

Social Capital, Local Communities and Culture-led Urban Regeneration Processes: The Sydney Olympic Park Experience

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Abstract

Culture has become increasingly important in regeneration processes designed to deal with urban futures. Urban regeneration processes in which culture has played a prominent role range from large-scale public investments in cultural facilities and artefacts as ‘hallmarks’ of urban regeneration projects (e.g. Guggenheim Bilbao), through to the use of ‘one shot’ cultural events such as the Olympic Games as a catalyst and engine for regenerating urban areas. The aim of this paper is to examine the association between social capital (SC), local communities and the culture-led regeneration process at Sydney Olympic Park (SOP), New South Wales, Australia. The catalyst for the transformation of an industrial wasteland into SOP was the awarding of the Olympics to Sydney in 1993. A convenience sample of 47 professional reports associated with the regeneration process at SOP between 1993 and 2010 were analyzed, the aim being to understand how local communities had been linked to the regeneration process through SC. Results from the analysis identified three principal associations between SC, local communities and the ongoing SOP regeneration process. The first association related to how, during the early years of the regeneration process, SC was used as a means of expressing concern about how governance mechanisms implemented at SOP might adversely impact the ability of local communities to engage in decision making that affected their local environment. The second related to the use of community development programs to build SC in local communities through the SOP development. The third related to a call for the development of measures to understand how the development of SOP impacts on the SC in local communities. Eight in-depth interviews with professionals involved in the regeneration process were used to provide further insights into the three principal associations. The paper discusses findings through reference to broader arguments surrounding the potential, capacity and nature of SC.

Introduction

In the last two decades culture has gained increasing importance in regeneration processes designed to deal with urban futures. There is a growing acceptance and recognition of the important role that cultural activities and events can play in the development of mature, post-industrial urban areas (Hall 1998; Hutton 2006; Hutton 2009; Landry 2001; Sacco & Tavano

Blessi 2009; Scott 2000). The utilisation of such processes has multiplied in recent decades. Regeneration, as Evans (2004, p.4) has noted, can be defined as ‘the transformation of a place (residential, commercial or open space) that has displayed the symptoms of environmental (physical), social and/or economic decline’. Furthermore, Evans (2004, p.5) uses the term *culture-led regeneration*, to describe those instances where culture is used as a catalyst for the regeneration process. Urban regeneration processes in which culture has played a prominent role range from large-scale public investments in cultural facilities and artefacts as *hallmarks* of urban regeneration projects (e.g. Guggenheim Bilbao) through to the use of *one shot* cultural events such as the Olympic Games as the catalyst and engine of regeneration within cities (García 2004a; Gospodini 2009). The reasons for implementing these processes vary considerably. They range from seeking simply to increase urban infrastructure to addressing more diverse goals of enhancing a city’s international brand, its economic prosperity and its attractiveness to tourists, and improving the quality of the social and cultural life of its residents (Evans 2001; Gold & Gold 2007).

The aim of this paper is to examine the association between social capital (SC), local communities and the culture-led urban regeneration process at Sydney Olympic Park (SOP), New South Wales (NSW), Australia. The catalyst for the regeneration of a previous industrial wasteland at Homebush Bay West into SOP was the awarding of the Olympics to Sydney in 1993 (see Figure 1). This paper is not just focused on the regeneration process that led up to the Sydney Olympics as an event in 2000 (see e.g. Garcia 2004b; Waitt 2003); it also examines the broader regeneration processes at SOP that continued up until this study was conducted in 2011. A convenience sample of 47 professional reports associated with the regeneration process at SOP between 1993 and 2011 were analyzed, the aim being to understand how local communities had been linked to the regeneration process through SC. Results from the analysis identified three principal associations between SC, local communities and the regeneration process at SOP. The first association related to how SC was used during the early years of the regeneration process as a means of expressing concern about how governance mechanisms implemented at SOP might adversely impact the ability of local communities to engage in decision making that affected their local environment. The second related to the use of community development programs to build SC in local communities through the SOP development. The third related to a call for the development of measures to understand how the development of SOP impacts on the SC in local communities, by virtue of their membership in social networks that arose through the

regeneration process at SOP. Eight in-depth interviews with professionals involved in the regeneration process were used to provide further insights into the three principal associations. Given the diverse terminology that was used for SC across the studies and interviews that were analyzed, the paper adopts a common conceptual language for SC when discussing the findings. The paper also discusses the findings from the analysis through reference to broader arguments surrounding the potential, capacity and nature of SC. In carrying out this examination, as Radcliffe (2004, p.519) recommends, we seek to open more fully the black box of SC with specific reference to its association with communities and culture-led urban regeneration processes.

