CONTENTIOUS POLITICS AND THE WELFARE STATE

SQUATTING IN SWEDEN

Dominika V. Polanska

Contentious Politics and the Welfare State

This book outlines the history of squatting in Sweden and analyzes the conditions under which squatting has intensified and declined in the country between 1968 and 2017. With close attention to the relationship between civil society and the state in the Swedish context, and the manner in which this relationship, together with attendant political, media and movement-based discourses, shapes the possibilities that exist for collective action, the author draws on two key concepts   those of *the narrative of consensus* and *discourse*   to present an analysis of squatting as a form of contentious politics and the "successful" story of civil society development as decisive for its emergence and development in the country. A study of the way in which confrontational actors question both the property relations inherent in capitalism and the authority of the welfare state and its institutions, *Contentious Politics and the Welfare State* will appeal to social scientists with interests in urban studies, political sociology, squatting, social movements and the relationship between the welfare state and contentious social actors.

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Contentious Politics and the Welfare State

Squatting in Sweden

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To Miguel

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Introduction

Squatting is the use of property without authorization. It is used both as a means in collective struggles (for a more just city) and as an end in itself (to meet immediate housing, social and cultural needs). The history of squatting dates back to the very beginning of human existence, as land takeovers and land occupations have been an inescapable part of our culture. Today as many as a billion people are squatting all over the world (Manjikian 2013); however, only the urban form of squatting will be the focus of this book. It is the squatting that is pursued openly by collective actors in urban areas and that is often criticizing welfare and housing policies for their insufficiency alongside what has been called *accumulation by dispossession* by David Harvey (2004). It is anti-capitalist per se in its character. Urban squatting has been described by scholars as enabling and providing self-help (Katz & Mayer 1985), providing housing alternatives (Wates 1980), expressing a do-it-yourself culture (McKay 1998), a struggle for a better society (Kallenberg 2001), a manifestation of political/ideological activism (Della Porta & Rucht 1995; Katsiaficas 1997), or as a response to housing deprivation and problems inherent in neoliberal capitalism (Squatting Europe Kollective 2013; Squatting Europe Kollective 2014).

Squatting is self-organized collective action where the taking over of a building (or land) is a means or/and an end in itself. Squatting is an inherently political practice as it challenges the way that urban goods are managed and distributed in the capitalist order. The political character of squatting was accurately articulated in the work of Rowan Tallis Milligan claiming that "all squatting is inherently political as it challenges ownership of property and the authority of the state in allocating housing, and forces confrontation with the state" (Milligan 2016: 8). This view of squatting as a political practice does not deny that some squatters are not explicitly politically motivated, but rather focuses on the effects of squatting practices as fundamentally political in the sense that they result in contesting property relations and their regulation established in capitalist societies. What makes squatting interesting to study is, apart from its essentially political character, the fact that it points to the shortcomings of capitalist democracies in its critique of prevalent inequalities and current forms of democracy.

In Sweden, the first squatting actions occurred in the late 1960s, at the same time as in Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and the US (Corr 1999; Martínez López 2013; Squatting Europe Kollective 2013; Squatting Europe Kollective 2014; Thörn et al. 2011). Nevertheless, squatting developed differently in Sweden and although squatting attempts intensified in the 1970s-1980s, and in the 2000s, none of the squats lasted for a long period of time (never longer than three years). Sweden has had an exceptional history in what is commonly referred to the "Swedish model" or, simply put, a form of corporatist capitalism, a hybrid of capitalism and socialism, combining market mechanisms with extensive welfare provision and corporatism. Squatting in Sweden has occurred, although it has been short-term and in the eyes of the public was seen as incompatible with the well-developed welfare provision in the country.

The long tradition of this kind of socioeconomic model in Sweden has promoted a generous welfare state and economic tripartism (Rothstein 1992) and has resulted in exceptionally high public trust towards the state and its institutions (Trägårdh 2007). Against this background, squatters' claims about insufficient welfare provision and social injustices have had a hard time attracting support. Moreover, I would like to argue in this book that the close relationship between the Swedish state and civil society, in what has been called the corporatist model emphasizing negotiation, compromise and consensus, has circumscribed the possibility of collective actors making contentious claims. A narrative of consensus has characterized the relationship between social movements and civil society and the state, which has a very ambivalent relation to extra-parliamentary political actions (Brink-Pinto, Ericsson & Nyzell 2016).

Historians have shown that Swedish Social democracy has built its identity on the narrative of consensus, stressing the role of history writing in the process (Linderborg 2001; Johansson 2001). Even if the very origins of the Social Democratic Party are to be found in extra-parliamentary actions, the narrative of peaceful negotiations and consensual methods has been emphasized since the 1920s. This powerful narrative has permeated the spheres of both politics and research, resulting in Sweden being described as having "a particularly vibrant form of participatory and deliberative democracy, in which the free associations   not least the unions, the cooperative movement, and the employers' organizations   co-govern Swedish society in close but free cooperation with the representatives of the state" (Trägårdh 2007: 2).

But dominant narratives, or discourses, are not static and change over time. Discourses refer to the structured ways of speaking and writing about an issue and shape what in the specific national or local context is perceived as "reasonable" and "legitimate". What is more important is that discourses are often differing and are involved in a struggle for dominance, supported by contesting ideologies (Wodak & Meyer 2009). How this narrative of consensus affects the way that squatting is conceived in Sweden is therefore interesting to study in more detail. How has the ambivalent approach to extra-parliamentary actions

among the Social Democrats, but also other political parties, been formulated in relation to squatting in political debates? How is squatting portrayed in media representations? How do squatters themselves contest and challenge dominant views?

The aim of the book is to analyze discourses on squatting in the country between 1968 and 2017 in the light of the dominant narrative of consensus. Sweden is renowned among scholars for its highly developed egalitarian, multicultural and tolerant welfare state. However, in the case of squatting, the attitude of state authorities has been rather repressive, or "exclusionist" in the terminology of Mary Manjikian (2013), and recently has focused on the labelling of squatting as a "security issue". The existing studies on the topic are local and mainly concern squatting in the 1980s and/or 1990s, rather than examining subsequent developments or providing an overall view, unfortunately resulting in a fragmented picture of squatting in the country. The aim is therefore to give a fuller picture of squatting in Sweden and to discuss the role of discourses in its development.

Discourse is here defined as "language use in speech and writing" (Fairclough & Wodak 1997: 258) and is, in accordance with critical discourse analysis (CDA), regarded as an expression of social practice. Discourses are emphasized as crucial to the development of squatting in Sweden, as they produce and reproduce dominant views on the very practice of squatting as well as the actors behind it. Language is regarded by critical discourse analysts as reproducing relations of power, or social dominance, and producing divisions that are used for the purposes of (for instance) social distancing. Language is therefore crucial to study in order to understand how we make sense of the world and what purposes some of the categorizations and distinctions serve.

Furthermore, following Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow, the kind of urban squatting studied here is conceptualized as contentious politics, namely "interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties" (Tilly & Tarrow 1998: 4). In the Swedish case, contentious politics describe squatting politics more accurately than the concept of social movement, as squatting actions have been used in the country in a less sustained manner (Tarrow 2013) or as a tool or a technique of disruptive action (Tilly & Wood 2009). Thus, the study will focus on how the subjects and objects of contention are connected and in particular the connection between the contentious actors and the Swedish welfare state and its institutions, by examining discourses and the use of language. Most often, scholars discuss squatting as either needs-based or political. In this book, however, it will be argued that squatting is fundamentally political as it is confrontational in nature and questions the authority of the state and property relations inherent in capitalism (cf. Milligan 2016).

Welfare state and the formation of consensus discourse

Researchers have shown that the historical development of the relation between the Swedish state and the labor movement created a model for how the interaction and cooperation of the state and civil society should work (Trägårdh 1999; Rothstein & Trägårdh 2007; Wijkström 2013). The corporatist order "has resulted in a fundamental consensus between the parties of the state and civil society" including "a myriad of informal and implicit" agreements (Reuter 2013: 224). Scholars have argued for different starting dates for the "Swedish model" in the beginning of the twentieth century and it is not the aim of this book to settle that discussion. What is interesting is that this development in the twentieth century has resulted in an unclear distinction between the state and civil society in Sweden. This has made scholars wonder "why in Sweden the boundary between state and civil society is so blurred and permeable that until very recently the Swedish word 'society' (*samhälle*) was used to describe both 'state' and '(civil) society'" (Rothstein & Trägårdh 2007: 231) and to introduce conceptualizations on how to understand this "symbiotic interdependence" between the Swedish state and civil society (Wijkström 2013). In the governmental study called *Democracy investigation* (*Demokratiutredningen*) initiated in the late 1990s researchers were puzzled by this close development in Sweden:

> If it is now that the classic Swedish people's movements, which were oppositional and explicitly political, no longer exist, how should you interpret this? As a sign that the state has colonized society? Or as proof that citizens now have so many peaceful, commonplace and dull channels to participate in the democratic process that they no longer need "desperate measures"?
>
> (Trägårdh 1999: 21)

"Desperate measures" were perceived as remnants from the past and were from this point of view not associated with democratic procedures. Social movements, commonly called the popular movements (*folkrörelser*),[1] were conceived as important contributors to the democratic development in the country while at the same time warning flags were raised by researchers on these movements' tendency towards depoliticization and loss of oppositional spirit in their striving for consensus (Pettersson 1998). The influence of popular movements on the democratization process and the self-image of Sweden cannot be understated:

> The principle of popular organization did not merely stimulate the democratic process in the country, but it defined   if not created   the still prevailing notion of civil society and it provoked the whole nation into forming a new image of itself. The Swedish collective identity has been coloured by the association system, a system that more or less from the beginning was directed towards the creation of a collective feeling of "we".
>
> (Pettersson 1998: 87)

The "spirit of consensus" (*samförståndsanda*) is an important feature of the Swedish collective identity and has become a notion in Sweden that permeates not only the relation between the state and civil society, but most spheres of society. The spirit of consensus is associated with the building of the People's Home (*Folkhemmet*) in the country since the 1930s, the Social Democratic notion of an inclusive society, and the necessary compromises and negotiations made between the labor movement, the state, political parties, employers' organizations, trade unions, and other important collective actors in the field of labor and welfare policy. The spirit of consensus refers to the common interests of different collective actors and their will to reach general agreement through negotiation instead of using confrontational or disruptive methods. It is closely related with the still active *Saltsjöbaden agreement* reached in 1938 where the employers' organizations (SAF) and the Labor union (LO) agreed to a set of rules of how to avoid conflict and cooperate on the labor market. The agreement has become a template for later agreements and cooperation between instances on the labor market and set the foundation for the popularization of the spirit of consensus in the country. Contentious issues were to be dealt with negotiation first and foremost.

The spirit of consensus is part of what has been called the "Social Democratic people's movement idealism" or the "People's movement civil society" (Trägårdh 1999; Antman 1993) stressing the close link between the state and civil society in the history of democratization in Sweden and its, not always, positive outcomes on the democratic organization and composition of participants in civil society organizations. Moreover, this idealism about the role of Social Democracy and civil society in the creation of the Swedish welfare state has had a considerable effect on the norms guiding Swedish political culture and the perception of how conflicts should be dealt with and what political methods are legitimate. Moreover, as will be demonstrated later on in the book, the position of the Social Democratic Party on some particular political issues has been intrinsically important in setting and consolidating the agenda.

According to Helmut Anheier, civil society "is self-organization of society outside the stricter realms of state power and market interests" (Anheier 2013: 83) which consists of institutions, organizations and individuals situated between the sphere of the state, market and family. Anheier emphasizes that civil society is not a separate sphere, but permeates the spheres of state, market and family as it is constituted in relation to these spheres (Figure 0.1). In international research, this relation has often been described as oppositional (ibid.: 82). In the Swedish case, it seems it has had a somewhat different character. In light of this, this study investigates how the rules, norms and expectations of political methods and legitimate political actors are negotiated. In public discourse and civil society research, collective actors using confrontational methods are either seen as representing deficient modes of participation in civil society or are simply ignored due to a common conception that they should not be included in the definition of civil society. Hence, squatting is in this study

CIVIL SOCIETY:

Institutions

Organizations

Individuals

STATE:
- National and local
governments
- Police
- Enforcement authority

MARKET:
- Developers
- Private housing
companies

PRIVATE SPHERE
- Families, friends,
neighbours
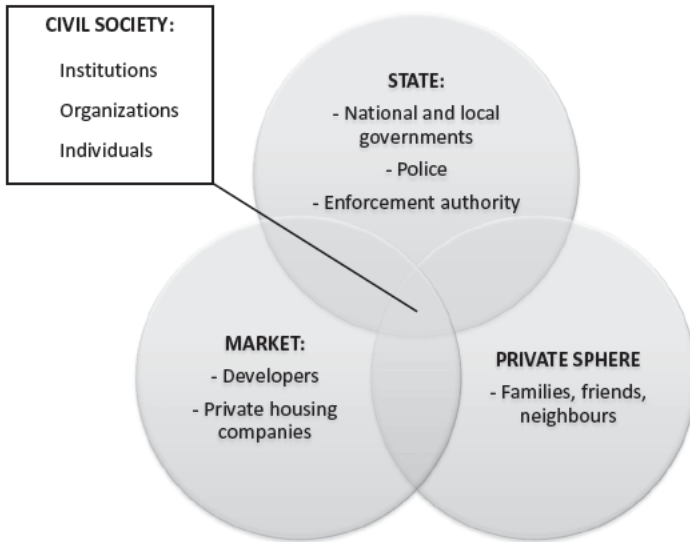
Figure 0.1 Civil society as permeating the spheres of state, market and family/private
sphere.

explicitly defined as part of what in sociological research is conceptualized as
civil society. Squatting is a practice that is inherently oppositional and poli-
tical in its goals. In the Swedish case, as will be shown in this book, it is
practiced throughout by collective actors with political agendas. In particular,
the discourses developed about the role and functioning of civil society in
relation to democracy and the welfare state will be in focus, problematizing
how specific conceptualizations legitimize power use and abuse and facilitate
the re(production) of other marginalizing and delegitimizing discourses.

Squatting in Sweden 1968–2017

Despite the normative discourse on what political methods are legitimate in
the Swedish context, urban squatting has occurred in the country since 1968,
when the first known collective attempt to occupy a building was made
public. The objective is to paint a broad picture of squatting including the
main actors behind squatting, the types of buildings and the waves of squat-
ting in the country. However, before explaining who squats and what is
squatted in Sweden I would like to discuss some general observations I made
when mapping and doing research on squatting in the country. One most
basic observation is that squatting seems to be recurrent, but tends not to last
for longer periods, if compared to other countries in Europe. The urban form
of squatting studied here started off simultaneously with many other western
European countries, but did not develop in the same manner in Sweden.

Geographically it is clear that squatting actions have over time moved from the city centers (with some exceptions) to the suburbs and in some degree from cities to peripheral locations/towns. While most of the squatting actions were geographically located in the inner-cities from the late 1960s to the 1980s, they began to move away from them in the 1990s and definitely in the 2000s. Very simply one could say that a large part of squatting events in Sweden have occurred in the same spaces as urban renewal projects or processes of gentrification and welfare cuts. However, as will be shown later on, the history of squatting in Sweden has not just been a history of contesting housing and urban policies by standing in the way of displacement and campaigning for affordable housing. It has also drawn attention to and challenged inequalities in welfare service provision and social rights.

In the second decade of the 2000s, squatting continued to take place across Sweden and there was broad acceptance in the media, especially left-leaning or local. One of the most renowned squats was the Dorotea healthcare center (*Dorotea sjukstuga*), which was squatted in January 2012 and lasted for over three years and three months, becoming the most long-lasting squatting action in Swedish history. During this period, an important factor in the nuancing of attitudes towards squatting in the media, but also among the wider public, was the access to and growing popularity of social media and in particular Facebook, which could be used by the squatting activists to spread the message behind their action to the wider public on their own, without the help of the mainstream media or through other channels. An observable trend in the 2000s was also the "popularization" of squatting as a protest method for groups of workers, homeless, residents of small towns, and middle-class families. Groups of workers lacking payment occupied a local construction site (2008 in Stockholm), homeless occupied a shelter that was closed (2014 in Helsingborg), another homeless group occupied an empty building (2012 and 2016 in Stockholm), middle-class families occupied the maternity ward in a well-off area in Stockholm as a protest against its closure (2016), along with the occupation of the health care center of Dorotea (2012 2015) and Sollefteå maternity ward (2017). Even if it has not been uncommon that homeless groups have occupied empty buildings before, in the 2000s several of these actions were widely publicized and not meant as covert actions, rather as politically motivated protest actions. All events where buildings (and not land) have been occupied collectively (and not individually) and announced publically (and thus not covert) are of interest in this book.

Generally, since the 1960s waves of squatting were closely followed by waves of police violence and militarization. This was especially evident in the 1980s, mid-1990s and late 1990s. This culminated in the violent clashes between the activists and the police during the World Summit meeting in Gothenburg in 2001, an event called in the popular history "the Gothenburg uprisings" (*Göteborgskravallerna*). In the media reports following the violent encounters, the backgrounds of several activists arrested during this event were revealed and they were represented as former squatters. Most importantly, the debate

revolved around the anti-democratic character of disruptive and confronta-
tional politics. A media debate on the use of police violence followed the
"uprisings", a discussion similar to the one that followed eviction of several
squats in the 1980s. Many of the journalists present witnessed exaggerated
violence and militarization of the police in both periods. I would like to argue
that the critical discussion of the violent methods used by the police in the
events of 2001 opened up the way for a different interpretation of the squatting
wave of 2008 2009. The less confrontational and more cautious tactics used by
the police during this wave made a mark on the media reports that tended to
depict a more nuanced picture of squatting than ever before. However, the
tendency of the media to only report on the opening and eviction of squats,
or the initial and final phase of squatting, remained (see more in Chapter 2).

   Since the beginning of urban squatting in Sweden, connections to the
squatting groups in Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands have been
common (see Chapter 1). In the 2000s, even more European countries joined
the list of "friendly" squatting connections. Also, squatting in other countries
has been depicted by Swedish squatters as a source of inspiration. Visits to
squats abroad and visits by squatters from other countries were often used to
organize meetings where experiences were shared and compared. In some
cases even a "squatting festival" was held to celebrate the visit (see more in
Chapters 4 and 5).

   Another important general observation, which is explored in more detail in
the following chapters, is that squatting has recurrently been regarded as a
threat to democracy and the democratic order by politicians, representatives of
the civil society and the media since the first squatting action in 1968.
Squatting as a method has been discussed predominantly in negative terms and
the main argument against it has been that it does not respect established
democratic ways of action. Squatters have been told to engage in party politics
or voluntary organizations in order to pursue their political goals. Squatting
and other extra-parliamentary methods have been deemed anti-democratic and
thus illegitimate. However, there are some exceptions to how squatters have
been treated by the media and the authorities. Such exceptions are observable
in the cases when squatters have demanded spaces for cultural activities and
been persistent in their struggle and able to attract wider support for their
cause. In some cases this has resulted in legalized solutions   that is, renting
spaces legally in cooperation with the local authorities. One such example is the
cultural association *Kulturmejeriet* that started out with several squatting
actions in Lund and resulted in an established cultural space in 1987. Another
example is a more recent one, the association *Kulturkampanjen*, where similar
demands for a free space for social and cultural activities were raised in
Stockholm in a set of occupations in 2003 and led to the construction and
consolidation of the social and cultural center *Cyklopen* in 2013.

   Most of the squatted buildings in the history of squatting in Sweden have
been demolished shortly after the squatters have been evicted, in some cases
just hours or days after the eviction. This strategy could be interpreted as an

important part of the repression of squatting in the country making the possibility of reoccupation impossible. Illustrative examples of quick demolition of a previously squatted building were *Borgen* in Malmö in 1990 (Figure 0.2), where the building was destroyed the next day or the case of *Mullvaden* in Stockholm in 1978, where the demolition of the buildings began just two hours after the eviction. In 2009, the occupation of the bath house *Aspuddsbadet*, a local swimming pool in Stockholm lasted two months and the building was demolished the day after the eviction of the activists (DN 2009-12-10).

However, some squatted buildings have been preserved due to squatting actions that critiqued the demolition of fully functional buildings in times of housing shortage. One such example is the squatting of *Kvarteret Utkiken* in Stockholm in 1990, which resulted in the preservation of three buildings that have been self-managed by the tenants until this day (see http://sverigesradio.se/sida/avsnitt/876092?programid=3103). In the case of several buildings occupied in Stockholm in 1985 1986 by a group "of punks and political activists":

> All the houses in addition to the old Central Hotel on Vasagatan still remain today. If it is because of our occupations, we leave it unsaid, except in the case of the Borgerskapets Enkehus, on Norrtullsgatan 45, which was to be demolished. It is thanks to us that the house is still there today.
>
> (http://vart80tal.se/info.html)

Figure 0.2 Borgen squatted in Malmö in 1990.
Photo: Salka Sandén

Yet another example is the area of Haga in Gothenburg, which has experienced several squatting actions since the 1970s against the plan of urban clearance and where the squatters' actions managed to protect the area from demolition, if not from gentrification (Thörn 2012). The squatters of *Mullvaden* in Stockholm in 1977 1978 claimed that a part of the demolition plans of the area around Hornstull was stopped by their occupation and their demands for more extensive examination of the technical conditions (Berg 1978).

Waves of squatting

The squatting of buildings in Sweden has happened since 1968, and has spread to different cities and towns across the country (Table 0.1). It has been time-consuming work to map squatting events in Sweden from scratch and it seems that it is a never-ending work (Figure 0.3). The presentation of squatting in this section is based on a collaborative online mapping project I have been involved with (published on www.maps.squat.net/en/cities).

The three cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Lund have had frequent squatting actions since at least the 1970s (or late 1960s), even if the squatted buildings were usually occupied for a shorter period of time than their European counterparts. All cities are located in the southern part of Sweden, but at several hours' drive from each other. Stockholm and Gothenburg are the biggest cities in Sweden, while Lund is the twelve largest city in the country with a large population of students. The repression met by the squatters, but also the measures taken towards the occupied buildings after their eviction usually leading to a fast demolition   contributed to the small-scale development of squatting in the country. As the repression of squatting is discussed later on in this book, I focus here on briefly describing the two waves of squatting in Sweden, when squatting actions reached their peak in numbers. The two periods are the years around mid-1980s and the years 2008 2009 (Figure 0.4).

In the late 1960s, squatting actions were undertaken in Stockholm and Lund. The students of Stockholm University occupied the premises of the students' union in 1968 and several occupations were held in Lund in 1969 planned by students, but quickly joined by other groups with the common claim of an "all-activity house" (allaktivitetshus), meaning a space for social and cultural activities which was self-managed by the activists. In the following decade, squatting spread to other cities, occurring in Gothenburg, Helsingborg, Karlstad, Malmö, Norrköping, and in the smaller locations of Markitta and Lerum. In 1977, one of the most renowned squatting actions took place in Stockholm, the squatting of the residential building *Mullvaden*, which lasted for eleven months in the area of Södermalm. The duration of the squat, combined with a discussion on urban planning and housing policies and the lack of affordable housing and spaces for activities created a favorable atmosphere in the public discourse in subsequent years (see more detailed description of the media discourse in Chapter 2). The cities of Stockholm and

Table 0.1 Years and locations of squatting actions in Sweden, 1968–2017.

Year	Location
1968	Kårhusockupationen, Stockholm
1969	Västra Mårtensgatan, Lund Kiliansgatan, Lund Råbygatan, Lund
1970	Gamla Bro, Stockholm Haga/Pilgatan, Gothenburg
1972	Jova, Stockholm Hagahuset, Gothenburg Markitta
1974	Hedefors, Lerum
1976	Victoriabiografen, Malmö
1977	Hamburgerbryggeriets disponentvilla, Stockholm Kv. Mullvaden, Stockholm Karlstad
1978	Tomtebogatan, Stockholm Kv. Lustgården, Gothenburg Helsingborg Kv. Barken; Norrköping
1979	Oasen, Stockholm Kv. Järnet, Stockholm Socialstyrelsen, Stockholm Elisabethsjukhuset, Uppsala
1980	Bellmansgatan, Stockholm Götgatan, Stockholm Stora Södergatan, Lund Ronneby Slottskällans badhus, Uppsala
1981	Skola, Rimbo Eisers fabrik, Sollefteå
1982	Husargatan, Gothenburg Nygatan, Umeå Brandstationen, Jönköping Föreningsgatan, Malmö Knutsgatan, Västerås
1983	Gula Villan, Umeå Villa Skalet, Helsingborg Österportsskolan, Landskrona
1984	Gamla mejeriet, Lund
1985	Skaraborgsgatan, Stockholm Drottninggatan, Stockholm Socialstyrelsen, Stockholm

Table 0.1 (Cont.)

Year	Location
1986	Drottninggatan, Stockholm Borgarskapets Enkehus, Stockholm Bromstensvillan, Stockholm Luntmakargatan, Stockholm Järntorget, Gothenburg Mellangatan, Gothenburg Kv. Sabeln, Gothenburg Kv. Kruttornet, Gothenburg Nygatan, Örebro
1987	Tavastgatan, Stockholm Kv. Furiren, Gothenburg
1988	Klevgränd, Stockholm Ultrahuset/Handen, Stockholm Kindstugatan; Stockholm Sprängkullsgatan, Gothenburg Helsingborg Skola, Norrtälje Bäverns gränd, Uppsala
1989	Centralhotellet; Stockholm Markan, Hässleholm Gillberska huset, Uppsala
1990	Kv. Utkiken, Stockholm Folkungagatan, Stockholm Landsvägsgatan, Gothenburg Färjenäs, Gothenburg Borgen, Malmö Storgatan, Umeå
1991	Kommendörsgatan, Stockholm Teatergatan, Stockholm Folkungagatan, Stockholm Teaterkompaniet, Gothenburg
1994	Barbahuset, Stockholm Hässelby, Stockholm Rålambsvägen, Stockholm Västra Utanbygatan, Västerås Kulturhuset Viktoria, Örebro
1995	Vilda Villerkulla, Stockholm Bryggeriet, Alingsås Viskafors, Borås
1996	Bryggeriet, Alingsås
1997	Alsnögatan, Stockholm Tullpackshuset, Gothenburg
1999	Beckomberga, Stockholm
2000	Svedmyra, Stockholm Gamla Westmanska BB, Linköping

Table 0.1 (Cont.)

Year	Location
2002	Ystadgatan, Malmö Rasmusgatan, Malmö Lönngatan, Malmö Grängesberg
2003	SVT, Stockholm Industrigatan, Malmö Kvinnohuset, Umeå
2004	Albano smide, Stockholm Telefonplan, Stockholm
2005	Visby
2007	Solna, Stockholm
2008	Agnesberg, Gothenburg Agnesberg, Gothenburg Holländareplatsen, Gothenburg Gamlestan, Gothenburg Luftvärnsvägen, Gothenburg Lärje, Gothenburg Johanneslustsgatan, Malmö Ramels väg, Malmö Tullkammaren, Umeå Kv. Hammaren, Umeå Övägen, Umeå Djursjukhuset, Umeå Smultronstället, Lund Kårhuset, Lund Björnbärssnåret, Lund Nyponbusken, Lund Nya Konsum, Uppsala Fåfängan, Nyköping
2009	Liljeholmen, Stockholm Aspuddsbadet, Stockholm Farsta, Stockholm Gröndal, Stockholm Kodakhuset, Stockholm Rinkeby, Stockholm Palatset, Gothenburg Gamla Almedalsvägen, Gothenburg Gårda, Gothenburg Sofielundsgatan, Malmö Squatting festival, Lund Romano Trajo, Lund Högevallsvägen/Muraren, Lund Botulfsgatan, Lund Göransgården, Visby Julmusthuset, Lunnarp Stora Berga, Nyköping Lyckliga gatan, Östersund Huset, Växjö

Table 0.1 (Cont.)

Year	Location
2010	Biskopsgården, Gothenburg
	Magle Stora Kyrkogata, Lund
	Kv. Kajan, Ulleråker
	BUP, Ulleråker
2011	Allmänna vägen, Gothenburg
	Sävja, Uppsala
2012	Husby, Stockholm
	Kristineberg, Stockholm
	Alelyckan, Gothenburg
	Dorotea Sjukstuga, Dorotea
2014	Lokstallarna, Umeå
	Hemlösas hus, Helsingborg
	Rosenlunds herrgård, Jönköping
2015	Högdalen, Stockholm
	Valla torg, Stockholm
	Södermalm, Stockholm
	Björkvik, Katrineholm
	Landskrona
2016	Akalla, Stockholm
	BB Sophia, Stockholm
	Aula för alla, Stockholm
	Socialstyrelsen, Stockholm
	Framtiden i Flogsta, Uppsala
	Spångholmsgården, Malmö
2017	BB Sollefteå

Gothenburg witnessed several squatting actions in the 1980s along with Helsingborg, Hässleholm, Höberg, Jönköping, Landskrona, Lund, Malmö, Ronneby, Sollefteå, Umeå, Uppsala, Västerås, and Örebro. This wave of squatting had reached its peak by the mid-1980s, especially in the cities of Stockholm and Gothenburg (Figure 0.5).

In the 1990s, a number of squatting actions were held in Stockholm, but also in the cities of Alingsås, Borås, Gothenburg, Malmö, Umeå, Västerås, and Örebro. In the case of Stockholm, squatting was no longer started in the central parts of the city and several actions were held in the city's outskirts or adjacent municipalities. Even if there were a few spaces squatted in the outskirts of Stockholm in the end of the 1970s and in the 1980s, this trend was clearer in the 1990s and was above all connected to the protests against the development plan of new traffic routes. The 2000s started slowly with squatting actions in Grängesberg, Malmö, Linköping, Stockholm, Umeå, and Visby in the first five years and peaked significantly around 2008 and 2009 in the cities of Gothenburg, Lund, Lunnarp, Malmö, Nyköping, Stockholm, Umeå, Uppsala, Visby, Växjö and Östersund. Many of these actions were
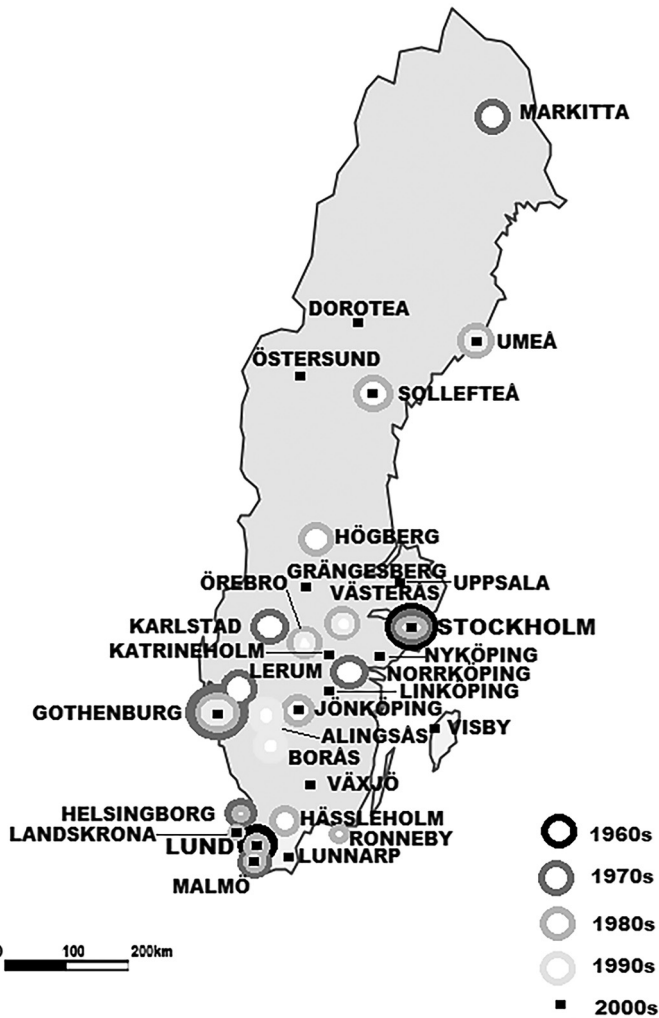
Figure 0.3 Map of squatting 1960s–2000s.

held around the same time and several squats that were evicted reopened in another location.

Between 2010 and 2017, the largest number of new squats were to be found in Gothenburg, Stockholm and Uppsala. Also, in the cities and towns of Dorotea, Helsingborg, Jönköping, Katrineholm, Landskrona, Lund, Nyköping, Malmö, Sollefteå and Umeå, squatting occurred in this period. There was great variation among the occupied buildings from this period. Hotels, maternity wards, health care centers, schools, theaters, community centers, railway stations, and residential buildings were occupied.
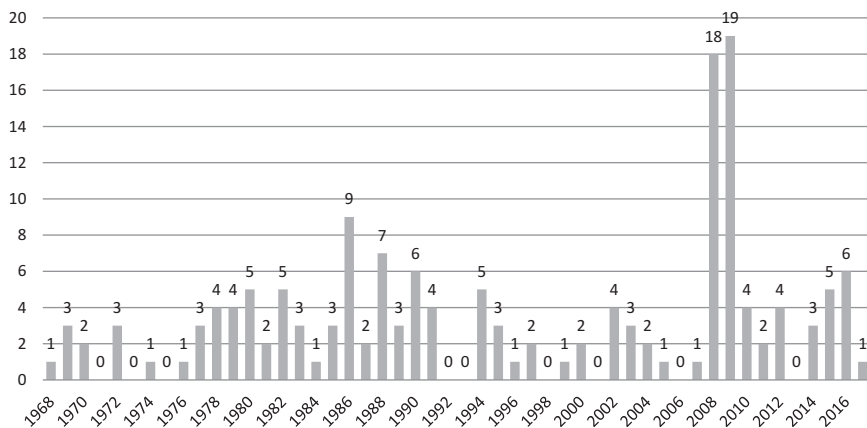
Figure 0.4 Squatting in Sweden between 1968 and 2017.
Source: author's calculations

Figure 0.5 The block of Sabeln squatted in the 1980s in Gothenburg.
Photo: Salka Sandén

Types of buildings

Different types of buildings have been squatted in Sweden. Most often, the squats have been residential buildings, but also other types of buildings have been taken over. The summary is given in Table 0.2 and shows that the type and function of the building seem to have had great significance for the claims advanced by the squatting activists. The perspective on squatting as inherently political is well demonstrated in the connection of the building's function and the fundamentally political claims made by Swedish squatters since the 1960s.

The most common type of building to be squatted in Sweden has been residential and in general municipally owned buildings were chosen over privately owned. Squatting of residential buildings has been connected to a critique of spatial planning, and in particular housing policies. Lack of affordable housing, vacant buildings in times of housing shortage, plans for demolition/excessive renovation/privatization of functional residential buildings along with the lack of

Table 0.2 Types of squatted buildings and their relation to criticized policies in Sweden 1968 2017.

Types of buildings	A reaction to:
Residential	General: Spatial planning/housing policies Specific: Threat of demolition, eviction due to renovation, lack of maintenance
School	General: Social services Specific: Threat of demolition, lack of social and cultural spaces, privatization
Health: local healthcare center, maternity ward	General: Social services Specific: Liquidation, abandonment
Storage	General: Social services Specific: Empty buildings, lack of social and cultural spaces
Fire station	General: Social services Specific: Lack of social and cultural spaces
Social or youth center	General: Social services Specific: Lack of social and cultural spaces, closing down or liquidation
Theatre/cinema/bath house	General: Social services + spatial planning Specific: Liquidation/demolition due to urban renewal
Office building	General: Representation and social injustice Specific: Rights of particular groups

maintenance of parts of the housing stock are some of the main arguments emphasized in this kind of critique. Other issues have been raised when buildings with other functions, like for instance school buildings, healthcare centers or maternity wards have been threatened by demolition, closing down or privatization. The provision of social services has been stressed by squatters as inadequate to satisfy the needs of a particular area where the school is located (cf. Larsson Taghizadeh 2016). Demands for spaces where social and cultural activities could be held, usually dovetailed with the critique of public services. This demand was particularly present in the squatting of youth centers or other empty buildings either threatened by closure or standing empty. The argument on the inefficiency of the present policies to address the needs of local communities was recurrent in this type of squatting action.

When the occupied buildings were not empty, like for instance offices, these kinds of event usually lasted for a few hours and the claims behind them differed somewhat from the claims of the earlier mentioned squatting actions. The critique was directed towards issues of representation of specific groups in society and prevalent social injustices. Occupation was used as explicitly temporary protest method to give attention to these issues and to put pressure on decision makers in specific organizations or public authorities.

Often the criticism of urban, housing, social and spatial policies intersected in the legitimization of squatting actions by squatting activists. Later on in this book, it will be demonstrated how different policy fields are intersecting in the critique raised by squatters, but also how difficult it is to distinguish between the different motivations stated by the squatting activists and how intimately connected they are.

Who are the main actors in squatting?

Manjikian (2013) distinguished between international/regional actors, national actors and local actors when describing the actors involved in squatting. When it comes to policy counteracting squatting, the actors are predominantly national and international according to her study. As squatting in Sweden did not develop in a similar way to Britain, Denmark, France, or the Netherlands and the number of migrants squatting is relatively low, this issue has had a different trajectory in Sweden. The threat associated with squatting in Sweden is not so much a threat coming from outside the country, but one coming from inside of it. Therefore, international and regional actors are excluded from the presentation of central actors involved in squatting in Sweden. National and local actors are primarily engaged in the discussion on squatting. Among the main national actors we find national newspapers, political parties, civil society organizations, security police along with the ministries of Justice (*Justitiedepartementet*), Culture (*Kulturdepartementet*), Defense (*Försvarsdepartementet*), and Health and social affairs (*Socialdepartementet*). On the local level, the actors involved in the formation of a discourse on squatting are local newspapers, local politicians and political parties,

landlords, local civil society organizations, real estate owners, developers, police, neighbors and celebrities.

To describe the actors who are actually involved in the act of squatting is however a more problematic issue. I would like to argue that the age and composition of the actors varies with the aim of the particular squatting action: If a youth center is squatted, the squatters tend to be the former users of that youth center supported by others who sympathize with the action; If a health care center is squatted, the squatters tend to be older; If a maternity ward is squatted the squatters tend to be in their thirties and most of them female; If a building is squatted with the aim of opening a cultural center the squatters tend to be in their twenties and early thirties and use physical attributes, like clothes or jewelry, to signal their preferences in music; If a building is squatted for housing reasons, the group of squatters tend to include political activists, homeless, tenants, migrants, pensioners, families with children and youths. Generally, the heterogeneity of squatters tends to increase with time as more people join in squatting the building. A general tendency among the media, to be discussed in more detail later on, is to describe squatters as "youths" regardless of the composition of the group (see more in Chapter 2).

The focus of this book is primarily on the discursive level, I will therefore leave the question about the social background of the squatting activists for future research to investigate more in depth. The focus here is rather on how discourses shape our social reality and in particular which sociocultural processes are at stake when squatting is discussed or how the political elites conceive of squatting and how squatters challenge, shape and reshape discourses on squatting.

Different positions – differing discourses

Discourses are subject to contestations and in this sense never fixed and static. How they constitute difference is interesting, as well as how they differ among themselves. The way in which political elites talk or write about something might diverge from the discourse found in mass media. There might, moreover, be ideological differences in the way that mass media portrays an event, a group or an individual. The aim of this book is to investigate how the discourse on squatting has been constituted in the media, in politics and by the squatters themselves. Which issues are foregrounded? How are the actors behind squatting portrayed? What particular actions are focused on when describing squatting? Whose voices are included in the depictions? And above all: how are these depictions legitimized?

Special attention is given to the development of the exceptionally vital civil society in the country, and its close cooperation with the unusually "strong" Swedish state, along with this state civil society relationship's role for raising contentious claims and challenging dominant discourses. The book consists of four empirical chapters, which all deal with discourse

analysis. In order to understand the broader context for the discourse on squatting in Sweden, a chapter presenting a historical outline of squatting is provided. The four chapters investigating discourses on squatting analyze how squatting is portrayed in the national and local media since 1968, the discourse on squatting in the parliamentary documents since the 1970s and two deal with the representations of squatting and squatters by squatting activists themselves. The analysis of media discourses gives us a fairly good understanding of sociocultural processes as mass media holds a central position in the production of knowledge in today's societies (Fairclough 1995). The analysis of the discourse in the parliamentary documents illustrates how the political elites tend to conceive of specific issues, how these issues are problematized, and how power is reproduced when language "provides a finely articulated vehicle for differences in power, in hierarchical social structures" (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 10). The very contestations of the discourses produced and reproduced by powerful actors, like the media or politicians, are equally important and interesting to study as they can reveal the complexity and dynamics of specific categorizations and disclose the arguments and strategies used to gain legitimacy by less powerful groups or even marginalized groups. Moreover, discourses can differ depending on the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure (s) that they are produced in (Fairclough & Wodak 1997) and the differences in how a discursive event is constructed or how it is socially constitutive, is interesting to study.

  Different forms of texts, that is, oral utterances or written documents, stand in the center of attention of discourse analysis here. In this kind of analysis the individual author of a text or his or her intention is less interesting, as texts are seen as expressions of the use of power of one group over others. Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer write:

> An important perspective in CDA [Critical discourse analysis] related to the notion of "power" is that it is very rare that a text is the work of any one person. In texts, discursive differences are negotiated; they are governed by differences in power that is in part encoded in and determined by discourse and by genre. Therefore, texts are often sites of struggle in that they show traces of differing discourses and ideologies contending and struggling for dominance.
>
> (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 10)

Individuals and their intentions are therefore not the primary focus of the analysis presented. The discourses are. However, as discourse analysis often falls short in recognizing humans as active agents, my ambition has been to include squatters' representations of squatting and themselves in the analysis and thus treat them as subjects capable of creating their own definitions and challenging dominant discourses, in addition to being active and creative political subjects.

Critical discourse analysis: examining power and ideology

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an approach to the study of discourses that combines interdisciplinary and problem-oriented perspectives. CDA is described by Wodak and Meyer as "characterized by the common interests in demystifying ideologies and power through the systematic and retroductable investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken or visual)" (2009: 3). CDA considers language to be a social practice and the context in which it is produced as central to the analysis (Fairclough & Wodak 1997). Critical discourse analysts focus on "structures, strategies or other properties of text, talk, verbal interaction or communicative events" and how they (re)produce dominance, or the exercise of social power (Van Dijk 1993: 250).

Language is central in discourse analysis and critical discourse analysts emphasize the relation between semiotic and material relations in the study of social reality (Fairclough 2012). In a handbook on discourse analysis James Paul Gee explains the relation between language, actions and identity:

> In language, there are important connections among saying (informing), doing (action), and being (identity). If I say anything to you, you cannot really understand it fully if you do not know what I am trying to do and who I am trying to be by saying it. To understand anything fully you need to know who is saying it and what the person saying it is trying to do.
>
> (Gee 2010: 2)

Critical discourse analysts highlight the link between spoken or written language and our actions and intentions. This important relation between semiotics and the material dimension of our social reality is focused on in this book in the understanding of how and why squatting and squatters are described the way they are in discourse produced in different social fields, the field of media, the field of formal politics and the field of activists practicing squatting. In the following section, I discuss the relation between the use of language and how power is (re)produced, what role ideologies play in up-keeping inequalities and how CDA is applied in this book.

Power

CDA's main purpose is to disclose how power is (re)produced and challenged in discourse(s). According to CDA language, power and ideology are closely linked together (Fairclough 1992). Teun A. Van Dijk (1993) uses the term "dominance" to describe the way that social power is exercised and highlights, in a similar way to Michel Foucault, that power is not only something that is exerted over others, but something that is omnipresent and embodied and enacted rather than concentrated among some specific agents.

The use and abuse of power in discourses is not always explicitly manifested in discourse and may appear as neutral. Power is here defined as relational and

language is used to legitimize relations of power. Power is also about relations of difference and how they are reflected in social structures. In the words of Wodak and Meyer:

> The constant unity of language and other social matters ensures that language is entwined in social power in a number of ways: language indexes and expresses power, and is involved where there is contention over and a challenge to power. Power does not necessarily derive from language, but language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and the long term. Language provides a finely articulated vehicle for differences in power in hierarchical social structures.
>
> (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 10)

An important aspect of analyzing how power is produced and reproduced in discourses is to study how dominant discourses are contested. Van Dijk (1993) has criticized critical discourse analysts who tend to focus on analyzing the discursive strategies of people in power rather than looking into how discourses are challenged and resisted. This is an important critique that has been built in to this study by including an analysis of how squatters challenge dominant discourses about squatting (Chapters 4 and 5). I share the belief that "an analysis of strategies of resistance and challenge is crucial for our understanding of actual power and dominance relations in society" (van Dijk 1993: 250). My ambition has therefore been to recognize squatters as active actors in shaping and contesting discourses (cf. Dee 2013).

Ideology

Language, power and ideology are intimately connected (Fairclough 1992). The ideological character of discourse has been highlighted in CDA studies analyzing the way discourses contribute to the maintenance of socioeconomic inequalities (Fairclough 2012). Norman Fairclough defined ideologies as "representations of aspects of the world which contribute to establishing and maintaining relation of power, domination and exploitation" (2003: 218). The role of critical discourse analysts is to analyze and criticize ideologies. Ideologies are belief systems and CDA shows how ideologies are disguised in the use of language. It is the more "hidden and latent type of everyday beliefs, which often appear disguised as conceptual metaphors and analogies" that are interesting to study (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 8). Ideologies are often invisible and built upon assumptions that seem neutral to most people. Or as David Machin and Andrea Mayr (2012: 5) put it: "it is often in the smallest linguistic details where power relation and political ideology can be found". It is the taken-for-granted and commonsensical part of our communication and the role of ideologies that attracts the attention of CDA scholars. Since the critical discourse analysts believe that language shapes and is shaped by society, they see semiotic choices as communicating

power relations. The role of researchers is to reveal these choices and the way they are constructed, showing what kind of power interests they represent.

