

Social Capital, Civil Renewal & Ethnic Diversity

Proceedings of a Runnymede Conference

**Proceedings of the Runnymede Conference of
June 2004 held at Oxford House, Bethnal Green, London**

Social Capital, Civil Renewal & Ethnic Diversity



RUNNYMEDE

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About Runnymede

The Runnymede Trust is an independent policy research organisation focusing on equality and justice through the promotion of a successful multi-ethnic society.

Founded in 1968 as a Charitable Educational Trust, Runnymede has a long track record in policy research, working in close collaboration with eminent thinkers and policymakers in the public, private and voluntary sectors. We believe that the way ahead lies in building effective partnerships, and we are continually developing these with the voluntary sector, the government, local authorities and companies in the UK and Europe. We stimulate debate and suggest forward-looking strategies in areas of public policy such as education, the criminal justice system, employment and citizenship.

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Foreword

Michelynn Laflèche Runnymede

Runnymede has focused on the issues of social capital, civil renewal and ethnic diversity throughout 2004 in pursuance of our aim to stimulate debate and suggest forward-looking strategies that promote a successful multi-ethnic Britain. We believe social capital and civil renewal to be crucial policy agendas in understanding and responding to the realities of politics and life in modern Britain. For us, race equality is not an optional extra. Reform of the way in which the state interacts with citizens must also be an exercise in addressing the impact of racisms and building a successful multi-ethnic society.

Runnymede is working with others to bring a wide range of individuals and organisations together, and enable open and frank engagement with the issues. It is hoped that this debate will support the activities of policymakers, the voluntary/community sectors, and wider civil society in ensuring that as these policy frameworks develop the needs of all communities are taken into account, and good relations between communities are at the forefront of the agenda.

Our focus has involved publishing an introductory paper by David Faulkner, hosting an expert seminar, and then a conference, papers from which are reproduced here. The process is an ongoing one. Readers are asked to join the debate by responding to this collection, contributing to further Runnymede

conferences on the topic, and sharing discussion across their networks and among their peers.

This collection is a report of The Runnymede Trust conference ‘Social Capital, Civil Renewal and Ethnic Diversity’ held in June 2004. Speakers were invited to reflect on the relationships between social capital, civil renewal and ethnic diversity in relation to government policy at central, devolved and local levels, and from the perspectives of those engaged in community development.

The conference proceedings are supplemented by an introductory section of four specially written papers. Rob Berkeley’s introductory chapter frames the debate about civil renewal, social capital and ethnic diversity. Next, Vic McLaren provides a backdrop to the debate by means of a literature review of the research on trust and building social solidarity. Henry Tam and David Faulkner then offer their reflections on the agenda in order to strengthen the background and deepen the context for the given conference papers.

If the Home Secretary is right in his assertion that civil renewal will form the ‘centrepiece of the government’s reform agenda’, we hope that these conference proceedings enable more people to reflect on how these reforms can contribute to Britain’s multi-ethnic society, present and future.

Michelynn Laflèche is the Director of the Runnymede Trust

Civil Renewal, Social Capital and Ethnic Diversity

Rob Berkeley Runnymede

Ethnicity and ‘race’ are about what people do, created and re-created over time and in different spaces. In deciding to focus Runnymede’s research efforts on civil renewal and social capital the challenge posed is to apply an understanding of ‘race’ and ethnicity to policy trends that together aim to address the bases of social interaction and the institutional frameworks in which they operate: a tall order, but an important step. For too long issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity have been seen as an also-ran, an agenda that belongs to the margins and the ‘other’. Through considering social capital and civil renewal in relation to ethnic diversity there is hope that we can move to a situation in which ‘race’ and ethnicity are viewed as fundamental to understanding society and to ‘doing’ politics.

Civil Renewal has developed into a major focus of the government’s community policy. All major political parties have expressed their concern at the disengagement of citizens from politics, the decline in ‘neighbourliness’, and the importance of making public services responsive to the needs of citizens. Civil

¹ David Blunkett, *Civil Renewal: A New Agenda*. London: Home Office, 2003 p. 1.

Renewal, understood as the redefinition of the relationship between the individual and the state in order to reinstate the role of political community, has been described as ‘the centrepiece of the government’s reform agenda’.¹ This

redefinition is reliant on understanding the identities of citizens and their understandings of community, and engaging with these identities to reformulate the state. In order for the political community to be effective, it has to be able to respond to the community of citizens and communities that make up multi-ethnic Britain. Success in civil renewal is then dependent on the success of a multi-ethnic society at ease with itself.

Social capital is much discussed between social scientists and it was therefore only a matter of time until it caught the imagination of policymakers. It can often appear to be the holy grail of social policy since it promises to resolve some of the most important issues in social science, in particular 'better working democracies, in which citizens are more active and demand greater accountability from their elected representatives'.² This is despite the fact that

² Francisco Herreros, *Why Trust? The Problem of Forming Social Capital*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p. 2.

even after 20 years of scholarship there is little consensus on how to define social capital, and the routes to its formation

remain elusive. Interestingly, the World Bank among others uses measures of social capital, despite its ill-defined nature, to decide policy.

For those on the left of politics, social capital poses some difficulties since as a concept its roots are to be found in liberal/conservative notions of smaller government – the state seen as at best irrelevant for its creation. Responses to the agenda have convincingly questioned whether the concept of social capital is useful in societies where there is stratification, disadvantage and racisms. It has also been criticised for generalising under its umbrella very different causes and consequences of disadvantage. Nonetheless, it is clear that government and others are keen to develop the concept alongside civil renewal as a means of understanding society. In this scenario, those concerned with racisms and race equality will have to find a means of engaging with these policy concepts and using them to work towards a more successful multi-ethnic Britain.

Civil renewal and social capital are suggested as the end and means, respectively, of a new policy agenda. Ethnic diversity is key to understanding both concepts. Any policy development that fails to take this into account runs the risk of failing and indeed exacerbating the discriminations and disadvantages already keenly experienced by marginalised ethnic groups.

This introductory paper aims to frame a debate on social capital and civil renewal in relation to ethnic diversity. By setting out some of the major questions, it is hoped that more people will be encouraged to engage in what we

believe to be a crucial debate about the relationships between the state and citizens, at the same time recognising the significance of responding to the challenges and opportunities provided by a successful multi-ethnic society.

The key themes considered in this paper are:

- Building trust
- Representation
- Engagement and participation
- Democratising public services
- Creating capacity
- Race equality, cohesion and renewal

Background

At the centre of my political beliefs is the idea that individuals achieve their full potential when they are active as citizens in shaping their own lives and contributing to the governance of the community of which they are a part. It is by engaging in society that mutuality between individuals develops, and it is a two-way process of contributing to, and receiving support from, the wider community. This is more than just the exercise of rights and responsibilities. It is about the development and extension of our democratic processes in the community, which I believe can lead to a wider renewal of civic and political engagement. – David Blunkett, September 2003.³

In June 2003 the Home Secretary declared his intention to make civil renewal the ‘centrepiece of the government’s reform agenda’,⁴ noting that ‘civil renewal is about educating, empowering and supporting citizens to be active in their communities, socially and politically’.⁵ He argued that civil renewal should be the ‘ongoing ethos’ to be applied to all of the government programmes concerned with communities. Social capital has also been the subject of recent debate from the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, among others, in terms of addressing disadvantage. However, there has been little public discussion about what these agendas mean for those concerned with tackling unfair discrimination and promoting racial equality.

In his June 2003 paper, the Home Secretary noted that ‘we need to think much more broadly about the practical implications [of this policy framework]

³ David Blunkett, *A Civil Society: Are we nearly there yet?* London: IPPR, September 2003.

⁴ David Blunkett, *Civil Renewal: A new agenda*. London: Home Office, 2003.

⁵ David Blunkett, *op. cit.* note 3.

for all areas of government and the delivery of public services', and invited agencies, think-tanks and voluntary bodies to develop ideas further. In January 2004 Runnymede published *Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain* by David Faulkner as our first contribution to this debate. In the meantime recent public service reform has begun to engage with the civil renewal and social capital agenda – in local government reforms, changes to the criminal justice system, in education, public involvement in health, and other areas of social policy. Runnymede's work in this area is designed to respond to this call for public debate and to generate ideas and recommendations for academics, policymakers and practitioners on the questions posed in this paper.

It is true that serious and sustained efforts are needed to build up the capacity and willingness of communities to engage in collective decision-making. We know too little about how to do this, despite the plethora of activity in this area, and our evidence base is thin. – David Blunkett, September 2003

The vision of multi-ethnic Britain as a community of communities and citizens, as expressed in the Parekh Report,⁶ presents a challenge to those developing how an 'ongoing ethos' of civil renewal and a commitment to build social capital will translate into effective policy and action. These early stages of policy development also provide an opportunity to ensure that issues concerning race equality, ethnic diversity and cohesion are embedded within this agenda. There is a danger that without a serious and sustained effort to ensure that ethnic diversity is a major concern from the outset, it could become sidelined. The effect of this would be policy and action that did not recognise the realities of the communities that it operated within and, worse, the development of an ongoing ethos that excluded certain communities and groups.

Runnymede has begun to engage academics, civil servants, community activists and journalists in thinking about the relationships between civil renewal, social capital and ethnic diversity. Through responses to David Faulkner's 'Runnymede Perspectives' publication and an expert seminar held in March we have homed in on some of the major questions. Our June Oxford House conference showed the range of interest in these topics, the potential impact of working to extend the conversation to a larger group, and the

fundamental importance to the civil renewal and social capital agenda of developing an understanding of ethnic diversity.

What follows are some instances of how civil renewal, social capital and ethnic diversity could impact on social policy, here specifically in relation to Education, Health, the Criminal Justice System and Preventing Racist Violence.

Health

A thriving citizen culture also depends on people having the capacity to get engaged in the world around them – David Blunkett, September 2003

The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health was established in 2003 as an NDPB. Its role is to make sure that the public is involved in decision-making about health through 572 Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Forums. NHS Trusts are legally obliged to respond to reports from PPI Forums.

This initiative has laudable aims to make the NHS more responsive to the public and acts as another site for voluntary action, expression of active citizenship and civil renewal. How do these Forums avoid 'capture' by certain groups in a system that is widely acknowledged to be short of resources? Decision-making on health needs should be informed by the experiences of patients from all communities. The increasingly well-documented ethnic differences in health needs (e.g. higher prevalence of kidney failure in Asian and Black groups, lower incidence of coronary heart disease in African Caribbean groups, ethnically linked diseases such as sickle-cell anaemia, and higher incidence of smoking among Bangladeshi and Pakistani men) is likely to cause some discussion in these forums about how services should respond. If this is not done in a way that engages all communities and enables all to understand the related key concepts of equality and diversity, the outcomes could translate into increased inter-ethnic tensions rather than a successful extension of civil society.

- How can trust be built across communities of interest as well as place?
- How can concepts of social capital be used as a tool to empowerment of disadvantaged communities?
- What are the best means of creating a participatory culture in all ethnic communities?
- What are the roles of the voluntary, government and private sectors in enabling the broadest level of participation and ensuring equality of outcome?
- What might success look like?

Preventing Racist Violence

A separate Runnymede project is currently examining existing local and community-based projects that use prevention as a means of reaching out to and changing the attitudes and behaviours of potential perpetrators of racist violence. It has become clear that the concepts of social capital and civil renewal are key in work with potential perpetrators.

The development of 'negative' social capital may be a key driver in offending behaviour. Negative social capital can lead in the extreme to criminal behaviour but also to exclusionary, xenophobic and racist attitudes. While levels of social capital are high within the 'in-group', barriers have been erected to exclude others from joining in certain networks because of their race, nationality or ethnic background. How can negative social capital be broken down, how can networks which operate in racialised ways be opened to the benefits of diversity, whilst maintaining their potentially useful characteristics.

The importance of civil renewal in this area is in the dialogue that needs to be created in public institutions about the means of challenging racist violence, and working to prevent it, through schools and youth work, but also through police and health forums, parenting classes, adult education, local and neighbourhood decision-making, and work with older people.

- How can negative social capital be broken down?
- How can networks which operate in racialised ways be opened to the benefits of diversity, whilst maintaining their potentially useful characteristics?

Education

The Department for Education and Skills has recently announced reforms to the ways in which schools are governed in an attempt to enable more effective decision-making and increase opportunities for schools to work more closely together. This is part of a drive to recognise schools as a community resource, to reduce the negative effects of competition between schools and to raise attainment levels for those who have been excluded from a range of educational opportunities through the differential challenges under which schools operate. Schools are intended to be important sites of community focus and key in supporting citizens to find public spaces in which they can interact. Catherine Ashton, the DfES minister, noted:

Parents become more involved in schools that provide extended services, which helps them support their children's learning. Schools providing services needed by local people become the focus of the local community and boost community pride and involvement. – DfES Press Release, 19 May 2004

This is an important way in which civil renewal and social capital agendas come together to make real policy impact. The government will spend £52.2 million over the next three years to encourage the development of 'extended' schools. Meanwhile research published by the DfES in December 2003 noted that:

The following groups are currently under-represented in school governance: black and other minority ethnic groups, disabled people, people with low incomes and people who are unemployed, young people, lone parents and (to a lesser extent) business people. ... Ensuring that school governing bodies are representative of their communities should be a key aim for all stakeholders (e.g. staff, pupils, parents), but care is needed to ensure that it does not become tokenistic. – Angela Ellis, Institute for Volunteering Research, December 2003

Therefore a key site in the renewal of civic society and a key site for building social capital; the extended school is governed by an unrepresentative group. Further, the recognition that all schools have a duty to build a relationship with their local communities and with neighbouring schools (often with very different ethnic population profiles, and sometimes with movements towards separation along religious lines) will involve capacity building in the education sector to enable dialogue. The outcomes are likely to exclude certain communities and lead to a failure to achieve the aims of the policy unless we can encourage a serious engagement with the challenges that are posed by diversity.

- **what works in building effective networks across existing communities,**
- **how can public service reform deal with differential levels of social capital, how can these agenda operate in rapidly changing communities,**
- **what works in engaging with underrepresented groups, that would be key in making policy in this area more effective.**

Criminal Justice

As bonds of trust, belonging and mutuality grow, crime and disorder can decline. Working together our communities can be turned from places of fear into ones of confidence and safety and take their place as the essential building blocks of a decent society. – David Blunkett, September 2003

The UK now has proportionately the highest prison population in the EU with custodial sentences increasing by 25 percent between 1996 and 2001 against a background of a 25 percent reduction in recorded crime. African Caribbean citizens were six times more likely than their white counterparts to be in prison. The recent Carter Review (December 2003) of the criminal justice system argued for greater engagement between it and communities. The Probation Board Association (PBA) highlighted its agreement in response:

Engaging the public is vital for the future of work with offenders in the community.

There remains, however, a historical mistrust between certain minority ethnic communities and the criminal justice system. Through celebrated injustices to daily street level harassment (African-Caribbean citizens up to six times more likely to be stopped and searched), there has been an antipathy developed. All the more tragic since African Caribbean citizens are also more likely to be victims of crime. There are recent reports from community organisations of increasing levels of stop and search on identifiably Muslim youth, which may lead to similar tensions between the police and these communities. Increasingly the criminal justice system will be relying on community involvement for the lay magistracy, restorative justice, meaningful community sentencing, mentoring, youth justice referral panels, inter alia, against the backdrop of negative relations with large portions of certain communities.

- **Recognising the complexities and histories of minority ethnic communities in the UK, what are the barriers to their engagement in civil renewal activities?**
- **How do you build trust out of such tensions, and what is the role of community development and leadership in so doing?**

Building Trust

Trust is fundamental to political systems and has been a focus of the discourse around social capital. It is argued that trust is important because it is the basis on which social networks are formed, enabling access to information, obligations of reciprocity and access to social capital; 'a resource, which like physical and human capital, makes it easier to achieve certain ends'.⁷ Trust is not in and of itself social

capital. Without trust individuals will not enter into social networks or be able to develop social capital. Without trust there are unlikely to be social networks, but there is little hope of creating, sustaining or rejuvenating democratic structures without them.

Surveys of trust show that populations in different countries have differential levels of trust and there are different trends in operation. Recent research from the Home Office Citizenship Study shows that trust is held differentially within a population. Differences between ethnic groups are significant. In response to the question 'Do you trust your neighbours?' there are quite marked differences. In the white population, those who answered positively amount to about 41%; in the Asian population the figure drops to 27%; and in the African-Caribbean population it is 16%.⁸

⁷ Francisco Herreros, *Why Trust: The problem of forming social capital*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p.6.

⁸ Duncan Prime, Meta Zimbeck and Andrew Zurawan, 'People's involvement in their neighbourhoods', in Home Office Research Study 270, *Home Office Citizenship Survey: People, families and communities*. London: Home Office, 2001.

Questions for further research/analysis

- How important is it to build trust?
- How do you build trust?
- What are the roles of government, and the voluntary/community sector in building trust?
- Are different approaches relevant for different ethnic groups?
- How can trust be built across and within communities of place, identity, interest and choice?
- What different understandings of social capital and civil renewal are necessary for these different kinds of communities?

Representation

- *2.9% of London's teachers are from African Caribbean backgrounds, 19.5% of pupils in London schools are from African Caribbean Backgrounds.*
- *There are only 13 MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds (12 in Labour Party); were parliament to reflect the ethnic diversity of Britain we would expect to see 60 MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds.*

- *Despite efforts by the Metropolitan Police Service to increase the number of police officers from black and minority ethnic groups, they still formed only 5.5% of the total in March 2003, against the target of 7.9% set for this date.*
- *Black and minority ethnic groups in London form nearly 29% of London's population, yet fewer than 10% of the London borough councillors elected in 2001 are from black and minority ethnic groups. Of the black and minority ethnic councillors in London, 7% are of Asian origin and fewer than 3% are of black Caribbean or African origin. Nationally, only 3.5% of councillors are from black and minority ethnic groups.*
- *Just under 5% of the 29,499 people on the boards of public bodies in March 2001 were black and minority ethnic appointees. Nearly 62% of the black and minority ethnic appointees were men.⁹*

It has now become widely accepted that it is important to ensure that governance structures and workforces should reflect the communities they serve.

⁹ *Black People Pushing Back the Boundaries II: Key facts. London: GLA, 2003.*

Considerable work has gone into improving the representation of people

from minority ethnic communities in political parties, parliament, the police force and teaching, among other areas. These efforts are important first and foremost because of a commitment to social justice; if talent is distributed normally regardless of ethnicity then it follows that the make-up of workforces should include people from minority ethnic communities at all levels. The failure

of systems to deliver this outcome is evidence of institutionalised racism, and action must be taken to address this failure.

However, a range of other reasons are also given for increasing the representation of people from minority ethnic communities in positions of power and influence, e.g. more black teachers

Questions for further research/analysis

- Why is representation important (beyond social justice)?
- Can change be delivered by head-count?
- What is the latest good practice on positive action?
- Are political parties the right place to start?
- Will first past the post ever deliver the better political representation?
- Will proportional representation necessarily be better?
- How can existing and new democratic structures recognise diversity and equality?
- What is the relationship between social capital and access to power? Can improving levels of social capital be a tool to empower previously disadvantaged communities?

are needed in schools to respond to the underachievement of black children, more black and Asian MPs are needed to give a voice to minority ethnic communities. These reasons for greater representation are questionable and contain a series of assumptions about the nature of 'race' and ethnicity. As civil renewal seeks to extend democratic structures and to address the issues of representativeness, these questions will become even more pertinent. Further, there is little use in changing the numbers of black and Asian people involved in politics, at whatever level, if the systems do not change as a result and racisms are allowed to persist.

Engagement and Participation

The turnout of 59.4% at the 2001 general election was the lowest since 1918, and the lowest ever under the full democratic franchise. This marked a dramatic fall since 1997 (71.6%) and 1992 (77.7%) and followed a period during which there was an underlying downward trend since turnout peaked in 1950 at 84%. The UK also has the lowest rate of turnout at European elections.

Research consistently suggests that certain types of people are more likely to vote than others. In the UK, turnout has been shown to vary by area, age, gender, ethnicity, social class and education, and by type and closeness of election. For example, in general, the affluent and the more educated middle classes are observed to have higher levels of registration and turnout. The people least likely to vote in the UK are from communities of black Caribbean and black African heritage. In addition, research has shown that people of black African heritage have one of the lowest levels of registration. There is considerable variation in the turnout of white people. It is notable, for example, that some of the lowest turnout figures in recent elections have been recorded in largely white populated, inner-city areas.

BME turnout rates are affected by generic factors including the younger age profile of these communities, the higher levels of social and economic deprivation experienced among these groups, and the fact that they predominantly live in urban areas where turnout levels tend to be lower than average. There are also community-specific factors affecting turnout such as lack of representation in high-profile public positions.

There is some evidence to suggest that dissatisfaction with political parties played a part in depressing turnout among BME communities. The idea that 'my vote will make no difference' was an important reason not to vote for all groups, including among BME communities. The concept of civic duty

is important in determining whether people vote, but there is no real evidence of differential interest in politics or feelings of civic duty among BME communities. (London Electoral Commission)¹⁰

It is clear that turnout at elections is influenced by ‘race’ and ethnicity among other factors. This is likely to become even more significant as new democratic structures

¹⁰ Kingsley Purdham and Ed Fieldhouse, *Voter Engagement among Black and Minority Ethnic Communities*. London: Electoral Commission, 2002.

are developed in order to deliver civil renewal. The effect of differential levels of turnout is to weaken democracy. This is

especially significant when the success of a multi-ethnic society is dependent on strong democratic principles in order to ensure human rights, race equality and to strengthen shared values.

The challenge to increase involvement goes beyond physical turnout. To respond to the criticism ‘my vote will make no difference’, civil renewal must lead to real engagement. To ensure longer-term participation, involvement will have to lead to discernible changes and improvements. Citizens are interested in what goes on around them and many operate in informal relationships to address social needs, this may be especially true of BME communities if the research reported above is correct. Civil renewal must lead to similar engagement with the institutions of the state. This may require more wholesale change than currently imagined and new means of engaging citizens. Regular voting and local referenda may have to be

complemented by other means of encouraging participation such as citizen juries, governance by lots, or use of new media in order to really engage citizens. Crucially, real engagement must lead to a shift in power relations.

Questions for further research/analysis

- How can new and existing democratic structures respond to differential levels of engagement from different ethnic groups?
- What are the best means of engaging people from all communities in politics at all levels?
- What levels of participation are necessary for citizens?
- Is voter turnout a sufficient measure of engagement?

Democratising Public Services

I actually think that engaging people in radical politics in their own neighbourhood, ensuring that they know that those who are elected are on their side, but that they inevitably will have to take much more difficult cross-cutting decisions and show leadership, that revitalising democracy by bringing

it alive and making it real at local level makes sense.

From Empire to Community – The Challenge for 21st Century Governance

Rt Hon. David Blunkett MP, Home Secretary – 22/01/2004, NLGN 2nd Annual Conference

Our ambition is not bigger government but bigger people; people with the skills and character to stand on their own two feet; people caring for and supporting those around them. Conservatives want to support those institutions – many relational, small and local – far away from the interfering hands of the central state – that promote self-government and, therefore, civilisation.

Real Decentralisation: The Denationalisation of Local Government Bernard Jenkin MP, Shadow Secretary of State for the Regions – 19/04/2004, NLGN Lecture

Liberal Democrats have always been committed to the principle of taking decisions at the lowest effective level. Devolution brings a number of clear advantages:

Democracy: Each elector's vote and voice has a greater weight in smaller political units.

Accountability: Access to political representatives is easier at lower levels, and new centres of political decision making tend to promote a 'civil society' around them, for example, through local/regional pressure groups.

Responsiveness: The lower the level of government, the greater the sensitivity to particular local needs, conditions and preferences (as opposed to a Whitehall 'one size fits all' approach).

Manageability: Public services run on smaller scales are generally easier to manage than large national scale operations.

Experimentation: Innovations can be tried out at local level. If they work, they can spread rapidly, particularly if the centre gathers, analyses and publicises information on performance.

Quality, Innovation, Choice: The Report of the Public Services Policy Commission Policy Paper 53, Liberal Democrats

It would appear that there is cross-party consensus on devolving power from Whitehall to local communities, beyond the traditional boundaries of local government to include other public services, notably health and policing. This approach raises a series of questions in a multi-ethnic society in which racism and disadvantage operate. Given what we already know about representation, engagement and differential levels of social capital, the challenges to plans to devolve power and maintain and improve racial equality are great.

As highlighted in the examples above, attempts to create civil renewal through localism could potentially exacerbate the inequalities that already exist in governance structures. As schools become more important as civic spaces, the composition of governing bodies becomes more significant. The relationship

between the police and African Caribbean communities has historically been marked by distrust. These problems will have to be addressed and greater understanding built before members of these communities approach

Questions for further research/analysis

- What forms of local governance of public services can deliver civil renewal?
- How are all communities to be engaged with local governance?
- How can disadvantaged communities build the capacity to engage with local governance structures?
- What trade-offs will have to be made between equality and diversity?
- How will localised services meet the needs of communities of interest and identity as well as communities of place?
- Is public service reform based on individual choice workable where differentials in levels of social capital are great (between all types of community)?
- What kind of work needs to be undertaken so that reforms are equally beneficial to all communities?

involvement in governance of the police without trepidation. Localism will produce diversity of outcome. While this may be fine in some areas of practice are we willing to accept that services that have more impact on minority ethnic communities will be addressed in some areas and not others? Communities of place are not the only communities that civil renewal will have to serve; communities of identity and interest also have a role to play.

Creating Capacity

One of the most important findings from the research is that public and private funding bodies do not seem to appreciate there is a relationship between the health of the Black Voluntary and Community Sector and Black civic participation. Rather, Black voluntary organisations are seen primarily, if not solely, as service deliverers. This is borne out by the recent publication of the Treasury's report on funding to the voluntary sector (HM Treasury, 2003), which puts the emphasis on service delivery. While this is important, we believe that the report has missed a vital element of the role of the sector as a whole, but particularly of the Black voluntary sector: that it has a part to play in assisting with the agenda for social cohesion, promoting good race relations and enabling better representation in all areas of public life. People join voluntary sector organisations for a variety of reasons, but one of the sometimes-unplanned outcomes is that individuals learn more about engagement in other arenas. As a result, the sector acts as a kind of conduit for social and political enfranchisement.

Black Voluntary and Community Sector Funding: Its impact on civic engagement and capacity building by Karen Chouhan and Clarence Lusane. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2004.

There are different rates of civic participation between ethnic groups and different types of participation. The research reproduced below (Table 5.2 of the Home Office study), suggests that we need to investigate further the routes to civic participation that different groups take and the best ways of encouraging active citizenship for all.

Participation in voluntary and community activities at least once in the last twelve months, by ethnic group

	Civic participation		Social participation		Informal volunteering		Formal volunteering	
	%	Respondants	%	Respondants	%	Respondants	%	Respondants
All	38%	10,014	65%	10,000	67%	10,009	39%	10,011
White	39%	9,357	65%	9,343	68%	9,351	39%	9,353
White British	39%	8,831	65%	8,818	68%	8,826	39%	8,828
White Irish	38%	147	63%	146	61%	146	33%	146
Other white	38%	379	66%	379	69%	379	37%	379
Mixed Race	37%	380	67%	379	63%	380	41%	380
Asian or Asian British	28%	3,258	61%	3,249	58%	3,247	35%	3,254
Indian	27%	1,332	66%	1,331	58%	1,328	39%	1,332
Pakistani	28%	945	58%	944	58%	942	31%	945
Bangladeshi	36%	583	53%	578	53%	580	31%	580
Other Asian	25%	398	61%	396	61%	397	33%	397
Black or black British	31%	1,850	66%	1,845	68%	1,844	42%	1,846
Caribbean	30%	1,007	63%	1,003	65%	1,003	39%	1,004
African	32%	704	68%	703	70%	702	44%	703
Other black	29%	139	64%	139	71%	139	43%	139
Chinese	26%	148	67%	148	67%	148	37%	148
Other	26%	466	54%	466	56%	464	34%	466
Combined sample	39%	15,459	65%	15,430	67%	15,434	39%	15,447

Home Office Research Study 270. Chris Attwood, Gurchand Singh, Duncan Prime, Rebecca Creasey and others, 2001 *Home Office Citizenship Survey: People, families and communities*. London: Home Office, 2003, Table 5.2.

Different patterns of civic participation represent a challenge to civil renewal, since in order to achieve its aims it will either have to change citizens' patterns of participation or offer a range of ways of participating. All different ways of participating will have to be equally valued. This will again involve a shift in power. The views of the traditional ward councillor will have to be balanced by the views of the residents' association, the youth parliament, the local web-based forums, or citizens' juries. Increasing civic participation and the range of ways in which it is expressed will, if successful, increase the range of voices to be heard. Politicians' jobs will be made harder as a result as they will have to mediate between these voices and make decisions on priorities. Local government will have to adapt to respond to these new democratic structures and instead of being a service deliverer may have to develop as a co-ordinator of services and an information conduit.

Race Equality, Cohesion and Civil Renewal

Building community cohesion is dependent on the creation of a common sense of belonging. This cannot be guaranteed by policy; however, certain things can be done to facilitate its development.

- Firstly, creating a strong democratic structure in which all voices can be heard and in which debate and disagreement are resolved in a just manner. This must operate at local, regional, national and international levels. Meaningful participation from all communities at the most appropriate level of decision-making is crucial, from parliamentarians and policymakers to school governors and CDRP members.
- Secondly, building a pluralistic human rights culture as the basis of shared values in our society. The passing of the Human Rights Act was a significant landmark. Moving to ensure that the Act is properly understood and respected is now a key task. Human Rights are the necessary basis of the moral community of a democracy.
- Thirdly, ensuring equal citizenship in which every member of the community feels equally valued and enjoys the same rights and

Questions for further research/analysis

- What is effective in encouraging civic participation amongst Black and minority ethnic communities?
- What is the role of the community and voluntary sector in promoting active citizenship?
- Can civil renewal be effective while groups respond differentially to participation?
- How can the black community and voluntary sector be developed to promote active citizenship more effectively?
- What role can local government play in ensuring a diversity of approaches to civil renewal does not lead to indecision?
- How can race equality and cohesion be embedded in a civil renewal agenda?
- What benefits should we expect from civil renewal in terms of race equality and community cohesion?
- Can civil renewal be a tool to empower previously disadvantaged communities?
- How can civil renewal respond to individuals' multiple identities, mutating racisms, and rapidly changing communities?

opportunities. Tackling institutional racism, combating inequalities in health, housing, access to employment, inequalities in education, and discrimination in the criminal justice system, as well as combating racist and other hate crime, are all part of building the sense of common belonging.

One of the tasks in delivering civil renewal is, then, to recognise the role it must play in promoting race equality and creating the conditions for meaningful community cohesion. Too often the civil renewal agenda reflects on changing governance and democratic structures without recognising this key role.

Conclusion

This paper aims to frame a debate on civil renewal and social capital in relation to ethnic diversity. Given the diffuse nature of the agenda and its implications across such a broad range of policy areas, a focus of this type is useful in defining key issues and anchoring discussions in an understanding of multi-ethnic society. By focusing on these six key issues, we hope that a wider range of people will be enabled to engage with this debate. The outcomes will be crucial for the future shape of our polity. Successful approaches to civil renewal and social capital could have significant benefits for race equality and community cohesion across the UK, but only if we are willing to tackle the difficult issues raised in this collection.



Civil Renewal – a Matter of Trust?

Vic McLaren Home Office G7¹

Over the past decade various theoretical and practical proposals have emerged aimed at fostering trust and social solidarity. They have mainly taken the form of calls for a return to ‘community’ and for a re-activation of civil society (Misztal 1996). Since the beginning of the new millennium there has been a rising tide of literature on the subject of *community* (Little 2002; Nash 2002, 2003; Taylor 2003; Gilchrist 2004) such as has not been witnessed since the heyday of community studies in the 1960s and 1970s.

The present government has placed a significant investment in the idea of community as is evidenced by its promotion of policies connected with ‘community cohesion’, ‘community regeneration’ or ‘neighbourhood renewal’, and, of course, ‘community safety’. Policies have largely been aimed at ‘communities of place’ (Nash 2003), with the government

viewing neighbourhoods as vehicles for the expression of moral recognition and the building of personal identities, an approach given greater impetus by the emergence in the later 20th century of the flexible economy, and a related fragmentation of social order. But the government has also increasingly come to

¹ This paper has been written to promote wider discussion and does not constitute an official position statement of the Home Office.

recognise the importance of ‘communities of interest’ – particularly faith communities – in building solidarity, and if the diverse conceptions of community have any unifying characteristic it is that sense of ‘belonging’ that community can provide (Delanty 2003).

