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Bourdieu's Concept of Social Capital: An Examination of his Broader Theoretical Framework and the Concept's Applications and Implications for Australian Social Policy

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Bourdieu’s Concept of Social Capital:
an examination of his broader theoretical framework
and the concepts applications and implications for
Australian social policy.

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ABSTRACT

The concept of *social capital* is investigated in this thesis both in its theoretical and potential social policy environment. Pierre Bourdieu's 'Theory of Practice' provides the theoretical frame within which this concept is investigated. A variety of texts, with a particular focus on Australian publications, provide the basis for further application analysis. This is primarily a textual research therefore data gathering procedures were library based. Being a theoretical analysis of the current status of *social capital*, as it relates to prospective social policy reform in Australia, this thesis both collates and contributes to a body of knowledge regarding the implications and applications of this concept. Applications of the concept are varied. Several major implications are suggested as a result of the integrative nature of social capital theory in the social policy environment.
I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

(ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

(iii) contain any defamatory material.

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INTRODUCTION

There are currently concerns in the political arena at the lack of community identity and well-being exhibited in many post-industrial nations. Questions arise as to how to attend to this loss of civic life. The isolating social outcomes, as a result of the individualistic, competitive and calculative social lives practiced within capitalist societies have arguably contributed to this decline in collective morale, community cohesion and consensus. A host of modern illnesses (mental and physical) have been attributed to this loss of community as have various types of crime and other socio-political and socio-cultural phenomena (e.g. Hansonism). Social dis-ease, fear and disenchantment needs to be attended to (Costing the Community, 1993; Cox, 1995:1997; Latham, 1998; Smith, 1998; Winter, 1998).

The concept of social capital in this social environment has for some become a beacon of hope. An intangible yet tradeable capital that may be generated by the social inter-relations of family and friendship networks or participation in a variety of other social environments where suitable conditions prevail. Trust, recognition and acknowledgment transform into reciprocity, mutual respect, moral obligation and increased trust that in turn transform into favours, aid and assistance. Trust and friendly assistance have dwindled, some say eroded, in our often frantic modern life. The concept, it seems, is ideal but the discussion and debate that has developed around and about it gets bogged with the recurring question “... how do we generate this type of interaction within society...?” - at the neighbourhood level, the level of local government, the corporate level (Costing the Community, 1993; Smith, 1998; Winter, 1998).
Politicians, academics and other social commentators embrace and explore the concept of social capital each with their own agenda and selected definition (still a fuzzy area). What I want to consider here is the concept in a broader theoretical frame to understand its significance in the reproduction, or transformation, of inequality and thus appreciate its role, not only within specific aspects of social life but as a link between them, for example the role of social capital as it bridges the private domain of family life and the public sphere of paid employment.

Social capital theory has been embraced to address multiple issues and concerns in contemporary society. The theoretical frame and one such application would surely have fulfilled the requirements of an honours thesis but it would not acknowledge the links, the wholistic or integrative nature, and thus the full potential, of the application of this one concept. In my attempt to illustrate the wide ranging capacity of the concept I may fail to offer a sufficiently comprehensive examination of any one particular area. This is a risk I am prepared to take for my intention is to reveal the integrative nature of all these issues from a social capital perspective. And thus contribute to discussion that considers the incorporation, or conceptualisation, of social capital as a general feature in Australian government and social policy rather than limit potential to only specific applications.

The thesis is divided into three parts. The first part is devoted to French social theorist Pierre Bourdieu. This will include a brief historic over-view of Bourdieu and an introduction to his 'Theory of Practice', a theory of social practice within which the concept of social capital is developed. The intention is to examine the concept in the context of Bourdieu’s wider theoretical perspective in order to anticipate its relevance and policy potential in contributing to a sense of community and civic life in modern democracy. This is by no means intended to be a comprehensive examination
of Bourdieu’s entire theoretical disposition and development. The sheer breadth, depth and continuous elaboration of his ‘Theory of Practice’ demands an entire paper of it’s own. For the purpose of this paper it is locating the concept of social capital, and exposing it’s role, within Bourdieu’s broader theoretical frame that is necessary.

The second part discusses the notion of social capital as it has been developed, or employed, by other social scientists to reveal its potential applications and shortcomings in areas such as health, education, employment, job security and unemployment, voluntary association, family responsibilities and urban development. Consideration of the international, particularly American, information is included only with respect to the extent it has set the agenda for Australian discussion. The current status of the concept of social capital in political and academic discussion and debate, especially as it relates to Australia, is embedded in the second part.

A discussion of the forseeable implications of this concept in regards to social policy in Australia will close the essay and will make no claim to be conclusive. The most recent currency of this exciting new notion and its timely arrival as post-industrial nations are seeking new ideas and directions in social governance makes it a provocative rather than conclusive concept.
PIERRE BOURDIEU

1. A Brief History

Pierre Bourdieu (1930 - ), his birth-place, education, works and contributions to social science will be presented in this brief section. What will become apparent are the factors and forces that have shaped a social - cultural theorist whom has made significant contributions to a theory of social practice that attempts to find a 'middle way' between agency and structure. Perhaps more pertinent to this paper, a theorist who has presented the concept of social capital as a part of a complete theoretical frame. A concept that has become 'hot' in current political debates regarding the state of our modern civic community and, social and community well-being and identity.

Bourdieu was born in 1930, the son of a civil servant, more precisely a post-man, in Bearn, a peasant region in the south-west Pyrenees of France. He moved to Paris in 1950 to study philosophy at the 'Ecole Normale Superieure'. At this time philosophy was the expected discipline for any aspiring intellectual. Bourdieu's dissatisfaction with the then current 'Philosophy of the subject', best exemplified by Satrian existentialism, lead to a move towards the 'Philosophy of the concept', associated with the works of Bachelard, Canguillon, and Vuillmen, as well as the phenomenology of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty (Wacquant, 1998; Fowler 1998).

Bourdieu's move to the social sciences was influenced by two major events at this time in his life, one personal the other intellectual. His mandatory military stint in the French army took him to French Algeria. The harsh and gruesome realities of a war that reflected the clash between imperial capitalism and native nationalism left Bourdieu isolated in a personal space. Trying to make sense of this bitter social
environment, and the social effects and outcomes of this nasty cross-cultural interface, was a significant precursor to his first ethnographic works (Wacquant 1998; Fowler 1998).

By dissecting the organisation of the native society, within and amongst which he found himself, Bourdieu produced texts that were an effort, on his part, to help "...illuminate and assist in the painful birth of an independent Algeria" (Wacquant, 1998, p.215). ‘The Algerians. Work and Workers in Algeria’ and ‘The Uprooting: The Crisis of Traditional Agriculture in Algeria.’ (Bourdieu 1958/62, Bourdieu and Sayad 1964, cited in Wacquant, 1998). Such texts were delivered without ideological bias and were attuned to the socio-political climate of the time. These were the works of an activist scientist in response to the ethical dilemmas of a disrupted social environment (Wacquant, 1998, p.215).

Having produced works invoked by his current personal circumstance, Bourdieu struggled for some time at the intellectual level. The fact that he had produced ethnological texts, from ethnographic data and analysis was not easy for Bourdieu to digest. The personal intellectual cross-over from philosophy to anthropology was possibly eased with the intellectual movement current in France at the time. A demise in existentialism and a re-birth of the social sciences, helped greatly by the prestige, according to Bourdieu (1990), that Levi-Strauss had given to science, eased Bourdieu’s transition.

Under a very broad banner of structuralism Durkheim’s project of a total science of society and culture was being revived, by Braudel in history and Levi-Strauss in anthropology. This fresh revival of the empirical disciplines allowed for the expression of a political voice beyond the controls of the communist party. Bourdieu embraced
this and attended to the "... re-establishment and civic legitimacy of sociology ... in it's motherland" (Wacquant, 1998, p.216).

Bourdieu returned to France and the University of Lille where he refused to take a doctorate (aggregate), partly on the grounds of the limited type of knowledge on offer and partly due to the hegemony of Stalinism. He did however teach for some time and proceed with his earlier studies of local cultural life and school and university students (Fowler, 1998, p.1). From the University of Lille he proceeded to Paris to the 'Ecoles des Hautes 'Etudes en Sciences Sociales', where he became the director of Studies and later the Director of the European Association of Sociology. It is from this prestigious institution that Bourdieu has had a major impact on the nature of research in sociology. He has implanted in the discipline a variety of practical and conceptual tools gained from his own background, and appreciation of, philosophy and anthropology (Wacquant, 1998).

Bourdieu has an ability to move freely between the ethnographic work of other societies to the study of his own. Indeed he considers an anthropological background in non-western societies as an essential experience to efficiently view one's own western society (Branson & Miller, 1991).

Bourdieu's work is distinguished by it's completeness, breadth and untiring use of empirical methodology. Bourdieu does not perform to critique theory but is instead an elaborator of theory. In recent years his increasingly visible activity in European politics and his push for the need for social change confirm his main objective for the social sciences to be developed to enhance social justice and civic morality (Wacquant, 1998).

Bourdieu's objective for social justice and the development of sociology as a solid and respectable social science has been a constant feature of his works: works that are
diverse in topic but unified in focus; works that range from the traditional agricultural society of the Kabyle in the French Algiers to the peasants of Bearn to studies of the arts and intellectuals of mainstream French culture. His early days in the margins of a largely metropolitan country provided for Bourdieu first-hand experience of the effects of marginalisation, an insight and awareness he has remained conscious of throughout his academic career. The Algerian war exposed him, physically and mentally, to the torments of social injustice and provided his first fieldwork environment and consequent ethnographic works. Bourdieu’s string of journal publications, interviews and books reveal how he is in a constant process of theoretical elaboration, all the time going back to his original data and building upon it. Bourdieu draws from a variety of theoretical camps, Durkheim, Mauss, Marx and Weber to name but a few, and maintains a constant dialogue with them. He encourages the use of a variety of methods and constantly uses the tools, conceptual and methodological, acquired from his philosophical, anthropological and sociological background. This almost eclectic sociology (I use the term lightly) has contributed to what some call one of the most adventurous social cultural theorists today (Branson & Miller, 1991; Fowler, 1998).
2. The `Theory of Practice`

For Bourdieu the deep-seated (entrenched) opposition between objectivism and subjectivism is an obstacle in the development of social theory. Bourdieu contends that the opposition between the two is "... artificial and mutilating" (Wacquant, 1998, pp.220-221).

Objectivists (structuralists) argue that social reality can be understood as sets of forces (structures) that act, impinge or impose, upon agents and thus influence their action. This perspective of course has no regard for the consciousness or free will that subjectivists take as their basis. Subjectivist thought asserts that social reality is the sum of innumerable acts of interpretation (of agents) whereby people jointly construct meaningful lines of action (interaction).

Bourdieu sees individuals as creative elements in the social process influenced by and influencing the structuring structures through which they operate. Whilst amongst the Kabyle he noticed an apparent lack, or indeed absence, of codified rules and regulations. For Bourdieu it appeared that a sentiment of solidarity held the clan together. Regulations or norms were present in the consciousness of each of the individual members of the community. For example where there was no court of law to uphold social behaviour the sentiment of honour operated as the code of behaviour, public opinion, in this instance, became the regulator (Miller & Branson, 1987, p. 215). Rather than responding to this situation as confirmation that rules existed, and thus reducing social action to rules / structure, Bourdieu pointed out that:

...the foundations of justice are not understood as formal or informal rational standards but are lived, acted upon and experienced. ....
Conceptualised thus, Bourdieu avoids reducing individual action to a relentless response to norms, obeying or disobeying (structural-functionalism) or allowing individuals to be considered as just agents of a ‘timeless deep structure’. Neither does this conceptualisation allow for the strict constructionist belief asserted by the ethnomethodologists and phenomenologists. Bourdieu’s theory proposes to overcome this antinomy and by extensive empirical studies convincingly exposes the continual relationship between the two extreme camps.

To develop this two-fold relationship Bourdieu has armed himself with an “...original conceptual arsenal anchored by the notions of habitus, capital and field (emphasis added)” (Wacquant, 1998, p.220).