The conceptualization of social capital

SC is the key concept explored in this paper. SC is a quality of social networks (Holt 2008; Mohan & Mohan 2002; Radcliffe 2004; Coleman 1988; Glaeser, Laibson & Sacerdote 2002; Putnam 2001), and is built about the core idea that ‘social networks have *value*’ (Putnam 2000, p19, emphasis added). As Westlund (2006, p.1) asserts, SC as a concept can be understood as emerging from the work of Bourdieu (1983) and Coleman (1988). Bourdieu (1983, p. 248) defines SC as: ‘the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition’. In a similar way, Coleman (1988, p. S98) describes SC as: ‘a variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether personal or corporate actors –within the structure’. SC is the outcome of social networks and as such it is generally agreed that neither individuals nor organizations can own SC, and that ‘SC cannot be stored materially, institutionally, textually and by, for example, academic titles (like cultural capital)’ (Bærenholdt & Aarsæther 2002). As Bullen and Onyx (1998) note:

It is created from the myriad of everyday interactions between people. It is not located within the individual person or within the social structure, but in the space between people. It is not the property of the organisation, the market or the state, though all can engage in its production.

Whilst SC cannot be stored, scholars such as Putnam have asserted that *stocks* of SC can amass ‘where trust and social networks flourish, [for use by] individuals, firms, neighborhoods, and even nations’ (2000, p. 319).

Despite the earlier origins of the concept of SC in the work of others, Putman's work (1993, 2000) often assumes a more central role in discussions of SC. Putman (2000, p. 19) defined SC as 'connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them', reflecting the views of his predecessors. Whilst Putman's conceptualization of SC is aligned with that of his predecessors, it also deviates. Putman, along with a range of other SC scholars (Woolcock 1998), argues that there needs to be a greater understanding of the diverse dimensions of SC. Of particular importance to this study is Putnam's (2000, pp. 22-24) distinction between *Bridging SC* and *Bonding SC* which he acknowledges as adopting from the work of others. Bridging SC refers to the social connections that cut across narrow groups and interests, connecting people in a community, and spans diverse social groups (Putman 2000). Bonding SC refers to social connections that create perpetual in-group cohesion, sometimes at the expense of cross-cutting social interactions, and reinforces exclusive identities and homogeneous groups (Putman 2000). In a figurative sense Bonding SC has been described as the *glue* and Bridging SC as the *lubricant* within social networks (Anderson & Jack 2002). For Putman these are the two most important dimensions of SC (Putman 2000, p.22), and should not be considered as mutually exclusive. For example it is possible to have in-group cohesion in addition to connectedness to other groups in a society.

Putnam and others suggest that Bridging and Bonding SC have different consequences and effects, not only on individuals but also on broader society, arguing that these consequences and effects can be both positive and negative (Putman 2000, p.22). For example Bonding SC, whilst generally having negative effects for society as a whole, may have positive effects for the members of a closed social group or network. Conversely, Bridging SC can have positive effects on society in that it supports contact between different groups or networks. Furthermore, according to researchers (Fukuyama 1995; Putman 2000; Halpern 2001) better health conditions, a favorable climate for entrepreneurialism, improved crime statistics, and better school performance can be observed in societies with ample social capital.

Whilst Bridging and Bonding SC have become widely used in SC analysis, Woolcock argues that it is important to recognise a third key dimension of SC: *Linking SC* (Woolcock 2001, 13-14). The concept of Linking SC is applied to the relations within the hierarchical structures of society, which connect us with people in positions of influence. Linking SC may be provisionally viewed as a special form of bridging capital that specifically concerns power

– it is a vertical bridging across asymmetrical powers and resources. We use the concepts of Bonding, Bridging and Linking SC as components of a common syntax for SC in this study, allowing the diverse and often confusing expressions of SC that were presented in the studies and interviews that were analysed to be standardised in the presentation of the findings.

