“WE’RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER”:

SOCIAL CAPITAL, COMMUNITY BOARDS and COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION in CHRISTCHURCH

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Political Science in the University of Canterbury by

CRAIG SINGLETON

University of Canterbury 2002
Acknowledgements

To my parents, Sel and Judy. Thanks for all the books, and the encouragement to read them. Thank you Sel for the spirited dinner table conversations that spawned my interest in politics; and thank you Jude for everything else. Many thanks to Brad, Brenda, Tom, Deborah and Steve.

This thesis benefited immensely from the insight, patience and wisdom of my supervisors. Their help, wit and deciphering skills are greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Joanna Goven for your unflagging support, enthusiasm and contribution, and for allowing a free rein.

Jim Ockey for agreeing to supervise a half completed work, and reminding me to spur it on. Thank you for the confidence to see this finished.

Keiko Tanaka, formerly of the Sociology Department, for helping me start this, and for your enthusiasm for my topic.

Jill Dolby, a living treasure who made each day at school more pleasurable (bearable). Thank you for your humour, time, compassion, humility...

Matt Hirschberg, Ron McIntyre and Philippa Greenman for your interest and support throughout my stint in the department. And

Thank you to my comrades in the department. Especially those with whom I shared cell 440. Jonathon, collaborator and guru on all matters green, thanks for continuing the spirited debate, and for all your help. Cheers to Caroline and Michael. Many thanks to everyone that helped me pull all this together in my customary last-minute panic, that seemed to last for ever: Mark, Craig, Ginny, Janine, Lindsay, Jud, Phyllis, Mr B. and Rebecca, who as good fate would have it, was there with me at the start of all this many years ago in stage one. On that note, thank you to Olive Brown for your encouragement support, and giving me the confidence to do this.

Thank you to comrades long gone who made this all the better experience, Sarah T, Nicola and Ellen.

Many thanks to Sarah B for all your help and critique.
Thank you to the people of North Beach for providing a caring, safe and vibrant community in which to live.

Salut! to the “Tree Group” for your humour, energy and dignity. I don’t want to do it again, but if I have to, I know who to call.

Thank you Connie, Jason and Jamie, and Lynne, Darius, Sacha, Jesse and Anne, and the lovely ladies at the Tuam Learning Centre, for looking after the kids.

Thank you “Donald”, “Jane”, “Alf”, “Peggy”, “Evelyn”, and “Mary”, for sharing your thoughts and confidences with me.

Many people in the Christchurch City Council deserve thanks. Among them are the Burwood-Pegasus, Spreydon-Heathcote, and Riccarton-Wigram Community Boards (1998-2001), the Chairs of each respective Board, and the Advocacy Teams and support staff attached to each Board. Thank you to everyone at the Civic offices that answers the telephone.

Attempting this thesis would have been impossible without the financial support of the Student Allowance. Thank you to the tax-payers of New Zealand.

Hi Sandy, ACNielsen remains my longest continuous stint of employment, so thank you for keeping me on the books, and on the street. Cheers to Tess, Glen and Filthy for the other exciting work that comes my way.

The title of this thesis borrows a line from the movie Brazil, screenplay by Terry Gilliam, Tom Stoppard, and Charles McKeown, that parodies the inefficiency of efficiency, among other things. The scene in question portrays the hero exposing himself to risk, questioning another person’s trustworthiness, deciding the other person can be trusted, and then having that trust verified and rewarded. When offered recompense for taking the risk and doing the other person a favour, the hero declines and replies:

we’re all in this together.

My darling Pamela, thank you, thank you, thank you, for putting up with all of this, and so much more.

All I’m saying, pretty baby, la la love you, I don’t mean maybe

For my children Alvin and Otis,
And other future participants.
# Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introducing Social Capital and Democracy ........................................ 1

Introducing Social Capital and Democracy ......................................................... 1

Introduction ........................................................................................................ 1

Rationale .............................................................................................................. 3

A Gap in the Literature ....................................................................................... 3

A Resident's Opportunity ................................................................................... 4

Thesis Outline ..................................................................................................... 5

Chapter 2 - Social Capital .................................................................................. 5

Chapter 3 - Passing the Motion: Social Capital and Community Boards ............ 6

Chapter 4 - Social Capital in Christchurch: The Interviews .............................. 7

Chapter 5 - Social Capital, the Christchurch City Council and the Community: A Case Study of Thomson Park ............................................................. 7

Chapter 6 - A Conclusion ................................................................................... 8

Research Methods ............................................................................................... 8

Case Study .......................................................................................................... 8

Participant Observation ..................................................................................... 9

Interviews ............................................................................................................ 15

Document Analysis ............................................................................................ 18

Chapter Two: Social Capital ............................................................................... 19

Introduction ........................................................................................................ 19

A Brief History of Social Capital ........................................................................ 21

Social Capital as a Private Resource .................................................................. 21

Social Capital as a Public Good .......................................................................... 23

Defining Social Capital ...................................................................................... 24

Definition of Social Capital for this thesis ......................................................... 25

Civil Society and Social Capital .......................................................................... 26

Trust and its Critique: The Strength of Relationships ....................................... 29

Putnam's Conception of Trust: Norms of Reciprocity and Networks of Civic Engagement ................................................................. 30

Why Trust is Important ..................................................................................... 31

Routines and Reputations: Trust as Habit ........................................................... 33

Conformity and Familiarity: Trust as Cohesion .................................................. 33

Collaboration: Trust as Policy ............................................................................ 34

Institutionalising Trust: Impersonalising the Personal ....................................... 35

An Institutional Mediator of Trust ...................................................................... 36

Trust in Political Institutions ............................................................................. 37

The Functions of Distrust: .................................................................................. 38

Networks: The Importance of Relationships ..................................................... 39

Putnam and Associations .................................................................................... 40

The Internal Benefits of Associations: Learned Cooperation? .......................... 41

The External Benefits of Associations: Towards Democracy? .......................... 42

Associations: Spontaneous Affinities or Artefactual Constructions? ................. 42

Problems with the Joys of Successful Collaboration: The Internal Defects of Associations ................................................................. 43

Problems with Interest Articulation: The External Defects of Associations ........ 44
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital in Context:</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associations are Not All Alike.</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Networks</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Value of Unpaid Work</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction in the Community</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life on the Street: The Importance of Lively Streets</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating Social Capital: Synergy Between Governments and Residents</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital: Democratic Alchemy or Academic Snake Oil?</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three:</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing the Motion: Social Capital and Community Boards</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy: Policy as an Enabling Tool</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Consultation: “Seeking Community Views”</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Trust</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Institutional Trust: Competent and Engaged Staff</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy Teams</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problem of Bureaucratic Inertia</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Networks</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising the Profiles of Community Boards: The Importance of Linkage</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Anonymity of the Residents’ Association</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four:</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital in Christchurch: The Interviews</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Methods</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networks</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC and Generating Social Capital</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Demographics</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in the Community: Everybody Needs Good Neighbours???</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Problems of Establishing Trust: When Trust is Not Conferred Across Communities</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fear of the Stranger: When Trust is not Generalized</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Limits of Trust: When Trust Does Not Result in Collective Action</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When Neighbourhoods Feel Like Home</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Matter of Priorities: Community, Family and Social Capital</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting the Family: Social Capital and Work</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casting the Social Networks</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Else the Respondents Do</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What They Do Not Do</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Matters: Relations with the Christchurch City Council:</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating Social Capital or Cultivating Apathy?</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embeddedness?</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Perils of Apathy: The Irrelevance of the CCC as the Antithesis of Embeddedness</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Five: Social Capital, the Christchurch City Council and the Community: A Case Study of Thomson Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalising Trust</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Social Capital of a Seaside Suburb</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arenas of Social Capital: The Importance of Public Land</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networks in the Community</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Proposal to Fell Conifers at Thomson Park: An Orienting Narrative</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What the Council did to Inform the Public</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Community Response</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Council Reaction</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital In The Community</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Trust: The Formation of Social Capital</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing Distrust: The Formation of Indignation</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tree Group and Social Capital</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synergy With The Community?: The Christchurch City Council Fails To Instil Trust</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Promises</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfair Procedure</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Power of the Bureaucrats and the Impotence of the Board</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Power of the Committee and the Impotence of the Board</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misinformation: Undermining Trust</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misinformation from the Councillors</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Importance of Accepting Responsibility: Regaining Trust</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter Six: Conclusions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Concept of Social Capital</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy and Social Capital</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Sources</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Sources</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Appendices</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: Seeking Community Views</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2: Letters to the Community Board</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3: Interview Schedule</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Structured Interviews</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured Interviews</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4: Letter to Residents</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 5: Information Sheet</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 6: Consent Form</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abstract

Social capital is a property of the relations between people; it denotes resources available to people based on the trust within those relationships. Robert Putnam connected social capital to democratic performance claiming it was an agent for democracy. He equated the term with civic-ness and in so doing attributed social capital with properties that it did not have when applied when to larger, abstract, conglomerates of people such as communities and nation-states. For social capital to be relevant to democracy, it requires social trust - a trust diffused throughout society and available to all of its members. In this thesis, it is argued that social capital is not necessarily democratising as Putnam claims because trust is not automatically transitive; trust cannot be applied to one relationship because it exists in another relationship. Trust at the community level, therefore, relies on a mediating structure to facilitate social trust. Based on a case study of a dispute involving an institution created as just such a mediating structure (a Community Board in Christchurch), it is argued that political institutions can act as a mediating structure to facilitate social trust and so facilitate social capital. This, however, is possible only if the political institutions themselves are trustworthy. Trust is inhibited by political institutions and their agents when promises are broken, procedures are unfair, when trust placed in the institution is not reciprocated, or when residents are treated with disrespect. If a political institution or its agents are considered untrustworthy they are not able to facilitate social capital. The ability of a political institution to facilitate social capital also depends on the authority and resources of the institution, and the abilities, competence and ethics of the staff responsible for facilitating social capital.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING SOCIAL CAPITAL AND DEMOCRACY

Introduction

This thesis examines the relationship between political structures and social capital. In this thesis I argue that social capital is not inevitably democratising because trust cannot be conferred automatically onto other social relationships in a civil society prone to conflict. The thesis will demonstrate that Putnam’s argument that social capital enhances democracy is flawed. Further, it will offer alternative arguments as to how social capital can be democratically relevant.

Robert Putnam was the first theorist to link social capital with democracy. Previously, literature on social capital addressed it in terms of intergenerational poverty (Loury, 1977), educational attainment (Coleman, 1986, 1988) and access to employment opportunities (Granovetter, 1973). Putnam’s thesis was that social capital made democracy work, as he indicated with the title of his influential book. The term social capital gained currency after the publication of Making Democracy Work (Putnam, 1993). Civic leaders, policy-makers and politicians of all political hues embraced Putnam’s contention that a community’s social capital was the product of the trust, networks and norms practised within that community. The civic culture of a community, Putnam argued, predisposed that community to be more involved, and influential, in affecting political structures. In turn, those political structures were more responsive to a community rich in civic culture. Putnam drew upon Alexis de Tocqueville’s Democracy in America, and described a social capital that bubbles up from below. He described an ethic of cooperation that ferments and matures in voluntary associations, enabling its members to become more trusting and
trustworthy. This creates a civic community that promotes democratic effectiveness and efficiency. People, Putnam claimed, via the mediation of associational life, produce a democratic polity by virtue of their civic actions.

Putnam's work, however, was widely criticised. His arguments were rebutted as circuitous and tautological, conflating the sources of social capital with its consequences (Foley and Edwards, 1997, Portes, 1998). He epitomises social capital as ‘trust’, but does not define what trust is (Levi, 1996, Warren, 1999); and he expects to apply trust as easily to a community as to an individual. Putnam had stretched what was a term that referred to the strength of social relations between individuals or small groups, to apply it to less definable, larger aggregates of people such as communities, regions and nations. Putnam reduced civil society to the domain of voluntary associations, of the type popular in the 1950s, and deduced them to be the sole source of social capital (Skocpol, 1996, Newton, 1997, Cohen, 1999). He was also historically misleading (Sabetti, 1996), methodologically mischievous (Tarrow, 1996) and neglected to recognise the possible negative effects of social capital (Portes, 1996, 1998). Furthermore, Putnam conferred on social capital a moral and ethical component that the original concept did not have.

Despite the criticisms levelled at Putnam, the idea of civic engagement influencing democratic governance is an idea worthy of more investigation, and Putnam has provoked responses that have attempted to further develop this aspect of democratic theory. In this thesis, I will argue that there is not a clear link between social capital and democracy, without the existence of “social trust”. Social trust exists when trust between individuals is “generalised” or “institutionalised”. It will be further argued that the generalisation of trust requires facilitation by a political institution. This argument emerges from a case study of social capital, social trust, and political facilitation in Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand. Local government is the form of government closest to the people, and Community Boards are the level of local government closest to people. Moreover, the Christchurch City Council (CCC) has a policy of “bridging” social capital. The research therefore examines the Community Board's role in “bridging” social capital.¹

¹“Bridging” social capital refers to connecting one group and its social capital with another group and its social capital, as opposed to “bonding” social capital which involves reinforcing the social capital within a group.
When considering whether Community Boards facilitate social capital, two preliminary questions must be addressed.

Can political institutions generate and maintain networks of trust and norms of participation (social capital)?; and if so, are Community Boards capable of creating, engendering, fostering, and maintaining these networks and norms?

In theory, it would appear that government structures may be able to establish and maintain networks of cooperation. The adoption of credible commitments, fair procedures, and reciprocating trust may all generate networks of cooperation by generating trustworthiness (Levi, 1998, pp. 90-93). Government institutions also have the resources and infrastructure to achieve this goal.

Community Boards were established to promote, or at least give the political appearance of attempting to promote, local engagement of communities into the newly rationalised local government arena. The Local Government reforms in New Zealand (1989) caused numerous smaller councils to amalgamate into considerably larger entities, and Community Boards were established to maintain grassroots involvement. The reforms pre-date Putnamania, but the raison d'etre of Community Boards is to be consultative intermediate bodies between the local council structures and the community. Community Boards have a coordinating function. Community Boards have the potential to act as the generators and promoters of local trust, and the facilitators of local networks. In short, Community Boards should be able to, and should, coordinate collective action that promotes the well-being and prosperity of their local communities.

Rationale

A Gap in the Literature

There is a dearth of literature pertaining to social capital in Aotearoa New Zealand. There was a flurry of writings on social capital in 1997, coinciding with Putnam's visit to New Zealand. The then Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, adopted the term and described social capital as "all that is good". Bolger did not define what social capital is, nor, as Mary Richardson (1998) points out, did he define what good
was. The literature that does exist (Blakely and Suggate [1997], Reid [1997], Robinson [1997]) is largely unmindful of the contested nature of the concept of social capital. This literature adopts Putnam’s view of the concept and conflates the causes of social capital with its effects. Similarly, social capital is equated with social cohesion. The writings at this time were also a reaction to the “adoption” of social capital by the then National Government. Most of the writing on social capital came from either senior public servants, or from church welfare officials. There are several Doctoral candidates currently writing about social capital (Witten-Hannah, Kibblewhite, Killerby), otherwise there has been no attempt to critique Putnam’s connection between democracy and social capital, no case studies of social capital in the community, and no study of social capital at the level of local government in Aotearoa New Zealand.

A Resident’s Opportunity

Coinciding with the commencement of the first year of my Masters project, Christchurch City Council planners proposed to fell a significant stand of conifers (about 50 pines and 400 macrocarpas) in my local park, Thomson Park at North Beach. Some local residents had initiated calls to fell the trees, and their request dovetailed with the Council’s policy of removing mature conifers and replacing them with native vegetation. However, other residents opposed the proposal to fell the trees, and thus began the dispute over Thomson Park.

Community meetings were organised and a core group emerged to save the trees. This group will be referred to as the Tree Group throughout this thesis. The Tree Group mobilised sufficiently to attract sixteen hundred names to a petition to save the trees. I engaged in collaborations with the group that opposed the felling. I became involved in the effort to save the trees because the paucity of prior knowledge about the proposal concerned me.

---

2 Richardson’s thesis outlines the evolution of the term in New Zealand.
3 I was initially framing my research in terms of public access to public land.
4 The Tree Group consciously did not adopt a name. I have chosen Tree Group because of its simplicity. I have also capitalised the title to distinguish the “Group”, from generic groups.
5 I had only learnt of the proposal because of a casual conversation with my friend and neighbour, a Council Park Ranger. I was a post-graduate student with an academic interest in public land, living practically across the road from this park. The trees could be seen from my front windows, yet, the consultation process, at that date, was due to a personal connection, not official Council communication.
The Thomson Park tree dispute featured at Community Board, Council Committee and full Council meetings. Initially I resisted suggestions that the Thomson Park tree dispute should be a part of this thesis, but as events unfolded, the situation became potent in exemplifying many aspects of community participation, Council consultation and its relevance to social capital. If I were to understand social capital in the context of community participation and the role of Community Boards in creating, facilitating or inhibiting social capital, events in my own neighbourhood provided rich material to research.

Opponents to the felling proposal claimed the consultation process did not engage either the residents of the area or visitors to the park. What makes these complaints relevant is that the principle of community consultation is enshrined in the Christchurch City Council’s “Seeking Community Views Policy (1997a)” (refer Appendix 1). Implicit in the text of the policy is the language of social capital: “fostering relationships”, “networks” and “transparent processes”. There appears to be a synchrony between the two processes of community consultation and facilitating social capital. This research will contend that if the Christchurch City Council were to implement its own consultation policy, it would move towards instituting social capital. Paul Bullen, co-author of Measuring Social Capital in Five Communities in New South Wales (in a personal interview 25/1/2000) confirmed that improved public consultation would certainly improve social capital: both rely on communication, although social capital may also be communicated tacitly.

Thesis Outline

Chapter 2 – Social Capital

This second chapter provides the theoretical framework for the thesis. Social capital is defined as the non-contractual exchange of resources between mutually trusting actors. Access to the resources of another party is based on the strength of their relationship. Social capital is an exchange based on trust.

The definition, applicability and moral value of social capital have undergone radical change as the term has increased in popularity, representing different meanings and opportunities to people with different perspectives. This chapter examines the implications of appropriating a term once used to refer to the attributes
of specific relationships between individuals and small groups, to now use it to refer to larger aggregates of people, describing communities and nation-states. When applied to communities, social capital is often equated with civic-ness, or social cohesion. This chapter inquires if that is an appropriate connotation for the term.

Trust and networks are considered as constituent elements of social capital, and are independently evaluated.

Trust is defined as a medium of communication that reduces social complexity. Specific trust relates to the trust between individuals in a relationship, whereas general trust, or social trust is diffuse and is trust of unknown, unverified persons. It is argued that institutional artifice is required to convert specific trust into generalised trust, and that this is necessary for social capital to have relevance for democracy. This involves a discussion on why trust is (or is not) important for democracy.

Networks are the relationships between individuals and can be either formal or informal. Formal networks, such as voluntary associations, are claimed to be the source of social capital, however, they may only be the indicators of pre-existing social capital. Alternatives to voluntary associations such as informal networks or casual interaction may also facilitate social capital.

Community infrastructure affects social capital: entertainment (parks, pubs) commerce (shops, dairies) and transport (bus-stops, footpaths) have the potential to facilitate trust based on social interaction (Jacobs, 1961; Raynor and Lee, 1997).

This chapter aims to develop a framework that demonstrates social capital as the benefits that can accrue to individuals due to their relationships with other people; and how this framework may be relevant to democracy.

Chapter 3 – Passing the Motion: Social Capital and Community Boards

This chapter aims to identify the necessary conditions for local government institutions to facilitate social capital. Specifically, it questions if the Christchurch City Council is able to enact its policy of “bridging social capital”. As such, it introduces the Christchurch City Council and its Community Board structure. The functions, roles and responsibility of Community Boards are discussed, with particular emphasis on the Board’s relationship with the consultation process. This
chapter examines the ability of Community Boards to connect with their constituent communities, and correspondingly, the ability of Community Boards to establish networks of trust with the community.

The Community Boards' relationships with council procedure, and the bureaucracy that implement that procedure, are also examined by considering if Community Boards are able to effectively represent their community at the higher Council level, and so maintain their community's trust in them. The chapter examines the ability of Community Boards to facilitate social capital.

Chapter 4 – Social Capital in Christchurch: The Interviews

Interviews provide an account of the relevance and implications of trust, the nature of peoples' relationships and consequently their access to social capital. The interviews are used to ascertain if trust conferred onto specific people is generalised or automatically transferable beyond those specific relationships. The interviews demonstrate that social capital exists in the respondents daily lives based on specific relationships. The interviews will also demonstrate how the respondents have access to social capital; whether through individual relationships, as members of associations. The interviews will also indicate the relevance of the Christchurch City Council, its structures and processes in peoples' daily lives. The interviews are designed to portray social capital in Christchurch.

Chapter 5 – Social Capital, the Christchurch City Council and the Community: A Case Study of Thomson Park

The case study further examines the relationship between social capital and democracy. The case study of Thomson Park provides an example of the generation of social capital between members of an informal network. The case study examines if the social capital within a group becomes available to the wider community. The case study will also demonstrate the potential role of a political institution in facilitating social capital.

Thomson Park is a case study of consultation and illustrates how a consultation process effects trust. The case study provides an opportunity to evaluate council procedure, staff and elected representatives and their opportunity to facilitate trust via institutional artifice. The case study provides examples of local social capital
and the opportunity for the Christchurch City Council to expand these networks, engender trust and so facilitate social capital. The case study provides an opportunity to witness the social capital being bridged.

The case study chapter provides the forum to integrate the theory of chapter two, the reality of council process of chapter three, and the domestic nature of social capital, as expressed in chapter four, to interplay at a seaside park.

Chapter 6 – A Conclusion

The conclusion integrates the material from the preceding chapters to provide a framework for understanding social capital, its relevance to democracy, and the opportunities for political institutions to facilitate it.

The conclusion answers the following questions.

Can political institutions generate and maintain networks of trust and norms of participation (social capital)?; and if so, are Community Boards capable of creating, engendering, fostering, and maintaining these networks and norms?

Research Methods

Case Study

This research incorporates a case study of the dispute over Thomson Park. The case study method intensively studies a single unit, typically a specific, unique and bounded object (Barber et al., 1971, p.36). A case study is characterised by a substantial time on site, personal contact with the activists and operations of the case, and a continual reflexivity and revising of what is happening (Stake, 1994, p.242). My academic participatory involvement with Thomson Park began at the Council meeting (17/3/99) to discuss the proposals for the park and is still active at the time of writing (9/11/01).

The disadvantage of using a case study is that the generalisability of the single case is unknown (Barber et al., 1971, p.36). Case studies represent the case and not the world; the case study is a personal and particular experience (Stake, 1994, p.245). However, the findings from this case study suggest sites, processes, and dynamics that
can fruitfully be studied by analysis of the relationship between social capital and democracy in other localities.

**Participant Observation**

My role in this research was one of participant turned observer. Being directly involved in the process of Thomson Park allowed the opportunity to observe and participate in informal (Tree Group), formal (Residents’ Association) and institutional (Community Board / Council) networks.

Observation can involve observing behaviour by being a member of the group being studied, or observing a group as an outsider. Fundamental to the discipline is that observations are collected and recorded systematically (Barber et al., 1971, p.36). Adler and Adler (1994, p.377) add that observation must also be purposeful, regular and repeated. Observation is a naturalistic technique that involves observing people engaged in a process that would naturally be occurring (Adler and Adler, 1994, p.378).

An advantage of observation is that it allows behaviour to be recorded as it actually happens, rather than rely on retrospective accounts (Barber et al., 1971, p.36). Observation, when complemented with other techniques, adds depth and breadth to the research, enhancing consistency and validity (Adler and Adler, 1994, p.382). Observations enable data to be collected on large groups of people at one time, such as at meetings, and can isolate patterns of behaviour (Adler and Adler, 1994, p.382). Data was collected by extensive use of note taking, particularly at meetings where note taking was not obtrusive. A field diary was kept daily.

Mental note-taking often had to be employed, particularly following conversations when note-taking would have been inappropriate. However, at times I was able to “take note” of specific points and could use the moment to record other items of data. This situation arose during casual interactions in the community, and also when I met with Council staff. Alternatively, I would commit to note form from memory shortly after leaving the interview (Tolich and Davidson, 1999, p.132). From the diary field notes and mental notes, extended field notes were written that elaborated on the notes and added analytical and theoretical linkages along the substantive themes of decision-making, trust, relationships or communication.
Participant observation was crucial for the research because it allowed me to observe the interactions between residents, Community Board members and Council staff. Participant observation involves being a member of the group being studied.

Observers who place themselves in the same situation as their subjects will thereby gain a deeper existential understanding of the world as the members see and feel it (Adler and Adler, 1994, p.386).

Intimate observation involves the use of the self as a research tool. It augments the researcher’s observations of others with observations of their own thoughts and feelings. This can add depth to the meanings of core meetings and experiences by sharing experiences of success or failure, and feelings of trust and distrust (Adler and Adler, 1994, p.386).

I assumed the participant-observer role as a member of the Tree Group, the group that organised opposition to the Council’s plans to fell the conifers in Thomson Park. This role came as a consequence of my other participatory role, as a resident living in the North Beach community. Although the Tree Group was a focus for my activities, the thesis is not specifically about that group; rather the thesis questions relate to the Christchurch City Council’s consultative and deliberative practices, in which both the Group and the wider community were involved.

Community, Community Board, and Christchurch City Council meetings were an important site of participant-observation in this project. Not everything that is said at these meetings is included in the official minutes, necessitating the need to be more actively involved. Participant observation allowed me to monitor opinions that were aired, promises that were made, who attended the meetings and community events, and what decisions were made.

I introduced myself in writing and in person to the Burwood-Pegasus (31/5/99), Spreydon-Heathcote (2/6/99) and Riccarton-Wigram (2/6/99) Community Boards (refer Appendix 2), and to the Parks and Recreation Committee (7/4/99). I also introduced my role of researcher at the Community Meeting at the North New Brighton Memorial Hall (8/5/99).

Community meetings began as an academic curiosity and became a participatory obsession. This research, and my community participation, began at the CCC public meeting about Thomson Park of 17th March 1999, and was reinforced at the subsequent community initiated meeting of 1st April 1999.
The local residents' association had initially requested that the trees be felled. In response, I joined that association in an attempt to have more influence in our community and become a committee member. Consequently, I have attended 22 residents' association meetings. Residents' association meetings were attended for personal reasons, but they did allow the opportunity to witness who came to these meetings, what the concerns of local residents are, and their strategies for dealing with such concerns. Residents' associations are also the groups of residents that are officially recognised by the CCC, so involvement with a residents' association allowed me to witness the interaction between these groups and the Council and Community Boards. There were concerted efforts made to involve more residents in the dealings of the residents' association. In a combination of private desire and an academic experiment at enhancing local participation, I endeavoured to make more people aware of, and engage in residents' association meetings. This involved collaborating in writing, publishing and distributing notices of meetings that were letter-box-dropped to 1600 homes in the area and placing notices in the local shops inviting people to upcoming meetings. At best, the association attracted 30 people to a meeting that featured an Engineer discussing roading issues; on another occasion, the Association Secretary and I sat outside the hall in bewildered conversation because no one had turned up.

Community Board meetings provided an early focus for the research. These monthly events were more useful for an orientation of Community Board functions and activities and Council procedure than for giving explicit answers about social capital. The most valuable moments during Community Board meetings were the deputations. This is the opportunity for people to address the Board at the start of their meeting, following the preamble of accepting apologies and confirming the minutes of the previous meeting. Deputations were an opportunity to witness who approached the Board and their reasons why. Deputations also allowed me to witness the Board's, and the Council staff's, responses. The remainder of each meeting, and the vast bulk of their agenda, were presentations by Council officers of what is happening, or proposed to happen in that Community Board's wards. Community Board meetings also allowed me to witness the interactions between Board members

---

6 I was appointed "Junior Vice President" for the year 2000-2001.
and Council officers. Community Board meetings offered a condensed view of the Board in public.

As a direct consequence of my participation in the Thomson Park debate, I also attended three Parks and Recreation Committee meetings. The first time as part of the deputation speaking on behalf of the trees, the second simply out of interest, and the third to hear that Committee’s final adjudication about the trees. This last meeting, apart from sealing the fate of the trees, was particularly illustrative of the problems that Community Boards can have communicating with, and affecting the decision-making of, the Christchurch City Council. This particular meeting is further discussed in the case study chapter. To gain an appreciation of the larger context I also attended full CCC meetings.

Participation in communal activities can increase trust and exchange between the researcher and the researched, leading to improved data and a higher level of understanding. My levels of participation varied depending on the situation. For example, I was fully participatory in Tree Group deliberations and writing of submissions. I also appeared on the Group’s behalf as part of a deputation to the Council’s Parks and Recreation Committee (7/4/99).7 I participated in community events, such as public planting days on the foreshore, and in Thomson Park after the felling had occurred. Participation also involved maintenance of Thomson Park;8 picking up rubbish, painting over graffiti (which is only a minor problem for the park) and reporting of maintenance problems in the park. In this matter, I also made submissions to the Annual Plan process that prioritised budget expenditure.

A criticism of participant observation is that the method often informs more about the participant than the subject that is being studied. To limit this criticism, I have not fore-grounded my experiences of the study. This has been possible because the subject was the CCC’s structures and processes and the community’s engagement with them, rather than the impacts of these upon myself.

Being a member of the community, and a member of the Tree Group, gave me an appropriate role within an existing system of interaction. Another means of expressing the relationship between fieldworker and host community is to say they are

---

7 This meeting decided the future of the trees should go back to the community for further consultation.
8 These “civic” activities also facilitated observation of park use, and were also designed as an experiment to see how park users reacted to “civic” behaviour in the park. The unproven hypothesis was that civic behaviour would encourage communication with other park users.
sharing experiences (Bell and Newby, 1971, p.55). My status as a member of the community meant that sharing experiences with them was achievable. Like Gans (1967) in his study of Levittown, I found it easy to gain rapport because of my status of home-owner and resident.

**Casual conversations** formed an important part of this research. Wax (1982, p.39) considers casual conversations to be intrinsic to fieldwork. These were conversations held between myself and other locals in the community, members of the residents' association, people passing in the street, people participating at public planting days, people visiting the local park, patrons at the pub, customers at the local dairy or fish and chip shop. Sometimes these conversations were a direct result of my participation, such as promoting a petition at the pub or posting a notice at the local shop. Mostly the conversations were based on chance meetings or the exchange of pleasantries. Topics of these conversations usually revolved around community amenities, identity, and participation. These could include use of local parks, knowledge of local issues, opinion about Council proposals and agreement about local parochialism. In my experience, locals would invariably return a hello and a smile, and given the opportunity stop for a small chat at least. Being the parent of small adorable children also made me more approachable, and conversation more accessible and sometimes mandatory. Importantly, people were free to express themselves or withdraw.

Clandinin and Connelly (1994) claim that conversations offer equality between the participants. Listening to people requires a response that can probe deeper than an interview because the conversation is occurring in a “situation of mutual trust”(p.422). Conversations allow flexibility for the (non researcher) participant to direct the conversation and talk about what they think is important. Being conversant with others in the community is crucial for a participant observer: conversations enable the participant observer to participate, otherwise they are observing and are not engaged or participating with the community. Conversations in the community were important to understand what others knew of the Council proposals and processes. Simply engaging people in conversation (accidental sampling) was the simplest means to gauge communal awareness, and the effectiveness of Council communication. The conversations added to my “feeling” for the community. A limitation of conversations was that they were mostly banter, and did not always relate to the substantive matters of the research and proved
difficult to systemise. The conversations, therefore, acted as a barometer of the community, an indicator of what I should look out for and test in my interviews or Council dealings, rather than a body of data that I could use.

**Interactions with Christchurch City Council actors** were an invaluable source of information. These people included Community Board members, Councillors and Council staff. Unlike the casual conversations with community actors, the conversations with Council actors were systematically recorded. These conversations were also “verified” by my observations at meetings or conversations with other Council people.

I would often be in contact with the Council for personal, communal and academic reasons. As such I spoke to a range of Council officers, including: Community Advocates, Community Secretaries, Community Development Officers, Technical Officers, Planners, Policy Analysts, Area Parks Officers, Park Rangers, Contract Supervisors, Arborists, Consent Planners, Area Engineers, Reception staff and Librarians. Contact with the CCC served multiple purposes. For example, a phone call to an officer might have been directed towards obtaining information as a resident with a local concern, yet this specific inquiry would also inform the research. Alternatively, I would contact the CCC to have an issue clarified, or a policy explained to inform the research, and invariably it would be relevant to my local community, and this response would also inform me as a resident. Personal enquiries helped the research, and academic enquiries benefited my participation. The information obtained in this way was mostly factual and not contentious, but as relationships developed with some of these officers, some of these conversations became quite candid, with personal views and experiences expressed. The identities of these people need to be protected and they will be identified as “an advocate”, “a senior bureaucrat” or something similarly general.

These conversations contributed to my understanding of CCC operations, their policies and priorities. Importantly they also contributed to an understanding of CCC attitude to residents, community participation and the implementation of Council policy. The conversations provided insight to identifying the impediments of applying CCC principles and policies into practice. These conversations also underscored the problems of communication within the CCC structure: between
Councillors and Community Boards, between Community Boards and Council Units and between Council Units.⁹

**Interviews**

Semi-structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with six randomly selected residents in an attempt to understand what constitutes social capital in Christchurch. Interviews were chosen as a method for this research because they offered the opportunity to investigate respondents' "emotions, experiences and feelings" in depth (Denscombe, 1998, p. 111). The focus of the research was trust, an issue that needed to be explored in some detail and interviews were a means to do this. Six respondents were interviewed to allow for focus on the depth of the information. The interviews were semi-structured with an interview schedule of open-ended questions that allowed respondents to develop and elaborate on their own ideas (Denscombe, 1998, p. 113).

The interviews were partly based on my own questions, and partly based on the 1997 study of Bullen and Onyx *Measuring Social Capital in Five Communities in New South Wales* (refer Appendix 3 for interview schedule). The object of the interviews was to gauge peoples' connectedness to their community and its relevance to their lives. Questions were asked about their neighbourliness and participation in local events. They were asked about their contact with their neighbours, involvement with community groups, participation and membership of local clubs or associations, and about their general connectedness. Questions were asked about their feelings of trust and safety, who they trust, their likes and dislikes about the community, feelings of intimidation, if they walk down the street at night or if their community feels like home. Questions were then asked about their knowledge of Council procedure, their knowledge of Community Boards, and their involvement and contact with Council. Demographic questions were asked about their occupation, education attained and family.

---

⁹ A Council "Unit" is the term now used to refer to what was known as a "Department", the bureaucratic separation of responsibilities such as parks, streets, property or environmental services.
Selection of Respondents

Respondents were randomly selected. It was a small sample and the total number of respondents interviewed was six. Stewart-Weekes and Richardson (in association with ACNielsen) (1998) interviewed twelve respondents for their study of social capital in N.S.W. Australia. In their case, twelve respondents were purposefully selected to ensure a range of social settings reflecting “rich” and “poor” social capital.

In the thesis, respondents were deliberately selected from outside the North Beach community to avoid personal acquaintances and involvement with relevant issues. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain data about trust and its ability to be generalised.

Selecting respondents from a simple random sample requires a list, or another systematic means of enumerating the population (Judd, Smith and Kidder, 1991, p.202). I had obtained the most recent list of streets (as of June 1999) from the Subdivision Office of the Environmental Services Unit of the Christchurch City Council so there was no possibility of any street in Christchurch not being included. In this way, anyone within the Christchurch City Council boundary could have been selected. Random (representative) selection is not generally adopted in qualitative research; people are usually targeted because of the specific contribution they can make to the research (Tolich and Davidson, 1999, p.35). However, respondents in these interviews were desired for their "ordinariness." Since most people do not participate in local politics, or their local community, it seemed relevant to speak to these people to understand how their non-participation affected their social capital. By selecting the respondents as randomly as possible, ensured that I would not favour who I interviewed. Generalisations can be made based on the random nature of their selection.

People were selected on the basis of what street they lived on in the Burwood-Pegasus, Riccarton-Wigram or Spreydon-Heathcote wards. The streets were chosen by drawing letters from a random letter generator until the sequence distinguished a street name. For example, say a T was drawn all streets starting with T in those wards were eligible. If next a P was drawn a search for the streets nearest to starting with TP would be eligible. This would be TO. The third letter drawn, in this example an N,

---

10 This method is, unfortunately, biased against homeless people.
would determine the street, Tonks Street. It appears to be a convoluted system but it was simple enough in practice and delivered me a range of streets in a random fashion. To select a start point I simply drew numbers from a random number generator. For example, if I drew 1, then 2, then 3, I would start at number 1, if there was a number 12 in the street I would start there, if the street was long and had a number 123 I would start at that address. This simply meant I did not favour addresses at the start of the street and gave more variety in the starting points. Using the Tonks Street example, Tonks Street has a number 1 and a number 12, but does not have a number 123, so I would start at number 12. From number 12 the next five consecutive homes on the right as I left the premises were all included into the research cluster.

Introductory letters on Department of Political Science letter-heads were delivered to those five homes (refer Appendix 4). The letters introduced myself, the nature of the research and requested to speak to someone in that home. The person I wanted to interview was the person in the home above the age of 18 who was going to have the next birthday. In this fashion, I interviewed six people. The interviews ranged from 60 minutes to 90 minutes. The respondents were assured confidentiality and were told they may withdraw from the interview at any point they chose.

