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Understanding Dynamics of Identity Navigation in Social Design

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to initiate an interdisciplinary dialogue between social design and narrative theory in understanding how vulnerable families navigate personal and shared identities. To exemplify this, we draw upon results from a design research project that introduces board games in prisons to help children develop bonds with their incarcerated fathers. In our case study we offer a method of analysis that enable design researchers to delve into the complex field of identity navigation. Further, we offer a focused reflection arguing that the vulnerability of these families can be conceived as family identities being broken or challenged. We attempt to show that identity is constructed through family members' co-authoring of family narratives, which manifest themselves in different formats such as 'master narratives' and 'counter narratives'. Design research has the potential to examine identity formations by applying narrative theory in practice.

Keywords: social design; identity navigation; family narratives; design research

1. Introduction

Social design is characterised by participatory approaches to researching, developing, and realising new ideas that may lead to increased resilience for vulnerable groups (Armstrong et. al, 2014). The characteristic given by Leah Armstrong, Jocelyn Bailey, Guy Julier, and Lucy Kimbell consists of using participatory design activities to "make change happen towards collective and social ends, rather than predominantly commercial objectives" (2014, p.15). In this context, design researchers need analytical tools, methods and models that enable them to evaluate the impact of a given social design project and whether it offers a qualitative change to the people we design with and for (Knutz, Markussen & Lenskjold 2019; Knutz & Markussen 2019).

In this paper, we reflect upon the preliminary results of a research project aiming to

help Danish children tackle some of the problems they experience due to their fathers' incarceration. More specifically we argue that the vulnerability of these children has to do with their family identity being broken or somehow disrupted. One way to repair their family identity is by enabling processes and situations where they get an opportunity to co-author family narratives with their fathers and other relatives. This remedying potential of storytelling is recognised by the Danish Prison and Probation Services insofar as it offers "Night Stories," an initiative for inmates who can record themselves reading fairy tales or kids' books aloud to be sent home to their children. Initiatives like these rely on the assumption that the telling and sharing of stories between parents and children play a significant role in children's identity formation and development. While "Night Stories" works for small children, there is a lack of similar initiatives for teenagers and adolescents – a group for which the question of identity formation is particularly important.

The process of identity development is a life-long process but starts during the physical changes of puberty, when a teenager starts to consider issues of identity (Erikson, 1968). In this process, the family and the stories told within a family play a crucial role in how we define ourselves and how we construct meanings of our personal and shared past (Cohler, 1982; Bruner, 1990; Fivush and Baker-Ward, 2005; McLean, 2016). Moreover, empirical studies have documented that the continuous telling and scaffolding of family stories can help children and adolescents to better cope with the separation from or loss of a parent, for instance due to secondment, illness, divorce or death (Saltzman et al. 2013).

The telling and sharing of these stories usually take place in everyday surroundings, for instance during dinnertime, bedtime or day-to-day events. However, when a parent is imprisoned for a long time, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain and develop family narratives between parents and children, since the family no longer has the home and daily life as the natural setting for sharing stories (Arditti et al, 2003; Jewkes, 2005; Markson et al., 2015). The continuous structure of shared stories becomes increasingly fragmented or broken. To remedy this situation, we have designed a family board game with the purpose of enabling incarcerated fathers and their children (age 11-18) to re-establish the process of co-constructing family narratives by sharing stories during visiting hours. Through different gameplays the players are invited into a serious, yet playful game, where the family members can share their feelings, relive past experiences and important events as well as express their wishes and dreams for the future. The underlying assumption is that, as it helps prisoner families to maintain family narratives, the game can have a positive impact on children and adolescents' coping skills and well-being.

However, this effect study is beyond the scope of the present paper, in which we instead explore how family members, who have played this board game, talk about their experiences. In particular we focus on how the game enables participants to craft stories, how they talk about and represent themselves, how they talk about others and how they construct and navigate identities through the telling of these stories. We also look at how 'master narratives' and 'counter narratives' play a role in the formation of individual and shared identities and how these narratives sometimes conflict.

In the first part of the paper, we start out by providing some conceptual clarifications of what we mean by family, master and counter narratives and how they can serve as valuable analytical lenses for studying identity constructions. While these three forms of narrative can be a good starting point, we need however to introduce Bamberg's (2011) so-called *three dimensions of navigation* to fully grasp identity construction as a fluid and dynamic social process. By introducing these dimensions, we are able to point out some dilemmas in how family members conceive differently of their group identity.

In the second part of the paper, we move on to describe our case project: the design of a game for prisons and the research context. Moreover, we lay out a 3-step method for analysing how the game may prompt family storytelling and what kind of identity construction that takes place through it. In our analysis we identify a number of narrative categories that seem to be at play. Furthermore, we apply Bamberg's three dimensions of navigation in order to single out some dilemmas in relation to the individual and shared family identity. Based on our analysis we then present rich visual mappings that allow for a precise diagramming of how identity navigation takes place between our participants. In so doing, we get a better understanding of whether games as used for social design purposes may offer a qualitative change to the families playing the game.