Methodology

A mixed-method design that investigated the culture-led urban regeneration processes at SOP, using the analysis of published studies and in-depth interviews, served to address the research aim. The study's methodology was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the University of Technology, Sydney.

The Culture-led Urban Regeneration Process at Sydney Olympic Park

In 1993 Sydney's largest brownfield site – containing a disused brickworks, an abattoir, and a military base – and covering 760 hectares at Homebush Bay West, near the 'geographic heart' of the Sydney Metropolitan Area, became the focus of one of Australia's largest culture-led urban regeneration processes. The catalyst for the process was Sydney's selection as the host city for the 2000 Olympic Games (Figure 1). Whilst the site had been the subject of various unfulfilled regeneration proposals since the early 1970s, in 1992 a new plan was prepared for the 2000 Olympic bid. The plan contained a sports complex, an athletics centre, an aquatic centre, recreational facilities, a regional park, housing, and major event facilities (Cashman 2011). Whilst partial regeneration of parts of the site had commenced prior to the nomination in 1993 of Sydney as the 2000 Olympic host city, the nomination acted as a significant catalyst for the site's regeneration, speeding up the process on a scale that would not otherwise have been possible (e.g. a new rail line to Homebush Bay West would not have been built without the Olympics) (Cashman 2011). The selection of Sydney to host the Olympics skewed the regeneration between 1993 and 2000 towards the construction of Olympic and cultural venues, leaving out the proposed industrial areas in the former strategies. Ongoing visions for SOP since 2000 have sought to extend its role as a leisure and cultural centre, through promoting ideas such as the development of museums, cultural festivals, education complexes (see e.g. Moore 2000) and more recently its promotion as a centre with the 'potential to provide for a broader range of employment uses, including commercial uses, whilst maintaining ... its chief function as a metropolitan and international sporting and cultural events facility' (NSW DOP 2007, p.8).

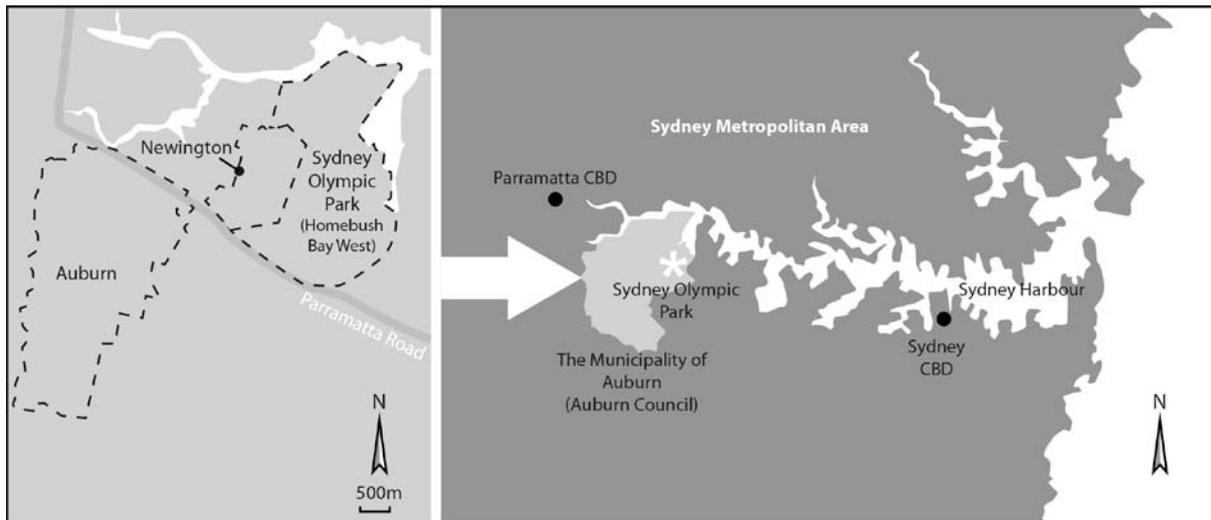


Figure 1. Map showing location of SOP, Auburn LGA, and two adjoining suburbs of Newington and Auburn discussed within the study's findings