Ideology is, as Fairclough (1995) has highlighted, located in the content, but also the form or style of texts and speech acts. According to him "language is a material form of ideology, and language is invested by ideology" (ibid.: 59). Discourses have ideological foundations and are shaping and reshaping societal structures because "ideology has material effects" and "discourse contributes to the creation and constant recreation of the relations, subjects (as recognized in the Althusserian concept of interpellation) and objects which populate the social world" (ibid.: 59). In other words, discourses are created in a specific setting of economic, political and ideological structures which condition their shape. It is the objective of this book to study the underlying ideological structures in the discourse on squatting and to reveal the implicit ideological assumptions and relations of power represented in it.

Critical discourse analysis as theory and method: how it is done

This section presents how CDA has been applied in the book. The approach used is content analysis with linguistic features that aim at revealing "more precisely how speakers and authors use language and grammatical features to create meaning, to persuade people to think about events in a particular way, sometimes even to manipulate them while at the same time concealing their communicative intentions" (Machin & Mayr 2012: 1). The aim is therefore to focus on how events are described and how language is used in these descriptions to persuade the reader about the accuracy of the claim. However, events are not something happening on their own, but are created by agents. Analysis of political or media discourse can disclose assumptions and norms that are shared in a particular context by looking closer into how agents are depicted, whether they are foregrounded or not, or even excluded. Moreover, guiding questions in the analysis of this book are, among others:

- Are the agents involved in the described events portrayed in a way that allows for self-identification among the public?
- Or is the description creating distance through language use?
- What kind of metaphors or analogies are used to describe the events and the actors involved in them?
- What kind of values, ideas and identities are promoted in the texts?

The creation of meaning is central to the analysis in the book. Language is regarded as a social practice that constitutes what is seen as "normal" and seeks to *naturalize* particular views (Machin & Mayr 2012). Language is in this view intimately connected to the way we act, organize and regulate our societies. Meaning is created linguistically, but also visually, and is not always explicit in texts and speech acts, but could be more taken for granted and embedded in the context.

There are a variety of different ways of doing CDA, which allows for flexibility, but requires some initial explanation on how the analysis is done. The ambition here has been to cover both the "what" and the "how" dimension of how meaning is constructed. In line with Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough (2012) I argue that the focus of CDA should be not only on the representations, but also on action and how reasons for action are created in discourse. A clear desire has been to cover the detailed level of texts at the same time as more generic features of these texts and the kind of argumentation provided are in focus. The analysis in this book has been structured around the following questions:

- How are *events and agents* described?
- What *values, ideas and identities* are promoted?
- What underlying *assumptions* are implicit, but communicated?
- What relations of *power* and underlying *ideologies and norms* are implied?
- How are particular views of squatting *naturalized* and *contested*?
- What *legitimation practices* are used?

In order to make the approach more systematic and transparent a toolkit has been created for the analysis. The issues of interest are how the events and agents behind squatting are described, how specific values, ideas and identities are promoted and what power relations and ideologies are underlying in discourse on squatting. The toolkit reflects the different dimensions of analysis that Fairclough (2010) distinguished for CDA, the level of text, the level of discursive practices and the level of social practices looking at how linguistic features can be understood as parts of discursive practices embedded in societal structures. At the same time, for practical reasons, it includes a selection of analytical tools that were useful in looking for an answer to the general question posed in this study, namely to study discourses on squatting in the light of the dominant narrative of consensus in Sweden. As a result of these considerations I used specific tools summarized in the toolbox shown in Table 0.3.

One of the most fundamental kinds of analysis within CDA is to study semiotic choices, or what kind of words are used to describe events, circumstances, agents, and actions. It is also quite common to focus on the use of metaphors and what the choices signify in a given context. What stands in the center of attention is how things are represented, what connotations they evoke, if terms are lacking in their description (suppression), if words and terms are overused (overlexicalization), the use of opposing concepts (structural opposition) and the particular style of spoken or written text (genre) (Machin & Mayr 2012: ch. 2). The analysis of representation does not only need to focus on the linguistic features, but can take into account visual features of representations by for instance studying the use of images. All these tools have been used in the analysis presented in this book in order to understand how squatting and squatters have been represented in media and political discourse, as well as in the discourse produced by squatters, in Sweden.[2]

Table 0.3 Toolbox used in the analysis of discourses on squatting.

Issues of interest	Analytical tool
Events Agents Representation of: *What is said?* *How? Who is talking? To whom?* *What is done?*	The use of: • semiotic choices • metaphors • suppression • overlexicalization • structural opposition • genre
Values, ideas and identities	Naturalization Contestation
Power and ideologies	Presupposition Justification and legitimation techniques

Semiotic choices that appear neutral in a given context have been especially focused on in this book. Critical analysis of texts concentrates on how values, ideas and identities are communicated in written and spoken language and what discourses they are alluding to. The naturalization of particular views of the world is common. It can be practiced through different tools, for instance semiotic or grammatical choices (for instance the use of verbs).

What actual shared values, ideas and identities are the bases of a particular text is interesting when investigating the particular worldview presented. When arguments are presented as given and natural in a particular setting or common norms are referred to, we speak of naturalization of some views. The choice of words or grammar as presented above is central to the naturalization of particular worldviews. Hegemonic views are created through discourses defining what specific moral, political and cultural values should be dominating in a specific context. However, naturalization or the creation of hegemonic "truths" is always connected to contesting and opposing discourses, as discourses are never fixed and their limits are often unclear: "hegemony will always be contested to a greater or lesser extent, in hegemonic struggle" (Wodak & Meyer 2009: 124). The primary interest of this book is to examine how the hegemonic views of squatting are constructed in the media and in politics, but also how they are challenged by the squatters taking part in the production of written and spoken texts over time. What role does the common idea of "the spirit of consensus" play in the representation of confrontational and disruptive events and agents? What specific words and grammatical features are used in the respective contexts of media, politics and activists? How do they differ and are there similarities in the way squatting is depicted?

In order to uncover underlying power relations and ideologies in texts, the analysis of the use of presuppositions is useful. What is presupposed, or presented as given, in a text "is deeply ideological" (Machin & Mayr 2012: 153). The kind of meaning that is assumed in a particular text is illustrative of the particular account that the text is representing and the argumentation used

(Fairclough & Fairclough 2012: 7). Presuppositions can conceal and manipulate, give the impression of being logical arguments, and convince the public to align with a particular view by calling on meanings that seem common sense in the particular context. Justification is another process that occurs when a particular view is justified and portrayed as rational and reasonable. Fairclough and Fairclough (ibid.) propose that legitimation has a narrower focus than justification and should be seen as a particular type of justification. Legitimation is used to point to the norms that guide societies and provide legitimate reasons to certain actions. Legitimation is connected to power and the use of power is often legitimized by invoking shared traditions, values, and beliefs. Fairclough and Fairclough argue that "the justification involved in legitimation seems to have one particularity, namely to invoke *publicly shared* and *publicly justifiable*, and sometimes even highly formalized, codified, institutional systems of beliefs, values, norms, in virtue of which the action proposed is considered legitimate" (ibid.: 109). Very simply put, legitimation aims at giving reasons as to why something should be done or why something should be done in a particular way. Different techniques of legitimation can be used to strengthen some worldviews by using legal, moral or rational arguments. The objective of discourse analysis in this book has been to expose how and on what grounds this is done in the case of squatting.

The book is not claiming to give a complete picture of the discourse on squatters in Sweden. It studies discourses (re)produced within three societal spheres; media, politics and activist groups. Even within these spheres it has been impossible to have a full coverage of all the texts that have been published on the issue. The limitations in the selection of the material are discussed in each empirical chapter. As the original texts studied for this book are written in Swedish, it has been a significant challenge to translate them into English without losing the specific nuances and meanings of the Swedish language in the translation. Sometimes the original phrases and wording in Swedish have been kept when the author has been unable to include the specific and contextual semiotic nuances in the translation. Despite that the analysis builds on publicly available material, the names of squatters, but also the names of politicians have been removed from the material in order to minimize any harmful effects that the research carried out for this book could cause.

An important restriction in the study concerns the cases selected for the analysis, namely those squatting events where buildings (and not land) have been taken over and which have been announced publically. All of these events have been carried out collectively, and no covert forms of squatting have been discussed.

The contents of the book

How can a confrontational act such as squatting be dealt with in a country characterized by consensus and non-conflictual methods? What distinctions become most important when the spirit of consensus is threatened? What purposes do these distinctions serve? These are the guiding questions in this

book along with the desire to demonstrate that squatting in Sweden has always been present, but as a highly contentious issue and not very well documented. Another important driving force has been to understand why squatting in Sweden developed differently than in other countries in western Europe despite its simultaneous start.

In Chapter 1, the previous international and Swedish literature on squatting and its structural conditions is presented. I argue that the history of squatting in Sweden has not been outlined before and there is a lack of systematic studies of the phenomenon in the country. Most studies have been based on local (city) observations during limited periods of time, and while some scholarly work on squatting in the 1980s and 1990s has been conducted, studies of the more recent history of squatting in the country are almost non-existent, not to mention studies of discourses. Moreover, explanations for the emergence and development of squatting in particular countries are presented in this part of the book and it is argued that the existing literature on squatting is too focused on "successful" cases of squatting, and neglects the less frequent and above all short-term squatting. Researchers tend to focus on what makes collective mobilizations and movements popular and effective in achieving their claims, rather than examining what constrains collective action and what hinders the achievement of its goals. It is argued that it is equally important to develop knowledge of the constraining aspects in collective action and short-termed mobilizations as they cover previously under-researched characteristics of collective action and are often embedded in more sustained collective action, a perspective that could further broaden and nuance our knowledge of the subject.

Chapter 2 presents media reports from the period between 1968 and 2017 and the way that squatting has been represented in local and national newspaper media. The guiding questions for this chapter were: How are the squatters described? What other actors are depicted and how? What actions are depicted and how are these described? How are they legitimized? Are squatters' voices included? In what way are they involved? What emotions are described and mediated? What are the pictures included in the reports depicting? It is shown how the dominant discourses on consensus and collaboration in the Swedish society have permeated media discourse and in particular the discourse on extra-parliamentary methods and the use of confrontational tactics. Moreover, it shows how the discussion on the illegality and the un/anti-democratic nature of squatting (and other extra-parliamentary actions) has characterized the discourse on squatting from 1968 and until today. It is argued that a moral panic, especially evident during the 1990s and the early 2000s and emphasizing the threat of the ideological foundation behind squatting, legitimized the use of repressive measures towards squatters and other actors using confrontational tactics. The main argument in the chapter is that the media depictions of squatters nourished a fear of a criminal movement not respecting legal regulations or the parliamentary system, and consequently turned away from the causes behind squatting, which led to its depoliticization.

Chapter 3 examines the way in which squatting has been talked about in parliamentary discussions since the late 1960s with a special focus on how the act of squatting is described, how squatters and other actors are portrayed and how these depictions are legitimized. Five ways of describing squatters are distinguished, of which three are negative. The most salient way of representing squatters in the parliamentary documents is to describe them as threatening the democratic order. They are also depicted as youngsters in need of parental and societal guidance and as immoral and unreliable. There are some differences between the political parties in describing squatting and sometimes the negative picture given is challenged with depictions of squatters as representatives of ordinary people. Five techniques of delegitimation of squatting are distinguished in this chapter built on arguments that stress the aspects of tradition, shared values, legal validity, moral responsibility and potential danger. A clear tendency since the late 1990s is to use "securitization" language when talking about squatting in the parliament, turning squatting and the actors behind it into a "security issue". It is demonstrated how dominating ideas of consensus foster discursive formations about collaborative civil society as opposed to (and threatened by) non-collaborative collective actors   squatters in this case.

The hegemonic nature of discourse production is an important starting point in this book. Discourses are not produced in a vacuum, but are constructed by powerful groups in society who strive after the legitimation and dominance of their moral, political and cultural values. This, however, does not take place without a struggle. The aim of Chapter 4 is to focus on the voices of squatting activists and the way they have framed squatting as well as the way they have contested dominant discourses on squatting. On the basis of different data sources, above all documents and texts produced by the squatters themselves, the ways that squatters have described themselves and their adversaries, are analyzed in this chapter. It is shown how squatters have been portrayed as rational, honest and representative of the interests of ordinary citizens in order to resist the discourse created by the media and the political elites. They did so by rejecting the dominant labels and reassigning them to other actors, but also by stressing the respectability of the squatters. Moreover, the discourse of squatters contains traces of the mentality created among the Swedish popular movements of respectable citizens taking responsibility into their own hands and using the corrupt character of their adversaries to describe themselves at the authentic and trustworthy representatives of citizens.

Chapter 5 deals with how the goals of squatting are legitimized in the discourses produced by squatters. A typology of the main motivations behind squatting in Sweden between 1968 and 2017 is presented: to provide housing, to preserve areas from clearance and demolition, to create free social and cultural spaces, to provide good educational conditions, to protect the environment, and to claim and reclaim rights. Legitimation techniques are then discussed, revolving around the issues of democracy, representation, morality and rationality. The main legitimation techniques used by the squatters

present squatting as an inherently democratic practice, as morally right and respectable, as representing citizens' needs and highly rational. The current political system is criticized by the squatters for its inability to satisfy the needs of the people by instead prioritizing the profitability and market solutions. Top-down political decisions are condemned as hurtful to and detached from the reality of ordinary people and the squatters often describe the objective of squatting as contributing to the improvement of local democracy. Squatting is portrayed as morally correct in the light of the undemocratic, arbitrary and biased decisions taken by the politicians. The disproportion in the rights of ordinary residents and citizens and the capitalists and power-holders, is presented by the squatters as somewhat restored when the distribution of resources is balanced through their reappropriation.

The last chapter, Chapter 6, summarizes the main arguments of the book. It places the development of Swedish squatting in a broader perspective by comparing it with squatting in other contexts and discussing the role of discourses for the development of squatting. In its focus on the discursive level it also provides explanations of why squatting developed differently in Sweden compared with other countries in Europe and in the analysis refers to the relation to the state and the "successful" story of civil society development as decisive for the emergence and development of contentious politics in the country. It also argues that despite heavy repression, squatting in Sweden has been continuous, and overtly political in its character, and that it has among other demands claimed better/more egalitarian housing conditions, spaces for activities, strengthening of particular groups' rights and conditions, improvement of the environment and preservation of existing communities. It has also explicitly criticized national policies and the successive dismantling of the Swedish welfare state and its consequences in this period.

Notes

1 The three movements usually referred to when speaking about the popular move ments are the revivalist/free church movement, the temperance movement and the labor movement (trade unions, cooperative movement, the Social Democratic Party) (Pettersson 1998: 86).
2 There are always some dilemmas with translations when the analysis is presented in English but the original language is another. I have therefore sometimes used both languages when the English translation does not "catch the full meaning" of the original sentence.

1 Previous studies on squatting in Sweden and beyond

In this chapter I review the previous literature on squatting in Sweden and focus on how the structural conditions for squatting have been presented in these studies, before I continue to the next section where I review the existing literature on the collective actors behind squatting in Sweden. The review is structured chronologically in order to build as complete a picture as possible given the small number of studies done on the topic.

The first section of the chapter serves as a background for the conditions for squatting outlined in previous studies. Even if few studies focus on squatting directly, and the most recent period of 2000s is almost entirely missing, the structural conditions prevalent during the historical periods studied are generally satisfactorily described. The second part of the review uncovers the collective actors involved in squatting in Sweden since the late 1960s as described in previous research. It will be demonstrated that the small number of studies on squatting and squatters in Sweden results in a fragmented and sometimes even skewed representation of squatters.

Furthermore, the third section of the review examines international studies on squatting and focuses on the opportunity structures highlighted by authors studying different contexts. Here, the argument is that the tendency among international scholars of social movements and squatting to study "successful" cases before small-scale and less spectacular ones is evident in the opportunities brought forward in studies and their insufficiency in explaining the Swedish case. Researchers tend to focus on what makes collective mobilizations and movements popular and effective in achieving their claims, rather than examining what constrains collective action and what hinders the achievement of its goals.

The last section of this chapter concentrates on an analysis of the shortcomings of previous studies sketching out an agenda for future research on squatting, including knowledge of the constraining aspects in collective action as it covers previously under-researched characteristics of mobilization and more sustained collective action, further broadening and nuancing our knowledge of the contentious politics of squatting.

The radicalization of the 1960s

Apart from a bachelor thesis on squatting in the city of Lund in the end of the 1960s (Rylander 2014), there is no scholarly work published concentrating solely on squatting in this period. Most of the existing studies have focused on the "radicalization" of the 1960s encompassing progressive social movements (among others, women's, environmental, peace, students, workers) fighting for social justice and extended democratic rights (Östberg 2002). The structural conditions of this period are comprehensively described in Kjell Östberg's book on radicalization waves in social movement activity in Sweden culminating in 1968, but stretching from the 1950s to the 1980s. Even if the book does not directly study squatting, it gives a good overview of the conditions prevailing during this period. Östberg argues that the structural, conjunctural, social, political and cultural changes were fundamental for development during the 1960s. For development in the Swedish case, Östberg argues that the interaction between social movements and the state has been of great significance, along with substantial urbanization processes, a large youth population, fundamental changes in moral values, a widespread and influential civil society and the close cooperation of social movements with political parties during this period, in particular the Social Democratic Party.

The author also emphasizes economic growth during this period and the influential role of the welfare state, at the same time as more Swedish young adults than ever before got a university education (from 11,000 students in 1950 to 125,000 in 1970). He argues that the wealth and relative economic independence of Swedish youth created material conditions for the formation of youth cultures and unification of common struggles with the workers when the future did not seem to look as bright as for the previous generations. What Östberg also stresses as an important factor behind the radicalization of social movements in Sweden in the 1960s is the development in the rest of the world and the ideological divide between East and West that was a result of the Cold War and the North-South divide partly resulting from the creation of new political forces after World War II among the formerly colonized independent states (Östberg 2002: 26f).

The culmination of radicalization is dated by Östberg to the years between 1965 and 1970 followed by a decline in the end of the 1970s. This culmination was called by the author "The red 1960s" and was characterized by close cooperation with the Social Democrats and socialists, the debate on housing shortage rectified by the Million Dwelling Programme, officially starting in 1965 and going on for ten years with the goal of construction of one million dwellings, and increasing differences in living and working conditions, revealing the cracks in the façade of the Swedish People's Home (*Folkhemmet*), a metaphorical notion established by the Social Democrats of Sweden as a home for all citizens, referring to the idea of a welfare state where equality and consensus were dominating and class differences were to be eradicated.

The peak in 1968 was, moreover, facilitated by Swedish TV and radio reporting on the events held during this period, along with the introduction of paperback book editions feeding the curiosity of social movements or simply inspiring political engagement.

In 1968, a movement for all-activity-houses grew in several cities in Sweden and coincided sometimes with squatting events, when the activists felt that parliamentary means were exhausted (Nelhans 1971). In the case of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Lund, the idea of a building open to everybody regardless of age, independent of authorities and offering a variety of activities, was the driving force behind the squatting of several places in the end of 1960s and throughout the 1970s. In his work on the all-activity house of *Gamla Bro* (1969 1972) in Stockholm, Mats Eriksson Dunér explained the concept of all-activity:

> The very word all-activity is a merger that refers to different types of activities and undertakings, but where the term activity also refers to the more charged word "activist" in the meaning of a political activist who advocates action and / or precedes political decisions by trying to bring about change in a specific issue. This duality built-into the word also shows the charge and ambiguity that surrounded the phenomenon of all-activity houses.
>
> (Eriksson Dunér 2015: 23)

Influences from abroad were important for the events and social movements emerging in Sweden by that time. These were looking at other groups in Denmark, Germany, Holland, France, United Kingdom, United States and other countries and were inspired by their formation and activity. Student protests sweeping over the world in 1968 were of crucial importance and the first squatting event held in Sweden took place in the same year as in the rest of the world and criticized planned educational reform limiting the freedoms of students (in Swedish abbreviated to "UKAS"). Also, squatting events in the end of the 1960s were carried out by groups of students, above all in Lund. Östberg describes the goals behind squatting actions of the late 1960s as protesting against UKAS reform and discussing the role of universities more broadly (Östberg 2002: 104).

People's Home Anarchists of the 1970s

The 1970s are also covered in some studies more directly focusing on squatting. Among these, the works of Håkan Thörn on an inner-city area in Gothenburg called Haga have been illuminating (Thörn 2012; Thörn 2013). Thörn has described the resistance going on in the area against urban renewal projects threatening to demolish several buildings in Haga between 1970 and 1990, being part of a "total sanitation" plan (read: slum clearance) of the city (Thörn 2013: 14). The resistance took the form of squatting,

founding direct action groups, mobilization, dialogue and opinion forming. One significant success of the struggles of the 1970s was the shift in municipal plans to more cautious renovation plans in the end of the 1970s and thus the withdrawal of the demolition plans. Thörn writes that squatters encountered intransigent and unsympathetic attitudes in the beginning of the 1970s from established societal institutions, but that these attitudes shifted to the invitation of squatters to the "conversation table of the Swedish consensus culture" (ibid.: 13). He refers to the specific non-militant approach of squatters in Gothenburg in the 1970s and 1980s, calling them "People's Home Anarchists" (*Folkhemsanarkisterna*), consciously forming their image as non-violent unlike their counterparts in other European countries.

One important structural condition that Thörn emphasizes in his studies of squatting in Gothenburg 1970 1990 was the presence of deteriorated working-class residential areas in central parts of the city (Figure 1.1). They facilitated the creation of relatively cheap, or free of charge, meeting spaces where movements could grow and social and cultural communities could form. Also, Thörn highlights the importance of influences from outside the city and describes the connections between Haga and the *Freetown of Christiania* in Denmark or the squat of *Mullvaden* in Stockholm at the end of the 1970s. He argues that Haga and *Christiania* functioned as centers for social movements, alternative culture and music movements in the 1970s and 1980s

Figure 1.1 "Sweden ends here" on a squat in Haga, Gothenburg, late 1980s. Photo: Salka Sandén

(Thörn 2013: 31). They constituted relatively permanent spaces in the central parts of the European cities that in this period succeeded in creating debates on issues rarely discussed in the public sphere.

Furthermore, Thörn has contributed to a deeper understanding of the squatting practices of the time and distinguished between the different goals of squatting in Haga in 1970 1990. Among these he identified three goals:

1   the provision of housing;
2   the provision of free spaces for activities; and
3   the preservation of the area from demolition (Thörn 2012).

Moreover, he argued that the activists from Haga succeeded in redefining the stigmatized identity of the area and thus were able to stop its clearance (although not its gentrification over time). In focusing on the material conditions and collective identities in his study of Haga, Thörn accentuated the need to go beyond the exclusive analysis of political opportunity structures in this kind of study. In a comparison with Christiania in Copenhagen he wrote:

> In Haga, by contrast, there was less political unity among squatting projects and activist groups. In the end, conservational activism tended to be more successful than the place politics of open space, a development that eventually contributed to the gentrification of the district.
>
> (Thörn 2012: 165)

This important conclusion demonstrates that conservational claims were more successful in the context of Gothenburg than the claims of autonomy and openness to the public based in a specific place identity, a dimension of squatting called by Thörn "place politics of open space" (2012). Most importantly, the author demonstrates that the conservational claims were more significant to the "success" of the Swedish squatters.

Social Democracy and established organizations clashing with grassroots

Place-making practices in the alternative milieu in Sweden in the 1970s have likewise been analyzed by Kristoffer Ekberg (2016) in his PhD dissertation. Several such practices involved squatting and Ekberg claims that squatting actions held in rural areas had some similarities with urban squatting in their framing of claims as preservational or conservational, but differed in other aspects such as their non-confrontational and often covert nature, in that they were carried out by families or small collectives and did not express the goals of great social and political change, but rather focused on living lives in a particular way (close to nature), and above all not being open to the public like in the case described by Thörn. In a sense, this kind of place-making was more of an individual emancipation than the political engagement that is the focus of this book. However, this turn to a rural life, outside cities is important to highlight as it was

by that time called "the green wave" and was a part of the environmental movement that emerged in the 1970s and sometimes used squatting as a technique of disruptive action (Tilly & Wood 2009). The environmental movement has been described in the work of Ulf Stahre, who argues on the basis of Stockholm that environmental issues were merged together with issues concerning spatial planning, anti-commercialism and community-seeking in what was called the Neighborhood movement (*Byalagsrörelsen*) (Stahre 1999; Stahre 2002). This movement expanded quickly in the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s in Swedish cities but had almost totally declined by 1980 (Stahre 1999: 78). The political opportunity structure of the time was described as relatively closed to the members of the neighborhood movement as "the movement did not follow the political rules" of Social Democracy (ibid.: 268). Stahre wrote:

> The neighborhood movement was seen as a threat to the building activity and consequently also to jobs. To some extent pure class antagonism is visible in the publications, as the neighborhood groups were seen as students and upper class. In the tenants' union, dominated by the Social Democrats, fierce conflicts arose when participants of the neighborhood groups joined the union as active members.
>
> (Stahre 1999: 268)

Based on a study of city council protocols from 1968 to 1976 and the trade union journal "Stockholms byggarbetare" (Stockholm Construction Workers) from 1968 to 1978, Stahre concluded that the relationship of the neighborhood movement and the Social Democrats was antagonistic and that the latter's negative attitude towards the neighborhood movement was based on the assumption "that these acted outside the set frames of the municipal democracy" and that they "put aside the fixed game rules, which was unacceptable" (Stahre 1999: 198). Moreover, Stahre came to the conclusion that Social Democrats viewed themselves as the guarantors of, and responsible for, the upkeep of the political system and that their view of the movement differed from the Liberals or the Left Party. In the case of the powerful civil society organization the Tenants' Union Stahre draws similar conclusions. Although the Union was initially positive to the neighborhood movement it quickly changed its view due to the use of extra-parliamentary methods that were "alien" to the Union and the conflict revolved according to the author around two issues: (1) that the movement did not follow the rules of the game, and (2) that there was a competition between the Union and the movement for the support of similar groups of citizens (ibid.: 200).

In Torbjörn Tenfält's (2011) short study of the squatting of *Mullvaden* in Stockholm in 1977 1978, one of the main conclusions is that the trust cleavage between the local elected politicians and the citizens was deepened and revealed in the conflict about the squatted buildings. When the squatters faced the court the main concern of the prosecutor in the media was "Where will this end if others follow?" (ibid.: 65).

Municipal politics disarming the radical edge in the 1980s

In the 1980s, squatting was influenced by music movements and in particular by punk music. In a study of squatting actions held in the city of Jönköping in 1982, Martin Ericsson (2016) argues that the repertoire of squatters, although still non-violent, shifted in this period to focus more on the creation of cultural spaces or what in Sweden was called "*allaktivitetshus*" (all-activity-house, referring to the idea about self-managed and non-hierarchical spaces for different groups to use without the control of authorities or organizations). These claims were already being made during the 1960s and 1970s and over time created a greater responsiveness among the local authorities toward the demands for autonomous spaces (Thörn 2013: 50) and a tendency to "end the occupations at the negotiation table" in the 1980s in Gothenburg (Carle 1991: 44). In the case of Jönköping, studied by Ericsson, a conflict sprang up between the squatters and the local politicians that, once again, revolved around the extra-parliamentary method used by the squatters and the demand set by the politicians to the squatters to formalize their activity in the form of a voluntary organization in order to be treated as a legitimate political subject (Ericsson 2016: 179). In this case, only the local Left Party was sympathetic to the demands of the activists and the Social Democrats were accused of betrayal by the squatting activists. The outcome, the decision to open a cultural space in the city in 1983 run by formal organizations and some representatives of the municipality was conflict-ridden and "succeeded in disarming the more radical demands for direct democracy and self-management" (ibid.: 184).

Peter Håkansson and Johan Lundin argued that the leisure time of youth was in the focus of national politics of the 1980s and that this perspective spread to the local level (Håkansson & Lundin 2009). Their study of the music scene's struggle for a space in Malmö and Lund showed that the arguments used in the debate on cultural and music spaces during this period very much stressed the good effects of such spaces on unemployment, criminality and drug use among youth. The authors referred to different squatting actions and other lobbying attempts in both cities during late 1960s and 1970s demanding free spaces for cultural activities that preceded the 1980s political debate that was the focus of their study. They showed the conflicts behind the political debate and the slow political process that resulted in the formation of voluntary music organizations that in the 1980s finally received municipal support. In both cities, run by different political parties, the issue tended to be used "as a bargaining chip in a political game" (ibid.: 84) to win the support of the younger population.

The squatting of a school building threatened by demolition in the city of Landskrona during the same period was covered in the work of Fredrik Nilsson (2010). The squatters wanted the building to be a space for all-activities, but their protests and efforts during 1983 only resulted in the demolition of the building. The local government run by Social Democrats did not give in to the demands despite the squatters' numerous attempts at portraying and staging their activities as rational, responsible and diligent. Similar to the concurrent

cases in Lund and Malmö, the squatters in Landskrona gained support from the local Left Party, but encountered hostility from the ruling parties   in this case Social Democrats. Despite a shift of the local media to a more positive view of the issue the local government and its officials held on to their previous decision to demolish the building, legitimizing it by blaming the squatters for not "following any rules of the game" that is not cooperating according to the set rules (by for instance lacking leaders, changing the composition of the negotiation group, using different methods to put pressure on the politicians, and so on) (Nilsson 2010: 140).

It seems there were political implications if squatting was carried out in close connection to elections in the 1980s. This is emphasized in the work of Håkansson and Lundin (2009) on Malmö and Lund and in an interview with a woman taking part in several squatting actions in Stockholm in the 1980s documented by Anna-Klara Bratt (2012). In the interview an activist referred to the squatting of *Skaraborgsgatan* in Stockholm and said:

> And we were lucky, because it was just before the election in 1985 and we ended up in some kind of political vacuum where no one dared to do anything about us. So we had to be left alone. The mayor ended up in trouble and our occupation became a fiery political issue-which we had not really anticipated.
>
> (Bratt 2012: 338)

Furthermore, political opportunity structures during the 1980s were described by Jan Jämte and Adrienne Sörbom as rather closed to the actors behind squatting (Jämte & Sörbom 2016). As they mostly belonged to anarchist and autonomist groups who often criticized Social Democrats and the corporatist structures of Swedish society, they were considered as outsiders among the Social Democrats and their allies   the labor and the popular movements. According to the authors this position limited squatters' opportunities to act and narrowed their repertoire of action. However, looking at the number of squatted buildings in the 1980s, we can conclude that the first wave of squatting occurred in the mid-1980s, despite the hostile political opportunity structure.

The fragmented picture of squatting in the 1990s

The 1990s was a period increasingly focusing on the economic growth of cities in Sweden, where improved infrastructural conditions were perceived as necessary to aid the economic competitiveness of urban areas (Holgersen 2017; Nilsson 2014; Pries 2017; Stahre 2002). During this period several environmental activist groups were active in Stockholm and used squatting as a strategy to protest against the construction of new traffic routes. Stahre has described some of these groups, mentioning squatting as a protest tactic (Stahre 2002; Stahre 2007; Stahre 2010). The same is done in the historical overview of social movements and contentious actors in Sweden between

1950 and 2015 by Abby Peterson et al. (2018), where squatting is mentioned as a tactic used by various social movements and other contentious actors. The picture of squatting in this period is not systematically presented in the literature. It is either connected to the repertoire of several social movements or to youths and their preferences, and fails to paint a more complete picture of squatting as a practice or how it is limited or enabled by structural factors.

In his work on the squatting of *Tullen* in Gothenburg in 1990, Jan Carle uncovered the relationship between squatters and the media (Carle 1991). On the basis of one squatting event, the author traced media coverage and concluded that it was dependent on the political orientation of the newspapers, that dramatic and spectacular events tended to draw the attention of the media and that media coverage played an important role for the emergence, continuation and success of a social movement such as the squatting movement. The author categorized his case as a part of a broader new social movement without presenting satisfactory arguments and context for why it should be understood as a social movement. The study was limited to one case of squatting and did not refer to other specific squatting events in the city or in the country. The explanations given for what the author described as the rather limited scope of squatting in Sweden were (1) the relatively low levels of homelessness and marginalization among youths, and (2) "that young people do not see squatting as a means they would like to resort to in order to affect their housing situation and the housing market more generally" (Carle 1991: 44). However, at the same time as Carle admitted that older individuals were taking part in squatting, he seemed to concentrate on the situation of the youths in his explanations for squatting's limited character in Sweden in the 1990s.

Johan Pries and Karin Zackari therefore made a considerable contribution to the body of research studying squatting in the 1990s with their study of the squatting of *Borgen* in 1990 in Malmö (Pries & Zackari 2016). They examined the representations of this particular squatting action in the local media and police reports. Despite the narrow focus on two sources the authors painted a broader picture of squatting in Sweden in that time. They referred to the prior period in the 1980s and claim that squatting in Scandinavia declined in the 1990s and that it encountered heavier repression internationally during this period. One interesting argument they put forward was that the non-violent repertoire of anarchists in the city of Malmö and the presence of a legal meeting space that satisfied the needs of the group discouraged them from squatting (ibid.: 195).

Blind spot despite considerable squatting activity in the 2000s

The most recent period of squatting in Sweden has failed so far to attract the attention of scholars. Despite a large wave of squatting in 2008 2009, squatting in the 2000s is a blind spot yet to be filled. Among the few studies published on squatting in the most recent period since 2000 there are the Master's theses of

Anders Lindell (2015) and Måns Lundstedt (2016), a book chapter written by Mathias Wåg (2017), and the article I wrote in 2017 (Polanska 2017).

Lindell (2015) examined local opportunities for squatting in Stockholm and the responses of authorities in his work. The author focused on the cases of *Aspuddsbadet* from 2009 and *Husby träff* from 2012 and studied these from the perspective of political opportunity structures arguing that there was a significant difference in the response of political representatives to squatting with moderate and with more radical goals. On the basis of political decisions and political rhetoric Lindell demonstrated that the local political majority kept their negative position in both cases, while the opposition tended to be more positive to squatters' demands. None of the cases contributed to policy change, however, and "there seems to be a consensus across political parties and protest groups that civil disobedience can be justified if the decision provoking the protest was the result of an undemocratic process" (Lindell 2015: 51).

Lundstedt's work focused on the radical libertarian left in Umeå indirectly studying squatting while examining the collective self-understanding, changes in practices, and relationships within and outside the movement in the period between 2002 and 2013. He traced the shift in the movement's practices through three squatting actions the occupation of *Kvinnohuset* (2003 2004), *Tullkammaren* (2008) and *Umeå Kulturhus* (2013 2014) and concluded that there was a shift from a more militant approach to coalition building and a more open and inclusive attitude.

My own article (Polanska 2017) and Wåg's study (2017) neither explored opportunity structures nor examined the collective identity of squatters. Instead the studies focused on presenting a timeline (Wåg 2017), mapping squatting events in Sweden and on presenting a typology of goals or main motivations behind squatting in Sweden between 1968 and 2016 (Polanska 2017). In my work I distinguished several goals behind squatting, among them: the goal of housing provision, the goal of preservation of areas from clearance and demolition, the goal of protection of areas from environmental threats, the goal of creating free spaces for activities, and the goal of criticizing national (welfare) politics. I demonstrated that squatting in Sweden has been continuous despite its short-lived nature, and political in its character, by reclaiming the rights to housing and a more egalitarian distribution of societal resources. Up to this date, few studies have been done outlining the history of squatting in Sweden and covering several periods. There is an overall historical gap in studies concerning confrontational or contentious politics in Sweden. Swedish 20th-century history is dominated by the narrative of the People's Home, a society built on equality, consensus and welfare, and the consensus solutions that developed during this period (Brink-Pinto et al. 2016). Historians and social scientists have had difficulty in categorizing some more contentious parts of Swedish history, or simply neglected them to focus on the narrative of consensus, negotiation and peaceful solutions.

Collective actors behind squatting in Sweden

In order to understand the history of squatting in Sweden, it is necessary to look at the collective actors behind squatting actions in Sweden. The starting point in this book is that the perspective of contentious politics conceptualizes squatting politics in the Swedish case suitably due to the use of squatting as a tool or a technique of disruptive action in Sweden since the late 1960s and also allows for a diversity of identities and claims behind these actions (Tilly & Wood 2009). The collective actors presented in this section are understood broadly as actors involved in squatting and acting collectively "on behalf of shared interests or programs in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties" (Tilly & Tarrow 1998: 4). I am not discussing whether the definitions used in previous studies on squatting as collective mobilizations are correct or not. Rather I review the ways that squatters have been portrayed and categorized as collective actors.

A good overview of the early years of squatting and the collective actors undertaking such contentious tactics until the end of the 1970s is presented in the already mentioned book of Östberg (2002) on the radicalization of Swedish social movements around 1968. Östberg argues that this radicalization started slowly in the 1950s and declined in the late 1970s and describes the slow start in the following way:

> It is possible to trace a slow escalation in the demonstrations' forms, intensity and scope during the decade, from the SSU [Social Democratic Youth League] Congress in 1958 that could not imagine "such a unique action" as a demonstration to the French embassy and the sit-in-demonstrations over nuclear-opposing to the [demonstrations] outside the Soviet Union Embassy in the early 1960s and the first police action against Vietnam-demonstrations in 1965. Provies [activist group inspired by Provos in Amsterdam] happening-impacted actions developed protest forms further. 1967 saw a clear trend also in the more traditional forms of demonstrations. FNL-movement [in English: the National Front for the liberation of South-Vietnam in French: Front National pour la Libération du Sud Viêt Nam] was one of the driving groups. Spring 1967 regular demonstrations were organized outside the US Trade Center in Stockholm with high-profile mass arrests that followed, and some 80 protesters were brought to justice.
>
> (Östberg 2002: 101)

The intensification during the beginning of the 1960s culminated in 1968 when a large number of demonstrations were held and when universities became the "arena for student struggles" (ibid.: 102). The occupation of the students' union in Stockholm in May 1968 was inspired by international events and mobilized students to fight for their rights as students, however for a limited period of time, before they returned to study or organized themselves in political groups

and organizations. Overall, there was an increase of left-wing groups during this period where students were active members. The issues that these groups pursued were international solidarity (and anti-imperialism), egalitarian perspectives (fighting inequalities), deepened democracy (criticizing representative democracy for its shortcomings), socialism (as a common frame, but interpreted differently), and faith in revolution (extra-parliamentary and non-violent in the country, however as pointed out by Östberg not always non-violent in the Third World) (ibid.: 120 122).

In the next decade, the 1970s, groups opposing the urban restructuring plans formed and were described by Thörn focusing on Gothenburg and the group of *Husnallarna* (with the double meaning of "House Bears" or "Those who steal houses") in the area of Haga, and Stahre writing on Stockholm's Neighborhood movement (Thörn 2012; Thörn 2013; Stahre 1999; Stahre 2002). Both categorized their cases as forms of urban movements and argued for their collective claims to be broader than the preservation or well-being of their immediate residential area, including environmental issues, anti-commercialism, anti-authoritarianism and cultural interests. Cultural interests gained attention the following years and alternative culture became the issue that drew mostly young people to social movements (Thörn 2013: 13). The issue of spaces for practicing cultural activities climaxed in late 1960s and early 1970s in what was called a "movement for all-activity houses" (*allaktivitetshusrörelsen*) (ibid.: 42; Nelhans 1971) that also included the critique of commercialization of public spaces, understood as resulting in the circumscription of democratic rights of citizens (see Forsman 1989).

In the period between the 1970s and the late 1980s researchers described groups involved in squatting as belonging to a broader urban social movement (Thörn 2013; Stahre 1999; Stahre 2002; Tenfält 2011). The work of Ekberg (2016) uncovered the more rural type of squatting taking place in Sweden in the 1970s and being part of the environmental movement. In the 1980s the influences coming from punk music and the European BZ-movement[1] were emphasized as important for Swedish squatters (Ericsson 2016; Nilsson 2010; Jämte & Sörbom 2016). The actors behind squatting were described in studies of this period as "Punks" or organized in the "Music houses movement" (Forsman 1989; Håkansson & Lundin 2009; Nilsson 2010). Others described squatters as affiliated with the anarchist and/or the autonomous movement (Jämte & Sörbom 2016; Piotrowski & Wennerhag 2015; Thörn 2013) and explained their source of inspiration in the following way: "In Sweden, the movement grew from the mid-1980s onwards mainly inspired by German and Danish autonomist activists, which introduced militant squatting tactics and addressed issues such as anti-fascism" (Piotrowski & Wennerhag 2015: 851).

Jan Jämte and Adrienne Sörbom argued that the anarchist and autonomist groups in Sweden were highly inspired by the environmental movement in the 1980s and were part of what has been called the "alternative movement" (Jämte & Sörbom 2016). Anarchist and autonomist groups of the time were

the "radicals" of the alternative movement, using experimental and utopian ideas in their desire to withdraw from society. Kerstin Norlander and Kristina Larsson described the women's movement of the 1970s and 1980s, and the occupation of *Gula Villan* in Umeå in 1983, an event that only women took part in (Norlander & Larsson 2017). The authors argue that it was the only known separatist squatting event in Sweden and claimed women's rights to organize and to shelters for women (see also Eduards 1997). Squatting was thus used by these groups in creating local alternatives. They were, however, different from their counterparts in the rest of Europe in their emphasis on peaceful and non-violent methods (with some exceptions that followed later on), at the same time as they drew inspiration from squatting in other locations, often outside Sweden (Ighe 1989; Jämte & Sörbom 2016). These influences were described by Jämte in the following way:

> The historical roots of the autonomous movement date back to the late 1950s, and the 1960s and the radical resistance tradition developed above all by north Italian factory workers, and later also left-wing radical students and unemployed, in the struggle for improved working conditions and social and economic conditions. During the 1980s, the movement spread to especially the Netherlands and Germany where a new generation of activists let themselves go inspired by the idea of autonomous organization and a wave of squatting swept across the countries. The goal was to create liberated areas   autonomous zones   often in the form of social centers and collectives, which made it possible to live an alternative, socialist lifestyle and, in addition, served as meeting places for politically and culturally interested activists on the left side. During the early 1980s, the movement spread to Denmark, most clearly through the formation of Danish BZ (according to Danish words for "besätt", that is, "occupy"), from there to cross the channel to Sweden during the second half of the decade.
>
> (Jämte 2013: 243)

Social movements of the 1990s are described in the works of Stahre as revolving around infrastructural and environmental issues (Stahre 1999; Stahre 2002; Stahre 2007). The movement using squatting tactics in this period is called by the author "the urban environmental movement" (Stahre 1999: 271). Stahre argues that this movement has gone through three stages from the initial stage in the 1950s and 1960s, characterized by individual efforts to the active phase in the beginning of the 1970s dominated by the Neighborhood movement and the phase in the 1990s characterized by diversification in structures and leadership. Most often this movement used direct action methods such as blockades (of roads) and theatrical actions that Stahre called symbolically expressive actions (Stahre 2002: 143). It was concentrated in Stockholm and resulted for example in the dismantling of the Dennis-package (*Dennispaketet*), an agreement on new traffic routes in the capital city, in the 1990s.

Researchers studying groups using squatting tactics in Gothenburg at the same time analyzed them differently. Carle (1991) focused on the squatting events in the beginning of the 1990s in the city and when reviewing previous literature and the case he was studying pointed to youth as the group involved in occupations. At the same time as the author was concluding that only 1 percent of the Swedish youth has been involved in squatting according to a survey, he kept the focus on youth and youth cultures as central to understanding how squatting was used in Sweden by the time. However, as has been emphasized by Ericsson (2016: 175) in his study of squatting in Jönköping in 1982, it is a bit misleading to treat squatting as a part of youth movements given the fact that far from all youths support or even sympathize with squatting.

Yet another explanation of the collective actors behind squatting in Malmö was given by Pries and Zackari (2016) in their study of the occupation of *Borgen* in 1990, a municipally owned residential building on the outskirts of the city. The authors noted the tensions that the occupation of *Borgen* created in the anarchist movement in the city, stressing that the militant framing of the squatters was in conflict with the values of the older generation of anarchists in the city. They pointed to the formation of a new movement, the left autonomous movement around the time of the occupation. They used the label "left radicals" to cover all of the groups mentioned (ibid.: 203) and underlined the influences coming from abroad, mainly Copenhagen, in the more militant approach in this particular case of squatting (Pries & Brink Pinto 2013: 72).

The same inspiration from the Danish and German autonomist movements in the 1990s was treated in the work of Grzegorz Piotrowski and Magnus Wennerhag. The authors wrote that the Swedish anarchist movement underwent a revival in the 1980s due to influences coming from punk rock and other countercultural expressions and maintained that in the 1990s "the Swedish anarchist and autonomist movement attracted activists involved in a variety of social issues, including anarcha-feminism, social ecology, and animal liberation" (Piotrowski & Wennerhag 2015: 851). They argued that militant squatting, together with anti-fascism, was "imported" from the Danish and German contexts. It was not uncommon that these two, enriched each other in actions where anti-fascists used squatting as a tactic (Jämte 2013: 236) and that it was happening already by the late 1980s. Jämte explained:

> People who started occupying houses in Sweden quickly turned their attention to the issues of [fighting] racism, neo-Nazism and anti-fascism, at the same time as some active anti-racists became more interested in the new radical movement.
>
> (Jämte 2013: 244)

A study of anti-fascist mobilization in Lund in 1985 2008 demonstrated that squatting was to begin with an important tool used by the activists, but that it lost

its importance in the 1990s to the benefit of blockades of public spaces that gained importance in anti-fascist repertoires in that period (Pries & Brink Pinto 2013: 247).