2. Studying identity constructions through family, master and counter narratives

The term *family narrative* refers to the stories we tell, share and co-construct as family members. They consist of all the things we talk about as a family on a daily basis. That may be past events: stories of family members being remembered; important events like family vacations or birthdays or minor day-to-day events. Creating and sharing these stories help family members to maintain emotional bonds and help children, in particular, to create a sense of who they are and how to relate to others (Fivush et al, 2011; Fivush and Merrill, 2016). Intergenerational stories – the stories that parents and grandparents share with their children about their own past – help children to make sense of their personal and shared past and contribute to the family identity and individual well-being (Zaman and Fivush, 2011).

Inquiries into family narratives increases our knowledge of how people lead storied lives – individually and socially – and how they shape their lives according to stories. They provide a specific insight into how stories play a role in the formation of family identities. Empirical studies suggest that family narratives are important in identity formation and well-being (Bohanek et al., 2006). Furthermore, a family's ability to co-author and scaffold narratives concerning stressful or traumatic events, such as parental separation and loss, can support children and adolescents to better cope with difficult life situations (Saltzman 2013). More recently, Fivush, Bohanek & Zaman (2011) have argued that adolescents, who tell intergenerational stories from diverse perspectives show higher levels of well-being.

As argued by McLean (2016), we use narratives to make sense of ourselves and in this process, identity is not constructed individually; we define ourselves in relation to others and others also define us. The concept of the 'co-authored self' as defined by McLean, allows us to explain identity as a process that is co-constructed through the stories, we tell about ourselves, through the stories we tell about others and through the stories that others tell about us. Families in this context support, counteract, maintain, and constrain identity formation and influence how we define ourselves. In this context counter narratives and dominant relationships among family members play a key role (McLean, 2015).

Master narratives within a family or a social community are stories that are shared and used time and time again by members of a community to define (for better or worse) who they are and where they belong in the social orders and hierarchies (for instance in relation to gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and age). Narratives in this regard serve a specific function, namely for passing down socio-culturally accepted values, but they also allow individuals to position their own values. According to McLean (2017) we can either agree on these narratives or we can resist, reject and counteract these by telling alternative personal stories.

Counter narratives are the stories that people tell and live, which offer resistance to master narratives (Bamberg and Andrews, 2004). In offering resistance, counter narratives contest what is assumed to be a "correct" or acceptable experience. Therefore, counter narratives always exist in relation to master narratives either in opposition to the master narrative or as minor stories relating to the master story in alternative ways, limiting it to a particularised or more personal perspective of the same event (Throsby, 2002). Yet, counter narratives can manifest themselves at various levels ranging from the personal, group and institutional level, for instance when staff members contest managerial decisions and strategies communicated through preferences, values, beliefs etc. (Frandsen et al., 2016). They may also diverge into minor stories or as disruptive powers that infuse people's personal stories and lived experiences with new meanings, identities and complexities (Bamberg, 2006; Bamberg and Georgakopoulou, 2008).

By analysing what people tell (about themselves and others) and how they react (e.g. assimilate or accommodate) to what others say we can apply the concept of master and counter narratives to *family narratives* and thus study how stories play a role in the formation of individual and shared family identities.

3. Dimensions of identity navigation

Family, master and counter narrative may easily give the impression that identity constructions come in a more or less stable or fixed form. However, identity constructions often involve a fluid and dynamic social process of negotiating multiple roles of identity and self-other relationships. Bamberg (2011) has suggested that this process can be properly understood by introducing what he refers to as three dimensions of navigation. As the dimensions do not follow in a certain hierarchical or logical order, we have taken the liberty to introduce them here reversely to how they are found in Bamberg's original text.

The first dimension of identity navigation is that of *agency*. In this dimension the speaking subject is perceived as "a bodily agent" that speaks with the body, which allows for non-verbal and embodied actions to be part of the analysis. Here identity can be navigated between the two terminal points of acting as an active "agent" (taking action, acting powerfully, taking responsibility) or as a passive "undergoer" (taking no action, acting powerlessly, taking no responsibility). Speaking subjects with high agency are experienced as being in control (positioning a heroic sense of self), whereas speaking subjects with low agency are experienced as being not in control (positioning a victimized sense of self). In both cases the speaker foregrounds certain events and places him/herself in these events as an "agent" in relation to others.

The second dimension concerns *constancy and change* across time. In this dimension the speaking subjects navigate their identity dilemma "by positioning who-they-are in terms of *some* form of continuity, constructing their identities in terms of *some* change against the background of *some* constancy (and vice versa)" (Bamberg 2011, p. 103). Stories in this dimension can give shape to identity constructions that can be plotted as sudden changes, slow transformations or even give shape to a sense of self that indicates no change at all.

The third dimension concerns *sameness versus difference* and positions the speaking subjects in relation to others (Bamberg 2011, p. 104), either aligning with others ("we are the same as") or positioning themselves as a contrast to them ("we are different from"). Stories in this dimension can give shape to an individual sense of self ("I am not like …") or they can be plotted as a sense of self in terms of belonging to a certain group, community or social category ("my friends and I always …"). Navigations can happen through aligning with or rejecting the values, behaviours or actions of others.