Collection and Analysis of Professional reports

A convenience sample of 47 professional reports related to the regeneration process at SOP between 1993 and 2011 was analyzed to explore the principal associations that had emerged between local communities, the regeneration process at SOP and SC during this period (see e.g. Green Games Watch 2000; Owen 2001). The convenience sample comprised reports from local governments, NSW government departments and agencies, consulting companies (e.g. engineers, planners and architects), non-government organisations, and academic researchers. Reports were selected, firstly because they focused on the regeneration process at SOP, and secondly because they made reference to SC and/or local communities¹. The use of reports as a data source was considered appropriate for several reasons. First, they are a valuable source of data for addressing the aims of this study because they provide detailed insights into how, where and why SC and local communities were being considered within the SOP regeneration process. Second, they are one of the few ways of sourcing such data other than interviews with those engaged in the regeneration process. Third, it seemed appropriate to use the professional reports to initially collect data prior to engaging through interviews. The reports also provided guidance on who was appropriate for interviews.

¹ The vast majority (42 out of 47) of reports in the convenience sample made reference to local communities. Fewer made reference to SC (22 out of 47). Only some of the reports (15 out of 47) focused specifically on local communities and/or social capital and the regeneration process at SOP (e.g. Green Games Watch 2000).

A strategic approach was developed towards the collection and analysis of the professional reports. In cases where it was necessary to maintain confidentiality, reports were de-identified prior to their being provided to the researchers for analysis. The analysis of the reports utilised a stepped qualitative data analysis (QDA), as explained by Dey (1993). In order to address the aim of this study, two researchers used NVivo qualitative software to code those sections of the main body of the reports that addressed local communities and those that addressed SC (e.g. titles, tables of contents etc. were removed prior to analysis)² For this coding, SC was classified both generally, and more specifically where reference was made to Bridging, Bonding and Linking SC³. For this coding, 'local communities' was only classified generally, and was understood to mean those individuals and/or groups residing in the locality of SOP.

One researcher did the classifying/coding of data. In order to maximise intra-coder reliability, a second researcher verified this classifying/coding once all data had been coded. When an issue related to inter-coder reliability occurred, the researchers discussed variations and agreed on a common understanding. Interconnections between the coded units were analysed in a cumulative process by the two researchers, firstly by exploring the principal associations that existed between the coded units for general SC and local communities, and then by exploring how coded type of SC (Bridging, Bonding and Linking SC) emerged in the principal associations. Only the principal associations emerging from this cumulative analysis are presented in the *Results and Discussion* Section of this paper.

Collection and Analysis of In-depth Interviews

Further data on the common associations between SC, local communities and the regeneration process at SOP identified within the reports was collected using eight in-depth interviews with representatives of organisations who played a role in the regeneration process at SOP. The interviewees included: two Auburn Council planners, an Auburn Council community development worker, a North West Community Care (NWCC) community development worker, two OCA representatives, and two SOPA representatives. The in-depth

² The raw frequency counts of the number of times SC or local community were mentioned in the reports are not presented in the paper as it was thought that they meant little out of context (e.g. Green Games Watch, 2000 mentioned SC voluminously, whilst other reports make only one or two references. See Owen 2011).

³ Few reports directly mentioned Bridging, Bonding or Linking SC (e.g. Green Games Watch 2000). Whilst few made direct references to these forms of capital, these concepts were detected across a number of reports (15 out of 95) (e.g bonding SC was described as densely interwoven SC, whilst Bridging SC was described as loosely interlaced SC).

interviews (average length one hour) were informal discussions. A principal advantage of this method is that it provides rich insight into how participants frame, understand and debate the principal associations arising from the analysis of the report as seen in participants' own terms. The interviews were audio recorded and fully transcribed and were used to provide further understanding of the associations emerging from the analysis of the reports.

