

**Does Social Capital Count?**  
**The Case of Solid Waste Management and Public Safety in**  
**Dobsonville and Yeoville, South Africa**

A Thesis submitted to the University of London  
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

Urban conditions in the cities of the developing world are deteriorating and the gaze of international development has increasingly fallen upon the local context. In the context of decentralisation policies and weak local states, urban policy makers and academics have begun searching for remedies at the local level, including new frameworks for understanding the social resources available to assist in local level development. Social capital has become one of the conceptual frameworks and explanatory tools taken up to factor in the role of social and institutional relationships at the urban scale. While general development debates are fairly advanced in terms of the role of social relationships in governance, the literature falls short at the urban scale. This thesis takes up the challenge of investigating social capital in the context of a complex urban environment, where the relationships and patterns of state-society engagement, increasingly described in development discourse as social capital, are often disparate and difficult to pin down.

The focus of the research is Johannesburg, South Africa, where the existence and operation of social capital within two residential localities are explored. Each locality has a different history of collective action and state-society relationships. These state-society relations are investigated in relation to two urban services, solid waste management and public safety. The research methods used for this study were qualitative and included semi-structured and in-depth interviews with area-based key informants, politicians and local government employees; focus group discussions; and participant observation of daily routines, meetings and community life in the two localities. The research findings first reveal that the mobilisation of social capital depends on the context. Particularly important are place and history and, more specifically, the local legacy of collective action. Second, the mobilisation of social capital depends on the issue involved. In this case, it is found that the urban service at stake has a bearing on the extent to which social capital is significant for local governance. Nevertheless, the two case studies also demonstrate how contexts with different histories may have similar outcomes in circumstances of change and flux. As such the constructability or mobilisation of social capital cannot be taken as a given. It is further argued that the possibilities of utilising social capital as a development resource remain inadequately theorised. An important conceptual conclusion is that social capital can provide an effective analytical framework for understanding urban governance but the notion falls short in operational terms. Consequently, the usefulness of social capital as a development resource lies primarily in its explanatory power.



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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ACTSTOP</b>	<b>Action Committee to Stop Evictions</b>
<b>ANC</b>	<b>African National Congress</b>
<b>ANCYL</b>	<b>African National Congress Youth League</b>
<b>AZAPO</b>	<b>Azanian People's Organisation</b>
<b>AZASM</b>	<b>Azanian Students Movement</b>
<b>BID</b>	<b>Business Improvement District</b>
<b>BLA</b>	<b>Black Local Authority</b>
<b>CBD</b>	<b>Central Business District</b>
<b>CDF</b>	<b>Community Development Forum</b>
<b>CJP</b>	<b>Central Johannesburg Partnership</b>
<b>CMIP</b>	<b>Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme</b>
<b>COSAS</b>	<b>Congress of South African Students</b>
<b>CPF</b>	<b>Community Policing Forum</b>
<b>DFA</b>	<b>Development Facilitation Act</b>
<b>DRC</b>	<b>Democratic Republic of Congo</b>
<b>EMLC</b>	<b>Eastern Metropolitan Local Council</b>
<b>ESKOM</b>	<b>Electricity Supply Commission</b>
<b>GJMC</b>	<b>Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council</b>
<b>GJMLC</b>	<b>Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Local Council</b>
<b>GJTMC</b>	<b>Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council</b>
<b>GSWA</b>	<b>Greater Soweto Accord Working Group</b>



IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
JCC	Johannesburg City Council
JMPD	Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department
LDO	Land Development Objective
LGTA	Local Government Transition Act
MIIF	Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework
NEAC	National Environmental Awareness Campaign
NIE	New Institutional Economics
PAC	Pan African Congress
PDG	Palmer Development Group
PWV	Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging
R	South African Rand
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSC	Regional Services Councils
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SANCO	South African National Civic Organisation
SAP	South African Police
SAPS	South African Police Services
SASM	South African Students' Movement
SCA	Soweto Civic Association
SDU	Self-Defence Unit
SMLC	Southern Metropolitan Local Council

<b>SPD</b>	<b>Soweto People's Delegation</b>
<b>SPU</b>	<b>Self-Protection Unit</b>
<b>SWM</b>	<b>Solid Waste Management</b>
<b>TPA</b>	<b>Transvaal Provincial Administration</b>
<b>UCASA</b>	<b>Urban Councils' Association of South Africa</b>
<b>UDF</b>	<b>United Democratic Front</b>
<b>UMSA</b>	<b>United Municipalities of South Africa</b>
<b>UNCHS</b>	<b>United Nations Centre for Human Settlements</b>
<b>WLA</b>	<b>White Local Authority</b>
<b>WMLC</b>	<b>Western Metropolitan Local Council</b>
<b>WRAB</b>	<b>West Rand Administration Board</b>
<b>YCDF</b>	<b>Yeoville Community Development Forum</b>
<b>YCPF</b>	<b>Yeoville Community Policing Forum</b>
<b>YRO</b>	<b>Yeoville Residents Organisation</b>
<b>YRS</b>	<b>Yeoville Recycling Scheme</b>
<b>ZCC</b>	<b>Zionist Christian Church</b>

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<i>African</i>	African in this thesis refers to South Africans of African ancestry.
<i>Black</i>	Black in this thesis is used when referring to the collective population groups who suffered under apartheid discrimination namely Africans, Indians and Coloureds.
<i>Burial societies</i>	These are associations formed to finance funerals and burials most often among low-income groups. They are operated through a system of membership contributions to a joint fund.
<i>Coloured</i>	Coloured in this thesis refers to a person of mixed race.
<i>Free Settlement Area</i>	The notion of the Free Settlement Area was introduced by the apartheid government. The government allocated certain sections of South African cities as desegregated areas within the existing racially segregated cities thereby allowing Black residents to seek housing in areas of the City with available housing.
<i>Gauteng</i>	This is the province within which the City of Johannesburg is located.
<i>Grey Areas</i>	The term 'grey areas' refers to those areas that were designated for a specific race group in terms of the Group Areas Act but which had over the years become desegregated.
<i>iGoli 2002</i>	The plan created by the City of Johannesburg for the intensive restructuring of city government, and in particular, its service delivery functions.
<i>Indian</i>	Indian in this thesis refers to South Africans of South Asian origin.
<i>Kitchen Clubs</i>	Kitchen clubs are based on a similar principal to <i>stokvels</i> . They meet regularly at a member's home. It is the responsibility of each member to purchase agreed upon kitchen appliances and electrical appliances for the kitchen party. Each member is then a recipient of allocated kitchenware on a revolving basis.
<i>'Matchbox' houses</i>	'Matchbox' houses are the colloquial name given to the original red brick houses constructed in African townships under apartheid. They are small four-roomed dwellings with a small yard.
<i>Makgotla</i>	This is a seSotho word meaning 'groups of people gathered together.'

<i>Megacity</i>	Megacity refers to urban centres with a population greater than 10 million.
<i>'Redlining'</i>	Redlining is the practice whereby banks do not give mortgages for the purchase of houses in neighbourhoods considered by them to be high risk.
<i>Sjambok</i>	A Sjambok is a whip. The South African Police notoriously used them.
<i>Soweto</i>	The name Soweto is an acronym for South Western Townships.
<i>Stokvel</i>	The term stokvel refers to group of people who contribute an amount of money regularly to a communal pot. The lump sum goes to a different member of the stokvel every meeting.
<i>Tsotsi</i>	The original definition of a ' <i>tsotsi</i> ' dates back to the 1940s. It referred to a 'flashily dressed African street thug'. Nowadays ' <i>tsotsi</i> ' is the name largely given to individuals involved in street crime.
<i>White</i>	White refers to persons of European ancestry.

## CHAPTER ONE

***One person is thin porridge or gruel; two or three people are a lump of ugali***  
Kuria (Tanzania and Kenya) Proverb<sup>1</sup>

Many cities in the developing world have been plagued by crises, not least among which concern substandard service delivery for the majority of their populations, and high levels of crime and violence, problems that are beyond the capacity of impecunious local governments to address. For many cities these are arduous times. Increasingly, diverse courses of action are being explored for confronting such development challenges and yet quests for solutions have at best been mediocre and at worst unrewarding. The UNCHS reports *An Urbanizing World* (1996) and *Cities In a Globalizing World* (UNCHS, 2001) acknowledge this with the latter stating that ‘there has been little physical, social and economic progress in improving most cities in the developing world since the Istanbul conference [1996]; and in fact there has been further deterioration’ (UNCHS, 2001b). With limited human and economic capital at the disposal of many local governments, policy makers, practitioners and academics have begun searching for alternative actors to engage in urban remedies at a local level. A widespread despondency concerning the role of the public sector in service delivery, together with limits to the private sector’s willingness to be involved, have generated lively debate regarding the conditions under which effective public-private partnerships can be forged, leading to greater attention being paid to the relationship between municipalities and communities.

International development discourse began advancing new questions about appropriate levels of governance and forms of development intervention. Concern with intersectoral approaches to crises in urban delivery has to be understood within the context of ‘decentralisation fever’ (Tendler, 1997; Devas, 2001) and increasing concern with local government (Douglass and Friedman, 1998) and urbanisation more generally (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2000a; 2000b; 2001a: 358). The concept of social capital gained currency in this context and has become a popular analytical tool for understanding local level relationships as well as a possible operational tool for fostering state-society cooperation. It is within this terrain that Putnam’s theory of

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<sup>1</sup> Ugali is a stiff cooked meal/flour from sorghum or millet.

social capital has been taken up internationally (Brown and Ashman, 1996; Narayan and Pritchett, 1997; Grootaert, 1999; Grootaert and van Bastelaer, 2002; Harriss, 2002) and used to test the contention that the presence of social capital can both facilitate a conducive relationship between government and society, and bolster government performance (Evans, 2002 and 1996; Foley, Edwards and Diani, 2001).<sup>2</sup> Putnam (1993) posits that vibrant associational life encourages the development of social capital and in turn fuels the formation of the active and engaged civil society deemed necessary to ensure government is responsive and performs optimally. The conceptual preoccupation of the present research is to test the validity of Putnam's conclusions within the context of two urban services, solid waste management (SWM) and public safety, in two quite different residential areas of Johannesburg, South Africa.

The concept of social capital has a number of intellectual roots which are outlined in detail in Chapter Two, but it is Putnam's usage which has captured the imagination of the development specialists and which is taken up here. Putnam describes social capital as follows: 'features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating co-ordinated action' (Putnam, 1993: 67). It is this conception that has been both extremely influential and extensively critiqued within the context of development debates.<sup>3</sup> In terms of the relationship between social capital and governance, Putnam argues that:

On the demand side, citizens in civic communities expect better government and (in part through their own efforts) they get it. They demand more effective public service and they are prepared to act collectively to achieve their shared goals. Their counterparts in less civic regions more commonly assume the role of alienated and cynical supplicants. On the supply side, the performance of representative government is facilitated by social infrastructure of civic communities and by the democratic values of both officials and citizens (Putnam, 1993: 182).

Although it is this exact framework for understanding social capital that has produced

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<sup>2</sup> Social capital is considered relevant for international development discussions because it presents a relationship between associational life, economic development and government performance at a time when the state is re-figuring in development discussions and international organisations have realised the value of societal relationships for economic development and improved government performance (World Development Report, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Social capital is not the same as participation because it is seen to present a more cogent resource than participation. Social capital is seen as a resource in itself and not only a process, potentially giving rise to further stocks of social capital.

critiques of Putnam's works, the contribution that the social capital discourse has made to governance debates cannot be underestimated. It has provided the springboard for new approaches to governance and development that venture beyond the traditional economic development propositions; namely that development hinges completely on economic development and good governance. Furthermore, development and state theorists, such as Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2002), Evans (2002, 1996), Ostrom (1990, 1993), Tendler (1997) and Fox (1996), have extended Putnam's argument in a bid to determine exactly how social capital might be useful for understanding state-society relations in the context of development. Using Putnam's hypothesis as a starting point, and not taking his framework as a template, Evans, Ostrom, Tendler and Fox have usefully engaged with Putnam's argument in relation to their similar concerns with the relationship between organised citizens, collective action and responsive government.

It is within the setting of these debates and the conceptual framework of social capital that this study is located. The social capital debates have broadened significantly since Putnam's historic text first appeared on the academic horizon, and indeed Putnam himself has refined his position (Putnam, 1993, 1995, 2000, 2002).<sup>4</sup> A huge body of literature has emerged which both concurs with and contests the usefulness of the concept. This literature and these debates are engaged with in detail in Chapter Two.

## **1.1 SOCIAL CAPITAL, DEVELOPMENT AND THE URBAN CONTEXT**

Interest in the state of urban centres has risen in the past decade upon the realisation that nearly half of the world's population is living in cities (UNCHS, 2001: 1). *The World of Cities* document compiled by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements declared:

For better or for worse, the development of contemporary societies will depend largely on understanding and managing the growth of cities. The city will increasingly become the test bed for the adequacy of political institutions, for the performance of government agencies, and for the effectiveness of programmes to combat social exclusion, to protect and repair the environment and to promote human development (UNCHS, 2001).

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<sup>4</sup> The differences in Putnam's positions are outlined in greater detail in Chapter Two.

There is a plethora of literature on the city in the developing world. Pivotal works have theorised about the impact of urbanisation on the state of service delivery and the urban poverty condition (Gilbert and Gugler, 1992; Rakodi, 1997; Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2000, 2001, 2002; Evans, 2002).<sup>5</sup> However, within the broader development literature concerned with rural poverty and national level development still predominates.

Rao and Woolcock (2001) claim that within this climate of accelerated interest in urban areas, there is an absence of procurable development data at the urban scale (Rao and Woolcock, 2001: 1; Devas, 2001: 399). This stands in contrast to the healthy pool of literature available on social relationships in cities at the community or neighbourhood level (Beall, 2001: 360). Moreover, there is a notable paucity of thorough understanding of how these local level social relationships relate to citywide dynamics and trends in urban centres. This reality sits uncomfortably with the increasing reliance by local government on the involvement of city dwellers in urban development and the escalating obligations of local government *vis-à-vis* residents.

The South African picture is somewhat different. Here the understanding of how social development relates to broader city trends in major urban centres has been addressed for example by Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002). Seekings holds that South African cities have principally been discussed relative to desegregation, poverty and inequality, public policy and development, and he looks at urban politics (Seekings, 2000: 833). The contemporary urban development and policy literature that speaks to social development is primarily framed within the discourse of social exclusion, social networks (amongst immigrant networks) and social capital (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2001a and 2001b; Simone and Gotz, 2003) but this has been contextualised in the case of Johannesburg, South Africa within urban economy and politics more recently (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002).

Hence social capital has become one of the key explanatory tools that has been taken up to understand social relationships at the urban scale. While this analytical framework has helped provide the mechanisms through which to shift the emphasis to

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<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, Jennifer Robinson (2002) has recently written an article questioning why third world cities are always discussed relative to development and not in the literature of global cities.



the role of social relationships in the social organisation of governance, the literature falls short in the urban sense.<sup>6</sup> Despite Putnam's early concern with urban Italy and subsequent preoccupation with social capital in rural and urban North America, much of the international literature has located discussions of social capital in a rural context where deliberations regarding trust, associational life and identity seem easier to investigate and capture. However as Evans argues:

The romantic vision that 'community' automatically entails homogeneity and unity of purpose is misleading even in traditional rural settings; urban communities contain an even more daunting spectrum of interests, identities, and political positions (Evans, 2002: 15).

This challenge is taken up in the present research which seeks to investigate social capital in the context of a precarious urban environment, where the relationships and patterns of state-society engagement described as social capital, are much more disparate and difficult to pin down than in less institutionally complicated settings.<sup>7</sup> Of concern too, is to understand whether the norms, networks and levels of trust, increasingly understood as social capital, are useful as one set of development resources for developmental urban local governments.

## **1.2 LOCALITY,<sup>8</sup> HISTORY AND THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG**

The locus of this research is the City of Johannesburg in the Republic of South Africa. Johannesburg is South Africa's biggest and richest city. It has an approximate population of 3,800,652 residents (City of Johannesburg, 2001c). As with other South African cities, Johannesburg is extremely unequal. It is also a city that has had a conflictual history and has seen a lot of flux, not least of all in relation to changes in local government in recent decades. The thesis investigates social capital in the City of Johannesburg through exploring the way it functions in two residential areas. The two study sites have varying histories, social identities and local governance dynamics.

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<sup>6</sup> Sue Phillips does however speak to the issue of social capital in urban areas in her chapter in Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones's *Urban Livelihood. A People-centred Approach to Reducing Poverty* (Phillips, 2002: 133-150) and there is some overlap between the livelihoods analysis and that of social capital as is evident in the analysis of urban livelihoods (Rakodi, 2002; Meikle, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> Krishna's book *Active Social Capital*, although focused on rural areas in India, undertakes a critique of social capital in rural areas which speaks to some of the issues mentioned in this thesis (2002).

<sup>8</sup> Locality for the purposes of this study refers to the case study site discussed, or neighbourhood level.

Based on these two exploratory case studies, Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, the research interrogates whether social capital really can be a development resource in an urban context undergoing rapid and dynamic social change.

The two sites were chosen because they are at variance in crucial ways. Old Dobsonville<sup>9</sup> is an original suburb of the cluster of townships that formed Greater Soweto, the vast and sprawling former African<sup>10</sup> township to the south-west of the city. Yeoville, by contrast, is a former White residential inner city neighbourhood. Historically, these two locales have experienced local government differently and therefore have divergent concerns. Moreover, trajectories of collective action on the part of residents have varied, as have responses on the part of government. Contrasting these two study sites allows for positing about ways in which social capital is viable as a development resource within a single but heterogeneous metropolitan local government jurisdiction. In order to achieve this, it is *de rigueur* to demonstrate how the nature of place or locality impacts upon the utilisation, mobilisation and generation of social capital.

In addition to place, the importance of history cannot be over-emphasised in any investigation of social capital, particularly in a city like Johannesburg. Against a background of political contest, but in the context of a remarkably peaceful transition to democracy in South Africa, it became the enterprise of local government to tackle the country's legacy of inequality. Given that the struggle history of South Africa was so vital to the political transition, it was expected that citizens would participate as vigorously in the rebuilding process as they had in the fight against apartheid. One such domain of expectation was the involvement of local citizens in the development process.

The South African government constructed a myriad of mechanisms through which to operationalise this connection. Not only was the participation of local residents considered key as a development resource, it was also boldly understood to be one of the tools for holding government accountable. Participation was seen too as a means for

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<sup>9</sup> Old Dobsonville was specifically selected as a case study site because it was the original site of formal housing in the 1950s. Since then, there have been a number of extensions and an informal settlement that have sprung up alongside the original set of houses.

<sup>10</sup> The term African refers to South Africans of African origin.

ensuring that communities were consulted in government processes and where possible it acted as a resource for the execution of government projects. Not surprisingly, a mass of policy papers emerged post-apartheid, making explicit reference to the need for citizen participation (in planning and in service delivery) and its importance to democratic governance. Indeed, government and in particular local government, was constitutionally obliged to consult and thus the mechanisms were in place to call upon civil society as a development resource. Unfortunately it was soon revealed that policy-makers and government officials had expected too much from participatory processes, which were initiated with enthusiasm but soon ran out of steam. In South Africa from 1994, the much-celebrated vibrancy of civil society was taken for granted and it was assumed that those who had engaged in local opposition politics would engage with the public sector in development. Following the euphoria of the transition from apartheid, however, it remains unclear as to whether citizens would take advantage of this newfound conception of governance or whether they were likely to eschew public engagement and retreat into exclusive groups to make it on their own.

Certainly, in the City of Johannesburg, state-society relationships have not emerged in the way envisaged at independence. Instead, citizens and residents in many parts of the jurisdiction of the City appear to be distancing themselves from the local state. Municipalities have not as yet fully felt the implications of these negative disengagements but the expectation amongst policy makers is that increasingly positive civil society participation will only take place if and when there are tangible material goods on offer. In an environment where local government is cash strapped and the public sector alone is unable to deliver all services, this potentiality has severe implications for long-term development. There are powerful imperatives for locating non-financial resources to deal with this.

These trends have already stimulated a number of questions pertaining to the circumstances under which a robust relationship between local government and civil society can be developed in South Africa. A relationship that will facilitate and consolidate a local state-society partnership. Whilst the idea of partnerships is constantly bandied about in policy circles in Johannesburg, the reality is that the legacy of mistrust associated with local government, founded on a legacy of racially unequal service provision, makes this ambitious project very complex. An argument advanced

in the present research is that the diversity of experience amongst residents and neighbourhoods is such that there can be no partnership template created and used across the board by the City of Johannesburg. It is perilous to assume that all localities in the City of Johannesburg could or should be tackled in the same way. An important conclusion is that state-society engagement needs to be proficiently and sensitively forged on the basis of a solid understanding of dynamics and imperatives evident in the context of a particular locality.

It is not only in South Africa that these realities are of relevance to development initiatives. In many developing countries, the quest for a productive relationship between state and civil society remains unfulfilled and under explored. It is recognised that the literature on citizen engagement and participation is vast. However, it is not engaged with in any detail here or used in the construction of a conceptual framework, as this literature is chiefly concerned with the activities and processes of local governance themselves, rather than the basis on which people engage in the activities and processes in the first place. Instead, it is the specific aspiration of this thesis to understand the norms, networks and customary patterns of interaction, participation, partnership and other mechanisms that make for a productive relationship between state and society in Johannesburg. In order to capture the role of social capital in fostering local governance, it was considered most appropriate to locate these deliberations at a local level primarily because it is here that the representatives of state and society are most likely to meet directly over immediate issues. Moreover, local level research presents a unique opportunity to examine local nuance across different localities.

### **1.3 CONSTRUCTING SOCIAL CAPITAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

In order to contextualise the empirical research undertaken for this study it is necessary to provide a sense of history of the City of Johannesburg – relative to both the institutions of government and citizens. The starting point in the relationship between residents, and particularly Black<sup>11</sup> residents, and the local state in South Africa even before but particularly during the apartheid years was an uneasy one, characterised by poor service delivery, lack of legitimacy, transparency and accountability in

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<sup>11</sup> The designation Black refers to South Africans of Coloured, Indian and African origin (Christopher 2001). Please see the glossary for detailed descriptions of how these terms are used in this thesis.

government and no encouragement by the local state of civil society participation in local governance. It is against a background of this agitated history that the relationship between associational life, social capital, collective action and institutional performance must be reviewed. The conceptual framework and literature review delineated in Chapter Two advances insights necessary for understanding the current dynamics between local government and civil society in Johannesburg. It provides a history of the relationship between state and civil society and offers clarity regarding the factors informing the City of Johannesburg's current obligations to civil society. It also explores the institutional constraints at work in the City of Johannesburg today.

Understanding the evolution of local government in Johannesburg is important for analysing the current domain within which the City operates, as well as decoding the historical and contemporary engagements between civil society and local government within the long-term context of urban service delivery. The history of local government in South Africa has been a controversial one,<sup>12</sup> as for the Black majority it has been characterised by illegitimacy and lack of delivery. In short, the great inequities of apartheid were well reflected in the lack of municipal service delivery in Black townships.<sup>13</sup> As such, local government in historically Black areas has always been a site of contestation between the state and civil society.

In the apartheid period, historically African and White areas were governed separately and inequitably. Prior to 1982, White Local Authorities (WLAs) governed African townships. Black Local Authorities (BLAs) were introduced through Act 102 of 1982 (Swilling, 1986: 23) as the first autonomous municipal governments for townships (Swilling, Cobbett and Hunter, 1991: 175). BLAs, argues Swilling, were initiated as a solution to the fiscal strain that increased African urbanisation was putting on the central state. The key objective of the BLAs was the creation of self-financing autonomous bodies at the local level that delivered services within urban townships (Swilling, 1986: 24). These autonomous BLAs were forced to generate their own revenue and to do so, needed to bolster rent and service payments in urban townships (Swilling, 1986: 24). These were increases that township residents clearly could not

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<sup>12</sup> This will be elaborated upon in greater detail in Chapter Three.

<sup>13</sup> Townships in apartheid South Africa were not fully serviced and the South African state was notorious for expending municipal finances primarily on White areas.

afford. BLAs were deemed even more politically illegitimate than the central apartheid state. It was this illegitimacy that acted as a catalyst for the creation of civic movements in the early 1980s (Shubane cited in Drakakis-Smith, 1992: 69). The South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) mobilised around opposition to BLAs from the 1980s. As such, for the majority of urban township dwellers, local government was an untrustworthy and oppressive institution from the outset. Shubane argued 'local government for the African population was historically conceived and implemented chiefly as a control mechanism' (Shubane, 1991: 65). Simultaneously, in WLAs, there was none of the poor service delivery that was experienced in BLAs. Neither was there a history of collective action nor political activism in relation to urban service delivery. In areas legislated as 'White', local government performed an effective and efficient service, making organisation around such issues unnecessary.

Given the illegitimacy of local government in African townships in apartheid South Africa, this sphere of government became an important target for making South Africa ungovernable by the mass democratic movement. The civic movement focused its oppositionary actions on BLAs in the 1980s. This opposition presented itself through rent and service payment boycotts. Antagonistic relationships between local government and citizens over service payments have not yet been resolved even in post apartheid South Africa, specifically because South African urban Black townships have always lacked equivalent services and service delivery to White designated areas. Service failure continues to be viewed as an arena around which resistance can be articulated. This potential persists as services remain largely inadequate in urban townships, albeit that the post-apartheid government is specifically targeting improved service delivery as one of the constitutional obligations of local government. Services such as water and sanitation and SWM are constitutionally recorded as basic human rights and government priorities. While public safety does not have the same constitutional prioritisation in South Africa, it is an area of extreme service deficit and it is one of the most critical concerns facing residents of Johannesburg and beyond. In inner city areas such as Yeoville, there has been a dramatic rise in concern regarding the decline in the urban environment. Unease regarding both crime and grime in these neighbourhoods has escalated. In Dobsonville, the types of public safety issues confronting residents have changed over the past decade, causing increasing concern regarding crime as well. Accompanying these changes in neighbourhoods, community

responses have fluctuated, this has had a significant bearing on the nature of social capital found in the areas at different times.

Both Old Dobsonville and Yeoville are residential areas that fall within the jurisdiction of the City of Johannesburg in the province of Gauteng. This thesis is concerned with the history of local government and its engagement with these neighbourhoods, insofar as it impacts on contemporary stocks of social capital and collective approaches to local government. The major focus of the study is the period of post-apartheid local governance from 1995 onwards, as it is only from this time that social capital as a development resource has been regarded as a key factor in policy terms. The study seeks to establish: first, the character of associational life in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, historically; second, the contemporary operation of governance on the part of the City of Johannesburg; and third, the current relationship between state and society in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville as it affects two areas of service delivery: management of solid waste and provision of public safety. A description of these three areas of organisation provides the contextual foundations to assess and analyse the potential for civil society to engage in a synergetic relationship with local government in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville for the effective management of two critical urban services. It also allows an exploration of the likelihood that social capital might constitute a resource in development generally.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The overall aim of the thesis is to explore the prior conditions necessary for the constructability and long-term efficacy of social capital through the empirical investigation of two case studies in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, chosen to show the importance of history and locality to the study of social capital. Further to that, the thesis analyses the role of social capital in relation to two urban services in order to test whether the nature of the service makes a difference. These services are SWM and public safety.

More specifically, the study seeks to understand whether there is a causal relationship between the existence of prior stocks of social capital and an active and engaged civil society. Second, it asks whether an active and engaged civil society leads to responsive

government performance as it applies to local level service delivery in Johannesburg. Towards this end, the study looks at the circumstances under which social capital emerges and how it is shaped and reshaped in the two localities over time. The research questions are based on the premise that the form of social capital present in any community is predicated on the unique history of that locality, as well as on changing wider contexts. Questions are posed as to whether what a community thinks is a matter of public concern, such as the state of different urban services expected from government, is of significance.

**Table 1.1 Diagrammatic Representation of the Research Questions**

Assumption from Putnam:	Assumption from Putnam: Social capital at community level leads to improved local government performance?			
<b>Social capital at community level is constructable</b>	<b>Related Research Questions:</b>	<b>Related Research Questions:</b>		
	<b>1. Does history count – do prior stocks of social capital matter?</b>	<b>1. Does locality</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Solid Waste Management</b>
	<b>1.1 Is the nature of collective action important?</b> <b>1.2 Is the wider context significant?</b>	Yeoville		Public Safety
		Old Dobsonville		

The study is motivated by the understanding that many conventional accounts do not fully explain how social capital emerges, is sustained and has impact in certain communities. In particular, factors are investigated such as a) prior stocks of social capital (or the history of associational life in a locality); b) the links to wider organised civil society; and c) the role of citizens in governance relative to waste and public safety. Qualitative research methods are used to explore the connections between, on the one hand, social capital and an active and engaged civil society and, on the other, an engaged civil society and responsive government performance. This is examined



through the study of two urban services. The research was conducted through two in-depth exploratory case studies of social organization and citizen interaction with the local state in two neighbourhoods in the City of Johannesburg. The selected case study sites, Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, differ greatly from one another in terms of their history, patterns of associational life and local government experiences. It is posited that these varying experiences have impacted greatly on the growth, nature and development of social capital in both localities. It is through the analysis of these comparative experiences, that policy implications are drawn regarding the possibility of social capital being constructed and playing a role in the delivery of urban services.

A third more specific objective of this thesis is to provide policy lessons that will assist local government in finding ways of addressing local urban development issues together with the involvement of local residents, while recognising the limits to generalisation from case study research. In order to assess whether it is possible to actively utilise existing social capital or construct new stocks of social capital as a development resource, it is asked whether or not social capital in a particular locality can be mobilised for all or selected services. The study explores the extent to which public concerns around the state of two very different local government services, SWM and public safety, influence the character of social capital in each community.

In sum, and within the framework of Putnam's analysis of social capital, this thesis asks the question: what (if any) relationship exists between prior stocks and the mobilisation of social capital, active and engaged civil society and responsive government at a municipal level? Stated differently, this thesis tests the assumption that a causal relationship exists between prior stocks of social capital, engaged citizenship and improved or at least responsive government performance. The study considers relationships as they occur among individual citizens, across local level or area-based associations, between state representative and citizens and relationships between state organisations and organised civil society. The study assumes that institutional performance (measured in terms of service provision) and civic engagement (measured in terms of contact between citizens and government) are embodied within a myriad of complex and unpredictable processes. The study is also sensitive to the fact that social capital in an area is not only linked to civic engagement or relations with local government but also can be a powerful force in the absence of or weakness of state

institutions and can also underpin confrontations between state and civil society. These processes are best analysed with reference to different bodies of theory derived from sociology, political science and public management. A combination of these analytic disciplines helps explicate in what instances associational life and social relationships result in responsive government.

## **1.5 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

This study aims to contribute to the existing literature on social capital as follows. First, through the test of empirical case study research, the thesis highlights the fact that social capital needs to be understood in terms of the conditions under which it emerges. In other words, history counts. Second, it questions the assumption that social capital, once formed, can be used as a development resource by showing how rapidly changing political contexts may have a massive debilitating effect on the maintenance of social capital. Third, it suggests that social capital cannot be seen as the undifferentiated property of a community. Different degrees and forms of social capital are held by particular groups within a community and obtain presence and currency in relation to different social issues represented in this study by varied public concerns over two local government services.

The research also makes a contribution by its focus on urban localities and how they relate to municipal level government. While a number of existing international studies have problematised, contested and supported the value of the concept of social capital in the development context (Evans, 2002; Grootaert and van Bastelaer, 2002), no study of this type has been undertaken in the City of Johannesburg. Most of the international studies reviewed have either investigated social capital at national level or in rural villages and neighbourhood or local communities. (Narayan-Parker and Pritchett, 1997; Grootaert, 1999; Kähkönen, 1999). A further contribution of the present research is to analyse whether the type of urban service has any bearing on the extent to which social capital is effective and able to be mobilised. This is key to understanding whether social capital can be considered seriously as a development resource. The important theoretical point being advanced here is that the mobilisation of social capital depends on the context, that is, the importance of a place both spatially and in terms of its history, and the legacy of experience of collective action. This includes in turn the

issues that prompt or have prompted collective action or not, especially for the purposes of the present research, the nature of the urban service at stake.

Comprehensive research on social capital in urban neighbourhoods and its relationship to local governance has not yet been undertaken in South Africa (broad South Africa-based work on social capital has been undertaken by Haddad and May, 2000; and Thomas, 2002). As is demonstrated in Chapter Two, local investigations of social capital as a development resource in urban contexts have been scant. The contribution of this study lies not in the exercise of theory building but primarily in its empirical insights and the application of an existing conceptual framework to a new context. Nevertheless, the emphasis on the importance of history and locality in the conceptual framework and analysis employed offer a fresh approach to the study of social capital, while the City of Johannesburg provides an apt context to pursue this approach, given the importance of its apartheid past for explaining the contemporary dynamics of collective action and local governance. Further, analytical insights to enhance a social capital framework are advanced in relation to area-based communities or localities of social capital. The implication here is that locations can differ incredibly, disallowing any generic city-wide developmental governance prototype from being constructed.

Much of the empirical work undertaken on social capital in the developing world has been survey based (Grootaert, 1999; Krishna and Shrader, 1999; Krishna and Uphoff, 1999). Woolcock, a specialist on social capital and a key World Bank advisor, suggests 'it is somewhat of a contradiction in terms to argue that universal measures can be used to capture local idiosyncratic realities' (Woolcock, 2000: 22). The World Bank has generated a table of social capital survey-based indicators that have been applied on a large scale in developing countries. Whilst these indicators might be useful for the study of social capital and development, this methodology has not enabled researchers to encapsulate the comparative nuance of locality as is the case here. It is recognised of course, that studies such as the present research have limitations too, not least that of generalisation.

Empirically there are few studies of social capital that compare two contrasting neighbourhoods within in a single local government jurisdiction.<sup>14</sup> Studies of social capital conducted to date have investigated the role of social capital in assisting service delivery at a city level (Beall, 1997; Kähkönen, 1999; Pargal, Huq and Gilligan, 1999; Moser and Lister and World Bank, 2000; Pretty and Ward, 2001; Campbell, 2002 and Leigh Anderson, Lock and Nugent, 2002). Previous studies have focused on depth and focus at the level of neighbourhoods (Cattell, 2001) or breadth and focus at the city level (Moser, 1998). Some have tried to combine the two such as Beall (1997) using survey and ethnographic work on urban services across three contrasting neighbourhoods in a Pakistani city. The approach used in this thesis follows these directions, however, unlike the aforementioned studies, in these works where the selection of neighbourhoods was on the basis of class or income indicators, the sites in this thesis have been deliberately selected on the basis of assumptions about the history of collective action, the consequent inheritance of different kinds of social capital and the different provision and organisation of urban services resulting from policies of the apartheid past.

## **1. 6 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS**

The research limitations are similar to most experienced in doctoral research. In the field there were shortages of time and resources. There were also problems of research access and ethics, given issues of representivity and the sensitive nature of some of the work. Finally there are limitations in relation to the findings associated with case study research more generally.

**Time and Resources:** Time and resources cast practical limits of this study. The study was limited by the fact that it was a Ph.D. study and therefore the research process was undertaken in a ten-month period with limited finances. Resource issues determined the breadth of the interviews undertaken.

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<sup>14</sup> Cattell wrote an article titled 'Poor people, poor places and poor health: the mediating role of social networks and social capital' where she compares health services in two urban neighbourhoods in East and North East London (Cattell, 2001).

This thesis draws on interdisciplinary literature and is concerned with policy. It does not have pretensions towards pure ethnography or to represent norms, values and relations of trust flawlessly in the case study sites. Mitchell made the point in 1969 arguing that 'the study of personal networks requires meticulous and systematic detailed recording of data of social interaction for a fairly large group of people, a feat which few fieldworkers can accomplish successfully (Mitchell, 1969: 11). This work seeks to portray perspectives and positions of different groups of people on state-society relations and urban governance through a comparative picture across two case study sites. With regard to the case study sites, the research was further constrained by the fact that, to the author's knowledge, there is no available written material on Old Dobsonville. There is also limited secondary literature available on SWM in South Africa generally where until recently it has been the Cinderella of urban services. As such, the empirical research relied heavily on oral histories and individual memory to construct a picture.

**Research Access:** Issues related to access emerged during ethnographic work. The case study sites selected both had access limitations. In Old Dobsonville and in Yeoville there were access problems arising out of the understandable mistrust towards a White South African woman undertaking research on sensitive issues in predominantly Black areas. Cooper for example, argues that the researcher's personal identity has great bearing on research and must be factored into the research process (Cooper, 2001: 11). There was reluctance by some politicians as well as on the part of representatives of community groups to meet with me. This reluctance can be attributed to the sensitive nature of the topic and in some cases political flank watching. Ensuring access through a resident was helpful. The reluctance on the part of politicians was overcome to some extent by relying on the assistance of political 'comrades' that I knew on a personal level. Furthermore, official representatives such as councillors were to some extent compelled to speak to me given the emphasis on transparency and accountability professed by government. However, this did not automatically translate into their being totally forthcoming. Problems of access were partly overcome through working with a local Dobsonville resident and a local Yeoville resident who assisted me in gaining access to respondents in the selected fieldwork sites.

Denzin and Lincoln argue, and the advice was followed, that:

the researcher must find an insider, a member of the group studied who is willing to be an informant and act as a guide and translator of cultural mores and at time jargon or language (2000: 655).

This proved to be a wise thing to do not only in terms of access but also personal safety.

There were some activities that could not be pursued due to personal risk. These included more detailed investigation of the criminal life in Soweto, which also precluded evening visits in Soweto. There were issues of personal risk in Yeoville as well, which prevented me from investigating the underworld in as much detail as I would have liked to. It was also difficult for me to move around at night as an unaccompanied woman and my research assistant warned me of the dangers associated with some contexts. Janet Jamieson describes the dangers inherent in the research she undertook on young people and crime in Scotland. She argued that being a female researcher researching crime in an unfamiliar area raised issues of personal risk. This was augmented by doing the research in a locality where being inconspicuous was impossible to achieve anonymity (Jamieson, 2000: 64). I experienced similar dynamics in the fieldwork undertaken as a White woman in the inner city and in Soweto.<sup>15</sup>

The selected case study sites were both high risk for research work. Another Soweto researcher whose fieldwork overlapped with mine was hijacked, shot and seriously injured in the course of research. While working in Soweto I was scurried out of public spaces. Activities such as chatting in the street, a much-favoured daytime activity, was considered unsafe for me. In many of my interviews in Dobsonville, women would question me as to why I was working alone in Soweto and would encourage me to be very careful and cautious. There was also an emotional difficulty associated with the work being done, as interview respondents were frightened by having me around asking questions. In one such situation, a local youth leader said that it took all his courage to agree to speak to me. In another instance, I hand delivered a thank-you note to a local activist and he joked about me delivering a letter bomb to him. Visiting the hostel in Dobsonville was extremely difficult and my research assistant encouraged me

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<sup>15</sup> Adam Ashforth, whilst doing his research in Soweto, wore a large white hat to be seen so that he was distinctive and equally would not be missed (Ashforth, 2000).

not to do so. These and similar dangers are faced by most researchers working in Soweto.

The risks within Yeoville were also high. The inner city is associated with a high crime rate and therefore being in Yeoville made one susceptible to hijacking, mugging and physical violence. Given that one of the foci of my research was public safety, which included an element of understanding how anti-social networks were established, accessing these networks entailed late night visits to Yeoville. It was often the case that I was the only White woman in a place, thereby making me very conspicuous. Here too, I was often questioned as to why I was working in the neighbourhood at night. This was similarly a question asked by women as well as men.

**Ethics:** Given the nature of the research undertaken for this thesis, research ethics were extremely important. Jenkins argues that there are two sets of ethical considerations to be considered in a study such as this: firstly, the ethical difficulties one is confronted with in the fieldwork process; and secondly, what to do with the data once it has been collected (Jenkins, 1987: 155). The high levels of suspicion towards me and the sensitive nature of the topic meant that great attention was paid to outlining the objectives of the study. It was made apparent to all respondents that this piece of work was for doctoral research and not being undertaken on behalf of an institution or a political party. At the outset, I explained that the interview would be confidential and that respondent names would not be used in the final text to ensure this confidentiality. Because the research looked at the position of both community members as well as institutions, I made the decision not to be aligned to any group. This may have impacted on the quality of some of the research but I considered it the most appropriate way to undertake the research. This was particularly important in the case of public safety. Whilst the police in both Dobsonville and Yeoville offered to take me around, I declined. This decision was based on the desire not to be seen to be affiliated to the police. This seemed sensible given that I was also interviewing residents involved in illegal activities. In both areas, I also felt extremely conspicuous and therefore felt it would be inappropriate to be seen to work directly with the police or to have a political affiliation.

The data gathered is kept confidential. The confidentiality of all respondents is maintained and quotations are not directly attributed. Instead, pseudonyms are used. Furthermore, when it was stated that material be used off the record this was respected. Given that the interviews were mainly taped, most respondents requested that the tape recorder be turned off when discussing issues they wished to be off the record.

**Generalisability:** Because the thesis is case study based, it is not generalisable and can only point to trends and possible lessons for cities structured similarly to Johannesburg. The research speaks very specifically to the apartheid and post-apartheid city in South Africa. The dynamics and history of the City of Johannesburg have impacted in many ways on the forms and impact of social capital in the two localities studies. The policy implications however are more generalisable if they are understood not as replicable or even transferable but as simply potentially adaptable. There were also methodological limitations within the case study approach. The sole use of qualitative methodology was selected in order to garner explanations for processes. However, in choosing qualitative techniques, any attempt at quantifying the results was sacrificed.

## **1.7 HOW THE RESEARCH PROCESS WAS ORGANISED**

The above sections have detailed the parameters of the research and have framed the case study sites. In order to elicit, analyse and craft the appropriate information, a range of qualitative research methods was utilised within a multiple method case study approach. Gilbert contends that there are three main divisions in social research: 'the construction of theory, the collection of data and, no less important, the design of methods for gathering data' (Gilbert, 2001: 14-15). Construction of theory was not an ambition of the present research and the theoretical and conceptual framework informing the research questions and underpinning the data collection techniques is presented in Chapter Two. This section discusses the methods used in the collection of data as well as justifying the research design and choice of methodology.

Evidence was required for two different case study sites situated in the same city. Although the contexts varied, the same research process was undertaken in both localities. The execution of this process was assisted by the fact that the case studies were directly focused on two services namely SWM and public safety. This helped



frame the data collection process.

An in-depth exploratory case study method was used suggesting multiple methods. By definition, case studies such as those employed in the present research, are characterised by their empirical basis and by their use of multiple sources of information, (Robson, 1993: 52). With this in mind the following methods were used:

- An historical analysis of the case study site and city context employing existing literature and the textual analysis of original sources.
- Primary research: semi-structured and unstructured in-depth interviewing, participant observation and focus group discussions.
- Secondary research: documentary search, literature review and textual analysis.

These methods were selected because they provided the basis for generating information that was interlinked in content and allowed for the use of triangulation to verify different results. A qualitative research approach was adopted, given that the research questions were concerned with the nature of social capital, which involves the investigation of relational issues.<sup>16</sup> In this the goal was to achieve explanatory depth rather than to understand the extent of social capital in Johannesburg or indeed, in the two locations under investigation. Data was collected through three qualitative data collection instruments: interviewing, participant observation and textual analysis. The field research commenced in January 2000. This initial phase of the research was piloted in Yeoville using a series of qualitative interviews and focus group discussions. The second phase of the research was conducted between November 2000 and August 2001. The three data collection techniques were used simultaneously in both case study localities.

Robson (1993) describes multiple methods of data collection as advantageous because it enhances the validity and reliability of the data and assists in verifying the analysis (Robson, 1993: 291). Generally, primary research that is qualitative in nature elicits

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<sup>16</sup> Much of the social capital case study work done by the World Bank and other large international organisations has been measured in quantitative terms largely using surveys. A qualitative approach was used in this study primarily because the nature of the information required to determine the *relationships* in each locality – between citizens and associations, and citizens and the local state and these were only identifiable through in-depth qualitative work.

opinions and normative responses. This is an important component of research as it allows the researcher to access information that is not contained in documentation and provides an understanding of perspectives and positions. Moser and McIlwaine in their article 'Participatory Urban Appraisal and Its Application for Research on Violence' explain how micro-level studies provide information on the experiences of violence amongst the urban poor in a way that could not be achieved by macro-level studies (1999: 204). It also exposes the researcher to opinions that have not been recorded elsewhere. The secondary data research component of the research design provided background information on the case study sites and access to municipal documentation that verified the information that has been obtained through the interviewing process.

The intention of using a multiple case study approach was that it could test the relationship between social capital, associational life and improved institutional performance in two different contexts using common methodological tools (Bryman, 2001). The two case study sites Old Dobsonville and Yeoville were selected because they allowed for comparison while producing contrasting results within the same conceptual framework, important because as Yin argues, when multiple case studies are investigated, this must be done within the a shared conceptual framework (Yin, 1994: 46). As Yin notes:

The framework needs to state the conditions under which a particular phenomenon is likely to be found (a literal replication) as well as the conditions when it is not likely to be found (a theoretical replication) (Yin, 1994: 46).

The framework of social capital is presented in Chapter Two.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

The selection of data collection techniques is critical for producing reliable and valid research. The choice of triangulation techniques in the present research was determined by the shortcomings in each methodology applied. Interviews were tested against observation and both were boosted by primary and secondary documentation. Secondary documentation was verified and checked through additional research. Every attempt was made to ensure the integrity of the research was maintained.

## Interviews

Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted through a non-random purposive sample of key informants in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville. Arber argues that in small-scale qualitative research small sample groups are legitimately used (2001: 62). Individuals in selected civil society associations, public sector workers, municipal officials and politicians were targeted. In-depth interviews were also conducted with selected residents in each of the case study localities. Respondents/residents were selected on the basis of age, gender, levels of political activity, race, nationality, occupation and the duration of their residence in Old Dobsonville or Yeoville. Interviews were considered the most appropriate method of data collection because of the depth of information required as well as the importance of eliciting and triangulating contrasting perceptions. The intention of this component of the research was to generate as inclusive a target group as possible. Both semi-structured interviews and in-depth unstructured interviews were conducted. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants but on the basis of the pilot research that was undertaken in Yeoville, it was ascertained that unstructured in-depth interviews best elicited the required or most useful information and opinion amongst individual residents in Yeoville and Old Dobsonville.

Oral history underpinned much of the historical data collection. This form of data collection has been assessed critically because of the latitude it gives to interviewees in interpreting the past. The editors of the book *The Oral History Reader* describe oral history as follows: 'the narrator not only recalls the past but also asserts his or her interpretation of that past, and in participatory oral history projects the interviewees can be historian as well as source' (Perks and Thomson, 1998: 1). It is possible that interviewees recollect a rosy past and glorify the old days. Therefore, it is necessary to use this form of methodology alongside additional sources such as primary and secondary documentation.

In the case of public sector workers, different levels of local government employees were interviewed. These interviewees were selected according to their job description as well as the factors mentioned above. The nature of the interview differed depending

on their level of responsibility. In the case of interviews with high level officials, structured interviews were most appropriate. This was a consequence of some sensitivity to questions on their part as well as limits to the time they had available. Semi-structured interviews conducted over a longer period were undertaken with lower-level officials and workers. These interviews were undertaken face-to-face. Robson has argued that 'face-to-face interviews offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self-administered questionnaires cannot' (Robson, 1993: 229).