By coding our narrative data according to these three dimensions we will identify dilemmas of navigation in relation to the individual participants (e.g. the father being a parent as well as a prisoner); family members (e.g. father versus sons/daughters) but also dilemmas of the shared family identity vis-à-vis the institutional system (e.g. the participants being "family" as well as being part of a prison system they must comply with). In so doing we get to understand families of prisoners and whether the game that we have designed offers a qualitative change to the families playing this game during visiting hours.

4. Case study: A prison game

The game *Captivated* (see fig. 1) has been designed for the Danish Prison and Probation Service's visiting program to help children and adolescent (age 11-18) to maintain and develop social relationships with their incarcerated fathers. The game, which is today fully implemented in the visiting rooms in all Danish prisons, is a result of the three-year funded design research project *Social Games against Crime* (2015-2018) that involved a cross-disciplinary research team from Denmark, the Netherlands and UK, including design researchers, ethnographers, criminologists, experts in narrative theory and sociologists.

Even though much has been done to make in-visits facilities in Danish Prisons more family-friendly, initiatives are still lacking for teenagers and adolescents. The fieldwork we conducted as part of a pilot study in prisons from 2013–2015 revealed that visiting spaces rarely offer initiatives to this age group. Additionally, in a report made by The Danish National Centre for Social Research (Oldrup et al., 2016), it was subsequently observed that one of the reasons why children ages 11–17 are reluctant to visit their fathers in prison is due to this lack of meaningful initiatives. This report also showed that the wellbeing of these children is lower as compared to prisoners' younger children. If they lose contact with their fathers in prison, it was further stipulated that they are at higher risk of ending up in psychiatric treatment, placement with a foster family, or that it will significantly reduce their educational performance (Oldrup et al., 2016: pp. 5–14).

To address the unmet needs of this age group, the authors carried out a three-year funded research and intervention study from 2015–2018 to investigate whether a board game designed for children and their incarcerated fathers has the potential to help them maintain family relations. The overall purpose of the game is to use game elements as prompts for restoring family narratives that are challenged or broken due to paternal incarceration. In particular, the game attempts to enable the players to share personal stories through bodily interactions and dialogue concerning the fathers' and the children's daily lives. In so doing, it is assumed that the game will help prisoner fathers and their teenage children to maintain a relationship to the benefit of the children's wellbeing and development (although the study of this impact was beyond the scope of the 3-year project).

The project is targeting families of prisoners, because imprisonment is known for having negative collateral effects on families' wellbeing. These families are vulnerable in several respects. First of all, imprisonment makes it difficult to maintain and develop family bonds between parents and children (Arditti et al, 2003; Markson et al.2015). Secondly the family structure is complicated, since many of the parents in these families are divorced or children have been placed in foster care, which means that children do not visit their fathers in prison together with their mothers, but with grandparents, foster parents or others. For these reasons the continuous construction of shared family stories is challenged.

During the process of designing the game, which lasted 1.5 years, several participatory activities and co-design workshops have been organised, including workshops with children, mothers and incarcerated fathers as well as workshops with prison officers and family therapists. These workshops have helped the researchers to shape game characters and to construct a game world that aligns with the actual needs and dilemmas of the families of prisoners (see previous articles focusing on the participatory design process, Knutz et al. 2016; Knutz et al. 2019).

4.1 The design of the prison game

The final version of the game has a game mechanic similar to that of the board game Monopoly, the difference being that the players do not move around in a city but in a prison

with certain places (workspaces, kitchen, visiting room), characters (prisoners and prison staff) and situations that the players learn about. All characters in the game have families and identities. The players may win the game by collecting certain characters and performing acts triggered by the question cards. The game includes three different types of cards (see Figure 1).

Figure 1   The prison game "Captivated". The game includes three different types of cards: Story cards (stories about the prison), action cards (that encourages physical interaction) and be honest cards (that foster interpersonal communication between the players).

Story cards include illustrated stories about the prison and the prisoners. For example, a story card about a particularly muscular prisoner practicing bodybuilding, says; "Oops! Your pants have shrunk and now everyone can see your *Hello Kitty* tattoo". These ironic and "teasing" anecdotes about prisoners have been collected during the co-design workshops with prisoners and children and bring parts of the prisoners' life that is normally not talked about into the parent-child interaction and conversation.

Action cards include eight different actions, for instance "Exchange something you wear with another player;" "Challenge one of your opponent players in arm wrestling;" or "Give one of your opponent players a tattoo" (for this purpose the game contains a black permanent marker). These cards are designed with the purpose of encouraging physical or embodied interactions between children and their imprisoned fathers.

Be honest cards are the third type of cards, which include nine different challenges that encourage the players to open up and talk about past memories, future wishes or personal feelings. For instance, one card says, "Talk about something that makes you angry or sad," another one says, "Talk about the most embarrassing gift you have received." These cards are designed to enable the sharing of emotions, embarrassing events and as well as hopes and dreams for the future. Furthermore, they attempt to the bring personal identity stories of the real world into the family narrative. With the assistance of family therapists working within the criminal justice system, we carefully considered the design of these cards to avoid intimidating fathers and children or eliciting unwanted emotions.

After completing the final game prototype, the game was pilot tested with two families who played the game during visiting hours together with the research team. Based on this experience the evaluation study was planned and set up.