Communitarianism

With the demise of soviet communism and near hegemony of liberalism within the world order, the moon of ‘communitarianism’² has been waxing as that of communism has been waning this past 20 years. This has also been in part a

² The distinguished philosopher, Steven Lukes, traces the origins of the term to the past quarter of a century.

reaction against the dominance of neo-liberalism and ‘rational choice’ theories of the 1980s and 1990s. But communitarianism

is not only concerned with the issue of belonging – the so-called ‘politics-of-identity’ – but also with promoting social capital and re-invigorating active participation in public life. One strand of communitarianism, *civic republicanism*, has been highly influential within government, particularly at the Home Office, with its mission to create an active citizenry. The challenge of civic republicanism is to take politics out of the state and into the public domain, with decision-making vested in local communities (Blunkett 2001; Delanty 2003).

But if the Runnymede Trust is dedicated to pursuing a policy of ‘civil renewal for all’, then it is likely to find in the idea of community only a partial solution to the issue of building trust and social solidarity, for ‘community’ has many detractors as well as supporters. This is partly because the term has become so ill-defined: attractive, perhaps, for politicians of various hues who are able to use the term with maximum flexibility; but frustrating for social theorists struggling with the overall bagginess of the concept. Furthermore, ‘orthodox’ communitarians have been slated by a range of critics including feminists (Frazer 1999), social utopians (Little 2002) and humanists (Sennett 1974, 1998) for a range of crimes of omission and commission, including moral authoritarianism, traditionalism, essentialism (see Young 1999), and for promulgating ‘community’ as a surrogate for politics.

Richard Sennett is amongst those latter critics who would seek to elevate the public sphere and, in the process, re-humanise the city. He is particularly dismissive of the claims of those communitarians seeking ownership of terms such as ‘trust’ and ‘commitment’. For Sennett, the idea of community ‘falsely emphasises unity as the source of strength in a community and mistakenly fears

that when conflicts arise in a community, social bonds are threatened'. Sennett, along with feminist critic Elisabeth Frazer, sees 'social conflict' as a positive rather than a negative force, provided it can be channelled into democratic politics (Sennett 1998; Frazer 1999). Developing these ideas, David Marquand sees the public sphere as pre-eminent:

'the public domain is...in a special sense, the domain of trust. Trust relations are fundamental to it: public trust is symbiotically connected with the contestations, debates and negotiations, and the values of equality and citizenship, which are of its essence.' (Marquand 2004)

Civil Society

Civil Society is, of course, part of the public sphere, and is often described as occupying the area between the state and the market, and if the idea of community could be said to have undergone a renaissance after two decades of relative neglect, then this is more spectacularly the case with civil society, an idea which had become virtually obsolete since its heyday in the 18th and early 19th centuries. During the past 12 years there has been a virtual avalanche of literature on the subject (see particularly Seligman 1992; Hall 1995; Keane 1998; Kaviraj and Khilnani 2001; Deakin 2001), the majority of it extolling the contemporary relevance of the idea, with the odd dissident claiming *au contraire* that civil society is, in fact, an anachronism (Tester 1992).

I suppose the really cogent question is why, around the end of the millennium, was there a revival of an idea originally associated with the Scottish Enlightenment, described by Sunil Khilnani as *the* compelling idea of the late 20th century, and why has this interest continued to be maintained?

Many critics point to the collapse of communism post-1989, and the interest displayed by various eastern European states, where previously civil society had been either suppressed or repressed, whilst social commentators such as Daniel Bell have seen in the resurgence of civil society a demand from the public for a return to a more manageable scale of social life, with decisions made locally and not controlled by the state and its bureaucracies (Seligman 1992). Both of these explanations have a core of truth, but a more plausible explanation – at least with regard to western Europe – may be that provided by Jeremy Rifkin, who argues that with the rise of globalisation and the relative decline in importance of nation-states, governments have felt exposed under the threat of global capitalism, and have, therefore, co-opted the organisations of civil society in a

partnership to act as a bulwark against the encroachment of over-mighty commercial interests into the public domain (Rifkin 2004).

It is undoubtedly the case that civil society organisations continue to retain levels of public trust that can only be the envy of both the public and commercial sectors, and are, therefore, a real asset in the enterprise of shoring up the public realm.

In Britain, the present government has invested heavily in the voluntary and community sectors in order to help them play a greater role in the polity (Newman 2001) and to deliver a range of public services. Initiatives have included the funding of various regional and local networks concerned with empowering those sectors to participate in public policy implementation, alongside major capacity-building programmes such as *Change-Up* and *Futurebuilders* (see www.homeoffice.gov.uk). Under this model of governance, the role of government itself has progressively changed from being a direct provider of services to a ‘facilitator’ or ‘enabler’ – in public management vernacular, more ‘steering’ and less ‘rowing’ – whilst within a globalised economy of impersonalised market forces, civil society can be construed as an antidote to a world increasingly defined in commercial terms (Rifkin 2004).

As a repository of trust, the idea of civil society begins to look promising, also as a countervailing power to offset the over-mighty state or global corporation, buttressing the public realm and protecting the life of voluntary associations and autonomous social movements as well as the development of various ‘third sector’ organisations promoting unselfish, non-commercial values (Gellner 1995; Giner 1995). Perhaps, more importantly, the success of civil society internationally will depend on its ability to avoid the ‘cages’ of countervailing forces (such as nationalism, despotism and certain forms of republicanism).

Whilst its origins are clearly culturally specific, with roots in the towns of mediaeval Europe as well as with the Scottish enlightenment thinkers of the 18th century, today’s picture of civil society as that which appreciates social and cultural diversity and has the ability to limit the depredations of political power and potentially unbridled market forces, looks to have real contemporary power and validity, and is in no sense an anachronistic idea.

Social Capital

‘Trust’ is a fairly abstract concept which has been largely neglected by sociologists, although it has received attention from certain social and moral

philosophers. However, it too has lately enjoyed a significant degree of scholarly attention, with contributions from a diverse collection of writers approaching the subject from various angles. These have included US authors Francis Fukuyama (1995) and Adam Seligman (1997), nowadays UK-based sociologist Barbara Misztal (1996) and BBC Reith Lecturer Onora O'Neill (2002).

Often represented as being synonymous with social capital, which many commentators view as a form of institutionalised trust (Misztal 2000) or as the 'crucible of trust' (Fukuyama 1995) for others, who argue their point convincingly (I believe), trust and social capital are not the same thing (Herreros 2004). It is easier to sustain the argument that in social capital-rich communities social trust is generated as a by-product of that 'prosperity' (Field 2003). According to former government

adviser, David Halpern,³ speaking at Runnymede's summer conference in

³ David Halpern's book *Social Capital*, scheduled for publication in October this year (by Polity Press) is now due out in January 2005.

2004, within the realm of the social sciences, social capital is now second only to 'globalisation' as an object of academic research activity, with a colossal rise in output on the subject since the late 1980s when (the late) James Coleman first popularised the term.

Much of that academic exposure can be explained by the meteoric rise to public prominence of US academic-turned-guru, the charismatic Professor Robert Putnam, who has captured the attention of the political class on both sides of the Atlantic, and in continental Europe. His most famous text, *Bowling Alone* (2000), is simultaneously a paean to the Tocquevillian view of American associational life and a lament for the demise of a civic generation of US citizenry, gradually being replaced by new generations of citizens overwhelmingly dominated by consumerist values and dedicated to solitary leisure pursuits. Putnam, along with fellow countryman, Professor Amitai Etzioni, has been accused of promoting a vision of society which is deeply nostalgic, and ill-suited to modern multi-ethnic societies (see McLaren 2003), where multi-culturalism has ceased to be what Gerard Delanty terms 'a container for immigrants' and has become instead an expression of contemporary society, where 'culture' and 'society' are melded (Delanty 2004).

As Runnymede's summer conference confirmed, 'social capital' is a somewhat elusive term, with at least one commentator questioning its very existence (Fine 2000). On the face of it, 'trust' looks to be a more

straightforward term⁴ – most people have an understanding of what it means, not just those operating in academic circles, and there is a popular sense that trust, particularly in the country's political and judicial institutions, is vital for democracy and the maintenance of social cohesion.

In her excellent sociological analysis of trust as it operates in modern

⁴ In *The Problem of Trust* (1997) Adam B. Seligman describes how the 18th-century idea of 'civil society' gradually eclipsed the greco-roman tradition of 'civic virtue'. In similar vein, Seligman sees the idea of 'trust' emerging during the period of modernity as being historically bounded and context-specific. With the changes accompanying the late/postmodern world – particularly the increasing accent on group-based identities – Seligman in a complex study controversially questions the continuing utility of the term, and ponders on its decline.

societies, Misztal (1996) explores the idea of trust, in relation to the various functions it performs, as 'habitus', 'passion' and 'policy'. It is the third function which concerns us here, and Misztal echoes Sennett in her suspicion of certain communitarian thinkers, pedlars of romantic versions of 'embeddedness' and 'belonging', stressing

instead that realistic policies to develop solidarity and to reinvigorate public life must emphasise the plurality of norms in modern societies, as well as the prevalence of moral conflicts. For her, the key to developing social solidarity lies less in 'strong' or bounded communities than in what Granovetter, writing 30 years ago, termed 'the weak ties of civic engagement', cutting across social strata and encouraging wider co-operation (cited in Misztal 1996).

Accountability

The influential Reith Lectures of 2002, delivered by Onora O'Neill, could legitimately be construed as a challenge to the idea that there is presently a genuine 'crisis of public trust', setting forth a number of modest proposals to enhance public accountability in a realistic and sensitive way. Anticipating David Marquand's controlled polemic of 2004, O'Neill ponders on whether a culture of *mistrust* has been reinforced by measures of *formal* accountability propagated by new public management theorists of the 1980s, resulting in what Michael Power has described as an 'audit explosion'.

Taking up the cudgels against the prevailing audit culture, O'Neill proposes a type of accountability more modest in scope, but crucially more ambitious in its concern for delivering substantive improvements in public services than a type of accountability concerned with formal rectitude. With a scarcely concealed barb, she calls this approach *intelligent accountability* (O'Neill 2002). Discussions around the most relevant forms of public accountability featured in Runnymede's 2003 review of inspection and regulation (conducted as part of

the follow-up to the recommendations contained in the Parekh Report on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain – see Berkeley 2003).

Civility

Building trust or developing social solidarity is vital to the task of civil renewal, and a strong civic ethos is an important component in revitalising the democratic process. Policies concerned with promoting ‘community’ and ‘social capital’ can be useful in promoting that sense of solidarity (Nash 2002; Herreros 2004) but, as we have discovered, these ideas have attracted a sizeable cadre of opponents as well as supporters, and measured attempts to assess both the upside and downside of these ideas is in sadly short supply (but see especially: Delanty 2003; Field 2003; Taylor 2003 for careful scholarly appraisals).

The idea of civil society, though generally welcomed by both progressive and conservative thinkers (Kaviraj and Khilnani 2001) has come to be viewed with suspicion by some erstwhile advocates, concerned that the term has been ‘polluted by its diverse and contradictory meanings’ (Keane 1998). However, in the context of building trust and assuring ‘civil renewal for all’, one term which suffered relative neglect is that of *civility* itself. Almost certainly, that is because the term has acquired some snobbish overtones – sometimes confused with notions of ‘gentility’, in the sense of being expected to adopt certain manners, or to conform with elaborate social class-based rituals. But, as Richard Sennett (1974) points out, the earliest meaning of the word connects civility with the duties of citizenship. Pursuing this etymological theme, Christopher Bryant explains that ‘courtesy’ was originally a code of behaviour for the court, ‘gentility’ originally one for the gentry, but the concept of ‘civility’ was for *all* citizens, in other words, a truly *democratic* concept, which, unlike civil society, can be comprehended across diverse cultures:

‘Civility bespeaks a common standard within which a multiplicity of ways of living, working and associating are tolerated. It demands that in all life outside the home we afford each other certain decencies and comforts as fellow citizens, regardless of other differences between us. It is, it should be noted, a cool concept. It does not require us to like those we deal with civilly, and as such it contrasts strongly with the warmth of communal, religious or national enthusiasms.’ (Bryant 1995)

Paradoxically, in looking forward with the intent of developing forms of civil and civic renewal for a 21st-century multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society, part of Runnymede's agenda may be to rescue the obsolescent meaning of an originally 18th-century term, restoring its original emphasis and re-investing it with meaning for progressive thinkers from all communities and across the political spectrum.

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Civil Renewal and Diversity

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Civil renewal is about empowering communities to overcome fragmentation and disengagement. Its core aim is to reconnect citizens with the public realm so that they become part of the collective solution to their shared problems. Its practical manifestations are to be found in the development of citizenship skills, raising the confidence of the public to express their views and concerns to public bodies, helping communities organize themselves to have greater voice, and engaging citizens and community groups as partners in tackling public problems. The strong emphasis on common values could, however, raise the question of whether the drive to build civic vibrancy might not be incompatible with the promotion of diversity. In this paper I want to look at how this alleged incompatibility has been seized upon by both libertarian as well as traditionalist critics. Through this I will seek to clarify the relationship between civil renewal and the promotion of diversity in society. I will conclude by setting out what civil renewal involves in practice and the implications that may have for policy concerns with social capital.

¹ This paper has been written to promote wider discussion and does not constitute an official position statement of the Home Office – August 2004.

A Healthy Democracy Does not Stifle Debate on Diversity

Let us begin with the libertarian perspective on diversity. Libertarians have never been comfortable about rallying calls to people to leave their private selves behind to join forces as members of communities. They worry that people would be pressurized into abandoning their individuality to conform to some stultifying, if not downright oppressive, uniformity. Their usual reaction to hearing that people are being encouraged to play a more engaged role in relation to public affairs is to champion the right to be left alone. They demand to know why people can't just stay home and mind their own business if that's what they prefer to do. Of course if everyone did stay at home and regard the business of the state and society as none of their business, the gulf between citizens and those who seek to govern on their behalf would continue to widen until it undermines the prospect of democratic governance itself.

What libertarians do not seem to grasp is that the process of coming together to deliberate what all should pursue in the interest of their common good is not one which necessitates the obliteration of diverse outlooks. There is no presumption that there is one absolute set of objectives which have been pre-ordained for everyone, and thus everyone must surrender their own beliefs and concerns to fall in with the realization of these objectives. What objectives a free society should aim for collectively, because they are important and yet unattainable if left to people acting on their own, is something the members of that society should themselves engage with in determining. In so doing, by sharing the views, arguments, experiences of others, attitudes and beliefs will undergo changes so a better-informed consensus could emerge. Scientists develop their ideas continuously through an open and collective exchange of views and arguments. They do not fear that engagement in this shared enterprise would destroy their ability to develop their own ideas. Rather they recognize that it is essential if the ideas they and their colleagues generate over time are to secure the assent of the overall scientific community. The roots of scientific and democratic deliberations require the same sustenance – a culture of open-mindedness, coherent reasoning, and consistent respect for human dignity.

Traditionalists are also anxious about talk of citizen participation – but for quite different reasons. They believe that there is a fundamental need for a closed set of values and social outlook to underpin stable and effective government. Diversity, in any significant sense of the term (with the possible exception of the huge income diversity between the wealthy and the poor which is generally

welcomed by traditionalists), is frowned upon as a threat to the cohesion of society. What they overlook is that without a diversity of hypotheses and attitudes, there would not be a healthy cross-fertilization of those ideas and outlooks which stimulate democratic debates and the growth of mutual understanding – factors which far more than any submissive deference to conventional authority provide the true foundation to a system of government which is responsive to the different needs of its citizens.

For traditionalists, people *should* come together to reinforce strong communities, but only on terms laid down by those sitting at the top of the social hierarchy. They ‘know’ what is right, what is true, what is desirable, and anything contrary to that established wisdom should be rejected out of hand. The idea that people with different traditions, or indeed a robust mistrust of traditions, should be encouraged to come forward to engage as equal citizens strikes traditionalists as misguided at best, and disastrous at worst. What they cannot embrace is that strong communities – where the strength is derived from their members’ respect for each other’s unique contribution to the good of all – are based on and ultimately only sustained by the commitment of their members. And people do not commit themselves to any system of values which is dismissive of their cultural identity.

Civil Renewal and Building Healthy Communities

The challenge for advocates of civil renewal is to steer a path through the opposition of libertarians and traditionalists alike, to demonstrate that the engagement of diverse citizens in a cooperative enterprise of community building is the key to a healthy democracy. Unfortunately, this task has not been helped by the interpretations which have been stirred up by recent sociological observations concerning the correlation between ethnic diversity and interpersonal trust. The bare facts are simple enough. Data analyses on both sides of the Atlantic suggest that, in any given geographical area, the level of trust local people have for each other is inversely proportionate to the level of ethnic diversity in that area. This was the basic finding of research carried out by Robert Putnam in America, and broadly affirmed by studies of surveys which took place in Britain. MORI’s publication, ‘Life Satisfaction and Trust in Other People’ (2004), for example, reported that ‘ethnic diversity does seem to be associated with lower levels of trust’, although it went on to say, ‘it is certain that the relationship is partially with factors associated with higher levels of diversity, such

as deprivation, urbanity and population mobility’.

From a traditionalist perspective, this would be taken as indisputable evidence that ethnic diversity undermines trust, and since trust is so important for society to function, it provides a *prima facie* case for limiting ethnic diversity. But what about MORI’s observation that the correlation concerning lower levels of trust is in part with factors like deprivation and mobility? As opposed to assuming that this would push traditionalists into a difficult dilemma about the need to limit diversity between levels of wealth and deprivation, it would simply hand them another reason to decry the extension of the electoral franchise to the poor. Traditionalists have always been reluctant to accede to the inclusion of the ‘lower classes’ in political affairs. And if the vote cannot be taken back, they would at least take a stand against all this talk of greater participation for all.

What is questionable about the traditionalist position is not that diversity, ethnic or otherwise, may challenge prevailing assumptions and hence trust between people who might have previously taken each other’s beliefs and dispositions for granted, but that this challenge is of great potential value if taken positively. We should start with the recognition that changes to any long-standing arrangements, through the arrival of, for example, people with different socio-economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, are bound to lead both the indigenous residents and the newcomers to wonder what approaches and priorities they could expect to share, and what they would need in time to work out through discursive exchanges. If the people concerned do get to know each other and develop new shared ideas and understanding, it would take their previous assumptions, through a process of critical deliberations, to a higher level of sophistication. Their former ways of living would be enriched through the mutual learning precipitated by the drive to discover the ways of strangers. Diversity, through this process, stimulates the need to question the status quo, review what merits trust and what does not, and leads to a more informed sense of togetherness.

Trust

It is of course possible that the prejudices of a few could stoke the suspicion of the many. Instead of people coming together to know more about each other and how they can strengthen their new, shared domain, they would stay away from each other. Afflicted by ignorance, or even hostility, they distrust what the ‘others’ might or might not do. And the whole community is thereby weakened.

But whether diversity is embraced to produce a richer form of community life, or frowned upon and thus breeds mistrust, is down to a combination of the disposition of those concerned and the social policies of their civic leaders. If ethnic diversity is still linked to lower levels of trust in many parts of Britain and America, what it tells us is that the policy challenge for community building is still a significant one for us. What it does not reveal is the extent to which people's social, cultural and intellectual lives have already been enriched by the interactions of diverse outlooks and practices.

If traditionalists might be content to exclude from having any input in their public realm people who are different from them, libertarians would oppose any attempt to draw people together to develop 'common' values and 'shared' priorities. What they dread above all is the submerging of diverse outlooks within a single monolithic culture. But once we have removed the rhetorical veneer, what is the balance we need to strike between diverse attitudes and common values? A set of common values, covering matters such as mutual respect, avoidance of inflicting harm or abuse on others, conflict resolution through dialogue, with force only as a measured last resort, are essential if people are to live together in a cohesive and democratic society. When civil renewal promotes the cultivation of and commitment to such common values, it is helping to build a social framework which protects ethnic and cultural diversity. It encourages all to cherish their rich mix of backgrounds and outlooks, but makes it clear that this wide embrace would not be extended to those who are intolerant or callously indifferent about the well-being of others.

Diversity is not a licence to reject all common values, especially if that rejection is to be expressed in behavioural terms which are hurtful, abusive or threatening to others. It makes no difference if the aggressive antagonism is to any extent explicable with reference to the cultural/tribal/religious background of the perpetrators. Intolerance or callousness in the name of any kind of group identity can never be allowed to trump the common values of a decent, caring society.

Affirmation of Collective Pride in Inclusion

If libertarians may be reluctant to admit this, advocates of civil renewal should be quite prepared to affirm that we do believe in the importance of developing and sustaining our collective pride in inclusion and cooperation. If any form of difference is to count as 'diversity', then it is obvious that not all forms of

diversity are to be celebrated. There is nothing to celebrate in having a mix of people who are inclined to hate or hurt others not because of anything reprehensible the latter have done, but simply because they possess characteristics of a certain race, religion, age, gender, sexuality or disability.

The diversity we want to promote is a progressive diversity of people with a range of social and cultural backgrounds united by a core set of common values which protect all who respect the rights of others. In renewing democracy and civil society, one of the key challenges we face is to overcome the notion that individuals can ignore their responsibility for the public good. This goes beyond mere compliance with the law, or even good neighbourliness. What needs to be tackled is civic disengagement, where people take no interest in the development of public policies and services, and yet complain that these policies and services fail to take their concerns into account.

Complex public problems require technical competencies backed by sensitive engagement with citizens who are affected by those problems. No sustainable solutions will be found if government bodies refuse to pay serious attention to what citizens have to contribute, or citizens continually turn their backs on efforts to engage them in the improvement of public services. With civil renewal, organizations established to provide policing, healthcare, educational and other public services will regard it as their core business to engage with citizens to determine how their needs are best met. Citizens in turn will wherever possible utilize opportunities for them to help improve services for their communities. This could be a chance to report a problem which should be rectified (e.g. failed or inadequate street lighting), refrain from adding irresponsibly to the burdens of public services (e.g. by not separating out recyclable waste), give one's views on why certain approaches have not worked so far (e.g. observing that increased police patrols are still missing out on a disturbance hotspot), or express support for a public policy option one believes is good for the community (e.g. voting in a local referendum for the budget proposal one has heard the best arguments for).

By their nature, such civic-minded characteristics cannot always be secured by legal sanctions. They need to be cultivated by schools, community organizations, civic leaders and public institutions at the local and national levels. A combination of citizenship education, community activism and consistent support for community engagement by state bodies will encourage and enable an increasing number of citizens to play their part in finding better

public solutions to their common problems. Respect for others' diverse backgrounds and sensitivity to their different needs are key elements of this development, as is the determination to expose and reject any pernicious tendencies to undermine such values.

So will the pursuit of civil renewal necessarily increase social capital, and vice versa? Insofar as civil renewal seeks to promote a greater awareness of public issues beyond the impact on one's immediate circle of families and friends, a deeper appreciation of other people's concerns and perspectives on policy differences, and a richer capacity to work with others to play a constructive part in improving the public domain, it follows that not only will social capital increase, but the increase will be directly beneficial to the functioning of an inclusive and democratic society. The converse, however, cannot be assumed. The definition of social capital is so broad that a wide variety of activities can be regarded as adding to social capital without it contributing to civil renewal in any significant sense. More people can become interested in team sports, spend time looking after their neighbours' pets, drink together in pubs or clubs, or join religious congregations without necessarily becoming more interested or engaged in tackling public problems affecting their communities with the help of public agencies. The relationship between citizens and the state is not made healthier by every piece of social activity.

It is even conceivable that groups which encourage self-sufficiency as an alternative to engagement with public services, or advocates of personal benevolence as a substitute superior to social justice as the key driving force in tackling poverty, may build social capital in one sense while undermining the prospects for civil renewal. Gated communities which pride themselves on their enclosure of privatized care and security may give their members a strong sense of belonging within, but a much weakened sense of engagement with the wider civic domain without. There are also communal ties in areas which particularly attract social capital theorists with their rich interpersonal networks – built and often sustained by personal favours and socializing activities outside official channels. This may score them high in pure social capital terms, but they would be in much greater need of civil renewal compared with places which adopt a more thoroughgoing civic approach, where respect is based on recognition of each other as citizens and where social generosity unconnected with due process would be frowned upon if used, however subtly, to influence public decisions.

Social Capital

Ultimately, social capital is like any form of capital. What good it brings depends on who has it, how it is being used, and what is being done about its unintended side-effects. Changes to social capital can no more be taken as positive or negative by themselves. If an increase to ethnic diversity reduces a proxy measure of social capital like interpersonal trust, but increases cultural richness and the quality of collective deliberations, there should be no presumption that there is a problem. The diagnosis can only come when the different aspects of civic vibrancy – mutual respect, reasoned debates, engagement through inclusive and democratic channels, and so on – are weighed together. Civil renewal succeeds when the growth of diversity and rise in social capital are supportive of a more democratically engaged and civic-minded society. This will not happen by chance. It will come about only through an active government working together with active citizens.

Race and Ethnicity – the Continuing Debate

David Faulkner University of Oxford Centre for Criminology¹

The debate on issues of race and ethnicity continues to ebb and flow, and to change its shape and direction. The ‘new’ issues of immigration, asylum and religion, especially Islam, have become uppermost in most people’s minds, but evidence regularly appears to show that the ‘old’ issues of discrimination, disadvantage and racist violence are still unresolved.

Some people continue to deplore ‘political correctness’, and what they see as favouritism towards ethnic or religious minorities; others criticize the white ‘elite’ and its supposed influence in maintaining a divided and exclusive society. Critics take pleasure in finding and then exposing what they see as the intellectual weakness of concepts which have been used to move the debate forward, for example ‘institutional racism’, ‘social cohesion’, ‘social capital’, ‘social exclusion’ and ‘civil society’. Different expressions move in and out of fashion, and their use in conversation sometimes labels the speaker as representing a particular point of view. Further discussion then becomes confrontational, or it is avoided altogether. The state of affairs portrayed in the report of the Commission on the

¹ David Faulkner’s *Perspectives* paper on ‘Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain’, published in January 2004, was the curtain-raiser to a 2-year period in which Runnymede is actively assessing the direction and effort of government programmes aimed at improving community cohesion around race and ethnicity. Here, towards the end of 2004, he reflects on separate treatment and shared social space.

Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain has been transformed in some respects; in others it is largely unchanged.

In this situation it is hard for progressive social reformers to know where best to apply themselves. The local situation will be different in different places – in prosperous multi-ethnic communities in and around London and other large cities, in deprived working-class neighbourhoods, in those large areas of the country where it is still unusual to find a person who is not ‘white’. It will be perceived and experienced differently by people of different generations. The task will always be to prevent and where necessary to confront and deal with instances of discrimination, under-achievement, exclusion and violence wherever they present themselves – on the street, in schools, in employment, in the criminal justice system. There is room for more innovative and imaginative ways of doing all those things, not just by enforcing the law but also, for example, by using the methods of restorative justice and developing the relationships which those methods can create.

In areas where those ‘old’ issues are less prominent, it is harder to find a point of entry. People who ‘go on’ about race may not be taken seriously, or may be resented, unless there is a practical context in which to do so. Like religion and politics, it is not a topic for polite middle-class conversation. But even in those areas, more people are forming relationships with people from different ethnic groups, more children have parents with different ethnic origins, and older people who may have had little experience of ethnic diversity in their earlier lives have children or grandchildren whose friends or partners come from backgrounds that are different from their own. And the ‘new’ issues of immigration, asylum and religion should not just be matters for complaint about the government: no citizen should ignore the need to integrate, and to often protect, recent immigrants to this country, and to achieve a better understanding between different religions and between religious and secular society.

The dilemma which has always affected discussion of race and ethnicity still remains – whether it should be seen as a uniquely important issue, to be dealt with separately by means of its own institutions, structures and procedures; or whether it should be ‘mainstreamed’ and dealt with in the contexts of social policy and social relations in which it arises. It can be argued that most of the progress towards racial equality which has been achieved in the last 40 years has come about because it has been treated separately, with national and local institutions, specialists, codes of practice and procedures. The Commission for

Racial Equality claim that separate treatment is still needed, and in particular that the Commission itself should not, as the Government has proposed, be merged with the similar bodies dealing with gender and disability.

On the other hand the existence of separate institutions and specialists has sometimes encouraged others to think that issues of race and ethnicity are not 'their' responsibility, and that it is enough to comply with the rules which others have imposed, with no sense of 'ownership' or commitment on their own part. Separate structures have also provided a target for criticism as constituting a 'race relations industry'. And their existence encourages members of the white majority to go on thinking, often unconsciously, of 'us' and 'them', with the continuing sense of 'difference' which that implies. Good community relations are more effectively generated when people from different backgrounds come together as equals to promote a common interest – the improvement of a neighbourhood, the progress of a school, a programme to help parents of young children – than when the aim is more vaguely to improve 'racial understanding'. And very often the issue which leads to racial tensions is not race itself but a situation of more general poverty, deprivation or disadvantage. That situation creates frustration and anger, which then turns into racial jealousy and hostility.

Within government, there is now a wide range of initiatives, and a range of Home Office units to carry them forward. From outside government, it is hard to remember their names, what they do, or the connections between them. Their intentions are admirable and they may achieve useful results, but they are mostly separate and outside the 'main stream'. They do not seem to be part of the Government's main drive towards the reform of public services or of criminal justice.

In truth the strategic plans for education, health and criminal justice have very little to say about race and ethnicity. The Home Office Strategic Plan *Confident Communities in a Secure Britain* contains a short passage within a section which also deals with encouragement for volunteering, the reform of charity law and the introduction of identity cards. It acknowledges the damaging effects of racism and discrimination, but the Strategy as a whole is about protecting the 'law-abiding' citizen against crime and disorder, about engaging communities in the process, typically characterized as the 'fight' (or the 'war') against crime, and about criminalizing increasing numbers of people whose behaviour is considered unacceptable. The separate Five Year Plan for the Criminal Justice System does recognize the problems of police use of the power of 'stop and search' and of

disparities in sentencing, but neither document acknowledges the increasing and disproportionate number of non-white men, women and children who are being caught up in that process of criminalization, or its disabling and potentially divisive consequences. Those charged with carrying out the Government's reforms will acknowledge that racial equality is important. But often they will think of it only when they are reminded; and too often it will be someone who comes from an ethnic minority who has to remind them.

Progress towards racial equality and religious tolerance and understanding can never be a matter for government alone. It is a matter for citizens themselves, whether or not they are directly involved in racial or religious issues. The Government has produced an imaginative and thoughtful consultation paper *Strength in Diversity*. The paper asks for answers to a number of fundamentally important questions. The questions are difficult if not impossible to answer at the level of national policy, but they should always be in the minds of citizens as they go about their ordinary working and social lives. What should we be doing (or stop doing) in our jobs, neighbourhoods, schools, the communities and organizations of which we are members, our contacts with public services? When should we intervene? How should we do it, and who might be able to help?

Conference Themes and Overview of the Presentations

Rob Berkeley Runnymede

Oxford House in Bethnal Green, on 24 June 2004, was the ideal location to further our understanding of the ways in which ‘race’ and ethnicity must be bound into our conceptions of contemporary society. An exhibition, ‘Make What You Will’, by young artists and a dance performance by local children working with Ascendance provided the backdrop to our deliberations and a reminder of the vibrancy and vitality of the multi-ethnic communities of East London.

Recently refurbished as an arts and community centre, Oxford House was founded as a university settlement. The move from outpost of Victorian philanthropy to a centre run by and for its local community is evidence of the change in the way we conceive our relations with each other. Oxford House is both a symbol of civil renewal and a recognition of efforts to build the capacity of the people of Bethnal Green to engage with each other in a community of communities.

Attended by over 130 delegates from central and local government, academia, community and voluntary sectors, the conference stimulated wide-ranging debate. The variety of perspectives presented left delegates with as many questions as answers, and discussion continued throughout the breaks and into the evening.

Session I – Focusing on Social Capital

Bobby Duffy opened proceedings by demonstrating both the scope and the limitations of the existing survey data for illuminating some key themes which social capital attempts to address: engagement with public services, trust in each other, political participation and shared values. He reported that levels of trust are related to certain other social indicators, suggesting that the more trusting are likely to be from middle-class backgrounds. He noted that a characteristic of the least trusting groups was that they lived in an area of greater ethnic diversity. This suggests that levels of social capital are related to economic capital and that ‘race’ and ethnicity play a part in its formation. This poses a challenge to those formulating policy on the basis of social capital to explain how it copes with current disadvantage. For those engaged in promoting civil renewal, it would suggest that the levels of trust and subsequent engagement are related to social class and ‘race’, and that these variables must be taken into account in renewing democratic structures.