### **Old Dobsonville and Yeoville**

There was limited secondary data available on Old Dobsonville and Yeoville. Research undertaken for this thesis was some of the first ever done. There was also limited secondary information available on SWM across the city as a whole. Thus the research was conducted in something of a documentary vacuum. However, the existing literature on Soweto was used to frame the Old Dobsonville case study and to help inform the criteria for categorising oral history and selecting interview respondents. Respondents were selected for interviews on the basis of:

- The length of time they had resided in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville
- Age and gender profiles
- Occupation
- Participation in associational life.

In Yeoville, pilot interviews were undertaken in January and February 2000 with representatives of political organisations, local government employees and residents. On the basis of this study, it was ascertained that Yeoville is less homogenous than Dobsonville and it was considered important to capture as much of the heterogeneity of the population as possible. The following assemblage of respondents was consequently selected in both areas:

- Foreign and local residents
- Long-term residents and new residents

- Formally employed residents and those involved in the informal economy
- Residents distinguished on the basis of race, gender and age.

In addition, interviews were conducted with residents and officials directly engaged in the two selected service delivery issues namely: SWM and public safety. In this study, 93 in-depth interviews and three focus groups were conducted by myself between October 2000 and August 2001. The interviews lasted between one hour and one and a half hours. Four focus groups were conducted by a research organisation, Progressus, as part of a broader study (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2001a) entitled 'Towards Inclusive Governance in Johannesburg. City Case Study for Stage Two of the ESCOR Commissioned Research on Urban Development'. A research assistant conducted three in-depth interviews. He was responsible for undertaking these as they were with Yeoville residents involved in the criminal underworld who did not wish to be identified to an outsider. The majority of interviews were recorded and transcribed by myself. The information was coded and analysed using the qualitative data analysis package Atlas TI.<sup>17</sup>

**Table 1.2 List of Interviews<sup>18</sup>**  
**Old Dobsonville, Soweto**

Area of Investigation	Unit of Analysis	Methodological Choice	Instruments Sources of Evidence
<b>Exploring Old Dobsonville</b>			
Determining the characteristics of the case study site	Recognised residential area	Textual Analysis  Interviews  Participant Observation: Simple Observation	Analysis of: Newspaper articles; Municipal Documents  Semi-structured and unstructured interviews In-depth interviews 42 Interviews  Observation of community life, meetings and daily routines.
<b>Public Safety</b>			
Determining government approach to public safety	South African Police Services	Textual analysis	Textual Analysis: Municipal documents Crime statistics National Department of Safety

<sup>17</sup> A guide to coding is presented in Methodological Appendix Two.

<sup>18</sup> This table is based on one developed by Carine Clert in her Ph.D. titled *Policy Implications of a Social Exclusion Perspective in Chile: Priorities, Discourses and Methods in Question* (1999: 80).

in Dobsonville	Local Government Officials	Interviews Participant Observation	and Security official documents Semi-structured interviews Observations of meetings and daily routines
The opinions of local residents regarding public safety	Residents	Textual Analysis  Interviews  Participant Observation	Newspaper articles: Academic texts  Semi-structured and unstructured interviews. In-depth interviews <sup>19</sup> 42 interviews  Observation at community meetings and community life in general.
<b>SWM</b>			
Determining government approach to SWM in Dobsonville	City of Johannesburg  Local Councillors	Textual analysis  Interviews  Participant Observation	Textual Analysis: Municipal documents and GJMC archives Newspaper articles Academic texts  Semi-structured interviews  Simple observation at meetings.
The opinions of local residents regarding SWM in Dobsonville	Residents	Textual Analysis  Interviews  Participant Observation	Newspaper articles Academic texts  In-depth interviews: semi-structured and unstructured interviews. 42 informant interviews  Simple observation: observing daily routine and life

### Yeoville

Area of Investigation	Unit of Analysis	Methodological Selection	Instruments Sources of Evidence
<b>Exploring Yeoville</b>			
<b>Public Safety</b>			
Determining government approach to public safety in Yeoville	South African Police Services Local Government Officials	Textual analysis  Interviews  Participant Observation	Textual Analysis: Municipal documents Crime statistics National Department of Safety and Security official documents  In-depth interviews: semi-structured  Simple observation of meetings and daily routine

<sup>19</sup> 42 Old Dobsonville residents were interviewed. They were all interviewed around issues of solid waste, public safety and general Old Dobsonville dynamics.

The opinions of local residents regarding public safety	Residents	<p>Textual Analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Participant Observation</p> <p>Focus Groups</p>	<p>Newspaper articles (two community newspapers in Yeoville – the North Eastern Tribune and the City Vision)</p> <p>Academic texts</p> <p>In-depth interviews <sup>20</sup>55 interviews</p> <p>Simple observation of community life and daily routines</p> <p>6 Focus Groups</p>
<b>SWM</b>			
Determining government approach to SWM in Yeoville	<p>City of Johannesburg</p> <p>Local Councillors</p>	<p>Textual analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Participant Observation</p>	<p>Textual Analysis: Municipal documents and GJMC archives</p> <p>Newspaper articles</p> <p>Academic texts</p> <p>Semi-structured interviews</p> <p>Simple observation of meetings and daily routines</p>
The opinions of local residents regarding SWM in Yeoville	Residents	<p>Textual Analysis</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Participant Observation</p> <p>Focus Groups</p>	<p>Newspaper articles (two community newspapers in Yeoville – the North Eastern Tribune and the City Vision)</p> <p>Academic texts</p> <p>In-depth interviews 55 interviews</p> <p>Simple observation of daily routines, meetings and community life</p> <p>6 Focus Groups</p>

<sup>20</sup> 55 Yeoville residents were interviewed. They were all interviewed around issues of solid waste, public safety and general Yeoville dynamics. The same applies to the focus groups.

## **Observational Techniques**

### **Simple Observation**

Simple observation is a technique used by researchers to observe an environment without being actively involved in its processes. This would include observing the population of the area as well as recording the physical and spatial dynamics of the locality (Angrosino and Mays de Pérez, 2000: 673). This technique of simple observation was used to generate information regarding activities in each area. Old Dobsonville and Yeoville were visited at different times of the day and on both weekends and weekdays. In this way, observation was important for understanding the nature of the locality as associational life was found to take different forms at different times.

### **Participant Observation**

#### **Community Level Participant Observation**

The researcher attended community meetings in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville. The personal notes made and the formal minutes of these meeting were used in conjunction with related documents and newspaper and magazine articles. Government documents were available from the City of Johannesburg and analysed relative to policy concerning the particular areas or services under review.

### **Documentary Analysis**

The analysis of primary and secondary documentation was used to augment and reinforce the findings of the interview process. Two categories were used for selection of documents. One set of documents was selected on the basis of their appropriateness to SWM and public safety in Johannesburg. The other set of documents was selected because of their relevance to the two case study sites.

Documentary analysis requires that the relevance and accuracy of the documents be considered before use. Two categories of documents were utilised, namely



government-generated texts and publicly-generated texts. These documents were deemed therefore to represent a particular perspective.

### **Government-generated Documents**

Events in local government transformation post-1990 have been recorded in some depth (Wooldridge, 2002; Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002; Allen, Gotz and Phillips, 2001; Tomlinson, 1999b). There is an abundance of documentation available from the City of Johannesburg and other sources pertaining to public safety and the political process in Johannesburg since 1990. SWM was a less well-documented service. The documentation that was in circulation was technical in scope rather than concerned with waste collection and management as a service understood within a social development framework.

These three groupings of documents were analysed to ascertain the course of events in the City of Johannesburg's history. They were also utilised as a means of tracing and interpreting the approach of local government to the urban service issues. Documents were also interpreted as a means of establishing the attitude of the City of Johannesburg to its citizens and residents of the two case study sites.

### **Newspaper and Magazine Articles**

National and provincial newspapers were examined for information regarding the City of Johannesburg since the 1950s. A selection of local newspapers and national magazines such as *Drum* presented a series of explanations of significant events that occurred in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville that were not recorded elsewhere. They also validated and verified information garnered through interviews.

The two community newspapers in Yeoville – the *North Eastern Tribune* and the *City Vision* captured community and local government sentiment in the neighbourhood over a long period of time.

## **1.8 THESIS ORGANISATION**

The objective of the first chapter has been to present the aims and objectives of the research, to introduce the concept of social capital, and to provide a background to local government/community relations in the City of Johannesburg in Gauteng Province, South Africa. The chapter has introduced the motivations for the research as well as presented the rationale for the research methodology used. Chapter Two presents the theoretical and conceptual framework within which the empirical chapters will be situated. It also locates the study within broader international debates. The literature on social capital, institutional performance and service delivery is reviewed and analysed. The chapter does not however confine itself to traditional discussions regarding social capital. Instead, for the purpose of answering the research question, the literature reviewed and conceptual framework presented includes literature on urban sociology, political studies and public management.

The empirical Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six are located within the conceptual and analytical framework developed in Chapter One and Chapter Two. Chapter Three provides a contextual overview of the City of Johannesburg, the local government jurisdiction within which the two case study sites fall. It presents a range of factors that constitute the framework within which policy decisions are made, historically and currently. It also provides an overview of political and associational life in the City of Johannesburg.

Chapter Four justifies the choice of the case study sites. It narrows the focus on social, political and economic infrastructure of the two localities studied, Old Dobsonville and Yeoville. This chapter also explores the distinctions between social capital in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville and discusses the implications of this diversity for policy making. Lastly, Chapter Four provides the context for understanding and exploring the relationship between associational life, social capital and improved institutional performance by local government.

Chapter Five reviews the first case study site of Old Dobsonville. Utilising the empirical information gathered it presents the history and current context of SWM and

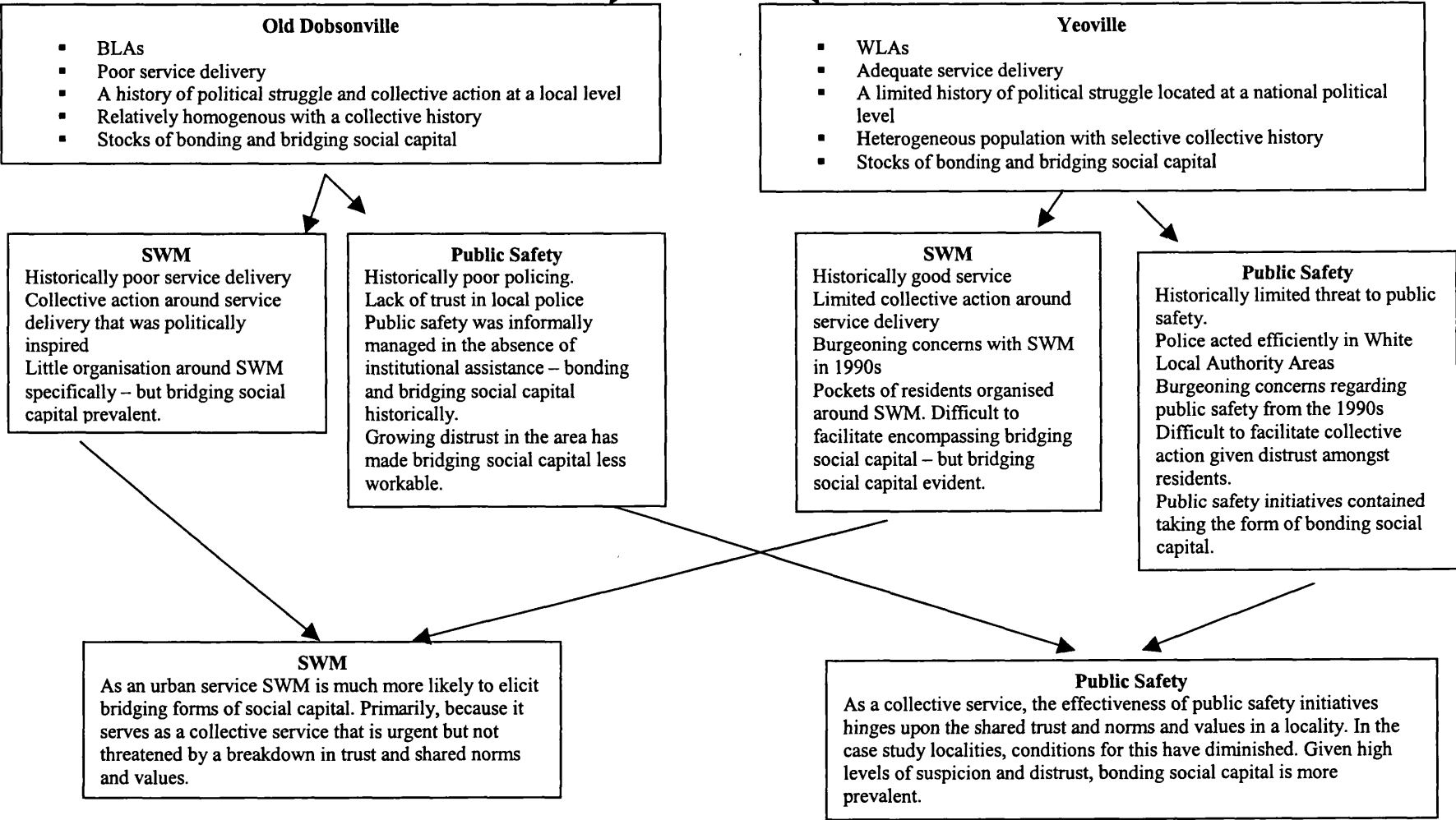
public safety in Old Dobsonville. It pays particular attention to social capital in the area and the form and utility which it takes here.

Chapter Six probes the history and context of SWM and public safety in Yeoville, similarly paying particular attention to social capital and how it is manifest in the area.

Chapter Seven provides a comparative analysis of the empirical research, relating findings to the conceptual framework. It explores the ways in which social capital has been used as a development resource in the context of the two case study sites and within a single local government jurisdiction. It examines forms of social capital and assesses the role it has played in inspiring collective action in relation to two collective urban services. This, as the final chapter, also draws conclusions, examining the significance of the thesis for conceptual debates on social capital and analysis of its relationship with governance. Finally, it provides suggestions for the policy process and identifies questions for further research.

**Table 1.3**  
**Social Capital as a Development Resource?**  
 The framework for investigating case study areas and case study services in the City of Johannesburg

A Metropolitan Government  
 The City of Johannesburg 2002



## CHAPTER TWO

### EXPLORING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN AN URBAN CONTEXT

This chapter sets the empirical research presented in Chapter Three, Four, Five and Six within the conceptual framework of social capital. Several comprehensive literature reviews on social capital have been undertaken since Robert Putnam's book (1993) *Making Democracy Work* received mainstream academic acclaim. The majority of reviews trace the history of the concept, analyse how and where it has been applied, and present critiques of a social capital framework drawn from different disciplinary perspectives. Presently, reference to the concept social capital can be found in a multitude of texts that discuss social relations, economic development, governance, development and management.

The widespread popularity of the concept in a development context is largely a reflection of the recent international focus on social infrastructure<sup>21</sup> as a resource at the disposal of governments and development agencies to potentially improve the performance of governments and as a means of including local residents in policy decisions. Within this domain, it is considered that the value associated with the concept of social capital is its explanatory power in understanding more clearly the nature of social relationships amongst individuals, as well as to understand the factors that are important for developing and sustaining co-operative social interactions in social groups. Social capital, in its most simple form, has been defined as 'the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organisations' (Coleman, 1988: 95).

The first section of this chapter will present the most cogent and influential discussions of social capital that have emerged in the last decade. An overview of this literature will create the framework within which the present research is located. The intent of the analysis is to unravel some of the key tenets of social capital literature as these are the

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<sup>21</sup> By social infrastructure I refer to social relations and social structures (Oakerson, 1993: 146).

foundations upon which the research analysis is built. The most important theoretical contributions are those of two sociologists, Bourdieu (1977, 1990, 1998) and Coleman (1988, 1990), who approach the concept from very different epistemological starting points, despite being concerned with similar social issues. Most important in terms of trying to identify the wider functioning of social capital are Fukuyama (1995) who looks at the relationship between social capital and business, and Putnam (1993, 1995, 2000, 2002) who explores the relationship between social capital and governance.

The subsequent sections consider the contributions made by these influential thinkers and contributors to the debate. Section Two introduces the role of institutions into the social capital discursive. This section looks more carefully at the role of institutions in determining social relationships and indeed the relationship between social capital, collective action and government performance. Section Three looks at civil society and other factors that impact on associational life which were not considered important by Putnam, but for the purposes of this research are key. Given that the scope of the research is to understand the role of social capital in affecting urban service delivery in locality, Sections Four and Five explore the significance of location as a factor in the relationship between associational life, social capital and improved institutional performance. Section Six covers the import of conceptions of governance to social capital and its link to institutional performance. Sections Seven and Eight trace the importance of social capital in service delivery. The overarching intent of Sections Three to Eight is to critique the existing understanding of social capital and the advocated relationship between social capital, associational life and improved government performance and propose instead a conceptual framework fitting to the experiences of the City of Johannesburg. Section Nine begins to explore how social capital can be used as a development resource.

The bodies of literature reviewed in this chapter include approaches derived primarily from urban sociology, political studies and public and development management. This is justified on the basis that setting about a detailed analysis of the relationships between an active and engaged civil society and a responsive local state around urban services, such as the management of solid waste and public safety, is a complex issue. It therefore necessitates a multidisciplinary approach that reviews different bodies of literature. However, limits have to be drawn and the vast and growing literature on

social capital is reviewed selectively. There are additional bodies of social capital literature that deal specifically with economic development and business, but these are not included in this study. Economists have used the concept of social capital to include 'the social' in discussions regarding economic growth and development. They suggest the import of social relationships into their analyses as a corrective device for explaining market imperfections (Fine and Green, 2000: 83). Given that this study speaks to a particular set of relationships between society and state, the economic perspective on social capital is not discussed.

This study neither attempts to generate new theory, nor to propose a hypothesis that is resolved through a body of theory. Instead, it uses a review and critique of the literature to assist in framing and answering the research questions and to test assumptions made about social capital and its application. This chapter serves, therefore, both as a literature review and as a vehicle for generating a conceptual framework within which the empirical analyses of Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six are situated.

## **2.1 THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

### **Defining Social Capital**

Social capital has been discussed in a variety of ways by different authors since it became popularised in the aftermath of James Coleman's (1990) *Foundations of Social Theory* and Robert Putnam's (1993) *Making Democracy Work*. Although the two authors used the concept social capital differently, their texts heightened consciousness around the possibilities that social relationships hold for economic growth and development (Harriss, 2002: 4).<sup>22</sup> Since these, numerous texts referring to trust (Fukuyama, 1995), reciprocity (Oakerson, 1993), connexity (Mulgan, 1997) and societal relationships have been written and applied to social and economic development discourse.<sup>23</sup> An interim wave of critique emerged in the late 1990s coming from political science (Tarrow, 1994, 1998; Levi, 1996; and Putzel, 1997); as

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<sup>22</sup> These contributions in sociology coincided with the rise of institutional economics that was reaching similar conclusions from a different standpoint.

<sup>23</sup> The World Bank has even launched a Social Capital Initiative that includes specific research projects, as well as a social capital discussion forum. Categorisations include: crime and violence, urban development, economic development and health.

well as development studies (Beall, 1997, 2001; Fine, 1999; Harriss, 1997) and anthropology (Bebbington, 1999), a second wave of literature analysing and critiquing social capital has become available since 2000. This includes the work of Baron, Field and Schuller, (2000); Foley, Edwards and Diani (2002); Harriss (2002); Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2002); Lin (2001); and Krishna (2002).

The principal original proponents of the concept of social capital include Coleman, Bourdieu and Putnam. James Coleman is well known for his work on social capital and began using the term as early as 1988 in his article entitled 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital' (Coleman, 1988). He developed his argument in his book *Foundations of Social Theory* (Coleman, 1990). The work of Coleman is important for an introductory discussion of social capital because it directly challenges the contention of neo-classical economics that society is solely comprised of atomistic, rational individuals (Coleman, 1990a: 301). It is this quality that is fundamental to social capital and which distinguishes it from other types of capital. Coleman contends that social relationships make a contribution to the fulfilment of the societal objectives that extend beyond the narrowness and individualism of human capital (1990a: 305). For Coleman, social capital is a resource located in social structures that facilitates the realisation of interests by groups rather than individual actors (Coleman, 1990a: 305).

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structure and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure (Coleman, 1990a: 302).

Since Coleman, a variety of other texts emerged that sustained and diversified interest in social capital. Francis Fukuyama's text (1995) *Trust, Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* applies the concept of social capital to economic development and highlights the importance of culture in corporate development. He argues that the decisions of individuals are informed by culture and it is his emphasis on culture as the key factor in economic development that differentiates his study from those of Putnam, Coleman and others (Fukuyama, 1995: 39).



This position is captured as follows:

Virtually all serious observers understand that liberal political and economic institutions depend on a healthy and dynamic civil society for their vitality. “Civil society”, a complex welter of intermediate institutions including businesses, voluntary associations, educational institutions, clubs, unions, media, charities and churches – builds in turn, on the family, the primary instrument by which people are socialised into their culture and given the skills that allow them to live in broader society and through which the values and knowledge of that society are transmitted across the generations. (Fukuyama, 1995: 5).

But ultimately social capital is used by/accrues to individuals and can be part of their (albeit reciprocal) utility maximising behaviour. Fukuyama reiterates, like Coleman and Putnam, that social capital is not a resource locked into the individual, but instead is located within a social structure (Fukuyama, 1995: 27). What is common to all these studies, and to the theorists that are located in the social capital genre, is the command they give to society as a realm of influence beyond that of the market or state. Coleman, Putnam, Bourdieu and Fukuyama were among those who initiated into economic and economic development discourse the salience of societal relationships as a resource, paralleling the work of the New Institutional Economists (NIE), North (1990) and Ostrom (1990, 1993).

### **Putnam’s Concept of Social Capital**

Putnam’s social capital arguments are described in this section because he was the first theorist who did not use social capital solely to explore norms and values within societal relationships (Putnam, 1993). Instead he took it a step further and posited social capital as a resource in the relationship between an active and engaged civil society and a responsive state. Putnam defines social capital as ‘features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action’ (Putnam, 1993: 167). Whilst Coleman and Fukuyama have used the concept to explain trust and reciprocity in relationships and to demonstrate the importance of these values to social and economic development respectively, Putnam extended the argument by presenting social capital as a resource for optimising government performance. It is this conception of social capital that will be used as the framework for this thesis because it is this conception that determines

whether or not social capital can in fact be used as a resource in the development process. It is also the understanding most commonly used in the development literature.

Putnam first presented this argument in the 1993 text *Making Democracy Work*. It was as a result of the impact of this text that the social capital debate expanded and was taken up by international organisations dealing with government performance. Putnam's application of the concept of social capital was to explain associational life and democratic performance and this was the key focus of Putnam's study of Northern and Southern Italy. Putnam's study ascertained that the levels of 'civic engagement, political equality, solidarity, trust and tolerance and voluntary association' were critical in determining government performance (Putnam, 1993). Putnam argues that citizen involvement in associational life creates social capital and is beneficial to civic engagement in two ways: first, it inculcates a culture of co-operation, and second, successful associational life relies on shared norms, values and trust all of which are cultivated through involvement in associations. On the basis of these learned norms and values of civic co-operation, social collaboration is much more likely to occur and hence so are society's demands on government more likely to be coherent and collaboratively articulated. Putnam explains the relationship as follows:

societal demands → political interactions → government → policy choice → implementation. Government institutions receive inputs from their social environment and produce outputs to respond to that environment (Putnam, 1993: 9).

It was this causal relationship that made Putnam's adaptation of social capital so compelling. Putnam purported to provide an alternative answer to the question of what makes for a successful relationship between active civil society and the state and he began to key out the requirements for optimum government performance. His further work on America, as presented in the well-known article 'Bowling Alone' and the subsequent book of the same title, operates within the same framework but demonstrates a causal relationship between a weak society and weak state. Putnam discusses the decline in civil society in America since the 1960s (Putnam, 1995, 2000). He states there has been a drop in membership in organisations such as labour unions, civic and fraternal organisations and that there has been a decrease in civic engagement and social connectedness (Putnam, 1995: 5). This Putnam attributes to a number of

factors including the movement of women into the workforce, mobility, changes such as divorce and reconfigured understandings of what constitutes leisure, such as the individualisation of leisure activities (Putnam, 1995: 75).<sup>24</sup> Accompanying this drop in associational membership has been a decline in civic engagement and trust. Americans, according to Putnam, are less trusting of each other and government now than they were in the 1960s (Putnam, 1995: 73). In (2002) *Democracies in Flux*, Putnam and Goss contend in the introduction that 'social capital is not automatically conducive to democratic governance' (Putnam and Goss, 2002: 7). This seems a toning down of the hypothesis argued in 1993.

Despite his extensive empirical research, critics of Putnam's conclusions in Italy have emerged in many disciplines. There has been some dispute around Putnam's proposed hypothesis that dense associational life leads to optimum government performance. The concern of this study, however, is not to question his basic hypothesis but to seek an explanation for what activities or processes exist among citizens (as a consequence of social capital) that act as catalysts for government performance. To explain further, Grootaert (1999) critiques Putnam's work through arguing that Putnam assumes that because there are co-operative relationships in a locality, as reflected through dense associational life (understood to be the micro-sphere), this co-operation will be transferred to a societal scale (meso-scale) and ultimately translate into societal demands on government for optimal performance (1999).<sup>25</sup> This thesis is based on the understanding that social capital is not equivalent to associational life, nor is it equivalent to civil society and for the purposes of this study will be considered as an independent variable. It is Putnam's purported uncomplicated, causal linking between micro<sup>26</sup> and macro<sup>27</sup> level factors that has raised substantial concerns around the validity of the link created between social capital and government performance, particularly given the significance of this link for development work.

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<sup>24</sup> I deem Putnam's conceptions of societal roles both conservative and old fashioned.

<sup>25</sup> Grootaert's study on 'Social Capital, Household Welfare and Poverty in Indonesia' for the World Bank captures the generally accepted distinctions between micro, meso and macro level. He describes the micro level as individuals/households, the meso as community level and the macro level refers to institutions (Grootaert, 1999: 5).

<sup>26</sup> Woolcock originally developed the notion of micro and macro levels of engagement and how this relates to social capital. Micro factors, in this context, apply to norms and values and relationships between individual citizens (Woolcock, 1998).

<sup>27</sup> Macro factors apply to the overall understanding of political culture and relationships between state and civil society. It is the meso space between micro and macro relationships that remain absent in Putnam's study. It is this caveat that has been the cause of much criticism directed towards Putnam.

Drawing on the critiques of academics and practitioners alike, the present study endeavours to understand more clearly the relationship between individual citizens, social relationships, civil society and the local state as independent but interlinked variables in the context of the City of Johannesburg. It also analyses the role social capital could play in facilitating interaction, be it positive or negative, for development. The following literature has been selected to inform the study in an effort to understand what social capital means more substantively as well as to understand relationships between state and society. While the bodies of literature presented above explains the evolution of the concept of social capital, given that the intent of the thesis is to understand the role that social relationships play in society in general as well as in institutions, the lens will fall to New Institutional Economics (NIE) and institutional literature. NIE speaks directly to the significance of social relationships within institutions and organisations.

## **2.2 INSTITUTIONS**

One of the primary concerns of this thesis is to bring to the discussion of social capital in the City of Johannesburg, the role institutions have played in constructing the political, social and economic realities. Maloney, Smith and Stoker (2001) describe the institutional caveat in Putnam's work as follows:

Putnam perceives the state to be an exogenous factor, neglecting the role played by political structures and institutions in shaping the context of associational activity and hence creating social capital. The governing bodies of an area are affected by social capital but also influence social capital (Maloney, Smith and Stoker, 2001: 83).

NIE proved an important theoretical inclusion because it provides insights into motivations for economic behaviour and relationships, beyond simple utility maximisation. As discussed in the section above, it is widely acknowledged that associational life is much more complex than Putnam's study in Italy suggests.<sup>28</sup> So too is the role that institutions play in constructing the relationship between social capital, collective action and improved institutional performance.

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<sup>28</sup> Putnam (2002) however posits an amended position and contends that the state does have a role to play in encouraging or discouraging the formation of social capital (2002: 17).

The work of the New Institutionalists also presents a very definite understanding of what an institution is and it is a definition that is used with frequency in relation to the social capital debate because it considers the importance of social relationships.<sup>29</sup> Clague (1997) contends that 'the NIE seeks to explain not only the individuals' choices with a given set of institutions but, more important, the way that individuals' beliefs and choices affect the evaluation of the institutions themselves' (Clague, 1997: 16).

Literature associated with the role of social relations in institutions is most often embodied within the framework of how economic institutions work. Historically economists have argued that individuals respond to economic contexts on the basis of rational choice or maximisation of utility and further to that, that society's interests are primarily driven by economic objectives. The New Institutionalists were important in expressing the relevance of social life relative to institutions, collective action and economic development, particularly towards the reduction of transaction costs. This is a key contribution of Douglass North (1990) and famously highlighted in Elinor Ostrom's *Governing the Commons* (1990).

New Institutionalists consider institutions - understood as 'rules of the game' - as critical to economic efficiency and indeed development (North, 1990; Granovetter, 1985: 483). Institutions constrain and facilitate the actions of agents. Significantly, North argues that institutions can take two forms: formal and informal. Formal institutions include rules and laws, while informal institutional form includes norms and values (North, 1990: 4). It is these institutions that structure the engagement between individuals and society. This distinction is important for this thesis because of the role that informal institutions play and have played both within and in the absence of formal institutions and organisations in a City such as Johannesburg. North in his study of institutions contends that informal constraints are an important element in moulding interactions within society. He discusses, using anthropological research, how societies generate informal structures for managing order (North, 1990: 39). In instances where there are absences of formal structures, informal social networks work

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<sup>29</sup> Ben Fine (1999), in his article 'The Developmental State Is Dead - Long Live Social Capital', states that broader institutional frameworks and social relations were understood by social scientists before it was discovered by the New Institutionalists. He argues that the power of economic discourse, as testified to by the way in which there has been recognition of social relationships by NIE, has given this relationship mainstream legitimacy (Fine, 1999).

instead to create order and reconstitute efficient economic activities and institutions. The apartheid history of Johannesburg necessitated the creation of these informal institutions.

North not only differentiates between formal and informal institutions, but also between institutions and organisations. Organisations for North include 'political bodies (including city councils), economic bodies (trade unions etc.), social bodies (churches, clubs) and educational bodies (schools and universities)' (North, 1990: 5). North creates the link between institutions and organisations by arguing that these bodies are influenced and evolve relative to broader institutional framework (North, 1990: 5), meaning that institutions create the framework within which organisations operate. This dual understanding of institutions is significant because it is one of the few acknowledgements by economists of the role that relationships, norms and trust play in influencing economic activity, a development that coalesces well with a social capital framework as espoused by the work of Coleman, Fukuyama and Putnam. It is especially obvious in Putnam's usage as evident from the following quotation.

Norms of generalised reciprocity and networks of civic engagement encourage social trust and co-operation because they reduce incentives to defect, reduce uncertainty and provide models for future co-operation. Trust itself is an emergent property of the social system, as much as a personal attribute. Individuals are able to be trusting (and not merely gullible) because of the social norms and networks within which their actions are embedded (Putnam, 1993: 177).

Granovetter's (1985) analysis of embeddedness from the perspective of economic sociology, posits a similar point to the New Institutionalists. He contends that all actions are woven into networks of personal relationships, and that this is no different relative to institutions (Granovetter, 1985: 504).

The New Institutionalists attribute to society a key role in service delivery and New Institutionalists like Ostrom, Schroeder and Wynne (1993) see 'indigenous institutions' as a significant supplier of social capital for sustainable infrastructure (Ostrom, Schroeder and Wynne, 1993: 209). Elinor Ostrom's work *Governing the Commons* presents instances in which society has organised collectively to address resource

issues, without state intervention (Ostrom, 1990).<sup>30</sup> In each of her case studies, communities restructured institutional form to address the common problems that they confronted collectively without state intervention and in an efficient manner. Ostrom argues that it is highly likely that society will organise spontaneously when threatened (Bates, 1995: 36). This is relevant for this study of Johannesburg because it creates the theoretical scope for explaining the resource that informal institutions could present in various settings.

The New Institutionalists owe something to the economic sociologist Granovetter, well known for his seminal work on social networks and their importance to economic life.<sup>31</sup> However, he argues that although NIE considers social relationships, ‘the main thrust of the new institutional economists is to deflect the analysis of institutions from sociological, historical and legal argumentation, and show instead that they arise as the efficient solution to economic problems’ (Granovetter, 1985: 505). NIE, while acknowledging the salience of norms and behaviour and informal institutional factors, does little to interrogate in any depth the meaning of societal relationships in the state and in society, beyond their utility for economic efficiency. Granovetter proposes that it is vital to recognise the importance of social relationships both in terms of generating trust, norms and values as well as for comprehending how institutions are configured (Granovetter, 1985: 505). However, the work of New Institutionalists like Elinor Ostrom demonstrates the value and influence of society in structuring institutional relationships concerned for example with service delivery. The importance of Ostrom’s work will be taken up in the empirical chapters.

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<sup>30</sup> She demonstrates this in a series of four case studies. In the cases of West Basin, California; Alanya, Turkey; Toerbl, Switzerland and Hirano, Nagaike, Yamanoka, Japan, Ostrom shows how communities were able to construct unique institutional arrangements that addressed their common resource problem with varying degrees of administrative intervention (Ostrom, 1993: 115).

<sup>31</sup> Embeddedness, as expounded by Granovetter, represents a relationship between economic actions and social relationships specifying that economics and social relationships impact upon each other and not necessarily only in response to economic efficiency. The shape that institutions take reflects these interactions (Granovetter, 1985: 481).

## 2.3 CIVIL SOCIAL CAPITAL<sup>32</sup>

### Bourdieu and the Subject

As was articulated in the discussion of Putnam's work, an important element lacking in his work is the explanation of the complex nature of society and how it operates. It is because of this gap, that the work of Pierre Bourdieu has become increasingly referred to in the literature on social capital. Bourdieu's work is connected with social capital as he was one of the original theorists who gave credence to social capital as a non-material resource (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990). As such, his work is interesting for this study because of the value he attributes to non-material goods as a source of economic power. Swartz argues that Bourdieu views society as more than a 'mass category'. Instead, he breaks society into subjects, a factor that could potentially assist in disaggregating associational life (Swartz, 1997:66).

Reference to Bourdieu is useful for positioning theoretical attempts to interpret civil society because his work includes a specific focus on the 'subject', in comparison to purely structural analyses that tend to use groups as the category of analysis. This is important because he seeks to understand what compels individual agents to join organisations and groups and also how the capital allocations of these subjects influences their activities. Bourdieu's work differs from Putnam in that he presents a more gritty and complex understanding of society, lacking in Putnam's work, and pays some mind to structural issues as well. This study seeks to analyse society in a more complex way than does Putnam and is therefore greatly assisted by the work of Bourdieu.

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<sup>32</sup> Knack (2002) in his chapter 'Social Capital, Growth and Poverty' in *The Role of Social Capital in Development* (Grootaert and van Bastelaar, 2002) refers to social capital in civil society as 'civil social capital' and in government as 'governmental social capital'. I have used these terms as they capture the division between social capital in the government domain and civil society domain in a simple and manageable way.



Swartz characterises Bourdieu's thesis as such:

Bourdieu argues against conceptualising human action as a direct, unmediated response to external factors, whether they be identified as micro-structures of interactions or macro-level cultural, social or economic factors. Nor does Bourdieu see action as a simple outgrowth from internal factors, such as conscious intentions and calculations, as posited by voluntarist and rational actor models of human action. For Bourdieu explanations that highlight either the macro or micro dimensions to the exclusion of the other simply perpetuate the classic subjective/objective antinomy. Bourdieu wants to transcend this dichotomy by conceptualising action so that micro and macro, voluntarist and determinist dimensions of human activity are integrated into a single conceptual movement rather than isolated as mutually exclusive forms of explanation. He thus proposes a structural theory of practice that connects action to culture, structure and power (Swartz, 1997: 9).

Sewell (1992) contends that Bourdieu's significant theory of *habitus* is embedded within a structural approach to the extent that it argues that agency actions are always located within broader structural constraints (Sewell, 1992: 15). Sewell continues, however, that Bourdieu is as much constrained by structure as other structuralists as he contests hypotheses that view actors as agents beyond the realm of structure. This is not regarded here as an overly problematic understanding as indeed it seems sensible to acknowledge as does Giddens, that agents do not act independently of their context (Giddens (1984). The missing factor in a lot of structural explanations is the acknowledgement that agents are able to recognise and manipulate structural constraints (Sewell, 1992: 20) and further to that, take part selectively around engagement within associational life and instances of collaborative action. This more holistic analytical approach is the strength of Bourdieu's contribution and indeed, that of Giddens, to social analysis. The challenge for empirical work therefore becomes establishing what factors are salient in inducing any form of collective action within society. Whether or not it is determined by the stocks of social capital or the extent to which the needs of the society are paramount.

Bourdieu's contribution informs the present research in two ways. Firstly, he provides a theoretical framework for introducing the notion of non-material capital to discussions of society by contending that individuals can have different endowments of capital, be it cultural, symbolic, economic or social. His term *habitus* is used to explain these structural complexities. For Bourdieu, the significance of symbolic and social capital is

the admittance it provides to assets that are not supplied by having economic capital alone (Swartz, 1997: 80). He illustrates how access to different types of capital both shapes agency responses and determines the structural position of the subject (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990). Secondly, Bourdieu's contention that there are distinctive allocations of capital resources available to subjects presents civil society as a multidimensional domain. Bourdieu exposes the nuances of society by proposing different understandings of what contributes to human action. His analysis suggests that agents can be both constrained and assisted by power and culture, two factors that account for the specificities of groups and individuals that were not considered in the initial discussions of social capital.

### **Organised Civil Society**

The above sections concern the views of classic social capital texts. They sought to demonstrate how social capital and the relationship between social capital and government performance have been understood. The overarching message in the work of Putnam, Coleman, and the New Institutional Economists is that social relationships constitute a resource in society and in the workings of institutions. Bourdieu's work introduces the notion of society as complex and fraught with issues of power and points to the significance of agency. But this literature still does not go far enough in explaining the circumstances under which social capital and civil society will contribute to improved government performance. This is based on the understanding that social capital and civil society are different.

Any discussion of social capital, such as in this study, which seeks to understand in relation to issues of governance, brings into consideration debates around the nature of civil society and structural factors that impact on associational life. Starting from social capital as 'the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organisations' (Coleman, 1988: 95), it is the details of these groups, the nature of their organisation and the reasons behind how and why they work together that are the critical focus of this study.

It is the contention of the present research that the role of civil social capital in local governance, as it relates to service provision, requires a more nuanced sense of

associational life and the nature of the linkages between the individual and the collective. The concept of social capital above all implies an emphasis on agency. However, some recent theoretical perspectives on social capital go beyond an acceptance that agency on its own is a sufficient explanatory variable (Beall, 1999; Levy 1996; Lin 2001; Putzel, 1997). It is argued that a consideration of current agency does not have sufficient explanatory power if seen in isolation from further discussions of identity and history. If a causal analysis is proposed between horizontal, thick associational life and government performance, it is vital to establish the salience of both agency (embodied perhaps in conceptions of identity and action) and structure in that causality. Castells argues that:

Identity must be distinguished from what traditionally sociologists have called roles and role sets. Roles (for example to be a worker, a mother, a neighbour, a socialist militant, a union member, a basketball player, a churchgoer and a smoker, at the same time) are defined by norms structured by institutions and organisations of society. Their relative weight in influencing people's behaviour depends upon negotiations and arrangements between individuals and these institutions and organisations. Identities are a source of meaning for the actors themselves, and by themselves, constructed through a process of individualisation (Castells, 1997: 7).

Calhoun's well-known work on identity and collective action, speaks of relationships between the identities of individuals and groups and argues too that identity is fluid in nature and amenable to change, depending upon context (Calhoun, 1991: 59). This point is illustrated in the context of this research in Chapter Three. It is in this contextual chapter on the City of Johannesburg that some insight is provided into the historical and contemporary conditions that have made up the structural context of the city. The chapter also suggests how these structural conditions have influenced the identities and agency of the research subjects.

### **Questioning the Positive Spin On Civil Society**

Putnam's understanding of civil society is both optimistic and uncomplicated. An alternative approach adopted by theorists' such as Castells (1997), argues that civil society associations such as co-operatives, civic associations and political parties are merely apparatus for sustaining structural dominance. Castells asserts that 'legitimising

identity generates a civil society that is a set of organisations and institutions, as well as a series of structured and organised social actors which reproduce albeit sometimes in a conflictive manner, the identity that rationalises the source of domination' (Castells, 1997: 8).

Bourdieu's allocation of 'capital' resources to individual subjects, and Castells's idea of hegemonic dominance, both view power and allocations of power as constraining for the activities of agents, arguing that inherent inequalities in civil society are reflected and reproduced in myriad ways. This understanding, if applied to the concept of social capital, suggests that the identity of civil society associations and of structurally located individual subjects within them can produce and reproduce inequalities. This is in direct contradiction to the more associationalist approach adopted by Putnam. Associationalism purports that civil society is a vital governance resource (Hirst, 1994: 70). Hirst, an important advocate of this approach, argues that associational life is the key to generating a self-governing society. The associationalist approach is different from the aforementioned because it does not represent civil society as complex, or if it does, it glosses over what the implications of this complexity are for self-regulation. So whilst associationalists view civil society as self-regulating, critics such as Ash Amin in fact reiterate the position that associationalism 'runs the risk of becoming a democracy of and for the powerful in the context of the residual state' (Amin, 1999: 3). Amin argues further that 'the "civil society" thesis too needs to attend to issues of embedded inequality in its case, within civil society itself' (Amin, 1999: 3). These observations echo some of the critiques made of the Putnam thesis (Beall, 1997, 2001; Harriss, 2002).

Acknowledging that civil society is a domain of conflict is neither new nor specific to Amin. John Keane's influential position (1998) on civil society is similar. He declares that in order for community participation and planning to materialise, a strong and active civil society is required. But he asserts further that civil society needs to be mediated by a strong state because of the potential it has for generating and perpetuating inequality (Keane, 1998: 15). Understanding the dynamics embodied within civil society itself challenges the linear relationship between social capital, an active and engaged civil society and responsive government as posited by Putnam because it intrinsically questions the implicit acceptance of civil society as an

unproblematic domain.<sup>33</sup> Understanding that civil society is a sphere that reflects power and inequities in society presents the necessity for investigating the specific nature of different forms of associational life (Harriss, 2002: 119). It also raises questions regarding the circumstances under which social capital is important in the relationship between an active civil society and responsive state.

Furthermore, contemporary theories on civil society organisation no longer necessarily view state and society as distinct spheres. Much work on civil society directly challenges the view that the state and society can be viewed as separate arenas and argues instead that state and society are enmeshed in each other (Evans, 1996; Ostrom, 1996). It is conceivable that the relationship between an active and engaged civil society and responsive government is a consequence of the embeddedness of shared norms and values. This would point to overlaps in the identities presented by government employees and civil society associations that would facilitate social capital (Tendler, 1997). This study would therefore have to consider social capital within government too: the norms and values that characterise government organisations. This links in directly with the work of the NIEs but differs considerably from Putnam's approach. Consideration of these aspects also highlights the importance of understanding for what reason citizens join particular organisations and political parties, as well as considering the extent to which membership in associations is similar amongst individuals sharing particular profiles.

## **2.4 HOW IMPORTANT IS LOCATION?**

Putnam proposes that social capital is an accumulated good and an historical resource that grows incrementally. In truth, in order for this incremental growth to occur and social capital to accumulate, it would need to flourish in a locality unmarked by trauma and conflict, or any other factors that are divisive to a geographical locality. This is an unlikely reality in complex urban settings where political and social realities have a large role to play in framing social relationships. Putnam's implicit path dependency stems from the contention that stocks of social capital are built incrementally in an area over time but Diani (2001) makes the point that albeit that social capital can persist

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<sup>33</sup> Harriss (2002) makes the same point in his book *Depoliticizing Development*. Here too he critiques Putnam's portrayal of an uncomplicated civil society (Harriss, 2002: 43).

over long periods of time, political changes constantly reconstitute those social bonds (Diani, 2001: 204). In urban settings the reconstituting of social bonds can be particularly significant given the complex nature of interactions.

One way in which social capital in urban areas can be affected is through the interaction between disparate groups of residents. Debertin makes the important point that the difference between urban and rural communities is that in rural communities there is greater likelihood that locality and social capital will overlap (Debertin, 2002: 2). It is taken for granted in Putnam's study (and much subsequent research on social capital) that associational life is linked to locality (Pritchett and Narayan, 1997; Grootaert, 1999). Portney and Berry in their discussion of 'Social Capital and Participation in Urban Neighbourhoods' contend that neighbourhoods are 'where bonds of community are built' (Portney and Berry, 2001: 71). Lowndes (1995) argues that the realities of urban life have resulted in 'choice, diversity, pluralism and competition' emerging as the organising principles for politics. A particular locality is not immediately the domain of identification (Lowndes, 1995: 163). Harvey contends that the poor are dependent upon their locality, as mobility is limited. As such, they are in fact 'trapped in space' and more likely to engage in some form of urban politics and citizenship (Harvey cited in Lowndes, 1995: 164).

In urban areas, there are healthier odds that residents will have networks that extend more broadly and an assumption informing the present research is that even within cities, across different areas locality and social capital will overlap in different ways (Phillips 2002: 135). Phillips however, suggests, as does the present research, that people do have relationships that extend beyond the physical space of their home and do not necessarily exist as a 'bounded unit' (Phillips, 2002: 142).<sup>34</sup> Nor are the actions of these individuals purely structurally determined. It is particularly in areas in flux that the structure/agency debate is useful as it assists in explaining further the rationale for the decisions people make outside of their structural locations.

Urban theorists such as Douglass and Friedmann (1998) and Castells (1997: 23) argue that whilst civil society can be stuck fast in neighbourhoods, cities and states, it can as

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<sup>34</sup> Urban anthropology debates the issues of space and identity in great detail. *Culture, Power and Place*, edited Gupta and Ferguson speaks directly to these issues.

easily have far-reaching networks both nationally and internationally. Amin and Thrift (2002) suggest that cities are 'mixed spatialities' and sites of global and local processes (2002: 3). Tostensen, Tvedten and Vaa (2001) evince that within an African context networks can either be ascribed or acquired. Ascribed identities are kinship or ethnicity based, while acquired are religious (2001: 15). They argue 'Ascription is a particularly important aspect of civil societies in Africa. The reach of networks may be confined to local communities or span continents to include Diaspora populations' (2001: 16). The authors argue further:

despite the growing importance of urban associations, informal networks within kin-groups, neighbourhoods, or gender and age groups, and links with rural areas probably, still play a more significant role for the urban population in their struggle for survival than do associations. Such networks are important for access not only to material resources, but social security and the fulfilment of socio-cultural obligations (Tostensen, Tvedten and Vaa, 2001, 24).

With the acknowledgement of the possibility that social capital is not necessarily geographically contained, so the complexity in the relationship between state and society is no longer limited to intrinsic power inequities in place bound civil society organisation and the structural constraints they face. Instead, it broadens the terms of reference to those beyond locality. This raises questions of whether or not these wider connections and allegiances allow citizens to be governed according to their identity.

### **Virtual Urban Communities**

A neighbourhood with far-flung networks potentially makes more challenging the work of utilising and constructing social capital for the purposes of governance. It is often argued that a poor, heterogeneous and highly evanescent population in fact constrains urban politics. The transient nature of the population inhibits the creation of structures and associations specific to the area. Coleman argues that stability is key to the creation, maintenance or destruction of social capital. He posits that 'disruptions of social organisations or social relations can be highly destructive to social capital' (Coleman, 1990: 320). Byrne's analysis (1999) of 'communities' and social exclusion contends that collective action is more likely to occur in areas where people have a permanent presence and hence a vested interest (Byrne, 1999: 120). But then again, even with the permanent presence of residents, exogenous factors can impact directly on the stocks of

social capital both positively and negatively throwing anticipated collective action into disorder.