_Habitus_ can be understood as the durably generated set of principles that underly an agent’s actions. _Habitus_ provides the schemata, or set of ‘dispositions’ and data, for an agent to engage in social practice. The _habitus_ is a constantly evolving feature that is influenced by external stimuli. The results of such interaction are consequently embodied in its matrix. Thus the _habitus_ may be understood as history embodied in the individual or group (Bourdieu, 1977).

Groups of individuals may share a similar _habitus_, for example socio-economic groups or ethnic groups, through having been exposed to a similar range of external stimuli. However for each individual/agent the matrix of dispositions is indeed a unique composition (Bourdieu, 1977; Miller and Branson, 1987).

For Bourdieu, who tired of the notion of ‘rules’ several decades ago, the creative ability of each agent, influenced by their _habitus_, combined with their knowledge of...
the rules of the external structures allows for agents to obey, or disobey, the rules by developing strategies to interact or practice in the field (Miller and Branson, 1987). Strategies are employed, not to manipulate the established order but to 'play' the field in a manner selected from a variety of possibilities. Actors may pursue the social practice required for their political and/or economic interest while still appearing to be practising within cultural norms and rules (Acciaioli, 1981, pp.28-29).

Agents in this theoretical framework are located in social space. Time and space are essential elements in Bourdieu's theory. The location and movement of individuals in social space is determined by two dimensions a) the volume of capital they possess, and b) the composition of this capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

Within this theory capital is representative of power but, unlike in 'economist theory', capital for Bourdieu can be recognised in four forms: 'economic capital' is that which is "... immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights, cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.243). 'Cultural capital' is convertible into economic capital under certain conditions. Cultural capital can exist in three forms: embodied, that is in the form of long lasting dispositions of the mind and body; objectified, which can be recognised in the form of such cultural goods as pieces of art, books, machines; institutionalized, which is a form of the objectified cultural capital wherein entirely original properties are conferred upon it, for example formal qualifications (Bourdieu, 1986, p.243). 'Social capital' is made up of social obligations, or connections. Such capital may be convertible into economic capital under certain conditions. Social capital may also be institutionalized in the form of social titles, for example family name or titles of nobility (Bourdieu, 1986, p.243). 'Symbolic capital' may be understood as reputation or honour, for example intellectual honesty (Fowler, 1998, p.31). Movement through
social space may be tracked across time and by the conversion or transmission of certain types of capital into another. One’s position in social space determines not only the external stimuli one is exposed to and thus the level (force-field), but also type of interaction with other structures (battle-field) (Bourdieu, 1995b, pp.112-113).

The result of the interaction in the battle-field between the agent and the structure, as they compete for access to, or conservation of, capital, is embodied in the habitus of the individual and the history of the structure. And the results produce or reproduce practice for both the agent and the structure.

In Bourdieu’s theory all action is based upon capital conversion and transmission. It would appear then that all social practice is economic, and Bourdieu acknowledges that at its roots this may be so even if it is not socially recognised as such. Not all action can be reduced to mercantile exchange, as per economist theory, because within Bourdieu’s theory mercantile exchange is but one form of exchange. The conversion and transmission of all capital forms is developed within Bourdieu’s theory to indicate how exchange affects both the volume and composition of capital which in turn affects an agent’s, or group of agents, movement and location in social space (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu’s theory lays stress upon the symbolic ordering of social space. The differentiation of social space, and the power relations that go with it, are recognised in terms of modes of distinction. The distinction between individuals and groups, that is symbolic identity, is reflected for example in lifestyles and taste, and in the volume and composition of their capital. Distinction is simultaneously a means of struggling for identity and a system of unequal power, remembering that power itself is capital (Bourdieu, 1995a, p.60).
Social capital brings groups of agents together and also draws separate groups closer together in social space via a shared vision of objective realities. On the basis of the knowledge of positions one can confirm the existence of an objective space that determines compatibilities and incompatibilities and proximities and distances. Groups, for example, whether socio-economic, ethnic, or family, within social space exist not as real groups but as a collection of individuals in an immediate space of relations. Grouping is then a practical arrangement for families, clubs, associations and the like. Distance in social space, the location of which is determined by volume and composition of capital, is then directly relational to the probability of bringing groups or individuals closer together. Those individuals, or groups, in close proximity have a greater probability of coming together than those with more social distance. To enhance alliance between actors already close may affect their internal competition, according to Bourdieu's theoretical perspective. However Bourdieu regards the encouragement of reduction in social distance between those presently quite apart, highly beneficial for civic society. Examples of these might be found in some of the more positive approaches to joint management relations (Bourdieu, 1995b).

In summary, Bourdieu's 'Theory of Practice' places all individuals in social space. An agent's location is determined by the volume and composition of their capital in its four forms. An agent's habitus, a constantly evolving set of dispositions, determines his or her practice in the field, and habitus itself is the outcome of previous practice where strategies have been deployed. Location in social space determines the area and level of interaction within the field and as a consequence the results are embodied in the habitus. Groups of agents, each member of which has his or her own unique habitus, are close in social space as a result of exposure to a similar range of external stimuli. To overcome inequalities and create some cohesiveness in society agents and
groups more distanced in social space should therefore be encouraged to reduce this
distance. Enhancing levels of *social capital*, therefore re-arranging the volume and
composition of each agent’s capital, may contribute to this (figure 1. Appendix A.).
3. The Capital Package: Volume, Composition and Time

As already discussed, Bourdieu places individuals and groups of individuals in social space in which location and movement are determined by the composition and volume of the ‘capital’ they possess (Bourdieu, 1986). The system, or set of dispositions, one’s habitus, is directly influenced by this location. The result of interaction in the field, determined by social space, is then internalised into the habitus, as is the resulting restructuring, or re-composition, of the agent’s, or group of agent’s, capital package (Bourdieu, 1986, p.221).

To recognise the role and the merits of social capital pertinent to this thesis the idea of volume and composition and variation over time needs to be developed. The role of time as a factor in exchange must also be explored. Most importantly the transmission, or transmutation, of one form of capital into another and the influence of different forms of capital upon the strength of each other needs to be clarified.

The ‘Theory of Practice’ considers the structure and distribution of capital, in it’s four forms, at any particular time, as representative of the structure of the social world thus the re-introduction of the concept of capital is necessary to account for the structure and function of the social world (Bourdieu, 1986, p.242).

Economic theory reduces all exchange to economic or mercantile exchange. The primary objective therein is profit, interest or maximisation. Exchanges that appear to incur less than immediate economic gain, or profit, or fail to have such intent as their immediate purpose are considered as non-economic or dis-interested. Such theory fails to acknowledge the numerous exchanges in daily social practice that although they may be economic at their roots are not socially recognised as such. Capital and profit must be understood and acknowledged in all forms to understand the laws whereby each
capital influences the capacity of the other and may transform, change, or convert into another (Bourdieu, 1986, p.243).

We have established that each habitus (individual or group) possesses a capital package, the volume and composition of which is unique in that some may be more or less endowed with certain forms of capital. The potential, or power, of each capital is directly related to the field in which it is functioning. For example an acclaimed artist rich in volume of cultural and symbolic capital in the field of art would have more power than an economically rich yet culturally deficit businessman in the same field and vice versa (Wacquant, 1993).

An exploration of the inequality in scholastic achievement between students from different social groups revealed to Bourdieu the role of cultural, economic and social capital in both academic achievement and the use made of such qualifications once acquired (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1970:1977). The investment of time and money (economic capital) directly influenced the attainment of qualifications (cultural capital). Use of this qualification beyond the education institution was then further influenced by the economic, social and cultural capital package of its bearer. For example an individual's social network, and the social capital therein, may influence the possibility of employment connections.

The British ‘Old Boys Network’ (Scott, 1992), comes instantly to mind: a system of social contacts which stem from family and education. These contacts are constantly maintained and reinforced by a continuous series of informal dinner parties and social gatherings and formal business meetings. Such networks and the resources therein largely determine the life chances of those who:

... go through public school and the Oxbridge system. Their
contacts both facilitate their careers and enable them to have more influence in the posts where they eventually lead (Scott, 1992, p.88).

The role of social capital, and social networks, is also illustrated by Coleman and Hoffer (1987) in their work on American Catholic Schools. This work indicated that the extended network of the church-home school community, and the norms and values embodied and constantly re-inforced within it, enhanced academic achievement and reduced drop-out rates. This research illustrated how the role of social capital volume directly influences the appropriation of cultural capital. Cultural capital, in this case academic qualifications, the appropriation of which is influenced by economic capital (investment of time and money), added to the capital package of its bearer, there to be invested, or used in the field, to secure economic capital (a job). The value of this cultural capital and its ability to secure an economic return (to enhance one’s economic capital) is directly influenced by the social capital component of the package it has been added to.

Cultural capital may be acquired across time in its objective state via economic expenditure (books, works of art), embodied state (accent, taste, manners) and institutionalised state (qualifications and titles). It cannot however be accumulated beyond the appropriating capacity of its bearer. In its institutionalised and embodied conditions such capital is not necessarily transferrable intergenerationally and therefore has a biological lifespan (Bourdieu, 1986, p.244). The transmission of cultural capital is not as obvious as that of economic capital. The disguised nature of such capital may often result in its transferring to symbolic capital. In the social environment such capital may be recognised as a competence in a particular field. Bourdieu uses the
example of one whom can read amongst illiterates (Wacquant, 1993). In this instance an investment in time and energy (economic capital) has produced an ability to read (cultural capital), which in turn, and in a particular social environment or field, has transmuted into symbolic capital (distinction). The profits, or interest, on this initial economic investment have become, across time, symbolic capital.

The possession of one form of capital on its own is never enough. For example the owner of the means of production, perhaps machines and money, requires the knowledge of technicians (cultural capital) to activate the machines to produce profits. In this instance cultural capital can be valued in economic terms and be used in the field of vocation to further access economic capital. Cultural capital in its institutionalised form, for example academic qualifications, is legally sanctioned. Such capital has a legally endorsed value, the level and value of which is determined by forces external to the individual. This particular aspect of institutionalised cultural capital allows for comparison and exchange in an economic sense. It sanctifies, quantifies and partially defines the economic value of the cultural capital therefore allowing the conversion of cultural capital into economic capital. Using again the example of academic qualifications and the use to which they are put vocationally it is easy to see how such cultural capital may influence economic returns in the work-force. Placement in the work-force then may depend on one’s cultural capital, symbolic capital and social capital.

Economic investment, in the form of time and energy, in any field, education, religion, sport, local community, friends and neighbours will yield profits of some form. Such profits are not necessarily immediately or materially obvious. It is this lack of immediacy, and material tangibility, that prevents the recognition of their presence and indeed their value:
Social capital is the aggregate of actual or potential resources linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships - of mutual acquaintance and recognition - or in other words, to membership in a group ... which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital, a "credential", which entitles them to credit in the various senses of the word (Bourdieu, 1986, p.248).

Bourdieu (1986) considers that such relationships may exist in either the practical, material or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them (p.249).

One's volume of social capital is directly influenced by the size of one's network of connections and the ability to mobilise it. Social capital may be institutionalised by way of family name or title. The stores of economic and cultural capital in one's whole capital package also, to some ends, influence the worth or value of one's social capital. Social capital is never fully reducible to economic or cultural capital but neither is it ever fully independent of them (Bourdieu, 1986, p.249).

One of the unique qualities of social capital is its natural multiplier effect. The more it is used, or invested in, the more it grows. Mutual acknowledgment and re-acknowledgment, for example greetings, continuously performed, increases the strength of social ties. By investing in social relations one can expect, across time, profits in the guise of social capital. A simple trust relationship that has evolved over time with a local shop-owner may make available economic credit due to the level of social capital that has been both invested and generated between the two parties. This example is portrayed in Bourdieu's study of the Kabyle as he discusses the 'man of
good faith'. This individual may visit the market to purchase goods without economic currency in his pocket but never the less be well endowed with a volume of social capital that enables trust and credit (Bourdieu, 1977, p.173).