An exception from the selection criteria was Mary who was a resident of North Beach. Despite interviewing outside North Beach, I felt that a North Beach response from a person not involved in the dispute over Thomson Park was appropriate. I had met Mary once before when I interviewed her for an Honours course pilot project in 1998.\textsuperscript{11} That selection method also involved randomly selecting houses. I was prepared to re-interview any of the five respondents from that pilot project, it just happened that Mary was the first that I made contact with. I consider her selection to be as random as the other respondents based on the original selection method. I had had no contact with Mary since the 1998 interview, noting that she had not attended any meetings over Thomson Park or other local issues. I also assumed that having previously interviewed Mary, I could re-establish a rapport that would facilitate this interview.

Complementing the randomly selected respondents, three people in the Tree Group were interviewed in order to include people that had been active in community

\textsuperscript{11} The Shifting Sands of Brighton: The Longitudinal Drift from Waimari to Te Karero-Karoro
participation, especially since the randomly selected respondents were not engaged in community affairs. I chose three members of the Tree Group that had not been communally active before the formation of the group. The aim of interviewing these people was to ascertain more comprehensively their motivations and experiences, and to consolidate our many previous informal discussions.

**Analysing the Interviews**

The interviews were tape-recorded and transcripts written out long-hand to ensure familiarity with the material. This was done soon after the interview. Upon leaving the interview, at a discrete distance from the respondent's home, further notes were made reflecting on the interview experience, or theorising on a point the respondent had made during the interview in an attempt to analyse and understand the information while it remained fresh in my memory. Analysis occurred concurrent with the collection of the data (Tolich and Davidson, 1999, p.8). Data from the interviews was organised thematically according to the respondent's perceptions of safety, degree and direction of trust, interaction with neighbours, and how they participate.

**Document Analysis**

The research also draws on significant document analysis. Community Board, Parks and Recreation Committee, and Council Agendas provided details on each item appearing on the agenda, the Council officer's, and Community Board's and Committee's Chair's recommendations for those items. Community Board, Parks and Recreation Committee, and Council decisions are listed under "Proceedings", available from the CCC web site (ccc.govt.nz).

Council Policy documents, such as "Seeking Community Views" and "Community Policy and Policy Guidelines" provided important foundations for understanding CCC policy.

The following chapter, Social Capital, will now examine the theoretical foundations of social capital and its relevance for democracy.
CHAPTER TWO:

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Introduction

The term social capital gained currency in the 1990s, especially after the remarkably influential work of Robert Putnam’s (1993) *Making Democracy Work*. Civic leaders, policy makers and politicians of all political hues embraced Putnam’s contention that a community’s social capital was the product of the trust, networks and norms practised within that community. The civic culture of a community predisposed that community to be more involved, and influential, in affecting political structures. In turn, those political structures were more responsive to a community rich in civic culture. Putnam is a pivotal theorist of social capital because he introduced the concept to the discipline of political science, and consequently claimed social capital was crucial to democracy.

In 1970, Putnam commenced a 20-year study of the devolution of state power in Italy to that nation’s recently established regional governments. What began as a study to measure institutional development became a more ambitious task of explaining the divergence in institutional performance in the north of Italy compared to the south, and the implications of this for democracy (Putnam, 1993, p.xiv). Putnam (1993) concluded that those communities that shared trust, networks and norms, had a greater record of civic involvement, social responsibility and mutual assistance. Such a civic tradition resulted in a representative government that was more responsive to the demands of its citizens, and was more effective in carrying out those demands. These communities (regions) had what Putnam referred to as social capital. The north had it, the south did not. Central to Putnam’s conception of social capital were voluntary associations, stable groups that acted and existed as intermediaries between individuals and the state. He claimed that these groups did not need to be overtly
political; simply by existing and encouraging social connectedness, they enable members of such groups to exert more positive influences over formal political structures.

Putnam has drawn upon the findings, and mystique, of Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. Putnam describes social capital as an ethic of cooperation that ferments and matures in voluntary associations enabling its members to become more trusting and trustworthy. This creates a civil community that promotes democratic effectiveness and efficiency. People, it is claimed, via the mediation of associational life, produce a democratic polity by virtue of their civic actions.

Putnam's work has been widely criticised. His arguments are rebutted as circuitous and tautological. He conflated the sources of social capital with its consequences and did not explain the complex relationship between its cause and effects (Foley and Edwards, 1997, Portes, 1998). He epitomises social capital as 'trust', but does not define what trust is; and expects to apply trust as easily to a community as to an individual (Levi, 1996, Warren, 1999). His analysis is centred on civil society, claiming that it is the source and cause of effective government (Levi, 1996). He then reduces civil society to the domain of voluntary associations, of the type popular in the 1950s, and deduces them to be the sole source of social capital (Skocpol, 1996, Newton, 1997, Cohen, 1999). He is also historically misleading and methodologically mischievous (Tarrow, 1996, Sabetti, 1996). Putnam also neglected to recognise the possible negative effects of social capital (Portes, 1996, 1998). Furthermore, Putnam confers on social capital a moral and ethical component that the original concept did not have. In introducing the sociological concept of social capital to the discipline of political science Putnam has stretched what was originally a term that referred to the strength of social relations between individuals or within a group (Bourdieu, 1986,[1980], Coleman, 1988) to apply it to less definable, larger aggregates of people such as communities, regions and nations.

In this chapter I will argue that social capital loses its usefulness as an analytic tool when it is conceived as a public good and applied to large scale conglomerates, such as communities and regions. By linking the concept of social capital with the "civic-ness" of communities and nations, Putnam underestimates the complexities of trust by assuming trust is transitive. To elevate social capital as a community construction, trust must become a shared community resource. I will argue that trust is not transitive; that trust between specific individuals cannot automatically be
generalised to include other, unverified, community members. Luhmann (1979), Misztal (1996), and Dunn (1988,1993) will provide the theoretical basis for this claim.

By equating social capital with community "civic-ness", and by nominating voluntary associations as the pre-eminent source of that civic-ness, Putnam overestimates the strength and scope of associational activity. I will also argue that voluntary associations are not the pre-eminent source of social capital that they are claimed to be. Informal networks within the community are also an important source of social capital, as are casual interactions in the community that can also build webs of respect and trust that engender a form of social capital. Jacobs (1961), Cox (1995) and Newton (1997) provide the theoretical foundation for this claim.

Finally, I will also argue that social capital is not inevitably democratising. This claim will be supported by showing that trust is only conferred onto people deemed to be trustworthy and that associations are not necessarily equipped to pursue collective action endeavours.

A Brief History of Social Capital

Social Capital as a Private Resource

The literature on social capital typically traces the original use to the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu in his 1980 article, "Le capital social: notes provisoies" (Provisional notes on social capital). The term did not make it into English language usage until the 1986 publication of "The forms of capital" where social capital is defined as:

the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu, 1986, [1980] p.248.).

Social capital relationships are enacted, maintained and reinforced in social exchanges. Bourdieu's claim is that benefits accrue to individuals by virtue of their participation in groups. Social capital comprises the social relationships that allow an individual to claim access to the resources of an associate; it is also the quality and the quantity of those resources. Social capital develops at the individual level but "cannot
be reduced to a set of properties individually possessed” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 256). Social capital is not an individual or group possession, but is a possession of the relationships between those parties.

Social capital can be quantified by the size of the networks that can be mobilised and the amount of other capital available to the people in one’s networks (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). Social capital is reproduced by “sociability, a continuous series of exchanges in which recognition is affirmed and reaffirmed” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 250). Moreover, sociability may be deliberately constructed for the purpose of creating this resource. Social capital is believed to give access to economic and cultural capital. Bourdieu (1986, p. 252) emphasised the fungibility of all forms of capital and their ultimate reduction to economic capital. Bourdieu’s original conception of social capital was applied between individuals, or between individuals and groups, or between groups and groups. However, later theorists would appropriate the term and apply it to larger aggregates of people, from communities to regions to nation-states.

James Coleman is credited with introducing the term to American sociology, giving rise to widespread usage in the English language. Coleman defines social capital as:

A variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain action of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure (1988, p. 98).

Coleman (1988, p. 95) describes social capital as a “resource for action” and a way of “introducing social structure into the rational actor paradigm”. Coleman’s aim here was to reconcile sociology with economics, to formulate a theory that can explain how socialised actors whose actions are sanctioned by social norms, and constrained by rules and obligations, co-exist as self-interested actors with individual goals. In his attempt to apply rational choice in understanding the social system, Coleman’s concern was how social capital, the assets inherent in social relationships, creates human capital, the assets possessed by the individual in subsequent generations (1988, p. 109).

Coleman’s study of Jewish diamond traders demonstrated that their strong ties and threat of ostracism enforced their mores and so they avoided legal costs. Social
cohesion allowed the traders to save the economic cost of maintaining and enforcing contracts, confirming Bourdieu’s fungibility thesis. Coleman’s analysis also argues that social capital is social control. Coleman described social capital as a specific asset embedded in the context of the relationships between those traders. This means that the trust that accrued in their network, remained in their network and was not necessarily transferred to other social settings. Social capital for Coleman was morally neutral and could be applied to all manner of collective actions. Coleman’s imprecise definition allowed many different and at times contradictory processes to be defined as social capital. It also paved the way for Robert Putnam’s highly influential *Making Democracy Work*.

Social Capital as a Public Good

Jane Jacobs’ (1961) *Death and Life of Great American Cities* provides an early contemporary reference to social capital. Jacobs’ analysis relates to how the planning and physical infrastructure of a city affects the sociability of its residents. Jacobs does not go into any depth in her analysis of social capital, but her use of the term is similar to how it is now being commonly applied.

To be sure, a good city neighbourhood can absorb newcomers into itself, both newcomers by choice and immigrants settling by expediency, and it can protect a reasonable amount of transient population too. But these increments or displacements have to be gradual. If self-government in the place is to work, underlying any float of population must be a continuity of people who have forged neighbourhood networks. These networks are a city’s irreplaceable social capital. Whenever the capital is lost, from whatever cause, the income from it disappears, never to return until and unless new capital is slowly and chancily accumulated (pp.137-138).

This introduction to social capital acknowledges the need for stability and depth for incumbent networks, as well as indicating the importance of diversity (and presumably the toleration of diversity) in the form of new arrivals that are important for civic vitality. Jacobs also introduces the asset metaphor of social capital, describing it as a source of income, that when lost needs to be re-accumulated.

Putnam introduced social capital to political science by attempting to explain the differences in institutional performance, and the implications of this for democracy, between what he designated as the “civic” north of Italy, and the “un-
civic" south of Italy. Putnam (1993) concluded that those communities that shared trust, networks and norms, what Putnam denoted as social capital, had a greater record of civic involvement, social responsibility and mutual assistance. Such a civic tradition resulted in a representative government that was more responsive to the demands of its citizens, and was more effective in carrying out those demands. These communities (regions) had what Putnam referred to as social capital. The north had it, the south did not. Putnam’s definition of trust, networks and norms as integral constituents of social capital built on Coleman’s use of expectations and obligations, information channels and enforceable norms as types of social capital.

**Defining Social Capital**

Social capital is found in the structures of people’s relationships. “To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is those others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage” (Portes, 1998, p.7).

Social capital has been attributed a colourful array of metaphors. Newton (1997, p.576) describes social capital as a “force that helps bind society together”. Foley and Edwards (1997, p.550) describe social capital as a “social energy” that civil society alternately generates and consumes. Eric Uslaner (1998) describes social capital as a set of “moral resources”. It has also been attributed the contradictory properties of “social lubricant” (Misztal, 1996), and “social glue” (Scott, 1997).

Defining social capital as the production of a combination of norms, networks and the consequences of collective action has created conceptual confusion. These concepts are closely related but should not be conflated into the single concept of social capital. Norms and values are subjective and intangible, while social networks are objective and observable. To better understand social capital it is important to keep norms and networks theoretically distinct so as not to “confuse possible causes and possible effects in the same definition” Newton (1997, p.577). A benefit of this approach is a better understanding of whether trust strengthens networks or networks produce trust – or both. Or what sort of networks and associations produce what sort of trust.

Paul Bullen and Jenny Onyx (1999, pp.1-2) define social capital as simply being what we previously may have called social fabric, refashioned to give it new legitimacy and status, because “...social fabric has more status as social capital in an
economic rationalist world view”. The term social capital is considered important because it promotes social fabric, or the fabric of our society, as being as important as other forms of capital, such as financial, physical or human capital. Social capital can be referred to as capital because it has some of the characteristics of other forms of capital: it can be accumulated, and drawn upon at a later time. Bullen and Onyx define social capital as existing “within the social space between families, firms and governments...civil society”. It involves a sense of “connectedness” that exists by virtue of a cluster of these relationships. Social capital is found in the “density of non-hierarchical, multi-purpose relationships in social networks”.

Onyx and Bullen in their 1997 study *Measuring Social Capital in Five Communities in New South Wales* concluded that social capital is an aspect of empirical reality that can be measured in local communities. Onyx and Bullen recognised eight distinct elements of social capital. The first four, social pro-activity, feelings of trust and safety, toleration, and value of life, are considered to be the “building blocks” of social capital. The other four, participation in the local community, neighbourhood connections, family and friends connections, and work connections, are considered the “arenas” of social capital. From these “building blocks” connections are made within families, neighbourhoods and communities; “dynamic arenas” then form, reform and change over time. It is important to remember that social capital is not a static concept. The complexity of the social fabric means that all measures of social capital must be considered. A single measure will undervalue the underlying complexity.

A community endowed with social capital is a community characterised by people feeling safe and secure in their environment. Communities high in social capital are exemplified by people who feel valued for who they are and who feel part of the community. They contribute to the community and participate in its various organisations. During times of need they work for the common good. Work is shared out, and is neither shirked nor usurped (Onyx and Bullen,1997,p.6).

**Definition of Social Capital for this thesis**

This thesis synthesises several theoretical and empirical strands to define social capital. The common elements are: that social capital exists in the relations *between* people, that it relies on the trust binding these relationships, and that social
capital involves an exchange. The definition borrows from Bourdieu for the exchange function of social capital, particularly his fungibility thesis that claims all forms of capital can be reduced to economic capital. Coleman supports the exchange notion by identifying social capital as communication that facilitates action. Moreover, the many forms of personal capital do not constitute social capital unless exchanged. Stewart-Weekes' study found that his respondents all considered social capital as an exchange. What facilitates the exchange, moreover, is trust, or mutual assurances. Putnam was explicit on the importance of trust; similarly, Coleman referred to expectations and obligations. So here is my definition of social capital as used throughout the thesis:

Social Capital exists in the relationships between people and involves a non-contractual exchange of resources between mutually trusting actors. Access to the resources of another party is based on the degree of trust in their relationship. Social capital is an exchange of those resources based on the trust in the relationship.

Civil Society and Social Capital

Civil society is the domain - distinguished and separate from state and market apparatuses - in which individuals and groups engage in voluntary relations and exchanges (de Oliveira and Tandon, 1994, as quoted in Bradford and Nowland-Foreman, 1999, p.71). This means that in order to understand social capital, which exists in interactions between individuals and groups, it is necessary to summarise the relevant literature on civil society. There is a vast body of literature on civil society. Its relevance to social capital can be summarised as follows.

The historic legacies of the civil society envisioned by Putnam (1993,1995) can be traced back to Alexis de Tocqueville, Adam Smith, and Adam Ferguson. This conception of civil society emphasises associational life, the joining-together of people with common interests, in an environment devoid of social conflict. The habits of (apolitical) association, in turn, foster patterns of civility that have a positive effect upon governance. The focus of this view of civil society is on “well-behaved” civic associations whose strengths are non-threatening to, and consolidate, the state. In short, a non-conflictive civil society, by virtue of (good) association, produces good government (Foley and Edwards, 1996, pp.39-42).
Another conception of civil society arose from the democratisation process in Latin America and Eastern Europe. This vision of civil society is not only independent of the state, but is a counterweight to the state. This form of civil society emphasises the conflictive potential of civil society and focuses on politically mobilised social actors. There is a greater role for less formal groups, such as social movements, local interest groups and grass-root political associations. These groups are considered more likely to produce "activated members" than the bird-watching, choir-singing, ten-pin-bowling groups of Putnam's social world (Foley and Edwards, 1996, pp.39-42).

Sheri Berman (1997) presents another view of civil society. Whereas neo-Tocquevilleans would interpret a rise in associations as a healthy sign for society and consequently better government, Berman contends that a rise in some forms of association directly reflects the failing of government. Some associations, such as neighbourhood improvement groups, home schooling or home birth networks, and militia, arise because of dissatisfaction with public institutions and represent "signs of sickness rather than signs of health" (p.571).

Where Berman is commenting on the failings of the state to explain civil society, New Zealand's Department of Internal Affairs (1997) appears to be describing the abdication of the state in its description of civil society. The Department equates civil society with "strong communities", where strong communities are "able to mobilise commitment and resources in order to achieve common goals and to solve problems". Strong communities have: established networks, interactions across networks, and networks beyond community boundaries that are based on trust and social capital. They are also self reliant, have cooperative organisations and an ability to generate resources. People in strong communities have a sense of belonging and pride, and a low sense of alienation or anomie (Department of Internal Affairs, 1997).

The arguments in this thesis will adopt the view that civil society is potentially conflictive; that there are many differing and at times opposing interests in society. The elements of social capital are the endowments that energise civil society. The properties of civil society and the definitions of social capital are very similar, but can be distinguished by civil society being considered as the arena of participation and social capital being the resource that enables participation.
In summary, the arguments in this thesis are based on the definition of social capital as a resource between individuals that exists in a civil society prone to conflicting interests. In this thesis I contend that social capital exists within the properties of specific relationships between individuals. When social capital is applied to communities, however, it can only indicate the likely prevalence of such relationships occurring. At the community level, social capital is a descriptive term for possible relationships. Since it is a property not of individuals, but rather of relations between individuals, social capital cannot be considered as an aggregate of all the individuals’ social capitals. It cannot accumulate that way because people do not have automatic access to other peoples’ social capital. Although such relations may link into a myriad of discrete networks, these networks are not joined together into a vast homogenous network. To refer to the accumulation of social capital is to assume a homogeneity that does not exist.

Social capital was initially conceived, and applied, as an analytic tool to measure the strength of connections between individuals, families or small groups. Putnam, in his attempt to reconcile cultural differences and institutional performance, appropriated the term by associating social capital with civility. He then expanded social capital’s utility by applying it to account for the democratic nature of communities, regions and nation-states. Whether conceived as an individual resource or as a public good, the common, and crucial, element is that social capital exists in the relationships between people. When social capital is conceived as a community resource, however, the connections between those relationships are more abstract.

These relationships, their reassurances and resources are not automatically available to other, unknown, people in the community, so social capital as a community description is inaccurate. Ascribing social capital, or a lack of social capital, to a community homogenises the concept; it assumes that social capital is available to all people within that community, although this may not be the case.

The remainder of this chapter examines the conceptual variables that constitute social capital, trust and relationships. Both trust and relationships are vital pre-requisites of social capital – without either, social capital would not exist. I then turn to investigate the requirements for turning these resources into social capital at the communal level by institutional artifice.
Trust and its Critique: The Strength of Relationships

Trust is a generalised medium of communication that performs the function of reducing social complexity. Trust does this by transcending “available information and generalising expectations of behaviour in that it replaces missing information with an internally guaranteed security” (Luhmann, 1979, p.93). Luhmann points to communication as being important for securing trust: “the supports of trust are mainly found in opportunities for effective communication” (1979, pp.55-56). Trust also increases the toleration of uncertainty (1979, p.150). Trust is not the only medium of communication that reduces social complexity, other such media also include: faith, love, money and power.

[Trust is]...a judgement, however tacit or habitual, to accept vulnerability to the potential ill will of others by granting them discretionary power over some good (Warren, 1999, p.311).

An act of trust requires minimal monitoring or enforcement of the person that was conferred the trust. “[T]rust is an action taken in a risky situation but in which there is reason to believe in the reliability of the person being trusted” (Levi, 1996, p.47). This action can be based on personal knowledge of the person trusted, institutional sanctions to prevent transgression (with the attendant trust in such sanctions), or faith (another reducer of social complexity) in your judgement (Levi, 1996, p.47).

Trust relationships offer possibility and risk. Trust must transcend the familiar, to extend the relationships of which an individual is confident. For this reason trust is future-oriented, those conferring trust make themselves vulnerable to those that they trust. This is possible for social relationships because the people are living in a world they are familiar with; they have a mutual understanding of daily life. They will also encounter one another, and this ongoing relationship provides an informal monitoring system (Luhmann, 1979, p.37). Such a relationship may not generate trust, but it will minimise the risks of trust. Coleman (1990, p.91) reminds us that trust situations are not spontaneous, that there is a lapse in time, and that this time lapse is where the possibility of risk may occur.
Trust is closely related to power. Trust involves the relationship between the person conferring trust, the person that is being trusted, and the object of that trust. Whatever that object may be, it is valued by the person conferring the trust, and that value is understood by the person being trusted. The person being trusted has the potential to exert power over the person conferring the trust, because the trusted person has access to the object of trust. Vulnerability to power is a risk that comes with trust; it may not occur because trust and power are different, but it is prudent to remember that practices of trust may harbour power relationships (Warren, 1999, p.333).

**Putnam’s Conception of Trust: Norms of Reciprocity and Networks of Civic Engagement**

Putnam (1993, p.170) denotes trust as “an essential component of social capital” and defines trust as entailing “a prediction about the behaviour of an independent actor” (p.171). To substantiate this view, Putnam (p.171) relies entirely on the following quote from Dasgupta (1988)

You do not trust a person (or an agency) to do something merely because he says he will do it. You trust him only because, knowing what you know of his disposition, his available options and his consequences, his ability and so forth you expect that he will *choose* to do it (pp.50-51).

This definition assumes an intimate knowledge of the person who is being trusted. The person’s dispositions and abilities, and the consequences of their options are all known to the person conferring the trust. Putnam concedes that prediction in small communities is based on familiarity with particular individuals and that in larger, more complex settings, impersonal and indirect trust is necessary, what Putnam refers to as social trust. To convert personal trust into social trust, Putnam (1993) claims social trust develops from “norms of reciprocity and networks of civil engagement” (p.171).

Norms specify what behaviours are appropriate or inappropriate; they are “prescriptions serving as common guidelines for social action” (Abercrombie *et al*, 1994, pp.287-288). Norms allow a transfer of control from the individual to groups
Putnam distinguishes between norms of specific reciprocity and those of diffuse reciprocity. Specific reciprocity refers to a simultaneous exchange. Diffuse reciprocity refers to a continuing relationship of exchange where there is a mutual expectation of repayment, although repayment may be outstanding or imbalanced. Putnam (1993, p. 172) privileges diffuse reciprocity as a highly productive component of social capital, and associates it with dense networks of social exchange.

Norms contribute to trust because they lower transaction costs and encourage cooperation. "Social networks allow trust to become transitive and spread: I trust you, because I trust her and she assures me that she trusts you" (Putnam, 1993, p. 169). This trust is developed at the personal level because of personal connections; a mutual friend acts as a medium for trust because she offers a personal verification. The circuitous definitions of Putnam's point to an exchange within established relationships but do not explain how "social" trust is formed. His examples do illustrate how personal trust is reinforced, and possibly expanded, based on personal verification; but this trust is not diffused equally throughout the community. Many people may not be engaged in those existing relationships of exchange and trust.

Putnam needs to explain the formation of social trust because he has juxtaposed social capital over a large amorphous body of people, namely communities and regions. This makes social trust crucial to Putnam's explanation of civic engagement producing a working democracy - albeit conceived as institutional effectiveness - because social trust facilitates cooperation. Putnam claims that trust is transitive, yet does not explain how this is so. Rather than theorising the formation of social trust, Putnam simply describes a self-reinforcing symbiosis: trust encourages cooperation, and cooperation enhances trust. Since this relation is fundamental to Putnam's wider argument, his failure to explain how social trust is formed fundamentally compromises that argument.

Why Trust is Important

Niklas Luhmann (1988, p. 105) identifies two structural changes occurring in the modern world. Firstly, the modern world is characterised by "unmanageable complexity" because of an increasing "diversification and particularisation" of both
the familiar and unfamiliar. Simply stated, the modern world confronts individuals with a barrage of conflicting images, messages and symbols. The other characteristic is “the increasing replacement of danger by risk” whereby people’s actions may have unwarranted future consequences that lurk beyond any sense of immediate danger. “[I]n a more contingent and complex world, risk-taking rationality is required; and risk-taking will as far as others are involved, require trust” (Luhmann, 1988, p.105).

Modern society is no longer regulated by the personal trust of small, traditional societies. Modern society instead relies on a “system trust”, or “generalised trust”, referred to by Putnam as “social trust”. Unlike personal trust that resides in the bonds between individuals, “system trust” requires a conscious evaluation and reflexivity of an abstract system (Luhmann, 1979, pp.66-69). However, Luhmann stresses that this is not a simple matter of using trust as a mechanism for calculating correct decisions. System trust is predicated on the assumption that others also trust. Luhmann refers to this as a “presentational base”, where so long as everything appears to be in order and everyone obeys the rules, the perception of trust endures. But, when things do not happen that are expected, or do happen when they are not expected, trust is eroded because of these failures of communication.

Misztal (1996) accepts Luhmann’s claim that trust should be understood by its function, to reduce social complexity, but insists there are two more functions of trust not proposed by Luhmann. As well as the social order existing in a stable system, the social order also, according to Misztal, exists in cohesive and collaborative systems. For each system there is also a different function of trust. Misztal bases this on two assumptions: firstly, that peoples’ conception of themselves and their duties towards others are shaped, constrained and formed by political and social institutions. “Thus, trust requires the existence of not only ontological security but also a variety of social forms; namely, the provision of conditions in which bonds of solidarity can flourish” (Misztal, 1996, p.96). Trust not only requires a state of mind that welcomes trusting behaviour, but tangible structures that assist and facilitate trusting behaviour. Dunn (1990, p.32) expands this conception by claiming that “establishing a social frame that facilitates human flourishing does depend on establishing and sustaining structure of government and responsibility which merit and earn trust”.

The other assumption of Misztal pertains to the characteristic of trust associated with social capital. “Trust as social capital which facilitates cooperation is an attribute of the social structure and can benefit the wider community”
(Misztal, 1996, p. 96). This is a property of trust that is external to the individual and makes it possible to consider that trust may be rationally applied to the social system. Misztal (1996) has synthesised a typology of trust. In a stable social order, trust is based on habitas (Bourdieu, 1977) and practiced as habit (routinised behaviour and ritual), collective memory and reputation. This is the type of trust theorised by Luhmann (1979, 1988).

**Routines and Reputations: Trust as Habit**

Trust, according to Luhmann, is a device of stable social systems. Trust helps people cope with the volume and complexity of information, prevents confusion and disorder, reduces ambiguity, and gives the social order meaning by "neutralising" arbitrariness. If the social order is stable, it is possible to conceptualise trust as "routine background to everyday interaction" (Misztal, 1996, p. 97).

**Conformity and Familiarity: Trust as Cohesion**

Two other important elements of Misztal's typology are relevant here: the cohesive social order (trust based on passion) and the collaborative social order (trust practiced as policy). In a cohesive social order, trust is based on familiarity, and is practiced among family and friends. It operates through internalisation and moral commitment and is the basis of self-identity and integrity. As such, it is the "foundation of relationships with the wider world" (Misztal, 1996, p. 99). Trust as familiarity is the "confident expectation of benign intentions in another free agent" (Dunn, 1988, p. 74). Trust as cohesion is based on the reliance of others' good will and is not rational or strategic; it is invariably based on conformity and familiarity. For example, people tend to trust those people in their own groups, family, friends, nationality, and co-religionists, rather than trust people that are not a part of those groups (Misztal, 1996, p. 99). This argument favours an in-group trust based on personal relationship and does not put a case for trust transcending those relationships.

---

12 Misztal refers to this trust as also being practiced as passion, due to the deep bonds between the participants.
Collaboration: Trust as Policy

In a collaborative social order, trust is implemented as policy and is practiced as solidarity, toleration and legitimacy. Trust as a policy is a strategy for establishing cooperation and shaping collaborative life. Dunn (1988) originally introduced the concept of trust as a policy in contrast to trust as cohesion. Trust as a policy was a response to the situation that peoples' interests are invariably dependent upon the "future free actions" of other people (Dunn, 1993, p. 641). Collaborative trust is a "device for coping with the freedom of others" (Dunn, 1988, p. 73). Political elites are able to achieve the confidence of society by "well-designed, strategic and rational policy" (Dunn, 1988, p. 90). This would mean that in opposition to Putnam’s conception, policy performance becomes a source of trust and not only a result of it (Levi, 1996, p. 50).

For the social order to be considered as collaborative, policy aims need to create conditions that encourage solidarity, toleration and legitimacy. Solidarity is the relationship between the individual and society, and relates to the commitment to subordinate individual interest to social goals (Misztal, 1996, p. 208). “[To] base collaboration on trust requires political support for the construction of the conditions of equality, which give people a genuine sense of an equal consideration and stake in society” (Misztal, 1996, p. 100). Coleman (1990) argues that people create solidarity by consciously communicating joint interests. Toleration is the degree of inclusion of individuals and groups into the system and relies on respect for other perspectives and an “absence of impediments and discrimination” (Misztal, 1996, p. 232). Legitimacy is the social support for the system and measured by the degree that the system is considered fair.

The contention of this thesis is that trust can only be created in informal, small, closed and homogeneous communities with the power of sanction. The development of trust occurs on a personal level, created from the habits of peoples’ routines or reputations, or from the cohesion they gain from the familiarity with others or from the conformity of shared norms. Trust as a collaborative effort requires facilitating structures to coordinate cooperation at meta-group levels. This requires a level of coordination that is beyond the ability of a community organisation. It is claimed that a collaborative effort can be implemented by means of a government policy to facilitate “social trust”. This claim will now be further investigated.
Institutionalising Trust: Impersonalising the Personal

Of particular interest to this research is the question of institutionalising trust to facilitate social capital by means of a political apparatus. Assuming that a collaborative social order is "the terrain for impersonal trust relationships" (Misztal, 1996, p. 101), and assuming that trust can be implemented as a policy to create a collaborative social order, these claims appear to provide the framework for examining the question of how to institutionalise trust. As Warren (1999, p. 320) argues, "[w]herever trust can be encouraged by institutional artifice, we have a form of trust of interest to democratic theory". Institutionalising trust is the causal link between social capital and democracy that Putnam fails to elaborate. If social capital is to be considered as an agent of democratisation, there needs to be an understanding of trust at a communal level.

The key question here is, how does particular trust between one person and another become generalised to include a community? How is "social trust" promoted? Putnam assumes that the particularised trust developed through intimate (face to face) contact is the same trust that is generalised and spread throughout the polity. Certainly associations may produce trust among their members, and possibly this can translate as trust for members of other similar associations, but Putnam does not explain how this trust is generalised. Putnam argues that being trusted makes residents "trust-responsive" and trustworthy, but Putnam's conception is of an interpersonal trust, specific to certain people and contexts. Particular people are trusted based on repeated interactions and the expectation of future interactions. When Putnam claims that trust expands and becomes transitive, this is done by personal verification. This may make an individual who trusts more trustworthy, but it does not mean that their trust can be conferred onto a different person in a different context.

It is possible that interpersonal trust cannot be transferred to other people in other social contexts in all circumstances. There is no standard trust, or no standards for trust; trust cannot be reduced to a generic model. If we extend the fungibility metaphor of social capital, there is no "currency" for the transaction, and no framework for its exchange. The designation of social capital as a "capital" is possibly disingenuous in implying its fungibility. In the realm of economic capital,
the market economy acts as the framework for this exchange, and money is the universal standard for that exchange. But such an institution or currency does not exist for the exchange of trust (Cohen, 1999, pp. 220-221).

**An Institutional Mediator of Trust**

Cohen (1999, p. 220) suggests there needs to be a mediator to convert such particular trust into the generalised.

Indeed, it is entirely possible that without other mechanisms for the "generalisation" of trust, participation in associations and membership in social networks could foster particularism, localism, intolerance, exclusion, and generalised mistrust of outsiders, of the law, and of government (Cohen, 1999, p. 221).

For impersonal, generalised trust to develop, the principle of reciprocity and a desire to be trustworthy needs to be instituted by means of government artifice. Misztal (1996, p. 199) expands Putnam's definition of trust and ventures the following as a definition of social trust.

[T]rust on the general societal level is a by-product of behaviour towards others based on the norm of reciprocity and networks of civil engagements, which can be facilitated by the nature of governmental institutions and the level of socio-economic development.

According to Misztal, trust given to fellow citizens can be institutionalised into political structures, forming the basis for a civil society. Misztal (1996, pp. 198-199) provides examples from the Federal Republic of Germany and Czechoslovakia, measuring levels of interpersonal trust between 1945 and 1989. The claim is made that the role of identification with, and legitimacy of, the state system cannot be ignored in fostering a civic culture. This indicates that the credibility of the government affects the development of social trust. Trust, once developed can act as a basis of solidarity. The greater the level of trust in society, the greater the chances of cooperation occurring, "which in turn contributes to the establishment of trust relationships" (Misztal, 1996, p. 200).

Levi (1996, p. 50) alternatively suggests that good government is "... a result of an interaction between a civic-minded citizenry and civic-minded government actors." So, people need to desire to be involved, but also the government needs to
want people to be involved. Levi (1996, p. 51) adds that good institutional performance requires more than trust among individuals, but that “there must also be trust of government actors”.

Trust in Political Institutions

A trustworthy government has the capacity to facilitate or produce trust. But before it is possible for political institutions to mediate trust throughout the community, those institutions themselves need to be trusted (Levi, 1998, p. 87).

Government actors are like any other actor in establishing trustworthiness. They require a proven character, need to exhibit consistent trustworthiness, and must share encapsulated interest. A proven character requires that the actor acts on principle and not from self interest. Credible commitments and accountable institutions will decrease the residents need for personal monitoring; the enactment of government promises will increase trust (Levi, 1998, pp. 86-87). Encapsulated interest occurs when the trusted government agent also fulfils their own interests by maintaining the trust placed in them by the civic actor. Trust is maintained because to breach trust may cause repercussions; elected representatives are not re-elected, and bureaucrats are not promoted. Encapsulated interest is trust based on tacit coercion.

Trust in government is based on the belief that government will act in the interests of residents. This requires that political institutions adopt fair procedures and act according to those procedures. Political institutions also need to ensure that they deliver on the promises that they make. Trust placed in political institutions needs to be reciprocated. Reciprocated trust requires that people feel that they are being treated with respect. To ensure the adoption of fair procedure, the delivery of promises and reciprocated trust should produce “contingent consent”. Contingent consent is where residents concede to policy, so long as the process is considered legitimate. Political participation, in essence, is the monitoring of political institutions. Trust of political institutions should be conditional on that trust being deserved. and the only way to know if the trust conferred is deserved is if the performance of the institutions are scrutinised. Political participation, therefore, requires “personal investment in monitoring and controlling” (Levi, 1998, p. 96).

Warren (1999, p. 338) contends that trust is maintained by a person's knowledge that they are able to “monitor and challenge authorities”, and that the
authorities know that this is possible. Trust is more “robust” when it can be challenged, “trust thrives when institutions are structured so as to respond to communication” (Warren,1996,p.49). “This requires (a) access to information and institutions structured so as to provide the necessary transparency, and (b) institutional means for challenging authorities, institutions, and trusted individuals. When such institutions are in place, the trust placed in authorities and experts may be warranted Warren (1999,p.338). Distrust in government is created by broken promises, incompetence and antagonising behaviour towards those whom the government is meant to be serving (Levi,1998,p.88). Falsification or corruption also erode trust in institutions (Levi,1998,p.95).

**The Functions of Distrust:**

Trust is important for personal relationships and the generation of social capital, but distrust may be more important for democracy.

[D]emocratic progress is most often sparked by distrust of authorities (Warren,1999,p.310).

To appreciate Warren’s conception of trust it is necessary to understand how he defines a political relationship. A political relationship is a societal relationship that is experiencing a conflict. This conflict necessitates that people join in a collective action to seek a collectively binding decision that is sanctioned by the use of power. Social relations become political when an everyday resource, amenity or service becomes challenged. A relationship becomes political when the relationships that provide individuals with their “…securities, identities, routines and habits…” can no longer be coordinated by their daily social life. Warren (1999,p.312) refers to this as being “socially groundless”; social relationships can no longer be taken for granted. Politics, therefore, is where conditions of trust are weak.

Luhmann considers that distrust is a functional alternative to trust. That distrust is at times a rational and healthy sign. Sometimes distrust encourages more political participation than trust (1979,p.75). Both trust and distrust have roles in democracy, as does withholding trust until given sufficient reasons for conferring trust. “Healthy scepticism is a prerequisite of democracy” (Levi,1998,p.96). Distrust that reflects the failure of political institutions to merit trustworthiness is more
beneficial to democracy than it is harmful (Levi, 1998, p. 95). Trust may also translate into an abdication of responsibility, producing non-participation. If people have trust in the processes and personalities of their polities, they may feel no need to become more involved, hence limiting their democratic participation.

One of my contentions in this thesis is that trust as a collaborative effort between previously unknown actors requires facilitating structures to coordinate cooperation at the level of large groups such as communities and regions. This requires a level of coordination that is beyond the ability of a community organisation and involves the implementation of policy from political institutions. The particular trust enjoyed between individuals is not automatically conferred onto groups or larger polities to become a generalised (social) trust because there is no reliable medium to facilitate this exchange. It is crucial to develop this large-scale social trust for the concept of social capital to have any relevance at the communal level, to have any impact upon democracy or to be equated with civility.

Trust is future oriented and involves elements of risk. Therefore, people tend to trust those people whose trustworthiness can be verified. That is why trust is created in informal, small, closed and homogeneous communities with the power of sanction. The development of trust occurs on a personal level, created from habits such as routines and reputations, or from internalised cohesion derived from familiarity and conformity. When trust cannot be personally verified, it can only exist as the assumption of trust.