The 2000s started off dramatically with the emergence of the Global Justice Movement and its small but considerable involvement in squatting in the Swedish context (Wennerhag 2008). In 2001 the anti-globalization protests in Sweden reached their end in Gothenburg with the EU summit and visit of US President George W. Bush. The violent repression met by activists forced left libertarian activists to redefine the value of militancy and violent confrontation (Jacobsson & Sörbom 2015). The same argument was illustrated in the work of Måns Lundstedt (2016) writing on the radical libertarian left in Umeå and demonstrating on the basis of squatting actions in the 2000s how the repertoire of the activists was shifting during this period to more open and less militant tactics. It seems that the year of 2008 was crucial for many of the collective actors behind squatting. Pries and Brink Pinto concluded on the events that took place in that time:

> [The events held on] 30 November 1991 1993 were part of the creation of an autonomous left-wing movement that was built upon but also broke with the 1980s squatting movement in southwestern Sweden and Copenhagen. November 30, 2008 was part of the transformation of the anti-fascist movement that emerged in the 21st century, but also linked to other unrest in the region as the ever-increasing street protests against the Swedish Democrats, the Swedish squatting wave 2008 2009 and instances of social unrest in Skåne Million program areas 2008 2009.
>
> (Pries & Brink Pinto 2013: 247)

The collective actors behind squatting in Sweden, as they have been described in previous studies, are summarized in Table 1.1. What is obvious   based on the number of labels and their diversity   is that the 1970s and 1980s seem to have been more thoroughly researched in relation to squatting than any other periods.

Ideas about self-management and direct democracy were of particular importance from the late 1960s till today. Moreover, no studies have been presented about squatting since 2010 yet. Before the unique character of squatting in Sweden is discussed international research on the topic is presented in the next section and the opportunity structures conditioning squatting in different contexts are debated.

International research on squatting

The English term "squatting" has its origin in nineteenth century America and Settler practices of taking over property. The term has its equivalents in other languages, where squatting has been part of the history, like "kraken" in Dutch or "bestezen" in German. The urban form of squatting in Europe set off after World War II and reached a peak during the 1970s in urban areas (Wates 1980). Urban squatting has been studied in several countries of Western and Southern Europe such as: Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and in the US (Bieri 2002;

Table 1.1 Collective actors behind squatting according to previous research.

1960s	Students (Östberg 2002) Left wing groups (Östberg 2002) All activity house activists (Nelhans 1971)
1970s	Neighborhood movement/Byalagsrörelsen (Stahre 1999) Husnallarna (Thörn 2013; Peterson et al. 2018) All activity house movement (Thörn 2013) Urban movements (Peterson et al. 2018; Stahre 1999; Stahre 2002; Tenfält 2011; Thörn 2013) Alternative milieu (Ekberg 2016)
1980s	Punks (Nilsson 2010) Music house movements (Håkansson & Lundin 2009) Anarchist movement (Jämte & Sörbom 2016) The autonomous movement (Jämte & Sörbom 2016) Anarchist and autonomist movement (Piotrowski & Wennerhag 2015) Women's movement (Eduards 1997; Norlander & Larsson 2017; Peterson et al. 2018) Urban movements (Thörn 2013)
1990s	Left radicals (Pries & Zackari 2016) Youth (Carle 1991) Urban environmental movement (Stahre 1999, 2002) Anarchist and autonomist movement (Piotrowski & Wennerhag 2015)
2000s	The autonomous movement (Stahre 2004) Radical Libertarian Left (Lundstedt 2016) The Global justice movement (Wennerhag 2008)

Bouillon 2017; Corr 1999; Martínez López 2013; Mudu & Piazza 2016; Owens 2009; Pruijt 2003; Thörn et al. 2011). Most of these studies focus on particular cities where squatting has occurred and are providing historical analyses. Different explanations have been given to the question why squatting takes place. Some have argued that squatting is a cultural expression. John Clarke and others (1976) interpreted squatting in Britain as a form of middle class counterculture, George McKay (1998) stressed the Do-it-yourself culture as crucial for squatting in the same country, while George Katsiaficas (1997) understood squatting as a search for autonomy by the autonomous movements of Central Europe. Adilkno emphasized the role of the media for the development of squatting in Amsterdam and argued:

> Squatting was originally nothing more than breaking open a door. Moving into living space without the required permits was considered a fairly normal thing to do. It was done in connection with family or neighbors and caused little stir because it had been happening since the 1960s, and according to some even as early as 1945. No one got excited, except the future residents of the house. No police or mass-journalism stepped in. Everything usually quieted down again quickly.
>
> (Adilkno 1994: n.p.)

Several researchers have classified squatting as goal-oriented and among them we find Freek Kallenberg (2001) who interpreted squatting as a utopian struggle, Anders Corr (1999) who argued for the redistributive dimension of squatting and René Karpantschof (2011) who regarding Christiania in Denmark claimed squatting was a search for ideological alternatives and a result of housing shortage. Moreover, Steven Katz and Margit Mayer drew a similar conclusion on the basis of New York City and West Berlin that squatting was a manifestation of self-help struggle for housing (Katz and Mayer 1985). Numerous studies have pointed out squatting as driven by social movements, although their interpretations on which social movements and ideological influences that motivate squatting often differed (Della Porta and Rucht 1995; Katsiaficas 1997; Polanska & Piotrowski 2015).

All of these interpretations of squatting touch upon an important feature of the phenomenon. Western European and North American contexts are those dominating the body of literature on urban squatting. Capital cities such as Berlin, London, Amsterdam, Paris and New York are those that usually stand in the focus of attention of scholars. Smaller cities along with cities located in Central and Eastern Europe and Scandinavia (with the exception of Copenhagen) have been less "popular" to study. Among the most ambitious works collecting research on squatting we find the volumes of the Squatting Europe Kollective or publications of researchers (in some way) affiliated with the network (Squatting Europe Kollective 2013; Squatting Europe Kollective 2014; Squatting Europe Kollective 2015; Squatting Europe Kollective 2016; Dee 2016; Kadir 2016; Martínez López 2013; Martínez López 2016; Martínez López 2017; Mudu & Chattopadhyay 2016; Piotrowski 2011; Polanska & Martínez 2016; van der Steen et al. 2014; Vasudevan 2015).

Political opportunity structures are often examined in the international studies on squatting stressing that financial and political scandals have influenced the development of squatting in several cases. Bart van der Steen and colleagues argued that disagreements and internal divisions among the ruling parties, along with loss of authority of those in power and the pressure on them before elections could result in the opening of opportunities to squatters (van der Steen et al. 2014: 15). Another opportunity acknowledged in the existing literature on squatting is the presence of vacant buildings and the question of ownership (Martínez López & Cattaneo 2014; Martínez López 2013). If the building is for instance owned by a large company or the municipality it could be used by squatters to put pressure on these with bad publicity (van der Steen 2014). In these studies the discussion of vacant buildings has often been intertwined with the importance of legal opportunities in a specific context and how the law is formulated and implemented, resulting in different outcomes for the squatters in different periods ranging from legal repression by criminalization to loopholes opening up opportunities to squat (however, the latter is rather unusual since the beginning of the 2000s in the European context, see Fox O'Mahony et al. 2015; Manjikian 2013).

Economic and urban restructuring processes are also emphasized in previous literature on the topic as important conditions for the emergence and development of squatting (Martínez López 2013). The lack of affordable housing, deteriorating standards of living and increasing inequalities has been underlined by Corr as crucial to the development of squatting (Corr 1999). Hans Pruijt has examined the role of the specific type of urban regime (distinguishing between market-oriented and state regulated) for the development of squatting, claiming that the former "offers less opportunities for squatting than a regime that is much more based on redistribution and planning" (Pruijt 2003: 152). Moreover, market oriented urban regimes were concluded to be more favorable to the cooptation of squatting   when an established organization is coopting or borrowing some parts of squatting without risking its own stability or existence   but that this process could in turn lead to a decline in squatting. By comparing a number of European cities Miguel Martínez López (2013) concluded that urban restructuring or urban renewal opened up opportunities for squatting. The fact that these kinds of processes result in vacant buildings and may lead to alliances between squatters and tenants or owners of small businesses in the area risking eviction and displacement has been important in the history of squatting in the rest of Europe.

Furthermore, an important aspect that is highlighted in the work of Martínez López (2013) is the connection of squatting in a particular context with other social movements and the ability to align forces and connect the local struggles with global and more general issues. Cooperation and connection to social movements and other collective actors could be crucial for squatters' ability to mobilize resources or broader support. The previous section discussed the collective actors behind squatting in Sweden and demonstrated the diversity of actors involved in squatting. The knowledge and experience of mobilization and collective struggle and the existence of networks (local, national and transnational) and useful contacts can become crucial for squatting to take place and be sustained. Martínez López (2013: 875) argues that it is through links to other social movements that squatting gains visibility outside its immediate environment. The role of alliances and the presence of brokers to collective actors striving for social change should not be underestimated. The transformative power of cooperation between different collective actors, involving squatters, has been examined in the work of Polanska and Piotrowski (2015) concluding that openness to new allies along with the independent (autonomous) functioning of the cooperating actors are crucial for the development of squatting. In his work on squatters' and migrants' interactions in Madrid over two decades Martínez López found out that squatters in the city have over time broadened their agenda and succeeded in a shift of discourse on squatting:

> After the global financial crisis in 2008 and the 15M movement in 2011, the occupation of houses by migrants, political squatters and other activists boosted and challenged the criminalization processes which were generally applied to squatting.
>
> (Martínez López 2016: 15)

Media and other discursive opportunities have been highlighted by some scholars of squatting as important conditions of possibility (Martínez López 2013; Dadusc and Dee 2015; Dee 2013; Dee 2016). Martínez López (2013) argued on the basis of several European cases of squatting that independent and mass media coverage that is not too aggressive enables squatters to legitimize their actions. Deanna Dadusc and E.T.C. Dee (2015) have demonstrated that media representations tend to depoliticize squatting in the Netherlands, England and Wales by focusing on the "criminal" character of squatting actions and diverting attention from the causes behind such actions. In line with Martínez López (2013: 876) I would like to emphasize that the sole fact that squatting is covered in the mass media, despite its often skewed and stereotypical form, sends off a message to the public on the possibility, presence and effectiveness of squatting. Moreover, E.T.C. Dee (2013) has in his work on dominant discourses on squatting in England stressed the importance of recognizing squatters as active actors in shaping and contesting discursive opportunity structures. He also found that whenever the discourse on squatting has been mixed with a larger ideological-discursive framework, on for instance speculative practices of real estate owners and the presence of vacant buildings or the inefficiency of bureaucratic decisions, it could shift to a more positive tone. Studies of discursive opportunities and formations, and above all in-depth analyses of how discourses are formulated and contested by squatters are still very few. Focusing on what is acceptable to say and do in a given context can give us an improved understanding of how contentious action, such as squatting, has developed over time in that context. Focusing on discursive formations and frameworks researchers can make visible how hegemonic discourses are strengthened and contested over time, and as Dee (2016) has demonstrated in the Dutch case, how they can enable criminalization and juridical repression of squatting.

None of the publications mentioned in this review has covered squatting in Sweden or explained the conditions prevalent in cases where a squatting movement/mobilization has not developed. Usually research on squatting either pays attention to the level of policies or legalization, focuses on the micro level of squatting (in a particular squat, city or squatting movement), or concentrates on a limited geographical context (the "usual" cases of squatting studied are the capital cities in: Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and US, and in less degree countries in Central and Eastern Europe). There is a lack of a more systematic view of how squatters contest these policies or which explains the less frequent and durable cases of squatting. Even if the link to the development of the welfare state and its relation to squatting in a particular national context has previously been recognized, this relationship has not been adequately examined in research up till today. The political opportunity structures approach focuses usually on the antagonistic relationship between collective actors and the state and few researchers have examined a context where the interaction between social movements and the state has been as close as in the Swedish case. International literature has

tended to use the explanations advanced in social movement studies for the trajectory of squatting in different contexts by focusing on the dimensions of resource mobilization, political opportunity structures and economic conditions presupposing that economic hardship motivates the emergence and sustaining of social movements. In a comparative study of squatting movements' strength in 52 large cities in western Europe, Cesar Guzman-Concha (2015) argued that the three dimensions of resources, political system and grievances are insufficient to explain differences in the development of squatting in these cities. The author claimed that we need to focus on particular configurations of causal conditions in order to understand the differences and distinguished two major configurations represented in northern and western/southern Europe respectively. The northern European model is where the far-right parties play a crucial role in the development of squatting movements. The other model mixes the three classical dimensions mentioned above: the availability of resources, economic grievances and ill-functioning institutions. Sweden is presented in the work of Guzman-Concha (ibid.: 675) as a place of non-existent/weak squatting movement, despite the fact that it has had several far-right parties since the 1990s following the emergence of fascist and white-supremacist movements in the 1980s. The two ideal types developed in this study are thus unsatisfactory in explaining squatting's trajectory in Sweden.

Additionally, the problematic nature of such models is that cases that are studied solely during a limited period of time are deemed as "weak" and "failed" and thus not worthy of further attention. Likewise, countries with what internationally has been regarded as strong welfare provision and "good" housing conditions are usually not included among the cases studied, so the expectation that contentious actors are absent becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The inclination to look for something fitting our particular expectations has led to the lack of nuance and attention to cases that are in some way different.

Conclusion: a need for a new research agenda

The preceding sections in this chapter presented previous studies on squatting in Sweden and the international body of literature on the topic and discussed aspects distinguished in previous research as conditioning squatting. As will be shown in the rest of this book, the picture given on aspects conditioning squatting in previous international research is not always fully applicable to the Swedish case. Or rather, it does not explain the trajectory of squatting in Sweden in a satisfactory manner. The uniqueness of the Swedish case lies in the corporatist type of capitalism in the country, its hybrid system combining capitalism and socialism manifested in the close relationship between the Swedish state and civil society and resulting in the fostering of a specific form of collaboration in the sphere of collective action. All the opportunity structures earlier highlighted as important for the emergence and development of squatting, that is the political, legal, discursive and economic opportunity structures along with the opportunity to connect with other collective struggles,

are permeated by the ideals fostered in the corporatist system in Sweden setting the rules for who is treated as a legitimate political subject, what actions are criminalized, how these actions are talked about and which social, political and economic grievances are seen as reasonable in a given context. Also the connection to other collective actors is in some way conditioned by/in this system, as we have seen in this chapter dividing between those "who play by the rules" and follow the specific Swedish consensus culture and those who do not. The analysis of the role of this corporatist model, the welfare state and civil society for the trajectory of the contentious politics of squatting will therefore be discussed in more detail in the book by analyzing discourses as these have the potential to uncover underlying and implicit ideals and norms.

Moreover, the tendency among researchers to focus on durable and "successful" cases of squatting has created loopholes and shortcomings in the examination of the constraining aspects in collective action by neglecting to cover previously under-researched characteristics of collective action, that could contribute to our knowledge of the conditions under which squatting occurs. The case of Sweden is once again a perfect example of a history of squatting that developed differently from squatting in other more known contexts and although squatting attempts intensified in the 1970s-1980s, and in the 2000s, none of the squats lasted for long periods of time and never longer than three years.

Research on squatting in Sweden is fragmented and does not provide a comprehensive picture of how squatting has developed in the country or in a particular city over time. The lack of historical perspective in research on squatting in Sweden or the sole focus on squatting in historical studies has resulted in a gap and some misinterpretations of squatting in Sweden. This book aims at filling this gap and to go against the tendency to study the most renowned, spectacular, durable and influential squatting actions and contexts.

In comparison with previous literature on the topic my ambition has been to regard the actors behind squatting as heterogeneous and not always previously organized groups of activists. I rather stress that squatters become squatters and collective actors when engaging in a squat/acting collectively and that some of them might belong to particular social movements, while some do not. It is therefore not my goal to determine who the actors behind squatting in Sweden are, but rather to ask how they portray themselves and their goals and to analyze the discourses on squatting in the media and among politicians in the country between 1968 and 2017. Studying discourses on squatting in Sweden, I argue later, provides an illustrative example of the dominant view of Swedish history that has been presented as extensively consensual and free from contentious and conflictual interests. This book proves that this view is itself a highly contested issue.

Note

1 A squatting movement that grew strong in Denmark in the 1980s. The abbreviation, BZ, stands for "besæt", meaning literally occupy.

2   Squatting in the Swedish media

The squatting of buildings has become a highly contested issue wherever it has occurred. As it challenges ownership of property by taking over buildings without authorization, the debate tends occasionally to be quite heated. How such a contested issue is represented in the media is interesting and could accurately demonstrate how discourses are operating in a specific context. How these discourses are conditioning squatting in setting the boundaries of what is "reasonable" and "legitimate" in a specific context in a specific period of time is therefore in focus of this chapter.

The aim of the chapter is to analyze how squatting events and squatters have been depicted in media reports from the late 1960s until today. I want to study whether these depictions have changed over time and how. Guided by the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach an important aspect of the analysis was to see who is talking in the reports and from what position (Fairclough 1995). I also studied the photographs included in the articles. The guiding questions for this chapter were:

- How are the squatters described?
- What other actors are depicted and how?
- What actions and how are these described?
- How are the descriptions legitimized?
- Are squatters' voices included? In what way are they involved?
- What emotions are described and mediated?
- What are the pictures included in the reports?

The starting point of this chapter is that discourses are processes and practices of knowledge construction that are used by humans to understand and represent the world. Discourses are here defined as particular ways of speaking or writing about subjects. In line with Foucault (1977), language is treated in this chapter as a reflection of power relations in a society. By producing meaning, language gives power and reproduces it. The aim is to trace the media discourse from the first squatting action in Sweden in 1968 to 2017 and to analyze how this discourse on squatting and squatters is reproduced,

justified and changed over this period. Therefore the presentation of the analysis in this chapter is structured chronologically.

Discourses and the media

Media plays an important role in the process of mediating meaning through texts (Fairclough 2003) and in the creation of discourses where actors, concepts and events are connected. Discourses are produced in specific social and cultural contexts and are continually created and recreated. Dominant, or hegemonic, discourses are those that are commonly accepted ways of speaking or representing something and are often created by those in power. A study of the way that squatting is described reveals the constraints and opportunities that squatters face in challenging or rearticulating discourses. Discourses mediated by newspaper media can thus be treated as a set of institutionalized ways of framing an issue and are in this chapter seen as crucial to the development of squatting in Sweden.

There are even fewer studies written on the representations of squatting in Sweden than generally on squatting in the country. Among the existing studies that systematically focus on representations of squatting there are studies of media representations of specific squats on the local level (Carle 1991; Ericsson 2016) and one study also includes material gathered in a police investigation (Pries & Zackari 2016). Most of the previous work mentions media representations of squatting but does not go into depth and systematically examine them (Thörn 2013). Others examine protest events on a local level over a longer period of time including squatting, but do not focus solely on the phenomenon of squatting (Lundstedt 2016). Still more accounts use media reports as the base for examining goals behind squatting (Lindell 2015). This chapter offers a more thorough study looking at the national level but including local representations and at the same time tracing them over time.

Analysis in this chapter builds on a selection of articles from the national and regional/local news media, including newspapers: *Aftonbladet* (AB), *Dagens Nyheter* (DN), *Direktpress* (DP), *Expressen* (EX), *Fria Tidningar* (FT); *Hela Gotland* (HG); *Helsingborgs Dagblad* (HD); *Jönköpings-Posten* (JP); *Kvällsposten* (KVP); *Landskrona-Posten* (LP); *Länstidningen Östergötland* (LÖ); *Mitti* (MI), *Skånska Dagbladet* (SD), *Svenska Dagbladet* (SVD), *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* (SSD), *Södermanlands Nyheter* (SN); *Tranås tidning* (TRT); *Västerbottens Folkblad* (VF); *Västerbotten Kuriren* (VK). There is a bias in the selection from earlier period as the digital database of printed news media of the Royal Library between 1968 and 1999 only includes national dailies such as *Aftonbladet, Dagens Nyheter, Expressen* and *Svenska Dagbladet*. This is, however, not considered to be particularly problematic as the aim was to analyze above all similarities in the national discourse and not local variations.

For the later period between 2000 and 2017, the Swedish Retriever Research (*Mediearkivet*) was used in the search for news articles about squatting in Sweden. The keyword used in both databases was "husockupation" (squatting,

or literally "house-occupation") and the author is aware of the fact that some squatting events not explicitly framed as squatting by the activists or the journalists were not covered in the selection. The initial search resulted in over 400 hits and the ambition was to analyze the discourse on squatting over time and create a "representative" sample by including reports from as many years as possible. In cases where squatting was reported on frequently or over a short period of time, longer articles were chosen over shorter ones. The criteria for the selection were as follows:

1   to create a sample that would cover as many years/periods as possible;
2   to choose texts covering different geographical locations and different squats;
3   to choose longer texts over shorter; and
4   to create a sample that is manageable.

The articles were further analyzed with a qualitative focus on the representations of squatters and the attributes used to describe them concentrating on:

1   what was said about squatters;
2   who was saying it;
3   to whom; and
4   how was it justified?

I particularly concentrate on the use of metaphors in the representations of squatting and squatters, on the representation of other actors and their relations to squatters, on the question of action and passivity or who is acting and why, on who is voicing their concern and who is silenced, on the mediation of specific emotions in the texts and on the visual part of the articles analyzed.

The final selection consisted of around 100 articles and did include some texts written by the squatters themselves and published in the selected newspapers as squatters should be recognized as active actors in shaping and contesting the dominant discourse (cf. Dee 2013). Discourses are often contested and competing representations are important to cover in order to understand how discourses consolidate or shift (van Dijk 1993).

The following analysis is for analytical reasons divided into sections roughly following the decades 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. Changes within each period are, however, followed closely. More general trends are presented in the concluding section arguing that although the discourse on squatting has been predominantly negative throughout the studied years, there have been some shifts indicating more positive and nuanced views on squatting in the media material. Interestingly, the editorial views of the national dailies, ranging from left, through social democratic to liberal, were not found to be affecting the depiction of squatting considerably. The local newspapers tended to portray squatting in a more positive light. Moreover, the role of the media

is described as significantly influential on the larger cultural context as the media's active involvement in the creation of specific discourses gives it some room for the identification of problems and possible solutions in the public debate. Negative depictions provided by the media result in negative attitudes that could extend to collective actors' possibilities to contest these kinds of depictions, also resulting in the weakening of their collective claims, or even depoliticization. It is shown that in the history of squatting in Sweden the tendency of a sharpened negative discourse in the media towards squatting has been occurring analogous with sharpened repressive measures.

Late 1960s and 1970s: stressing the illegality of squatting

The most common actors in the articles from this period were squatters, police, municipal housing companies or landlords/real estate owners depending on the ownership status of the squatted building. Sometimes even other actors were included in the narratives, like for instance bailiffs, the Tenants' Union, security guards, spectators and supporters (of squatters). Squatters were described differently throughout the period and the descriptions shifted from one squatting action to another   the most popular one was the squatting of *Mullvaden*   and sometimes even when one and the same event was described differently over time or by different media.

In May 1968, the first public squatting of a building was carried out in Sweden. It was widely covered as it was the first such event in Sweden and took place during a period in history that was characterized by civil unrest both nationally and internationally with demonstrations, strikes or occupations of university buildings taking place in for instance France; US, Italy, Germany and Mexico. In Sweden the squatting of the students' union building (Stockholm University) in May 1968 attracted the attention of different media (SVD published 91 articles mentioning the word "kårhusockupation"/ "occupation of the students' union" between 1968 and 1969 and DN published 76). Just a year later, in 1969, several squatting actions were taking place in Lund and were covered by the regional newspaper media (SSD, SD) and national media (Rylander 2014).

The squatters in the case of the students' union were described as students in the articles. On the last page of *Svenska Dagbladet* the day after the students' union was occupied a picture of two men was published under the heading "Students are occupying students' union: a protest against educational reform" (SVD 1968-05-25). On the picture one of the men was shown talking into a microphone while another was smiling and holding up his hand showing a bankroll. The bankroll represented money gathered in support of the squatters. Two articles on the squatting of students' union were published side by side. One of the reports depicted how the decision to squat the students' union was taken and cited some of the speakers at the event. The reason for squatting was described and it is obvious that the author must have been present at the event. The other article covered the visit of the minister of

education, Olof Palme, to the squatted building and cited parts of the conversation between the students and the minister on planned educational reform. This positive representation of the occupation changed within days and a conflict between different left-wing parties and their youth organizations blew up. This conflict represented the first time out of countless times until 2017 when political parties and civil society organizations distanced themselves from squatting practices.

Of importance in this conflict was the discussion on the illegality and anti-democratic character of squatting. Less than two weeks after the squatting of the students' union's house ended, the socialist federation declared that the media representations of the occupation were "grossly distorted" and did not take into account the organization of the action around free discussions and majority vote as the main decision-making procedure:

> The students were represented as perpetrators of violence and anti-democrats. They focused on the occasional ill-considered opinions in a debate where several hundred people for the first time presented its opinions publicly in a conscious way.
>
> (SVD 1968-06-08)

The facts that some of the squatters of the students' union also took part in an attempt to squat the opera building the second day of the occupation and broke some windows, that there was an attempt to take over the People's House, that one person screamed that "next time we will not be unarmed" during a demonstration, and that one speaker at the Union brought a knife, created conflicts and a need among the groups to distance themselves from violence (DN 1968-05-28; DN 1968-06-02; SVD 1968-05-29; SVD 1968-05-31). A discussion on the un/democratic character of squatting and other extra-parliamentary actions took off and shaped the subsequent reports on squatting, among them the squatting events taking place in 1969 in Lund. A year after the squatting of the students' union the discussion was still ongoing and in an article in *Svenska Dagbladet* six public figures (a professor, a vice-chancellor at Uppsala University, a minister, a member of the parliament, a director-general, and a writer) were interviewed on their opinion about "Extra-parliamentarism democratic or not?" (SVD 1969-06-24). People using extra-parliamentary methods were described as "youths" and one of the interviewed persons called it "post-modern" as "the openness and flexibility that the youth is demonstrating today, not least the radical youth, is conditioned, of course, by living in a rapidly changing society" (SVD 1969-06-24). Most of the pictures published in 1968 and 1969 depicted squatters at meetings and demonstrations. Only a few focused on particular persons, while the majority portrayed squatters as a more anonymous group/mass. Some of them depicted policemen celebrating successful actions against the squatters receiving flowers or eating a festive dinner together.

In the first half of the 1970s reports on squatting were focusing on the "illegality" of such actions describing the squatters as either tenants or youths. Most often the initiation or eviction of a squat was reported on and it was common to describe the planned police action. The heading "Squatting in Gothenburg: 20 arrested" of an article in *Svenska Dagbladet* (1970-12-08) or "Police mobilization evicted squatters in Lerum" (1974-08-22) were quite typical during this period. The emphasis in the reports was on the possible use of violence (by the squatters and the police) and the aggressiveness of squatters in such situations. Often barricades built by squatters were mentioned and squatters were dehumanized and objectified whenever evictions were portrayed. Squatters were "carried and dragged out" (SVD 1970-12-08) of buildings and the sequence of events was commonly described as follows:

> The other evictions were carried through by the police after the barricades were "stormed" and squatters were carried out and removed to the police station in Alingsås in order to interrogate and identify them.
>
> (SVD 1974-08-22)

The description then focused on how the squatters made it more difficult for the police to enter by creating barricades with old bicycles, nailed doors, stairs filled with benches and boards, and so on. The above quotation illustrates the objectification of squatters that needed to be "carried out" or "removed" like objects. The emotion mediated in this kind of depictions was the trouble and irritation over the childish and irrational behavior that squatters represented. It was the disciplinary glance of a parent/adult that was represented in these reports. A parent/adult talking to his/her peers condemning the actions of immature and childish squatters. In his study of the discourse on squatting in England in 2000s, Dee (2013) found that a discourse was forming based on generational elements and a parent/child relationship not necessarily supported by the actual age of squatters, but used to belittle the phenomenon of squatting. It is a tactic to dismiss antagonists as unrealistic and ignorant children, opposing a parent who knows best.

In the late 1970s, the most covered case of squatting was *Mullvaden* in Stockholm since it lasted for 11 months and attracted broad support. In connection with *Mullvaden*, the discourse on squatting seems to be softening and the squatters themselves are for the first time ever voicing their concerns in texts (letters to the editors) published in the national media. In an article from 1977, it is argued that the squatting of *Mullvaden* should be understood as "a rare form of forced management" as the buildings squatted have been neglected by the municipal housing company Svenska Bostäder and broken the promise to the tenants of "moderate sanitation in joint consultation with the tenants" (AB 1977-11-19). Squatters are described as tenants reacting to the unfair housing management of Svenska Bostäder, municipal housing policies and the "real housing thieves" of construction and real estate companies. However, the author continues to argue the

activity of the Tenants' Union should not "move over to illegal forms of struggle", even if the struggle of the squatters of *Mullvaden* is worth supporting (AB 1977-11-19).

This positive attitude towards squatters of *Mullvaden* was shared in several articles. In one covering the whole page of *Dagens Nyheter* from 1978 with the title "Mullvaden   a life of waiting for the police" several voices of persons in some way involved in the occupation were represented in their own words. Among these the voices of a worried mother, a former alcoholic, a high school student, a former architect, an early retired middle-aged man and two visitors were represented. A mixed picture was painted here. Positive aspects of squatting like for instance vulnerable groups receiving a roof over their heads were mixed with negative aspects such as squats attracting mentally unstable persons, or "radicals" (DN 1978-09-01). A similar conclusion was reached in the study of Dee where the dominant discourse on squatting in England was examined and where the author argued that squatting could be depicted positively "but only perhaps when another discourse is involved, so that the negative discourse concerning squatting is over-ridden by a larger ideological-discursive framework" (Dee 2013: 256). The discourse on buildings left vacant for speculative purposes or bureaucratic measures setting the limits for the use of empty buildings were parts of such a discursive framework in the Swedish case that could shift the tone to a more positive one overall.

This relatively positive view of squatting was continuing in following reports on other squatting events in 1978 (cf. Thörn 2013). In the article on the squatting of Tomtebogatan in Stockholm in 1978 the squatters were described as tenants acting against the municipal housing company Svenska Bostäder wanting to sanitize the building (DN 1978-02-03). The same day an article in another newspaper was published about the same event, but this emphasized the "illegal" nature of this kind of action by focusing on the point of view of Svenska Bostäder under the dramatic heading "New squatting: the landlord is calling for the police" (AB 1978-02-03). The director of the company is interviewed in the article mediating the feeling of a "troublesome situation":

> But we are planning on throwing out the five that have moved in illegally. A police report has been done and we have told them to be out by Monday. We are counting on the police to move quickly if they are not gone by then.
>
> (AB 1978-02-03)

This tough attitude was represented in other articles from the same period. In a follow-up article of the court case against squatters from *Mullvaden* it was concluded "Mullvaden-squatters got harder sentences" by citing the persecutor's arguments in the Swedish Supreme Court and arguing that the squatters did not show respect to the principles:

> … guiding a democratic society, namely that citizens ought not to use illegal means to prevent the implementation of legally taken decisions. This circumstance, as well as the accused actions' range and durability can justify that they according to the general obedience to the law should be imprisoned.
>
> (DN 1978-06-03)

Even if the squatters did not get prison sentences but probation and fines the quotation above is illustrative of an often recurring argument on the illegality of squatting and its undemocratic nature although many of the articles also described how squatters strive for self-management and direct democracy and critique undemocratically taken decisions (of demolitions, renovations or on the democratically managed community centers). This argument is traced further in the following analysis as the discourse on squatting in the following years is presented.

The ambiguous attitude of the media toward squatters, ranging from negative to more nuanced, was traced in the study of Jansson and Uba (2016), where the authors studied the resistance against the construction of a power plant in Ljungan, Jämtland between 1972 and 1979. One method used was the occupation of land where the power plant was planned to be built and the authors observed that the local newspaper despite its support throughout the whole period and the occupiers' peaceful and non-confrontational approach also frequently used "terms like 'battle', 'readiness' and 'frontiers'" (ibid.: 164). Thörn (2013), on the other hand, claims that the local media in Gothenburg gradually changed its negative attitude toward squatting from the 1970s onwards. He argues in his comparative study of the Swedish case of Haga in Gothenburg and the Danish case of Christiania that the tolerance of squatting among Danish media and other established institutions was considerably greater manifested in positive media representations.

To sum up, the description of who the squatters were shifted between the late 1960s and the 1970s from students and youths to tenants and to youths again resulting in a more positive and at the same time serious tone whenever the squatters were described as tenants. Squatting undertaken by youths and students was portrayed as childish and not to be taken seriously (cf. Dee 2013). Already during the first squatting of the students' union the need of political parties to distance themselves from the "illegal" and confrontational method of occupying buildings was apparent and squatting was discussed in terms of its undemocratic character going against the established laws, often leaving out the reasons for squatting or the organization behind squatting from the discussion. To engage in party political work or civil society organizations were mentioned among the accepted methods by the critics of squatting. Later on during the 1970s civil society organizations, like the Tenants' Union, also joined the discussion and distanced themselves from "illegal" collective action (with the exception of the Södermalm group who supported the squatting of *Mullvaden* in the 1970s). What was perceived as the radical

nature of extra-parliamentary actions was often brought up in the discussion on squatting during this period, when actors such as politicians, civil society representatives and other public figures took part. A dehumanizing and patronizing view of squatters was common in the articles in the first half of the 1970s. The most spectacular events in the course of a squatting event, the opening and the eviction of a squat, were frequently covered in the articles, in this way missing out on the everyday activities and the self-governing character of squatting. Instead a "media spectacle" was created following the newspaper media logic of selling papers (Corr 1999). The reports on the longest squatting in this period, the one of *Mullvaden*, marked a more positive attitude towards squatting showing a shifted view toward the phenomenon at the end of the 1970s.

1980s: squatters vs. the police

On the front page of *Svenska Dagbladet* in the summer of 1980, one could read that "Bellmansgatan 22 is barricaded: some 40 youths are squatting [ockuperar] the building" (1980-06-08). The picture accompanying the text portrayed three policemen and the director of communication at Svenska Bostäder standing outside the building's entrance. The squatters were described as youths protesting against the building left vacant by the municipal housing company and its plans to demolish it. The squatters' plans to create collective housing there and open a café, a flea market and a bakery were mentioned, but the only person cited was the police inspector saying that the squatters "are on their way out. Tonight might be difficult, but as soon as possible" (SVD 1980-06-08). In 1982 a group resquatted the building and the media reported rather favorably by examining why the building had been empty for five years, confronting the director of Svenska Bostäder: "Why has the house been empty for five years? It is not our fault. It is the City Museum requiring unreasonable measures in the basement that makes a renovation far too expensive" (SVD 1982-05-23).

By citing this statement the article showed the unreasonability of arguments for letting buildings stand vacant and unused in times when there are groups interested in putting them into use. The discourse on squatting intersected here with the discourse on the inefficiency of political and/or administrative decisions, especially resilient in relation to discussion on housing and spatial management.

The wave of squatting that was going on during this period left its mark on the way that the squatters were described. The reporters seemed to have recognized them from previous squatting actions and were prone to write things like "The squatters from Skaraborgsgatan have struck again" (EX 1985-11-02). The squatters were even in mid-1980s portrayed as youth and even if their voices were cited in the articles, there was a moralizing argument often presented in the statements made by politicians or landlords (municipal and private) telling the "youths" that squatting is "not a constructive way of having a discussion" (EX 1985-11-02) or that "We think that the youths have

won a lot already through their occupation" (SVD 1985-09-10) encouraging squatters to leave without obtaining their demands.

In the 1980s the increasing number of squatting actions in Sweden along with the escalation of police violence against squatters was also evident in the articles published in this period. The headlines shifted their focus from the squatting itself to the very encounter of squatters with the police. Some examples from this period that were illustrative for this turn were: "110 youths arrested" (DN 1986-12-15), "The police stopped an attempt at squatting" (SVD 1987-03-22), "Police dissolved an occupation" (DN 1988-09-11), "Police shock against squatters" (AB 1988-09-11), "Police cleaned the street at 'Husnallarna' [House bears] this night" (AB 1988-10-03), and "The battle for the empty houses scares politicians" (EX 1986-12-15).

The police violence was critically discussed during this period and even newspapers displaying an unsupportive attitude towards squatters joined the debate. In his study of the attempts to take over a fire station in Jönköping in 1982, Ericsson (2016) concluded that "also Jönköpings-Posten which otherwise kept a rather bantering tone against the activists who complained of police brutality, admitted that the [police] intervention resulted in 'bruises, torn loose tufts of hair and sore wrists'" (ibid.: 174). Along with the tendency to depict squatting events as a confrontation between squatters and the police there was a critical discussion held on the increased police actions and interventions during this period.

In the ongoing debate about police violence some representatives of the squatters took part. Several debate articles were published in 1986 discussing police violence as a problem. In this discussion the explanations for squatting buildings were deepened and the squatters themselves got the space to explain why they squatted particular buildings with their own words. The violence used by the police and especially the use of tear gas in the eviction of Norrtullsgatan in Stockholm were summarized by one of the squatters in a debate article:

> Those half-lies of our militancy are simply an attempt to shift interest from what is truly exceptional in this context   the use of tear gas. If this should be the practice in the future   and why would it not be?   it is a harsh climate we are awaiting […].
>
> (DN 1986-06-20)

This contribution to the debate was met with texts written by a lawyer and a former ruling council shortly after it was published. The former governmental council (*regeringsråd*) argued that "If one calls oneself a squatter, one might find oneself being exposed to the violence that the police have the legal right to exercise" (DN 1986-06-27). The attitude expressed by the lawyer was much more positive towards squatters, condemning the violence practiced by the police. But it also included arguments from other discourses, like for instance that criticizing the demolition of functional buildings or the inability of local authorities to satisfy housing and socio-cultural needs of youths. The

patronizing view was evident and the division of the old/politicians/established society and young/squatters/youths was clear in the article asking questions if young homeless people could get help of "the established society", how older members of the society should talk to teens and young adults or how collective forms of living (seen as temporary desires) could be encouraged among young people (DN 1986-06-27).

The generational division guiding this article was unmistakable and the squatters were depicted as much younger, not yet established in society and striving for collective forms of living, but only temporarily.

Throughout the rest of the 1980s the militancy of squatters was often emphasized in the reports and the violent encounters with the police were in the forefront of media representations. Pictures published together with the texts often showed squatters clashing with the police, being arrested, being beaten, body searched, often lying down on the ground. Different words used to describe the situation were "turmoil" (DN 1986-12-15), "battle" (EX 1986-12-15), "uninterrupted resistance" (EX 1986-12-15), "police cleaned the house from squatters" (AB 1988-09-11), "police cleaned the street" (AB 1988-10-03), or "fight" (DN 1988-11-27) as in this very vivid and graphic description depicting the events following police's entering the building:

> The squatters responded with a hail of bricks, water bombs, firecrackers and rockets that landed on the police's Plexiglas-shields. The battle ended with a squatter unleashing a powder fire extinguisher against the police officers who quickly retreated to the sound of cheers and applause from the squatters.
>
> (DN 1988-11-27)

This fixation with violence became clearer when most of the reports during this period centered their attention on the "tools" or "weapons" used in the clashes with the police. Even if all of the articles mentioned the reasons for squatting and often cited squatters explaining the particular history of the squatted building and their critique of the housing situation the fascination with the moments when stones were thrown or doors were forced was very symptomatic. The squatters' actions are described as: "forcing the doors", "storming with axes" (DN 1988-09-11), using "jumping jacks and paint bombs" (AB 1988-09-11), "built barricades" (DN 1987-03-22), and "clashed with the police" (DN 1986-12-15). In some reports on squatting when the eviction was resolved without the use of violence, it was highlighted that the action was "peaceful" (SVD 1988-05-31) and that the squatters were "different" and "good squatters" (SVD 1986-09-10).

A similar division between "good" and "bad" squatters was found in the French case analyzed by Florence Bouillon (2013) where these two categories were kept apart in the representations shaped by government officials. The "good" squatters were those who acted in good faith and were inoffensive and lived up to the three criteria of being (1) genuinely poor, (2) sincere, and (3) harmless (Bouillon 2013: 239; Dee & Debelle dos Santos 2015; Debelle dos

Santos 2017). The division between "deserving" and "undeserving" squatters has been pointed out by scholars as crucial in media representations of squatting (Platt 1999). According to Steve Platt (ibid.), who studied discourses on squatting in Britain in the 1960s 1990s, the respectability of squatters along with their lack of a political agenda qualified them for the category of "good" squatters. In the Swedish case the non-violent and peaceful approach of squatters, along with their genuine wish for a more equal society (not often covered in the articles), qualified them as "good" in this period. Nevertheless, newspaper media representations of 1980s were predominantly negative towards squatters, using military terms to describe squatting events and objectifying squatters in such reports, stripping them of their humanity. Portraying them as young led to moralizing arguments about the "criminal" character of their actions and legitimized the use of disciplinary measures and police violence. Corr (1999) argued that using mainstream media by the squatters is comparable to a double-edged sword, on the one hand disseminating squatting actions, on the other also skewing the view due to the media's tendency to concentrate on street violence. Furthermore, in line with the work of Dadusc and Dee on the Netherlands, England and Wales (Dadusc & Dee 2015), I would like to argue that the focus on the "criminal" character of squatting actions during the 1980s overshadows the political dimension of squatting resulting in a depoliticization of the practice of squatting in media representations.

The 1990s: fascination with violence

The 1990s were somewhat calmer than the 1980s in the number of reports published on squatting and were dominated by the articles on the recurring squatting of a building at *Folkungagatan* in Stockholm, the squatting of *Tullen*-building in Gothenburg and the six months long squatting of *Borgen* in Malmö. Carle (1991) examined the representations of two local newspapers in 1990 covering the squatting of the Tullen-building at Landsvägen in Gothenburg and concluded that the liberal one to a greater degree portrayed squatting as a social problem and used the perspective of power holders, while the Social Democratic newspaper displayed a more sympathetic view of squatting, discussing it as a legitimate way of addressing social and political problems. Carle's study showed that among the sources used in the media reports during this period squatting activists were referred to in 32% of stories. However, my examination of the reports, where other cities are included, shows a different picture. The militancy of squatters was stressed in these reports and the use of tear gas and other repressive methods by the police was justified by arguments on:

1   Squatters being armed ("big stones" DN 1990-06-10; "bricks" DN 1990-06-05, SVD 1990-07-03; "Molotov-cocktails" and "stones" SVD 1990-11-17; "a table leg" DN 1991-03-30; "cobblestones and asphalt chunks" AB 1994-01-08; "bombs, powerful slingshots and stones" AB 1994-11-15), and using barricades and checkpoints ("barbed wire and

fences" SVD 1990-07-03; "similar to a fortified castle" SVD 1990-11-17; "closed the street with checkpoints" DN 1991-03-30).

2   The police not being efficient in fighting squatting ("critical voices were raised against police passivity" SVD 1990-11-17, "still after six weeks the police and the municipality are delaying intervention against…" SVD 1990-07-03).

3   Squatters being part of a bigger movement or organization ("The autonomous in Malmö   Sweden's most militant youth movement" AB 1994-01-08; "Several of them have been members of the Left Party's youth organization, the Young Left" AB 1994-11-15; "environmental activists" SVD 1994-04-19).

The reports on the evacuation of *Borgen* in Malmö were especially detailed and focused on the arms used/or prepared for use by the squatters and the police action during the eviction. One illustrative example was the article in Svenska Dagbladet and the section that followed a subheading "Gasoline bombs":

> After the evacuation on Friday Malmö police showed the youth's weapon stock in the property. On the roof there was a variety of ready to be used, so-called Molotov cocktails, bottles filled with gasoline. Elsewhere there were stones and objects fitted with spikes.
>
> (SVD 1990-11-17)

Different "arms" were mentioned in different reports on the same squatting event. Moreover, the discussion on squatters belonging to a militant movement took off and the squatters were from this point in time no longer only "homeless youths" (SVD 1990-11-17; DN 1991-03-30) or "youths" (SVD 1990-07-03; SVD 1992-03-04; AB 1994-01-08; AB 1994-11-15; DN 1995-01-04), but more often were called "counter-demonstrators" and "the autonomous" (AB 1994-01-08), groups with a specific "ideology" (AB 1994-11-15), or "environmental activists" (SVD 1994-04-19). There was a shift in the tone that significantly changed the emotional mediation further on by focusing on the organized character of squatting. The emotion mediated was a mix of thrill and fear, or delight mingled with terror. An article in *Aftonbladet* in 1994 set the tone for this kind of representations by describing "The autonomous" as a militant youth movement consisting of "eco-saboteurs, eco-terrorists and professional demonstrators", sometimes calling themselves *plowshares* (an international movement for disarming weapons), *kokosbollar* (coconut balls, an environmental group whose name comes from a demolished coconut ball factory) or simply the *autonomous* and to be found in Swedish cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö (AB 1994-01-08): "They are tired of flyers and demonstrations. They rather devote themselves to sabotage, civil disobedience and direct action. […] Who are these saboteurs and terrorists? What do they want? And what are their limits?" (AB 1994-01-08).

The movement started, according to the article, with "squatting, continued with riots, smashed bank windows and a firebomb in the Stock Exchange-building" (AB 1994-01-08). The report was two pages long and large pictures showing squatters at *Borgen* or people in a fight with the police at two demonstrations held previous years. The picture of *Borgen* was accompanied by the text that the autonomous movement was born at the squatting of *Borgen*.

During this period it is unmistakably evident that even the visual material in the reports was pointing in the same direction as the written texts   the militancy of squatting and the threat it posed to society. The pictures depicted squatters in situations when they were arrested (SVD 1990-11-17; AB 1994-11-15), masked on the roof of the squatted buildings (SVD 1990-05-14; AB 1994-01-08), fighting the police (DN 1991-03-30; AB 1994-01-08), being held down by the police (AB 1994-01-08; AB 1994-11-15) or giving up (SVD 1991-12-13).