The implications of this vocabulary are important in the debate around social capital as it presents the possibility of individuals belonging to different communities, be they micro locale, virtual communities or moral communities. Associationalism reconciles the possibility of self-governing communities that have local, national and international affiliations, thus not restricting society to an area-bias (Hirst, 1994: 71). Mulgan concurs, arguing that 'connexity makes it possible for these memberships to be far more dispersed than in the past. There are few intrinsic reasons why any of these scales should be geographically close' (Mulgan, 1997: 115). This is explicitly the case in large and heterogeneous cities such as Johannesburg. This reality broadens exposure to a myriad of independent 'norms and values' some of which are more predisposed towards collective action and civic engagement than others. At the same time, Mulgan argues that the economics of attachment dictate that individuals have finite connections to 'communities' (Mulgan, 1997: 116). In literature associated with collective action, it is argued that group size affects the likelihood of collective action (Olson, 1965; Kähkönen, 1999: 6). Kähkönen's study continues that the more heterogeneous a society is, the less likely it will organise for collective action (1999: 7). Fukuyama makes the following bold statement:

It would appear that in many African cities, older tribal structures and family ties have been broken down with rapid urbanisation and have not been replaced by strong voluntary associations outside of kinship. This kind of atomized society does not provide fertile ground for economic activity, supporting neither large organisations nor family businesses. One interesting thread that runs through such societies, however, is that of a delinquent community: the community structures that do exist are criminal organisations. It is as if there is a natural universal human impulse towards sociability, which if blocked from expressing itself through legitimate structures like family or voluntary organisations appears in pathological forms like criminal gangs. And indeed, mafias have appeared as one of the strongest forms of social organisation precisely in places such as Southern Italy, American inner city, Russia and many Sub-Saharan African cities (Fukuyama, 1995: 338).

While Fukuyama's analysis of the emergence of delinquency in cities can be interpreted as offensive, the presentation of a dislocated population is pertinent. The importance of this discourse is the opportunity it presents for analysis around whether



or not governments may well create communities in areas characterised by atomistic residents, whether social capital exists or develops in these settings and whether or not these communities unite to influence government. Policy initiatives, such as area-based targeting, are based on the notion of community, an example of government attempting to create a community through the identification of a geographical area as a 'deprived area' (Glennister, Lupton, Noden and Power, 1999). Nikolas Rose presents a fascinating analysis of what he terms 'the death of the social'. Rose argues that government responds to civil society through a 'community' nomenclature whereby government articulates the identities of its citizens through location within a particular community. The 'social' is therefore no longer the focus. Rose argues thus:

The subject is addressed as a moral individual with bonds of obligation and responsibilities for conduct that are assembled in a new way – the individual in his or her community is both self responsible and subject to certain emotional bonds of affinity to a circumscribed network of other individuals – unified by family ties, by locality, by moral commitment to environmental protection or animal welfare (Rose, 1996: 334).

With the acknowledgement of the possibility that forms of social capital exist and that social capital is not geographically contained, so the complexity in the relationship between state and society is no longer limited to intrinsic power inequities in civil society as a consequence of structural constraints. Instead, it broadens the terms of reference to those beyond locality.

## **2.5 LOCATION, INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Locality has an important role to play in determining the nature and form that social capital takes. In as much as institutions, structure and agency have a bearing on social capital, so too does the context within which discussions of social capital are undertaken. Given that this thesis deals with the City of Johannesburg, the nature of the African city is a critical component in determining how social capital manifests.

Much has been written about the nature of cities in developing countries that make discussions of governance, social capital and service delivery different from those of developed countries (Gilbert and Gugler, 1992). Simone (1999) argues that African cities are largely characterised by a lack of effective governance, the implications of

which include the creation of an unsafe and uncertain environment. Residents consolidate geographically in blocks or neighbourhoods to compensate for the lack of formal institutional presence and in an attempt to recreate lost social ties (Simone, 1999: 8). It is because of specific circumstances that these social structures emerge. These actualities do not confront citizens in developed countries in the same way and hence the evolution of social structures would differ,<sup>35</sup> although, in many urban contexts in Africa, social identity and locality indeed overlap considerably.

Given that the question informing this thesis relates to the circumstances under which social capital becomes a resource for creating positive relationships between an active and energetic civil society and a responsive state, it becomes necessary to consider the historic analysis of an area and consequent relationships with local government. Historical analysis provides contextual insights into existing 'communities' and structures. In addition, the history of an area holds important information regarding the structural factors that impact upon the locality and potential for collective action. Moser (1998) concludes in her article on 'The Asset Vulnerability Framework' that:

the urban poor might be particularly vulnerable to *social fragmentation*. Community and interhousehold mechanisms of trust and collaboration can be weakened by greater social and economic heterogeneity, associated with wider distributional ranges of incomes, opportunities and access to infrastructure, services and access to urban areas (Moser, 1998: 4).

Further to that, understanding of locality provides some insight into social identities and historical relationships between state and society (Fincher and Jacobs, 1998: 21). Maloney, Smith and Stoker (2001) argue 'only by being sensitive to the different locations in which social capital is created or inhibited is it possible to judge its impact on governance' (2001: 84).

If informal institutions are the means by which services are delivered, this has a critical bearing on the potential of social capital as a prospective resource in effective urban service delivery. Much of the existing social capital literature argues that in contexts where institutions are absent, local residents bond together to formulate survival

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<sup>35</sup> Jennifer Robinson's article 'Global and World Cities: A View from off the Map' (2002) contests that cities in the developing world should be categorized and explained in different terms to those in the developed world.

strategies (Moser, 1998; Grant, 2001; Rose, 2001; Tostensen, Tvedten, Vaa, 2001; Saegert, Thompson and Warren, 2002; Phillips, 2002). Richard Rose (2001) explains that in the case of Russia the suspicions that arise from the conduct of formal institutions promote the formation of informal institutions (Rose, 2001: 59). The failure of formal institutions to deliver means that alternative means of accessing services are sought under some circumstances. The power of these informal institutions can supersede that of the local state. Since institutions can be ordered according to formal or informal rules, the state is not necessarily the ordering principle. This mostly occurs in situations whereby the state is neither trusted nor capable of delivering basic services. Walton (1998) adds that urban groups learn to cope with the realities imposed on them as a consequence of the retreat of the state into privatisation and deregulation (Walton, 1998: 469).

Informal institutions facilitate the survival of these marginalised groups and intensify existing identities through constructing a measure of certainty in an otherwise hostile environment. Although these residents may not have a fixed history, they share a broader acknowledged identity and sufficiently powerful (but selective) relationships of trust with each other. Rao and Woolcock (2001) make reference to this dynamic amongst immigrant communities in the United States. They state that new arrivals are able to access 'indigenous social institutions' to assist at the outset. Whilst this practice succours, it also excludes because it is only accessible to *insiders* (Rao and Woolcock, 2001: 2). Fuchs, Shapiro and Minnite's study amongst New York's Russian Jewish networks have similar findings (2001: 292). Narayan contends that social capital and social exclusion can be interlinked. She suggests 'those who belong to social networks which already have access to the resource allocation decisions of the state or the private sector (jobs, location of industry) are much more likely to continue to be included in societal processes than those who do not have such access' (Narayan, 1999: 5). Harriss proclaims similarly "'social capital" for one group of people may constitute "social exclusion" for another' (Harriss, 2002: 10).

Given the history of apartheid, the City of Johannesburg is one saddled with deep-rooted legacies of inclusion and exclusion, constantly challenged under the post-apartheid dispensation. Moreover, it is also a city in flux and of allure to a myriad of new residents. As such, informal institutions cannot be excluded from the social capital

debate. The empirical chapters show how informal institutions are not fixed but are shaped and reshaped according to the vagaries of Johannesburg's history and the political, social and economic realities of its citizens.

## **2.6 GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Whilst urban theorists increasingly write of the power and influence of informal institutions and social networks in cities, financial resources and political realities remain the dominant considerations in the domain of governments. It is for this reason, that the approach of the state itself towards governance and development is critical in determining to some extent the usefulness of a concept of social capital in development. The shift from a conceptual focus on government to one on governance has been widespread, almost universally in the past decade. The term governance has emerged to describe the governing actions and activities of the state in relation to civil society. Whilst reference to the governance literature will be limited in this thesis, it is important to highlight the distinction between governance and government because of its significance to the social capital debate, especially in relation to the delivery of urban services. Harpham and Boateng have done this as follows:

The crucial distinction between government and governance is the notion of civil society, which can be defined as the public life of individuals and institutions outside the control of the state. Government, on the other hand, is said to consist of those agencies that make and implement laws (Harpham and Boateng, 1997: 66).<sup>36</sup>

Certainly this is the acceptable definition of the difference between government and governance and one that has been adopted by international organisations. Putnam argues that 'a good democratic government not only considers the demands of its citizenry (that is, is responsive) but also acts efficaciously upon these demands (that is, is effective)' (Putnam, 1993: 63). To this extent he is concerned with governance.

The World Bank has gone so far as to formulate governance indicators that represent the key elements of governance. These are identified as follows: 'voice and

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<sup>36</sup> There are of course numerous debates dealing specifically with the term 'governance' and civil society that would problematise the statements of the above quotation. However, for the purposes of this review, the above definition of governance will be used.

accountability'; 'political instability and violence'; 'government effectiveness'; 'regulatory burden'; 'rule of law' and 'graft' (Kaufmann, Kraay and Zoido-Lobaton, 1999: 8). Narayan (1999) adds that government performance is evident through 1) creating an environment of law and order and freedom of association; and 2) providing resources, as well as accountability and authority (Narayan, 1999: 15). The World Conference on Metropolitan Governance defined urban governance as follows:

Governance cannot be understood as management. Governance includes the visions we have and the strategic decisions we take. Nor can governance be divided simply into political and technical dimensions. Governance has five fundamental dimensions: 1) political, 2) contextual, 3) constitutional, 4) legal and 5) administrative/ managerial. This concept of governance embraces a variety of ideas which encompass intergovernmental relations, such as negotiations, agreements and co-operative ventures among public and private parties. It implies bottom-up decision-making; having all concerned people at every level of government and non-government organisations participate (cited in Beall, 1996: 5).

This quotation illustrates the global governance trends, but also validates the ongoing global push towards the inclusion of urban citizen in all levels in the governance process. The bulk of definitions make the distinction between government's technical responsibilities and responsive obligations to civil society. The governance debate, as pertinent to urban services, is reflected in two ways, argue Harpham and Boateng: as it is relevant to the technical delivery of services and as it applies to the involvement of civil society (1997: 66). Both of these need to be addressed in order to consider, what if any role, social capital plays in government performance. Generally, the public management literature views the institution's identity relative to efficient and effective delivery, issues of restructuring, managerial reorganisation and labour relations. In other words, the focus within government itself and the public management literature is still largely on the technical aspects of service delivery.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Theoretically the governance/government shift has permeated academic discourse. In practical terms, and amongst local government practitioners, the focus is still largely on technical expertise. In the South African context there is much policy that directly promulgates the importance of civil society engagement, but in reality this is increasingly being marginalised because it is time-consuming.

## Including Governance in the Social Capital Debate

Putnam's study of Italy looks at institutional performance using factors that can be considered part of the technical genre: internal processes, policy pronouncements and policy implementation (Putnam, 1993: 66). He presents as indicators of institutional performance the following categories: cabinet stability, budget promptness, statistical and information services, reform legislation, legislative innovation, daycare centres, family clinics, industrial policy instruments, agricultural spending capacity, local health unit expenditures, housing and urban development and bureaucratic responsiveness (Putnam, 1993: 73).

Putnam's study does little to investigate the nature of the state apparatus closely, nor that of civil organisations. Interestingly enough, the overwhelming focus of Putnam's study is on the government institutions<sup>38</sup> and their performance in terms of efficiency and fairness. Little care is paid to understanding governance as responsiveness to citizens, nor the 'identities' which institutions reflect. Evans suggests:

The authoritative coordination that is fundamental to the generic nature of the state imposes some uniformities, but the panoply of agencies making up the public institutions of governance remain heterogeneous in their orientations and often pursue contradictory roles (Evans, 2002: 20).

Putnam argues that to ensure government performance, four components are required, namely: government must be comprehensive, internally consistent, reliable and must meet the objectives of its constituents (Putnam, 1993: 38). In a sense Putnam sets up a paradox. He is overzealous in his descriptions of society as interactive, as trusting and engaging but antithetically presents government organisational structures that are sterile.<sup>39</sup> In other words, Putnam does nothing to explore the social in the institutional or the institutional in the organisational when it comes to his analysis of government.

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<sup>38</sup> For the purposes of this study, the distinction between institutions and organisations as outlined by North in Section Two will be used.

<sup>39</sup> This is evident in Putnam's measures of institutional performance. He uses cabinet stability, budget promptness, statistical and information services, reform legislation, legislative innovation, day-care centres, family clinics, industrial policy instruments, agricultural spending capacity, local health unit expenditure, housing and urban development and bureaucratic responsiveness.

The social capital literature more generally suggests that social capital could potentially play a role in developing a conducive relationship between an active civil society and a responsive state, either through its location in civil society, its location in the state or as embedded in both. Lam's well known study of Taiwanese irrigation systems demonstrates the importance of the interplay of state-society relationships for successful partnerships (1996). Lam illustrates that the good relationships between government officials and local communities was key to the success of the projects (Lam, 1996). Of particular import is the fact that government officials lived in the local communities where they worked. The significance of this is captured as follows: 'the networks of trust and collaboration that are created this way span the public/private boundary and bind the state and civil society together' (Pargal, Huq and Gilligan, 1999: 11).

Although theoretical conceptions of governance would seem to suggest otherwise, government and governance are often theorised in a manner disconnected from social relations as they relate to the internal dynamics of the state. Traditionally, social capital debates have largely stressed the relationship between associational life and government performance with the obvious focus on society. In each of these discourses, the social profile or internal complexion of the state is not discussed. Literature associated with the notion of the role of social relations in institutions is neglected in these bodies of literature. Even citizen engagement as a public management issue is rarely written about with a sociological or ethnographic component. A relevant example would be Sharp's work, because it is concerned with local government administration. Citizen engagement is described by Sharp as taking the following forms:

- Public hearings
- Citizen surveys
- Neighbourhood involvement
- Co-production (Sharp, 1990: 72).

Woolcock (1998) argues in his review of social capital, that comparative institutionalists consider the following issues: firstly, the internal specificities and structures that govern how the state operates, and secondly; the relationship between state and society (Woolcock, 1998: 21). Abers's study of participatory policy in Porto

Alegre Brazil also demonstrates these factors and illustrates how the local state was able to elicit participation in an area where participation had not existed before. This she attributes in part to the active involvement by the administration through direct engagement in participatory processes (Abers, 1998: 522). But as discussed above, these approaches do not undertake a composite consideration of the particularities and complexities within governments, the factor that is imperative if there is going to be an explicable connection between social capital and government performance.

In as much as associational life requires disaggregation in order to understand the relationship between an active civil society and responsive government, so too does the public sector. A valuable attribute of the concept of social capital is the complexity it gives to the study of society. It adds an important dimension to discussions of society by conceptually separating the idea of social capital from that of participation. However, in as much as public management theory does not really problematise society, so too discussions of social capital are seldom located specifically within the context of the public sector. An analysis of the relationship between social capital and responsive government begs the question of how the public sector works internally to generate specific outputs. What is important is the nature of the institution itself. Hyden raises the key question when he asks 'what institutions make up society and what qualities must associations possess in order to foster the process of democratisation?' (Hyden, 1997: 15).

### **The Effects of Good Governance**

Judith Tendler's (1997) book *Good Government in the Tropics* provides valuable insights into the social complexion of the public sector as well as an ideal relationship between the public sector and society (Tendler, 1997). She questions the notion that governments in developing countries cannot perform effectively. This is done through her study of Ceara Province in Brazil. Her book explores the success of the regional government in Ceara Province in Brazil through four case studies in health, business extension and public procurement, employment-creating public works and agricultural extension and small farmers (Tendler, 1997: 12). What her analysis does is present a case of a successful regional government in a developing country. The significance of this study is that it provides insights into management within the public sector and a



possible link between social capital literature and responsive government performance. Tendler points out the key role of public officials and workers in generating social capital. She argues that four trends were evident in all four case studies. These were: firstly, a core of government workers highly committed to their work (Tendler, 1997: 136); secondly, the government itself constantly congratulated its workers through public demonstrations of admiration (Tendler, 1997: 136); thirdly, due to the respect given to workers, they were prepared to work harder and undertake a more diverse sets of tasks (Tendler, 1997: 138) and 'it gave rise to trusting and respectful relationships between clients and public servants – both parties repeatedly using the language of trust and respect to describe these arrangements. The more customised the work, both sides reported, the better the results' (Tendler, 1997: 138); <sup>40</sup> fourthly, there was a demonstrable coherence between the work undertaken by workers and the more general objectives of the broader programmes (Tendler, 1997: 139).

This book is important for two reasons: first because it provides insights into what can motivate effective and efficient public sector performance. This is done in a manner that speaks to the public sector worker (as an agent) specifically; and second, this study begins to suggest (although Tendler does not use the term explicitly in this book) that social capital between public sector workers and communities facilitates improved government performance.

This is captured as follows:

Some members of civic associations or non-government organisations moreover migrated to government, making alliances with like-minded colleagues already within government. Once in government, they spanned the public-private divide by continuing to relate to their outside networks... to the extent civil society contributed to good performance then, it was not necessarily previously existing or totally independent of government (Tendler, 1997: 146).

Tendler's analysis presents a complexity within government that is lacking in Putnam's analysis. Tendler's study also helpfully includes discussions of conventional indicators of government performance, but in addition presents government as a complex set of institutional and individual mechanisms and recognises the structure/agency debate. This point is made more explicitly by Peter Evans (1996) in his citing of Tendler's

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<sup>40</sup> Stolle and Rochon's study on associational life highlights the necessity of trust not only between citizens but also between citizens and government (Stolle and Rochon, 1998: 51).

work. Evans takes forward the importance of linkages between government and society in his discussion of how and what contributes to synergetic relationships between the state and civil society. But the work still does not explain happens when history is complex and goodwill lacking.

## **2.7 ONE LOCALITY, ONE SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Up to this point it has been argued that in order to ascertain the value-added of social capital in a development context, it is necessary firstly to understand how it manifests in civil society and organisations; and secondly to understand what factors impact specifically on how social capital is presented. As the concrete application of this conceptual framework is discussed in the context of the City of Johannesburg, it has been claimed that context, locality, history and governance affect the form of social capital. The thesis specifically sets out to investigate how the form of social capital present in any community is conditional on the unique history of that locality, on changing political contexts and in particular, on differing issues at play within and around matters of public concern, such as the state of different urban services expected from government. Edwards and Foley made this point in 1998 when arguing that ‘the value of a particular form of social capital for facilitating group or individual social action varies according to social, spatial, historical and geographical location’ (Edwards and Foley, 1998).

Whilst classical social capital arguments, as illustrated through Coleman’s quotation, rest on the assumption that social capital is linked to locality, the above sections have argued instead that social capital is not necessarily purely locality bound. Instead, given the nature of social relationships and power, social capital can come in different guises in a social structure. Coleman contends that:

social capital has certain properties that distinguish it from the private, divisible, alienable goods treated by neo-classical economic theory. One of these, discussed by Loury is practical inalienability. Although it is a resource that has value in use, it cannot be easily exchanged. As an attribute of the social structure in which a person is embedded, social capital is not the private property of any of the persons who benefit from it (Coleman, 1990: 315).

However, his research suggests instead that social capital, if it exists in a locality, is not a packaged resource that can be automatically enlisted by all members of society to achieve certain objectives. Instead, the inherent inequities in civil society and the possibility that different types of social capital can coexist within one locality are critical considerations. Foley and Edwards in fact argue that it is not a given that social capital is a public good, and as such question whether it is capable of in fact producing the effects attributed to it (Foley and Edwards, 1998: 5).

Beall (2001) in her work comparing urban governance across selected cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, argues that social capital can be regarded a semi-public good as it has both public and private attributes. Bourdieu's work outlined in Section Three acknowledges differences in power through the inequitable distributions of social, cultural and symbolic capital. Castell's work on hegemony in civil society suggests that dominant organisations in civil society are reflected in the state and are indicative of existing structural inequities. But as has been pointed out, the social capital literature taken up by development theorists and practitioners<sup>41</sup> has not undertaken detailed analysis of power (Beall, 1997: 960; Harriss, 2002). Power as a factor in determining, analysing and understanding the relationship between an active and engaged civil society and municipalities is essential. Structuration theory (Giddens, 1979, 1984), *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977) and civil society theory (Keane, 1998; Amin, 1999) present likely theoretical vehicles for incorporating an understanding of these power inequities in society and simultaneously present different ways of understanding micro and macro relationships. The perspective drawn from these theoretical standpoints provide nuance to the more crude analytical lines drawn by social capital theory as expounded, for example, by Putnam.

Accepting that social capital does not take one form, but many, is important as it convolutes further the relationship between associational life, social capital, collective action and government performance. Adding complexity to the consideration of social capital as a public good, are academic-practitioner discourses stating that the types of social capital can be differently categorised. These distinctions are not new to the literature. In Mitchell's (1969) study of networks he analyses the contrasts between

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<sup>41</sup> This refers to the original texts of Coleman and Putnam.

‘open’ and ‘closed’ social relationships in Central Africa (Mitchell, 1969: 6). Narayan makes the distinction between bridging and bonding social capital and the different forms social capital can take. Bonding social capital refers to tight bonds between close groups. These bonds ensure hermetic ties but can also be the basis for exclusion of others. Bridging social capital are bonds between assorted groups where bonds are fungible but exclusion is also less foreseeable (Narayan, 1999; Schuller, Baron and Field, 2002: 10). Putnam and Goss suggest another division within social capital namely inward-looking versus outward-looking. Inward-looking social capital they describe as consolidating the rights of a particular group of members, whereas outward-looking refers to those groups in search of public goods such as the Red Cross (Putnam and Goss, 2002: 11). Portes makes more intricate the distinctions and imputes further two sources of social capital namely consummatory and instrumental. Consummatory refers to networks of socialisation such as those found amongst families and networks. Instrumental are those that are purposeful and based on the potential of reciprocity (Portes, 1998). This division raises questions regarding the conditions under which different forms of social capital are able to be mobilised. Krishna and Uphoff also classify social capital in two ways: namely structural and cognitive. Structural social capital refers to those relationships based on social networks along with rules and procedures. Cognitive, on the other hand, describes networks based on shared norms and values and inclines people towards engaging in collective action (Krishna and Uphoff, 2002: 87).

The commonality in the divisions within social capital that are outlined in the above paragraph suggests that a distinction must be made between ties that are tightly bound and those that are amenable to broader engagement such as the work of Granovetter on strong and weak ties. Narayan maintains that cross cutting ties, or those ties that connect social groups<sup>42</sup> are required if collective action and well being are to be a byproduct of social capital (1999: 35). This thesis suggests an additional categorisation of social capital is required. Whilst indeed bonding and bridging types of social capital (or its expression in varying discourse) are useful divisions, it still does not explain fully resident responses to varying circumstances.

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<sup>42</sup> This section discusses ties between groups in the civil society sphere.

Evans suggests:

There is no reason to expect poor urban communities will necessarily be endowed with the kinds of norms and networks, or 'social capital' that enable collective action. For a set of households to construct a sense of shared identity and common purpose sufficient to enable them to act collectively, it takes uncommon imagination and heroic effort. Even if the members of a community do manage to act collectively, improving their own liveability is likely to require support from political structures that surround them, and their leverage vis-à-vis the rest of the political structures is unlikely to be sufficient to allow them to change the way the city deals with problems of livelihood and sustainability (Evans, 2002: 16).

It should not be taken as a given that hermetic ties exclude the possibility of collective action. Significant structural constraints may force some residents to seek refuge in bonding social capital and collective action may be required to catalyse this response. This will be further illustrated in the case of public safety in Johannesburg. Furthermore, 'bonding' social capital need not be apolitical. Bridging social capital can also be spontaneous and issue-driven as will be demonstrated in the case of solid waste management (SWM). Getting to grips with the distinctiveness and complexity of the different types of social capital complements the argument proposed by Bourdieu as outlined in Section Three. It also speaks to Castell's work on hegemony in civil society which suggests dominant organisations in civil society are reflected in the state and indicative of existing structural inequities.

Discussions of the 'dark side of social capital' (Putzel, 1997: 941) or anti-social capital (Beall, 1997, 2001) explore other instances in which 'bonding' types of social capital relationships become the basis for exclusion. This might diminish the possibility of collective action. Putzel critiques Putnam's optimistic understanding of civil society through his contention that social capital can be a negative resource as illustrated through associations such as the Ku Klux Klan, gangs and crime syndicates (so too does Portes, 1998). He also contests Putnam's notion that the family is the most fundamental form of social capital by drawing attention to the implicit hierarchy and gender inequities represented in family life (Putzel, 1997: 944-945). These unambiguous normative attachments to the descriptions of social capital constrain attempts to understand the different forms of social capital as well as the productive roles they can play in urban service delivery.

## **2.8 MANOEUVRING SOCIAL CAPITAL FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY**

Taking the central ideas underpinning the concept of social capital and discussing them relative to the importance of civil society, locality, institutions and governance still does not deal with the notion of whether or not stocks of social capital can be manipulated and manoeuvred for purposes of development. It is clear that the type of social capital and the nature of the community itself are critical to answering this question. So too is the governance approach adopted by local institutions and the condition of social capital in the area. Some of the development literature discusses the constructability of social capital for development purposes and there has been specific reference to the relationship to service delivery (Brown and Ashman, 1996). But the social capital literature, whilst discussing the concept relative to service delivery, does not compare its effectiveness between services as in the case of the present research. The essence of this is the verification that in fact, social capital can adopt differing forms according to the urban service at stake impacting upon how and when it can be used.

Those studies investigating social capital and service delivery have largely spoken to the relationships between social capital and common pool resources. These have mainly been undertaken in rural areas and relative to natural resource management (Krishna and Uphoff, 2002; Pretty and Ward, 2001; Lam, 1996; Narayan and Pritchett, 1997).<sup>43</sup> Mancur Olson (1965) famously contends that groups are more likely to engage in collective action in circumstances where relationships of trust are face to face and where there is a shared set of norms and values (Olson, 1965). It follows that in urban areas, a different set of imperatives is required to mobilise collective action.

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<sup>43</sup> The literature around common pool resources questions why in some instances communities are able to manage a collective resource whilst in other instances the resource is not managed and diminishes. Note must be taken of the fact that common pool resources are not viewed as 'pure public goods' because there is the possibility of users being excluded, but the likelihood is low (Graham and Marvin, 2001: 146).

Evans professes of services in urban areas:

The increased political centrality of ordinary communities is absolutely clear when increased liveability depends on the delivery of collective goods. Public transportation, water and sewers are delivered to places. Without place-based collective action they will always be undersupplied. Elites can afford private alternatives to collective goods. Secluded air conditioned residences are substitutes for public campaigns to stop pollution. Poor communities lack such alternatives and must therefore fight for collective goods (Evans, 2002: 15).

In her article 'Valuing Social Resources or Capitalizing on Them? Limits to Pro-poor Urban Governance in Nine Cities of the South', Beall (2001) suggests that amongst the urban poor in the reviewed cities it is not a given that associational life will be scaled up and translate into collective action (Beall, 2001: 364). It is this lacuna that is yet underexplored. There is also little work available in the domain of social capital and comparative service provision in one locality.

As discussed in Section Seven, Narayan presents an analytical framework in her much quoted paper 'Bonds and Bridges: Social Capital and Poverty' (1999) that simplifies the functions of social capital. She outlines the role of formal and informal institutions in promoting 'well being' and goes some way towards structuring a discussion of social capital (1999: 19). Two of the categories of 'well being' she selects are local public goods, basic services and common property resources and security. In the domain of local services and public goods she argues that informal institutions are represented by community groups and committees and formal institutions by 'co-production with local groups through direct or indirect representation'. With regard to security in informal institutions these are characterised by norms, self-policing, neighbourhood or social group security systems. Formal institutions are the police, armed forces, security personnel, laws about carrying arms by citizens, law enforcement and fairness in law enforcement, zoning laws, investment incentives to private sector (Narayan, 1999: 19).<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Batley, in his article titled 'Public-Private Service Provision' argues that police services fall into the category of 'public goods' (Batley, 1996: 724).

The significance of ascertaining the role played by a service in developing or mobilising social capital is the implications it has for social policy. If some services are more likely to elicit collective action than others, it is significant to the discussion of whether or not social capital is in fact a shared resource, a common denominator or indeed a resource that can be mobilised depending upon a range of exogenous factors. The impetus behind collective action fuelled by stocks of social capital is dependent upon a variety of factors in the context of cities in developing countries. In as much as the characteristics of the locality and institutions are significant, so too are the services.

Each service has its own dynamics. Beall (1997) argues that it is critical to bear in mind the nature of the service itself as well as the rationale for the poor provision of the service. Some urban services are more likely to be 'public goods' than others and this has a bearing on the collective action potential. Public goods are characterised by the following criteria: 'joint supply' meaning that a service can be supplied to one or many persons without additional costs; 'non-excludability' refers to the fact that the use of the service cannot be user restricted; and, 'non-rejectability' suggests that once the service is provided it cannot be rejected by any person who does not wish to use it (Graham and Marvin, 2001: 80). Social capital is relevant to these considerations because having stocks of social capital supposedly diminishes the likelihood of 'free rider' behaviour with public goods.

As the above sections have argued, it is critical to look at the nature of the urban service on offer and the institutional arrangements per context. According to Mhamba and Titus (2001) in their article titled 'Reactions to Deteriorating Provision of Public Services in Dar Es Salaam', responses to inadequate service provision can be twofold, either taking the form of individual initiatives or collective initiatives. The authors argue further that this action can be constructive or destructive. Batley views the provision of services in the absence of institutional delivery as 'informal or unintended' privatisation (Batley, 1996: 725). Hence his analysis is relevant to the study of social capital in relation to urban services.

The form that social capital takes in a locality also determines responses to service delivery. SWM is unbundled as an urban service into solid waste collection and the disposal of waste. Batley argues that solid waste collection is not a public good as the



service can be contracted out and it can exclude non-payers (Batley, 1996: 730). Waste disposal however is a public good because it is difficult to exclude non-payers (Batley, 1996: 730). Pargal, Huq and Gilligan's study speaks to social capital relative to SWM in Dhaka, Bangladesh (1999: 1). They justify the choice of the service in relation to the study of social capital as follows: 'the community aspect is vitally important here since trash collection involves positive externalities leading to limited incentives for individual action. Also, trash collection is an activity in which individual action does not have much impact, so collective action is warranted' (Pargal, Huq and Gilligan, 1999: 1). The authors argue that highly developed levels of social capital in a neighbourhood most likely emanate in the formation of trash disposal committees (1999: 7). Their other findings suggest that in the context of SWM in Dhaka, norms of sharing were the most critical for collective action. However, the study of social capital and waste in Pakistan and India by Beall is more sceptical about social capital overcoming the free-rider problem in community waste management (Beall, 1997).

Evans (2002) contends that poor communities are disproportionately subject to what he terms 'collective bad' (2002: 15). Services such as waste often fall into the category of the 'collective bad'. Douglass, Ard-Am and Ki Kim's (2002) study of social capital in Wat Chonglom Slum Community in Bangkok found there was a greater likelihood that those households that interacted actively with other households in the community would join in on cleanup campaigns and environmental associations (2002: 42). This they considered indicative of 'neighbourliness'. Referring back to Mhamba and Titus's study, they argue that destructive individual actions in the realm of SWM would be the dumping of solid waste on open spaces (2001: 222). Whereas constructive collective action is when neighbourhoods formulate collective practice to resolve poor service delivery (2001: 223). Obviously, if stocks of social capital are available, it is more likely that collective action will ensue.

But if the contention that social capital is a shared locality-based resource is to be believed, then a locality should be able to mobilise the resource for all services or issues affecting it.

Narayan suggests:

While it is commonly accepted that collective action is based on shared purpose or interest, social movements also tap deeper feelings of solidarity or identity that which gives shared meanings social movements persist when they are embedded in dense interlocking social networks. It is only when there is 'connective structure' between members of groups that the action of one can incite another. Social movements have to go beyond isolated incidents before they become a movement that persists in time and place. (Narayan, 1999: 28).

Whilst a collective service such as SWM provides some insights into locality-based collective action, it will be argued in this thesis, that in the Johannesburg case study, the form of social capital required to stimulate social capital is *magnetic* in its constitution. By *magnetic*, I refer to the type of social capital that occurs in instances where there is an issue facilitating co-operation and attracting residents to engage. These social relationships can coexist with other forms of social capital and does not exclusively take the form of bonding or bridging social capital. Instead, it is the nature of the issue itself that is the determinant in the construction of *magnetic* social capital.

A compelling, yet theoretically unanswered concern, is what impact social capital has in a context where security in a neighbourhood is problematic and the stakes are high, or in a context where collective public safety is under threat. An entirely different set of motivating factors and accompanying constraints are permissible. This raises the question as to whether or not different stocks of social capital are required other than mere 'neighbourliness'. 'Neighbourliness' is seemingly easier to achieve in a non-threatening context. There is specific literature that addresses the relationship between violence, crime and social capital. According to the World Bank study of Violence and Social Capital in Colombia, 'violence erodes social capital when it reduces trust and cooperation within informal and formal social organizations and their members' (Moser and Lister, 1999: 12).

Sampson, in his study of social capital, crime and public safety makes the point that although theoretically neighbourhoods with high levels of social capital should have effective ways of dealing with public safety, this is not always the case (2001: 95). Sampson suggests instead, as will the research in this study, that the social networks in themselves are not sufficient to safeguard a neighbourhood. He argues that collective

efficacy is key. He describes the term as such: 'collective efficacy is meant to signify an emphasis on shared beliefs in a neighbourhood's conjoint capability for action to achieve an intended effect, and hence an active sense of engagement on the part of residents' (Sampson, 2001: 95). The present research explores under which conditions collective efficacy as it applies to public safety is more likely. Issues regarding public safety and mobilising social capital to confront it, are of a different nature to those referring to urban services more generally. It is within this distinction that the nuance and complexity of social capital as a collective resource lies.

## **2.9 HOW SOCIAL CAPITAL WORKS**

Beginning with the work of the classic social capital theorists, this chapter has extolled the purported virtues of and enumerated problems identified with the concept of social capital and its relationship to government performance. But do these bodies of literature answer the substantive question posed in the present research regarding whether or not social capital can be effective in service delivery, and if it can be effective, whether or not social capital can be constructed? Schuller, Baron and Field (2000) capture one of the questions surrounding the social capital debate when they ask 'is social capital itself a characteristic of a flourishing society, or a means of achieving it?' (2000: 29). If it is in existence, a question posed here is whether or not it can be mobilised for developmental reasons. It is the attempt to answer these questions in the City of Johannesburg that has inspired this research endeavour.

The insights from the civil society and institutional literature create a framework for discussing further the circumstances under which social capital can become a resource in the productive relationship between the responsive state and civil society and in particular with reference to service delivery. It is through locating these circumstances that this study will be practically useful for local government, urban development and social policy in South Africa. Social capital as a resource for social policy is a distinct concept and one that requires an analysis of literature that provides insights into the relationships within organisations as well as factors that are important for positive engagement between the state and civil society.

In seeking to find guidance from the international literature for understanding the South African context, what remains absent are explanations of the exact engagements involved within society, between associations and within and between government, and, relatedly discussions of the power relations involved. In fact, Woolcock (1998) specifically states that culture, power and rationality give way to a focus on social relations when discussing social capital and development (Woolcock, 1998: 34).

Woolcock asserts:

It is impossible to understand the prospects of development policies and projects without knowing the characteristics of social relations at both the micro and macro level, whether and how these levels articulate with one another, and how this degree of articulation has emerged historically (Woolcock, 1998: 34).

It is anticipated that through the intensive micro discussions of associational life in civil society and the public sector,<sup>45</sup> the context will be sufficiently provided so as to begin to surmise how micro and macro levels articulate with each other and whether or not social capital has a positive role to play in these engagements. As such, this study will contribute usefully to debates.

Evans's work around embedded autonomy and synergy has come the closest to articulating circumstances under which a state-society relationship can lead to development. The work of Evans (2002, 1996), Fox (1996) and Heller (1996) begins to discuss the state in a more detailed way. Evans endeavours to refine and develop Putnam's argument regarding the connection between state and society through presenting the nature of the possible link between associational life and government performance. Evans acknowledges the power of associational life but introduces the dynamics within government itself as a player in government performance.

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<sup>45</sup> These are analysed and described in the sections on civil society and governance.

Through his concept of synergy he provides a possible means for using social capital as a development resource thereby proposing concrete conditions under which a relationship between state and society could be developed.

The idea of synergy implies that civic engagement strengthens state institutions and effective state institutions create an environment in which civic engagement is more likely to thrive. The actions of public agencies facilitate forging norms of trust and networks of civic engagement among ordinary citizens and using these norms and networks for developmental ends (Evans, 1996: 1034).

Drawing on the work of Granovetter, Ostrom, Lam and Tandler especially, as well as his own insights into the developmental state (Evans, 2002, 1996), Evans advances that synergy between state and society can be built through a combination of embeddedness and/or complementarity. Evans explains complementarity as those instances where government requires the assistance of community involvement to deliver a service effectively, whereas embeddedness is 'relationship-based' – namely the actual collaboration between public servants and community members (Evans, 1996: 1123). The combination of embeddedness and complementarity is seen as the most effective partnership arrangement. This combination is seen at all stages of engagement between the state and civil society and extends to the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of service delivery. This Evans describes as the ongoing process of government acknowledging their role in service delivery and the role that communities can effectively play (Evans, 1996: 1123; Evans, 2002: 21).

The argument advanced by Evans owes much to Ostrom who first used the term co-production to describe co-operative relationships between the state and society (one of interdependence) and defines it as follows: 'co-production is a process through which inputs from individuals who are not "in" the same organisation are transformed into goods and services' (Ostrom, 1996: 1073). She argues that the concept of co-production was developed upon the understanding that in fact, government agencies were not necessarily the only agent available for service delivery and that in the provision of services, government agencies could only benefit from the active involvement of citizens (Ostrom, 1996: 1079). Ostrom illustrates co-production through a case study of urban infrastructure development in Brazil. The Brazilian case study demonstrates how citizens actively participated in planning and setting up their own

condominial systems. This was necessary to do given that the financial constraints of government were inhibiting the extension of services to poorer households. Through a process of citizen involvement from the planning phase in developing the condominial systems, to the level of service provided and a negotiated formal agreement by citizens to pay for the service, urban infrastructure services were extended in numerous cities in Brazil with much success (Ostrom, 1996: 1075). Lam similarly presents a study of irrigation systems in Taiwan (it is significant that it is a shared resource) as a good example of co-production.

The starting assumption of the present research however is that the viability of co-production, embeddedness and complementarity is heavily influenced by the attributes of society, the nature of social capital, the specifics of the service and the character of government itself. It is these same factors that would determine whether or not social capital is a resource in the productive relationship between the state and civil society as it relates to service delivery. Evans observes that 'in order for state-community interaction to take place there must be robust, competent state agencies oriented towards delivering collective goods. At the same time, communities must be able to engage these agencies collectively and politically, not just as individualized clients' (Evans, 2002: 21). The probability of these circumstances existing in cities in developing countries is undermined by the structural constraints so often found in these settings.

The conclusions drawn from of the studies presented in Evans's book *Livable Cities?* concurs with the contention of social capitalists, namely, that historical residence and cultural ties assist greatly with regard to collective action. In addition, Evans verifies that social capital is more present in communities with denser associational life. However, a critical addition to the work of Evans, is the position that there needs to be a reciprocal relationship between social capital and collective action or else the likelihood of social capital being a development resource is diminished (Evans, 2002: 225). It is through finding what constitutes that reciprocal relationship that some progress can be made in the broader social capital and development discussion.

In as much as society-based theorists see the nature of society as critical, Evans contends that using social capital as a development resource is not strictly dependent on

micro-relations between citizens. Instead, argues Evans, it is about determining how to reconfigure micro-relationships in a way that transforms them into a development asset.<sup>46</sup> For him, public agencies are a critical component of these synergetic relationships. Narayan's article 'Bonds and Bridges: Social Capital and Poverty' advocates that in order for social capital to assist in development initiatives it is necessary to institute change at a macro level and support associational activity at a micro-level (1999: 2). As mentioned above, Tandler's study of Ceara in Brazil and Abers's study of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil, both demonstrate successful co-productive relationships between state and society. They illustrate how proactive government employees were in setting up citizen forums to participate in service delivery projects. Although Evans advocates the importance of institutions in facilitating partnership arrangements, the social capital literature has largely failed to distinguish what the implications are between those institutions initiated by government and those initiated by communities in the absence of government as a delivery agent, although Beall (2001) explains this dimension in her comparative review of social resources and governance in the cities of the South.

Even though consideration of the works cited above is essential to any analysis of civil society and state relationships relative to service delivery in this section, like others in the social capital genre, by and large, they omit to include vital information; information that is necessary for convincingly stating the conditions under which social capital will act as a resource in facilitating a productive relationship between an active and engaged civil society and responsive government. The work of Evans, Ostrom and Woolcock (amongst others) focuses on the role that the state can play in constructing the necessary conditions for social capital to be useful. While it is sensible to suggest that optimum conditions for state-society relationships are under circumstances where both are engaged and responsive, it is also important to mediate this with the potential realities that in fact, a synergetic relationship is not automatic in many cities. As the preceding sections have illustrated, the structure of society, coupled with a range of other factors, creates the conditions under which the likelihood of synergy will be determined.

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<sup>46</sup> Heller and Fox make this point in their studies of Kerala and Mexico respectively (Heller, 1996; Fox, 1996 and Evans, 1996: 1125).

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

In summation and upon reflection of the literature appearing in the above review, this study suggests that social capital is in fact a concept far more complicated than the classical studies propose. In order to address appropriately the questions presented in Chapter One, the study confronts the gaps and pitfalls in the argument presented by Putnam regarding his proposed relationship between social capital, an active and engaged civil society and a responsive government.

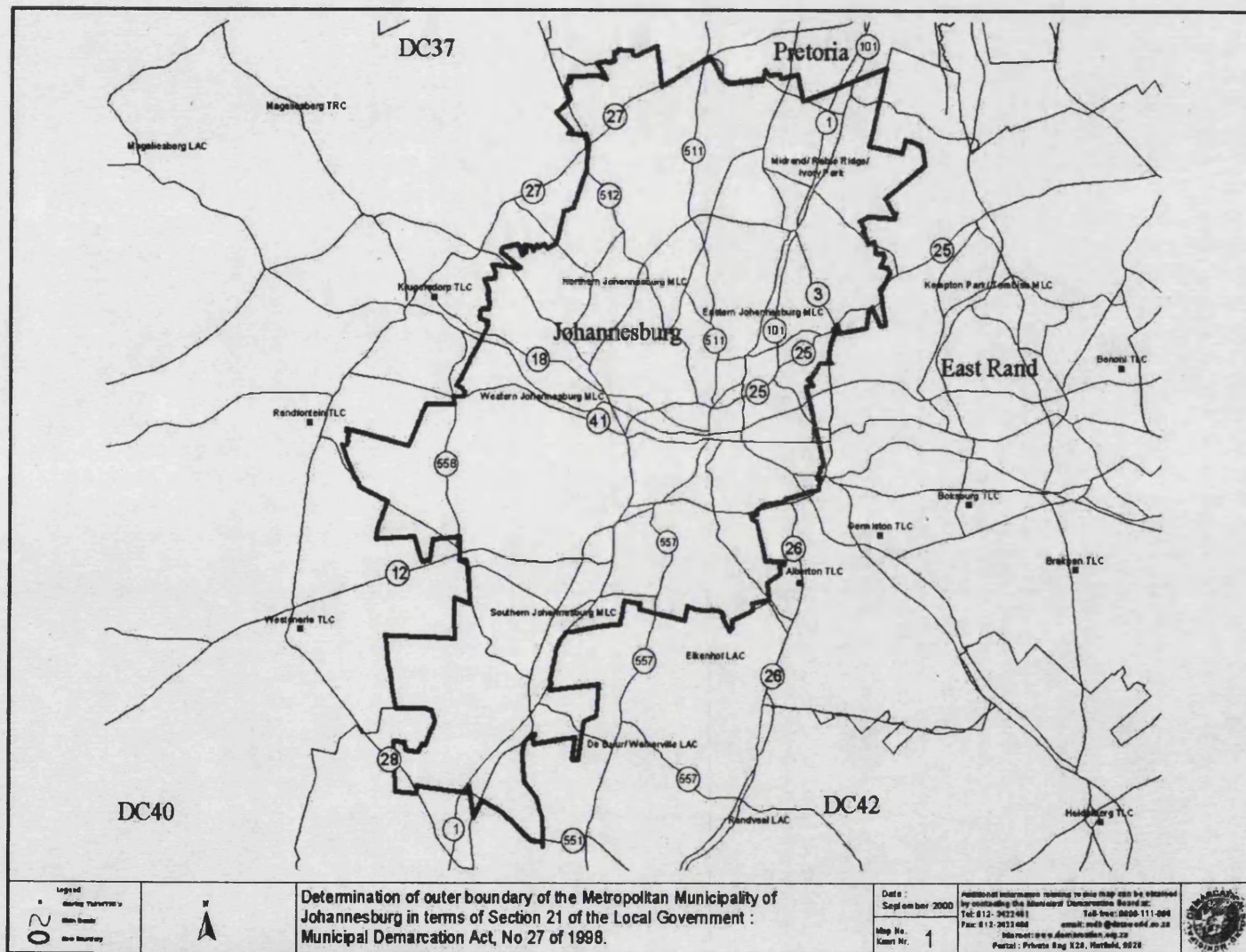
Using the work of Bourdieu and Giddens it is argued that without consideration of power, structure and agency, a comprehensive study of social capital cannot be undertaken. This analysis is bolstered further by discussion of civil society literature that offers further insights into the complexity of associational and organisational life.

It is suggested further that in complex urban environments, social capital is affected by the history and nature of the locality. This is concluded through a review of the literature on social relationships in cities showing that they are no longer restricted to the domain of a single locality. As such, disparate and diverse relationships present obvious difficulties for social capital construction and development. With the real possibility that locality is no longer the point of reference for organised civil society, questions are raised regarding collective action and its relationship to the local state. In order to construct a framework within which to analyse the domain of the state, the governance literature was reviewed, highlighting the importance of considering the internal characteristics of institutions as well as what motivates and affects the choices that formal institutions make.

Finally, because the intention of the study is to make a contribution to urban social policy, literature tracing instances where synergetic relations between the state and civil society have been constructed (involving social capital) is discussed. This body of literature provides insights into the possible requirements for successful and constructive partnership arrangements between state and civil society and points to the role that social capital has played in these relationships. At the same time however, in combination with the empirical evidence presented in Chapter's Three, Four, Five and Six, the implications for social policy will be drawn in Chapter Seven.



Figure 3.1. Municipal Demarcation of the City of Johannesburg



## CHAPTER THREE

### JOHANNESBURG: A CITY IN FLUX

*Any city however small, is in fact divided into two, one the city of the poor, the other of the rich. These are at war with one another (Plato BC 427-347)<sup>47</sup>*

The intent of this chapter is to provide an historical overview of Johannesburg from 1980 until 2002, a period of considerable political and social change in South Africa. The analysis of the historical conditions provided here imparts a context within which to locate the contemporary empirical work reported on in Chapters Four, Five and Six. The City of Johannesburg, whilst not a megacity,<sup>48</sup> is nevertheless the biggest urban centre in South Africa and is a fitting context within which to base a study of a complex urban environment. Johannesburg is a multifaceted city both institutionally and socially. In recognition of this, this chapter traces the growth and evolution of the City from its apartheid to its post-apartheid morphology.