Political institutions may be able to generalise this trust, but this depends on the institution – its structures, its agents’ abilities and accountability, and the institution’s resources. In short, the ability of an institution to institutionalise trust depends on the institution’s trustworthiness.

Networks: The Importance of Relationships

Relationships are integral to social capital; if there is no relationship, there is no social capital. Relationships may be either associational or informal. Associations are institutionalised bodies with established, specific purposes (such as neighbourhood improvement, sports or recreation); they have elected committees and are possibly part of national affiliations. Informal networks are more ad hoc issue oriented, they are not as structured or affiliated and their participation is (more)
episodic. Informal networks coordinate on specific problems and (may) disband until the next time they need to coordinate. Informal networks may also be based on social interaction, such as patrons in the local pub, people that share a bus stop, or other parents in the park. Episodic coordinations have not featured in the literature about social capital, and their ability to generate social capital, is overlooked. The thesis will argue that informal networks are an important source of social capital within the community.

To further illustrate the contention raised previous in this chapter, that political institutions are able to convey trust throughout the community, it will also be demonstrated that political institutions have been involved in initiating and supporting associations. Associations are not necessarily created from spontaneous affinities, but may be a product of institutional artifice.

Groups are credited with representing interests effectively. They give individuals the power to bargain and the capacity to represent their interests, supposedly leading to political equality. Groups provide the means for participation for individuals without the resources to participate by providing access to resources and increasing their potential to be heard. Groups also provide a more intricate system of interest representation, especially in a system predominantly represented by territorial constituencies (Cohen and Rogers, 1995, p.29).

**Putnam and Associations**

Putnam (1993, p.91) poses the question of what connections exist between the "'civic-ness' of a community and the quality of its governance". In reply, he suggests the vibrancy of associational life is one indicator of civic sociability. Putnam nominates non-professional lobby groups, service providers, sports and cultural clubs. These could include mutual aid societies, alternative economies, cooperatives, soccer clubs, choral societies, hiking clubs, bird-watching groups, literary circles, Lions clubs and similar non-profit organisations. From this, civic community is defined by...
the concentration of local cultural and recreational associations. Putnam’s definition, however, excludes trade unions, church groups and political parties (Putnam, 1993, p.106).

Networks of civic engagement represent “intense horizontal interaction”. Civic engagement is measured by: membership in local associations, the longevity of these associations, and attendance at public meetings. Social capital is associated with these voluntary associations, especially those that encourage social “connectedness”, such as the development of direct relationships when members work together (Putnam, 1993, p.173).

Associations are claimed to rise from the “immediate affinities” of peoples’ daily lives, located in their neighbourhoods, occupations, leisure or needs (Young, 1995, p.209). This is the conception of associations favoured by de Tocqueville and subsequently Putnam. Conversely, associations are also claimed by other scholars to be artefactual, not a spontaneous product of social life, but are the product of public policy (Hirst, 1995, p.102).

The Internal Benefits of Associations: Learned Cooperation?

Associations have effects on their members. Putnam (1993, pp.89-90) insists that the influence of a civic ethic upon a group produces habits of cooperation, solidarity and public-spiritedness. Members of associations, Putnam claims (quoting Almond and Verba, 1963), display more “…political sophistication, social trust, political participation, and subjective civic competence…” inculcating skills of cooperation and shared responsibility. These associations need not be political in orientation to educate their members of the fruits of “…self-discipline and an appreciation for the joys of successful collaboration”.

Associations are a means to pursue common purpose in “fellowship” with others and so enhance personal capacities. Associations achieve for the individual, and individuals develop themselves by associating with others. Associations, therefore, foster individuality, yet encourage cooperation (Hirst, 1994, pp.49-50). Associations rely on individual initiative and encourage individual action (Oldfield, 1995, p.128).
The External Benefits of Associations: Towards Democracy?

Associations have external effects, expressed as “interest articulation” that contributes to social cohesion. The influence that associations have upon the external world is through their interconnection with other associations, creating a dense network of secondary associations that “both embodies and contributes to effective social collaboration”. Civic community consists of associations of “like-minded equals” that are contributing to “effective democratic governance” (Putnam, 1993, p.90). Stated simply, Putnam (1993, pp171-173) proposes that civic associations promote democratic governance.

Cohen and Rogers (1995, p.7) give associations a central role in democracy by claiming that associations help set the political agenda, implement or thwart choices, shape beliefs, preferences, self understanding, and habits of thought and action that individuals bring to the political arena. Associations are the social foundation of pluralist society; articulating many divergent interests in civil society, while also preventing potentially homogeneous majorities. They are also claimed to ensure the democratic nature of the state (Hirst, 1994, p.25).

Associations: Spontaneous Affinities or Artefactual Constructions?

Unless social structures are specifically oriented toward promoting positive civic action or economic cooperation, it is doubtful they [voluntary associations] will contribute directly to the political or economic health of a democracy (Foley and Edwards, 1997, p.553).

Why would voluntary associations be so good at promoting attitudes and habits for engaged and civic residents? Putnam elevates voluntary associations as the pre-eminent source of social capital by describing a civil society defined only in terms of the existence of such associations. This is coupled with a conception of the state as simply an enforcer to ensure social order (Cohen, 1999, p.219). Cohen and Rogers (1995, p.7) define associations as a “range of non-familial organisations intermediate between individuals...and the institutions of the state”, yet this neglects the contributions and influences made by individuals and political institutions on associations and civil society.
Levi (1996, p. 50) criticises Putnam for placing an undue emphasis upon civil society as the “root cause” of effective government. The criticism concerns the conversion of lifestyle interests, such as bird watching and football, to civic engagement and ultimately government performance. Central to the debate is Putnam’s conception of trust: norms of reciprocity that function as networks of civic engagement. Levi (1996, p. 48) queries whether intimate social clubs are rigorous enough to communicate ideals of exchange beyond their relatively shallow circle of influence. To determine this would require a more precise definition of trust than what Putnam has offered. Levi is not dismissing Putnam’s work, but is pointing to a causal gap between membership of a social group and political activism.

Skocpol (1996, p. 24) dismisses Putnam’s claims that such spontaneous associations occur without governmental inspiration and support. In the USA, governmental initiatives, elite driven and politically motivated, provided the genesis for a variety of voluntary movements. Skocpol points to the spread of public schooling and the establishment of post offices as enabling factors in mid 19th century USA. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) began as The National Congress of Mothers with express state support. The American Legion was also a state initiative, and both associations were active in formulating public policy.

Associations are not necessarily horizontal bonds of solidarity as mythologised by Putnam. Putnam assumes social ties within clubs and associations are equally horizontal and equally effective as social capital, despite his confessed limited micro-level information on club membership ties to support his claim (1993, p. 245, n. 69). Associations can be hierarchical, exclusionary and based on self-interest. Associations can also be parochial and promote localism, and resist change. More importantly, the existence of associations does not mean that cross-community connections occur (Fox, 1997, p. 125).

Problems with the Joys of Successful Collaboration: The Internal Defects of Associations

Trust is more likely to develop from a person’s experiences and from interactions with institutions outside of association membership, rather than from experiences within associations. For example, expectations derive from interaction with people of shared values, or identities (based on class, ethnicity, religion) rather
than shared interests, such as singing, bowling or watching birds (Yamagishi and

Newton (1997) asserts that family, schools and workplaces may be more adept
at generating civic commitment. After all, families, schools and work are where
people’s priorities are and where their time is mostly spent. Newton (1997, p. 579)
meanwhile claims that it is “implausible” to ascribe too much credence to voluntary
associations when they account for “few hours a week of life” and only for a small
minority of activists.

The influence of associations may not be entirely civic-minded. Their
proximity to the political process, for example, may lead associations to also teach
selfish habits to their members, such as maximising political favour and competing for
resource allocation (Cohen and Rogers, 1995, p. 23).

Problems with Interest Articulation: The External Defects of
Associations

To represent all associations as being equal, in stature and status, is quite
erroneous. Associations are systems of organised interests that are numerous, evolved
from disparate histories, have many forms and can perform an even greater number of
functions (Schmitter, 1995, p. 169). There are unequal characteristics between different
associations, each possessing different resources and skills to utilise those resources.
Associations are corporatist by design and tend to benefit the differentially stronger
parties within the corporate entity (Levine, 1995, p. 161).

Associations compete against each other for resources, members and assets.
Associations are linkages for potential political patronage. A diversity of interests in
plural society means that there will be a diversity of conceptions of what is the
common, or public, good. The political process reflects the distribution and weight of
interests producing what Ely (1980, p. 152) refers to as the “pluralists bazaar” because
the common good is recognised as a result of “fair procedure of interest representation
and group bargaining” (Cohen and Rogers, 1995, p. 38). A plural conception of politics
would suggest that associations bargain among themselves, and with political
authorities, each seeking their own advantage. Bargaining between associations and
policy-makers also means that the information that the groups provide may be biased.
"Politics is still largely a game of resources, not a forum of principles" (Cohen and
Rogers, 1995, p. 25). Whereas, a corporatist conception of politics would suggest that some associations are favoured over (most of the) other associations (Bradford and Nowland-Foreman, 1999, p. 92).

Putnam ignores "interest articulation" that manifests as conflict for resources that other associations may also utilise, or wish to utilise. Putnam's only acknowledgement of the "uncivil" nature of some associations is when he points to the Ku Klux Klan and Nazi Party as examples of associations without democratic goals or egalitarian organisation. To account for their un-civic nature, Putnam suggests that tolerance and equality should be determining factors in whether an association generates social capital (1993, p. 221, n. 30). It is unfortunate Putnam had to resort to extremist organisations to illustrate that association is not a "civic good" in itself.

There is no reason to believe that collective action endeavours are inherently "good". Consideration needs to be given as to why the associations exist and the purpose of the coordination. Associations can provide an infrastructure for the discontent of groups and the motivations and actions of these associations are more important in evaluating their contribution to democracy than their act of association. The extreme examples of uncivil association given by Putnam are not the only cases of undemocratic association. Potentially, many ordinary associations may be non-democratic, toward their own members, and toward other social actors (Berman, 1997, p. 565).

Putnam dichotomises social relations as either part of a "virtuous" cycle, where trust is present, or part of a "vicious" cycle, where trust is absent. This would appear too simple and not relate to the complexities of relationships. Social capital is a property of the relationships between people, therefore, the social capital available to the people in that relationship is constrained by the context of that relationship.

**Social Capital in Context:**

By elevating social capital as a feature of communities or regions Putnam assumes a homogeneity of the concept of social capital. I will explain that social capital should not be considered as a homogeneous concept. Coleman (1988, p. 96) introduces social capital as a conceptual tool to demonstrate how rational action in
"particular social contexts" can "account not only for the actions of individuals in particular contexts but also for the development of social organisation".

Social capital results from the resources available to individuals who are able to share access to particular social contexts. Social capital is not a resource of the individual (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 256) so the assets that exist in a particular social context are properties of the relationships within that context and cannot (automatically) be applied to another social context. Social capital is context specific. The resources available because of shared norms and values in a specific social setting may have a different value, or no value, outside of the setting (Edwards and Foley, 1998, p. 129).

Not all social capital is created equally. Social capital is prone to "context dependency", meaning that the creation of social capital depends upon the societal and institutional contexts in which it is created. This means that access to social capital is not evenly distributed throughout society (Edwards and Foley, 1997, pp. 671-672).

"The value of a specific form of social capital for facilitating some action depends in no small part on the socio-economic location of the social capital within society (Edwards and Foley, 1997, p. 673)."

No form of capital is evenly distributed, and its access is contingent on race, class, gender or geography. Social capital is no exception and is dependent on the context in which it is found. The value of social capital is linked to the social world where these relations are connected (Edwards and Foley, 1998, p. 129). Social capital is only as good as the relationships it exists in and the resources available to those in the relationships.

Social capital is a property of the relationships between people, therefore, the social capital available to the people in that relationship is constrained by the context of that relationship; the strength of the relationships, the resources available to the relationship and the political and social environment where the relationship is located. The "context dependency" of social capital is exhibited in the following comparative study between two associations.

**Associations are Not All Alike.**

Carla Eastis (1998) studied two of Putnam's archetypal voluntary associations, choral societies, in an attempt to delineate the multiple definitions and uses that are
conferred on social capital. The contention of her research was that the structure of each choral society would affect the social capital that each produced. The groups had obvious differences in repertoire, ensemble size and financial stability, and these attributes in turn would affect the networks, norms and social coordination of each association.

Eastis (1998, pp. 70-71) measured the networks of each by their recruitment style. One group (exclusive) was more selective; applicants were screened on the telephone and needed to be "experienced". The other group (social) was more open, rehearsal times were advertised and applicants were invited to simply "come and join". The norms of the groups were discerned by their different rehearsal styles. The exclusive group would praise talent that showed an ability beyond what the situation required. This group all shared skills (such as reading music) and would therefore all participate in the rehearsal as a collaborative process. The social group would praise those that were skilled (such as reading music) because that was not a common attribute among the group, and this also meant they were not as collaborative in the production and relied on direction. The exclusive group were also financially secure because they were directly funded by a university. This meant they did not have to engage in fund-raising or coordinate on any matter other than their choral activities. The social group had no such funding luxury and had to raise funds as a matter of necessity. This meant a large proportion of their choral time was spent planning or carrying out fund-raising activities or designing and making sets and costumes to offset costs. These activities gave that group access to many different situations and interaction with people that ultimately enhanced their social connectedness.

The exclusive group could work together well as a group, but there was no need or opportunity to engage those skills outside of that group. The social group did develop collective action skills and were able to establish wider networks. Eastis (p. 76) points out that external collective action and attracting new members are the social group's strength; however, their own norms of behaviour during their rehearsals, in that rehearsals were not a collaborative endeavour, did not reinforce those bonds created from external collective action.

The networks, norms and collective ability of each group were distinct and this resulted in different emphases on different aspects of social capital formation. The implication is that context is important and voluntary associations (or trust, or networks) are not true independent indicators of social capital as may be claimed.
Members of each group may report feelings of participation, but each has a different focus, domain and motivation.

Booth and Richard (1998) applied Putnam’s theory of social capital to the recently re-democratised nations of Central America. Their research followed Putnam’s where information levels and interpersonal trust were operationalised as variables of social capital. They found that formal group activism (represented by associations, unions, and cooperatives) contributed to political information, however, the associations’ impact on interpersonal trust was negligible. On the other hand, communal activism (found in community and local collective groups) contributed to interpersonal trust, but not to political information or democratic norms (Booth and Richard, 1998, pp. 40-41). This raises a question: if associations have a minimal affect on interpersonal trust, how are they to affect generalised trust to influence “regime performance”?

Booth and Richard devised their own scale of “political capital”, the attitudes and behaviours that influence political regimes. Their work is an attempt to analyse how people’s attitudes and behaviour can affect the state. They measured democratic norms (such as extending the political franchise to others currently excluded), voting behaviour, campaign activity and contacting public officials. They concluded that associational activity was more likely to increase political capital rather than social capital, suggesting that associations may be better placed as political agents than local stores of interpersonal trust.

In summary, relationships are crucial to social capital. The context of the relationship and the environment in which the relationship is situated, are the important factors in determining the value of social capital.

Putnam credits voluntary associations with a disproportionate influence in the creation of social capital. They are claimed to educate members on political participation, and consequently, act as a democratic agent to connect with other disparate groups across communal lines. This elevates associations beyond their important, yet narrow, social interests such as watching birds and playing bowls. When associations do participate in the democratic process, it is possible they may be motivated by their own interests. Putnam also overestimates the power of societal based associations at creating themselves spontaneously from below and consequently ignores the role that individuals and political institutions play in creating associations. Associations may really be an indicator of pre-existing social capital, rather than the
source of social capital. Conversely, associations may be the beneficiaries of state sponsored facilitation that assisted their formation. Associations, meanwhile, should not all be considered as the same. They differ in their functions, norms, resources and the motives and abilities of their members. As Eastis (1997) demonstrates, the social capital that is created by different associations, is different.

**Informal Networks**

Newton (1997,p.581) claims that social science has focused on formal organisations as the source of social capital and political participation simply because they are more visible and hence easier to study. Newton maintains that formal organisations are less relevant because they are formal, making them bureaucratic and their members less involved in daily activities. More pertinently, such organisations are more prone to be vertically structured and hierarchical. They have committees that include presidents, secretaries and treasurers, and set agendas for their meetings.

Gundelach and Thorpe (1996,p.31, as quoted in Newton,1997,p.583) distinguish between “classic” formal organisations and what they call “network associations” that are looser, more informal and more personal forms of associations. Gundelach and Thorpe claim that “network associations” produce a stronger impact on the attitudes and behaviour of those that participate than the traditional formal associations.

Parry, Moyser and Day (1992), also distinguished between formal groups and interest groups that were organised along “institutionalised channels of communication”, such as residents' associations, and “informal ad hoc groups of neighbours” concerned over a local development (pp.86-87). They also found that informal groups are as important as formal groups in generating satisfaction with political action (p.281), in educating members (pp.289-290), facilitating political action (pp.423-427) and participating in local politics (p.319). Furthermore, Parry et al found that more effort was involved in participating within informal groups than was needed in formal groups (p.275). They concluded, therefore, that informal groupings are as important as formal associations in developing social capital.
The Value of Unpaid Work

The number of organisations is an unsatisfactory indicator of associational life because this figure only represents names on a register. Associational strength is better understood by the volume of their memberships, the intensity of their involvement and the frequency of their activities. The *Measuring unpaid work in New Zealand, 1999* (Statistics New Zealand, 2001) survey provides a simple means to consider these contributions. The study found that all persons above the age of fifteen spent 27.6 hours per week in unpaid work, compared to an average of 23.6 hours per week in paid employment. The vast majority of unpaid work, 87%, occurs in the respondent’s own home, engaging in activities such as cooking, cleaning, caring and maintenance. The remaining 13% of time spent in unpaid labour was for the benefit of the community and persons outside the home. However, this figure is further delineated by what is considered to be formal and informal unpaid work. Formal unpaid work is done by people acting for or through an organisation or group; and accounts for 6% of respondents’ time. This includes charitable work, service organisations or the local sports team, and involves committee work, coaching sport, or organising activities. Informal unpaid work is done by people not acting on behalf of an organisation or club; and accounts for 7% of respondents’ time. This includes helping their neighbours or friends, and communal activities, such as public planting days or cleaning up the beach days. People spend more time volunteering in informal capacities, than formal.

Social capital at the community level requires an expansion of the networks and the exchange of resources beyond the pre-existing network to facilitate some communal good. For association membership to be construed as a communal source of social capital it is expected that some type of exchange should occur that benefits the community, such as voluntary work. Otherwise, association membership would only benefit members of that association and their social capital potential remains localised. Unpaid work on the behalf of an association is considered as a good example of that association’s social capital filtering through the community. However, the time spent in formal unpaid work is less than that spent in informal unpaid work, which would suggest that informal activities are as important for generating social capital, as are formal activities.
Interaction in the Community

When people meet to clean up a city, a suburb or a local park, they are amassing social capital. Indeed we amass social capital when we work on the school fete, talk to our neighbours about street plants, drop some soup into a sick friend, meet a regular group at tennis or bowls, join a local choir, commit ourselves to making uniforms for the junior sports group, arrange theatre parties, or whatever we do with friends and sometimes strangers (Cox, 1995, p. 19).

Life on the Street: The Importance of Lively Streets

Jacobs considers public (street) life important because it allows connections to be made with people that may not be considered suitable as acquaintances in private life. Confining relationships to people that one would only consider worthy of inviting into one’s home “stultifies” city life. One type of trust, therefore, can be seen as the assumption of support formed over public sidewalk contacts. These conversations may seem trivial, but cumulatively they add to a feeling of public identity that creates a “web of public respect and trust” (1961, p. 56). An informal web of public trust is a necessary condition for collective action. “Impersonal city streets make anonymous people” (Jacobs, 1961, p. 57). For Jacobs (1961, p. 115), community is formed from the criss-crossing of the connections made in the daily contacts of foot-path life; the numerous and trivial interactions that often simply pass as pleasantries and politeness. Community is the repeated intersection of people’s lives that creates a community out of groups of disparate individuals. Halperin (1998, p. 5) agrees, arguing that “community is not just a place, although place is very important, but a series of day to day, ongoing, often invisible practices”. Community is a series of practices that are connected to, but not confined to place.

“The self government functions of streets are all humble, but they are indispensable...there exists no substitute for lively streets” (Jacobs, 1961, p. 120). Community, however, requires a conception of the neighbourhood around the corner. Residents that only live in the culture of their immediate street do not make the necessary connections with their neighbours around the block. Vibrant street neighbourhoods are not discrete units but are social and economic continuities. Public street life needs commerce, liveliness, use and interest.
The cross-links that enable a district to function...consist of working relationships among specific people, many of them without much else in common than they share a fragment of geography (Jacobs, 1961, p.133).

Moira Raynor, co-author of *Rooting Democracy: Growing the Society we Want*, has also linked social capital with democracy. Raynor spoke on Radio New Zealand (interviewed by Kim Hill, 6/6/99), and links Putnam’s claim that ordinary people involved in ordinary events with one another build up a reservoir of trust and provide the basis for the quality of good government to the practice of local government. Local government should encourage these reservoirs by providing parks and public benches and libraries where people can meet. Raynor claims that simply meeting each other can get people interested in the community, to make them feel involved and engaged to preserve local amenities. However, there needs to be an issue to galvanise action. It does not need to be a big issue, and it need not be confrontational. Raynor warns that community can be a con word, that if there is nothing to unite the people then it does not equal community. Unconsciously people do see each other as a group when they do things for one another, and this produces a sense of identity. If people engage voluntarily and get along, they will produce a better government. People do not need to be politically active to be engaged, they only need to talk to their friends and neighbours. Raynor claims people do not need to express themselves in representative boards, only that they need to express themselves to others.

Raynor and Lee (1997, p.13) endorse a culture of conversation. They claim that powerlessness is both the cause and product of a lack of knowledge of how government works. Disenfranchisement from the political process makes people feel that they are “bullied, deceived and ignored”, and that instills them a passive view of citizenship. Open government emerges from the conversations of participants.

A healthy community is one where people talk and argue among themselves. Confidential chats... debates... arguments... exchanges... are all the many voices of a pluralist society going about its business (Raynor and Lee, 1997, p.14).

Conversation must be informed, happen in a public forum and be accepted as legitimate for it to promote public interest. There needs to be a communicative
climate that fosters the legitimacy and expectation of communication (participation). There also has to be an expectation that people will be listened to.

Informal networks of ad hoc issue based groups are also productive generators of social capital, yet have not featured prominently in Putnam’s conception of social capital. Informal volunteering accounts for as much time as volunteering on behalf of formal groups. Issue oriented groups meanwhile are not as formal, allowing for a less hierarchical participation that has a greater impact on attitudes and values, adds to political understanding, education, participation and understanding. Casual interaction within a neighbourhood also establishes relationships that can function as the framework for collective efforts.

**Generating Social Capital: Synergy Between Governments and Residents**

Evans (1997) and Fox (1997) claim that social capital may be created by a “synergistic collaboration” between political institutions and societal actors.

Evans (1997) adopts Putnam’s norms of cooperation and networks of civic engagement and suggests that they can be “promoted by public agencies” (p.179), specifically through “synergy”. Synergy has two constituent elements. The first, “complementarity”, is where independent yet mutual support by government and civil actors (residents) “complement” each other’s actions. The other is “embeddedness”, where direct connections are established between government actors and residents. Complementarity, the meeting of two sets of resources and their ability to support each other forms the potential for synergy, whereas, embeddedness, the direct involvement of public officials, is the institutional basis for realising that potential (Evans,1997,p.187). Synergy relies on the regular interaction and the development of norms and trust between the government and residents (Evans,1997,p.182).

Social capital inheres, not just in civil society, but in an enduring set of relationships that span the public-private divide (Evans,1997,p.184).

Evans (1997,p.184) claims that this is the most important form of social capital, that which is formed in the relationships between the government and residents. This is achieved, according to Evans, by making the people who are part of the institutional apparatus more a part of the communities that they are serving.
Synergy is constructible because it is latent, needing only institutional leadership. Evans' (1997,p.191) review of third world development literature suggests that the stocks of social capital in various communities are important, but are not the defining element in the success of development plans. The problem is "scaling up" these micro-level networks of trust relationships to a scale that can effect coordinative action. Certainly micro-level ties are crucial, without them there is no basis to work from, but what are needed to expand the effectiveness of those local ties are competent and engaged public institutions. None of the communities in Evans' review had extraordinary stocks of social capital, but there was great variation in the respective government's abilities to implement development plans. Correspondingly, there was variance in the success of various development plans. Evans (1997,p.193) suggests that the success and limitations of synergy are located in the government institutions, rather than civil society. Competent and engaged public institutions are therefore necessary for "scaling up" local stocks of social capital to become relevant at cross community or regional levels. Synergistic cooperations also require tangible supports. Effective bureaucracies are necessary, but these require funds and resources to be able to deliver what people want (Evans,1997,p.194).

I have previously identified a major problem with the conception of social capital as a public good as being the homogenisation of the concept; the assumption that communal interests are all the same. Synergy further assumes homogeneity of interests and compounds this problem by also assuming shared interests between community and government. This would indicate that the opportunities for synergistic collaboration are most fruitful when dominant communal interests and dominant government interests align. The degree of shared interest between government and community determines the potential for synergy (Evans,1997,p.196). Politics and personal interests are therefore relevant to any conception of synergy. This reflects Bourdieu's contention of "manufactured sociability", meaning that people may enter relationships with the express view of accessing the resources available to those relationships. Self-interest may generate social capital. It is possible that the generation of social capital, via synergy, may depend upon the bane.

---

14 Evans' review is based on health workers in rural Brazil (Tender,forthcoming), sewer complexes in urban Brazil (Ostrom,1996), irrigation systems in Taiwan and Nepal (Lam,1994,1996), worker mobilisation in Kerala, India (Heller,1994,1996) and the political construction of social capital in Chiapas, Mexico. (Fox,1996).
of Putnam's civic community, vertical parochial ties. Vertical connections would be established if there were direct contact between the bureaucrats and those in the community. This can exist where bureaucrats can supply community members with the resources for their projects, and community can provide the bureaucracy with the legitimacy of acting on behalf of the community. But, community interests do not always correspond and communities are inhabited with people that possess different life philosophies, different priorities, different motives and differing abilities to cooperate. Even seemingly "good" things like irrigation systems and health projects may favour some sectors of the community over others. The point is, even the most collaborative of bureaucracies cannot collaborate with everyone, and invariably community participation is assumed by an elite few. It is these few that would develop the more established relationships with government agents, and therefore benefit proportionately greater from what social capital may be developed between them.

Social Capital: Democratic Alchemy or Academic Snake Oil?

Social capital will remain an individual or group asset, unless relationships are established with others beyond ones immediate group. Social capital needs to be activated and engaged at the communal level before social capital can be considered as a communal resource (asset).

Social capital within small groups is a relatively simple concept. Communication is uncomplicated and relationships are easier to maintain. Trust is conferred on a personal basis and sanctions are easier to enforce. Social capital within (or across) a community is a more complex matter. Communication is more complicated and relationships may not be as personal. Trust has to be assumed, with the attendant risks, and sanctions are harder to enforce.

For social capital to have an effect upon democracy it needs to exist at a communal level. It is possible to generate social capital at the communal level only if the trust between particular individuals can be generalised to incorporate trust in unverified others. This requires facilitation, or generation, beyond what community actors can provide. If trust exists within a community (the pre-requisite for social capital), it requires a mediating structure to generate it across community lines. Equating social capital with civic virtue, as Putnam does, is both disingenuous and
vacuous. It misunderstands the varieties of small, locally produced social capital, homogenising them to be the sum of a greater good. Homogenising social capital as a form of civility also misconstrues the different ambitions that can arise from people collaborating together.

Despite Putnam’s misappropriation of the term social capital, the concept remains relevant to democratic theory because it may illuminate problems associated with collective action and social mobilisation. To be of relevance to democracy, it has to be shown how social capital can be generated and applied beyond its pre-existing community sources.

Conclusion

Social capital exists in the relationships between individuals and small groups. Social capital involves an exchange of resources between the actors in those relationships. These relationships, and the exchanges within them, are sanctioned by the norms and mores of the participants and are reinforced by verifiable trust by those involved in the relationships. The resources available to a group are available to the members within that group. Relationships, resources available to those relationships, and reciprocating reassurances of the bonds of the relationships are the pre-requisites of social capital. Social capital depends on people being trustworthy, people being willing to trust, and people connecting with one another. Groups are capable of promoting their social capital by expanding the size of the group, or by strengthening the trust relationships within the group.

Different social contexts offer different pre-requisites for social capital. Different pre-requisites in turn generate different forms and values of social capital that depend upon the strength of the relationships, the resources available to the relationships and the political and social environment where the relationship is located. To claim that social capital is available to larger aggregates of people is problematic because the nature of the relationships become more tenuous, and the trust within those relationships is no longer verifiable. To equate social capital with "civic-ness" is also problematic. Social capital is not necessarily “good”, because relationships and their resources can be put to un-civil ends. Social capital may produce localised and particularised groups more concerned with their own motives than extending communal interests. Civil society can create social and unsocial
capital, depending on the motivations of the groups involved, the interpretations of society and the political environment.

It is argued that there is a role for government to enhance social capital (Skocpol, 1996, Fox, 1997, Evans, 1997, Warren, 1996, 1999, Levi, 1996, 1998, and Berman, 1997) by facilitating trust and increasing networks to bridge pre-existing social capital across community lines. Trust is not automatically transitive from specific relationships to other relationships, or to the general community, so there appears a need for an institutional mediator to "promote" social trust. Moreover, it may be difficult to generate social capital across communal lines because people are preoccupied by their own commitments (communities). Consequently for social capital to be relevant in larger conglomerates a coordinative structure is also necessary. Government action in generating social capital depends on those political institutions themselves being trustworthy, practicing fair procedures and keeping their promises.

Social capital at the scale of small groups is a real measure of their collective strength. Social capital at the scale of communities and regions is only indication of the potential for those relationships to exist. Social capital can not be adequately equated with civic-ness, and consequently social capital, as articulated by Putnam, does not contribute to an understanding of democracy. Social capital is not necessarily democratising because trust is not automatically socialised and associations are not the font of civil society.
CHAPTER THREE:

PASSING THE MOTION: SOCIAL CAPITAL AND COMMUNITY BOARDS

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to illustrate the complexities of institutionalising social capital within a community via political apparatuses such as local government bodies. This chapter will specify the connection between social capital and the Christchurch City Council's policies of community consultation and participation.

To generate social capital by institutional facilitation, two requirements need to be met. Firstly, people need to be able to trust the processes and the agents that implement those processes, in this case the Christchurch City Council. To do this, the political institutions need to establish effective networks of communication between the institution and civil actors. It is contended that community consultation is a means of creating and extending networks of communication, of coordinating groups and of enhancing participation. Social capital may already exist in the community. If so, consultation is a method of connecting these relationships with the Christchurch City Council’s structures. Consultation is also a method of connecting these relationships and their resources to other, hitherto, unconnected networks in the community. The definition of social capital used throughout this thesis is as follows.

Social Capital exists in the relationships between people and involves a non-contractual exchange of resources between mutually trusting actors. Access to the resources of another party is based on the degree of trust in their relationship. Social capital is an exchange of those resources based on the trust in the relationship.
This chapter will examine Evans' (1997,p.185) contention that the most important social capital is that which is formed in relationships between government and civil actors by making the people who are part of the institutional apparatus more of a part of the communities that they serve. Evans introduces the concept of synergy as the process of government agents establishing direct connections with a community and acting in mutual support with that community pursuing congruent interests. Synergy relies on the regular interaction, and the development of norms and trust, between the government and residents (Evans, 1997, p.182).

Evans (1997,p.191) claims that the stocks of social capital that already exist in a community need to be “scaled up” to make them relevant to democratic action. “Scaling up” involves utilising the pre-existing stores of social capital within families or small groups, and expanding the utility of the resources within those networks. Connecting the small groups and families to other relationships enables the potential for resources to be exchanged between these previously disconnected networks. “Bridging” social capital is the process of expanding the web of social capital. Combining common resources and applying their efforts to joint projects, makes these networks and their resources effective at collective action at the community level. Furthermore, Evans (1997,p.193) found that the variance in the ability to scale up social capital from its communal sources to social capital that is relevant for democratic action, is located in the ability of the government institution responsible for implementing such policies, rather than the original stock communal social capital. Scaling up is the policy aim that has been adopted by the CCC and is expressed as follows in their Community Policy and Policy Guidelines:

A key role for the Council is to develop connections or bridging social capital. Communities cannot always achieve their desired outcomes alone. It is important to build networks between communities and between agencies in the community. An aggregate of cohesive, strong neighbour-hoods does not necessarily translate into a cohesive community or cohesive society. Social groups within societies can be rich in social capital while the societies experience debilitating poverty, crime and conflict due to lack of connectedness or cross-cutting ties between groups. Residential segregation can sort people into communities with unequal resources and social capital can be used by residents of some communities to keep others out (CCC, 2000g, p.18).15

15 Ratified by the Christchurch City Council, 24/8/2000.
This use of the term social capital by the Council emphasises connecting disparate groups (bridging social capital), rather than bolstering the social capital of a particular group (bonding social capital). The synergistic role of the Council in fostering trust, it will be argued, is potentially in the Council’s own procedures. What is required is that the policies are relevant to the reality of peoples’ lives and competent staff implement the policies.

Social capital building effects are conditioned by the nature of existing social capital in the community, the structure of the government intermediary, and the design of the specific program intervention (Warner, 1999, p. 374).

Warner’s (1999) conception of social capital construction at the community-level depends on three crucial, interdependent elements: return on investments, autonomy, and linkage. Warner (1999, p. 376) refers to Bourdieu (1986) and claims that — building and maintaining networks requires investments of time, energy, and political and cultural capital. Network building that does not produce social and economic cultural yields (returns) is not worth the effort. Local communities need a return on the trust they invest in political mediating structures.¹⁶ (What Levi refers to as reciprocated trust). Investment in community social capital is harder to justify because the returns are not direct compared to the benefits of employment, education and the gains made by investing in family centred social capital.

By autonomy, Warner means the ability of such a political structure to implement and carry out its own policies, and to initiate and implement programs. Government autonomy is determined by the organisation structure, budget and administration capacity, and is strengthened by the professionalism of those who implement the programs (Warner, 1999, p. 377). However, too much government autonomy insulates a government from the community, and consequently residents need autonomy to challenge governments via “voice and vote”. Autonomy is the efficacy of government programs and the government’s ability to prevent predation by interest groups. As such, resident autonomy is democratic power and a say in community administration. Public debate, therefore, dominated by one group in the community is an example of uneven resident autonomy (Warner, 1999, p. 378).

¹⁶ This also applies to investments of time, energy, money and emotional commitment. For my purposes, trust is central.
Linkage refers to the many connections within communities, between communities, and between communities and political mediating structures. Linkage facilitates information exchange and embeddedness of organisations in the community, either temporary and issue oriented, or long-term and institutional (Warner, 1999, p.378). A narrow linkage to specific interest groups may limit government responsiveness to the broader community. Warner (1999, p.379) maintains that networks can be intentionally created so as to facilitate social capital to address community problem-solving where forums of interaction may not emerge from the “natural extensions of work, school or play”.

Both Warner’s and Evans’ conception of government facilitated social capital place an emphasis on the government agents connecting with communities; and both require that communities benefit from that connection. Both conceptions also require the government agents have the authority, or autonomy to establish and reward these connections. Warner and Evans argue that the social capital within a community is important, but that it is the ability of the mediating structure that determines the success of attempts to promote social capital for communal benefit. Overriding these criteria is the ability and competence of staff to implement such policies. Policy is the enabling tool, and competent staff are the enabling agents of government facilitated social capital.

Social capital requires trust among individuals, consequently, social capital facilitated by means of institutional artifice, requires trust of government agents (Levi, 1996, p.378). A political institution is only able to mediate trust throughout the community if that institution itself is trustworthy (Levi, 1998, p.87). Only individuals can trust, or be trusting. Trustworthiness, however, can be attributed to individuals or institutions. When reference is made to having trust in an institution, what is meant is that the “agents” of that institution, the people that operate within that institution, are trusted or are trustworthy (Levi, 1998, p.80).

Good government is a “result of an interaction between a civic-minded citizenry and civic-minded government actors” (Levi, 1996, p.50). Residents need to desire to be involved, but also the government needs to want people to be involved.

The remainder of this chapter will examine political institutions ability to facilitate social capital by evaluating Evans’ notion of synergy – complementarity and embeddedness - and Warner’s concerns for autonomy, linkage and return on investments. This chapter will introduce the experiences of two advocates, Tom and
Harry, to illustrate the impact of the policy reforms and the problems of their implementation. Tom and Harry are senior advocates who were generous with their time and insights and will remain anonymous.

**Autonomy: Policy as an Enabling Tool**

Community Boards were established to retain local involvement in local issues, and so they are crucial to any understanding of consultation in local government. Community Boards were established as a compensatory measure, to retain grass-roots involvement, following the rationalisation of the 1989 local government reforms that established enlarged councils.\(^{17}\) One hundred and sixty Community Boards\(^{18}\) were established throughout New Zealand for wards with populations greater than 20,000 people (Bush, 1995, p. 111). Section 101ZP of the Local Government Act 1974 legislated the existence of Community Boards by decreeing that “(1) For every community there shall be a community board”.