Jane Jacobs (1961; 1992), in a similar fashion, describes the inter-relations on a New York City Street wherein trust is formed over time from continuous sidewalk contact:

...people stopping at the bar for a beer, getting advice from the grocer and giving advice to the news-stand man... nodding hello...

hearing about a job from the hardware man and borrowing a dollar from the druggist... (cited in Sturgess, 1997, p.59)

Here, and elsewhere, group membership is increased / embedded with continuous relations of acknowledgment and re-acknowledgment which across time transpire into recognition, trust and mutual reciprocity. The investment of time and energy in social relations builds or creates or nurtures social relations and social capital. Social capital accrued in group membership forms the basis of the solidarity, that is the cohesiveness, the glue, the connectedness (Bourdieu, 1986, p.249; Cox, 1995; Latham, 1998).

The network of relations required for social capital does not occur by chance but is explained theoretically as the product of strategies. They are strategies of investment performed by individuals, or groups, either consciously or unconsciously. Such strategies are aimed at reproducing social relations, either maintaining them or transforming them, for use in both the short and the long term (Bourdieu, 1986; Acciaioli, 1981).
Such a transformation, across time, implies durable obligations, respect, trust and friendship. Bourdieu (1986) goes so far as to call these qualities institutionally guaranteed rights (p.249). Individuals and groups can expect the correct treatment from friends, family and work mates, due to continuous interaction, recognition of norms, trust and obligation.

The exchange of greetings, gifts, favours, a helping hand and acknowledgment may be constant. Such continuity further presupposes the production of mutual knowledge and recognition, shared social realities and expectations. A continuous series of social exchanges endlessly affirms and reaffirms recognition and a sense of belonging. Social capital requires the expenditure of time and energy. Time and energy are directly reducible to economic capital therefore revealing the conversion of economic capital into social capital. Social capital plus more economic capital (time and energy) produces more social capital for the investor. Enhanced levels of social capital, trust, recognition and access to broader social networks may enhance one’s access to cultural and economic capital. Certainly many studies have revealed how high stocks of social capital have influenced the economic and cultural prosperity of groups and individuals (Putnam 1993; Coleman & Hoffer, 1987; Portes & Zhou, 1992; Scott, 1992; Lupton and Wilson 1976). In fact Putnam (1993) asserts that civic richness precedes economic prosperity.

Bourdieu’s (1986) conceptualisation of social capital establishes it as the very basis of a group (p.251), whose internal mechanisms within groups determine delegation. This allows for the strength, or the power, of a group to be pooled and used at the disposal of a delegated leader, spokesperson or representative. Social capital when executed in this collective form is amplified and becomes a tool of empowerment. Solidarity, group cohesion, with its collective investment then yields a greater power
in the field where struggles for the re-distribution of other forms of capital takes place.

Shared objective realities and desires are more easily fought for collectively than in the individualised 'battles' that occur in our increasingly individualistic, and consequently fragmented, lifestyles.

Although some goods and services in social life can only be obtained by exchange for economic capital, others can not. Many requirements for social life are accessible only "... via the virtues of social capital or the relations, obligations, trust and reciprocity inherent in it" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.252). Such virtues do not occur instantaneously but are the product of the investment of both time and energy before and beyond their use. This before and beyond tag associated with investment in social relations is, in purely economic terms, considered as risky business. Such acts are not guaranteed, are not sealed with legal contractual arrangements and do not appear to have imminent results. Time-lag is the key factor that transmutes a simple act of good-will, a favour from a stranger, a smile, a gift, a greeting into recognition between parties. What was at the time a pure and simple debt becomes across time "... the recognition of a non-specific indebtedness..." (Bourdieu, 1986, p.252). This Bourdieu labels as 'gratitude'.

The risk of investing in social relations of course is non-recognition or un-gratefulness. Quite unlike the pure exchange in economic terms, where equivalents exchange hands at the same instant, social exchange presupposes a "... subtle economy of time" (Bourdieu, 1986, P.252).

The transformation of economic capital (time and energy) into social capital requires what appears to be a gratuitous expenditure of time, attention, care and concern all offered without the guaranteed and direct returns one would experience in pure economic exchanges. The foundation of social capital is investment of time and energy
based on a basic premise of trust to allow for recognition, more trust, good faith and reciprocity to transpire. Such virtues are invested without the expectation of prompt or immediate returns, but are an investment strategy for the future or indeed a response from the past that self generates as an investment for the future. A lack of response or input from other parties, or indeed an abuse of the resource, reduces the levels of social capital between the actors and so self-regulates it's own losses. Stocks of social capital not constantly nurtured or invested will deteriorate.

As we now understand the inter-relations between the different forms of capital within an individual’s or a group’s capital package it becomes easier to comprehend the effect of each capital upon the others and the relevance of volume, composition and time. The inter-relationships between these forms of capital and the manner in which they may transform and grow in many instances may be seen as reducible to economic capital but this is never entirely so. Neither are they ever totally independent of it. The value or worth of one’s social capital may be directly affected by the economic, cultural and symbolic capital that surrounds it and vice versa. The greatest value of social capital is in it’s role as the basis of group solidarity where it provides cohesion. Social relations and exchange, networks and the qualities inherent within, are necessary for the other forms of capital to be activated, acknowledged, recognised or exchanged. Inadequate stocks of social capital may have effects and ramifications upon society that have not and cannot be economically accounted for.

This chapter, I hope, has presented the role, characteristics and the virtues of social capital within its complete capital package. The use of economic jargon has been employed for purely illustrative reason. To reduce social capital to an economically accountable and quantifiable product has not been my intention. To do so would be a large mistake. My intent has been to illustrate the capacity of social capital to be
analysed within such a frame and to illustrate the manner in which the concept both presupposes and influences economic, cultural and social endeavour.

The following chapters will address a number of research areas, for example, health, education and employment, that conceptualise social capital. Much of what follows will therefore be subjected to an analysis which derives from the theoretical frame embedded in the 'Theory of Practice'.
CONCEPTUALISATION AND APPLICATION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Having acquainted you with Bourdieu the social theorist, his history, his desired direction for the discipline of sociology and its role in the movement for social justice and civic morality (Wacquant, 1998) it is now time to consider the wider international arena in which the concept of social capital is currently being considered. The principles of Bourdieu’s ‘Theory of Practice’ will be applied throughout the following discussion; the work of certain international contributors and research documents will be considered; and the work of key Australian commentators and researchers, from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and political orientations, will place the concept firmly in the Australian context.
4. The Italian Experiment

In 1970 the Italian Government implemented regional government. The Italian peninsula was divided into a number of relatively autonomous local governments. This exercise provided for Robert Putnam and his colleagues an excellent experimental situation in which to ask the question what makes democracy work? Research, that spanned twenty years, revealed to Putnam (1993:1994) and colleagues that despite their identical form and organisation some of these governments were more successful than others. Some flourished while others withered. Many possible explanations were considered such as differences in regional wealth, levels of social stability, and patterns of urbanisation, however none of these seemed to correlate with government performance. What the final analysis of this large research project did reveal however, as significant, was that those regions characterised by a dense network of civic associations and high rates of civic engagement / participation were more successful than regions where the predominant relations between people were based on patron-client models (Putnam, 1994, p.32).

A dense network of horizontal relations as opposed to vertical (exploitation / dependence) relations enhanced trust and community conscience. The dense social ties within such communities facilitated close-knit interaction and gossip which itself regulated and cultivated the expectations and reputations of residents, trust, mutual obligation and respect. This finding links up with Bourdieu’s ‘sentiment of honour’ as a public regulator, since ‘honour’ itself is manifest in reputation. Thus reduced social distance, shared objective realities and increased volumes of social and cultural capital for residents reflected positively upon the nature of the civic community within which they resided.
In his attempt to answer why some communities were more civic-minded than others, Putnam used a cultural-historic map and a socio-economic history relative to the regional divisions. Communities which began to expand historically on the basis of impersonal credit, that is credit that extends beyond immediate community, correlated with the more successful and civic-minded communities of the present. To indulge in the process of impersonal credit required that same element of trust, which is a central feature of social capital. Interestingly, etymologically, the word 'credit', derives from the Latin 'credo': I believe.

The regional governments that flourished were civic-minded regions. These regions had prospered because trust and reciprocity were woven into their social fabric. This suggests that wealth is the consequence, not the cause, of civic communities. “They have become rich because they are civic” (Putnam, 1993, p2).

Putnam (1993) also attempted to draw parallels here with the contemporary rapidly growing economies of East Asia, where rapid growth appeared to him to be based upon the strength of the networks inherent in extended family or close-knit ethnic groups. Such groups, who share similar regions in social space, foster trust, mutual obligation, reciprocity and share immediate objectives. Consequently “Social capital can be transmuted, so to speak, into financial capital” (p.4). Some commentators have labelled such growth as 'network capitalism'. In the light of more recent economic collapses in parts of East Asia, and South-East Asia in particular, however, much of this is now in doubt which in turn raises questions about such notions as trust and reciprocity and their limitations according to which networks one is considering. It may well be that consideration of the composition of their entire capital package
may provide some insight as to why some nations, regions, or groups succeed and others do not.
5. Business and Social Capital

A study of the labour market experiences of three immigrant minority groups; Dominican, Cuban, and Chinese, in America which progressed on the basis of their own cultural socially embedded norms and expectations revealed to Portes & Zhou (1992) that the conventional explanations, that favour either individualist theories or structuralist arguments, were inadequate. The absence of a perspective that largely considered the importance of 'community', prompted Portes and Zhou (1992) into research that revealed the large and positive role of social capital in labour market experience for both individuals and groups of individuals who face a similar range of external stimuli and forces. Enhanced levels of social capital empowered such groups as they entered the field of entrepreneurship and engaged in their struggle for access to economic and cultural capital. Explanation of success in terms of social networks and social capital, according to Portes and Zhou, was considered too general and failed to explain the success of some and not others. Further analysis regarding the differences in outcome in relation to social networks and the role of social capital reflected, I suggest, the place of social capital in its wider capital package.

The 'bounded solidarity' amongst immigrants initially created by virtue of their foreignness in the host nation, a shared subjective reality, is heightened by the recognition of 'symbols' of common ethnic nationhood (Portes & Zhou, 1992, p.514). A shared desire and preference for particular consumer items is manifested both on account of the utility of certain goods in relation to cultural lifestyle, and on account of their symbolic representation of cultural identity. Such symbolic identity, distinction, creates a marketplace for a variety of goods and services and therefore a niche in the consumer market. Market opportunities, a preference to work amongst one's own
kind, and most often, as investors, a desire to opt for investment in firms from one’s own country of origin or from within one’s particular ethnic community all spring from this shared identity and position in social space (Portes & Zhou, 1992).

Trust and confidence in the immigrant business community is further enhanced not purely by cultural loyalty but more tangibly in the recognition that malpractice will result in social ostracism. Such a cut-off results in loss of access to consumer goods, sources of opportunity and credit within the cultural community. The repercussions of malpractice are then experienced both morally and materially (Portes and Zhou, 1992). Community sentiment and trust are policed by community knowledge (gossip), and reputation (honour) is all important. Double-dealing or malpractice reduces social capital and impacts upon one’s symbolic capital, and access to cultural and economic capital.

The need of goodwill, confidence and trust in business relations has been widely acknowledged by organisation theorists. Among other things it frequently rules out the need for litigation regarding malpractice and the need for legal contracts. Trust and confidence are themselves created and maintained by continuous social interaction, mutual acknowledgement and recognition amongst participants of business communities. Large studies in America of the cattle industry (Ellickson, 1990. cited in Sturgess, 1997, p.70) and the diamond trade (Bernstein, 1992. cited in Sturgess, 1997, p.70) certainly suggest this is the case. Both the above studies revealed a preference in the industries for norms as a social regulator rather than legal enforcement which is suggestive of distrust. In sum social capital within such environments as a fundamental resource, is preferred to the economic purchase of external impersonal legal enforcement (Sturgess, 1997).
In business 'appropriate' behaviour ensures trust. Continuous positive exchanges and inter-relationships enhance trust between parties. And for successful business operations reputation is essential. In a close knit business community internal gossip and information serves to demonstrate and maintain norms and values and acts as a watch-dog upon members whom fail to adhere to the expectations of the community. Reputation, good-will and trust facilitate co-operation. Social capital transmutes, or is maximised, into economic, symbolic and more social capital.