4.2 Evaluation study

The evaluation study was conducted in two Danish maximum-security prisons and lasted eight months. Five families participated in the evaluation study and played the game during their prison visits. Due to prison regulations the research team was not allowed access to the visiting rooms, since no form of monitoring was permitted. Hence follow-up interviews played a central role in the evaluation study.

The families who participated went through the following process: The family played the game during visiting hours without being monitored. After having played the game, the father and child were interviewed separately by two researchers. The interview with the father took place in the prison under the supervision of a prison officer. The children were interviewed at home, usually with their mother or foster parent present (see Figure 2). All interviews were conducted in Danish, audio-recorded, transcribed and translated.
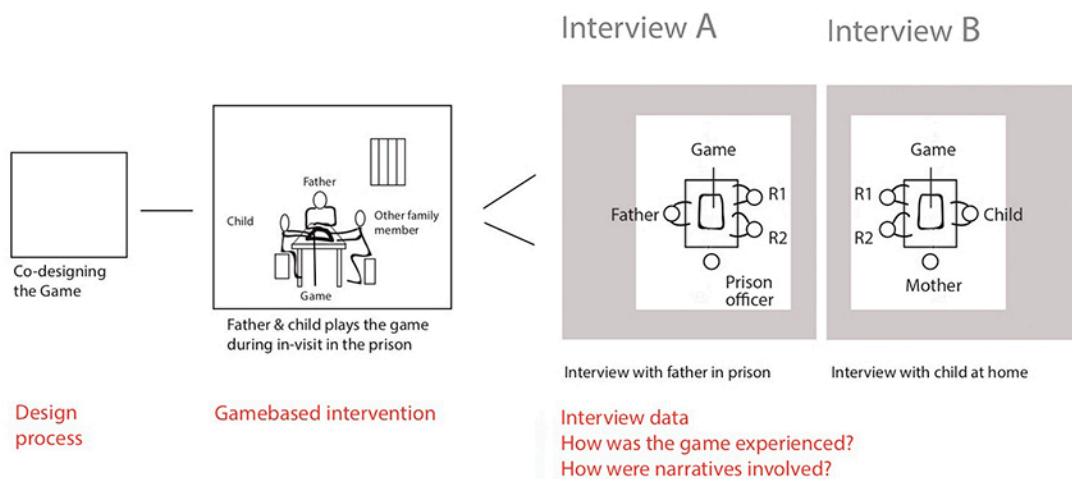

Figure 2   The evaluation study design

During the interviews the board game played a key role, as a research tool enabling dialogue. The two researchers listen to how the participants recalled the game experience of, for instance, what happened when a player got a particular card (e.g. the be honest cards) or landed on a particular place on the game board (e.g. the "visiting room"). This part of the study was not designed to try to reconstruct their authentic game-based interaction, rather, the interview setting itself was conceived as a context for family storytelling, yielding data for analyzing the stories that fathers and children told about their family visit. The empirical data is analysed according to a series of analytical steps (see below).

Due to the limitations of this paper, we focus on excerpts from interviews with one particular

family and two of its members (for a more extensive study, see also Markussen & Knutz 2020a; 2020b forthcoming). The family in question consists of 11-year old Oskar and his incarcerated father John who has been in prison for 14 years. John is a leading member of a criminal gang and is the father of three children. Oskar is his youngest son. John is divorced from Oskar's mother and therefore Oskar visits John with John's new girlfriend.

5. Method of Analysis

In the following we focus on the conversation with John (Interview A) and the conversation with Oskar (Interview B). We will provide examples from excerpts of how John talks about himself, how he talks about Oskar, and how he talks about being in prison. Likewise, we will give examples of how Oskar talks about himself, how he talks about his father and how he talks about the prison. Furthermore, we provide examples of how the prison officer Henry addresses John during the conversation as parent or prisoner. Our aim is to identify different identity constructions and navigations, which are perceived through the various ways in which the participants talk, interact and perform, based on the materiality of the prison game.

Our method of analysis follows a series of analytical steps that enable us gradually to tap into the identity navigation:

- **Step 1: Detecting identity construction in relation to roles**
  In this step we apply Bamberg's first dimension by looking at the speaking subjects as "agents" that may take on certain roles (e.g. the concerned father, the powerful prisoner etc.) and we attempt to identify a number of these.
- **Step 2: Foregrounding relevant narrative categories**
  This step allows us to identify a number of counter-, master- or family narratives manifested in the personal relationship between the participants
- **Step 3: Plotting identity navigation in relation to dimensions and narrative categories**
  In this step we activate the dimensions of *constancy and change* across time as well as the dimension of *sameness versus difference.* This final step allows us to make a comparative analysis of the two interviews in relation to a particular game card/topic that was activated during the game sessions and talked about in both interviews. We will refer to these mappings as "plottings" (see Figure 4 and 5).
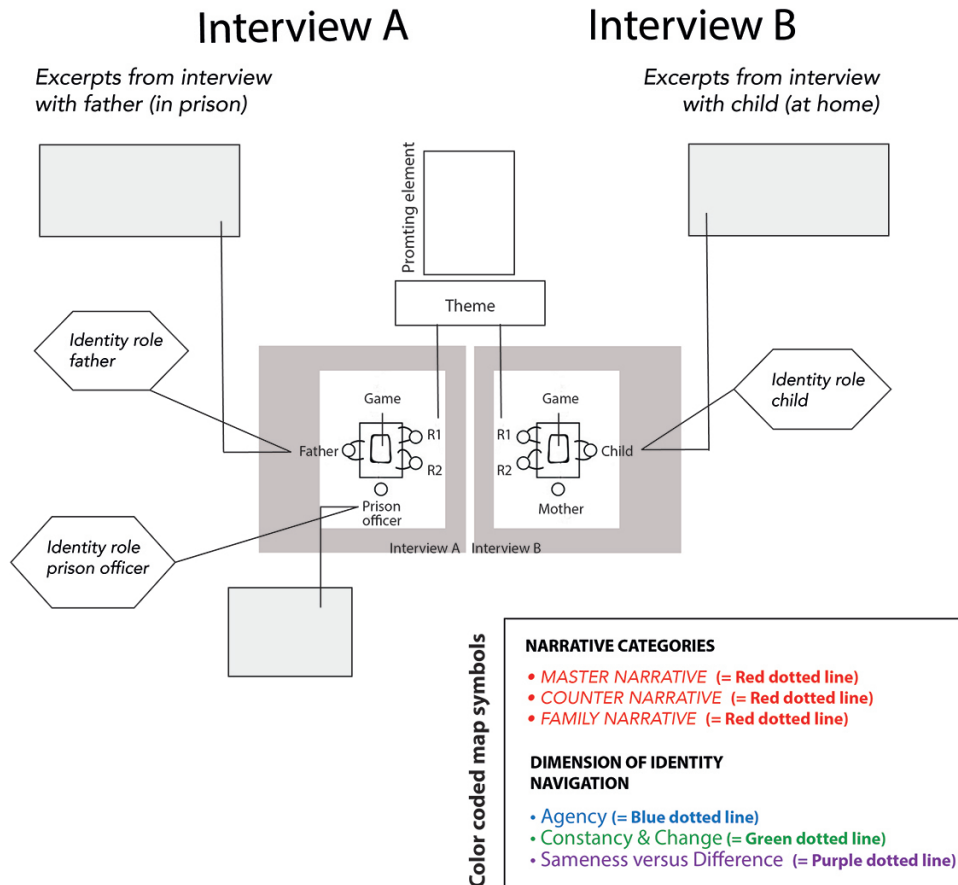
Interview A   ## Interview B

Excerpts from interview with father (in prison)

Excerpts from interview with child (at home)

Figure 3   *Model of analysis. Step 3 will result in visual mappings that attempt to diagram the identity navigation taking place between the participants*

6. Analysing the "talk"

6.1 Examples of the participants positioning different identities that engage in different narrative categories (step 1 and 2)

When John talks about his son Oskar and how they played the game, he says that Oskar, during the game session, drew a be honest card, which made Oskar talk about how much he misses his dad. To this John adds: "I was a little nervous that it came to close" and "then I hurried on so that he didn't get too sad". John says about the be honest cards, that they are "good" but also a bit "offensive". He further explains that he is afraid "to step into something that hurts". During the interview John poses questions about the game and about his son's involvement in the project: "Have psychologists been involved?"; "Can the drawings made with the marker be washed off?"; and "I've talked to his [Oskar's] mother. He is willing to talk about these things." About his own participation in the project John says: "I will do everything to help when it has something to do with our children."

In these excerpts John positions himself both as the responsible father but also worried and protective father who is concerned about his son getting upset or sad when he draws the be

honest cards; or whether the black marker can be washed off, and that he is on good terms with his ex-wife, Oskar's mother ("we have talked about these things"). The prison officer sometimes supports and co-constructs John's responsible father identity, for instance by remarking: "But it's also great that he [Oskar] can tell you that he misses you." In so doing, the prison officer positions himself as "the caring prison officer" who empathises with the prisoner and supports him in assuming his parenting role.

A second identity role of John is that of being a prisoner and a gang leader. When talking about the story card that reveals the "Hello Kitty tattoo," John jokes about confronting his gang members "checking their ankles." He later explains, "there is a conflict between us and another group", which causes some violence, but he adds that this is a "business risk." And he confirms his role as a gang leader by indicating that within his group he is the one who controls ("in our group it's just me who decides"). A third identity construction is the funny-friend identity. John says: "Me and my 11-year-old son we manage a lot by using humour. We do a lot of really funny stuff together." This statement indicates that he looks at his bond with his son as a kind of partnership or friendship built around "having fun together."

If we compare this with Oskar's account about his father, the funny-friend identity seems to mirror his father's positioning: "I know everything about my father," he says and continues "We know each other well." Oskar also says that they have fun together and points out that he and his dad's girlfriend "always cheat on Dad," when they play the game. This indicates that Oskar and his father seem to share a family identity of "being friends" and a family narrative that points towards "having fun together." But Oskar's personal narrative does not always align with the shared family narrative of "having fun."