Section 101ZY of the Local Government Act (1974) stipulates that a “general purpose” of a Community Board should be “communication with community organisations and special interest groups within the community”.\(^{19}\) Community Boards provide a forum for local disputes, where people can make representations concerning the merits or misgivings of local issues.

The concern for community connectedness is also evident at the Community Board level as expressed in the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board’s Mission Statement:

> Through Advocacy the Board will effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the Burwood/Pegasus community by being responsive to local issues, and working towards a socially aware, safe and active community. (CCC, 2000e, p. 6).

---

\(^{17}\) 231 territorial bodies became 60 district and 12 city councils.

\(^{18}\) Christchurch City is divided into twelve wards that form six Community Boards. A Community Board in Christchurch consists of the six elected Community Board members and three elected City Councillors who are appointed to the Board.

\(^{19}\) Section 101ZY stipulates that the “general purposes” of the community board should be:

(a) The consideration and reporting of on all matters referred to it by the territorial authority or any matter of interest or concern to the community:
(b) The overview of road works, water supply, sewerage, stormwater drainage, parks, recreational facilities, community activities, and traffic management within the community:
(c) The preparation of an annual submission to the budgetary process of the territorial authority for expenditure within the community:
(d) Communication with community organisations and special interest groups within the community:
(e) To perform such functions as are delegated to it under the authority of section 101ZZ of this act:
Christchurch’s six Community Boards are relatively well resourced. They each receive $390,000 for expenditure that is prioritised among the Boards’ parks, streets, waterways, and community development. This funding is prioritised, and allocated, via the Annual Plan process. Community Boards have a statutory responsibility to make a submission to the Annual Plan. Each Board hosts a meeting each year, the annual “wish list”, where community interests petition the Board to prioritise their needs.

Fifty thousand dollars per annum is designated as discretionary funds for each Community Board to distribute to petitioners as needs arise throughout the year. Congruent with Evans’ claim that synergy requires tangible supports; Community Boards have some funds and resources to deliver some of its residents needs. This funding indicates a degree of autonomy as specified by Warner.

Community Boards in Christchurch work within a framework set by the Christchurch City Council Corporate Office. The Corporate Office, under the direction of the City Manager, established the Council’s consultative principles, established the Advocacy Teams, and also employs the staff that the Community Boards rely upon; suggesting limits to Community Boards’ autonomy.

Sometimes the Community Board is no more powerful than other interest groups (Advocate Harry).

Community Boards only have limited delegated powers; Community Boards cannot make substantive decisions but can only make recommendations to the relevant Council Committee. Community Boards, therefore, have limited autonomy.

A major problem for Community Boards is that they are adrift from the real realm of decision-making. The Council or a Council Committee ultimately decides most of the issues that come before a Community Board. The City Council ostensibly makes their decisions with the benefit of Community Board recommended options. The Community Boards’ role is to sign off on the public consultation process. Items

---

20 Many Community Boards do not receive any funding from their parent Council.
21 Funding available for the 2001/02 financial year.
22 Section 101ZZ of the Local Government Act (1974) defines the restrictions under which the Board operates. Community Boards do whatever their parent Council may delegate to them. The parent Council may delegate any of its powers to the Community Board except for those under the Public Works Act 1981. Community Boards cannot borrow money, strike a rate, make a bylaw, or negotiate some contracts. Community Boards cannot acquire, hold or dispose of property; appoint, suspend or remove staff, or recover monies greater than $5,000. Parent Councils may also perform such functions on behalf of a Community Board, or may revoke the delegation.
that appear on a Community Board’s agenda are categorised into the following “parts”: (A) matters requiring a Council decision, (B) reports for information and (C) delegated decisions. Typically, a Community Board’s delegated decisions involve receiving apologies, confirming reports, approving the installation of give way signs, parking restrictions and advertising on bus shelters. Boards also have street naming responsibilities, can confer community service awards and can allocate their discretionary funding. For all other matters, the Board’s decisions are reported to the relevant Committee and to the full Council meeting as an indication of community feeling. The majority of the Boards’ decision-making roles are deciding what advice they are offering to the Council. Community Boards have no real decision-making capacity. A Community Board, therefore, does not resolve most of the items that are presented to it.

A Community Board represents its community’s interests at other levels of the CCC structure, namely at Committee and full Council meetings. The capacity of a Community Board to facilitate social capital also depends on its ability to achieve results for that community. A Community Board must be able to represent the community, or at least the section of the community that it has decided to support, at the greater Council level. If a Community Board is not effective in pursuing issues on the Council stage this will diminish the confidence of the community in the Community Board’s ability to function as an advocate. Community Boards make recommendations to Committees and to Councils, so if Committees and Councils disregard that advice it can undermine the Community Boards’ ability to maintain the trust of their communities to effectively represent them. If they cannot be considered as an effective channel to pursue local issues their ability to coordinate other networks will be damaged. More crucially, however, Community Boards become a local forum, but not a local force. If Community Boards can not convey local concerns onto the greater stage of full Council where all decisions are made, they will lose their standing in the community and effectiveness at organising and establishing networks of trust and norms of participation because they will not have the legitimacy to do it.

Community Boards rely on Council officers to implement their decisions. Yet Community Boards have no power to ensure that those decisions are implemented. Community Boards have no control over staff. Furthermore, Community Boards rely on a bureaucracy that may not be altogether responsive to the needs, or desires, of the Community Board.
We as a Board cannot direct Council officers to do one thing or another; we can only make requests (Burwood-Pegasus Community Board Chair).

Boards can only agree or not that the job has been done to their satisfaction (Advocate Harry).

Community Boards may request more information from staff, but that is all they can do – request. Community Boards are not empowered to employ, or discipline, staff. Section 101ZZ of the Local Government Act 1974 stipulates that Community Boards can not “appoint, suspend or remove staff”.

Public Consultation: “Seeking Community Views”

“We’ve listened long enough, it is time to lead” (CCC Councillor and champion for public involvement).

Social capital inheres, not just in civil society, but in an enduring set of relationships that span the public-private divide (Evans, 1997, p.184).

Community consultation, when applied by engaged and competent institutions, can facilitate social capital. Consultation is part of the communication that occurs within Evans' “enduring set of relationships” between governments and its residents. Councils have the opportunity to institutionalise social capital from their consultative practices because they have the infrastructure to do so. Councils have the resources, such as funds, office equipment and accumulated knowledge, professional talent, linkage to policy-makers, support staff, and established community networks (Warner, 1999, p.384). Consultation is potentially a means of extending networks by introducing more people to Council processes.

Public consultation is the rubric under which local government and residents interact. Public consultation is an invitation for community involvement in the policy process. The power of decision-making responsibility, however, remains with the representatives or officials. Forgie et al. (1999a, pp.79-80) claim that consultation is a "limited" and "constrained" form of public participation. Consultation is institutionalised communication, whereby, a process of community interaction has been regulated and controlled by council policy.
Consultation is a stage in the policy process that seeks information from the community through a variety of formal and informal instruments, mediated by officials according to their training, competence and values (Forgie, Cheyne and McDermott, 1999b, p.v).

Consultation, like facilitating social capital, relies on the abilities of the people implementing it. Consultation also establishes its own set of norms; including, defining key stakeholders and other interested parties, response times, holding meetings and determining their formality. Sanctions can be applied to exclude transgressors of norms from the process.

The benchmark for consultation was set by the High Court, in Air New Zealand v Wellington International Airport Ltd. 6/1/92 Justice McGechan CP403/91, and in the Court of Appeal, Wellington International Airport v Air New Zealand [1993] NZLR 671. Justice McGechan has identified the requirements for adequate consultation and the following four principles have emerged from the judgements:

(a) There must be made available to the other party sufficient information to enable it to be adequately informed so as to make intelligent and useful responses;
(b) Sufficient time must be given for the consulted party to consider the information provided and tender its response;
(c) Sufficient time must be set aside for the responses to be properly considered by the consulting party;
(d) The party obliged to consult, while quite entitled to have a working plan in mind, must keep its mind open and be ready to change or even start afresh as a result of the responses from the consulted party;

The policy the Christchurch City Council adopted that has established residents’ rights to be consulted is “Seeking Community Views” (SCV) (CCC, 1997a). The establishment of the Seeking Community Views Policy is what Dunn (1988, p.90) would describe as a “well-designed, strategic and rational policy”, referring to his requirements for a collaborative policy. The “Seeking Community Views” policy consists of six policy statements. It begins with the acknowledgment of the importance of engaging “in processes which give it (the CCC) an understanding of the views within the community”. The final statement declares that “responsibility for making decisions rests with the Christchurch City Council”. The process for seeking communities’ views are claimed to be managed according to a list of twenty principles insisting that “seeking views occurs as an input to decision making, not

---

23 Ratified by Christchurch City Council, 17/12/1997.
after a decision has been made” (CCC, 1997a). (refer Appendix 1). The policy document that has exalted community consultation, however, does not offer any help in how to achieve this and is often a principle rather than a practice.

Seeking Community Views (SCV) is a wonderful principle but not grounded in the reality of what the CCC does. Roading fellows with hairy shoulders are focussed in what they are doing and are not going to be consulting with a SCV document before they go and do what they do, units continue to act unilaterally (Advocate Tom).

The “Seeking Community Views” policy was developed by policy analysts with some input from practitioners. Some practitioners, however, claim that it is flawed because its principles are too detached from the practice, and it does not acknowledge the complexities of consulting with the public. A handbook produced as a manual on how to apply the principles does not address the complexity, or the scale of community consultation. The handbook refers to the interactions between individuals or small groups and explains such techniques as to how to read body language and how facial expressions reveal the type of learning processes a person employs (CCC, 1998a, pp. 21-27). These are very important skills to enhance the communication with others, but they can only be utilised when in personal contact with a small group rather than elicit communal engagement on an issue.

This scenario mirrors the overextension of the concept of social capital. The theories behind SCV are also extended to now apply to communities where their utility may not be as relevant as when applied to small groups.

The problem is that policy analysts and senior officials and Councillors are not out there in the public, you know, they’re not out there riding on the garbage trucks. It is no good having sets of principles if they’re not grounded into reality, or are applied by people that don’t understand reality. It (SCV) is not relevant to the requirements of CCC officers (Advocate Tom).

Establishing Trust

For residents to be able to trust Community Boards, Community Boards need to demonstrate that the communities’ trust has been well placed and return that trust. The current structure, however, has the potential to bypass Community Board involvement; hence undermining the Boards’ reliability.
Politics between Christchurch City Council and [Community] Boards is complicated (Spreydon-Heathcote Community Board Chair, 2/11/99).

We have a process, it's hard enough for Board members to understand and we can't expect the community to understand. I know it seems ponderous, but the Christchurch City Council, and [other] Councils are ponderous (Burwood-Pegasus Community Board Chair, 1/11/99)

The structure of the decision-making process appears to be incomprehensible to Board members. Upon introducing the new Community Advocate at the May Day 2000 Burwood-Pegasus Community Board meeting, the Chair mentioned that the Advocate joined the Advocacy Team from “Tuam Street (the City Council Civic Office) which remains a mystery to us all”. At this comment, a Councillor squeaked in disapproval. Tuam Street is not a mystery to that Councillor, or at least not to be admitted publicly, but the Chair of the Community Board obviously does have the opinion that Council structures are not as comprehensible or transparent as they could or should be. It should be noted that the Chair had expressed such reservations in private conversation, and also that while a sardonic wit is typical of the Chair, undermining Council structures is not.

The credibility of a government affects the development of social trust (Misztal, 1996, p.199). Council process and procedure that are incomprehensible indicate that communication has failed somehow. Either the process is flawed (illogical) or the process is not explained adequately. In either case, considering the importance Luhmann (1979, pp.55-56) placed on communication for securing trust, such failures of communication inhibit the establishment of trust.

If CCC procedures appear incomprehensible to community representatives, they must obviously be incomprehensible to the residents. A conversation with an Advocate, Tom, revealed his frustration with “the bureaucratic intransigence of the organisation that is the Christchurch City Council”. He was primarily concerned about the lack of Council responsiveness to a submission process, claiming that “this organisation does not respond to its customers”. He complained that getting the CCC to recognise its own principles is hard enough, but having those principles honoured was proving to be frustratingly difficult. Having an important CCC official express a lack of confidence in the bureaucratic structure alarmed me and I replied that if he
found CCC structures inflexible and confusing, how does he suppose the average resident finds them. He shrugged and could not answer.

**Establishing Institutional Trust: Competent and Engaged Staff**

What the City Manager has introduced is quite revolutionary. It is unique in New Zealand if not unique in the world. And it is nearly working but what is stopping it is some staff members. I would say that the City Manager probably has unwarranted confidence in his staff. He thinks strategically, but does not have a role in the running of it. People do not understand him because he speaks above the team leaders heads about political philosophy (Advocate Harry).

**Advocacy Teams**

The Advocacy Teams are an effort to establish “embedded” actors into the community. The staff of the Advocacy Teams need to be “competent and engaged”, according to Evans, in order to create synergy between governments and communities. Evans' concept of synergy – direct connections between government agents and communities complementing each others' actions – depends on competent and engaged staff. Similarly, Warner's concept of autonomy is bolstered by the “professionalism” of those implementing the programs.

The Advocacy Teams are vitally important to the Christchurch City Council’s, and the Community Boards’, efforts of promoting social capital. The Advocacy Teams are the focus for the day-to-day interaction that Evans describes as “providing substance” to the concept of embeddedness, or the establishment of an institutional actor in the community. The day-to-day administration is where community participation is most “relevant” and “effective” (O’Neill and Colebatch, 1989, p.9). This entails entitlement to information before proposals are placed onto council or committee agendas, advice from staff and, ultimately, involvement in the decision-making process. Advocacy Teams were established in March 2000 to attempt the encouragement of peoples' participation in the decision-making process.

Advocacy Teams provide the bureaucratic support for the Community Boards, but also retain the bureaucratic responsibilities to their relevant Council Unit. Each
Team has some autonomy that allows Boards and Teams to prioritise their needs and capital expenditure, but ultimately, direction and principles come from Council policy-makers. The primary responsibility of the Burwood-Pegasus Advocacy Team, for example, is "the promotion of community development and social programmes". The Team is also "responsible for providing accurate advice to Council, Community Board and the community" on local issues. The Team "provides an important link between the wider community and the Council’s function", and "plays a significant role in the implementation of Board and Council policy". "To this end, it should be the first point of contact for residents with Council-related enquiries or concerns" (CCC, 2000e, p.11).

The two roles of the Advocacy Teams are potentially conflicting and contradictory. On the one hand, Advocacy Teams act as advocates for the community; however, they also have a role in the implementation of CCC policy. Presumably, an advocate for the community would need to oppose council policy if residents were opposed to that policy. This role could only be consistent if resident input, via the mediation of the Advocacy Team, had a direct influence on CCC policy, which the teams would then implement.

The Burwood-Pegasus Community Advocate describes the three main functions of the Advocacy Team as: informing the Community Board, liasing with the community, and liasing with the Council and its officers. The importance of communication is underscored by the roles of the Advocacy Teams. The Teams are responsible for communication between CCC and residents, yet often, and embarrassedly, Council communication bypasses the Advocacy Teams and CCC Units act unilaterally.

He describes the relationship as follows:

Advocacy Teams can only really respond to the direction from the Board. Boards decide and Advocacy Teams implement. But, Advocacy Teams can only encourage Council Units to consult, we certainly can’t enforce a Unit to consult (Burwood-Pegasus Community Advocate).

This produces a problem of the "link" role of the Advocacy Teams, if Advocacy Teams cannot enforce other Council officers to do anything.

Advocacy Teams total less than fifty staff members and constitute only a relatively small percentage of Council staff. The majority of Council staff,
approximately 1100, are employed by their relevant Units, such as Parks and Waterways, City Streets, and Leisure Units for example. The priority of general staff members is to fulfil their Unit's requirements, and so establishing trust relationships and extending networks may be incidental to their tasks.

Every CCC Unit is responsible for implementing the Seeking Community Views policy, and subsequently, every CCC Committee is also responsible for ensuring the implementation of that policy. However, only the Community Relations Unit is responsible for the Community Policy, the policy that recognises “bridging social capital” as “a key role for the CCC”. Correspondingly, only the Community Services Committee is responsible for the Community Policy. This is problematic because for a policy that aims to connect disparate groups across the community would need to be implemented by the entire CCC apparatus, rather than by one specific branch of it. Such policies need to be applicable and enacted across the bureaucratic spectrum, and to be utilised by all of the CCC units. Many residents may not come into contact with the Community Relations Unit, yet have dealings with other CCC Units, such as Parks, Leisure or Streets.

The problem of poor communication with CCC Units is confirmed by the findings of the recent “Review of the Residents' Association Formation and Recognition Policy” conducted by the Community Relations Unit which concluded that:

[T]he communication between Residents' Groups, community advocacy teams and other local service centre staff was very good. It identified that communication with all other Council units was not always as good and for some Residents' Groups, the Council is a labyrinth of people, processes and documentation (CCC,2001a Community Services Committee Agenda, 6/8/01).

Advocate Tom, describes a “miasma of discontentedness” that stems from “the Christchurch City Council being seen as a faceless bureaucracy” and claims that “that's what we are. We (the CCC) need to put a face on it, show people the human side and make engagement more easy”. Advocate Tom believes that his job is to enhance peoples' empowerment, help them to make decisions for themselves on issues that impact upon their lives, but to do this he must overcome problems caused by peoples' attitudes towards the Council. Perceptions of an unresponsive bureaucracy do not engender peoples' participation.
There is a further problem of CCC Units not communicating between themselves. CCC Units failing to communicate between themselves, and within the same Unit, contributes to, and is a result of compartmentalisation. Different units of the CCC become their own separate bureaucratic enterprises.

Compartmentalisation is when each Unit acts on its own without coordination with other Units within the CCC. This means that there may not be coordination between – and even within – units for specific projects. Local projects may develop as independent budget streams, meaning that two different projects within one community are implemented individually and not coordinated. Coordination between projects appears to be more of a budgetary, rather than a social or communal, requirement. Compartmentalisation within the CCC indicates that if Units within the CCC do not communicate with each other, communication between CCC Units and residents could be problematic. Compartmentalisation, furthermore, is the antithesis of complementarity; or the inability to collaborate on projects of mutual interest. Further delineation of accountability and responsiveness occurs because of the contracting out of services. Non-Council workers, employed by companies contracted by the Council, for example, maintain the City’s parks and streets.

Advocacy Teams, therefore, offer only a limited role as an “embedded actor”. Advocacy Teams do not have the authority that the embedded actors as described by Evans have. This means that there are no guarantees that promises are kept. This limits the trustworthiness of the Teams if other units in the Council do not need to account for their actions. It is difficult to engender trust when people cannot predict how someone else is going to act, or if they act unilaterally.

The Problem of Bureaucratic Inertia

Advocacy teams are repackaged, they’re the same people with the same titles and same abilities, but are now considered as advocates. But they all have other job prescriptions, be it parks, roads, community development, as typists, whatever… Each person on the advocacy team has their own job to do, their own job description and advocacy seems to be an add-on (Advocate Tom).

Advocate Tom explains that part of the problem is that there is a culture of conservatism among employees, where employees are rigid in their approach, as in
"this is how it's always been done and this is how we'll do it". The advocate
complains that this attitude produces an unresponsive bureaucracy.

One Community Board member likened officers' actions as burrowing
through, or burrowing under, public concerns. She describes the Board as attempting
to reconcile the consultation process between Council officers and the residents.
Complaints about consultation efforts are brought to Community Boards. Community
Board are responsible for revisiting and reviewing consultation efforts that have
provoked complaints. "Officers have their own ideas and pursue these regardless of
what the public or the Community Board wants". She believes Council officers are
very slow in responding to the new inclusive, public consultative way of thinking.
The Board member points to officer recalcitrance and incompetence as undermining
the credibility of the Board.

There is a problem of Community Boards getting lumbered with the
officers' mistakes and their lack of consultation. Officers seek views
but then they don't listen to them; they carry on regardless in their slow
methodical way (Community Board member)

She believes that the trouble is that people do not agree on what it is that they
want. Conflict between community members can be exploited by Council officers;
the officers may produce reports that overstate the extent of community impasse, and
propose their own solution as the remedy.

Residents argue amongst themselves and with the Community Board
and meanwhile the Council officers continue to burrow underneath the
process. It is action by stealth that undermines the actions of the
Community Board and the residents.

This undermines trust in the process. The trustworthiness of political
institutions, in this case Community Boards, depends on the abilities and motivations
of their officers. If the officers are considered trustworthy, so too are the institutions.
Boards are powerless to control officers who obfuscate, prevaricate, or are
incompetent and, therefore, are considered untrustworthy. Even though the Boards
may be an institution that can be trusted, in that they may not prevaricate or obfuscate,
Boards may still be considered as unreliable because they are powerless to amend or
control the actions of officers who act in an untrustworthy fashion. The
powerlessness and limited authority of Community Boards can make them appear untrustworthy.

There is a real problem in community relations. Staff understand what we (staff) need to achieve but they (staff) are thrown out of their comfort zone. The old way of doing the job was to manage the people from afar, now they need to leave the office and talk to people. That’s a big change for people. It is much easier to tell the staff not to get too enthusiastic and to slow down the process. We’re being held back from doing it, the involvement stuff, and its just a bit slow moving. The policy is enacted with genuine interest and people put in a full effort, very often after the working day has finished, but the system is flawed, it lacks leadership. There are too many rational managers (Advocate Harry).

The problem is that consultation is relatively innovative and people who were adept at managing and administering may not be as well versed in advocacy skills, or attuned to the attitude needed to consult with people, rather than administer them. The consequences for the facilitation of social capital are bleak if staff are unable or unwilling to demonstrate an affinity with residents.

We are still grappling with what advocacy is. No one is standing up and defining what it is. There is confusion because the City Manager has the vision but other managers have no idea. They pay lip service to the ideas, or know them by rote but they really do not understand what the message is. It has come down to an issue of administration versus advocacy. The problem is that, on the whole, community advocates are from the old school of administering and managing the community without inviting the community to become involved. It all depends on how good the Community Advocate is at doing their job (Advocate Harry).

The concerns of Advocate Harry also indicate that the institutions of the CCC are not as competent or engaged as Evans (1997) would claim that they need to be to produce synergistic cooperation. This lack of institutional competence and engagement inhibits the formation of social trust, or can erode any trust that may have been established if the institutions appear, or are, inconsistent.

Advocate Harry speaks of officers being forced from their comfort zones, needing to now engage with the community, and maybe not being sure how to do this, rather than administer from afar. He testifies to the trepidation of the officers having to do this. "It is a big change for people". It would be hard to expect officers to engender trust within a community, or to engender trust in CCC processes when these
officers are not sure of their own positions or abilities. This suggests an uncertainty in their professionalism that Warner would argue inhibits the autonomy of the institution. Tom refers to this as a need for a culture change.

There would appear to be serious communication problems within the CCC resulting from arguably a lack of coherent leadership throughout the bureaucracy. This has produced confusion about the definition and subsequently the role of advocacy. As a result, the process relies on the abilities and interpretations of individual Advocates. Corporate policy is not being translated consistently and so the policy is not being implemented consistently at the community level. This lack of consistency undermines the prospects of fair procedure, which is vital for considering an institution trustworthy (Levi, 1998). Even if procedures are fair, if residents have the perception of unfairness because of minor inconsistencies, it gives the impression of procedural failure, affecting the reputation of the Council. Ultimately, a bad reputation will diminish trustworthiness as surely as bad deeds (Levi, 1998).

Advocate Tom claimed there has been no ongoing education process for advocates and that there was no instruction for advocacy teams of how to do the job. There are *ad hoc* seminars, but not an organised regime of advocacy education. Communication is vital for the Advocates to establish trust in their communities, but communication within their own processes is inarticulate. There is no institutional support for the people ostensibly responsible for institutionalising social relationships throughout the community. The generation of trust and hence, social capital, relies on fair procedure, but procedure is arguably confused and based on *ad hoc* reaction.

There are no specialists at approaching the community. We [the Council] need "people" people. We don’t have people employed to just only get the message out to the community. No one is solely responsible for Council PR. What we need is a sales rep, some one to go out and approach people and see if they are happy with our services and contact; to see if people are connected with the Council and to gauge their satisfaction with us (Advocate Tom).

In contrast to this, the Communications Team employs six people full time "to get the message out there" and are active with publications such as the *City Scene*. However, the focus of this team is to circulate Council news, such as press releases and public notices. The information flow is from the Council out to the community, not from the community into the Council. Furthermore, even this approach is
administered on an *ad hoc* basis. The Communications Manager of the CCC, reporting on radio station RDU’s “On the Wire” (28/10/99), admitted that “there is not a communication strategy, it just gets out there. It’s more a muddle through process really”. I asked several Community Advocates why there were resources spent on Corporate Office communications and not on community communications? The advocates agreed that that was a problem, but could offer no solution.

Advocate Harry offered this insight on advocacy:

> It is a governance idea. The principle is that Council, the Boards and the community are meant to be acting in a partnership. The whole idea is to have people feel that they are a part of it, to have them pick up the rubbish in the park rather than whinge at the council and expect them to do it. The thing is, what the managers don’t understand is that it is ultimately better to get everyone on side and make them a part of it because it ends up being the best way to run an organisation. To have locals pick up rubbish gives them a good feeling and saves the council hundreds of dollars in calling out special rubbish collections.

Council staff do not implement Council policy consistently. The problem occurs in several ways. The emphasis on advocacy is a recent innovation and most Council staff are responsible for only implementing the priorities of their relevant Unit which traditionally was a matter of administration. The staff that are now considered as advocates also retain their bureaucratic functions. There is a conflict between the roles of advocacy and administration. It is claimed by some of the people responsible for implementing the policies that the policies are not defined, meaning that their roles are uncertain. It is also claimed that the bureaucratic culture is providing inertia in a move from administration to advocacy.

The consultation effort and advocacy skills are dependant upon the personal abilities and ethics of the officer involved in the process. Council procedure is consequently unevenly distributed throughout the city. Just as social capital is dependent on the context of the relationships in which it exists, consultation also relies on the relationships of the Council Officers involved and the community being consulted.

Council communication ultimately relies on people not necessarily skilled as communicators. Corporate policy is not translated into community advocacy. There is a policy directed from above, that is not always understood, or appreciated, by the people charged with implementing it. This misunderstanding and misapplication
thwarts the possibility of fair procedure, as recommended by Levi, producing a conflict that inhibits the perception of trustworthiness.

Establishing Networks

Raising the Profiles of Community Boards: The Importance of Linkage

The capacity of a Community Board to facilitate social capital depends on its ability to "connect" with its community, and to connect hitherto unconnected groups within that community. Community consultation is a means of instigating those connections.

The task of connecting, and connecting with, community groups is complicated by the extremely poor recognition of Community Boards within their community. According to the CCC's own research, the Annual Survey of Residents' (1998) (CCC, 1998b) only 8% of respondents could correctly name their Community Board. A further 18% could partially name their Board. This means that the remaining three quarters of the population have no idea what the name of their Community Board is. The 1998 survey was the last year that respondents were asked questions referring to Community Boards so it is unfortunately impossible to ascertain if the profile of Community Boards has increased.

The profile of the Boards is a concern for Community Boards. A deputation, by the protagonist of the case study that is to follow this chapter, at the 29/3/99 Burwood-Pegasus Community Board meeting claimed that she had never heard of the Board or knew anything of its functions. This prompted a review of the profile of the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board (CCC, 1999c). The following March, the Community Advocate of the time was contacted. He assured me that raising the Board's profile had been an ongoing process. "The Board's profile is raised by what they do. Furthermore, we are lucky to have such an active Board. Other Boards in

---

24 The actual figures may be worse. The respondents were asked about their own Board, yet all these totals were aggregated. For example, 2% could correctly name Burwood-Pegasus, and a further 4% could partially name it, so the remaining 94% of Burwood-Pegasus residents do not know the name of their Board. Fendalton-Waimari rated the best, with 2% correct and 5% partially correct, meaning 93% do not know. Shirley-Papanui was the worst with 1% correct and 1% partially correct, and 98% not knowing.
town are not as well known as ours”. This is true. The Burwood-Pegasus Community Board was accurately named by 2% of respondents in the 1998 survey of residents. Other Boards in Christchurch were named by only 1% of respondents (CCC,1998b).

The Chair of the Riccarton-Wigram Community Board suggests that Community Boards should be known as “Community Councils” and those elected to them as “Community Councillors”.25 As he says, “people don’t know what a Community Board is, (but) everyone knows what a Community Council is”. A City Councillor on the same Board agreed that Community Board members need a recognisable title, and claimed that calling them “Community Councillors” would enhance their identity in the community. “After ten years there is a total lack of understanding out there as to what Community Boards are all about”. For Community Boards to have any effect, people need to know that they exist, and what their functions are. Community Boards cannot extend networks or establish trust if they are unknown to the majority of the public. Community Boards cannot make disparate groups in the community aware of each other, until people are aware of the Community Boards.

The Anonymity of the Residents’ Association

The importance of linkage to the community for constructing communal social capital is hindered by the importance placed on residents’ associations.

One gentleman I encountered was a resident of his community for 32 years before he became aware of the existence of his local residents’ association. Despite the failure of residents’ associations to attract widespread interest and interaction from local residents, residents’ associations remain important institutions to the Community Boards. “The major link to the Community Board comes from residents’ associations”. “Residents’ associations are the lifeblood of the Board’s interaction with local communities” (CCC,2000e,p.16). However, despite these claims, Advocacy Teams are recognising that there are other institutions in the community that better perform the functions expected of residents’ associations. Sports and service clubs, and increasingly schools, are providing a more tangible and robust network for Community Boards. A message delivered to a local school can be carried

25 This suggestion had been raised at the 1998 Community Board Conference.
into potentially hundreds of homes, whereas even on a good night the same message will reach a few dozen homes if delivered to a residents’ association.

Putnam has elevated voluntary associations as the pre-eminent source of social capital. Similarly, residents’ associations in Christchurch are purported to be the source of community involvement. However, voluntary associations are not the source of social capital as they are claimed to be, and residents’ associations are not the hallmarks of community participation. Residents’ associations may exist without the knowledge of residents, and as such are a limited and selective source (or indicator) of social capital. The Council’s Annual Survey of Residents is again instructive. For the Years 1996 through to 2000, in response to the question about their knowledge of residents’ groups, the percentage of respondents replying that they did not know of any such groups was consistently between 72% to 74% (CCC,2000f, Table 49:q25a+b). Furthermore, in response to the question “What kind of positive contact have respondents had with the people in their street?” 92% claim to have had some form of positive contact. Twenty seven percent had some “limited” contact, such as giving a nod or saying hello, 45% had “some” contact, such as chatting and asking small favours, while 20% have “lots” of contact, like regular socialising and considered neighbours as part of their social network. This all indicates that there are many social connections within the community. These are the informal networks as proposed by Jacobs (1961), Raynor and Lee (1997) and Newton (1997), operating quite independently of the formal residents associations. Unfortunately, these community connections may remain invisible to Council processes.

The Community Relations Unit recently reviewed the roles, functions and responsibilities of residents’ associations. Their recommendations generally revolved around producing consistency between the six Community Boards and the 96 residents’ groups. Specifically, the review recommended that residents’ groups receive some extra funding, a small annual grant and the responsibility to establish their own boundaries. The review recognised that “there is a need for further education and development around the use of the Seeking Community Views Policy

---

26 Residents’ associations and residents’ groups are one and the same. Some residents’ groups in Christchurch are known as ratepayers associations, or community groups, or precinct societies. I have chosen residents’ association to refer to all these groups.

27 Percentage of respondents that had no knowledge of their local residents’ groups: 1996-74%, 1997-74%, 1998-72%, 1999-72%, 2000-73%.
incorporating the CPCR\textsuperscript{28} model, across units" and proposes that "Council staff and elected members use the Seeking Community Views Policy and Policy Guidelines when consulting with Residents' Groups and other relevant community groups" (CCC, 2001a). Some Councillors, and Council Staff resent the importance placed on residents' associations. They claim that residents' associations are "empire building", that they are not a democratic forum, and that they over-extend their mandate.\textsuperscript{29}

**Conclusion**

To bridge social capital, the Christchurch City Council needs to generalise trust, expand existing networks and make participation accessible, relevant and easy. The Christchurch City Council has enacted policies relevant to community well-being that may provide the institutional framework for facilitating social capital. The Council has also allocated funds to Community Boards, allowing the representatives closest to the community to act upon some local needs. This provides Community Boards with a limited mandate and some resources to engender cooperative actions.

Community Boards were established to act as a conduit for communication between the Council structures and the residents. Grassroots engagement with the Christchurch City Council is based on the principles of community consultation that are channelled through the Community Boards as the initial phase of the process. In this regard, Community Boards are well placed to act as an institutional focus for the facilitation of social capital.

However, there are several impediments to Community Boards achieving this. The process relies on people engaging with an institution, Community Boards, that are largely unheard of, under the auspices of a policy document that is arguably not based on the reality of Council procedure. The Community Boards' lack of prominent public profile undermines their potential to contribute to a community's social capital. Community Boards are obscure and remain relatively unknown by their communities, inhibiting their opportunities to connect with people in their communities. The lack of awareness of Community Boards is further eroded by the limitations of Community Boards' delegated authority.

\textsuperscript{28} Consult to find the Consensus-Plan-Consult and discuss-Result).
\textsuperscript{29} Residents' associations make the same allegations about the Council.
Community Boards are also relatively powerless. They have delegated authority over relatively minor local issues, and are ultimately unable to make the decisions on the issues that affect a community. The decision-making capacity of Community Boards is largely restricted to making recommendations to a Council Committee. This lack of authority may be interpreted as a lack of credibility, especially if the Community Board's recommendation is rejected by a Committee. Advice from Community Boards can be ignored by Council decision-makers, effectively disregarding the community. The lack of autonomy also inhibits the Boards' reliability, and in turn undermines its trustworthiness. Any loss of trust in the effectiveness of Community Boards reduces their ability to facilitate social capital. Community Boards are, therefore, peripheral to the decision-making process. This peripheral location reduces the reliability of the Community Boards to effect change for their community, thus limiting the trust that people can place in the Boards. Correspondingly, their capacity to facilitate social capital is inhibited.

The facilitation of social capital by institutional means relies on the abilities of the agents of that institution. Community Boards do not have control over the staff that are ultimately responsible for implementing policies and are powerless to ensure that CCC units consult. Community Boards' rely on a bureaucracy that may not be strategically aligned with the Boards' intentions. Community Boards therefore have little autonomy and cannot guarantee a return for community participants investment. Consultation processes have the potential to connect many different groups (and individuals) in the community. However, Boards do not design or implement consultation; they can only respond to the bureaucrats' implementation and analysis of their consultation. Boards do not have the resources to enact consultation; they can only approve or disapprove of the process as carried out by Council officers.

Social capital engendered by political institutions is facilitated via bureaucratic mechanisms and in the case of the Christchurch City Council, those mechanisms have recently changed focus from administration to advocacy. This has produced a conflict between the officers' role as a link between the community and Council functions, and their role in implementing Council policy. The delivery of social capital in an institutional setting depends on the interpretation and implementation from bureaucrats who may not fully understand what is required, or may not wish to change the bureaucratic culture; the priority of most Council staff is not to advocate for others but to administer them.
Furthermore, compartmentalisation occurs within the CCC structure, such that there is not always coordination between CCC Units; each acting as their own bureaucratic enterprise with separate budget streams. Compartmentalisation within the CCC is epitomised by only one CCC Unit being responsible for implementing the policy that advocates bridging social capital. Before there can be effective communication between institutions and residents, there must be effective communication within the institution. Similarly, for social capital to be facilitated via political artifice, the institution's entire bureaucratic spectrum would need to be responsible for implementing such a policy. Most crucially, Council policy has to be implemented consistently. Consistent application of policy will result in fair procedures; and fair procedures are what will determine if the Christchurch City Council is trustworthy. Fair procedures rely upon a competent and engaged set of public institutions. A trustworthy government has the capacity to facilitate or produce trust; consequently, such a government can facilitate social capital.
CHAPTER FOUR:

SOCIAL CAPITAL IN CHRISTCHURCH:
THE INTERVIEWS

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to locate the discussion of social capital, trust and related institutions in the context of peoples’ everyday lives. These in-depth, semi-structured and unstructured interviews add evidence to the argument that trust is conferred only on people that can have, or have had, their trustworthiness verified. The interviews also illustrate that trust existing in neighbourhoods based on neighbourhood reputations is not generalised to include other unverified people in the community.

These interviews illustrate the commonalities people share in their sources of social capital, through their family, friends, education, work and communities. The respondents are preoccupied with family concerns, especially their children, and also with their occupational demands. Respondents claim that they simply do not have the time to become more involved with participation beyond their daily family needs. However, respondents at some time have volunteered time and energies for community and non-community based organisations, such as schools, church groups, neighbours or lobby groups. The respondents’ participation in these cases is in the service of their priorities, mostly, their children. The interviews demonstrate that respondents’ main source of social connections are based on family activities and friendships. Finally, the interviews indicate that the Christchurch City Council has little daily relevance for respondents in terms of reinforcing or “bridging” social connectedness.
Interview Methods

Six respondents were chosen by random selection from the Burwood-Pegasus, and Spreydon-Heathcote, wards of Christchurch, based on the street that they live on. A random letter generator selected letters until a street name was obtained. Similarly, a random number generator selected the start point on that street. Five houses were approached by door-to-door introduction, revisiting the area until an interview was obtained. I achieved interviews at the first house of the sample cluster on three occasions, and interviews at the second, third and fourth houses in the other sample clusters. I interviewed the person in the home above 18 years of age who was going to have the next birthday.