Results and discussion

The analysis revealed three principal associations between SC, local community and the regeneration process at SOP. The first association related to how, during the early years (1993-2001) of the regeneration process, SC was used as a means for expressing concern about how governance mechanisms implemented at SOP might adversely impact the ability of local communities to engage in decision making that affected their local environment. The second association related to the emergence of community development programs from 2001 onwards that sought to build SC in local communities through utilization of the SOP development. The third association related to a more recent call for the development of tools to examine how the development of SOP impacts on the SC in local communities, by virtue of their membership in social networks that arose through the regeneration process at SOP. When discussing the three associations, direct quotes from the interviews are identified using quotation marks and organizational affiliation only.

Association One: SC, and SOP's governance and engagement of local communities in decisions affecting their local environment

SC emerged within the reports as a vehicle for expressing ongoing concerns about the ways in which local communities might be excluded from engagement in decisions affecting their local environment (see e.g. Green Games Watch 2000; Owen 2001). Underlying these concerns was the 'affectedness principle' which suggests that all those individuals, such as local residents immediately adjoining SOP, affected by an issue should be involved in decisions about its future (Barnett 2011, p. 281). Driving these concerns was the implementation of special governance vehicles for the regeneration process at SOP. In 1993 a special governance vehicle – the Olympic Coordination Authority (OCA) (called Sydney Olympic Park Authority after 2001) – was established for the SOP site. Its key aim was to ensure that the transformation of the brownfield site at Homebush Bay West into a venue for the Sydney 2000 Olympics was completed in time for the games (see e.g. Dunn & McGuirk 1999; Owen 2001). This involved meeting inflexible deadlines. This arrangement excluded

the local council (that previously had authority over the site) from the regeneration process.

As one Auburn Council officer noted, Auburn Council was not involved:

in the planning of ... physical infrastructure at the Park or ... activities/events in it, which was driven by... a lack of cooperation and interest by ... [OCA officials]. This effectively excluded the local community from any planning decision for SOP ... reducing their power within local environmental decisions that may affect them (Planning Officer, Auburn Council).

In this context SC was used as a way of expressing concern for how decisions affecting the community's local environment were reframed as existing in the shadow of a centralised governance body that had a 'lack of accountability' to that local community (Davidson & Donald 2012, p.1634). Firstly, concern was raised about the way in which the implementation of the special purpose governance vehicle had the potential to cut off local communities from stocks of Bridging SC. In particular this applied to Linking SC that previously allowed the local community to be *linked* upwards with actors (such as local government), with the power and resources to make local environmental changes. This Linking SC enabled the local community to 'have a say' if they felt that proposed changes were not in line with community needs or did not deliver needed services to that community. Secondly, concern extended to the potential for such special governance vehicles not only to sever traditional Linking SC that enabled communities to effectively engage in local environmental decisions, but also to actively block the local community's ability to develop effective networks (Bridging and Linking SC) through which they were able to engage with decisions about their local environment. As Dunn and McGuirk note, such special governance vehicles 'often utilize their powers to discourage dissent and engage in superficial or tokenistic community engagement in planning and development processes' (Dunn & McGuirk 1999).

Association Two: SC, Community Development Programs and the regeneration process at SOP

The concept of SC was frequently mentioned in the analyzed reports in relation to a series of local community development programs. These programs emerged in 2001 after the completion of the Olympic Games. They reflected part of a new post-2000 strategy that guided the development of SOP and its relationships with local communities (see e.g. SOPA 2003, 2005; SOPA Board 2008). This strategy saw SC, that is, 'the connections within and between social networks' as having 'particular importance to the future SOP' (SOPA Board 2008, p.10). This part of the strategy, as noted in a recent report on SOP by SOPA, sought 'to build and nurture the social capital of SOP', through 'the principles of social equity and

opportunity, and designing for people and communities'. These principles, SOPA declared 'will be applied in the future development of [SOP]'. SOPA stated that 'a priority will be for community infrastructure to be developed to an adequate level ... [so] people from all sections of the community should be able to participate fully (SOPA Board 2008, p.10). One way SOPA sought to achieve this was through collaborations with Auburn Council and non-government organizations to explore ways in which SOP infrastructure could be utilized to build social networks in local communities. For residents of the Auburn Local Government Area (LGA) this was facilitated through Auburn Council's, Community Development Program (CDP). As a Community Development Worker noted:

Immediately after the games Council started an informal collaboration with SOPA and local community associations and services, including Chinese and Turkish organizations, to explore ways in which the Park's facilities could be used for recreational and meeting activities for local residents ...to build and expand their social networks.