David Halpern, of the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit, presented a paper to conference that considered why ‘social capital’ could be a useful policy tool in multi-ethnic Britain. Noting the rise in academic interest in the topic, Halpern introduced the delegates to the key parts of the social capital debate and the complexities of the different types of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking) and the different levels (individual, community and macro) at which they operate. As highlighted by Bobby Duffy’s paper, the key measurement tool for social capital is the level of social trust, captured in the question ‘Generally, do you think most people can be trusted?’ In Britain, surveys suggest that there is a downward trend in the proportion that answer positively. Scandinavian countries tend to have maintained higher levels of social trust.

In relation to ethnicity, Halpern noted that social capital could help to explain the ‘ethnic penalties’ suffered by certain groups, arguing that group membership can have its negative outcomes:

... we can say that upward social mobility is normally thought of as being a great advantage, it will boost your life satisfaction, and so on; but actually, especially for minority ethnic groups, upward social mobility can often be associated with marked decrements in your mental health, because you’ve left behind some of the supportive networks that you had before. And these are illustrated by what’s sometimes called ‘group density effect’.

He also pointed to recent research from the Home Office Citizenship Survey, which showed that there are differential levels of social trust among different ethnic groups:

... if you look at 'Do you trust your neighbours? Do you trust those around you?', you see quite marked differences around whether you think people are trustworthy. In the white population, that figure is about 41%; in the Asian population it drops to 27%; and in the African-Caribbean population it's 16%.

These differentials become even more important when considering the range of social policy areas in which social capital is said to have some effect: educational outcomes, physical and mental health, fear of crime, and economic success. For Halpern the key is to understand better the means by which to build bridging and linking social capital, and he suggested some ways in which government policy is already beginning to address these issues – through active citizenship programmes such as Millennium Volunteers, housing mix, devolution, community service credit schemes. Significantly, he noted that bonding and bridging social capital do not seem to be in direct conflict, suggesting that strong ethnic communities are not in opposition to the development of strong communities of communities.

Ben Fine, a long-standing critic of social capital, argued that the social capital paradigm ought to be rejected since it obscured more than it illuminated. He argued persuasively that the basis on which most of the research into social capital was founded is flawed. The ubiquity of the agenda made him suspicious of its existence, explaining everything and consequently nothing:

... it is a universal concept with a gargantuan appetite, almost as big as – if not bigger than – globalisation. It ranges over all history, countries, peoples, activities, as I've said, from 12th-century Italy through to US bowling clubs to Tanzanian burial societies, to New York diamond traders, to whether we trust our neighbours and so on. The presence or absence of social capital is the theoretical, empirical and policy panacea for the poor, the sick, the criminal, the criminalised, and so on. So social capital, because of this universal nature, obliterates difference, treating as equivalent what are entirely different phenomena, circumstances and consequences. And I think this is very, very serious for looking at ethnicity and multi-ethnicity.

He went on to argue that whilst applying to almost everything, social capital could not be used to explain satisfactorily 'those questions of power, conflict and

systemic sources of disadvantage and inequality which seem to me to be so germane to the problems of ethnicity'. Instead of illuminating the significant problems and challenges posed in late modern society, social capital, he argued, degrades the debate since 'it is entirely parasitical upon existing ideas, but re-clothes them with weaknesses'. Professor Fine was keen to express to delegates his reservations about the dangers of the agenda, concluding that:

It's very important to bear in mind how social capital is used – and this is my experience of policy and practice – to organise support for policies and policy contexts that have already been decided and as a way of sidelining dissent at lower levels to the implementation of those policies and against dissent moving to higher levels.

Session 2 – Civil Renewal and Governance

With this real challenge to the social capital agenda still reverberating, the discussion moved on to look at civil renewal and governance. Sanjay Dighe, Chair of London BME Councillors, provided a view from his experience of working in an ethnically diverse borough, reflecting on the challenges but reaffirming optimism about the role of local government and the success of multi-ethnic communities.

Ralph Fevre reported on research carried out while the National Assembly of Wales developed its mechanisms for involving and engaging with minority groups. Quantitative and qualitative surveys enabled a comparison between the responses of different minority groups consulted by the Assembly: women, people with disabilities, LGB organisations, and BME community organisations. Fevre pointed to a rather unexpected result of the research – namely that a top-down approach to civil renewal through the creation of networks expressly for the purpose of consultation produced a more positive response than building on existing networks. His research posed another challenge to the social capital model, he concluded:

Some commentators, and some of those charged with modernising Government in the UK, will be surprised that social capital does not seem to be a key ingredient in innovations designed to widen participation in policymaking. Social capital is normally thought to be the glue that holds society together, and building social capital is seen to be synonymous with civil renewal. Yet our research shows the groups with more social capital were much less enthusiastic about the organisations of civil society getting involved in policymaking.

It would appear that social capital does not always operate in such a way as to improve engagement with government and may in some ways be counter-productive to civil renewal.

‘New Localism’ has been the recent theme of the New Local Government Network’s policy analysis. Dan Corry spoke about the challenges new localism must respond to in order to operate effectively in a multi-ethnic society. New localism is defined as

The devolution of as much power as possible to the local level within an agreed framework of minimum standards to deliver high quality services and engaged communities.

This localism can be seen as a re-imagination of the role of local government, or the development of new structures for specific bodies such as primary care trusts, neighbourhoods or police services. Corry argued that participation needs to be viewed more flexibly given that citizens’ interests will change depending on their life-cycles. Any participatory model will need to be sensitive to ensure representation, avoid the dangers of ‘political capture’, and enable organisations to work together where appropriate. In achieving this goal, he noted that local government might have an important role to play:

... in a more pluralistic governance system, where we have different public bodies, community and voluntary bodies, the local authority clearly has a legitimacy across the spatial area that none of the other bodies has. It is elected and, hopefully, increasingly, will be elected to give community leadership rather than just be the service-deliverer, to be the voice of the community to all the other services and groups.

Session 3 – Community Use of Social Capital

Alison Gilchrist (Community Development Foundation) and Avila Kilmurray (Community Foundation Northern Ireland) shared a panel to discuss practical ways in which the civil renewal and social capital agenda can be used in communities. Gilchrist noted that community is often seen and felt to have been imposed from outside, leading to resistance, short-lived alliances, and a failure to take diversity into account. Community development offers a response to this model:

It’s a way of working to create, nurture and shape the social conditions, the social environment whereby vibrant communities can emerge and then in turn foster the evolution of a myriad of self-organised groups, networks and organisations.

Avila Kilmurray shared her experience of working in often divided communities in Northern Ireland. The very real conflict in Northern Ireland had encouraged policymakers to use social capital as a way of understanding the barriers that build up within a community and had framed a great deal of work in building relationships across communities.

... the Community Foundation has found social capital a useful concept. The reality is, in headline terms, Northern Ireland has a lot of 'bonded' communities, but lags behind in any sense of 'bridging' social capital.

Both speakers noted that whilst social capital might be a useful policy tool:

Community Development and Social Capital must be considered in the broader policy and political context of the distribution of power and resources.

Session 4 – On Achievement

A paper from Trevor Phillips concluded the conference. His emphasis was to relate discussion on social capital and civil renewal to the other current debates on migration, integration multiculturalism and equality. He was keen to express the need for our discussions to be focused on achieving goals rather than indulgent navel-gazing. He was clear that the emphasis in considering social capital is to have some impact on changing the way in which the state operates rather than changing communities themselves:

...when we're thinking about social capital, we shouldn't just be thinking about what individuals do and how people live next door to each other. We also have to think about the way institutions work, schools and governments, and so on.

A group of delegates then moved on to the Museum of Immigration and Diversity in Princelet Street to see how communities have impacted on our shared histories and consider how immigration has required institutions to be developed and neighbourhoods to adapt to ensure that all can thrive. Others left to watch England's multi-ethnic footballers play their final game in Euro 2004.

Rob Berkeley is Deputy Director of the Runnymede Trust

Social Capital and Ethnic Diversity

Quantitative and Survey Data

Bobby Duffy MORI Research Director

*Bobby Duffy's paper looks at three things that are directly related to social capital: **participation**, **local engagement** and **trust**; and evaluates how they relate to ethnic diversity. Then, he considers two related issues: **immigration** and how ethnic diversity relates to views of **local services**.*

There are, as you all know, many definitions of social capital. This is a common example that is often quoted:

'networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups' (Cote and Healy 2001: 41)

I'm not going to examine all the different types of social capital, but I am going to look at how it's measured, particularly in social surveys. And this includes indicators such as those listed here.

- Social relationships and support
- Formal and informal social networks
- Group membership
- Community and civic engagement
- Norms and values

- Reciprocal activities
- Levels of trust in others

(Source: Measuring Social Capital in the United Kingdom, ONS)

Links between Ethnic Diversity and Social Capital

The link between ethnic diversity and social capital is mostly seen as a negative one, though it has to be said that the evidence comes mostly from the US. Work by Costa and Kahn (2002) has brought together 15 studies which have shown that, when ethnic diversity is higher, lots of aspects of social capital are lower. So, trust is lower, participation is lower and then even things like public acceptance of taxation and spending on particular services such as education are lower when diversity is higher.

People will also be aware of work by Robert Putnam, which shows that trust is lower in more diverse areas even within each individual ethnic group (Putnam 2000). But, I think it's true to say that the evidence from the UK is much more limited, mainly because it hasn't existed until very recently. However, even among the limited evidence that we do have so far, it seems that the picture is less clear-cut.

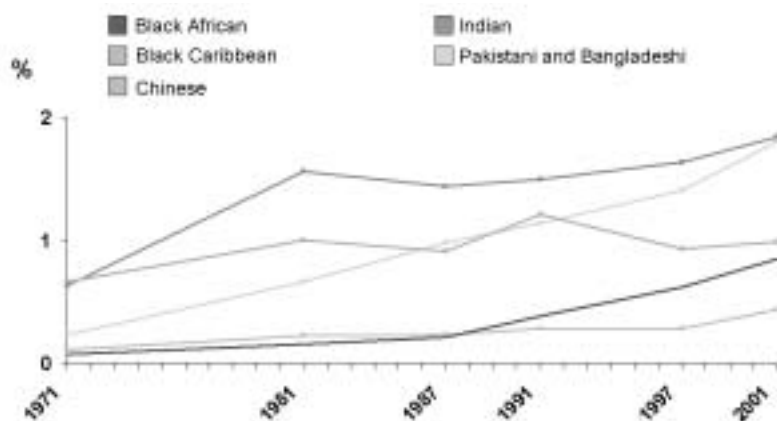
Ethnic Diversity and Participation

I'm going to start by looking at ethnic diversity and participation trends in the UK, and how these have changed over time. And the first thing to say on this is that there has been an increase in ethnic diversity in Britain over the past 30 years or so.

It was surprisingly hard to get data on these types of trends, – and that's why we've ended up, in Figure 1, with Pakistani and Bangladeshi grouped together; but you can see that the trend is generally for an increase in diversity, mainly among Asian groups. So following on from that, if you've seen this increase in diversity and diversity is related to a decline in participation, you would expect to see similar trends of a decline of participation in the UK. But, in fact, you don't really see that at all.

This is MORI aggregate data (in Figure 2) that we've been collecting since the early 1970s on people's level of participation in a range of different activities. I've just picked out three (2b–2d) and you can see that these types of activities in the UK are actually stable or rising in some cases. And looking at these three in turn, you can say that we're certainly not bowling alone as they are in the US.

Figure 1. Proportion of ethnic minority groups in GB

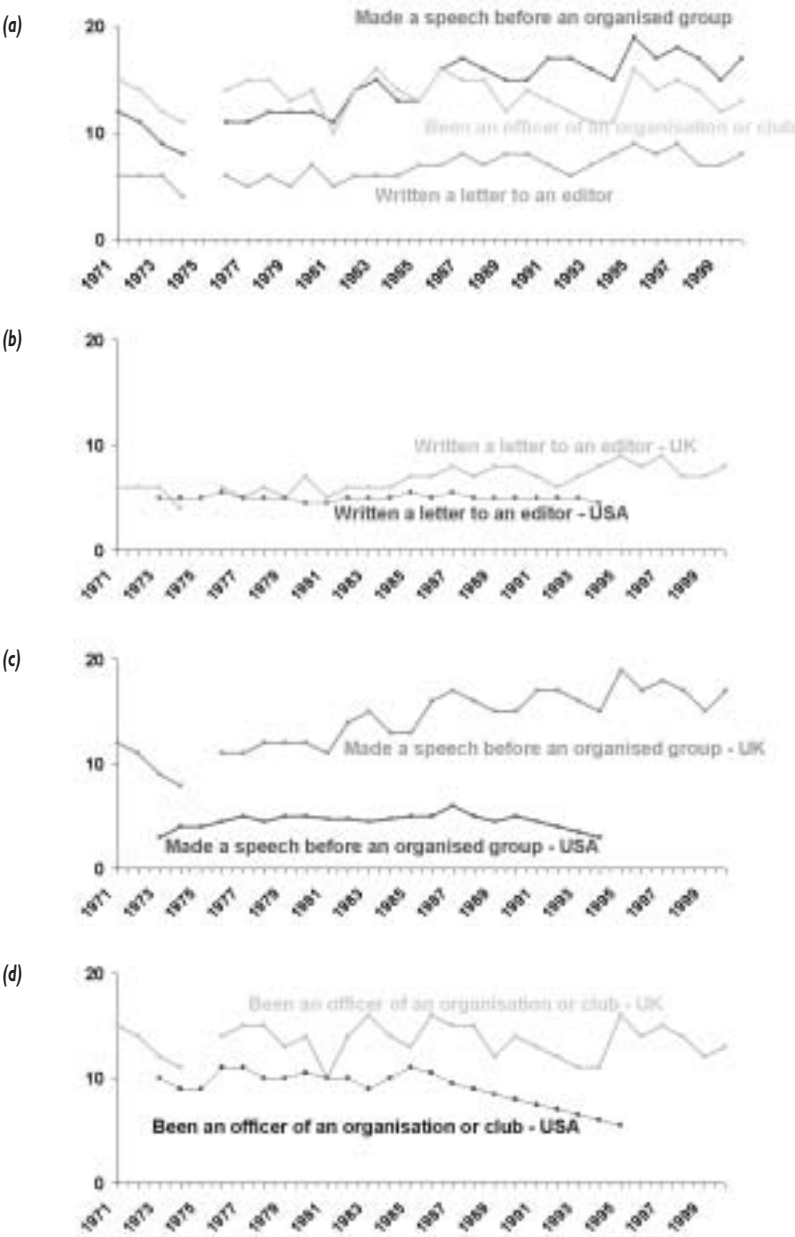


Source: MORI aggregate data

You can say that maybe we're moaning alone, given that we're increasing our letter-writing to editors, which is an interesting trend in the UK. You can also say that we're moaning at each other, to an extent, because we do seem to make an awful lot of speeches to organized groups – a lot more than in the US at any point in the past – and still an increasing trend, where the US is tailing off. But, probably more important for this type of discussion about social capital, is that we're much more likely to be members or officers of an organization or a club in the UK, when it's tailing off quite substantially in the US.

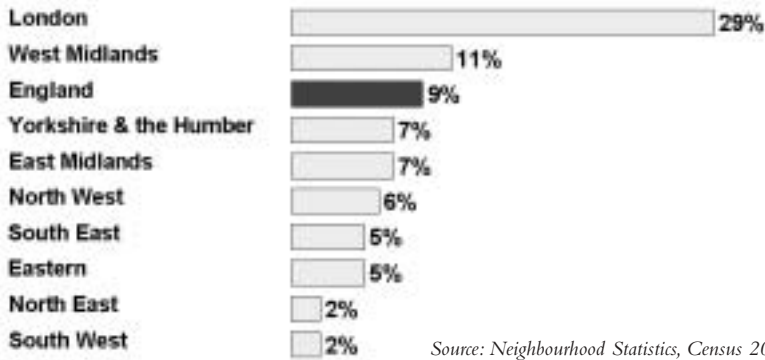
So, not the same trends that you see in the US, but then, would you really expect ethnic diversity to have that type of impact, particularly since changes have actually been very uneven over the years? And you can see that in Figure 3 – this is just from 1987 – but you can see that the increase in ethnic diversity across the UK as a whole has largely been a function of increase in ethnic diversity in London. There have been increases in other regions but it's really London that's been driving that change. So you wouldn't really expect to see changes in participation across the UK as a whole; and perhaps we should be looking at it at a more local level. You can see the current situation in terms of ethnic diversity quite easily in this bar chart. It's largely London, and to an extent the West Midlands that are the diverse regions, and then you go down to the Northeast and the Southwest, where diversity is very low indeed.

Figure 2. Activity in the UK is stable or rising



Source: MORI aggregate data

Figure 3. Proportion of ethnic minority residents by region



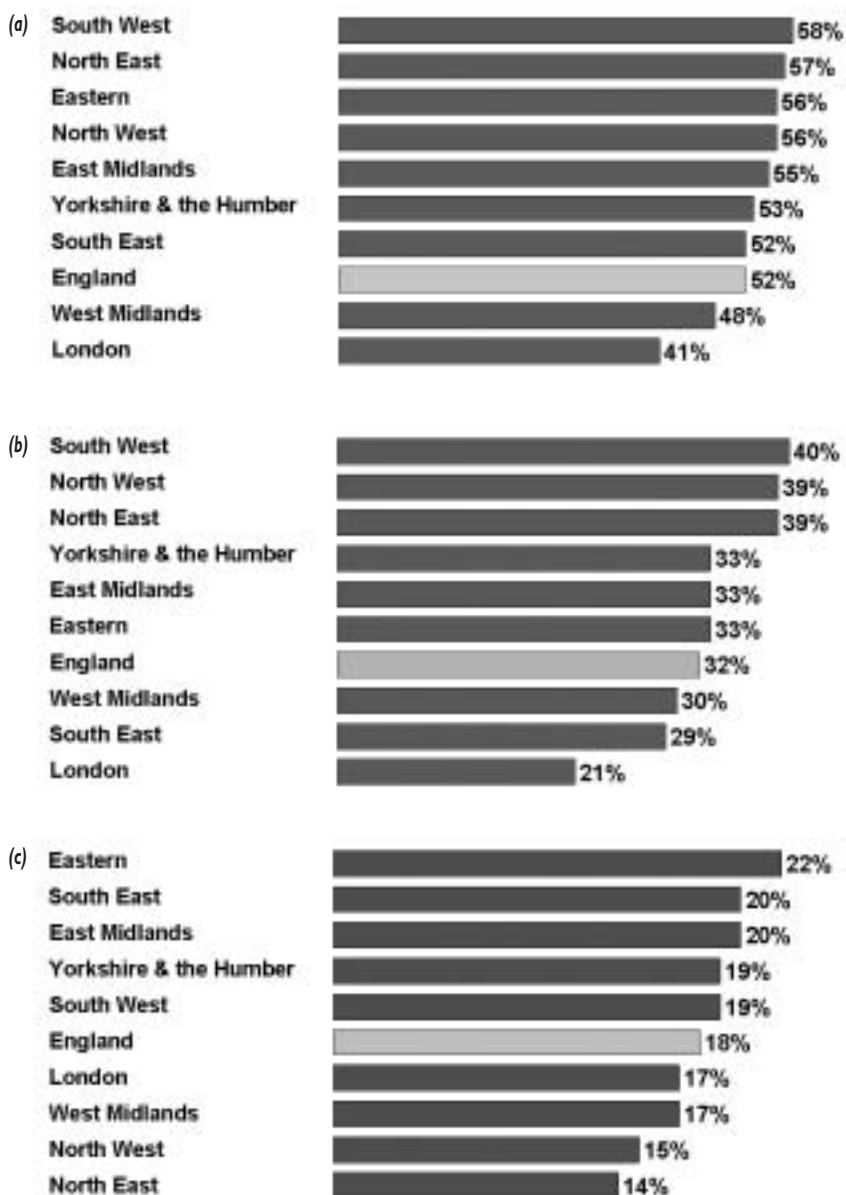
Regional Patterns

It might be useful to look at these types of indicators of social capital on a regional level – this may give an insight into whether civic engagement and local networks have some relationships to diversity, given the differences in ethnic diversity between regions. This is data from the Social Capital module of the General Household Survey 2000 (Figures 4a–c), and looking first at reciprocity (Figure 4a) their measure is whether they feel neighbours look out for each other, whether they’ve done or received a favour. And you can see that there is some relationship between how diverse a region is and the levels of reciprocity – where the most diverse regions (London and the West Midlands) are at the bottom of the bar graph as they have lower levels of reciprocity. The least diverse regions tend to have higher levels of reciprocity.

Again, with neighbourliness (Figure 4b), ONS construct a neighbourliness score, which is whether you know, speak to or trust neighbours, or do or receive favours. Here London is once more firmly at the bottom of the list. The Southeast, a much less diverse region, though, pops in between London and the West Midlands. But again, the least diverse regions at the top of the graph are the highest in the neighbourliness scores. That type of relationship breaks down a little bit when you look at civic engagement (Figure 4c) – which in these terms is whether they’re involved in local organisations, feel informed, feel they can influence local decisions and a few other measures. Here we see one of the least diverse regions, the Northeast, is the one least likely to feel civically engaged.

So, again, there’s evidence of some relationship but this is very basic analysis; all we’re looking at here is the relationship between the levels of these factors of social capital and the regions.

Figure 4. Scores by region (a) high reciprocity, (b) neighbourliness, (c) feel civically engaged

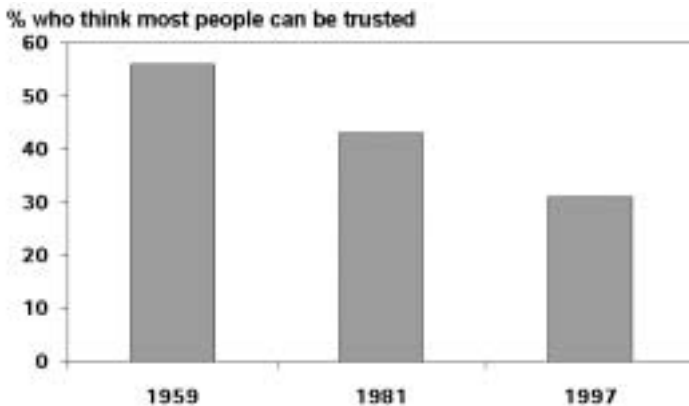


Source: Social Capital Module of the General Household Survey 2000

A Question of Trust

Two main problems arise from using the regional pattern as the basis for cross-comparing levels of social capital. Firstly, regions are obviously too large and the levels of diversity within them are too variable to be comparable in themselves – so we’re not looking at small enough areas. But lots of other factors that haven’t got anything to do with ethnic diversity vary by region, and could themselves increase the visibility of those types of differences between regions. So we wanted to look at a more detailed analysis, and to try to control for those factors within it; we’ve done that on levels of generalised trust.

Figure 5. We are losing trust in each other



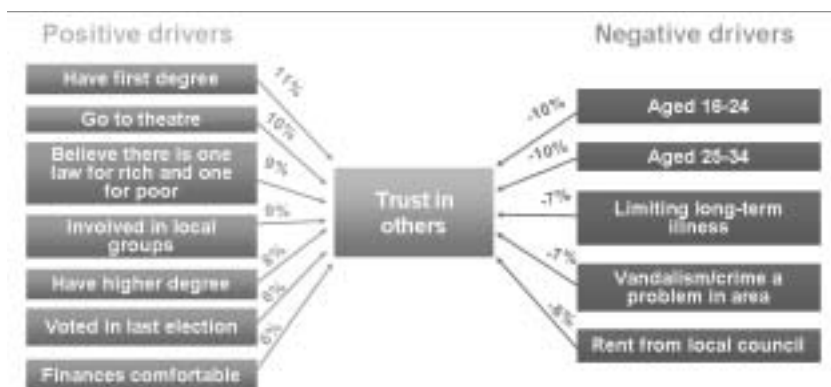
Source: World Values Survey quoted in lectures by Richard Layard 2002/3 – Happiness: has social science a clue?

The first thing to say about trust is that we are losing trust in each other (as Figure 5 shows). Comparing 1959 with 1997, the proportion of people that say that other people can be trusted has just about halved, from 55% down to around 30%. Now there’s some dispute about these figures and other surveys report different levels, but there’s definitely been some serious decline in the levels of reported trust in other people.

In an effort to understand why that was happening, we undertook a study to explain what drives different levels of trust among people. This was a study for the Cabinet Office using data from the British Household Panel Survey, which is a very big study: 15,000 interviews and about 250 variables of lots of different demographic characteristics that you could expect to be related to levels of trust. We also added area factors to the mix: deprivation levels but also ethnic diversity

and things related to ethnic diversity, such as the level of urbanity, to try to control for those elements. And then we used a statistical technique called ‘regression’, which just tells you what factors are most related, controlling for all the other factors. So it’s more sophisticated than just looking at straightforward associations. And the results from that type of regression analysis can be shown in a chart like Figure 6, which gives the positive and negative drivers of trust.

Figure 6. Trust – a middle-class luxury?



Source: MORI

Positive Drivers of Trust

The first driver that emerges, the most important thing in how trusting people are going to be, is whether they have a first degree or not. So, it’s got a strong relationship with education. Then, the next most important thing to come out, rather surprisingly to us, is the extent to which people go to the theatre. We’re not saying that going to the theatre increases levels of trust, it’s not that we want policies to encourage theatre-going across the country as a whole, it’s just a fact that people who go to the theatre tend to be more trusting for all sorts of reasons.

The third driver is that people who believe there’s one law for the rich and a different one for the poor are also more likely to be trusting. We tend to characterise this as a sort of *Guardian*-reading, liberal approach to that is also associated with trusting other people. Fourth, being involved in local groups, is positively related to trust in others. Again, we’re not saying that being involved in local groups is a causal factor, but that the people who are more trusting are more likely to be involved in local groups. Fifth on the list, even higher levels of

education seem to be a positive driver – people who have higher degrees are more trusting; as is voting in the last election (sixth), as you’d expect. And finally, for the positive drivers, having comfortable finances (seventh) tends to be related to higher levels of trust.

Trust, when looked at from these positive drivers, is a middle-class luxury.

Negative Drivers of Trust

The things that are negatively related with trust – at the top of the list: being aged 16–24, and being aged 25–34 – show that anyone who’s relatively young is less trusting. Then next in order come: illness – having a limiting long-term illness (third); or experiencing vandalism and crime as a problem in the area (fourth); and renting from the local council (fifth). So some area aspects emerge here, with vandalism and crime in the local area being a problem, but the important point is that, in contrast to American studies, ethnic diversity in the area doesn’t register at all, in this prediction of trust, from this particular data-set.

Most and Least Trusting

But that’s not all we can do with the data. We can take the analysis further, looking at who trusts most and least, using a different statistical technique but using the same data-set. And this technique, basically, breaks down the population, as represented by this survey, into the most and least trusting people in the country.

So the first thing that comes out of the model (see Figure 7), the thing most associated with trust, is having a first degree or not having a first degree. The model breaks the data down into those two groups, then breaks them down further into the most different groups, in terms of levels of trust, that it can within each group. For those having a first degree, the factor most associated with levels of trust is whether they want to move or not. Among those who don’t have a first degree, it’s whether they rent from the council or not. And the model goes on doing this, keeps breaking it down till at one end you’ve got the most trusting people, and at the other end you’ve got the least trusting people in the country.

Figure 8 then profiles the most and least trusting people in the country. And the first group, the most trusting people, have a first degree, don’t want to move and are involved in local groups. Quite surprisingly to me, that’s just 2% of the population, but they do have very high levels of trust. But, from our point of view, the more interesting group is those who are least trusting. Again, just 2% of the

Figure 7. The most and least trusting people in the country (1)

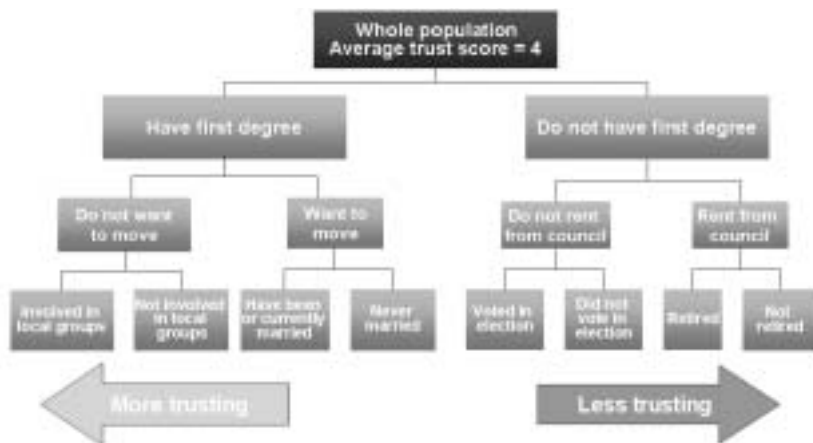
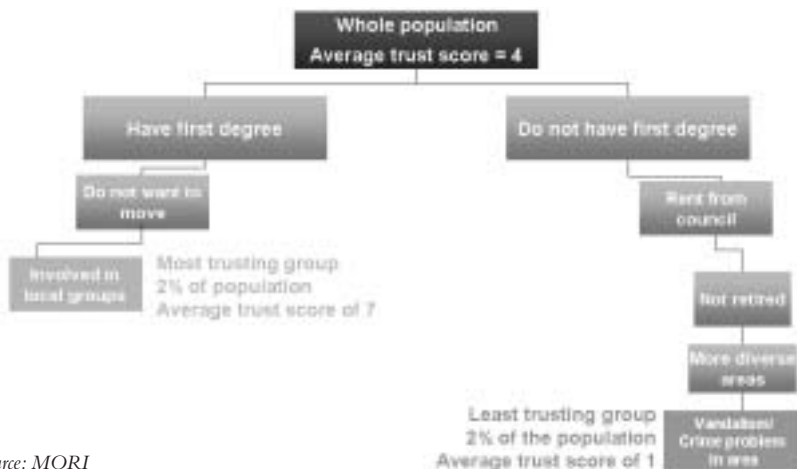


Figure 8. The most and least trusting people in the country (2)

Source: MORI

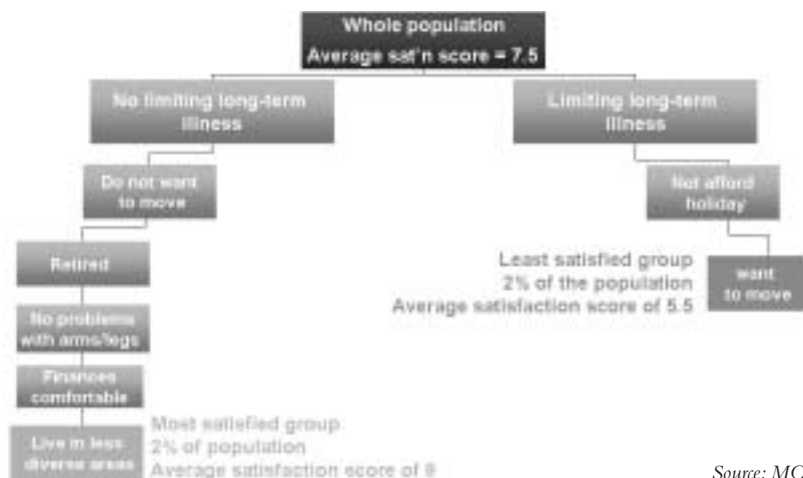


Source: MORI

population, but they don't have a first degree, they rent from the council, they're not retired, vandalism and crime are a problem in the area – as we've already seen in Figures 6 and 7 – but also they live in more ethnically diverse areas.

So, here we do see ethnic diversity having some impact on levels of trust when we look at these more extreme groups, which is more in line with US and International evidence. As the core of this project for the Cabinet Office was also about life satisfaction, we did the same sort of analysis on life satisfaction and in Figure 9 we can see the same sort of output from this technique, looking at the

Figure 9. Diversity also linked to life satisfaction...



Source: MORI

extreme groups, about who are the happiest people in the country. This basically tells you who are the happiest people in the country. Looking at the least happy first, these are people who have a limiting long-term illness, who can't afford a holiday – which we find is a good proxy indicator of wealth – and who want to move from their current home. They are the least happy people, with a low life-satisfaction score.

But the most happy people are basically healthy, fairly well-off, retired people, but, again, they also live in less ethnically diverse areas. So we see ethnic diversity coming through again.

We see some evidence of similar patterns to those seen in the US, but the evidence is not as strong, and ethnic diversity doesn't seem to be as related to social capital in this country as it is in the US. And this is kind of backed up when you ask people themselves what they think is the main reason why we're losing community spirit (see Figure 10, part of a study for *Prospect* magazine).