Trust

Respondents gain security from knowing their neighbours and state that knowing their neighbours has an influence on their perceptions of safety. The perception of safety, however, has not been expanded into feelings of generalised trust toward the community as a whole. Trust develops on a personal level in small networks, created from the habits of peoples' routines and reputations, (Luhmann,1979) or from the cohesion they gain from the familiarity with others (Misztal,1996). Without regular contact, habits and cohesion are not formed. Trust is based on the verification of someone’s trustworthiness. To expand feelings of trust to include a community requires the assumption of trust, to forgo the need for verification. All of the respondents claim that friendship and trust with neighbours is important. All of the respondents have someone they can rely on in an emergency. This person is not necessarily a neighbour, or local, but respondents all have someone they can rely on.

Networks

The respondents are mostly involved in family-oriented activities that involve their children's school or sporting activities. Respondents have very little contact with their neighbours on a regular basis such as swapping goods and services, borrowing tools, sharing child-care or having get-togethers. Mostly, the respondents do not even know their neighbours other than some of their immediate neighbours.
Respondents do not have any current formal connections with community organisations, such as residents' associations or neighbourhood watch. In addition, none of the respondents are formally involved with any clubs or associations. No respondent has been involved specifically with an issue relevant to their community or neighbourhood and no one has been part of a local action group. Some have been involved in business or employment-related issues, or interest groups, but these issues were not concerned with their local community.

**CCC and Generating Social Capital**

The Christchurch City Council's structures and agents have very little interaction in respondent's daily lives. The extent of respondents' dealings with the CCC is to pay their rates. None of the respondents has had any involvement with the Christchurch City Council about a local issue. The respondents' trust in their neighbours is not dependent on CCC processes or actions. Respondents' commitments are oriented towards personal connections that are independent of the CCC.

Familiarity with the CCC and their processes is necessary to participate in those processes, but just knowing about them does not mean that people will participate. In addition to familiarity with CCC processes, participation requires information, opportunity, time, resources and a reason to participate. Respondents have expressed a lack of time and opportunity to participate. Respondents also feel they have minimal information and resources, but crucially, none felt as though they had any reason to participate.

Some respondents have a vague recollection of the existence of Community Boards, while others have no idea that Community Boards exist, or what their function or roles may be. Only one respondent could name her Community Board. The respondents do not interact with CCC structures, staff or elected representatives as a matter of routine. Routines need to be developed with the CCC to develop trust in the CCC.

Respondents trust their families, their friends and other specific people. The trust for these people, however, is not generalised to produce a social trust. Social connections with neighbours are weak and social connections with the community are even more tenuous. Despite this, each of the respondents have their own "stock" of social capital that is based on their relationships with their families, some of their
neighbours, their employment and other groups to which they may volunteer their efforts.

Some Demographics

Donald is a man in his forties. He lives on the hill in Heathcote Ward. Donald owns his own business and has three children. He was born in Christchurch but has lived in large, international cities. His street is a private lane cul-de-sac off a major road up the hill. There are no communal or commercial amenities close to his home. “There is nowhere to go apart from other peoples’ houses. There is nowhere to meet without going off the hill” says Donald.

Jane is a woman in her late thirties living in Spreydon Ward. Jane and her husband are both professionals and have an eight-year-old son. Jane has lived in the Spreydon Ward for three years and has previously lived mostly in the Papanui Ward in the north of the city.

Alf is a man in his forties, married with no children and lives in the Spreydon Ward. Alf is originally from South Canterbury and has lived in Christchurch for the past ten years. Alf is currently studying and working part-time.

Alf and Jane are in close proximity to a mall, library and park. Alf lives four doors away from Jane, around the corner, in the same sample cluster.

Peggy is in her late thirties, married with one pre-school-age son, is a full-time mum and lives in Pegasus Ward. Peggy was born in England and came to New Zealand in the 1970s. She has always lived in the east of Christchurch. Peggy lives in a quiet street close to the river. Behind her street is a local shopping centre that includes a dairy, fish and chip shop, hairdresser and a tavern.

Evelyn is a woman in her forties, married with three teenage children. Evelyn lives in Burwood Ward and works full-time in administration. Evelyn’s street is a private lane cul-de-sac off a minor arterial road. Within one hundred metres of her home there is a dairy and bus stop, and up the road there is a chemist, fish and chip shop, garage, hairdressers and pizzaria.

Mary is a woman in her late fifties, a retired dressmaker and married with grown-up children. Mary has always lived in the Brighton area, and has lived in her current home on a minor arterial road in Burwood Ward for 35 years. Mary is well
connected to the community by her relationships with individual friends. "It's good here. I love it. We know a lot of people".

**Trust in the Community: Everybody Needs Good Neighbours???

In this thesis I am concerned with the trust that exists within communities. Specifically, the trust that can engender cooperative action and facilitate social capital within the community. In this chapter I will investigate if the feelings of trust between individuals is generalised (socialised) and conferred onto unverified, other people. The perception of safety in the community is a "building block" of social capital, and is, therefore, considered as a pre-requisite for the generation of social capital in the community (Bullen and Onyx, 1997).

The respondents' were questioned about trust and their perceptions of safety within their communities and neighbourhoods. All of the respondents stated that the people they trusted were their family members and friends. Respondents state that knowing their neighbours has an influence on their perceptions of safety. Those respondents that do know their neighbours gain security from knowing them and believe that their neighbours will look out for them and can be relied upon in a time of need. Furthermore, respondents state that despite the "good reputations" of their neighbourhoods, their specific trust is not conferred onto unverified, unknown people. Respondents report they feel safe in their neighbourhoods, although few would choose to walk their streets at night. All claim that friendship and trust with neighbours is important. Respondents have very little contact with their neighbours on a regular basis, such as socialising, back-yard conversations, or exchanging goods and services.

**The Problems of Establishing Trust: When Trust is Not Conferred Across Communities

*Jane* admits that she would feel safer if she knew the people in the street better. She does not feel as safe on her street as she would like, because her neighbours have not responded to her greetings. Despite her efforts to engage with
her neighbours, Jane is astonished, and alarmed, that many people would not respond to her greetings.

Some locals have said hello and some have just ignored me, yes they do ignore me, and these are people just around the streets here. I introduce myself to neighbours because that is what you do (Jane).

Jane can name some of her immediate neighbours but has minimal contact with them. Jane described this neighbourhood as insular. Jane has not visited a neighbour for “a little while” and conceded that is much to do with her life-style and work keeping her busy. She does not gossip with neighbours and said that it would be nice to do that every now and then.

It’s good to keep in touch so you can know, so you can care for each other. When gardening down the drive I chat to people as they come past, and they just don’t, as much as, you know, say hello. When I stop and chat to people in their gardens as you go for a walk they just don’t respond. People come and go and just do their own thing in their own place and that’s it (Jane).

Jane’s involvement with her neighbours in other parts of Christchurch was very strong and this experience had given her expectations of neighbourliness that are not being reciprocated in this neighbourhood.

Compared to where I used to live it has been very different. Over there (previous neighbourhood) we would have get-togethers and it was a very caring environment. People get involved with their neighbours. Over here, as much as you try, people keep to themselves. It’s bizarre actually (Jane).

During a moment of personal trauma, Jane’s neighbours in northern Christchurch (her former neighbourhood) responded by leaving vegetables on the back-door-step, and sending dinners on a plate. At other times, Jane would share drinks with five neighbours on a Saturday afternoon while gardening. Other goods and services were also swapped.

Jane has lived in neighbourhoods where people did act more communally. She, therefore, has the positive experience of neighbours talking and doing things together and retains the optimism of being able to do it again. Jane is accustomed to and expects people to share and swap and celebrate together. This interaction has a direct influence on how safe she feels.
Jane’s trust in her neighbours is conditional, given to those that have responded to her greetings, but not to those who would not communicate. The difficulty that Jane has experienced in establishing relationships with her neighbours has directly affected her establishment of trust in the area. The trust that Jane felt, and was able to confer, in her previous community has not transferred to her Spreydon community. The trust available due to the shared norms and values of a specific set of relationships has no value beyond those relationships (Edwards and Foley, 1998, p.129). Jane’s status of trustworthiness, and her ability to confer trust, has not been “accepted” in her new environment. Jane’s trustworthiness was dependent on the context of her previous relationships in her previous community. There is no medium for exchanging Jane’s trust from one community to another (Cohen, 1999, pp.220-221). The inability to reduce trust to a generic model that is recognisable to unknown people indicates that interpersonal trust cannot be transferred automatically to other people in other social contexts in all circumstances.

Alf does not know any of his neighbours. “No idea, never met them, don’t have anything to do with them. We all live in our own little worlds”. Alf believes that trust is simply no longer found in neighbourhoods and that people are generally very sceptical.

Getting to know people is not the done thing anymore, it’s not the norm. It is not normal to actually bowl on up to a person and say “Hey look, I wouldn’t mind getting to know you, associate with you, popping over and having a coffee from time to time”. When someone comes over to a complete stranger, probably the first thing to pop into their head is “What does this person actually want”? (Alf).

Alf expresses an underlying disconcertedness that he does not really know who his neighbours are. Yet, Alf does feel safe in his community. Alf trusts only those people that he has established relationships with: his family and his friends, but not his neighbours.

Jane and Alf appear not to have anyone in their neighbourhood that they can trust. However, Jane and Alf both experience relationships based on trust with their respective families, and their friends. Jane has also described a very caring and trusting set of neighbourly relationships in her previous community. Both respondents are capable of being trustworthy, and are willing (to varying degrees) to trust other people, yet their trustworthiness is not automatically redeemable within
their community. Their values and norms that established their trust with other people are not converted into trust in their neighbourhood and in turn their neighbours do not trust them.

The Fear of the Stranger: When Trust is not Generalised

Donald claimed to have “very low social connections” with his neighbours, meeting them occasionally in the lane-way, but not in their homes. Despite this minimal connection, Donald’s neighbourhood enjoys a trusting atmosphere. Donald described his area (Heathcote ward) as “peaceful and safe” and claimed that the area has a reputation for being safe. He feels secure with leaving the house unlocked when sometimes visiting the local shops a 15-25 minute return trip away. Bicycles are left in the yard, the garden shed unlocked and the garage under the home is often left open.

In some respects, it is a kind of watch-dog environment, we would notice someone totally strange hanging about. I guess we do have an informal neighbourhood watch (Donald).

Donald’s neighbours have access through each other’s properties via an informal path that crosses Donald’s and other neighbours’ land. It is not a legal walkway, but is simply a short-cut that crosses people’s land that was established long before Donald and his family moved in to their home.

I would recognise anyone that wouldn’t normally use the path. If a stranger walked through I would notice, but unless they lingered it wouldn’t be a problem. It is something that happens. It took a little getting used to but it certainly isn’t a problem for us (Donald).

Donald accepts the vulnerability of leaving his property exposed because he has placed trust in his neighbours not to steal from his family. Importantly, he also trusts his neighbours not to allow anyone else to steal from him and is optimistic that people would not steal from him in any case. This toleration extends to his neighbours using his property as a walkway. The privilege of private property has been eased to allow for a communal convenience. Donald’s trust is based partly on the reputation (Luhmann, 1979) that his neighbourhood has, and partly on the assumption that his neighbours will conform to a social norm that repudiates theft.
Donald’s trust of the other residents in his lane (one dozen homes) does not extend to his neighbours in the streets beyond his lane because Donald has no contact with the residents beyond his lane.

Peggy said that she feels safe in her area (Pegasus ward) and considers that it has a reputation for being safe. When they moved in two years ago the five or six immediate neighbours all came over and introduced themselves. Peggy was not surprised at this friendliness. "If they hadn’t of [introduced themselves], we would have gone and introduced who we were”.

Peggy and her family have formed good relationships with their neighbours. She can name most of them, and regularly says hello to them on the street or in their gardens.

Yes, we go and have a natter, occasionally we all get together for a few drinks. [Also, we] sometimes lend and borrow each others’ tools, like hedge trimmers, and the other day he (neighbour across the road) came in and helped shift some furniture. I know every one looks out for each other. Get to know if someone different is around and it makes you wonder, “what are they doing?” (Peggy).

Nothing in Peggy’s neighbourhood intimidates her, other than concerns for the safety of her child. If her son is playing in the front yard, he is told not to play near the fence.

You have to be aware wherever you are. You hear what happens in America and children are taken when playing in their own front yards. No, I don’t really think it’s a big problem here, but you really don’t know and it really is best just to be cautious (Peggy).

The lady across the road has an alarm that sometimes goes off and her neighbour has the code to reset it.

The first time the alarm went off everyone came out, they all came out. The surrounding four, five households. Normal people would just ignore it, but we all came out to see what was going on. That really made me think how people care. Five households came out, that’s very good, it’s very reassuring (Peggy).

Peggy, however, was not so sure about walking down her street at night. “It wouldn’t matter where you are, I wouldn’t walk anywhere after dark on my own. But I would if I had someone with me”.

(Misztal, 1996).
Mary feels safe in her area (Burwood ward) but she will not walk at night. "I enjoy walking on the beach, and generally feel safe in the area during the day, but not at night". Mary claims that there is nothing specific in the area that intimidates her but believes that some authority in the area is necessary.

What I would really like, because we get a few roughs going past here at night, especially Saturday night, would like to see a community cop going around the area. Keep an eye on all the riff-raff, send them home (Mary).

Mary thinks that Thomson Park has a bad reputation, but cannot recall anything happening in Thomson Park to warrant its reputation. Similarly, Mary has attributed a nearby neighbourhood (which happens to be my neighbourhood) as being unsafe because a dog attacked her dog there one day. "Wouldn't like to live down there, [it's] not very safe. [I] don't go there now, just wouldn't".

Mary's trust is based on the people that she knows. She trusts her friends and neighbours that she communicates with. But this is not extended to her neighbours that she does not communicate with, or to the area generally. Mary does not trust the streets at night, and does not trust the part of the neighbourhood that I live in. The area is generally considered as safe, but Mary attributes some parts of her neighbourhood as unsafe based on unsavoury events, such as loutish behaviour, uncontrolled dogs or bad reputation; hence she does not trust the area.

Mary does, however, confer trust if it is verified by people that she trusts, such as her friends, Kate or Ralph. These people act as mediating agents who inform Mary of local news and Council events.

Donald, Peggy and Mary confer their trust onto the verified, known people in their neighbourhoods, but express distrust of the unknown, unverified stranger. Their trust is not generated beyond those known to them and is not generalised in their neighbourhoods which they describe as areas of "good reputation". In Mary's example, she recognises some parts of her neighbourhood as having bad reputations, and consequently does not trust those areas.

---

30 The dog Mary claims attacked her dog also attacked me once. Both the dog and the dog’s owner are distinctive. I reported the dog bite on myself and this precipitated my own bout of feeling unsafe. The day after I reported the attack, a gentleman’s house in Invercargill was firebombed because he had reported a dog attack which resulted in the animal being put down. The owner of the dog, and perpetrator of the firebombing was the gentleman’s neighbour.
The respondents' assumption of non-malice only extends to those people whose trustworthiness has been verified. Their trust is based on relationships with specific neighbours, based on shared routines (Luhmann,1979) or because they conform to the familiarity of shared norms (Misztal,1996). However, trust is future-oriented and involves an element of risk; therefore, conferring trust onto specific, unverified persons is dangerous and not done by these respondents. There is no mediator to convert the respondents' specific trust into a generalised trust. Consequently, trust that they confer onto specific people, remains with those people and does not encompasses the community.

The Limits of Trust: When Trust Does Not Result in Collective Action

Peggy and her family are recent victims of unsafe and uncaring neighbours. They had lived in their home in an adjoining suburb for seven years. They had renovated the home, established trusting relationships with their neighbours who would pop in, and they “were really happy there”. Then their neighbour died and the house was rented-out to “undesirables”. Their new neighbours had no concern for anybody else, they would party and burn bonfires in the front yard. Bottles would be thrown into the bonfire and explode.

We approached these neighbours but we couldn’t get any sense out of them. We had to leave, it was really sad to leave but I couldn’t live like that and [I] was a bag of nerves. We sold the house within a day and had to buy something else quickly and ended up with the same sort of neighbours. We were there for fifteen months and I hated it. But then we moved here. Since we’ve been here we haven’t come across any problems, really. We just love it here (Peggy).

Peggy and her neighbours in her old neighbourhood did not form a group to confront the nuisance neighbours that ultimately drove them out of their home. The trust that the established neighbours shared was not converted into a collective action to address their common problem of nuisance neighbours.

No, we just handled it individually, and would ring each other and moan about it, but they [the partiers] were just ignorant and didn’t care. They were in their own little world and to hell with everybody else (Peggy).
Peggy and her neighbours were unable to develop their trust into a collaborative effort as a “device for coping with the freedom of others” (Dunn, 1988, p.73). Peggy and her neighbour had contacted the Police who could not help, and so the neighbours did not know what else they could do. Peggy and her neighbours were unable to convert their mutual trust into a collaborative effort because they had no institutional support to facilitate the process.

When Neighbourhoods Feel Like Home

Evelyn has lived at her Burwood home for sixteen years and despite the influx of in-fill housing the area retains a stable core of residents who have lived there longer. The neighbourhood commercial premises also possess a longevity of tenure that encourages Evelyn’s trust in the area. The fish and chip shop has been in the same hands for over sixteen years, as has the hairdresser. The chemist has changed hands once. Evelyn and her family are friendly with the people at the garage and the dairy. “We bump into people on the street, see the same people, have a sense of security, yeah I quite like it” (Evelyn).

This exchange indicates a degree of street level trust being generated by long time informal interaction. This conforms to Jacobs’ (1961) requirements for social capital in two ways. Firstly, a stable core of residents accepting a steady influx of newcomers, adding to the vitality of the area, and secondly, a mix of businesses that encourage local commerce that provide local focal points that also contribute to the area’s vitality.

Evelyn would be in contact with one of her neighbours up the lane several times a week, but with others less so. Evelyn also talks to other neighbours that live on the busy street. There are many people in the community that Evelyn can trust. “There are a few that I could [rely on] if there was some sort of emergency I could definitely call on them if [I] needed to”.

Evelyn believes that she would be safe walking down her street at night. It is not something that she often does, but would feel safe enough because of the number of homes of people she knows along the street. Evelyn thinks that the area has a reputation for being safe. “Never been anything happen around here. [We have] never been burgled, don’t hear about burglary here”. On my several visits to Evelyn’s
home, the garage door has been wide open, bicycles are left out and car windows open, phenomena I would attribute to a trusting household.

I asked Evelyn how her trust levels may have changed in the sixteen years she has lived here.

I felt more attached to the area before [I started to] work when the kids were little because I'd be walking around during the day, during the week, something not done now. [I] probably knew more people than I do now. [This is] balanced out with the new development in here. Have less to do with people that had little kids when my kids were little, but have more to do with immediate neighbours than I would in those days (Evelyn).

Mary describes one set of neighbours as “wonderful”. They swap goods and services, the neighbours pops over for a chat, and Mary walks their dog for them and looks after their animals when they are away on holidays. “If they (the neighbours) need us we’re there and likewise, if we need them they’re there, we work in together”. Mary specifically watches out for an elderly couple down the road and invites them around for dinner; the elderly couple in turn invite Mary and her husband to the Working Man’s Club for a meal.

Mary has lived in her home for 35 years and says the area is quiet and has not changed a lot. “It’s good here. I love it. We know a lot of people”. Mary’s trust is based on specific relationships. Mary is at home in her community, but Mary has definite areas that she has decided are unsafe, and consequently, not part of her home.

Evelyn’s trust is also based on specific relationships. However, Evelyn has placed greater “faith” in the area, based on her experiences and the area’s reputation. Evelyn has developed many relationships in her sixteen years in the area and some of them have been maintained for the sixteen years, although they are not in such frequent contact anymore. Evelyn’s neighbourhood also has a range of commercial premises with a longevity of continuous ownership nearby, which according to Jacobs (1961) encourages casual interaction. Possibly, Evelyn is accustomed to seeing strangers on her street.

The trust that the respondents confer is always referred back to specific relationships. There is no feeling of generalised trust that is applied to unknown, unverified community members. Trust is established in specific relationships based on the respondents’ habits (routines and reputations) or from conformity to
neighbourhood norms. Trust is not generalised beyond these specific relationships. None of the respondents offered an instance of community collaboration affecting trust. Respondents generally feel safe in their neighbourhoods. The respondents with a greater level of rapport with, or knowledge of, their neighbours have greater expectations of trust in their neighbourhoods. However, the good reputations of the respondents’ neighbourhoods did not engender a generalised trust in their communities.

Trust from one set of social relations is not conferred onto other relationships because there is no mediator to achieve this. Trust is based on personal verification. Trust also does not automatically result in collective action. This is exemplified by Peggy’s example of intolerable neighbours. What may have been required in this situation was some institutional intervention, or a mediator to establish collaborative action among otherwise trusting neighbours.

A Matter of Priorities: Community, Family and Social Capital

For most of us, our deepest sense of belonging is to our most intimate social networks, especially family and friends. Beyond that perimeter lie work, church, neighbourhood, civic life, and the assortment of other “weak ties” that constitute our personal stock of social capital (Putnam,2000,p.274).

All respondents state that their families are their first priority. The overriding concern of the respondents is to provide for the welfare and security of the members of their immediate families. Consequently, respondents report that they have precious little time or energy to commit to community participation. When they do participate, it is in the service of their priorities.

Children invoke feelings of obligation, norms of behaviour and positions of trust among the people that participate in their activities with them. Coleman (1988,pp.s109-111) is explicit about the importance of family for the generation of social capital, which, he argues relies upon the extent of commitment and energy between parent and child. Social capital in the family depends on the physical presence of adults with children and the attention given to children by adults. The more time that parents spend with their children, the greater the social capital between them.
Family activities also take respondents out of their homes and connect them with others in their community, and with other communities. As Putnam (2000, pp.277-278) said, "we meet people through our spouses and our children". A "closed" system of relationships produces the greatest social capital, for example, one where a person's child is friends with the child of that person's friend. The closure of this system also provides the framework for effective sanctions (Coleman, 1988). Child-raising responsibilities exemplify Bourdieu's (1986) notion of manufactured sociability. Coleman's vision of interfamilial chumminess notwithstanding, participating in activities that involve children invariably necessitates their parents engaging with people with whom they would otherwise not share common interests. As will be demonstrated, the main community participation experienced by respondents who have children, involve activities involving those children. Social capital forms in these relationships because this is where the respondents spend much of their time (Newton, 1997).

Community and family can form either competing relationships or complementary relationships. Family can be the reason for not participating in community affairs (competing relationship), or family can be the reason that people do participate in community affairs (complementary relationship). The nature of participation is the source of potential conflict or complementarity between family and community. Some types of participation increase time and energy spent with the family such as personal involvement in children's sports or (pre-) school activities. Such types of participation involve interaction with the family.

The potential for social capital generation is greatest when family and community interests are congruent, meaning that community participation also corresponds with family participation. For example, community participation that involves activities that can include family members, such as carnivals, festivals, or park and playground activities, reinforces participation within the family that visits the festival or park. Commitments to a person's family also provides the reason for people being involved with their community by becoming involved in children's activities, playground issues, or child safety. Family commitments heighten issues of trust, can potentially expand networks that are connected with the family, especially children, and potentially increase participation. Complementary participation may be motivated by a desire to improve children's opportunities or protect their interests.
Parenting is...an entrée to community life, but the effect does not appear to extend beyond school - and youth - related activities themselves (Putnam, 2000, p.278).

However, the Christchurch City Council’s structure of consultation alienates participants from their families. Council requirements for consultation or participation decrease the time and energy that participants can spend with families. These requirements include such activities as preparing for and attending meetings, committee work, preparing for and writing submissions, or lobbying Councillors (O’Neill and Colebatch, 1989). This type of participation is necessary to engage with CCC processes, and has only potential benefits to the family. This type of participation may preclude peoples’ interaction with their families. As a competing relationship, participation in community affairs can reduce the time and resources available to the family. Conversely, families demand financial commitments and daily maintenance that can limit an individual’s involvement with their community. Families can inhibit relationships with other networks that are not connected with the family, and so potentially decrease participation.

Donald has three children, is running a business, and finds himself focussed on his family’s needs. He does not have the “time” or “inclination” to become more involved in community issues. He cites his only current participation as coaching rugby at the local primary school to “help out” during winter. “That is my contribution to the school.” Donald was also helping to escort a school trip away later that week. Another sports activity he participates in is taking his children rowing at Kerr’s Reach. Donald’s participation, therefore, involves his children or their school and sporting activities.

Peggy also describes herself as being family-oriented and her involvements are family-based. Many of Peggy’s activities are also centred around her local church. The church is involved with community activities, but Peggy has not become involved with these herself. “Mainly because of time, just don’t have time anymore.” Peggy is a member of the local toy library, attends the church’s music and movement group, a playgroup and a kindergarten for her son. Peggy is an occasional volunteer at the kindergarten. Peggy’s community activities are therefore oriented around the needs of her pre-school-aged son.

Evelyn also rates her family as her priority. Evelyn’s main community involvement is with the local school’s Board of Trustees. She has been involved for
one term, and was involved for a term when school Boards of Trustees were established in 1988, but was unable to complete that term because of work commitments. Evelyn claims not to be part of other community projects or groups, but has volunteered time at kindergarten, play-centres and school. She has contributed as a parent helper at schools, assisted by going on school trips and “filled in on road crossings, that sort of thing”.

Thinking about how living in one place for sixteen years, quite a long time, and with having kids, I think if I lived without kids, things would be very different. They hook you into all sorts of things (Evelyn).

Mary describes herself as being “very family-oriented” and picks up her granddaughter from school each day.

Alf has no children and insists that his family is most important to him. He cites in order of importance the things that he is committed to as his: wife, family, school and work, and describes them as things that need 100% attention. “If I start over-committing in other areas than the most important things will suffer, then it all breaks down and I am no use as a community organiser”.

Supporting the Family: Social Capital and Work

Social capital in the family needs resources. A family’s resources are supplied by the respondents’ engagement with employment. Consequently, employment is another significant commitment that takes up people’s time and energy.

Donald’s family’s well-being and security are achieved from his own business efforts. He does not rely on the CCC and so has no need to get involved. “I have three children and am running a business, and find I’m focussed more on our needs”.

Alf claims that greater demands on peoples’ working lives and the need for people to work longer to make a living subsequently means that there are greater time constraints and less time devoted to communal and societal concerns. Alf was a member of a cycle club but had to let his involvement lapse due to work pressures.

Evelyn felt more attached to her community before she re-joined the work force. At the time she was at home with young children she spent more time walking around her neighbourhood.
I felt more attached to the area before [I started to] work when the kids were little because I'd be walking around during the day, during the week, something not done now. [I] probably knew more people than I do now....But when you work full time you can’t do things and that’s why I ended up going on the [school] Board.

Mary, who used to work in town as a dressmaker, experiences the opposite of this. Mary does not go to town anymore. Now that she spends more time in her community, she feels more attached to it.

Jane had not offered explicit involvement at her son’s school principally because of time constraints and work commitments. Jane maintains that her efforts as an employed professional are designed to ensure her and her family’s security.

Whether community and family commitments are complementary or competitive depends on the type of participation. Families can help their members to connect with other sectors of the community. Alternatively, family life may isolate people and they may not get out and connect with their community. The respondents that do participate in community activities do so in the service of their children. Their participation involves both their family and the community. However, the respondents do not participate in community activities when doing so conflicts with their family (and work) commitments.

By helping with the rugby team, Donald helps his children and also other peoples’ children. Similarly, Evelyn benefits both her own and other people’s children by serving on the school Board. Therefore, family and community participation can be congruent if participation involves interaction with both. However, family and community participation can conflict when the participation required for one does not benefit the other. Social capital is an exchange, so there has to be some type of transaction of time, energy, or resources. Parents acting on behalf of their own children by coaching a sports team, volunteering at kindergarten, or sitting on the school board, benefit a collective of children.
Casting the Social Networks

What Else the Respondents Do

Though respondents' community participation is primarily focussed around activities associated with family needs, other networks are also productive of social capital.

Jane describes herself as having friends rather than being a "club person", indicating that her personal relationships are informal, rather than associational.

Peggy’s “time to go out” is attending a weekly cell-group meeting with the church. The church also offers a “welcome in” where a meal is provided and games are organised for people who do not go to the church to get together and meet the church-goers. School fairs and church fetes feature as part of Peggy’s social life and she would:

[N]ormally go to a fair, a chance to try to meet with people out of the house and have a bit of a get-together. Once upon-a-time we would have gone out more, but now we potter around in the garden or go for a walk along the river after tea (Peggy).

Alf’s studies at Poly-tech and his work bring him into contact with a lot of people and he claims to discuss issues of community participation and obligation with these people. These information channels (Coleman,1988) constitute a form of social capital. Alf proved to be an interesting character for this study because despite his low levels of current formal involvement, he was once highly involved and politicised. In what he describes as a “different life”, Alf was heavily involved with the Labour Party and worked for a prominent politician who is now a Minister of the Crown.

Had a different life completely, almost a different person. [It was] a public life, I was in the paper and associated with public figures and business promoters. I was advertising and reporting, going to meetings and generally in the public eye (Alf).

I asked Alf which life made him happier? “Ooh this present one, yes. That’s why I left, I thought there’s got to be more to life than this”.

Evelyn was involved with a group that advocated home birth.
At that time that choice was potentially under threat and it was a choice that could be taken away. The issues involved were women having a choice and reasonable pay for midwives (Evelyn).

On behalf of a passionate issue, Evelyn was prepared to stand up and speak out, to participate and was "quite happy doing those things."

Mary is a volunteer worker for an animal welfare group. This work involves finding homes for unwanted pets and looking after the group's shop one day a week.

**What They Do Not Do**

Respondents do not have any current formal connections with community organisations such as residents' associations or neighbourhood watch. None of the respondents are formally involved with any clubs or associations. No respondents have been involved with an issue relevant to their community or neighbourhood, and none has been part of a local action group or part of any local involvement to organise services or amenities.

Peggy sometimes attends her church outreach meetings but claims she does not have the time to become more actively involved in church outreach work. Evelyn and Mary are not involved in local organisations either, though Mary has often been invited to join. Mary knows about her local residents' association but has had no involvement with it.

Have never been to meeting, but have been asked to go, but I lead a busy life just haven't got time to belong to it. I know people that keep me informed. A guy that goes along is a pretty big-wig in community down here. He just keeps me informed about everything. If someone keeps you informed there's no need to go along.

This bears out Coleman's (1988) identification of information channels as a form of social capital.

Respondents are not involved with formal associations or clubs. However, these people all possess generous stocks of potential social capital based on relationships with families, friends, informal connections, work and school. Their social capital is based on formal commitments, such as Evelyn's contribution to the school board, volunteering, as in Donald's helping with the school rugby and sporting trips, or socialising, like Peggy’s playgroups and church outings.
The experience of the respondents indicates that their social capital remains in distinct social networks and is not easily commuted to other communities of people. Alf and Mary share in a social capital based on information channels: Alf communicates with his colleagues at work and at the Poly-tech, whereas Mary’s communication is centred on friends in the community. Putnam (1993) privileges formal associations as the primary and most effective generators of social capital. Yet the respondents possess tangible stores of social capital, even though such associational connections do not register in their lives.

Council Matters: Relations with the Christchurch City Council: Generating Social Capital or Cultivating Apathy?

The Christchurch City Council has a stated policy aim of “bridging social capital”, to connect hitherto unconnected sections of the community. Competent and engaged institutions and institutional actors are needed to “embed” themselves into the daily functioning of the community to provide the synergistic cooperation required (Evans, 1997). Most importantly, what is required is community awareness of Council structures and processes.

Respondents report that they do not have any contact with the CCC, other than to pay rates. Two respondents that did have contact with the CCC report their involvement did more to encourage apathy towards involvement in Council procedure than support mutual engagement. The one respondent, Evelyn, that reports positive contact with the Council has a personal relationship with an elected Community Board representative. Evelyn, therefore, experiences Council procedure from the advantage of someone engaged with an embedded Council actor (Evans, 1997).

Embeddedness?

This section will consider the experiences of two of the respondents who have personal relationships with two different members of the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board as examples of embeddedness. It should be noted that Evans’ conception of embeddedness did not relate specifically to personal relationships with elected representatives, but concentrated on relationships with bureaucratic officers.
However, it is assumed that a personal relationship with local body representatives should facilitate a form of embeddedness that leads to an understanding of local concerns as envisioned by Evans (1997).

Evelyn is the respondent with the most extensive knowledge of Community Boards. This is in part due to her personal friendship with the Chair of the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board. Evelyn knew of the Board’s existence before the current Chair was on the Board, but she hears about it a lot more now that her friend is on the Board.

If the paper says Burwood-Pegasus I always notice it, if [I did] not know her (the Chair) I might not notice as much. Hard to know quite what I’d pay attention to if she wasn’t there (Evelyn).

Evelyn’s personal stock of social capital is enhanced by her friendship with the Chair of the Board. This friendship gives Evelyn a stronger relationship, or connection, with the Community Board than would otherwise have occurred. By extension, Evelyn is now also better connected to greater Council structures because of her friendship with the Chair. Evelyn’s familiarity with personalities, including the Chair, the Mayor and local activists, gives her the confidence to engage with Council procedures if she chooses. Evelyn’s connection with the CCC is a personal form of embeddedness.

The Burwood-Pegasus Community Board Chair has personally invited Evelyn and her daughter to participate in Council forums, “like a focus group”, to share their views on a variety of topics. The Chair “suggested I go [because I am] somebody who would have something to say.” Evelyn became aware of the “Seeking Community Views” Policy because of this personal contact. Evelyn has had no direct dealings with the Community Board other than the focus group forums and her involvement with the school’s Board of Trustees. This suggests that even with the benefit of personal friendships with Community Board members, people do not engage with Council structures.

Evelyn was familiar with the Community Board and with the issue of Thomson Park, so I asked her what she thought the role of the Community Board should be.

I think it should be a forum not just for noisy people, but somehow could be a forum for people who are less able to make a fuss. I don’t
quite know how they do that, but I think that would be good. They've obviously got to be involved in some sort of particular issues, but maybe taking a wider focus and looking at getting a sort of needs analysis of [the] community and being more pro-active on behalf of community as well. If they responded to what people popped up with it would get pretty imbalanced (Evelyn).

I asked Evelyn if she considered that institutions such as Community Boards or Councils enhance her connection to, or trust in, the community. “Yeah, I think they do. All those things around us have a subtle effect”. Evelyn was unable to nominate a specific instance of the Council having a definite effect upon her communal connections, but did suggest that the Council may have:

[B]een in the background, funding things or promoting things, I don’t know. My sense is that probably potentially more so now then it perhaps used to be, it feels to me like they’re more pro-active than the older Council was (Evelyn).

I then asked Evelyn if she attributed that to Community Boards? “Yeah, I think they’re more out there on the ground than the actual Council”.

Mary also had a personal friendship with a different, former, member of the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board, Kate. Mary’s relationship did not enhance her awareness of the Community Board, which, in any case, is of little practical concern to Mary. Despite having a friend who was once a member, and another friend who has consistently sought its office, Mary claims that she does not know what the Community Board is, or what it does. Mary considered the former member primarily as a good friend and neighbour. “Had quite a bit to do with Kate, Kate was good for the community, she spoke her mind”. Mary had great respect for Kate, but her friendship did not engender connectedness with local decision-making. Instead, it had the opposite effect because she trusted Kate “to do the right thing”, Mary believed that her participation was not necessary.

When asked if she knew what the Community Board does, Mary replied that she only knew what Ralph (the friend who is a habitual Board contender) had told her and that she knew “nothing much, really got no idea, got no idea. Is it for the good of the community or what do they do”? However she also explained that if she wanted to know more about the Community Board she would trust Ralph to inform her.

---

31 Since Kate is deceased, Mary now relies on Ralph for community information.
Mary does not know any current members, doesn't feel that she is kept informed by the Council about what it does, and has "not much time for Council really, I don't think they do an awful lot." Mary claimed not to have participated in Council procedure, however, I reminded her that she had made a submission on the 1994 review of the Christchurch coastline. Mary replied that it was something she would not normally do, but probably Kate had asked her to do it, so she did. Social capital, in this case, involves doing favours for people.

Evelyn is more aware of CCC activities for reasons other than being a local resident. By knowing the Community Board Chair, being involved in the school's Board of Trustees, having a sister who is a councillor on another metropolitan council, knowing the Mayor "slightly from way back", and "just through knowing people" Evelyn is personally well connected to the mechanism of the CCC and has the opportunity to become involved if she chooses. Evelyn, however, chooses not to. Mary had a closer community connection with her friend on the Community Board but considered Kate friend first and foremost as a friend and neighbour. This friendship, however, did not engage Mary into Council procedure and consequently, Mary has little awareness or involvement with the CCC.

Like Evelyn's participation in focus group forums, Mary's involvement in Council procedure is generated not by the Council as such, but is rather part of a personal network of social capital. Similarly, personal networks make Evelyn aware of CCC type activities.

The experiences of Evelyn and Mary indicate that though this kind of personal embeddedness produces increased awareness, it does not necessarily lead to a recognition of the relevance of community participation in their lives, and so does not necessarily produce synergistic relationships between the CCC and residents. These personal relationships do not necessarily expand into institutional relations, or help "bridge" the networks these women belong to into wider, or different social networks.

32 A list of people who made submissions was listed in the subsequent Council report, Review of Christchurch Coastlines, 1994.
The Perils of Apathy: The Irrelevance of the CCC as the Antithesis of Embeddedness

Apathy is a loss of interest, or a sense of indifference. Apathy hinders the formation of trust, and apathy may also hinder the realisation of distrust. Apathy constitutes neither trust, nor distrust, representing an abdication of responsibility. When apathy occurs expectations are not held, and obligations are not met. Apathy, therefore, can be seen as an antithesis of social capital.