The key focus of the Auburn CDP was the development of stocks of Bridging SC through the use of SOP infrastructure to expand the social networks in which Auburn residents were able to engage. Auburn community development workers noted how their attempts to use Auburn-based community associations to facilitate the CDP adversely impacted on programs aiming to build Bridging SC, where the strong Bonding SC (built about culture, language, etc.) in some of these associations limited connections with broader social networks through passive barriers (e.g. language) and by the active use of 'soft sanctions' of blame between local residents who participated in the events (see Magnani & Struffi 2009, for a discussion of the use of sanctions in communities). As Vervisch (2011) suggests, such strong Bonding SC may be utilized as a force for social good and mutual support (as was the intention of the CDP) or it may have a negative impact by creating suspicious and inward-looking groups that form factions.

In addition to the Auburn Council CDP, a second CDP was implemented by NWCC, a privately funded non-government organization. This privately funded CDP was aimed at the residents who moved into the newly formed suburb of Newington (formerly the Olympic athletes' village). The program was designed to 'welcome, and help new [Newington] residents settle into their homes, and facilitate opportunities to engage and connect with ... others through activities at SOP' (Community Development Worker, NWCC). The aim of this Newington CDP was to build Bridging SC by developing social networks between

Newington's residents and those in surrounding established communities, while at the same time developing Bonding SC through the development of social networks between the newly settled residents who moved into Newington from 2001 onwards. As one NWCC community development worker noted SC 'can be built by ... exploit[ing] the Park and its resources as a ... tool for linking the new local residents within Newington and adjoining communities together through activities and events'.

Association Three: Measuring the effect of the SOP regeneration process on the accumulation of SC within local communities

Whilst the previous discussion focuses on attempts to build access to stocks of SC for local communities through SOP, the reports also identified the need to develop instruments that can provide evidence of the ways in which the SOP contributed to stocks of SC within the local communities. One report that we analyzed sought to provide insight into the effects of the SOP development on the SC of local communities (see Prior & Tavano Blessi 2008). This study draws on findings from a survey that was conducted in 2006. Part of this survey investigated the effects of the development of SOP on the SC of residents in two adjoining suburbs, Auburn and Newington. Auburn is one of several older established suburbs surrounding the Park. Newington is a newer suburb that adjoins SOP and emerged as part of the Olympic-led development process at Homebush Bay West. Newington became part of Auburn LGA in 2001. Both suburbs share significant concentrations of residents who are overseas-born and have English as a second language, but they differ significantly in terms of their socio-economic status. According to the Australian Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), residents in Newington have one of the highest average socio-economic levels (1120.0) in Australia, whilst Auburn residents on average have one of the lowest (872.00) (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006).

The survey was distributed to 310 residents (18 years and over) in the selected suburbs, and 193 were completed, 124 from Auburn and 69 from Newington. Surveys were collected using two methods: surveys with residents in public areas in each suburb; and surveys collected through local associations that service residents of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in both suburbs. Whilst the sample cannot be considered to be representative in the strict sense of the term, it did tap a broad cross-section of adults living in the two suburbs (see Prior & Tavano Blessi, forthcoming). A further limitation of the study is that it only

explores the impacts of the development of SOP on the SC of residents over the age of 18 years.

The survey collected data on opportunities (e.g. social activities and spaces) provided as a result of SOP through which residents were able to expand their stocks of Bridging SC through the development of mutual acquaintances/relationships to other individuals outside their community as a result of the social activity at SOP and they were able to expand their stocks of Bonding SC through the development of mutual acquaintances/relationships to other individuals inside their community as a result of the social activity at SOP (see Table 1). This data was used to assess whether the infrastructure associated with SOP’s development contributed to or left unchanged the respondents’ ‘aggregate of ... actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of ... relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition’ (Bourdieu 1984, p.248). The quantifiable findings from the survey suggest that only a small proportion of respondents from each suburb believed that SOP’s development provided opportunities for social activity that led to increased social networking (see Table 1).