What these respondents think are the main reasons behind loss of community spirit, which we used as a proxy for social-capital-type factors, is that people work longer hours, and they spend more time on individualised entertainment, like TV and the Internet – which corresponds to some extent with Robert Putnam's work in *Bowling Alone*. There's also evidence here that people see a connection between community spirit and population mobility; and it's only

Figure 10. Why people think we're losing community spirit

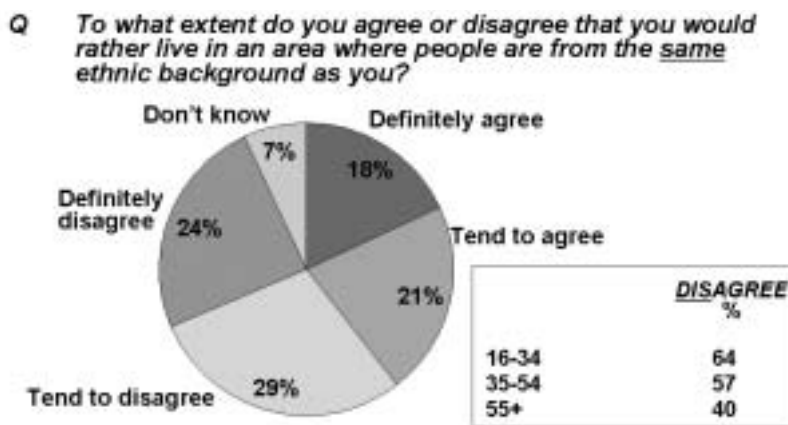


Source: MORI Community Questionnaire 28 Nov to 1 Dec 2003 (base: 1000 British adults 16+)

after these reasons that people start to raise the potential impact of more newcomers to the country, including asylum-seekers, and make the negative correlation between this and community spirit.

Maybe less encouragingly, there is still a significant minority who would choose homogeneity in the area they live in (Figure 11). We asked people: 'to what extent do you agree or disagree that you'd rather live in an area where people are from the same ethnic background as you?' And around 40%, around 4 in 10 people, do actually say that they'd prefer this. I suppose the more encouraging thing about this is how it breaks down by age, and is very highly

Figure 11. Significant minority would choose homogeneity in their local area



Source: MORI (base: all respondents)

related to age. Disagreement is much higher among younger age groups, so, it's a more encouraging picture than it might at first seem.

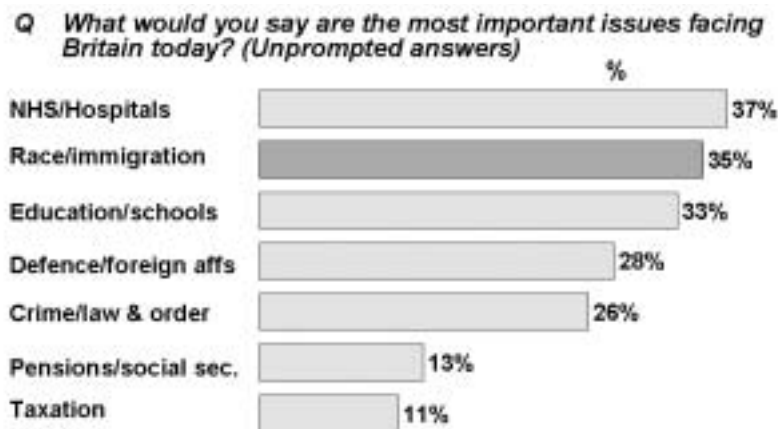
The impact of diversity on social capital is clearly not directly related to immigration and asylum, but it would be remiss not to raise the connection given what we see in our studies, where the public themselves often confuse them.

'Most Important Issues' Surveys

As part of our survey pattern we ask every other month 'what are the most important issues facing Britain as a whole?' The pattern that we've been finding (see Figure 12) puts race and immigration issues second only to NHS hospitals in the public estimation. We've been finding, for the past 18 months, that it's moved to the top of people's agenda, ahead of education, schools, defence, foreign affairs, crime.

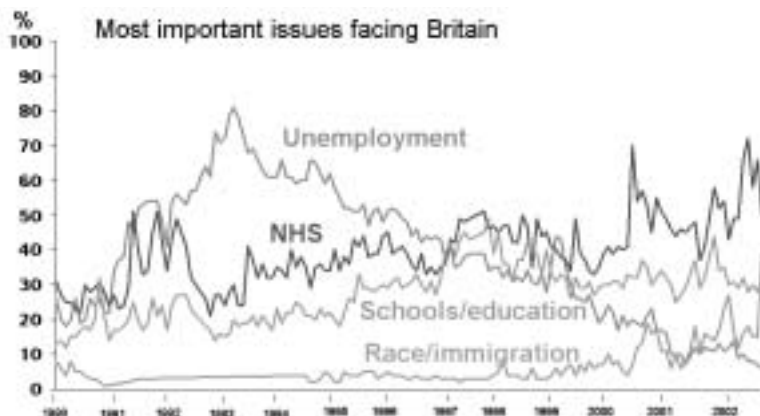
You can see the rise of this issue better in Figure 13, which plots trends from the early 1990s. People are no longer concerned about unemployment. That has really tailed off. We've seen the rise of concern about public services, the NHS, schools and education, but, in one sense, the real story of recent times has been how the rise in concern about race and immigration has come from just about nothing, bubbling along at the bottom of the graph throughout the 1990s, then shooting up to extraordinary levels in 2003/4. There are all sorts of reasons why, but the nature of media coverage of the issue has to be a key cause.

Figure 12. Most important issues



Source: MORI Political Monitor, February 2004 (base: 1000 British adults 18+)

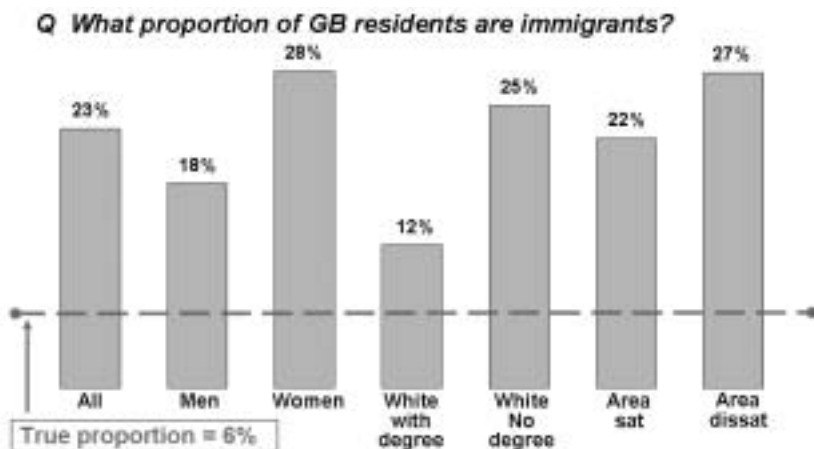
Figure 13. The rising importance of race and immigration



Source: MORI (base: 2000 British adults)

You can see that, to some extent, with the huge over-estimate of numbers of immigrants in the country shown in Figure 14. People guess at 23% as the average overall proportion of Britain made up of first-generation immigrants, whereas the actual proportion is more like 6%, depending on which figures you look at. So people have a hugely overblown notion of the numbers involved.

Figure 14. Huge overestimate of the numbers of immigrants in GB



Source: MORI (base: all GB adults aged 16+ [822])

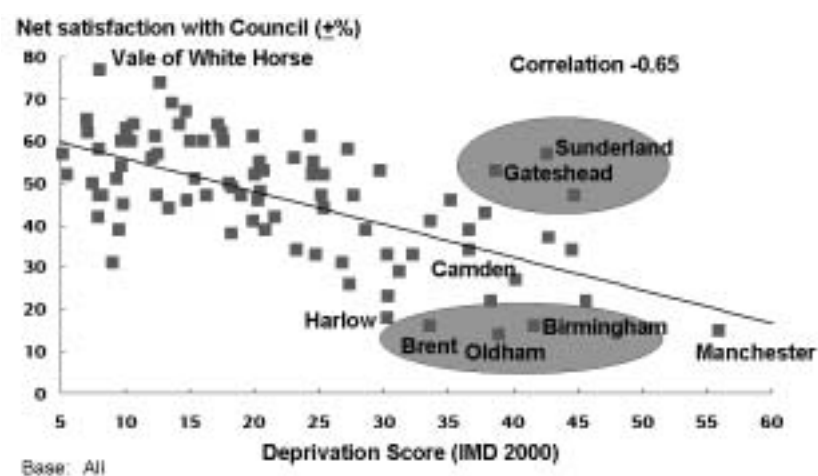
Ethnic Diversity and Local Government Services

The final thing that I want to look at is, again, not so much directly related to social capital but very important, and something that we're seeing increasingly – the relationship of ethnic diversity to ratings of public services.

From work we did a while back we've known that deprivation levels relate strongly to satisfaction with local government, so the more deprived an area is, the less satisfied people tend to be with local government services. There are all sorts of reasons why this might be the case – including the fact that diverse areas also tend to be more deprived areas and we know that service needs are generally more complex and difficult to meet in deprived areas. But, we've seen that more ethnically diverse deprived areas have lower satisfaction with local councils than homogeneous deprived areas, and you see that to an extent in Figure 15 which plots surveys for individual local authority clients.

Satisfaction can be read off the vertical axis – each square represents a client MORI has worked with – deprivation along the horizontal axis. And you can see there's quite a strong relationship; so the more deprived an area is, the less satisfied people are with council services, which came as quite a shock to some local councils. But, more importantly for this debate, it tends to be the more homogeneous local authority areas that achieve higher than you'd expect from

Figure 15. Satisfaction with council vs area deprivation score

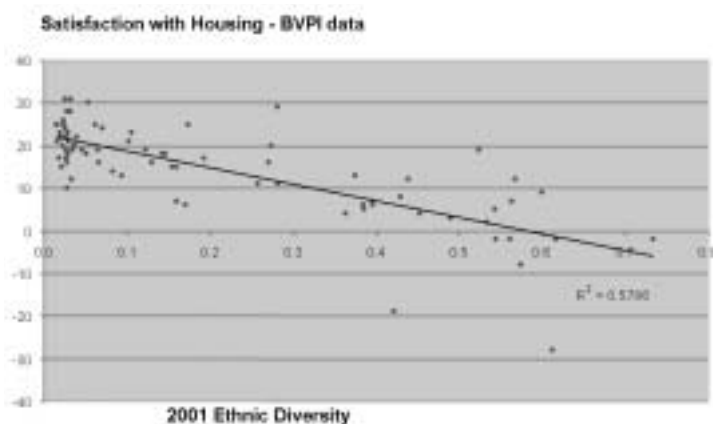


Source: MORI analysis

their deprivation levels. So compare perceptions of Sunderland and Gateshead with the more diverse and lower-scoring local authority areas like Brent, Oldham and Birmingham. When we put all this into a model, it actually reveals ethnic diversity as a significant factor, even controlling for deprivation, in how people view their local council.

This effect is visible again in some more recent work (see Figure 16), looking at views of council housing services, plotting satisfaction with council housing services directly against ethnic diversity. Here you see a very strong direct relationship: the more ethnically diverse an area is (horizontal axis), the less satisfied people are with their council housing service (vertical axis).

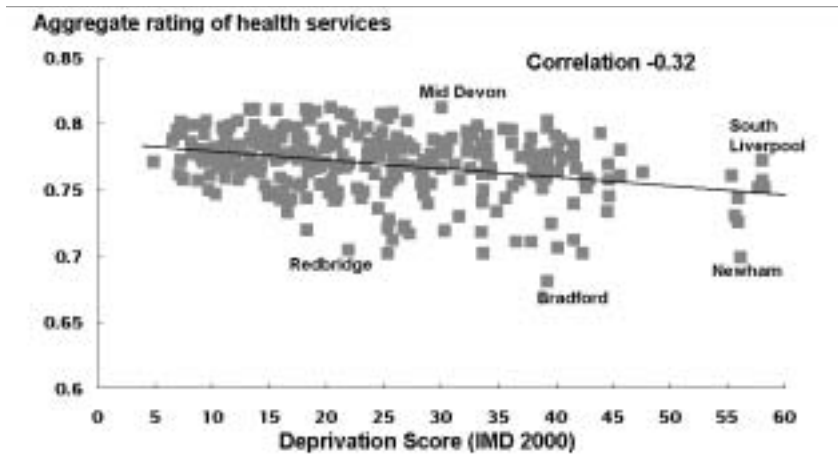
Figure 16. Ethnic diversity and satisfaction with housing services



Source: MORI analysis

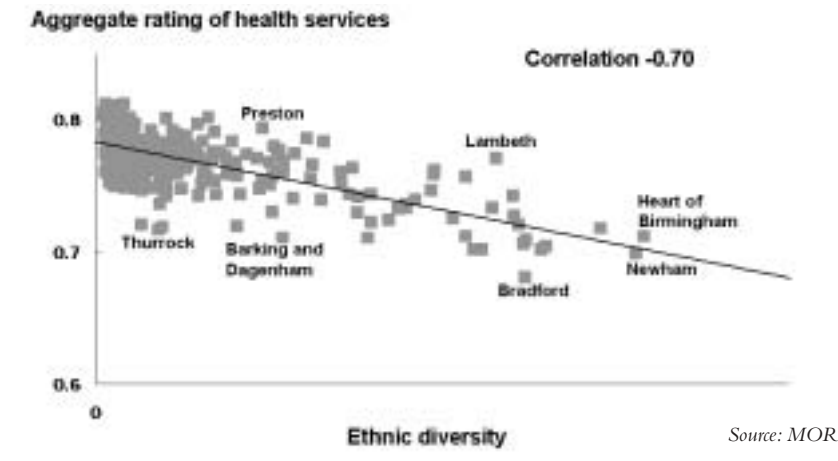
But it's not just council services. Work we've recently published (Frontiers of Performance in the NHS, June 2004) on health services (see Figure 17) shows a Primary Care Trust service rating – every Primary Care Trust has to survey their patients now – which we've modelled against a range of factors to do with the local area and objective service performance. We expected, once again, to see deprivation emerge as a predictor of different levels of satisfaction with Primary Care Trusts, but it didn't come out that strongly at all. But ethnic diversity, measured through a variable called 'ethnic fractionalisation' comes out very strongly as a predictor of how satisfied patients are with Primary Care Trusts (see Figure 18).

Figure 17. Weak relationship between rating of Primary Care Trust services and deprivation



Source: MORI

Figure 18. Strong relationship between rating of Primary Care Trust services and ethnic fractionalisation



Source: MORI

One of the main conclusions from this is that while we're now very used to thinking about allocating resources based on the level of deprivation in an area, if you look at people's views of services, it is at least as important for us to allocate resources and target services on the basis of ethnic diversity. We'll be taking this forward in future work.

Conclusions

First, there is some evidence that ethnic diversity is related to aspects of social capital, and to other attitudes such as life satisfaction – it doesn't seem to be as strongly related as in America, but there still is some evidence. However, it's very important to avoid coming to simplistic conclusions based on this type of evidence, as what's being presented is in no way an argument for less diversity or greater segregation. It's not possible and it wouldn't help if it could. As David Halpern says in his paper, diversity and mobility are important for economic and social success and what we really need to do is learn from international experience – US and other international experience – both good and bad. David's looking more at the policy responses, how you can actually do something about this; but from our point of view, we suggest having a particular local focus, something that encourages more local mixing and local focus, seems to be key to improving levels of community cohesion and social capital.

We know how difficult this is from the New Deal for Communities experience, where we're involved with the evaluation. There are both good and bad stories from that, and they highlight not just how difficult it is to encourage local capacity, but also how important it is to achieve it. We see how important it is to have something tangible at stake when you are bringing people together – actual, proper control of local services.

But, we still need a better understanding of the issues and people's views. This is quite basic analysis. We need to do more work on it and I know that new work under way on the Citizenship Survey 2003 will be out later in 2004, which should help. That work will include a very useful case study element, a local areas boost that we're involved in, which has 20 case study areas exploring why levels of trust and engagement are higher and lower in particular areas.

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Is Social Capital a Useful Policy Tool in a Multi-ethnic Britain?

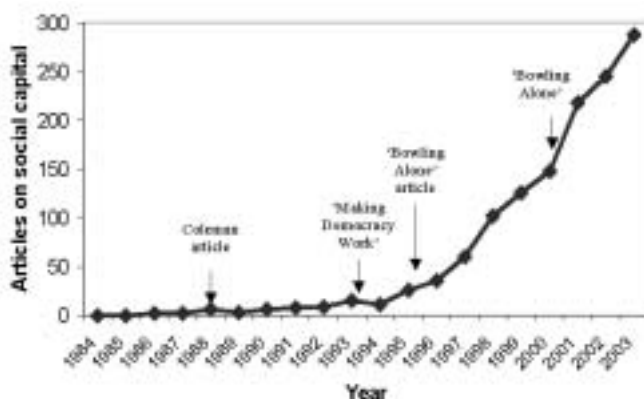
David Halpern Prime Minister's Strategy Unit

Following on from Bobby Duffy's statistics, the kind of facts and figures that we all engage with, David Halpern acknowledges that he is the one presenting rather more of the dry theory. Here his aim is to talk about 'some issues of definition, some of theory', to which Ben Fine responds critically in the presentation that follows. David Halpern also speaks about why 'we as policymakers are interested in the idea of social capital' and looks at 'some of the policy implications' of that interest.

What is social capital? I think most of us already have a sense of what it is. There's a lot of interest in it, both in the policy and in the academic community. Figure 1 is a graph which, of course, Ben Fine has helped to generate in some sense, which shows numbers of articles written about social capital over the last 20-odd years. This kind of growth rate was particularly troublesome for me because when I came to the Strategy Unit 3 years ago and was trying to finish a book on social capital, every time I'd go back to this list, there'd be about another 300 articles on it, so it was a nightmare to keep up with the reading.

But you can see, essentially, that this concept really comes to the fore in the early to mid-1990s. Bob Putnam, who wrote a relatively obscure book on Italy

Figure 1. Growing interest in social capital expressed by the rise in academic articles on the subject 1984–2003



Source: see Halpern (2005)¹

and why it was that some regions appeared to perform better than others,² essentially concluded that it seemed to have little to do with the sums of money they got or the differences in the structure of the governance, but more to do with, essentially, how vibrant the community was. The caricature of it was that the number of choral societies seemed to predict how efficient their government was.

He came back to the States and started talking about it in the US context and saying that these same kinds of measures that seemed to be important in the Italian context appeared to be declining fast in the US. He wrote some articles in the mid-1990s and then, subsequently, his book in 2000.³ So we're now running at 300 or 400 articles a year on social capital. Of course, many of them aren't what *I* would call 'social capital' but nonetheless they've got 'social capital' in the title.

The classic example is the one actually raised by Coleman in his very early article on social capital.⁴ He cited the New York diamond market to make the

point that here was a market which worked amazingly efficiently. It was more or less coterminous with a religious, Jewish community. People would, essentially, give each other a bag of diamonds to look at over a weekend, with no written contract involved and no insurance. An enormously efficient system, it rests, essentially, on a social network and on high levels of trust

¹ David Halpern (2005) *Social Capital*. Cambridge: Polity Press (forthcoming).

² Robert D. Putnam (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

³ Robert D. Putnam (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

⁴ James S. Coleman (1988) 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital', *American Journal of Sociology* 94: 95–120.

between the members. So you can see how it would have enormous value in some circumstances for those who were part of the network. It is a multi-level concept in the sense that it functions on the individual level, also at community level and even at higher aggregate levels. In addition we have to think of it a bit like a vitamin model in that not all forms of social capital are good in all circumstances, but what you tend to find is, in terms of the consequences, most of us need a varied mix of different types of social network, types of social capital.

So, the definition: we've already touched on it, but the standard ones are to do with your social network, who you know. But it's also to do with the norms of reciprocity and exchange in particular, with the common link being that they facilitate cooperative action; they enable people to get along with each other for their own, and for mutual, advantage.

Many commentators have focused on decline, and I just want to say something about transformation. What I think is happening is not about decline, whether things are falling apart. To me, the main story is that the type of social capital that is important in modern times is changing, so it's a transformation story.

Now, the complexity of Figure 2 is supposed to try and convey something about these definitions of social capital – the way in which people talk about it in the field – at individual level, the meso or community level and at macro level. So we can talk about (1) who you know. Who do you know? Who is in your filofax? You can talk about your network, as it were, on an individual level and it turns out often to be quite important. It is claimed that 80% of people get jobs through those they know; they hear about them informally. Your network seems to have considerable consequences. We can talk about it at the (2) community level: how internally cohesive is a community? And we can also, arguably, talk about it at a higher level (3) that's normally about norms of trust and reciprocity. There are quite marked national differences too, as you can see later when we look at Figure 3.

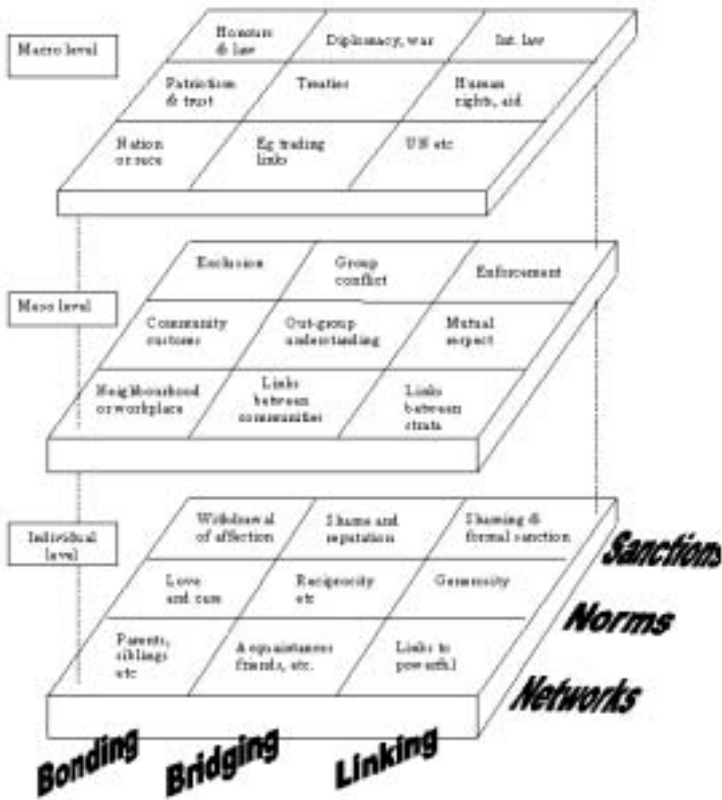
People also define social capital on the basis of the dimensions of social networks – and Putnam increasingly these days seems to talk about it just as networks – social norms, particularly about reciprocity and, arguably, also about sanctions: it's about how people regulate if someone doesn't play by the rules.

The last dimension that's often talked about is the distinction between bonding, bridging and, sometimes, linking social capital (see Figure 2). And,

essentially, the difference is:

- ‘Bonding’ often refers to knowing people who are very much like yourself, you’ve got a strong sense of internal cohesion;
- ‘Bridging’ tends to refer to the extent to which your networks include people who are very different from yourself, so the network bridges across between you and them;
- and ‘Linking’, which is the extent to which, in your social network, there are connections between people with very different levels of power.

Figure 2. A conceptual map of social capital



So it all makes quite a complicated story, but I think that level of complexity is necessary.

We can talk about it just in terms of social networks, etc., but we can't quite understand what's going on, and in terms of the vitamin model, it turns out that different aspects of social capital matter for different things. So, generally speaking, having just one kind of social capital – e.g. a very strong sense of internal cohesion in a community but without connections to a wider community – will put you at a disadvantage, at least in some contexts.

Measurement

There has been a lot of discussion about measurement, but in some ways the canonical measure – the most widely used measure – is social trust. And part of the reason for it is that when you use much more complex measures, you often find that the single simplest kind of explanatory variable – the thing that counts the most – is social trust. And it's captured in the question 'Generally speaking, do you think other people can be trusted?'

Actually, if we look at the UK data Bobby Duffy presented, about 30–40% of people would generally say that most others can be trusted. But interestingly, there are regional variations, and very substantial national variations as well.

In some survey data from the early 1990s, Scandinavian countries have very high levels of social trust (roughly, two-thirds of the population, consistently, would say most others can be trusted). At the other end of a scale of 42 countries (World Values Survey on Trust between Strangers) is Brazil with 6% of the population who say most others can be trusted. Britain appears at number 11 from the 'high levels of trust' end of the scale, with 44% of the population agreeing that 'most people can be trusted'. These variations are very substantial and also of interest to policymakers in that they appear to predict a lot of the responses that policymakers care about as I'll try and demonstrate here.

Social Capital – a Declining Asset?

A lot of discussion is going on about what's happening to social capital: is it going down, is it not? And, of course, to investigate this thoroughly you have to look at the different components listed in (Figure 3), but let's just go with the social trust question at first.

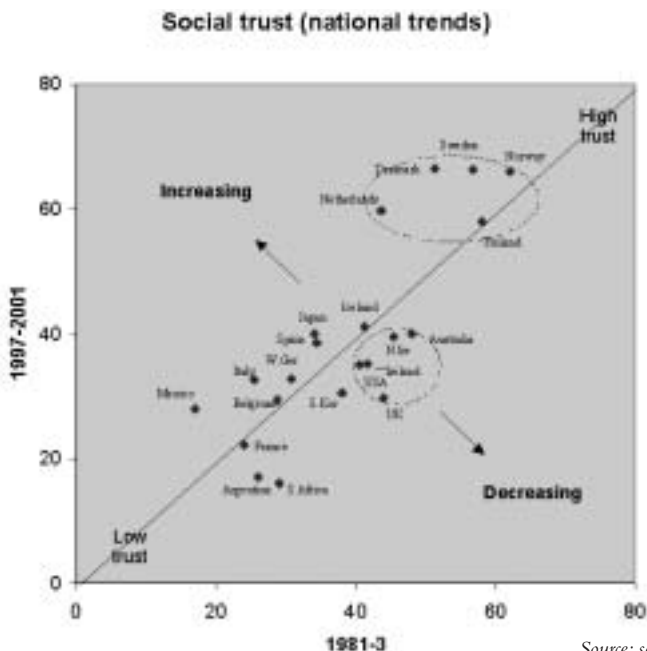
Along the bottom axis we've got levels of trust in the early 1980s. Along the vertical axis we can read levels of social trust in the late 1990s. If we were to look for Brazil on this chart it would be right down at the bottom LH corner, and Scandinavian countries are clustered at the top RH corner. And, interestingly, in

contrast to the US where social trust and some other measures have also been declining, you'll notice that Scandinavian countries have actually been moving towards higher levels of social trust, not lower.

In contrast, the Anglo-Saxon countries as a whole, tightly bunched here in Figure 3, have actually been showing a drift towards lower levels of social trust. It's not only in the UK that levels are falling. Were we to add more countries to that graph we would see more contrasts: China would be up at the high trust level, but falling back; India would be a little above Iceland, actually, and rising somewhat. South Africa is already quite low and falling dramatically.

A lot of papers on social capital talk about it in a universally positive way. Like other forms of capital, social capital is often used for the bad and has negative outcomes. A couple of examples: at the level of peer groups, we all know the example of the old boys' networks – work wonderfully for the old boys, not so well for everyone else. At the meso or community level the mafia is often cited as, clearly, a form of social capital, but most people wouldn't regard it as a good. And at the macro level, of course, it is often expressed as conflict between groups. So Northern Ireland, for example, is a country which

Figure 3. Social trust – national trends of growth and decline



Source: see Halpern (2005)

exhibits on many measures quite high levels of social capital but, of course, you also get very high levels of conflict between those relatively high social capital groups.

Social Capital and Ethnicity

About ethnicity: in the limited timeframe for this presentation I can't deal with the full richness of this area, but let me make a few points. One of the classic areas of interest in the social capital literature are stories about migration and survival, and it's partly about how the concept helps you understand what happens. Often, we see patterns of chain migration in many countries, many cultures, where people first of all will create movement within and between family and other kinds of social networks. And they often come to an area or a country with relatively impoverished levels of social capital, and they'll rely heavily on these, their own, social networks. Interestingly, what often happens is – in order to then break through economically into the wider community – you have to then leave behind many of those early social networks. One of the classic examples is that many immigrants in many countries will change their names over a period of time. Because otherwise they may feel overwhelmed as waves of new immigrants arrive that draw on their own resources and their own networks, and they have to decide to leave that part of their life behind. In fact my own great-great-grandparents would have come from Prussia and Central Europe and, essentially, they are an example of this experience: after a generation they changed their names, and so on.

Ethnic Penalties

One of my colleagues, Shamit Saggar, has done a lot of work on ethnic penalties, work which partly illustrates some of these issues. We know that many ethnic groups in the UK, as well as in other countries, suffer ethnic penalty in the sense that their earnings are lower than you would expect from their levels of qualification. On the one hand, group membership can often sustain us, especially in the face of discrimination and hostility from the outside. It can also, sometimes, work against us, and there's a particularly complex story of social mobility that applies to minority ethnic groups, reflecting some of those tensions.

To illustrate this we can say that upward social mobility is normally thought of as being a great advantage, it will boost your life satisfaction, and so on; but

actually, especially for minority ethnic groups, upward social mobility can often be associated with marked decrements in your mental health, because you've left behind some of the supportive networks that you had before. And these are illustrated by what's sometimes called 'group density effect'.

Another area where we see this playing out is that different minority ethnic groups, in order to get on in the world, have to use, rationally, rather different strategies. Many with well-established social networks that go out into the wider community can rely heavily on their social capital. Others, particularly those who've come from backgrounds disadvantaged either by class or by ethnicity, have to use a somewhat different strategy: rely much more heavily on human capital, invest in getting skills and qualifications as a way to get ahead. A classic illustration of this is, actually, again, the US context, where Harvard graduates from an affluent background haven't had to work too hard at Harvard because they'll get a great job in New York anyway. But if, from a disadvantaged background, you go to Harvard to study you absolutely have to work hard because you're going to rely very heavily on your qualifications to do well in the world of work, not on the network.

Group Differences

Group differences and social capital⁵ – these can't be reduced down to a single number because of the complexity of this issue. If we look at, say, informal sociability across ethnic groups in the UK, the differences aren't especially marked. For example, we'd find that the frequency with which you have your friends round to visit, and so on, is perhaps as high as 30% amongst Asians,

whereas for the white population it's about 25%, and pretty similar for African-Caribbean. Some of that's compensated for by how often you go

out socially; and you find that the white population tends to go out a little bit more often than the minority community; African-Caribbeans significantly less.

At a neighbourhood level, there are no great surprises: how many people do you know in the neighbourhood? There's not much difference between the white and Asian population. If you look at the African-Caribbean population, you'd see it's much lower, so instead of 30%-plus, you'd see about 19%.

But then if you look at 'Do you *trust* your neighbours? Do you trust those around you?', you see quite marked differences around whether you think

⁵ Chris Attwood, actually, at the frontier, has been very involved in the Home Office's Citizenship survey. C. Attwood et al. (2001) *Citizenship Survey: People, Families and Communities*. Home Office Research Study 270. London: Home Office.

people are trustworthy. In the white population, that figure is about 41%; in the Asian population it drops to 27%; and in the African-Caribbean population it's 16%. Perhaps no great surprises there, but an illustration of why it's not possible to reduce this measure to a single figure.

To some extent in contrast to the US, and helping to explain some of the differences, if you look at trust in more formal kinds of institutions – it isn't necessarily social capital, I should say – then, interestingly, amongst British minority ethnic communities, levels of trust are often higher. For example, trust in parliament for the white population is running at 35%, for Asians it's 56%. Of course it doesn't work the same for the police, especially if you look at the African-Caribbean population, at 59% as opposed to 80% in the white population.

Very briefly, let's take a look at the community or middle level – where there's been a lot of controversy, certainly in the US, about the effects of diversity at community level or higher. One of the difficulties – and Bobby Duffy's tried to disentangle the data on that – is the relationship between this triangle of economic inequality, diversity and social trust, where it's pretty difficult to pick apart the causality. Perhaps more interesting than the fundamental relationship – and that there is a relationship is perhaps no great surprise – is that it's not across countries. In the US some of this seems very pronounced, particularly the effects of ethnic diversity on various levels of trust. Arguably, there's some effect in the UK, but there's some reason to think, for example, in the Canadian context, that those relationships are much, much weaker. So in Canada, of course, where Canadians proudly tell you that 'diversity is cool', there's something slightly different about how these forces are playing out. Which means that we shouldn't see them as inevitable, deterministic.

Some interesting work in the US context looks at how levels of social trust and social capital show remarkable persistence over long periods of time. Across US states, for example, there's massive variability in levels of social trust.

The really high levels of social trust are around Minnesota's Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St Paul). Who lives there? It's Swedes mostly, from five generations ago, but remarkably you see that originating pattern of trust persisting in the characteristics today. When you look at the Canadian context and try to do the same kind of analysis, you find that, within a generation, those very big differences seem to disappear. So something very different happens in the Canadian context and we really need to understand those sorts of differences.

That rather important understanding possibly helps explain the US versus the Canadian difference. In the Canadian context, there's a sort of valuing of diversity and yet, ironically, the valuing of that diversity seems to ease the process of adjustment over a period of time.