The overview of the City is located on two planes: first, an examination of formal institutions or the workings of the City of Johannesburg,<sup>49</sup> and second, a discussion of the nature of social and associational life in various parts of the city. The government and civil society spheres are both considered critical to the investigation of social capital as explored in the thesis. It is argued here that both spheres play a fundamental role in influencing both social capital and government performance. The chapter seeks to capture dynamics operative in both the government sphere and civil sphere; this is done by laying out the history of the City in three phases: that prior to 1990, developments in Johannesburg between 1990 and 1995, and the challenges faced by Johannesburg between 1995 and 2002 when the research was concluded.

This chapter begins by briefly outlining the history and development of Johannesburg as an apartheid city, a city that, in the past, actively pursued policies of spatial and racial segregation. The chapter then sketches the post-apartheid city, the actions

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<sup>47</sup> This quotation is cited from Plato's *The Republic*, Book Four.

<sup>48</sup> Megacities are seen to be cities with a population of 10 million or more.

<sup>49</sup> The term City of Johannesburg will be used to refer to the institution of government and the administration whereas, Johannesburg refers more generally the social and associational life in the city.

undertaken by the local and national governments in seeking to overcome and remedy these racial distortions. This part of the analysis deals with those dimensions that constitute government. It is through this chronology that the circumstances surrounding the current geographical and spatial differentiation of the city as well as the nature of local administration will be explained. The intention of this chapter is to indicate the political, financial and social factors affecting institutional decisions and operations – apartheid and post-apartheid. This is relevant because as discussed in the forthcoming chapters, government institutions play a significant role.

Part two of the chapter reviews developments in the civil society sphere by presenting a broad history of civil society and associational life in Johannesburg. An understanding of this historical context demonstrates how and why the relationship between organised civil society and the local state in apartheid Johannesburg has been an uneasy one.<sup>50</sup> The chapter traces the changing relationship between civil society and government and the role of each in determining the form that the City of Johannesburg took in 2002.

### **3.1 THE URBAN FORM OF THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG**

I believe that it is possible to see Johannesburg as it really is only when we view it as a place of mystery and romance, as a city wrapped in mist. Is there any other city that is less than sixty years old and the origin of its name already lost in the shadows of Time? (Bosman, 1964: 47).

Johannesburg has been associated with a number of different adjectives: some of which include vibrant, exciting and dangerous and descriptions that include ‘gated’ communities alongside extreme ‘glitz and glamour’; wealth and gold alongside crime, segregation and poverty. Johannesburg calls itself the ‘economic powerhouse of Africa’ and is located in the wealthiest and most industrial province of Gauteng. Johannesburg is South Africa’s biggest city and is large in both physical terms – its municipal boundary is 1644 square kilometers – and demographically, with a population of nearly three million (see Table 3.1). The City of Johannesburg generates 16 per cent of South Africa’s Gross Domestic Product and is the richest city in South Africa (City of Johannesburg, 2001c). Johannesburg is not only the hub of South Africa’s economy but services much of Southern Africa too, and has long attracted fortune seekers from

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<sup>50</sup> A more detailed analysis of these struggles is found later in this chapter.

countries to the north of South Africa.<sup>51</sup> As such, Johannesburg has a reputation as a city of opportunity both locally and on the continent.<sup>52 53</sup> According to national statistics, and as shown in Table 3.1, the population of the City of Johannesburg was in 1996 2,638,233. It is difficult to state convincingly the exact population size of the City of Johannesburg. The figures that exist are generated through the 1996 Census which is distinctly out of date. Population size is also generated through the City of Johannesburg statistics. However, given the movement of the population into and out of Johannesburg, migrant populations are often excluded from these figures. Furthermore, as pointed out by Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002) these figures often exclude hostel dwellers and backyard tenants. The boundaries of the City of Johannesburg have changed numerous times with the move towards a democratic local government. This too might have impacted on the population figures.

**Table 3.1: Population Group by Gender for Weighted Population Johannesburg.**

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
African	940519	912727	1853246
Coloured	81695	89431	171126
Indian	48375	48456	96831
White	238203	253992	492195
Unspecified	12419	12416	24835
<b>Total</b>	<b>1321211</b>	<b>1317022</b>	<b>2638233</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa, Census 1996: Community Profile

Overall it can be said that Johannesburg's history has been characterised by discrimination and controversy.<sup>54</sup> The discrimination exemplifying the lives of Johannesburg's residents was articulated in many different ways: access to land, access

<sup>51</sup> It is estimated that 100 000 tourist shoppers move through Johannesburg each month (Tomlinson, 1999: 1656).

<sup>52</sup> It is stated by Abrahams and Goldblatt that 20 000 – 30 000 people enter Gauteng per month (Abrahams and Goldblatt, 1997).

<sup>53</sup> For a detailed discussion of migration to Johannesburg see Ivor Chipkin's paper 'Review of Foreign Migration to Johannesburg' in the report *Social Capital and Social Exclusion in the City of Johannesburg* (City of Johannesburg, 2001d).

<sup>54</sup> Johannesburg and its history has been well documented and analysed (Rogerson, 1999; Tomlinson, 1999; Bremner, 2000; Chipkin, 2001d and Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell 2000, 2001, 2002). This is because it represents so effectively the distortions of apartheid on the South African city. These distortions are obvious in spatial, racial and economic terms. Lemon states in 1991 more generally of South Africa 'no other country, certainly, has embarked on so thorough a reorganisation of its urban spaces for the purposes of segregation' (Lemon, 1991: 1).

to urban services and access to employment.<sup>55</sup> These deliberately constructed dislocations structured the future challenges and terrain confronting the non-racial, democratic City of Johannesburg. The legacy of apartheid left a city characterised by uneven development, conflict and ongoing inequality.<sup>56</sup> It was the task of the City of Johannesburg from 1995 to address this separateness and associated inequalities whilst simultaneously pursuing financial stability. This required investment in both social and physical infrastructure.

The physical implications of apartheid planning were stark in physical infrastructural terms. According to City of Johannesburg statistics in 2001, 96 per cent of homes had piped water, 84 per cent had municipal sanitation services; 85 per cent had municipal electricity and 88 per cent had municipal garbage removal (City of Johannesburg, 2001c). Discrepancies in infrastructure provision were vast and this was a physical indicator of difference in apartheid-constructed residential areas, although as pointed out, compared to the rest of Africa, low income residents of Johannesburg are relatively well off (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002). South Africa's White population resides in suburbs where historically they were recipients of excellent municipal services, whereas the Black population lived in urban townships with mediocre infrastructure. Informal settlements seldom had any access to basic infrastructure. So, while Johannesburg was a relatively rich city, it had high levels of inequality with White residents having considerably higher service levels than their Black counterparts. This was most blatantly obvious in relation to water and refuse disposal and somewhat less visible in relation to sanitation; it was these service discrepancies that profoundly underpinned the historical collective action focused on opposition to apartheid local government.

Johannesburg was never an integrated city either socially or physically. Parnell and Pirie contend that 'the residential geography of Johannesburg has never been free of racial considerations' (Parnell and Pirie, 1991: 130). This situation was exacerbated by

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<sup>55</sup>Difference in access to urban services per areas in greater Johannesburg is one of the greatest dilemmas facing the Council. Abrahams and Goldblatt demonstrate in detail the differences in access to urban services per population group. In access to solid waste removal for instance, 85 per cent of urban Black households have access to refuse removal while 97 per cent of White, Coloured and Indian households do (Abrahams and Goldblatt, 1997).

<sup>56</sup>A good example of this inequality is the delivery of electricity. Soweto was only electrified in the 1980s (Bond, 1999: 51).

apartheid legislation that deliberately pursued and implemented a programme for the spatial separation of racial groups. The most dramatic and draconian of these policies was the Group Areas legislation<sup>57</sup> that was implemented in 1950 (Parnell and Pirie, 1991: 8; McCarthy, 1991: 261). It was based on the premise of racial separation and zoning and legislated the separation of racial groups in South Africa. It was enforced through the Natives Resettlement Act of 1954 and the Group Areas Development Act of 1955 which allowed the state to seize existing occupied land and resettle different groups according to zoning regulations (Bollens, 1999: 159). The implications of this zoning were that Black South Africans were relocated to areas beyond the immediate perimeter of the Johannesburg city centre in townships situated on the urban periphery. As Wooldridge has explained:

The implementation of the Group Areas Act is closely tied to a modernist conception of regional planning. Having decided to build African locations, the question became where to build them. Urban Whites wanted locations far from their residences, industry wanted locations to be close to industrial areas to facilitate access to labour. Regional planning provided a way of making 'rational' spatial decisions which took infrastructural development (particularly transport and housing) and land-use into account. This 'rational' planning instrument was used to apply a central set of spatial principles, which in turn facilitated the political aims of apartheid (Wooldridge, 2000: 3).

State control over population movements and housing rights heavily influenced the original configurations of social capital. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002) explain how in the 1950s, the state provided mass rental housing for African residents in Soweto, then in the 1960s, family housing was curbed to prevent African urbanisation and single sex accommodation was favoured. These policies framed social, political and economic interactions at this time and impacted dramatically on the means in which residents organised from then onwards.

### **The Different Faces of Johannesburg**

Johannesburg comprises neighbourhoods of different forms varying between the 'leafy White suburbs' and formal urban townships located on the city periphery (Bremner,

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<sup>57</sup> Lemon explains the Group Areas Act as the legislation put in place to ensure that racial groups lived and existed separately. Racial zoning was legislated to guarantee that Black, White, Indian and Coloured South Africans lived separately (Lemon, 1991: 9). Although racial zoning had been legislated earlier, this was the most extreme and draconian legislation. It was only revoked in 1991 (Lemon, 1991: 8).

2000). Soweto (South Western Townships) was one of the formal townships established in the 1950s to accommodate the former residents of Alexandra, Sophiatown, Martindale and Newclare (Gilbert and Crankshaw, 1999: 2378). Bollens described the process as follows:

In Johannesburg specifically, clearance and forced removals of Black western ghettos and freehold areas in the 1950s and 1960s, most notably Sophiatown, occurred amidst much vocal outcry. In accordance with Group Areas delineations, receiving zones for Blacks displaced from non-Black group areas were commonly remote, isolated and peripheral. In Johannesburg, this was an area approximately twelve miles southwest of, and spatially disconnected from, the White city. Two pre-World War Two Black 'locations' (Orlando and Pimville) existed there where some housing for Blacks had been built. With the emergence of apartheid, however, this area increasingly identified as the South Western Townships, or Soweto, became a major dumping ground for Blacks displaced from 'White' Johannesburg (Bollens, 1999: 159).

Soweto both accommodated those families that were forcibly removed and acted as a reception area for migrants from rural areas coming to Johannesburg to seek employment (Gilbert and Crankshaw, 1999). According to Crankshaw (2001), migrants arriving in Soweto prior to the late 1960s were more likely to have accessed formal housing than those arriving after the late 1960s by which time the state withdrew the provision of housing (Crankshaw, 2001: 1). The apartheid state, viewing urban African residents as temporary migrants as it did, increased insecurity by ensuring that African residents were unable to purchase land (Parnell and Pirie, 1991: 136). It was only in 1983, upon the recommendation of the Riekert Commission, that African residents were able to purchase houses and there was some acknowledgement that African residents were going to have a permanent presence in Johannesburg (Parnell and Pirie, 1999: 138). The Riekert Commission was a significant milestone and explains why the early 1980s are important in the periodisation of South Africa's urban history.

While Black South Africans were relocated to land beyond the inner city boundaries, White South Africans continued living and developing the 'suburbs', many of which were in close proximity to Johannesburg's central business district (CBD) and other sites of employment. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (1999) have explained for example how state housing policy encouraged and enabled Whites to purchase their homes (1999: 47). New migrants, entering South Africa from Europe, particularly sought

accommodation in the inner city of Johannesburg in the 1960s, in places such as Hillbrow, Berea and Yeoville (Bremner, 2000: 1851; Morris and Bouillon, 2001) and the inner city developed a specific cosmopolitan character as a result. Although later to become the vanguard of multi-racial residence, the inner city was not however accessible to Black South Africans at this time (Gilbert and Crankshaw, 1999: 2383).<sup>58</sup>

In the 1930s, the state removed all African residents from the inner city slumyards (Crankshaw, 2001: 8). It was only in the 1970s, that the residents of the inner city grew increasingly diverse as Black residents began settling in the inner city. The apartheid authorities largely ignored this settlement and Parnell and Pirie argue that there is evidence of the gradual 'greying' or deracialisation of Johannesburg's inner city from the mid-1970s (Parnell and Pirie, 1991: 139). However, by 1993, 85 per cent of inner city residents were Black, and by 1996, only five per cent of inner city residents were White (Bremner, 2000: 186).

Cloete argues that the subsequent 'greying' of South African cities took place for the following reasons: firstly, because from 1984, CBDs were opened for free trade to all areas; secondly, in 1985 the inter-racial marriages and social relations prohibitions was repealed and many mixed couples and families headed for these grey zones; thirdly, in 1986, influx control was eradicated; and fourthly, in 1987, it was anticipated that the Group Areas Act would soon be repealed (Cloete, 1991: 93). In short, the apartheid government was unravelling. These trends were reinforced by the fact that there was also a housing shortage in urban townships. So while the first group of incomers to the inner city were mostly middle class mixed, Coloured and Indian families who could afford to pay the cost of accommodation in the inner city, the second group were poorer African families who moved into often overcrowded buildings (Cloete, 1991: 93-94). Landlords, knowing that residents were illegally present in the city, charged exorbitantly high rents with little or no accompanying maintenance. The result of overcrowding in the inner city buildings led to the deterioration in sanitation, safety and health levels which has been ongoing ever since.

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<sup>58</sup> For a more detailed explanation, see Parnell, S. 'Racial Segregation in Johannesburg: The Slums Act, 1934 -1939', *The South African Geographical Journal*, 70, 1988: 112-126.



Bremner contends:

The rapid greying of the inner city was accompanied by physical decline and racial stereotyping of new residents. In many cases, the exodus of White residents had been aided and abetted by landlords who saw the 'illegal' status of the Black tenants as an opportunity for raising rents and reducing building maintenance. In many buildings, rents were raised, apartments overcrowded and services not maintained. These conditions fuelled the racial prejudice of White inner city residents who had left and who romanticised life before the arrival of Black residents (Bremner, 2000: 186).

Residents of the inner city were required to be better off financially. Crankshaw and White argue that 'the cost of renting in the central areas of Johannesburg has so far prevented a massive inflow of poor rural migrants and will probably continue to do so (1995:10). Chipkin argues that 'foreign migrants entering formal accommodation in Johannesburg during the 1990s tended, in the main, to be from central and west Africa. They are generally situated in the Inner City area and are either professionals or migrant traders well connected in and through networks. Southern African migrants tend to be unskilled or lowly skilled workers that find lodgings in backyard shacks, hostels, informal residents suburban quarters' (Chipkin, 2001d: 14). The movement of the population in and out of formal urban townships and in and out of the inner city was markedly different from the 1990s. As illustrated above, the inner city of Johannesburg became increasingly heterogeneous, attracting South African township dwellers, foreign migrants from West Africa, Central Africa and other Southern African states. Residents of Soweto were not likely to move, however, as township dwellers often owned their own homes and were very settled in their neighbourhoods.

With the collapse of apartheid, mobility was no longer institutionally curbed along racial lines. Nevertheless, while the movement of inner city residents of Johannesburg was fluid, diverse and itinerant, much of Soweto's population remained stable. This background is an important concern for understanding the historical context of inner city Johannesburg and the peripheral former African townships of Johannesburg, such as Soweto. It is well worth noting at this point as well, that the two case study sites are drawn from each type of settlement elaborated upon here, the inner city of Yeoville and the former African township of Dobsonville in Soweto. It is significant too, that

these distinctive historical developments and circumstances have had profound implications for contemporary social capital in the localities, specifically in terms of associational life, relationships with local government, and what have become shared issues and areas of tolerance.

### **3.2 THE JOURNEY FROM GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNANCE**

#### **The History of Local Government**

The controversial nature of local government in apartheid South Africa created relationships of contestation between the state and civil society. This was because for the Black majority, its track record was one of illegitimacy and lack of delivery. Local government suffered from being the most visible face of apartheid legislation, making it a particular target of resentment and hostility. In short, the great inequities of apartheid were well reflected and manifest locally and spatially.

Racial inequities were spatially demonstrated through apartheid planning, which ensured that the Black residents of Johannesburg were segregated in separate residential areas, and provided inferior municipal services in Black townships which were never fully serviced. The South African state was notorious for expending the vast bulk of municipal finances primarily on White areas. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2000b) suggest that 'from 1968 investment in urban "African areas" practically ceased altogether' (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2000b: 838).

Prior to 1982, White Local Authorities (WLAs) governed African townships. A new system of self-governing, Black Local Authorities (BLAs), was introduced through Act 102 of 1982 (Swilling, 1986: 23) as the first autonomous municipal governments for townships (Swilling, Cobbett and Hunter, 1991: 175). The key objective of the BLAs was the creation of self-financing autonomous bodies that delivered services within urban townships (Swilling, 1986: 24). BLAs, argued Swilling, were initiated as a solution to the fiscal strain that increased African urbanisation was putting on the central state. These autonomous BLAs were forced to generate their own revenue and in order to do so, needed to bolster rent and service payments in urban townships (Swilling, 1986: 24). It soon became clear that these were increases that township

residents could not afford, nor were they prepared to pay (Bollens, 1999: 222). It was not long before BLAs were deemed politically illegitimate by township residents and it was this illegitimacy that acted as a catalyst for the formation of civic movements in the early 1980s (Shubane cited in Drakakis-Smith, 1992: 69).

The South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) mobilised opposition around BLAs from the 1980s and non-payment for services in the form of rent and service boycotts, began in Johannesburg in 1984, spreading to Soweto by 1986 (Bollens, 1999: 223). For the majority of urban township dwellers, local government was an untrustworthy and oppressive institution. Shubane argued 'local government for the African population was 'implemented chiefly as a control mechanism' (Shubane, 1991: 65). The realities in WLAs areas differed substantially. WLAs were efficiently managed and the White population were recipients of excellent services. The complaints directed at WLAs were puerile when examined relative to service delivery considerations in BLAs.

Given the illegitimacy of Black local government in apartheid South Africa, it became an important target in the struggle against apartheid and the focus of the campaign to make South African townships ungovernable. Bollens reported that by January 1991, of South Africa's 272 BLAs, more than 100 had buckled (Bollens, 1999: 223). These antagonistic relationships between local government and urban citizens over service payments were not resolved, and spilled over into the politics of post-apartheid Johannesburg. This was both because South African urban townships had always lacked services of an equivalent standard to traditionally 'White' suburbs and because service delivery was viewed for a long time as an arena around which resistance could be articulated. Even though in the post-apartheid period national government has specifically identified improved service delivery as one of the constitutional obligations of local government, conflict over services and a culture of non-payment continued to prevail (Abrahams and Goldblatt, 1997) and was apparent during the time of the fieldwork for the present research in 2001.

In post-apartheid South Africa, services such as water and sanitation and waste management were constitutionally recorded as basic human rights and government priorities. In response to persistent service delivery problems, physical infrastructure

delivery was stressed. Municipal Infrastructure Programmes were put in place from 1994 in a bid to address physical infrastructure backlogs. The Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework (MIIF) (1996) specifically outlined the service obligations of municipalities and the requisite service levels. The MIIF however was not favourably received by many of those concerned with urban development. It was critiqued in particular in relation to the levels of services it advocated. For example, critics argued that service standards were too low and that the repercussions of this would be negative externalities in the form of public health issues (Bond, 1999). Complementary frameworks were developed at the national level to assist municipalities in infrastructure development. Grant systems such as the Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure Programme (CMIP) were available to municipalities to assist (1996).<sup>59</sup> CMIP was a programme of intergovernmental transfers to assist municipalities with capital projects. These national initiatives sought proactively to assist local government in remedying the inequities in urban areas but had so far proved insufficient by 2002.

### **The Political and Institutional History of the City of Johannesburg**

The political and institutional evolution of the Johannesburg City Council (JCC), as it was then called, was an interesting one and largely framed the dilemmas faced by a successor structure and what became known as the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council<sup>60</sup> (GJMC), referred to here as the City of Johannesburg. In a paper entitled 'Ten years in the making: A metropolitan government for Johannesburg' Richard Tomlinson in 1999 outlined the process of reform set in motion to resolve the dilemmas facing the JCC at the end of apartheid. Local government was targeted nationally by the transitional government (in power between 1994 and 1999) as a critical area for further political restructuring. The JCC's reform process began as early as 1990 and was seen by many as a pioneering exercise in transforming local government.

Tomlinson stated that the critical point in the history of Johannesburg's local government was the signing of the Soweto Accord in 1990 (Tomlinson, 1999: 10). This

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<sup>59</sup> CMIP consolidated a number of earlier and disjointed grant agreements.

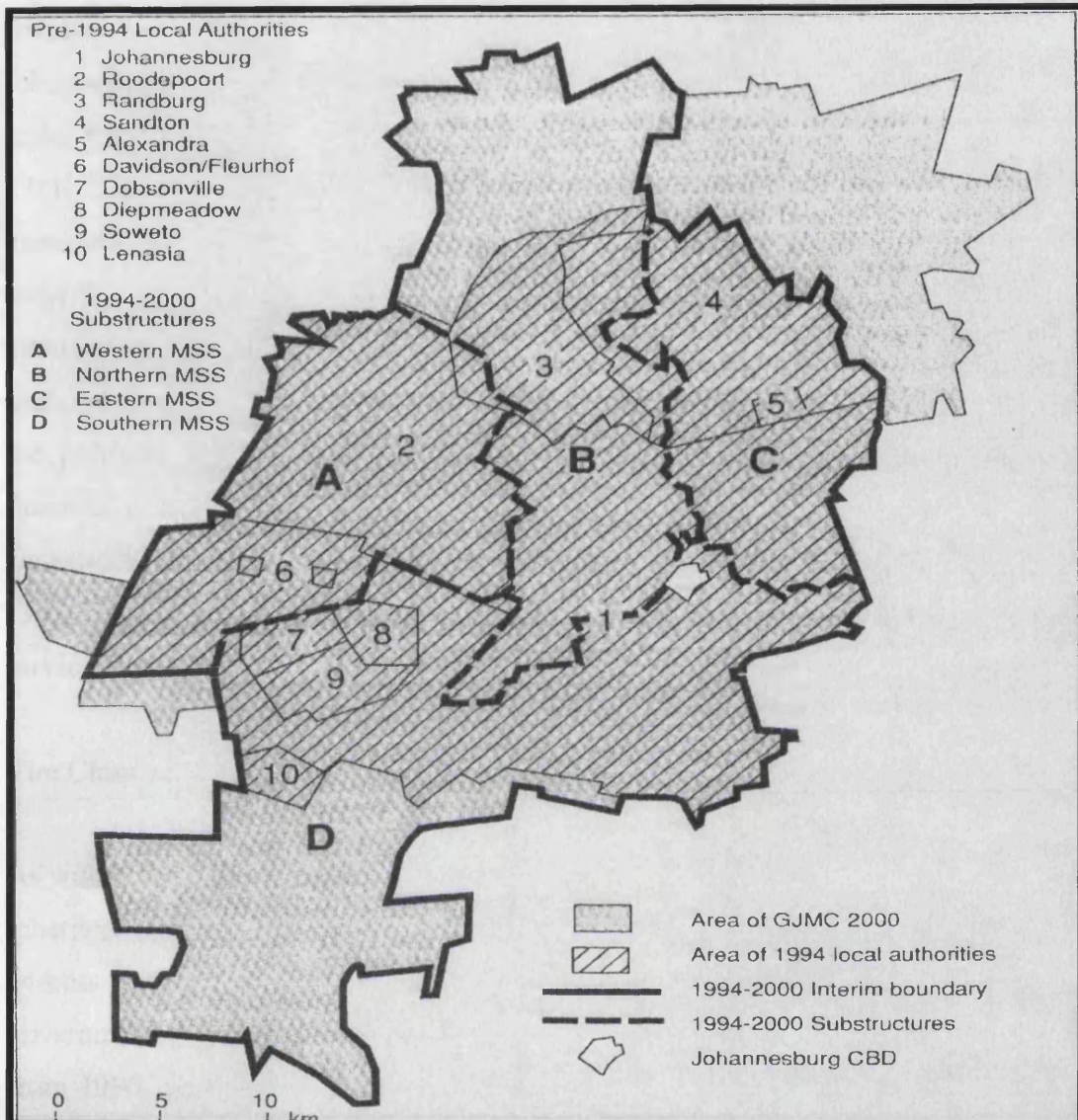
<sup>60</sup> Johannesburg's municipality became known as the Greater Johannesburg Municipal Council after the amalgamation of the JCC and the BLAs. Initially, as mentioned in the main text, BLAs and WLAs were administered separately. With the democratisation of local government, WLAs and BLAs were amalgamated into a single metropolitan government. The municipality is now called the City of Johannesburg.

was an agreement by the existing Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) to effectively write off the service arrears (R516 million) that were owed to the JCC by township residents in Soweto (Tomlinson, 1999: 5). On 24 September 1990, the Accord was signed by the councils of Soweto, Diepmeadow, Dobsonville, the Soweto Peoples' Delegation (SPD) and the TPA (Mandy, 1991: 133). This finally paved the way to develop a legitimate local government system where the existing 13 racially demarcated local authorities, in what is today's City of Johannesburg, would be amalgamated into a unified structure.

The Central Witwatersrand Metropolitan Chamber was established in 1990 to address the remaining political issues (Tomlinson, 1999: 6; Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002).<sup>61</sup> Its directive was to 'design and implement a new non-racial and democratic urban policy' (Swilling, Cobbett and Hunter, 1991: 190). Whilst the original body included the TPA, local government bodies and civic associations, (Tomlinson, 1999: 5) membership burgeoned until it comprised additional civic associations, political parties and local government associations. By 1993, the Chamber had 53 member organisations, 32 observer organisations, and working groups that dealt with institutional, economic, social and physical development (Swilling, 1997: 2). The agenda of the Chamber was to transform the JCC to a vehicle of local government appropriate to the post-apartheid political dispensation. The Chamber was reorganised into a local negotiating forum, based on a national model (Tomlinson, 1999: 6). The objectives of the GJMC included the renegotiation of internal boundaries and statutory restructuring (Tomlinson, 1999: 6).

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<sup>61</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of this process, refer to Richard Tomlinson (1999) 'Ten Years in the Making: A Metropolitan Government for Johannesburg' Graduate School of Public and Development Management, Occasional Paper.



**Figure 3.2 The Shifting Municipal Boundaries in Johannesburg. Source: Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002: 69).**

One of the democratic movement's objectives for Johannesburg (as with all municipalities) was realising a programme of 'one city, one tax base' and a system of local government that would integrate Johannesburg's urban core and urban periphery (Bollens, 1999: 171; Wooldridge 2002). This was partly realised through the approval of a Special Electoral Court in 1995. The court, after much debate, approved the plan for four metropolitan substructures in Johannesburg (Bollens, 1999: 171). Each of these substructures was responsible for taking on the management of both former White suburbs and Black townships. Each of the four municipal substructures was established within the framework of existing administrations. In addition to existing jurisdictions, these administrations were allocated additional township areas to manage. For example,

Greater Soweto was situated within the boundaries of the administration of Johannesburg, Alexandra in that of Sandton, Diepkloof, Orlando East and Pimville fell under Randburg and Dobsonville and Meadowlands under Roodepoort (Bollens, 1999: 171). The renegotiation of boundaries left the JCC with the same tax base but an increased jurisdiction to service. Whilst the JCC had formerly only serviced White areas it was now cast into a position of servicing Johannesburg's entire population, including not only poorly serviced African townships, but also areas such as informal settlements where there were no services at all. So whilst there was some resolution of the political dilemmas facing the city, the Council continued to be plagued with financial considerations and poor institutional design. In 1997, reports Tomlinson, the Gauteng<sup>62</sup> Provincial Government intervened in the finances of the GJMC (Tomlinson, 1999: 11). This was an extreme measure but one that was considered necessary as poor service payments remained a reality, coupled with an inherited debt from the JCC.<sup>63</sup>

### **The Changing Image of Johannesburg: 1995-2002**

As with other South African municipalities, in 1995 Johannesburg local government inherited extensive un-serviced or semi-serviced townships<sup>64</sup> and was expected to address service backlogs with little additional financial assistance from national government and little additional revenue. In fact, capital budgets were consistently cut from 1996, while responsibilities increased (Pieterse, 2002: 1). This made it difficult for local authorities to extend infrastructure and services, as was the obligation of all local governments. The City of Johannesburg's financial woes were much publicised in South Africa as a representation of local government's financial crisis. Allen, Gotz and Joseph (City of Johannesburg 2001c) contended that the gravity of the financial crisis hit when the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GJTMC), as the

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<sup>62</sup> As part of the restructuring of post-apartheid South Africa, the existing four provincial administrations (Orange Free State, Transvaal, Cape Province and Natal) were restructured into 9 provinces (Gauteng, North West Province, Northern Cape, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, Limpopo Province, Kwa Zulu Natal and Free State). Whereas Johannesburg pre-1994 fell into the Transvaal province, post-1994 it fell into Gauteng Province.

<sup>63</sup> Johannesburg was recorded as having a deficit of R291 million in 1999. Arrears owed for services amounted to R2.1 billion (*iGoli* 2002, 1999: 7).

<sup>64</sup> Many of these residents are unable to pay for services. The national government developed an infrastructure plan entitled the Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework (MIIF) that outlines the service levels for essential services. It is the obligation of municipalities to extend services to previously disadvantaged areas.

city's local government structure came to be called, could not meet its commitment to creditors (2001c: 4). The story was retold by a GJMC employee as follows:

On 12 July 1997, ESKOM presented a bill of some R300 million for bulk supply of electricity to the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council. Despite desperate attempts to gather the money, the account could not be paid. The bubble had burst and the biggest and most powerful metropolis in South Africa and Johannesburg was forced to admit that it was in serious crisis (City of Johannesburg, 2001c: 4).

This catalysed politicians to intervene and take action to save the city and disentangle the financial crisis. Experts differed in their analysis of the implications of the financial crisis. Allen, Gotz and Joseph (2001c) suggested that it was in response to the financial crisis that the GJMC later embarked on an extensive process of internal reshuffling of personnel, the restructuring of the way services were delivered and an increased emphasis on credit control. By contrast Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002) contend that the financial crisis in Johannesburg was 'talked up' to push through neo-liberal reforms and that this gave national government a mechanism through which to tackle the institutional and organisational complexity of all large South African municipalities (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002: 13-14).

The financial crisis in Johannesburg was addressed through the creation of the Committee of Ten – a team of politicians and technical experts (Tomlinson, 1999: 14). Thereafter, the restructuring of Johannesburg was under the leadership of the Committee of Fifteen until the end of 1998 when the second provincial intervention expired. However, top Johannesburg officials and councillors wanted to continue the momentum started by the Committee of Ten, which later became the Committee of Fifteen, so they set up a Transformation Lekgotla.<sup>65</sup> Under the leadership of the Transformation Lekgotla, an organisational review of metropolitan government was undertaken once again, this time in the context of Johannesburg's financial crisis (Tomlinson, 1999: 16). The Transformation Lekgotla was replaced in turn by the Mayoral Committee set up in December 2000. The City of Johannesburg from then onwards was run by an executive mayor who took all political and strategic decisions

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<sup>65</sup> Lekgotla is a commonly used word in the South African context to describe a meeting or collective decision-making process. It means the 'tribal gathering of chiefs and indunas for the purposes of serious discussion and decision-making'.



in conjunction with a ten-person mayoral committee (City of Johannesburg, 2001c). The democratic benefits of this system remain questionable given that the executive mayor was more accountable to the ruling party than to the local citizenry.<sup>66</sup>

In order to deal with Johannesburg's problems, a mid-term development policy was developed called *iGoli 2002*.<sup>67</sup> It was a controversial plan created by the City of Johannesburg for the intensive restructuring of city government, and in particular, its service delivery functions. Fundamental to the *iGoli 2002* vision was the development of new institutional mechanisms for the delivery of key services. These included public utilities for water, sanitation, electricity and waste management; agencies for roads and stormwater, parks and cemeteries that differed from traditional public sector delivery of these services (*iGoli 2002*, 1999: 4).<sup>68</sup> Under *iGoli 2002*, public sector entities were set up in terms of the Companies Act of 1973 as companies distinct from, but wholly owned by Council. The Systems Act, 33 of 2000, set up utilities as a special form of what are called municipal entities. The intention of these public utilities was 'to address the critical financial and institutional problems which face the councils' (*iGoli 2002*, 1999: 4).

*iGoli 2002* embodied the new era of South African local government because it was a business plan, more than a policy framework, that introduced the possibility of service delivery by an institution other than the public sector. Through its internal restructuring process, Johannesburg became a metropolitan authority with different priorities, different systems and processes and a different relationship with its citizens from that which had preceded it. In reality however, institutional tensions and constraints largely continued to frame the responses of the local state to civil society requests. *iGoli 2002* created new institutions that were at arms' length from the Metropolitan Council. The relationship between the Council and these new institutions was reconstituted so that Council was the major customer. The implications of this relative to local government and citizens could be the exacerbation of an arms' length relationship between Council and service users.

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<sup>66</sup> Personal communication with Dominique Wooldridge, 31 October 2002.

<sup>67</sup> Johannesburg has been called *iGoli*, meaning the City of Gold in Zulu.

<sup>68</sup> Water and sanitation, electricity and SWM will be run by service utilities. Roads and storm water services will be provided by the Johannesburg Roads Agency and the provision of parks and cemeteries by City Parks Johannesburg. The Council has also set up separate companies for its fresh produce market, the Johannesburg Zoo, the Civic Theatre and Metrobus (City of Johannesburg, 2001c: 13).

*iGoli 2002* was not seen as a mechanism through which to foster engagement with and by the local citizenry. The deliberate absence of the reference to ‘community’ involvement in *iGoli 2002* was partly redeemed in the subsequent medium term development plan *iGoli 2010*. While *iGoli 2002* made scant reference to citizen engagement, *iGoli 2010* was based on generating a joint long-term vision for Johannesburg as articulated by stakeholders, officials and politicians. Its intent was also to build Johannesburg into a world-class city for Africa by 2010. It was anticipated that the combination of the *iGoli 2002* and *2010* processes would simultaneously resolve the financial and administrative systems whilst entrenching a culture of governance. It must be noted that the process of focused institutional reform largely obfuscated the attention paid to the local citizenry (Harrison, 1999), but new policies such as the Medium Term City Development Plan of 2001/2002 to 2003/2004 consciously outlined Johannesburg’s strategy for moving from ‘transformation and restructuring to sustained good governance’ ([www.jhb.org.za](http://www.jhb.org.za)). This was further demonstrated in the City Development Plan envisaged for 2030 ([www.jhb.org.za](http://www.jhb.org.za)). Given the scope of this thesis, the present research only assesses citizen engagement and government responsiveness in the context of selected services and areas during state of play at the time of *iGoli 2002*.

### 3.3 NATIONAL FRAMEWORKS: GOVERNANCE FROM 1995-2002

Johannesburg has not escaped nor been untouched by national government requirements for processes of consultation and participation. Indeed, the local government crisis was of great concern to national government, which responded to the national municipal financial crisis in ways that were controversial because it was thought to be overly prescriptive. The programmes that were implemented included a stronger emphasis on planning through a national directive to generate Integrated Development Plans (IDPs)<sup>69</sup> as well as putting in place internal fixtures such as performance measurement and management systems.<sup>70</sup> Within the domain of these post-apartheid statutory obligations, the experience of Johannesburg was of particular significance for three reasons: first, because it was part of the economic heartland of South Africa and the region; second because it characterised so well the perversity of

<sup>69</sup> IDPs are seen as a medium term planning tool for municipalities to ensure co-ordinated planning.

<sup>70</sup> This is outlined in great depth in the Municipal Systems Act of 1998.

apartheid planning; and, third, because many new local government initiatives have been tested in the city. The fate of Johannesburg was to many indicative of the likely success or failure of post-apartheid local government in South Africa more broadly (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2000a).

Rectifying distribution inequalities and locational disadvantage at the local level became the mandate of all South African municipalities and there were a range of national policy frameworks that consolidated and directed this agenda. Local government became the key instrument for addressing historical inequities in combination, of course, with nationally-based initiatives and directives. Simone argued that 'current South African policy views the local to be the most dynamic site of economic development, political participation, social capital formation and the management of territoriality and sociality' (Simone, 1999: 14). This was based on a general understanding that local government was the sphere closest to its citizens. However, as Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell have pointed out, the focus on local government was accompanied by difficult unfunded mandates, while the trend towards decentralisation was potentially tension making as it sat at odds with the centralising tendencies of the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2000b; 2002).

Policy frameworks were developed outlining both the frameworks for achieving this necessarily integrated city, as well as instruments required for broad-based participation. Measures such as The Urban Development Framework (1999) argued Simone, demonstrated this. Simone outlined its four main objectives as follows:

- integrating the city through integrating planning, rebuilding existing communities, reforming land use, transportation and planning systems, and planning for higher density land use and developments;
- improving housing and infrastructure;
- promoting economic growth which builds on local resources, increases access to informal economic as well as direct employment opportunities and focuses on poverty alleviation;
- creating institutions for delivery, which emphasises intersectoral collaboration and the transformation and reform of the public sector (Simone, 1999: 5-6).

The Local Government Transition Act, Second Amendment Act 1996 Section 10 also stated that ‘metropolitan councils are obliged to promote integrated economic development, equal redistribution of municipal resources and equal delivery to ensure that balances are addressed’ (LGTA, 1996). IDPs, medium-term expenditure planning and land development objectives (LDOs)<sup>71</sup> became the mandate of municipalities and were designed to deal with physical and social infrastructure distortions that apartheid had introduced and entrenched. LDOs were one of the mechanisms constructed to tackle apartheid inequalities. Parnell and Pieterse explained the objectives of LDOs as follows: ‘The DFA (Development Facilitation Act) stipulates that LDOs must develop the skills and capacities of disadvantaged people (Section 3 [c, e], promote the establishment of viable communities (Section 3 [h] [ii], meet the basic needs of all citizens in an affordable way (Section 3 [h] [iv])’ (Parnell and Pieterse, 2002: 81). IDPs were intended to align national planning frameworks with local level needs. The distinctiveness of the IDP approach was the way in which the process emphasised the importance of consolidated planning (Parnell and Pieterse, 2002: 84).

But the viability of these processes was being contested. An illustrative example was the outcomes of an assessment of IDPs in 21 localities. The assessment established that to a large extent these processes were not well understood by municipalities. Bornstein presented the findings of the report as follows:

Integrated development planning in 21 localities found IDPs structured around traditionally defined sectors rather than local problems, a lack of strategic thinking in the planning process, mechanistic application of IDP tools, confusion regarding the applicability of different legal frameworks, heavy reliance on commercial consultants, poor design and implementation of participatory and inclusive processes, and a mismatch between the administrative standards of the plans produced and capacity for implementation (Cranko cited in Bornstein, 2000: 183).

For many municipalities, including Johannesburg, fulfilling national policy frameworks became a process of ‘going through the motions’. Johannesburg completed its LDOs and IDPs but remained focused on achieving a financial and institutional comfort zone before it engaged with its citizenry. It was therefore

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<sup>71</sup>Land Development Objectives (LDO) are the development objectives of municipalities. They are considered in conjunction with Integrated Development Plans (IDP), budgeted for and implemented accordingly (Abrahams and Goldblatt, 1997).

questionable whether the resolutions of the IDPs and LDOs would be ultimately realized.

At a political level, the Municipal Structures Act (1999) legislated for permanent structures of engagement between local government and its constituency. Each metropolitan council (of which Johannesburg was one) had a ward participatory system and/or a sub-council participatory system. Wooldridge and Engelbrecht explained that the justification for these structures was to ensure that community participation took place particularly given the span of the communities that the Johannesburg metropolitan government was required to govern (Wooldridge and Engelbrecht, 1999: 16). Notwithstanding these policy initiatives, understanding the nuance of social dynamics requires, in reality, a much clearer understanding of associational life than that which can be provided through local councillors. It demands a clearer conception of citizens and one that cannot be achieved solely through constructed, generic and formulaic participation processes. Indeed, understanding citizens means engaging more directly with local level social and political dynamics.

Engagement needs to be proficiently and sensitively forged on the basis of a solid understanding of dynamics and imperatives evident in the context of a particular locality. The City of Johannesburg had not worked out the specifics of consultation with its residents by 2002. This was because getting to grips with the particulars of a locality had been overshadowed by the desire of the City of Johannesburg to confront a myriad of other tensions. There remained pressures of delivery. The obligatory participation process slowed delivery down and as a result there was a reluctance to engage in participatory processes on the part of local officials and politicians. Many aspects of visible tangible delivery, such as housing, were provincial competencies and yet local government was responsible for related service provision such as water and sanitation. There was also a tension between maintaining existing services and extending them into areas where substandard services exist. Finally, political tensions between political groups within the City of Johannesburg and their constituencies were tricky. The tension of balancing priorities in a context of increasing expenditure and moribund or declining revenues was problematic.

Therefore in the midst of the institutional desire to deepen participation, the City was facing enormous other challenges. These challenges still eclipsed the need for a greater understanding of social dynamics in 2002.

### **3.4 THE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE<sup>72</sup> OF JOHANNESBURG**

Albeit that the approach of post-apartheid Johannesburg was underpinned by the notion of achieving democratic governance, extending physical infrastructure provision was still the priority. Given the blend of circumstances within Johannesburg, the city addressed its governance challenges in particular ways. Within the broader domain of alleviating inequalities, the local administration sought to confront the city's challenges in two distinct area-based ways. Johannesburg operated on two trajectories: first there was an exhaustive and sophisticated process of engagement by policy makers and officials in a bid to understand the social, political and economic dynamics of the inner city. This was largely a consequence of the desire by the City of Johannesburg to optimise the economic potential in the inner city.

The second trajectory applied to the former urban township areas. Here the focus was on extending physical infrastructure and attempting to get to grips with poverty and urban service issues. Urban townships fell into the development frameworks developed at a national level. Similarly, within informal settlements, the gaze fell on the provision of basic services but largely within the context of housing provision or upgrading. The complexity of governing Johannesburg post-apartheid certainly intensified. During the apartheid era, the containment of formal township areas and of 'White' areas ensured that there was some consistency in terms of urbanisation patterns, service and housing provision and resident profiles of these separated areas. Mabin has confirmed that during the apartheid period, local government had a miniscule role to play in apartheid planning (Mabin, 2002: 41). The nexus of power was national. The subsequent decentralisation trend with the accompanying expectation that local government would increasingly take responsibility for local decision making has had a considerable impact on the City of Johannesburg.

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<sup>72</sup> Social infrastructure refers to social relations and social structure.

It is because of the poor understanding of the contrasting experience and demands of Johannesburg's many and specific localities that two distinct case studies have been chosen for the present research. This thesis seeks to shed greater light on the social infrastructure in two distinct geographic areas. Chapter Four outlines in greater depth the logic surrounding case study selection. In brief, the first case study area is a traditional, well-established former apartheid township in Soweto, Old Dobsonville. It was developed in the late 1950s and is fairly representative of other older parts of Soweto. The second case study site is Yeoville. Yeoville is a former 'White' suburb in Johannesburg's inner city which has become deracialised. It has a comparable history to and has been confronted with many of the same tensions as other inner city neighbourhoods in Johannesburg in recent years.

### **Civil Society in the Apartheid City: 1980-1995**

The nature of South Africa's civil society was as much a social manifestation of apartheid policies as its city planning was the physical manifestation of apartheid. The situations described above gave rise to dense associational life. Organic civil society organisations emerged to address this marginalisation – politically, socially and economically. During the late apartheid era associational life at local level and in particular as it related to local government was predominantly associated with civic associations, or the civics, as they were known. Civics emerged in response to rent and service delivery issues in the 1980s.<sup>73</sup> Although at the zenith of their power in the 1980s and early 1990s, civic associations still existed and played a role in post-apartheid South Africa. Swilling, Cobbett and Hunter described civic associations as:

Local social movements organised by an unpaid voluntary leadership who have succeeded in mobilising their communities around the problems of daily township life. The issues around which they are organised are defined as 'civic' issues as opposed to (party) political issues i.e. housing, services, land, education, health, transport and community facilities (Swilling, Cobbett and Hunter, 1991: 187).

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<sup>73</sup> Jeremy Seekings states however that civic associations did not only emerge in response to material inequalities but also in response to a lack of political representation experienced by Black South Africans (Seekings, 1991: 299).

In reality, the leadership of civic associations and local ANC branches were closely aligned (Seekings, 1991: 94). Civic organisations originated as a vehicle to deal both with local level issues in the absence of government assistance as well as to mobilise local communities against the illegitimate local state. Although initially locally-based and organically formed, civics increasingly worked with political organisations in the 1980s given the overlap in their objectives. Seekings divides the activities of civic associations in the 1980s into four phases as follows: the early 1980s was a period of localised township protests; from 1984-1986 there was an upsurge in protest action; from 1986-1988 there was an increase in political violence and a lull in protest action; and from 1989 once again there was an increase in protest action (Seekings, 1991: 294). Civic associations were responsible for spearheading the rent and service boycotts against the BLAs in what is now the province of Gauteng. In response to *iGoli 2002*, the civic associations re-emerged to protest the drift towards the privatisation of essential services.

The significance of protest action and the relationships between political and civic organisations was that they facilitated a growing relationship between township residents with regard to local level issues (Seekings, 1991: 301). Street committees and area committees were common features in urban townships in the 1980s and worked to assist in governing townships in periods of intense political mobilisation (Cherry, 2000: 90). These street committees were commonly found in urban townships and dealt with a range of community issues. The significance of street committees is that they created a foundation upon which to build post apartheid civil society organisations. They were also indicative of the stocks of social capital available in urban townships in Johannesburg during apartheid.

In contradistinction, civil society in inner city neighbourhoods took a different form. Much of the activity of civic associations was based in their traditional domain namely urban townships. However, Alan Morris (1999b) has argued that a similar process of boycott was in place in the inner city but around different issues and against somewhat different targets. Exploitative relationships between tenants and landlords acted as a catalyst for rent boycotts in inner city neighbourhoods (Morris, 1999b: 511). The relationship between landlords (predominantly White) and new tenants (predominantly Black) were characterised by sporadic but dramatic increases in rent accompanied by



no maintenance (Morris, 1999b: 517). Morris elucidated the often racist disregard of tenants by recounting a statement from one notorious landlord.

They lose the keys and they kick the doors open. They block the drains, they put foodstuffs down them. The toilets – I've taken bricks out of the toilets. They pull the whole washbasin out. They paint on the walls, even up the staircase, 'ANC', 'Viva Tambo', 'Viva Mandela' (Morris, 1999b: 118).