A small number of respondents from each suburb indicated that these opportunities for social networking led to their forming connections with individuals outside or within their community, that is, increased the stocks of Bridging and Bonding SC (see Table 1).

Percentage of respondents from each suburb indicating that their:	Auburn percentages (n=124)		Newington percentages (n=69)	
	Increased	No Change	Increased	No Change
Social activity at the Park increased/did not change opportunities for social networking	27.8	72.2	50.4	49.6
Mutual acquaintance/relationship to other individuals outside their community increased/ remained unchanged as a result of the social activity at the Park (bridging capital)	10.9	89.1	30.4	69.6
Mutual acquaintance/relationship within their community increased/remained unchanged as a result of the social activity at the Park (bonding capital)	10.2	89.8	10.7	89.3

Table 1 – SOP’s impact on respondents’ opportunities for social networking, and accumulation of Bridging SC and Bonding SC

The issues examined in the quantitative questions were explored further through qualitative interview questions that sought to investigate the limitations associated with the interactions local residents had at SOP. Answers to these questions were diverse and identified that a range of barriers, such as language barriers, religious differences, and class differences operated within the existing social networks in the established communities, which were identified as inhibiting the accumulation of Bridging SC through the Auburn CDP (see previous section of paper). The study also identified other barriers that limited local residents' ability to accumulate Bridging SC as a result of the SOP development, including physical barriers and local beliefs. Physical barriers such as a lack of crossings and safe sidewalks along major roads that separated local residential areas from SOP, and limited transport links, limited residents' access to opportunities to expand their social networks through activities at SOP. As a result many respondents reported that the durability of connections that could be established through social networking activities at SOP were limited by their higher transaction costs, when compared to the connections they could establish in the dense familial networks of social relations found in their places of residence or work. These more immediate connections were seen as easier and cheaper to maintain due to their close proximity and familiarity. Local residents' ability to connect through activities at SOP was also affected by local beliefs that circulated within the communities. As one Auburn respondent to the survey noted, for many residents from Auburn the development of social networks through social activity at SOP was hampered by a perception that SOP was a 'recreational playground for only wealthy and educated people, that was too sophisticated in terms of cultural supply' (Resident, Auburn Suburb). This affected their propensity to participate in the Park's opportunities.

Conclusions

The study sought to provide insights into the associations between SC, local communities and the regeneration process at SOP; and how, when and why SC and local communities were being considered within the SOP regeneration process. To uncover these associations the study analyzed two data sources, firstly professional reports on culture-led regeneration processes at SOP, and secondly interviews with those involved in this ongoing regeneration process. The analysis identified three principal associations. We do not assert that these are the only associations possible, they reflect those that emerged through the study's methodology which was subject to the flaws that beset most studies that use convenience sampling, including the fact that the sample may have been biased by the collection method.

We conclude the paper by discussing these associations with reference to broader arguments surrounding the potential, capacity and nature of SC.

The first association related to the use of SC, during the early years of the regeneration process at SOP, as a conceptual tool to express concerns for how special purpose governance vehicles established for SOP might adversely affect or stifle the local communities' Linking SC – links with hierarchical authority –which allowed local communities to engage in and influence decision making that affected their local environment. These findings reflect those of other studies of SC that stress that careful consideration needs to be given to the structure of formal governmental institutions if they are to contribute to the development of resources – funding, power, and hierarchical networks of contacts and expertise (e.g. linking capital) – that local communities can use to address local need (Warner 1999, Evans 1996). Despite these concerns, as Searle (2007) has noted, the ability of local communities to actively counter the intervention of centralized government when it usurps their ability to engage with local environmental decision making is very much dependent on the broader stocks of Bridging SC (such as access to courts) that are held by that local community (Searle 2007). See for example Searle's (2007, p.5) study of a government intervention in local environmental decision making in Balmain (Sydney) which was 'countered by court action started by residents and the council'.