It is of course essential for interaction between businesses and organisations, and indeed within them, to have well defined formalised processes, norms and rules. However as indicated by the likes of Weber (1947. cited in Sturgess, 1997, p.56), and Bailey (1977), even within hierarchical bureaucratic organisations the formal processes depend on, or are subverted or manipulated in Bailey’s case, the informal norms and connections that govern personal behaviour.

Organisations both draw upon and produce social capital. Their potential to generate social capital in the voluntary sector will be considered in the following chapter.
6. Voluntary Organisations and Social Capital

The capacity of voluntary organisations to draw upon and produce social capital is well documented in the current social capital discussion as is their significance as indicators of national civic participation (Putnam, 1993; Cox, 1995; Latham, 1998). In America a rather grim picture of that country's deteriorating civic life was presented by Putnam (1995). Drawing upon statistical data that revealed a deteriorating rate of participation in a variety of voluntary or non-profit organisations in the third sector Putnam suggested that social capital stocks were falling in the United States. This proclamation attracted the attention of academics and politicians across the country and instigated a flurry of discussion. The claim has since been refuted on the basis of changing types of participation rather than changing rates (Lapp and Du Bois, 1997).

The refutation though did not dampen enthusiasm for the concept of social capital, and for recognition of the importance of civic participation, but instead prompted a whole new area of study and debate regarding the changing nature of civic participation, social networks, and the importance of the third sector in modern society.

The third sector fulfills a variety of services and this next discussion considers the voluntary non-profit organisations that operate within this sphere.

Leisure and welfare facilities of all kinds are found in the third sector and include sports clubs, environmental pressure groups, specific disability support groups, to name but a few. Some would even go as far as to say that the voluntary sector is the largest social capital producing realm in modern society. For others, though, this claim is somewhat over-simplified as social capital can be generated anywhere that suitable conditions prevail (Onyx & Bullen, 1997).
Non-profit organisations provide links for people to community, or civic life, beyond the networks of family and friends. They also serve to bring together a diversity of people under a collective, or shared, interest or reality. This fits with Alexis de Tocqueville’s (1847; cited in Onyx & Bullen, 1997, p.24) belief that voluntary associations are the primary resource for the maintenance of a civil society.

Contemporary organisation theory suggests that the survival, or effectiveness, of organisations, both profit and non-profit making, depends on their ability to adapt and transform to meet the rapidly changing requirements of the society in which they operate. Such performance is necessarily a feature of their design, or indeed their *habitus*. Organisations should be “... *learning from each round of experience*...” (Stewart-Weeks, 1997, p.93), thereby internalising results from the *field* into their *habitus* for the development of future *strategies*. For non-profit organisations their design also determines their ability to generate social capital.

That all voluntary organisations are rich sites of a nation’s valuable social capital is a generalisation that has been fiercely contested. Some commentators refer to two types of social capital, positive and negative. The difference here is determined by the end use of the resource (Onyx & Bullen, 1997, p.25). Social capital generated by some groups or voluntary organisations may be of an exclusive nature and consequently not contribute to increased tolerance of diversity or serve to build bridges between differences (Portes and Landolt, 1996). According to Cox (1996; cited in Onyx & Bullen, 1997, p.25) such a virtue is necessary and measurements of social capital that suggest trust does not extend itself to this capacity should not be considered as social capital at all. This is currently a site of some contention in the Australian social capital discussion and will be addressed later. Some non-profit organisations may even produce social capital that is harmful to the broader society in which they operate, for
example racist organisations like the Ku Klux Klan (Onyx & Bullen, 1997, p.25). To generate social capital in a positive and inclusive manner voluntary organisations must be outward looking. Such organisations should attempt to embody norms of tolerance and encourage their members to participate with non-members in the wider society (Lyons, 1997).

Non-profit voluntary organisations can be considered under two general headings ‘member serving’ and ‘public serving’ (Lyons, 1997, p.89). Member serving non-profit organisations provide opportunities for people to interact with others with similar interests, or shared preferences. Such organisations facilitate the extension of networks and provide an environment that allows for the continuous meetings ideal for the constant acknowledgment and reacknowledgment that fosters trust, good-will and reciprocity. ‘Public serving’ non-profit organisations are designed to deliver services and therefore focus on service provision for a commonly acknowledged objective or group. Both are capable of generating social capital. The first does so by virtue of sharing a common interest despite other differences, providing an environment for continuous social interaction based initially on this interest and encouraging interaction beyond the organisation. The second does so via its pooling of resources (social, economic, cultural and symbolic capital), thus engendering norms of trust and encouraging the participation of its ‘service users’ in networks that are extensions of the service area (Lyons, 1997, pp89-90).

Further differentiation may occur depending on the model of organisation adopted. Lyons (1997) labels these as the ‘business / management model’, based upon economic science, and the ‘civil society model’ which draws from political science. The business / management model is committed to quality, customer service, and the achievement of maximum output. Organisational efficiency is measured in these
terms. The civil / society model views non-profit organisations as expressions of people's commitment to each other, that is to say the common good. Such organisations attempt to involve as many people as possible in the decision making process despite this being a time-consuming method and, possibly, inefficient (Lyons, 1997, p.90).

The ability of voluntary organisations to generate social capital, and the aspects and virtues of social capital that they generate, are themselves likely to be determined by a combination of their service type and mode of internal organisation (Lyons, 1997). Of the four possible combinations only the 'member-serving / civil society' type does so simply because of the way it is focused and organised. This particular combination is most favourable to the generation of social capital both within and external to the organisation's boundaries, and Lyons (1997) suggests that it is also precisely this type that Australia may experience a decrease in.

Subsidies and grants are essential for voluntary non-profit organisations to function. The current pattern of government funding regimes is best suited to organisations that can compete for such sources of income. The 'philanthropic' funding model, of the late 1960s, allowed funds to be granted to projects initiated by non-profit organisations. The 'submission' model that later replaced the 'philanthropic' model allowed the government itself to identify the types of services that communities required, and then encouraged non-profit organisations to submit for funding as such. The imbalance in funding and service delivery resulting from this, however, led in turn to it being replaced by a third model - the 'planning' model. This model with its shift in focus to finance and "...quantifiable units of service" (Lyons, 1997, p.91) ostensibly allows government to be more precise in clarifying the areas in greatest need of funds.
The more recent 'competitive tendering', part of the out-sourcing process currently employed by government, allows the government to purchase outside providers of community services and both profit and non-profit organisations are encouraged to tender without differentiation (Burbidge, 1998, p.14). Another, less publicised, form of funding is the 'quasi-voucher' model which has also been adopted to respond to the demand of identified service areas. The 'quasi-voucher' model operates closely to the pure market 'supply and demand' theory (Lyons, 1997, pp. 91-91). The point about both of these models is that they allow government to maximise the use of resources available to the non-profit organisations, that is the entire pooled capital package of the particular group, to suit their own ends. Both models also encourage development of the business / management design to enhance the competitive edge of the organisation in the tendering environment (Bourdieu's battlefield). Voluntary organisations of this type, although better equipped to engage in the struggle for subsidies or grants, are less favourable to the generation of social capital because of their focus on service output and internal management hierarchy.

Under these two funding systems the preferred, in terms of social capital generation, member-serving / civil society type non-profit organisations are seriously disadvantaged due to their lack of a competitive edge. If such non-profit organisations are the most conducive to the generation of social capital then current government funding systems are contributing to a double demise. They are directly affecting the ability of this section of Australia's voluntary sector to adapt to the changing demands of the social environment within which they operate, for which investment of economic capital (time, money and energy) is essential, and at the same time they are encouraging organisational design changes that are less conducive to the generation of social capital.
At a seminar on social capital held at the Department of Social Security, 21 August 1997, in Canberra, increased government intervention in the welfare sector was held accountable by one speaker for a decrease in the welfare arm of the voluntary sector (Norton, 1998). He suggested there was a correlation between an increase in welfare benefits and a decrease in welfare provisions from the voluntary sector, via networks of family, friends and charitable organisations or mutual aid societies. And there is some independent empirical evidence to support this claim. A more effective analysis though might consider a number of other changing factors occurring in this period of Australian history, including changing family structures, increased geographic mobility and the changes in funding regimes.

Norton (1998) also discussed the capacity of voluntary organisations to assist in the generation of positive self-esteem among individuals, and the way they can as organisations contribute to both a sense of worth and increased interaction with other members of society. This is an important feature of such organisations. Research has revealed, for example, that civic participation and inter-personal trust are closely related in a tight reciprocal relationship. Increase in levels of civic participation leads to an increase in inter-personal trust and positive beliefs about others which in turn may lead to more participation (Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Onyx and Bullen, 1997). The relationship may also be analysed conversely. A decrease in civic participation leads to a decrease in trust and further decline in civic participation, and thereby creates a vicious rather than virtuous circle (Brehm and Rahn, 1997). If, as is suggested by this research, the connection is strong between participation and trust, then it follows that any reduction in possible avenues of participation is undesirable for a community or nation.
Research by Hughes, Bellamy and Black (1999) however suggests that the relationship between trust and voluntary involvement is weak in rural Australia. This indicates that people in such areas develop social relationships in a variety of other ways, which may be assisted by the higher rate of overlap in various aspects of daily life, for example work and leisure activities. Enhanced levels of familiarity may lead to either distrust or trust depending on positive or negative experiences. Regions with higher population density experience less overlap in their various roles so trust (or distrust) based on familiarity is less evident. One is forced to consider, in light of this information, the different roles of voluntary organisations in areas of different population densities.

Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) suggest that trust, fundamental for the building of social capital, is only understandable in its socio-cultural situation. For social capital to be built opportunities for interaction suitable to the specific socio-economic and socio-cultural circumstances of the community need to exist. This suggests that the capacity of voluntary organisations, for example, to enhance social interrelations and trust is socio-culturally determined. What may suit one community, in terms of generating social capital, may not suit another.

There is clearly no doubt that the capacity of the voluntary sphere to foster and generate social capital is influenced by government intervention. Recognition of this influence and the extent of this intervention consequently need to be more closely examined by policy makers. Social capital as a resource essential for the operation of a ‘healthy’ society should be acknowledged in the government decision-making process even though, in some cases, it may be considered a worthy trade-off for other pursuits. The recognition of this resource should allow for policy development that invests in and encourages the growth of such capital. Latham (1998) maintains Government
needs to attend to the creation of environments that foster the generation of social capital and that appropriate funding should be directed specifically at this particular feature of society. Policy developments that capitalise on it for their own ends are an abuse that can instigate, theoretically, de-generation of a necessary social resource.
7. Family and Social Capital

The role of family has been discussed by scholars for as long as sociology has existed. As a basic social unit it is widely considered an institution that provides physical and emotional nurturance and, primary socialisation skills, values, attitudes and acceptable norms for the society in which it operates. Boulding (1973) revealed the significance of the family in providing the glue that assists in other areas of the socio-economic system. Boisjoly, Duncan and Hofferth (1995) suggest that risk-taking, in an economic sense, is related to an individual’s perceived access to family resources in terms of time and money. The role of family connections in determining life chances is also well documented, especially in terms of a society’s elite (Bourdieu, 1986; Scott, 1992; Lupton & Wilson, 1970:1976; Boissevain, 1974).

Boisjoly et al, (1995) investigated the strength of family and friend connections in terms of perceived access to time and money, or more precisely the perceived capacity for social capital to be transformed into economic capital within such networks. Their results suggested that socio-economic status did not influence access to time but did reflect upon access to money. Financial assistance was more readily available in higher socio-economic groups for immediate and ongoing use. Perceived access to time and money (economic capital) varied between family and friendship networks. Both perceived access and reliance on family and friendship networks varied according to factors such as ethnicity, education level of family head, geographic mobility and distance from place of origin.