DeLuca (1995, p. 11) identifies two faces of apathy. One aspect of apathy indicates that non-participation is a result of personal choice. An individual chooses not to participate for personal reasons. The other aspect of apathy attributes societal organisation as responsible for discouraging participation. Elites, institutions and social structures produce an environment in which people can have little or no meaningful control.

Council structures may encourage apathy by their lack of responsiveness, by adopting confusing procedures, or poor consultation techniques, or by having non-engaging staff (Levi, 1998). Moreover, apathy is produced by poor communication (Luhmann, 1979).

Apathy, however, may be an inappropriate or inaccurate term to apply to the respondents. All the respondents are interested in their local environment, community and (especially in the case of Alf) global, structural processes. It may be that the respondents consider Council processes as irrelevant for addressing those issues. The Christchurch City Council may not be the most appropriate arena for pursuing respondents' interests and needs.

The Christchurch City Council and its Community Boards are not important to Donald. Donald thinks he has heard of Community Boards but cannot name it, or any of its members, and is not aware of having had any contact with a Community Board. "I don't even know what they do to be honest". Donald voted in the last two Council elections, but cannot recall voting for the Community Board. In any case, he did not know that Community Boards have a budget that they can allocate to community projects.

The only contact Donald has had with the Council in the past five years, other than paying the rates, was objecting to a proposal to construct a playground outside his business premises in Cashel Mall.
Vicky Buck decided to put a children's playground in Cashel Mall right outside a business we were operating. They went ahead and ripped up all the tiles, pulled the trees out, uprooted plane trees of a reasonable size and put down bark. The plan was done without any consultation because the Council approached Ballantynes as representative of all the businesses. No one came to my shop to inform me or seek my opinion. We had a meeting about it, but the meeting gave the feeling of banging your head against a brick wall, to pay lip service to your objections and then ignore them. I don’t go to public meetings (Donald).

Donald's experience and complaint centre on the Council not communicating with him, not following fair procedure, resulting in the Council performing in an untrustworthy manner.

Jane has no respect for the Council and is concerned about the weight that the Council is able and willing to throw around. Jane’s work, as a consultant with a neighbouring District Council, gives her “an insight of how the CCC treats normal people”. Commenting on the Council from a professional footing, Jane finds them hard to deal with, and describes the attitude and behaviour of the Council as astonishing. “They try and project themselves as leaders, not just in New Zealand but in Australasia, but they’re not as marvellous as they think they might be”. Jane is aware that she has a Community Board, although she cannot name it or any of its members, to her “it’s just a vote thing”.

It’s well and good to have local elections but they do all this publicity before, then don’t do anything afterwards. “I’m here now, I’ve arrived” like being elected is all they have to do. They need to be a little more active. They all want your vote when it comes to the critical time but at the end of the day, what are they doing? The environment they are creating creates quite a lot of apathy. None of them are vavoom enough. They need to be a lot more vocal. Whoever does the PR for the Board has no idea (Jane).

Community Boards have played no role in informing Jane of any issue. There has been no consciousness raising from, by, or of Community Boards.

I don’t think they’re a huge crucial part of what goes on to be honest. What is their point? I wouldn’t have a clue what their purpose is, probably to serve their community would be their primary objective. But I wouldn’t know if they’re doing that. If they are doing stuff behind the scenes they should make that more public knowledge (Jane).
Jane’s experience and complaint point to a disgruntlement that Boards do not achieve anything. Jane claims that electioneering is their primary focus for community awareness-raising, and once elected, they are ominously quiet. This points to the Boards not exhibiting a proven character - they may not be delivering on election promises - and indicates that Jane believes that they act out of self-interest, in getting elected, rather than delivering on their promises. So according to Jane, the lack of awareness and accountability in promise-keeping creates apathy.

In marked contrast, Jane’s neighbour four doors away, Alf, has this to say.

Without the Council there would be a flippin’ mess. Without the Council, individuals would be even more alienated and disconnected from their communities (Alf).

Alf adheres to an almost paternalistic view that the CCC provides the moral basis that is lacking because of the failure of family values. By family values in this context is meant parents passing on an ethical foundation to their children, families as disseminators of knowledge and behavioural norms have been eroded by people’s commitment to the workforce. Alf claims the council is addressing what he refers to as “ethical confusion” because the message of how to behave in society, “the vital information, civic education” is no longer coming from community or family agencies.

So the CCC steps in to gently suggest and push the better ways such as, water conservation, recycling, public transportation...They’re always coming up with something, not forcing it down your throat. At the same time coming up with constructive ideas that can assist people. I think the council is quite aware of how society is going, that there are no longer the close communities there once was and that people have become fragmented from society and are off on their own tangents (Alf).

Despite his approval of the CCC’s role in social engineering, Alf has no involvement with the Council. He has also never heard of Community Boards. Alf’s trust in the CCC is based on assumption, as a result of their media campaigns. Alf has no direct involvement with the Council, but believes that they are responsible for leadership.

Peggy is blissfully unaware of the roles and procedures of the Christchurch City Council. She has heard of the Community Board, and seen advertising about
them, but cannot name her Community Board, or any of its members. Peggy has had no dealings with a Community Board and has no idea what they might do. Peggy has never heard of the Council’s “Seeking Community View” policy. Other than to pay their rates, Peggy has had no contact or involvement with CCC and when asked about her contact with CCC service centres, asked “what do you mean by service centre”?

These respondents are not apathetic. They care about their families, their friends, some of their neighbours, community interaction and the safety of their streets; and the respondents were able to articulate those concerns, as expressed in the interviews. However, the respondents either do not access CCC structure, or feel that the CCC structure inhibits their involvement. None of the issues important to the respondent, they feel, can be addressed by the CCC. It is not that the respondents are apathetic, but that they feel that the CCC is not relevant.

People do not participate not because they do not want to, or are too lazy (although this may account for some people’s inaction), but because it requires effort that detracts from their other commitments. The respondents are unwilling to sacrifice efforts for their family for actions that may not be relevant to their needs. Furthermore, these efforts may be constrained by bureaucratic inertia or political caucus dealings that exclude people’s contributions and result in participation not being worth the effort. CCC structure revolves around submissions, meetings, and personal correspondence. Jane’s complaint that the Council creates an atmosphere of apathy is not coming from an apathetic person, but from someone who bemoans the establishment of apathy-producing structures that discourage residents becoming involved.

Evans (1997) claims that synergy is inspired from political leadership and facilitated by the application of institutional policy. Council-produced apathy would negate any efforts to generate social capital. If people are unaware of Community Boards, or are unaware of what they are doing, the Board’s actions cannot be verified. If their actions cannot be verified, there is no basis for trusting them, unless there is an institutional medium for conferring trust.
Conclusion

The respondents trust their family and friends and some select neighbours, but this trust does not extend to unknown, unverified people within their community. Trust is future oriented and involves an element of risk, so people naturally enough trust the people that they know, or can have verified. Trust is based on specific relationships and the trust enjoyed by one set of relationships cannot automatically be conferred onto another until it is verified as trustworthy, and neither is it automatically generalised to include unknown, unverified others.

Trust does not automatically precipitate collective action. Peggy shared trust among her neighbours, but this solidarity did not facilitate cooperation when confronted with intolerable neighbours. Peggy and her neighbours could communicate, but they could not organise, indicating that they required some institutional intervention to facilitate their trust into collaborative action.

The respondents sounded a chorus “no time” and “family commitments” when asked why they do not participate more in community affairs or join clubs and associations. Respondents enjoy connections with other people that are not organised or structured along formal associational lines.

The respondents’ social capital is established in their social lives. The respondents’ state that their families are their priorities, and it is in family oriented activities that respondents interact most with their community. Donald gives the clear indication that the time needed for involvement is not available because he needs to devote his time to business to secure his family’s needs. Yet Donald happily donates his time and effort to the school rugby team. It is his way of giving to the community. This behaviour suggests that people do have their own way of contributing to their communities without the need to engage in specifically Council structures.

Social capital formation relies on relationships; if there are no relationships, there is no social capital (Coleman,1988,pp.s109-111). There are numerous social capitals in Christchurch because there are numerous avenues for connection and participation in Christchurch. If certain institutions are part of a person’s social life, and if relationships are formed from them, then social capital can develop from those
relationships. The "value" of social capital based on these relationships varies, depending on the extent of their connection to other groups and their resources.

If neighbourhoods, community organisations, friends, work places, schools or families are part of a person's social circle, it is possible that these institutions can facilitate social capital formation. However, these institutions on their own are limited, and limiting. For example, close relationships with family, neighbours, clubs, et al., do not necessarily connect the individual to the greater resources of the community or society. The CCC's brief, as they have defined it, is to connect, link, or, as they put it, "bridge" these autonomous, yet disconnected examples of social capital.

The CCC or Community Boards are not active in "bridging social capital" or connecting community agencies for these respondents in any tangible or explicit form. Other than possibly Evelyn, no one has had their trust levels or networks increased and no one has participated because of CCC social or communal activities. Evelyn's participation was also the result of a personal friendship with a Board member, rather than resulting from the institutional operation of the Board.

For social capital to originate from institutional artifice, it needs to be expanded from established sources of trust, established networks, and established behaviours as found in neighbourhoods, community organisations, friendships, work environments, schools or family. Attempts at fostering social capital will be more successful if they seek to build it incrementally from what already exists, rather than trying to create it anew (Evans, 1997). Synergy is the collaborative process of "scaling up" existing social capital in communities by institutional artifice to make it robust at the communal level. CCC participation that can be included into peoples "everyday lives" by including their families in such activities as planting days, fishing days, festivals or concerts, or by incorporating workplaces, will enhance the generation of social capital more effectively than the reliance on their consultative procedures that mostly exclude family interaction.
CHAPTER FIVE:

SOCIAL CAPITAL, THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL AND THE COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY OF THOMSON PARK

Introduction

This chapter examines an attempt to institutionalise trust via political artifice. It aims to determine whether the Christchurch City Council's consultative practices can "bridge" social capital. It does this through the case study of a dispute over a significant stand of mature conifers\(^\text{33}\) at Thomson Park, North Beach.

This chapter examines the potential generation of social capital along informal networks, and the impact of a local political institution, the Community Board, on this potential. The case study is an example of the formation of trust within an informal group (the Tree Group) that rose spontaneously to protect their environment. It is also an example of conflict over interpretations of trustworthiness.

Simultaneously, the case study is also an example of distrust in a formal association that was created artefactually by the Christchurch City Council (CCC) to protect residents' interests. Although this chapter will outline the formation of social capital between members of the Tree Group, as an indication of how trust is developed, the main aim of this chapter is to illustrate the procedural deficiencies of the CCC and why they were unable to engender trust in their processes and in the individuals responsible for implementing those processes. It illustrates the acceptance and adoption of CCC processes and subsequently, the deterioration and ultimately, loss of trust in the CCC. The case study is an example of the institutionalisation of

\(^{33}\) The total number of trees involved in the dispute were over 400 macrocarpa and 50 pinus radiata.
distrust by the CCC.

This dispute is typical of many in Christchurch that debate native re-vegetation versus mature conifers. A contention of this research is that social capital available to the public, a public good conception of social capital (Putnam, 1993) requires public land for the social capital to be generated and maintained. Public land, it will be argued, is where networks can be expanded, participation encouraged and trust developed. Public land is non-exclusionary; public land is owned by the public. People may choose not to visit, but they are not excluded from visiting. Public land is where people can associate, formally and informally, in settings of relative equality. This chapter argues that public land facilitates communal social capital, that dispute is a potential generator of social capital, and that trust is needed to sustain social capital. Involvement in a dispute exposes a person to other protagonists and antagonists, who may or may not have been previously known to each other. Disputes offer opportunities for communication, establishing networks, conferring or erasing trust (Wood, 1997). CCC consultation is - potentially - an exercise in generating or expanding social capital based on disputes over public land.

A situation of political conflict may seem to be an unfair test of CCC social capital building, but social capital and conflict are closely linked. Collaboration is often based on conflict and political positioning (Wood, 1997, p. 603). Wood contends that the democratic promise of social capital is dormant until it is “connected to explicitly democratic political organising – organising that often includes more, rather than less conflict” (Wood, 1997, p. 603). Wood acknowledges the conflictual nature of civil society and suggests that democratically relevant social capital introduces community groups into the decision-making arena of the “hard work of politics, rather than the illusion of a conflict-free civil society” (Wood, 1997, p. 603).

The Christchurch City Council’s policy of bridging social capital is pointless if their efforts are constrained to narrow, exclusive goals of community development schemes. CCC community development plans may better exemplify the skills and abilities of the CCC at creating networks of trust within, and across communities, but the general population are not necessarily open to community development schemes and these attempts at facilitating social capital are targeted. The role of the CCC in “bridging” social capital is better examined in a non-exclusive setting such as public land, and specifically in this case study, a park.
Social capital inheres, not just in civil society, but in an enduring set of relationships that span the public-private divide (Evans, 1997, p.184).

Synergy between government and residents relies on the regular interaction and the development of norms and trust.

To bridge social capital, the CCC is required to "scale up" the existing social capital within the community, small groups and families, and make them effective at collective action at the communal level. Competent and engaged public institutions are needed as mediators to expand the effectiveness of these local connections, to scale up the local stocks of social capital to make them relevant at the cross-community level (Evans, 1997, p.194).

This chapter establishes that social capital is vibrant in North Beach whether assessed according to Putnam's emphasis on voluntary associations, or Jacobs' emphasis on informal interaction. It then outlines how social capital formed within the Tree Group. The chapter will then examine the process of determining the outcome of the tree debate, in light of the potentials for bridging the social capital already existing within the community and the bourgeoning social capital of the Tree Group. However, for the social capital within the Tree Group to be relevant to the democracy of the wider community, rather than just relevant to the Tree Group members, the relationships and resources of the Tree Group need to be expanded to become accessible to the greater community. The energies, resources and talents of the members of the Tree Group, if directed, encouraged and harnessed by an institutional mediator would benefit the community.

Trust as a collaborative effort requires facilitating structures to coordinate cooperation at meta-group levels, a level of coordination beyond the ability of community organisation. This potentially is the role of the CCC. Such a collaborative effort can be implemented by means of a government policy to facilitate "social trust". Political elites are able to achieve the confidence of society by "well-designed, strategic and rational policy" (Dunn, 1988, p.90). To base collaboration on trust requires political support for the construction of conditions of equality that give people a sense of involvement and worth in the process (Misztal, 1996, p.100). Cohen (1999, p.220) suggests that there needs to be a mediator to convert particular trust into general trust.
Indeed, it is entirely possible that without other mechanisms for the "generalisation" of trust, participation in associations and membership in social networks could foster particularism, localism, intolerance, exclusion, and generalised mistrust of outsiders, of the law, and of government (Cohen, 1999, p. 221).

CCC policies for public consultation are such policies, designed to give residents a stake in decision-making and participation.

The CCC has the policies, but as the remainder of this chapter demonstrates, the staff did not implement their policies, and the elected officials did not ensure that the policies were enacted.

Social capital building effects are conditioned by the nature of existing social capital in the community, the structure of the government intermediary, and the design of the specific program intervention (Warner, 1999, p. 374).

Warner (1999) maintains that the construction of community-level social capital relies on three crucial, interdependent elements: return on investments, autonomy, and linkage. Local communities need a return on the trust they invest in political mediating structures. Warner conceives autonomy to mean the ability of such a political structure to implement and carry out its own policies. This sense of autonomy is linked to the ability of the community members to engage with this governmental process. Thirdly, linkage refers to the multi-faceted connections within communities, and between communities and political mediating structures. Government institutions control resources, such as "funding, power and expertise" (Warner, 1999, p. 388), which are important for the generation of social capital. The CCC has the infrastructure, resources, staff and the policies that (should) connect disparate networks, establish communication to engender trust and facilitate participation.

Institutionalising Trust

Wherever trust can be encouraged by institutional artifice, we have a form of trust of interest to democratic theory (Warren, 1999, p. 320).

---

34 This also applies to investments of time, energy, money and emotional commitment. For my purposes, trust is central.
How to institutionalise trust to facilitate social capital by means of a political apparatus? Assuming that trust can be implemented as policy to create collaborative social order, institutionalising trust is a causal link between social capital and democracy.

For political institutions to mediate trust throughout the community, those institutions themselves need to be trusted (Levi, 1998,p.87). In order for the institution to be trusted, the agents of that institution must prove themselves to be trustworthy. Institutional trustworthiness requires that the agents of an institution must be “competent, credible, and likely to act in the interest of those being asked to trust the institution” (Levi,1998,p.80). Breaking promises, adopting unfair procedure and treating residents with scant respect will diminish residents’ capacity to trust in the processes or personnel of such an institution. When institutions fail to behave in a trustworthy manner, it diminishes the possibility of that institution contributing in any beneficial way to the development of social capital (Levi,1998).

Reciprocating residents’ trust enhances a government’s trustworthiness. Residents for their part will recognise that a government is reciprocating their trust when they can perceive a return for their compliance. Residents will also recognise a government reciprocating their trust when they feel treated with respect.

Perception that a government is untrustworthy is a function not only of its failure to fulfil promises but also of evidence that government agents distrust those from whom they are demanding cooperation and compliance (Levi,1998,p.93).

If institutional agents distrust actors in civil society, they are presumably not motivated to connect those people with other groups: distrustful institutional actors are unlikely to want to “bridge” social capital.

Good government is “a result of an interaction between a civic-minded citizenry and civic minded government actors” (Levi,1996,p.50). People need to want to be involved, and the government needs to want people to be involved. Good institutional performance requires more than trust among individuals; “there must also be trust of government actors” (Levi,1996,p.38).

The capacity of the CCC to facilitate social capital, or in their terminology, bridge social capital, depends on their ability to “connect” with its community, and to connect hitherto unconnected groups within that community. Community
consultation is a means of establishing those connections. The CCC has the infrastructure to institutionalise social capital from its consultative practices: it has the resources, funding, office equipment, accumulated knowledge, community networks and the policies. The CCC also has the staff. Yet as this chapter will demonstrate, it is the actions of key staff and elected representatives that compromise CCC opportunities to bridge communal social capital by destroying trust. The energies of the Tree Group were not utilised beyond the Tree Group and distrust in the process discouraged further involvement.

The remainder of this case study details examples of where the CCC failed to institutionalise the trust from the Tree Group, because the CCC itself acted in an untrustworthy manner. It examines instances of when Council officers and elected representatives lacked competence and credibility, when they acted in a manner that was not in the interests of the people who placed trust in them, because they broke promises and adopted unfair procedure. The Tree Group did not feel that they were respected, and also felt that the Community Board was not treated with respect by Councillors and Council officers.

The Social Capital of a Seaside Suburb

North Beach is characterised by a bounty of open space and parkland. The suburb is bounded by the Pacific Ocean, Travis Wetland, the plantation forest of Bottle Lake and Rawhiti Domain. Thomson Park is in the North-East corner of Rawhiti Domain. There is a lot of publicly accessible land and, as it transpires, a lot of potential for disputes over that land.

North Beach exudes the ambiance of a seaside village. Originally a coastal retreat for those that could live with the sand and make it flourish, it could now be mistaken as merely the beach front of a sprawling urbanisation that has consumed the swathes of sand dune, swamp and pasture that once separated North Beach from Christchurch. Rawhiti Domain, however, helps create the air of a settlement separated from the cares and frenzy of the lurking metropolis. The towering crowns of conifers of Thomson Park punctuated the urban fringe. The park was a sliver of wilderness, a rugged relic of a time long past that was created by an over-exuberance of volunteer labour and civic pride.
Arenas of Social Capital: The Importance of Public Land

Public land is an appropriate arena to study social capital because it can be a site where various previously unconnected networks can come into contact. Public land also allows a vast range of activities to occur where people can participate.

In the case of Thomson Park, these activities occur in a children's playground and fort, a skate-park, a band rotunda where regular youth oriented concerts are held, and include simple passive use such as lying on the grass or eating your fish and chips. Thomson Park also includes playing fields that host touch football and rugby training, and is bordered by an eighteen-hole Council-operated golf links in Rawhiti Domain. The Domain also houses archery, athletics, cricket, rugby, tennis and women's bowling clubs and their attendant fields, pitches, tracks, courts and lawns. Rawhiti Domain also hosts a Boy Scout den and Silver Band and St Johns ambulance halls, and was once the site of a Motor Camp. Given the number of clubs and associations housed in Rawhiti Domain and around North Beach, and considering Putnam's (1993, 2000) connection between associational vibrancy and civic vitality, North Beach and Rawhiti Domain should be a mother lode of social capital production. However, despite the wealth of associational activity in North Beach, none of these clubs made representation about the trees in Thomson Park. This suggests the importance of informal groups for protecting informal sources of social capital.

Networks in the Community

If a person was washed ashore at North Beach, they may be greeted, and if necessary resuscitated, by a member of the North Beach Surf Life Saving Club, or a member of the North Wai Boardriders Club. The Boardriders' clubrooms are in the North New Brighton War Memorial Hall, on the foreshore just to the south of the Life Savers club house. Also to be found in the Memorial Hall are the meetings of the North New Brighton Residents' Association, and weekly activities that include line.

---

35 The Tennis and Ladies Bowls Clubs have recently both announced in 2001 that they will need to surrender their respective leases because of falling membership.
36 Rawhiti Domain is 56 hectares in area.
37 The War Memorial Hall was originally known as the Peace Memorial Hall. The hall was built following WW1 and its name was changed after WW2. Some people still refer to the hall as the Peace Memorial. It will be referred to as simply the Memorial Hall from now on.
dancing, tap dancing, ballet, Nan's Grans dance group, the New Brighton Dance Academy, tai chi, yoga, indoor bowls, brownies and bridge. The Community meetings described in this thesis occur in the Memorial Hall.

Across the road from the Memorial Hall and on opposite corners are two bars, the Ozone and the Kazbah. Directly behind the Kazbah is Thomson Park. Other commercial activities within 200 metres include a dairy, a fish and chip shop, a barber-shop and second-hand dealership, a home heating supplier and a gymnasium. There is also a “learn to swim” pool that has been operating for over 30 years. This corner of North Beach is serviced by two bus routes. In summary, there are many opportunities for local community interaction. This geography conforms to Jacobs’ (1961) idea of commercial and civic vitality. Within close proximity, there is also a primary school, three pre-schools, another scout den, and a Seido Karate hall.

Local community interaction may take different forms. A resident can be a member of a club, such as the Life Savers or the Boardriders. A resident may be part of an informal network, such as a regular patron of the Ozone or the Kazbah. This is not to preclude patrons of licensed premises forming associations. Many hotels have social clubs, or Christmas committees, or sporting teams originating from the interaction of patrons and hosts. However, for the purposes of this thesis, I wish to illustrate that robust, informal cooperation results from people socialising together at a regular, common venue. A resident may also interact on the street with other residents on the way to the dairy, at the chip shop or the barber. These boundaries are not fixed. There may be an informal network based on regular barber-shop patronage, or someone may not frequent the pub often enough to be part of its networks, but may interact with people in those networks. Affiliation with one club does not preclude membership of another, but generally, people are either members of the Surf Club, or the Boardriders, but rarely both. Similarly, people mostly frequent the Ozone, or the Kazbah, not both. This indicates that people participate in their own social spheres and do not necessarily mix with others, despite their geographic proximity.

A Proposal to Fell Conifers at Thomson Park:
An Orienting Narrative

The dispute over the trees in Thomson Park began officially as a complaint about shading in the park. A local resident had met with the Council Arborist and a
local Councillor in the park to inspect the trees. The North New Brighton Residents' Association agreed with the request to fell the stand of trees in the park because the trees shaded the playground and blocked views through Thomson Park. The Association consequently requested that the Parks Unit remove the trees because they made the local park "cold, dark and generally uninviting" (CCC, 1998d). The North New Brighton Residents' Association made this request without consulting with the community or the park users; such was the extent of local democracy.

A proposal had been presented to the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board at their meeting of 6/7/98 and consequently referred to the Council's Parks and Recreation Committee the next August (12/8/98) to remove the trees. I was unaware of these events. The Parks and Recreation Committee resolved: "That the pines and macrocarpas along the northern and eastern boundaries of Thomson Park be removed early in the 1998/99 financial year, once public comment had been sought". The Committee had, in effect, decided first to decide to remove the trees, then to seek public comment. Part of that public comment was to come from the New Brighton and North New Brighton Residents' Association's after "perusal at their respective monthly meetings" of the proposed plans (CCC, 1998f).

What the Council did to Inform the Public

In February of 1999 I received the "information leaflet" (flyer) outlining the proposed work. This flyer invited comment but gave no indication that there was an alternative to the felling. The flyer gave the impression that it was a done deal, that there was no fruitful avenue for dissent, such was the authority of the document. Although the proposed plan was only that, a proposal, the plan did not inform the reader that opposition to the felling was possible. It invited people to come along and talk to the Council about the proposal as though the decision had already been made.

This flyer was accompanied by a large A3 size plan drawn up by the landscape architect. There were many proposals for the park, such as repositioning play equipment, re-contouring and terracing the natural amphitheatre, erecting shade-sails and constructing paths. The removal of the trees was simply another item on the plan; the removal of the trees was represented as a side issue hidden amid the small print with the other proposals. This misinformation confused people.
Further investigation into the letter-box drop showed that some streets in the vicinity received the information and some did not. For example, in my street, every second home where I inquired (12 households) received the flyer. As for the street around the corner, every home I spoke to on one side of the road (12 households) got the flyer, but their neighbours across the road (12 households) did not. The Area Parks Officer (APO) reported at the 3/5/99 Burwood-Pegasus Community Board meeting that the information leaflet went to 1,400 households.38

A notice was erected at an entrance to the park. This particular entrance was one third of the way along Marine Parade, at a permanently locked vehicle entrance.39 There are many ‘entrances’ to this park and local foot traffic would not necessarily see this sign; I did not. There were no signs at any entrance that may have caught more foot traffic, such as the entrance at the southern end of the playing fields, or at the entrance opposite the paths that lead to the beach, or at the entrance at the corner of the park that is closest to the pubs, Surf Club and Memorial Hall. There were no signs at the entrance opposite Tonks Street, which is the entrance closest to a bus stop, the dairy and the fish and chip shop. This entrance fronts the greatest residential area; the whole residential catchment would filter through this entrance. If every resident of North Beach were to enter Thomson Park from the entrance closest to his or her home, it would be this entrance.40 There were no notices placed in the Park itself. There was a one-off notice in the local community newspaper the Pegasus Post and on three separate dates, notices in the city-wide circulated The Star (CCC,1999c).

The Council held a public meeting on St. Patrick’s Day, 17/3/99. Seven people attending supported retaining the trees, but thirteen others in the room did not, and were concerned about shading, danger and aesthetics, describing the trees as “sinister shadows”. These people felt intimidated by the trees; they claimed to not feel safe among the trees and described them as harbingers of danger and risk. The trees themselves were considered dangerous, and who, or what, was possibly lurking in their shadows was another threat. Following Luhmann (1979), the trees were an unacceptable risk for some people.

---

38 At the 7/4/99 Parks and Recreation Committee meeting, the Parks Manager claimed that 2,000 households received the flyer.
39 The APO claimed that this was the “main entrance” to the park. Yet for local people this is not necessarily a regular entry point.
40 The North New Brighton Neighbourhood Improvement Plan (1991) recognised the importance of this entrance and recommended that it be signposted. It was not.
The meeting consisted of a Council presentation by the Area Parks Officer (APO) and a Council Arborist\textsuperscript{41} which focussed on safety and risk management, and assumed the trees would be felled. The people that supported the trees sounded very emotional in response to the scientific arguments employed by the Council staff discussing "timber aging", "wind-through", and "sun angles". The Council proposal for felling the trees further explained that the trees posed a health and safety risk. The large macrocarpa were losing limbs and there were recent tree failings onto the footpath and in the playground. The trees were claimed to be structurally unsound with some crowns lifting and splitting. The problem with the trees, the Council argued, was that they were planted in plantation formation but were never maintained, so overcrowding had occurred. The trees' slender trunks relied on the support of the formation. As the trees failed and lost branches, wind through the trees would increase and produce more failings. Therefore, the Council reasoned, the stand could not be thinned, nor could selected trees be retained, because they would be subject to wind they could not withstand without the protection the entire stand offered. It was, therefore, an all or nothing proposition. The meeting was a foregone conclusion; the trees, the meeting was told, were being removed for the community's own good. Some people complained that there had not been enough consultation, involvement or warning.

The theory was to connect the park with the coast across the road and to have that strip reflect the dunes. Minor landscaping techniques and native plantings would be introduced, in accordance with Council practice of native re-vegetation. The Council wanted to increase activity and make the park lively.

The importance of this meeting for community social capital was that it introduced supporters of the trees to other people in the community. The meeting also indicated that the Council could not be trusted. The Chair of the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board informed the meeting that - as the next stage of the process - the issue would be presented at the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting of 7/4/99.

\textsuperscript{41} Sometimes I refer to the "City Arborist" who is the CCC's senior Arborist, and is the "Council Arborist's" superior.
A Community Response

The residents responded by holding their own meeting on April Fools’ Day, 1/4/99. This meeting is significant mostly for its status as a residents-initiated response. Most members of the Tree Group did not know each other prior to the St Patrick’s Day meeting. Together they combined to organise and facilitate a meeting that attracted over fifty people that did not know of, or could not go to the previous Council-organised meeting. In contrast to the Council meeting, the vast majority at this meeting were in support of the trees. Two local residents, members of the Tree Group, facilitated the meeting.

This meeting was important for social capital because it was an example of residents attempting to expand the network of people who supported the trees. The meeting was a method of establishing communication channels to foster collaboration to oppose the Council proposal, and to establish trust based on peoples’ shared habits of park use. The meeting was also a support mechanism, a reminder that people who supported the trees were not lone objectors; there was wider support for the trees.

Two petitions were independently organised and circulated. One of these petitions was “officially” adopted because of its less emotive preamble and the other was retired. The official petition, entitled “Save our Trees”, attracted 1600 signatures in two weeks. Signatures were mostly collected in the park, and some copies were circulated among local, and City, businesses.

The Council Reaction

The issue of the trees came before the Parks and Recreation Committee on 7/4/99. At that meeting, the Committee decided that “a significant number of residents were unaware of the proposal” to fell the trees. “In light of this the Committee resolved”:

42 One individual who was not, was my park ranger neighbour who braved the crowd to argue for the virtues of a revamped park. My neighbour had an important role to play because if it had not been for him I would not have known about that meeting. Illustrating the perils of the letter-box drop, I had noticed the small flyer in my mail, but it was face down and I assumed it was soliciting donations or advertising carpet cleaning services or some other currently unwanted product. I ignored it. It was, of course, informing me of the meeting and had been especially delivered in my letter-box because I had been recognised at the previous meeting. Instead, my neighbour informed me of the meeting moments before it began.
1. That the removal of the pine trees and macrocarpa trees on the northern and eastern boundaries of Thomson Park be delayed.

2. That the report and landscape plan be referred back to the Community Board for further public consultation.

3. That consideration be given to staging the implementation of the landscape plan (CCC, 1999b).

The Committee, therefore, acknowledged that the consultative effort had failed to inform a significant number of persons so as to warrant a fresh round of consultation. The Council’s information channels had not performed their role. At the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board meeting on the 3/5/99 the Area Parks Officer, on behalf of the Parks Unit, presented the following process for Board endorsement:

1. Parks Unit to identify the imminently dangerous trees and identify any groups or blocks of trees which could remain for the time being.

2. Consult with the wider “Save Our Trees” group\(^\text{43}\) … to discuss the result of (1) above.

3. Once the above has been obtained, consult with the two residents’ groups involved.

4. The Parks Unit redraft a public information leaflet which will outline a compromise if able to be obtained, or the options as put forward by the four groups: Parks, “Save Our Trees” and the two residents’ associations. To overcome criticism regarding the circulation area, the groups will be consulted and the “Save Our Trees” members’ offer to distribute the leaflets accepted.

5. The feedback from the leaflets will be assessed and reported to the Community Board for a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Committee (CCC, 1999c).

In response, the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board (3/5/99) decided:

1. That the public consultation process as outlined in the report be endorsed.

2. To request the Parks Unit to undertake the consultation, and inform it of the results (CCC, 1999d).

\(^{43}\) The Council named the group “Save our Trees” because that was the title of the petition.
The Group was happy; the trees remained in place and a fresh round of community consultation was promised. Its members returned to their regular lives of earning a living, raising children, and in my case contemplating this thesis. The group had placed their trust in the CCC processes and awaited a fresh round of consultation. The group trusted that the consultation would occur, indicating that there was initial trust in Council processes, but their trust was misplaced.

In March, 2000, the Group was informed of a new plan. The new plan was really the old plan with not as many trees removed. The basic proposal remained the same, to remove the macrocarpa and pines along the Marine Parade (eastern) and Bowhill Road (northern) boundaries. Now, however, the single row of macrocarpa along the southern end of the park was to remain in the interim. The more substantial multiple row of macrocarpas at the northern end, consisting of the most trees and the most emotive block, was to be felled. The planners had also decided not to fell the row of trees along the western border of the park along the golf course.44

This new plan was based on an independent arborist's report that was commissioned on 18/1/2000. The matter had not been taken to the community as promised; instead a new arboreal opinion was solicited. The Tree Group was given only three days to respond to this plan by the APO because it was told that if the Group’s submission was to be presented to the next Community Board meeting, the submission had to be received before the agenda for the meeting was set, two weeks before the meeting.

The Tree Group, as requested, made a submission on the new proposal. The first stage of the process was to present their submission to the next Burwood-Pegasus Community Board meeting (27/3/00). At that meeting, through their deputation, the Group again agreed that dangerous trees should be removed. The City Arborist volunteered that “99% of the trees were not immediately dangerous, however, that most were potentially dangerous”. The City Arborist, in his written report (CCC,2000b), defined immediately dangerous trees as “those which display obvious sign of structural defect such as root lift, splits in branches or trunk, extensive decay, etc. In these situations the Council has a responsibility to take immediate action to

---

44 Approval for the felling of the trees on the Golf Course boundary was never requested, and the Committee never decided on them, yet the 1998 plan never included these trees, indicating that they were intended to be felled. The Thomson Park (northern) end was to become native tree and shrub planting, while the playing fields (southern) end were to “remain in the short term” (Tony Milne Landscape Proposal Plan, 1998).
eliminate danger”. Potentially dangerous trees are “dangerous under certain conditions, gale force winds etc.” The City Arborist in his presentation to the Community Board said that “all the trees are feasible, but they leave no room for future planting”. This would confirm that danger was not the issue, but that danger was being used as an excuse; the issue was to establish native plantings.

The Burwood-Pegasus Community Board (27/3/00) voted unanimously to remove the pines that bordered the properties on Bowhill Road, and the pines near the playground. The Community Board disagreed with the recommendation by the Parks Unit to remove the stand of macrocarpa along Marine Parade near the playground.45

The matter then went to the Parks and Recreation Committee (5/4/00), which, in a 5-4 split, decided against the Community Board’s recommendation, and supported the Parks Manager’s proposal to remove all the trees in question. The Parks and Recreation Committee had delegated authority from the Council in matters of removing trees from parks, so the process had concluded. The trees were subsequently felled.

Social Capital In The Community

Establishing Trust: The Formation of Social Capital

“I love those trees. I see those trees and I know I’m home” (Cyril).

Until I heard that comment at the Council-organised St Patrick’s Day public meeting (17/3/99), I was ambivalent about the imminent felling of the trees in our park. I had resigned myself to their loss, believing the decision was final and that the Council plans about to be implemented needed to be accepted to avoid unnecessary frustration. Hearing that comment, however, galvanised my emotions. Someone felt the way I did, and was able to articulate it in a way that I had felt unable to do. That comment communicated to me more than that man’s love of those trees. It invoked a shared unconscious routine of returning home and the trees indicating that we were home long before we reached our front gate.

It was sharing similar sentiments that enabled the Tree Group to coalesce. The trees were symbolic of what their home meant to them. This gave an early impression

45 A Councillor on the Board later claimed that he did not vote in support of the trees, and says he simply did not vote. However, the Councillor did not vote against retaining the trees.
that this type of dispute could give rise to the formation of social capital based on the
group that opposed the felling of the trees. Raynor (1997, 1999) claims that there must
be a reason to galvanise the “reservoirs of trust”.

Supporters of the trees entered the St. Patrick’s Day meeting not knowing one
another and only sharing their love for the trees. Unwittingly, however, the Council
meeting gave them more reasons to be united in their support. People did not feel
adequately informed about the proposal. Some had not received the information flyer,
some had not seen the press reports, and no one, it appears, had seen the notice at the
permanently locked vehicle entrance to the park.

Everyone had felt belittled and patronised by the attitude of the Council
representatives at that meeting. As a public consultation process, the St Patrick’s Day
meeting was a very demeaning experience. People dissenting from the Council view
were told that they were wrong and summarily dismissed. People felt demoralised by
this attitude, prompting one local to ask, “Is condescension a method of consultation”? Everyone felt indignant that the trees were to come down because the
Council had not maintained them adequately for the past thirty years. As for the
perceived un-safety of the trees, no one from the Tree Group felt that the Council had
presented an adequate case against the trees. There was a feeling of fait accompli
about felling the trees. The plan was meant to be a proposal, but the attitude of the
Parks Unit staff was that the felling was to occur.

Establishing Distrust: The Formation of Indignation

The CCC process produced a sense of confusion and futility among the Group
members. The CCC appeared to regard consultation as an obligation to inform the
public, rather than an opportunity to engage with it. When members of the public
voiced strong opposition to the idea, they were patronised, the discussion was shut
down, and the concept plan was introduced. Council employees proved more adept
at, and inclined towards, managing the community, than consulting with them.