In Johannesburg's inner city, Action Committee to Stop Evictions (ACTSTOP)<sup>74</sup> spearheaded the campaign against unfair landlords (Morris, 1994: 829). This protest action was largely contained within specific buildings and it was questionable whether or not it facilitated the establishment of relationships between residents along social movement lines in the same way as in township areas. Many of the ACTSTOP campaigns were specific to problematic buildings. These engagements were context-specific engagements between civic associations and landlords in inner city neighbourhoods, whilst in urban townships the engagements were characterised as one between urban township residents and the local state. Moreover, difficulties associated with urban services in inner city neighbourhoods were seen as a consequence of bad building maintenance by landlords rather than as a consequence of the lack of delivery by local government. It was only in 1997 with changes in municipal by-laws that the City of Johannesburg was able to cut off services (Morris, 1999: 147). Crankshaw and White (1994) contended 'there was a strong correlation between overcrowding and inadequate building maintenance which resulted in the failure of plumbing, drainage and sewerage systems (Crankshaw and White, 1994: 4). Whilst service delivery issues were clearly not as dire in the inner city as they were in urban townships, they were significant to residents exploited by landlords and elicited some measure of collective action. The enemy in the inner city however was much more starkly identifiable as the landlords, rather than local government.

There were numerous other forms of associational life in apartheid South Africa, but these associations have been less frequently connected with collective action around urban services and more related to survival strategies. Such associations emerged to

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<sup>74</sup> Some reference was made in newspaper articles to other organisations such as the City Slum Action Group and the United North East Civic Association (City Vision, 26 January 1995: 2). There have been other civic organizations formed in the inner city too such as Johannesburg Tenants Associations. The recorded details of these organisations however are not accessible.

compensate for the lack of access to resources, both institutional and social. Adler and Steinberg capture the sentiment as follows:

In many activist circles a stark line was drawn between 'politics' and 'culture'. In academic circles this line separates 'political studies' from 'anthropology'. Many structures of social life – embodied most visibly in vibrant ethnic practice, and in massive religious movements like the Zionist Christian Church – were somehow construed as private, as unimplicated in the political arena (Adler and Steinberg, 2000: 19).

Strong forms of associational life have historically been represented through religious, recreational, welfare and identity-based associations. Bonner and Segal recounted that from the 1950s, the extreme difficulties of urban life in Soweto resulted in the germination of social organisations, church groups, burial societies and mutual aid societies (1998: 36). These associations evolved and some assumed a role later in the anti-apartheid struggle. In the 1980s, church organisations played an important role both in the anti-apartheid struggle but also as an important part of township life (CASE, 1998: 21). The same can be said of stokvels,<sup>75</sup> burial societies, welfare groups and sports and recreation associations. Bonner and Segal (1998) explain:

Burial societies were yet another way in which Sowetans came together and attempted to create a form of stability in an otherwise insecure and unstable environment. These mutual aid societies – often known to Sowetans as 'neighbourhood societies' provided their members with financial and other assistance when a death occurred in the family (1998: 36).

Stokvels (informal savings clubs) were present in urban townships from 1932. These associations were still present in large numbers, in particular in urban townships, in the 2000s. White's research in Mzimhlope, Meadowlands Hostel and Powa Park in Soweto indicated that in addition to civics, burial societies and stokvels were the other key associations in urban townships (White, 1995: 16).<sup>76</sup> The brief description of

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<sup>75</sup> According to White, Dlodlo and Segooa (1995), stokvels are based around a group of people who contribute an amount of money regularly to a communal pot. The lump sum goes to a different member of the stokvel every meeting. They are able to spend the funds on whatever they wish to (1995: 19). This footnote reappears in Chapter Four.

<sup>76</sup> Burial societies are associations formed to finance funerals and burials most often for survival purposes. They are operated through a system of membership contributions to a fund. White states that each burial society has its own definitions of who and what will be covered by the fund (White, 1995: 17). The significance of stokvels and burial societies is that membership is exclusive and selective amongst friends 'while individual stokvels lack some of the formal elements of voluntary associations,

associational life beyond the civics is by no means comprehensive but there is surprisingly little development literature pertaining to the nature of associational life in Johannesburg.

As discussed above, variations in the complexity and stability of citizens in the inner city and urban formal townships impacted greatly on issues surrounding social capital. Although limited in scope, the literature on the historical development of civil society and associational life at neighbourhood level in Johannesburg suggests its importance for the formation of social capital. Different histories and different trajectories of collective action in the inner city and the formal urban townships has meant that civil society has articulated and responded to contemporary issues in different ways. One of the objectives of the thesis is to interrogate exactly how this history in the case study localities has impacted on social organisation and the implications for the development and nature of social capital.

### **Civil Society in the Post-Apartheid City: 1995-2002**

In the post-apartheid Constitution a definite role for civil society was mandated through policy and legislative frameworks. Its configurations however were envisaged as different from the historic forms of civic associations that were prevalent at the local level. As stated above, the LDO and IDP processes explicitly commanded that local residents be involved in determining the future of their localities (Parnell and Pieterse, 2002). In fact, organized civil society organizations were acknowledged as critical role players alongside local government. But whilst legislatively the emphasis on citizens was present, in real terms political associations in Johannesburg have been on a decline. Policy frameworks emphasise citizen involvement, but it is difficult to articulate the exact form of associational life to which this policy refers. Already, some analysts have articulated the fear that these over-formalised approaches to public participation will favour organised groups and they will monopolise the participatory channels. The linkage between the objectives of the public sphere and role ascribed to the social sphere by the post-apartheid government is currently being managed through a

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they engender a high degree of mutual commitment and obligation, since members rarely if ever seek to evade their duty to contribute to the common enterprise' (White, 1995: 20).

‘partnership’ approach. But whilst the policy secures community participation, it does so in a terrain with little in-depth understanding on the part of citizens (Harrison, 1999).

Adler and Steinberg (2000) in *From Comrades to Citizens* argued that unlike during the apartheid era, post-apartheid government choices would to some extent mould associational life. They state ‘the South African government is faced with an extremely difficult dilemma in regard to the sorts of associational life it chooses to promote or dissuade’ (Adler and Steinberg, 2000: 23). By supporting the idea of local level partnerships, a government position was constructed. This position to a great extent predetermined what was considered legitimate in the engagement between associational life and the local state, which in turn hinges critically upon the ways in which public-private partnerships were understood and constructed.

The status accorded to civic associations in the 1980s and early 1990s diminished in the post-apartheid era. Seekings argued that the role of civic associations became less important in the immediate post-apartheid period as a consequence of broad democratic change – ‘civic organisations lost their former status as the premier channel through which grievances could be raised’ (Seekings, 2000: 207). The role played by the civics in the past was increasingly taken over by local ANC branches or alternatively, civic activists joined local government (Seekings, 2000: 209; CASE, 1998: 37). Seekings argued too that civic leaders suggested that civics play the role of community representatives instead of elected counsellors which clearly worked against the new approach to community representation – that of a united democratic community (Seekings, 2000: 208). Seekings contended further that the Community Development Forums (CDFs) that were encouraged in the context of post-apartheid development local government took over the role that civic associations had played in representing community interests more broadly. Similarly, Community Police Forums (CPFs) took over the role of informal or unofficial policing and public order issues that had also formerly been the domain of civic associations (Seekings, 2000: 221).<sup>77</sup> Growing disaffection with civic associations unlocked the space for growth and development of a more diverse set of civil society associations as well as civil society associations not directly linked to political parties.

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<sup>77</sup> This is not to suggest that civic associations have no impact now, but it is much more locality-specific now than it was in the apartheid era.

## Post-Apartheid Forums

Probably the most well-known of post-apartheid partnership organisations were the CDFs. The origins of these forums were located in a national process whereby Gauteng's communities were encouraged to organise for participation at the Vista One Conference in 1994.<sup>78</sup> CDFs were locality-specific unified, representative and democratic forums that would represent all community interests to government. Certainly their form could be likened to an organised form of bridging social capital. Communities were expected to form an integrated and equal forum representing all interests in the locality. This was the first time in which opposing political and civic associations came together in a unified front to articulate and confront local issues. The intention of these forums was to provide a 'united community front' with which government would engage in participatory and development processes. They were an interesting phenomenon because the idea of CDFs was seized upon equally in urban townships and former White suburbs. There was indeed an initial flurry of CDF establishment, but this was not sustained. Reviewed over the medium-term, the CDF initiative was largely ineffectual. The fecklessness of these forums was attributed to a lack of funds and resources coupled with growing civic despondency around delivery. Reitzes argued that as state-initiated forums, CDFs raised concerns. She argued that 'far from acknowledging the voluntaristic, autonomous plural and inclusive nature of civil society, these proposals seem to intend to construct civil society from the top down, to co-opt it into statist structures, and determine the control and nature and extent of its participation' (Reitzes, 1998: 144).

Regardless of the failure of these forums on the whole, policy-makers remained optimistic about the role civil society would play in service delivery. The overarching significance of these constructed civil society associations for the purposes of this thesis, is an evaluation of the role the CDFs played in mobilising for collective action at a local level. It also provides insights into whether or not social capital can be institutionally constructed and then mobilised.

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<sup>78</sup> The Vista One conference held in Gauteng called together all community organisations in preparation for the launch of the idea of the Community Development Forums.

In the same vein as the CDFs, but focused directly on policing, were CPFs. CPFs were also state-driven and they were developed in the identical mould to CDFs. Their presence was also widespread in urban townships, the inner city and the former suburbs. Pelser suggested that the first real reference to Community Policing could be found in the Interim Constitution (Act No 200 of 1993), which explicitly instructed that community police forums be established. This position was consolidated in 1997 when the Department of Safety and Security published a policy on Community Policing entitled Community Policing Policy Framework and Guidelines (Pelser, 1999). The intentions of CPFs were manifold: to assist local police in identifying priorities, to ensure local police were performing appropriately and spearheading a partnership between local police and local communities (Pelser, 1999). The draft national policy document released by the National Department of Safety and Security stated

The main objectives of community policing is to establish and maintain an active partnership between the police and the public through which crime, its causes and other safety-related issues can be jointly determined and appropriate solutions designed and implemented (cited in Mistry, 1997:2).

Pelser critiqued CPFs on the same basis as CDFs, namely the assumption that community automatically relates to locality. This thesis will empirically test this notion. Bremner (1999) contended that CPFs in suburbs such as Yeoville, Norwood and peri-urban areas have been successful due to resources of time and money, whereas in poor areas forums are less successful due to the truncated sense of community as well as the lack of resources, time and money in low income communities (Bremner, 1999). In truth, the activities of these forums may have been intense in the initial post-apartheid period, but were tempered after a couple of years. The reasons for this tempering were complex and have yet to be adequately explained. The complexities implicit in organisations such as CPFs are evaluated in the empirical case studies. Each site demonstrates a different set of tensions and dynamics depending upon their history and context.

### 3.5 CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ACTORS IN JOHANNESBURG

The once-celebrated zeal of associational life in apartheid South Africa was broadly considered to be on the decline in the years following the transition from apartheid. This was to some degree an obvious consequence of a changing political terrain in South Africa. But in as much as understanding the role of civil society was important to broader governance issues, so is understanding the role of civil society in the absence of government resources. Adler and Steinberg have argued that associations that are 'structures of social life', such as stokvels and burial societies, still exist in a comparable form to those formed during the apartheid era (2000: 19). It was in these organisations that the present research found that much of the continuity of social capital could be located. There was at the same time, also another domain where new associational life had emerged. It was within the context of a general disappointment with government performance that a new and intensified growth of (a)political associational life had emerged. Soweto saw the rise of forums centred on professions, for example such as associations of businesspeople, ministers, taxi drivers and teachers. There were also local associations that responded to social issues such as crime and HIV/AIDS which became priority issues. Community-based concerns were by and large confronted on an issue-by-issue basis rather than in a sustained way, mostly because sustaining civil society associations is tough as a consequence of community-level organisational fatigue.

In the inner city, the literature suggests that many of the associations that developed were identity-based, especially amongst immigrant groups. African immigrants established identity-based groups that sought to assist new and established immigrant families in a hostile environment (Harrison, 2000). Simone argued:

Although conventional firms and entrepreneurship, both local and foreign, are burgeoning in African cities, informal sector activities remain the core of their economies. But increasing their absorptive capacities now often demands a simultaneous narrowing of social fields and a wider dispersion of economic processes over larger territories. Membership in social networks and neighbourhoods, may therefore become more tightly drawn – sometimes along religious, ethnic or cultural lines (Simone, 1999: 7).

These tight and exclusive social networks certainly developed in the inner city of Johannesburg. These social networks originated both as means for survival but also for consolidating business opportunities. These identity-based organisations were not only constructed around business prospects, but were survivalist and community-oriented as well. There was a shared sense of the importance of the church and the mosque in the lives of many inner city residents. Amongst South African inner city communities, historic associations existed. There were local political parties and SANCO branches as well as church groups, residents associations and street committees.

The obvious distinctions between collective action and associational life in Johannesburg's inner city neighbourhoods on the one hand, and traditional urban townships on the other, prompts the question as to what circumstances are most likely to induce enhanced civic engagement and institutional performance? A contextual picture of the particular aspects and dynamics in two different neighbourhoods will go some way towards answering this question. This comparative picture will also create the empirical evidence for analysing whether organisations can be utilised in pressing for institutional performance and whether or not social capital can be channelled in specific directions, or if absent, can be constructed.

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provides a brief overview of the history and development of government and society in Johannesburg between 1980 and 2002. It offers information pertaining to the broader context at the city level within which the detailed empirical case studies of Old Dobsonville and Yeoville are located.

The chapter portrays how political factors have historically structured relationships within the City. In addition, it reveals the extent to which institutional considerations within local government in the City of Johannesburg have informed financial allocations, policy choices and priority selection. Many of these choices have been made in an effort to address the challenges faced by the City of Johannesburg post-apartheid and in an attempt to get to grips with the new and increased demands placed on local government. It is in such challenging circumstances that the concept of social capital is advocated as a development resource.



The broad analysis of the historical and contemporary characteristics of the city's residents and associational organisations illustrates the role played by formal institutions in structuring societal relationships. This analysis presents a fitting background to the questions framing the forthcoming chapters namely under what circumstances does social capital play a role in the productive relationship between an active and engaged civil society and responsive government?

Overall, the chapter speaks to the distinctions between Johannesburg as an apartheid city and Johannesburg as a post-apartheid city. It provides initial insights into the importance of the distinct differences between the government and society as they appear in the inner city and formal urban townships. It also highlights the historical differences in the development and financing of two types of Johannesburg neighbourhoods, thereby laying the ground for more elaborate discussion of the fieldwork areas, Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, in Chapters Four, Five and Six.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **SITUATING THE LOCALITY CASE STUDIES IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG**

As has been pointed out in Chapter One and Chapter Two, the aim of this thesis is to explore what relationship, if any, exists between social capital, organised civil society and responsive government at a municipal level, working within the framework of Putnam's social capital concept. This endeavour to understand the relationship between associational life, social capital and institutional performance is explored empirically in two field sites which are described in some detail here, alongside a questioning as to the conditions under which state-society co-operation is possible, and the micro conditions conducive to these broader interactions. Chapter Two constructed the theoretical and conceptual framework within which the relationships are explored. Chapter Three outlined the broad context within which state and society interact in Johannesburg. Chapters Four, Five and Six represent the analysis of two case study sites within the city. It is upon these findings that the thesis question will be answered.

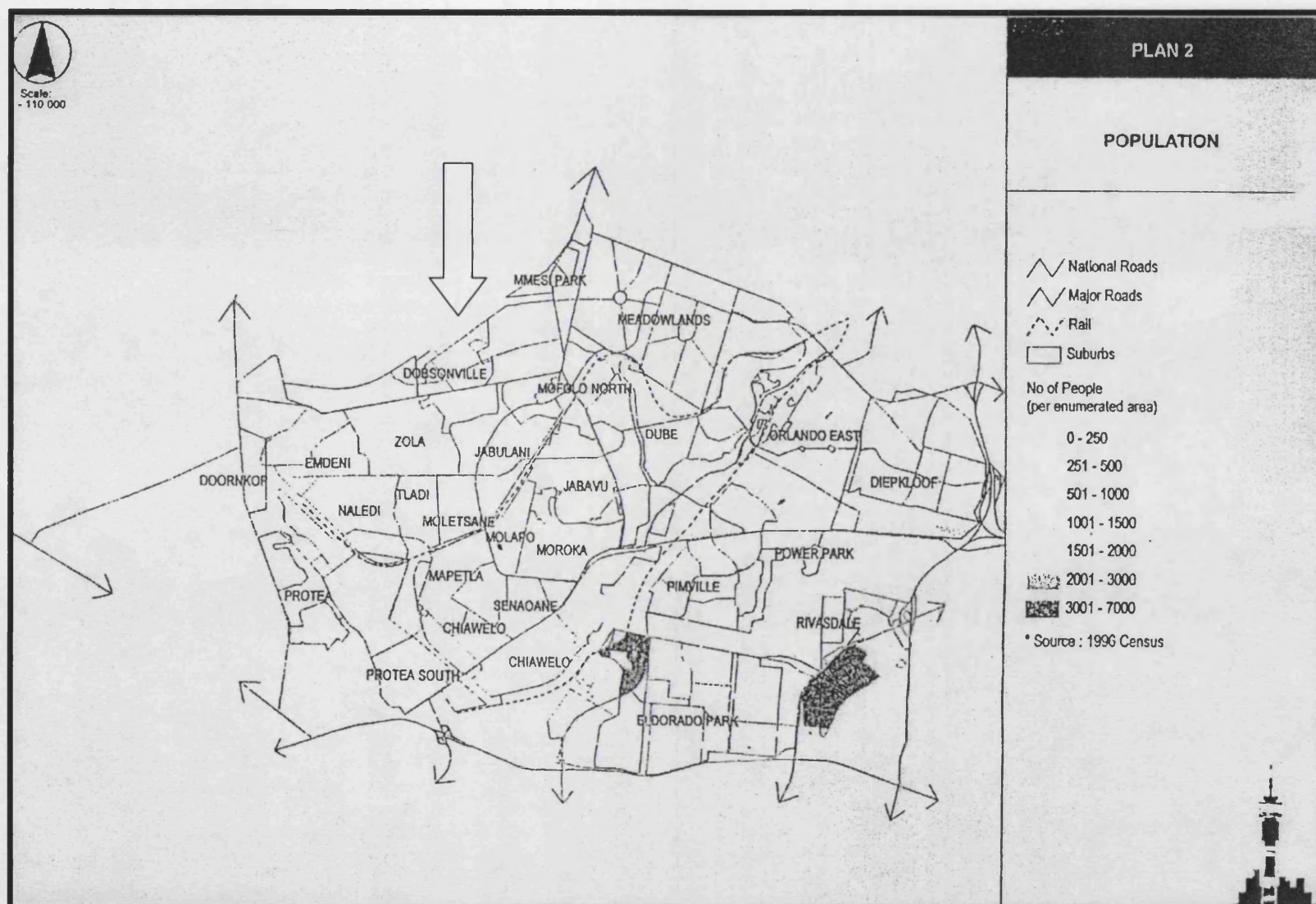
In Chapter Three, a contextual overview of the recent history of the City of Johannesburg was provided, outlining the nature and specificities of the local administration in Johannesburg from 1980 until 2002 and the role of civil society organisations in the governance of the city. The post-apartheid challenges faced by the City of Johannesburg between 1995 and 2002 as a result of this legacy were highlighted. It also demonstrated how Johannesburg consists of a miscellany of residents with different understandings of the importance of locality and local government, both historically and in the contemporary period. Against this background, and in order to represent something of the social diversity in Johannesburg, two case study sites were selected within which to explore the existence and development of social capital. These are: Old Dobsonville in Greater Soweto and Yeoville in the inner city.

This chapter seeks to justify the choice of the case study sites by presenting further contextual information in order to compare and contrast these two localities. Section One validates the choice of the two case study sites by demonstrating the links between the hypothesis and the contexts presented, both historically and contemporaneously, in the localities. This section also explains why the two sites are valid for demonstrating the link between associational life, social capital and institutional performance. On the basis of these insights gained, Chapters Five and Chapter Six draw on the field research findings to discuss the particularities of two services – solid waste management (SWM) and public safety – within the contexts of Old Dobsonville and Yeoville. The description and analysis of the two case study sites presented in this chapter is drawn from a combination of field research, secondary and primary documents.

#### **4.1 CASE STUDIES: THE RATIONALE AND CHOICE OF FIELD SITES**

This section explains the choice, as case study sites, of Old Dobsonville in Soweto and Yeoville in the Inner City. Both localities fall within the jurisdiction of the City of Johannesburg but are otherwise radically different. The contrast between these two sites offers an interesting opportunity to explore Putnam's notion of the relationship between associational life, social capital and government performance in a complex urban setting. Old Dobsonville and Yeoville are examined in detail in the following section with explicit reference being made to institutional dynamics and associational life in the two areas. The intent is to portray the unique characteristics of each site, as well as the parallels between them, the objective being ultimately to determine the impact of locality on social capital and the forms it takes in diverse neighbourhood settings. Sections Two and Three then sketch the particularities of both case study areas with a view to framing the detailed analyses of SWM and public safety in the two areas in Chapters Five and Six.

Figure 4.1 Map of Greater Soweto. Source: City of Johannesburg



## PART A

### 4.2 'THE NOSTALGIC CITY',<sup>79</sup>

Old Dobsonville in Soweto was selected as the case study site to explore the existence and formation of social capital in a former African township created under apartheid. This section begins with a brief description of Soweto, which has existed as a formal township area in Johannesburg since the 1930s, and a discussion of the emergence of associational and institutional life in Old Dobsonville, since its inception in 1956. The history of Soweto has been complex and fraught, involving a township that has been marked by conflict and danger on the one hand, and a significant degree of social cohesion and collective action on the other. Soweto, is an acronym for South Western Townships, comprises a collection of residential townships which, from their establishment in the 1930s, have been home to a diverse group of African residents. Soweto acted primarily as a resettlement area for residents of Sophiatown, Newclare and Western Native Township, as well as to other rural and urban settlements which were subject to forced removals. Dobsonville was established in 1956 as the township alongside Roodepoort, a secondary city near Johannesburg.

Old Dobsonville, the case study site, is in the original section of one of those earliest townships. Dobsonville is situated within Soweto. It lies to the west of Meadowlands and borders Mofolo North and Zondi on the south side (Mashabela, 1988: 61) (See Figure 4.1). Localities within Soweto tend to be analysed collectively by researchers, but for Sowetans, the characteristics of each particular locality are significant and social identity is often closely associated with locality. This is because Soweto was and remains a vast and diverse place marked by varying levels of affluence, class particularities and histories (Morris, 1980: 54). This is replicated on a smaller scale in Old Dobsonville. Table 4.1 illustrates how despite distinctions in class and affluence, the population itself remained fairly stable from the 1950s.

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<sup>79</sup> This title is borrowed from a title in Amin and Thrift's book *Cities. Reimagining the Urban* where they refer to the cities of the past that were characterised by a face-to-face interaction (2002: 32).

**Table 4.1 A Community Profile of Migration Based on the Year Moved to Usual Residence in Dobsonville From 1900-1996**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Resident Migration Numbers</b>
1900-1958	689
1959	85
1960	503
1961	208
1962	293
1963	98
1964	87
1965	120
1966	348
1967	92
1968	139
1969	147
1970	114
1971	44
1972	67
1973	59
1974	58
1975	66
1976	78
1977	70
1978	92
1979	96
1980	264
1981	167
1982	390
1983	162
1984	306
1985	907
1986	1430
1987	434
1988	1801
1989	4187
1990	3270
1991	8376
1992	3921
1993	3845
1994	3063
1995	3764
1996	4181
Never moved	34825

Unspecified	627
N/A Institution	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>79473</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa, Census 1996

Table 4.1 shows there has been a limited influx of new residents into Old Dobsonville since its inception. It was only from the mid-1980s that the population grew at a substantial pace, suggesting that the township remained largely homogenous until the mid-1980s. Bonner and Segal (1998) relate how from the 1980s with the easing of the pass laws, Soweto attracted a flurry of new residents, many of whom became backyard tenants (1998: 134). Although there was the influx of new residents into Soweto, existing residents stayed too. Gilbert and Crankshaw's study of Soweto in 1999 demonstrated that half of Soweto's residents have lived in the area for more than 20 years. The study showed that 'few Sowetans have changed residence very often. This is particularly true of those who are established in council housing. Once families move in, they rarely move out' (Gilbert and Crankshaw, 1999: 2393). Table 4.1 reveals half of the population of Old Dobsonville has not moved residence in their lifetimes. This finding is indicative of the fact that the population of Old Dobsonville was relatively stable, mobility amongst residents being limited. It is critical to this study that its population is fairly homogenous, as can be gleaned from Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 also demonstrates that Old Dobsonville had a largely young population as in 1996. But more significant for this study, the table demonstrates that the population group became noticeably more heterogeneous in recent years up to 1996. Among older age groups, first languages were predominantly Setswana and IsiXhosa. This has changed gradually and the younger generations display a far more heterogeneous mix of residents. This is borne out in the qualitative data analysis which shows that Old Dobsonville in the early years was largely homogenous but that this is now changing among younger residents.

**Table 4.2 A Community Profile of Population Group and First Language by Age in Dobsonville**

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76+	Un-specified	Total
African																		
IsiNdebele	12	14	20	7	26	40	20	18	9	8	3	4	4	1	0	2	0	188
IsiXhosa	1667	1357	1157	1286	1424	1387	1317	1187	878	611	400	302	194	147	95	106	51	13566
IsiZulu	2644	2220	2248	2053	2246	2144	2106	2257	1538	927	451	293	201	145	92	82	121	21768
Sepedi	446	305	300	271	344	391	457	420	294	173	104	74	62	30	11	20	35	3737
Sesotho	821	694	712	645	666	725	663	779	546	287	204	147	110	67	59	54	34	7213
Setswana	2953	2469	2398	2452	2863	2542	2436	2585	1913	1263	845	716	499	399	225	222	158	26938
Siswati	61	28	41	38	52	49	52	48	48	15	16	10	4	2	1	1	1	467
Tshivenda	238	122	93	92	135	198	191	177	117	81	54	36	17	5	4	0	3	1563
Xitsonga	410	202	205	220	392	340	295	285	207	96	60	56	32	26	8	11	33	2878
Afrikaans	9	6	6	8	9	3	7	4	8	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	1	69
English	16	7	10	12	14	9	11	6	8	3	0	2	1	0	3	1	0	103
Other	27	7	14	16	43	41	18	20	9	11	4	1	1	0	1	0	3	216
Unspecified	65	34	32	41	25	23	15	24	12	10	4	9	4	2	1	2	14	317
<b>Total</b>	<b>9369</b>	<b>7465</b>	<b>7236</b>	<b>7141</b>	<b>8239</b>	<b>7892</b>	<b>7588</b>	<b>7810</b>	<b>5587</b>	<b>3487</b>	<b>2147</b>	<b>1654</b>	<b>1129</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>79023</b>
Coloured	12	5	18	15	13	16	19	6	10	5	2	4	0	1	0	1	0	127
Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Asian																		
White	1	1	5	6	8	8	3	4	3	13	6	8	3	1	0	0	0	70
Unspecified	51	27	34	23	25	29	15	6	12	11	0	1	1	0	0	2	14	251
<b>Total</b>	<b>9433</b>	<b>7498</b>	<b>7293</b>	<b>7185</b>	<b>8285</b>	<b>7945</b>	<b>7625</b>	<b>7826</b>	<b>5612</b>	<b>3516</b>	<b>2155</b>	<b>1667</b>	<b>1133</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>79472</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa: Census 1996



## **Governing Dobsonville**

Greater Soweto, from the 1960s, was divided into three separate administrative localities, each falling under the jurisdiction of different administrations. Most of Soweto was administered by Johannesburg except for Dobsonville which was administered by Roodepoort and Diepkloof and Meadowlands by the Natives Resettlement Board (Mandy, 1984: 182; Morris et al, 1999). Although Dobsonville, as a jurisdiction, was always considered part of Greater Soweto, it was governed separately from the rest of Soweto until post-democratic government. This continued under different administrations until 1995. Soweto was not only governed separately, but also, the manner in which its residents were settled was constructed to embed social divisions.

The state advocated a number of methods by which to 'entrench the divisions' in Soweto's townships. First, the divisions were drawn according to tribal categories. Some areas were designated as tribal (migrant); some as semi-tribal (immigrant) and others as residential zones for detribalised (urban) 'natives' (Bonner and Segal, 1998: 37). Beyond this, there was also a process of ethnic zoning that was undertaken (Bonner and Segal, 1998: 37) and residents were settled in townships and in streets according to their ethnicity and language. This ethnic zoning impacted on residents in varying degrees depending on the neighbourhood. Pauline Morris (1980) contends for example that given that there were only a certain number of housing units available at the outset in Soweto, residents selected neighbourhoods according to three main criteria - only one of which was ethnicity. These were: economic status (which refers to income, education and occupation); family or household status (Morris defines this as age structure) and ethnic composition (referring to religious, cultural and language) (Morris, 1980: 51).

The impact of these divisions was not particularly significant in Old Dobsonville, where all the original residents were re-settled from a single township area called Roodepoort West or Juliwe and were ethnically largely of Tswana origin. Thus, families that were re-settled in Dobsonville<sup>80</sup> came with a sense of shared identity and history, unlike some other parts of Soweto where residents from various parts of Johannesburg were re-settled as a consequence of forced removals. A resident of Dobsonville recalls: 'I remember in 1959 when I buried my grandmother in this graveyard that there were only five houses and it has since grown into a big township' (Debbie). (SAIRR, 1958-1959: 185).<sup>81</sup>

The relative homogeneity of residents moving to Dobsonville assured a non-conflictual transition. Residents who moved into Dobsonville in the 1950s also seemed fairly content with their new homes albeit that they were built in the mould of the notorious 'matchbox'<sup>82</sup> houses.<sup>83</sup> One older resident commented:

Ja, when we moved into Dobsonville as I say, it was a new township that was built when you used to move into a house, you see this house how it is built, it is one of the municipality houses. It was built by the Roodepoort municipality. Then, immediately as you moved in, you were issued rent, your permit and then it came the time when they installed electricity but water was there already. When you moved in there was the toilet with water clean water and then electricity came after. Then you applied and they put electricity in for you. There was not much problem. (Maria)

Residents interviewed consistently emphasised that Dobsonville was marked by either good services in the early years or a 'sympathetic administration'. It was considered by all its residents to be a well-serviced township. This was attributed to the fact that, unlike other areas in Soweto, the Roodepoort/Maraiburg municipality administered

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<sup>80</sup> According to a key interviewee, the name Dobsonville came from the municipal superintendent, a Mr Dobson. His son Dennis Dobson succeeded him. There is no verification of the exact dates when he was superintendent but it was suggested by local residents that he was superintendent in the early 1960s. All official documentation was destroyed in a fire in the early 1990s.

<sup>81</sup> This indicates the changing size of Dobsonville.

<sup>82</sup> 'Matchbox' houses is the colloquial name given to the original red brick houses constructed in African townships. They were tiny four-roomed dwellings with a small yard.

<sup>83</sup> The significance of the conditions in Dobsonville is best illustrated through comparison with the rest of Soweto. Gorodnov (1983) contends that in the 1970s, only 15 per cent of houses in Soweto had electricity. The remainder were serviced by candles and paraffin lamps (1983: 67).

Dobsonville. In fact, older residents of Dobsonville appear to have had a loyalty to the local municipality. A local resident explained:

And Dobsonville, then, during the era of the Community Councillors, compared to now, was a model township created in 1956, Dobsonville, Wattville and Kwa Thema even though Dube was the elite where rich people of Soweto lived, Dr Motlana,<sup>84</sup> etc; were staying, in terms of any township controlled by municipalities, the Roodepoort/Maraiburg municipality was the best. Entering Dobsonville, you could see that you were entering a clean township. It was all electrified just opposite the police station, parks were clean, we had the local police, which we called 'Black Jacks', who were not police controlled by the system but were working under Community Councillors, their duties was to see that everything in the township was in order. And they would chase kids around playing gambling, or not keeping the township clean. (Stofile)

In fact, the system of governance in Dobsonville was paternalistic. Dobsonville in the early years was a close-knit community that was not organised around governance issues. Instead, as the above quotation demonstrates, the social pressure to be a good citizen was extreme. Being a good citizen included co-operating with the local municipality. Residents of Soweto made reference to Dobsonville's image as 'a farm place'. One elderly resident articulated this to mean that 'we were considered to be not as bright as they were. We were a quiet set of law-abiding people' (Doris). Stories told by older residents make for interesting supporting evidence of this picture. Residents explained how discipline was maintained in Old Dobsonville with the assistance of the local administration. This they did with the full permission of residents to ensure that the norms and values of the township were maintained.

The two M brothers that were here in this office, they would know everybody in the township. In fact Dobsonville is a very, very homogeneous society because if you ask me about a number of somebody or if I don't know their number well or if you ask me about a surname of a person, I will tell you. I know exactly, oh that person stays that other side. That is excluding extensions. That is from Roodepoort West where we come from. We are that type of a society. There was more care. There was what you call *ubuntu*; it is humanity. I am not sure to what extent but we were like my friends or any parent around Dobsonville was my parent. We grew from that era so we were scared of elderly people. We did not do any wrong in the presence of elderly people around Dobsonville, that is how we grew up. ....That is how Dobsonville was, there was respect, there was everything. (Stofile)

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<sup>84</sup> Dr Ntatho Motlana was the chairperson of the Soweto Civic Association (SCA) in the 1980s. He was and remains a prominent South African businessperson.

This early history of Dobsonville is interesting because Dobsonville pre-1976 corresponded to the conditions Putnam describes in south and north Italy. There was a culture of co-operation amongst residents, explained by their long history of association and shared identity. There was associational life. There were shared norms and values and trust as evinced by interviewees who often termed other Dobsonville residents as family. Neighbours in Old Dobsonville did not change with any frequency. The majority of residents had lived in Old Dobsonville since relocation and as such were accommodated in council-built housing. But, residents of Old Dobsonville in the 1960s and 1970s, unlike the Italian citizens discussed by Putnam, did not endeavour to ensure optimum government performance by utilising their social capital. Instead, Dobsonville residents believed that the Roodepoort/Maraisburg Municipality delivered an acceptable level of service. At this juncture there was a passive acceptance of the racially unequal system of local government that was in place. This passivity co-existed with a healthy stock of social capital that clearly was not organised at this point. Social capital was community-based but was not the type of force Putnam envisaged for collective action.

So, whilst there was associational life, and social capital, it did not facilitate optimum government performance as was the case in Putnam's Italian case study. The residents of Dobsonville received as good governance as they could at this time by playing the paternalistic game. This was viable as long as the community itself was homogenous and flat in class structure. After that, social capital was not enough and political capital became a necessary asset to cultivate for collective action.

### **Associational Life in the Early Years**

Associational life in Soweto in the 1960s and 1970s contained a range of organisations that were evident in all neighbourhoods. Many of these associations were established to cope with difficulties present as a consequence of poverty, which, as pointed out by Moser, is a fairly common phenomenon in developing countries (Moser, 1998). Some of them, those involving finances, were based on trust among contributing members. These included burial societies and stokvels. Membership was and still is constituted on the basis of trust. Members were friends, relatives or colleagues. In order for an 'outsider' to become a member of the stokvel, they had to be vouched for by one of the

existing members (Molakeng, 1991: 15). Associational groups, based on trust, worked to the exclusion of those that were unknown. There were other associations too, including sports clubs, youth clubs and choral societies. Swilling (1993) contends that:

Formations such as stokvels, certain kinds of church organisations, sports formations and certain leisure patterns all contributed to a culture that can only be described as mutual, associational and localised networking (Swilling, 1993: 20).

Whilst these forms of associational life were flourishing, there was little overt political activity during the early decades of Dobsonville's existence. It was only from the mid-1980s that there was a conflation of associational and political life. This was crucial in constructing new forms of social capital and boosting the old. Although not all associational life operated in conjunction with political life. Many associations, such as burial societies, existed solely to fulfil their objective and deliberately eschewed political involvement. At the same time, there was a multitude of associations whose express purpose was to assist or provide cover for political organisations. These included church groups, youth clubs and green clubs. In the 1980s these associations served as a 'front' for organised political activity, which was banned under the apartheid regime until 1990.

As pointed out, from its inception in 1956 until 1976, Dobsonville was characterised by a local administration that was performing to the relative satisfaction of the community (or so residents were led to believe). It was a township where residents had a history of engagement with each other and co-operation with local government, had something of a collective memory and identity; and had relatively high levels of trust. In addition, this period saw the emergence of associational life around self-help initiatives formulated to assist residents in surviving in a new environment as they were relocated from their homes to urban townships. A combination of these elements seems to explain the reluctance of Dobsonville residents to organise politically and around service issues when compared to other areas in Soweto, where opposition to the local administration began to emerge and to fuse with more generalised oppositional politics. Dobsonville also lagged behind in terms of political organisation because leaders in the community were very strong and influential, and conservative. Hence, it was only upon their encouragement and vision that activities were undertaken. Involvement in politics

also made individuals very visible in a close-knit community. In those times of draconian punishment, involvement in political activity was severely deterred by the possibility of being jailed, detained or tortured.

In terms of local governance then, the relative lack of oppositional political organisation that was evident in Dobsonville, could be attributed largely to Dobsonville's status as a well-serviced township, because it fell under a different dispensation - that of the Roodepoort Municipality. A local activist from Dobsonville suggested that with its earlier electrification and satisfactory services, Dobsonville was a privileged area in Soweto. Other residents attributed the delay in effective political organisation in Dobsonville to its lack of access to political information, given its local government association with Roodepoort rather than Johannesburg. However, the conditions in Dobsonville changed radically in the aftermath of the 1976 Soweto uprising when the townships of Soweto became sites of mass-based confrontation against the apartheid state.

#### **After the Uprising: Associational Life Post-1976**

It is not possible to discuss Dobsonville post-1976 without locating it within the general political, social and economic realities of Soweto at the time. This context has been broadly provided in Chapter Three and much has been written about activism in Soweto, following the student uprising in 1976 against being taught in the Afrikaans language (Ashforth, 1995; Bonner and Segal, 1998; Brewer, 1986; Glaser, 1998; Hirson, 1979; Mandy, 1984; Seekings, 1992; Smith, 1992). As such, it would seem unsurprising that Dobsonville became increasingly politicised from the late 1970s. Soweto in general became conscientised in the post-1976 period and following the Soweto uprising. In the process, the collective concerns of Dobsonville evolved from focus on local issues, to a broader consideration of issues. Dobsonville was no longer able to survive in an insular manner, satisfied with its reasonable level of services. Instead it had to make common cause with Greater Soweto.<sup>85</sup> A local activist explained that Dobsonville ensured it was involved in Soweto's political activities by joining the

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<sup>85</sup> Jeremy Seekings (1990) comments that the political struggles in the 1980s were based on local grievances with regard to housing, local government and services (1990: 120). This correlates with the findings in Dobsonville regarding non-involvement of Dobsonville residents until drawn into broader political struggles.

Soweto Civic Association (SCA). 'We did not allow ourselves to be isolated. We felt it was very important to belong to Soweto. But it came late (Sebokeng).'<sup>86</sup>

The critical issue for this chapter is the extent to which the characteristics of Dobsonville played any role in the articulation of collective action in the area, and the extent to which general political circumstances prevalent in Greater Soweto influenced collective action in Dobsonville. Seekings (1992) argues that 'local factors and dynamics were of primary importance in the initial transition to confrontation' (Seekings, 1992: 20). However, the configuration of political and associational life in Old Dobsonville seems to have ensured compliance with local government until the late 1970s. It was only when the realities of broader struggles began to impact on Dobsonville residents that they became consciously involved. It was not poor governance that catalysed local Dobsonville residents into action. If anything, Dobsonville's earlier compliance with regard to local government was modified by the fact that political activism was putting at risk the comfort zone Dobsonville's residents had enjoyed.

Putnam's analysis of associational life excludes political parties. However, research undertaken in Old Dobsonville reveals that to a large extent the nature of associational life in the area had remained fairly constant since its inception in the 1950s, but was transformed by politics. This did not mean that the infusion of political activism into existing social structures changed the nature of existing associations. These remained. However, some of the associations were reconstructed and reconfigured for engagement in the anti-apartheid struggle. The implication of this was the beginning of a co-ordinated approach to organisation in Greater Soweto and the emergence of *magnetic* social capital taking a bridging form.

### **The Impact of Transforming the Local Administration**

Key informants remembered clearly the transition from the Roodepoort/Maraisburg Municipality to the West Rand Administration Board (henceforth WRAB) for the administration of Old Dobsonville. Velaphi commented, 'I thought our place in

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<sup>86</sup> Dobsonville lies on the western edge of Soweto but because it was administered separately was sometimes viewed as 'separate' to the rest of Soweto prior to the 1980s.

Dobsonville was the nicest place because the municipality of Roodepoort was doing everything for us.' The WRAB was set up (according to the Black Affairs Administration Act of 1971) and took over the administration of Soweto and townships on the West Rand in 1973 (Morris, 1980: 65; Mandy, 1984: 191). This included Dobsonville.

In 1977, some autonomy was granted to townships in the guise of Community Councils. Three Community Councils were established in Greater Soweto: the Dobsonville Council for Dobsonville, the Diepmeadow Council for Meadowlands and Diepkloof, and another for the rest of Soweto, which had previously fallen under the Johannesburg Municipality (Morris, 1980: 65). Community Councils were conceptualised as a means of introducing some measure of Black self-governance. In reality though, Community Councils were not funded and the services they were required to provide were impossible to deliver given constraints of financing they faced. Predictably, the majority of residents of Soweto did not accept the notion of Community Councils, and in response the SCA was formed in September 1979.

The objective of the SCA was to unify Soweto in its resistance to Community Councils and to lobby for the establishment of a legitimate Soweto Council. The SCA was also created to deal with local issues affecting residents of Soweto, including municipal services and the concomitant financial assistance required towards ensuring that Soweto was habitable. (Morris, 1980: 67). Dobsonville residents commented on the decline and downgrading of services upon the creation of the Community Councils.

Resistance to the concept was obvious in the election results for Community Councils.<sup>87</sup> Elections for the Soweto Council demonstrated their lack of credibility. (Mandy, 1984: 203). Morris explains that amongst Sowetans support was not given to the institutional structures implemented by the apartheid state. As a result of the objection to Community Councils, when Community Council elections were held, only six per cent of Soweto voted and 16 per cent of Diepmeadow. In Dobsonville, percentages were greater reaching 43 per cent (Morris, 1980: 66). This is a significant difference compared to Soweto and Diepmeadow.

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<sup>87</sup> Community Councils differed from BLAs in that they had less power and independence over their local jurisdiction.



It seems that Dobsonville was less opposed to Community Councils. Was this a consequence of satisfaction with previous local government service and was voting informed by an historical precedent of acceptable service delivery? Or, was it a consequence of the norms and values embedded amongst Dobsonville's residents? Could it also have been a consequence of the reality that the people who stood were old respected Dobsonville members, who governed everything? Perhaps it was another indication of the remainder of the paternalistic relationship with local government? It was also significant that when the administration of local government changed in 1982 with the establishment of self-governing Black Local Authorities (BLA) (Mandy, 1984:227) a Council was elected again in 1983, this time with a poll of 23.5 per cent (Mashabela, 1988: 60). However, as interesting as the fact that Dobsonville stood out against the mainstream in the early years of Community Councils, more so is that fact that these high percentages for voter turn-out diminished over the years until the historic 1994 national election.

### **The Slow Decline in Service Delivery**

With the introduction of Community Councils and 'self-governance', conditions in Dobsonville began to deteriorate. In 1979 the Dobsonville Community Council showed a deficit of R8 million. Not only was the Council affected by this deficit, but also there was a dramatic decline in services in Dobsonville. Residents complained that they were being forced to pay for services that were poor (Mashabela, 1988: 61). In two decades, Dobsonville had evolved from a well-serviced and maintained area to one afflicted with worsening services and inefficient local government. The breakdown of services affected Greater Soweto in general. Moreover, once the WRAB took over administration, it undertook minimal infrastructure provision or maintenance (Mandy, 1984: 234).

Consequently, there were a number of specific issues unfolding simultaneously in Dobsonville at this time. Dobsonville residents were confronted with declining service levels, increased political activity and the strengthening of Black local councils. The active anti-apartheid struggle, located largely amongst the youth in Soweto, occurred concurrently with the strengthening of local councils which were populated by older residents. Dobsonville, although always slightly removed from Soweto, participated

actively in school stay-aways, consumer boycotts and other political activities undertaken to make Soweto ungovernable during the 1980s. Dobsonville residents were also members of the Soweto Youth Congress. A local resident, now in his early thirties, remembers the event that triggered activity in Dobsonville as follows:

In the early 80s when there was a first man buried, somebody claimed the guy died in exile so he was being buried in Dobsonville. So, there were some young men, comrades, we call them that, from places like Alexandra and Thembisa and from the East Rand.<sup>88</sup> They are the ones who came and started to put the youth into the struggle and so on and so on. And that is when Dobsonville began to change and be active; that is when we started to be active; then from there, we took it from there. (James)

Several interviewees reported that Dobsonville was radicalised through the involvement of 'comrades' from other Soweto neighbourhoods and it appears that Dobsonville was swept along in political activity rather than being an initiator of the activity. Collective action emerged in response to the charisma, leadership and political organisation more broadly evident within Soweto at this time.

There was also, at this time, an active presence of the local administration in Dobsonville, resulting in the splitting of allegiances within the neighbourhood. For example, Mashabela (1988) explains how Steve Nkatlo and Steve Kgame, two Dobsonville councillors, were vital in initiating and leading the Urban Councils Association of South Africa (UCASA).<sup>89</sup> In fact, UCASA's headquarters were in Dobsonville (Mashabela, 1988: 62). Dobsonville was in the news in the mid-1980s largely as a consequence of the attacks on its councillors. A newspaper report in September 1984 reported that the house of the Mayor of Dobsonville, Don Mmesi, was under police protection (*Star*, 12 September 1984). In December 1984, the home of Councillor Steve Kgame was petrol bombed. (*Rand Daily Mail*, 24 February 1984). In August 1985, the *Sowetan* reported that Mr Steve Kgame's home had been petrol bombed once again (Makaringe, 1985: 9). In 1987, Steve Kgame was shot (*Sowetan*, 12 January 1987). In 1989, yet another time, Mr Kgame was gunned down by unknown assailants (*Sowetan*, 11 April 1989). Mr Kgame was a long-time Dobsonville resident and remained involved in politics until the national elections in 1994.

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<sup>88</sup> Alexandra is an African urban township located in the north of Johannesburg. Thembisa is an African township located on the East Rand, east of Johannesburg.

<sup>89</sup> UCASA is the acronym for the United Councils' Association of South Africa.

The transition in local government administration and decline in service standards were not what motivated residents to engage in collective action during the 1980s. Instead, it was the growing political mobilisation within Soweto, more generally, that filtered into Dobsonville and raised consciousness. Interestingly, many earlier forms of associational life and the stocks of social capital remained constant throughout this period and beyond. As such, the mobilisation process was largely unrelated to traditional forms of associational life although at times these were used as cover. Nonetheless, existing social relationships no doubt facilitated engagement and interaction between Dobsonville residents and mediated their involvement in the political struggle.

### **Local Government Cannot Be Trusted**

Historically, housing has been a hugely important issue in the lives of Dobsonville residents. The housing shortage in Soweto is a pervasive problem and one that was intensified with the rescinding of the pass laws as well as changing urbanisation patterns. In Dobsonville, housing was a considerable problem that re-emerged as an issue throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Housing had become a problem in Dobsonville, as with all of Soweto, as a consequence of a growing population without the provision of additional housing. Housing had become a point of political mobilisation given the proliferation of backyard structures and the burgeoning population. The apartheid state distinctly did not build additional housing in urban townships as a consequence of the policy of viewing Africans residing in urban areas as temporary sojourners.