Pries and Zackari studied the representation of the occupation of *Borgen* in the local media and highlight that the squatters used quite a militant repertoire of contention and the "local media helped out in creating war-like dramaturgy" (Pries & Zackari 2016: 196) by above all using military representations in the headings and the pictures portraying the conflict between police and the squatters. The squatters were depicted wearing masks, showing off or describing a set of weapons that could be used in street fights, along with the use of a dramatic rhetoric.

The squatters of the 1990s were described not only as youths, but as youths with an ideological conviction and a political agenda. During this period it became important in the reports on squatting to connect squatting practices with an ideological view that would make the recurrent character of squatting more comprehensible to the reader, evoke emotional response to the organized character of squatting, but also legitimize the use of violence and repression. The threat of a spreading movement that was using "illegal" methods of action fed the growing moral panic, raising fear and outrage and diverting attention from the causes behind squatting (cf. Dadusc & Dee 2015). To have an ideological view seen as different from the majority society was the very root of the posed threat. Any view not conforming to the dominant discourse on consensus and collaboration in Sweden could have potentially raised a moral panic, but in this case extra-parliamentary methods using for instance civil disobedience and direct action were perceived as especially outrageous and threatening to the democratic order in the country. As will be shown later, this moral panic contributed to the effective and violent repression of the movement in the 2000s.

The 2000s: the rise and fall of the autonomous

The first decade of the 2000s is clearly defined by the squatting of the old maternity ward *Westmanska* in 2000 in Linköping. Even if the squatting did not last longer than two days, the following protests in the city including an arson attack towards a local politician (and an arson attack towards a

McDonald's restaurant in the city when two of the squatters took part in 2001) caused a sharpened attitude towards squatting on local level, but also on the national level discussing an emergence of "extremist" organizations and sometimes using the label of "terrorists" to describe squatters. In the leading article of Expressen the consequences of the Linköping squatting action were described in the following way:

> When political extremist organizations go so far that they are prepared to hurt individual officers and politicians they should be defined as the terrorist groups they are. Civil disobedience is acceptable when it is not harming people and property. The deliberate use of violence […] is an entirely different matter.
>
> (EX 2000-03-20)

The analysis of the actors behind squatting actions representing a bigger movement of the 1990s was built upon in the 2000s. These were called "the extreme left groups" or "terrorists" (EX 2000-03-20), "anarchists" and "left activists" (EX 2000-03-21), "the autonomous movement" (DN 2000-03-25; SVD 2001-03-05), or simply "extra-parliamentary left" (DN 2000-03-25). The rise of the "autonomous movement" was depicted as worrying and links were drawn between different groups using civil disobedience and direct action tactics. In an article in *Dagens Nyheter* the point of view of the Swedish Security Police (SÄPO) was made clear describing the relationship of the autonomous groups and the police as tense and their distrust to the social establishment as a common denominator of all included groups:

> SÄPO has a national strategy against criminal antifascists and animal rights activists. Police usually cluster all autonomous groups on the left wing in something they call the autonomous network. It includes squatters, anarchists, animal rights activists, porn opponents and anti-racists.
>
> (DN 2000-03-25)

The cities of Malmö, Linköping and Stockholm were pointed out as the strongest brackets of the movement and several specific organizations were listed as violent. Often when the "unusually brutal" (EX 2000-03-20) squatting in Linköping in 2000 was discussed it was pointed out that those arrested for taking part in it came from other cities, for instance Malmö, Jönköping, Vänersborg, Trollhättan, Söderköping and Nyköping. A picture of a network of activists was drawn by clustering together diverse groups sharing a similar action repertoire (direct action, civil disobedience) and locating them on a map. The threat they posed became more acute when the network was described as located in particular Swedish cities. Dadusc and Dee describe the three requirements for a successful moral panic, following Cohen (1972/2002); a suitable victim, a suitable enemy and "a general consensus that the values being attacked are embraced by the society as an organized whole and need

to be protected" (Dadusc & Dee 2015: 114). In the Swedish case in the early 2000s the values under attack were more or less explicitly described as the democratic principles and the victim was the Swedish society itself. The squatters were depicted as enemies that were part of a bigger threatening and ideologically driven whole (the autonomous movement) that required reactive measures.

Moreover, the riots during the EU summit in Gothenburg and the visit of US President George W. Bush in 2001 resulted in several court cases where the background of the accused activists often included squatting actions. Kerstin Jacobsson and Adrienne Sörbom (2015) claimed in their study of the Swedish left libertarian activists that the riots in 2001 ended the cycle of anti-globalization protests in Sweden and resulted in a redefinition of militancy and violent confrontation among the activists. This turn was also to some extent evident in the following squatting actions (and their limited number until 2008) and the way they were framed from 2001 onwards by activists and the media.

Stockholm, Malmö, Umeå and Visby reported on squatted buildings between 2001 and 2007 and the "tranquil" and "peaceful resolution" was emphasized in the reports (HD 2002-10-14; SVD 2002-10-14) along with the moderate and time-limited claims of the squatters: "Organizers also announced that they would leave the house at ten o'clock on Monday evening. The police did not act in connection with the occupation; no police report has been made either" (VF 2008-05-06).

Visual representations changed significantly in this period from depicting the clashes with the police and anonymous masses of "militant" activists to focus more on the squatted buildings (often without squatters) in the period after 2002 or the interiors of squatted buildings. Above all, the pictures published together with the texts varied in focus and did not stress the militancy of squatters anymore.

In 2008 2009, a wave of squatting swept through Swedish cities. This was certainly covered in the media and the experiences from 2001 of violent clashes between the activists and the police were still active in what was described as cautious responses of the police to squatting. The eviction of the first squat in 2008 in Lund and the following demonstration was reported on in the following way: "It has been said to Sydsvenskan that the strategy [of the police] on this day was to lie low and not provoke. In several precincts police officers were ready to be put to work" (SSD 2008-11-09).

The squatters were described as "young" or "youths" in several of the articles covering the wave of squatting across Sweden in 2008 and 2009 (GT 2008-11-11; TT 2008-10-12; SVD 2009-01-24; SSD 2009-04-19; SSD 2009-05-14; TT 2009-07-21). Moreover, the housing question was brought forward by most squatters in this period and an important critique that crystallized was the inertia and ineffectiveness of traditional political work and the work of civil society organizations in the field of housing in Sweden. The argument was the straightforwardness of squatting in satisfying housing needs versus the slow and bureaucratic work of civil society organizations and political

parties. Several representatives of civil society organizations and political parties joined the discussion and the vast majority was careful to pinpoint that squatting was "illegal" and distanced their specific organizations from illegal methods of action. A representative of the Swedish Tenants' Union explained to the journalist of *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* while commenting on the squatting attempts held in Lund: "You have to show your opinion correctly. We do not want to be associated with the method, although we also think that the current housing policies betray the young" (SSD 2009-05-14).

There was, however, a shift in the representation of squatting in the media in the years following the squatting wave of 2008 2009. The discussion on squatting was less moralizing and more nuanced including the critique of housing policies and welfare cutbacks, an understanding of the (housing) situation of young people, a critical evaluation of the (excessive) police actions, a critique of the municipal politics as inefficient, but also focus on the successes of previous squatting actions. In the analysis section of the regional newspaper *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* one of the journalists wrote as a reflection following some of the court cases against squatters in 2010 asking what lessons could be drawn by the activists taking part in the Squatting Festival in 2009. One question posed in the article was ironic asking whether the lesson to be learned was the willingness of the society to use enormous resources to protect abandoned buildings. Another regarded the realization that squatting actions held power to twist:

> … the minds of journalists, politicians and police officers. Possibly they conclude that squatting, or threats of squatting, is a phenomenally effective way to stimulate debate. And that the phenomenon of moral panic is alive and well. In short: do you want catch the establishment's ugliest snout   Throw the squatting hook.
>
> (SSD 2010-04-30)

The ironic tone in the above quotation was obvious to the reader. The effectiveness of squatting in initiating a public debate was confirmed and the lack of logic of wasting of society's resources on the protection of vacant buildings that should instead be inhabited was demonstrated. In an article in *Södermanlands Nyheter* looking back at several squatting events in 2009 and 2010, the success of the squatters in Nyköping was emphasized, arguing that it pays to squat:

> Their three-week squatting action in a chilly deserted farm received great attention in January. The municipality won the struggle for the right to the house but also the insistent won   last week the Kulturföreningen Bergatrollen [Culture association Berga trolls] moved into a house at the foot of Kråkberget.
>
> (SN 2010-07-14)

The argument that "it pays to squat" was repeated in different forms in other articles (local, regional and national) covering the wave of squatting or new squatting events (SSD 2011-10-23; SSD 2010-04-30; SN 2010-07-14; LÖ 2014-08-29; DP 2015-03-14; FT 2015-05-20). Reports on squatting events in the following years after 2009 also started to a greater degree to use other labels than "youths" and "activists" to describe the squatters. A more neutral term "persons" (MI 2010-04-20; EX 2012-01-04; FT 2015-05-29) was used, alongside "demonstrators" (LP 2010-07-29; SSD 2011-10-23; GP 2012-01-04; JP 2014-01-28; TRT 2014-01-13), showing a more neutral picture of squatters as collective actors voicing their concerns.

Only in some of the so called "evening newspapers" (*Aftonbladet, Expressen, Kvällsposten*) was the moralizing and simplified perspective on squatting still thriving in the 2010s. *Expressen* continued to present squatting as pursued by "extremists" "glorifying violence as political method" (EX 2013-04-25) and *Kvällsposten* reported on an individual activist involved in squatting in Linköping in 2000 by examining his criminal record and calling him a "left-extremist" (KVP 2014-03-27).

The 2000s started with a sharpened discourse towards squatters and culminated in the 2001 Gothenburg events where the repression against squatters and other activists resulted in violent encounters intimately intertwined with the negative representations of squatters in the media by that time. It is difficult to assess the direction of the connection between media representations and repressive measures used by authorities in a society, but it is apparent that these interplayed closely in the beginning of the 2000s. Later on the discourse on squatting shifted towards a more positive and nuanced tone when the squatting wave of 2008 2009 hit the country. There the need to depict squatting and squatters cautiously as calm and non-violent dominated media reports. Of course this could also have been a result of a more non-violent framing among Swedish squatters (Benford & Snow 2000), as Jacobsson and Sörbom (2015) pointed out in their work on Swedish left libertarian activists. From this period onwards only evening dailies continued to depict squatting solely in negative terms.

Moreover, the trend to describe squatters as "young" and "youths" was maintained with some exceptions during the 2000s, holding on to the tradition from earlier periods and withholding the distinction between squatters and the rest of the society consisting of law-abiding citizens. Another similarity with previous periods was the appearance of the critical discourse on buildings left vacant for speculative purposes or bureaucratic measures setting the limits for the use of empty buildings around 2008. This discourse helped in portraying squatting as more "acceptable" as it addressed an important root of the cause (provision of housing for instance). Also in the 2000s it was equally important for civil society organizations and political parties to persist in refusing to acknowledge squatting practices as legitimate.

Tendency to focus on the negative characteristics

Not all squatting events have been described by the media. There are also important differences between the priorities and the way of describing squatting between the national and local media that should be accounted for. Media has a tendency to cover the most spectacular or violent cases and the most covered phases of squatting are those when squatting is initiated and when it ends (Carle 1991). I would, in line with Thörn (2013), like to argue that there are national and local differences in the way that squatting is portrayed and that they change over time. Moreover, there is a clear capital/big city bias in the material and the squatting actions held in big cities have most often received media attention in the national newspaper media. However, as the newspaper media material analyzed in this chapter has shown, the media discourses on squatters in Sweden have largely tended to focus on the negative characteristics of squatting and squatters. As Platt (1999) and Dee (2013) have argued this discourse tends to reappear periodically, in the Swedish case depending considerably on the intensity and character of the squatting actions undertaken in the country and the way they are responded to by local authorities. However, media representations not only reflect social practices but to some degree contribute to the shaping and reshaping of these practices (Fairclough 1995).

The main actors distinguished in the newspaper articles analyzed from 1968 to 2017 were: squatters, police, landlords, civil society representatives, politicians, representatives of authorities, public figures, and supporters. Most often the encounters between the first two, squatters and police, were described. Squatters were predominantly described by their actions; however, these actions were often depicted in terms of immorality/illegality. Whenever the debate focused on the inefficiency of the political or administrative sphere the negative tone towards squatters was softened. The squatters were in the late 1960s primarily described as students, in the 1970s as tenants and youths, in the 1980s as youths, in the 1990s as activists and during a short period in the late 1990s and early 2000s as a more dangerous kind of activists: extremists or terrorists (Table 2.1). Moreover, the gender of squatters was often taken for granted in the articles, men were depicted in the pictures, and those interviewed or represented were most often males. The media fixation with violence and paternalistic perspectives on squatting probably attracted/was addressed to a specific kind of audience.

Table 2.1 Media representations of actors behind squatting in different decades.

1960s	Students
1970s	Tenants and youths
1980s	Youths
1990s	Activists
2000s	Extremists and terrorists/youths/activists
2010s	Youths/activists/residents

Some of the media representations, like for instance those published after 2008, used more neutral terms to describe squatters, for instance by describing them as residents. Some others, like those in the 1970s, objectified and dehumanized squatters. These were nonetheless, quite rare. The different ways of describing squatters aimed at evoking different emotions among the readers and ranged from patronizing and moralistic views to fear, repression or support. When squatters were depicted as youths or students, the discourse tended to portray their actions as irrational and childish, not worthy of support and dismissed as a phase in a young person's life. When they were described as activists, their actions were aimed at creating fear and support for repressive measures. A possible audience for this kind of media reports was primarily adults, concerned parents, engaged citizens and a wider public.

Generally, the discussion on the illegality and the un-/anti-democratic nature of squatting (and other extra-parliamentary methods) has characterized the discourse in media on squatting from 1968 and until today. Already when the first occupation was held in Sweden in 1968, this discussion blew up and became important in how squatting was debated in the following years. The need to position squatters and squatting in relation to violence and democracy has permeated all following media reports until this day. I would like to argue that the dominant discourse on consensus and collaboration prevalent among Swedish civil society organizations and established political actors has heavily spilled over to the media discourse from 1968 until the late 2000s, when squatting was debated in a more nuanced way. This in turn has created significant constraints in the use of confrontational and extra-parliamentary tactics in the country.

Moreover, the reports on squatting in other countries have affected the discourse on squatting in Sweden occasionally by depicting violent evictions of squats abroad or uprisings following these evictions. Most often squatting in Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany was covered in the media reports. Yet, it has not always been favorable to the way that squatting in Sweden was portrayed in the articles. On the contrary, it often worked as a warning of how bad things could get if squatting spread in the country. Positive shifts in the discourse, on the other hand, appeared whenever a squatting action lasted for longer and allowed the journalists "behind the scenes" (with the exception of *Borgen* in 1990) or whenever other discourses mixed with the discourse on squatting. Among these I have identified the discourse on the already mentioned inefficiency of political and/or administrative decisions, especially resilient in relation to the discussion on housing and spatial management prevalent in the 1980s and the 2000s, and the critical discourse on the police violence in the 1980s and 2000s, along with the critique of welfare cutbacks in the 2000s. Squatting practices were depicted as legitimate only when other powerful discourses were present, namely (1) the inefficiency caused by bureaucracy, (2) the use of too much violence by the police, and (3) welfare cutbacks. Whenever squatting was discussed in relation to bureaucratic practices it was seen as an efficient way of circumventing the slow bureaucratic order of decision making and implementation. In the cases when the excessive

use of police violence was discussed the depictions of squatting could shift into more positive, criticizing police violence, and portraying squatting in less moralizing terms. When cutbacks to the welfare were discussed together with squatting actions, squatting was described as a legitimate way of responding to the cutbacks.

The role of media representations cannot be underestimated as the media's active involvement in the creation of specific discourses gives it some room for the identification of problems and possible solutions in the public debate. Negative depictions of squatting provided by the media resulted in negative attitudes that constrained squatters' possibilities to shape the discourse. Thörn has stressed the role of media "for the establishment of territorial stigmatization, moral panic and the escalation of urban contradictions" (Thörn 2013: 77). The issue of moral panic has been manifested in the discourse on squatting in the Swedish newspaper media in 1968 2017, especially during the 1990s and the early 2000s emphasizing the threat of the ideological foundation behind squatting, in this way also legitimizing the use of repressive measures. This fear of a spreading criminal movement not respecting legal regulations or the parliamentary system diverted attention from the causes behind squatting, leading to its depoliticization (Dadusc & Dee 2015).

Moreover, few of the articles studied in this chapter have focused on the characteristics of the squatted buildings. This makes me wonder if it was intentional. Focusing on the actors behind squatting and particular perceptions of their character with a tendency to recurrently place squatters on the "wrong" side of the law has particular implications for the repercussions encountered by squatters in the Swedish context. The focus on actors and particular parts of the events has fundamental consequences for what room and capacity for action squatters are given in this context. The only times when the buildings have been discussed, were when the discourse was mixed with the discourse on the inefficiency of political and administrative institutions.

Critical discourse analysis has been criticized for its vagueness in the analysis of the relationship between discourse and societal practices (Boréus 2015: 180). Kristina Boréus argues that it has been common among critical discourse analysts to find it difficult to draw a line between the different levels of analysis. My ambition here is therefore to position this discourse in a social context. By contextualizing the discourse, scientists contribute to make their arguments more transparent and hopefully reliable. In the case of Sweden, the established consensus on non-confrontational collaborative forms of collective action and the close cooperation of the institutions of the state and the civil society associations are according to scholars a result of the historical development of the country, where the interaction of the labor movement with the state and other adversaries in the beginning of 20th century is highlighted as crucial (Rothstein & Trägårdh 2007: 232). This powerful discourse propagating consensus and compromise permeates all spheres of the Swedish society and has its origins in the corporatist model of cooperation between the state and civil society, and has been formative for these relations ever since (ibid.: 227). Bo Rothstein and Lars Trägårdh summarize:

[…] this system of "early neocorporatism" gave the organized working class a channel to the Swedish state, and showed the state to be not entirely hostile to working-class demands. Moreover, this system institutionalized neocorporatism as a natural and workable political system in Sweden, with the capacity to solve conflicts between the parties to the advantage of both sides.

(Rothstein & Trägårdh 2007: 234)

I would like to argue that the hegemonic status of this discourse of peaceful cooperation has made all other solutions to conflicts of interest highly contested in Swedish society. This is particularly evident in the perception of squatting as an anti-democratic practice threatening the democratic order. Swedes perceive their country as fundamentally democratic and this deep-rooted self-image is closely connected to the (internationally exceptional) relation between the state and civil society in the country. Practices that are not conforming to the traditional and established way of solving conflicts are considered deviant and threatening. Squatting is such a practice, not conforming to the electoral politics or the corporatist model.

Conclusions: (de)legitimization techniques used

Even though the discourse on squatting has shifted over the years a number of (de)legitimization techniques can be distinguished in the media representations. According to Max Weber (1946) the use of legitimation techniques presupposes the existence of a relationship of domination and subordination. Critical discourse analysts emphasize the use and abuse of power in discourses and their frequent appearance as neutral "truths". According to this view language is used to legitimize relations of power where differences play an important role. As has been shown media discourse on squatting has not been a coherent activity, but has been highly negative although some periods were more nuanced, intending to arouse different emotions and depicting squatting from different (overwhelmingly negative) positions. The limitation of studying legitimization techniques lies in the possibility to only cover the construction of what is seen as il/legitimate, and less so the very reception of such techniques by for instance the readers. Having said this, it would be interesting to fill in this gap in future research to see what effects these techniques have on the target group.

Moreover, squatters themselves have, even if to a limited extent, participated in shaping the discourse in the media and have contributed to the legitimization of the practice of squatting in media representations. Legitimation is a result of active participation of collective agents and an ongoing negotiation between agents with different interests. Legitimacy is a complex and multi-faceted construction that is far from the popular understanding of what is right/wrong. It is not absolute, but requires a negotiation of its meaning built on different aspects of what is perceived and emphasized as "acceptable" and "desirable" practices and actions.

Delegitimization is often parallel to legitimization. By defining what is unacceptable, we also define what we perceive as acceptable. Delegitimization could be defined as:

> the categorization of a group, or groups, into extremely negative social categories that exclude it, or them, from the sphere of human groups that act within the limits of acceptable norms and/or values, since these groups are viewed as violating basic human norms or values and therefore deserving maltreatment.
>
> (Bar-Tal & Hammack Jr 2012: 1)

Legitimization and delegitimization consist of the same elements that are used in constructing something as legitimate or illegitimate, acceptable or unacceptable.

I have distinguished five main techniques of (de)legitimation in the media representations of squatting, whereof four are delegitimizing squatting and one is legitimating it. These five techniques are built on arguments that stress the aspects of: shared (democratic) values, legal validity, potential danger, moral responsibility, and rationality (see Table 2.2).

Squatting in the Swedish media has been delegitimized by referring to the shared values of democracy and democratic practices. To act in a democratic manner is here perceived as encompassing participation in elections (electoral democracy), submission to the bureaucratic order (authority) and non-confrontational forms of cooperation through civil society organizations (corporatism). The anti-democratic character of squatting was one of the most salient ways of describing squatting in the media. The underlying assumption was that squatting was incompatible with democratic values as it did not comply with the three aforementioned hegemonic views on how democracy is done. Moreover, the potential use of violence by squatters, whether it was real or imagined, was constructed as an act opposed to the democratic order, as an act to be condemned by the wider public. Likewise the description of squatting as an extra-parliamentary method strengthened this argument, locating squatters outside commonly valued frames, that is, outside representative democracy.

Table 2.2 Legitimacy claims and the construction of (il)legitimacy of squatting in the media.

Legitimacy claims	Construction of (il)legitimacy through:
Shared values	anti democratic character of squatting
Legal validity	criminal character of squatting
Potential danger	collective and organized character of squatting
Moral responsibility	squatters as young and irresponsible
Rationality	1. the inefficiency caused by bureaucracy 2. the use of violence by the police 3. welfare cutbacks

Sweden has been commonly portrayed as the country where the rule of law is guiding and the claim of legal validity   to follow the laws   is crucial in constructing squatting as an illegitimate practice. Through the focus on the criminal character of squatting and squatters in the media representations squatting was described as an illegitimate practice. This way of delegitimizing squatting in the media contributed to its depoliticization. It simply made the question of why buildings are squatted non-negotiable through not problematizing it and making it invisible (cf. Wendt 2012: 18). The political claims advanced by squatters were simply overshadowed by the powerful claim to abide the law. In this sense, abiding the law, was naturalized in the media and used as a commonsensical argument disqualifying any oppositional stance regardless of its further claims. Squatting was also constructed as potentially dangerous to the Swedish society as it was pursued by collective actors that did not comply with the established ways of organizing for change. To be involved in party politics or associations were the options emphasized as suitable and legitimate in relation to the demands of squatters. To act outside this norm was perceived as dangerous.

Furthermore, there was a clear moral dimension in the way that squatting and squatters were portrayed in the Swedish media. Squatting was delegitimized through the depictions of squatters as young, and thus immature, allowing a patronizing and moralizing view.

3 Parliamentary discussions and delegitimation techniques

The way that squatting is discussed in the Swedish parliament illustrates how the political elite conceives squatting and what particular features of squatting it finds challenging or interesting. It is on the basis of these political debates that decisions regarding squatting are taken and implemented. In this way, the discourse shaped in the parliament transforms into discursive practices and societal norms and rules. Moreover, the parliamentary discussion is complementary to the one in the media reflecting a somewhat different perspective on squatting and squatters. While parliamentary discussions are expected to reflect the perspective of governing institutions, media debates are expected to be of a sort that resonates with popular opinions, including more voices than political elites. Political discussions on the other hand, can be expected to be more explicit and exaggerated, in order to reflect the stance of the particular political party. As will be shown later on in the chapter, the voice of political elites is not a uniform and coherent one, on the contrary, the way that squatting is described changes over time and varies considerably between different political parties. This contested field is interesting to study as it reveals how the meaning of squatting is discussed and negotiated in parliamentary discussions over time, and what role ideology plays.

The aim of this chapter is to analyze how squatting events and squatters have been depicted in parliamentary documents from late 1960s until 2017. I study whether these depictions have changed over time and how. An important aspect of the analysis is to examine who is talking in these documents and from what position, how squatting is talked about, what characteristics are ascribed to squatters and squatting and how these depictions are legitimated. Also differences in these representations between the political parties and between the different periods are studied. The guiding questions for this chapter are:

- How is the act of squatting and squatters described?
- What other actors are depicted and how?
- How are actors and actions (de)legitimized?
- What function do these depictions play?

With the help of political discourse analysis focusing on "the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions, such as presidents and prime ministers and other members of government, parliament or political parties, both at the local, national and international levels" (van Dijk 1997: 12), this chapter examines how squatting and squatters are portrayed by Swedish politicians and what function these depictions have. The difference from the previous chapter, and the discourse analysis of media representations, is that politicians debating in the parliament do so publicly, but might be less concerned about the audiences than journalists and media and more focused on the very act of argumentation.

Political discourse and squatting

Political discourse is according to Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) predominantly a form of argumentation for or against a particular stance that can function as a ground for decisions. The discussions in parliament are heavily focused on positioning one's party (pro/con). In this way the analyzed parliamentary debates are first and foremost struggles over legitimation of a particular party's politics. The texts produced in this context have therefore particular functions and implications (van Dijk 1997: 14). There is, however, a slight difference between the debates held in the parliament and the official governmental reports studied in this chapter. The official reports are expected less to legitimize a particular party's political agenda, and are not always written by politicians themselves and center on establishing or contesting common norms, regulations and laws and their role. In the end their aim is to influence political decisions. From this point of view the combination of both sources in the analysis gives a fuller picture of how the issue has been discussed in the field of Swedish politics.

Material analyzed in this chapter consists of various documents produced in/by the Swedish Parliament from 1968 until 2017. Among them there were propositions, interpellations, bills, chamber minutes, a selection of SOU reports (official reports of the Swedish government), answers to written questions, commission directives and the ministry series. The selected documents, about 80 in total, either mentioned the keyword: "squat" (*husockupation*, noun) "squatting" (*ockupera*, verb), "squatters" (*husockupanter*) or the term "extra parliamentary" (*utomparlamentarisk*) and ranged from two to 300 pages in size. Only the material regarding squatting of buildings has been selected for the analysis. No visual material has been included in the analysis as the documents did not include visual representations. As the keywords were sparsely used in the studied material the selection has also included the term "extra-parliamentary" and its use in parliamentary documents, since squatting was often categorized as "extra-parliamentary" activity in the material. This selection broadened the scope of the phenomenon and contributed to its contextualization and gave a deeper insight into how the discussion on squatting developed. Apart from the political/organizational affiliation of the speakers/authors of the included

documents, wherever it is known, no other personal data has been revealed as it is not seen as crucial for the understanding of the content. The data analyzed here is public and part of it can be traced and accessed online, however, I have chosen not to publish the names of individuals involved in squatting or publically talking about squatting in this study in order to minimize the individual costs of my work.

Few previous studies on squatting in Sweden have dealt systematically with parliamentary documents. Lindell (2015) wrote a master thesis on the basis of city council debates about squatting in Sweden in the 2000s analyzing political responses to squatting in Stockholm. Other authors only occasionally analyze contents in documents produced by political decision makers on national or city level. Furthermore, none of the previous studies have dealt with de/legitimation techniques. The ambition of this chapter is to fill this gap.

Finding antagonists and agonists of the Swedish model

The verb "ockupera" to squat was mentioned in the studied material in 1968 in the discussions that were held in parliament after the summer when the students' union was occupied by students at the University of Stockholm. It was discussed in relation to "direct-democratic methods" or "direct actions" that students and young people were described as using to make statements in this period. An illustrative quotation of how these issues were discussed comes from a general political debate held in the Parliament where the representative of the People's Party (FP, the Liberal Party) concluded in 1968:

> From this point of view we can oppose the speculations about and demands on so called direct-democratic methods that have been appearing in the debate. In the reality these methods seem to be about small minorities turning peaceful demonstrations into acts of violence, occupying classrooms, interfering with the meetings of their opponents, and preventing them from speaking, breaking windows of foreign embassies, etc. Through direct actions in violation of applicable laws and regulations, they want to make their meaning known and seek to make society conform to their will. We must reject such methods in our country.
>
> (Prot. 1968:35)

Direct democratic methods were equated with methods used by small groups to exert power in an unjust and unlawful way, and thus delegitimized and depoliticized as they did not represent the interests of the broader Swedish community. The examples given in the quotation were all negative and associated this kind of methods with violence, damage and illegality. In the 1970s, the squatting of *Gamla Bro* in Stockholm in 1970 (JO 1972:2: 3), a building in Lund in 1969 and Hagahuset in Gothenburg in 1972 (Prot. 1972:134) and Kungstorget and some adjacent buildings in Gothenburg in 1976 (Prot. 1976:38) made it to the

discussions in the parliament. The discussions revolved around how the political parties should be positioning themselves in relation to such actions and the politicians that in some way have been positive, or insignificantly negative, towards squatting were heavily criticized by their fellow MPs (from opposing political parties; see the appendix to this chapter). In the case of Hagahuset the background to the occupation was described in the following way:

> A group of former employees in the leisure department of the social services in Gothenburg, who were dismissed because they refused to comply with the Social Central Committee's directives and subsequently sought to impede the activities that the elected politicians wanted to accomplish in Haga, have twice made an illegal trespassing in the house and refused to leave it when the police and social administration asked for it. Instead, they have called for negotiations, and among their negotiation requirements they included the current Hagahuset superintendent's dismissal. In short, they have called for the Social Central Committee to state its intentions and to allow occupiers to determine the content of the activities against the will of the municipality and the municipal residents. Politicians and civil servants in Gothenburg have repeatedly attempted to come to terms with the squatting group but refused to enter into negotiations on the conditions of the occupiers.
>
> (Prot. 1971:134)

It was thus stressed that trespassing was illegal and that demanding something through an occupation is opposed to electoral democracy. The squatters' will and demands were contrasted with the will and demands of elected politicians, civil servants and the citizens. Squatting was repeatedly compared to actions that did not comply with the Swedish consensus spirit and propagated conflictual repertoires. In a response to a Moderate Party MP the Social democratic minister made his statement about some of the categorizations used by his colleagues:

> I want to add one thing. There is some sort of word choice in the political debate that I feel terribly bad about. Today, Mr XX [MP of the Moderate Party] said, for example, that the LO-secretariat [the Swedish Trade Union Confederation] seems to have been occupied by the student-Left [*studentvänstern*], and last spring he said that the young generation of unionists is unreliable   it has not learned the spirit of consensus, but it seeks to fight at all costs, it wants to change society and take over power, it wants to change ownership and, as it is called in various debates, socialize.
>
> (Prot. 1975:147)

It was clear that leftist students and trade union representatives were accused of using methods that did not comply with the ones associated with the spirit of consensus. The spirit of consensus opposition was to "seek battle", "to take

over power", "change ownership" and "socialize". The term "occupied" in the above example was used to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate actions in this case. Squatting was, moreover, often discussed in relation to police intervention and work. The word "squat" (*husockupation*) was used in 1980 in the proposition discussing the use of citizens as witnesses in police actions arguing:

> The investigation is based on the fact that the citizens' witnesses should primarily serve at interrogations of suspects during criminal investigations and in cases where persons deprived of liberty are brought to a police station. The witnesses, however, should, according to the investigation, be able to attend even when other police tasks are carried out, as far as possible. Among other things, the attendance in connection with the handling of immigration cases, search and interventions that are expected to attract considerable attention, for instance interventions against squatting, are mentioned.
>
> (Prop. 1980/81:13)

In this proposition squatting was used as an example of a police intervention that attracts public attention and where several reforms of the Swedish police force were suggested. One of these was the introduction of citizen witnesses that would improve "the transparency of local police operations" (Prop. 1980/81:13). Preceding this proposition, during the 1970s, actions such as squatting were clustered together with other methods and political groups in the term, "extra-parliamentary". Squatting was often mentioned as an example of extra-parliamentary methods or actions. The term "extra-parliamentary" occurred in the studied documents together with words such as: methods, work, groups, actions, movement, and organizations. Extra-parliamentary work or methods were often, but not exclusively, discussed in relation to parliamentary work and were more frequently used in the parliamentary discussions and documents than the term "squatting". The use of "extra-parliamentary" was uneven in the studied documents, even if two waves can be distinguished in their occurrence in the late 1980s and the late 1990s/early 2000s (see Figure 3.1). The peak in the 1980s matched the activity of radical left social movements in the country, as did the later peak (culminating around the event called the "Gothenburg riots" in 2001). Both peaks coincided with extensive and often negative media reports (see previous chapter) and increased police violence used against activists.

Apart from the MPs of the Left and Communist Party (VPK) none of the MPs of other parties expressed a favorable opinion about extra-parliamentary methods or groups. A common position among the ruling Social Democrats was that extra-parliamentary methods undermined the parliamentary work done by the Party and the labor movement since the 1930s. In 1972, the Social democratic finance minister compared extra-parliamentary methods with revolution and argued in a debate on finance:
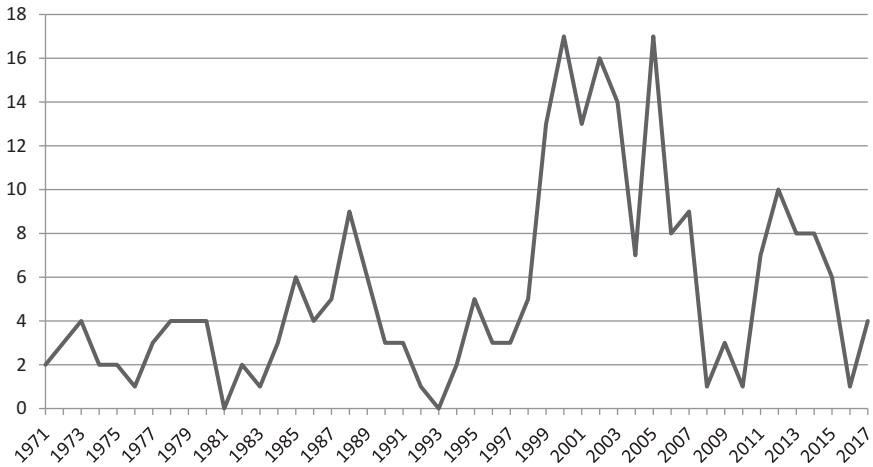
Figure 3.1 Frequency of use of the word "extra parliamentary" in official govern
        mental documents, 1971 2017.
Source: Swedish Parliament

> History shows revolutionary reversals like the convulsions after World
> War II, history sometimes shows such reversals as an expression of des-
> peration of a hungry, enslaved and oppressed population. But none of
> these situations can form the basis for a realistic assessment of how the
> policies are to be formulated in our country today.
>   These prerequisites of revolution and brother-murders, we have dis-
> regarded in the Swedish Social democracy. We want to make this society,
> which the Swedish labor movement has led for 40 years, gradually better
> and better.
>
> (Prot. 1972:31)

In this statement the civilized state of affairs was emphasized and the use of extra-
parliamentary methods condemned as unrealistic and associated with desperation,
hunger, enslavement and oppression. In a free, democratic and peaceful country
like Sweden these kinds of methods are unnecessary and incompatible with the
development in the country. By clearly taking a stand against extra-parliamentary
methods Social Democrats highlighted the work they have put into the improved
development of the Swedish society. Groups using extra-parliamentary methods
were described by another Social Democrat as aiming at "overthrowing the
society" or involved in "extremist activities" (Prot. 1972:111). A common opinion
expressed by Social Democrats and Moderates was that extra-parliamentary
methods damaged democratic principles and were a serious threat to the political
order as "there may be a risk that the minority will choose to instead work with
extra-parliamentary actions" (Prop 1975:101) or as it is "A decision-making
that does not want to know of representative democracy" (Prot. 1976:18).

Extra-parliamentary methods were depicted as simply not respecting "the democratic rules of the game" (Prot. 1973:129) or were described as "putting societal functions out of play" (Prot. 1979:150).

The civilized and peaceful nature of the societal improvements won by Swedish Social democracy was contrasted to the uncivilized and disruptive methods of extra-parliamentary actors. Extra-parliamentary methods were described as destabilizing the established order and thus threatening it. They were portrayed as a direct threat to the functioning of representative democracy in the country undermining the work put into the establishing of democracy in Sweden. Nothing about the contribution of extra-parliamentary work in the process towards democracy was mentioned except by the Left and Communist Party (VPK).

The struggle over democracy and representation

It was obvious that there were conflicting definitions of the term "extra-parliamentary" in the studied period. The only political parties who offered a broader interpretation of extra-parliamentary activities were the Left and Communist Party (VPK) (later the Left Party, V) and the Green Party (MP). This definition included for instance trade union activities in a response given to an MP of the liberal People's Party (FP):

> Mr President! XX [MP of the People's Party] does not think that the workers should engage in extra-parliamentary activities. There must be a fault of his side that he should correct in the minutes as soon as possible. XX should as well as everyone else know that all trade union activities are by nature extra-parliamentary. Extra-parliamentary activities from the union side will not be abolished unless you either prohibit trade unions or redirect them to yellow unions who work only in the interests of employers.
> (Prot. 1978:89)

While MPs from the Social Democrats, Moderates and the People's Party used the term "extra-parliamentary" in a derogatory way, often as a dirty word, MPs from the Left and Communist Party stressed its positive features, favorable to parliamentary work. Moreover, in the citation above the ideological difference between "good" and "bad" trade unions was emphasized by referring to the notion of "yellow unions", trade unions controlled by the employers. It was stressed as a commonsensical fact that extra-parliamentary activities are natural in trade unions´ work. When discussing housing policy in Sweden in a bill in 1978 several MPs of the Left and Communist Party (VPK) wrote:

> The housing struggle has its natural ground in the residential areas. The requirements that spontaneously emerge must be brought into their political context and connected with real political requirements. The demands must be given a definite focus, where reactionary and sectarian tendencies

are counteracted. VPK sees it as the main task of housing policy to participate in and stand in the lead for the struggle in the residential areas.

This fight is an extra-parliamentary struggle. The foundation in that battle lies in the work carried out in parliamentary assemblies, in the parliament, county councils and municipalities. VPK strives to connect parliamentary work with extra-parliamentary actions closely. Starting from the extra-parliamentary struggle VPK works for the battle issues to be brought into and run in the parliamentary work.

(Motion 1978:396)

In this bill about Swedish housing policy in the 1970s, it was expressed that parliamentary and extra-parliamentary work should be intimately connected, as they are inseparable. This view emphasized that extra-parliamentary work is as legitimate way of "doing politics" as much as the parliamentary way. The terminology used stressed that both ways of doing politics were an ongoing struggle in need of connection. The metaphors used to describe the situation, "struggle", "battle" and "fight" demonstrated the importance and urgency of connecting parliamentary work with extra-parliamentary along with the position of the party as well-connected with the grassroots and informed about the needs of the people. This was, in a sense, a typical way of legitimizing a party's ideological position in parliamentary debates, by describing the party as representing the needs and demands of the citizens.

In a debate from 1971 an MP from the Left and Communist Party (VPK) argued that it is his duty as an MP "to bring the extra parliamentary opposition's issues" to the parliament (Prot. 1971:11). He argued that the inequalities in working and living conditions in Sweden have caused the emergence of "extra-parliamentary movements and groups, people who demonstrate, criticize and strike   not only because they have been poorly paid but because they experience the system as being sick". He went on to argue that these groups and movements were "the only real opposition in society", sharing "authentic solidarity" and condemned the "ruling classes" for reacting "hysterically" by calling extra-parliamentary movements "professional trouble-makers" or "undemocratic and irresponsible" (Prot. 1971:11).

However, the line that separates enemies and allies in the rhetoric of the Left and Communist Party changed in 1976 when a non-Social democratic coalition government was formed for the first time since 1936 consisting of the Moderate Coalition Party (M), the People's Party (FP) and the Center Party (C). From this point the Social Democrats (S) and the Left and Communists (VPK) were in opposition. It did not, however, change the rhetoric of Social Democrats into being more positive towards extra-parliamentary work.

For the Left and Communist Party the allies were the socialist parties in the government, including the Social Democrats. The perceived "we", rooted in the labor movement and some other established popular movements, was contrasted with the "bourgeois" others (the ruling parties). Here in the words of an MP from the Left and Communist Party:

> For the labor movement, the extra-parliamentary struggle, the union movement, the tenant movement and other popular organizations are now serving to claim the interests and demands of wage earners and other affiliated groups. The labor movement must mobilize its members into a united, active fight against the bourgeois wage-hostile policies, policies pursued by the government, and create widespread mass movements that can force the bourgeois parties to take into account the demands of employees and the majority of people.
>
> (Prot. 1979:17)

The priorities shifted after 1976 and so did the way that the two opposition parties described the situation and the common enemy. "The bourgeois majority" was the main antagonist and in order to improve the conditions of workers the importance of extra-parliamentary struggle was propagated, however only by the Left and Communists.

   What is interesting in the parliamentary material is that it was not always clear who the ones using extra-parliamentary methods were. I would like to argue that it is an important lexical absence not to state who they are, shifting the focus on the activities' negative consequences instead. The focus was on how destructive extra-parliamentary methods and actions were to the societal order, contributing to the naturalization of the view that they should be condemned. Whenever the actors using extra-parliamentary methods were described, these depictions were heavily moralizing. In one debate in 1971 young people were linked with extra-parliamentary methods by an MP from the People's Party in a discussion on religious education in school:

> Generally it is about young people who experience the established society as condescending and unfair. Then you go to extra-parliamentary means, which of course is reprehensible. The relationship between law and morality is unambiguous.
>
> (Prot. 1971:13)

According to this contribution to the debate the actors behind extra-parliamentary actions were demoralized young people in need of religious education teaching them ethics and moral behavior. Moreover, the groups using extra-parliamentary methods were often described as influential and powerful, thus dangerous. These descriptions often failed in describing which groups they were, and instead put emphasis on the danger they posed. They were often portrayed as opposing the values and forms of decision-making that were represented in the parliament. As one MP of the Center Party expressed it when discussing nuclear policies in 1979: "The future will show whether it is the people's representatives in this house or extra-parliamentary established interests that decide" (Prot. 1979:168).

   The ideological struggle of the right-wing and left-wing parties in the Swedish parliament was depicted in the construction of a structural opposition: "the

people's representatives" versus the "extra-parliamentary interests". This ideological struggle made a clear division between representative democracy and "undemocratic" means of extra-parliamentary activities.

The emergence of a young squatter

The MPs of the Left and Communist Party often took a stand against what they called "the bourgeois" or "the majority" depending on who was ruling at the time. In a parliamentary discussion in 1981 about housing policies, an MP of the Left and Communist Party (VPK) blamed the "bourgeois government" for:

> Political strikes, squatting, blockades, rent delays and rent strikes can be the result of a continuing refusal of a bourgeois government and parliamentary majority to take action to avoid major rent increases in 1982 and facilitate the opportunity for tens of thousands of young people to get their own homes.
>
> (Prot. 1981:16)

Squatting was in other words used as an example of extra-parliamentary action caused by housing policies that led to rent increases and were unfavorable to young people. In this way young people and tenants were linked with squatting and other extra-parliamentary methods of opposing this kind of policy. The use of the word "squatting" has in the studied documents been irregular and, like the use of the word "extra-parliamentary" reached a peak in the late 1990s/early 2000s (Figure 3.2), not matching the peak in squatting actions held in the country, but matching the negative media attention given to squatters and other activists and radical left social movements in this period (see previous chapter).
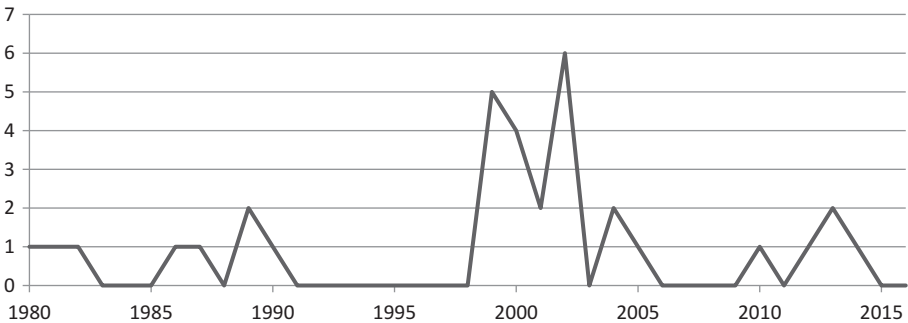
Figure 3.2 Frequency of use of the word "squat" (*husockupation*) in official governmental documents, 1971 2017.
Source: Swedish Parliament

In the 1980s squatters were described as rebellious youngsters independently of the political affiliation of the speakers/authors. An MP of the Moderate Party wrote in a bill in 1987:

> There are a variety of actions that need to be taken to improve the situation of the youth. Otherwise, we risk reviving events like youth violence, clashes at Kungsträdgården, squatting and so on. It is about time that decisions are made in the right direction in accordance with the expressed views in this bill. Freedom presupposes responsibility. If young people are given responsibility the problems with damage are reduced and so on.
>
> (Motion 1987/88:A268)

In this view the irresponsible nature of youth behavior could be controlled by specific policies. The problems of youths described in the above bill mostly concerned education, spare time and housing. If not controlled (deregulation was advocated) they would result in violent expression. The solution promoted was to liberate the youths from state-regulated living conditions and thus avoid violent actions such as squatting.