Well, it looks like social capital – various kinds of measures, even the simple social trust measures – impact on all kinds of policy outcomes, cross-nationally, regionally, and so on. It impacts obviously on conflict. It seems to impact on economic growth rate, over time. It impacts on education, which we can see

A scatter plot illustrating the relationship between the age-adjusted mortality rate and the percentage of respondents who believe most people would try to take advantage of them. The vertical axis (y-axis) represents the 'Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate' ranging from 680 to 1020 in increments of 20. The horizontal axis (x-axis) represents the 'Percent Responding: "Most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance."' ranging from 5 to 45 in increments of 5. A solid black regression line shows a clear positive correlation. Numerous data points are plotted, each labeled with a two-letter state abbreviation.

State Abbreviation	Percent Responding (%)	Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate
ND	11	790
IA	12	785
SD	13	775
NE	14	825
MT	16	755
WY	17	805
OK	18	795
UT	20	765
CO	22	780
NM	23	800
KI	24	805
GA	25	795
MS	26	800
AL	27	790
LA	28	805
TX	29	795
SC	31	815
NC	32	810
VA	33	815
MD	34	810
DE	35	805
PA	36	815
NY	37	820
CT	38	825
RI	39	830
MA	40	835
VT	41	840
NH	42	845
ME	43	850
AK	44	855
HV	45	860

70 |

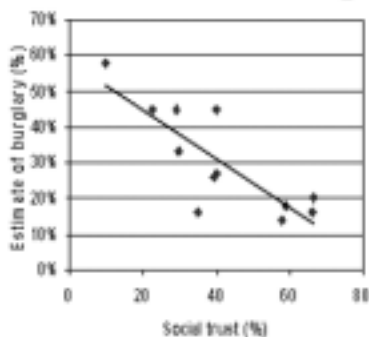
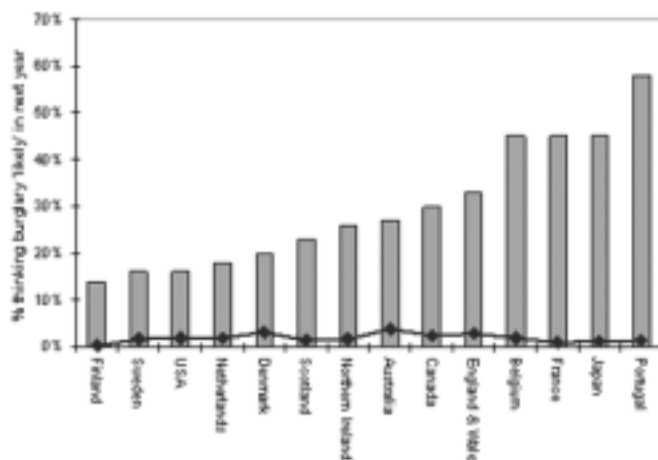
both at the individual and also the meso level. It impacts on health, slightly controversially, but certainly at the individual level. People with strong social networks live longer.

Social capital has an amazing, resilient effect across many longitudinal studies. Crime, again, is a relatively well-known example, particularly in the work of Robert Sampson in the US, in Chicago, so communities with high levels of collective efficacy, all other things controlled for, tend to have lower levels of crime; and even governments are going back to the original Italian case.

There's evidence also from other countries that there's something about the

Figure 5. Fear: relationship to risk and to social trust

Fear often has little relationship to risk...



...but a strong relationship to social trust.

nature of the underlying social capital in a country which is a pretty key variable in understanding how effective governments are, not just something abstract on high.

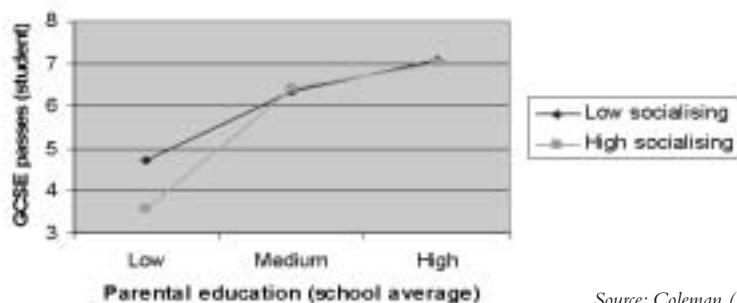
To illustrate a couple of those things, one of the relatively famous graphs is shown in Figure 4. It looks at variations in health outcomes in the US context and is a kind of variant on social trust... in fact, it's the other way round. 'Do you think most people try and take advantage of you if they've got a chance?' against age-adjusted mortality rates. And you get this very strong relationship: a relationship which you don't see in all countries.

On fear of crime, some of the same evidence can be cited (see Figure 5). If you look across countries trying to explain the relationship between actual burglary rates, for example, and levels of concern about burglary, cross-nationally, there's no relationship, you can see that pretty clearly from the graph. On the other hand, if you put in social trust, you get pretty much a straight line. So, whether we think we're going to be burgled or not is not being driven by actual burglary rates; for the most part, it's being driven by whether we think those around us can be trusted.

To illustrate the issue about 'not always good', one slide (Figure 6) can be used to represent lots of examples in every area – this is an educational example, one of Coleman's, who kicked this thing off right at the beginning. His example was educational – that some schools (in fact his early example was Catholic schools) seemed to out-perform other kinds of schools.

Coleman's argument was they had high social closure: all parents in the school knew each other, which was a great advantage. You can see along the bottom axis of Figure 6 average levels of parental education in a school; if you go to a school where parents are all highly educated, it boosts everybody's educational

Figure 6. Academic performance by average parental education in school and network closure



Source: Coleman (1988)

attainment over and above individual characteristics. But if we look at the closure measure – Coleman’s original measure, at the end of the graph where levels of parental education are predominantly low, in the school context – if the child answers ‘Yes’ to the question ‘Do your parents spend a lot of time socialising with your friends’ parents?’, the situation actually works against the child’s interests in that instance.

It obviously is contingent: whether social capital can be viewed as ‘good’ or ‘not always good’ depends on the characteristic being measured and the resources available to it within the social network.

Building the Links of Social Capital

For us, this then moves to relatively practical questions: well, what can you do about it? Bearing in mind it’s not a simple, single number we’re talking about, and note that in this area – of reflecting on ethnic diversity and civil renewal – we’re especially talking about bridging social capital, one of the difficulties is that it appears relatively easy to build bonding social capital between people who want to be together, who are very similar anyway. The tricky bit is building bridges, links, between people who are relatively different.

The drive to build these links is already going on: things like Millennium Volunteers, mentoring, volunteering and so on. Interestingly, in the case of volunteering, even quite a short period, a few weeks, of volunteering can have quite a big impact on people’s attitudes and behaviour. The impacts are, in terms of bridging, most beneficial if they also involve exposure to people who are not like those in your own background, but are diverse, particularly under conditions of mutual respect, of course.

At the more meso or community level, things that could be done include: devolution as one argument, things to do with the housing mix, I mean as far as it’s possible to influence those things. In other countries, some interest is being shown in how to use people’s social networks to help pull them out of poverty: rather than fight against it, you essentially do peer recruitment, to bring people into employment, for example. I think another interesting example is work on using ICT, people just being able to connect to other people in the area – their neighbourhood; and the evidence from Canada and the US is very positive on this. Just simple things to lower barriers, make it easier to know who your neighbours are, seem to have quite a big impact over a period of time and we could do a lot more of that, I think, in the UK.

And at the macro level, there are various things we could do more of. Some are already going on: citizenship education and so on. Something slightly more innovative, like community service credit schemes, is perhaps an interesting development. In Minnesota, which is, we remember, the social capital hub of the US, the community service dollar scheme is a form of time banking, but more systematic. People engaged in volunteering activities of various kinds build up a kind of credit which they can then use in other ways. If you can stretch the bonds or the nature of reciprocity even just a little, the effects are quite significant. If instead of doing a favour just for those people I immediately know, I were able to transfer it further, the impact is potentially very dramatic and I'm pretty interested in whether we should do more of that in the UK.

Optimisation and Awareness

In conclusion, then, there's a lot of policy and academic interest clustering around ways of rethinking or regrouping information and ideas that social capital helps us to focus on. The story is definitely not just about maximising, it's about optimising what you've got; and understanding that, for most of us, across different domains, what matters for health and what matters for our economic outcomes are different kinds of networks, different kinds of social capital, and making best use of them.

Bonding and bridging types of social capital-related activity aren't incompatible. That's a particularly important lesson. Often it is said that these things are somehow in tension; and what I want to say is, empirically, for the most part, that doesn't seem to be the case.

A lot of work is going on to increase understanding of the area. We've only got a limited understanding, but particularly because of what the Home Office is doing, we're understanding more all the time. One of the important stories certainly seems to be that we shouldn't destroy social capital lightly. We shouldn't destroy networks lightly.

And then, finally, watch out for downsides: certain kinds of social capital are negative, are problematic. We just have to be aware of that and not see it as an unmitigated good.

If Social Capital is the Answer, We Have the Wrong Questions

Ben Fine Professor of Economics at the School of Oriental
and African Studies

Professor Fine is one of the longest and strongest critics of social capital and 'social capitalists'.¹ Moving from his prepared text, he offered an immediate response to the previous speakers, arguing that social capitalists have tended to refuse to engage with criticism other than, at most, to observe it and then pass on regardless.

Let me just begin with the example that was brought up by David Halpern about the New York diamonds and this wonderful community of ethnic traders who, despite dealing with extremely valuable commodities, just passed them to one another in bags and were entirely trusting.² This seems a wonderful example of networking, community bonding, efficiency in transactions over a valuable good, and so on, as is often brought out to explain social capital. But what I want to point out, and I have pointed it out before but, again, it just seems to be ignored, is that the capacity of these traders

¹ For his comprehensive critique of social capital, see Ben Fine's *Social Capital versus Social Theory: Political Economy and Social Science at the Turn of the Millennium*, London: Routledge, 2001. Also see 'It Ain't Social, It Ain't Capital and It Ain't Africa', *Studia Africana* no. 13, 2002: 18–33; 'Social Capital: The World Bank's Fungible Friend', *Journal of Agrarian Change* 3 (4) 2003: 586–603; and in short and sharp form, 'They F**k You Up Those Social Capitalists', *Antipode* 34 (4) 2002: 796–9.

to exist and function in this way depends first of all upon a century-long cartel organised by De Beers, without which the diamond industry would just be, to put it a particular way, 'Ratnered'. You know, these diamonds would be less valuable, there would be no need for these traders to trust one another, and so on. And of course, this isn't the only aspect of the capacity for this network to exist; it's also dependent on century-long, often apartheid, exploitation of mining labour. This is why this network can exist irrespective of its, in that context, serving as an example of social capital.

Interestingly, again, it was raised that material written on social capital is now running at something like 300 articles a year, that's second to the other meteoric, fashionable concept of the 1990s, by a long way, actually – 'globalisation' – which runs at 3000 or more articles a year. But, paradoxically, there are practically no examples – maybe no higher than single figures – of articles on social capital and globalisation. There's nothing on international networks and the power that is organised through them. Perhaps the one major exception would be white, male, US lawyers who dominate international law.

What we can see from this simple example of the diamonds is a particular thrust and direction for social capital literature. It seeks positive-sum outcomes from given conditions without examining the origins of those conditions and, arguably, what is often their negative aspects.

Also brought up was the question of educational achievement and, in particular, James Coleman's emphasis on this.³ He argued that when you come from a good Catholic neighbourhood, you get a better education. Interestingly, his empirical results have been shown to be fundamentally flawed. He hadn't corrected for levels of educational expenditure, and so on. Similarly, in Putnam's study of Italy,⁴ something was laid down in the North in the 12th century which

meant that the South remained, by comparison, underdeveloped. His empirical research was based upon a measure of associational activity in 1985, and his finding was that associational activity was greater in the North than in the South. By

1990 the South had caught up in associational activity with the North, wiping out the rationale for his argument within a period of 5 years despite his appeal to a centuries-long effect.

The thrust of these two pioneering examples is to say: there's something very

² See David Halpern's presentation on pp. 61–74.

³ See his 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital', *American Journal of Sociology* 94, Supplement, S95–S120, 1988; and also *Foundations of Social Theory*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990.

⁴ See his *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993.

weird going on here, you know, that on the basis of these two empirical studies, social capital has shot to enormous prominence, even though the empirical studies on which it was first based have themselves been shown to be fundamentally flawed.

My academic interest in social capital came from a wish to explain how and why this could happen, how social capital could be running at 300 articles a year within 10 years and be so influential on any number of policy areas. Let me just again now – it seems very unfair – comment briefly on one of the aspects of Bobby Duffy’s presentation. I want to talk about some of the trust work in the MORI material and, obviously, I’m thinking on my feet here because I haven’t seen this work before, but there was something very interesting tucked away in one of the earlier diagrams – that this empirical analysis and statistical work explains 15% of the variation in trust.

Now just what does that mean? It’s like one of those ‘15% fat-free’ labels that actually means your products are 15% fat. That means 85% of the variation remains unexplained and yet it’s the sharp decline – true or false – in trust that is seeking an explanation. To my view, this is a bit like saying that we want to explain global warming so what we’ll do is explain 15% of the difference in current temperatures between Britain and the Equator. It just doesn’t deliver the goods because such cross-sectional (or, more exactly, geographical) differences are irrelevant to differences of both regions across time. In addition, were you to suppose that social capital trust is a perfectly good concept but that its distribution and effects are purely random, actually, there would be no systematic relationships at all between it and anything else. Were you to do enough of these statistical exercises, by chance you would explain 15% of the variation in trust. So really, there’s something very strange going on here.

Social Capital Is Not a Conceptual Tool

That said, let me return to my prepared talk. My own view is that social capital should be rejected as a conceptual tool. Like weapons of mass destruction, it simply doesn’t exist. We all knew they didn’t exist, but they still proved a very powerful tool or lever, right or wrong, in the making and persuading of policy. Whatever your views on the Gulf War, I hope to persuade you that social capital should not be used to make policy.

Am I in a minority of one voicing Cassandra-like reservations about social capital? The more my reservations are true, the less they are believed. In addition,

I'm nervous because I don't have expertise in the discourse of multi-ethnicity in Britain and don't understand why and how social capital should have been embraced in this discourse, although I can see general reasons why that should be so.

I'm labouring my clichés and metaphors here, and this is most appropriate because this is what social capital predominantly is – actually the vitamin analogy (see David Halpern's presentation on pp. 61–74) is a new one on me today. It's absolutely everywhere, this use of social capital as some sort of metaphor. It begins, as we've heard, from the idea that it's not what you know but who you know that matters, but goes on from there to embrace almost any social phenomenon, interaction, depending on how you learn ... how you know, rather than who. So social capital becomes trust, custom, cultures, institutions, and so on. Indeed, it can be almost anything that leads to its chaotic and all-embracing definition. From 'will a neighbour lend you £10 if you're short of money?' to whether you or your village has a burial society in Tanzania. These are all treated as social capital. By the way, the World Bank's pioneering study on social capital in Tanzania drew the conclusion that having a burial society in a village was five times more effective than female primary education in alleviating poverty. So that's something worth thinking about.

In the case of ethnicity, there are a small number of significant studies. They are worryingly dependent on stereotypes: the successful ethnic entrepreneur, if not the exploitative family sweatshop (the successful conduit for and support networks for migrants), if not the structures and practices of exclusion imposed by their hosts. Indeed, there is a tendency in the literature to treat ethnicity as if it is social capital: if you belong to an ethnic group, you have that ethnic group's social capital. And the same is becoming true of gender, community or whatever, since they all, in some sense, represent a common bond. So let me now run through how this leads to my reservations about social capital.

Universal concept

First of all it is a universal concept with a gargantuan appetite, almost as big as – if not bigger than – globalisation. It ranges over all history, countries, peoples, activities, as I've said, from 12th-century Italy through to US bowling clubs to Tanzanian burial societies, to New York diamond traders, to whether we trust our neighbours and so on. The presence or absence of social capital is the theoretical, empirical and policy panacea for the poor, the sick, the criminal, the

criminalised, and so on. So social capital, because of this universal nature, obliterates difference, treating as equivalent what are entirely different phenomena, circumstances and consequences. And I think this is very, very serious for looking at ethnicity and multi-ethnicity.

Accentuates the positive without eliminating the negative

My second reservation is closely related to but different from the first, because, in principle, social capital could be anything and applied to anything, in practice it has taken a particular trajectory that emphasises the virtues and pay-offs of cooperative and collective behaviour, but is more or less silent on those questions of power, conflict and systemic sources of disadvantage and inequality which seem to me to be so germane to the problems of ethnicity. In addition, the social capital literature has deliberately sidelined the most important sources of collective and cooperative behaviour; that is, the central state, trades unions and formal political parties. Nor do we hear anything of the social capital of the ruling classes – national or international. Indeed, social capital is essentially non-market self-help raised from the individual to the community level. It's the 21st-century equivalent of Victorian philanthropy.

Ignores the economic questions

Third, social capital has studiously ignored economic questions and perhaps you'll not be surprised that I emphasise this as an economist interested primarily in how other social sciences treat the economy. At most, and this is a good thing, it accepts that markets do not work perfectly and so social capital, whatever that might be, can make them work better. Whatever the issue, social capital is supposed to address it. But, in doing so, in my view, it needs to incorporate economic considerations, not least those concerned with wealth and power.

A derivative concept that degrades

My last reservation is that social capital is completely free of originality. It is entirely parasitical upon existing ideas but re-clothes them with the weaknesses that I've already tried to outline. Perhaps I can illustrate that by a couple of the pieces that were sent to me in preparation for today.

I think David Faulkner's pamphlet is very, very interesting, but it could have been written without any reference to social capital whatsoever. There was also sent to me something that was prepared for the Audit Commission on Social

Capital which talked about social capital but its six policy conclusions didn't use the words 'social capital' at all. So what's going on is that social capital is being used as the peg on which to put forward other particular proposals. I also think a lot of the presentations that we've heard today already could just have been made, whatever their virtues, without any reference to social capital whatsoever. My general observation is: the more social capital touches an idea, the more it degrades it. We talk about trust. Trust is extremely complex, networks are extremely complex and diverse and differentiated, but social capital tends to universalise and homogenise across them.

Relevance for Policies to Promote Multi-ethnicity?

In my view ethnicity is intimately bound to historically specific circumstances, to particular communities and to questions of privilege, power and oppression. Further, how such ethnicity functions is very, very different from one instance to another.

If we're talking about employment, housing, health, education, policing, entertainment and culture, I don't think universal categories of any sort will help us to unravel outcomes or formulate policy in these contexts. By the way, that's a conclusion that I reached in doing my work – over many years – in South Africa where you would think if there's some sort of homogenised power meaning that you could have universal concepts, it would be apartheid. But, nonetheless, what we find is that the health systems, the housing systems, education systems under apartheid are very different from one another, and we have to recognise that in our concepts and in the use of those concepts for policy-making.

So what I would argue is that each of these arenas needs to be addressed in a way that is sensitive to their differences in terms of the ethnic communities themselves, their relations with other ethnic communities and the nature of the policy itself. In the case of policing, for example, talk of 'institutionalised racism' has a definite meaning that needs to be, I agree, detailed and confronted, but if you start talking about 'institutionalised racism' in *every* context then it becomes completely empty of any leverage over understanding and policy itself. That is exactly what social capital is doing by rag-bagging generally if, as I've also tried to indicate, selectively across social causes and effects.

Whilst the ideas of collaboration, trust and mutual support are rightly attractive, attaching them to social capital leads to serious omissions in approach

and analytical content *and* implausible panaceas in the realm of policy. To anticipate the presentations that are to follow later this morning and this afternoon, I do not doubt you will hear good policy from the speakers, but this will be good policy because it is good policy, not because of its spurious attachment to social capital. I'm not so cynical as to believe that good policy inevitably or accidentally can systematically arise for the wrong reasons. But I am sufficiently cynical to recognise that in its logic, in its origins and in its momentum, social capital has deep and paradoxical roots in the neo-liberal, anti-statist wish to correct the market whilst recognising that we would prefer the market not to need correction.

I have not talked about this today – the, sort of, logic, roots and momentum of social capital – for lack of time and not wishing to give an academic talk: that's what I do in my academic life. But it's very important to bear in mind how social capital is used – and this is my experience of policy and practice – to organise support for policies or policy contexts that have already been decided and as a way of sidelining dissent at lower levels to the implementation of those policies and against dissent moving to higher levels. So social capital can, itself, be a lever of organising the implementation of policies. This is especially true of World Bank policies.

So although you may be hearing a lot today about social capital leading to decentralised local policymaking, much of which I'm sure is very, very good and attractive and worthwhile, I think you also have to question whether that actually then leaves open the bigger questions of context, questions of 'Is this generalisable to other circumstances?' and questions of 'Who gets to have social capital? Who gets to use it? And can we really put aside some of these other issues?'

How Social Capital and Civil Renewal Operate in Relation to Local Government Networks

Dan Corry Director, New Local Government Network

NLGN is a think tank focusing on modernization in local government and locally delivered public services more generally. NLGN has done a lot of work in recent years on these topics as well as ways to re-invigorate our democracy.

This presentation is mainly about governance and about devolved governance, and what's going on in current debates, and why. This obviously links directly into social capital and the other issues we're talking about today.

I'm basically going to talk about: (1) a concept which you may have come across called 'New Localism' – it's got given different names; (2) the implications of New Localism for governance; (3) some of its problems; (4) a particular focus on issues of participation, which link a lot of social capital; and (5) finish up with some thoughts about what all this means for local politics.

New Localism: a Brief Overview

What is 'new localism' all about and why are people talking about it? In Britain, unlike a lot of other countries, we've had a very centralized system of

governance, both in terms of democratic devolution, and in the way we run our public services. Certainly when this government came into power in 1997 – and I was a political adviser to it at the time – that command-and-control approach to running the country was taken up fully.

It is always very tempting for a new government when it comes into office, wanting to change the world because it has finally got its hands on power to look to drive everything from the centre. In addition, there is an impetus, particularly for a centre-left government, to try and create uniformity across the country so that people get the same kind of services, have the same kind of experience, wherever they live. It is easy to assume that a centralized command-and-control system is what will deliver such equity.

But there are well-known problems with command-and-control systems in that they miss out on:

- Information – and the need for the centre to have an almost infinite amount of it
- Innovation and Experimentation – since everyone is being asked to do the same thing
- Diversity – they cannot accommodate different preferences and approaches reflecting different communities

Public services are very difficult to run from the centre without stifling these attributes and, in particular, such systems don't allow for the fact that we have a very diverse country, diverse in every which way.

So it is hardly surprising that the way the government has tried to run the public services has caused all sorts of problems for frontline deliverers – people actually trying to provide the services at local level. All sorts of targets were set, but the targets often contradicted each other, and the providers were pulled this way and that. The targets also lacked flexibility, and were not user-focused. In a command-and-control system people tend to look up to who's setting the new targets, who's going to reward them, whereas really we want them to be looking out to the communities they're trying to serve. The command-and-control system isn't great for democracy either, again because of the nature of its upward-looking structure.

In response to these approaches, the New Local Government Network think-tank advocated the concept of New Localism which, very simply, is all about

devolving power down as far as you can, but with the important safeguard of an agreed framework of national standards. The definition we used was:

New Localism: a Definition

The devolution of as much power as possible to the local level within an agreed framework of minimum standards.

To deliver high-quality services and engaged communities.¹

Why New Localism?

Why is this a time to start thinking about more complicated systems of governance? There are three broad factors underlying this.

1. *Complexity.* The problems of governance have become more complicated and the complexity itself more intense. They often need different agencies to work together – focusing on ethnic and cultural diversity, age diversity, all sorts of things. Therefore, the chances are that, in a complicated world, we're going to need not one-club solutions, but a lot of working together, almost the 'bridging' social capital that people were talking about earlier.

2. *Re-thinking 21st-century democracy.* The need to revive democracy in some way, getting people, citizens, involved again in the institutions that are delivering their services or making decisions about them and for them, in a way that clearly goes beyond voting, has become acute for two reasons. First, a lot of people don't vote; and how do you get people who don't want to vote to become involved? And second: even for those who do vote, it's not good enough if voting is the be-all and end-all of their involvement.

I think it's fair to say that the drive towards a more devolved way of governing ourselves – which is argued for, at least rhetorically, by all the political parties at the moment – is partly about understanding that you can't deliver better and better services in a command-and-control way. But for the politicians, I think the democracy factor is just as important. Politicians care desperately about the fact that turnout is going down. I'm not sure the public do: they care more about the services.

3. *Trust, social capital and active citizenship.* Concepts of trust, social capital,



Dan Corry and Gerry Stoker (2002) *New Localism: Refashioning the Centre-Local Relationship*. London: New Local Government Network.

networks, whatever you want to call them, are felt to be very important, both in terms of re-engagement but also in terms of improving our public service. It is hoped that a way to activate these elements is by pushing power down, and promoting involvement and exchange of views and competences.

Devolving from the Centre to the Local

New Localism – it's important to say – is not a free-for-all. There are other versions of this, which basically say: 'let's devolve and leave it to local people to decide things and there is no role for the centre'. And then, of course, it becomes an easy thing to do – any of us can devolve in that way.

However, we have certainly argued that the role of the centre, the role of the central state remains, in terms of:

- (a) setting national minimum standards, and allocating resources, to take account of relative prosperity in different areas (equalization);
- (b) dealing with failure, be it a local authority or a hospital that's completely useless, the centre shouldn't just sit back and let it rot;
- (c) in general, acting as an 'ensuring state', not only for those institutions, but for individuals and communities who, in a devolved world, may get left out.

This strong role for the centre in a more devolved world makes New Localism a controversial concept. Bernard Jenkin, a Conservative front-bencher, believes that any system which still has a role for the centre is not a real devolution.

so-called 'new localism' fudges the real question. New Localism is defined as 'devolution from the centre within nationally agreed frameworks'. For 'nationally agreed frameworks' read 'targets dictated by ministers'.

(Bernard Jenkin, NLGN speech, 19 April 2004)

Problems with Devolving

There are certainly lots of problems with these agendas for devolving, especially when looked at from the centre, where I worked for far too many years. There is a deep suspicion in the centre, particularly among officials, about people at local level of whatever kind – local government, people who run the police, community leaders, whatever – have they got the capacity and skills to do it?

There's a more genuine worry that I mentioned before about equity, about the fact that the more you devolve the more people will get different services or

whatever in different places. That, to a *Daily Mail* writer, is a ‘postcode lottery’, and is up there among the worst things you can do in life.

The centre also worries about blame. They say ‘You know, we might just devolve all this stuff. But if they get it wrong down at local level, we’re still going to get the blame. So if that’s the case, we may as well not devolve in the first place.’ And that’s a fair-enough worry.

And then there’s the worry of localism or New Localism turning into parochialism, where you devolve down to communities who become very exclusive and inward-looking, the bad side of communitarianism. So, a lot of worries there, some legitimate, some convenient excuses for inaction.

Two Emergent Versions of New Localism

From this debate about devolving down to local level, two versions emerged.

The local government community said: ‘Well we love this idea. At last, you’re going to devolve down. We must be the people you’re going to devolve down to. That’s fantastic.’ Some of them were looking back to some golden age of municipalism, where they would run everything (again), and that would be great.

Another view was that devolution would be down to specific bodies, set up for the purpose, like elected bodies to run the local hospitals. You might choose that structure for the police, or for the PCTs, or for empowerment of neighbourhood areas, maybe separately from their local authorities. Certainly from the local government viewpoint, that looked like anarchy, and a world which the public wouldn’t understand: and it wouldn’t work, nobody would join up.

Governance Systems

As a think tank, our response to these debates was to acknowledge the possibility of the problems and then, of course, to produce another publication, this one called *Joining Up Local Democracy*.²

In the process of saying ‘what are we trying to look for in a local governance system? (not a local government system, a local *governance* system) we came up with six key principles. They may seem rather obvious – although I remember we debated them endlessly – but they represented to us the kind of things that, in a holistic



² Dan Corry, Warren Hatter, Ian Parker, Anna Randle and Gerry Stoker (2004) *Joining-Up Local Democracy: Governance Systems for New Localism*. London: NLGN.

way, we want a local governance system to produce, though obviously some of them conflict and you have to find the right balance.

Six Key Principles of Local Governance Systems	
1.	Being Effective – able to get things done
2.	Providing clear Accountability
3.	Promoting Participation and involvement
4.	Capable of delivering Equity
5.	Recognizing and underpinning Diversity
6.	Encouraging Innovation and the evolution of services

I want to focus on one of these, the issue of participation.

Participation

The NLGN argument on participation was: you want a governance system that will allow as much participation as possible and encourage it; but it shouldn't be a system which *depends* on participation. That's where we parted company with those politicians, like David Blunkett and Hazel Blears, who sometimes talk as though they see a world where people are continuously participating, and if they don't do that, the whole system collapses.

Voting

But to say a few things about participation itself and why it matters, I begin with the idea, one I think most of us agree on, that for a whole host of reasons we are looking for more than the occasional vote every 4 years, or whenever. One reason is that some groups do not vote as often as others. For instance there are differences within the ethnic communities as to how much voting is going on. Even within the representative systems – in local government, for instance, which I don't think is quite as badly off as national politics – ethnic minorities are under-represented as councillors. So, important voices are not getting through to the formal 'voted' system, one way or another.

Another reason why we want to see more than voting is because people should be involved somehow in shaping the services being delivered to them. The two major party political leaders are talking a lot about wanting to tailor services to what users want and using choice to enable it. We would support this.³

There's also an important and developing concept of co-production which says, essentially, that an awful lot of services are not just delivered by the service-deliverer, they're a product of how the service-deliverer behaves and how you, as the user, behave. That's particularly obvious

³ Adam Lent and Natalie Arend (2003) *Making Choices: How Can Choice Improve Local Public Services?* London: New Local Government Network.

in schools and healthcare, and so on. Now a strong view is that the user participates more in the production of the outcome – healthier people or better-educated children, or whatever – if you involve them more. This, of course, links into social capital with all the provisos we heard this morning.

The other factor which I consider very important is a view that democracy is about participative not just representative democracy. Whenever I talk with councillors or MPs about this, all of their questions are about a contradiction between the two: that somehow participative democracy undermines representative democracy. But while there can be an undeniable tension between them they are not opposites.

Mass Participation and Governance

There's also confusion as to whether we're looking for a world of mass participation where everyone's involved, or for systems which can help *some* real citizens – representative citizens of their local communities – get involved in governance. For example, I mentioned earlier that we now have elected bodies for foundation hospitals. The press have been pointing out that not many people voted in these elections, and so conclude that they're all a bit useless and that should be the end of that experiment. But, if we've moved from a world where the hospital was run by the Secretary of State, which was the situation before, to a situation where we're going to have some control at local level of what the Chief Executive of the hospital does, and what we want are people who have some roots in the local community as governors, then you have a simple question: is it better to appoint or to elect those governors? My view on the whole is that if you can put some elected elements in there, even if not that many people choose to vote, it's probably a good thing. Clearly, therefore, it depends on your expectations of 'participation'.

People often say that nobody wants to participate in public institutions locally, they just want them to deliver a good service. It's a bit like the debate on choice: nobody wants choice, they just want a good local hospital. But do people want to participate? Bobby Duffy will have presented this morning the slides that MORI regularly produce which demonstrate that while, on the whole, people think it's

quite a good thing for structures to allow participation in their local public institutions, they themselves don't want to do it. This, perhaps, is no great surprise. But it's clear, at certain times in a life-cycle, that people do get interested. They get very interested in the school when their child is there. They get interested in the hospital if their relative is there. They get interested when there's a planning application that's nearby or a road closure proposal. So, that's partly why I think we need to create systems which allow communities, users, to participate when they want to. And we certainly do know, from all the surveys and so on, that there is a lot of voluntary activity and discussion out there.

Some recent work by the Electoral Commission suggests that politics is talked about in social situations (Electoral Commission press release 3 June 2004). Somehow they worked out that people in the pub are, sometimes, talking about political issues, not just about football. But what it appears people don't want to do is get involved in what our representative politicians do, which is to make trade-offs. On the whole they care a lot about their own very local area or a particular school or hospital, but they don't want to get involved in the difficult decisions that councillors at local level and MPs at national level have to make on priorities and balances.

Traditionally, of course, political parties allowed us to cast our vote for the broad-based trade-offs we believed in and then just concern ourselves with our local patch while they got on with what we'd licensed them to do on our behalf. Politicians at local and national level, in my experience, get very annoyed that today's citizens are not sufficiently aware of the trade-offs that are having to be made, and that you can't win every game.

How to Shape Formal Participation

How do you shape formal participation in terms of public institutions so that people want, or are more likely, to participate? Certainly you should localize decisions and, when you localize, you actually do give the power, to make decisions and to allocate money, to the local level. That includes to local authorities which have had a lot of their power taken away over the decades. The public are not stupid, and they do and will know if certain public bodies are not worth the effort when it comes to voting for them because they don't decide that much. People also need information if we want them to participate.