Oskar repeatedly expresses a need to be heard, seen and felt. He says about the be honest cards that "It was nice that you could just say things as they are...and that you can say something that you do not really talk about, for instance if your mum or dad is not listening." It seems as if Oskar doesn't want everything to be "just fun". His account seems to counteract how he defines himself within the family and his experiences of the be honest cards seem to represent a counter narrative to his father's perception about the cards as being "too hard" and as something that makes his son "sad."

During both interviews Oskar and his father look back at the old prison where John was previously imprisoned. Here the children could walk in and out of the visiting rooms. Oskar says: "I actually got to know somebody there." John also comments several times on the old prison. It was better, according to him, because the children could experience an open door "and play with the other children." "We are family people," John continues. "I want to get to know my brothers' children."

These statements express multiple identity constructions. John speaks both as "the responsible family father" and as a leader of his criminal gang and his so-called "brothers" whose children he wants to know better. John seems to switch seamlessly between two different positions: that of the "the responsible father" and that of a "leading member of a criminal gang." Through these excerpts we also learn how the old prison is part of Oskar's

and John's shared family narrative and that it's visiting facilities are assessed as "good" or "better" compared to those in the new maximum-security prison.

John and Oskar's narratives are counter narratives to the prison officer Henry's conception of "the good visit". Henry believes that the doors to the visiting room must be closed, so that the family can have some privacy. "It is best for the family," he repeatedly states. As John continues to insist on the open door, Henry explains that it would never work because "our security system would explode completely." Henry's identity construction is caught between two competing master narratives that exist within the Danish criminal justice system: one master narrative that articulates incarceration as a process of rehabilitation and care and another that emphasises imprisonment as a matter of punishment, control and security. Both John and Oskar seem to reject Henry's conception of "the good visit" and they construct a counter narrative that aligns with their shared family narrative: the narrative about the good (old) prison that allows prisoners and their families to meet freely during visiting hours.

During his talk about the old prison Oskar is asked what it was that made these visits good. To this Oskar replies, "I just think it was...it was because it was my mom and my dad and me who were together." This does not represent a counter-narrative as such, but it does indicate that Oskar and his mother have their own alternate family narrative and shared understanding of what made these previous visits "good:" they were together as a family.

In the first part of our analysis we have looked at the speaking subjects as "agents" that navigate identity by performing certain roles. Furthermore, we have identified a number of narrative categories that seem to be at play in the construction of personal or shared identity, including master, counter and family narratives. In the last part of our analysis we will attempt to extend the analysis to include the dimensions *constancy and change* as well as the dimension of *sameness versus difference.*

6.2 Plotting identity navigation (step 3)

This part of the analysis will be carried out visually by thematically clustering some of the excerpts that we have already presented above. In addition, we then map out the identity navigation according to the last two dimensions. We will focus on two particular topics that was prompted by the game and talked about in both interviews: the "be honest cards" and the conception of "the good visit".

The first plotting (Figure 4) concerns John and Oskar's descriptions and experiences of the be honest cards. The interview with the John ("Interview A") is placed on the left side of the figure, while the interview with Oskar is mirrored on the right side (as "Interview B"). In this plotting we have attempted to focus on identity navigation in relation to the dimension of *agency* (blue line) and *constancy and change* (green line). Master-and counter narratives are marked with red lines.
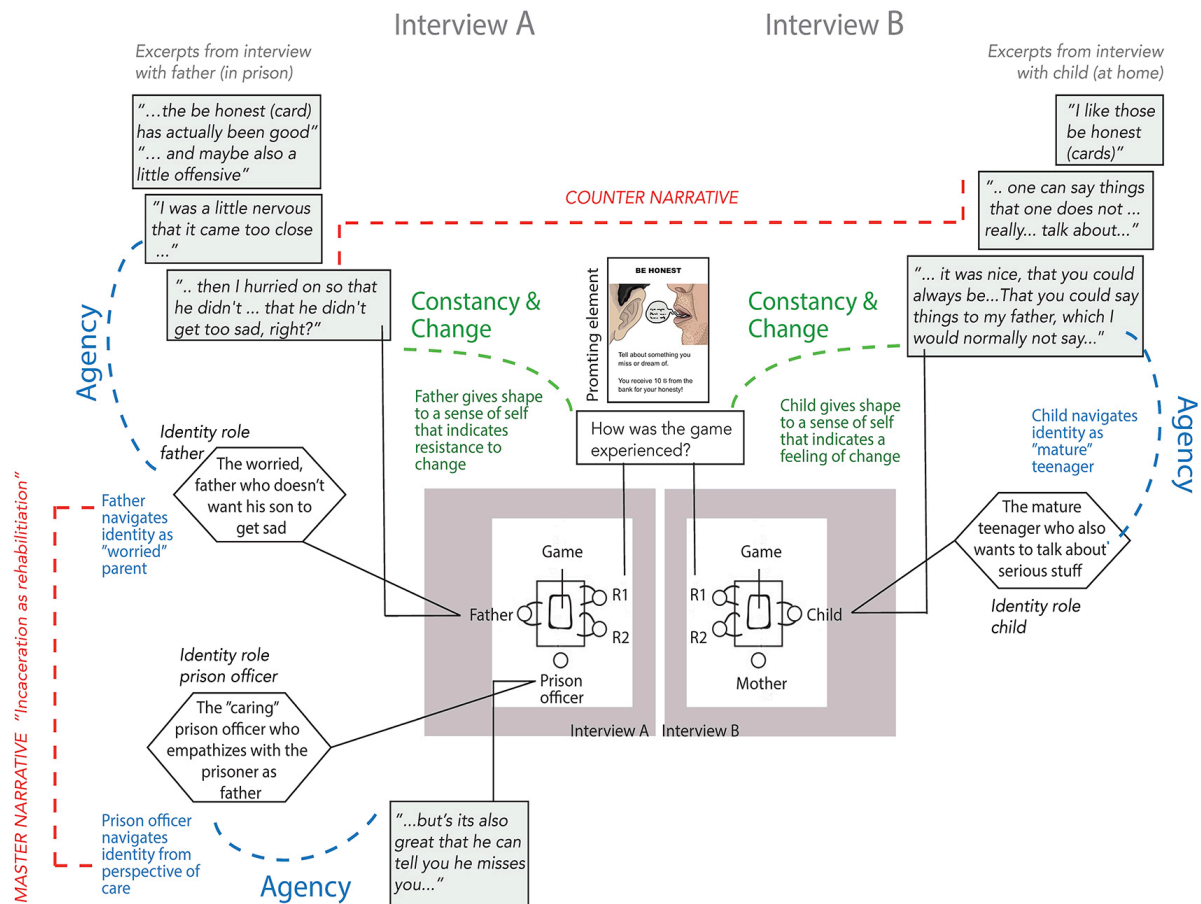
Figure 4   *The first plotting concerns John and Oskar's descriptions and experiences of the Be honest cards. The identity navigation is mapped in relation to the dimension of "agency" (blue) and that of "constancy and change (green).*