The Australian Institute of Family Affairs has completed three major research projects that consider the forms of financial, practical, psychological and emotional
support provided by families: The Family Support Networks Project (1991); The Australian Living Standards Study (1992-3); and The Australian Family Life Study (1996). Reference to family in these studies extends beyond the nuclear household to include a wider range of relatives:

...by birth or marriage (whether legal or de facto)

who may live in separate households but are linked

by mutual experiences, affection, obligations and


The Family Support Networks Project (1991) was prompted by a debate that considered the role of state support and degree to which informal networks could be regarded as complementary or alternative to formal support structures. It considered the ability of families to mobilise support via formal or informal channels when their own resources where inefficient (d’Abbs, 1991) and the results suggested that the type of assistance required determined the path and structure, formal or informal, pursued. The type of assistance required differed between family and friend networks (Millward, 1998).

The Australian Living Standards Study (1992-1993) suggested that households with strong kin networks correlated with strong friendship networks while smaller weaker family networks experienced smaller friendship networks. Place of residence categorised as rural (remote), outer urban, mid urban and inner urban also reflected upon the type of networks used and support structure pursued (Millward, 1998).

The Australian Family Life Study (1996) considered the nature of expectations and
obligations in family networks intergenerationally. It found that the middle
generations were predominantly responsible for, and obliged to assist, both the
younger and older generations (Millward, 1998).

All studies revealed the dominant role played by females in terms of caregiving,
providing practical assistance and maintaining networks. The higher the rate of
interaction between particular family members the higher was the perceived beneficial
stocks of social capital in the form of obligation, favours and assistance (Millward,
1998). Values, attitudes and expectations vary with age, gender and to some extent
socio-economic conditions. Expectations of support varied between family and
friendship networks. Care of the sick, elderly or children, for example, is fulfilled by
the family network or otherwise use is made of formal structures. The suggestion
therein is that family and other informal networks are not interchangeable in terms of
their respective support functions. Instead each network type services a particular
niche (Millward, 1998). Evident in all of these studies was the variation in terms of
interaction between different family members and different family groups, or friends.
It cannot be assumed that social interaction, exchanges, obligations or reciprocity can
be applied equally to all family members or units. In response to current growing
interest in the need for supportive communities, the Australian Family Institute has
designed a research program to examine attitudes and behaviours that are associated
with these various patterns of social exchanges, and what these imply for individual

Discussion that questions the ability of government to generate or contribute to the
demise of social capital may also be applied to the family. Is family the very crucible
of social capital or does emphasis on strong family relations based on obligation negate
the development of trust or reciprocity beyond the family? To what extent does a focus on family and its ability to foster and mobilise social capital enforce the development of in-group (‘exclusive’) social capital? Does contemporary society require a focus beyond the family to develop structures that in turn reflect upon family and individual well-being?

Focus on traditional family ideology, whereby families seek to meet their own needs for their own members, fails to address the need of more collective action in contemporary society. Traditional family ideology may be understood as supportive of an individualist ethos, that is an ethos that fails to strengthen or provide links between groups of agents, in this case families (Maas, 1983, cited in Burbidge, 1998, p.12). Families which operate in a similar social space gain benefits from the complete capital package relevant to the social capital inherent in their respective networks. Social networks, and the social capital therein, contribute to the cohesiveness of a particular group but may also act as boundaries that determine the radius of member inclusion.

Enhancing social networks within already well networked groups can contribute to social capital of an exclusive nature and reproduce the social inequalities that social policy seeks to address. Examples of the capacity of social capital to maintain the status quo, in regard to access to economic and cultural capital, are easily recognised, for example, in ‘The Old Boys Network’ (Scott, 1992), and ‘The Kinship connexions of Top Decision Makers’ (Lupton and Wilson, 1970; 1976).

If it is social cohesion, as opposed to the currently perceived fragmentation, that is desired, then it is the distance in terms of social space that needs to be reduced between groups of agents (Bourdieu, 1995b). The promotion of structures that encourage interaction between those presently quite separate would contribute to
reducing such distance. To encourage the nurturing of social capital within family
groups may contribute to continued separateness. Some research suggests a large
diversity in terms of social, economic, cultural and symbolic capital resources
available to different family groups, families with fewer resources being therefore,
further disadvantaged.

We have already said that Norton (1998) argues that the welfare state has contributed
to a demise of social capital inherent within family and friendship networks. The
expansion in the welfare state is mostly regarded as a response to change in family
structure especially since the 1960s. Increased geographic mobility, movement from
place of origin to seek suitable work and residence, divorce, sole parenting and the
increased presence of women in institutions of study and the work-force have been
related to a decrease in roles traditionally fulfilled by family. Technological and
cultural changes that influenced traditional family roles imposed on the state a need to
fill such areas (Burbidge, 1998).

State reform intended to relieve responsibility and return it to the family has recently
been expressed in the Family Law Reform Act (1995). This focus in family law returns
all responsibility for children, including their collective responsibility, back to parents

Campion (1995) maintains that parents are now being held to account by society for
not providing ‘suitable’ citizens. But the increased isolation of family units, based on
the premise that they may function on the resources available within family networks,
will not address this ‘unsuitability’. Society as a whole, she suggests, must accept
responsibility for its young and create suitable community support structures that
encourage interaction between families and enhance accessibility to social, cultural
and economic capital.
Major changes in service delivery such as user-pays, privatization, de-institutionalisation and the contracting out of services have, arguably, affected both the quality and quantity of services available to those who most need them. Such changes have also increased the responsibility of families whose members use these services, many of whom may actually be ill-equipped to manage with such responsibility (Burbidge, 1998, p.13). Fogarty (1994) maintains the re-integration of the intellectually and physically challenged into society (de-institutionalisation) is indicative of the state abandoning its core responsibilities. Craze (1986, cited in Burbidge, 1998, p.15) considers privatization to be merely a re-location of responsibility of care from low-paid care workers (usually women) to unpaid care-workers (also women).

Retro-fitting social capital to suit values and ideas that are most easily pursued by families operating in the comfortable middle classes does not address the requirements or the isolation of those more disadvantaged. Many people live alone, are widowed, divorced, orphaned or persevering with unhappy or violent domestic situations (Leeder, 1998, p.4). Research by Whittaker and Garbarino (1993; cited in Palmer, 1997) in America found, for example, that there was a correlation between areas with lower domestic violence and:

... extensive neighbouring networks and
better provision of support services such as child-care
and links between doctors, schools and social workers
(p.152).
Putnam (1995) found that family stability was often the product not the precursor or cause of high social capital; that trust and access to sources beyond family networks contributed to family stability.

Norton (1998) maintains that increases in welfare state provision not only reduces social capital stocks in family and friendship networks, but also in charitable organisations. Returning responsibility to family directly bypasses the sphere of community organisations or support structures that once acted as extensions of family life. This then raises the important research question about how families generate and nurture interactions or exchange between the family and other institutions; what institutions in particular reflect positively on family well-being? One is instantly reminded here of the work by Falk and Kilpatrick (1999) who argue that generation of social capital is determined by specific socio-cultural and economic aspects of the group, or community, being considered.

To embrace social capital theory as a means of reducing welfare spending by returning responsibility to the community and the resources embedded in social networks, be they family or friend, or civic organisations, is not the same as addressing current inequalities. Many individuals dependent on government welfare benefits are often not adequately resourced in terms of economic, cultural or social capital. And, as a number of research projects undertaken by the Australian Institute of Family Studies indicate, not all families and friendship networks are similarly resourced (Millward 1998). The diversity in family type, resources available, socio-cultural, and socio-economic environments each impact on the type and strength of
social networks and social capital therein. One may add to this list the impact of the physical environment which is where we now turn to.
8. Physical Environment, Place of Residence, and Social Capital

The significance of the natural/physical environment, or impact of ecological factors, upon social structure is not an entirely new field of inquiry for the social sciences. Montesquieu attempted to explain, in 1748, cultural habits in terms of natural habitat (cited in Boissevain, 1974, p.74; Barrett, 1984, p.46). Geertz, in 1968, pursued a similar line in his study of the agricultural system in Indonesia (cited in Barrett, 1984). A variety of sociological perspectives from the ‘Chicago School’ in the first half of this century also developed theories regarding the natural and created physical environment of urban regions (Giddens, 1993, p.569).

Environmental determinism, after suffering a period of discredit was partly revived by Boissevain (1974, p.74) in his discussion of climatic influences on types of social interaction, network structures and social organisation. Of course a number of other factors contribute to patterns of social organisation and climate cannot possibly be considered independently of these (Boissevain, 1974, p.77). Remembering the importance of continuous social interaction to foster and generate social capital (Bourdieu, 1986), some consideration of the range in climate conditions across Australia may contribute to interesting research in relation to social interaction, social networks, and opportunities to generate social capital in a regionally specific context relative to Australian lifestyle.

In modern society human beings have attempted to overcome the obstacles of the natural environment in a variety of ways, for example the development of all-weather transport systems or indoor sporting venues for traditionally out-door sports. And some recent literature considers the links between our created physical environment and
patterns of social interaction and social inequalities (Forrest and Kearns, 1999; Rogers, 1997).

Both where people live and who they are shape patterns of social interaction. Focus on place has revealed structured differences in terms of opportunities to interact with others (MacIntyre and Ellaway, 1999). The process of urban regeneration in eight major British urban centres for example, studied over a period of time, revealed an association between local physical amenities, resources, and social relationships and symbolic meanings (Forrest and Kearns, 1999).

The loss of a small local shop in the wake of the development of a large commercial centre, holds greater significance to the local community than merely consumer inconvenience. The continuous interaction between individual consumers and local shop-owners may often develop into a relationship bound by recognition and trust (or indeed distrust). Credit, based on trust, may ease times of economic difficulty for local residents (Forrest and Kearns, 1999). Local shop-owners are often key stakeholders in the future of the community and may be active in local politics. Participation in community politics, by way of involvement in local council or government is determined, within Bourdieu’s theoretical frame, by one’s *habitus* and *capital package*. This suggests that residents, who individually lack the cultural, symbolic, economic or social capital to participate in such spheres of public life are thereby connected, informed, or associated by the social capital invested in their relationship with the local shop-owner. The social connection between residents and shop-owners therein allows community members to both contribute, and gain access, to community matters - which is to say, to cultural capital (Forrest and Kearns, 1999).
The shop-owner in this social relationship is a distinctive member of the community, by virtue of his or her possession and access to valuable social and cultural capital having been transformed into personal symbolic capital. Personal association with the shop-owner then enhances both the social and cultural capital component's of an individual's complete capital package, while removal of this association has the reverse effect.

The retreat of major services, for example banking and post-office facilities, as well as causing inconvenience, may impact upon a community's sense of worth. Such retreat may be perceived, in symbolic terms, as rejection and consequently this let-down reflects upon community morale and esteem (Forrest and Kearns, 1999). The retreat of major services may have a negative impact on prospective private investors and thereby further reduce the community's access to other social, cultural and economic activities.

Urban planning has a direct influence on the fostering of conditions that encourage social interaction. Physical environments that feature derelict buildings, inadequate street lighting, unkempt parks and greens, have been related to high rates of crime and vandalism in the towns considered by Forrest and Kearns (1999).

The importance of constant face to face social interactions experienced in a city street, in relation to access to assistance, information, and self esteem are presented very clearly by Jacobs (1961). And though not all individuals have the opportunity to stroll regularly along the same city street, similar benefits may be incurred by regular and repetitive interaction in a variety of other urban, suburban, and rural settings. Urban planning and town planning and development thus have the power to influence the construction of such opportunities.
Australian suburban sprawl has been described as “... monotonous tracts of housing that serve to isolate rather than connect people” (Baum, 1999, p.9). The suburban sprawl involves people in a great deal of physical and geographic mobility which is, most often, not complemented with efficient transport systems. Independent, individual transport is required which further reduces opportunities for social interaction in one’s local community. To this extent they are not conducive to the generation of social capital. Baum (1999), suggests that “Working with urban designers and planners holds much promise ... ” (p.9).

Rogers (1997) in ‘Cities for a Small Planet’ considers inner city dwelling and the environmental and social benefits of pedestrian cities. Residences above commercial premises, attractive well lit walkways and close high density housing are combined to encourage pedestrian traffic and consequently face to face social interaction. Recent planning developments in Western Australia at the new ‘Joondalup City Centre’ reflect this sort of socio-environmental focus.

In Western Australia an increasing number of residential developments place parks, shops, school and the community hall at the centre of the community linked to homes by a series of walkways that encourage pedestrian traffic. The case of ‘Ellenbrook’ is a good example. Planners envisage the development of local commercial links to provide work for residents.