We could do with more clarity about how and why people participate. Whether groups of people, differentiated by age, gender, ethnicity, etc., like participating in

different ways and find some ways easier than others. Or, even if it's kept to a very local scale, what are the cultures and histories that create differences in approach.

I am a little dubious as to whether you can encourage this sort of participation through training and institutes and support. Some government programmes do that. Also, some local authorities have decided that part of their role is to be a centre of expertise for local people involved in governance, be they school governors, people sitting on PCTs, or whatever, and to be a support for them. That looks a promising avenue to pursue.

Can Localized Forms of Governance Help?

I mentioned earlier the notion of having a local governance system that, for instance, might include a directly elected body to run the local police, and have more neighbourhood governance as well. These are interesting ideas and the Government's played around with some of them already. We also know that these have happened in other countries. But the classic objection to both of those forms – and if I talk to a local government audience they've got hundreds of objections because they see these trends as a big threat and are very worried about it – is that there's just not enough interest in this sort of thing. So there'll be even lower turnout for any election, the argument goes, and as a result you'll get capture by special-interest groups. Some argue that this is what you see in NDCs, but I'd say not very much. Also there's a worry at local level that if the answer to many of today's problems is a lot of agencies working together, then if you create different bodies with different democratic mandates, they might refuse to work together. These problems are real but by no means fatal. The following list outlines the problems and also some of our quick responses on why the problems aren't insurmountable.

Concerns about localized forms of governance	
1.	Low turnout – BUT restrict to services and functions likely to attract interest; same day elections; experimentation
2.	Capture by special interest groups – BUT they will be directly elected – and can add democratic element where none exists now
3.	Single service bodies will make joining up impossible – BUT clarification of roles and responsibilities might make co-operation easier – plus strengthen partnership working; more autonomy = more action, alignment of agendas and budgets

Source: NLGN

Neighbourhood Democracy

The theme of neighbourhood democracy seems very strong at present, at least in some of the Labour Party's thinking – there was material about this in 'The Big Conversation' document, and clearly they are interested in trying to see more on this. I'm loath to use the phrase 'social capital' at the minute, as I think I've been blasted into cowardice by Ben Fine's presentation earlier, but where social capital's important, moves to things like neighbourhood democracy might be very important too.

Are Elected Bodies Good for Diversity?

Are these new sorts of elected bodies a good idea if we care about diversity issues and so on? There are a few concerns. First, I've heard the point made a lot of times, when I argue that I'd always rather have elected people than quangos, that 'well, you know, you won't get enough women, you won't get enough people from ethnic minorities; much better let the centre do it'. Of course, you're relying at this point on a benign centre to appoint the right people to the quangos.

Secondly, when you have a local hospital in a particular area, for example, will some sort of crazy party (call them the BNP if you like) win all the seats? There's an issue to consider when creating neighbourhoods: will you de facto in some areas create ethnic neighbourhood governance, and is that a good or a bad thing?

These are big questions to which I certainly haven't got the answers. They are questions for us all to think about.

Civil Society

An alternative approach to getting social capital and community cohesion going is to go for a civil-society approach, with much more encouraging of self-help, self-organization – what I think Ben Fine was saying in his presentation.

This is not a retreat from the concept that the state has a role. It's clear that this sort of thing can't be created by central government or local government, but they certainly can do a lot to encourage, support, skill-up, and so on, that kind of activity. When I was listening to David Halpern I was thinking that perhaps part of the role of the local authority is then to be the bridge between these groups; and in local government strange bodies called 'local strategic partnerships' already exist to do some of that bridging. They're not massively successful in most areas, but success usually relies on these organizations

themselves being inclusive and functioning in a sensible way and, again, that is not always the case.

Other Localist Participative Models

⁴ David Faulkner (2004) *Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain*. London: Runnymede.

Some thoughts that came to me from reading David Faulkner's Perspectives paper,⁴ which I enjoyed, and thought very interesting, were to do with whether a more localist approach ends up being too pluralist. New Localism says that we have a complex, diverse world in this country now, so our governance should accept that and reflect it. But does that accept too much? Do we end up with too much of a mess, and do we need, perhaps, to have a bit more uniformity imposed? Does it ask too much of citizens and civil society? Can they really do this? And, striking a cautionary note: none of this, even after creating all your social capital and your lovely governance, guarantees you community cohesion, 'collective efficacy' and other good things.

Role of Local Government

I do a lot of work with local government, so I'm often asking myself: What's the role of local government in all of this?

In general, in a more pluralistic governance system, where we have different public bodies, community and voluntary bodies – we might have neighbourhood bodies, we might have elected PCTs and so on – the local authority clearly has a legitimacy across the spatial area that none of the other bodies has. It is elected and, hopefully, will be elected increasingly to give community leadership rather than just be the service-deliverer, and to be the voice of the community to all the other services and groups, private sector as well.

It must be the key to horizontal joining up. We argue that there are a number of other mechanisms that can encourage this as well – ranging from rewards and sanctions to transparency and overlaps – but clearly the local council is going to be key in bringing everyone together and giving them leadership.

It also has a role, which I think is important in relation to this agenda, of monitoring and scrutinizing other bodies, public and private, in trying to localize; empowering local citizens as much as possible, but keeping an eye on what's happening. In this respect, local government has this 'ensuring state' role at local level, intervening when they need to, encouraging participation every which way they can think of – from citizen juries and opinion polling and governance by 'lots' to the use of mutuals and community ownership.

Political Parties

What does all this mean for local politics and local parties? Some see New Localism as a plot to depoliticize the world, since we might have very localized organizations which, probably, wouldn't be party-political. It's certainly hard to see the parties running platforms, and they haven't so far, for hospital trust boards, neighbourhood councils and so on.

Clearly, in this world the political parties are going to have to live with devolution. They've already found this very difficult – all the political parties still find it difficult that e.g. Scottish Conservatives can have a different policy from National Conservatives. When each town has got its own version of Labour policy, or whatever, that will be even more difficult. But in this more complicated world, my view is that political parties, with their over-arching, joining-up message, become more important actually. It's quite clear that a lot of people who take part in governance often cut their teeth in party politics.

The real problem is that this is a different world. The political parties need to change and the question is whether they're up to it. Knowing what I do about most of the political parties, I would say that at this moment they don't have the people, the resources, maybe not yet the leap of imagination, to play the role they need to in this world.

Social Capital, Civil Renewal and Marginalized Groups in Wales

Ralph Fevre Professor of Social Research and Deputy Director of
the Cardiff School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University

Professor Fevre's presentation reported on the steps taken by the Welsh Assembly to formally involve traditionally marginalized groups in decision-making processes. As Wales further embeds its new forms of devolved governance, his paper offered a new perspective on the challenges of real involvement and the range of responses to it from different communities and parts of the voluntary sector.

Introduction

As a spin-off from the process of devolution, which began in 1999, the United Kingdom was given a largely unanticipated opportunity to experiment with new mechanisms which might bring marginalized groups into decision-making. It might even be suggested that the very fact that devolved matters could seem parochial to much of the political establishment meant that such experiments might go on without anyone feeling that too much was at stake.

This was particularly true of Wales, where a low-calorie version of devolution (with lesser powers than those devolved to Scotland) had been put in place for the population of less than three million. The fact that devolution in Wales provided some of the best opportunities for these experiments was surprising

nonetheless. The cultural and economic history of Wales suggested that marginalized groups would remain marginalized long after other parts of the UK, and particularly London, had found ways to bring them into decision-making processes. Wales, for example, had historically low female economic activity rates, but as the traditionally male economy of coal and steel was dismantled, it became possible for social and political realities to change too (Aaron, Rees, Betts and Vincentelli 1994).

The White Paper that initiated the process of ‘devolution Wales’ was quite explicit about the need for new forms of participation designed to make up for the way black and minority ethnic (BME) and other groups had been excluded from politics and policy-making:

‘the Government attaches great importance to equal opportunities for all – including women, members of the ethnic minorities and disabled people. It believes that greater participation by women is essential to the health of our democracy. The government also urges all political parties offering candidates for election to the Assembly to have this in mind in their internal candidate selection processes.’ (Welsh Office 1997: 24, para 4.7)

The political parties, or at least Labour and Plaid Cymru, paid particular attention to candidate selection and, as a result, women now make up 50% of the National Assembly Members, 56% of the Cabinet and chair four out of seven of the subject committees. Outside of the devolved institutions, Welsh politics have been carried on in much the same way as before. Although there are three women amongst the four MEPs in Wales, only 23% of councillors, 14% of council leaders and just 10% of MPs are women.

There was no successful intervention in candidate selection processes on behalf of the BME population. According to the 2001 Census, BME citizens made up 2.1% of the Welsh population (by far the biggest concentration is in Cardiff: 8% of the population) but there have, as yet, been no BME Assembly Members (AMs). Outside of the devolved institutions 1% of local councillors are drawn from the BME population and between 10 and 14% of that population are failing to register to vote – 4 times the level of the electorate as a whole. BME citizens make up 1% of public appointments in 35 Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies, 15 Health Trusts and 22 Local Health Boards, and 1% of the Assembly civil service (all figures taken from Williams 2004).

It may well have been assumed during the process of planning devolution for

Wales that conventional representative politics would fail in respect of BME and some other marginalized groups. From the time of the White Paper onwards the means of pursuing alternatives to conventional politics was explored in respect of BME and disabled people (and subsequently lesbian, gay and bisexual people) as well as women. Thus the Government of Wales Act (1998), that brought about devolution in Wales, determined that the new National Assembly must ‘make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that its functions are exercised with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people’.

In pursuit of this aim the National Assembly for Wales was given a standing Equality of Opportunity Committee with permanent representation for the equality commissions and the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Forum. The Assembly set up the Forum along with other consultative networks – including the All Wales Ethnic Minority Association and the Welsh Women’s National Coalition – that were now given a role in policy-making. In addition the Assembly set up a Voluntary Sector Scheme, which was meant to put the voluntary sector (including those organizations representing marginalized groups) on the same sort of partnership basis with the Assembly as business and local government. Statutory partnerships with the voluntary sector were used to promote equality and a new network for consultation, the Voluntary Sector Partnership Council.

Clearly these experiments in involving previously marginalized groups in governance entailed both facilitating and developing social capital but the idea that social capital was the key to revitalizing democracy and more efficient governance was not explicit in the planning for devolution. There were other more familiar conceptual frameworks on which to hang ideas such as the ‘third way’, ‘modernizing governance’ and a framework with particular resonance in Wales: ‘inclusive governance’ (Chaney 2002). In essence all of this thinking was leading to the identification of the same goal: more partnership between government and civil society.

This is an idea with a long British tradition, particularly in respect of the role of the voluntary sector (Hall 2002), but devolution also involved stimulating the creation of new vehicles of participation – especially the consultative networks – where none existed before. Perhaps it would be better not to think of such networks (for example the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual [LGB] Forum)¹ as ‘new social capital’ because not all of the organizations or networks that are involved

¹ We use the LGB acronym throughout this paper for ease of reference to previously compiled statistical data presented; however, since April 2003 LGB Forum Cymru has been called Stonewall Cymru.

have the classic characteristics of social capital. The term ‘civil renewal’ is more accurate, and this distinction will prove helpful when thinking about who got involved in the partnership between government and civil society after devolution and what sort of involvement this entailed.

Researching Social Capital and Civil Renewal

There is no doubt that the Assembly has taken seriously the need to take account of the views of BME and other marginalized groups in policy-making, but the civil bodies that provide the vehicles for their participation are key to the success of these experiments. Our survey of 1329 members of these organizations and networks² tells us how well this new kind of link between the people and their government is working (see Figure 1).

There is no room to consider the policy outcomes of the new mechanisms here.³ Instead we can weigh the evidence that these mechanisms have had an impact on transforming politics and promoting racial equality through changing the process of policy-making and governance. For example:

- Is there any evidence that more and different people have got involved as a result of the innovations?
- What has their involvement been like?
- In particular, how aware are people of the experiments in participation and how useful do they think they are?

Within our sample of the members of 25 organizations, 68.2% were members of women’s NGOs, 8.5% BME, 13.7% disabled, 9.5% LGB.⁴ Our study reveals

² We gratefully acknowledge the funding of the Economic and Social Research council, grant reference R000239410.

³ But see links and publications at <http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/inclusive-governance>.

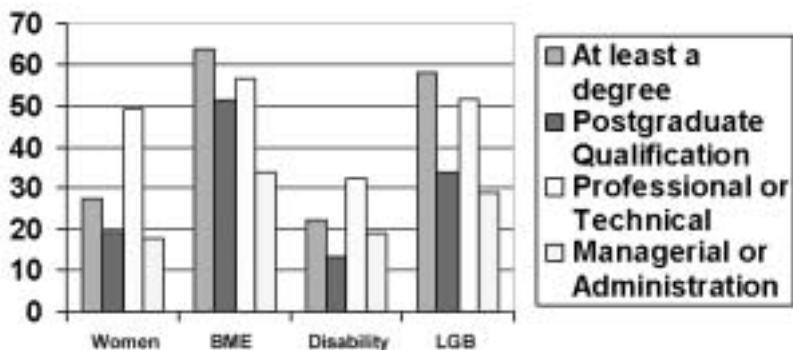
⁴ Not all the women in the sample were in women’s organizations, of course. Amongst respondents 84.7% were female, 15.2% disabled and 11.3% gay, lesbian, bisexual or transexual.

some of the crucial differences between these four kinds of NGO and some of the more general characteristics of the people taking part in civil society in Wales. Figure 1 shows that respondents in the BME groups were mostly people who would

have been active in conventional politics with or without the experiments in widening participation.

Members of BME organizations were more likely to have a degree or postgraduate qualification and to work in both professional or technical and managerial or administrative jobs than the members of other marginalized groups. If the new mechanisms for involving BME citizens simply opened up further opportunities for the participation of a highly educated, middle-class elite

Figure 1. *The Usual Suspects – social activists as profiled through organizations and networks that link with government*



there must be some doubts as to whether this is really an example of civil renewal. On the other hand, the fact that quite so many of the BME organization members had postgraduate qualifications and professional jobs might remind us that, just as Wuthnow (2002) argued in respect of civil society in the US, the members of the most marginalized groups may need to have a large amount of human and cultural capital to draw upon before they feel comfortable engaging in this kind of participation.⁵

The classic social capital indicators are usually thought of as trust, social networks, norms and civil activism. Activism is measured by the number of groups an individual is involved in, and the amount of time they spend in the activities of these groups. Our most noteworthy result for civil activism is that respondents in BME organizations were much less likely to be active for more than 5 hours per month than members of women's or disabled organizations, although LGB respondents were even less active.

In the sample as a whole, the results for trust were remarkably similar to the UK-wide Citizen Audit undertaken in 2001,⁶ but some interesting patterns were apparent in respect of political trust, particularly trust in political institutions.

The sample as a whole had a higher level of trust in the National Assembly than the Citizen Audit found for political institutions generally. Similarly, the sample expressed a higher level of trust in Plaid Cymru than the Citizen Audit found for other political parties. Our questions on trust also revealed some differences between members of BME organizations and others.

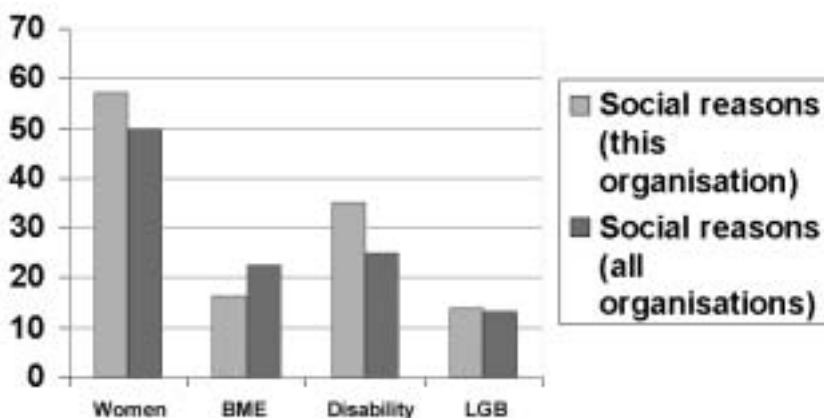
⁵ I am grateful to Rob Berkeley for this observation.

⁶ The final report of the project *A Citizen Audit for Britain* (investigators: P. Seyd and C. Pattie) can be accessed on www.regard.ac.uk an ESRC research service.

Members of BME organizations were a little less likely to think people were helpful and not looking out for themselves and a bit more likely to think people would take advantage of them. This evidence of lower generalized trust was balanced by some evidence of greater political and institutional trust. Members of BME organizations were more likely than anyone else in the sample to trust Government, Parliament and the Assembly (though here the difference was less marked), Labour Party and the EU. This confirms the UK pattern described by David Halpern earlier in this publication. In our study, members of BME organizations were less likely to trust Plaid Cymru, the police and courts (although note that LGB members expressed even less trust in these institutions).

In respect of social networks, it was the members of women's organizations that stood out as having high social capital (see Figure 2). For example, they were more likely to count other members of their organizations as friends, relatives and neighbours. Four out of ten BME members were introduced by a friend or relative, and this was similar to the pattern for the sample as a whole (LGB members tended to be more likely to report that they had joined independently). BME members were just as likely as the sample as a whole to have friends in positions of responsibility in the organization, to have worked with them before, and to discuss things with them. LGB members were much less likely to know other people in the organization and seemed to be much more isolated, but, in at least one respect, BME members also seemed to be more isolated.

Figure 2. Social Reasons for Activism

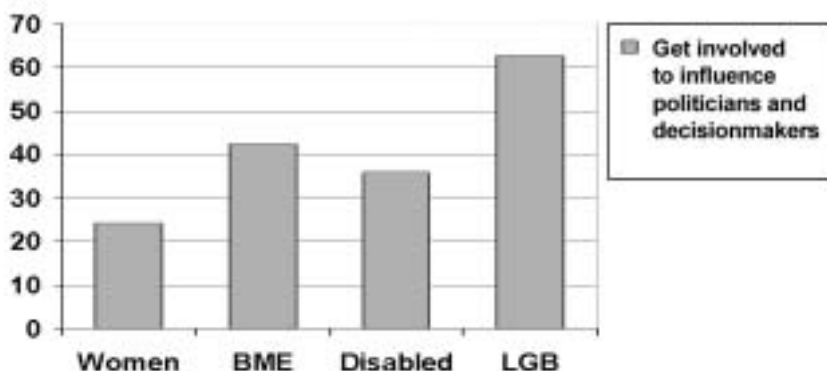


Unlike those activists Robert Putnam (2000) called ‘schmoozers’ – and considered such an important component of social capital – BME respondents were not very likely to be participating for social reasons. The next figure shows that social reasons were high on the agenda of members of women’s organizations, but even those respondents from disability organizations were significantly more likely to report social reasons than both BME and LGB respondents.

We now turn to the norms of our sample. If few members of BME organisations were schmoozers, it was also the case that people were not particularly likely to join BME organizations for what we could describe as personal reasons. This was in sharp contrast to members of disability organizations (and LGB members) who reported joining because of specific personal experience. BME members were no more likely than those in women’s organizations to tell us they had decided to engage in civil activism (in general) because the organization(s) to which they belonged helped with issues that directly affected them. BME members were about as likely as the members of disability organizations to say they were active because they had experienced prejudice. They were much more likely to say this than the respondents from women’s organizations but not nearly as likely as LGB members.

Norms differed in other ways. BME members were more like LGB respondents in not being schmoozers and also in that they told us they wanted to make a difference to a social issue. But BME members were more likely

Figure 3. Influencing Policy



than LGB respondents to say they wanted to provide a service to others, wanted to help family members and were participating for religious reasons. BME members were also much less likely than LGB respondents to cite political reasons for their participation. They were no more political than the sample as a whole, although they were a little bit more likely to say they wanted to influence policymakers, as Figure 3 shows.

With the exception of the result for LGB respondents, this figure could be quite depressing for the architects of the new mechanisms designed to involve marginalized groups in decision-making through the bodies of civil society. After all, it might suggest that most of the members of these organizations do not really want to be involved in this way.

The next figure confirms this impression of disengagement because it allows us to see just how little our respondents felt they knew about the partnership between their organization and the Assembly. For example, less than half of the BME members told us that the Assembly was accountable to their organization. The figure also suggests that the stronger people's interest in policy was, the more positive they were about their organization's engagement with the Assembly (Figure 4).

Figure 5 presents a slightly more optimistic picture. It reinforces the impression that those with a greater interest in policy-making were keener on

Figure 4. Knowledge of the Process

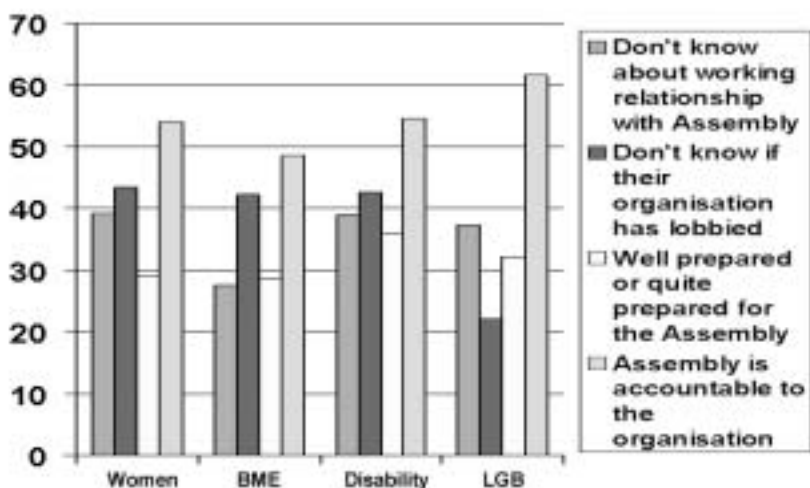
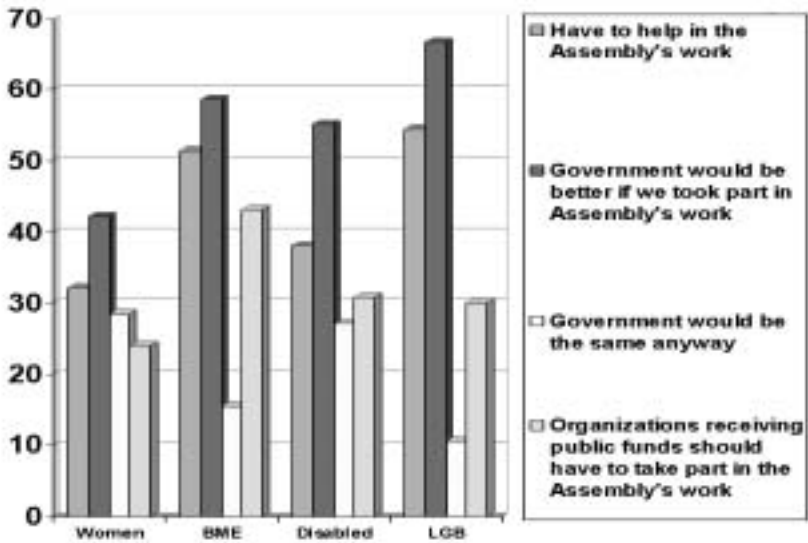
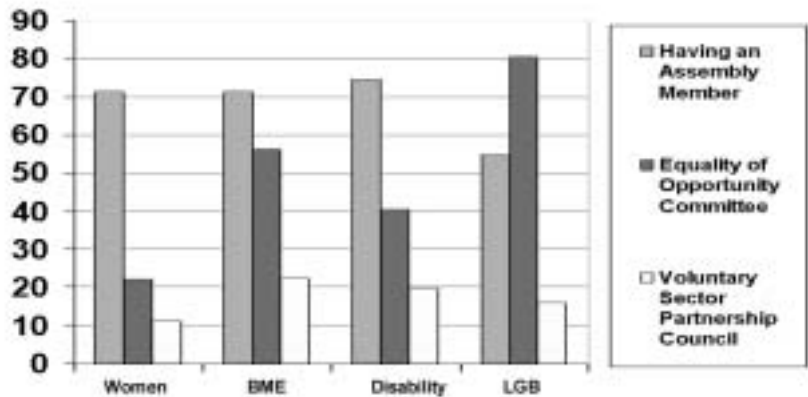


Figure 5. Rights and Responsibilities



any sort of partnership between civil society and the Assembly, but it also indicates higher levels of engagement across the board. More than 40% of the members of the women's organizations, i.e. those who were the least interested in partnership amongst the groups represented in our sample, were prepared to say that government would be better if their organization took part in the Assembly's work. The corresponding figures for the other groups,

Figure 6. What Works?



and particularly for the BME and LGB respondents, were much higher. Majorities felt bound to help in the Assembly's work, and thought that their participation would make government better. Very few thought that the partnership with civil society would make no difference. Interestingly, BME members were particularly likely to think that organizations which were funded from the public purse had an obligation to take part in the Assembly's work.

We also asked the respondents to the survey which of the innovations that had been introduced with devolution had done the most to improve communication between their organization and government (Figure 6). The high approval ratings for AMs across the board must be pleasing to both the architects of devolution and the AMs themselves. Beside these ratings the other two innovations which we have picked out did not score very well. Nevertheless it is clear that, once again, BME and especially LGB members were more likely to approve and support the Assembly's mechanism for bringing marginalized groups into decision-making, represented in this case by the Equality of Opportunity Committee. The other mechanism we selected, the consultative body set up under the Voluntary Sector Scheme, seemed to have little impact amongst any of the organizations we sampled.

We also asked our respondents how they thought that the working relationship between their organization and the Assembly might be improved

Figure 7. What Might Work

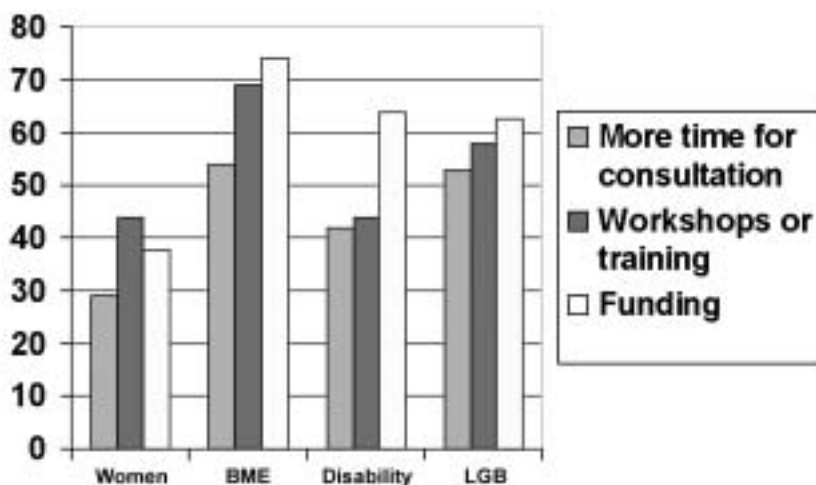
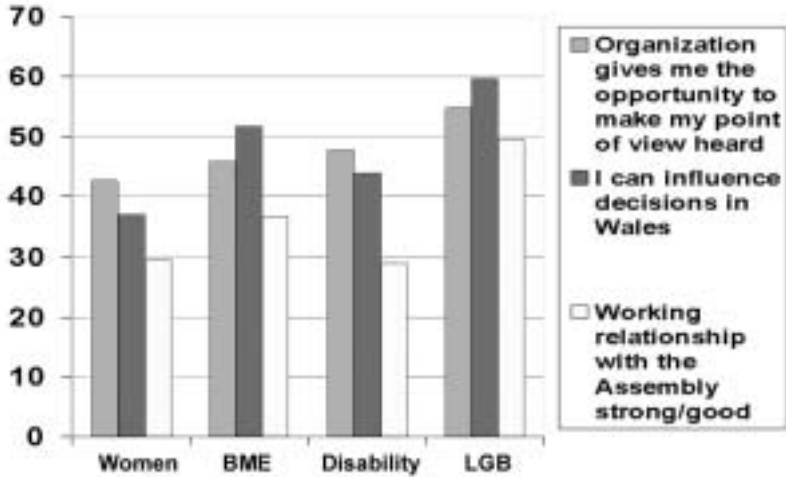


Figure 8. Voice and the Assembly



(Figure 7). Here the respondents who were members of BME organizations were particularly likely to indicate their willingness to engage in partnership. They were just as likely as LGB respondents to ask for more time for consultation but more likely than respondents in any other group to ask for workshops or training and increased funding from the Assembly.

Figure 8 shows the familiar pattern established by the survey: members of women’s organizations were the least inclined to give a positive assessment of the new mechanisms for facilitating partnership between the Assembly and civil society. LGB members were the most positive, with the responses of members of BME and disability organizations coming out somewhere in-between. Only in the case of LGB respondents were a majority able to give positive responses to all our questions about ‘voice’. Slightly fewer than one in two BME respondents expressed positive views about their ability to influence decisions in Wales, and rather fewer had positive views of the state of the relationship between their organization and the Assembly.

Discussion

Our study has uncovered a paradox which may cause some confusion among those who see social capital as the solution to the twin problems of modernizing government and revitalizing democracy. The evidence presented here suggests that top–down civil renewal (like the creation of the LGB Forum) produced the

lowest social capital but the most positive responses to the Assembly's participation initiatives. Where the Assembly tried to build on existing social capital (such as women's organizations) the responses were more negative. The key to the paradox seems to be the views members had about politics and policy-making. The more political they said they were, the more positive they were about the Assembly, but being more political (and even wanting to influence policy-making) was associated with less social capital measured in terms of activism, norms and networks and perhaps trust. Building social capital and transforming politics so that marginal groups can have a say may be turning out to be contradictory aims, and what does civil renewal mean if it does not actually generate activism?

We know members of BME organizations in our survey were less active, certainly, than the members of women's organizations, and we know they were also the most elite group in our sample. For this and other reasons we also know the BME group were, rather like the LGB respondents, the least well connected with a wider community. Williams (2004) makes the point that this may have something to do with the distribution of the BME population within Wales, and the fact that only in Cardiff is it really possible to talk about sizable BME communities which could be linked through elites to the new decision-making structures.

Further reasons to temper talk of civil renewal may be found in our results on voice and the Assembly. For example, does it really amount to civil renewal if only half of the people in the organizations targeted for encouragement and involvement in the new structures said that they felt they could influence decisions in Wales? There is also the nagging doubt that the very epitome of positive engagement and enthusiasm in our data, the LGB group, do not really provide an unambiguous model of civil renewal either. It may be more accurate to think of them as a loose network of interested individuals who share the Assembly's enthusiasm for partnership but have no other form of existence beyond this. Clearly they were very pleased to be taken seriously, pleased the LGB Forum had been given equal status at meetings of the Equal Opportunities Committee and pleased that they were now in receipt of some Assembly funding. In sum, the LGB group had reason to be positive about the innovations, but does this amount to civil renewal or is a bit more evidence of increased activism required?

All of this may also be true, although to a lesser degree, of the BME group. Many members of the BME organizations had been very disappointed at the failure of conventional politics to deliver direct representation and pleased that alternative vehicles for participation in decision-making were introduced

(Williams 2004). They were, perhaps, in a slightly different position to the members of disability organizations, and particularly the members of women's organizations, with a slightly longer history of involvement in policy-making, and therefore a little more realistic about its limitations. In the case of women, this may have been combined with a greater confidence in the ability of conventional politics to deliver representation and, perhaps, the desire to keep civil society unsullied by the political process.

Perhaps the best we can say (on the basis of Figures 5–7, for example) is that the attempt to use the opportunity afforded by devolution to bring about civil renewal has selectively raised awareness and expectations. What happens next will depend in part on the way that BME organizations and networks develop. The conclusion may be a fairly obvious one, but real civil renewal requires that these organizations and networks can somehow mature into proper vehicles for activism and wider participation in the work of the Assembly.

Summary

The architects of the political experiments in Wales must have mixed feelings about the results of this study. Respondents to our survey were more likely to say they trusted the Assembly than any other political institution, especially the UK Parliament and the EU, and they gave the Assembly Members very high approval ratings. But there was still widespread ignorance amongst marginalized groups about the role of NGOs and networks in policy-making, although there was perhaps a bit more knowledge amongst BME respondents. Members of BME groups were also more likely than most to say that the working relationship between their organization and the Assembly was strong or good. Nevertheless, it was still only a little over a third of the members of BME organizations who expressed this view.

Compared to most of the other groups the BME organizations were not very cohesive. They had less of the social ties between members that social scientists call social capital. On the other hand, they were less likely than some to see their participation in purely instrumental, or heavily politicized, terms. They got involved because they wanted to make a difference, provide a service for others and help their families, but they were also more committed to influencing policy-making than some – for example, those in traditional women's organizations.

