kapitel – som et spørgsmål om fællesskabsorientering – relaterer sig meget til den forventede kategoriseringspraksis. Den betingede effekt af formelle regler er imidlertid mindre tydelig. Der ser ud til at være en tendens til, at organisk fællesskabsorientering og individualiseret praksis trives bedre under reglerne om kontanthjælp, mens relationen mellem mekanisk fællesskabsorientering og en stereotyp kategoriseringspraksis er fremherskende blandt socialarbejdere, der administrerer lovgivning om sygedagpenge. En sammenligning af formelle regler og de konkrete argumenter for kategoriseringspraksis bekræfter denne tendens.

Kapitel 9: Professionelle normer og kategoriseringspraksis

I kapitel 9 identificeres og analyseres socialarbejdernes brug af professionelle normer som endnu en indikator for solidaritetsopfattelse. Her udgør konkrete udsagn om socialarbejdernes brug af deres professionelle normer målingen af solidaritet. Forskellene mellem socialarbejdernes henvisninger til deres professionelle normer identificeres som forskelle mellem henholdsvis en administrativ og en socialpædagogisk professionel norm. En socialpædagogisk norm identificeres som trækkende på en organisk solidaritet, mens en administrativ norm identificeres som trækkende på en mekanisk solidaritetslogik. Relationerne mellem solidaritetsopfattelser og kategoriseringspraksis sammenlignes igen med formelle regler med henblik på at undersøge, hvorvidt de betinger disse relationer. Analysen understøtter den tendens, der blev indikeret i kapi-

tel 8, til at socialarbejdernes opfattelser af organisk og mekanisk solidaritet og den korresponderende individualiserede og stereotype kategoriseringspraksis formes af formelle regler.

Den overordnede konklusion fra kapitel 9 er, at mekaniske solidaritetsopfattelser dominerer når socialarbejdere forklarer hvorfor og hvordan de placerer individer i forskellige kategorier af privilegier og forpligtelser. Fra analysen fremgår det, at formelle regler har betydning i forhold til hvilken praksis der opmuntres til.

Kapitel 10: Smertestereotyper og udredningspraksis

Kapitel 10 undersøger de mekanisk baserede argumenter for en stereotyp praksis, som kapitel 8 og 9 viste var fremherskende overfor organisk baserede argumenter. Dette gøres gennem endnu en sporing af solidaritet og kategoriseringspraksis, nemlig socialarbejdernes reaktioner på stereotype smertefortællinger og deres efterfølgende foretrukne valg af udredningsmetode. Kapitel 10 er således et særligt studie af det teoretiske argument og har en anderledes analysestruktur end de foregående tre kapitler og analyser.

Forskellene i kategoriseringspraksis måles ved socialarbejdernes brug af udredningsmetoder i fiktive cases (vignette A: Fibromyalgi, vignette B: dissemineret sclerose og vignette C: en manglende arm). Vignetterne blev konstrueret som genkendelige stereotyper med forskellige omstridte og ikke-omstridte diagnoser, men som havde det til fælles, at de alle led af kronisk smerte. Socialarbejderne distancerede sig fra den omstridte smerte beskrevet i fibromyalgivignetten ved at referere til mistanken om simulerende personer med en 'skjult dagsorden' for at opnå gratis politiske og sociale rettigheder, mens de knyttede sig anderledes kategorisk til den ikke-omstridte multiple sclerose vignette.

I det første tilfælde anvender de udredningsmetoder til at afprøve smertens 'realiteter', mens de i det andet tilfælde udreder med henblik på at foranstalte en hurtig sagsgang for den borger, der søger hjælp. I forhold til reaktioner på vignette C, der beskrev en kvinde, som havde mistet en arm og som socialarbejderne modtog efter enten vignette A eller B, gjorde et interessant mønster sig gældende. Det viste, at socialarbejdernes udredningsmetoder var forskellige afhængige af, hvilken vignette de modtog først og at denne *priming* effekt i de fleste tilfælde resulterede i, at socialarbejderne reagerede modsat på vignette C i forhold til reaktion på den første vignette. En sammenligning af disse reaktioner viser, at ikke kun udfaldet, men også de konkrete aspekter, som socialarbejderen lagde vægt på, skiftede tilsvarende. Analysen viser variationsrummet for socialarbejdernes skøn, når de gør brug af mekanisk baserede argumenter til at kategoriserer borgere, der søger hjælp.

Kapitel 11: Konklusion

Konklusionen sætter resultaterne i perspektiv af andre studier og erfaringer. Det overordnede resultat er, at socialarbejdere trækker på både organiske og mekaniske solidaritetsopfattelser i deres argumenter for kategorisering og udredning af borgere, der søger hjælp. Imidlertid viser studiet også at den mekaniske solidaritetsopfattelse og den stereotype kategoriseringspraksis dominerer i forhold til organisk solidaritetsopfattelse og individualiseret kategoriseringspraksis. Med andre ord, viser studiet at selvom socialarbejderne har både mekaniske og organiske solidaritetsopfattelser, anvender de oftere mekanisk baserede argumenter for en stereotyp kategoriseringspraksis. Med henblik på at forklare dette mønster viser studiet, hvordan regeringens retorik og de politiske redskaber til at implementere aktiv socialpolitik, understøtter en mekanisk tilgang til borgere, som søger hjælp, ved at repræsentere forholdet mellem borger og stat som en gensidigt 'noget for noget' diskurs. Generelt retter socialarbejderne sig efter denne politiske intention i forhold til at læse en mekanisk solidaritetslogik ind i deres sagsbehandling, fordi den politiske mekaniske 'fortolkningsnøgle' harmonerer med socialarbejdernes følelser af 'fortjenstfuldhed' og fællesskabsværdier om arbejde og hjælp, snarere end er i konflikt med dem. Den politiske intention med at 'antænde' mekaniske solidaritetsopfattelser blandt socialarbejderne, efterlader imidlertid den organiske 'forståelsesnøgle'. Studiet viser, at organiske praksisargumenter kun sjældent aktiveres når socialarbejderne beskriver deres tilgang til borgerne.

Til slut forholder konklusionen sig tilbageholdende overfor at lade stereotyper, som fungerer gennem mekaniske argumentationskæder, dominere den måde, hvorpå socialarbejdere politisk forventes at møde borgeren: Ved at lade stereotyp information påvirke skønspraksis i vores politiske system, tillader vi arbitrære kriterier og særlige politiske præferencer at determinere adgangen til fundamentale politiske og sociale rettigheder til offentlig støtte. Dette skyldes, at stereotyper fungerer gennem overdeterminerede associationer af enten positiv eller negativ karakter og dermed altid overtrumfer den konkrete erfaring og bedømmelse af den person, som sidder foran dig. Dette modsiger fundamentale principper om lige adgang til behandling i det politiske system såvel som en objektivt baseret vurdering af – i dette tilfælde – arbejdsevnen hos den borger, som søger hjælp. Når stereotype associationer overtager skønsudøvelsen er den ikke længere baseret på en konkret erfaring hos borgeren.