A threatening picture was painted when the negative development of Swedish economy in the 1980s was discussed in the parliament in 1982 and the situation of in particular Swedish youth was compared to that in other European cities. Soon Swedish cities could be taken over by armies of unwanted workers and squatters, that is, permanently unemployed young people. Here in the words of a Social Democratic MP:

> We can see the significance and consequences of this around us every day. This evening for example, TV-News showed in a report from conservatively ruled Denmark how a large part of the permanently unemployed youth in Copenhagen now transforms into an army of hopelessness and squatting. As a kind of modern lumpen-proletariat, they are now ending up completely outside society. We have also been able to study the same developments in the major cities of England, Berlin and Amsterdam.
>
> (Prot. 1982:52)

After the Social Democrats became the ruling party in 1982 the tendency to connect squatting and youths did not change much. Young people's working and living conditions were emphasized as important for their preferences to squat or revolt during this period. Those in opposition blamed those in majority for creating an environment encouraging "youth revolts, squatting and other desperate acts" (Prot. 1986:128). Structural explanations of what caused squatting, usually high unemployment and lack of housing, were frequently used in the parliamentary debate of the 1980s and, surprisingly, absolved politicians of responsibility for the situation. Sometimes the

discussions tended to focus on defects in the character, morale and behavior of squatters, emphasizing their young age and immaturity. Most often the debate took for granted that the behavior of young people should be controlled from above, preferably by policies in the spheres of education, work and housing and regulations clarifying the boundaries between "right" and "wrong". In the words of a Social Democratic MP:

> Politicians must be fully responsible for promoting democracy within the framework of democracy, strengthening and further developing democracy, but also to clarify not least for the youth groups where the boundary goes.
>
> (Prot. 1998/99:43)

Swedish squatting in focus or blame it all on the Social Democrats

In 1988 a new party — the Green Party (MP) — entered Swedish parliament for the first time in 70 years. The fact that the party was new did not change the way that the MPs talked about squatting and squatters. Above all, they linked squatting to young people and used the discussion on squatting to blame "the old parties" in the parliament for their insufficient housing policies resulting in housing shortage in Swedish cities:

> So, Mr President, I would like to continue to the support for youth housing. The traditional growth policy has resulted in hundreds of thousands of young people standing in line to get their own homes, mainly in metropolitan areas. Had the old parties managed better their own growth policy, one might have been able to balance the supply of work and education sites with the availability of housing. This has not been and is still not the case. The politicians who over the years do not keep their promises in terms of youth housing have a major responsibility for the lack of confidence of young people in democracy in general and for squatting in particular.
>
> (Prot. 1989/1990:96)

As the party was new in the parliament it seemed important to position its politics in relation to the other parties and in this case take on a critical stance towards unsatisfactory policies in the field of housing causing democratic deficit among the younger part of the Swedish population. In this kind of explanation the lack of confidence in democracy was linked to squatting practices. In this view, politicians were held accountable for what was believed to be a turn-away from democracy among young people, manifested in squatting. The perspective of the Green Party was oftentimes similar to the Left Party's and contributed to a more nuanced discussion on "extra-parliamentary" work in the parliamentary debates. In a discussion on the relation between the state and the Church in Sweden in 1995 (preceding the separation of the state and church in 2000) an MP of the Green Party stated:

> This was just a small remark to ministers, parliamentarians and others who often feel that they in their work are creating the future. There are

people outside the Parliament who have made the greatest efforts in the important and fundamental issues, such as freedom of religion, democracy, and so on.

(Prot. 1995/96:34)

The work done outside the formal political system was praised for its achievements, a perspective shared with the Left Party. Maybe this perspective was not surprising, since the Green Party itself was a result of the growth and development of the environmental movement in Sweden. Its view of extra-parliamentary work preserved the legitimacy of such work and often pinpointed "the positive changes that extra-parliamentary movements" could result in (Prot. 1995/96:68).

This view was in general not shared by other political parties. Both Social Democrats and the People's Party distanced themselves from extra-parliamentary actions in for instance discussions on environmental issues (Prot. 1996/97:80; Prot. 1998/99:43). Furthermore, particular squatting actions were seldom mentioned in the parliamentary debates. Two such squatting events were referred to, one carried out in Stockholm (*Folkungagatan*) and one in Malmö (*Borgen*). Both were held in 1990 and were portrayed as relatively violent in the media reporting on the events (see Chapter 2). The parliamentary discussion referred to media representations and painted a threatening picture if nothing was done about the housing situation. Here in the words of an MP from the Left Party (V), formerly Left and Communist Party (VPK):

> The in many respects violent squatting of Folkungagatan, which we have now witnessed and read about, must be seen as a legitimate protest against the situation on the housing market as it appears today. But one should think that the situation with these proposals threatens to get worse. One can then ask what is going to happen in our metropolitan areas if we do not get any improvement and, say, return a little more to a social housing policy.
>
> (Prot. 1989/90:137)

Even though the violence of this particular squatting event was used to emphasize the seriousness of the situation, the view given stressed the legitimacy of squatting actions. An antidote was proposed in the improvement of housing policies and especially their social orientation. Social Democrats represented a different view. Squatting was not a legitimate action, but a criminal one. In a reply to a question concerning "actions against democratically unacceptable methods" in 1990 the Social Democratic Minister for the Public Administration made clear:

> The comparison that XX [name of MP] makes in his question about the events surrounding a house occupation in Malmö is not sustainable. Occupying a house is a crime, which the police obviously have to intervene.
>
> (Prot. 1990/91:100)

In the late 1990s discussions on extra-parliamentary methods increased considerably. These discussions were to a high degree influenced by the fall of the Berlin wall and state socialism in Central and Eastern Europe by that time and the Social Democratic Party was regularly criticized from the right for its too "socialist" (and not enough market-oriented) policies or from the left for its inability to repair what was described as a failing welfare system. In a discussion on Swedish social policy, the MP for the Left Party summarized a debate previously held between MPs of the Moderate and the People's Parties arguing that there is a part of the population that has been overlooked in Swedish policies, by emphasizing the absence of Social Democrats "on the barricades":

> XX [referring to MP for the People's Party] talked about transferring resources from adult healthy people with work to the sick and disabled that is the forgotten Sweden. He also spoke of the Social Democrats who abandon the barricades. As a Left Party member I pay tribute also to the extra-parliamentary work and stand quite often on the barricades, I would like to say that it is generally quite empty on the barricades nowadays.
>
> (Prot. 1990/91:97)

"Standing on the barricades" was used to criticize the ruling party for its lack of foundation in the lives of vulnerable groups in society. A critique of the lack of a more inclusive perspective in politics taking part in current conflicts outside the parliament was, above all, addressed to the Social Democratic Party. This critique illustrates the ideological struggle taking place in parliament and a dispute on how democratic political participation should be defined, and where the Left Party, along with the Greens, has persistently represented the broadest definitions of the issue.

   When economic crisis hit Sweden the debate on what democracy should be gained importance. The discussions of the welfare system and housing policies were especially heated during the 1990s partly due to the financial crisis that hit Sweden in the beginning of the decade and the subsequent processes of increasing socioeconomic divides, housing shortage, and housing segregation during this period. These processes were perceived as threats to the Swedish welfare state and the well-being of the population. Democracy was an important topic during this period and was perceived as endangered since the 1990s experienced a fall in the turnout for the parliamentary elections (81.4% in 1998 and 80.1% in 2002 compared with the highest turnout in 1976 of 91.8%). Against this background extra-parliamentary methods were discussed in 1998 by a Social Democrat:

> Madam President! I have been very puzzled over not only the Left Party but also the Green Party's perception of democracy. Both parties have in one area a perception that has surprised me, and it concerns extra-parliamentary

methods. I am not thinking about those who guard Kynnefjäll [a protest against final disposal of nuclear waste] or those who hug trees when the dredgers stand next to them. I wonder, however, where the limit goes. We are now seeing such activities that the militant vegans usually are blamed for. This is a highly unexplored area, which is not easy to debate, but we know that the violence is escalating and people feel threatened. Because of this people are forced to leave their jobs and are afraid both in their work and in their daily lives. We have two parties here in the parliament, who often defend this. Even in the election campaign, it was noted that they would not disregard this type of anti-democratic activity in society.

(Prot. 1998/99:43)

To exclude extra-parliamentary methods from the definition of democracy was particularly important to Social Democrats in times of economic crisis. The division between parliamentary and extra-parliamentary work was discussed and a ranking of more or less desirable extra-parliamentary activities was often constructed in the debates. Squatting was often included in the "undesirable" category by using arguments on the violence involved in squatting, downplaying its importance or omitting to mention why it was carried out. The Left Party acknowledged the difficulty in boundary-drawing between what should be seen as democratic or not and challenged the simplified view of the Social Democrats by referring to an important event in the history of Stockholm:

But it is not that easy to draw a clear border between what is admissible and inadmissible from a democratic point of view. The classic example is the elm-struggle here in Stockholm [referring to an action held in 1971 were activists saved a number of elm trees by occupying the area where a metro station was planned], which nowadays almost all political representatives think was quite nice   it was great that the building of a metro station in question could be stopped. These were extra-parliamentary methods, and it was also a way to prevent the implementation of democratically-based decisions. The understanding of that action has increased with the distance in time.

(Prot. 1998/99:43)

This illustrative excerpt from the parliamentary debate demonstrates the different positions held by the different parties in the Swedish parliament. The Greens and the Left Party were often accused of supporting anti-democratic practices and sentiments by expressing support to extra-parliamentary methods. In the view of the Social Democrats extra-parliamentary methods were not part of a democratic order. However, in the citation above a difference is made between different extra-parliamentary methods and the guarding of the area of Kynnefjäll against nuclear waste disposal was obviously not perceived as particularly problematic, neither were the activities of "those who hug trees". In contrast the

practices of "militant vegans" were mentioned as undesirable and threatening the societal order and the wellbeing of ordinary people. Probably the activities of animal rights activists were referred to when talking about "militant vegans". These were considered unacceptable due to the "escalating violence" and the fear they spread. Extra-parliamentary methods were linked to anti-democratic activities and presumed to be undertaken by youths that were described as in need of teaching what democracy is. According to this view politicians were responsible for teaching the youth this. The Left Party, on the other hand, admitted that the boundaries of democracy were not always clear and could change over time by referring to a positive example of an extra-parliamentary struggle in the 1971 when a central park in Stockholm was occupied and in the end stopped the plans on felling a number of elm trees and building a metro station on the spot (Karlsson & Tenfält 2011). The activists involved in the so-called elm-struggle went against the decision taken by the local and national government and protested by occupying the area around the trees, an action whose outcome was subsequently assessed as successful and positive for the city.

Strengthening democracy through securitization

The parliamentary discussions held during the 1990s very much influenced the subsequent decade of debates on extra-parliamentary work and squatting. Democracy was one of the central investigated issues in this period. Between 1997 and 2000 the governmental investigation called the Democracy investigation (*Demokratiutredningen*) was going on in Sweden resulting in 32 reports and a final report. The Democracy investigation was part of the official reports of the Swedish Government (*Statens Offentliga utredningar*, shortened to SOU). They were ordered by the Swedish government and aimed at investigating, and providing reports, about complex issues in order to facilitate the formulation of legislative proposals.

Squatting was mentioned in four reports produced for the Democracy investigation in the end of the 1990s (SOU 1999:22, 1999:84, 1999:93, 1999:101) and in eleven reports in the 2000s regarding issues such as homelessness, ownership of housing, the work of armed forces, the work of the intelligence service in Sweden, the work of the police in relation to the right to demonstrate, evictions and homelessness of families with children, limitations in preliminary investigations, prevention of serious crimes and crimes endangering state security and the prevention of violent extremism (SOU 2001:95, 2001:98, 2002:21, 2002:87, 2002:91, 2002:122, 2004:18, 2005:88, 2010:43, 2012:44, 2013:81). Extra-parliamentary methods were mentioned in seven reports in the 1990s concerning politics for young people, the distribution of economic power and economic resources between women and men, the investigation of construction of a tunnel in Hallandsåsen, and several reports of the Democracy investigation (SOU 1997:71; 1997:113; 1998:137; 1998:146; 1998:164; 1999:113; 1999:130) and in several

other reports in the 2000s (SOU 2000:1, 2000:25, 2000:88, 2001:48, 2002:29, 2002:87, 2002:91, 2002:90, 2002:122, 2003:32, 2004:49, 2004:99, 2005:112, 2006:46, 2007:67, 2009:70, 2011:25, 2012:44, 2012:74, 2015:96, 2016:10). It was during the early 2000s that "extra-parliamentary" was in these documents connected to terms like "race-ideological groupings" (*rasideologiska grupperingar*) and "white-power movement" (*vitmakt-rörelsen*) (SOU 2000:25, Skrivelse 2000/01:59, Proposition 2000/01, Betänkande 2000/01). This was a connection that persisted throughout the 2000s and culminated in the equating of left-wing and right-wing extra-parliamentary activism with "violent extremism" and "terrorism" during this period (Sörbom & Wennerhag 2016). In the official report investigating the organization of the police to fight serious and organized crime in 2000, equal status and connections were drawn in following way:

> Extremism occurs in the form of extreme movements, seeking total but one-sided solutions to problems. Extreme movements can pose a threat to the internal security of the country. Violation of the internal security of the kingdom means activities aimed at changing our state of mind by violence, threat or compulsion, causing decision-making political bodies or authorities to make decisions in a certain direction or prevent citizens from exercising their civil liberties.
>
> … Traditionally we speak about left-wing or right-wing extremism. Right-wing extremism includes extra-parliamentary oriented race-ideological groups. It includes the so-called White-power movement emphasizing the conservation of the white race regardless of nationality. The white-power movement is a summary concept of a variety of organizations, associations, groups or individuals with, among other things, race-ideological and national socialist values. This includes the National Socialist Front and the Aryan Brotherhood, a militant organization whose members are recruited from correctional institutions. The "opponents" of the White-power movement include Jews, gays, persons of foreign descent, preferably dark-haired people, and handicapped persons.
>
> … Left-wing extremism includes the Communist Party Marxist-Leninists (revolutionaries), KPMLr. Apart from that, most of the autonomous movement is attributable to left-extremism. The autonomous movement is a summary term for a number of loosely assembled networks and one-issue-oriented groups with common ideological values. The movement has its idea-historical origins in anarchism and syndicalism. Both the individuals and the different groups may differ in terms of organization, goals and methods. One characteristic is that one advocates direct action. Prominent networks are the Antifascist Action (AFA) and the Syndicalist Youth Union (SUF). There are also a number of smaller groups as animal rights activists and environmental activists.
>
> (SOU 2000:25)

In this equating of right   and left-wing extra-parliamentary groups the nationalist and racist ideology was compared to anarchism and syndicalism and both were deemed extremist, unacceptable and organized by more or less criminal individuals and groups. Moreover, a strange choice in terminology was used to neutralize the danger associated with the right-wing groups   the word "opponents". Even if surrounded by quotation marks the word implied the active participation of the groups listed, instead of focusing on the destructive actions that were pursued against these groups by the far right-wing groups.

An umbrella term was used for the left-wing extra-parliamentary groups the autonomous movement. It was said to be extremist and to gather different groups with one common feature: the use of direct action. Direct actions are usually used by collective actors to highlight a social, economic or other problem by means of for instance sit-ins, blockades or strikes and are not always aimed at breaking the law or using violence, as it is presumed in the description above. As David Graeber explains, the term direct action has "become synonymous with a certain degree of militancy" in the center of political debates (Graeber 2009: 205). It has been described as different from civil disobedience actions, becoming its militant expression and according to Graeber is only allowed when the actions are co-opted and heavily regulated by the state, and thus not called direct action per se. Also in the Swedish context this seems to be the case as the term serves here to distinguish a set of practices that are deemed "unacceptable" and "unlawful" and practiced by specific groups. These groups were moreover called a "movement", a term that implies a bigger and more coherent entity than a number of loosely connected networks.

The "autonomous movement" or "autonomous groupings" were notions that were used for the first time in the parliamentary context in 1999 (Betänkande 1999/2000:JuU6 and SOU 1999:101). "Violent extremism", on the other hand, was introduced to the debates already in 1996 (Förordning 1996:1515) and reached several hundred hits in parliamentary documents in the years 2015 2017. There was a clear tendency in the late 1990s and early 2000s to depict extra-parliamentary methods and among them squatting as a security problem. In an interpellation to the justice minister an MP from the Moderate Party asked in 2000 how the security would be strengthened given the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2009. The MP expressed concern about the "basic everyday order and safety for the average men" (Interp. 2000/01:211). The image of Sweden was at stake and it was important to "leave a positive echo". The simultaneous emergence and development of the alter-globalization movements across Europe and North America, using EU events to protest, was diagnosed as dangerous to the Swedish national security. The Interpellation summarized the threat in the following way:

> On the other hand, it is worrying and less predictable what increasing unrest and street violence can lead to. Such effects are experienced to appear in the traces of various protest organizations at significant

international discussions. Such examples have been given in the past year in among others Seattle, Prague and Nice. The two latter directly in connection with EU conferences.

The organizations who   despite declaring non-violent intentions pursued the violent events, have announced increased activity even in Sweden. In addition, there is an increased tendency for certain groups in Swedish society to engage in activities that seem to trigger violence.

One example is the Reclaim the City's so-called street party on Götgatan in Stockholm during the summer, which resulted in an unusually large amount for Stockholm of property destruction; another is the high-profile squatting in Linköping, with the occurrence of threats towards people. Experience also shows that police resources have been short in Stockholm for several years, which was emphasized by the chairman of the police board and city commissioner, XX.

<div align="right">(Interp. 2000/01:211)</div>

The picture painted was one of an increasing danger that was spreading internationally and threatening Swedish security. It was especially threatening to the capital city. The organizations behind protests against EU were described as untrustworthy regarding their use of violence, destruction of property and tendencies to threaten individuals. There was a clear distancing in the description of the examples of events expressed in the use of the term "so-called". The purpose of the street party was questioned as it resulted in property destruction. The perceived solution to the problem was police intervention.

Moreover, in 2002 a report including a systematic mapping of all kinds of left-wing extra-parliamentary groups and networks was published with the title "The threat from the left" (SOU 2002:91) as a result of a collaboration between the Security service commission and Swedish researchers. Squatting was given a separate section in the report (ibid.: 332 343) and described as connected to anarchist groups. The report was based on the documents produced by the security police on extra-parliamentary groups after World War II and until the late 1990s. The report was reflective and at times critical and tracked the threat scenario of left extra-parliamentary groups presented by the Swedish security police over the years. Squatting actions undertaken in Stockholm in the mid-1980s were in the report distinguished as especially important due to the escalation of police violence. The confrontation of squatters by the police was later "the subject of a lot of criticism that basically assumed that the use of violence was not in proportion to what was in question or the resistance used by the squatters" (ibid.: 340). Squatters were portrayed in the report as young and a "Swedish model" of police intervention in the beginning of the 1990s was described, a model propagating speedy actions to evict squatters immediately after entering a building. 1990 was described as the end of the squatting movement and the refocusing among the anarchists and the autonomous on anti-fascism and environmental activism. At the same time as the report gave a

critical impression of how some groups have been treated and misunderstood by the security police, the inclusion of some of them, among them squatting, in a report with the title "The threat from the left" implied that these groups could pose a danger to the societal order and should stay monitored.

The official reports are important in understanding how the measures and policies proposed by the politicians are legitimated by the use of "experts" and "experts' statements". The usual procedure is to build a group of experts on the topic including MPs, representatives of authorities or civil society organizations, researchers, journalists or other relevant actors. These reports then serve as a basis for legislation amendments or other actions taken regarding the investigated issue. In the case of groups practicing squatting the pointing out of some activists' groups as threatening to the local and national security transforms the magnitude and the very character of the problem discussed. Moreover, the focus on assessing how dangerous these groups are overshadowed the reasons behind their actions, shifting the problem from why people squat to the fact that they do. In the 2000s the autonomous and their direct actions were labelled "extreme" and to be met by counter-measures. The culmination came with the governmental investigation of "extremist milieus" that threaten the democratic order in the country mapping and profiling some autonomous and extra-parliamentary leftist groups and organizations as violent extremists (SOU 2013:81), a result of the governmental strategy from 2011 "to protect democracy from violent extremism" (Skr. 2011/12:44), introducing a national coordinator against violent extremism (a former leader of the Social Democratic Party) and an informational Internet-based platform "Samtalskompassen" [The Dialogue Compass] in 2014 to educate about the issues of extremism and terrorism. Sörbom and Wennerhag (2016) argue that the term "extremism" has been commonly and unreflexively used in the Swedish context, without specifying the ideology or the methods referred to when speaking about "extremism". The authors point out that the vagueness of the term risks being misinterpreted by authorities, which in turn is not compatible with basic democratic rights, like for instance the freedom of speech and association. This dilemma is to be found within many democratic societies; however its unproblematic and normative construction within the field of politics is described by Sörbom and Wennerhag as highly arbitrary and dependent on the hegemonic views in a given society. The purpose of research examining discourses is then to deconstruct these hegemonic views and make visible the normative assumptions behind them.

In the governmental report from the 2013, squatting was described as the breeding ground of the autonomous movement since the 1980s (SOU 2013:81). The metaphor of breeding ground gives the association of animals gathered to breed and multiply; something not fully human and perceived as frightening due to the possibility of increased number of offspring produced in such a place. Extinction of such a dangerous place is the only way of getting rid of the problem   the growth of the autonomous movement. The use of metaphors has a powerful effect, argues Fairclough (1995), as they influence how we understand the world and at the same time give the

impression that they reveal something about it. They usually hide some-thing, most often power relations. With this in mind let us look at how the agenda of the autonomous was described, including an unexpected feature of political violence:

> The autonomous groups conduct issues that many people sympathize with. They work against racism, Nazism, sexism, homophobia and for the rights of refugees, often in collaboration with groups and people who are not violence-intensive but who are passionate about their cause. It is usually about young people involved in different subcultures and engaged in justice issues. Left-wing extremism is also influenced by pronounced anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism, they are opponents of the United States and Israel. They say they are fighting for a socialist society based on justice and equality. Therefore, left-wing extremists can periodically count on support for their campaigns far beyond their own connections among people who do not really sympathize with political violence, but who do not realize that the actions are exceptionally driven by such purposes. The activities of autonomous left-wing groups are usually legal. It's about concerts, study circles, lectures, film nights, flyer distribution and demonstrations. But the illegal activity is also a natural and obvious part for those activists who think that Sweden's laws and regulations are not legitimate. Activists see themselves as a resistance movement committed to fighting an unfair and oppressive society from within. In the core group, when the time comes, armed revolution and known leftist terrorists are perceived as historical heroes and role models.
>
> (SOU 2013:81: 50)

The bottom line of this report on the prevention of violent extremism was the potential of autonomous groups to use violence and to deceive the wider public to participate in its activities on false grounds. The autonomous' agenda was presented as clear and solely focused on the use of political violence to reach specific goals. The character of the members of autono-mous groups was thus portrayed as immoral in three regards: firstly, their tendency to mislead ordinary people to support them without revealing their intentions and secondly due to their inclination to break the law that is depicted as a "natural and obvious part" of their actions. Lastly, these groups' inspirational sources being terrorists and undemocratic and violent actions indicate their moral corruption. No explanations were given in the text as to how the process of attracting and misleading ordinary citizens was conducted, how the "autonomous milieu" is organized, with whom and how it cooperates and how it works with all of the mentioned issues. Even if it was repeated that not all autonomous activists are violent, the conclusion was drawn that "some of them are" (SOU 2013:81:51). The sheer possibility was frightening.

Portrayal and delegitimization of squatters and squatting

Before the delegitimization of squatting as a practice is discussed in this chapter, the way that squatters have been portrayed in the studied material is presented. There is a difference in how the actors behind squatting are described and how their actions are depicted in parliamentary documents and official reports. There are five outstanding ways of portraying squatters in this context, whereof four are negative and most common in the material. These are:

- squatters and squatting as a threat to the democratic order;
- squatters as a national security problem;
- squatters as youngsters in need of parental/societal guidance;
- squatters as immoral; and
- squatters as representatives of ordinary people.

The most salient way of representing squatters in the parliamentary documents was to describe them as a viable threat to Swedish democracy and national security. In the 1970s and 1980s squatting was considered an action not compliant with the democratic way of dealing with social and housing issues developed by the Swedish popular movements and Social democracy. In the parliamentary discussions it was stated that Social Democrats were distancing themselves from extra-parliamentary work, stressing the parliamentary way of doing politics as the only acceptable way. Squatting was seen by the Social Democrats and the right parties in the government as challenging the very values of the Swedish model built on cooperation and consensus and ironically a tactic used by the police in the 1990s to repress squatting was called the "Swedish model" (SOU 2002:91). Squatting was thus perceived as a threat to the Swedish model, and was therefore in need of elimination.

As squatters were described as part of an ideologically driven movement they were also perceived as prone to use violence for political purposes. It was not made clear whether all squatters shared the same ideology or exactly who among them was expected to use violence. The absence of this information had a specific function   to simplify and persuade. Recently an observable shift towards a securitization of the discourse on extra-parliamentary methods, including squatting and squatters, claimed that such collective actions should be treated as a national security problem together with other groupings with the ideological base in fundamentalism and fascism. The rhetorical logic used in these reports and documents was that of "securitization", a process aiming at transforming an issue or topic into a matter of security. This shift changed the focus of discussions as securitization is both a language and a set of practices that "can be used to construct a problem as being 'about security' when previously the situation was 'about politics' or even 'about real estate'", writes Manjikian (2013: 5). The shift that started in the end of the 1990s did not occur in the field of political discussions only. It was also present in the media (see Chapter 3) and was widely discussed in the beginning of 2000s

coinciding with the growth of the global justice movement and the protests staged by its adherents (Wennerhag 2008).

A common narrative in the political discourse on squatters throughout the whole studied period was that they were of young age. To portray collective actors as young implies their immaturity and need of guidance and correction. The need for guidance was explicitly expressed in the discourse and was sometimes expected to come from these young peoples' parents, but most often societal guidance was propagated as a solution to these "confused" individuals' search for affiliation. This perspective on squatters has been shared by all of the voices taking part in the discussion, regardless of party affiliation. Squatting was believed to be practiced by young generations as part of their rebellious youth in their development towards more mature political subjects. The perspective was highly moralizing and normative as it did not recognize the seriousness and purposes of squatting, but saw it as a temporary phase of some youth groups. Studies in other contexts have shown that this way of representing squatting is not unusual, and is used to belittle squatting (Dee 2013).

The morality of squatters was continually questioned when the squatters were described as prone to use violence or break the law. The powerful discourse on the rule of law and how it guarantees societal order and individual security was used to legitimize repressive attitudes and measures against squatting and squatters. Moreover, squatters were depicted as not trustworthy, as their intentions were hidden. In official reports they were portrayed as inclined to criminal behavior and inspired by historical figures that have been classified as terrorists. In both the parliamentary discussions and the official reports the societal order established by law-abiding citizens was described as threatened when the squatters broke the law by using violent means or methods outside the parliamentary repertoire. Sometimes the immorality of squatters was connected to their young age and the need to turn around their demoralization by means of education. Since the 1990s there was, nevertheless, an observable shift in attitudes toward squatters in the discourse studied here. The view was more pessimistic about the possibility of "turning around" squatters as their practices were to a greater degree labelled criminal. This in turn legitimized proposals and decisions to increase police intervention and punitive measures. When placing this shift in a broader context of "penal policy aimed at curbing the disorders generated by diffusing social insecurity" (Wacquant 2012: 72) which is expanding currently in Western Europe, the picture gets clearer. Sweden is not unique in its disciplinary tendency toward what is perceived as "social problems".

Yet in a few cases in the parliamentary discussions, squatters and activists using extra-parliamentary methods were described as ordinary people or groups fighting for the rights of ordinary or disadvantaged people. This view was mostly shared by the political parties on the left with the perceived closest links to social movements and extra-parliamentary actors, the Left Party and the Greens. However, in these representations the politicians never

elaborated the reasons why people squat or what in the media discourse appeared as rational reasons behind squatting; to protest against welfare cutbacks, or to solve difficult situations without the involvement of slow and inefficient bureaucratic apparatus. Suppression of such issues could be understood as an ambition to avoid controversy and to keep the distance between, what Iris Young (2001) has called, the character of the "deliberative democrat" and the "activist". What is referred to in this division between the two characters are the approaches to how political conflicts should be resolved. In the case when squatters are constructed as extremists this specific label serves the role of a "power ploy whose function is to rule out of bounds all claims that question something basic about existing institutions and the terms in which they put political alternatives" (ibid.: 675).

Conclusions: the reproduction of political power

Critical discourse analysis of political discourses revolves around "the reproduction of political power, power abuse or domination through political discourse, including the various forms of resistance or counter-power against such forms of discursive dominance" by studying speeches and texts produced by politicians and political institutions (van Dijk 1997: 11). Politicians are in this kind of analysis treated as actors and authors of political discourse that shapes for instance how policies are formulated, how regulations are discussed, and what is considered legitimate and lawful in a society. This reproduction of political power is done with the help of the categorization of the world in comprehensive and persuasive representations that are legitimized and naturalized constructing specific moral, political and cultural values. The focus in this chapter has been on the practical argumentation and arguments presented in the debate on squatting and extra-parliamentary actions, as these deliberations are grounding decisions and further actions. Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) argue that political discourse analysis should focus on the political implications of such a discourse recognizing the significance of decision for action.

How is the legitimation work done in the political discourse on squatting and extra-parliamentary methods? I have distinguished five main techniques of delegitimation in the parliamentary documents about squatting and extra-parliamentary repertoires of action. These five are built on arguments that stress the aspects of tradition, democratic principles, legal validity, moral responsibility and potential danger (Table 3.1).

The legitimacy claims used in the political discourse on squatting were referring to traditional and procedural arguments, claiming squatting to go against the procedures set by the representative democracy. Arguments on the long work put into the development of the democratic system by Swedish civil society and party politics of above all Social Democrats were used to legitimize the status quo and delegitimize all forms that could be perceived as threats to it. The democratic principles of parliamentary work were described as the only reasonable way using squatting as a contrast and example of an

Table 3.1 Legitimacy claims and the construction of (il)legitimacy of squatting and extra parliamentary activism in the parliamentary documents.

Legitimacy claims	Construction of (il)legitimacy through:
Traditional values	against the procedures set in a representative democracy
Democratic principles	anti democratic character
Legal validity	criminal character
Potential danger	threat to national security
Moral responsibility	young and immature morally corrupted

anti-democratic practice. It seems that this kind of democratic value became even more important when the discussion of democracy deficit reached Sweden in the 1990s and national politicians became painfully aware of their need to legitimize the electoral system. At the same time it was important to withhold the legal validity of the system by stressing conformity to the rule of law and the classification of trespassing as a criminal offense clearly divided between the desirable forms of political engagement and the "criminal" ones. David Beetham (2013) has argued that legal validity is an important feature of legitimacy. The need to simply classify something as illegal has its origin in a much complicated discussion about what should be perceived as legitimate. Beetham writes:

> Disputes about legitimacy, or rightfulness, of power are not just disputes about what someone is legally entitled to have or to do; they also involve disagreements about whether it conforms to moral or political principles that are rationally defensible. Are the relations of power, of dominance and subordination, which the law sustains, are the rules that determine access to positions of power or the means of exercising it, themselves rightful?
>
> (Beetham 2013: 4 5)

Young (2001) points to the complexity of the issue of legitimacy and emphasizes that in a society, where structural inequalities are affecting people's well-being and living conditions, the legitimacy of the political system might be challenged through non-deliberative and confrontational political practices. That in turn makes it even more urgent for the political elites to set clear boundaries protecting their positions and legitimizing their actions. A common strategy is to label activists as "extremists", writes Young (ibid.: 675). In this particular case this has been done by, for instance, portraying squatting as an extremist activity and labelling it as a security problem during the late 1990s and throughout the 2000s, resulting in a normative shift in the political discourse, significantly circumscribing the room for

direct action methods. Like the media discourse, the political discourse depicted squatters from the position of a concerned adult. They were described as young and immature people. They were also portrayed as morally corrupted and deceitful, and thus a danger to other citizens in the country. It seems to represent a quite paradoxical view of immature children that are a threat to the very fabric of the Swedish society. Sörbom and Wennerhag (2016) discuss how arbitrarily the term "extremism" is used in the Swedish public debate, risking misinterpretations and the labelling of groups and practices as unreasonable and deviant. This inconsistency in how to view groups not conforming to the dominant political norms is also evident in the parliamentary discussions and reports.

Dee (2016) explores the usefulness of the moral panic schema of Cohen (1972/2002) in examining the criminalization of squatting in the Netherlands. He argues that what is perceived as deviant often triggers moral panic consisting of three requirements: enemies, victims and general consensus about the values that have been broken or attacked. In the case of Netherlands "the enemies were the squatters, the victims the people whose houses were squatted and the required consensus that squatters had no right to occupy houses and thus violate the rights of property owners, meaning that "something had to be done" about squatters (Dee 2016: 788). The creation of squatters as folk devils contributed to the arousal of moral panic in the country and the criminalization of squatting in 2010, Dee concludes. In the Swedish case, the squatters were clearly created as the enemies in the 1990s and 2000s when extra-parliamentary activism was recurrently depicted as "extremist". The victims were not so much the owners of the properties, but ordinary people that were threatened by the activists, but on a more abstract level also the whole political system. The general consensus revolved around the violence used by squatters and extra-parliamentary activists that posed a threat to the national security, thus in need of appropriate response. What was ultimately at stake was the belief that the consensual and "democratic" way of doing politics in Sweden should be protected.

Appendix

To guide international readers in the field of Swedish political parties the table below might be of interest.

Since the elections in 1968 the Social Democratic Party has been the largest party in the country, however not always in the ruling position in the parliament. From general elections in 2010 there is also the Sweden Democrats, a far-right national populist political party in the Swedish Riksdag, along with some smaller parties mostly represented on the European or the local level. The percentage of vote in the general elections since 1968 have been as shown in the table below.

Political party	Abbreviation	Ideology
Swedish Social Democratic Party	S	Social democracy
Moderate Party	M	Liberal conservatism
Green Party	MP	Green politics
Centre Party	C	Liberalism, agrarianism
Left Party	V (earlier VPK)	Socialism, feminist politics
People's Party/Liberals	FP/L	Liberalism, social liberalism
Christian Democrats	KD	Christian democracy

Year	(V)	(S)	(MP)	(FP)	(C)	(M)	(KD)	(SD)
2014	5.7	31.0	6.9	5.4	6.1	23.3	4.6	12.9
2010	5.6	30.7	7.3	7.1	6.6	30.1	5.6	5.7
2006	5.9	35.0	5.2	7.5	7.9	26.2	6.6	2.9
2002	8.4	39.9	4.7	13.4	6.2	15.3	9.1	1.4
1998	12.0	36.4	4.5	4.7	5.1	22.9	11.8	0.4
1994	6.2	45.3	5.0	7.2	7.7	22.4	4.1	
1991	4.5	37.6	3.4	9.1	8.5	21.9	7.1	
1988	5.8	43.2	5.5	12.2	11.3	18.3	2.9	
1985	5.4	44.7	1.5	14.2	10.1	21.3	2.3	
1982	5.6	45.6	1.7	5.9	15.5	23.6	1.9	
1979	5.6	43.2		10.6	18.1	20.3	1.4	
1976	4.8	42.7		11.1	24.1	15.6	1.4	
1973	5.3	43.6		9.4	25.1	14.3	1.8	
1970	4.8	45.3		16.2	19.9	11.5	1.8	
1968	3.0	50.1		14.3	15.7	12.9	1.5	

4 Squatters' self-presentations and the creation of adversaries

The hegemonic nature of discourse production is an important starting point for this chapter. Discourses are not produced in a vacuum, but are constructed by powerful groups in society who strive after the legitimation and dominance of their moral, political and cultural values. This, however, does not take place without a struggle. How dominant or hegemonic discourses are resisted and challenged is an important issue to study when examining how power is created in discourse and how change comes about (Fairclough 1992). The aim of this chapter is therefore to focus on the voices of squatting activists and the way they have framed squatting as well as the way they have contested dominant discourses on squatting in Sweden. On the basis of different data sources, above all documents and texts produced by the squatters themselves, the way that squatters have described themselves and their adversaries, is analyzed. This chapter's objective is to answer following questions:

- How are squatters describing themselves and what attributes do they put emphasis on?
- Who are the squatters' main adversaries? How are they described?
- What specific justification and legitimation strategies are employed by squatters?

Some of the magazines published before the introduction and popularization of the Internet functioned as a community resource "for anarchists and alternative people all over the country" (*TotalBrand* 2015/1). Jämte distinguishes the anarchist magazine *Brand* as particularly important in the 1980s in the growth of the autonomous movement in Sweden (Jämte 2013: 244). Squatters frequently published texts in *Brand*; interviews and reports on current squatting events were published in the magazine regularly. It is therefore an invaluable source of information on squatting in Sweden, from the perspective of squatters and supporters of squatting. About 30 articles published in *Brand* and *Total-Brand* from 1978 onwards (*Brand* ceased to publish between 1967 and 1973) have been included in this analysis of squatting from the point of view of squatters. Additionally about a dozen texts written by squatters and published by the national and local newspaper media between 1986 and 2017 have been

included in the analysis along with a smaller number of books published by squatters about particular squats. Also, a broad material produced by the studied groups (pamphlets, books, folders, flyers, Internet-based websites, and blogs) is analyzed, along with transcripts of two public debates on the topic of squatting in Sweden including activists involved in squatting in different periods and organized by the author in 2016. Moreover, four film and radio documentaries have been part of the examined material, as have reports.

A possible shortcoming is that the texts from the magazine *Brand* are not always written by the squatters themselves, but sometimes by supporters. However, usually these reports are based on interviews with squatters and are representing perspectives shared with squatters. Another potential shortcoming is the fact that all squatters might not have written published texts about whom they are and why they do what they do, at least in a lesser degree before the introduction of the Internet (since the 1990s, the number of such texts and their availability is much greater than before). This shortcoming has been addressed by the analysis of archived printed material. Moreover, Swedish squatters are not a homogeneous group and their choices whether to write and publish texts about themselves varied and is not fully addressed here. One observable bias in the material is the greater number of texts produced by squatters taking part in occupations that have lasted for a longer period of time. In other words: the longer the occupation   the more numerous texts to analyze it. Also, the analysis of visual material might contain biased selection as the publications chosen were those with the richest visual material known to the author.

This chapter continues with the analysis of what representations are constructed by Swedish squatters when describing the actors behind squatting. It also distinguishes other important actors represented that are important in the creation of adversaries. In describing who "we" are, an important step is to distance oneself from "them". How these representations were legitimized is analyzed in the last section of this chapter, which presents how squatters have been portrayed as rational, honest and representative of the interests of ordinary citizens.

Who are the squatters?

Critical discourse analysis helps to uncover the semiotic choices made when squatters describe themselves and their "enemies", what is left out of the picture, what is specifically emphasized, what structural oppositions that the distinction between "us" and "them" is based on, how values, identities and ideas are naturalized, what meanings are presupposed and how justification is used in various ways.

The analysis of the representation of who the squatters are, by the squatting activists themselves, starts with the examination of how it is done and what attributes are central. An important issue of interest has been to investigate which actors have been described as the squatters' main adversaries, but

also who was considered a supporter or comrade. I was interested in what the main structural oppositions were in defining who the squatters are. What was brought forward? What was made invisible? What was common sense and thus portrayed as accepted knowledge? How were justifications made?

We are not who you think we are

An important way for the Swedish squatters to present themselves has been to emphasize that the stereotypical views of squatters do not apply to their case. An essential aspect in this counter-discourse has been to respond to the militant and violent characters of squatters and squatting actions. Another has been to refute the accusations of squatters being foreign professional activists coming to Sweden to squat. Yet another one has been to question the dominant view of squatters being young. These responses were usually directly and explicitly addressed to convert stereotypical depictions. An illustrative example was a text written for *Brand* by one of the squatters of *Folkungagatan* 164 in Stockholm in 1990:

> The police had spread the rumor that there were foreign, probably German, professional squatters who took possession of the house. No ordinary Swedish youth could beat such an impressive police attack! In addition, we were supposedly shooting steel bullets and nuts (!) with "American sling-shots" (what the hell is an American slingshot?) and were suspiciously skil-led in dodging the police shooting, ducked and so on. There were no Germans that exited the occupied house after the two days. Out came eleven unusually dirty and tired Swedish youths, without slingshots, without bombs, without RAF's [Red Army Faction] collected texts in the overall pocket. It must have been a terrible disappointment for them.
>
> (*Brand* 1990/37 38)

In the above comment on the squatting of *Folkungagatan*, both the non-mili-tancy of squatters and the absence of professional activists from abroad were emphasized. To strengthen the impression of non-militancy the lack of knowl-edge about what an American slingshot is, was stated. To convince the readers about the lack of connection to violent groups from outside the country (in this case Germany), it was highlighted in the description of the group forced out of the building by the police after two days that they were all Swedish. It was important to stress that those involved were regular citizens, unarmed and exhausted. Another squatter from *Folkungagatan* simply recalled: "The squat-ters are being prosecuted and it appears that there were no Danish or German professional squatters among them, only Swedes" (www.utkiken20.se/dokum ent/historia.aspx). The expectations of the authorities were described as not ful-filled when the squatters turned out to be of Swedish origin. A similar argument about the non-militancy of squatters was presented in a biographical novel writ-ten by one of the persons involved in the squatting of *Borgen* counting squatters with international background:

Tim from the US, one Russian, and one German. They have to deal with a lot of jokes as media claims that Borgen is run by foreign terrorists. In fact, our terrorist leaders are very modest. They are here because they do not want to learn to kill for their respective states.

(Sandén 2007: 31)

In this passage from the novel the author makes fun of the accusations of foreign terrorists running the squat that in fact were hiding there from military services in their home countries. The accusations were not coming from the police, like in the example above, but from the media. In a debate article in one of the largest national dailies in 1986 one of the squatters emphasized the disproportionate amount of police violence in relation to the peaceful intentions and behavior of the squatters. She referred to the police intervention in the squatting of Norrtullsgatan in Stockholm in 1986:

The municipality already gave the police permission to storm in after ten hours. We did not make any resistance, but were faced with aggression and brutality. The actions of the police suggested some sort of terrorist training, which, in relation to our peaceful conduct, seemed pathetic.

(DN 1986-06-20)

The contrast between the aggressive behavior of the police and the peaceful and non-resistant behavior of the squatters gives the impression of unbalance. This kind of contrasting has been frequently used by squatters to demonstrate their non-violent character and good intentions. It also served the purpose of denigrating the responses of the police and authorities. In a report from the series of squatting actions in Gothenburg in the 1980s, one of the involved squatters addressed the issue of age and the tendency to treat squatting as something lacking seriousness:

Talking about occupations and alternative housing projects often as "experiments" and "attempts" does not make communication easier. The fact that everything does not have a solid form is one thing   all living is constantly evolving, but reducing people's reality to some kind of a playhouse is not particularly clever.

(Ighe 1989: 138)

The author further argued that the squatters in the Association of Sabeln had to negotiate with Ungbo, the Gothenburg Youth Housing Association, targeting people aged 18 25 years, when most of them in fact were much older than this.

In many of the representations it was important to stress the different age groups being involved in squatting, along with the involvement of women. This was a way to avoid the single-sided label of "youths" frequently given to squatters by the media and connected to notions of immaturity of young people and the perception of squatting as a youth revolt and thus a passing phase.

In the visual material and in the texts written by squatters it was common to stress the role of women in squatting and women were often authoring these texts. This might have been a reaction to the absence of women in media representations and political discussions. Interestingly, in the case of *Mullvaden* in Stockholm in 1977 1978 "women brigades" were used to show the non-militancy of squatters and to handle the conflict with the police. In the "Squatting Handbook" written after the eleven months long squatting of *Mullvaden*, one of the squatters drew the conclusion "women brigades was the weapon we used against the police, politicians, bureaucrats, and trouble makers" (Berg 1978: 13). The squatters of *Mullvaden* believed that women were better negotiators with the police and created a "softer, more open and more cooperative impression" (ibid.). Women squatting confused those who came to confront squatters. In the "Handbook" a female squatter recalled that the police did not know how to react to women brigades to begin with. They were in a sense disarmed as the usual tactics of "threats and power" when meeting other men became useless (ibid.: 44). Women were perceived as less threatening. The argument also reveals that the squatters were at least from the perspective of the police imagined as men. When women confronted the police, they were disordered. Their gender seemed to have been strategically used to disarm the confrontation and transform it into a negotiation. It also shows the awareness of squatters about their image among the police and the authorities and the readiness to amend it. To actively correct the presupposed gender of the squatters is a recurring tactic used with different intentions: to emphasize the peaceful intentions, to demonstrate the broad interest in the issue, to show the specific interest of women in the issue, and to empower women by showing their important role in the collective effort and liberating them from gender stereotypes. The tendency to ignore or forget women's participation in collective confrontations has been stressed in some recent Swedish historians' work. Participation in contentious politics is usually imagined as exclusively a male issue. Swedish squatters seemed to have used this gender knowledge deliberately.

In an article in *Brand* in 2010, one of the involved squatters was interviewed about the squatting of a local bathhouse in Aspudden, Stockholm. She repeated the central role of "mothers with kids in second grade" in the action and that the engagement of local residents in the bathhouse was unique: "The [involvement in the] bath house was so wide because the ones who used the bathhouse were mostly retirees and families with children. It is these two groups that have been the basis of the occupation" (*Brand* 2010/1).