The second association related to the use of a series of CDPs to expand the access of local communities to Bridging SC and Bonding SC through the SOP development. We highlighted how this association emerged at the same time that the SOPA sought to transform its strategy for SOP following the completion of the Olympic Games. Part of this new strategy was focused on 'building and nurturing the social capital of SOP' (SOPA Board, 2008, p.10). The focus that the CDPs and SOPA placed on the belief that stocks of SC can be built for the benefit of local communities is supported by a range of SC theorists (Evans 1996; Skocpol 1996; Warner 1999) who insist on the possibility of building community SC where it is weak. They also point to the role that formal organizations (e.g. non-government organizations and local governments) can play in structuring community-level interventions to build SC (Evans 1996; Skocpol 1996). In arguing that SC can be built in this way they also point to the strong evidence of the happiness, wellbeing, and health effects that come from social connectedness (see e.g. Putnam 2000; Szreter & Woolcock 2003). Whilst some support the idea that stocks of SC can be built, others argue that the current rhetoric about SC-building through CDPs is a

myth (DeFilippis 2001). DeFilippis (2001), for example, cites Putnam's (1993) study in Italy, arguing that it provides little evidence of an ability to construct SC. Furthermore, such critics argue that formal organizations such as NWCC and Auburn Council are fundamentally ill-suited for helping to build SC (Etzioni 1993; Fukuyama 1995).

The final association revealed through the analysis was related to a call for the development of measures to understand how the development of SOP had impacted on the SC of residents within local communities. We highlighted one study which, despite its methodological limitations, is the only study which to date has provided insight into this last association for SOP. This study by Prior and Tavano Blessi (2008) suggests that SOP had a limited impact on the accumulation of Bridging and Bonding SC by residents in two adjoining suburbs – Newington and Auburn. This reflects the findings from a study conducted by Sacco and Tavano Blessi (2009) on a culture-led urban regeneration process in the Bicocca District, Milan, Italy which showed similarly low impacts of the development on the accumulation of SC by residents in adjoining areas.

Furthermore, examination of the associations suggest that a range of factors, including physical barriers, social status, language and religious beliefs, amongst others, impacted on the way in which local communities and members within them were able to accumulate various forms of SC, in particular Bridging SC, through SOP. These findings are reflected in a growing body of research which suggests that the accumulation of SC is not only affected by the more commonly recognized dimensions of social networks such as language, but can also be impacted by physical barriers and spatial dimensions (see e.g. Westlund, Rutten & Boekema 2010). As Rutten, Westlund and Boekema (2010 p.863) have highlighted, 'social capital pertains to the social relations between humans, and since these social relations have a spatial dimension, so too does social capital'.

In conclusion, it is worth noting some insights from the research that are of benefit to those who seek to engage with SC and local communities through culture-led urban regeneration processes like those at SOP. Firstly, the findings suggests that closer consideration needs to be given to the way in which governance mechanisms are developed for culture-led regeneration projects, so that such mechanisms are not only designed to achieve often strict development deadlines associated with such regeneration projects, but are also designed to ensure that local communities are given the opportunity to engage in decision making that

affects their local environment. As Owens (2012, p.224) recently noted with reference to the urban regeneration process associated with the London Olympics, when developing the planning and governance framework for such processes: ‘the right balance needs to be struck between creation of expedient delivery arrangements and the maintenance of democratic controls over planning decisions and more generally over public investment and the creation of public goods’. Secondly, the findings suggest that diverse factors ranging from physical barriers through to language barriers need to be considered if a development like SOP is to be used to build SC in surrounding local communities. In particular it suggests that the design of physical infrastructure associated with such development as SOP (e.g. distance, venues and accessibility) needs to be considered just as much as the design of its soft infrastructure (e.g. events) if it is to be used as a means for SC development. Finally, the findings suggest the growing interest and need to develop ways to measure how developments like SOP impact on the SC of residents within local communities, to match measures within other tools such as economic capital assessments (see Hutton 2008; Scott 2000) and physical capital assessments (Hemphill, Berry & McGreal 2004) that are currently being utilized to assess the capital impacts of such developments, so that we can, as Lim suggests, ‘sort out the hype from the substance’ (Lim 1993, p.594) in the claims commonly made about what such processes can achieve with regards to SC development.

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