In 1986, 144 families were evicted from Council-built houses in Dobsonville after occupying them for 3 months (*Sowetan*, August 13, 1986: 2). This was the upshot of limited housing stock and some residents claiming they had been on the waiting list for a house for 15 years (Moroke, 23 February 1986). In 1987, Councillors Steve Kgame, Jerry Zembe, Steve Nkatlo and Isaac Mashao appeared in court on bribery and corruption charges. It was alleged by Dobsonville residents that they had had to bribe local councillors in order to be allocated a house (Nyaka, February 6-12 1987). Although the councillors were ultimately acquitted (Nyaka, February 6-12, 1987: 7), in 1989, the Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) undertook an investigation into the allegations of corruption amongst the Dobsonville Council. It had been alleged by

30 residents that they had given councillors large sums of money in order to ensure access to housing (Tema, 1989).

Alongside the 'untrustworthy' councillors and lack of access to housing for long-standing residents, Dobsonville grew substantially with the development of formal extensions to Old Dobsonville as well as the growth of Snake Park, an informal settlement close by (Bonner and Segal, 1998: 134). The population of Dobsonville became increasingly diverse and unfamiliar to long-term residents, except in Old Dobsonville where the existing residents continued to reside in their original homes. Debbie, an elderly resident, affirmed this,

these people when I moved in here, I found them here and they are still here up until now. We have not had new people here, the new people settle in new houses that have been extended, otherwise most of us knows each other this end.

Nevertheless, taken as a whole, Dobsonville in the 1980s became a mix of original residents, newcomers and backyard tenants. Accompanying urbanization and the shortage of housing was the proliferation of backyard shacks. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2000a) reported that up to 40 per cent of all formal houses in Johannesburg's African townships had at least one backyard shack by 1987 (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2000a). Drawing on BLA records Gill (1990) states that in 1990 Dobsonville had 5092 backyard shacks and had an average of three per site (Gill, 1990: 67).

A key issue is whether the rapid increase of backyard shacks and tenants had an affect on associational life in Dobsonville. For example, it has been argued by Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2003) that owners and tenants in nearby Meadowlands pursued different organisational issues. However, for Dobsonville it was apparent that the nature of associational life among backyard tenants resembled closely that of long-term residents. Thus, increasing differentiation, signified for Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell by different housing types in Soweto, did not seem to break the homogenised placidity of old style associational life in Dobsonville. Instead, associational life was conducted on similar terms as historically it had always been.

Frustration around the lack of access to housing became visible again in 1990 when shacks were constructed on unoccupied land in Dobsonville. The municipality demolished these shacks because they had been illegally constructed (Moroke, 1990). The outcome of the demolition of the shacks was an ongoing battle between the SCA and the Dobsonville Civic Association on the one hand and the local municipality on the other. As a last resort, because of the failure to reach a compromise, the women shack dwellers stripped down to their underwear in a bid to prevent the local municipality from bulldozing their homes. A newspaper reported the motivation as explained by one of the women participants:

Traditionally men are supposed to respect a naked woman's body if the woman is not their wife. We decided to undress because we thought the police would shy away from our naked bodies and that would have saved our shacks. But our naked bodies did not stop the armed forces in their mission. They brushed us aside and a bulldozer started to flatten our shacks (Rantao, 21 July 1990: 7).

Housing issues have elicited impassioned and organised responses from Dobsonville residents over the years and this was one particularly poignant form of protest on the part of desperate women.

Housing is the service around which associational life mobilised most vociferously in Old Dobsonville in the 1990s. Housing is associated with the *magnetic* form of social capital defined in Chapter Two. It is argued here that a *magnetic* form of social capital emerges in instances where a locality-based issue attracts collective action in residents and existing social relationships are utilised to facilitate the collective action. In the case of Dobsonville, this was evident regarding housing. Housing applications lodged with the local administration as early as 1996 had still not been dealt with by 2001. Housing allocation has always been contentious. In 2001, Dobsonville erupted because there were allegations that residents who had been waiting for houses since 1996 were not allocated houses because the lists containing their names had been misplaced by the local administration. Further, as a consequence of a provincial housing policy, new houses in Braamfischerville<sup>90</sup> on the outskirts of Dobsonville, were promised to

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<sup>90</sup> Braamfischerville was a new extension to Dobsonville. It was a Reconstruction and Development Housing project. This means that specific government funding was targeted to upgrade the area for development purposes. It was supposed to house backyard tenants from Dobsonville as well as residents who had been on a waiting list for houses for some years.

residents relocated from Alexandra instead of to local Dobsonville residents who had been on the housing waiting list.<sup>91</sup> The response of Dobsonville residents was fury. A local resident commented:

We were shocked. We knew this Braamfischerville was for the local children who have grown up to have their own homes. But now only to find that there are some outsiders. That is where the chaos started. (Debbie)

On 15 February 2001, 700 residents of Dobsonville stoned the Kopanang Centre<sup>92</sup> in Old Dobsonville after failing to reach agreement with the local councillors regarding the housing issue (Attia, 15 February 2001: 5). This was an unprecedented display of resident activism in Dobsonville, an area that was historically inactive, and one that came after the main political energy directed against apartheid had dissipated.

Putnam's argument that there is a linear relationship between dense and active associational life, social capital and improved government performance can be questioned, therefore, when applied to the case of Dobsonville. The nature of associational life, social capital and government performance remained fairly constant in the 1970s, yet it was specifically with regard to the politicised issue of housing that collective action in the locality was provoked in later years. Community resources were not mobilised wholeheartedly relative to other service issues however. The exact reasons for the differentiation are discussed in Chapter Five but relate in large measure to the fact that housing has been a highly politicised issue for Dobsonville residents, not least because of their origins as neighbours who shared the experience and insecurity of removals.

Not surprisingly, after 1994 the political landscape in Dobsonville naturally transformed. So too did local administrations, as local government became democratic. One important element at a local level was that now Dobsonville residents had local councillors who were directly representing their locality and were theoretically easily accessible to residents. Local government was no longer the direct focus of oppositional collective action. It was a requisite that it be linked into a constructive

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<sup>91</sup> Alexandra is a township in the northern parts of Johannesburg. It is also one of the poorest urban townships in the metropolitan area.

<sup>92</sup> The Kopanang Centre is the community centre in Dobsonville. It is here that the local councillors have their offices.

partnership with local residents. But while social capital conditions, as articulated in this study, remained consistent at the associational life level, engagement with government changed comprehensively. Illegitimate local councillors of the apartheid years were replaced by elected councillors theoretically tasked with ensuring democratic local governance. Local councillors were conceptualised as the interlocutor between civil society and local government. For residents of Dobsonville, who had viewed local government with hostility for decades, this was an enormous transition to make.

Social capital, to the extent that it gave rise or linked to politicised collective action, was linked to housing. This can be explained by the historical connections between people in Dobsonville, who had been moved together, had a collective memory of removals, had a shared history of fighting for their homes and a stable neighbourhood and, as such, were prepared to go to great lengths to retain these.

### **Associations Now!**

While the more politicised collective action reared up around housing issues, the self-help activities of associations and associational life continued unabated. The duties and objectives of associations such as stokvels, churches and burial societies, remained unchanged during this period. What was fundamentally different in old Dobsonville in this period was the relationship between the local administration and residents. During the 1956-1976 period, relations were cordial. These relationships became increasingly acrimonious after 1976, following the Soweto uprising where generalised levels of suspicion increased. Local government was further demonised as a consequence of declining service delivery. Old Dobsonville residents who had lived in the neighbourhood for most of their lives, saw the place as home and were invested in the neighbourhood over many years. So while political struggles were raging, the traditional forms of associational life in Dobsonville persisted.

People continued to attend churches, and support stokvels and burial societies, and still did in 2001. In nearly every household, at least one person was a member of a burial society or stokvel or kitchen club. Kitchen clubs were based on a similar principle to stokvels. They met regularly at a member's home. It was the responsibility of each

member to purchase agreed-upon kitchen and electrical appliances for the kitchen party. Each member was then at some point a recipient of allocated kitchenware. As with stokvels, kitchen parties served a social function with dancing, food and beverages. Associational life that had begun as survivalist remained in place and appeared to have greater longevity than other constructed forums and organisations. Albeit that the form of associational life has remained constant, the nature has altered over time. Associational life survived and mutated whilst political organizations were much more sensitive to exogenous conditions.

One resident, when questioned about associational life and what concerned residents of Dobsonville, replied as follows:

People of nowadays, predominantly women, they are concerned about burial societies. If I die I want to be buried in a nice coffin, with nice food. Which was not a Black thing. It is not a White thing. I don't know where these things come from. If I die, or my parents died, we slaughter the beast, the skin was used to bury, but now that it has come about that it is a must if it is your parents or an elderly you must slaughter a beast, but after that you give people, but it was only samp<sup>93</sup> and porridge - a brown porridge used by Tswana people, Xhosas would go. Now it is no longer that. People of now late, morning, evening people belongs to burial societies. Ah stokvels! People belong to five stokvels, that if I die, they must buy a cow and make all the salads that they can cook in the world. I don't believe in this. The food that is provided, even at a wedding you don't get the type of food that you get at a funeral. Then after that you just drink. It is no longer that solemn atmosphere. People are more concerned that if I die, the coffin must be expensive, a limousine. (Stofile)

However, unemployment has taken its toll on these associations as residents were unable to contribute their dues in cases where there was no household income. This parallels the situation of community kitchens in Latin America which either survived and often outlived various forms of political organisation, only to be threatened by the problem of sustainability as more and more members came to depend on them without being able to contribute adequately (Moser, 1992; Barrig 1996; Lind and Farnelo, 1996).

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<sup>93</sup> Samp is wholegrain corn porridge. It is a staple food in South Africa. Samp is often served with a meat-or vegetable-based sauce.



Churches were and remain an important part of civic life in Old Dobsonville. Denominations include Methodist, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Zionist, Lutheran and the Rhema Church.<sup>94</sup> Ashforth warns that it is important to be careful in the categorisation of churches as sources of social capital because of the different forms they take in Soweto. For him, a distinction needs to be made between 'healing churches' (Apostolic and Zionist) and mainline churches. The Apostolic and Zionist churches are centrally involved in healing and are organised in small bands of members under the direction of a Minister and a Prophet. These bands take the form of compact, exclusionary groups which can be categorised as bonding social capital. Of great significance is the role these churches play in confronting illness. Ashforth, on the basis of his studies of witchcraft in Soweto, explains that these churches put a strong emphasis on evil forces despatched by outsiders. The bands strongly discourage interaction with outsiders and generally frown upon any sort of civic or political action.

In Dobsonville, amongst the mainline churches, there was a strong interdenominational community that worked alongside the CPF and police to assist in the combating of social crimes. The activities of the church, as per key informants, included assisting the elderly, HIV/AIDS Awareness Programmes and Youth Groups. The Roman Catholic Church has a Youth Group and a Church Women's League which have chosen to fight HIV/AIDS together. The ANC Women's League was also involved in HIV/AIDS awareness and job creation initiatives. They were members of the CPF as well. The Methodist Church in Dobsonville worked with the Council for the Aged. The Methodist Church also ran a luncheon club where elderly people were given lunch and entertained.

Most of the above-mentioned associations are all historic, having existed in Dobsonville for many years and having served an important long-term social and economic function. But involvement in these associations has not precluded residents from participating in other activities that have emerged spontaneously or issues that were of inter-community concern. The most obvious one, evident from the list of

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<sup>94</sup> The Rhema Ministries were founded in 1979 in South Africa. It is an evangelical church boasting a non-racial congregation of up to 300 000 members ([www.rhema.co.za](http://www.rhema.co.za)). The Zionist Christian Church (ZCC) was founded in 1910 by Bishop Engenas Lekganyane ([www.anc.org.za](http://www.anc.org.za)). The ZCC is the largest African Independent Church in South Africa and around 10 per cent of South Africa's population are ZCC members. For further information on African Independent Churches see Evans, Bekker and Cross (1992: 33-37).

associational activities described above, is organisation around the newest threat to face Dobsonville residents, HIV/AIDS. Self-help activities and efforts to secure a safe and stable neighbourhood have remained constant in Old Dobsonville. These activities sat comfortably alongside politicised action and *magnetic* bridging social capital in relation to housing and to a lesser extent services which are discussed in Chapter Five.

#### **4.3 SUMMARY**

The history of associational life and local government in Old Dobsonville highlights the way in which life and governance in Old Dobsonville has changed in the near half century between its foundations in 1956 and the time of research in 2002. The role, efficiency and effectiveness of local government has transformed dramatically. So too, has the response of local residents to local government. Even in post-democratic South Africa, with the encouragement of a partnership arrangement between local government and residents, people have remained deeply distrustful and sceptical of local government officials and councillors.

Despite massive social change and political instability, over the years locality based associational life continued. Yet, social capital, understood as a resource locked within the stock of associational life in Old Dobsonville, did not emerge automatically as a bridge to organised responses to poor institutional performance. Instead, as this section has demonstrated, numerous additional exogenous factors also served to contribute to the presence or absence of engaged citizenship in Dobsonville. It is these factors that will become the points of comparison with Yeoville, the inner city case study site.

### **PART B**

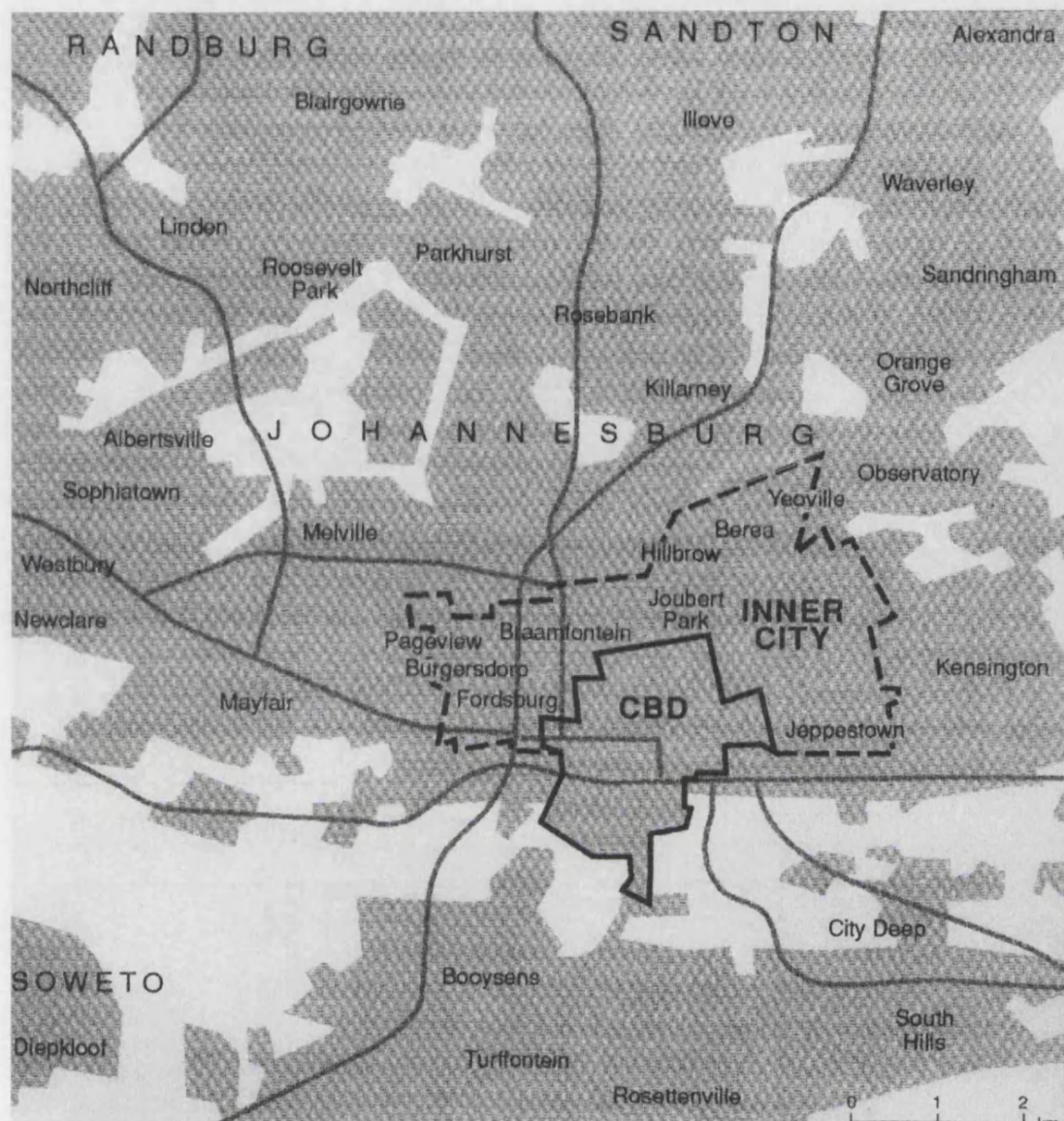
#### **4.4 THE 'FUNKY' CITY**

Compared to Soweto, the relationship between local government and residents in White areas in apartheid South Africa was not fraught. The struggles around local issues were not located in the domain of fundamentally inadequate services and absent or inappropriate political representation. In fact, local struggles only emerged in really significant terms post-1980 when, for the first time, residents of deracialising inner city neighbourhoods were confronted by the reality of apartheid South Africa.

The history of Johannesburg's inner city is closely knit with the consequence of apartheid legislation. With the introduction of the Group Areas Act<sup>95</sup> in 1956 all African, Indian and Coloured residents of Johannesburg's Inner City areas were resettled elsewhere on the outskirts of the City. The Central Business District (CBD) and neighbouring residential areas were zoned White. By means of the Johannesburg Proclamations, the municipal area of Johannesburg was thus zoned with the major part being zoned for White residents only (SAIRR, 1962:6). The 1963 Bantu Laws Amendment Act or 'White by night' policy reiterated that private homeowners could not accommodate more than one African domestic worker on the premises. Legislation, which became known as 'Locations in the Sky', outlined that it was prohibited for the owner of a building in White areas to accommodate more than five African residents unless special permission was obtained to do so. This demonstrates just how much the Apartheid government was at pains to ensure 'White' zones stayed White. They largely succeeded until the 1980s. For a period of approximately 30 years, the neighbourhood of Yeoville was strictly 'White'. As was the case of Old Dobsonville, this apartheid history was of great significance for the way in which social capital developed in the post-apartheid era.

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<sup>95</sup> The Group Areas Act was passed in 1950. It specified the separate residential areas for South African residents according to race. The law was repealed in 1991.



**Figure 4.2 CBD, Inner City and Suburbs. Source: Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002: 47)**

**Table 4.3 A Community Profile of Migration Indicating the Year Moved to Usual Residence in Yeoville From 1900-1996**

Year	Resident Migration Numbers
1900-1958	66
1959	1
1960	15
1961	0
1962	16
1963	4
1964	8

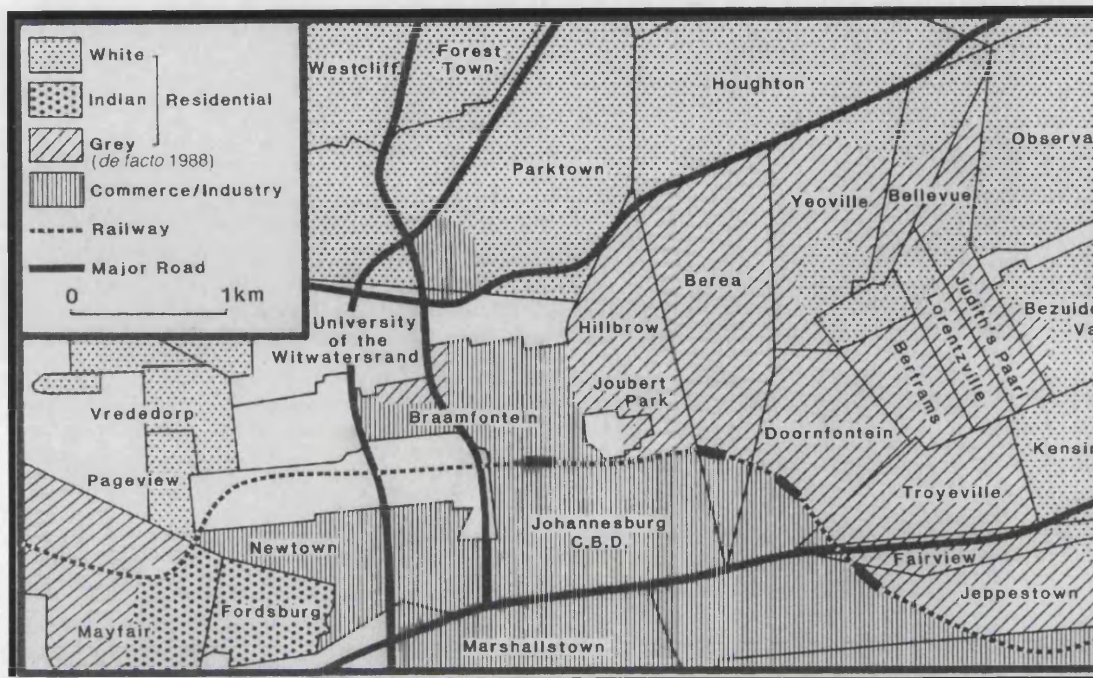
1965	6
1966	6
1967	3
1968	12
1969	11
1970	42
1971	19
1972	16
1973	12
1974	21
1975	34
1976	44
1977	13
1978	37
1979	39
1980	120
1981	72
1982	67
1983	57
1984	94
1985	87
1986	95
1987	96
1988	122
1989	233
1990	463
1991	392
1992	612
1993	832
1994	1126
1995	1793
1996	2938
Never moved	1027
Unspecified	91
N/A Institution	157
<b>Total</b>	<b>10899</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa, Census 1996

Table 4.3 demonstrates how, in contrast to Dobsonville, recent population movement into Yeoville grew substantively from the 1990s. Although this table only reflects the period until 1996, it is expected that population movements have continued to grow since then. Also, of significance is that unlike Old Dobsonville where almost half the population had never moved, in Yeoville roughly only 10 per cent of the population had lived in the area permanently.



Figure 4.3 Grey Areas in Johannesburg, 1988.



Source: Christopher, A.J. (2001) The Atlas of Apartheid.

**Table 4.4 Community Profile of Population Group and First Language by Age in Yeoville**

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76+	Un-specified	Total
African																		
IsiNdebele	9	6	2	7	21	11	16	6	8	4	0	1	1	3	1	0	2	98
IsiXhosa	72	41	45	36	124	142	118	74	49	34	23	14	8	4	2	0	4	790
IsiZulu	233	70	81	140	402	477	279	200	127	71	63	30	34	18	3	5	39	2272
Sepedi	73	27	20	39	105	139	119	94	64	52	25	30	10	5	3	1	18	824
Sesotho	24	19	10	16	70	91	55	27	23	12	6	6	2	5	2	4	3	375
Setswana	30	24	28	33	90	93	81	47	40	33	19	21	4	4	3	2	8	560
Siswati	8	2	1	10	13	22	11	3	7	2	4	5	0	4	0	1	4	97
Tshivenda	20	8	5	7	42	42	22	12	6	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	172
Xitsonga	23	0	6	7	27	37	29	19	14	11	6	12	2	4	0	0	3	200
Afrikaans	6	0	0	1	3	2	5	0	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	22
English	82	41	42	55	130	142	108	58	22	19	6	6	3	4	2	4	19	743
Other	77	39	18	32	99	116	80	37	8	7	2	3	4	4	0	1	8	535
<b>Total</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>1126</b>	<b>1314</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>6688</b>
Coloured/Afr	7	8	1	5	21	27	20	7	8	7	2	2	0	1	3	0	4	123
Coloured/Eng	43	30	23	19	87	73	53	38	23	9	5	7	3	4	1	3	5	426
Other	10	0	0	2	1	2	6	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>582</b>
Indian/Eng	32	3	12	11	42	32	31	18	9	8	8	6	0	1	0	1	3	217
Indian/Other	2	0	5	0	1	5	2	2	6	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	14	42
<b>Indian Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>259</b>
White Afr	12	7	6	10	28	35	22	9	11	5	12	7	6	9	3	12	3	197
White/Eng	130	102	110	133	207	274	206	202	193	188	135	138	118	154	139	298	45	2772
Other	16	9	19	15	13	17	4	24	14	18	21	29	21	21	12	17	4	274
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>3243</b>
Other	18	10	15	2	15	12	14	12	1	5	5	6	0	3	0	1	2	121
<b>Total</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>1541</b>	<b>1791</b>	<b>1281</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>10893</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa: Census 1996

The Johannesburg City Council (JCC) was the local government that resided over Yeoville until 1995. Its functional activities included ensuring that the following services were provided to residents: the maintenance of streets and sidewalks; cemeteries and crematoria; parks and recreation grounds; water and electricity supply; abattoirs; refuse removal; health services; environment and conservation; housing and slum clearance; town and city planning; licences; civil defence and the construction and maintenance of municipal buildings (Cloete, 1989: 12). As with other White neighbourhoods in apartheid South Africa, Yeoville was a fully serviced residential neighbourhood in the jurisdiction of the JCC. Its residents enjoyed the benefits of apartheid local government facilities. Revenue was garnered from residents through service charges, trading undertakings and some subsidies from national and provincial government (Cloete, 1989: 138). Residents of inner city neighbourhoods did not have to worry about lack of service delivery nor lack of access to housing. In fact, it was the over-abundance of housing in the inner city, that led to its 'greying'<sup>96</sup> from the 1970s. The luxury of full service delivery meant that institutional performance on the part of local government was not in question and did not require collective action underpinned by stocks of social capital.

This said, Yeoville was also not a conventional White neighbourhood. Its population was uniquely varied for South Africa at this time, its diversity stemming from the origins of its residents. Yeoville acted as a reception area for White immigrants. Chipkin (2001) sketched the arrival of foreign migrants in his paper 'Review of Foreign Migration to Johannesburg'. He recounted how Yeoville in 1930-1940 was very 'European' in character. It became the home to immigrants arriving from Europe in the 1930s (Chipkin, 2001: 6). It remained that way for decades. Yeoville was also home to a large Orthodox and Hasidic Jewish Community. A local newspaper (1994) described Yeoville as follows:

Here you see old Jewish ladies wrapped in the obligatory black shawl sharing space with a chain-and-leather tough guy. Foreigners apparently cannot resist the gravitational pull of the area and Yeoville has a high percentage of foreign residents (*City Vision*, 6 October 1994).

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<sup>96</sup>The term 'grey areas' refers to areas which have been designated for a certain race group in terms of the Group Areas Act but which had become desegregated in practice (SAIRR, 1988: 494).



From the 1960s, severe housing shortages were experienced in the townships in Johannesburg including the African township of Soweto, Indian township of Lenasia<sup>97</sup> and Eldorado, a residential area designated for mixed race or 'Coloured' South Africans. Housing shortages in these areas made the Group Areas Act untenable for White areas that were well supplied. The Survey of Race Relations 1977 reported that at this time Coloured families were already living in blocks of flats in White areas to deal with housing shortages they were experiencing (SAIRR, 1977: 441). By July 1980 it was reported that in excess of 2000 Coloured and Indian families were living illicitly in central Johannesburg (Gordon, 1980: 355).<sup>98</sup> These cases were severely dealt with by the police and the courts. In the case of [*State vs Govender*] in 1982, however, there was a court ruling that stipulated that it was only in cases where substitute forms of housing could be found, that those persons defying the Group Areas Act could be evicted (Pickard-Cambridge, 1988:vii).

Until the 1980s, the presence of Africans was not tolerated. Those residents that were illegally residing in Yeoville were in no way able to engage in political or social life. Instead, invisibility was essential for survival. Their illegal status also made these residents vulnerable to exploitation. Crankshaw and White (1994) and Morris (1999a; 1999b) reported that evidence of overcrowding emerged in the 1980s, a consequence of absent landlords whose tenants had little recourse to action, specifically as the result of deracialisation coupled with the Group Areas legislation that prohibited Black residents from residing in the Inner City (Crankshaw and White, 1994).

### **Yeoville in the 1980s**

In the 1980s, there was growing evidence of collective action accompanying broader societal change. The first organisation created to deal with the growing social problems in the Inner City was Actstop (Action Committee to Stop Evictions) (Morris, 1999a). Actstop was a non-governmental organization established to deal with the inequalities arising amongst inner city residents and more specifically to address the problems of discrimination and exploitation that afflicted Black residents of the inner city by virtue of their illegal status. For example, it was common for Black residents to receive

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<sup>97</sup> Lenasia was an Indian township. Eldorado was a Coloured township.

<sup>98</sup> These mixed areas became known in the South African context as 'grey areas'.

inadequate services from landlords while paying exorbitant rental. Further, Actstop worked to protect the rights of residents facing eviction in inner city neighbourhoods (Morris, 1999a). According to Royston (1998), whilst the government continued to try and enforce the Group Areas Act, organisations such as Actstop vociferously opposed the ongoing implementation of the Group Areas Act using tactics such as demonstrations and other methods (Royston, 1998: 14). A local Yeoville activist commented:

Then there was still a large White community and as things changed. I mean landlords honestly they really capitalised on the situation. That is only because they use the opportunity and they make fortunes. They pay their bonds and they don't pay council for rates and services and they absconded with the cash. (Tim)

Still, the transformation of Yeoville was not on a par with other inner city areas such as Hillbrow and Bertrams.<sup>99</sup> For a start, the densification process was slower. In addition, many residents of Hillbrow and Berea moved into Yeoville to escape what they saw as the mayhem of life in other inner city neighbourhoods. Thus, in the 1980s, Yeoville remained a middle-lower-middle income neighbourhood that continued to attract a diverse set of residents. It nevertheless, at the same time, became one of the initial 'grey' areas of Johannesburg and there is evidence of the first African immigrants in this period before the repeal of the Group Areas Act in 1991. But Yeoville continued to be home to a heterogeneous set of residents. In addition to its European immigrant population, largely from Germany, Italy and Greece, as well as a large Jewish community, Yeoville residents included left wing academics, activists and increasingly a Black middle class. Yeoville was considered proudly to be 'cosmopolitan and bohemian' by its residents, many of whom settled there because of that environment.

For most residents, Yeoville's appeal was not only due to its location (this was primarily to do with its proximity to the city centre and higher education institutions) but related to its nightlife and cosmopolitan appeal (Simon, 1992: 47). It also had an abundance of housing stock as White residents fled the inner city northwards (Royston, 1998:13). In addition to the cosmopolitanism of the area, it was a place with high levels of political activism. In the 1980s, Yeoville was often a site of refuge for political

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<sup>99</sup> See Alan Morris (1999a) *Bleakness and Light. Inner City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

activists and home to key political figures, left-leaning academics and activists, many of whom post-1994 went into high level government positions and some even into parliament.

In the 1980s, it could, therefore, be said that what characterised Yeoville was an area-based identity and in this sense there were parallels with Old Dobsonville. Residents commonly referred to themselves as Yeovillites. This identity was not based on the duration of stay in Yeoville, but instead with the association with what being from Yeoville signified. One of the questions explored in this thesis is whether locality-based identity suggests the possibility of healthy stocks of social capital and indeed it was this area-based identity that led to the establishment of the very active Yeoville Residents Organisation (YRO) in 1989. The explicit objective of the YRO was to build on and develop a sense of community in the area of Bellevue, Bellevue East, and Yeoville. Its objectives were stated as:

A community organisation open to all people who live, work or own property in Yeoville, to fight racism and racist laws; to assist Yeoville residents with their problems; and to address environmental issues in Yeoville (*The Watertower*, 1 January 1990: 2).

In 1990, the YRO established an advice office in Yeoville to deal with issues such as evictions, poor living conditions and landlord/tenant conflicts. Minutes of meetings of the organisation suggest that it also worked in conjunction with other existing inner city organisations, such as Actstop, to confront Group Areas Act evictions. It tackled apartheid at the local level through campaigning against Yeoville as a Free Settlement Area<sup>100</sup> and other Group Areas related-issues such as the deracialising of public amenities. Furthermore, it concentrated on building, through cultural, environmental and social activities, a community in Yeoville.

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<sup>100</sup> The concept of Free Settlement Areas (as per Free Settlement Areas Bill (Act No 102 of 1988)) was introduced by the government as a consequence of the burgeoning need for housing in South African cities. What this meant was that the government allocated certain sections of South African cities as desegregated areas within the existing racially segregated cities thereby allowing Black residents to seek housing in areas of the City with available housing (Saff, 1990: 6). Yeoville formed part of the proposed Central Johannesburg Free Settlement Area in 1990 (Bernstein, 1990: 57).

A long-term Yeoville resident remembered:

Yeoville used to be a very tight community. Everybody cared you know and I think you know that people want Yeoville to be the way it was so that people need to get together again and own up to this community and make it a better community. (Nanci)

Residents of the Yeoville of the 1980s had very few direct problems with the JCC in terms of service delivery issues and, therefore, the residential focus on institutional performance was minimal. The foremost problem experienced by residents at this time was primarily to do with corrupt landlords. These landlords operated largely in a sphere inaccessible to or through local government while decisions pertaining to the Group Areas Act and its implementation were located at a national level. Engagement in politics was, as a result, situated at the level of national politics as this was where power was concentrated. Real qualms with local government and the need to mobilise against it, were not foremost in residents' minds during this period.

### **Local Government Tackles the Inner City: The 1990s and Beyond**

Prior to 1990, residents of Yeoville avoided interaction with local government, and the JCC invested little effort in Yeoville. This soon changed in the 1990s once major businesses began relocating to Sandton. There was a flurry of local government activity around the inner city after 1990, however, upon the realisation that the inner city core was critical to the City of Johannesburg and in danger of suffering the flight of capital. The transformation of the Inner City had not really been anticipated and reflected upon by the City. From the 1990s, in contrast, there was intense interest in the inner city. This surge of interest can be explained by the fact that the inner city evolved from a place of limited complexity to one that attracted the attention of various interest groups.

In the aftermath of a workshop on the Inner City in 1991 it was decided that the Central Johannesburg Partnership (CJP) would be launched as a partnership between local government, the community and business. The intent of the CJP was to work for the interests of the inner city and its community (CJP, 2002: 2). It was also felt generally that the inner city of Johannesburg was in 'decline'. This decline was rather simplistically attributed to the flight of capital from the inner core. The work of the CJP

became to initiate the concept of business improvement (BIDS) districts in the Inner City. Until 1998 most of the inner city fell within the jurisdiction of the Southern Metropolitan Local Council (SMLC), one of the four local councils that fell under the GJTMC. However, some neighbourhoods such as Yeoville were in the jurisdiction of the Eastern Metropolitan Local Council (EMLC). It was in 1998 that an Inner City Office was established to deal specifically with the inimitable problems recognizable in the inner city. Gotz and Wooldridge (2000) describe the tasks of the Inner City Office in the City of Johannesburg as 'an obvious management tool to implement and monitor newly formulated Inner City Development Strategy' (2000: 2).

So, although Yeoville was under the authority of the EMLC it became functionally a responsibility of the Inner City Office. It was geographically defined as part of the Johannesburg inner city but was not perceived to be one of the poorest, highest density settlements or most dangerous parts of the city and perhaps, for that reason, Yeoville, by default, did not become a priority locality for the Inner City Manager's Office. The significance of the investment by the City of Johannesburg in the inner city was that it held implications for the relationship between associational life, social capital and institutional performance. Yeoville residents did not have to struggle to access additional local government resources for their neighbourhood. In fact, the investment of financial and human resources in the inner city was a consequence of a broader political and economic agenda. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002) have argued that local government was more responsive to private sector or business initiatives than it was to residents of the inner city. The suggestion here is that power and influence and perhaps the social capital of business interests was greater than that of residents.

The focus on the inner city as a geographical region of interest for local government was both because of, and coincided with, substantive changes in neighbourhoods themselves during the 1990s, when dramatic adjustments were afoot. Whilst the conflict between landlords and tenants was taken up by activist groups and NGOs in the early-1990s, it faded from public attention during the late 1990s. This was largely because exploitation by landlords increasingly afflicted mainly foreign residents instead of locals and was therefore less visible and of less concern to politically engaged South Africans. It also became less of a political issue with the scrapping of apartheid legislation which included the demise of the Group Areas Act. It was at this point, from

the 1990s, that Yeoville saw an influx of both former township residents and foreigners (both legal and illegal) from the 1990s.<sup>101</sup>

The population of Yeoville from the 1990s was a much more mobile one and was predominantly tenant-based. This transient population contained differentiated income groups ranging from wealthy homeowners, to poor and unemployed tenants. There were older and more stable groups of residents including pensioners who had lived in the area for decades. There were the young professionals and students who historically had been drawn to the area because of its proximity to schools and tertiary education institutions and then there was a large and growing African migrant population, the demographic specifics of which were largely unknown to local residents and urban planners and managers alike.

From the mid-1990s, therefore, Yeoville was confronted with a range of issues it had not experienced before. Prior to this point, community concerns were manageable enough to be confronted directly, and, in a place like Yeoville sometimes on an individual basis. This scenario changed as the nature of life in Yeoville became more complex. The escalation of urban decay coupled with urbanisation and growing crime made the landscape far more complicated.

Furthermore, landlord/tenant relationships were tempered by the fact that many tenants were illegal residents in South Africa and therefore had no recourse to institutional assistance. Unscrupulous landlords who had reaped the benefits of apartheid legislation by exploiting Black residents, now exploited illegal immigrant tenants. Such residents often needed to remain anonymous and imperceptible and were thus not willing to raise issues with public authorities or even neighbours. These changing realities of life in Yeoville stood to undermine existing stocks and minimise the possibility of generating over-arching and inclusive locality-based stocks of social capital.

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<sup>101</sup> Harris (2001b: 11) suggests a categorization of foreigners that was appropriate for Johannesburg. These categories are: refugees, migrants and immigrants. These are helpful and are also useful in this thesis.

## **Associational Life in Yeoville**

Yeoville had been an integrated community since the 1980s and racial tensions had not been in evidence among its residents. However the rapidity of change was accompanied by a lack of tolerance towards foreign immigrants (Harris 2001b; Morris, 1998, 1999a, 1999b). Yeoville became characterised by broad-based distrust between local and foreign residents coupled with high levels of xenophobia. Unlike urban townships, residents in Yeoville had little history of cohesive collective action and because residents did not cohere as a group, they participated to varying degrees in locality based civic life. The social networks that existed differed both amongst locals and between the locals and immigrant populations. On the whole, local associations in Yeoville (including the CPF and CDF) had no structured relationship with the international population. A local activist commented that the foreign African networks were very separate from local networks and while there were interactions, they were interpersonal or informal rather than formal. Further to that, he argued, foreign African migrants did not see themselves as part of the broader Yeoville community.

It can be seen from the above, therefore, that associational life in Yeoville differed tremendously from that in Old Dobsonville. Whereas in Old Dobsonville, where a pooled background of removals and resettlement, shared concerns and long standing associations had had an historic place in the lives of residents, this was not the case in Yeoville. A locality in flux, its associations reflected the transitions within the area more generally. In many cases, organisations emerged in response to the perceived needs in the area. These often differed substantially. The following section outlines the key organisations and associations that were present in Yeoville from the 1990s.<sup>102</sup> It explores the ties between local government and local organisations and explores the extent to which social capital had any role in the building of these associations.

The ANC Yeoville branch played a significant role in representing and initiating community issues. It chose to tackle a range of local issues ranging from landlord-tenant relationships to job creation. However, it was not alone in its pursuits. In 1995, the Yeoville Community Development Forum (CDF) was established to deal with local

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<sup>102</sup> At this point, the YRO had fizzled out. This was because the broader ANC began to take on these issues post 1990. Many of the YRO moved on to the ANC as it was no longer banned.

community issues. Its lifespan however was short and it appeared not to have played a very constructive role, given that the key issues of concern for Yeoville residents, those of crime and grime, were not being addressed through these organisations. Further, the Rockey Raleigh Management Committee was established in an attempt to position Yeoville as a BID along the lines being promoted more widely across the inner city. But these organisations appeared to be swimming against an enormously strong demographic tide that rendered their attempts at community building ephemeral. Moreover, running parallel to these developments was the establishment of either identity-based or survivalist-based associations including church groups and burial societies that were more inward looking. These associations were not concerned with Yeoville as a place, but dealt more directly with the concerns of their members, to assist operate and survive in an unfamiliar environment with little by way of exogenous support. The operations and intent of these associations therefore, differed vastly from those concerned with the issues facing Yeoville and it appeared that there was little overlap in membership.

### **The African National Congress (ANC) in Yeoville**

The ANC in Yeoville served as a powerful local presence from the 1990s onwards. In this period, the ANC branch in Yeoville was a strong organisation, peaking at roughly 1200 members in 1993. Given the progressive nature of most Yeoville residents, its membership captured wealthy homeowners, students, political activists and workers across the racial divide. Ahead of the historic 1994 elections, the branch launched a massive recruitment strategy. Its manifesto also reflected more than national issues and it spoke to community issues including problematic landlord-tenant relationships.

In the aftermath of its local government election victory, the ANC Yeoville spearheaded a range of activities including the integration of schools, addressing the plight of domestic workers, the ‘bad buildings’<sup>103</sup> problems and issues regarding the location of informal traders. Even at this juncture, crime and grime were also considered to be issues of concern in the neighbourhood although this focus was to grow dramatically as the decade progressed.

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<sup>103</sup> The term ‘bad buildings’ refers to those buildings in a poor state of maintenance. They are invariably those with absentee landlords and minimal levels of service.



Post-elections and an ANC local victory in the 1995 local government elections, residents became less engaged in political life. Some of the most active residents left Yeoville. Some went into Parliament or government and moved to Pretoria and Cape Town and many had far less time to work with community issues. Nevertheless, the ANC in Yeoville continued to engage with community issues. The branch also prioritised working with traders, tackling directly the unhygienic conditions which informal traders were expected to survive. For example, schemes were introduced to assist traders through the provision of brooms for their sites. In the latter years of the 1990s, the ANC also had projects to assist local youth through job creation schemes. Attempts at community spirit were also garnered through other means including developing relationships with local musicians and artists. But the ANC branch in Yeoville suffered a similar fate to many other organisations in the area. Residents displayed increasing apathy towards involvement in their projects. Reasons for this will be taken up at the end of the chapter.

### **Burial Societies – the Pull of Place**

It was the absence of formal and political organisations that probably prompted the strong sentiment among local South African residents interviewed in Yeoville that there was no sense of community in the area from the 1990s. This was dramatically different from the historic perceptions of Yeoville as a place with a tight-knit local identity. However, Yeoville also did not have or develop the kinds of traditional forms of urban associational life such as stokvels and burial societies. Furthermore, sports clubs and youth clubs were in short supply. Interestingly, Yeoville residents were members of burial societies and stokvels, but they were not Yeoville-based. Instead, they were linked to the place from which a resident originally came. This was radically different from residents in Old Dobsonville whose organisational identity was strongly place-based and served to reinforce the set of constraints that undermined the preservation and formation of social capital in Yeoville.

A Yeoville resident commented:

No, we do not belong to societies here – it's just that our societies are those we belong to in our hometowns. Some of us have grouped ourselves as Durbanites and the society covers our people back home. But now these Durbanites, and so on, and so on, they meet in the townships and not here. Here in Yeoville we are segregated. If we want the group community feeling, we go to our society in the township. (Progressus Report, 2000: 25)

A Yeoville resident hailing from the Northern Province,<sup>104</sup> now called Limpopo, explained how she was a member of a burial society based in Savoy<sup>105</sup>, Johannesburg. This burial society catered for people coming to Johannesburg from Polokwane, which until recently was known as Pietersburg, and had a membership of about 200 people.

From home, it is the people from home. We just submit every month. There are so many people. We are doing that for – like a burial society. If I die now, you have to take me home. You know my mother, she was going to the same society when she was in Joburg that is why I know it. I go mainly because of her. (Candy)

She explained the process further:

Every month it costs R5.<sup>106</sup> You know everyone is a member. If maybe, just like now, I am near someone and he is getting sick, it is me who must go and report it to the society. Cos I know him and they bring everything to me. And if he is dead I have to phone them, I have to phone another five. These five will help me to phone other people. (Candy)

This sort of arrangement was found to be commonplace amongst other residents in Yeoville as well. In fact, it was also a system used by immigrant residents such as the Ivorians. The Ivorian society explained that they met together and assisted each other. The Ivorian Society provided financial assistance if someone in Ivory Coast required assistance with funeral costs. They celebrated social events such as weddings and births.

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<sup>104</sup> South Africa has nine provinces. Northern Province is a province in the northern part of the country. Polokwane is the provincial capital.

<sup>105</sup> Savoy is a neighbourhood in Johannesburg.

<sup>106</sup> R5 was equivalent to roughly 34 pence in 2002.

A Nigerian resident of Yeoville spoke of this type of assistance too but made the point that help was limited to certain types of need. For instance:

Being arrested means contacting brothers who would make a plan. When can you rely on help? Only with serious issues such as bad health or a death in which case people get together and assist with cash. But in other situations you are on your own. (Sonny)

These organisations suggest the strength and inclusivity of identity-based social capital. These identity-based organisations mirror those of immigrant and refugee communities all over the world and can be understood as a consequence of their isolated state as unassimilated newcomers. Immigrant/refugee populations in Yeoville, as mentioned above, also established burial societies to ensure that members were transported back 'home' in case of poor health or death, suggesting a limited commitment to their place of residence. These community organisations also reinforced a strong sense of national identity.

Again, this seemed dependent on the nature of the community and was not generalisable, but the Ivorian community, for example, fostered a strong identity and were tightly organised with an Ivorian Society that hosted and facilitated exclusive interaction. The Congolese informants however asserted that they had no exclusive associations in the community and no support group although Katanga (2000:2) argued that the church provides assistance for Congolese residents in difficulty. Interestingly, in the focus group, the Congolese viewed South African institutions as critical to their well-being. The Nigerian community was divided into Ibo and Yoruba residents, their organisations replicating the ethnic divide present in Nigeria. A Nigerian resident explained the conception of the Yoruba Association of South Africa as follows:

Basically, we the Yoruba are not moving. It is only the Ibos that are moving and that is because they do things together. When an Ibo comes to the country, they help each other, they are united. We are not united but we are more clever, more learned than them. How can they take everything over from us? So we say now, lets unite ourselves. When our people when they get arrested they don't take two three days to come out. They might even be there for years because there is nobody to help them. So that is why you will find people around us. When you don't have money there is nobody to help you, nobody to advise you, nobody to give you ideas. (Dan)

This section has highlighted the distinctions and frameworks constructed to govern associational life amongst foreign communities in Yeoville. These distinctions serve to consolidate further the discrete pockets of social capital available to different groups. It also demonstrates how differences cannot be escaped in new settings and how differentiation is so difficult to overcome.

## **Church Groups**

The role played by the churches in Yeoville amongst immigrant communities was interesting. Religious organisations had a strong presence but also serviced directly the needs of particular groups of residents. Immigrant residents involved in no other community organisations invariably attended a church. A Nigerian resident engaged in illegal telephone tapping commented: 'I am part of the church that is the only place. I participate in a church group. Everyone in Nigeria takes religion seriously. Forget about our moneymaking but we fear God and we believe God provides for us' (Dan). A Ghanaian resident, who was involved in the generation of fake identity documents, minerals, credit card and fake money commented in an interview 'I enjoy going to church on Sunday but I don't join the choirs' (Jo).

These church groups were not restricted to the conventional mainstream churches that existed in Yeoville but included churches that were transported by their membership from various parts of the continent, for example, churches with a primary base in Angola and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Revivalist churches also had a strong presence. Some were even privately-run through self-appointed pastors. Religion was also a means of unification for nation-based identities. A local minister in Yeoville explained that local churches have responded to the presence of foreign congregants by integrating church practices from other countries into his service. As an example he explained:

We use African instruments for our worship called marimba. So again, that is something that people like because there is something African about it. It gives them meaning and reminds them of their African-ness. (Pule)

But whilst the activities and community offered through churches was important for many Yeoville residents, local activists complained that these churches played no role

in broader community-based activities. In terms of actual participation, they were considered absent and non-participative although in reality churches were responsible for many critical activities in Yeoville such as running soup kitchens and luncheon clubs and some participated actively in the Inner City Forum. Further to that, whilst churches may not have participated directly in community based initiatives such as the CDF and CPF, they played a critical supporting role for a component of the population who did not have access to other types of assistance and any form of associations where they felt welcome or at ease.