Cyril and Sadie had walked into the St. Patrick’s Day meeting expecting to be
the only ones defending the trees and were happily surprised to find others in support.

When we went in there (the meeting) we didn’t think the process
would have gone so far. We thought we were coming in at the
...but [it] was like we were coming in at the end and felt, well, what is the point, the decision has already been made (Sadie).

Cyril thought the meeting had started out fairly until:

Bert brought in a whole lot of technical stuff and they sort of just shut the meeting up and just went onto it’s going to happen, let’s have a look at the plans of what it will look like rather than discussing the issues. That’s the part where I thought it was a foregone conclusion... I felt patronised. They give people a say and when they lost control of people having a say, they decided to shut it down (Cyril).

It was felt that the Council could not justify why the trees had to come down.

**The Tree Group and Social Capital**

To the chagrin of its members, the group that coalesced around fighting for the trees was dubbed the “Save the Trees” group by the Council. The Tree Group had a regular core of 15 “Committee” members, 11 of whom lived in North Beach. Gender representation in the group was even. Half of the members of the group knew someone else in the group. Three of the members were neighbours in a street that bordered the park, and one of these people is connected to two others from outside the area that were established political activists. The other half of the group did not know these people or each other until the group had formed. The formation of the group was due partially to the serendipitous meeting on the street of two supporters from the St. Patrick’s Day meeting, Lois and Bert. Bert then introduced Lois to the three neighbours. A protest was arranged in the park and reported in *The Press* (24/3/99) and from those details Cyril contacted the group offering assistance and support. It was this group that would ultimately form the committee that engaged with the Council’s consultation process. The Tree Group adopted a twin rebuttal based on the health and safety of the trees, and the paucity of public consultation.

Trust was created from the Group’s collaborations. The Tree Group developed their trust toward each other from habit and routine communication. They held regular meetings, developed tactics for opposing the felling and deliberated together on submissions to the Community Board, the Parks and Recreation

---

46 I became involved with the Group after their meeting of 1/4/99 when I met individual members for the first time.
Committee, and eventually on lobbying Councillors. Other than two members who habitually made submissions to Council proposals and were critics of Council practice, no one in this group had previously engaged in activities of this sort.

Internally the group shared solidarity in opposition to the felling, were tolerant of each others’ opinions (to a degree) and felt that the group’s actions were legitimated by the 1600 name petition. This form of trust was based on opposition, a trust based on mistrust. Group collaboration was the only option to save the trees. The alternative was not cooperating with one another and losing the trees. All members shared a sense of indignation, and expected to be treated with more respect by the Council.

Saving the trees was the purpose of the Group, but within the Group there was a range of positions. These positions extended from “not one tree to be lost” to members that were prepared to compromise and accept a pragmatic Council decision that may have sacrificed some of the trees. Other than the voice that called for “not one tree to be lost” and another member that wanted the park reverted to “wilderness”, the Group were concerned about the health and safety of the trees. No one in the group wanted dangerous trees in the park, but all felt that the danger argument had been used as political leverage and exaggerated; especially since “the main reason for the request (to fell the trees) was [that] the conifers cast shade over the playground” (CCC,1998f). There had been no safety concerns raised at that point. To counter this end, the Group employed the services of an arborist to evaluate the trees. This arborist considered the trees viable, apart from one stand that bordered residents’ homes.

Trust within the group was developed among the members, but was not institutionalised or expanded beyond the narrow networks of the group. This exemplifies the internalising effects of social capital that reinforces trust among the group’s members (bonding social capital), in contrast to the externalising effect of social capital that facilitates connections with others outside of the group and (potentially) promotes democratic participation (bridging social capital) (Putnam,2000,p.69). The ambition of the Group was to retain trees and they had

---

47 The petition could have easily been expanded. The 1600 signatures were collected in a two week period and collection stopped after the 7/4/99 Parks and Recreation Committee meeting decided to defer the felling.

48 The arborist was employed by the Group for an independent opinion on the viability of the trees, to confirm their safety or otherwise. This report was never tabled before the Council.
entered a political dispute to do this. The onus of ensuring democratic participation was the responsibility of the Council. The Council had failed at this task, which was why the Tree Group was engaged in this political dispute.

The Tree Group exhibited its own form of exclusion, justified by the reasoning that it was an interest group, not a democratic forum. A good reason for this was that the Group could find little consensus on substantive issues other than opposing the Christchurch City Council clear felling plan; and it could take four hours to arrive at that lack of consensus. The Group debated expanding the “committee” that had formed, but reasoned that the limited numbers (twelve regular members) that met found decision-making difficult and any new involvement would only confuse the process. It was decided by the Group to oppose the felling through CCC process, rather than by organising more bulk public opposition. The 1600 signature petition credited the group with the legitimacy to engage in CCC processes on behalf of those people. The Group opted for a workable group, rather than what they feared would be an increase in personal disparities.

Access to social capital was created for some members within the group. This social capital was based on the personal relationships of specific individuals. People would pop in on each other for visits, invite one another to children’s birthday parties, meet on the street, at the shops or in the park. People would do favours for one another. Members of the Group would keep each other up-to-date, inform one another of developments in the area, recall events of a meeting, and generally act as information channels. For example, I continued to attend residents’ association meetings and other community meetings and informed other members of the community and Tree Group of events. I did this because I felt obliged to inform people, even though at times I thought that they might not really want to know.

Within the confines of their daily commitments of work, children, school, and domestic servitude, the Tree Group had developed a latent network, whereby they could call upon, and rely on, each other when it was necessary. The Tree Group therefore represented “potential” social capital: they were people who could ask each other for favours. The Tree Group was another community reference point, a beacon of trust among other relationships within the community. For example, I would see my immediate neighbours more often, and exchange favours with them more often than members of the Tree Group (even though most of my immediate neighbours
supported felling the trees), yet I would collaborate with the Tree people more than I would with other people in the community, except my immediate neighbours.

An important reason for many in the Tree Group participating was that they did not trust the CCC to accomplish the task of replanting in the park. Previous attempts at replanting were ill-conceived and not maintained. People doubted the Council’s ability to establish new growth over such a vast area, in such a hostile environment. For example, the original (June, 1998) proposal would have required over seven hundred metres of new planting to be established fifty metres away from the Pacific Ocean. The City Arborist admitted never attempting a trial this close to the ocean before at the extent required, but said he would like to “give it a go” (Invitation only Community meeting, 9/5/00).

The Tree Group advocated that the appropriate maintenance work be carried out. The group attempted to ensure a more transparent process so that promises were kept. The group also ensured that the promised soil amelioration occurred, that irrigation was installed and shelter-cloth erected. The group also advocated that the felled timber be re-used in the park. The group was especially keen to have the stumps of the trees fashioned into seats. The group acted as a collective monitor of the process; they made local concerns in North Beach more vocal and established networks that can re-mobilise when necessary. The group also advocated for macrocarpa to be replanted to retain the character of the park.

The Tree Group also exemplifies the problems of creating social capital under Christchurch City Council policy and practice. The Tree Group exhibited their own network of social capital. Unfortunately, the CCC was unable to engage with the Group more productively, eroding trust and inhibiting participation for some members of the Group. The experience of the dispute over the trees produced salient lessons about the nature of coordination and the relevance of social capital. Even among a small, committed group with ostensibly a single focus, motivations and strategies differed. This had implications for the perception of trust within and outside the group, the use and extension of networks, and debates about how to achieve the goals of the group.

The group that formed to support retaining the trees in Thomson Park developed and exhibited a form of social capital among themselves that was based on: their opposition to the CCC proposal (galvanised emotions), collaborations in their meetings and strategising (communication and information channels), and the specific
relationships between some members that existed outside of the tree issue (friendships and trust).

Synergy With The Community?: The Christchurch City Council Fails To Instil Trust

A community implicitly trusts the Council to maintain the trees in their parks. This maintenance never occurred in Thomson Park and the Council abused this trust by allowing the trees to reach a state that supposedly became dangerous. The Rawhiti Park Management Plan\(^{49}\) (CCC,1988,p.4) describes Thomson Park as “a pleasantly treed enclosed area”. In the space of eleven years the trees became “sinister shadows”, yet during these eleven years there had been no effort to prevent the once “pleasantly treed” area from becoming the harbinger of gloom it was accused of becoming. The CCC failed to adequately maintain the trees in Thomson Park, and failed to uphold their responsibilities to provide a safe environment for the residents. The CCC breached the trust held implicit by the residents that it would uphold these responsibilities.

Broken Promises

The Parks and Recreation Committee (7/4/99) decided that the Thomson Park tree issue go back to the community for further consultation, but the consultation process for the trees stagnated, and was abandoned. The Parks Unit proposed a fresh round of consultation, but in fact this proposal remained dormant for twelve months.

In January 2000, the Council had still not approached the community, yet employed the services of an independent arborist to give another (non-communal) opinion about the trees in Thomson Park. The findings were not complimentary to the park, but most worrisome about the report was the subjective nature of the findings. The trees were considered to be “scruffy and untidy, of low aesthetic appeal and uninteresting” and safety considerations were placed below aesthetic opinion (Beaver Tree Report,2000)

\(^{49}\) Rawhiti Domain is classified as a Domain, the 1988 Management Plan, however, is entitled the Rawhiti Park Management Plan. The Council arbitrarily changed the name and status of the Domain. The 1988 Plan is currently under review.
The total consultative effort to occur in the twelve months following the Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting (7/4/99) that decided to delay the felling involved:

1. The Area Parks Officer surveying the six (6) homes on the northern border of Thomson Park.
2. The on-site meeting of 8/5/99 that identified dangerous trees.
3. The commissioning of Beaver Tree Services (18/1/00) to carry out another arboreal report.
4. The invitation only meeting on 9/3/00 at the North New Brighton Memorial Hall.\(^{50}\)
5. The Tree Group’s submission to the revised plan.
6. The Community Board meeting of 27/3/00; the Tree Group had a deputation at this meeting by two local residents.
7. The Area Parks Officer’s (APO) claim that the North New Brighton Residents’ Association (NNBRA) now supported the retention of trees; the then President of the NNBRA reported that no such communication occurred between the Association and the APO.

The problem with the Parks Unit “sitting” on the tree consultation was that it meant that the process was back at the start again, at the same stage of the process as the previous year, producing a bizarre sense of déjà vu and some foreboding.

The Tree Group accepted the Council decision to refer the matter back to the community for further consultation and trusted the Council processes to honour that commitment. Part of the Tree Group’s compliance was to accept this decision: the group did not continue with the petition, did not solicit further community support and agreed to resolve the issue through Council processes. The Parks Unit did not reciprocate the Tree Group’s trust and so there was no “return for their compliance” (Levi, 1998, p.93).

Why the consultation never occurred has not been answered. It may have been the individual inaction of the Area Parks Officer, or he may have been inhibited by systemic inertia. Whether the reason for not completing the promised consultation

---

\(^{50}\) Tree meeting of 9/3/00 at North New Brighton Memorial Hall was an invitation only affair meant to include all interested parties in the process. It was attended by fifteen members of the public, twelve members of the Tree Group and three people that made submissions supporting the felling. The North New Brighton Residents’ association (NNBRA) were not invited. The President of the NNBRA and the APO confirm that the NNBRA were not invited.
was officer incompetence, procedural mischievousness or simply a case of too much work to do, the result was the same - mistrust. There was certainly a breakdown in communication between the Tree Group, the Parks Unit and the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board.

The Tree Group expected – because they had been promised – further consultation. The Tree Group expected, for example, notices to be placed in the park and another letterbox drop around the area. The Group had volunteered to deliver these leaflets to address concerns that the previous effort was incomplete. Poor consultation was the principle reason that the Parks and Recreation Committee (7/4/99) decided to delay the felling: to ensure adequate community awareness of the proposal. At their 3/5/99 meeting the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board endorsed the APO’s recommendations that the Parks Unit redraft a public information leaflet to outline a compromise, or the options as put forward by the four groups: Parks, Save Our Trees and the two residents’ associations. The feedback from the leaflets was to be assessed and then reported to the Community Board, who were then to make a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Committee.51

Since the new round of consultation had been promised, the Group did not understand why the process was again at the point of identifying dangerous trees, as in the Beaver Tree report. Dangerous trees had already been identified at the meeting of 8/5/99 in the park. The group had agreed with the assessment of the City Arborist at that meeting and had approved the removal of the dangerous trees, those that were leaning or were top heavy. Agreeing to this was difficult for the Group. It should not even have been a matter of debate; since the Parks Manager has delegated authority to remove dangerous trees, there was no need to re-consult about dangerous trees. Dangerous trees should already have been removed, and the community should have been deliberating on the felling plan for park. So, what was the purpose of the meeting?

Unfair Procedure

The Tree Group was awoken from their consultative slumber by the demands of the Area Parks Officer that they were to respond to the new plan within the next

51 The full text of the recommendations appears on pages 125.
three days; the Area Parks Officer claimed that this was necessary in order for his own report to make it onto the Community Board agenda for the next month's meeting.

Lois believes that the Parks Unit employed such tactics to antagonise the Tree Group, to provoke confrontation so the Parks Unit could then claim to be attempting to work (consult) with an unworkable group. The Parks Unit were attempting to nullify the Group's involvement, by giving them a choice which they most likely could not agree on. The Parks Unit set about causing distrust within the group by attempting to encourage dissent within their ranks, and distrust of CCC procedure. Having the Tree Group debate publicly about dangerous trees at the 8/5/99 meeting in the park was particularly antagonistic.

The Parks Unit used several methods of maximising dissent within the Tree Group. Their minimisation of response times was epitomised by the three days allowed for the group's submission on the new plan, after a twelve-month hiatus of consultation. This put extra pressure on the group's members, who had to debate and then write a coherent response in a very short period of time. At meetings the Council officers would invite dissent under the guise of consultation by making inflammatory comments that some of the more emotional members of the Tree Group could not help responding to. Council staff made value judgements about the locality, the park, and some of the park users: asides that did not serve the purpose at hand, public consultation, but made residents defensive about their community.

The APO requested the petition from the Tree Group so that he could place its 1600 names and addresses onto a database, to "keep these people informed, and to educate them of Parks [Unit's] reason for felling the trees". The Tree Group believed that this was highly inappropriate. When contacted, the Privacy Commission advised the Group that since the petition had not been officially presented to the Council, such a database would be illegal. An official presentation would put the petition into the public domain; though no longer illegal at that stage, the Commission spokesman said that he would still advise against placing it onto a Council database.

Ordinarily, petitions are presented to the Council. The Tree Group were collecting signatures up until the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting (7/4/99) and the petition was taken to that meeting to be presented. However, petitioners cannot present petitions. Petitions need to be presented by a Councillor on the behalf of petitioners and the Tree Group had not arranged for this. The petition served its purpose at that meeting as the Deputees, on behalf of the Tree Group, referred to the petition and impressed the Committee with its size. The Committee subsequently made their recommendations in favour of the trees, and so there was no need to present the petition. It was after this meeting that the APO requested the petition for educative purposes, consequently the Group refused to give it to the APO, or the CCC.
because it was reasonable to believe that the signatories had not expected to go onto a Council database.

Signatories to the petition placed their trust in the Tree Group by supplying their names and addresses. The petition was a statement of support for retaining the trees. It was not a list of residents who wished or expected to be “educated” by the Council. The request for names and addresses so that the Council can “educate” those people that disagreed with their proposal is revealing. It suggests that the Council presumes that those people in disagreement are simply wrong. Such a presumption denigrates the knowledge, habits and routines that constitute park users’ relationship with that park. It also infers that those people have been misguided in their use and enjoyment of the park; an assumption that the basic life choices of the residents cannot be trusted. If the Council does not trust its residents, those residents could not be expected to trust the Council. The attempt to use the petition for a database seemed to be designed to target and intimidate dissenters, rather than to engage community concerns. In Levi’s terms, this strategy can be seen as a failure to act in the interests of the people who placed trust in the institution.

The Power of the Bureaucrats and the Impotence of the Board

The Burwood-Pegasus Community Board had requested at their meeting on 28/2/00 that the Area Parks Officer’s “full report” of the results of the consultation be presented at the Community Board’s 27/3/00 meeting (CCC, 2000a). Their request was not fulfilled and the report of the consultation has never eventuated because the consultation never occurred. Instead, the City Arborist addressed the Community Board, requesting removal of the trees based on the Beaver tree report. It must be remembered that a Community Board cannot instruct a Council officer to do one thing or another, they can only request. Yet, it does seem disrespectful towards Community Boards that an officer can simply disregard the Boards’ request – and for another officer to present an entirely different report.

The failure of communication between CCC staff and the Community Board and residents was epitomised by the events at the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board meeting of 29/5/00. The Area Parks Officer began his presentation assuming the Community Board had received the letter he had drafted outlining the “invitation
only” meeting of 9/3/00. The letter, however, had not been sent. When asked by the Chair what had happened to the letter, the officer blamed another member of the Advocacy Team and in turn asked that officer what had happened to it. The exact contents of the letter, although I was meant to receive one myself, are unknown. It would appear to be a summary of the consultative process to date since the CCC decision to fell the trees in Thomson Park, subject to “community comment”. The Community Board was appraised verbally of the superficial facts according to the Area Parks Officer, and were expected to respond to the situation despite having no information.

The Area Parks Officer failed to fulfil his duty of informing the Community Board in the very public setting of a Board meeting. It may be, and was, inferred from this that the Officer may not be trusted to fulfil his duty of communicating with the public in less public, less formal arenas.

The Power of the Committee and the Impotence of the Board

The fate of the trees was decided at the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting on 5/4/00. The decision was made at that meeting to fell the trees and proceed with the replanting plan. There are several aspects to the proceedings that stand out. It has already been discussed that for the Community Board to gain the trust of the community it would need to be a recognised stakeholder in Council proceedings. The Community Board’s advice, however, was not accepted in this instance. The Community Board had unanimously53 agreed to the felling of the stand of pines that bordered six properties on Bowhill Road and to the felling of the leaning pines near the playground. The only point of dispute was the Marine Parade boundary stand of macrocarpa, the most substantial and emotive block in the park.

At the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting (5/4/00) the Chair of the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board was allowed five minutes speaking rights, the same as for any deputation. The Community Board Chair felt it was necessary to spend some of her five minutes re-orienting the Committee to the history and background of the issue, rather than to use that time arguing for the merits of the Community Boards’ decision. Towards the end of her deputation the Chair was hurried by the Committee Chair and told to “wind it up”.

53 With one abstention.
This is in contrast to the Committee relying heavily on Council officers for information. Council officers could present at length, they could defer questions to their colleagues, effectively working as a tag-team. The Parks Manager was able to interrupt proceedings, to interrupt his staff, clarify points and add personal opinion seemingly at will. There were also other Councillors present at the meeting, who were not members of that Committee, and they too were able to ask questions. These Councillors did not have a vote, but they had an influence upon the debate and consequently they had an impact on the Committee members. The Chair of the Community Board, however, did not have this right and was rebuked by the Committee Chair for pointing out that a Council officer had not answered a question from a Committee member.

The Community Board Chair was not given the respect she deserved. The Community Board Chair was present as the “community expert”, a representative from the Community Board, and by extension, the community, yet communal considerations attracted little respect. There was a great deal of clarification in expert areas such as plants, soil and coastal suitability, but there was no clarification on community issues. I questioned the Chair of the Community Board about the treatment she received at that Committee meeting. The Chair responded that not all Committees operate that way and that the Community Board Chair’s right to speak depends on the Committee Chair. I was given the example of how another Committee Chair, who belongs to the same political party as the Board Chair, and like her is a cycling advocate, allowed the Community Board Chair to speak at length on cycling issues. Neither situation recognises the status and importance of Community Boards. Community Boards should not have to rely on the patronage of favourable Committee Chairs, or be dismissed by unfavourable ones. For the process to be considered fair, Community Board deputations should have equal access to speak at all Committee meetings. The personal patronage of favourable Committee Chairs, or the lack thereof, does not engender trust in procedure.

The problem of Community Boards gaining access to council tables is documented in Community Boards: 1995 Survey of Functions. Many Board members claimed that allowing Community Boards, or at least their Chairs, opportunity to speak at these meetings would ultimately enhance communication between Community Boards and their Councils (pp.60-61).
At the 5/4/00 Parks and Recreation meeting, Thomson Park became an issue of botanic interest that prompted some Councillors to use the occasion to suggest personal preferences for plantings in the park irrespective of what communal interests may have been. This suggests that Councillors did not believe that the community had already debated these issues, or were capable of debating them. The deputation was not before the Committee to seek gardening advice, yet landscaping wisdom is what they got.

The Committee made their decision based on limited information. It was limited to the presentations of the Council bureaucracy, and to questions raised by Councillors. The only opinion offered on park use was that of a commissioned landscape architect, whose own vision for the park had been formulated according to Parks Unit guidelines. Most of the Councillors had never visited the park; some had driven past the park, and others based their decision on anecdotes several years old and without substance.

The Burwood-Pegasus Community Board asked more probing and insightful questions about Thomson Park than the Parks and Recreation Committee. During the Committee meeting of 5/4/00 the City Arborist was never asked which trees were immediately dangerous, or which trees were perceived as dangerous, or why the trees that were declared dangerous in May 1999 remained standing. The Community Board (27/3/00) asked all these questions. The decision of the Committee was made based on Councillors' personal phobias or their own landscaping desires for the park. The trees were felled not because of health and safety concerns, but to conform to the Park Unit's concept of what the park should be like. The meeting concluded with the Parks and Recreation Committee voting 5-4 to support the Parks Managers recommendation to fell the trees.

In summary, the experience of dealing with the Parks and Recreation Committee did not instil trust in their decision-making capacities. The treatment of

---

54 The Parks and Recreation Committee have a record of going against Community Board recommendations. The Parks and Recreation Committee, at their 11/8/99 meeting, decided against a Riccarton-Wigram Community Board (4/8/99) recommendation to retain a healthy and significant pine tree in Ferrier Park. The decision of the Parks and Recreation Committee also went against the advice of the Parks Unit staff who recommended the tree remain, and the City Arborist’s opinion that there was “no safety, amenity or park management reason … to remove the pine”.

55 Only one Councillor on the Committee represented the Burwood or Pegasus wards. All of the other Councillors represented wards on the other side of the City.

56 The Committee did not register the irony from one of its members when he commented that they are retaining trees with the most recent history of failing and losing branches, yet are agreeing to fell trees that have not presented such problems.
the Community Board Chair and the limitations placed on her ability to effectively
deliberate and represent the public interest and the Board was imperious when compared to the free rein the
Parks staff, especially the Parks Manager, were given in presenting their case. The
rejection of the overwhelming support that the Community Board had given for
retaining the trees was a rejection of the value of Community Boards, and the effort
that the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board had taken to understand the issue and
the wishes of the community. The Parks and Recreation Committee failed to ensure
fair procedure by failing to deliver their earlier promise of consultation, nor did the
Committee question what had happened to the results of that consultation. The
Committee decided that the issue should go back to the community, yet there was no
mechanism to ensure this happened. Community Boards do not have the authority to
ensure that the Parks Unit conducts consultation, consequently, the Parks Unit was
left to do as it wished, which was to have another arborist confirm that the conifers
were “scruffy and untidy”. Although the Community Board could not make Parks
staff accountable, they did attempt to engage with the issue.

**Misinformation: Undermining Trust**

Whatever may have been the reasons why the promise of new consultation
was never kept, the result for the Tree Group was the same: mistrust and feelings of
betrayal. The Group felt deceived by the process. They had engaged the process in
good faith, followed the rules, but then the rules changed. At subsequent Parks and
Recreation (5/4/00) and Council (19/4/00) meetings, the Parks Manager (and his
subordinates), and the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee, claimed that
consultation had occurred, further damaging the Tree Group’s trust in the Council.
The claims that consultation had occurred referred to the original round of
consultation of early 1999, the original letterbox drop, signage and public meeting -
the same consultation effort that the Parks and Recreation Committee (7/4/99) had
decided was inadequate (CCC,1999b).

The issue of the trees had been public for over a year but it was not debated.
Personal communication with a Councillor and Parks and Recreation Committee
member confirmed this misperception when he responded “Oh those trees, that’s been
around for a while now. Everyone knows about them”. “Everyone”, however, did
not know about the proposal to fell the trees. After the Parks and Recreation
Committee decision to fell the trees, I was encountering people in the park, on the street and in the pub who did not realise that the trees were a subject of debate, much less that a decision to fell them had been made.

Ultimately, the Tree Group was very uncomfortable with the process. How could consultation be delayed and ultimately abandoned only to have another arborist evaluate the park? It was disingenuous of the Parks Unit to give the Tree Group, the community, the Community Board and the Council the promise of consultation and then not to conduct it. To then maintain that consultation had occurred was duplicitous. This duplicity eroded the confidence and trust that the Group had placed in following Council procedure. The Council had promised and was, therefore, obliged to consult further with the community and park users.

Following the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting (5/4/00), the Tree Group thought that the matter was going to be debated at the next Council meeting (19/4/00) and so lobbied Councillors to support a unanimous Community Board decision over a five-four split at the Parks and Recreation Committee. The Parks and Recreation Committee’s delegated authority, however, trumped the Group’s expectations; no-one realised that the Committee had the final word. Thomson Park was a “delegated decision”; the final say rest with the Parks and Recreation Committee. Some years previously, the CCC had decided to bestow delegated authority on the Parks and Recreation Committee regarding the felling of trees because the Committee was considered to be the best judge of these matters. The Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee had assured me that the issue of the trees “will certainly be debated, it will go one way or the other, Council will vote for or against” and that “it goes to Council and it’s open for debate”. He was wrong and he misinformed me. No one informed the group that the Parks and Recreation Committee had delegated authority. The Community Board was also unaware of the process, and the Parks and Recreation Committee or Parks Unit never volunteered the information. This is an example of information not filtering through the Council.

57 By comparison, an item on the same Parks and Recreation Committee agenda concerning a sundial in New Brighton - an issue arguably not as significant as felling 400 trees - was decided by full Council.
58 Telephone conversation, 12/4/2000. While it seems implausible that the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee would not know that his Committee had delegated authority in the matter, I contacted him at home and it is possible he may not have thought the issue through. After the Thomson Park item was dealt with at the 19/4/00 Council meeting, the members of the Tree Group left the Chamber and were greeted by the Chair who - mistaking one of the members for me - apologised for giving the wrong information on the telephone. I was still writing notes in the Chamber during this time.
system. If people cannot rely on the Council to keep them appraised of the process, people will lose trust in that process, especially if it appears that the Council does not fully understand what its own process is.

Since the decision over the trees was delegated to the Parks and Recreation Committee, there were only two means of having the issue debated before the full Council. Firstly, the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee can invite the issue to be debated before Council, and only that individual can give permission for this to occur. Accordingly, the Mayor asked the Chair of the Committee if he wished for the matter to be debated, to which the Chair replied, “no”. 59

The other option is for a “Notice of Motion” to be posted by a Councillor, seconded and carried by a two-thirds majority of the Council. A local Councillor of 15 years experience said that she did not know that to have the trees debated at Council level, a “Notice of Motion” needed to be posted. Notices of Motion are not rare items of Council business. Ironically, the previous Notice of Motion was at the previous month’s meeting (23/3/00) and related to a formal procedure for a Complaints Management System. The local Councillor who claimed not to know the Notice of Motion was the only option for debating the Parks and Recreation Committee’s recommendation seconded this particular Notice of Motion.

There was a feeling that the Councillors let down the Tree Group, and undermined the process. This diminished trust in them, trust in their procedures, and this loss of trust renders the CCC ineffective at connecting with communities and bridging social capital.

Misinformation from the Councillors

An example of Councillor obfuscation occurred at the North New Brighton Residents’ Association AGM, May Day 2000. 60 This meeting was a week after the

---

59 In comparison, the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee requested that his vote against his Committee’s decision to remove the Ferrier Park pine be “recorded” (11/8/99). When the Parks and Recreation Committee’s report came before Council on (26/8/99), the Ferrier Park item was held over for further debate and put to the vote of the full Council, although it too had been a “delegated decision”.

60 A recruitment drive to attract new people to the Residents’ association AGM (2000) produced three people that allowed themselves to be nominated onto the Committee. Each of these people know each other and have lived in the area longer than I. Each person wanted to join to contribute some vitality into the Association, yet within six months each has stopped coming to meetings because of the intransigence of the long established members. Each person decided that their time was better spent invested in their other, established networks.
Council meeting that confirmed the Parks and Recreation Committee’s authority to fell the trees.

Though the felling was now unavoidable, there was still the landscape plan to consider. I entered the May Day Residents’ Association meeting with the latest concept plan for the park, which had not changed substantially from the original concept plan dating back two years. Some new people were attracted to this residents’ meeting, so discussing the plan for Thomson Park would, presumably, be news for them, so I attempted to engage the meeting in a discussion about the park.

Three Councillors attending that meeting misunderstood and misrepresented my suggestions for discussing the plan; they did not want to discuss the concept. I was attempting to open up the discussion, believing that that is what residents’ meetings were for, hoping that other residents would contribute to the process and more importantly, articulate what they wanted for the park. If the consultation had occurred, as the Council kept insisting that it had, then residents should have been informed, as had been reported at the CCC meetings, and, therefore, fruitful discussion about the park would have been possible. However, Councillors confused the situation by suggesting that “funding would be lost if there was a delay”, and that “pockets of funding could not be swapped”. Another Councillor insisted he understood my concern, yet proceeded to misrepresent what I was saying. A Councillor at that meeting told me that the proposed plan had not yet been made public. This is despite the “concept plan” being made public two years previously and having been supposedly consulted on. A City Council Committee was able to decide to remove the trees based on a concept, yet the community was not able to discuss landscaping, based on the same concept. Councillors insisted on not discussing “concepts”, yet concepts were all the residents had to work with.

Most troubling was the Councillors’ insistence on interjecting and explaining their own interpretation of my intentions rather than allowing residents to inquire after more information. The conversation was effectively shut down by our elected representatives and the meeting accepted that the concept plan should not be discussed until a meeting with the landscape architect to explain his “vision” for the park.

Communication amongst the community, therefore, was discouraged in favour of having an outside “expert” present to the group. Residents and park users should have been able to discuss the local park in more knowledgeable and meaningful terms.
than an “expert” whose only contact with the park is instigated by a commercial exchange. The Councillors dictated what is appropriate communication; they defined an issue as open to discussion when mediated via someone contracted to the Council and who was not part of the local community. This is an example of how CCC structure and process alienates residents from participation. This exemplifies the CCC not connecting with people in the same room, let alone connecting with disparate communities.

If the CCC representatives are to personally bridge social capital, it would be appropriate to encourage communication within the community. This residents’ meeting presented an opportune moment - a crowd of thirty people and some new faces - to discuss their local environment, but communication was discouraged.

The Importance of Accepting Responsibility: Regaining Trust

The events concerning Thomson Park do not flatter anyone. The process began with the North New Brighton Residents’ Association requesting that the trees be removed. At the time of this request, the Association represented some half a dozen households. The 1995-98 Burwood-Pegasus Community Board agreed to this request (CCC, 1998d), as did the 1995-98 Parks and Recreation Committee (CCC, 1998e). The 1998-2001 Parks and Recreation Committee decided there had not been adequate community consultation, then decided to fell the trees even though the consultation that they had ordered had not been carried out. The Area Parks Officer neglected to carry out the consultation, prevaricated to the community and the Community Board, while other staff and elected representatives were also guilty of obfuscations and misinformation.

One local Councillor levelled blame at the Residents’ Association, who were only acting within the power that the Council had given them.61 At the 29/5/00 Burwood-Pegasus Community Board meeting, this Councillor claimed that the North New Brighton Residents’ Association failed in their consultation with local residents. The Councillor argued that it is the responsibility of the residents’ associations to

---

61 Distrust was palpable at Residents’ association meetings after the Tree Group had joined that association. There had been no institutional attempt to reconcile the two groups, who now found themselves uneasy associates.
explain the issue and clarify what people want and do not want. It was suggested that residents’ associations need to be told that it is their responsibility to do the consulting first, and only come to the Council when they have all the arguments for or against specific proposals. The Councillor then proposed a seminar with residents’ associations, to talk through such responsibilities. “It is time to get the residents’ associations together and talk and show how mistakes are made because they act on wrong information at the start”.

This Councillor ignored all the mistakes and injustices caused by staff and elected representatives, people who are paid to implement policy and ensure its implementation. Instead, the Councillor lay the blame of poor consultation on an association of volunteers who pay for their involvement with their own time, energy and money. The North New Brighton Residents’ Association had no part in the process once they had made the request, because the Parks Unit assumed responsibility for pursuing the cause, and the deliberative matter lay with the Community Board and Parks and Recreation Committee. This suggests that this senior Councillor is unwilling to recognise the limitations and faults of elected representatives and staff, and the procedural imbalance of Council processes. By blaming the residents for the problems over Thomson Park, the Councillor is signalling she is not about to ensure that the CCC acts in a trustworthy manner; she is not concerned about the Council’s breaking of promises or adoption of unfair procedure.

Conclusions

Evans suggests that political institutions are able to facilitate social capital if they are able to “scale up” the existing social capital in the community. The community at North Beach offers a rich stock of social capital from which to work. North Beach has a vibrant associational life, so by Putnam’s associational definition of social capital, the community offers this avenue of civic engagement. North Beach has a varied and developed communal infrastructure; its parks, foreshore and commercial areas present many and varied opportunities for informal interaction. So, meeting Jacobs’ definition of social capital, the community offers this further avenue for civic engagement. The Tree Group exhibited their own social capital that was also connected to other networks of social capital within the community. A political
institution wishing to utilise these networks has a rich stock of pre-existing social capital to work with. However, the Christchurch City Council treated the Thomson Park tree dispute as a political conflict, rather than as an opportunity to bridge these existing stocks of social capital.

Consultation is, potentially, an exercise in generating or expanding social capital. Accordingly, the Thomson Park dispute opened opportunities for participation, the creation of networks and the confirmation or withdrawal of trust. The CCC has the infrastructure, resources, staff and the policy that should enable the Council to connect disparate networks and establish communication that engenders trust and facilitates participation. Unfortunately, this prospect for social capital development for communities and their participants is not necessarily realised. Political institutions need to ensure that they deliver on the promises that they make. However, as the preceding case study showed, major promises can be, and are, publicly broken. Trust placed in political institutions needs to be reciprocated, meaning that people feel that they are being treated with respect. Yet, as the preceding case study showed, communities, and Community Boards, can be, and are, treated with disrespect by Council staff and Councillors. Trust in political institutions requires the adoption of fair procedures, yet as the preceding case study showed, procedures, can be, and are, unfair.

The Council’s many decisions concerning Thomson Park produce a poor report card. The Council identified imminently dangerous trees, yet did nothing about them; even though the Parks Manager has authority to remove dangerous trees without the need for consulting with the public. A fresh round of community consultation was promised, but was never delivered. A new information leaflet was not produced and delivered, and notices were not displayed. Since there were no leaflets or signs proclaiming consultation, there was no feedback from the public; and consequently, nothing was reported to the Community Board as had been promised. In twelve months, the only consultation to occur was the Area Parks Officer’s survey of the six homes that bordered the park and a series of meetings with people that already knew about the proposal. This does not indicate a close relationship with the community.

I find it disconcerting that after introducing myself at Community Board, Parks and Recreation Committee, and community meetings as having a specific academic interest in studying consultation, that effort was not taken to ensure a fair
consultative process. I did not expect special treatment due to my position as a researcher; but I did expect the Council to fulfil its obligations, keep its promises and maintain respect for the community. The CCC was being monitored with the expressed view of being documented in this research, yet that did not ensure a fair process. I infer from this experience that consultative processes that are not being monitored in such a fashion are even less likely to provide a conducive environment for fair participation. Participation will not translate into trust when promises are broken, and actors are not treated seriously, or with respect.

The Parks Unit entirely misread the capacity for trust within the community. Political institutions will not be able to bridge social capital if they do not acknowledge existing networks, and do not recognise their trust, or legitimacy, within the community. Individuals are able to recognise connections and their capacity for trust, but institutions such as the CCC, may not be able to. That is why Evans suggests the need for "embeddedness". However, Evans' idea of embeddedness has only limited applicability for a local government employee in Christchurch. Evans' term describes the relationship between development workers and communities who are engaged in third world irrigation projects, sewerage networks or access to health care. These projects are long-term commitments to communal well-being, and require that the "embedded" worker live in the community in which they serve; often that worker also comes from that community. The situation in Christchurch is very different. Projects in Christchurch only rarely involve the long-term development of basic infrastructure, and have a finite period of interaction when the budgeted money is available. Council workers in Christchurch, moreover, live in their community as another member of the community, as a resident and not as an embedded worker. Yet the principles of Evans' embeddedness are feasible for local government workers in Christchurch; for the worker to establish direct connections with the community and to respect the community.

Evans' idea of synergy, furthermore, relies on competent and engaged staff. The inaction of the Parks Unit, particularly the Area Parks Officer, to initiate the promised consultation suggests staff were either not-so-competent, or were not engaged with the community. Synergy also requires institutional leadership. The failure to conduct the promised consultation, and so the failure to engage with the community, can also be attributed to the elected representatives that did not monitor the inaction of the Parks Unit. The Parks and Recreation Committee that had ordered
the consultation to occur, they had also ordered it to be referred back to the Community Board. The Community Board, meanwhile, had become involved in the next series of issues to present themselves to the Board. The Board, meanwhile, periodically questioned the Area Parks Officer about the progress of the consultation, but does not have the resources or the jurisdiction to ensure that the consultation occurred. The Community Board, however, should be in the position to communicate officially with Parks officers, the Parks Manager, or the Parks and Recreation Committee concerns about unfulfilled consultation.