A common argument brought forward by squatters was the ordinary character of the squatting activists. The argument functioned as a reaction to the common way of describing squatters in the media, as professional activists prone to use violence. In emphasizing the ordinary and everyday character of squatters, and highlighting the role and interest of women and children in the squatting action, the impression given to the readers was one of peaceful citizens protesting against injustices in their local environment. The disproportional response of

the authorities to the squatting action seemed then particularly harsh and unreasonable. The contrast of the ordinary character and ordinary claims of squatters, to the repressive measures that squatting actions encountered, served as a legitimizing background. In the case of the squatting of a youth center in Lund in 2009, the group "Residents of Lund against cutbacks (*Lundabor mot nedskärningar*)" used the contrast between the everyday character of the squatters and the brutal methods used by the authorities to end the squatting action:

> Parents in the area, young people hanging out there when the youth center was open and people with connections to previous occupations in Lund participated in the occupation. A variety of people from those in their fifties to 5-year-olds cooked food together, played games and discussed everything from trouble on Norra Fäladen to how to handle professional journalists.
>
> (https://lundabormotnedskarningar.wordpress.com/)

In the above text, everyday activities such as cooking, playing games and chatting were further contrasted with the use of batons, pepper spray and guns that came with the eviction of squatters from the building. The absurdity of the exaggerated reaction of the city authorities and the police was highlighted. By stressing the variety of actors participating in the squatting event and their everyday and ordinary common activities the reasons for squatting were naturalized. The good character of squatters as well as their ordinary and orderly behavior appeared as natural in the described context and served as a legitimation. Moreover, apart from age and gender the socioeconomic and ethnic background was seldom stressed in squatters' representations. Sometimes some "code words" were used to show that the squatters were sharing a precarious socioeconomic background or identified as disadvantaged groups in the society, like for instance coming from "troubled" neighborhoods (see the citation above), sharing common socioeconomic position (claiming their city to be "available to all, not only for the well-to-do"; www.vart80tal.se/info. html), or as simply the local population of a neighborhood, town or region that has been disadvantaged (see next chapter and in particular the groups reacting to closures). This might have been a strategy to not emphasize differences when presenting the actors behind squatting and to challenge the tendencies of the media to categorize squatting as something foreign. The texts were meant to be appealing to a broader audience.

Moreover, the most common ways of referring to squatters in the texts written by squatters themselves has been "occupiers" (*ockupanter*), "squatters" (*husockupanter*), "tenants" (*hyresgäster*), "residents" (*boende*), "people" (*människor*), "persons" (*personer*) and occasionally also "youths" (*ungdomar*). Compared to the discourse in media the words used to describe the actors behind squatting were more neutral and did not imply that squatters are professional activists, but ordinary people. Referring to squatters as youths was not as common as in the media or in the discourse produced by political

elites, and was most often used when the squatting for the purpose of creation of music or youth centers was discussed. It was, however, clear that in the descriptions of squatters four important features were particularly important: that the squatters were peaceful and non-violent, that they were ordinary people, that they were of different age, and that they were not solely men.

We are ordinary and orderly citizens

In the "Squatting Handbook" the squatters of *Mullvaden* were described as "tenants" and "volunteers" living in the buildings occupying them to protest against their planned demolition (Berg 1978: 6). On a flyer distributed in February March 1978 the squatters of *Mullvaden* explained:

> The houses were standing and decaying. Thus, the "public" housing company Svenska Bostäder has acted as private speculation company. The tenants who were able to stay asked for help from volunteers. Now we are just over a hundred people who fill the houses. We have cleaned up, repaired windows and doors. To manage the houses over the winter we chopped wood and kept the heat in the tile stoves.
>
> (Flyer 1978)

What was evident in many descriptions of squatters provided by squatters was the emphasis on orderliness and good character of squatters. The efforts put in to the tidying up of the occupied buildings along with the diligence and hard-working character of squatters and their peaceful and non-violent intentions were often emphasized. In the "Squatting Handbook" from 1978 the instructions on how to act after the building has been squatted the listed points were to lock the door, arrange for some to guard the building, to have a telephone list in case the squatters are harassed by the police, and to "Note all meter positions" and "Pay for electricity, gas, and water (it is not solidary to not pay)" (Berg 1978: 16).

Especially the two last points are interesting, since they put emphasis on righteous and honest behavior. The squatters were encouraged to take note of the positions of meters in the occupied building and pay the cost of used electricity, gas and water. Anything that deviates from this norm was represented as a lack of solidarity, even if it was not explained what this lack referred to (for instance solidarity with whom). A few pages later the handbook gives instructions on how to spread the word on the squatting action and how to attract wider support. On the bottom of the page a conclusion is drawn: "THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR SUPPORT IN AN OCCUPATION IS YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR" (Berg 1978: 20). To behave well, that is to be friendly, not get het up by the presence of police, create "happy and nice mood" were the tips given in the handbook. In the end every squatter was expected to exert some self-disciplining of their behavior: well-behaved squatters attracted the support of the

media and the wider public, a support that could be decisive for the success of the occupation. Moreover, in several squatting events studied here it was important to accentuate that the goal of squatting was not to avoid to pay rent, but to create self-managed spaces that the squatters took care of. The act of not paying the rent or the operating costs risked being classified as immoral by the wider public and not worthy of support. In a text about the squatting of *Kvarteret Sabeln* in Gothenburg in 1986 one of the squatters explained:

> We have what can be called a real direct influence over our accommodation. No one else sows our farm, we do it. If we need a laundry, we will furnish one. This is what our accommodation and our occupation are about. It's not about living for free; it's about living in a way that makes us feel good and is developing.
>
> (Ighe 1989: 137)

Many stressed the drug-free environment they wanted to create in the occupied buildings and rejected alcohol and drug consumption as part of their activities. In the Manifesto of the action group for a house in the center (*Aktionsgruppen för ett hus i centrum*) in Jönköping from 1982 the squatters posted seven declarations around which they believed that their activity revolved: living culture; cohesion between different social groups; gender equality; enabling the unemployed; freedom from drugs; politically and religiously independent; children are our future (Järhult 1982: 11). Especially the statements about the unemployed and the stance against drugs were interesting from the point of view of representing oneself as a respectable agent.

Enabling the unemployed

Many of the human beings forced into unemployment are inevitably outside the community that work and schoolmates make up. We do not want these people to sink into passivity and misconduct. In the house we will together be able to create meaningful employment. Through concrete projects, we hope to create many sensible jobs.

Freedom from drugs

Because we know that drugs create addiction and passivity, all our actions are drug-free. We have also made a decision in principle where we establish that the cultural center must be a drug-free area. Even though we are still standing on the street, recent events have shown what cohesion and friendship can mean for those who have substance abuse problems.

(Manifesto of the Aktionsgruppen för ett hus i centrum, 1982)

   The respectability and morally justifiable intentions of squatters were expressed particularly clear in the statement on the plans for unemployed participants. By distancing themselves from the passivity and misconduct that unemployment could lead to, the squatters indicated their disposition for an active and hard-working lifestyle. Moreover, to be drug-free was a statement that once again emphasized orderliness and consciousness about the problems and conflicts created by drugs and alcohol. In a flyer from a squatting in Linköping in 2000, it was stated:

> We want to encourage women and men to work together on equal terms in the house. Everyone has to be pulled into work and feel that they are important and needed. The work should be shared in a fair way and all persons faced and treated equally regardless of sex, ethnic background, sexuality, age or social background. Because we know that drugs create addiction and passivity, we want the youth house to be drug-free. Alcohol sales would shut out or constitute a serious obstacle for people under eighteen years of age. Keeping a youth house drug-free is also a way to show solidarity with the many people living with alcohol problems.
>
> (Flyer, 2000)

The squatting in Linköping in 2000 became later widely covered news that illustrate well the discussion on the growing "extremism" among left-wing activists in previous chapters (see Chapters 3 and 4). However, the picture displayed in the media was contested in the texts authored by squatters. The fundamental rules in most squatted buildings from the 1970s to 2017 seem to have been: "Consensus. Drug-free milieu. Non-violence" (*Brand* 62/1994). In the planning of the squatting festival in Lund in 2009 the emphasis was given the non-violence and orderly behavior of squatters. The focus was stressed to be to occupy buildings and not to use physical violence, fight the police or vandalize. In the instructions given to participants it was stated:

> If the police were to interfere with our party, we will abide by the principle of confrontational non-violence. That is, we do not attack physically, we do not break anything. Instead, we will walk around, over and if necessary through police chains with minimal contact with the police.
>
> (http://rodamalmo.blogspot.se/2009/05/information-om-ockupa
> tionsfestivalen-i.html)

The "Rules of order" put up at the *Högdalen Folkets Hus* (Högdalen People's House) in Stockholm in 2015 were illustrative of all of the implicit and explicit rules set at different squats in the studied material. The "Rules" (see Figure 4.1) said:

- Smoking is taking place only outside.
- Nobody is getting drunk.
- Everybody cleans up after themselves directly and keeps it clean all the time.
- The food cooked is veggie.
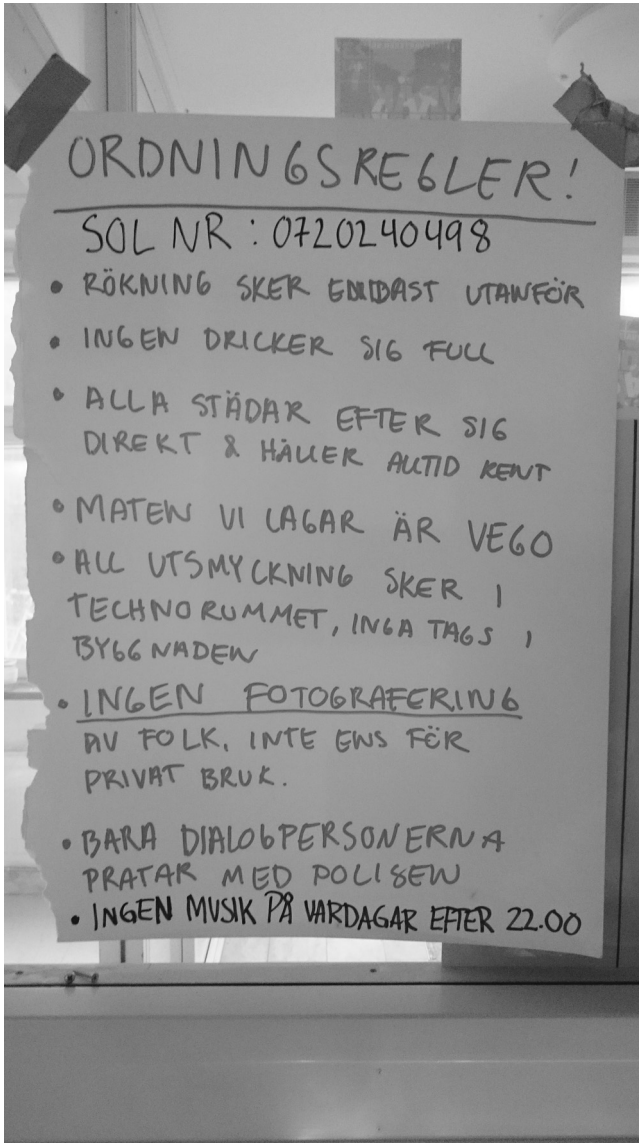
Figure 4.1 Rules of order, Högdalen, 2015.

- All decorations are taking place in the Techno-room, no tags in the building.
- No photographing of people, not even for private use.
- Only the dialogue-persons are talking to the police.
- No music on weekdays after 10 pm.

In some cases the squatting actions undertaken were time-limited from the beginning and were planned to last a day or a number of days and in these cases it was very important to set the time and to keep it. In for instance 1976, the *Victoria Theater* was squatted in Malmö and the two-day-squatting-event was described in the following way:

> On Saturday afternoon the occupants opened the gates to the theater. There was music, poetry and theater all night. […] On Sunday they opened again and the program continued. In the evening, the occupants closed, cleaned up and left Victoria   all according to their plan.
>
> (www.mikaelwiehe.se/intervju viktoria ockuperat.htm)

In the case of *Victoria Theater* the squatters not only kept the ending time of their two-day action, but also the rules set by the city to finish the show and close before midnight. They also tidied up the place before leaving, in this way minimalizing the "damage" done by their action. In a much later example of the squatting of *Husby träff* in Stockholm in 2012, the squatters wrote in a press release:

> In order to make new conversations about our requirements, we hereby declare the success of the occupation and announce that we will leave Husby träff peacefully Sunday 29 January. Until Sunday 29 January, a number of important arrangements will be implemented as further steps to broaden political mobilization.
>
> (Press release 2012-01-25)

The occupation of *Husby träff* lasted two weeks and was ended by the squatters in order to start a negotiation with municipal politicians regarding the future of their area and their community center. The purpose of predetermined closing dates in squatting was partly to avoid police interventions, but also a way of making a political statement and demonstrating that the squatters could keep their promises and thus were reasonable actors. It was quite common that particular groups occupied offices of authorities for a limited period of time to make a political statement and demand particular rights. For instance, a group demanded in 1979 the change of categorization of sexuality as a mental illness by the Swedish Health Authorities by occupying the office of the authority in Stockholm (Documentary 2009, Swedish Radio). When their claims were recognized they peacefully left the occupied buildings. Or in other cases, like for instance the occupation of a centrally located building by women in Umeå in 1983 to protest the lack of meeting spaces for their association, where the action was initially planned to only last during the weekend to make the point, but developed into a much longer one (Norlander and Larsson 2017: 9).

Often internal and external boundaries were drawn in order to distinguish who should and should not be included in the presentations of an "us". Internal boundaries, based on structural oppositions, were important to make

distinctions of whom to consider as part of the group and whom to exclude. The boundaries served to construct a collective representation that was built on the ideal of orderliness and good behavior. In the "Squatting Handbook" the boundaries were drawn among those present at *Mullvaden* and those trying to access the squat. Those living at *Mullvaden* were divided between the ones who followed the rules and the ones who did not by drinking, fighting, not paying the rent or not contributing to the guarding system. These divisions were, however, described as not definite and possible to change with collective work, openness and inclusion. The problems caused by those trying to access from outside were considered worse and the recommendation was to keep the spaces drug-free and free of drug-addicts stating "Drug addicts can manage their business outside the house" (Berg 1978: 41).

In other words, internal boundaries seemed to serve as disciplining for the squatters, while the external served to keep out unwanted elements from the squatted space: drugs and drug-dealers/addicts. It seemed important for the squatters to distance themselves from "the hassle" (Swedish: *strulet*) or simply from individuals with violent behavior, drug problems or other social problems. One of the squatters of a building in Stockholm in 2003 recalled a meeting with such a person and the inability of the group to handle "the problem":

> When we occupied the Swedish Television building in 2003, we met a homeless man who already lived in the house and immediately became part of our project. The man was a tired hippie around the age of 40, surrounded by a harem-like circle of teenage girls, one of whom was his daughter.
>
> (Marx 2013: 116)

The "problem" was this man's sexual relations with these teenage girls, which the group did not know how to handle. The problematic encounters with individuals who did not share the ideas and values of squatters were often referred to in texts, where squatters reflected back on the events they have been involved in. These individuals were described as disturbing the order established in a squatted house and were often eventually excluded. Those not willing to fully participate in the squatting by devoting their time and effort to maintain and improve the building and by sharing the values of the group to be drug-free, alcohol-free, to avoid sexism, homophobia, racism, and so on were simply not welcome. In the case of squatting of *Gamla Bro* in 1970 in Stockholm the squatters decided from the beginning to limit access to the squat considerably. Only people who openly declared to be willing to work to improve the conditions in the building were admitted (Nelhans 1971: 109).

The decision of limiting access was taken in order to keep order. In many cases squatters were clear to point out that the openness of their group and their project often attracted "problematic" individuals who disturbed the order and could cause the group's fall, either by exhausting it from the inside

or causing problems with authorities accelerating the police intervention. However, these internal "others" were to a much smaller degree represented as problematic than the encounters with the groups regarded as squatters' adversaries. The deeply embedded values of behaving well and orderly seemed to have been a guiding norm, and not only a tactic, among squatters (with some exceptions of course). Change was achieved through order and respectable behavior, a stance that was not always shared by squatters in other European countries.

Look at who we are

One general pattern in the photographs included in the material was the diversity of individuals presented there, without explicitly going into depth into the socioeconomic or ethnic background of the occupiers. Gender and age were at the forefront in these representations. There were numerous pictures of children taking part in activities arranged by the squatters as well as older people. Women were portrayed in "non-traditional" ways, for instance while climbing or breaking into buildings, taking part in construction work, talking in meetings and so on. These pictures served to show the unconventional character of women squatting and the liberation from gender stereotypes that squatters represented. They also filled the important function of going against the hegemonic view of male squatters and demonstrating that also women were squatters. Kids and elderly were depicted in situations when they were socializing in the squatted spaces. Moreover, squatters were most often portrayed in action, while interacting, eating, repairing, working, playing music, at meetings, demonstrating, dancing, and performing. Everyday activities were depicted in pictures side by side with more unusual events like demonstrations and protests. These pictures addressed the lack of such depictions in the media, where the representations of squatters were deemed skewed and incomplete. Photographs were often supplemented with drawings that communicated visionary and symbolic messages showing resistance, community, visions for the future and so on. The drawings could also include more abstract structures of for instance decision making or activities held at the squat.

Buildings were often to be found in the publications produced by squatters. They were depicted from outside and inside, however the sentiments communicated in them varied. The photographs taken from the outside portrayed the buildings as abandoned, neglected, empty, and partly demolished. They communicated the sense of sorrow over their fate. The banners put on the buildings represented resistance and the potential of squatters to take care of the buildings. The interior of the buildings demonstrated the creativity of squatters and their playful and careful way of taking care of these spaces. The banners, posters and flyers displayed on the inside of the buildings stated the claims and slogans behind the squatting action, but also the attempts to create order in for instance rules of order, guarding schemes, appeals to take of shoes, or prohibitions.

The adversaries, police and politicians, were sometimes depicted in the publications in less sympathetic situations. Politicians tended to be portrayed in formal situations posing for the photographer. Police were frequently depicted in situations when they were numerous, either being passive or active. When depicted as passive they were standing in line, observing and staring back at the activists. When presented as active, they were in the process of catching, hitting or arresting activists. In these situations the activists were recurrently portrayed as not using violence, but peacefully letting the police to do what they must.

A lot of the visual material included humorous and playful elements by depicting individuals dressed up, unthinkable situations taking place, police portrayed in embarrassing situations, police cars being decorated by the activists, and so on. Humor was used to undermine authority and to point to absurdities in the situation. Majken Jul Sorensen (2008) argues that humor is a tool to resist uneven power asymmetries and can contribute to new insights and perspectives on the issue. In the case of squatting in Sweden, humor was used to reverse the relations of power and give squatters the prerogative to interpret and ridicule the opponents.

Who are the Others?

The construction of a self-image is to a great degree dependent on the construction of "the Other". In representing ourselves we often do that by using difference and explaining what makes us different from others. Collective actors need a "we", a positive identification, in order to act collectively. Negative identification, the creation of a "them" is equally important. The category of "them" encompasses groups that squatters consider as adversaries, but can also include "internal others" that the squatting activists want to distinguish themselves from and that "functions as a buffer, where all of the undesirable descriptions of one's own group can be distanced from the group's collective identity and self-presentation" (Polanska 2017: 183). Among the most common and direct adversaries of squatters the politicians (often local, but not always) and the police were explicitly distinguished in the texts. Politicians were often described as corrupt and uninterested in the matters of ordinary people, pursuing political careers for purely egoistic reasons. The police were often described as violent and violence-seeking robot-like people, who seldom showed their feelings and used their profession to exercise violence. However, the relationship between these two categories could accurately be described in a quotation from a squatter who took part in the squatting of the fire station in Jönköping in 1982: "We had the support of the public. They [the adversaries] had police and municipal bureaucracy" (Hellsten 1982: 108). Politicians and their policies were described as unfriendly to the people and the police was often regarded as the extended and violent arm of the municipal decision makers. Sometimes the names of individual politicians

were used and sometimes a more abstract term "the city" was used to refer to municipal politicians.

Moreover, also representatives of private and public housing companies responsible for the squatted buildings were depicted by squatters as unsympathetic actors. A more abstract adversary in the representations of squatters was the media. Media, most commonly newspaper media, were often referred to and described as used by decision makers or the police to spread misleading representations of squatters, or simply following "media spectacle" logic, where spectacular events were covered leading to a distorted picture of squatting and other events connected to squatting.

Politicians and those in power – corrupted and indifferent dummies

Politicians have been represented as the main adversary of the squatters regardless of what period it was. Politicians were by the squatters described as corrupted, inconsiderate and mendacious. Oftentimes the politicians' specific affiliations were only mentioned in passing, while in other cases the affiliations were important in the descriptions. Social Democrats were particularly criticized and described as opportunistic and lacking courage. In Jönköping in 1982 the squatters distributed flyers with the title "The betrayal of Social Democrats" (*Sossarnas svek*) and one of the squatters summarized her view on the political parties and their contribution in the struggle for a cultural center:

> Social Democrats do not dare to take a stand; they do not want to offend anybody. They are cowardly in some way. The left has not done much, even though it concerns such important issues as youth unemployment, junk culture and drug abuse.
>
> (Christina 1982: 68)

In the above quotation, the Social Democrats and the Left Party were mentioned, however different expectations were guiding the representations. The Social Democrats were described as not brave enough to take on youth issues, while the Left Party was portrayed as only supporting the squatters with statements, not by actions. Moreover, politicians' promises were depicted by squatters as seldom kept or founded in ignorance. In the case of squatting of *Skaraborgsgatan* 8 10 in Stockholm in 1986 one of the squatters concluded in a debate article in a national daily:

> After the occupation, which we terminated according to an agreement, many of us felt fooled. We had been used as a weapon in the electoral debate and rather acted as catalysts of the housing policy bureaucracy than as active critics of it.
>
> (DN 1986-06-20)

Politicians were described as more or less consciously allowing for some housing problems to arise and deepen. In Figure 4.2 the poster reads: "In 2010 politicians sold this house. Did they ask the people about this? Did they ask all the homeless people that needed housing in Stockholm? No! Democracy!?"

The inefficiency of formal municipal politics was often accentuated and used as a reason for squatters to take over the responsibility. Or to draw attention of the politicians with an expectation that they will act in a particular way. In the case of the recurrently squatted fire station in Jönköping in 1982 one of the squatters wrote:

Figure 4.2 A poster outside Högdalen Folkets hus in 2015.

I hope, although it does not seem likely, that the actions have served as an alarm clock for our elected politicians. So that they realize the importance of something specific from their side. And very fast. The proposal for STAB [Svenska Tändsticks Aktiebolag, referring to the former area of the Swedish Matches company] is a typical Social Democratic middle way that is comparable with their actions in the nuclear issue.

(Edgren 1982: 19)

The slowness of political decisions, as well as the lack of attention to important issues were two arguments often brought up in the texts written by squatters. The bureaucratic inertia, insensitivity to real life problems, commercial interests guiding political decisions, and the irresponsibility of politicians was used as a justification for squatting. As the politicians seemed not to react quickly enough and to fully understand the issue, squatting was depicted as a reasonable reaction. Politicians were also accused of not taking on their role of elected representatives seriously and thus being irresponsible. Here in the words of the activists who squatted a building in Beckomberga, Stockholm, in 1999:

We are tired of all the talk of politicians. Homelessness is an urgent problem and politicians are not taking their responsibility. We are therefore taking the law and our self-evident right to housing in our own hands. We encourage everybody else, lacking housing or not, to do the same.

(*Direkt Aktion* 1999/18)

Politicians were sometimes directly blamed for the actions of squatters. In the case of the series of squatting actions undertaken in Jönköping in 1982, the squatters wrote in retrospect:

When politicians began to fumble on their own plans for a cultural center in the fire station in favor of the more established culture and instead got attracted by a potential establishment of a wax cabinet, all hopes of the frustrated youth to go the parliamentary way burst.

(http://kulturhusetjonkoping.se/om-kulturhuset/historia)

It was a rather unsympathetic picture of politicians that was drawn by squatters. Politicians' actions and decisions were described as not always following a clear logic and thus not trustworthy. In the case of Jönköping the squatters portrayed the sudden turn of the politicians as a tactic to win voices in the coming election:

From having initially treated the action group as almost a plague, politicians changed tactics in the midst of the summer heat. The current election approached and the youth issue had sealed up in a few months as one of the most important local political issues.

(http://kulturhusetjonkoping.se/om-kulturhuset/historia/)

In the end, the fire station squatted in Jönköping was saved from demolition by the squatting group that was promised another building for its activity by the local politicians just before the elections. Apart from being depicted as opportunistic, politicians were often portrayed as not familiar with the problems of ordinary people and far away from the everyday life and problems of the average citizen. Housing shortage and homelessness were used to point to the inefficiency of policies and the inability of politicians to treat these problems seriously. In the case of *Folkungagatan* in Stockholm in 1990 the squatters went even further in their critique of the politicians:

> The embarrassing top-dogs [*pampar*] and human dummies, real estate councilor XX and councilor XX (both) have, through their cynical and lying statements, provided evidence that they do not take Stockholm's homelessness seriously. Their argument in the radio and magazines makes me think of the arrogance the Ceauşescu couple showed during their trial: They have forgotten that they are employed and paid to serve us. They have shown that they do not WANT to do anything about housing policy in Stockholm. They have shown that the disdain against politicians that is growing among the people begins with the politicians' disdain AGAINST the people.
>
> (*Brand* 1990/37 38)

The politicians named and described by the squatters in the above quotation were ascribed the lack of seriousness, along with cynical and dishonest character and arrogance. Their attitude and unwillingness to act in the field of housing was emphasized by the comparison used   the trial of Nicolae and Elena Ceauşescu in 1989 when the spouses were accused of among other things genocide leading to their execution. The comparison of the behavior of the named councilors and offences of Ceauşescus was a very dramatic one, directing the thoughts of the reader to the urgency and gravity of the housing situation. The use of the metaphor of a dummy to describe politicians was another tactical choice used to criticize the order of things and justify squatting by describing politicians as not fully human, but rather resembling human beings. In the description the distance to politicians was also created by mentioning the growing discontent among the people with politicians described as caused by the politicians´ disrespect of ordinary people. The disrespect and arrogance of politicians was a recurring theme in the texts. In the squatting of a school building in Högdalen in 2015, the squatters put emphasis on the lack of transparency of politicians' decisions and the residents' lack of influence on a policy that aimed at privatizing public resources. In a debate article in 2015, the squatters of Högdalen's school used statistics to make their point about the effects of the policy:

> We have not been given any voice in this matter and see the procedure as part of the privatization policy and the sale of public housing that has

been intensified since 2000 in Sweden and, in particular, in Stockholm. It is estimated that over 145,000 apartments have been sold in the last fifteen years and that the large part, as many as 82,000, has been sold in Stockholm County.

(Dagens Arena 2015-06-11)

In the text it was made clear that the interests of the people living in the area were subordinate to the interests of municipal politicians, hence an undemocratic process. The non-transparent sale procedure and the emphasis on the co-owned character of the building were used to justify the squatting action. To criticize municipal politics for their priorities was common among the squatters and the contrast between the interests and needs of the local people and the economic reasoning of the municipality were often used in legitimizing squatting. In the case of a youth center occupied after it was closed down in 2010 in Lund the squatters argued that the planned cuts were known to the staff, but the activity perceived by politicians as "unprofitable". At the same time they observed that the priorities of the local politicians were "vanity projects" that served to improve the image of the city, but less to improve the quality of life of the residents (https://lundabormotnedskarningar.wordpress.com).

In portraying politicians as undependable and not prioritizing the needs and interests of the people the squatters depicted themselves as the opposites, that is, actors that could be trusted to protect the needs of ordinary people.

The authorities, who in their work followed the political decisions, were often accused of same ideas and practices as the politicians. Sometimes it was even unclear if the politicians or representatives of authorities were referred to, at other times the term "power-holders" was used, not distinguishing between these two categories.

Police – doing their job, but enjoying the use of violence

Police were pointed out as important adversaries next to politicians. However, police were often described as instruments of power-holders only implementing their decisions, and thus in a position lacking their own will. In the case of the fire station in Jönköping in 1982 the activists involved in the "Action group for a house in the center" unanimously declared the local politicians as their enemies and the police as their instruments: "In every society the police are serving to protect power, order and law. This is the way it is in Warsaw, Johannesburg and Berlin. It is also this way in Jönköping" (Järhult 1982: 72).

To describe the police in instrumental terms helped to justify the moral and rational arguments behind squatting. In the above case, the squatters emphasized their claims as rational   by providing a place that would keep the youth of the streets   and supported by the wider public. These arguments were contrasted with the functioning of the police, to protect the power-holders and their interests, and their strength in numbers. The allegory to the speech

held in 1908 by Knut Wicksell, "The throne, the altar, the sword and the money purse", criticizing the most powerful institutions in society by that time (the monarchy, the church, the military and the upper-class), served as a critique to the power wielded by these institutions, and in particular the police, and highlighted the claim to free speech and democratic participation in society.

Sometimes the police were depicted as following their own instrumental reasons, not the ones of the power-holders. Squatters of several buildings in Stockholm in mid-1980s recalled how they unreasonably became the targets of a police force in need of practicing anti-terrorist interventions arguing that the local police "saw us as a guinea pig in their newly discovered strategies" as there was a lack of terrorists in Stockholm at that time. "It became a practice to abuse, beat and lock up teens with visions of another, more vibrant city" (http://vart80tal.se/info.html).

The absurdity of the police actions was an important point made in many of the squatters' texts on the encounters with the police. In a public debate one of the participants that squatted *Rinkebyhuset* in Stockholm in 2009 compared the fully equipped police entering the building to evict the squatters to "people from Mars" (Public debate a):

> Before we could hand in our proposal we were thrown out by police who seemed equipped for a nuclear war. It was unbelievable. We were asleep and they broke the door that indeed was closed as we were sleeping, but they could have knocked. It was a bit surreal. They looked like people from Mars; they had space suits on them.
>
> (Public debate a)

The absurdity of using violence instead of knocking, and the equipment of the police were used to contrast the defenseless squatters. The metaphor of "people from Mars" served to create an alien impression that did not fit the circumstances. It was common that the police was represented as violent and holding unlimited power to exercise their authority. The squatters of *Folkungagatan* in Stockholm in 1990 described the police's arbitrary, non-transparent and somewhat not well-planned actions in these terms:

> Without any transparency, without restrictions, the police can set up a civil war on a street in Stockholm. Journalists and the general public are effectively moved away using riot fences, batons, horses and dogs. The politicians effectively stay away by themselves. These abominable fools in uniform stole the bulldozer all the way from a nearby building, they thief-connected it and then waved away across the street   unquestionably testifying to some desperation. They managed to mow down the entire staircase in front of the entrance and forced the front door, and for a short time the whole house stood wide open.
>
> (*Brand* 1990/37 38)

The absurdity of the described actions, the fact that the police used a bulldozer without authorization and used it to destroy parts of the building in a desperate act gave the impression of stupidity and irrationality of the police. The notion of "fools in uniform" served to strengthen the impression of the police disguising their senselessness and instrumental intentions. This stood in stark contradiction to the terrorist label that the squatters tried to distance themselves from. In several of the texts an argument was used that the terrorist label was intentionally created to legitimize the actions and new equipment of the police. The eviction of the squat of *Borgen* in Malmö in 1990 was described in the following way by one of the squatters:

> The storming of Borgen was part of the Security Polices's and the cops' new deal; to portray anarchists and squatters as international scale terrorists to the mass media. This hypocrisy entitles them to anti-terrorist forces of 40 men, one million crowns to their personal equipment as well as months of training.
>
> (*Brand* 1991/44)

By portraying the police as acting instrumentally, the label given to the squatters could be challenged. By describing the actions of the police as driven by specific logics the accurateness of the terrorist label could be questioned against the interests lying behind the use of such label. Moreover, depicting the police as excessively violent to the point of irrationality was used to shift the position of squatters and justify their actions.

Media – capricious, twisting and focused on the creation of spectacles

Squatters' perception of various media has been highly ambiguous. Most often media was described in negative terms, as the adversary of squatters, although sometimes media was depicted in more instrumental terms, as means to get across a message. When the more positive descriptions were used an important reservation that was made was the logic of the media and the unknown future of the message mediated through media outlets that the squatters did not control. When the media were assessed in more positive terms their ability to "create publicity" that the power-holders fear was emphasized (Berg 1978: 10).

Quite early in the debate on squatting in Sweden squatters were portrayed as undemocratic and violent actors by the media. The reaction of squatters was to point to the tendency of media to focus on extremes and in consequence to serve distorted images to the public. The board of the Socialist Federation in Stockholm made a statement following the squatting of the students' union in 1968 emphasizing the role of the media in portraying the event:

> Media, press, radio and television have given a roughly distorted picture of the action. The students have been represented as violators and anti-

democrats. The attention has been attached to some unprecedented opinions in the debate where, for the first time, hundreds of people expressed their views publicly in a conscious way.

(SVD 1968-06-08)

The message behind the critique of how media has reported on the squatting of the students' union was that the action was based on highly democratic modes of procedure overlooked by the media. An argument that we will come back to, when examining the reasons for squatting in the next chapter. In a panel on squatting one of the participants active in the squatting of a school building in Högdalen in Stockholm in 2015 described the double-edged relationship to the media:

> One advantage and disadvantage was that we got a lot of media [attention]. The disadvantage of having a lot of media is that media gladly talks about "activists". They created a distinction between residents and activists. I am for instance both. But in their world it is inexistent; it is either black or white. You either live in Högdalen or you are an activist.

(Public debate b)

The argument that media often simplified complex issues was used to disqualify media representations of representative power. In a flyer of the All-activity-house activists in Lund in 1969, the conclusion on the corrupt and non-representative character of the media was drawn:

> But how would one reach out to others with the idea? It is difficult for ordinary people to make themselves heard through the available media. Press, radio and TV are not for public's viewpoints, and PR-stunts cost money. The economy was in a bad state.

(Published in Nelhans 1971: 166)

The media referred to were described as unavailable as means for ordinary people to make their voices heard. The squatters identified themselves as ordinary people and pointed to that in order for them to use the media like press, radio and television; they would need to have economic resources that they lacked. Media was depicted as not on the side of squatters equivalent in the text to ordinary people, unless they could pay, which the squatters perceived as spoiled, and far from neutral. Those who had the economic means had a greater chance to convince the public of their point of view. In the "Squatting Handbook" the author explained that potential squatters should be aware of the uphill struggle it meant to reach out as squatters were perceived in the society as thieves of apartments, creating extra costs for the municipality, being communists, longhaired and so on. The antidote was to launch information campaigns with a specially assigned press group to work continuously to gain broader support by writing articles, taking pictures,

making posters, participating in debates and answering all the attacks expected to come (Berg 1978: 38).

The media coverage that followed squatting attempts was here described as skewed and not in favor of squatting. The author refers to the debates in the newspaper media by the time when the squatting of *Mullvaden* was discussed in these negative terms. His suggestion is to create one's own documentation but also to participate in the established media channels by writing articles and taking part in public debates. By documenting one's own history the official image of the media could be challenged and the situation required preparedness to "fight back" (Berg 1978: 38).

Media was often pointed out as spreading misleading representations of squatters and squatters used to correct these representations by stressing the inaccuracy of these descriptions. By producing their own texts and documenting through for instance photography the squatters contested these representations. The squatters who participated in a series of squatting actions in Stockholm in mid-1980s concluded on the contrast between their own photos and the ones published in the media: "Our own pictures next to the official press images form two parallel worlds depicting the same events from different perspectives" (http://vart80tal.se/info.html). The use of contrast was common when discussing how media functioned and served the purpose of emphasizing the innocence, physical fragility and mental sensibility of squatters. Another squatter taking part in the same series of squatting in the same period accused the media of spreading the police's misrepresentative view of squatters in a debate article:

> When I read in the newspapers the police's description of us as "raw and ruthless," I thought about us laying there on the street [after an eviction] in a big coughing, twisting and creaking pile and could nothing but laugh. There is not a single person among us who is raw and ruthless.
>
> (DN 1986-06-20)

The inaccuracies of the picture given by the media and ultimately also by the police was emphasized by the author and the physical weakness of squatters in the situation of eviction was brought up to contrast the image of squatters as violent. Furthermore, the image of the media as uncritically reproducing images of squatters created by the police was rather frequent in squatters' texts. One squatting action of a newspaper office in 1994 was addressing this issue directly. The activists wrote in a press release:

> All the established media are willing to legitimize police actions through serving relevant threat scenarios. One technique is to only focus on the anti-fascist protesters' real or feared acts of violence. But the questions of "in what context" or "with what goals" are absent.
>
> (Press release 1994-11-30)

The above squatting action aimed at criticizing media practices when reporting on anti-fascist activists and was a short-termed protest action without the purpose of using the squatted building. However, it pointed to the important role of media and to what the activists perceived as a lack of contextualization of the cases described by the addressed newspaper.

Housing companies and their representatives as profit-oriented

Squatters have described both public and private housing companies in negative terms. Especially the public companies were depicted as acting immorally, since they were expected to protect the interests of the public. Housing companies were mentioned most often in relation to squatting of residential buildings, where the goal was not only to create social and cultural spaces, but also to satisfy the housing needs of the squatters. The municipal public housing company Svenska bostäder was recurrently described by the squatters of *Mullvaden*. In a poetry book, the following passage illustrates the way that squatters viewed this particular housing company:

> it is where
> the " public housing" wants to demolish all the old houses
> because there are too many pensioners
> and students in the area
> the municipality gets too few taxes from them
> so
> there will be new big
> apartments for families with kids
> says the "public housing"
>
> (Lappalainen and Berg 1979: 14)

Further on in the book the authors introduce a new name for the housing company Svenska Bostäder, Svenska Rivningsbostäder, literally meaning "Swedish demolition-housing" (Lappalainen and Berg 1979: 16). In the "Squatting Handbook" the public company of Svenska Bostäder was accused of acting as a private company not keeping their promises to carefully renovate the buildings and protecting the interests of the tenants. The label of the company as public, or oriented towards protecting a public good, was therefore questioned by the squatters. The same housing company got attention again when the squatting of *Folkungagatan* in Stockholm in 1990 was initiated. The building owned by the company was standing empty for several years before it was squatted. The squatters saved it from demolition and the building still belongs to the municipal company, but is managed by its tenants. In a description of the building's history it was stated:

> The house has been vacated for eight years and deteriorated. The squatters were in contact with the owner of the dilapidated house and

offered to buy it for a symbolic sum, but Svenska Bostäder refused. The squatters started cleaning, cooking and making the house as inhabitable as possible.

(www.utkiken20.se/dokument/historia.aspx)

Housing companies were often accused of wasting of resources by the squatters. Their irrational behavior in letting buildings stand empty in times of housing shortage was a recurrent critique. In the above case the public company was not even interested in selling the rundown building, which was portrayed as illogical. In the case of several occupied buildings in Stockholm between 1985 and 1989 the housing companies let the buildings "stand and decay in pure speculation waiting for the market prices to rise" (Avanti Framåt 2017: 6). The self-presentation of squatters against these irrational housing companies was presented as rational and well-needed. In several squatting cases this irrational behavior of housing companies was used as legitimation for squatting. In the case of the "Squatting Festival" in Lund in 2009, the activists declared:

We are arranging the festival to invite all of Lund to join and reclaim their city from politicians who let homes stay empty when people have no place to live, from property owners who are building only more and more expensive and worse and worse.

(http://rodamalmo.blogspot.se/2009/05/information-om-ockupa
tionsfestivalen-i.html)

Squatting was depicted as a way of claiming back housing rights and squatters were described as the people in need of housing doing something to satisfy this need. Politicians were blamed for intentionally letting buildings stay vacant and the construction of new housing was criticized for its quality and costs. In the squatting of Hagsätra School in Stockholm in 2016 the squatters described the private housing company as cheating the system by using the services of companies related to it:

To complete the purchase, they take loans from their own bank, Ikano Bank. The interest rates on loans are thus retained within one and the same family. Then they buy all the renovation materials and furniture from their father, Ingvar Kamprad, who owns Ikea.

(ETC 2016-07-04)

An affair of the housing company was revealed to the media and the squatters used this immoral and deceitful behavior of the company and the perceived cooperation between politicians and company representatives to legitimize their squatting action. Another legitimizing argument was to por-tray the municipal government as equally corrupted and hazardous to the interests of tenants. When both the political sphere and the market are

presented as in collusion the squatting action could be represented as the only logical way to act.

The representation of representatives of housing companies was quite similar to the representation of representatives of municipal companies owning the squatted buildings. The same arguments about corrupt procedures, irrational decisions to close down functional and needed spaces, and immoral behavior dominated such depictions and represented squatting as a reasonable practice to reclaim common spaces.

Conclusions: squatters as respectable agents

The aim of this chapter has been to examine the way that squatters have represented themselves and their adversaries since late 1960s until the 2000 and answer the questions: Who are "we"? Who are "them"? How is the situation analyzed and described? And: What legitimation strategies are employed? The representations of squatters have served to contest the hegemonic views of squatters communicated by for instance the mass media. Squatters' self-representations were built upon structural oppositions drawing clear divisions between popular representations of squatters and how they imagined themselves. The negative depictions were met with representations challenging and reversing them. In Table 4.1 these structural oppositions are summarized.

In the table the descriptions of squatters based on concepts that are opposite in meaning are presented with concepts used in the "common" discourse, that is media and among the wider public, and the concepts presented by the squatters when describing themselves. What is observable in the use of structural oppositions in the table is their negative connotation in the hegemonic view on squatters and their positive meaning in the contesting discourse of squatters. Squatters emphasized the skewed and simplified view of them. In their view the negative depictions of squatters served as legitimizing police violence and the repression of squatting. The main points brought forward by squatters were:

- Squatters were misrepresented and misunderstood in the hegemonic view presenting them as young, violent, male and professional.
- Squatters were ordinary citizens taking matters into their own hands, whose demands and needs were not being taken seriously.
- Squatters were the guardians of democracy and the counterweight to the corruption of authorities, market and politicians. Contrary to societal institutions squatters act democratically, recognize all interests involved, are non-violent, tolerant and promote negotiation and consensus.
- Squatters were respectable and moral actors who are orderly and hardworking with moral qualities like honesty, righteousness and attentiveness.
- Squatters were rational actors reacting to injustice, corruption, waste of resources, abuse of power and represented the interests of ordinary people.

Table 4.1 Structural oppositions in the representation of squatters.

Negative depictions of squatters	Squatters self representations
Lack of order	Orderliness
Militant	Peaceful
Troublemakers	Well behaving
Lazy	Hard working
Addicts/passive	Drug free and alcohol free
Egoistic	Solidary
Excluding and sectarian	Equal and non discriminatory
Conflictive	Consensual and non hierarchical
Violent	Non violent
Immoral	High morals
Foreign professional	Regular citizen
Young	All ages
Male	Female

The dimension of respectability in the counter-discourse of squatters is very interesting in the Swedish case. It could be related to the ideals of conscientiousness (skötsamhet), a kind of mentality, that characterized the working class population involved in the Swedish popular movements in the early twentieth century (Ambjörnsson 1998) and is still present in Swedish society. This mentality of conscientiousness encompassed self-discipline, culture, rational arguments, and schooling (*bildning*). Workers could improve their lives by leading sober, self-schooled, and responsible lives away from gambling, confrontations and violence, extreme ideas and ultimately insurgencies. They were expected to display abilities like: keeping their word; reflection; thoughtfulness; self-control; planning (ibid.: 9 13). This search for respectability among the Swedish working class has fascinated many scholars. Lars Pettersson concluded in his work on the development of popular movements in Sweden the importance of

> … organizational training of a cadre of respectable citizens, prepared to take their responsibility when the opportunity arises. And it is interesting to note how those same classes that were singled out as being rough and undisciplined adopted these norms …
>
> (Pettersson 1998: 103)

Traces of this self-disciplining mentality are to be found in the self-representations of Swedish squatters when stressing the distance from drugs and violence, the hard-working and diligent character or when using rational arguments to highlight the reasonableness of squatting. To work hard was by the squatters

considered a virtue and moral arguments were used whenever people did not. This kind of moralism has been illustratively described by Ronny Ambjörnsson: "it was about not sinking into laxity, but about grabbing every moment and doing something of one's life, not just simply living it" (Ambjörnsson 1998: 13) and was one of the main ideas developed in the temperance, trade union, and popular schooling movements in Sweden in the twentieth century. Young (2001) concludes that activists tend to be more self-conscious and disciplined than other actors on the political arena as they are often portrayed as unreasonable and threatening to the political order. It seems to be the case even for the Swedish squatters.

The representation of squatters as inherently democratic and acting democratically is an important part of the counter-discourse and will be given extended attention in next chapter on the representation of the reasons and goals of squatting. Moreover, as the process of self-presentation and legitimation is closely related to the representation of other actors and contexts that the squatters want to distance themselves from, these actors and contexts deserve further attention. Among the main adversaries of squatters the politicians, police, media and representatives of the housing companies were present. Politicians were described as corrupted, selfish and egoistic, elitist and distant to the life of average people, slow and inefficient, and irresponsible. Against these descriptions a picture of responsible, sensible and altruistic squatters was drawn. Police was described as acting instrumentally and following orders, thus not acting rationally, being excessively violent, arbitrary, non-transparent and intentionally seeking violent conflicts. Squatters were contrasted against these descriptions as peaceful, acting transparently and following rational reasons. Media was portrayed as focusing on the extremes and giving distorting pictures, biased and influenced by others' interests, unreflective and interested in creating spectacles or conflicts, in contrast to the squatters who could give a realistic depiction of the situation and were independent and influenced only by their own analysis and interpretation. Representatives of the housing companies or the companies owning buildings that were squatted were represented as immoral, not keeping their promises and wasting resources. They were moreover, acting irrationally, dishonestly, and corrupt and did not care about the needs of the people. Squatters' actions were in this light portrayed as rational, honest and representative of the interests of ordinary people. In this way several of the attributes ascribed to squatters were ascribed to other actors, like for instance:

- Egoistic   politicians.
- Excluding and sectarian   politicians.
- Conflictive   police, media.
- Violent   police.
- Immoral   housing companies.