### **Community Development Forums**

As described above, associational life in Yeoville was disparate and reflective of its population and in many ways exclusive. In terms of community-based organisations, activities seemed sporadic and inconsistent. From 1994, Yeoville's organised and formalised associational life had mainly been configured through the Yeoville Community Development Forum (YCDF) (established in 1994) and the Yeoville Community Police Forum (YCPF) (established in 1995).

Interestingly, both initiatives were originally the inspiration of national government. The YCDF was officially launched on 8 April 1995 (*North Eastern Tribune*, April 4, 1995). The organisation became defunct in mid-1997 and was re-launched in 1998 (Simmonds, 1998). The YCDF was organised in such a way that each organisation in Yeoville wishing to be represented sent a representative. This ensured that the executive of the CDF was held accountable to residents. However, this CDF did not last. In 1998 the CDF was reconstructed with the assistance of a group of interested Yeoville residents. Again, the CDF had problems maintaining its presence in Yeoville. A local activist explained it as such:

I mean this is a strange suburb. If you sit around here there is a whole bunch of people here who will sit and talk about Yeoville and talk about doing things but just won't get involved. Don't get involved in the ANC. I would say if you went here and spoke to all the South Africans who are sitting around today you will see that most of them belong to the ANC. But they don't get involved in the branch. (Manuel)

Other residents implied that the failing of the YCDF could in part be attributed to the high turnover of executive members and problematic leadership.

For most Yeoville residents who were not involved in the YCDF and other organisations, the notion of the CDF was an unfamiliar one. Foreign residents were not engaged in these forums for the reasons cited above, such as the need for invisibility or because of feelings of alienation and the xenophobic persecution they experienced. Moreover, for many foreign residents, Yeoville was an interim place of residence and they were not compelled to invest in the place in any way. They felt no connection to the area, or South Africa for that matter, and did not consider engaging with the state or other associations as important. This was the overarching position of residents interviewed as well as that of focus group participants. There was at the same time however the opinion amongst some Yeoville residents that Yeoville still has a strong local identity base. Perhaps this represents the difference between those residents who have lived in the area for a fairly long period of time versus new residents.

However, even amongst some of the residents who have lived in Yeoville for more than five years, the position was held that whilst there was a sense of community in the area at one point, it had certainly dissolved in the last five years. This was seen as a consequence of a combination of a rapid urbanization process coupled with the relocation of active components of the population. Amongst more long-term residents of Yeoville, a pervasive representation of community in Yeoville also had a visible Jewish community who have subsequently relocated, diminishing feelings of community among longer-term residents of Yeoville. The knowledge that there was a fixed community residing in the neighbourhood seemed to bring some comfort to other residents.

Even though the activities of the CDF were patchy, the mandatory report-back meetings held by the local councillor persisted. The most 'direct' structured interaction between the Yeoville community and local government was through the mandatory meetings of the councillor that are held every two months or more frequently, depending on the issues. The attendance at these meetings was also poor. The councillor noted that the people that attend these meetings are a) those that wish to complain b) those genuinely interested in the area c) Community Development Forum

and Community Policing Forum members, d) local ANC activists, e) some pensioners and f) property owners. There was a limited presence of foreign immigrants at these meetings. Even the most accessible and structured form of engagement between residents and local government was not utilised by most residents for articulating grievances. Collective action from 1995 was pursued on a sporadic and unsustained basis. Local government as a domain of influence was marginal for many Yeoville residents, even once services and other matters within the remit of local governance became issues. The marginal presence of local government puts further into question the likelihood of a constructive relationship between social capital and government performance. It also highlights how formal institutions are not necessarily the prevailing channel through which to secure access to resources.

### **Rockey/Raleigh Management Committee**

Whilst the YCDF was essentially moribund, another community initiative was started, the Rockey/Raleigh Management Committee established in February 1999 (Marais, 2000). The Rockey/Raleigh Management Committee (comprising largely long-term Yeoville activists) worked on turning Yeoville into a Business Improvement District (BID). Their strategy was to launch a local economic development project called Yeoville 2000 that would bring economic growth to the area. The Committee endeavoured to tackle seven issues: Criminal Law Enforcement, By-Law Enforcement, Tourism, Project Management, Safety and Security, Urban Upgrading and the launch of Yeoville as a City Improvement District (Marais, 2000).

Much like the work of YCDF and YCPF, the organisers of this effort were actively pursuing a strategy aimed at developing partnerships with local government. Politically active members of the Yeoville community, unlike other residents, had limited faith in the responsiveness of local government to their plights. But, as in the case of the YCDF and YCPF, the efforts largely seemed to be the initiative of a core group of volunteers. The same volunteers were involved in this strategy as in the YCDF and YCPF. The process was not an easy one and a range of problems confronted participants. One huge problem was the saturation point reached by business people in the neighbourhood regarding upgrading strategies. There had been numerous strategies (such as the Hells Angels, YCDF and YCPF) pursued in Yeoville prior to this initiative to attempt to

combat crime and grime. In real terms, the success of the project depended on the support, financial and otherwise, of local business.

Marais reported that because many of the business operations in Yeoville were small businesses, owners battled to finance such programmes. When this floundered, the core group instigated a programme that involved purchasing buildings in Yeoville to prevent further urban decay and deterioration. Two key buildings that were purchased through this initiative were the Piccadilly Centre and the Bizarre Centre (both of these buildings were used to accommodate shops, clubs, restaurants and art galleries). The Bizarre Centre had a consortium of owners (Marais, 2000). The key mastermind explained it as follows:

I just emailed a whole bunch of people when it became available and said lets buy this building and the price that it was going for which was a bit over priced but it was because we were wanting to make sure we got it, was R255 000 and because of that we were able to buy it for cash because we got people in the community to pay for it and make contributions. So people contributed between a R1000 and R10 000 and we raised the whole lot. So we own the building now.  
(Manuel)

What made the experience unique was that many of the investors no longer resided in Yeoville. Instead, they had at one time been residents of Yeoville and remained bound to it and had a 'soft spot for the place'. This form of interaction between existing and former Yeoville residents was ongoing through an email chat group. The email group covered topics ranging from advertisements for bridge playing partners, to homes for rent to updated lists of community activities. Thus this email list created a virtual sense of community among people who were not strictly locality bound. It was social relations that formed the basis for this initiative and provided the impetus for the collective action.

This phenomenon parallels other above mentioned organisations that were also identity based. Except that in this instance, identity was aligned to locality, even if not always a current place of residence. The Rockey/Raleigh Management Committee saw this as a successful example of community engagement with the local council, individuals who were contributing to Yeoville's regeneration initiatives were often contributing as a consequence of a loyalty to the locality. This is interesting because it raises questions as



to whether or not social capital existing among virtual communities can translate into bridging social capital that engages local government in a particular locality and on a sustainable basis.

### **A Synergy of Sorts: The Rockey Street Market**

Amidst the rather piecemeal community organisations in the neighbourhood, emerged the Yeoville Traders' Association. This has to be understood within the context of the controversy over the Yeoville Market. The Yeoville Market was a project conceptualised by the Inner City Office, a specialist office in the City of Johannesburg. The Inner City Office was officially established in April 1998 specially to beat the decline in the urban environment (Gotz and Wooldridge, 2000: 2).

The Yeoville market has been extensively written about in the South African literature but remains interesting here because it was a significant interlocutor in the relationship between civil society and local government in an inner city neighbourhood (Gotz and Wooldridge, 2000; Gotz and Simone, 2003). It also represented a locality-based initiative that encouraged interaction between local residents and traders in Yeoville. The primary objective of the market was to deal with the burgeoning number of street traders operating informally in the inner city, that is, to confront the problem of informal traders in Johannesburg by integrating informal traders into formal city processes (Gotz and Wooldridge, 2000: 16). The scheme was a component of the regeneration initiative undertaken by the Inner City Manager's Office. It also generated a link between local government and civil society in Yeoville and created a relationship between immigrant/refugee informal traders and local traders. This was surprising given the hostility between them, in a context where foreign African traders provided unwelcome competition and were often the victims of physical threats from local traders (Prabhakaran and Siqoko, 1997; Pana, 1997).

The objectives of the Yeoville Market were captured as follows:

In Yeoville, the streets cannot realistically be 'tidied up' until there are well sited alternative spaces into which hawkers can move [...] The immediate issue is to match the introduction of street trading regulations and their enforcement – now underway – with a developmental programme that contains as many solutions to the problems of Yeoville as possible. Amongst other things, it has to provide the necessary legitimate and commercially positive spaces that can both absorb the present street traders whilst encouraging and enabling them to achieve a far greater diversity of trade than they engage in at present (cited in Gotz and Wooldridge, 2000: 20).

The Yeoville Market provided formal accommodation and encouraged formalised practices for informal trading. For traders this meant renting a site and relocating from the streets into a formal physical structure. In reality, this Yeoville Market was not well received by traders who complained that their profits were down and their rents were too high. In fact, there was a display of dissatisfaction exercised by the Traders on the weekend before the official opening of the market (Gotz and Simone, 2003). The decline in profits and increased rent affected both foreign and local traders. Henceforth they were collectively involved in objections to the market, the catalyst was the decline in economic capital.

According to traders interviewed, a management committee, called the Yeoville Traders' Association, was established to negotiate rents. This, in a neighbourhood typified by little interaction between local and foreign residents, was significant for discussions regarding collective action. Because much ongoing discontent has surrounded the market since its inception, an increasingly negative attitude towards the Inner City Office has accompanied this controversy. Given that the rent issue was not resolved, traders took to selling in the market during work hours, thereafter moving back onto the streets in order to capture the rush hour business. Traders complained that increased crime had had a negative impact on their business. But what the Yeoville Market did do, was to serve as a bonding mechanism among trading groups and provide for the flow of information between local residents and the City of Johannesburg.

## **4.5 SUMMARY**

This analysis of associational life and local government in Yeoville suggests that, unlike Old Dobsonville, the relationship between social capital, associational life and institutional performance is different and that the forms of social capital that have emerged result from a different local history and spatial context. Although the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery has recently slipped in Yeoville, the locality did not suffer the affliction of an antagonistic relationship between residents and local government over service delivery.

Unlike Old Dobsonville where residents historically have felt hostile towards local government as an institution, Yeoville residents instead displayed a combination of disengagement, dissatisfaction and satisfaction with local government. New residents expressed little interest in local government as an institution and many were satisfied by the services they received. Their focus was primarily on surviving in a hostile, and for many, an interim inner city environment. More established residents wished to 'save' Yeoville from urban disintegration and were deeply dissatisfied with the performance of local government in this endeavour.

Opportunities to participate in partnership arrangements between local government and residents were seized upon by those residents already engaged in political and social life in the neighbourhood. A form of bridging social capital was apparent amongst these groups as the aspiration was for an operational relationship between various organisations and local government. Whilst this existed on a small scale, it co-existed with stocks of bonding social capital found in discrete pockets. This bonding social capital was not available to all residents nor was it necessarily available as a tool for collective action.

## **4.6 CONCLUSION**

This Chapter has served two purposes. Firstly, it has justified the rationale for the choice of location and research methodology used in investigating the two case study sites. Secondly, it has broadly outlined the nature of institutional and associational life in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville. The broad description of the case study sites and the

history of associational life within them raises questions regarding the relationship between associational organisations, social capital and institutional performance.

The chapter points to the significance that perceptions of government play in informing the quality of engagement between state and society. Part A, dealing with Old Dobsonville suggests that perceptions and opinions regarding local government have changed dramatically since 1956. These changing opinions have coexisted with, and been the result of, a range of factors including political struggle and declining service delivery. As outlined in Part B in the case of Yeoville, unlike Old Dobsonville, local government historically was not considered untrustworthy because it had delivered excellent services. Furthermore, following the 1994 elections, the importance of local government as a focus of collective action in the area diminished. For most residents, a local institutional presence was not considered helpful or important. This has made subsequent mobilisation amongst residents extremely difficult.

Whilst in Old Dobsonville there was a history of locality based associational life, in Yeoville, due to the fluctuation in residents, the history of associational life is more complex and rather than locality, it is identity-based social capital that predominates. This is manifest in associational life becoming more ethnically and nationally discrete and exclusionary and therefore not uniformly accessible to all residents. This chapter begins to unpack the types of social capital present in both case study sites and the implications this has for both areas.

In Chapter Five and Chapter Six, the specifics of the two urban services being investigated will be discussed in some detail, within the context of each case study site. Using the findings outlined in Chapter Four, the aim is to determine whether or not the type of service is a determinant when testing Putnam's suggested linear arrangement between associational life, social capital and institutional performance.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CASE OF OLD DOBSONVILLE<sup>107</sup>

Chapter Five analyses two urban services in Old Dobsonville, a neighbourhood in the formal township of Soweto,<sup>108</sup> in Johannesburg. The chapter focuses on the issues of solid waste management (SWM) and public safety in Old Dobsonville<sup>109</sup> and investigates further the relationship between social capital and institutional performance on the part of local government. Findings are based on a combination of secondary and primary data collected during the period October 2000 and August 2001.

Chapter Four located the history of Old Dobsonville within the broader context of Soweto and addressed the significance of its unique experiences, challenging the historical treatment of social capital by Putnam (1993) and others who followed in his wake. This chapter analyses the response and interplay between the City of Johannesburg and Old Dobsonville residents regarding institutional performance as represented through SWM and public safety arrangements albeit that the same overall potential for social capital exists in Old Dobsonville regardless of the service.

These services, in particular, were selected because they represent two different sets of priorities for Old Dobsonville residents, even though both services have evolved historically along particular trajectories generated as a consequence of apartheid policies. The chapter is divided into two sections, each discussing one of the two service issues. The first section of the chapter describes how SWM as an urban service has been dealt with in Old Dobsonville. It traces the institutional, political and social determinants that shaped the evolution of SWM and the relationship to social capital. Section two analyses public safety in Old Dobsonville from the 1950s until 2002. It seeks to establish how public safety was managed in times of great institutional, political and social change. Both sections will reveal how different forms of social

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<sup>107</sup> Due to the sensitive nature of some of the material in this thesis, the names of the interview respondents have been omitted for reasons of confidentiality.

<sup>108</sup> Soweto is the acronym for South Western Townships.

<sup>109</sup> Old Dobsonville was specifically selected as a case study site because it was an original site of formal housing in the 1950s. Since then, there have been a number of extensions and an informal settlement has also developed.

capital emerge around and represent each service – a critical consideration for the broader social capital debate.

## **5.1 WASTE: COLLECTIVE GOOD WITH BAD PUBLICITY?**

Chapter Four constructed a history of local government and associational life in Old Dobsonville from 1956. It argued that the relationship between associational life and good institutional performance was not a linear one attributable only to social capital. It demonstrated, instead, that the evolving context in Old Dobsonville was a critical factor in framing collective action and endeavours for improved government performance. Enmeshed within this local context were the various stocks of social capital articulated in different forms. Empirical evidence indicated that there were different triggers for collective action in Old Dobsonville. Inadequate urban service delivery was one and an intensifying political struggle was another. Poor SWM was not a mobilising catalyst in its own right, actually it was through its conflation with urban services in general and the fight against apartheid local government that SWM needs were articulated in the 1980s.

SWM was selected as a service worth investigating because it is a collective service and one that has positive collective externalities (Pargal, Huq and Gilligan, 1999: 1). SWM as a service falls into the public domain and the effectiveness of the service requires a delicate balance between the service delivery agent and the locality being serviced. SWM, however, is not only a ‘service’ but is also a normative issue capturing, to some extent, the neighbourliness within a locality and it is because of this that social capital is an important consideration.

Poor SWM in developing country cities is an unmistakeable gauge of the adequacy of local institutions in dealing with rapid urbanisation (Onibokun, 1999: 3; Sudhir, Muraleedharan and Srinivasan 1996: 164)). Although relatively well resourced and serviced, Johannesburg has had a similar experience to other African cities and the crisis of the service was augmented by the legacy of apartheid inequalities. The history of SWM in Dobsonville, as with other formal black townships, was indicative of the flagrant inequalities in service delivery in Johannesburg. Of the 500,000 collection sites under the jurisdiction of the City of Johannesburg, almost all were found in well

developed areas (Swilling and Hutt, 1999: 199).<sup>110</sup> Prior to the amalgamation of local authorities in Johannesburg (as described in Chapter Three and Four), the Dobsonville Council waste department provided a twice-weekly service for Dobsonville residents but with little street cleaning assistance (Swilling and Hutt, 1999: 197).

An attitudinal study on service priorities undertaken by the management consulting group Monitor (2000a, b) in the Greater Johannesburg area (as part of the Medium Term Development Plan), *Igoli 2002*, indicated that out of 25 categories of concern, communal litter emerged at number six and refuse removal at number 14 overall (Monitor, 2000b: 14). In Soweto, specifically high levels of dissatisfaction with the service were not recorded (Monitor, 2000b: 27). Nevertheless, Soweto clearly has a prodigious SWM problem. SWM was never a high priority in Dobsonville compared to public safety which was a pervasive concern from the 1960s. Important, however, is that the approaches and state of SWM in Dobsonville reflect the complexities and evolution of local government administration in terms of service delivery priorities since the apartheid era. These were discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

The following tables give an indication of the state of solid waste as a service in 1996.

**Table 5.1 Refuse Removal for Weighted Households in Dobsonville**

Regularity of Refuse Removal	Number of Households Collected	Percentage
Removed by local authority at least weekly	17362	90.1
Removed by local authority less often	785	4
Communal refuse dump	183	0.1
Own refuse dump	368	1.91
No rubbish disposal	168	0.87
Other	0	0
Unspecified/dummy	383	1.99
<b>Total</b>	<b>19249</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa 1996, Census 1996. Household Services.

<sup>110</sup> Meikle's chapter 'The Urban Context and Poor People' in *Urban Livelihoods: A People-Centred Approach to Reducing Poverty* makes the point that poor households often live in environmentally inappropriate locations with proximity to solid waste dumps and other hazardous aspects (Meikle, 2002: 40). This was certainly the case in Soweto too.

**Table 5.2 Refuse Removal for Weighted Households in Dobsonville, Yeoville and Johannesburg.**

	<b>Johannesburg</b>	<b>Dobsonville</b>	<b>Yeoville</b>
Removed by local authority at least weekly	86.4	90.1	96.5
Removed by local authority less often	5.6	4	1.17
Communal refuse dump	1.76	0.1	0.17
Own refuse dump	2.5	1.91	0.1
No rubbish disposal	1.3	.87	0
Other	0.15	0	0
Unspecified/dummy	2.19	1.99	2.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa 1996, Census 1996. Household Services

The above two tables demonstrate the level of servicing in Old Dobsonville. As might be anticipated, given its status as a formal urban township, Old Dobsonville was better serviced overall than the City of Johannesburg, which included informal settlements with minimal service delivery levels. It was, though, also less well serviced than the former White suburb of Yeoville. Subsumed within the formal service delivery statistics however are a range of qualitative dynamics that illustrate how SWM is about more than service delivery levels. It is also about political struggle, the connection to locality, community cohesiveness and managing the urban environment.

The relationship between SWM, residents and the local state in Johannesburg has reflected largely the state of the political terrain at any given time. As a service, it was never considered crucial to the residents of Dobsonville. Instead, organising around SWM was historically conflated with broader political struggles. In the aftermath of those struggles, SWM was relegated to a domain of little importance. It is contended here that the weighting in significance of urban services in each locality speaks to the maneuverability of social capital as well as the possibility of the emergence of magnetic social capital.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Magnetic social capital is defined in Chapter Two on Page 70.



### **‘Dobsonville is the Cleanest Township in Soweto’**

There was little information available pertaining to SWM prior to the rent and service boycotts in the 1980s. A paltry stock of secondary literature existed and even information regarding the 1980s was limited. It was therefore necessary to draw on oral histories to piece together the nature of the service in Dobsonville. Civic memory among Dobsonville residents suggests that Dobsonville, in the early years, was viewed as the cleanest township in Soweto. Older residents remarked:

In the old days our service was very good. They (the municipality) were trying to clean the place.... And the inspectors used to come to the yard to see if you have cleaned or if you did not clean. And if you did not clean, they would come and lecture you. Give you a lecture about the environment and it must be clean. (Fikile)

This was a recollection shared by municipal workers. A street cleaner who worked in waste during the 1970s agreed:

In the 1970s Dobsonville was the cleanest place. Everybody took out their garbage. There were 85 litre bins and refuse was collected twice per week. (Joy)

As with other municipal services, when the WRAB took over the administration of Dobsonville, services deteriorated dramatically. Mandy commented that ‘services such as sewerage, electricity, refuse removal and roads deteriorated under the Board’s inept rule’ (Mandy, 1984: 196). As suggested in Chapter Four, this relapse did not immediately incite a community response. It was only once garbage collection was tied to broader service delivery and political issues that residents responded to poor SWM. Ashforth argues that the concept that the community might organise to maintain public space and the urban environment was alien to most residents at this time.<sup>112</sup>

From the 19800 onwards, SWM as a community issue was much more in evidence. Collective action regarding SWM was conflated with more general political mobilisation around local government service delivery and rent boycotts (Cherry, Jones and Seekings, 2000: 890). Symbolically, more than that though, waste constituted a

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<sup>112</sup> Personal communication with Professor Ashforth, 19 April 2002.

visual display of collective defiance against the BLAs.<sup>113</sup> The rent boycott began in Soweto in 1986 in the suburbs of Chiawelo Extension 3, Naledi Extension 2 and Jabulani (Planact, 1990: 23). Through the SCA, the rent boycott spread throughout Soweto in 1986, including Dobsonville. This meant residents were not paying for their services, thereby inflicting a massive financial burden on the BLAs.

Although refuse removal, allegedly, was still being undertaken by the Council, Soweto was by no means clean. There was still litter on open plots of land and street corners (Planact, 1990: 52). Illegal dumping was encouraged as a means of demonstrating resistance to BLAs but was restricted to public spaces. Dumping in your neighbour's bin was prohibited, demonstrating the division between collective political action and community cohesiveness.

A combination of these ingredients culminated in a cavalier stance towards the environment. Concern for the environment in Greater Soweto was obfuscated by disparate realities. The temporary urban condition of residents, and appreciation by residents that they were not considered to be permanently based in townships, meant diminished responsibility for the urban environment. Ashforth further contended that 'the history of urban settlements created a profound dependence upon government provision of services coupled with a highly authoritarian administration of them in a context of a fundamental alienation from urban space.'<sup>114</sup> It was not uncommon for residents to take domestic waste to any dumping site. Furthermore, the original 'matchbox houses' were not well insulated and in many instances residents did not have access to electricity. Wood stoves were used for cooking and warming purposes and resulted in air pollution as well as ash in the waste. Streets were also not tarred and sealed. Hence, waste trucks would come to collect rubbish and generate further dust from unpaved roads.

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<sup>113</sup> The history of the rent and service boycotts has been outlined in Chapter Three and in Chapter Four.

<sup>114</sup> Personal communication with Professor Ashforth, 19 April 2002.

Public disposal sites were often in close proximity to houses and had dangerous health effects.

Of particular risk are those encouraged through fly breeding in rotting refuse. Rat breeding is also likely to increase which, in turn, will result in risks of outbreaks of rat-borne or promoted disease. Other hazards emanating from uncollected refuse are an increased fire risk, pollution of water and intoxication and injuries. Children are particularly susceptible to the latter. (Planact: 1990: 56)

Thus, whilst household collection was visible, it became increasingly irregular. Regardless, residents continued to dump on street corners in full knowledge that the waste would remain uncollected. These actions were not, however, the consequence of poor 'neighbourliness' but was instead the response of residents to a political struggle and an absent local government. With the expansion in the number of backyard shacks,<sup>115</sup> resident's yards became too small for the amount of waste accumulating. Rather than keeping waste until the collection day, residents dumped waste beyond their homes. Even when faced by the realities of burgeoning urbanisation, local government ignored overcrowding and the expanding service needs of the population. For instance, in the 1970s and 1980s, 85 litre bins were provided per household per site and refuse was collected once a week regardless of the growing number of dwellings per site.

The overarching experience of SWM was a complex one representing well the difficulties of urban township life. As the state of the urban environment became increasingly hostile, the feeling of disengagement from public space and formal institutions by residents meant there was a limited response from residents. This was exacerbated once the political imperative for involvement in SWM diminished.

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<sup>115</sup> Backyard shacks erupted in Soweto to house new residents. The state failed to provide formal housing for African urban residents because of their policy that African workers were only temporary sojourners in urban areas. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell also state that there was no SWM provision made for backyard tenants (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002: 164).

## Environment Overshadowed

The civic memory of residents over the involvement in SWM in Old Dobsonville in the 1980s was differentiated and varied among the interviewees. Although Old Dobsonville, like the rest of Soweto, was not a hotbed of environmental activity in the 1980s, it was home to the Soweto-based environmental organisation the National Environmental Action Committee (henceforth NEAC), which was formed in 1976. NEAC was established in the aftermath of the Soweto Uprising in response to deteriorating service standards and heightened filth in public spaces (*Sowetan*, 12 June 1986). The organisation aspired to educate people regarding the environment. Environmentalists interviewed argued that during the time of apartheid and poor urban services, people wanted to see the environment clean even though evidence suggests that in fact the majority of residents did not prioritise waste management at all.

There were pockets of residents who were interested at the time. NEAC organised workshops, seminars and educational discussions. It was also a means of organising young people at a time of heightened political activity and school drop out among adolescents in Soweto. A Dobsonville environmentalist argued 'Youth would go out and do things for the community including cleaning up parks and responded to the incentive to beautify the area and green the place and plant trees'. Incentives were given to those areas performing well with the rewards such as trips to Pretoria Zoo or a national park. In addition, issues linking the national environment and environmental problems experienced by residents formed part of the school syllabus.

Although the work of NEAC was well known and appreciated in Soweto, there was some speculation regarding its funding. The 1980s was a period of low trust and the inability to track funding meant that NEAC was viewed with suspicion by some local activists who explained NEAC's focus on the environment as a sinister way of keeping youth out of the broader political struggle. For activists, encouraging youth to participate in environmental issues meant they spent less time in oppositional politics. Concern with waste was considered politically appropriate if it took the form advocated by activists such as service boycotts, but was less acceptable as a stand-alone concern.

According to other environmental activists from Soweto, in the late 1980s, and into the early 1990s, recollections of SWM revolved around allowing and encouraging people to deliberately dump on street corners and on vacant plots.

A local Sowetan activist and former municipal worker commented:

You know the issue, the environment has been one of the last things on the agenda of the people. You know a poor person wants his own house you know. He does not think of the environment. Like for instance they will tell you that Kruger National Park, that is where the environment is, you understand? They think along those lines. But the immediate or the built up environment where they stay, those are issues that are not important. But at the moment what is important is employment, housing. Let me have a roof over my head. Let me have food, you understand? So whether the environment is dirty or whatever they don't care. (Kani) <sup>116</sup>

Unlike public safety issues, residents did not respond to SWM through organised measures of self-regulation suggesting that the collective nature of the service itself was not relevant. The engagement between local residents and the local administration with respect to SWM on its own was negligible. To the extent that residents took it up, it could be speculated that they were the more aspirant and upwardly mobile households who were concerned about their children's schooling and activities and the general state of their neighbourhood.

### **Waste Finally Solidly on the Agenda from the 1990s**

Transformation within key formal institution operations had an enormous impact on service delivery. In 1991, as a consequence of the political negotiations undertaken by the Central Witwatersrand Metropolitan Chamber, a compromise was reached between the Greater Soweto Principal Parties and the TPA. For the first time, local government was taking into cognisance the reality of living conditions in Greater Soweto. Institutional restructuring and a transforming political context directly affected service delivery in Soweto. Refuse bins were supplied to each structure on a site (Greater Soweto Accord Working Group (henceforth GSAW) 1991: 10). Further negotiations

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<sup>116</sup> This is not surprising given that Korfmacher's study on SWM in urban areas in South Africa came to the same conclusion (1997).

regarding refuse removal included the understanding that domestic bins would be collected twice per week: the understanding that streets would be cleaned once per week and bulk containers cleared once per week (GSAW, 1991:2). This sealed the first legitimate engagement between residents and the local administration regarding SWM issues. But this arrangement did not rectify the waste disposal and collection problems.

As late as 1993, as is often the case in impoverished neighbourhoods in developing countries, the Marie Louise landfill site<sup>117</sup> was built on the outskirts of Dobsonville. The presence of Marie Louise mobilised some magnetic<sup>118</sup> social capital among some residents because when it rained in Dobsonville the smell from the landfill site was overbearing. But this was by no means wholehearted nor all encompassing. In reality, post the rent and service boycotts, Old Dobsonville residents were not driven to confront SWM issues.

They did not mobilise in a bid to ensure improved service delivery in a context where the obstacle of illegitimate local government had been removed. Ashforth's insights into the lack of collective action in the domain of SWM in Soweto cast a different light on the service. He argued that a gendered analysis of space has a direct bearing with private space being the domain of women and public space the domain of men.<sup>119</sup> For Ashforth, public space was male space and men were largely unconcerned about the state of the urban environment. 'Collective action at a community level to clean public spaces involves complex negotiations between male and female agendas in a context where men always have something better to do' (Ashforth, 2002).<sup>120</sup> This insight is useful as it demonstrates further how the environment per se was never a real issue in Dobsonville. Instead, the political objectives of the time determined the collective action strategies thus making the possibility of ongoing environmental activism unsustainable.

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<sup>117</sup> The City of Johannesburg owns 12 waste management depots; five landfill sites and one incinerator. ([www.johannesburg.gov.za](http://www.johannesburg.gov.za)) The Marie Louise landfill site serviced Dobsonville.

<sup>118</sup> The term magnetic social capital is explained in Chapter Two on Page 70.

<sup>119</sup> The relationship between gendered space and SWM is a major focus of Beall's (1997) study of SWM in Pakistan.

<sup>120</sup> Personal communication with Adam Ashforth, 19 April 2002.

This dynamic remained the case post-1995. It follows therefore that any restructuring of SWM was initiated directly by the local administration. This was attributable to the restructuring within the formal institution itself. Although Chapter Three and Chapter Four have laid out a picture of the fertile stocks of social capital available in Dobsonville at this time, stocks of social capital and collective action had little bearing on the nature or delivery of this particular service in the post-apartheid era.

It was the restructuring of local government services since 1995 that substantially affected service delivery in Dobsonville. Whereas in the past Dobsonville had been administered separately from Diepmeadow and Soweto, it was now coherently part of Greater Soweto. This applied to SWM departments too. From January 1995, responsibility for waste management was transferred to the GJTMC whilst it was still being administered by local departments (Swilling and Hutt, 1999: 197). During the subsequent period of the GJMLC, SWM was managed under the jurisdiction of the sub-structure. Each sub-structure had its own Technical Service Cluster and Waste Management Sub Cluster (Abt Associates, 2000:1). These structures were responsible for 'collection, street cleaning, cleansing, management of illegal dumping, regulation and enforcement, waste minimisation projects and education' (Abt Associates, 2000: 1). Landfill sites fell under the watch of the City of Johannesburg. WMCL, a sub-structure of the GJMC, administered Dobsonville.

Markedly in this period, Dobsonville was once again the recipient of 'special treatment' relative to the rest of Soweto. This was apparent in that Dobsonville was the first neighbourhood in Soweto to receive 240 litre wheeled bins. It was also the site of the first recycling centre in Soweto. The question is why? Was institutional performance better for Dobsonville as a consequence of its stocks of social capital, organised associational life and collective action? In fact, the answer is no. Improvements regarding waste in Dobsonville were a direct result of the objectives of local government.

Dobsonville was a pilot area for the implementation of 240 litre bins in 1998. It was a political decision partly based on the fact that Dobsonville was a manageable area within which to implement the scheme and also the fact that Dobsonville fell under a different local government sub-structure from the rest of Soweto. Another reason

speaks to the significance of social relations within organisations. The Head of Waste Management in the WMLC had been the town clerk of Dobsonville in the early 1990s and favoured the area. Neither of these reasons for improved institutional performance suggests any link between social capital, associational life and collective action in Dobsonville. If anything, Dobsonville residents continued to feel that waste was poorly managed. Nonetheless, they were not overly invested in either lobbying government to improve the service or in mobilising existing stocks of social capital to manage their environment.

The general feeling persisted that local government was untrustworthy and was a valueless receptacle on which to focus complaints. Interestingly, this position was articulated within the new local government context where residents often personally knew local councillors, diminishing the possibility of a co-productive relationship in this arena. Interviews on the topic of waste highlighted the gaps in understanding between Dobsonville residents and local government in the area regarding SWM issues. In relation to the implementation of the 240 litre bins, WMLC staff indicated that a vigorous educational awareness campaign had been undertaken prior to implementation. They argued further that the management of waste had improved dramatically with people dumping less on public sites. Conversely a Dobsonville resident commented:

I was at my place and one lady came and said to me 'You are no more going to use this bins, you are going to use the 240 what what, from the 4 May'. Then I said 'what is going to happen to this?' and she said 'hey look don't ask me questions. If you don't accept it, you will see what to do'. I mean that kind of behaviour and in other places, she was kicked out. So marketing, they say, they never really marketed. They have done nothing. (Motseng)

Residents indicated unanimously that there was little direct interaction with the Council around service issues, but findings suggested that the satisfaction of residents with their SWM service varied. More significantly for present purposes, residents did not feel that engaging with the Council or councillor would be at all beneficial to them. They also did not feel that it was their responsibility as they were already paying service charges.<sup>121</sup> Nevertheless, there was a degree of bonding social capital and of mutual

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<sup>121</sup> Beall's study in Bangalore had similar findings (Beall, 1997: 955).



respect with regard to illegal dumping. Open plots of land were considered appropriate dumping sites but residents did not dump in other residents' bins. The extent of collective action was minimal and hinged upon the ongoing concern of a select few environmental die-hards. Certainly the mobilisation of social capital was in no way apparent.

### **The Council, the Entrepreneur and the Paper Company**

Despite the indifference of Dobsonville to issues regarding the environment and SWM, Dobsonville was home to the first recycling centre in Soweto. The project was launched in October 2000 as a partnership between the WMLC, Mondi and a local business person.<sup>122</sup> According to a participant in the process: 'We chose Dobsonville because of the WMLC's commitment to waste reduction. As compared to the other local Councils, it is much better'.<sup>123</sup> The WMLC donated a piece of land for the recycling centre. They also assisted the Recycling Centre on an ongoing basis if they required transport for waste collections. Essentially, the business of the recycling depot was to act as a collection site for recyclables that were then sold to recycling companies such as Mondi. Once more, the social capital amongst residents had little to do with improved government performance in their neighbourhood. Instead, it was the incentive of local government institutions themselves that framed the decisions made in terms of resource allocation. This illustrates the significance of formal institutions in constructing the terrain within which social capital is located.

This depot was started as a job creation exercise because it was that element which attracted residential interest. It serviced hawkers, vendors and residents of Dobsonville and the surrounding areas. In real terms, recycling is not a lucrative business for individuals. It was commonly known that the amount of income generated from recycling waste daily was minimal. Although the depot was a joint initiative between the local administration and a local resident, in 2001 there was no relationship between the recycling centre and community groups. Nor was there any sign of this partnership arrangement working to benefit residents generally.

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<sup>122</sup> Mondi is a paper company and has as a division, Mondi Recycling, which endeavours to promote the recycling of paper.

<sup>123</sup> Personal communication with key interviewee in Old Dobsonville.

In Dobsonville, the recycling initiative cannot be explained as a bridging type of social capital where local business, local government and residents come together to 'tidy the neighbourhood'. Generally, those involved in the recycling initiatives were motivated by gain. Recycling was therefore not a survivalist activity nor was it indicative of social capital. Perhaps, given that Dobsonville was not a neighbourhood of extreme poverty, recycling was not a livelihoods-motivated activity, but instead focused on material reward. Engagement with SWM was spurred due to the prospect of the economic capital to be gained from recycling by those involved in it.

Despite the advances in recycling, as with earlier periods, in the period 1995-2002 SWM was not the most pressing community issue. Local community groups, through recycling schemes, were those most fervently embracing it. The neighbouring suburb of Meadowlands was home to the award winning community group – the Meadowlands Environmental Group which received media attention and accolades for their efforts to improve poor air quality in the area as well as tackling waste. No such high profile environmental organisation existed in Dobsonville. The involvement of the Dobsonville Youth Forum in recycling issues, for example, mainly arose because of its potential function as a job-creation opportunity.<sup>124</sup>

Whilst resident-based environmental concerns were sluggish, changes in local institutions were happening at a furious pace. The establishment of Pikitup as a city-wide waste utility meant the assimilation of all SWM departments into a single administration. Pikitup was established on 1 January 2001. It is a company owned by the City of Johannesburg but managed as a separate utility. The strategic intent of Pikitup, according to then Managing Director Joseph Shamir, was 'to target specific areas and create "pockets of excellence" in which litter and illegal dumping are tightly controlled' (City of Johannesburg, 2003).

While it is too soon to analyse the success of these demonstration initiatives or of Pikitup, the institutional restructuring is significant because of the impact on localities. Accompanying the transformation of waste management responsibility to a parastatal-type utility meant the reallocation of resources and priorities. This institutional re-

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<sup>124</sup> The ANCYL were also occupied with recycling initiatives. Unbanned from 1990, the ANCYL was involved in recycling projects but for job creation purposes.

organisation of the service has largely happened in isolation from the consultation with residents of Dobsonville who continue to see service delivery as the domain purely of local government.

## **Conclusions on SWM**

This section has described associational life and interaction with local government connected with SWM in Dobsonville. It has demonstrated that on its own SWM has not been historically a point of critical concern for residents in Old Dobsonville.<sup>125</sup> Collective action pertaining to SWM was evident during the rent and service boycott era of the 1980s and early 1990s because it was conflated with political capital. This was because the norms, networks and repeated interactions were constitutive of broader stocks of bridging social capital and civic engagement or disengagement in Old Dobsonville. Furthermore, the service was aligned with the bridging social capital mobilised by local Sowetan residents in the 1980s, more generally.

Since 1994, community initiatives regarding SWM in Old Dobsonville have centred on the opportunities it has provided for eliciting income or economic capital. Any increased efficiency and effectiveness in the management of solid waste has been initiated and delivered by local government. Of great significance is that in the post-apartheid period there has been an erosion of social capital of the bridging variety exercised in pursuit of state-society engagement. In the pre-1995 period, the residents actively resisted poor delivery through collectively confronting local government. Although oppositional, this was suggestive of the power of bridging social capital. Post-1995, residents chose to resist poor service delivery through non-engagement with local institutions instead.

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<sup>125</sup> As recounted in Chapter Four, housing is a concern that has more easily mobilised residents in Old Dobsonville.

## 5.2 PUBLIC SAFETY

Soweto is a uniquely complex mix, a city of ordinary people leading ordinary lives, using any one of a dozen languages, weaving multifaceted social webs of ties and interactions; and a city of grinding daily awareness of the threat of crime, of theft or robbery, attack, rape and/or murder. (Wardrop, 2001: 256)

**‘Crime is a problem. A major, major problem’<sup>126</sup>**

In comparison to SWM, sustained collective action surrounding public safety issues has been far greater in Dobsonville. The research findings indicate that the lack of interest in SWM contrasted strongly with the intense interest in matters of public safety despite the same potential pool of social capital. Moreover, the history of efforts at community policing has been excellent. The issue of public safety, as experienced in the case study neighbourhoods, was not only about crime, policing or combating crime. It was also about the political, social and economic contexts within which public safety happened. Whilst Putnam (1993) chooses in his discussions of social capital to view context regionally, it is the contention here that context must be viewed locally as well. The complex dynamics of a locality and how they are manifest in everyday life are critical to any discussions of social capital. With particular reference to public safety in Old Dobsonville, this locality-based complexity was embodied within manifold factors, some of which were found to encourage crime and discourage the engagement of residents in government initiatives to ensure public safety. Other local dynamics encouraged residents to become involved in public safety initiatives. These are explored below.

Residents in urban neighbourhoods were found to operate in a quagmire of dynamics with different sets of pressures and expectations. Soweto’s experience of these common urban dynamics of insecurity has its particularities. Crime is not a new phenomenon in Soweto, but one that has been somewhat obfuscated by, and at times fused with, political activity. For residents of Soweto, issues of public safety have affected them for decades. Embedded in a complex historical crime tapestry has been an ensemble of informal institutions as diverse as gangs, *makgotla*,<sup>127</sup> self-defence units, street committees and political organisations. Co-existing with these groups has been an

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<sup>126</sup> This is from a statement made by a key interview respondent in Dobsonville.

<sup>127</sup> This is a Sotho word meaning ‘groups of people gathered together’ (Gorodnov, 1983: 128).

unresponsive and draconian police force both at a national and municipal level. These opposing forces resulted in a particular legacy, the nature of which must inform any discussions of social capital in Soweto, and more specifically Dobsonville, which did not remain immune.

Although the experience of crime in Johannesburg was general, the history and current reality of public safety in urban townships differed vastly from that of public safety in Johannesburg's suburbs and inner city neighbourhoods. This section speaks specifically to public safety issues in Old Dobsonville. It locates the issues faced in relation to Soweto as a whole. The section traces the type of public safety issues that have emerged in Old Dobsonville, as well as community responses to them. This section discusses institutional forms and associational life as determinants of how public safety has been viewed and addressed in Old Dobsonville.

### **The Politics of Policing**

You know it was the worst, from 1960, Dobsonville was called 'the wild west' it was so rough. Uh, from the 60s it was called the Wild West until 68/69. One guy called Roos, the regional magistrate came to Dobsonville, oooh, if you are arrested with a knife, just having a knife in your pockets, 18 months. (Motseng)

It was commonplace in Johannesburg for the police to remain disengaged from criminal activity in African areas. Good policing was largely the preserve of 'White areas'. From the 1930s onwards, the response amongst African residents to this lack of engagement was the constitution of community organisations to address the gap in institutional provision of a public safety service (Goodhew, 1993: 448). Residents of Soweto were obligated to take responsibility for monitoring and managing ordinary crime issues from the 1960s onwards. This reality had great bearing on how associational life was organised. It also influenced the historic relationships between the police and local residents and has impacted on the potential for the construction of future beneficial relationships. The experience of Dobsonville is testimony to the fact that a corrupt and incompetent police service actively destroys social capital between residents and service providers.

Putnam emphasises the importance of trust as a foundation for social capital – both within society and between state and society. This is not a condition met in the case of policing in Dobsonville. The relationship between local police and local residents has historically been largely acrimonious, described by Brewer as ‘fluctuating and tumultuous’ (Brewer, 1994: 226). For generations, the basic form of interaction between citizen and police was through the notorious pass raids.<sup>128</sup> There was obviously no measure of trust in public safety institutions and this is what is required if the expectation is to be met that such institutions would respond to collective action. Instead, corrupt and incompetent police service actively destroyed social capital.

Whilst there was dense associational life, government institutions were not the focus of societal action. On the contrary, collective action was used to shield residents from the state or alternatively construct surrogate informal institutions in the absence of legitimate formal institutions. This discontent was not only apparent in the relationship between state and society, but amongst residents too. Managing public safety entailed a complex set of power dynamics and challenges and these divisions were most strongly felt in generational terms. There was an historical divide between the role played by older residents as manifested in *makgotlas*, and the role thrust upon the youth, visible in youth movements, street committees and self-defence units. Thus the norms and values upon which solutions to public safety were based differed substantially amongst different resident groups.

Policing in Soweto/Old Dobsonville during the 1960s and 1970s was in the control of the ‘Black Jacks’, so called because they wore black uniforms. ‘Black Jacks’ were placed in townships by White local government and administration boards (Laurence, 1987:5).

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<sup>128</sup> Pass Laws were instituted in 1948 as a tool for the apartheid state. The pass was a document that was carried by all African South Africans during the apartheid era. It was instituted by the state to monitor and prohibit the free movement of Africans. If a person was caught without their Pass it was likely that they would be arrested, detained or jailed. Pass Raids were periodically undertaken by the SAP for purposes of maintaining control.

A middle aged Dobsonville resident remembered:

The Black Jacks were all right; you know those guys used to curb crime very well. They were all right they were no problem to us, and they were better than the SAP, far better, far better, effective. You call them here now, they are here now. Having one man coming with bicycles. These with caspiers etc. you phone them at 7 and they will come after 25 hours.... No they were not that cruel. If you can report to the Black Jacks, you report so and so's child is doing this. He has been housebreaking and they fetch him. They will sjambok<sup>129</sup> him to the office and you call now the SAP, and they will respond. They were very effective, the Black Jacks, very, very, very effective. If you phone them and say someone has a gun, they will come. They will never come harass what what. But when they have that particular person with the gun, they will get that gun and sjambok the person to the police station. They were very effective. (Motseng)

The 'Black Jacks', however, were not to remain indefinitely. As the political struggle intensified, the 'Black Jacks' were replaced in the 1980s by municipal police (Rauch, Shaw and Louw, 2001: 2) whose reputation was far more notorious. The role of the municipal police differed from 'Black Jacks' in that they were employed by township councils and were armed with guns rather than batons and handcuffs (Laurence, 1987: 5).<sup>130</sup> Municipal police in the apartheid days amounted to glorified security guards. They were originally recruited to guard municipal and local administration infrastructure and were well known for their brutality and their poor training. Consequently, they were very unpopular with the local community. Their unpopularity was not improved by the fact that they were also directly involved in evictions associated with the rent and service boycotts in the 1980s and early 1990s. A Dobsonville resident in his early thirties explained this transition thus: 'Black Jacks'<sup>131</sup> in the late 1970s/1980s were the municipal police involved in evicting people. They would evict you and the next day there would be someone else in your house. It was very brutal'.

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<sup>129</sup> A Sjambok is a whip. They were used notoriously by the South African Police.

<sup>130</sup> The municipal police forces were called 'Green Flies' (Institute of Criminology, 1990: 46) and 'Green Beans' (named also after the colour of their uniforms) among other names for them

<sup>131</sup> This municipal police force also continued to be called 'Black Jacks' by some people.

The significance of this association between the 'Black Jacks' and the draconian implementation of apartheid legislation meant that relationships between public safety institutions and local residents were sullied, making questionable the viability of future engagement. This also diminished the likelihood that those stocks of social capital that did exist would be put to use in a partnership relationship with the state. Altbeker makes the point that the police after all, at the most basic level, are armed civilians employed to deal with problems. As such, they should be the personification of social capital.<sup>132</sup>

### ***Makgotla* and Gangs: Both A Double Edged Sword**

In the absence of a trusted and reliable law enforcement agency and with public safety becoming increasingly precarious as a result, simultaneous operating forces emerged. There was a conservative community whose means of managing crime was through *makgotla* which often took the form of vigilante groups, sometimes exercising unnecessary force. These were considered to be the means through which crime was managed and their jurisdiction was locality based. Originally *makgotla* had emerged in response to the formal institutional void Soweto in the 1960s and 1970s. *Makgotla* were based on traditional responses to discord in a community. Local Dobsonville residents explained that *makgotla* were more social organisations than organisations established for maintaining discipline. However, their might was exercised when for instance neighbours did not agree with each other or children were misbehaving.<sup>133</sup> A group of older men would assist in solving problems as well as dish out punishment (such as the administering of lashes) for local misdemeanours.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Personal communication with Antony Altbeker, former advisor to the South African Minister of Safety and Security.

