**Social
Geography
Discussions**

Interactive
Comment

Interactive comment on "Community development and social actor theories: a case study in Montréal (Canada)" *by* G. Sénécal

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To define the concept of social actor, I conducted a brief literature review of the most widely known papers published on the topic. My goal is not to establish a theory of collective action, or even to provide a critical reading. Rather, my goal is to identify the characteristics, the functions and the actions taken up by so-called social actors. While drawing on several theories, my intention was to show that the actor is not one-dimensional. Indeed, the same individual or representative of an organisation will alter their actions according to the context and the position taken within the context. It was apparent to me that, while observing contexts of collective action, as the one found in the Villeray district in Montréal, that the individuals, groups, networks, and anyone that can be linked in one way or another to the concept of actor, define themselves

essentially by the various postures taken according to the context. By posture, I refer to Pierre Bourdieu's proposal to connect the methods used by social actors in their intervention and their position taken in the context. In other words, the posture evolves simultaneously with the situation. I then proceeded in classifying the various theories compiled on the definition of the concept of actors. These are shown in Table I. What I try to show in the paper are the various postures of actors in the different positions taken. The same actor is able to adopt any of these postures simultaneously or successively. In response to Referee 2 who writes, "Part of the problem here lies in the number of theories the author introduces; part of it lies from the opaqueness with which the arguments", I intend to reconsider the way I framed the initial objective, which consists of establishing a classification of the postures. I make explicit the limited reach of the proposal in order to avoid any ambiguity. The proposed link between the different theories placed within a model does not signify that these six big theories are merged. An actor, who is not one-dimensional, applies strategic, communicational and reflexive skills, etc. Combining practices, interventions and positions – which I call the postures of the actor – enables me to carryout an in depth analysis of the sphere of practices. This is the reason why I chose to combine several postures in a flexible model (that can consider the complexity of different types of actors). Besides, I emphasize how I was able to observe every posture of the actor in the case study presented in the second part of the paper. In order to avoid any risk of giving an all-encompassing definition of the actor, I offer instead expanded definitions in the theoretical section. This is done in response to the Referee who writes, "The notion of social actor refers to all stakeholders, individuals or groups, within civil society or public institutions involved in processes and carrying out initiatives in support of community development or urban revitalization". In the revised text, the concept must be widened to include such notions as social interactions, networking, and public communication. Likewise, it will be necessary to distinguish between individuals and organizations that embody real actors or collective actors that are considered as global actors (a social movement for example). It is important to specify that the observed actors in the context (i.e. in the Villeray

district) are building a collective project. Offering a more precise understanding should remove the ambiguities mentioned by Referee 2.

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