The Tree Group could have monitored the inaction of the APO and the Parks Unit, but the Tree Group was content to have the trees standing; the status quo suited the Tree Group. Although the Tree Group would have accepted the mandate of public consultation, it was not advantageous for the Group to initiate it. Of more relevance for social capital, the members of the Group were actively engaged in their own commitments and networks. It was the responsibility of the Parks Unit, and possibly the Residents' Association that initiated the request, to see the process to its completion.

In the Thomson Park dispute the deliberations of the Community Board did not carry weight with the higher Council structures. The proceedings of the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting (5/4/00) were biased against the community representatives. Although the Parks Manager was allowed to speak at will, the Chair of the Community Board was glowered into silence. Park's staff were allowed to present at length, but the Chair of the Community Board was rushed to wind up her allotted five minutes. The decision to fell the trees was not based on danger, but danger was used as an excuse. The status of the Burwood-Pegasus Community Board's decision, and its Chair, were not respected, effectively eroding trust in the ability of the Community Board to represent its community. This demonstrated the limited autonomy of Community Boards, and hence their limitation in facilitating social capital.

Policy that is delivered inconsistently, or with favour or bias, will reduce trust in the CCC, and produce perceptions of its unreliability. This case study exemplifies that the CCC acted in an untrustworthy manner. An untrustworthy government, or one perceived to be untrustworthy, will not be able to generalise trust throughout the community. If the government is unable to generalise trust they have no opportunity to engender social capital that is relevant for democracy.
The participation of the Tree Group was based on a sense of optimism that their ambitions could be realised. The attempt to save the trees, ensure vigorous replanting, utilise the timber, and restore supposed loss of pride to the park all suggests tacit trust in CCC procedure and process. However, the Tree Group’s participation was also based on distrust: distrust of the original decision and the motivations to fell the trees. Tree Group participation was further motivated by distrust of CCC processes, such as when promises were broken and the process became unfair. Participation became a responsibility to ensure that promises were kept: participation became the monitoring of political institutions, rather than collaboration with them.

Putnam’s original thesis was that social capital made democracy work; however, a functioning, even flourishing democracy may have more to do with distrust in political institutions as it does with networks of trust. When political institutions erode, or destroy, trust there are two possibilities. Firstly, a loss of trust can result in a loss of participation because people lose interest, think the process is inflexible or inaccessible, or possibly believe that decisions are already decided; these people, with plenty of other concerns in their lives, revert to trusting relationships they can rely on. Alternatively, a loss in trust may provoke an increase in participation because people feel as though they need to monitor the process. Distrust may motivate engagement, however, if engagement is based on distrust, and distrust is all there is, it becomes dysfunctional. Most people are not currently engaged with CCC processes (according to the CCC’s own Survey of Residents) so, compared to the people that lose interest and disengage, the number of people that remain engaged as monitors is relatively few.

Trust is an integral component of social capital, but the connection between trust and democracy is ambiguous. Putnam has linked social capital with democracy, it is argued in this thesis, however, that social capital and democracy are only connected when trust is generalised to become “social” trust, applicable to all actors in society.

Social capital, therefore, was not mediated by the CCC. Social capital within the Tree Group’s network, remained in the Tree Group’s networks, or was exchanged in other relationships that members of the Tree Group had personally verified. The CCC was unsuccessful in acting as a mediator of trust, consequently the bourgeoning civic engagement of the Tree Group remained, as Cohen had suggested, localised and
parochial. Further participation was stymied because the Groups engagement was based on distrustful monitoring, rather than trustful collaboration. Moreover, this experience means that it will be difficult for people who felt their trust was betrayed to again place trust in the CCC, possibly precluding future social capital facilitation.
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS

The Concept of Social Capital

This thesis has argued that social capital is not inevitably democratising because trust cannot be conferred automatically onto other social relationships in a civil society in which conflict is a fact of life. By examining the flaws in Putnam’s contentions about social capital enhancing democracy, it elaborates on his theory to offer alternatives of how social capital can, or could, be democratically relevant.

Social capital was initially conceived, and applied, as an analytic tool to measure the strength of connections between individuals, families or small groups. Putnam (1993), in his attempt to reconcile cultural differences and institutional performance, appropriated the term by associating social capital with civility. He then expanded social capital’s utility by applying it to account for the democratic nature of communities, regions and nation-states. When social capital is conceived as a community resource, however, the connections between those relationships are more abstract. When applied to communities, social capital can only indicate the likely prevalence of such relationships occurring. At this community level, social capital is a descriptive term designating possible relationships.

Relationships: The Importance of Connections

Relationships are crucial to social capital. Whether conceived as an individual resource or as a public good, social capital exists in relationships between people, as individuals or in small groups. The context of the relationship and its wider environment are important factors in determining the value of social capital. Social capital involves an exchange of resources between related actors. These relationships, and the exchanges within them, are sanctioned by the norms and mores of the participants, and are reinforced by the verifiable trust of those involved in the relationships. People monitor their own relational exchanges. The existence of social capital means that there is no need for State enforcement or contracts. The trust
within the group means that the resources available to a group are available to the members within that group.

Relationships, the resources available to those relationships, and trust in the relationships are the pre-requisites of social capital. Social capital depends on people being trustworthy, people being willing to trust, and people connecting with one another. But these relationships, their reassurances, and the resources available to people in those relationships are not automatically available to other, unknown, people in the community. This makes the notion of social capital as a community endowment inaccurate. To denote a community as having, or not having, social capital is to inappropriately homogenise the community and generalise the concept. Such a denotation assumes that social capital is available to all people within that community, although this may not be the case.

Different social contexts offer different pre-requisites for social capital. Different pre-requisites in turn generate different forms and values of social capital. The different forms and values of social capital depends on the strength of the relationships, the resources available to the relationships and the political and social environment in which the relationships are located. To claim that social capital is available to larger aggregates of people is problematic because at this level, the nature of the relationships becomes more tenuous, and the trust within those relationships is no longer verifiable.

"Civic-ness", Associations, and Networks

To equate social capital with "civic-ness" is also problematic, because relationships and their resources can be put to un-civic ends. Social capital is not necessarily "good". Social Capital may produce localised and particularised groups that are more concerned with their own motives than extending communal interests. Civil society can create social and unsocial capital, depending on the motivations of the groups involved, the interpretations of society and the political environment. Since social capital cannot be adequately equated with civic-ness, Putnam’s conception of social capital does not contribute to an understanding of democracy.

Putnam credits voluntary associations with a disproportionate influence for the creation of social capital. But associations are not the pre-eminent source of social capital that he claims them to be. Instead, associations may only indicate pre-existing social capital. Putnam also claims that voluntary associations educate members on
political participation, and consequently, have a democratising function connecting their members with other disparate groups across communal lines. This elevates associations beyond their important, yet narrow, social interests such as watching birds, singing a tune or playing bowls. It also neglects to recognise that when associations do participate in the democratic process they may be motivated by their own interests that may undermine the "common good". Putnam also overestimates the power of societal associations to create themselves spontaneously from below, consequently ignoring the roles of political institutions in the creation of associations. Associations have been the beneficiaries of state sponsored facilitation that assisted their formation.

Associations, meanwhile, should not all be considered the same. They are diverse, with different functions, norms, resources, and members of differing motives and abilities. As Eastis (1997) demonstrates, the social capital that is created by different associations, is different.

Informal networks of ad hoc issue-based groups are also productive generators of social capital, yet have not featured prominently in Putnam's conception of social capital. Informal volunteering accounts for as much time as volunteering on behalf of formal groups. Issue-oriented groups, meanwhile, are not as formal, allowing for a less hierarchical participation that has a greater impact on attitudes and values. These values contribute to political understanding, education and participation. Casual interaction within a neighbourhood also establishes relationships that can function as the framework for collective efforts.

Trust

The development of trust occurs on a personal level, created from the habits of peoples' routines or reputations. Trust also develops from the cohesion people feel from familiarity with others or from the conformity of shared norms. Trust that cannot be personally verified can only exist as an assumption of trust.

Social capital within small groups is a relatively simple concept. Communication is uncomplicated and relationships are easier to maintain. Trust is conferred on a personal basis and sanctions are easier to enforce. Social capital within a community (or across communities) is more complex. Communication is more complicated and relationships may not be as personal. Trust has to be assumed, with the attendant risks, and sanctions are harder to enforce. If the concept is to be of
relevance to democracy, it has to be shown how social capital can be generated and applied beyond its pre-existing community sources.

The particular trust enjoyed between individuals is not automatically conferred onto groups or larger polities to become a generalised (social) trust because there is no reliable medium to facilitate this exchange. For the concept of social capital to have any relevance at the communal level, or to have any impact upon democracy, large scale social trust has to be developed.

Misztal (1996) and Dunn (1988,1993) claimed that a collaborative effort could be implemented by means of government policy to facilitate “social trust”. A collaborative effort between previously unknown actors requires facilitating structures to coordinate cooperation at the level of large groups, such as communities and regions. This requires a level of coordination that is beyond the ability of a community organisation, involving the implementation of policy from political institutions.

Democracy

For social capital to have an effect upon democracy it needs to exist at a communal level. It is only possible to generate social capital at the communal level if the trust between particular individuals can be generalised to incorporate trust in unverified others. This requires facilitation, or generation, of social capital beyond that which community actors can provide. If trust exists within a community (the pre-requisite for social capital), it requires a mediating structure to generate it across community lines. To equate social capital with civic virtue, as Putnam does, is both disingenuous and unproductive. It misunderstands the varieties of small, locally produced social capital, homogenising them into the sum of a greater good. Homogenising social capital as a form of civility also misconstrues the different ambitions that can arise from people collaborating.

Skocpol (1996), Fox (1997), Evans (1997), Warren (1996,1999), Levi (1996,1998), Berman (1997) and Warner (1999) have argued that there is a role for government to enhance social capital by facilitating trust and increasing networks to bridge pre-existing social capital across community lines. Trust is not automatically transitive from specific relationships to other relationships, or to the general community, so there is a need for an institutional mediator to “promote” social trust.
Moreover, social capital across communal lines may be difficult to generate because people are preoccupied by their own commitments and relationships.

Political institutions may be able to generalise trust, but this depends on the institution – its structures, its agents' abilities and accountability, and the institution's resources. In short, the ability of an institution to institutionalise trust depends on the institution's trustworthiness. Evans argues that the most productive social capital is formed in the relationships between government institutions and civic actors. This requires complementarity of goals, and direct connections between government agents and the community. Synergy is needed between government agents and civil actors to scale up the stocks of social capital existing within the community and so make them relevant for larger political aggregates; and so relevant for democracy. Government action in generating social capital depends on those political institutions themselves being trustworthy, practicing fair procedures and keeping their promises.

Despite Putnam's misapplication of social capital, the concept remains relevant to democratic theory because it can illuminate problems associated with collective action and social mobilisation.

**Social Capital and Government Policy**

The Christchurch City Council has enacted policies relevant to community well-being that may provide the institutional framework for facilitating social capital. The Council has also allocated funds to Community Boards, allowing the representatives closest to the community to act upon local needs. This provides Community Boards with a limited mandate and some resources to engender cooperative actions. Community Boards were established to act as a conduit for communication between the Council structures and the residents. In this regard, Community Boards are well placed to act as an institutional focus for the facilitation of social capital. However, there are several impediments to Community Boards achieving this.

Community Boards are relatively unknown. Their lack of a prominent profile severely inhibits their opportunities to connect with people in their communities. Community Boards are also relatively powerless. They have delegated authority over minor local issues, and their decision-making capacity is restricted to providing recommendations to Council decision-makers. Council decision-makers, meanwhile, can ignore or disregard the advice from Community Boards, thereby effectively
disregarding the community. The Community Board’s lack of autonomy inhibits its reliability, thereby undermining its trustworthiness. Any loss of trust in the effectiveness of Community Boards reduces their ability to facilitate social capital. Their limited delegated authority reduces the ability of Community Boards to effect change for their community, thus further limiting the trust that people can place in the Boards. Their capacity to facilitate social capital is correspondingly inhibited.

Consultation processes have the potential to connect many different groups (and individuals) in the community. However, Community Boards do not design or implement consultation and can only respond to it. Without the authority or the resources to enact consultation, they can only approve or disapprove of the processes as carried out by Council officers. Community Boards, moreover, rely on Council officers to implement their decisions, yet most Council staff are responsible for implementing the priorities of their relevant Unit, traditionally an administrative body. Some staff are now considered as advocates, yet they also retain their earlier bureaucratic functions and responsibilities. There is, therefore, a conflict between the roles of advocacy and administration. Some Council officers claim that bureaucratic culture is holding back the move from administration to advocacy. This means that the delivery of policy depends on the interpretation and implementation of bureaucrats who may not be strategically aligned with the Community Board. Consultation efforts and advocacy skills depend upon the personal abilities and ethics of the officer involved in each process, and so Council procedure is unevenly distributed throughout the city.

Just as social capital depends on the context of the relationships in which it exists, consultation also relies on the relationships between the Council officers and the community being consulted. This introduces another problem for policy delivery, compartmentalisation. Compartmentalisation is the bureaucratic separation of responsibilities, such that, communication across bureaucratic departments does not necessarily occur. Each Unit acts as its own bureaucratic enterprise; focussed on their own budgets, projects and priorities. If communication (or coordination) does not happen within the institution, communication (or coordination) is unlikely to occur with people not in the institution. This situation is epitomised by the Community Relations Unit being the only unit responsible for the Council’s “bridging social capital” policy. The inference is that other Council Units are not involved in establishing networks and engendering trust in the community.
For social capital policies to have any relevance for the CCC the policies must be applied across all departments within the Council. As it is, compartmentalisation in the CCC inhibits its policy for social capital construction. The CCC has a policy to promote social capital, yet the majority of its staff are not responsible for it. Only the Community Relations staff are responsible for implementing the policy that recognises "bridging social capital" as a key role for the CCC. The remainder of the Council staff, the vast majority of them, are only responsible for their respective bureaucratic departments.

A further impediment to the CCC’s ability to bridge social capital is their recognition of residents’ associations as the primary group in the community; yet, residents’ associations membership accounts for only a small fraction of total community members. Furthermore, when consideration is given to the depth and range of community connections that are shared between neighbours and friends in their daily lives, residents’ associations account for even less community interaction. Moreover, associations are not necessarily democratic organisations. The North New Brighton Residents’ Association decided to request the tree-felling in Thomson Park without seeking a mandate beyond the dozen people that were present at one particular meeting. Associations can be localised and self-interested.

Council policies also need to take account of informal networks within the community; the daily seemingly insignificant exchanges that occur between neighbours and friends. Accumulatively, these exchanges account for greater collective action than the more recognised residents’ associations. Council policies do not recognise the potential of these informal relationships, thus limiting the potential for the generation of social capital.

To bridge social capital, the Christchurch City Council needs to foster relationships based on trust, expand existing networks and make participation accessible, relevant and easy. The Christchurch City Council has a policy framework designed to facilitate social capital, and does have some talented and dedicated staff, however, there does not appear to be complete institutional support and coordination in the application of these policies.

This study has pointed to two crucial areas where the CCC is undermining its own policy: communication and consistency of implementation. Communication is essential to building and maintaining trust and, therefore, to implementing the CCC’s policy on social capital. Better communication needs to be developed between CCC
Units, and between CCC Units and residents. This communication also needs to involve the Community Boards. Moreover, Council policy has to be implemented consistently. Consistent application of policy will result in fair procedures, and fair procedures will produce trust in the Christchurch City Council. Fair procedures rely upon a competent and engaged set of public institutions and institutional actors.

The Specificity of Trust and Family-Centric Social Capital

The interviews demonstrate that trust is conferred only on people that can have, or have had, their trustworthiness verified. The interviews also illustrate that trust is not generalised to include other unverified people in the community. Confirming that trust is specifically conferred onto small groups of known people, the respondents claim to trust their families, their friends and other specific people. Although respondents are not involved with any formal associations or clubs, they all possess generous stocks of social capital based on relationships with families, friends, informal connections, work and school.

Respondents gain security from knowing their neighbours and state that knowing their neighbours has an influence on their perceptions of safety. The perception of safety, however, has not expanded into feelings of generalised social trust toward the community as a whole. Their trust is not generated beyond those known to them and is not generalised even in neighbourhoods they describe as having a "good reputation". There is no mediator to convert the respondents' specific trust into a generalised trust. Consequently, the trust that they confer onto specific people does not expand to encompass the community. None of the respondents offered an instance of trust promoting community collective action indicating that trust does not automatically precipitate collective action. For example, trust among Peggy's neighbours did not facilitate cooperation when they were confronted with intolerable neighbours. This suggests that some form of institutional intervention is required to facilitate trust into collaborative action.

Community and family can either form competing relationships or complementary relationships. Family can be the reason for not participating in community affairs (competing relationship), or a reason for participating in community affairs (complementary relationship). The potential for social capital generation is greatest when family and community interests are congruent, meaning that community participation also corresponds with family participation. For
example, community participation that involves activities that can include family members, such as carnivals, festivals, or park and playground activities, reinforces participation within the family, while people are also communally participating. Commitments to family also motivates involvement in children's activities. Family commitments heighten issues of trust and can potentially expand networks that are connected with the family, and so can increase participation.

However, the Christchurch City Council's consultation structure alienates participants from their families. Council requirements for consultation, or participation, decrease the time and energy that participants can spend with families. Preparing for and attending meetings, committee work, preparing for and writing submissions, and lobbying and monitoring Councillors and Council staff are necessary to engage with CCC processes. This type of participation may preclude peoples' interaction with their families. Conversely, families demand financial commitments and daily maintenance that can limit an individual's involvement with their community. Families can inhibit relationships with other networks that are not connected with the family, and so potentially decrease participation.

The experience of the respondents indicates that social capital remains in distinct social networks and is not easily commuted to other communities. The respondents defy Putnam's assertions, because they possess tangible stores of social capital, yet associational connections do not register in their lives. There are numerous stocks of social capital in Christchurch because there are numerous avenues for connection and participation in Christchurch. If certain institutions are part of a person's social life, and if relationships are formed from them, then social capital can develop from those relationships. If neighbourhods, community organisations, friends, work places, schools or families are part of a person's social circle, it is possible that these institutions can facilitate social capital formation. However, on their own these institutions remain limited, and limiting. Close relationships with family, neighbours and clubs do not necessarily connect the individual to the greater resources of the community or society. Accordingly, the CCC's brief, as they have defined it for themselves, is to "bridge" these autonomous, yet disconnected examples of social capital. Yet, for the respondents, the CCC or Community Boards are not active in "bridging social capital" or connecting them to community agencies in any tangible or explicit form. Trust levels, network connections or community participation have not increased for the respondents because of CCC activities.
Evelyn is an exception, but her connection is the result of a personal friendship with a Board member, rather than as an effect of the institutional operation of the Board. Yet even her personal relationship with a Community Board member did not encourage community participation, beyond helping her friend out occasionally.

To create social capital through institutional artifice, it must be expanded from established sources of trust and networks, and established behaviours as found in neighbourhoods, community organisations, friendships, work environments, schools or family. Attempts at fostering social capital will be more successful if they seek to build it incrementally from what already exists, rather than trying to create it anew (Evans, 1997). CCC participation can be included into “everyday lives” by involving what really matters to people; their families, sport, school, art or leisure. This will enhance the generation of social capital more effectively than the reliance on consultative procedures that mostly exclude family interaction and other enjoyable exercises.

Consultation as (not) Bridging Social Capital

The Thomson Park case study illustrates how the Christchurch City Council failed to honour the trust placed in it by the Tree Group. A government perceived to be untrustworthy will not be able to generalise trust throughout the community. If it is unable to generalise trust, such a government has no opportunity to engender social capital that is relevant for democracy.

Evans suggests that political institutions are able to facilitate social capital for collaborative purposes if they are able to increase the utility of the existing social capital in the community. This requires institutional encouragement; namely recognising a common project and having committed staff work with the community. The community at North Beach offers a rich stock of social capital from which to work. The community offers the avenues for civic engagement as set out in Jacobs’ definition of social capital. The Tree Group exhibited their own social capital that was also connected to other networks of social capital within the community. Though a political institution could have utilised these networks, the tree dispute was treated as a political conflict, rather than an opportunity to scale up the existing stocks of social capital.

Consultation has the potential to enhance social capital because it is a means of extending networks, by engaging more people, particularly previously non-
connected people, into the deliberative process. Consultation is also a means of establishing trust; consultation can develop expectations; as those expectations are met, trust is developed. More fundamentally, consultation facilitates information channels and encourages communication. Social capital can be bridged by Councils if consultation is utilised as a means to develop relationships, rather than as a process of identifying and managing objectors.

Christchurch City Council consultation is, potentially, an exercise in facilitating social capital. The CCC has the infrastructure, resources, staff and the policies. These resources could be utilised to establish communication to connect disparate networks, these networks could then engender trust and facilitate participation. There is a synchrony between community consultation and bridging social capital. Both rely on the abilities and values of the staff responsible for their implementation. Trustworthy, competent and engaged staff are critical for the success of either consultation, or social capital facilitation. As well as competent and engaged staff, consultation also requires diligent elected representatives to ensure the staff responsible for implementation act accordingly. Perhaps staff are only incompetent and disengaged when they are not monitored by the publics’ representatives, or the public.

The failure of the Christchurch City Council to effectively communicate with the community and its unwillingness to collaborate was underscored by broken promises, unfair procedure, misinformation and poor accountability of procedures. The Christchurch City Council acted in an untrustworthy manner. This rendered the Council unable to engage with, and expand the social capital within the community and the Tree Group. Synergy was never going to work between the Tree Group and the Parks Unit: their actions and motivations were diametrically opposed and not complementary. The Parks Unit wanted to fell trees which the Tree Group wanted to retain. Complementarity is independent - yet mutual - support by government actors and civil actors who complement each others’ actions. The Thomson Park dispute demonstrated competing social capital; two different sets of networks with two different aims. This points to the difficulty of bridging social capital, and illustrates that social capital may only be facilitated when aims are congruent. The degree of shared interest between government and community determines the potential for synergistic relations (Evans, 1997, p. 196).
Complementarity was possible between the Community Board and the Tree Group, maybe, because the two groups shared wider communal interests. From the Community Board's view, once the initial disruption settled, the Tree Group offered new communal vibrancy. The Tree Group offered a communal spark. It involved new people into the communal deliberative process, provided new energy in communal interests and energised residents' association meetings for a while. Community participation as represented by residents' association meetings had stagnated; meetings were irregular and attracted half a dozen people. The actions of the Tree Group, through conflict, invigorated the residents' association, attracting new people to the association, for a while.

Political institutions need to ensure that they deliver on the promises that they make. However, as the preceding case study showed, major promises can be, and are, publicly broken. Trust placed in political institutions needs to be reciprocated by the institution, meaning that people feel that they are being treated with respect. Yet, as the preceding case study showed, communities, and Community Boards, can be, and are, treated with disrespect. Trust in political institutions requires adoption of fair procedures, yet as the preceding case study showed, procedures, can be, and are, unfair.

Democracy and Social Capital

Putnam's original thesis was that social capital made democracy work. But a functioning democracy may have more to do with distrust in political institutions, than with networks of trust. Putnam's definition of social capital as a communal resource that enhances democracy is faulty. This thesis has demonstrated that it cannot be assumed that trust between specific people can entail trust throughout the community. Also, voluntary associations are not the pre-eminent source of social capital that they are purported to be.

Trust is crucial to social capital, but distrust can be more important to democracy. There is no simple direct link between social capital and democracy. Institutionalising trust is the causal link between social capital and democracy that Putnam fails to elaborate. The Thomson Park case study indicates that participation does not necessarily increase trust, and that participation can occur because of distrust. Distrust motivated the Tree Group to monitor the institutions and procedures.
of the CCC. Distrust motivated the Tree Group to join *en masse* the North New Brighton Residents’ Association. The relationship between social capital and democracy is a complex one. Putnam’s original thesis was that social capital made democracy work. However, social capital can be put to non-democratic purposes, and distrust may spur political participation.

People generate social capital by the nature of the relationships that they form. Social capital is formed in complex and varied social circles. People may have access to the pre-requisites of social capital, but (new) social capital needs to be generated through pre-existing and varied networks. This means that social capital should not be understood as a homogenising concept. This is a problem with conceptions of social capital that equate it with social cohesion; it is bland and unrealistic. Social capital is based on a variety of different relationships, all with differing access to different sources of social capital.

Social capital exist as different sets of relationships, with different accessibility to different resources. Social capital cannot be homogenised to become the equal blend of all its constituent parts, because those constituent parts: trust, resources and relationships are not able to be transferred beyond their existing relational environments, and so can not form an ideal communal equilibrium. Construction of an ideal communal social capital, can only describe peoples’ potential access to it, rather than the actual access that their personal environment allows.

Because trust is personally conferred from habit, trust in political agents similarly needs to be confirmed by the actions of such agents. Therefore, the independent actions of individual political agents are crucial for establishing relationships from which trust can develop.

The case study showed that distrust of the CCC motivated engagement with it. When the people formed the Tree Group they facilitated the formation of social capital within that group. But the process of participation did not convert that social capital into a property of the community. Instead, the CCC failed to encourage the social capital within the Tree Group to be utilised for communal benefits. The CCC had poor communication channels, it built up expectations, but did not deliver on its obligations. The CCC did not enforce their own norms of behaviour with their staff, the staff misbehaved, and elected officials let it happen. This produced alienation rather than social trust.
For social capital to be productive of democracy, local disputes would need to be embraced as an opportunity for consultation and collaboration. Institutions that are decision-making bodies and that prioritise the allocation of resources for which there is competition, may find it difficult to assume the role of connecting disparate communities, or disparate interests within communities. Moreover, consultation and collaboration to some extent slow the bureaucratic process. The case study suggests that participation can be seen by local government officials (and perhaps by others in the community) as undermining efficiency. This makes it all the more important that policies aimed at generating social capital be applied across all units so that they become part of the accountability structure of those officials.

Democratic theories of social capital rely upon equating social capital with civic-ness. It then follows, according to these theories, that societies high in social capital are civic, and consequently, produce a democratic polity. This thesis, however, concludes that it is specific relationships that are high in social capital, that specific individuals or groups participate in local decision-making, and consequently, that participation only results in a democratic polity when such behaviour is respected by political institutions. A groups’ social capital is only relevant to democracy when it is legitimated and encouraged by political institutions and its agents.

Social capital is also inappropriately equated with social cohesion. Social capital may also be social exclusion, and therefore social capital would more appropriately be described as group cohesion. Social capital consequently can not be automatically linked to democracy, nor can it be claimed to be democratising, in a civil society where conflict is a fact of life.
REFERENCES

Primary Sources

Interviews

*Randomly Selected Respondents*
Donald, (12/7/99) Heathcote Ward
Jane, (8/11/99) Spreydon Ward
Alf, (10/11/99) Spreydon Ward
Peggy, (7/12/99) Pegasus Ward
Evelyn, (24/1/01) Burwood Ward
Mary, (28/1/01) Burwood Ward

*Tree Group Respondents*
Lois, (6/2/01)
Cyril, (12/2/01)
Sadie, (12/2/01)

*Other Interviews*
Paul Bullen, (25/1/2000) Sydney, N.S.W.

Meetings

*Community Meetings: Cited and in Chronological order*
Christchurch City Council Thomson Park Tree Replacement Public Meeting, North New Brighton War Memorial Hall 17/3/99
Community Meeting, North New Brighton War Memorial Hall 1/4/99
Thomson Park Public Meeting, North New Brighton War Memorial Hall, and on site in Thomson Park 8/5/99
Public Meeting (Invitation only) North New Brighton War Memorial Hall 9/3/00
North New Brighton Residents’ Association AGM 1/5/00

*Christchurch City Council Meetings: Cited and in chronological order.*

Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting 7/4/99
Burwood-Pegasus Community Board Meeting 3/5/99
Riccarton-Wigram Community Board Meeting 4/8/99
Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting 11/8/99
Burwood-Pegasus Community Board Meeting 28/2/00
Burwood-Pegasus Community Board Agenda 27/3/00
Parks and Recreation Committee Meeting 5/4/00
Christchurch City Council Meeting 19/4/00
Burwood-Pegasus Community Board Meeting 29/5/00

**Secondary Sources**


Burwood-Pegasus Community Board. (2000) “Mission Statement” *CCC Community Plan (Burwood-Pegasus)*


Christchurch City Council. (1997a) *Seeking Community Views*, Copy obtained from Shirley Service Centre.

http://www.ccc.govt.nz/Policy/Seeking.asp


Christchurch City Council (1999e) List of Street Names in Christchurch, June. Subdivision Office of the Environmental Services Unit of the Christchurch City Council.


Department of Internal Affairs. (1997) *Building Strong Communities*, Wellington: Department of Internal Affairs


# Table of Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table of Appendices</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1: Seeking Community Views</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2: Letters to the Community Board</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3: Interview Schedule</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4: Letter to Residents</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 5: Information Sheet</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 6: Consent Form</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1: Seeking Community Views

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Christchurch City Council sees it as important to engage in processes which give it an understanding of the views within the community.

2. Such processes are one of a number of methods of gathering information which may be used to assist the Christchurch City Council with making a decision.

3. The Christchurch City Council respects all views in conjunction with other sources of information.

4. The processes will vary with the circumstances and stage of the proposal.

5. The responsibility for making decisions rests with the Christchurch City Council.

6. Processes for seeking community views will be managed in accordance with the principles below.

PRINCIPLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Council will endeavour to seek community views when:</th>
<th>The Council will endeavour to seek views by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The views of individuals and groups within the community will provide further information valuable to the decision making process.</td>
<td>1. Fostering relationships, networks and partnerships as well as consultation on specific issues, so as to be sensitive to changing views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The issue significantly affects existing levels of service.</td>
<td>2. Being honest and open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Issues are controversial.</td>
<td>3. Being prepared to listen and change our view.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Views may be sought from the following people, as applicable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The silent majority.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opinion leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children, youth and the elderly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4. Having flexible approaches to seeking community views.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Increasing the ability of and making it easy for people to contribute, especially those who would not ordinarily participate.</td>
<td>5. Providing equitable opportunities for stakeholders to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Providing the information necessary for informed comment.</td>
<td>7. Providing the information necessary for informed comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Being well planned and prepared.</td>
<td>9. Communicating effectively before, during and after seeking views.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Giving people sufficient time and notice to contribute.

12. Informing participants of the outcomes of their input.

13. Having clear, transparent processes.

Notes:

- The Council has statutory requirements to consult with the community in a number of contexts. This policy relates to circumstances where it is not legally required that community input be sought.

- This Policy is not intended by the Council to create any expectation of legal rights in any person or group of persons.

Council
17 December 1997
Appendix 2: Letters to the Community Board

42 Tonks St.,
North Beach,
Christchurch,
Ph. 3882492 home
   3667001 ext. 8676 office
e-mail: cas69@student.canterbury.ac.nz

10th May, 1999
C/o Shirley Service Centre,
36 Marshlands Rd., Christchurch.
To the Burwood - Pegasus Community Board

To Whom It May Concern:

I wish to take this opportunity to ask for provision to introduce myself to the Burwood Pegasus Community Board at its meeting on Monday, May 31, 1999. I am Craig Singleton, a post-graduate student at the University of Canterbury, currently studying for a Master of Arts in Political Science. The principal concern of my research is why people do not participate in the political process. The contention of my research is that people are able to effect change upon their local polity, however, they largely do not articulate their ideas or participate in the debates that effect their community.

I propose to attend Community Board meetings, and with the Board's permission, I respectfully request that I be able to record proceedings. The research's interest in Community Boards is in their role and function of facilitating communication between councils and the public. I wish to reiterate that Community Boards in themselves are not the focus of the research, the research is more concerned with the attitudes and opinions of people that do not participate in the affairs of the local community. However, an understanding of the structures and machinery of local government is invaluable to the efficacy of the research.

If Board members have any concerns or questions they wish to clarify, I am happy to answer any request. I can be contacted by any of the above mentioned means. I would also welcome the opportunity to explain the research more fully before the board at its next meeting.

Your faithfully,

Craig Singleton.
Appendix 3: Interview Schedule

Semi-Structured Interviews

O+B question from Onyx and Bullen (1997)

How long have you lived here?
Are you from Christchurch?
Do you know your neighbours name?
What involvement do you have with your neighbours? Do you
- swap goods and services
- keep keys
- lend tools
- care for children / pets
Do you talk to your neighbours about the neighbourhood?
What about?
Are there people in the neighbourhood that you keep an eye out for?
each other's homes?
Children?

Knowledge of residents associations:
Are you a membership of a residents association?
What is your involvement with your local residents associations?
Can you name your local residents association?

Knowledge of Community Boards:
Can you name your Community Board?
Can you name any of your Community Board members?
What contact have you had with Community Boards?
What involvement have you had in the Community Board decision making process?
- Have you made a submission to a Community Board?

How do you get your news?
Do you regularly read a newspaper?
Do you regularly read public notices
- what local community newspapers do you receive? / read?
- Eg. Smog, Stann, Buzz, Plains Pages, City Scene, Pegasus Post, Star, Mail,

Community activities and local issues and participation:
What involvement do you have with Community groups?
What involvement do you have in Community activities?
Eg. - Waterway plantings
- Neighbourhood watch
- Volunteer work
- Why did you get involved?
- Why didn't you get involved?
What membership to clubs / groups / associations do you hold?
- What is your involvement with cultural or sporting groups?

Who do you consider to be part of your community?
- What contact with these people do you have?

What was the last public meeting you went to?
- Why did/ didn’t you go?
- What happened at the meeting?
- Did you know other people at the meeting?
- What sort of feeling did the meeting give you?
- Do you speak at public meetings?

Have you joined a community action to deal with an emergency? O+B

What local environmental alterations have happened?
- Did you know this was going to happen?
- How did you first hear about...?
- What did you do when you heard about...?
- What happened then?
- Do you object to / approve of ...?
- What was your response to...?
- Who did you approach about this?
- Who do you rely on for information / support?

Have you ever joined a demonstration to stop a local development? O+B
In the last 5 years, have you ever taken part in local community project? O+B

What possible local environmental alteration would provoke you into action?
What local issues would you support?
- parks, heritage, nuisance, pollution.

Do you know anyone that you would consider active in community life?

What do you like about your community?
What concerns do you have for your community?
What would be the biggest problem that you are having, (or think you will have) in the community?
Do you feel intimidated by anything in your community?
Do you walk down your street at night? O+B
If there was one thing in your community that you could change, what would it be?
Does your local community feel like home? O+B
Does your area have a reputation for being a safe place? O+B
Who in your community can you rely upon?
Can you get help from friends when you need it? O+B
Who do you trust?

Knowledge of Council procedure:
Are you aware of the councils “Seeking Community Views Policy”
What involvement have you had with Council procedure?
- Why did you get involved?
- Why didn’t you get involved?
Are you aware of the debate concerning urban expansion into the 'Green Belt'?
- What has been your involvement in this process?

Are you aware of tree felling programs in your area?
- What has been your involvement in this process?

Are you aware of park replanting schemes in your area?
- What has been your involvement in this process?
Unstructured Interviews

Locality as a social entity distinct from Christchurch
- Perceptions of Community
- Attitude towards Community
- Parochialism

Attitude to Council procedure
Responses to Council initiatives

Ascertain Range of Political Beliefs
- Existence of Political interest
- Relevance to everyday life
- Involvement in Political process - local, regional, national, international

Knowledge of particular local events?
Involvement in local variants of City-wide events?

Social/ political/ economic/ cultural contact with others in community?

Demographics

Occupation
Completed Education
What continuing education have you attended since leaving school.
Appendix 4: Letter to Residents

Dear Residents

Research on Attitudes and Knowledge about Community Participation in Christchurch

Hello, I am Craig Singleton, a post-graduate student from the Department of Political Science, University of Canterbury. In a few days will be in your area and someone from your home may be asked to do an interview for my research, which is being carried out throughout Christchurch from July to September.

I want to find out what Christchurch residents

- Feel about their local community
- Think are the important issues facing their community
- Do to get involved in community activities
- Opinions are about local government

The research is completely confidential and no individual will be able to be identified in the research.

Your support in this research would be very appreciated. I will ask to select one person from your house who is 18 years or older, for an interview. It will take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete, depending on how much people wish to say. The research is for my Master of Arts degree, and has been approved by the University of Canterbury’s Human Ethics Committee.

Thank you for reading this letter. Please show it to everyone in your household. If you are selected, I hope you enjoy giving your views on these issues.

Yours sincerely

Craig Singleton
Appendix 5: Information Sheet
University of Canterbury
Department of Political Science

INFORMATION

You are invited to participate as a subject in the research project “Community Participation in Christchurch”.

The aim of this project is to formulate strategies for enhancing community participation in local decision making processes. In this regard, the research aims to improve communication between the residents and the local council.

Your involvement in this project will involve participating in an interview that will take 30-60 minutes, depending on how much you want to say.

As a follow-up to this investigation, you may be asked to complete another interview if you wish to, if not there is no obligation.

The results of the project may be published, but you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered in this investigation: the identity of participants will not be made public without their consent. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, participants will not be identified, and all data will be locked in a cabinet safe.

The project is being carried out as part of a Master of Arts degree in Political Science by Craig Singleton, who can be contacted at 38882492. He will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project. Craig is under the supervision of Joanna Goven, Department of Political Science, and Keiko Tanaka, Department of Sociology. They can be contacted on 3667001.

The project has been reviewed by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.
Appendix 6: Consent Form

“Community Participation in Christchurch”

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate as a subject in the project, and I consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved. I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided.

Signed................................................................................... .

Date .....................................................................................