To explain this we need discourse analysis and the concepts of hegemonic or dominant discourses that are maintaining power in a society. Discourses

are often created in oppositional relationships, struggling for domination. The discourse that is dominated tends to be silenced and suppressed. This does, however, not mean that these discourses cannot reverse and create their own meanings, in resistance to the dominant discourses (Fairclough 1992). Antonio Gramsci (1971) concept of hegemony is useful here as it refers not only to dominance, but also to the negotiation involved in meaning making. Fairclough argues that the concept "is helpful here as a theory of power and domination which emphasizes power through achieving consent rather than through coercion, and the importance of cultural aspects of domination which depend upon a particular articulation of a plurality of practices" (Fairclough 1995: 67). In this sense hegemony refers to a process under constant making, that is not fixed and the meaning of which is under negotiation, opening up for other possible interpretations to resist the order of discourses. By rejecting the dominant labels by reassigning them to other actors and stressing the respectability the squatters resisted the discourse created by the media and the political elites. Moreover, the discourse of squatters contained traces of the mentality created among Swedish popular movements of respectable citizens taking responsibility in their own hands and using the corrupt character of their adversaries to describe themselves as the authentic and trustworthy representatives of the citizens.

5 "It is right to rebel" or why squatters do what they do

With the analysis of representations of squatters and adversaries in mind, this chapter deals with the representations of the motives and goals of squatting and how these have been justified by squatters. The goals of squatting are often intimately intertwined with the reasons for taking over buildings and this is why both are included in the analysis. How they are legitimized in the discourse produced by squatters, is moreover, in the center of attention in this chapter. The analysis is structured around following questions:

- How are the goals of squatting represented?
- How are the reasons for squatting described?
- What specific justification and legitimation strategies are employed by squatters?

The material used in this part of the book is identical with the material used in the previous chapter consisting of publications in the anarchist magazine *Brand*, articles written by squatters in national and local newspaper media, books written by squatters, TV and radio documentaries, material published on the Internet as well as printed material distributed by the squatters. The aim has been to include texts and representations produced by squatters themselves and to see what strategies are employed to justify squatters' perspectives and to analyze saliences and changes over time. The difference from the previous chapter which dealt with the way that squatters describe themselves and their adversaries is that this chapter focuses on the act of squatting, the motivations and the perceived goals of these actions and how these are described in the material produced by squatters. This chapter takes over where the previous chapter left off the analysis, and discusses the issues of democracy and authenticity in the way that Swedish squatters have represented squatting and what tools have been used to legitimize squatting.

With the help of critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA), this chapter uncovers how the goals of squatting have been described and justified and focuses on the resistance of squatters to what is perceived as a social "wrong" (Fairclough 2010: 231). Fairclough argues that CDA should be focused on the analysis of how unequal power relations are reproduced in order to make

visible how the dominant logic is created and withheld. The analysis of discourses serves to expose how legitimacy and legitimation are constructed.

The first part of the chapter analyzes the goals of squatting as they have been represented in the material written by squatters and presents a typology of main motivations behind squatting in Sweden between 1968 and 2017. The second part of the chapter focuses on legitimation of squatting and presents the central structural oppositions that the representations of squatting have revolved around. For the Swedish case the essential issues of democracy, representation, morality and rationality are discussed and legitimation techniques used by squatters are presented, in the third part.

The goals of squatting

Based on different documents where the squatters described the aims of their actions since the 1960s, the goals of squatting in Sweden could be categorized in several types: the provision of housing, preservation of areas from clearance and demolition, the creation of free social and cultural spaces, squatting for better educational conditions, environmental squatting, and claiming and reclaiming rights by squatting (see Table 5.1) (cf. Polanska 2017). The types developed here are derived from the explicitly expressed goals that occur in the material written by squatters in Sweden. They are ideal types, in the Weberian sense, meaning that the most common features of a phenomenon are sorted and presented as a type, serving a better understanding of the complexity by creating analytical distinctions. Three of these types, the provision of housing, preservation of areas from clearance and demolition, and the creation of free social and cultural spaces, have through the history been closely entwined (sometimes impossible to separate) and were the most frequently stated types. The very first squatting action carried out in Sweden, and commonly not included in the history of squatting in the country, was the occupation of the students' union of the University of Stockholm in 1968, followed by several failed attempts to squat different objects. This squatting attempt has been categorized in the study as

Table 5.1 Main goals of squatting in Sweden between the 1960s and the 2000s.

1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Educational	Housing	Housing	Housing	Housing
Social and cultural activity	Social and cultural activity	Social and cultural activity	Social and cultural activity	Social and cultural activity
	Preservation	Preservation	Preservation	Preservation
	Claiming and reclaiming rights	Claiming and reclaiming rights	Environment	Claiming and reclaiming rights

motivated by educational objectives, and has been unique in the sense that it never reoccurred as an objective in the history of Swedish squatting again. In the 1990s, the goals of squatting were extended to also include environmental objectives and I have distinguished a type called claiming and reclaiming rights, referring to the type of squatting of buildings that used protest to gain or regain social, health, recreational and legal rights and often addressed legal amendments, and anti-austerity policies resulting in the close-down of service providing institutions, present throughout different time periods, but intensifying in the 2000s.

In order to illustrate the goals of squatting in more depth, the following section will be devoted to the exploration of the types introduced above and those who did not entirely fit these ideal-types. In most cases of squatting the objectives were stated simultaneously. This was probably a result of different motives driving various individuals to take part in squatting, therefore nothing specific to the Swedish context. In contrast to the works of Pruijt (2003; 2013) on different configurations of squatting the typology developed here is solely based on the objectives stated by the squatting activists, conceiving of all types of squatting as inherently political and not separating between need-based squatting and politically motivated squatting (Milligan 2016). The multiplicity of motives behind squatting was amply captured by one of the squatters involved in the occupation of Folkungaggatan in Stockholm in 1990:

> There were different motives behind the occupation. Someone declared that he was a revolutionary and occupied this house based on an anarchist point of view. Another said that he would not call himself an anarchist but was looking for a home, simply. I myself think that squatting is one of the best political expressions for the movement I claim to belong: It is concrete and direct, it unites theory and practice in an unbeatable way, and it is an attempt to really create something. The occupied houses around Europe are important centers, and that is why the police consider BZ-movement so seriously. Despite these differences, which would certainly have caused hour-long discussions at any meeting, these people formed the most smoothly functioning and effective group I ever had the honor to belong to. At the same time the atmosphere was calm and warm, we took care of each other and that is something we may be bad at in other contexts.
>
> (*Brand* 1990/37 8)

The diversity of goals was accentuated, but described rather as a resource than an obstacle. The objectives varied from explicitly political to those based in deprivation at the same time refusing to be categorized according to some ideological labels. The difficulty in separating and categorizing squatters' objectives is eloquently expressed in the statement made by the squatters of *Gamla Bro* in Stockholm in 1970:

More houses for the people in the city
Homes for all
Local common spaces to the people
End of exploitation, exhaustion, poisoning of humans and nature
Alternatives to today's capitalist, passive and uncaring society
It is: a whole new society
We must start with ourselves
ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE.

(Flyer dated 28-10-1970, in Nelhans 1971: 113)

In the above statement the types of squatting for the provision of housing, the creation of free spaces, squatting for environmental reasons, and squatting for the improvement of service provision are all combined with the critique of capitalism. The quotation shows how difficult it is to separate some of the demands or objectives that squatters have posed over time. However, when analyzing the written and spoken texts produced by squatters more in-depth some categories of objectives emerge, and these will be focused on in the following section in six sub-headings.

Squatting for educational reforms

The squatting of the students' union of Stockholm University in 1968 is classified here as the first squatting of a building in the post-war Sweden. The squatting of the union was massively reported on by the press, radio and television. In a documentary made by Swedish television the squatting action was announced by one of the participants in the following way:

We have gathered here to discuss UKAS [the proposed educational reform] at all. We will also discuss how we can stop it, because that is what is important right now. I think it is quite clear that it must be stopped. How? I have a suggestion. I would like the meeting to show by hands what you think about … the proposal is that those who are willing to fight for the students' sake, those who are willing to stop UKAS, stay here after the meeting, occupy the union building and do not leave it.

(SVT documentary 1968, transcript done by the author)

In a text published two years after the occupation one of the involved students wrote:

The Students' Union is suddenly in the middle of Swedish society and everyone knows it. Olof Palme is the Minister of Education. We want to have his decision about our future working conditions. The Social Democratic Education Minister comes. He is not treated very respectfully.

(Fredelius 1970: 2)

To stop the proposed educational reform that the students perceived as worsening their conditions was the main objective of the squatting of the students' union in 1968. In 2013, a proposal to allow for private foundations to run higher education and collect fees, and further on the proposal on the reduction of the student grant in 2014 was met by protests called *Occupy the University* protesting against what the students perceived as commodification and the takeover of new Public Management of higher education in Sweden. However, these protests consisted of dissemination of information (mass media, social media, flyers, banners) and the organization of demonstrations and meetings, and spread to different universities all over the country, without including the actual occupation of buildings.

Squatting for housing

Squatting as a strategy to call attention to housing issues has been one of the most common objectives mentioned by squatters in Sweden over time. This objective was described as used to create alternative housing, but most often the squatting action was used to criticize housing policies and housing shortage of affordable housing. Questions of who has the right to the city, were recurrent when housing was discussed. The priorities of well-off politicians and homeowners were often problematized:

> This week the significantly smaller city, Lund, has seriously shown to the public that the squatting movement is back in Sweden. There the battle has become harder, and the response of politicians and police is so tough, as the actions show what they would prefer to hide. Here the conflict is about the right to housing. By satisfying their own immediate needs and gaining roofs over their heads, the squatters of Smultronstället, Björnbärssnåret and Nyponbusken have simultaneously focused on a number of moral issues that at present is extremely difficult for homeowners and politicians to find a good answer to. Do not all residents of the city have the right to housing there? Why, then, are not measures to remove housing shortages prioritized?
>
> (*Ockupantnytt* 2008/1/2)

The above case of three squatting attempts in Lund in 2008 illustrates the objective of squatting to satisfy housing needs and at the same time criticize housing policies for being immoral by not taking into account the interests of all citizens. Often, the focus was on who the criticized changes/lack of changes would benefit and that the planned actions resulted in displacement of present residents. Only later on these displacement processes would be explicitly labeled as "gentrification" by the squatters to criticize urban renewal programs. Evictions of tenants in the 1980s in the area of Haga in Gothenburg were met with resistance. In the case of the eviction of the residents of the block of Sabeln (Figure 5.1) the situation was described:

> The squatters of the Sabeln block in Gothenburg were to be thrown out of
> their house onto the street on 1 October 1st. HSB [an association for
> cooperative housing], who owns the property, is going to luxury-renovate
> the house for rich yuppies to be able to move in with walled-up tiled ovens
> and "picturesque" iron stoves. After two years of residence Husnallarna
> [House bears   a group that squatted in Gothenburg in this period] were
> forced to abandon their house. But it was not that easy for HSB. On
> Saturday, October 1, a support demonstration was held outside the house
> on Sprängkullsgatan. Quickly, tables, chairs, couches and carpets were
> placed in the middle of the street to show exactly how it is to be homeless.
> Inside the house feverish activities were taking place: the ground floor and
> the gates were barricaded, large banners hung along the entire facade and
> coffee, buns, juice and tea were lowered with the help of ropes.
>
> <div align="right">(Brand 1988/23)</div>

The objective of housing provision was often combined with the goal of
preserving specific areas, blocks, or even buildings that were described as his-
torically valuable. The absurdity of renovating functioning spaces was often
brought forward and the requirements of the new and well-off residents were
ridiculed, as in the quotation above, mocking descriptions of renovated
apartments ("walled-up tiled ovens and 'picturesque' iron stoves"). In a sense,
the impression of force being exercised against tenants was used as a justifi-
cation for the violence that the squatting action might involve. What is more

Figure 5.1 The block of Sabeln in Gothenburg, 2017.

important is that squatting for housing was not only described as a concrete fight for a roof over one's head, but as a struggle for dignity. The right to housing was depicted as a universal right that included influence of the residents over their housing situation. During the squatting of *Borgen* in Malmö in 1990 the involved activists wrote:

> "The housing situation in Malmö is completely screwed. It's increasingly more difficult to find an apartment here; there are already 5000 people under the age of 25 in the queue at the housing agency. And the right to housing is no privilege; it is a right you should not ask for. For us it was therefore obvious to occupy. Partly, as a pure protest against the housing policy, but above all, to be able to live somewhere where we have control over our accommodation", one of the occupants says. "One's living conditions are the basis for one's entire life. An accommodation may not be about storage. I have no desire to close myself in a studio-apartment of 24 square meters. When we accept to live like this, we become all lonely and a lone person is weak. Malmö has the highest suicide statistics in all of Sweden and I'm not surprised at all." "The old houses that are demolished are symbols of a time when people lived together and cared for each other. I do not want to live in a house where someone may lay dead for weeks without others noticing it", says XX [name], another of the occupants. "We are not only fighting for a house, we are fighting for human dignity".
>
> (*Brand* 1990/37 38)

New forms of housing were in this case depicted as alienating and creating loneliness and discontent among the Swedish population. The demolition of the housing stock built in the past was perceived as a symbolic act of getting rid of the collective forms that characterized living in these buildings. These collective forms of living were described as threatened with disappearance and other ideals, associated with good life quality and living conditions were highlighted by squatters.

Squatting for the creation of social and cultural centers

The movement for the creation of all-activity centers around the country took off in the end of 1960s. The beginning of this movement and the varying definitions of all-activity centers used in this period are described by Bertil Nelhans (1971) in what is today a classical book on the topic. The movement did not always involve squatting, but it happened a few times, and as it will be demonstrated the demands posed by "All-activists" were very often incorporated in the demands of the squatters. One of the very first initiatives for the establishment of an all-activity center was taken by activists in Lund. On a flyer from 1969 the reasons for the action were explained:

The existing meeting places in Lund are unsatisfactory. What is needed is a varied place where everyone can meet, play and listen to music, watch movies, paint, etc. In the Saluhallen-debate a large interest among the population of Lund showed its view about an all-activity center. Saluhallen's friends tried to go the parliamentary road but were eliminated by bureaucratic silence. […] It is a direct challenge to Lund's residents that such a large house is empty in the center of a city with a shattering meeting place-shortage and a major unsatisfied need of the community. It is right to rebel in a society where human needs come after businessmen. What is happening now is not an occupation   only a collection of people starting to use an empty house.

(Flyer dated 17-05-1969, in Nelhans 1971: 154)

However, the history of the notion of all-activity is contested and some argue that it was coined in Stockholm in the late 1960s in the project on Gasklockan and *Gamla Bro* (Eriksson Dunér 2015: 35). Also the meaning of the word has been contested and discussed by activists and bureaucrats all over the country in the late 1960s and 1970s (Nelhans 1971). In a text about the struggle for an all-activity center in Jönköping in the 1980s one of the involved activists explained:

The fire fighters had moved out by now and the old fire station in central Jönköping was empty. It would be perfect as a cultural center. We thought. But the municipality had other plans. They were going to open a wax cabinet.

(Lodalen 2006: 83)

The struggle to create all-activity houses in different Swedish cities in the end of the 1960s and in the 1970s was most often described as a struggle between representative democracy, social democracy, bureaucracy and welfare state on the one hand and direct democracy, socialist experiments, alternative visions and activists on the other (Eriksson Dunér 2015). Bureaucratic measures were depicted as slow, inefficient and not satisfying the need of residents. Those in power were depicted as old ("municipal-oldsters") and not up to date with the needs of younger populations and other groups lacking representation. In the case of the squatting of *Gula Villan* in Umeå in 1983 the goal was to save the building from demolition and to create a space where women could meet and organize, a demand that was insufficiently met by the local politicians (Norlander & Larsson 2017). Moreover, the interests of city politicians and civil servants were often portrayed as solely guided by business principles, overshadowing the needs of people living there. In the above quotation on the squatting of *Västra Mårtensgatan* in Lund in 1969 it is evident that the activists wanted to distance themselves from the label of an "occupation", which indicated something illegal, and stress the very need of such place instead. All-activity also encompassed a freedom from top down decisions and conditions, self-management and relatively non-hierarchical

organization of the activities where ideally anybody could take part. Most of the campaigns and actions for all-activity centers were described as met with either silence and passivity or active and deliberate unwillingness to work out a common solution. In the case of a series of squatting actions in Stockholm called *Kulturkampanjen* (Culture campaign) in the 2000s the cultural center of *Cyklopen* was established:

> In Stockholm, for example, we have Kulturkampanjen. Since 2003, they have been on the move with a number of thoughtful and social occupations. Empty houses were taken, plans for how they could be used were made and a dialogue with responsible politicians about their ideas was established.
>
> (*Ockupantnytt* 2008/2: 19)

Cyklopen was described as established as a result of a number of squatting actions that aimed at opening up spaces for social and cultural activities around Stockholm and the visitors per month were estimated to a thousand. The case of *Cyklopen* was claimed to be filling in a void in the municipal supply of cultural spaces and especially those self-governed and free of costs (in contrast to those offered by the municipality). The number of visitors was used to confirm the need of such spaces and the difficulties in negotiating with the municipality emphasized. In the end of the 1960s and in the following two decades the planned demolitions of functioning and useful buildings were protested against and often the claims for all-activity centers were brought up in the discussions. In these cases the preservation of particular buildings or areas was subordinated to the objectives to fill them with social and cultural activities. The objective of creating spaces for all-activities has prevailed until today and has been expressed in the vast majority of squatting actions opened to the public.

Preservational squatting

Preservational or conservational squatting aimed at preserving buildings, blocks, or neighborhoods from demolition and urban renewal. The demolition of physical objects, like buildings or blocks of buildings, but also social ties and communities were brought forward by squatters in defense of occupations. Pruijt (2013) distinguishes conservational squatting as a specific type of squatting that aims at preserving a cityscape or a landscape. However, the author sees this type of squatting as mainly, but not exclusively, driven by the middle class, which does not fully apply to the Swedish context. In the late 1960s, 1970s and 1980s the areas where most squatting actions occurred in Sweden were the relatively central areas of Swedish cities under processes of urban renewal, commonly called "clearance" or "sanitization" (*sanering*). The majority of these areas were working-class areas planned to be demolished to make way for office buildings, parking spaces and "luxury housing" in the central parts of the city in this

period (Thörn 2012; Thörn 2013; Nilsson 2014; Karlsson & Tenfält 2011). In the case of the area of Haga in Gothenburg the squatters of the block called Sabeln (Kvarteret *Sabeln*) argued in 1988:

> A clearance [sanering] of a decayed house means that the façade will be preserved while the apartments will completely or partially change their shape. Much of the old and nice atmosphere will disappear. In addition, the chance to live cheap, but with a lower standard. Here in the Sabeln block we want everything to be preserved as much as possible.
>
> (*Brand* 1988/17)

The planned renovation of the buildings was perceived as a large intervention in the physical form and the sentimental "atmosphere" was expected to change. Also the access to affordable apartments in the area was raised as a reason against the renovation and in favor of preservation. In mid-1980s the struggle for the preservation of buildings and complexes of buildings took place at the district of Södermalm in Stockholm often emphasizing the deliberately neglected maintenance of buildings that would allow the owners to demolish them and build new construction in their place. This was seen as waste of resources and an intentional plan to push out the poor from the area. The squatting of several buildings at *Skaraborgsgatan* in 1985 was described as a protest "against the housing policy that allowed old, genuine Stockholm houses to decline, and be demolished to be replaced by luxury housing" and the main demand of the squatters was described as "Stockholm should be preserved and made available to all, not only for the well-to-do, and for alternative solutions to housing shortages and the lack of meeting places" (www.vart80tal.se/info.html).

As the above quotation demonstrates, the critiques of housing policy, housing shortages, lack of spaces for social activities and gentrification were all raised side by side to legitimize squatting and the preservation demands. A common picture of "yuppification" (*yuppifiering*) as a threat was drawn by the time referring to yuppies, or young urban professionals, taking over the central parts of the city. These professionals were connected to the increased number of office spaces in inner-cities and this development was explained by one of the squatters of several buildings in the mid-1980s in the following way: "The development of Stockholm's inner-city is what we found problematic. That it would house office-buildings" (Public debate a). Over time squatting actions moved away from the city centers to the suburbs, in many cases following ongoing urban renewal processes. The preservation of areas was an important goal of squatting actions, especially when it favored the interests of private companies and was perceived as violating the rights of residents. In 1990, the squatting of buildings in Färjenäs in Gothenburg was described in the following way:

Yes, it has happened again. A new occupation in Gothenburg. The place is called Färjenäs and is located at Hisingen. It consists of four houses (one wood and three stone) on a hill, with a view over the city. On evenings you can see all the lights that the Älvsborgs-bridge that is looking like the Golden Gate itself. It is Eriksberg (a former dock in the port) who owns the place but they obviously cannot get a demolition approval and now it is up to the municipality to decide what will happen out here. Why the place was to be demolished to begin with is not clear, but Eriksberg has already demolished eight houses here, and our closest neighbor felt threatened and has for a long time fought to preserve the area.

(*Brand* 1990/35)

The location where the squatting took place was described in a very graphical way, using images to highlight the loss that the area would suffer if demolished. At the same time the inefficiency of the municipality and the "bad" intentions of the private owner were mentioned to confirm the potential threat of a demolition. Squatting was portrayed as the only possible method for the preservation of the area. The activists involved in squatting in the 1980s explained in a book published recently that the Social Democratic policy allowed to "clean up" inner-city areas and argued:

Both anarchist and libertarian movements and other residents in the neighborhood who wanted to preserve both the houses and the social composition, saw that there was a conscious policy which aimed to make it impossible for the milieus we wanted to preserve.

(Ighe 2017: 131)

While the squatters portrayed themselves as protectors of the social milieus present in these areas, the politicians were described as striving for their destruction. The politicians' strategy was perceived as highly intentional and the final goal was to disperse the populations living in these areas and to replace them with socioeconomically more resourceful groups. In the last quotation the author questioned the commonly used explanation behind gentrification processes   the forces of market   and gave the agency behind the development back to the ruling party of Social Democrats, blaming them for their "conscious policy" resulting in the displacement of the population living in inner-city areas at that time.

Squatting for environmental reasons

In the 1990s, it became more common that the squatting of buildings focused on criticizing environmental policies and protest new infrastructural plans. Such a critique was formulated in the actions carried out in Häggvik, north of Stockholm, where the new traffic routes of the plan called the Dennis package (*Dennispaketet*) were planned. From the beginning, the activists

planned on setting up tent camps in the way of the road construction, but when suitable buildings standing in the way of the construction were discovered, the action turned into squatting:

> On April 11, 1994, a house was occupied in Häggvik, in Stockholm, against the motorways of Dennispaketet. Barbahuset, as it was called, stood in the way of the Dennispaketet. A year later, a house was again occupied in Häggvik, Vilda Villerkulla. Both occupations were directed against the Dennispaketet, both took place in Häggvik, but the similarities end here. Barbahuset lasted for six weeks, Vilda Villerkulla for 10 days, Barbahuset became a mass media sensation, Vilda Villerkulla went unnoticed by mass media, Barbahuset was emptied by the police, Vilda Villerkulla was left by activists because they felt threatened by local youth gangs.
>
> (*Brand* 1/1996)

One of the activists taking part in the squatting of *Barbahuset* published a debate article in the largest national newspaper in 1995 and explained the goals behind the action:

> The occupation of the house was a political action that was addressing the proposed roads included in the Dennis package. The occupation was the first protest against these motorways. Is it right to sacrifice living green spaces for the transport apparatus? Is it right to force evolution backward by turning living surfaces into dead matter?
>
> (DN 1995-01-04)

The squatting actions in Häggvik were preceded by the growth of the environmental and alternative movements since the 1960s which were using direct action as a method. One such group, founded in 1969 in Stockholm that was involved in squatting actions in the 1970s was *Alternativ stad* (Alternative city). *Alternativ stad* combined environmental and urban issues. The group frequently set up blockades of traffic routes in the 1980s and 1990s and called them "cultural crashes" (*kulturkrockar*). They organized Reclaim the streets parades and used civil disobedience actions to make visible the environmental effects of motoring. Housing activism and environmental activism were mixed in the struggles that the group was engaged in (www.folkrorelser.org/texter/alts-1.html#4). In the period between 1969 and 1990, when the clearance of particular areas and urban renewal plans were discussed and criticized the activists often argued they were not particularly environmentally friendly. Lastly, environmental issues were important from the 1960s and on among urban movements, or the alternative milieu, that tended to be involved in squatting (see Ekberg 2016; Stahre 2002; Stahre 2010), however, these squatting actions encompassed either objects outside cities or land or forests. The ones held in urban areas were mainly focused on direct actions against new traffic routes or urban plans that in some ways violated common environmental resources, like parks, green areas, and so on. As

most of these actions were carried out in the open, and did not include the takeover of buildings, they have not been given detailed attention here.

Squatting to claim and reclaim rights

In a sense, the claiming and reclaiming of rights characterized all squatting actions in the Swedish history. However, in order to make some distinctions between them this particular goal of squatting has focused on social, legal and health rights that have been taken away from particular groups of individuals or were lacking and thus perceived by these groups as discriminatory. Many of this type of occupations have been of defensive character. In for instance 1979, 1985 and 2016, the National Health Authority has been occupied by sexual minority groups demanding more equal treatment (SVT report 1985; Documentary 2009, Swedish Radio; https://www.qx.se/samhalle/125353/socialstyrelsen-ockuperat-igen). In 1981, the female employees of Eiser's factory in Umeå protested the planned close-down of their working place by occupying it for eight months (Löfström 1983). In 2000s, on the other hand, the type of squatting that solely focused on the critique of withdrawal of service provision became more explicit. Before this type occurred together with other objectives, but during this period it could be distinguished as a separate goal of squatting and a reaction to cutbacks and the withdrawal of the welfare state from service provision. These withdrawals were often described by the involved activists as "racist" or "discriminatory" to minority groups or peripheral and sparsely populated areas. Some of them even explicitly demanded "Reclaim welfare" on a banner outside the building in 2009 (www.filmbasen.se/node/84553). Among the actions addressing cuts, the squatting of the youth center *Romano Trajo* in Norra Fäladen in Lund (also in 2009) was initiated by a group called "Residents of Lund against cutbacks". On their website they demanded the reopening of the center and their involvement in the decisions taken about it, protesting politicians' attacks on poor areas (https://lundabormotnedskarningar.wordpress.com/page/4).

In this kind of squatting action it was common that the activists used arguments concerning safety and top-down decision making that excluded the needs and perspectives of residents. In the case of *Romano Trajo*, the unequal access to resources between different areas of the city was stressed when commenting on the closure of the center. The area of Fäladen, perceived as a poor area, was described as being attacked by politicians living safely in affluent areas. The right to close down the center was portrayed as actually belonging to the visitors of the center.

Similar argumentation was presented when a building was occupied in Rinkeby in Stockholm in 2009:

> If we are to talk about what we protested against, an important piece of it was that a lot of the service and jobs that were in Rinkeby moved to Kista; district administration, nation insurance office, employment office, banks … A lot of services that left or were in the process of leaving Rinkeby.
>
> (Public debate a)

The residents protested against the move of services from their area by occupying a building close to the area's center. In the arguments presented, one could read that the move of services was interpreted as cutbacks on specific less attractive areas of the city.

In the small town of Dorotea, in Northern Sweden, the threat of closing down the local hospital was in 2012 met with a squatting action that lasted more than three years and resulted in the health services being kept in the area. The campaign was called "Dorotea Uprising" (*Dorotea Upproret*) and one of the main demands was equal healthcare for all, regardless of the place of residence. In a text evaluating the successes won by the squatting action, the group argued in 2015 that they have shed light on healthcare costs and the priorities of politicians tending to take decisions that result in waste of local resources stating:

> What we now expect is that our elected municipal and county council politicians will come to a solution that restores the safety of the permanent population and for all the tourists and visitors coming to our mountain municipality by opening the Dorotea Hospital 24 hours a day, all year round.
>
> (http://sjukvardforalla.doroteaupproret.se/startsida)

The injustice caused by withdrawal of health provision in the area was brought forward by the activists occupying Dorotea hospital. Arguments pointing to the waste of local resources were used to legitimize the action. Local and regional politicians were encouraged to think of solutions that would satisfy the local population and provide safety. The argument of safety was particularly powerful as the proposed close-down of the hospital was perceived as threatening to the safety of the population living there as well as the visitors.

In 2016, a similar objective of equal access to health care guided a group in Stockholm who squatted the maternity ward of *BB Sophia* that was planned to be closed down. The argument on the safety of mothers-to-be and equal access to birth care was fundamental in the description of the action. In a retrospective description of the squatting action it was stated that the peaceful occupation of the ward was carried out with the support of the staff and created media attention raising the issues of:

(A)   A more humane childbirth
(B)   Possibility to choose where and how to give birth
(C)   One midwife per birth
(D)   A maternity care that is designed based on the wishes of women who need it

(www.fodelsehuset.se/om-oss/verksamhetsberattelser/verksamhetsbera ttelse-2016)

The squatting of *BB Sophia* was described using the same notions of safety and non-representative decisions taken by the regional politicians. It was stressed that the maternity ward was highly regarded and needed in a context of birth care shortage. What was instead needed, according to the squatters, was a decision based on evidence and need, and no other interests. A decision to be taken together with all relevant stakeholders, not one taken solely by politicians. Another legitimizing argument used was increased publicity and the support of the staff working at the ward. It was important that the action was supported from inside and not accused of being undertaken by activists from the outside. By the time of writing, in February 2018, a part of the local hospital in Sollefteå has been occupied for over a year as a protest against the closure of the local maternity ward, forcing mothers-to-be "to drive for up to three hours on substandard roads that piecewise lack connection in the mobile network" to the next maternity ward in another location (Flyer, 2017; Figure 5.2).

Legitimizing squatting

The ways that squatters and squatting have been described by the involved actors has from the very beginning in late 1960s until today revolved around four main structural oppositions. These have been:

- Democratic undemocratic.
- Representative non-representative.
- Moral immoral.
- Rational irrational.

These structural oppositions demonstrate the notions that are discursively connected to squatting in Sweden and highlight the domains that squatters have found particularly important and have consequently challenged. It is around the meaning of these four domains that the discursive struggle on the meaning of squatting has taken place. The well-established, however highly contested, notion of democracy has been discussed, criticized and given additional definitions by the squatting activists. Questions of representation, and the central analysis of who is being represented, have been raised by squatters when discussing the political system, particular politicians or policies, or the practices of civil servants, housing companies and the police. The notions of what is right and wrong, what is moral and immoral, have been at the fore when debating and contesting the way that societal resources are distributed across social groups, and parts of the city/country. The irrationality and immorality of the proposed or applied solutions to housing, service provision, and the satisfaction of social and cultural needs of citizens have been brought forward in the discussion on squatting.

Figure 5.2 Flyer and a pin from the occupation of the maternity ward in Sollefteå, 2017.

When all democratic means are exhausted

In many of the squatting actions studied in this book, concerns have been expressed about the state of democracy in the country. Squatters have, among others, pointed to what is commonly referred to as a democracy deficit, by highlighting the inability of the Swedish national and municipal governments to fulfill what are believed to be democratic principles. Among these unfulfilled principles the squatters have, as will be shown below, emphasized corruption of

the government, bureaucracy as a hindrance to democratic rights, representative democracy as elitist and exclusive, electoral democracy as detached from and not satisfying the needs of ordinary citizens, the interests of private companies as superordinate to the interests of citizens, politicians' incompetence and detachment from the reality of ordinary people, and so on. In some cases the very concept of democracy deficit has been used, in others descriptions of identified problems have been prevalent. What was, however, characteristic to how the goals were described was the prominence of the statement that squatting as a method was used when all formal democratic, legal and/or parliamentary means were exhausted. In this way, the activists also demonstrated their knowledge of the hegemonic view of squatting and the countless attempts at describing it as un/anti-democratic practice and method. Squatters challenged this view by describing squatting as inherently democratic in the way it was organized, in what it opposed, in who participated, in its very objectives and its support and popular engagement. At times, squatters presented themselves as the defenders of democracy in a context where democratic rights were circumscribed. In the case of the squatting of a school building in Hagsätra, south of Stockholm, in 2016, the reasons were explained in the following way:

> The heavy presence of the owner comes with a serious democracy deficit, which restricts the otherwise legally protected freedom to express dissatisfaction or anger over authorities. The efforts of residents to stand in the way of renovation plans and rent increases are constantly met by changing tactics from the [private housing] company.
>
> (ETC 2016-07-04)

The squatters in Hagsätra legitimized the occupation of a building in 2016 by showing the lack of dialogue and communication with the private housing company in the area (Figure 5.3). The privatization of public assets in the area was compared with a lack of democracy by the squatters who used arguments concerning their circumscribed democratic rights to demonstrate and to deliberate in order to legitimize the taking over of an abandoned school building. The exercise of power by the property owners was often described by the squatters as an undemocratic practice that limited the rights of the residents.

Likewise, when clarifying why squatting was used as a method in the case of the Järnet block of buildings in Stockholm in 1979, the activists explained:

> When XX [landlord] bought the building all tenants' contracts were terminated by 2/11/78. They appealed against the decision to the Rent tribunal and housing court without success. The tenants also tried to influence decisions at the Real estate authority, county administrative board and the local court. After all the legal ways had failed the decision on squatting was taken.
>
> (*Brand* 1979/13 14)
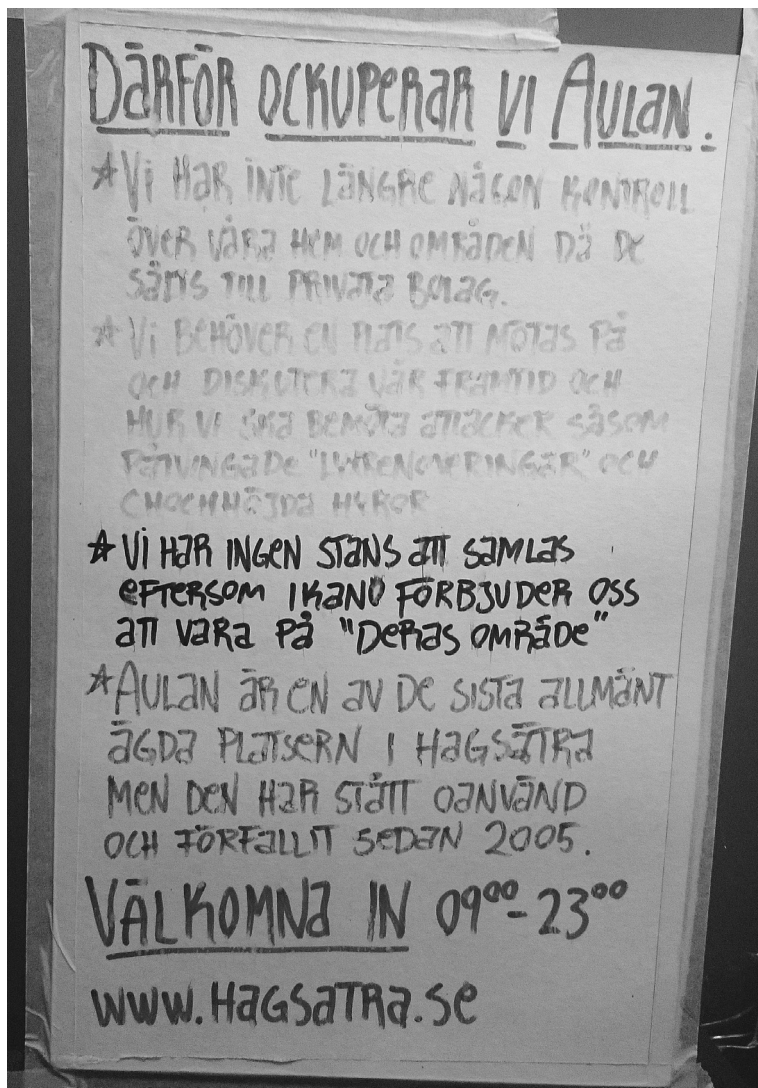
Figure 5.3 The statement of squatters in Hagsätra 2016.

The squatting action was explained to be the last resort, when nothing else worked. It was quite common that squatting was described this way by different squatters over time. Legal, democratic or parliamentary means which were attempted before squatting was chosen as a method, were highlighted as a background to the squatting action. In this way, squatters demonstrated that they were aware of these means, and stressed that they were insufficient in their case. Even in the "Squatting Handbook" the

reader was encouraged to "Test all the legal methods first" before squatting (Berg 1978: 3).

Likewise, when "Högdalens Vänner" (The Friends of Högdalen) squatted a school building in Högdalen, south of Stockholm, in 2015 as a protest to its planned demolition, a similar argument was put forward:

> When Högdalens Vänner [The Friends of Högdalen] attempted to influence the development of the events by following the democratic path and visiting both the meeting where the project was to be presented and the City Planning Office to participate in consultations, it was already decided on both demolition and new construction of condominiums. Furthermore, at the presentation of the project, the information was withheld that the new dwellings would be condominiums [bostadsrätter].
>
> (ETC 2015-06-02)

It was indicated in the text that crucial decisions were taken before consultations with the residents. It was noted that the group was willing to follow democratic procedures, but met with an undemocratic and corrupted system. In a panel discussion, one of the participants in the squatting of Högdalen's school stated:

> And what we were emphasizing by then was that the way things were decisions were taken over the residents' heads. This is not unfamiliar in Högdalen. The center has been privatized and people who were active there were thrown out, the district was previously merged with another district to make it bigger, I don't know exactly how many people live there… From being a small and radical district, it became much bigger with diverse opinions among the inhabitants. So residents of Högdalen have been run over. To put spotlight on this we occupied. And we said that there is an obvious and large democratic deficit, a vacuum, and what we want to do by taking over this physical space is to establish a democratic space.
>
> (Public debate a)

A system that did not consider the common good of the community and area of Högdalen was described, as it was not interested in what the residents had to say and kept important information from them. Squatting was depicted as the only rational action in this kind of system. Where democratic spaces were lacking, squatters said they were creating them by taking over empty buildings (Figure 5.4).

The commitment to the interests of the local area in contrast to the abstract interests of politicians and business representatives often described as profit-oriented, was frequently accentuated when legitimizing squatting. Politicians were described as morally corrupted actors, who did not care about the needs of ordinary residents, but their own careers or voting

På Rangstaplan 22 i Högdalens centrum reser sig det
nya **HÖGDALENS FOLKETSHUS**.

Huset som hotas av rivning intogs den 23:e maj av folk
i orten som tröttnat på utförsäljningen av allmänna
ytor. Istället för bygge av dyra bostadsrätter vill vi skapa
en mötesplats för alla. Förslag på att bygga ett
ålderdomshem eller att bedriva kulturverksamhet i
lokalerna har dissats av lokala politiker och därför tar
vi nu saken i egna händer. Nu står portarna öppna till
HÖGDALENS nya FOLKETSHUS!

Nu på söndag den 31/5 kl 12 organiserar Högdalens Vänner
en Open Mic, ett tillfälle för ordkreatörer, lyriker och
meningskompositörer att dela med sig av sina tankar,
visioner, känslor och utopier. VI står för ljudutrustning och
DU står för feta texter, tunga rhymes, tal eller
inspirerande poesi på max 4 minuter.

Tillsammans skapar vi en öppen och välkomnande
atmosfär i samma anda som huset.

Occupy and resist   All makt åt folket

Figure 5.4 Flyer from Högdalen, 2015.

turnouts. In the case of squatting of *Rinkebyhuset* (Rinkeby House) in
Stockholm in 2009 this division between those who chose to squat and the
politicians was made clear when the group described the attitude of local
politicians towards them as:

> We do not consider ourselves as the kind of criminal people who are a
> risk to society; by contrast we are a colorful group of concerned and
> committed people who are prepared to do what is necessary for the resi-
> dents of Rinkeby to have a chance to make their voices heard, instead of
> being run over.
>
>   (http://rinkebyhuset.blogg.se/2009/december/)

Concerned and committed people were contrasted to indifferent and cur-
tained politicians. The democratic system in the country was referred to in
order to disqualify the judgement that a particular politician made about
those squatting *Rinkebyhuset*. The argument on politicians' weak will or
knowledge on how to follow democratic principles and the outcomes of their
top-down decisions in practice was a recurrent theme in the texts. In 2012 a
municipally run community center in a suburb of Stockholm, Husby, was
occupied in protest against the proposal to move it and a group called
"Husby demands respect" stated: "We want a real dialogue. We want real
democracy. We want respect." They argued:

This occupation is largely a result of several years of intense struggle for the power-holders to listen to the opinions of the residents. The fact that XX [local politician] is persistent in being proud of the Järvadialogen [Järva dialogue, a citizen dialogue about urban renewal in the area] appears therefore to be the expression of a weak link to reality.

(http://megafonen.com/husby-kraver-respekt)

Squatters often described their long struggle for an issue, whether it was a common space, housing, or social justice, and their frustration over the results and politicians' treatment of their demands. The procedures taken by the politicians to deal with the issue were deemed unsatisfactory or even deceitful, and not truly democratic. Squatting was presented as improving the current state of democracy, by allowing people to take power into their own hands and in many cases the model of direct democracy was introduced as the ideal of how democracy should work. Already in the All-activity mobilization by late 1960s this issue became apparent in the demands of the activists. While politicians required the activists to form formal organizations the activists argued: "We demand direct democracy without representatives, in which decisions are made at the assemblies where every present party has a vote" (Flyer dated 17-05-1969, in Nelhans 1971: 155). Also in the occupation of the students' union in 1968 the demand was made to discuss the reform, in a democratic manner, with students directly and "not with the bureaucrats" (SVT Documentary, 1968). Assemblies were frequently mentioned as important for the democratic running of squats. In the case of *Mullvaden* in 1977 78 it was argued that assemblies allowed all participants to actively take part in the discussions and choose the topics they found important (Berg 1978: 28).

In the "Squatting Handbook" the recommendation for how squats should be organized was that it was difficult to generalize "only that it should be democratic" (ibid.: 27). The "democratic" organization of squatting followed a horizontal model or organization, and often encompassed assemblies and the possibility of all interested to take part in decision making. It was contrasted with the political system of representative democracy, with the view of elected politicians as egocentric, corrupted and narrow-minded.

The moral right to occupy

When discussing squatting, activists tended to give emphasis to their moral right to take over buildings since they were either neglected, left for speculative purposes, or involved in corrupted political procedures. It was often accentuated that "it is right to rebel" (Nelhans 1971: 155) and that since the behavior of politicians and business representatives was immoral, squatting in these cases was moral. The activists in Jönköping in 1982 argued that what was moral and legal was not the same and described their objective as superior to law in moral terms:

> The politicians were afraid when we did something ourselves. If someone violates their rules and patterns and acts on their own, they immediately begin to bawl about undemocratic methods. It is not something unique for Jönköping. Throughout Europe, people refuse to accept "progress". The moral right, to save Jönköping's youth, is above the law.
>
> (Kalle in Järhult 1982: 35)

It was the activists' moral right to occupy and they dismissed the label of undemocratic methods used by the municipal politicians to describe squatting. In the squatting of *Gula Villan* in Umeå in 1983 the activists wrote on a flyer: "It is not immoral to occupy   It is immoral to demolish the beautiful house and garden   It is immoral to not let the Women's House Association [*Kvinnohusföreningen*] have the space" (in Norlander & Larsson 2017: 203). This argument dismissing the illegal character of squatting when squatting actually was a protest to illegal activities carried out by municipal authorities was recurrent, stressing the morality of squatting actions.

Likewise, in the case of the squatting of an old school in Högdalen in Stockholm in 2015 one of the squatters explained: "We were helped by a journalist who dug out even more facts that showed black on white that things were illegal" (Public debate b) referring to the sale of the public building to private companies. The rules constituted by politicians in these cases were described as arbitrary and in place to secure their position and their policies. The law was often described as not necessarily moral. In the "Squatting Handbook" from 1978 it was stated that the law was an instrument for the wealthy and powerful groups to use their power, arguing that previous violations of the law have resulted in present right to vote, to strike, to freely express opinions and so on (Berg 1978: 12).

The policies allowing vacant buildings to stand empty for speculative reasons were often addressed by the squatters arguing that these policies were not in favor of the residents. In the case of several squatted buildings in Stockholm in mid-1980s, the argument to the right to the city and to decide on how to live in it was brought forward against a background of homelessness, speculation in real estate, and waste of common resources (http://vart80tal.se/info.html).

The moral aspect of squatting was contrasted with politicians' conscious decisions to prioritize economic gain before residents' needs. During the wave of squatting in the country in 2008, the activists in Lund asked questions of what is truly moral and how it should be assessed:

> When accepting that houses are left empty, don't you accept that property owners' pricing is more important than the residents' right to reside? Is it not morally hideous to leave a house empty when people are homeless? Is it not morally right to do something about your life situation and use the resources actually available, like occupants? Since the authorities do not want to respond to these troublesome issues, it

is completely dismissed as a police issue that is to be solved by violence. The absurd situation is taking place that Lund politicians accept the demolition of livable houses in order to avoid solving the problem of the lack of rental dwellings for the city's population.

<div align="right">(Ockupantnytt 2008/1/2)</div>

By questioning of what is morally right and contrasting homelessness with speculation on the real estate market the authors revealed the absurdity of the authorities' choices. Their choice to involve the police instead of dealing with the issue politically was criticized, along their unwillingness to solve housing shortage and homelessness.