What evidence is there, though, of such urban designs to generate social capital? What forms of trust or reciprocity do transpire from these contemporary Australian ‘urban villages’? The promotion of urban and suburban communities based on the provision of a social environment conducive to an ‘over-lap’ in such aspects of lifestyle
as work, leisure, and education, appear to be modelled on the lifestyle peculiar to rural communities.

The fact is, this relatively new style of urban development still awaits sociological research in its Australian context. Meanwhile increased areas of over-lap in social life versus engagement in a number of independent circles returns us directly to such issues as community and trust based on familiarity, tolerance of diversity, and social capital as inclusive or exclusive (Cox, 1995; Hughes et al., 1999; Onyx and Bullen 1997).

Anthropological research regarding the reality of close-knit communities has revealed, in some instances, some quite negative and in turn isolating outcomes for community members. For example while a positive property of ‘gossip’ in communities may be in its potential to regulate community norms it can also be somewhat destructive and isolating for individuals (Bailey, 1971). Urban and suburban residents who have spent many years enjoying the privacy and anonymity, the flip-side of isolation, of their place of residence may therefore experience social constraints that do not suit their lifestyle. Time alone will reveal to social scientists the socio-cultural outcomes of such experience. And indeed here research techniques largely employed by anthropology, that have the capacity to tap into “... the informal side of life” (Barrett, 1984, p.216), may contribute to our understanding of social interaction, trust, and social capital in these modern urban communities.

So what can we deduce from this? An individual’s choice of habitat and place of residence, may be determined by *habitus*. *Habitus* and the entire *capital package* influence both an individual’s entry into the *battle-field* of real estate purchasing and his or her final residential selection. Available finance (economic capital), technical knowledge like the home handy-man’s know-how (cultural capital), geographic
proximity to work and friends or family (social and economic capital) and other relevant, distinctive features of lifestyle such as golf-club membership (cultural and symbolic capital), all impact collectively on the final decision.

The capital package of each member of a new community may be similar in volume and composition. Habitus understood as past experience embodied in the present, although unique to each individual, may also be understood in a collective form. Consequently, although strangers in a physical and personal sense, residents of such urban developments may not be strangers in terms of position in social space. Rather, new urban developments may well be an invitation to a group of people already close in 'social space' (Bourdieu, 1995b) to share a similar proximity in geographic space.

Pooled capital in such a community may also determine the range of facilities provided by private investors. This outcome does not address the need to generate social connections and capital between those individuals or groups set apart in terms of social space. Thus while such communities may foster and generate social capital they do not foster the type of capital that the Theory of Practice deems necessary to address inequality and enhance social cohesion in wider society.

If such urban developments are to continue in the perceived direction of their planners, that is with all facilities available at a local level, then the need to interact with other communities may well be reduced. An absence of such interaction, bearing in mind that such communities may already be composed of similar groups of people, would indicate that an approach to combat individual isolation has simply created community isolation. Although the fostering of social interaction at a local level is important, equality in access to social, cultural and economic capital requires the fostering of networks that extend beyond immediate social environment. Exposure to,
and experience of, a range of external stimuli that are internalised into *habitus* must be fostered between groups presently quite apart in terms of social space (Bourdieu, 1995b). Again the capacity of such developments to provide a structural opportunity favourable to the fostering of social capital, conducive to social cohesion, in Bourdieu's terms, seems non-existent.

Current research that concerns itself with the impact of the created physical environment upon social action and interaction should be thoroughly considered and encouraged. Research to date reveals the impact of urban environment upon social well-being and the opportunities for individuals and groups to interact in ways that are socially beneficial. This topic has been developed further in relation to health and well-being in modern society which is where we now turn to.

In 1897 Emile Durkheim's study "Suicide: A Study in Sociology" (1952) demonstrated that suicide rates were higher among societies that were less cohesive. In the study of a small Italo-American community, called Roseta, in 1957 the rate of heart attacks appeared significantly lower than other communities in the same geographic location (Kawachi, Kennedy and Lochner, 1999). In explanation of this, the researchers suggested that the only significant, and distinctive, feature of this community was the density of social networks and social interaction that occurred within it (Kawachi et al., 1999). In another study Berkman and Syme (1979) considered data from thirty-nine states across America and, after adjustments for age and habits such as smoking, suggested that people with fewer social ties were two to three times more likely to experience an heart attack than individuals with many social ties. A series of epidemiological studies of other communities has since confirmed this conclusion (Kawachi et al., 1999; Baum, 1999). For example a recent study in America suggested that individuals who were socially isolated, compared to individuals with more social ties, were 6.59 times less likely to survive a stroke, 3.22 times more likely to commit suicide and, 1.59 times less likely to survive coronary heart disease (Kawachi and Colditz, 1996, cited in Baum, 1999, p.3). It is becoming increasingly evident that Putnam's (1993) claim that weakening social cohesion may be harmful in civic and economic terms may also have physical and mental ramifications.

To further our understanding of the relationship between social interaction and health the Adelaide Health Development and Social Capital Study considered the levels and types of participation, both social and civic, of a random sample of more than two thousand people (Baum, 1999, p.4). Social participation was divided into:
informal interaction, for example visiting, or being visited by, family, friends or neighbours; activities in public spaces such as cafes, restaurants, parties or the movies; and group activities like hobby groups, going to the gym, or involvement in self help groups. Civic participation included: individual activities such as signing a petition, protesting at a meeting, writing to the local newspaper or perhaps attending a local council meeting; group activities like community action groups, political party or campaigning for a particular social cause. The sixth participation index, described as a mixture of social and civic participation, was called community group participation and considered involvement, for example, in voluntary associations, ethnic groups, school-related groups or service clubs (Baum, 1999).

After conducting a path analysis researchers found that poor physical and mental health was associated with low participation and that individuals with higher mental and physical health scores were less likely to be in the low participators' group (Baum, 1999, pp.5-6). The researchers also suggested that social participation did appear to have a positive influence on health, however, civic and community participation did not to any significant extent (Baum, 1999, p.5).

This study also suggests that both social participation and civic participation appear to be patterned by social and demographic variables (Baum, 1999, p.5). For example low participators were more likely to be older and male (symbolic capital and identity), have lower levels of education (cultural capital) and income (economic capital), and be either widowed, separated or divorced (reduced social networks and social capital therein). Respondents with higher incomes (economic capital) and higher education achievements (cultural capital) were significantly more likely to participate in both individual and collective civic activities.
This study then suggests that low levels of cultural, economic and social capital are related to low levels of participation which in turn associate significantly with poor mental and physical health. This, in turn, suggests that inequalities experienced in other aspects of life may be reproduced in mental and physical health. Poor health was also listed as an inhibitor to social and civic participation (social and cultural capital), and influenced work (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital) and leisure (cultural and social capital) activities (Baum, 1999), which suggests that inequalities in health are again reproduced in access to other aspects of life. Improvements in a person’s health, it follows, should therefore assist that individual’s employment prospects, and access to further education or learning, and social interaction that generates social capital.

In this hypothetical situation assistance to enhance levels of social interaction and participation would, according to the results of this study, have a positive impact on health and consequently, I suggest, upon other aspects of the individual’s capital package. The cycle of disadvantage in health would then be transformed rather than reproduced. Baum (1999) thus concludes that in the interests of health promotion that more “... emphasis should be put on work that strengthens the mechanisms by which people come together, interact and, in some cases, take action to promote health” (p.8). Let us look at this more closely.

MacIntyre and Ellaway (1999), aware of the impact of such mechanisms, have attempted to further our understanding by undertaking an analysis of the interrelationship between local opportunity structures, social inequality, and social capital and health. In a study that considered a cross-section of residential areas in Glasgow, Scotland, the authors revealed how some differences in access to life-choices are favourable to good health even when the geographic areas selected do not
represent extreme opposites on the socio-economic scale but, rather, lie either side of the national average.

Whereas trust and interaction between neighbours, and perception of neighbourhood cohesion were significantly higher in the somewhat more advantaged neighbourhood an analysis of facilities such as clubs, associations and youth activities revealed similarities in terms of the number available in each neighbourhood. A further examination of these facilities, however, suggested that the low income neighbourhood was less resourced in terms of facilities that catered for the elderly, youth, and parents and children (MacIntyre and Ellaway, 1999, p.5). Also a lower rate of car ownership (economic, cultural and symbolic capital) and a less efficient public transport system (physical infrastructure) further limited access to structural opportunities, conducive to health, for residents of the low income neighbourhood (MacIntyre and Ellaway, 1999, p.5).

A common health promotion strategy is the promotion of exercise and good foods, but in this study the low income neighbourhood had less access to sporting and exercise facilities, and even taking a walk - as an healthy and possibly socially interactive exercise - was found to be inhibited by inadequate street-lighting, street litter (broken glass and used medical syringes), and by the fear of violent crime (MacIntyre and Ellaway, 1999, P. 6).

This study also revealed that although a range of healthy food was available in the less advantaged neighbourhood it was not as wide a range as that available in the high income neighbourhood. Furthermore, a price check on a cross-section of healthy foods showed that prices in the low income area were often higher than those in the high income neighbourhood (MacIntyre and Ellaway, 1999, p.6). These latter points may relate to the fact that larger commercial shopping centres, with leading chain stores
capable of more competitive prices, where usually more accessible to residents of the more affluent neighbourhood. In areas where small local shops had been forced to close down, residents had the added cost of travelling to the larger centre and incurred a number of other losses, such as those related in chapter 8.

MacIntyre and Ellaway's (1999) research implies that the structural inequalities that relate to place of residence, remembering that place of residence is determined by *habitus* that is itself the embodiment of previous (historic) inequalities, also relate to health. Advantage and disadvantage is thus reproduced. The question that therefore arises is, can social capital, or the fostering of conditions that generate social capital, assist in the transformation of the cycle of disadvantage and inequality as it relates to health?

Individuals in the less advantaged Glasgow neighbourhood experienced a different 'force-field' (Bourdieu, 1995b) in their attempt to access health promotion structures than did residents of the more affluent neighbourhood. They were more remote from exercise facilities and other clubs or associations that generate social capital and this geographic distance was further emphasised by their lower rates of car ownership (cultural and symbolic capital) and a less efficient public transport system. Geographic distance thereby appears to reinforce separation and distance in social space. Lack of trust, fear of crime and a physical urban environment not conducive to social interaction necessary for the generation of social capital were further deterrents to the residents of the less advantaged neighbourhood. Access to healthy foods and exercise and, therefore, improved health, were, I suggest, limited by the volume and composition of economic, cultural and social capital of individuals residing in the low income neighbourhood.
Social capital research, analysed within Bourdieu's theoretical frame, has connected economic, cultural, symbolic and social capital to health. But more significantly still MacIntyre and Ellaway (1999) have illustrated how local infrastructure and structural opportunities impact upon an individual's, or group of individuals', complete capital package and health. From this one can suggest that health is not just about people it is about place. "Where people live as well as who they are, shapes patterns of health and of inequalities in health" (MacIntyre and Ellaway, 1999, p.1). Baum (1999) endorses this and encourages health professionals and urban planners in Australia to come together at the drawing board.

To recognise the impact of social capital upon health and the integrative nature of social capital in terms of friends, family, work, leisure and place of residence is to place contemporary health promotion in the broadest of social contexts, including those conditions that perpetuate inequality and disadvantage in other spheres of life. Health policy that focuses on the 'big picture' and concerns itself with providing the conditions that foster the generation of beneficial social capital will, therefore, inevitably spill over in to other areas of social life.

The World Health Organisation defines health as "... a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (Mahers and Douglas, 1998, p.146). This places health in a broader social context. Future progress in world health requires increased attention to quality of life rather than quantity (Mahers and Douglas, 1998). The conceptualisation of social capital theory in relation to population health has, to date, suggested significant links between health and well-being as suggested by the W.H.O. definition. Furthermore it has contributed to an increased understanding of the reproduction of social inequality that itself reflects upon individual health. If social capital as a valid measurement, in terms of well-
being, is established, funding policies that concern themselves with specific health problems will need to be re-considered (Kreuter, 1999, p.3).