This has proved to be good news for the Assembly because this kind of commitment has produced a positive response to their experiments in

participation. A majority of BME respondents thought they should help with the Assembly's work and that Government would work better this way. Just over half said they felt they could influence decisions in Wales (a higher proportion than in the sample as a whole). A majority also said the Assembly's Equality of Opportunity Committee had improved communication with government. In fact, BME respondents were especially likely to say they wanted to increase their involvement: they wanted more time for consultation, more training to help them do the work, and more Assembly funding for their organizations.

On most of our measures, BME respondents come out somewhere in between two extremes. They had lower social capital than some (women) and more than others (LGB). They were less positive about transforming politics than some (LGB) and more positive than others (women). Finally, we should bear in mind that the people who were most positive were not only the least active but also had the least experience and, again, BME organizations fell somewhere in between the two extremes.

Some commentators, and some of those charged with modernizing government in the UK, will be surprised that social capital does not seem to be a key ingredient in innovations designed to widen participation in policy-making. Social capital is normally thought to be the glue that holds society together, and building social capital is seen to be synonymous with civil renewal. Yet our research shows the groups with more social capital were much less enthusiastic about the organizations of civil society getting involved in policy-making. This may be true for the short term only, but the less social capital they had, and the more political they were, then the more enthusiastic partners they appeared to be.

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Civil Renewal and Social Capital in Northern Ireland

Avila Kilmurray Community Foundation, Northern Ireland

Avila Kilmurray began by observing, in relation to Ralph Fevre's presentation in the morning session, that 'our regions were falling like flies', but that nevertheless she was unashamedly speaking just from her own Northern Ireland experience. In David Halpern's terms, from the morning session, when she is talking about social capital it really is in terms of that meso interface with the macro level. As Ben Fine said, social capital should be contextualized.

Northern Ireland is by no means unique – but it is different. When forms querying ethnicity are circulated in Northern Ireland people either ask where the categories for Irish and British are, or else look for where they can sign up to be Catholic or Protestant. These are clearly the main fault lines that have run through our society, and that have given us the unenviable reputation of being a sharply, and bitterly, contested society. In a society in which there has been increasing residential segregation, to match the long-established educational segregation, even other people's disputes have been re-interpreted in terms of our sectarian lines. Thus Israeli flags join the invariably bedraggled Union Jacks that cling to lampposts in Loyalist areas; and Palestinian flags fly alongside the

Irish tricolour in Republican areas. And in the niches of our one and a half million population are the minority ethnic communities. The official returns for the 2001 Census suggest that there are 14,279 residents of minority ethnic background in Northern Ireland (and that figure includes 1,710 Irish Traveller community). While I do believe that this is an under-estimation – considerably so with regard to the reported 4,145 Chinese as I know there are over 10,000 from working with the Chinese Welfare Foundation – nevertheless, it offers some sense of scale.

And yet we are not without our problems. A nasty outbreak of racial attacks and intimidation was registered in three inner-city areas of Belfast over recent months; a member of the Indian community was murdered in the district town of Cookstown last May; and Portuguese immigrant workers, many of them south-west African in background, have been attacked in the mid Ulster area; whilst the attempt to establish a mosque in Craigavon provoked furious reaction. And it is interesting to note that a recent survey carried out by Amnesty International locally amongst young people showed that the majority thought that some 6.9% of the world's refugees and asylum seekers are in Northern Ireland, whereas the correct figure is 0.02%.

So that is our context. Northern Ireland also has a long tradition of collective community action, and community groups and structures are particularly dense in many disadvantaged areas – largely due to the absence of local political power and accountability over the years of the Troubles, and, indeed, on into our current period. The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action estimate that there are some 4,500 community and voluntary organizations across Northern Ireland, and a minimum of some 72,000 active volunteers. We are a society that has had considerable civic engagement – albeit for a range of different reasons.

Social Capital in the Context of Northern Ireland

And so to social capital. Over the past 3 years there has been considerable discussion of social capital in Northern Ireland. In 2002 the Department for Social Development (which has some of your Home Office functions) commissioned Community Evaluation Northern Ireland to prepare Indicators for the Evaluation of Community-Based and Voluntary Activity in terms of social capital. My own organization, the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, has used the concept of social capital to help monitor the outcomes from our grantmaking under the European Union PEACE 11 Programme and within

our Communities in Transition Programme which works proactively in ten areas of weak community infrastructure and community tension – in other words in deprived areas where community structures have not developed due to fear, alienation and, in some cases, paramilitary influence. In fact using these areas as a pilot we have recently received a research grant from the Irish Academy to undertake further social capital research.

We all know of the multiplicity of references to, and usages of, Social Capital. All in all it seems to be the ‘in’ concept despite the complaint of our long-term community activists – first we had poverty; then we had deprivation; next we had social exclusion; and now people are worried about our social capital levels – and our communities are still no better off.

Notwithstanding this, the Community Foundation has found social capital a useful concept. The reality is, in headline terms, Northern Ireland has a lot of ‘bonded’ communities, but lags behind in any sense of ‘bridging’ social capital. The Community Evaluation Northern Ireland analysis also talked in terms of ‘linking’ social capital, which represents the engagement and relations between local communities on the one hand and resource agencies and policymakers, on the other. We have variable quantities of this.

Bonding Social Capital

I want to say a few words first about our ‘bonded’ communities. Yes, there are reasonable levels of community infrastructure, connectedness and in many cases local empowerment; but much also depends on the relationship between these local communities and the macro political circumstances, or even the State. In many Republican/Nationalist communities that would have a tradition of being alienated from the State, community action was viewed as a self-help necessity, given that there were few other avenues for community progression. While still experiencing some of the highest levels of deprivation, indeed in the UK, these communities have tended to develop a myriad of community structures and an active sense of civic activism. They have benefited psychologically from the politics that have developed in the aftermath of the 1994 paramilitary ceasefires; although in social and economic terms their internal bonding still draws on ‘the most oppressed people ever [MOPE]’ syndrome. But bonded they are, at many levels, despite the stirring of some political dissent at the margins and the difficulties experienced by some internal ‘anti-social activity’ in communities that do not yet benefit from normal policing.

In Protestant working-class (loyalist) areas, whose relationship with the Unionist state should have been more straightforward, the traditional webs of the pre-1969 period that would have provided bonding have now been torn apart. These communities have tended to be abandoned by their own achievers; they are emotionally drained and alienated as they have been repeatedly told by the Unionist political leadership that Protestants have ‘lost out’ as a result of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, and the Loyalist paramilitary groups that flourished in these areas have tended to fragment and actively feud with one another. Consequently, despite often having community groups and structures in place, there is little sense of connectedness, no sense of trust, vision or purpose, and every sign of weak bonding social capital.

Furthermore, it is not without significance that it tends to be within these communities that the most obvious indications of racism and racial attacks have occurred. Not helped by the repeated, if not spectacularly successful attempts by the BNP to align itself with Loyalism – although the prevalence of the Israeli flags in these areas did lead to a certain confusion. However, poverty and lack of confidence were also factors in the equation. Accommodation in these deprived Loyalist areas was the cheapest available, often being bought up by private landlords, who in turn rented it out to immigrant families and members of minority ethnic groups. The power of rumour also played a part, with one area, inner-city Donegall Pass, believing that it was destined to become Belfast’s China Town; and another – the Village – already under pressure from redevelopment within which 450 dwellings were to be built to replace 1,000 existing ones. The pressure, the rumours – and strangeness – of perceived newcomers was the final straw; particularly when fuelled by the paranoia of the British popular press and the odd bit of freelance paramilitary protectionism.

While I know Robert Putnam worries as to whether well-bonded communities can increase exclusivity and be unwelcoming to incomers, I think our experience would suggest that at least in well-bonded communities there are community groups, structures and networks that can give you a point of contact in to the neighbourhood, which at least allows discussion of issues of inclusion, and that can capture rumours and confront them. Local public meetings can be planned and held; and there are channels for tapping community fears and concerns. In poorly bonded communities this is simply not the case.

I noted in the Foreword to the Home Office document on ‘Building Civil Renewal’ that the Home Secretary suggests that ‘Building the capacity of both

individuals and groups within communities is central to the process of civil renewal, enabling local people to develop their own solutions to the issues which most affect them’ – and while I do think that there is much that is commendable in the document, from our experience in Northern Ireland I have a couple of caveats.

First of all, if social capital is to be an effective ingredient in civil renewal, then we have to go beyond the rather mechanistic approach of developing solutions to identified problems, there has to be a negotiated sense of place and future and relatedness. These are the very elements that many of our weakest communities in Northern Ireland currently lack.

We also have to get away from the idea that it is necessary to build local capacity from the top down: more often than not it is a matter of being open to recognize and value the capacities that already exist within communities, and find ways to nurture them. Again, we have a long experience of capacity-building being implemented by throwing consultants at neighbourhoods, or seconding civil servants who are expected to be immediate experts; or designing elaborate strategies, when what we actually need is longer-term resourced and well-grounded neighbourhood development support, which does not turn its nose up at knocking on doors or having a chat in the local post office, laundrette or pub. And at the end of the day we have to ask ‘building capacity for what?’ All too often it is the capacity to engage with policymakers who see themselves as ‘the experts’; or the capacity to fill in complicated grant application forms where it might be more appropriate to develop more accessible approaches and simpler forms.

Bridging Social Capital

I want to turn now to bridging social capital, which we have struggled with in a Northern Ireland that is increasingly divided. Here, our experience is largely premised on the sectarian divisions that continue to haunt us. The Community Foundation approach over 25 years has been to encourage work both within and between communities. Our continuum of trying to address bridging social capital has gone something like this:

- First people from different traditions came together to chat pleasantly but carefully skirted around any potentially controversial or embarrassing issues – the ‘whatever you say, say nothing’ syndrome, in the words of one of our local songs;

- Next there were meetings where people did state their different views, but where there was little genuine hearing – and often bitter disagreement;
- Then the gradualist approach – where people discussed possible issues or concerns that they had in common and tried to work together on them, but rarely touched on difficult issues;
- Then the outside-in approach – where you brought in speakers from other divided societies like South Africa, Nicaragua, the Middle East and anywhere else, so that we could discuss our differences through the mirror of trying to sort out their difficulties; and
- Finally, where enough trust was generated to discuss issues of difference, to agree to work together on a common platform, and to negotiate sufficient mutual respect to allow for differences in perception and aspiration to be accommodated; but not the 1970s approach that saw everyone with a different view to yourself as being the victim of false consciousness.

In our context the Women's Sector has been most effective in achieving this last level. However, we have also found, through trial and error, that where there is an accepted 'safe' structural framework, such as membership of a Trades Union, or indeed of a Community Network, that it is more likely that this last level of bridging social capital can be achieved.

The practical considerations that we always have to take into account, and often to balance, when we are seeking to facilitate bridging social capital are wide-ranging:

- The respective levels of confidence, information and knowledge of the various parties are critical. If one partner comes across as being articulate, knowledgeable and confident it can frighten off other potential partners;
- The use of language is important, even when we're all speaking English. A concrete example from Northern Ireland is that 'Human Rights' are seen as Republican; 'Civil Liberties' vaguely Unionist; so we settle on Social Justice – and there are many other examples;
- The importance of venues and facilitators who can enable a listening and hearing culture;
- And achieving the balance between the rhetorical approach (which allows no room for sectarianism or racism) and a sensitivity to local concerns and conditions. The 'bite the tongue' syndrome.

The development of bridging social capital is more often than not an intermediate to long-term task – it is not a matter of a certain dollop of capacity building and then we are all ready to realize inclusive community development and cohesion in practice. The residents of an area change; activists can move on; the results from a Local or General Election can have an impact; and scare stories in the popular media take their toll. There are the inevitable external as well as internal factors – and yet investment in this work is crucial; it is often difficult; and, in our limited experience, while there may be many theoretical papers on the subject, we still lack practical tools and resources to develop bridging social capital (what the Community Foundation in Northern Ireland calls ‘peacebuilding’) – the ability to understand and manage change, not to fall victim to it, at a local level.

Linking Social Capital

A final word on ‘linking social capital’. The Home Secretary points out that ‘Our vision is of a society in which citizens are inspired to make a positive difference to their communities and are able to influence the policies and services that affect their lives’ – an important statement. But this requires effective linking social capital and policymakers that are listening. It also requires the effective resourcing of a participatory public culture that ensures the most silent voices can be heard. In Northern Ireland, given its overweening emphasis on the sectarian division, the voices that can be drowned out are those of minority ethnic communities or asylum-seekers. Indeed many of our small number of asylum-seekers are held in Maghaberry Jail, where it is difficult to have your voice heard. If the very worthy aspiration of civil renewal is not to merely add to the rhetorical chatter, then social capital as it applies in its different forms to both our disadvantaged communities and our communities of interest, must be taken seriously and addressed in practical terms.

And we have a responsibility to ensure, as Ben Fine said this morning, that Community Development and Social Capital must be considered in the broader policy and political context of the distribution of power and resources. I continually keep in mind that while Scandinavian countries are high in social capital they are also some of the most economically and politically equal societies in the world.

Community Development Approaches

Alison Gilchrist Community Development Foundation

Focusing on practical actions, Alison Gilchrist has been a neighbourhood worker in a multi-ethnic inner-city area of Bristol, which has given her some of the understanding and commitment she shares with us in this presentation. She has also been involved in anti-racist activity over a couple of decades; and, as an academic, has investigated how networks and networking can be used to manage complex situations. Wanting to weave together these three strands of her own identity is what characterizes her work at the CDF.

Having stayed near Limehouse last night and walked here to Bethnal Green through the East End to get an impression of what it's like now, I found myself walking through Cable Street. This is the site of an historic stand against Oswald Moseley's brownshirts, fascists who were fomenting ignorance and prejudice in the 1930s. That struggle is still with us today and needs to be refreshed with theory and practice.

Ben Fine and Avila Kilmurray have talked about racism as one dimension of this debate – racism as power plus privilege (Ben's formulation), which is important, but also questions of preference, which are almost more worrying. Listening to Bobby

Duffy's data from the MORI poll in the morning session I was horrified to hear initially that 40% of people wanted to live in an area inhabited only by people from their own ethnic group. However, when he went on to say that over half the population positively want to live within diverse communities, I felt there was room for hope about where we are going as a population.

Tower Hamlets, though one of the most ethnically diverse boroughs, and also one of the most socially disadvantaged if you look at the indices of deprivation, has high levels of inter-culturalism. Looking, this morning on my walk, at who was going where, which children were going into the schools, who was wearing what, which languages were being spoken, gave me a lot of encouragement about how we can move on. White women wearing the salwar khmeez is just one small but significant example of people valuing the diversity of the culture. I was also struck by who was flying George Cross flags for the England team in the Euro 2004 football tournament, mainly but not uniquely white people.

Introduction to the Policy Context

Civil renewal
Active citizenship
Social inclusion
Community cohesion
Participation
Partnership working

However, at this point I want to talk about policy themes in terms of government thinking at the moment. Someone referred to these as buzz words – but I think they have a more political significance in terms of their being government aspirations around democracy and social justice, so I make no apology for putting these up on Slide 1 to remind ourselves that there are some really positive

opportunities around at the moment.

Civil Renewal is one of them – and this is definitely civil (not civic) in the context of Community Development. *Active Citizenship* is another recurring theme. All this has to happen in ways that promote social inclusion, and don't leave people out from some of the opportunities for service delivery and participation generally.

Community Cohesion has already been mentioned – the idea of it being to utilize the capacity that resides within communities to help resolve some of the conflicts that erupt from time to time – the conflicts that are always there.

Public and User Participation was a strong theme of government even before New Labour, particularly in terms of community representation on some of the partnership boards around regeneration and renewal programmes. And we have seen, in particular, huge changes in the ways partnership working is being developed, and different and more challenging forms of governance for the public

decision-making and service provisions.

All this is predicated on an idea that community is a good thing, that it is out there and that it can be harnessed by government and public officers to make things happen in ways that weren't possible before.

Compulsory Community?

Required
Imposed
Expected
Engendered
Resisted

So does this mean that community has now become compulsory? In many examples of policy it is a *requirement* in terms of planning and of engagement in decision-making. For many people it's seen as something that's *imposed* from outside. There are *assumptions* made about the community as though it were a homogeneous entity. And labels, like 'the disabled', are used as though this was again one other form of community. Often community is applied strictly to locality, to residents, without understanding the many identities and different ways that people organize their lives to cut across local areas.

To some extent there's an *expectation* that people ought to be in communities, and they ought to participate more, both in terms of volunteering initiatives and care in the community. (That's something we've not heard about recently in terms of policy!)

Community also seems to be *engendered by outside factors*. It might be an external threat or an opportunity to come together around some common purpose. Often funding programmes are the lever to get people to do that. We've seen this in particular in relation to the New Deal for Communities.

Often the drive towards communities is *resisted*. People don't want to be lumped together as one community. People need their differences to be recognized, and sometimes that can come across as a kind of parochialism or segregation. And that's an issue that's left hanging as well. In my view, community is something that *can* be developed – that's why I do the work I do.

The Development of 'Community'

Collective identity
Shared interest
Reciprocal interaction
Mutual integration

Sometimes when all this diversity is around it can be helpful to have an external intervention, and community development can be seen as a skilled, active and strategic way of working with communities to develop community, arising and demonstrated through interactions. It's a way of working to create, nurture and shape the social conditions, the social environment

whereby vibrant communities can emerge and then in turn foster the evolution of a myriad of self-organized groups, networks and organizations.

I see community not as some nostalgic throwback to the past but looking at how people choose (and occasionally have imposed on them) collective identity, the connections that are made between them, where they have a shared interest or where there is reciprocal interaction amongst members of that community and where there is some kind of mutual integration where people come together to share ideas and learn from each others' cultures. Again, that's not about assimilation – and we need to think very carefully about power issues here.

A Sense of Belonging

Communities as complex, dynamic,
diverse and divided
Many identities
Constantly shifting allegiances

The development of community is about nurturing a sphere of fluid and fuzzy connections where collective activity can happen – a meso-level aspect of civil society. Some years ago Runnymede brought together the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, whose report advocated a community of communities.¹ This was an attempt to capture the idea of diversity within the population, but also to assert that this had to be based on notions of rights and responsibilities. The report argued that these could be termed or bundled together in the concept of 'citizenship' or captured as a sense of belonging. However, communities in reality are more *complex* than this – *dynamic, diverse* and often *divided*.

As individuals we have many identities and constantly shifting allegiances, depending on what's going on around us, who we're with, what's happening in our lives, what seems most salient at the time.

Bobby Duffy earlier referred to what might appear to be a negative association between social capital and diversity – it's important to think about diversity as an enriching aspect of our society but also one that generates problems. This might be why it seems to be inversely related to ideas around reciprocity and neighbourliness.

As Professor Fevre mentioned earlier, we're not just talking about ethnicity here, we're talking about class, gender, disability, age and

sexuality. Ethnicity is only one dimension of our lives, and it isn't always the most significant one.

¹ CFMEB (2000) *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: The Parekh Report*. London: Profile Books for the Runnymede Trust.

Multi-dimensional Challenges

Differences
Discrimination
Disadvantage
Divisions
Denial
Dissatisfaction

Diversity is about *difference* – it's a tautology, but the differences themselves present challenges in terms of how they can be accommodated when people are sharing the same space and competing for the same opportunities. We are also talking about *discrimination* in our society and that generates *disadvantage*, creates *divisions*; but there is also at times *denial* of these differences. And that can lead to *dissatisfaction*.

Social Capital as 'Community'

CD as the development of 'community'
Supporting bonds:
Local and interest-based groups
Building bridges:
Forums, federations and festivals
Creating linkages:
Cross-sectoral, inter-agency networks
and partnerships

It can be difficult to make links and sustain positive interactions when we are living in diverse communities. Sometimes it is useful to have outside help, and this is where community development comes in.

Unusually for me I'm not going to engage with the political and ideological debate we heard earlier, interesting though it is. Instead I'm going to take a more opportunistic

approach and seize the metaphor of social capital in ways that I hope could persuade government that it should be using community development to achieve some of its policy objectives. We heard earlier that there seems to be evidence of a link between strong social capital and policy outcomes in terms of health, crime reduction and the others on the list that David Halpern gave us this morning.

I was pleased to hear that Putnam had recently conceded that social capital is a reformulation of that older concept 'community', which also had its problems in terms of definitions. I think it's useful to think of community, of social capital, as primarily consisting of the networks and norms of interaction which in turn enable people to take collective action. We need to remember that it is also about survival – especially so for people who are economic migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, who are seeking entry from the outside.

It's useful to think about community development as simply the development of 'community', using Michael Woolcock's model of bonding, bridging and linking capital.²

Examples of how community development can work to strengthen these particular links include:

² M. Woolcock (1998) 'Social capital and economic development: towards a theoretical synthesis and policy framework', *Theory and Society*, 27: 151–208.

- Bonds – helping groups to form within neighbourhoods or around particular interests, and that's helping people with something very definite in common to work together to help themselves.
- Bridges – between people who aren't so alike. Create forums, bring federations together, and organize events that will link across differences, such as festivals and similar kinds of cultural events. They don't just happen. They need a lot of input and shaping. Bridges need strong supports so you need the bonding to support the bridges across, as David Halpern recognized in his contribution.
- Links – community development can also create linkages around cross-sectoral partnerships, inter-agency work, and generally make it easier for people in communities and some of the civic institutions to communicate and learn from one another and have some influence in that respect.

Values and Processes

Promoting equality:

Tackling institutional discrimination
Challenging attitudes and prejudices
Positive action strategies

Collective empowerment:

Alliances
Organization

Informal learning:

Reflection
Discussion
Dialogue

Community development is not just a set of techniques and methods. It is underpinned by certain values that are reflected in the processes by which we work. In particular, community development has a fundamental commitment to equality, and in this context, means making sure that people can tackle some of the barriers and biases they experience within institutions.

It's also about working with individuals around *challenging attitudes and prejudices* and

having positive action strategies that can move people forward and clear the way very often to rectify historical factors. Community development is also primarily about *collective empowerment*, and that may be about building informal *alliances* or *campaign organizations* or about the development of *formal organizations* moving from the small groups and networks to become something more formal with a public face and a public way of being involved in decision-making.

Another aspect of community development – *informal learning* – works through processes of reflection, discussion and dialogue. Here people are learning together, reflecting and discussing with each other, sometimes in quite heated ways. Learning that there are different views and that people change their minds can be the major

bonus of this work. These processes have a huge impact as they help shift the population forward, make their thinking more progressive, on this issue around diversity.

Networking across Boundaries

Solidarity
Equality
Justice
Diversity

Community development is fundamentally about helping people to network across the boundaries. Four motifs (*solidarity, equality, justice, diversity*) were used by a group of us organizing a Festival Against Racism in 1994 in Bristol. These were our organizing principles – and participants could do what they liked in this month of the Festival as long as it addressed and embraced some of these principles. That was an interesting initiative as it was deliberately coordinated in ways that fostered connections and encouraged people to work together – different groups from different ethnicities – to build more connections on the basis of what they already had. A directory of contacts was published to help people stay in touch, and so that this anti-racist social capital could be used in future years – as has indeed happened.

Policy into Practice

Cohesion:

- LA community strategies
- Pathfinders programmes
- Community-based projects

Research:

- Manchester neighbourliness
- Leicester DMU young people

Community development work:

- Events, activities and opportunities
- Capacity to deal with conflicts
- Collective action for common purposes

How can we influence policy and put these ideas into practice? For the moment, I need to talk about what's happening in England now. Community cohesion work sees *community strategies* being developed in ways that at least don't undermine community cohesion and where possible promote it, especially when it is a local authority responsibility. So-called *pathfinder programmes* and *community-based projects* are those whereby not only money but facilitators are

being put into communities to develop conflict resolution strategies.

Two interesting pieces of *research* are worth examining. First, Kevin Harris from the Community Development Foundation, who is doing a piece of research for Manchester Council looking at neighbourliness and social capital, came up with findings that people's actual experience of good neighbourliness seemed to be inversely related to how much they thought that mattered. And ethnicity seemed to be a factor in that. So, people from Asian heritages enjoyed better relationships with

their neighbours but weren't that worried about it. Perhaps if we were a little more laidback about some of this stuff it might happen.

The second bit of research – by Thilo Boek at De Montfort University – looks at how young people's social networks help them navigate risk, and how their bonding capital – the relationships amongst their close friends, their peer groups, their gangs if you like – actually restrict their opportunities and constrain some of their aspirations around where they want to go in life. His team argue that bridging connections open up opportunities and help them make more informed choices about their lives.

There is loads of community development work going on, though it is not always called that. It definitely has an impact in terms of building a sense of community within communities. Some of that's about organizing events, setting up activities, and generally creating opportunities where people can mix. This provides an experience of working together, getting to know each other better, but also building some kind of capacity to deal with conflicts, because the tensions and differences are always there. Community development is about enabling people to organize collectively around a common purpose. This could be anything from a campaign to do with public services or facilities, or to tackle a traffic problem. Community development has a lot to offer in these situations.

Conclusions

Spaces and places
Safety and support
Inclusion and integration
Power differentials
Honouring diversity
Impact of skilled
and strategic interventions
Learning from experience

I'm not going to talk about trust – there's not enough time here today. It's a problematical concept which needs to be much more subtly differentiated in the way we look at it than we've been able to attempt today – though that was hinted at, I grant.

But think about the kinds of things needed within our cities, towns and villages (for instance, as on the list given above). Bobby Duffy said that his research indicated there was need for more meaningful local mixing and local focal points. Shared spaces and places that we have in many communities: public places, parks, streets, shops, outside the school gates, but also communal spaces like village halls, community centres where people visit for all kinds of individual purposes but in the process start to mingle a bit more.

Everyone must be able to use these places with a feeling of safety and support

– places that feel safe to some can feel dangerous and alien to others. There's something about how we design and maintain places that enables people to use them with ease, to share them and claim them for their own activities.

Major issues arise around inclusion and integration – particularly so for refugees and asylum seekers in our society, and we haven't talked about that very much today; but community development has a lot to offer to support interaction and successful settlement in this country with some excellent projects and organizations out there.

Power differentials are crucial. None of us comes to this situation equal, and racism distorts how some organizations are operating. We need to honour the kind of diversity that exists in our communities so that we can accommodate a whole range of cultural needs and preferences in our activities and our places. It's not enough just to open up the space; there needs to be active involvement and some capacity to deal with any resulting tensions.

A major challenge is to provide evidence that our skills and strategic interventions actually do have an impact. Often we rely on anecdotes and case studies. But a long-term systematic study is needed that evaluates exactly what's going on, the nature of intervention that seems to work in different situations, but while we're waiting for that to happen we need to go on learning from our own and each others' experiences, otherwise we can't continue to make progress on these extremely important issues.

Social Capital: A Scottish Voluntary Sector Perspective

Calum Guthrie Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Calum Guthrie was scheduled to deliver this paper to the Runnymede Trust's 'Civil Renewal, Social Capital and Diversity' Conference on 24 June 2004. Although illness prevented him from doing so, we are more than pleased to include what he had prepared for presentation on the day.'

This paper begins with a number of caveats. The content is based on experiences of involvement in the delivery of a number of Scotland-wide programmes – primarily funded by government – addressing issues related to voluntary-sector and community involvement in regeneration partnerships.

It is not intended to provide a detailed or definitive exposition of regeneration or social capital policy and practice in Scotland. Equally, it is not meant to be a polemic. The intention is to provide one practitioner-focused perspective on some of the implications of the prevalence of social capital theories emerging over the last few years. In the interests of brevity and coherence, the use of the

¹ This article should be taken as an expression of the personal views of Calum Guthrie and not necessarily the views of the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

phrase ‘social capital’ should be taken throughout this article to imply the following:

‘features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives... Social capital, in short, refers to social connections and the attendant norms and trust.’ (Putnam 1995)

Three main types of social capital can be distinguished:

- *bonding* social capital (e.g. among family members or ethnic groups);
 - *bridging* social capital (e.g. across ethnic groups); and
 - *linking* social capital (e.g. between different social classes)
- (Cabinet Office, PIU 2002)

Although there is much worldwide debate about what ‘social capital’ is, what it can be used for and what the outcomes of promoting it are, this particular definition is most evident in UK government policy documents where ‘social capital’ language is used.

In addition, ‘regeneration’ in this article is taken to mean the specific components of the regeneration policy agenda of the Scottish Executive and includes the delivery of area-based and thematic regeneration-focused partnerships (namely Social Inclusion Partnerships and Community Planning structures and processes). Again this definition is limited in the interests of brevity.

Finally, the article is structured as follows:

- Outline of Scottish Regeneration Institution and Policy Context
- Social Capital, the Voluntary Sector and Regeneration in Scotland
- SCVO’s Social Capital Project
- Observations about Social Capital

Scottish Institutional Context

The creation of the Scottish Parliament following the 1997 referendum and Royal Assent of the Scotland Act (1998) means it is something of an understatement to say that the Scottish institutional and policy framework has changed considerably in the last 7 years. The process of devolution in Scotland has been well documented and is only of relevance in the context of this article with regard to the creation of institutions with responsibility for regeneration,

equalities and communities. The main institutions in this context are as follows.

National Government

Scottish Parliament. Just over 5 million people currently live in Scotland and are represented by 129 Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) elected by a combined system of proportional representation and direct election. Devolved matters are health, local government, housing, tourism, police and fire services, sports and the arts, aspects of transport policy, natural and built heritage, education, social work, planning, economic development, courts and the legal system, environment, public registers and records, agriculture, forestry and fishing. Regeneration is defined as a devolved matter for the purposes of this article, although a number of policies that, arguably, impact on the aims of regeneration programmes are reserved by the UK Parliament (e.g. welfare benefits).

Committees of the Scottish Parliament. In common with the Westminster Parliament and the Welsh Assembly, the Scottish Parliament has a system of committees which discuss a range of issues in detail and scrutinize the impact of policy. There are currently 16 committees and the most relevant in this context are:

- Communities
- Equal Opportunities

Scottish Executive. This is the devolved government for Scotland which manages an annual budget of almost £26billion (2005/06 indicative figures). The Executive is a coalition between the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party and is led by a First Minister nominated by Parliament. The First Minister, in turn, appoints other Scottish Ministers to make up the Cabinet. Margaret Curran is currently Minister for Communities and has responsibility for the following areas of policy: anti-social behaviour, poverty, housing and area regeneration, the land use planning system and building standards, equality issues, voluntary sector, religious and faith organizations and charity law.

Communities Scotland. This is an Executive Agency directly responsible to the Minister for Communities in the Scottish Executive for the regeneration of Scotland's disadvantaged communities and helping to deliver better housing. This currently involves administration of the programme of Social Inclusion

Partnerships (targeted multi-agency regeneration partnerships) and a number of other areas of policy implementation, including literacy and numeracy, and community learning and development.

Non-Departmental Government Bodies (Quangos)

A large number of quangos operate across all major issues and include a range of executive and advisory organizations such as Scottish Enterprise (broadly responsible for issues related to economic development) and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

Local Government

Following local government reorganization in 1996 there is now a single tier of 32 directly elected local authorities with responsibility for a range of local services, including social work, education, cleansing and environmental services. Many local authorities still have responsibility for housing. However, in a number of areas (notably Glasgow), local authority tenants have been asked to vote on the transfer of housing stock to the control of specially created housing cooperatives. This is part of the Scottish Executive's housing policy agenda based on specific Scottish legislation.

Health Services

Health Boards. There are 15 geographically defined Health Boards and seven Special Health Boards which have a remit for specific services or issues. Broadly speaking all Health Boards have the following responsibilities – health improvement, health protection, needs assessment, resource allocation and performance management.

Trusts. These are local management and delivery systems for the design and delivery of patient care. There are distinct but complementary structures for primary and acute patient care.

Economic Development

Scottish Enterprise is Scotland's main economic development agency, funded by the Scottish Executive. Services include start-up support for new businesses, support of existing business; development of business knowledge and skills; and promotion of the Scottish economy as a competitive business location in the global market. There is a network of Local Enterprise Companies which, broadly

speaking, have local responsibility for delivery of economic development activities of the nature outlined with regard to Scottish Enterprise.

Voluntary Sector

Recent research by the SCVO about the size and shape of the voluntary sector highlights the following:

- There are an estimated 50,000 voluntary organizations in Scotland
- In 2001 there were an estimated 107, 000 paid staff working in the voluntary sector (this is the equivalent of 4.6% of all employees in the Scottish workforce)
- Public-sector funding accounts for one-quarter of all voluntary-sector income

There are a number of national voluntary infrastructure organizations, including the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and Volunteer Development Scotland, and a range of specialist intermediaries such as Voluntary Health Scotland, LGBT Youth, Equality Network and the Scottish Association for Mental Health.

There is also a network of Councils for Voluntary Service which perform a range of support functions to local voluntary organizations, including provision of information and advice.