In John's interview the be honest card has prompted talk about the father being concerned that the be honest card will make his son "too sad." In the dimension of *agency* (blue line) the father is positioning himself as "the worried father" (afraid of Oskar getting too sad). The prison officer supports and scaffolds this identity formation by positioning himself as "the caring prison officer" who empathises with the prisoner and supports him in his parenting role. In their identity process both father and prisoner assimilate with the institutional master narrative within the Danish criminal justice system that articulates incarceration as a process of rehabilitation and care.

If we compare John's concern about the be honest card making his son "too sad" with Oskar's reflection on the same game card, then he is positioning himself rather differently. For John's son the be honest cards seem to open up for a possibility to "say things" to his father that he "would not normally say." Here the son is positioning himself as "the mature teenager" - an identity role that does not align very well with how the father defines him within the family (as a small child that needs attention or protection). Oskar's account represents a counter narrative in terms of how the be honest card is experienced and valued as well as how his father defines him within the family narrative.

In the dimension of *constancy and change* (green line) the father gives shape to a sense of self that indicates a resistance to go into things that gets too emotional ("I was a little nervous that it came too close."). The son, on the contrary, expresses a sense of self that indicates a feeling of something being different than before ("one can say things …that one does not really talk about"). Based on this we argue that Oskar feels that a change has happened (between him and his father) and that the be honest card has prompted this change.

The second plotting (Figure 5) concerns the participants' experience and description of the "good" prison visit. In this plotting we focus on identity navigation in relation to the dimension of *agency* (blue line) but we will add *sameness versus difference* (purple line) to get a more profound understanding of how the father and son navigate identity in relation to other groups (their own family versus other prisoner's families).
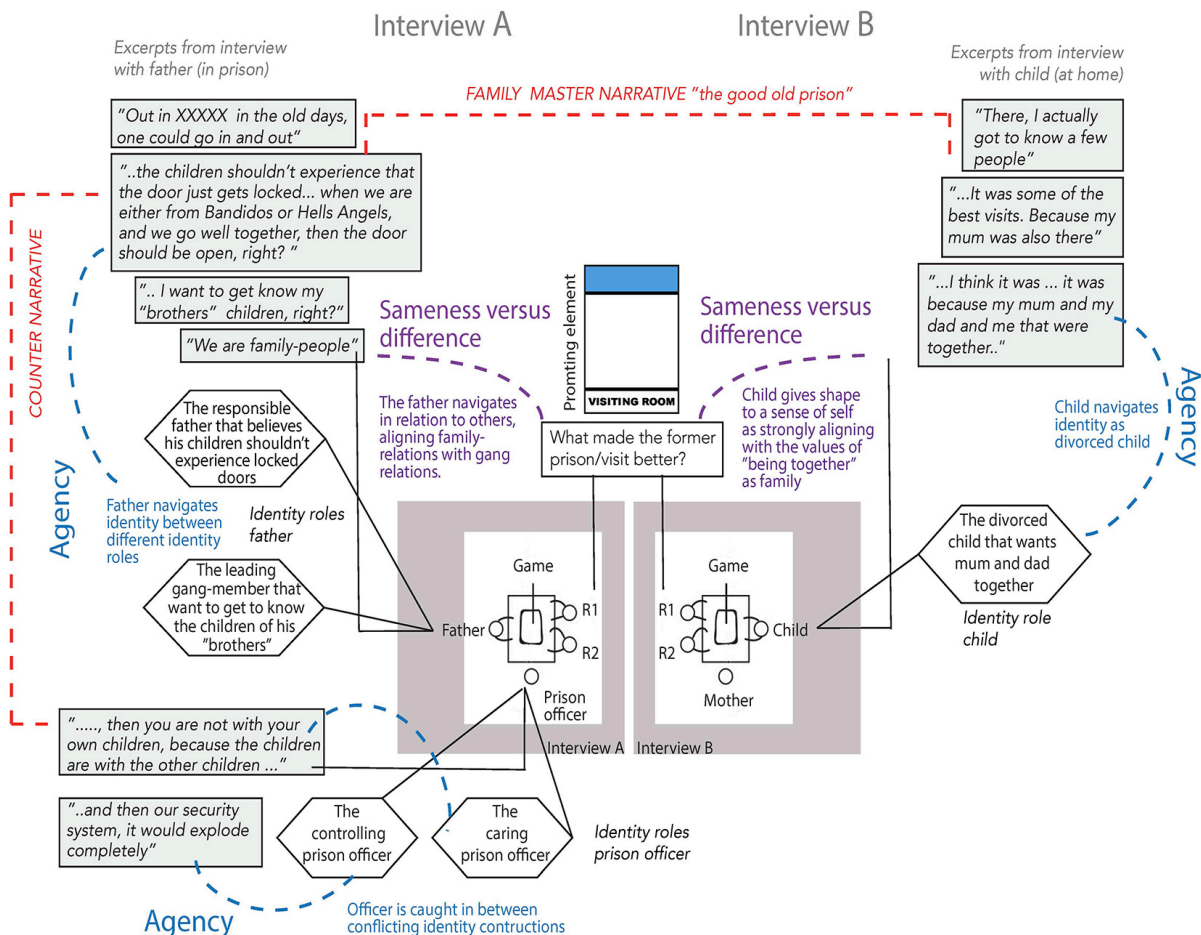