Whose voices and interests are represented?

As demonstrated above, one of the main critiques of squatters was that voices, wishes and needs of residents were not included in political decisions. The behavior of politicians or the way they dealt with the claims of squatters was discussed as immoral, selfish, indifferent or explicitly corrupted. Questions of representation were raised. Who should the politicians represent? Why are economic gains more important than the needs of residents and voters? Here a tension between squatters and politicians was built, where both of these groups claimed to be the representatives of a People (*folk*). Testimonies of residents' interests "being run over" (http://rinkebyhuset.blogg.se/2009/decem ber), "put out of play" (http://megafonen.com/husby-kraver-respekt), and politicians who "completely don't give a shit" (Kalle in Järhult 1982: 35), or who were conscious about the consequences and thus "morally hideous" (*Ockupantnytt* 2008/1/2) were used to disqualify politicians and authorities as representatives of citizens.

The arguments about lacking representation of citizens' interests in conventional politics, resulting in the favoring of affluent groups and real estate owners often addressed the perceived imbalance of rights; the right to housing and the right to ownership. These opposing interests were described in the following way by one of the squatters of an old Cementa building in Stockholm in 2009:

> What gives me the right to take a house just like this, is that I believe that the right to have somewhere to live is more significant than the right to own a property, and then to use that right merely to leave a house empty while waiting for prices to rise in the real estate market when one can make use of the houses to something sensible: housing, social center, all-activity centers.
>
> <div align="right">(Documentary "Anarkistiska Kliniken 4" documentary, 2009: 3min,
transcript done by the author)</div>

Squatters used the contrast of ownership and the right to use/live in a building to demonstrate the absurdity of leaving buildings empty for speculation

purposes. Here, the moral argument was emphasized as more substantial than the legal right to property. The interests of the ordinary people and voters were depicted as focused on the use of buildings in times of housing and meeting-space shortage. Property rights were portrayed as protecting the interests of a small group of owners and corrupted politicians. The line was drawn between the residents, citizens and activists and the establishment, where politicians and real estate owners were the main opponents. When a local theatre was occupied in a protest against costly renovations in the area of Årsta (Valla torg) in Stockholm in 2015, the squatters distributed a folder where the demand was that "Everybody should stay put" presenting the residents of the area as "pensioners" and "people that cannot afford the high rents in Stockholm", while the housing company was described as wanting to "replace the population and charge the same high rents as in the rest of Årsta" and "ride roughshod over the residents and replace them" (Flyer, 2015, "Valla torg") (see Figure 5.5).

These conflicting interests (of protecting the right to stay put in one's home and earning money on the gentrification of the area) were used to persuade the readers of the rightfulness of the squatting action and collective struggle against the plans on extensive renovation of the area. Similar demands and division were raised in the case of Högdalen in 2015, when a school was squatted in protest against its demolition and the plans on building expensive apartments in the area. The conflict of interests, and indirectly who represents whom in the conflict, was formulated as (see Figure 5.4):

> The house threatened with demolition was taken on May 23 by people in the hood [ort] who were tired of the sell-out of public spaces. Instead of building expensive condominiums, we want to create a meeting place for everyone. Proposal to build a retirement home or to conduct cultural activities in the premises have been dissed by local politicians and therefore we are taking the case in our own hands.
>
> (Flyer, 2015, "På Rangstaplan")

The recurrent representation of the squatters as "the people" and the description of the squatted premises as to be used "by all" was a way for the activists to position themselves against the opponents: politicians and companies. The flyer ended with the appeal "All power to the people" and pointed to the necessity to take action and not rely on what the squatters perceived as disrespectful politicians.

The rationality of squatting

The moral aspects debated by squatters are linked to how squatting has been described and legitimized as rational in many of these representations. The rationality of squatting has been used by demonstrating the legitimacy of the demands of the right to housing and the city at the same time questioning the

ALLA SKA BO KVAR!

Stockholmshem tänker lyxrenovera Valla torg och vill chockhöja hyrorna. 300 lägenheter berörs. De boende måste flytta ut 16 månader ut ur sina lägenheter. Många kommer inte ha möjlighet att flytta tillbaka.

Stambytet har vuxit till ett europeiskt skrytprojekt: *GrowSmarter*. EU skjuter till en slant för att skapa ett miljöanpassat uppvisningsområde, men största kostnaden faller tillbaka på allmännyttan och de boende.

Hälften av de boende i Valla torg idag är pensionärer. Här bor folk som inte har råd med de höga hyror som gäller i Stockholm. Nu vill Stockholmshem byta ut befolkningen och ta ut samma höga hyror som i övriga Årsta. Området ska lyftas för att passa den nya befolkningen. Hammarby sjöstad ska förbindas via Slakthusområdet och Årstastråket ner till Årstafältet – som ska bli "Stockholms Central Park".

Hela Valla torg kommer att vara en stor byggplats de närmaste tre åren. Minst. Nu tömmer Stockholmshem alla verksamheter i området inför renoveringen: förskolor, Walla scen, secondhandbutiken Tjuvgods – alla tvingas flytta. För att lokalerna ska användas som byggbarracker.

Valla torg behöver satsningar – men till rimliga hyror.
Valla torg behöver boendeinflytande – inte att Stockholmshem kör över de boende och byter ut dem.

Figure 5.5 Fragment from a folder on Årsta and Valla torg, 2015.

legitimacy of law and private ownership. By pointing to structural inequalities   like homelessness, shortage of resources, poverty and precarity of some groups in society   and contrasting them with the tendency to treat them as specific shortcomings of individuals or groups of individuals, the squatters legitimized their actions as striving for a more even distribution of resources through reappropriation. Here through the lens of squatting actions held in Lund in 2008:

> The occupants in Lund have been right in politicizing the question from the beginning, and not to hold it as an individual conflict. Instead of discussing an individual property, they have generalized the struggle and raised the universal issue of the right to housing and the right to a meeting place. The establishment of these requirements should not be regarded as a passive appeal to a sovereign authority, e.g. local politicians, to guarantee these rights, but the requirements are being constitutive: they are the basis for and used to legitimize actual reappropriations. While raising questions and putting them on the public agenda, practices are undertaken responding to these questions directly satisfying the needs mentioned. Against the lawfulness (e.g. "private property rights") we have to put the legitimacy ("right to housing") through the creation of alliances on constitutional requirements.
>
> (*Ockupantnytt* 2008/1/2)

According to the above quotation, squatting is the direct way of solving political problems, where the citizens are not waiting passively for authorities to satisfy their needs, but act upon them armed with the claim of the right to housing as superior to the one of private property. In 1969, the squatters of a building at *Västra Mårtensgatan* in Lund claimed:

> It is right to rebel in a society where the needs of people are second hand after businessmen. […] The purpose of this action (squatting) is first and foremost to create contact between different people   a house where everyone can meet.
>
> (Flyer, in Nelhans 1971: 22)

Another form of legitimization that revolved around the rationality of squatting was when squatters stressed their right to independence and self-management; independence from authorities and top-down decisions that affected above all their social and cultural activities that brought meaning to their lives. The willingness and ability of squatters to run social and cultural centers, as well as collective housing projects, has been central in this form of legitimization of squatting as a practice. When squatters in Linköping took over an old clinic with the purpose of creating a youth center there in 2000, their action was described as follows:

As we see it, most people in society are guided by adults and their money, if something is organized for young people; it is in the adult world's premise. We want a youth house that can act as a free zone. A house that can function independently of privatizations and cuts in society. It should be governed by young people, for young people. We also want the house to be free of prejudices such as racism, sexism and homophobia. It is our goal to keep an ongoing discussion to counteract this. Ideas for a youth house have been around for several years, the campaign that started a few months ago is not the first. Certainly, we who work for this now have received some help from the municipality but nobody we have been in contact with has been able to accept that we want to control it ourselves. They have not believed in our ability to cope with it or they are afraid of the development of a youth-run house that they could no longer control. We should take our own initiatives and not be socialized in society's norms.

(*Brand* 2000/2)

The rationality of the above case was rather simple; it was described as rational that willing and capable youths should be given the opportunity to run their own youth center. What was used to legitimize the occupation was the instability of such youth centers in the surrounding society, and their dependence on municipal resources, that were at risk of being cut. Squatting would provide stability, as the squat was imagined to be run from below and not relying on resources coming from above. Moreover, the squatting youths emphasized their previous struggles for such a space, their contacts with the municipality and its dismissal of the proposals due to the inability to control the activities and the belief that the group was not able to manage such a responsibility. The squatting of the building was proof that it could. A similar argument was brought forward by the activists that squatted the fire station in Jönköping in 1982 stating that they wanted to work and create a decent life and that the occupation of the building gave them that opportunity (Järhult 1982: 10).

Here the mere occupation is a proof of the ability to take action and the willingness to do something meaningful in an environment that does not offer much. Against the background of housing and meeting space shortages and the ability of the citizens to self-organize, the decision to let buildings stand empty was portrayed as irrational and absurd.

Conclusions: squatters' legitimacy claims

The aim of this chapter has been to distinguish different types of squatting and to analyze how the squatters describe the goals of their actions and what legitimization strategies they use in their descriptions. Central questions in this chapter have been:

- How are the goals of squatting represented?
- How are the reasons for squatting described?
- What specific justification and legitimation strategies are employed by squatters?

The different goals of squatting to provide housing, to preserve areas from clearance and demolition, to create free social and cultural spaces, to provide good educational conditions, to protect the environment, and to improve service provision, have been presented and described. The main legitimation techniques have been to present squatting as an inherently democratic practice, as morally right and respectable, as representing citizens' needs and highly rational. The current political system was criticized by the squatters for its inability to satisfy the needs of the people by prioritizing the profitability and market solutions (in urban planning, housing, health care, and welfare). Top-down political decisions were condemned as hurtful to and detached from the reality of ordinary people and squatters often described the objective of squatting as contributing to the improvement of local democracy. Squatting was portrayed as morally correct in the light of the undemocratic, arbitrary and biased decisions taken by the politicians. The imbalance of rights, between the right to housing and property rights, was presented as somewhat restored when the distribution of resources was balanced through their reappropriation. Squatting was also depicted as a highly rational practice stressing the right to independence and self-management along the ability to take care and turn abandoned buildings into functional spaces. In Table 5.2 the legitimacy claims and arguments used by squatters, presented in Chapter 4 and 5 have been summarized.

By portraying squatters as representatives of the residents/citizens, the people (*folk*), fighting for the common good the emphasis was put on squatters' authenticity. The actions undertaken by squatters were described as genuinely concerned with the common good and contrasted with the corrupt and commercial interests of politicians and housing companies/real estate owners whether the goal was to create all-activity centers, criticize housing policies, preserve areas from demolition and displacement or claim the rights of particular groups. In this way of portraying things the representations of politicians were associated with falsity and hidden agendas, while squatting was related to genuineness and concern for common issues. The objectives of balancing out power relations and promoting authentic claims overshadowed the practice in itself, and its "illegal" nature in this context. By representing themselves as authentic actors with authentic objectives squatters positioned themselves in opposition to institutional power and contributed to the strengthening of a common "us" against a "them". This is not a unique strategy in modern history and has been commonly employed by powerless groups in opposition to the institutions of power. In the words of Sharon Zukin:

> In Western culture, the idea of authenticity arose between the ages of Shakespeare and Rousseau, when men and women began to think about

Table 5.2 Legitimacy claims and arguments used by squatters.

Legitimacy claims	Construction of legitimacy through arguments
Representation	Representing ordinary citizens
Organizational forms	Democratic character of squatting (referring to: majority rule, consensus, direct democracy, representation of all interests)
Moral responsibility	Taking moral responsibility in an immoral context of flawed legislation, corruption, speculation, etc. Moral qualities: honesty, righteousness and attentiveness
Rationality	Reacting rationally to injustices, corruption, waste of resources, abuse of power, etc.

an authentic self as an honest or a true character, in contrast to personal duplicity, on the one hand, and to society's false morality, on the other hand. As a social theorist, Rousseau developed a structural grounding for the authenticity of individual character. Men and women are authentic if they are closer to nature or to the way intellectuals imagine a state of nature to be than to the institutional disciplines of power. While this view has often inspired people to opt out of society and form a commune, it also offers psychic consolation to social groups who do not have a realistic chance of gaining rewards from powerful elites or of taking control of powerful institutions.

(Zukin 2008: 728)

In line with Zukin's view, one could see squatters as representatives of powerless groups in society opting out of the formal political system by the act of squatting, in order to claim access to housing, welfare, good quality of life, health or basic social rights. To be a political representative is a common claim among those who have not been elected on behalf of a specific group. Michael Saward discusses how claims to be representative should be understood in relation to political representation's reach and character and argues for "the idea that electoral institutions themselves, while indispensable to contemporary democracy, by their very structure leave open the possibility for non-elective representative claims that can call on criteria of democratic legitimacy which in some ways echo but in important other ways are distinct from electoral criteria" (Saward 2009: 3). Saward discusses political representation as claim-making and less so as an electoral system, claiming that full representation in politics is more or less impossible and that electoral politics are no guarantee in themselves that the voters' all interests and identities will be represented. If representation is seen as "substantive acting for others", writes Saward, it does not require formal authorization. He points to the deep tension between authenticity and authorization in political representation and

asks the rhetorical question "Could it be that threshold democracy requires elections, while advancing along the democracy continuum (to make a democracy more democratic) requires additionally non-elective representation?" (ibid.: 21). The central point made by the author is that electoral democracy needs non-electoral action that will challenge and reset it regularly, as it tends to institutionalize.

Moreover, in order to claim authenticity the squatters' strategy was to get rid of the negative labels ascribed to them by the media and politicians and reverse them. In his study of white separatists Mitch Berbier (1998) found an interesting strategy that the group used to legitimize its claims and win support   the strategy of reversal by reversing labels put on the group externally to others. In the case studied here, many of these labels were reversed back to the politicians, police, bureaucrats, and journalists using the very same descriptions that have been used to discredit squatters. The reversal also served another purpose; it questioned and challenged the representation based on authorization. It ascribed elected politicians, police, housing companies' representatives and media undesirable attributes, in this way questioning their power and their way of representing what was perceived by squatters as an unjust system.

6 Conclusion

Contesting consensus

Squatting as a resistance to the logic of the market

Our civilization is built upon the practice of squatting. Since the very beginning, people have been squatting land all over the world. The urban squatting described in this book refers to the collectively orchestrated and overt practice of taking over buildings without authorization and has in the case of Sweden its origins in the radicalization of the 1960s (Östberg 2002). I have chosen to situate this particular form of squatting in this period, as I believe that its collective character was explicitly articulated in this period of time during the last century, not only in Sweden, but also in the rest of the world (Squatting Europe Kollective 2013; Squatting Europe Kollective 2014; Martínez López 2017; van der Steen et al. 2014; Vasudevan 2015). The 1960s in Sweden were, moreover, characterized by social movements fighting for peace, women's liberation, protection of the environment and alternative ways of organizing, sharing the ideological basis of direct democracy, anti-bureaucracy, anti-capitalism, anti-imperialism, anti-commercialism and direct action (Östberg 2002: 10). As has been demonstrated in this book, by taking over buildings the contentious actors involved in squatting criticized among other things housing policies, social service provision, spatial planning, welfare cuts and environmentally unfriendly policies and actions.

The squats functioned as places to practice direct democracy or what is often referred to as the commons, or self-organized and self-governed spaces or resources (Ostrom 1990; Squatting Europe Kollective 2014). These commons, defined by Massimo De Angelis and David Harvie (2014: 280) as "social systems in which resources are shared by a community of users/producers, who also define the modes of use and production, distribution and circulation of these resources through democratic and horizontal forms of governance" were inherently anti-capitalist in their character (by taking over private and public property for instance) and have over the years created alternatives founded in collectivity and community. In this way these initiatives have resisted the individualism inherent in late capitalism as well as the economic logic of the different periods and forms of neoliberalization (cf. Kunkel and Mayer 2012). Many squatting actions have explicitly criticized capitalist accumulation and

the privatization of common goods in their local communities. By reclaiming spaces the squatting practice produced public goods that served these local communities. As such, the reclamation of spaces can be equated with a political practice challenging property relations in a given context (Milligan 2016).

The Swedish case of "regulated capitalism", or corporatist capitalism, a hybrid of capitalism and socialism, combining market mechanisms with extensive welfare provision, is quite peculiar. The hybrid nature of this model, frequently referred to as the Swedish model, has lately been subjected to changes, eloquently summarized by Johannes Lindvall and Bo Rothstein:

> Nevertheless, institutional changes have in many ways been more far-reaching in Sweden than in other small European countries. These changes have been described in terms of the dismantling of socialist policies previously defended by the ruling Social Democrats …, in terms of decorporatisation, whereby one of the world's most centralized labour markets disintegrated and labour market organisations lost their pivotal role in policy making …, and in terms of idea-change, through which a set of ruling ideas, blueprints for institution-building, fell victim to the ascendancy of neo-liberal economic thought ….
>
> (Lindvall & Rothstein 2006: 48)

These changes consisting of the withdrawal of the state from several policy fields on behalf of the market have by scholars been called a system-shift, especially in the field of housing (Baeten et al. 2016; Christophers 2013; Hedin et al. 2012). The changes in the field of housing are relevant as the squatting actions repeatedly emphasized housing policies and housing conditions as one of their points of critique. Brett Christophers (2013) has called the collision of welfare policies and the increasing market-orientation of the political economy in Sweden   *the monstrous hybrid*. The conflict between these two orientations has had some visible consequences in the deepening of socioeconomic inequality and housing segregation in the country. Squatting has in this light functioned to criticize the lack of affordable dwellings for specific groups, to oppose gentrification plans of residential areas (inhabited by low-income households), to shed light on homelessness, to reveal cuts to the welfare of communities, and to condemn privatization of the housing stock. It has by occupying buildings contested the market logic and property relations, by making manifest the contradictions inherent in the present system. In other European cases, researchers have drawn the conclusion that squatting has been "a direct answer to housing deprivation and other social problems" (Cattaneo & Martínez 2014: 5). In Sweden squatting has been a reaction to the contradictions inherent in the *monstrous hybrid*.

The market logic has advanced extensively in the field of housing in Sweden. It has been propagated since late 1980s, and in particular since the 1990s, and has been a rather "peaceful revolution" according to Clark (2013). But the neoliberal shift of the housing sector in the 1990s was not an isolated

event as neoliberalism contains "deregulation, privatisation, and withdrawal of the state from many areas of provision" (Harvey 2005: 4). This neoliberal shift consequently occurred in other spheres, and has been highlighted as a milestone in the shift of policing of protest, where protesters and in particular squatters have been met with new police tactics and more restrictive legislation (Peterson et al. 2018; Wahlström 2011). Neoliberalism is, according to Loic Wacquant (2012), a normative rationality that permeates the actions of the governing and the governed concealing the location of power and reproducing itself as a technique following institutional logics of commodification, disciplinary social policy, individual responsibility and a "penal policy aimed at curbing the disorders generated by diffusing social insecurity in the urban zones impacted by flexible labor and at staging the sovereignty of the state in the narrow window of everyday life it now claims to control" (ibid.: 72). Punitive methods used towards those who in any way challenge or disturb the order are according to Wacquant an integral part of the neoliberal order. For instance to label collective actors disturbing the order by calling them "extremists" or even "terrorists" serves the purpose of creating scapegoats for the imperfections/ dysfunctional features of markets. It plays an important role for the self-image of the market-oriented regime, as it blames others and shifts the responsibility for the deficiencies of the system.

Values, ideas and identities promoted in the hegemonic discourse

Lars Trägårdh (1999: 21) poses a thought-provoking question in his book on the state of present Swedish civil society, asking whether we should understand its development as completely colonized by the state or so fundamentally democratic that it does not need contentious and oppositional claims for its improvement. The image of this "well-developed" Swedish civil society permeates all spheres of public life in the country forcing the construction of how the democratic process should look like onto hegemonic ideas about the functioning of democracy, politics, rationality and collective actors. As Pettersson (1998) has emphasized in his work on social movements and democratization in Sweden, this self-image of a specific democratic development, has filled a particular function in the country's history. It has mobilized the creation of an "imagined community", in the words of Benedict Anderson (1991), an image of nationhood that could gather around this particular idea of democracy and how it should be practiced/ done. Forms of democratic work, not complying with this shared image, were banished and labelled as endangering to the (national) community. Among these banished forms we find disruptive, confrontational and direct-democratic actions that have functioned as the necessary distinction between "us" and "them" (Bauman 1990). The forms that did not fit the notion of how democracy should be practiced, in Sweden commonly expressed by the concept of "spirit of consensus" or Social Democratic "reformism", were branded as "extremist" and "anti-democratic" and the actors behind them as a group to be excluded from the

notion of "us". The non-conformity with these particular societal norms has placed the squatters, and other contentious actors, in the category of political "Others" in Sweden. By becoming a marginalized political group in the view of society the squatters inevitably contributed to the challenging and ultimately strengthening of the hegemonic notion of desirable democratic practices, resulting in the extraordinary harsh repression of squatting in the country since late 1960s, never allowing for a squatting movement to flourish and grow for longer periods of time.

By becoming the "Other" squatters could only for short periods of time become "good" squatters, the timing often coinciding with more long-termed squatting actions, where the squatters managed to get the support of the public opinion and the media. However, the distinction of "good" and "bad" squatters common in other contexts and stressing the deservedness of squatters (Bouillon 2013; Platt 1999) was generally non-applicable in the Swedish context. I would like to argue that the fact that squatters were consistently described as political "Others" contributed to the difficulty to nuance the hegemonic view on squatters and squatting. Not conforming to electoral politics or to the corporatist model of solving conflicts between different parties has become a division which is impossible to compromise on in the Swedish context.

Already in 1968, when the students' union was squatted at the University of Stockholm the public discussion at that time, held in the newspaper media, radio and television, constructed squatting actions as "undemocratic" and "violent" and forced several political parties and organizations to distance themselves from it. The parliamentary discussions did not differ much in this respect. Early on, the inherently democratic organization of the squatters' decision making processes, the claims of taking back and/or creating common goods, or the characteristic of the squatted buildings for instance, were ignored in the discussions. Janne Flyghed (2012) tracked the surveillance of anarchist and syndicalist groups in Sweden by the national Security Police (SÄPO) over 100 years. One of the main conclusions of his work was that the actual threat that the anarchists, and later on autonomous, posed was not proportional to the surveillance in the 2000s. He argued that the label of "anti-democratic" orientation of such collective actors was created to maintain the power position of the state, since these groups "disrupt the consensus around the legitimacy of the political and economic system" (ibid.: 286). What these groups were instead striving for was more democracy, the author contended.

As has been shown previously, only when the hegemonic discourse on squatting was challenged by other powerful discourses, like for instance the one on bureaucratic inefficiency, the police's use of excessive violence, and cuts in public welfare, was the negative discourse on squatting softened in the media. These twisted media reports were often lacking a deep explanation of the events preceding the squatting action and the political statements behind it. Media representations often combined moral panic and the mix of thrill and fear in the representation of squatting. To not conform to the consensual

and collaborative way of "democratic" practices in Sweden was described as moral outrage, but with a thrilling twist, addressing curious readers and intending to evoke strong emotions, especially when the squatters were described as militant terrorists. The idea of their uncontrolled and invasive character came partly from the arbitrary clustering of squatters together with other groups using similar direct democratic action repertoires, in order to create the impression of a potential threat these groups posed.

The way that the politicians described squatting followed roughly the same path. In discussions it was important to stress the democratic and societal improvements of the Social Democratic Party that served as a stark contrast to the disruptive methods represented by squatting. In the discourse of politicians squatting tended to be depicted as a security problem in the 1990s and 2000s, threatening the national security and order consequently requiring repressive measures. Once again, squatting was depoliticized and turned into a matter of other selective interests, in this case the security of the country. The moral panic created by politicians consisted of:

1   clear enemies   the squatters;
2   victims   ordinary people and the current political system; and
3   general consensus   the rule of law along with the excellence of the current political system.

Moreover, the labelling of squatters as "extremist" groups in the political as well as media discourse, especially since 1990s, has contributed to the creation of squatters as deviants or, in the terminology of Dee, following Cohen (1972/2002), "folk devils" (Dee 2016).

The wide-ranging media fascination with violence and the tendency to only report on the very opening and closing/eviction of a squat has contributed to skewed representations of such actions, not critically examining why the squatting action was held, how it was organized and what it achieved, but instead confirming the hegemonic view of the supposedly undemocratic character of such acts disturbing the societal order. However, hegemonic discourses are often contested and challenged and the examination of squatters' representations in this book has demonstrated that these discourses did not go unanswered. Squatters reversed the negative labels directed at them and used opposing attributes to describe themselves, where issues of democracy, morality, rationality and representation were central.

People's Home Anarchists or the creation of a respectable squatter

The emphasis on the non-militancy and non-violent intentions of many squatters in the Swedish history since the 1960s has made some researchers label squatters as "People's Home Anarchists", referring to the kind of Swedish anarchists, who in some way have incorporated the ideas and values of "the Swedish consensus culture" (Thörn 2013: 13). The importance of non-violent behavior and hard-working

character of squatters displayed in many squatting actions since the 1960s is another remnant from the past and in particular the self-disciplining ideals expressed in the working class movement in Sweden in the twentieth century (Ambjörnsson 1998). By internalizing these ideals (many, but not all) squatters aimed at creating a picture of a respectable squatter, complying with the principles previously displayed by the Swedish popular movements emphasizing soberness, hard work, self-control and trustworthiness among workers.

Similarly to the temperance, trade union, and popular-schooling movements of the twentieth century squatters demonstrated a kind of moralism about laxity and drug-use. Strict divisions were generated in order to create distance to unwanted behaviors and groups of people. To keep up with these norms, spaces that were theoretically described as open remained closed to individuals with drug problems or perceived as trying to free-ride on the efforts of the others, and spaces that did not follow these norms probably remained "in the dark" (only known to their users). One could ask in what way this boundary-drawing affected the growth of the groups and their social unity. In a comparison of the communities built in the district of Haga in Gothenburg and Christiania in Copenhagen in the 1970s and 1980s Thörn (2013: 58) concluded that the community in the Swedish case was less socially cohesive than the Danish one. The groups present in the district of Haga co-existed peacefully, but did not display the tight social unity found in Christiania. Maybe the differences between these two contexts are to be looked for in the much stronger state and influential social democracy of Sweden, as Thomas Ekman Jörgensen would argue in his historical study of the Left in Sweden and Denmark (Ekman Jörgensen 2008). Or they are to be looked for in the welfare state development and its impact on intraclass and cross-class conflicts and ability to unify and organize, in the words of Swenson (1991), who compared labor organization and the growth of the welfare state in Sweden and West Germany. Either way, it seems that the specific Swedish context has had considerable impact on the functioning, unity and representation of squatters in the country.

Another interesting conclusion, in line with the findings in this book, has been drawn by Ekman Jörgensen on the unwillingness of the Swedish Left (gathering working class and popular movements) to pose a threat to the democracy in the country in the long period between 1956 and 1980 by for instance propagating revolution or Soviet-style dictatorship (Ekman Jörgensen 2008: 31). Instead the efforts of the Left were put into the completion of the "unfinished democracy" by closely following Swedish democratic traditions. Ekman Jörgensen explains why this was the case:

> The Swedish working class and the popular movements (folkrörelser) had struggled for hundreds of years against despotic monarchs and oppressive capitalists, and they had achieved both   albeit an incomplete   democracy and better living conditions. The completion of this struggle was within reach.

> (Ekman Jörgensen 2008: 30)

Since this view of particular Swedish democratic traditions was hegemonic and the role of the labor movement for the democratic achievements was widely emphasized   maybe it was not that strange that squatters chose to incorporate parts of this specific national "consensus culture"? I would like to argue that it was highly strategical to portray one's struggle within a larger framework of struggles that people could identify with. In this way, squatters could depict themselves as guardians of the democratic development and welfare in the country. They often applied the same division between the concerned workers and the capitalist bourgeois, not caring for the welfare of the country, used by other parts of the Left in the country and summarized by Ekman Jörgensen:

> Sweden was a country infected by the disease of monopoly capitalism. On the surface of the system seemed democratic, but underneath this democratic glazing, capitalists secretly pulled the strings of the economy and thereby held the real power. It was a country where the sound people of the land were being deprived of their rights and their homes, all for the profit of the rich few.
>
> (Ekman Jörgensen 2006: 30)

The particular Swedish context fostered squatters caring for the values fundamental to the creation of the People's Home and fighting for the completion of the unfinished democracy in the country. Also, the fact that they in Sweden could find allies on the left side of the political divide more easily, due to the clear-cut left-right political division in the country, played an important role for the more "pragmatic" attitude among these "radical" actors (Piotrowski & Wennerhag 2015).

Contentious politics as indicators of what is wrong with society

In mapping major trends in contentious politics and social movements in Sweden between 1950 and 2015, Peterson et al. (2018) distinguished between four waves of protest in the country, carrying traces of transnational social movements and local features, and revolving around conflicts on the right to the city, anti-capitalism, gender equality and sexuality, peace and disarmament, ecology, solidarity, global justice and racism/anti-racism (ibid.: 379). The first wave centered to begin with around the issues of peace and youths (in the 1950s) and culminated around 1968 with student protests and the new Left. The second wave consisted of new social movements working with peace, women's and environmental issues in late 1970s and the 1980s. The third wave focused on anti-racism, anti-austerity and global justice with a turning point in 2001, the protests against the EU summit in Gothenburg that year (cf. Wennerhag 2008; Jacobsson & Sörbom 2015; Wahlström 2011). The fourth wave rose in 2010 around topics of climate and justice, new urban movements, anti-austerity (predominantly healthcare protests, protests against

school closures and strengthening of common welfare) and anti-racism. Many of these social movements have been involved in squatting practices in Sweden since the 1960s and squatting has occurred in the country during all of these waves, where collective actors such as student protesters, women's organizations, anti-austerity protesters, environmental activists, urban activists and the broad spectrum of activists involved in the global justice movement, were taking part in occupying buildings.

What is interesting is that the authors of this mapping of protest in post-war Sweden argue that it has been intertwined with state action, and has been conditioned by, but has also formed state responses to protests. The study shows how the interaction with state authorities and police has taken place during this period and particularly how the use of policing protests has varied from coercive repression to more soft approach of publically staged protests (cf. Wahlström 2011). And the other way around, these new social movements have, the authors argue, "challenged the institutionalized cooperation between the state and the 'old' popular movements" (Peterson et al. 2018: 379). This contestation has been expressed by refusal to be coopted and take part in the presented options for cooperation: consultation, negotiation, recruitment to government, and funding offers. To refuse to cooperate in the Swedish context could result in the loss of opportunity to influence political decisions and get recognition as a collective actor (Thörn 2013: 88). The division between conditioned institutionalized cooperation and non-institutionalized collective action was a result of what Michele Micheletti has called a selectively opened corporatist political opportunity structure in Sweden, allowing some collective actors access to government, while marginalizing and isolating others (Micheletti 1995: 26 27). In her study of Swedish Social democracy, Åsa Linderborg (2001) described the "enemies" of Social Democracy as all other actors than the "reformists". These reformists were the genuine representatives of Swedish labor movement, a notion associated with the idea of the People's Home "based on socio-liberal democracy and a peaceful consensus between different societal interests" (Nordvall 2005: 7).

Squatting is an inherently political practice, contesting current property relations and the authority of the state by taking over buildings and reclaiming rights of discriminated and marginalized groups (Milligan 2016). Squatting in Sweden is an example of a recurrent conflictual phenomenon that has challenged the functioning of representative democracy in the country and "consensus culture". It has highlighted social, economic, health and legal inequalities and protested against them by seizing property and turning it into direct-democratic spaces where these issues could be discussed. It has served an important role in the Swedish neoliberal regime that has shied away from the problems of housing, welfare and public service cuts in the last decades, by pointing to how these political changes have affected particular groups of people. The neoliberal regime has on the other hand created an imagined threat depicting squatters as a threat to the societal order, in this way shifting the blame for different social problems to a group of "radical" actors. This shift could be conceptualized as yet

another "institutional logic" of neoliberalism (Wacquant 2012) of blaming a small and easily delimited group of antagonists for systemic failures and short-comings, shifting the focus from the failures in for instance the field of housing in the country. Not only are the individuals who are not entrepreneurial enough blamed for their failures, also specific groups who often take on an antagonistic position are blamed for the dysfunctional features of the neoliberal regime. Critical discourse analysis is important in revealing how these processes are done:

> To explain the strategy of off-loading onto the public the costs of rescuing the markets from themselves, of which there are many other historical instances, we need to bring in material structural factors associated with the character of capitalism, but also semiotic factors   including examples of the causal power of common sense and of commonsensical construals in bringing about material effects (particular trajectories within and out of the crisis).
>
> (Fairclough 2012: 10)

Following Fairclough's appeal to disclose power relations and lines of conflicts behind discourses the most important fields of contestation when examining the discourses on squatting in Sweden have been: democracy, morality, representation and rationality. The meaning of democracy and democratic practices has been debated and the main division has been drawn between representative or electoral democracy and direct and participatory democracy. While the political elites and the media defended the formal political system of representative democracy, the squatters criticized this system for its top-down perspective insensible to inequalities and realities of citizens. The democratic model suggested by squatters included features that were often contrasted with the functioning of representative democracy reflecting the opposition of the "organization of collective decision making referred to in varying ways as classical, populist, communitarian, strong, grass-roots, or direct democracy against a democratic practice in contemporary democracies labelled as realist, liberal, elite, republican, or representative democracy" (Kitschelt 1993: 15). The field of representation was closely connected to the field of democracy in the discourse on squatting, where the struggle about who is to be represented and by whom was recurrently taking place. In this struggle the category of the "people" (*folk*) was particularly important (more about this in the next section). Moreover, morality was a contested issue that was interpreted differently between media and politicians and the squatters and their supporters. While morality among the first group was of a more deontological dimension where the conformity with rules and lawfulness was equaled with moral behavior, morality according to squatters was of teleological character, stressing the effects and consequences of a particular behavior. Squatters emphasized irrationalities in the formal political system that caused inequalities and highlighted slow bureaucratic processes as highly unreasonable. At times this argumentation resonated with the hegemonic discourses and squatters' claims were supported.

Contentious politics encompass collective action, contention and politics, according to Tilly and Tarrow (2006: 4). Subjects, objects and claims are brought together in contentious politics. Studies of contentious politics have often emphasized the role of contention and conflicts in the historical development of societies. The recurrent, but episodic, history of urban squatting in Sweden demonstrates how collective actors have by the act of squatting made political claims and challenged dominant power relations by taking over buildings and questioning both property ownership and the role of authorities in allocating housing. In this way political claims were brought forward by squatters, in the more unconventional realms of politics, challenging the dominant cultural framework of how political conflicts should be solved and what collective action should be regarded as legitimate. This kind of collective action could with the categorization developed by Doug McAdam et al. (2000) be labelled transgressive contention, as it is episodic and it addresses the government as an object of its claims, and above all uses forms of actions that in the given context are deemed "innovative", meaning actions "unprecedented or forbidden within the regime" (ibid.: 8). McAdam et al. claim that social change "more often emerges from transgressive than from contained contention" (ibid.: 8) and argue that the combination of conflicting claims and episodic action results in the rethinking of current identities by creating uncertainty, disclosing political fault lines, inspiring further contentious actions, compelling a reconsideration among the elites and opening up for change in future repertoires of contention.

Who are the people?

Henrik Nordvall (2005: 10) argued that the notion of a "people" was "a key part of a thought figure about the democratic, stable, cooperative and successful Swedish society; characterized by the spirit-of-Saltsjöbaden, socio-liberal economic policy and reforms aimed at reducing class divisions". It was a construct that was presented as something "typical" and "traditional" and an important part of the construction of the Swedish People's Home since the 1930s. In the political rhetoric of the Swedish Social Democracy, this was a central concept that was perceived as a broader and more inclusive way of attracting supporters, than the concept of working class or workers. The notion of people was emotionally charged and could simultaneously refer to the feelings of class community and national feelings. Micheletti (1995: 61) argues, in the same line, that the notion of the people was in the case of Sweden uniquely transformed into a universalistic welfare state, instead of anti-democratic and fascist-inspired development. The notion in itself signified social solidarity, equality, responsibility and democratic governance, setting the corporatist norm by clearly prioritizing the development of the People's Home before class conflict. It became a unifying concept, however associated with specific action repertoires. Linderborg writes:

Thus, all articulated contradictions become a threat, whether they have a revolutionary potential or not. In this way, all other action strategies appear beyond what Social democracy defined "reformist" as violent and undemocratic   there is only one alternative to the social democratic/social-liberal line: dictatorship or bloodbath.

(Linderborg 2001: 263)

By opposing the social democratic reformist way with dictatorship and bloodbath, all actions and articulations not fitting the social democratic scheme were in the hegemonic discourse associated with the extremes of violence and undemocratic expressions, squatting among them.

In this light, when not complying with the reformist action strategy, collective actors have been forced to persuade their publics about their legitimacy and good intentions. When squatters publicized their actions one of the main arguments was that they represented the people (*folk*), in this way linking their claims for legitimacy to a broader struggle over the definition of the people within the Swedish social democracy and beyond (cf. Nordvall 2005). The struggle was not so much over the national dimension of the word, but more over its social dimension, and what particular social classes' interests were represented in the public realm. Nordvall argues that the notion of a people, in the context of *folkbildning* (popular education) in Sweden, has referred to a "social strata of people: the broad population or the lower social classes" (ibid.: 5). My interpretation is that the same applies for squatters in the cases they have used the notion of a people to legitimize their claims and show whose interests they represent. As we have seen in the analysis of the discourse of squatters in previous chapters, the issue of representation has been quite central in the way that squatters have justified their actions. By contrasting the people that squatters represented with the elites in the Swedish society, the struggle over a particular building was broadened to issues of common good and the welfare of the lower social classes, or those who have, in the terminology of David Harvey (2004), been dispossessed in the capitalist order.

Mediatized politics and the depoliticization of collective claims

The functioning of media in Sweden has been studied by Maria Wendt (2012), who claims that media and politics in the country are functioning in a close symbiosis, hence threatening the functioning of democracy. The author argues that the public arena that the media are expected to contribute to in a democratic order, where ideas are expressed and discussed by an informed public and where power-holders are scrutinized and held accountable, does not exist in Sweden. This lack is a result of the close symbiosis and the relationship of dependence between media and the political sphere. This relationship is expressed in uncritical evaluations, but also in close cooperation in creating media or political spectacles, the same goals of reaching out to a mass public, and the often interchangeable positions in the career of journalists and politicians.

Against this background, the need of a distance and critical coverage in the Swedish context is often identified by collective actors outside the "establishment" trying to make their voices heard and challenging hegemonic discourses created by the media and political elites together. The case of Swedish squatters demonstrates how this has been done and what specific points of critique have been raised as particularly important. It makes visible how the construction of a democratic and equal Swedish *us* in the media and political spheres is contrasted to the "strange", "undemocratic" and "violent" *them*, in this way naturalizing assumptions about who is and who is not a democratic actor.

Depoliticization of claims foregrounded by collective actors or making invisible conflicts or disagreements in the name of consensus, has often been the result of such a symbiosis. The analysis of the functioning of media in Sweden done by a number of media scholars (Amnå 1999; Ekström 2006; Fornäs & Kaun 2011; Wendt 2012) has shown that the spheres of media and politics in the country are too closely interwoven, resulting in a circumscription of a number of political issues and conflicts. The logics of media, captured with the concept of mediatization, or "the metaprocess by which practices of the everyday and social relations are increasingly shaped by mediating technologies and media organisations" (Livingstone 2009: 4), are permeating politics and vice versa in Sweden leading to mediatized politics that tend to neutralize some particular actors and some particular lines of conflicts, resulting in the processes of depoliticization. Wendt argues:

> Depoliticization may mean that a question is not at all done negotiable, that it is invisible or rendered unproblematic. It may also be that problems and conflicts are formulated in personal and individual terms, rather than as political (in the sense of common) affairs. Finally, I mean that de-politicization occurs when relationships and phenomena are presented as harmonious and natural, making invisible oppositions and different interests.
>
> (Wendt 2012: 18)

According to Wendt depoliticization also takes place when common assumptions about the exceptional state of equality and democracy in Sweden are highlighted and remain unquestioned. In her study of how gender and nation are depoliticized in the Swedish media, she argues that social change and political critique become impossible when the common position is to keep present ideals and traditions (Wendt 2012: 71). If a democratic public sphere is to be regarded as an arena where different and conflictual ideas are discussed and politics as an "ensemble of discourses, institutions and practices, the objective of which is to establish an order" (Mouffe 2015: 126), in line with radical democracy theory (Mouffe 2000; Tonder & Thomassen 2005), then the idea of democracy is that it is not fixed, subject to contestations and in the process of making, or being done or undone (Brown 2015). In a society

that cannot provide a well-functioning democratic arena "or lacks a dynamic democratic life with genuine confrontation among a diversity of democratic political identities, the groundwork is laid for other forms of identification to take their place, identification of an ethnic, religious, or nationalist nature" (Mouffe 2015: 124). This lack of confrontation on a democratic arena has become ever clearer in the Swedish context in the last decade causing a fall in the People's Home (Svallfors 2016; Therborn 2017).

Conclusions: contesting consensus

Cooperation, compromise and dialogue have been the cornerstones of interaction between collective actors and the Swedish state (Micheletti 1995; Peterson et al. 2018; Rothstein 1992). Rothstein (1992) argued in his groundbreaking work that the long Social Democratic tradition in the country together with the main political ideology   reformism   have been practiced by establishing corporative structures that facilitated this kind of politics. By using a definition of corporatism borrowed from Panitch (1980), Rothstein put the emphasis on the political structure at the leadership level, where organized interests were expected to cooperate, and the mass level where mobilization and political control can take place. By doing this, the author focuses on corporatism as a distinct coordination tactic guiding politics in capitalist democracies and fostering negotiation and compromise between divergent economic interests. This particular tactic's consequences on the Swedish political sphere have been significant and the focus on reformism, including "dominant views on what policy is, who has the right to participate, how political processes and institutions are best designed and what you can, and above all cannot, achieve through political decisions" (Rothstein 1992: 29) has become a hegemonic ideology in the country.

However, as Peterson et al. (2018) point out, this hegemonic ideal, or specific form of negotiation and compromise, has not automatically included consensus as such. Rather, the norm has been guided by the "spirit of consensus" (Thörn 2013; von Essen & Segnestam Larsson 2013; Nordvall 2005) and defined by Peterson et al. (2018: 380) as a shared political norm "established with the Swedish model, that conflicting state, business and civil society actors should always make strong efforts to avoid conflict, and instead 'lay differences aside' to be able to negotiate, compromise and reach cooperation". This norm has had specific implications for the development of civil society in the country and the dominant view on more contentious forms of collective action. This dominant view, understood in Gramscian terms as cultural hegemony, has according to scholars been expressed in the Swedish context by varying forms of repression, stretching from softer methods of surveillance, dialogue and conditioned cooperation to more violent forms (Peterson et al. 2018; Thörn 2011; Wahlström 2011).

Following Gramscian thought, Thörn (2013: 84 90) has highlighted hard and soft forms of disciplinary power exercise characterizing the relationship between the state and collective actors in the Swedish context. The hard forms involve repression of squatters, the softer form includes a conditioned cooperation and co-existence fostering self-disciplinary attitudes among the collective actors. Thörn calls this phenomenon "consensus culture" and argues that it has been a substantial element of the creation of the welfare state. By the means of cooptation and consultation of "unruly" actors this culture was reproduced offering collective actors influence over "popular" decisions and recognition of their struggle. Whether the claims of these collective actors were neutralized by this particular political culture, Thörn argues, is an empirical matter. What I would like to argue, given the history of urban squatting in Sweden, is that it has been the main impediment to the development of a Swedish version of a squatting movement. By studying how this has been expressed in discourse my ambition has been to unveil the hidden power relations and conflict lines and show how discourses are producing and reproducing society and culture.

What is important to point out in the history of squatting in Sweden is that the repression and whether the squatters have chosen to cooperate with authorities to some degree (for instance to take part in negotiations) or submitted themselves to the consensus culture (for instance in practicing self-disciplining behavior at the squats) has varied between different places and across time. The second half of the 1980s and the 1990s mark a contrast in this regard. It seems that the self-disciplining ideals expressed in the working class movement in Sweden formulated in a number of regulations and norms for the running of squats, were challenged in this period by squatters inspired by punk music and the European BZ-movement (Ericsson 2016; Nilsson 2010; Jämte & Sörbom 2016) resulting in less self-disciplining ideals guiding squatters and more violent resistance to protect the squats. However, this was not always the case, rather an exception, which stood in stark contrast to the prevalent code of respectability, temperance and hard-working character of squatters.

Additionally, it was not consensus that was contested in squatting, but the social contract built on the ideals of compromise and cooperation with the government. The Swedish "consensus culture" was founded on the assumption that conflicting interests should be put aside in support of the common good. The common good as understood by squatters, however, did not always include what the opponents of squatting defined as common good. Squatters opposed the generalized dimension of the common good represented by formal politics criticizing it for not taking into account the good of minorities and particular groups overridden by the majority rule/capitalist system/patriarchal society. I would like to argue in this final section of the book that urban squatting has served to decolonize Swedish civil society from the conditioned cooperation with the state and its institutions by reclaiming a renewed version of democracy

and pointing to the fault lines of Swedish politics (cf. Trägårdh 1999: 21). It has fundamentally questioned the image of a "well-developed" Swedish welfare society and the prevailing idea and self-image of Sweden as a fundamentally equal and democratic society. In this light, the self-image and the history writing in the country needs a critical update and further investigation in order to present a more nuanced picture (Brink-Pinto & Ericsson 2016).

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