Scottish Policy Context – Regeneration

In common with the rest of the United Kingdom, the shift in regeneration policy stems from the mid to late 1990s. Some of these changes were evident prior to the 1997 general election. However, the main components are as follows:

- Competitive bidding for additional centrally allocated/locally delivered resources streamed through government-initiated multi-agency partnerships.
- An increasing emphasis on the importance of people-based approaches to regeneration, given that previous physical regeneration initiatives focusing on the built environment were largely deemed to have been unsuccessful. This resulted in the creation of a number of additional thematic Social Inclusion Partnerships, targeting ‘communities of interest’, including black and minority ethnic people, young people leaving care and women involved in prostitution.

- The emergence of the language of social exclusion (social inclusion in Scotland, and latterly social justice) and social capital ‘covertly’ driving policy.
- A focus on the improvement of public services based on the coordination and integration of service planning and delivery and the accompanying shift in the culture of agencies towards this. This is underpinned by the requirement for partner agencies to target ‘mainstream’ resources towards regeneration partnership priorities (‘bending the spend’).
- A focus on public involvement in service planning and delivery; namely user involvement and community involvement in regeneration partnerships.
- Voluntary sector organizations recognized as key vehicles for the delivery of effective services to the most excluded, or ‘hardest to reach’ groups – increasingly via service-level agreements.
- Equalities mainstreaming required across all organizations in receipt of public funding but little practical implementation in evidence in area-based regeneration partnerships.
- A focus on the ‘most socially excluded’ based on existing area-based deprivation information with some attempt to regularly update this but no significant changes until 2004.

Following devolution and the ‘bedding-in’ of the new institutional landscape, a number of other developments in regeneration policy have occurred:

- The creation of an Executive Regeneration Agency – Communities Scotland in November 2001 tasked with driving regeneration implementation. Communities Scotland evolved from the ‘merging’ of the function and staff of Scottish Homes and the Area Regeneration Division of the Scottish Executive Development Department. Communities Scotland reports directly to the Minister for Communities for the implementation of all regeneration activities and also the delivery of community learning and development policy, some equalities issues, and literacy and numeracy initiatives. A ‘good practice hub’ – the Scottish Centre for Regeneration was also set up as part of Communities Scotland in 2003. Communities Scotland is the agency with perhaps the most direct role in promoting ‘social capital’.
- A focus on ‘closing the gap’ between the most deprived and most

affluent communities (largely using an area-based analysis of deprivation). The framework for this is Community Planning as outlined in the Local Government in Scotland Act (2003). This places a statutory responsibility on each Scottish local authority, as the lead partner, to initiate a community planning partnership which will operate according to the principles for regeneration partnerships as outlined above. It also binds Scottish Ministers to the commitment to ‘mainstream’ community planning across all government departments.

- The management of existing regeneration partnerships (Social Inclusion Partnerships) will be devolved to local Community Planning Partnership structures following a phased transition process based on updated deprivation information focusing on ‘communities of place’ and ‘communities of interest’.

Social Capital, the Voluntary Sector and Regeneration in Scotland

Overt references to ‘social capital’ and its ‘bonding’, ‘bridging’ and ‘linking’ components are entirely absent from regeneration policy documents issued by the Scottish Executive until 2002 and the publication of the Regeneration Statement, Closing the Gap. ‘Social capital’ is defined in this document as:

‘the skills, confidence, support networks and resources – that they [Communities] need to take advantage of, and to increase, the opportunities open to them.’ (Scottish Executive 2002)

It could be argued that this definition has more in common with notions of capacity-building than the ‘standard’ social capital language explicit, for example, in most of the recent English regeneration policy documents. There is no obvious reason for the Scottish Executive not wholeheartedly to embrace social capital language across policy documents in the manner of other UK counterparts, especially given a wider social policy context which has witnessed a well-documented ‘explosion of interest’ in social capital. However, the increasing emphasis in Scottish policy documents on ‘people-based’ approaches since the mid to late 1990s as the key to successful and sustained regeneration of communities clearly bears the influence of social capital thinking from other parts of the United Kingdom.

A possible consequence of this is the lack of projects and activities using an overt social capital ‘analysis’ to inform practice or to measure the impact of

interventions. There is some anecdotal evidence of use in the context of Community Learning and Development and an increasing emphasis in debate about what the ‘Social Economy’ is. However, in comparison with other parts of the UK, the Scottish voluntary sector does not seem to have embraced social capital theory to any great degree.

Building Scotland’s Social Capital – SCVO’s Social Capital Project

Given this apparent gap SCVO has developed a small-scale pilot project with the aim of delivering by a programme of intervention designed to support the development of social capital within specific communities (both geographic and thematic).

Project Description

The ‘Building Scotland’s Social Capital’ project is a 2-year pilot programme with two key strands:

- 1) Development and implementation of a programme of intensive activities to promote bonding, bridging and linking social capital
- 2) Development and implementation of an independent local structure to represent the views and interests of local communities.

Methodology

This pilot intervention adopts a phased approach as follows:

Phase 1. Identification of target communities including a rural community without regeneration status, an urban area with regeneration status and a range of communities of interest including black and minority ethnic groups, women, elderly people and young people. This phase of the project will also: carry out a social capital literature review; compile a database of social capital projects in the UK; audit current and planned regeneration activities; appraise existing and planned social capital measurement and consultation with local communities of place and interest.

Phase 2. Development and delivery of a programme of activities in consultation with the range of local stakeholders designed to specifically promote bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Programme activities would include negotiation skills, peer support and mentoring and links to local, regional and national networks.

Phase 3. (funding as yet unsecured for this phase of the project). Development of an independent local structure to support community engagement with relevant local regeneration structures and initiatives such as Community Planning Partnerships. A core function of this structure would be to perform a representative function for diverse local communities of interest with a view to exploring and contributing to new and sustainable forms of public-sector and voluntary-sector service delivery

Outputs. These will include the following:

- production of a social capital literature review;
- compilation of a database of social capital projects in the UK;
- delivery of a programme of dedicated, intensive social capital promotion activities, including peer support linking local and national organizations to a range of local, regional and national networks; development and implementation of a ‘buddying’ system linking local organizations and individuals to a range of local, regional and national networks; implementation of a programme of skills training including bargaining and negotiation, representation and accountability, self-awareness; implementation of a programme of information and awareness-raising around key areas, including the role and function of public-sector organizations and political processes;
- development of an independent local representative structure to support community engagement with local public-service providers.

Outcomes

The following outcomes are anticipated from this project:

- an increased understanding of the relationship between the promotion of social capital and the effectiveness of interventions designed to challenge social exclusion in a local neighbourhood context;
- an increased understanding of the transferability of a dedicated social capital approach to other communities of place and interest experiencing high levels of social exclusion and deprivation;
- increased ability of local voluntary-sector and community organizations to influence local public-sector service planning and delivery;
- increased ability of local voluntary-sector and community organizations to more effectively meet the needs of their client groups;

- More effective representation and participation of a range of excluded and marginalized groups and individuals.

Observations about Social Capital

The influence of social capital across many areas of public policy is all the more interesting given that there is no real consensus in the literature over what social capital actually is, what it can be used for and what the outcomes of promoting it are. Despite this the message in policy documents is fairly unambiguous – social capital is a good thing. Perhaps this stems from a desire among policy-makers to develop a ‘formula’ for somehow quantifying notions of ‘community spirit’ in order to target regeneration interventions more effectively towards ‘rebuilding’ the attitudes and values of people in deprived areas.

Social capital is a sufficiently fluid, ambiguous and apparently benign concept which can be moulded towards any analysis. However, in the context of regeneration policy it could be argued that it is about how individuals operate in communities, and by implication infers an entrepreneurial self-help approach to getting out of poverty, rather than any real sense of collective action. As well as being about building trust – it’s about who you know and what they can do for you – probably as an individual.

Given that resources are scarce, this invariably means excluding others. Given there is little reference to power, it could also be argued that promoting social capital reinforces discrimination. It’s a mechanism for gaining entry but only if those with power let you in, on their terms.

Alternatively, social capital can be seen as a useful way of trying to get to the heart of what it is that makes the contribution of the voluntary sector different from the public sector and the marketplace – the ‘added value’, which is so often specified in funding applications but never really quantified.

Whatever the view taken about social capital, it has, in all of its guises, implications for the values and role of the voluntary sector. This is especially true where the traditional boundaries between the state, the private sector and the voluntary sector are becoming increasingly blurred.

References

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Building Social Capital across the Ethnic Divide?

Trevor Phillips Chair of the CRE

As Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips had been unable to attend the whole conference day. He'd been caught up in signing legal notices to police authorities addressing some of their procedures – procedures which, he thinks, are leading to an outcome of racial bias in practice.

As I've not been able to be with you during the course of the day what I want to do is say a few words on social cohesion from the point of view of where I see it. Indeed I was going to say one could write a book – lots of books have been written on this issue of social capital, but there are one or two things which, I think, are particularly relevant for the work that I do.

So, first of all, let me say thanks to Runnymede for organizing this conference, because social capital has, in some ways, been underlying a debate that's been taking place about how we deal with issues of diversity. There are many agendas which are aimed at dealing with racial disadvantage, dealing with diversity, and I think one of our problems at the moment is that a lot of these agendas are rather muddled together, rather unexplained and, frankly, some of them, unexplored.

I will say, however, it's very nice to come into a conference and hear somebody use the words 'I'll make no apologies for being optimistic'. We don't do that enough, because, actually, it is possible sometimes to get things right and I will say a word or two about that in a moment.

Individuals and Communities

There are some questions we could ask ourselves. Do we now understand, at the moment, what makes individuals part of communities and what makes those communities sit together as part of a single society? What are the factors that make a country like Britain cohesive? And do social capital and civil renewal, which I gather hasn't been too much part of your discussion today, give us tools to make some sense of those factors or is this just another bit of navel gazing, another bit of sociological jargon and semantics that we can have conferences about?

Because one of the things I've discovered since I've become Chair of the Commission is that you can spend lots of time talking about community cohesion, multiculturalism, good race relations, citizenship, integration, civil renewal, all the rest of it, simply discussing whether you're talking about the same thing. I'm wondering if we need to return a bit more specifically to thinking about cases rather than concepts.

Managing the Social Consequences of Migration

Having said that, I'm going to go straight back into talking about a couple of concepts which are, in some sense, contestable. From the point of view of what we do at the Commission for Racial Equality, the task is pretty simple. It's never, or it hasn't for a long time, been expressed in this way, but it is essentially the job that we do; we manage the social consequences of migration. In this country, for the best part of two generations, the expression of that has been to deal with a migration which is essentially, or was, essentially distinguished not by language or culture, because we all came from colonies and so on, but by colour and the barriers that created to the process of managing migration.

What is the good outcome of managed migration? Well, the good outcome is integration. So, what we're thinking about is: what is the principal barrier, what are the pure barriers to integration? Well, there's no question that the largest and most significant of the barriers to integration, and therefore to the building of cohesive communities, and the construction and development of social capital,

is inequality. One of the mantras that we're beginning to develop is a very simple one: that if our job is integration, the thing we cannot achieve integration without is equality. There's no true integration without true equality.

It's also worth saying that I think, and this is not a CRE view but it is my own view, that the converse is true as well: there is probably no true equality without true integration and I would cite as evidence what is essentially the home of social capital studies and Putnam and all of that, a very different kind of society, the United States, which is, in essence, a segregated society – a society in which 9 out of 10 African-American children study in black-majority schools, where 9 out of 10 white Americans live in districts where the black population is lower than 1%. Minority communities talk a lot in this country about the success of Americans, you know, they have mayors and they have vice-presidents of corporations and they have big cars and they are millionaires and all of this stuff. The truth is, if you look at the success of most substantial minority communities in the United States, one of two for whom this is not the truth is, for example, the Jewish community. Most substantial minority communities build their success on their own communities: African-American vice-presidents are typically African-American vice-presidents, until very recently, in companies which service black communities; African-American headteachers are disproportionately African-American headteachers of majority African-American schools; and police chiefs and mayors and so on, and so on. And the question you've then got to ask yourself is: does that matter?

Well, it does matter, because in almost every single one of these cases, every single one of these institutions, if you are a black mayor, you are the mayor of a poorer city or a poorer town than your white equivalent. Ditto with schools, the police and so on.

So, from our point of view, before we get to the question of building social capital, of inclusion and such, we need to think about the role of equality in all of this.

Ethnicity and Culture – a Dynamic and Changing Relationship

Let me put that to one side for a moment and deal with the second question, which is: is this just a citizen's role, is it just something that is organic and natural within any community? Well, without going over some more-or-less interesting recent debates, I think we need to be clear about some of the barriers which race and class and religion place in the way of that process of building social capital.

One of the arguments around this is whether the inability to create greater social capital in a diverse society, as has been suggested by some of the research in the United States, is because of that diversity or not. And, in the not-too-distant past, some people on the Left have, in my view, made what I think is a completely erroneous argument, which is that diversity, in itself, is a barrier to the development of social capital. That is to say that ethnic difference, for example, in itself, or religious difference, in itself, is a barrier to social capital. Well, I don't think this is true and I think it leads you into some very dangerous territory.

One of the things it suggests is that, actually, ethnicity and culture are indivisible and that, because I look like this, I must be like that. Well, I don't suppose that anybody who comes from an ethnic minority would or could sustain this position. I am, frankly, very much like my father who died now 35 years ago. In fact, about 10 years ago I saw myself in a mirror when I had on, for some bizarre reason, a trilby and a raincoat and a pair of brogues. As I walked past I felt that moment of recognition when I realized I was looking at my father in that mirror because I've grown to look just like him. However, if he were here, the idea that he and I are culturally the same would be laughable. We don't speak the same way, we don't have the same references, there are all sorts of things about me that I hope he would like, but there are many things that would absolutely send him through the roof.

Leaving aside the cultural, that sort of 'fashion', in practical terms, the communities which create and inform our diversity are not, frankly, immutable. If you look at the African-Caribbean community, 50 years ago it was composed entirely of people like me – people who either came from the Caribbean and were part of the black communities there or were their children. Today, amongst African-Caribbean Britons under 30, for every one that has two black parents, like myself, there is one that has one white parent. And, typically, those will be people who will have grown up not in what we think of conventionally as a 'black' home, but actually, probably, will have had a closer cultural and family link to their white parent. Now, are those people not African-Caribbean? Or are they something else?

Diversity is no Obstacle to Social Cohesion

This is an argument that goes on inside the African-Caribbean community. But the purpose of introducing this point here is a very simple one: the proposition that diversity, in and of itself, is an obstacle to social cohesion and therefore not

a way of producing social capital seems to be just wrong. It is also extremely dangerous because it says, effectively, that: every one of us is frozen in the place that we or our parents came from. And that, of course, is probably the single greatest historical drive – blockage, rather – to more integration, and on this occasion I'm not going to reprise the arguments about multiculturalism.

But, there are some major red herrings here which one needs to get past. The building of social capital does, however, depend on interaction, and one of the interesting things in this country is how little interaction there is across ethnic lines. We haven't done the survey recently – I hope we will in the not-too-distant future – but there was evidence (and I'm as yet unable to track it down, but I know it exists) which in the last 25 years demonstrated pretty clearly that, for the majority community, most people had never met someone of a different ethnicity. We like to think, those of us who live in London, that this is no longer true. I would bet my money that it is probably still true of the majority of Britons, especially those, obviously, who live outside London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. This is an essential issue when we're thinking about this question of social capital.

Aggregates not Individuals

These are some of the factors involved here. Now, we could say that this is all about how people interact, but, of course, a fundamental part of what we do is not about simple issues of racism, where somebody comes up to you in the street and slaps you. In my view, the vast bulk of racial bias and racial prejudice in this country now, looking at the way individual attitudes express themselves and how housing and inter-marriage and so on have 'moved', let's say, over the last 30 years, has nothing to do with individual attitudes at all. Most of it has to do with the way that aggregates of people behave.

The comparison I always make is with traffic. No individual gets up in the morning and says 'I'm going to bring a big city to a halt', but in this city 300,000 people used to drive to work. When they all drove to work none of them wanted to create a traffic jam, but when they all made the same perfectly rational decision to drive rather than to take the tube, they created gridlock. Now, we've managed to find a way in which one-third of them don't make that decision and we have a completely different situation most of the time.

I'm not suggesting that we put a Congestion Charge on racism – though I would like to. We need to think of the way that racial bias and racial prejudice –

patterns of racial prejudice – can emerge out of a hundred-thousand individual – on the face of it, perfectly rational – decisions, but something about those hundred-thousand decisions works together to create a pattern which produces division, produces racial bias. And that is why, in practical terms, our business now is much more about the way that institutions work, much more about the way that communities work. Though frankly I don't believe police forces are stuffed with racism, the reason I was late coming here is because I had to sit and write multiple pages of legal notices to police authorities and police constables across this country, 22 of them who, I think, are doing something in their practice which is leading them to an outcome of racial bias. Not because I think they're all racist; I just think they are doing something wrong. And my job is to use the law in such a way that they stop doing that wrong thing.

Appropriate Community Responses to Community Problems

The point I want to make here really is that, when we're thinking about social capital, we shouldn't just be thinking about what individuals do and how people live next door to each other. We also have to think about the way institutions work, schools and governments, and so on. One of the worries I have about our approach is that we spend a huge amount of effort on schemes and programmes which are all meant to do things that look sort-of obvious as ways of bringing people together, and then we're surprised and worried when they don't work. Are we diagnosing it the right way? It's a little bit like – forgive me for this football analogy because I'm a football enthusiast, you know – comparing Wayne Rooney, very fine young player, full of bustle, full of effort, terrific presence, and so on, gives you 90 minutes of sweat and produces 2 goals, with Zinedine Zidane who, for 87 minutes of the game might as well have been sitting up in the directors' box having a gin and tonic, then for 3 minutes comes on, takes one free kick, makes one cross, scores 2 goals. Now, Zidane knows what to do with his skills and Wayne knows what to do with his skills. But which one would you rather be?

The point I'm making here is that we must, when we look at the impact of this debate about social capital on race, be clear about what we want to achieve, what we want to have an impact on, and therefore what are the levers that we need. I think we do sometimes forget that institutions work... that institutions matter.

Saying something about our 'safe communities' initiative, one thing that just

struck me was an example we came across here in Tower Hamlets to do with the Fire Brigade, where addressing the institution and its practice solved what appeared to be a problem about people within the community.

A spate of arson attacks was being carried out by a gang of Asian youths. Everybody knew that. Now, they could have ignored the problem or they could have gone to the police and said ‘arrest this one, arrest that one’. They did something rather different: they set up a placement scheme for young Asians and, interestingly, some people who might have been in the business of setting fires, got their kicks instead by getting on fire ladders and running around with police officers, pretending they were on *London’s Burning*. That situation changed because of the way the institution addressed it, not because these kids were told ‘you’re very bad, you’re very naughty, you mustn’t light fires’, etc. The institution responded in a different way. I wouldn’t go so far as to say that the way we need to deal with gun crime is to put people in the army, but, you know, there are ways in which institutions can change.

Grounds for Optimism

And my last point comes back to what I heard when I came in, that we can be optimistic, there are things happening. Everybody talks about the Muslim community’s separateness, blah, blah, blah. I think we can overdo this and look from the outside all the time rather than looking at the way those communities think and what they actually want to do. Though neither of these things particularly favours me personally, or the beliefs I have, it is striking that the first major civic engagement of the Muslim community in this country was to be part of the Anti-War demonstrations last year in their tens of thousands.

Now Muslims in this country could have done it in a different way, as they have done in other parts of the world, to express their opposition to the policies of Bush and Blair and all of that. But, what did they do? They came to London in coaches, they got off, milled around, they walked from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square or, if it was the other way round, I can’t remember, it was, no doubt, in the rain; they stood there trying to listen to speeches from people they’d never heard of and, anyway, they couldn’t hear the words because you never can, and then they found out what actually happened in the *Guardian* the next morning. Now that is a perfectly British way to behave; and that seemed to me to mark a moment when that community said ‘okay, we’re here and we are here in the British way, but we’re not necessarily going to do the things that you guys do,

but we're going to express it in a particular way'.

Ditto, one can say, of the elections on 10 June, where Muslim communities in different parts of the country decided, for example, not to automatically support the Labour Party, which would traditionally have expected to soak up that vote. Half of that vote in London went to the Respect Coalition. In other parts of the country it went elsewhere. Obviously, I can't expect the Chief Whip or the General Secretary of the Labour Party to be jumping up and down with approval for this outcome, but to me these are exactly the signs that one should rejoice in; that this is a community using the instruments that are notoriously described as a 'core of Britishness', democracy of a particular kind, as an instrument to express its will. And I think that's where we need to look for the building of social capital across, as it were, the ethnic divide.

Appendices

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Conference Programme

24 June 2004, Oxford House, London E2

Social Capital, Civil Renewal and Ethnic Diversity

Morning Sessions:

Conference Introduction by Session Chair **Michelynn Laflèche**

I. What we know about social capital and ethnic diversity in Britain

Examining the quantitative and survey data available on social capital and ethnic diversity

Bobby Duffy – Research Director (MORI)

II. Is social capital a useful policy tool in a multi-ethnic Britain?

Considering the theoretical debate about the limits and capabilities of social capital in policy.

David Halpern – Prime Minister's Strategy Unit

Professor Ben Fine – SOAS

III. It's all about power – how can social capital and civil renewal transform politics in a multi-ethnic Britain?

3 speakers give their perspectives on the use of social capital and civil renewal to transform politics and respond to the need to promote racial equality.

Cllr Sanjay Dighe – Chair of the London BME Councillors' Network

Dan Corry – Director, New Local Government Network

Professor Ralph Fevre and **Charlotte Williams** – University of Cardiff

Afternoon Sessions:

Introduction by Session Chair **Rob Berkeley**

IV. How are civil renewal and social capital being used in the UK?

3 speakers give examples of the use of civil renewal and social capital in their work with communities – Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Avila Kilmurray – Community Foundation Northern Ireland

Calum Guthrie and **Louise Carlin** – Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations

Alison Gilchrist – Community Development Foundation

V. Concluding thoughts

Trevor Phillips, CRE

Post-Conference option. Assemble at Museum of Immigration and Diversity (19 Princelet Street) for Private Viewing, followed by dinner at a Brick Lane restaurant.

Contributor Biographies

Dan Corry became Director of the New Local Government Network (NLGN) in September 2002. NLGN is an independent think tank focusing on local government and related issues. Prior to this, he had spent 5 years as a Special Adviser, first at the DTI and then at the DTLR, covering all policy areas. From 1992 to 1997, Dan was Senior Economist at the think tank ippr; having begun his career as an economist in the civil service, including several years at the Department of Employment and 3 years as an Economic Advisor at HM Treasury. He then spent the years 1989–92 heading the Economic Secretariat of the Labour Party. He also founded and edited the journal *New Economy*. Dan's publications include, most recently: *New Localism: Refashioning the centre–local relationship* (with Gerry Stoker) (NLGN, 2002); *The Regulatory State: Labour and the utilities 1997–2002* (ippr, 2003); *Joining-Up Local Democracy* (with Warren Hatter, Ian Parker, Anna Randle and Professor Gerry Stoker) (NLGN 2004) and a recent edited collection *London Calling: Reflections on four years of the GLA and solutions for the future* (NLGN 2004).

Bobby Duffy is Research Director with the responsibility for leading MORI's Research Methods Unit and Regeneration Research Unit. With MORI since 1994, his particular focus includes measuring customer expectations and satisfaction in a public-sector context, as well as more general work on what influences perceptions of government and quality of life.

Ralph Fevre is Professor of Social Research and Deputy Director of the Cardiff School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University, Wales, UK. His latest book, *The New Sociology of Economic Behaviour* (Sage Publications, 2004) argues that the sociology of economic behaviour was hijacked by the economic sociology which grew out of Parsons' interpretation of Weber and seeks to revitalize the classical approach to develop critiques of current economic arrangements. His previous book, *The Demoralization of Western Culture* (2000), argues that contemporary confusion and uncertainty about morality arises from the popularity of a particular sort of reasoning, a subcategory of rationality called 'common sense' which came to dominate our thinking during the 20th century. He is also Founding Editor of the Politics and Society in Wales Series (published by the University of Wales Press). For the past 4 years, Ralph Fevre has led an inter-disciplinary study of the attempt to create 'inclusive governance' in the new devolved layer of government in Wales, the National Assembly.

David Faulkner is Senior Research Associate at the University of Oxford Centre for Criminological Research. Fellow of St John's College, Oxford 1992–9, and deputy secretary at the Home Office 1982–92. Member of the Commission on the Future of Multi-ethnic Britain. Chair of the Howard League for Penal Reform 1999–2002. Publications include: *Crime, State and Citizen: A Field Full of Folk* (2001), 'Taking Citizenship Seriously: Social Capital and Criminal Justice in the Changing World' in *Criminal Justice* 3(3) 2003; *Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain*, Runnymede Perspectives (January 2004); and with Frances Flaxington 'NOMS and Civil Renewal' in *Vista* 9(2) 2005.

Ben Fine is Professor of Economics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and has been a leading critic of 'social capital' since it emerged to prominence. He served as an economic advisor to the ANC for a decade and as international expert on the South African Presidential Labour Market Commission, and is currently undertaking a study for the UNDP of alternatives to privatization for provision of public utilities in Africa. His article 'They F**k You Up Those Social Capitalists' (*Antipode* 34 (4): 796–9, 2002) was one of the most cited from that journal. Recent books include *Social Capital versus Social Theory: Political Economy and Social Science at the Turn of the Millennium* (Routledge, 2001); and *The World of Consumption: The Material and Cultural Revisited* (Routledge, 2002).

David Halpern is a Senior Policy Adviser in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, which focuses on the development of long-term, cross-cutting policy for the PM. He has worked on ethnic and group effects, values and value change, as well as more general policy analyses, such as the (1995) strategic policy review *Options for Britain*. His book on social capital is due out from Polity Press in 2005.

Alison Gilchrist is Director of Practice Development for the Community Development Foundation and is now based in Leeds. The Community Development Foundation is a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Active Community Directorate of the Home Office, and is a leading authority on community development, with a specific remit to advise government at national, regional and local levels of decision-making. Alison originally joined the CDF in 1999 as their Regional Links Manager, working with regional levels of government. Prior to joining the CDF Alison had been a community development worker in inner-city neighbourhoods in Bristol, and chaired the Executive Committee of the Standing Conference for Community Development between 1995 and 1998. For 11 years she taught community and youth work at the University of the West of England and during this period undertook research into the value of networking for community development. This was published as *The Well-connected Community* (Policy Press, 2004). Her most recent publication, *Community Cohesion and Community Development – Bridges or Barricades?* (October 2004) is a CDF publication, with a foreword by Runnymede's Director.

Calum Guthrie is a development officer with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations – the umbrella body for voluntary organisations in Scotland – and works on a number of projects relating to voluntary sector and community involvement in area-based and thematic regeneration and social justice partnerships. These have included supporting the development of a Scottish network for voluntary sector and community representatives involved in the decision-making structures of Social Inclusion Partnerships and Community Planning Partnerships. Calum is also involved in a pilot project developing a programme of activities in a variety of community settings to promote 'bonding, bridging and linking social capital' with a view to establishing the 'usefulness' of social capital concepts for the voluntary sector in the regeneration context.

Avila Kilmurray is Director of the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (previously the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust) since 1994. Based in Belfast since 1980, she has worked for a period with the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action and subsequently as Coordinator of the Rural Action Project (NI) – an EU Second Anti-Poverty Programme initiative. In 1990, Avila was appointed the first Women's Officer for the Transport & General Workers' Union (Ireland). She has served on the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and on their Executive Council. Currently a Board member of the Community Development Foundation (UK), Avila has written extensively on community development, women's issues and civil society. She has been active in the Northern Ireland Women's Rights Movement, as a founder member of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition and a member of the Coalition's negotiating team for the Belfast Agreement.

Vic McLaren was born in London and went to university in Nottingham. Vic worked for several probation services in a variety of capacities (for a total of 19 years) before joining the Home Office in 1992. Since then he has held a number of different portfolios including Acting Director of the National Crime Prevention College, and Adviser to the Government Office for the East Midlands. He has undertaken attachments/secondments to the Institute for Public Policy Research, University of Huddersfield, Community Development Foundation and the Runnymede Trust, for whom he acted as a Policy Adviser during 2002/3, and for whom he has undertaken work on community cohesion, social capital, and civil renewal, all as part of the 'Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain' agenda.

Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, was educated in the Caribbean and England. Whilst completing his Chemistry degree he became involved in the National Union of Students and was elected president of the NUS in 1978. After leaving university he started his career in TV, initially as a researcher in LWT, rising to become the Head of Current Affairs, a well-known face for both LWT and the BBC. After a successful career in broadcasting, Trevor was elected to chair the London Assembly in May 2000, a position he relinquished to become Chair of the CRE in March 2003. Throughout his adult life he has been involved in campaigning on equality issues – he successfully initiated the Windrush season, which raised the profile of Black History – and has combined his career in the media with voluntary work. He has been Chair of the Runnymede Trust and is currently trustee of several leading charities working to serve ethnic minority communities.

Dr Henry Tam is the Head of the Home Office's Civil Renewal Unit, responsible for developing a cross-government approach to the engagement of citizens in solving public problems. He had previously been in charge of setting up the Standards Unit for Correctional Services. From 2000–2 he was the Home Office's Director for Community Safety & Regeneration in the East of England, where he developed a unified approach in implementing Government policies on neighbourhood renewal and crime reduction. Prior to joining the Home Office, he was the Deputy Chief Executive at St Edmundsbury Borough Council, and directed the Borough's successful bid for Beacon Council status. He also held posts with local authorities in Hackney, Lewisham and Braintree. Henry was a founder member and honorary treasurer of the charity Philosophy in Britain, a member of the Editorial Committee of the magazine *China Now*, and a member of the executive committee of the London Branch of the United Nations Association. He read Philosophy, Politics & Economics at the University of Oxford and has a PhD in social philosophy from the University of Hong Kong. He is a Fellow of the Globus Institute for Globalization and Sustainable Development, University of Tilburg, the Netherlands, and has published six books.

Biographies of Runnymede Personnel

Michelynn Laflèche is Director of the Runnymede Trust. Michelynn has studied and worked on social justice issues relating to race and gender for the last 16 years — first in Canada, then Germany and, since 1996, in the United Kingdom. She obtained her undergraduate degree at the University of Ottawa, her Masters degree at the University of Toronto and undertook her postgraduate studies jointly at Toronto and Karls Ruprecht University in Heidelberg (Germany). Her research focused on gender and racial discrimination in vocational education in Canada and Germany. While working as a research consultant on equalities and social justice for numerous organisations over a period of 10 years, Michelynn was also a teacher of English as a Second Language and a university lecturer during that period. She joined Runnymede in 1997 and began co-ordinating the UK Race and Europe Network, as well as managing Runnymede's projects relating to European social policy, citizenship and employment. Michelynn was appointed Director of Runnymede in February 2001.

Dr Rob Berkeley is Deputy Director of the Runnymede Trust. His doctoral studies focused on exclusions from school. He worked in the voluntary sector throughout his academic career as co-ordinator and then chair of the Oxford Access Scheme, encouraging young people from minority ethnic and inner city backgrounds to enter Higher Education. He is a primary school governor, a trustee of 'Inspire Futures' (a programme to raise the self-esteem and aspirations of youth from African-Caribbean communities), and Naz Project London (which provides sexual health and HIV prevention and support services to various minority ethnic communities in London). Rob's continuing research interests lie in public policy, the arts, institutional cultures, educational disadvantage, young people, 'race', ethnicity and social justice.



In June 2004

Runnymede convened a conference to develop understanding of the important new policy agenda — social capital and civil renewal — in relation to ethnic diversity.

This one-day conference built on a position paper by David Faulkner on 'Civil Renewal, Diversity and Social Capital in a Multi-Ethnic Britain' published by Runnymede in January 2004 as part of its Perspectives series. The event itself drew together speakers capable of reflecting on the theoretical, practical and political implications of these agenda in contemporary multi-ethnic Britain. Its aim — to enable a wider group of people to engage with these crucial issues — was fulfilled in the conference programme represented in these proceedings.

Policymakers debate with statisticians and political theorists in an attempt to further define social capital itself, its relevance as a concept and as a policy tool for addressing disadvantage, and its effectiveness in particularising programmes that put race equalities high on the list of expected outcomes. Councillors, network directors and heads of community foundations explain what social capital and civil renewal mean for them in relation to ethnic diversity. Trevor Phillips reflects on the salience of these agenda for the work of the Commission for Racial Equality. Together with introductory papers from Rob Berkeley and Vic McLaren, invited papers by Henry Tam and David Faulkner reappraise the relevance of social capital from a governmental and an independent perspective in the light of the day's proceedings.



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