As we have seen, existing inequalities in social life may be expressed and reaffirmed in mental and physical health. Research has suggested this very same cycle is evident in contemporary education which is where we now turn to.
10. Education, Employment, and Social Capital

Social reformers throughout the twentieth century have often seen the use of education as a means for reducing inequalities, however, an increasing body of research suggests this is not the case (Giddens, 1993, p.453). The impact of social background upon academic achievement and eventual employment has been clearly demonstrated thus suggesting that academic achievement is not solely a reflection of an individual’s natural ability (Coleman and Hoffer, 1987; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Bernstein, 1977; Scott, 1992; Reid, 1992). For example an extensive sociological investigation in America that was designed to report on the education inequalities resulting from differences in ethnic background, religion or national origin suggested that:

Inequalities imposed on children by their home, neighbourhood, and peer environment are carried along to become the inequalities with which they confront adult life at the end of school (Coleman et al., cited in Giddens, 1993, p.432).

This study also suggested that children who developed close friendships (social network) with others from less deprived backgrounds were likely to be more successful at school. Which, I suggest, indicates the potential in fostering social interaction between individuals set apart in social space thereby generating social capital of an inclusive, rather than exclusive, nature.

Aspects of this work have since been challenged mainly for methodological reasons, however the investigation did encourage new ways to consider the role of this social
institution in modern society and it’s capacity to perpetuate inequalities that reformers expected it to reduce (Giddens, 1993).

An analysis of quantitative data in England considered the relationship between parental social class, either working class or middle class, and children’s academic achievements at both primary and secondary school (Reid, 1993). The children from lower class families, Reid (1993) suggested, were largely represented in the lower achievement figures. This difference in achievement, Reid (1993) suggests, was also apparent in tertiary education even after adjustments were made to account for the disproportionately higher number of middle class children enrolled at this level.

Bearing in mind this connection between social class and academic achievement, there are a number of ways that social capital can be analysed as a contributing factor. For example Bernstein (1977) argued that a child’s ability in the formal academic environment was to some extent affected by the linguistic skills (social capital converted into cultural and symbolic capital), or systematic ways of using language, acquired from their social environment prior to entry into the education system. The restrictive code, a use of language that contains many unstated assumptions, Bernstein (1977) suggested, was more apparent in children from lower class families. Whereas the elaborated code, a style of speech that allows words to be individualised and used to suit a variety of different situations, and consequently more suited to the conceptual and abstract thinking required in a formal academic environment, was more evident amongst children from middle class backgrounds. One could argue that such cultural capital may be acquired when an individual becomes active in the education system. However, it still remains that children exposed to a social environment within which the social capital required to access this cultural capital is evident, enter the education system with a distinct and immediate advantage.
Research by Coleman and Hoffer (1987) suggested that higher academic achievement levels and reduced drop-out rates, evident in a number of American Catholic schools, were the consequence of an extended social network fostered by the church-home-school community, and the norms and values embodied and constantly reinforced within it. The school-home-church community was a structural opportunity that fostered increased social interaction between individuals and groups that, in the absence of the religious connection, may otherwise have not occurred. The wider social network was more ‘inclusive’ and thus generated social capital that contributed to the transformation, rather than reproduction, of previous academic achievement patterns.

An exploration of the inequality in scholastic achievement between students from different social groups in France also revealed, to Bourdieu and Passeron (1970:1977), the role of social, cultural and economic capital. This study concluded that cultural and economic capital, and social networks influenced not only achievement within the academic environment but also the use of qualifications beyond it. Bourdieu suggests the ‘elaborate educational systems’ of today’s developed nations are principal modes of social and cultural reproduction (Wacquant, 1993). Although the direct family transmission of economic capital continues, for example in bonds and stocks and property, Bourdieu argues that the school-mediated mode of reproduction has become a principal mode of reproduction that conceals the direct transmission of the cultural and social capital required for dominant groups to retain their power, remembering that “pure economic domination never suffices” (Wacquant, 1993, p.25). Attempts to weaken the dominant class by use of mechanisms that control the official and direct transmission of power and privileges, for example laws of inheritance, have produced a greater need for this social group to develop reproduction strategies that are better
disguised (Bourdieu, 1986, p.254). Bourdieu argues that academic qualifications (cultural capital) are largely determined by the economic and cultural capital belonging to the bearer, remembering the necessary investment of time and money (economic capital) and the cultural relevance of education according to an individual’s social group (cultural capital), and that the value of such qualifications rises in proportion to the value of their bearer. Social capital (‘a helping hand’, ‘string-pulling’, the ‘old boy network’) corrects the effect of academic sanctions and ensures the reproduction of the social structure.

Scott (1992) suggests much the same in his analysis of the ‘Old Boys Network’, a system of social ties, social contacts and networks that stem from family and education. For many who go through the English public school system, itself a private fee paying system, and continue on to either Cambridge or Oxford University, their “contacts both facilitate their careers and enable them to have more influence in the posts where they eventually lead” (Scott, 1992, p.88). Incidentally over half of the annual student intake in both Oxford and Cambridge is public school graduates (Giddens, 1993).

So far this chapter has suggested that social capital may impact upon ability and achievement in the education system prior to entry and whilst active in it. Furthermore, both Scott (1992) and Bourdieu (1986) suggest that educational qualifications never function perfectly as currency for it is the volume of social capital in the capital package to which they have been added that may largely determine the economic returns on this economic investment, thereby reproducing current inequalities between social groups. This has been reasonably well demonstrated amongst society’s elite in England and France (Scott, 1992; Lupton and Wilson, 1979; Bourdieu and Passeron 1970:1977) but just how relevant is social capital to the Australian labour force?
The Australian Bureau of Statistics (1991-1992) data indicates that approximately 24% of jobs are secured via connections with family, friends and acquaintances whom are most often employed and that a further 25% are secured via employers approaching prospective employees (Carson, 1995, cited in Norton, 1998, p.42). These personal approaches, no doubt assisted by informal networks, indicate that job-seeking and consequential employment is enhanced by social association with individuals active in the paid work-force.

Whilst active in the paid work-force an individual is often exposed to other employment possibilities. Absence from the paid work-force may reduce an individual’s ability to secure other employment, and reduces the value of their social capital, in regards to access to employment, for family, friends or acquaintances.

The work-place in modern society provides a social environment that allows for the continuous interrelations between individuals required to develop recognition, self-esteem, reputation, and the acknowledgment and reacknowledgment required for trust, mutual obligation and goodwill to transpire. The work place may also provide access to new technical knowledge and people from different social or cultural backgrounds. More precisely, in addition to economic capital, paid employment may allow access to social, cultural and symbolic capital. Assuming this suggestion is the case, absence from the workforce immediately removes access to a wide range of resources. The economic loss, as a result of unemployment, may be emphasised by reduced inclusion, or access to, a variety of activities that provide: a sense of purpose, self esteem or identity; additional knowledge, skills or information; emotional or psychological aid or assistance; exposure to different social environments and interaction with members of society from different ethnic, cultural, or social backgrounds; and access to other employment.
Bearing in mind that the work-place in modern society provides an environment that encourages social interaction, and thus the generation of social capital, how might recent changes in the structure of the work-force, for example increasing home based work and contractual arrangements, impact upon this function and thus effect the volume of social capital available to individuals and society as a whole? Does interaction on the inter-net or via electronic mail nurture or generate the elements of social capital that may evolve from face to face social interaction? How do these modern work relationships contribute to an individual's self esteem, development of trust, mutual obligation and recognition of norms and values (Cox, 1995)?

The growing number of contractual work arrangements in Australia also require sociological analysis. Contracts range in time periods from perhaps one or two weeks to several years. Is short term contract work conducive to the generation of social capital? Such work may ensure access to a wide range of social environments and individuals therein however, although broad in terms of the number of different individuals encountered, the brief, or short term, interaction may not be conducive to the continuous acknowledgment and re-acknowledgment necessary for recognition, trust and mutual obligation to transpire (Sturgess, 1997). Short term arrangements may in fact emphasise the need to adhere to rigid written contractual agreements in the work environment and consequently have a negative impact on the development of trust and mutual knowledge and obligation (Sturgess, 1997).

Local based shift work, mobile shift work, 'fly in - fly out' work arrangements are also quite largely represented in Australia's work force. How do such work arrangements impact upon an individual's, or family's, ability to interact with other aspects of their home community or, maintain networks of friends (Cox, 1995)? Are some shift 'lags' more suited to address current concerns that require people to become
more socially interactive in the public sphere? For example how does a ‘two weeks on - two off’ shift compare with ‘six weeks on - one off’?

If paid work is to remain central to social life, and thereby remain the central environment in which the social capital necessary for social cohesion is generated, then research that attempts to understand the capacity of these work arrangements to provide environments conducive to the generation of beneficial social capital should be encouraged.

There are some suggestions that, as we move into the post-industrial era, technological advancement may contribute to reduced working hours. Gorz (1982) suggests that such change will result in paid work becoming less central to social life. As we have already discussed paid work, apart from generating the economic capital necessary for life in modern society, is closely associated with an individual’s identity and provides contact with other people beyond immediate family and friendship networks. If this large social institution, that is so central to industrialised society, is destined to reduce in scale then what other institutions will take its place and thus fulfill its social, cultural and symbolic functions?

The conceptualisation of social capital as it relates to education and paid employment has revealed the relationship between the two and the capacity of this relationship to reproduce current inequalities. Paid work and the education system are two social institutions central to modern life and Bourdieu’s theory argues that they are both collaborators in the reproduction of disadvantage and advantage, assisted by the concealed nature of the power of social capital (exclusive form). Such analysis also acknowledges the capacity of both of these social institutions to foster social networks, and consequently social capital, but most often only between individuals that already occupy similar locations in social space, again reproducing cultural and social
inequalities. Despite standard coinage on academic qualifications, as a strategy to overcome inequality in access to improved economic returns, inequality persists assisted by the social capital (exclusive) in dominant groups.

Social policy that acknowledges the role of social capital, prior to entry, during participation, and when excluded from either of these social institutions, may address the reproduction of advantage or disadvantage by fostering the development of mechanisms, within and external to these institutions, that encourage the interaction of different social groups and create social capital of an inclusive nature.

However, before social capital can be endorsed at such a level, issues of definition and measurement need to be confronted especially in regard to the inclusive or exclusive properties of this social resource. This is a complex site of debate that embodies the perspectives and alliances of a number of different political and academic commentators and will be considered briefly in the following chapter.
IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

11. Social Policy and Social Capital

Social policy is about personal experiences that become collectively defined as social issues; it is about what social directions should be taken and whose interests will be served. There is an increasing acceptance within the Australian social policy framework that personal family and community life, and wider social arrangements are interrelated. Contemporary analyses do:

recognise that public legislation and policies about social life are interdependent and influence personal and family life, community experience and labour, urban planning, and the receipt and distribution of wealth and other resources (Dalton, Draper, Weeks, and Wiseman, 1998, p.6).

Of major importance to contemporary social policy debates and decisions, is the acknowledgment that Australia is becoming more diverse and unequal. As Australian society becomes increasingly culturally diverse it is hoped that increased tolerance of difference, for example between ethnic groups, will occur (Dalton et al., 1998, p.37). Along with such cultural diversity Australia is experiencing increasing division between the rich and the poor, the employed and the unemployed, the two income and the no income families (Dalton et al., 1998, p.38). The individualistic lifestyles and
fragmented social and economic relationships in this rapidly changing and shifting economic and cultural context highlights the need to find ways to understand the implications of social policy upon the population.

