

*The following is an excerpt from an Article published on Page 15 of the community newspaper
Translated by Jennifer Long*

Jennifer Long has spent the recent months being very busy in the neighbourhood. She attended many events as people came out to debates surrounding the local housing project, she poured lemonade at the opening of the artificial turf on the Branch Street, she helped set up and listened to the lectures of the heritage preservation group 'Friends of the Hofpleinlijn', in addition to helping out the young people with their homework. She said: "In the beginning I was more part of the scene than a participant. But the more Dutch I learned, and the better I could express myself and the more I started contributing. I always try to be involved, if only by helping clean up."

Q: What have you studied the past year?

"I have tried to understand the impact of important political and social events on the daily lives of people that I examine in public spaces. I ask: how does one use space according to the political, socio-economic and cultural relations in larger society? I focus on whether or not there is increased tension between different cultures and peoples. The Netherlands is traditionally known as a tolerant, but today there are compulsory integration courses and identity-influenced preventive searched (e.g. Moroccan Youth), which make more people feel excluded."

Q: What conclusions can you draw it?

"It is too early to draw conclusions. I've interviewed nearly one hundred people; I've been many places and have participated in lots of activities. I will use all of this information in the coming year. According to recent scientific literature, the increasing tension caused by globalization, i.e. the increased immigration and economic insecurity, will affect how people get along in everyday life. I wanted to know how that looks in everyday life."