Figure 5   The second plotting concerns John and Oskar's descriptions and experiences of the "good" prison visit. The identity navigation is mapped in relation to the dimension of " agency" (blue) and that of "sameness versus difference" (purple)

In interview A and B, the game has prompted family talk about the difference between past visits and present visits. In both interviews, the father and child (independently of

each other) seem to share the idea of the old prison somehow having been better than the present one. But this family narrative about the "good old prison" is more complex than that.

If we apply the dimension of *agency* as well as the dimension of *sameness versus difference,* John positions two different identity roles; "the responsible family father" ("the children shouldn't experience that the door just get locked") and "leading gang-member" ("I want to get to know my "brothers' children"). In the dimension of *sameness versus difference* John seems to navigate his identity by equating family relationships with gang-relations. If we activate the same dimensions in the interview with Oskar we get a different insight into why these past events have relevance for the child's experience of the past ("It was some of the best visits. Because my mum was also there"). The child positions the identity role as "divorced child" and the self-other differentiation in the dimension of *sameness versus difference* is navigated by giving shape to a sense of self that strongly aligns with the value of the three of them (him, his dad and his mum) being together "as a family". This navigation tells us that even though both father and son share a family narrative about the "old" prison as "better", they might not share *what more precisely* made these visits "good".

The prison officer is countering the father's family narrative of the "good visit" (the visit with open doors) and the plotting visualizes his identity dilemma; he is caught between two conflicting identity roles. One that aligns with "care" ("then you are not with your own children") and another that aligns with "control" ("our security system would explode"). Whereas the father navigates rather unproblematic between "responsible dad" and "leading gang-member", the prison officer has more difficulties in navigating between "care" and "control".

7. Conclusion

Through our case study we analyse the various narrative categories that are involved in a family's co-construction of identity and how these narratives work in a social context. Here master narratives as well as counter narratives plays a central role in how families navigate individual and shared identities. For instance, Oskar and his father have a shared family narrative that offers resistance to the Prison & Probation Service's Master narrative of the "good visit". But Oskar also give shape to a sense of self that indicates that the good visit for him positions different values and preferences than those of his father.

Identity constructions are complex matters as they often involve a dynamic social process of negotiating multiple roles of identity and self-other relationships. By applying the dimensions of navigation and turning these into visual plottings we gain a more profound understanding of the dynamics of identity formation and how these work across time (e.g. in relation to present or past family visits); how these works in relation to group-identity (e.g. criminal gang relations versus family relations); or between family members. For instance, Oskar expresses a sense of self that indicates a feeling of something being different than before and that a change has happened between him and his father, through the activation of the be honest cards.

We state that design researchers need analytical tools, methods and models that enable them to evaluate the impact of a given social design project and whether it offers a qualitative change and value for the people interacting with the design. Value in this context, can be a matter of giving families the opportunity to share 'family narratives' and to negotiate and navigate identities. By co-designing a game world particularly for families of prisoners, narratives can be shared and at the same time this storytelling space can allow individual family members to position their own values and preferences in relation to past, present and future events. Our contribution is a method of analysis that enable design researchers to examine identity navigation. This method forms the first step in developing a more extensive theoretical framework and interdisciplinary dialogue between social design research and narrative theory.

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