There is some suggestion that social policy should be discussed in a framework that "... emphasises the interdependence of all citizens" (Dalton et al., 1998, p.56) therefore addressing both the values of cooperation and reciprocity embraced in communitarian ideology, and the pursuit of autonomy and difference peculiar to the individualist ideology of the right. Indeed throughout much of the debate that has surrounded social capital in recent years there is keen interest, both positive and negative, from both the left and the right of the political spectrum. It is exactly how it will be embraced that is often of most concern. For example, reducing welfare spending based on the social capital in an individual’s social network would only add to the disadvantage of groups already inadequately resourced. However, allocating welfare spending for the specific purpose of generating social capital may assist the transformation of the cycle of disadvantage. Or, alternatively, has the increase in welfare spending reduced opportunities for the generation of social capital in community based associations, or has the paradigm of economic rationalism, that influences the type of funding procedures, contributed to a demise in this area of civil society? Social capital, if recognised and thus politically employed, should be considered a social resource that, if encouraged in an inclusive sense, will benefit society as a whole in the long term, not as a resource that, if capitalised on, will save government spending in the short term. However, the concept of social capital, if incorporated in the policy framework, may contribute to the fostering of an emphasis that recognises the need for a well connected community as a strong basis for increased individual autonomy and benefit.
Before social capital, as a concept, enters the social policy environment it must find some stability in terms of definition and measurement. Current definitions of the concept are varied and, although joined by common threads, are often worded to suit the intention of the commentator (Appendix B). There is, however, some consensus that it is grounded in social networks and connections, and may contribute to an individual’s movement through social space. Enhanced levels of social capital, as a result of broader networks, may reduce social distance and increase levels of trust and mutual obligation in recognition of the pursuit of common goals for members of society.

Cox (1998) argues ‘trust’ is the currency of social capital and Fukuyama (1995) suggests the entire social capital discussion should focus on the type of trust that modern society has fostered. For success in post-modern societies Fukuyama (1995) acknowledges the necessary presence of law and contract, but emphasises the need to develop trust based on habit rather than rational calculation. Some trust is required for social interaction to occur and thus create more trust. For Cox (1998) social capital is about building bridges between differences and the tolerance of diversity. Trust, in this instance, should extend beyond trust based on familiarity to a trust of strangers. This Cox (1998) refers to as ‘social trust’. Trust other than this does not support the development of beneficial social capital, that is social capital that builds bridges, or is of an inclusive rather than an exclusive nature. In Australia research suggests a trust of strangers is often more apparent in higher density population areas and to some ends based on a type of ‘systems’ trust (Hughes, Bellamy and Black 1999) which, I tentatively suggest, is grounded in rational calculation. And trust based on familiarity is more evident in less populated areas, where social interaction and the consequent social networks are more dense; this is trust based on experience (Hughes et al., 1999).
For Australia to seriously consider the incorporation of social capital as a part of the policy agenda more research in this area needs to be done.

In the growing public debate social capital has come to be generally understood as the sum of our informal associative networks along with social trust, that is the degree to which we feel strangers may do right by us (Lapp and Du Bois, 1997). It is along these very lines that measurement techniques have been developed both in Australia and overseas. Some examples have been included in previous chapters indicating the measurement of types of interaction and attitudes toward different aspects of life.

A combination of shared values, networks of norms and trust and reciprocity are the requirements and the results of social capital. All commentators allude to the idea that extended networks, an increased recognition of shared social objectives, and a reduction of distance in social space empowers, by means of solidarity, the pursuits of individuals and groups. As a consequence this reflects positively on the nature of their community. In an increasingly individualistic society, where individuals strive for similar ends, albeit on an individual basis (fragmented), social capital may be recognised as a tool of empowerment that may assist both individual and social well-being.

If social capital does penetrate the social policy environment it may be incorporated into specific policy areas, for example education or health, or a number of other applications some of which have been considered in this thesis. As we have already discussed there is an increasing acceptance within the Australian social policy framework that many aspects of social life are interrelated. What has become apparent in the previous chapters is the significant role of social capital as a link between different aspects of social life. Does this suggest that social capital would be more appropriately placed as a feature of the general social policy framework? The
decision-making process in all portfolios may then automatically consider social
capital, with its potential to be either inclusive or exclusive, and thus the impact of a
particular decision on other policy areas may be immediately evident. Social capital
would thus imply a more integrative approach in both the decision-making processes
and courses of action pursued to address social issues.

Research suggests that certain types of social interaction are the key to the
generation of social capital which implies that Australian social policy-makers would
be encouraged to foster and develop social institutions that allow for such social
activity. Such institutions, as a mechanism for social capital, would need to attract the
participation of individuals and groups who are presently quite separate in terms of
social space. A re-focus on re-generating and extending the sphere of civil society
would require a re-examination of the current funding framework to allow for funds to
be allocated to this specific task (Latham, 1998). Some would argue that rather than
invent we should invest in the institutions already present. Again, this would require a
restructure of current funding regimes that do not favour, for example, voluntary
organisations most suited to the generation of social capital (Lyons, 1995).

If this concept is incorporated into the social policy framework the traditional
approach of attending to specific problems in specific policy portfolios may have to
give way to a frame that considers underlying causes and thus addresses several issues
at once. Again, this suggests a re-examination of current funding procedures.

The concept of social capital implies that social policy that fails to keep in mind the
bigger picture, by continuing to attend to apparently isolated and independent issues,
may experience increasing problems and costs. Social capital as a feature of social
policy would require the development of a solid ideological framework that highlights,
the significance of social and civic engagement, the interrelatedness of all aspects of
social life, and the suggested capacity of enhanced social networks to challenge the reproduction of current social, cultural and economic inequalities.

Furthermore the impact of social capital on economic prosperity, as suggested by Putnam (1993), implies that some harmony between social and economic policy should be pursued. Can social and economic policy be re-integrated into a shared vision? How will this be done? To secure the pursuit of social objectives, for example good health, employment and equality, a new balance between the state and market in economic and social policy must be found (Smyth and Cass, 1998). Research to date does indicate that some harmony between social and economic policy should be sought by governments of the future (Putnam, 1993; Latham, 1998; Gallop, 1999; Cox, 1998; Smyth and Cass, 1998; Emy, 1993). Perhaps this is the most significant implication that social capital, if accepted as a valid conceptual tool at the policy level, poses for Australian social policy. And even if social capital is not incorporated as a concept in its own right the current interest may still be acknowledged as part of a larger movement that seeks to re-invigorate the need for a social imperative in government after two decades of concentrated economic rationalism. The market is after all a social construct.
A variety of disciplines and political groups have engaged in the social capital discussion. The arguably increasing un-social conditions of post-industrial society have set a fresh agenda for research to inform new directions for social governance. The wealth in a purely civil sense that is apparent in the social interrelations of society’s individuals has become for many researchers an exciting revelation. Some investigate and articulate this concept in connection with civic morality and social justice; others embrace its potential connection with economic prosperity. Yet definition and scope remains an area of debate.

There is agreement that social capital is the product of social exchanges. Time, energy and some trust are required for social interaction, which in turn, depending on the nature of the interaction, produces either more trust, or distrust.

Social capital may be understood as a system of social credit (mutual obligation and reciprocity) governed, as Bourdieu (1998) suggests by a “... subtle economy of time” (p. 252). Although it may be apparent to the individuals or groups amongst whom it operates, it cannot be reduced to the set of properties individually possessed by an individual or group. This alone makes it difficult to define and measure in quantifiable terms and it is this degree of concealment from the economic aspect that lends social capital its power.

Sociology readily perceives this credit as inherent in connections. It is particularly visible in instances where different individuals obtain unequal gain from investment of similar economic or cultural capital. Their gain reflects both the volume and composition of the capital package within their group, and their ability to mobilise it.
Current discussion considers the merits of social capital not only for its theoretical capacity to enhance the volume and composition of an individual’s, or group of individuals, capital package and thus empower individual pursuits but also because the process of generating social capital allows for the recognition and acknowledgment of shared social objectives. This should encourage the collective rather than individual pursuit of such objectives, empowered by the collective resources of the group. Enhanced social capital can then be understood as empowering for both individual and group efforts in their struggle for the re-distribution of resources.

Social capital is already present within social groups in its exclusive form. This should not be altogether ill-considered, especially in terms of society’s less fortunate, as in this instance it serves as a tool for group identity and solidarity. The current interest is to seek that same identity and solidarity on a larger basis by encouraging individuals and groups presently set apart, in terms of social space, to reduce this distance and therefore strengthen the fabric of society. What may then be most crucial to the current social capital discussion is recognition of this ‘exclusive’ aspect and an appreciation that for some groups it must stay intact, to some degree, to assist in their struggle in daily life. While for other, more advantaged groups, exposure of this exclusivity may contribute to reducing their monopoly in access to other forms of capital. To promote the generation of inclusive social capital will require an investment in social institutions that can draw separate groups closer together without impacting on the exclusive social capital of the less advantaged groups in society and creating further disadvantage.

What we have seen in these pages is that social capital discussion has contributed to the re-invigoration of an academic and political argument for an increased social imperative in government. We have also observed that no matter what one’s interest,
be it political, academic, or otherwise, the recognition of social capital as integral to social cohesion seems important and timely for the future development of social policy. Indeed it just may come to represent a new era of social governance that respects the values of both communitarian and individualist ideologies. Social capital may be understood as a system of social credit that, like other *credo*, hinges on trust. In the social sense members of society need to believe in each other and in the institutions that govern them. It is the argument of this thesis that the fostering of such institutions will lay the bedrock for Australian society in the post-industrial era. Just how much social capital theory will contribute to this remains to be seen.
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Attached is figure 1. Model of a general frame for Pierre Bourdieu's 'Theory of Practice'.

This is by no means intended to be a comprehensive diagram of all the complexities and subtleties of the transmission and conversion of types of capital in the process of cultural and social reproduction or transformation. The diagram has been provided as a visual tool to assist comprehension of the continuous flow between structure and agent, and is also a useful reference for testing examples of interaction.
AGENT SOCIAL STRUCTURE

strategies or struggles

habitus
- mental structure
- set of dispositions
- schemata for practice

capital package
(soc/cult/syrn/eco)
- volume and composition
- variation over time
- conversion and transmission

transforms or reproduces

Figure 1. Model of a general frame for Pierre Bourdieu's 'Theory of Practice'. (Designed by Dawn Atkin, May 1999.)
Definitions of social capital

Coleman (1990) recognises social capital as inherent in the structures of relationships between and among people and as being further “... created when the relations among persons change in ways that facilitate action” (p.304). Coleman (1990) argued that “...expectations and norms depend on regular communication” (p.321).

Putnam (1993) places social capital as a clear component of civic virtue. He acknowledges the role of social capital to “... facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit ... (and that)... networks, norms and trust” (p.1) are necessary for groups of individuals to cooperate in their pursuit of shared objectives.

Lapp and Du Bois (1997) suggest the term has come to represent “...the sum of our informal, associative networks, along with social trust - the degree to which we feel we can expect strangers to do right by us” (p.1).

For Fukuyama (1995) the key ingredient is trust thus implying that it is how trust is nurtured that should take central stage in social capital discussion.

Kreuter (1999) discusses social capital as the four inter-related constructs of:
...trust, social engagement, civic participation,
and reciprocity (which) are the basis of the processes and
conditions among people that lead to accomplishing
a goal of mutual social benefit (p.1).

Winters (1998) of the Australian Family Institute suggests that social capital in
simple terms is “...the mutual sense of reciprocity and trust which enables groups to
live and work together successfully” (p.8).

Norton (1998) offers a very neutral definition of social capital as “...relations
between people with on-going productive capacity” (p.41).

Latham (1998) considers ‘vertical’ social capital to be based on trust of people such
as doctors, teachers and so forth, and ‘horizontal’ social capital as a more spontaneous
product that arises for instance between family and friends, workmates, and
neighbours.

Cox (1995) who can perhaps be acknowledged for popularising the concept in
Australia drew her initial definition from Putnam and defined social capital as:

... the processes between people which establish networks,
norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and
cooperation for mutual benefit (p.15).
Cox (1998) does suggest that functionally social capital may be defined as “... the quality of our thick and thin relationships” (p.160) and that the “...probably measurable quality of (these) relationships “(p.162) is ‘trust’. Trust in this case is the currency of social capital.

For Onyx and Bullen (1997) social capital is:

... a slippery but nonetheless important concept:
slippery because it is poorly defined; important
because it refers to the basic raw material of civil society (p.4).

Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as the:

...aggregate of actual or potential resources linked
to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships - of mutual acquaintance and recognition - or in other words to membership in a group... which provides each of it’s members with the backing of the collectively owned capital, a “credential”, which entitles them to credit in the various senses of the word (p.248).