<sup>133</sup> A report in the Sunday Star (December 1982) reported how *makgotla* members in Zondi and Dobsonville had confiscated 596 dangerous weapons in December 1982 (Khumalo, 1982).

<sup>134</sup> Personal interview with key Dobsonville interviewee.



A younger resident commented:

From 1970-1975, we had what you call *makgotla*. They were vigilante groups and anyone who was known to be a criminal during that time and our fathers were in that group. And they would go out and catch the criminals. It was sort of a kangaroo court process where they will catch the criminal, bring them to book, and then give them punishment. Maybe give them lashes, of maybe about twenty or so on. But then again that did not stop the criminals or criminal activities but somehow it sort of slowed down the pace of the criminals during that period of time. Or the gangsters because they knew. But then you know, the gangsters began to form and tried to fight against the *makgotla* and then that is how the *makgotla* began to slow down. Because several members of the *makgotla* were targeted by the gangs themselves to fight back. And that is how they began to diminish. (Lebo)

*Makgotla* became increasingly controversial organisations in the 1980s because of their conservatism and age-based structure. There was by this time the co-existence of youth-based organisations and *makgotla*, both of whom saw themselves as maintaining order in township neighbourhoods. Conflict within civil society emerged in a redoubtable form.

The role of *makgotla* was not limited to fighting crime but was also a response to the lack of interest displayed by the SAP in policing Soweto. The significance of these informal institutions for discussions of social capital was the fact that they were founded on a collective understanding amongst residents of the role that these *makgotla* played and this ensured compliance. A combination of high levels of trust and the absence of institutional presence facilitated this response. This understanding of how best to manage public safety was reconstituted in the 1980s as political activism accelerated.

The management of public safety and political opposition was conflated. This conflation was visible in the form of street committees that emerged both as means of policing political actions, such as consumer and rent boycotts, and maintaining order. Dealing with the political struggle created the context whereby social capital became generational and linked to peer groups and not family ties. The different generations in Dobsonville experienced locality and broader political interests differently. Traditional practices of maintaining law and order, such as *makgotla*, whose efficiency relied on shared norms and values, were replaced by politically-inspired collective action

through youth movements. Their efficiency was less about public safety per se, and more about constructing a unified oppositionary force to the state.

Simultaneously there was the existence of gangs,<sup>135</sup> also demonstrating locally-based identities. These gangs were often viewed as playing a constructive role in managing crime locally according to Clive Glaser, who has written extensively about Soweto's gangs (1998). Although his research does not make reference directly to gangs in Dobsonville, the gang phenomenon was articulated in largely comparable ways across Sowetan townships. According to Glaser, the gang phenomenon played a critical role in youth crime and the form that public safety took. What was really significant is that gangs in Soweto's neighbourhoods consolidated a geographical identity. Glaser states that: 'Most of these youths felt a strong sense of neighbourhood loyalty, and by extension, some sense of loyalty to the local gang' (Glaser, 1998: 308).

These powerful neighbourhood identities meant that gangs tended to be protective of local people. Crime was not targeted at local residents, but directed at anonymous people on transport routes, in the CBD or in other neighbourhoods (Glaser 2002).<sup>136</sup> Seemingly, the morality associated with the criminal activities of these gangs was obfuscated by their loyalty to their area. An elderly Dobsonville resident explained of Dobsonville's gangs:

In actual fact from Roodepoort West there were two gangsters, the 39ers and the Americans. And when we came to Dobsonville they were spread now, so a new gang was formed, Black Swines, and Bee Bop, and the third one was, what was it? There were three. They did not fight amongst themselves just with gangs from surrounding areas. 'Gangsters' were not marginalized by this community but instead were friends with fellow residents and were known to perform good 'community related' activities. Ya. And, in actual fact, they used even to protect the school gals from Dobsonville who used to go to school at Morris Isaacson at Jabavu. They used to take them there in the morning, come back in the afternoon, go and fetch them. (Motseng)

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<sup>135</sup> The reference to gangs in this thesis is very much determined by the work of Clive Glaser. He defines their genesis as follows: 'the gangs were a young male peer group phenomenon. They emerged at the intersection of personal and territorial familiarity as teenage boys, with the social space to be independent and mobile, grew up together on the streets' (Glaser, 1998: 308).

<sup>136</sup> Personal communication with Clive Glaser, 20 February 2002.

At the same time, Glaser explained that the relationship of gangs with local women was generally highly coercive. Local women were regarded as 'property' and could be in great danger if they resisted the advances of a member of a strong local gang. Later, schoolgirls received protection from schoolboys rather than these local gangs. In fact, there was constant antagonism between school students and gangs. Because high schools were so rare, they of course drew in students from diverse neighbourhoods. As a result, the girls were often going into 'foreign' territory for their schooling.<sup>137</sup> Another resident verified the anomalous position of the gangs and their territorial propensities:

Yes, there were gangs in Dobsonville, umm, during the 1970s but then one gang that suffered most was the Black Swines. Now there were about a few gangs, but the dominant gangsters who were here in Dobsonville causing havoc was the Black Swines. Then the Black Swines suffered in their killings of people. I think five of their members were hanged. I think the gentleman that was here, if I am not mistaken his younger brother was also hanged. Yes, they were caught and sentenced to death. They were sentenced to death. That is when all members of the Black Swines were arrested and five or six of them were sentenced to death and the rest of them served prison sentences and gangsterism then subsided.

But also the Black Swines, in spite of the fact that they were a problem to the community, they also assisted against gangsters from White City and Mofolo North. Because there was rivalry between Zondi and neighbouring townships. We did not have much problems from the Meadowlands Zone 10 area but they sort of protected their territory. We also suffered if you went to White City you would be beaten up for coming from Dobsonville by then. The soil was very, very red so when you go to Soweto people like you can see Braamfischer, it was like Braamfischer.<sup>138</sup> A person from Braamfischer you can see this person is from Braamfischer if you look at his shoes. So, we had that problem. If you go to a different area, they would see that you come from Dobsonville. (Sakile)<sup>139</sup>

There is some discord in records regarding gangs or '*tsotsis*'.<sup>140</sup> Gorodnov's (1983) account contended that *tsotsis* were a threat in Soweto whereas other accounts suggested that gangs played a positive role in managing crime in their local areas (Glaser, 1998). Gorodnov argued that families relied on the income garnered from *tsotsi* activities and for those involved this clearly acted as a disincentive with regard to

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<sup>137</sup> Personal communication with Clive Glaser, 20 February 2002.

<sup>138</sup> Braamfischerville is a Reconstruction and Development housing development. It was in a state of construction and was therefore very sandy.

<sup>139</sup> White City, Mofolo North, Zondi and Meadowlands are other suburbs in Soweto.

<sup>140</sup> *Tsotsis* refers to small-time criminals.

public safety initiatives (1983: 84). In some circles, lack of public safety immediately cast an ambiguous sense of morality on this type of criminal activity.

This ambiguity continued and was still evident at the time of fieldwork. It acted as a disincentive for collective action in the sphere of public safety and not least of all among those who relied on criminal activities for survival. For some township residents, the activities of *tsotsis* safeguarded their livelihood and still did at the time of fieldwork. These constraints acted as a break on those forms of social capital that could be mobilised around public safety or from bridging social capital with institutions of law and order. Instead, public safety became a private or ultra-local matter fostering hatred among smaller groups of people and narrower axes of trust and forms of bonding social capital.

### **Youth Take the Reins**

As mentioned above, historically, alternative justice systems were constructed and run by older township residents. However, with the political shift of the 1980s and the increasingly powerful role given to township youth in the political struggle, so the latter became more intensely involved in controlling the local systems of alternative justice. Marks (1995) commented:

Youth in African townships were often responsible for identifying and punishing individuals in these areas for committing such crimes as theft, murder and rape. In so doing, they often become alternative policing and justice systems. The controversy surrounding such activities is undeniable. However, these structures and activities were the result of a deep mistrust for the police and justice system. For the most part, any alternative policing that took place during this period was done in a manner which was both antagonistic and in direct opposition to the South African Police Force. (Marks, 1995: 8)

Whilst gangs were tolerated as part of the neighbourhood, animosity came to characterise the relationship between school students and gangs from the late 1970s onwards. School students were pitted against gangsters, whom it was felt were not making a contribution to the political struggle. There were norms working against this sort of opportunistic behaviour. Increasingly, the Sowetan youth became responsible for maintaining order and the roles played by gangs were scorned upon by these youth.

Students most often felt that gangs were not contributing to the 'struggle' and were instead characterized as reactionary and unproductive. A local youth leader explained:

There were gangs in Dobsonville in the 1970s – the 702s, the Aces, Copperheads. They all played together but you knew your neighbour was involved in gangster activities. During the day they would be a comrade and at night gangsters. They did not seem to realise they were victimising individuals in communities. If you were in a gang and victimising the community they would take them to kangaroo courts and beat you up. Street committees – their main objectives were to discipline those that were corrupt. (Tsepo)

The transformation in power relationships between school students and gangs impacted heavily on the existing local community structures that had been established to maintain order. There was no overlap between residents in *makgotla*, gangs and youth structures. Ashforth suggests that this undermined the traditional assumption that it was the duty of older men to discipline the youth.<sup>141</sup> Traditional discipline and the elders had governed order in society. Now, however, the emphasis had shifted to the youth. Older organizations such as the *makgotla* became redundant.

## 1976 and Onwards

Commentators on Soweto argued that the 1976 Soweto uprising marked the turning point in Soweto's history. The relative acquiescence to the will of local authorities and the police was transformed and the brutality of local institutions was exacerbated. Residents focused attacks on authorities. Attacks on councillors and policemen became commonplace (Gorodnov, 1983: 198). As indicated in the preceding section, the schisms between gang members and the growing number of student activists in Soweto exploded in the aftermath of the Soweto uprising in 1976, as did power relations between the youth and parents. Gangs and student activists remained at odds and there are oral history accounts of gangsters in Dobsonville being 'reinitiated' by politically active youth.

The re-articulation of power relations had widespread implications for traditional ways of dealing with public safety issues and political issues more generally. The self-regulation of public safety issues in Dobsonville was restructured in such a way that the

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<sup>141</sup> Personal communication with Adam Ashforth, 19 April 2002.

focus turned to direct confrontation with the state. Gorodonov (1983) referred specifically to an incident in Dobsonville in March 1977 in which 500 students attacked the WRAB (Gorodonov, 1983: 198). Dobsonville was no different to the rest of Soweto in embracing collective action. However, it was as an area reportedly difficult to organise. A local leader commented:

One could not say that much on it, but many things when they happened in Dobsonville, the police could just arrest anybody because there was one section where it was built for police. That area was the area where you could be detected easily and detained easily. I think that is how Dobsonville was late. Because of the fear. I think in 1977 there was a shooting and I am sure that was the first person that was killed was a teacher, and I think the name was; I cannot remember the name, but he was killed by the police in our area. I remember that. Like I say, the police presence, and Dobsonville was a relatively small area. It is only now that it has grown, but it was relatively small. One night and they could arrest all the people at once. (Sebokeng)

In 1986 the beer hall in Dobsonville was converted into a police barracks and the municipal police, police and the army occupied the barracks (Mashabela, 1988b: 62). Ordinary crime continued in Dobsonville albeit that there was a strong police presence in response to the political unrest. A local activist argued that the approach taken by the police was largely to ignore crime. They adopted, argued a local resident, a 'no, let them kill each other' position. Furthermore, ordinary criminals were only arrested when their activities began to impact on 'White areas'. These included bank robberies being undertaken in 'town'. It was only once murder was committed in Soweto that police began to intervene. A local resident said:

Yes. And then the other things, again because of the murders they began to commit in Soweto itself. I mean people began to complain, I mean why are these guys not being arrested. But you had to kill quite a few people before you got arrested. It was a trend during that period and that is why. I mean even if you killed a person you would be arrested today and by tomorrow you would be out. During that time when you stabbed a person to death you could get five or six years. Not much, because it was not considered really cold murder like when you shoot a person down. (Lebo)

The 1970s and 1980s were the eras when politically motivated collective action emerged in Soweto. Public safety was ensured through the formation of collective informal institutions called street committees and they are discussed in detail in the following section. At this point, bridging social capital emerged as various

organisations closely linked their operations to maximise opposition against the state. Stocks of social capital were effectively consolidated in resistance. At this time, the nature of social capital worked positively in favour of Dobsonville residents.

In the 1980s, ordinary public safety issues took a backseat as organisations such as street committees were established to ensure order was present in Old Dobsonville. Although, claims a local Dobsonville activist:

Let's be honest. The street committees, in one sense, were not to fight criminals. It was a way of mobilising people. To say to people we have a common enemy; we have a problem with the apartheid regime. At the same time it was a way of policing our streets understanding what is happening, making sure that people in streets have to adhere to certain things. Making sure that when there is boycotts you know what do you call them, boycotting of buying things from town.

People from the street would monitor each other. It was that kind of a process. People made sure that you did not go and pay rent when the culture of non-payment began in earnest. We had to police each other. It was one way of making sure people did not do those types of things and we knew who was not paying and who was paying. But the street committees and the block committees were specifically meant to deal with political activities more than dealing with criminals themselves. But it was the youth themselves, not the older people, who were the ones fighting the criminals. Making sure that the criminals joined the struggle and so on. You know how prominent the youth were in the struggle. (Lebo)

There was a significant shift in the conceptions of criminal activity in Soweto and Dobsonville at this time. It was considered 'unprogressive' by politically active youth to be involved in crime against community members and against Black South Africans in particular. The strength of these normative factors together with the structuring of street committees intensified the conflict between youth involved in opposition politics and those involved in criminal activities. This acrimony was more muted during the struggle years as 'comrades' succeeded in disciplining gangs.

However, by the early 1990s, with the disengagement of youth movements from the formal politics of transition, there was a resurgence in gang-related activity. The informal, institutional frameworks that had been created at local level in the struggle days collapsed in the early 1990s. There was no substitution to fill the void. Instead, social violence became more overt and less controlled, fragmenting the prospect of

prior stocks of bridging and bonding social capital giving rise to forms of social capital that might ensure national level political fence mending and reconstruction that might translate to the local level. Adversely, organisational fractures and burgeoning suspicions coupled with the lack of a unifying objective acted as a disincentive for positive forms of collective action.

### **‘Luthuli Street Is A No-Go Zone’<sup>142</sup>**

The beginning of the 1990s heralded the onset of the notorious hostel violence in Reef Townships.<sup>143</sup> Scattered urban township areas became the battlegrounds for political conflict between the hostel-based Inkatha Freedom Party (henceforth IFP) members and township-based ANC members (Seekings, 1991: 12).<sup>144</sup> The causes of this violence were attributed to a range of factors including the historic political, social and economic marginalisation of hostel dwellers. Seekings argued that ‘uncertainty, isolation and instability have been the major cause of violence’ (Seekings, 1991: 13).

Dobsonville was one of the areas in Soweto where this violence was the most extreme. Sippiwe Hostel, the site of much of the violence in Dobsonville, was situated in Luthuli Street, centrally located in Old Dobsonville (Tema, 27 September 1992). Relations between the hostel dwellers and township residents had not been overly hostile until the commencement of this more generalised violence. A *City Press* newspaper article suggested: ‘Until last Sunday, Dobsonville hostel inmates and township residents who lived in homes bordering the hostel on the west, north and southern sides were good neighbours – or at least lived and let live.....last Sunday, residents experienced the wrath of hostel dwellers when a group of Zulu men from the adjacent hostel attacked and killed a number of residents’ (Sello, 5 May 1991).

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<sup>142</sup> A statement made by a key interview respondent from Old Dobsonville.

<sup>143</sup> Reef Townships refer to those townships that were built in the vicinity of the gold reef.

<sup>144</sup> Hostel violence broke out in some urban townships in the early 1990s. Historically, squatters, hostel dwellers and formal urban township dwellers had experienced difficulties living together with the limited available resources. These difficulties were exacerbated through the policies of the apartheid state. The hostel violence was popularly described by the apartheid state as ethnic violence between the Zulu-based IFP and Xhosa-led ANC. This argument has subsequently been dismissed given the active role the apartheid state played in stoking up the violence.



Certainly the period of hostel violence was divisive<sup>145</sup> and there was once more a period in township life when police proved that they were not to be trusted because they were assumed to be partisan within the violence (Zulu, 1992: 8-14; Minaar, 1993: 68). Records and personal accounts revealed that the violence experienced in Dobsonville was severe and safety became, once again, the domain of the community itself. Damage was done to social relationships in Dobsonville as the divisions amongst residents intensified along political lines.

The Independent Board of Inquiry into Informal Repression (May 1991), commissioned by a local Gauteng-based non-governmental organisation reported that there had been extreme clashes between hostel residents and Dobsonville residents in April 1991. In August 1991, in a bid to curb further violence, the Dobsonville community removed material from unused buildings to discourage the use of these buildings by hostel dwellers (*New Nation*, 16 August, 1991). In September 1991, three residents were shot outside the hostel. Nine people were killed and three injured on 8 December 1991. On 13 March 1992, 3 Dobsonville residents were shot dead (Koch, June 26-July 2, 1992: 5). In the same year, 250 Dobsonville pupils marched on Sippiwe Hostel (Modisane, 30 August 1992). Koch (June 26-July 2 1992) reported that 53 people were killed and 29 injured in violence surrounding the hostels in Dobsonville. In 1992, Dobsonville was part of a boycott targeted at White business in Roodepoort. The Consumer Boycott Committee of Dobsonville, Meadowlands, Mofolo and Killarney in Orlando West called the boycott in a last bid attempt to curb violence. Demands included the closing of Sippiwe Hostel in Old Dobsonville (Rawana, 14 July 1992). By September 1992, local residents, businesses and police had agreed that Sippiwe Hostel be fenced off and the boycott was suspended (*Sowetan*, 24 September, 1992).

The import of the hostel violence in Dobsonville was twofold: it wrought violent hostility in the township, and it once again demonstrated to residents that they were unable to trust in the intervention of the police to assist them in these times. In incidences of hostel violence throughout Gauteng, local police were unresponsive to

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<sup>145</sup> The divisions evident during the period of hostel violence were not the only divisions in the area. There were also divisions on the basis of ethnicity and class and indeed the divisions were themselves informed by ethnic conflict and class differences (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002: 188).

the violence inflicted on local residents by hostel dwellers and were furthermore viewed as partisan colluders in the violence.

The necessary response from Sowetan residents, primarily amongst the youth, was the creation of self-styled self-defence units (henceforth SDUs), which were by their very nature exclusionary.<sup>146</sup> SDUs comprised young ANC-aligned men who assumed the role of defenders of their communities (Marks and McKenzie, 1995: 1). Dobsonville was home to one of the thirteen visible defence units<sup>147</sup> in Soweto (Marks and McKenzie, 1995: 27). The SDU in Dobsonville was called the Dobsonville Defence Force and local youth were obliged to become part of the defence force. If they did not, they were thought to be spies. A former SDU member elaborated:

Everyone was obliged to be part of the defence force or else they thought that you were a spy. They defended houses – took shifts and set up camp to defend the residents. It was voluntary work. After 1994, the violence declined. It was quiet after that and bad feelings were gone. Now hostels are family units and people from all over live in the place. The police were supporting the IFP and they knew who some of them were.

However, SDUs became problematic in their own right and by 1993, the ANC had suggested that these SDUs be placed under greater control. This was upon recognition that SDUs had become undisciplined and unaccountable (Independent Board of Inquiry, April 1993: 23). With the dismantling of SDUs and the inability of the police force to absorb SDU members, some of these young men drifted into organised crime instead.

The implication of this period of violence was that it constructed divisions within a neighbourhood that had effectively mobilised its resources in opposition to state institutions during the period of intensive political struggle in the 1980s. Although hostel dwellers had always been implicitly separate from townships dwellers, this violence consolidated divisions and made more explicit the social exclusion of hostel dwellers. This violence also diminished greatly the likelihood of the imagined community policing options punted in the post-apartheid period being successful. The

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<sup>146</sup> In fact, it was generally accepted that in fact the police were assisting hostel dwellers in the violence (Minaar, 1993).

<sup>147</sup> Marks and McKenzie (1995) explain that most of the members of these defence units were aligned to ANC Youth League and COSAS. (1995: 36).

bonding social capital of the residents and hostel dwellers respectively seemingly prevented the unity that would have given rise to the bridging social capital necessary for the future initiative – an inclusive Community Policing Forum (CPF) - to work.

### **Patchy Policing Continues 1995-2002<sup>148</sup>**

The context described above shows the barren earth into which the seeds for cultivating partnership approaches between police and local residents were sown after 1994. Needless to say, post-apartheid public safety became no less complicated an issue. Whilst during apartheid there was the glue of opposition that bound many residents together, in the post-apartheid period this was no longer the case.

Perhaps therefore, it can be argued that in the post-apartheid context that a more realistic picture of social capital can be developed. In the post-apartheid period, without the somewhat artificial adhesive provided by a common enemy, residents were confronted with a combination of intensifying ongoing violent crime and persistent intra-community conflict. Added to this was the ineffectiveness of restructuring the police service with the formation of the South African Police Services (SAPS).

The intensity of crime in South Africa increased post-1994, specifically in Johannesburg (Schönteich and Louw, 2001:1). The patterns of violence in South Africa changed at this time (Simpson, 2001: 116). Bonner and Segal explain that post-1990, crime became more sophisticated. Syndicates of carjackers and armed robbers surfaced (Bonner and Segal, 1998: 137) and the violence perpetrated by these syndicates became more brutal with the increase in gun circulation (Segal, Pelo and Rampa, 2002: 95). There was a surge of what Beall refers to as anti-social capital (2001: 362).

Increased crime, coupled with the nascent post-apartheid policing structures that were radically different from its predecessors, necessitated that township residents adopt a new approach to the police as an institution. The SAP was replaced in 1995 through the South African Police Service Act by a single police force, the SAPS (Rauch, Shaw and

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<sup>148</sup> There are ten police stations in Soweto. They are situated in: Diepkloof, Dobsonville, Eldorado Park, Jabulani, Kliptown, Meadowlands, Moroka, Naledi, Orlando and Protea Glen (Mayne, Richardson and Sekoto, 2000: 80). There is one CPF per police station.

Louw, 2001: 1). One of the pillars of this new 'community-friendly' styled policing was the central role allocated to local communities in policing their own residential areas. This was known as the CPF initiative. Although local in focus, it was situated nationally in the SAPS at a policy level. As far as local level municipal police was concerned, the Gauteng Green Paper (1996) on Metropolitan and Municipal Policing delegated to municipal police the task of crime prevention and by-law implementation (Rauch, Shaw and Louw, 2001: 2). This has now been implemented.

The Department of Safety and Security's White Paper on Safety and Security articulated a far more prominent place for local government in public safety issues. It was felt that local safety needs and priorities were needed to inform the activities of local SAPS branches in order to secure greater policing effectiveness. The South African Police Service Amendment Act No 83 of 1998 indicated that municipal police would exist independently of the SAPS and would be accountable to local government (Rauch, Shaw and Louw, 2001: 1). In particular, the draft White Paper on Safety and Security (1998) advocated that local government should work closely with CPFs and that they should play a role in social crime prevention, the restructuring of municipal services to accommodate local safety issues and further ensuring that crime prevention strategies were assimilated into local level discussions (Shaw, 1998b: 2).

Historically, the police as an institution, including the municipal police, had little to do with local residents aside from meting out oppression and guaranteeing the execution of apartheid legislation. Hence, the dramatic shift to 'participatory decision making' was pioneered in a context of high scepticism and in a realm that had traditionally historically been marked by a lack of helpfulness and as well as horrifically high levels of police violence.

Although post-apartheid township residents were encouraged to establish CPFs, trust in policing as an institution was low. Many Dobsonville residents continued to feel that the responsibilities for policing their streets lay in their own hands, but in the context of diminishing social trust. Nevertheless, as in other areas, at the outset of the idea of CPFs some residents were excited at becoming involved. There were officially two CPFs in Dobsonville. One CPF is situated in Dobsonville itself and the other in the nearby informal settlement of Doornkop. Officially, there are street and block

committees and the block representatives form part of the CPF executive. In December 2000, community policing sub-committee forums were established on the basis of occupational associations. Namely, members were recruited from businesses, churches, schools, tavern owners, taxi associations and doctors. These divisions reflect the implicit power relations in Dobsonville making the CPF largely the domain of the middle classes.

Fittingly, church committees participated in social crime prevention and assisted in dealing with crimes that the police found difficult to prevent. Likewise, taxi associations were mostly concerned with traffic crimes, the possession of illegal firearms and the conveying of illegal goods. The police engaged expressly with these forums around issues that concerned them directly – but the CPF did not represent all residents. As stated representatives were drawn from the more established residents. This is indicative of the perpetuation of power relations within civil society. According to police sources, they tried to involve the entire community in the CPF but without great success. Involvement in the CPF seemed to be inconsistent and sporadic. Other political party representatives contended that the CPF was mainly an ANC-run forum that did not welcome residents from other political parties. These structures illuminated the power dynamics that had been submerged in the past.

The CPFs, conceptualized as they were as the bridges that would construct a healthy relationship between residents and police, failed in their task. For the residents of Old Dobsonville, the CPF seemed to serve little purpose and neighbourhoods continued responding to public safety through various self-governing programmes. The excitement has dissipated since 1995, partly due to a natural dwindling enthusiasm for the transitional process, but also because the benefits expected from involvement have not materialised.

## Home-Grown Solutions

More violent crime is committed in Soweto itself than in other areas in Johannesburg. SAPS statistics (1996-1999) showed that Dobsonville experienced 41-55 incidents of serious crime incidents per 1000 population per police station area per annum (Mayne, Richardson and Sekoto, 2000: 79).<sup>149</sup> According to local police, Dobsonville's biggest crime fears include hijacking, armed robbery and bank robbery. This was partly a consequence of the proximity of the positioning of two shopping centres within Dobsonville and its position on the outskirts of Soweto. Current figures reveal that there are 244 police personnel resident in Dobsonville with 16 civilians who assist with support and administration.<sup>150</sup> Clearly, residents are equally susceptible to burglaries of businesses and residences, and also to social crimes.

This reality, coupled with the way crime had been dealt with during the apartheid years, created a unique public safety scenario. The lacklustre performance of the CPFs and the associated political complexities with these forums fuelled reliance on a variety of alternative options to deal with public safety issues. This signalled the failure of a bridging-type social capital developing because bridging social capital, as conceptualised, denoted a functional relationship between state and civil society.

Instead, Old Dobsonville residents on the whole seemed more determined to continue managing public safety issues in the same way that they had done historically. At the same time, however, the expansion of Dobsonville over the years had gradually whittled away the cohesiveness of the community. While it was still viable for associational organisations such as stokvels, burial societies and kitchen clubs to continue operating, they did so on a referral basis. This meant that an informal system was in place to filter members. In the case of broad-based public safety initiatives, this filtering process was less viable.

Respondents mentioned that there had been a neighbourhood watch scheme at one time. Older men and boys patrolled the neighbourhood but this faded out over time. A local resident recounted how men in the neighbourhood would patrol on foot. He

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<sup>149</sup> A full list of crime statistics appears in Appendix Four at the end of the thesis.

<sup>150</sup> Personal communication with SAPS in Dobsonville in 2001.

elaborated that this particular approach only lasted two months as criminal elements began to infiltrate the patrols thereby foiling attempts to catch criminals. This did not represent an ideal scenario for building trust in a context characterized by suspicion. Mention was also made of the use of the whistle method. In this case, each household would have a whistle. When a crime was in progress, residents would blow the whistle to alert neighbours for assistance. These examples illustrate the divergent ripostes to public safety concerns. Residents generated their own public safety tactics. These tactics are principally a bonding type of social capital. Evidence of a declining social order and decreased community trust meant that resident attempts at securing neighbourhood safety were targeted at a much more local level. The use of the whistle method, for example, is indicative of this. This method relies on an informal filtering or exclusionary process, namely geographical location.

The ways of dealing with public safety issues in Dobsonville were fragmented. Other modes of dealing with public safety, as already described, included informal initiatives that were based on the history of self organisation, such as the *makgotla*. There was also an upsurge in vigilante-type activities in response to the ongoing frustrations with policing. Although police discouraged residents from taking command of criminals, it was extremely difficult to curb the propensity in areas afflicted with high crime rates, unemployment and limited police effectiveness. There were nevertheless incidents where suspected criminals were severely dealt with by residents in the absence of the police. Dobsonville residents took responsibility for disciplining suspected criminals directly. A resident recounted an incident highlighting the potential dangers of being involved in public safety initiatives as well as the implications of this involvement relative to local police:

I was part of a street committee and we happened to apprehend a potential rapist. Why I say potential is that these guys were threatening a lady. There were about 14 or 15 of them. So we managed to catch only one. The rest ran away with the lady. So this one that we got, we wanted information from him. So he did not want to give us, instead he threatened us with a gun. Only to find that when we search him he has no gun. So some of my guys, they beat this guy up. So later, we found ourselves to be what you call it, perpetrators of violence. Even myself I decided I am not interested in this kind of thing of street committees and so on because it does not do any good. So it is everyone for himself. (Joubert)

The local context was also such that there were massive disincentives for being identified with formal public safety initiatives for young men. This was not only because of the 'disciplinary' ramifications but also because it makes participants visible in a community where residents know each other. According to Jerry: 'That is how Soweto is. Not only in Dobsonville, but the whole of Soweto. Let me say Black townships, that is what I am talking about. Sometimes you find your neighbour is a criminal or even your brother.' Another resident made a similar comment:

I mean you see CPFs in town, in the suburbs, or more on crime fighting and crime prevention and with us it becomes different because as much as you would be fighting this sporadic crime that happens here and there and opportunistic crimes, at the same time because these people are your friends, your brothers you know, are your sisters. At the same time if someone brings R100 000 into the house you cannot be asking where that money comes from. If there is no money in the house and if the person drives a new car then it brings prestige and status in the family you know. (Lebo)

Amongst the youth especially, the incentives for involvement in organised public safety were limited. The explanation for this was partly apathy, but also partly fear. Whilst social capital in a neighbourhood like Old Dobsonville meant that residents knew each other and each other's families, it also meant that participation in anti-crime initiatives ensured high visibility and hence vulnerability for those involved.

Many older residents expressed dismay regarding the upsurge in crime but also a reluctance to become involved. Older residents interrelated the increase in crime more directly with diminishing community trust. 'We are old people. We don't poke our noses. We are always indoors' (Francine). An elderly woman, when asked how Dobsonville had transformed since the 1950s replied: 'It is too much since the elections. They used to call Dobsonville a rural area. Then came now the 'clever' people. We are afraid even to go out after 8 o'clock. We close our gates.' The most vulnerable residents, such as the elderly and women, retreated indoors as their mechanism to deal with the lack of safety. As in the case of Yeoville, public space became the domain of those who did not feel physically threatened, groups such as young men.



## **Conclusions on Public Safety**

The residents of Old Dobsonville celebrated the change in government in 1994. However, societal transition did not keep pace with administrative transition. Although legislatively and administratively the conditions for a partnership between police and local residents have been created, the results have not been promising. After decades of poor policing, most residents were not willing to embrace a partnership with the police.

Nearly all respondents indicated that they did not trust or have confidence in the police in Dobsonville. This was not only an historical overhang but also an upshot of the ongoing inefficiency of public safety responses to the experiences of the residents of Dobsonville. But even without trust in the police, public safety has been a pressing enough concern for mobilisation within the Old Dobsonville community.

The conclusions on public safety suggest that the history of social capital in a locality diminishes in importance in periods of very low trust. A plateau is reached, after which bridging social capital as a means of co-ordinating co-production becomes unviable and instead bonding social capital becomes the means through which to create security.

## **5.3 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has utilised empirical findings generated from the qualitative research conducted in Dobsonville to bear out some of the conceptual assumptions raised in Chapter Two. It also serves to locate Old Dobsonville within the contextual factors and dynamics outlined in Chapter Three and Chapter Four. The chapter illustrates that in Old Dobsonville, a combination of factors were responsible for vacillating engagement and non-engagement between formal service delivery institutions and residents. The chapter demonstrates how activity associated with the two urban service issues have differed for a number of reasons, paramount among them, the history of a particular service and the legacy of collective action in relation to it.

This chapter shows that SWM, in its own right, has never been an issue of great collective concern given the complex conceptions regarding service delivery obligations. SWM was conflated more generally with other urban services in Old

Dobsonville during the politically vigorous times of the rent and service boycotts of the 1980s. Without the presence of political capital, post-apartheid, activity regarding waste management only attracted those local residents who utilised recycling as a means of generating economic capital. Involvement was not directed at maintaining a clean public space, but in its potential as an income-generating activity.

It was post-apartheid local government institutions that were responsible for what SWM improvement there was. The passion of the local administration for improving waste management assisted enormously in initiating changes as did the implementation of a SWM utility in the City of Johannesburg. This illustrates further the power of formal institutions and decision-making in determining the priorities and resource allocations in localities.

In contrast to SWM, the chapter shows how the issue of public safety has been of great concern in Old Dobsonville since its inception. Until the 1970s, public safety was managed in society through norms and practices shared by residents. On the basis of these shared norms, these responses coalesced into informal institutions. The community of Old Dobsonville mobilised their own resources to fill the institutional void. This was done through a variety of forums that evolved over time, including street committees, *makgotla*, gangs, self-defence units and later CPFs. These associational organisations displayed a combination of bridging and bonding forms of social capital depending upon the degree of threat.

In the period under study, the lack of policing forced local residents to respond to increasingly difficult situations and circumstances. Initially, residents sought response in what could be viewed as 'bridging social capital' through engagement with the authorities and CPFs. Increasingly however as Old Dobsonville began reflecting a more complex urban landscape, bridging social capital was replaced by reversion to bonding social capital and retreat into smaller and known groups. This was in the main largely because involvement in public safety had become interspersed with issues regarding loyalties, danger and threat; competition, suspicion and mistrust amongst groups within Dobsonville had been obscured or suppressed during the apartheid era with combined opposition to the joint enemy of the apartheid state.

The conclusions in this chapter refer only to Old Dobsonville. Chapter Six outlines the parallel circumstances in an entirely different community, Yeoville, with its contrasting experience of local government, associational life and urban service delivery. Only on completion of Chapter Six will the comparative analysis of both case study sites within the context of the conceptual framework be discussed. This will be taken up in detail in Chapter Seven.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE CASE OF YEOVILLE <sup>151</sup>

*Listen up I got a story to tell  
On the streets we got guns and drugs for sale  
Cause you hoes know the game that we play is real  
Keep your mind on the money and your weapons concealed. (Ja Rule, Story to Tell)<sup>152</sup>*

Chapter Five dealt with the analysis of social capital and urban services in Old Dobsonville. This chapter analyses Yeoville, a mainly residential neighbourhood, which falls within the bounds of the Inner City of Johannesburg. It looks specifically at the same two urban services – solid waste management (SWM) and public safety. Chapter Four advanced the contextual information regarding Yeoville, within which the detailed dynamics of the specific urban service are located in this chapter.

A key argument in the present research is that thus far social capital studies have not demonstrated whether the type of urban service has any bearing on the extent to which social capital is able to be constructed or mobilised in a locality. This is a key policy consideration and important because urban services are one means through which government and civil society can potentially positively engage. The position advanced by the study and demonstrated in the context of Dobsonville in the previous chapter, is that the existence and nature of collective action hinges on the type of social capital available, and the mobilisation of social capital depends on the locality, context, history and also the urban service at stake. This chapter repeats the exercise for Yeoville.

The chapter first describes the particularities of the two services in Yeoville. It investigates how the residents of Yeoville have responded in different ways to seeking effective SWM and public safety arrangements. It is argued that these responses have been constructed in a context of often unreliable institutions and contested understandings of public space. The analysis is constructed from evidence drawn from

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<sup>151</sup> Due to the sensitive nature of some of the material in this thesis, the names of the interview respondents have been omitted for reasons of confidentiality.

<sup>152</sup> This is from a verse from a rap song by Ja Rule, an American rap artist. It speaks to the brutality of life on the streets of neighbourhoods where crime is prolific. The lyrics are taken from the internet source: [www.rbaworld.com/Music/Rap/Artist/JaRule](http://www.rbaworld.com/Music/Rap/Artist/JaRule)

a combination of primary and secondary data gathered during the period of October 2000 and August 2001.

The chapter discusses each of the two services separately. It is important to bear in mind, however, that in an inner city neighbourhood, the two services are considered to be more interlinked than was the case in Old Dobsonville. This is largely a consequence of the common association made between urban disintegration and inner city neighbourhoods and the concomitant increases in criminal activity – the so called ‘crime and grime’ duality.

## **6.1 THE CITY AS A WASTELAND**

A common catchline for the post-apartheid inner city is that ‘crime and grime’ are the paramount problems. As part of the former White residential inner city, Yeoville was not confronted with service delivery issues prior to the 1990s. SWM was not considered an individually significant service and had even less of a profile than it had in Dobsonville, particularly as Yeoville never experienced a rent and service boycott deriving from poor living conditions and the linking of these to services.

This section begins by outlining the history of SWM in Yeoville as it was delivered to a White Local Authority (WLA) area. The section then discusses contemporary conceptions of SWM and analyses the effect that changes in the inner city have had on the challenging task of service delivery in the 1990s. As conditions in Yeoville changed dramatically and the effects of urbanisation escalated, it explores how the approaches to SWM were reconstituted.

Historically, WLA areas had a 100 per cent SWM service. A report by the Palmer Development Group (PDG) titled ‘Evaluation of Solid Waste Practice in Developing Urban Areas in South Africa’ (1996) demonstrated that under WLAs, the solid waste budget was not strictly utilised simply for the removal and disposal of domestic waste. It was also utilised for cleaning streets and other public spaces. In Black Local Authority (BLAs) areas this was not the case (PDG, 1996: 11). Instead, it was common for there to be no refuse removal at all, let alone the maintenance of public space.

**Table 6.1 Refuse Removal for Weighted Households in Yeoville**

<b>Regularity of Refuse Removal</b>	<b>Number of Households Collected</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Removed by local authority at least weekly	4436	96.5%
Removed by local authority less often	54	1.175%
Communal refuse dump	8	0.17%
Own refuse dump	5	0.1%
No rubbish disposal	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Unspecified/dummy	94	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4597</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa, Census 1996. Household Services

**Table 6.2 Refuse Removal for Weighted Households in Dobsonville, Yeoville and Johannesburg.**

	<b>Johannesburg</b>	<b>Dobsonville</b>	<b>Yeoville</b>
Removed by local authority at least weekly	86.4	90.1	96.5
Removed by local authority less often	5.6	4	1.17
Communal refuse dump	1.76	0.1	0.17
Own refuse dump	2.5	1.91	0.1
No rubbish disposal	1.3	.87	0
Other	0.15	0	0
Unspecified/dummy	2.19	1.99	2.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Statistics South Africa, Census 1996. Household Services

Because ensuring the actual delivery of services was not a necessary consideration in Yeoville, pre-1994, Yeoville residents had the capacity to tackle specifics on SWM as part of the more general environmental issues. This was evident in a number of ways. Firstly, from 1989 onwards, there were recorded environmental concerns articulated in Yeoville by the Yeoville Residents Organisations (YRO). The YRO joined forces with an environmental non-governmental organisation, Earthlife, to confront environmental issues (*The Watertower*, January 1990: 8) such as the polluting of the Yeoville Ridge (1990: 8). At this time, there was also reference made to the Yeoville Recycling

Scheme (YRS) established in 1991 to deal with what they referred to as the three R's – reduce, recycle and re-use (*The Watertower*, 1990: 10). To a great degree, these campaigns were locality-specific and were confined distinctly to the Yeoville area. According to a YRO member, the recycling initiative was a failure.

Conceptions of what constituted 'grime' or poor waste management in Yeoville was interestingly emblematic of the kinds of issues that concerned residents in the neighbourhood of the time. They were vastly different from those in Old Dobsonville where expectations of solid waste service standards had always been low due to historically poor service delivery. In Old Dobsonville, problems with SWM were conflated with broader service delivery issues. In particular, the most worrying representation of poor waste management for residents was the predominance of illegal dumping and the irregular collection of waste.

In Yeoville, the issues were different. This is understandable if stock is taken of the customary efficiency and effectiveness of the service. In Yeoville, there were localised concerns regarding the failure of the City to collect waste on certain streets on the expected day or in particular public spaces.<sup>153</sup> Concerns with recycling and complaints about the litter generated through the presence of informal traders also became dominant in the early 1990s (*North Eastern Tribune*, July 25 1995: 5). The neighbourhood never experienced the complete absence of service delivery.<sup>154</sup> Finally, during apartheid, businesses such as informal trading had not been allowed in 'White areas' and therefore the presence and nuisance value of these traders was not experienced relative to SWM. But this was to change in the mid-1990s.

Five years later, in 2000, an attitudinal study on service priorities undertaken by Monitor (2000b) in the Greater Johannesburg area indicated that out of 25 categories of concern, communal litter emerged at number six and refuse removal at number 14 overall (Monitor, 2000b: 14). In inner city neighbourhoods specifically, high levels of dissatisfaction with the service were recorded. In fact, in a recent survey of inner city

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<sup>153</sup> In WLA areas, a 100 per cent service delivery was guaranteed.

<sup>154</sup> According to Palmer Development Group (PDG) there were huge discrepancies in the service provided to WLAs and BLAs. Relative to street cleaning, they demonstrated that population per solid waste municipal worker in WLAs was 2800 and in BLAs it was 6300. In terms of population per litre bin, in WLAs there were 350 and in BLAs there were 890 users per bin (PDG, 1996: 13).

residents it was allocated as priority number two (Monitor, 2000b: 27). The same study reflected that in the inner city 65 per cent of the population was dissatisfied with SWM. Further disaggregated, the complaints were reflected as follows: Litter / dumping (76 per cent) was considered the most serious problem, followed by a lack of or irregular refuse removal and cleaning (25 per cent), hygiene problems (14 per cent) and the lack of public bins (10 per cent) (Monitor, 2000: 27).

A number of noteworthy factors were responsible for changing conceptions of and approaches to SWM in Yeoville. The decline in urban neighbourhoods was often represented in terms of an increase in crime and grime. But if 'grime' is disaggregated and explored, it is highly complex. Perceptions of the deteriorating environment were largely attributed to the visual increase of waste in public space in Yeoville. In fact, reasons for this increase were manifold. Yeoville, as a WLA area, was fortunate enough to have had local government resources allocated to it so as to ensure that there was 100 per cent service as well as additional funding for the maintenance of public spaces.

However, with the transformation within the City of Johannesburg, the urban environment transformed and Yeoville became a more populated and socially diverse neighbourhood - but without the additional funds necessary to maintain the same level of services experienced under WLAs. Also, the budget allocated for Yeoville, compared to the WLA-era budgets, was much diminished. Changes in resource allocation and priorities had a noticeable impact on the locality. In addition to the reduced allocation of resources in the neighbourhood, social transformation also had an impact on the waste generated. The entry of a transnational population in Yeoville meant that it became a locality that was no longer comprised of a homogenous group of residents with shared conceptions and expectations of SWM and an ongoing commitment to the urban environment. Instead, an uneasy conflict emerged between the instincts of some residents to trade and survive and the more aesthetic considerations of more established and better-off homeowners.



## Remembering the ‘Good Old Days’

The rose-tinted and selective nostalgia of life in Yeoville under apartheid amongst long-term residents is significant because it created service expectations that were not fulfilled nor were these expectations paralleled by those of new residents. This dichotomy is captured in the following quotation:

Before Yeoville was beautiful, but now it is smelly. The park is like a bush – it’s dirty. The cleanliness of Yeoville has really gone down (Rooftop tenants).

Another resident stated:

Water is all right. OK refuse collection is sweet but not like before. Even people need to be educated you know. I have noticed even with friends of mine that are close to me, he throws down a paper and he is like a metre away from a dustbin. Talk about ignorance and being stubborn. Having that ego. (Sipho)

Waste staff complained of residents disassociating themselves with waste once it was beyond the domain of the private. A local waste manager explained:

Well, they say thank you, they did not know and what must they do with their rubbish once their bag is full and they just fill it up and put it on the pavement. It is going to be your problem. They don’t want be near you whether they have glass that breaks in your bags, or bins or what not. Ja, the excuse is that it is other people and it is not them and the other thing is that they did not know. They thought they could put out every day although you will give them a pamphlet. (Barend)

Accompanying the influx of diverse residents was the creation of a distinct division between attitudes to and management of solid waste in the public space and the private space. Certainly, solid waste in the public domain became much more difficult to manage from the 1990s, for both budgetary and socio-economic reasons. One of the greatest problems experienced by the SWM Department was the densification process resulting from urbanisation trends. For example, the subletting of rooms in flats and houses meant that the household refuse generated per household per site was far in excess of that anticipated by local government. Accompanying this subletting of rooms and flats was the reality that most residents were tenants and transient. It was assumed by local residents and officials that because of this status, these residents were less

amenable to taking care of the environment. A local government employee commented:

There is a big distinction between tenants and residents or those people that own a house. But, we actually have similar problems in Yeoville and Hillbrow. Not putting out waste, putting out waste on the wrong days. (Carole)

In fact, SWM expectations and concerns varied between residents. Some were alarmed by rubbish in the park, others with the inconsistent collection of household refuse and yet others about street litter. Stories were recounted of residents throwing waste material over their neighbour's walls or on to the street from their flats. Some residents viewed this as an indication of poor 'neighbourliness'. Once more responses to these concerns varied.<sup>155</sup> But so extreme was the difference in approaches to the urban environment in the neighbourhood that these issues did not even vaguely trouble many of Yeoville's residents. Whereas in the past, the neighbourhood of Yeoville had had at its disposal resources from individuals who could directly confront SWM problems, as the locality changed this was no longer viable. For example, in 1996, a Yeoville resident began paying local homeless people in the neighbourhood to clean up the area (*North Eastern Tribune*, July 5 1995). These sorts of projects were commonplace in the locality at this time. In the late 1990s, however, confronting issues in this way became increasingly unfeasible as resident numbers grew and the 'village' appeal of Yeoville diminished.

There was some reaction to burgeoning solid waste issues but that they can be attributed to a locality-based social capital is doubtful. Some flat residents and homeowners responded to these problems by organising collectively for the specific purposes of addressing the concern in their slice of the neighbourhood. Collective action included tenants working together to address the waste problem in and around their building.

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<sup>155</sup> Community organisers in Yeoville remained concerned with various waste management issues and these appeared on the Yeoville website in 1998 (<http://www.pcb.co.za>). These included: dustbins and illegal dumping, litter and the possibility of creating a nature reserve on Observatory Ridge. The website is still up and available for reading on current Yeoville issues.

Some residents gave an account:

Many people were dumping in front of our building. Even our neighbours came and dump before our flats – it was so dirty! Now we made a law in our building that if we find someone dumping in front of our building, we report him to the police. Very suddenly the place cleaned up nicely.

Where I am living, there was a lot of dirty things in the garage – so we took action ourselves – the people in the building – to clean up our flat and we contacted the municipality to pick up those things. We took the action ourselves – as a building, a united group of people with a committee acting as our voice. (Progressus Focus Group of flat tenants)

Similarly, in Dunbar Street (predominantly containing houses and not flats) in Yeoville, a specific project of the street committee was to keep the street clean. Every Saturday afternoon at 4pm the street committee cleaned up the street. There were usually 10-20 people who volunteered. The street committee intended to meet the needs of all of the residents who resided in Dunbar Street. The Local Council provided the bags. The Dunbar Street Committee attempted to broaden the initiative to neighbouring streets. The organisers commented that they had dropped 300 notices to people between Bezuidenhout Avenue and Fortesque Road. Only 30 people turned up for the meeting and they were the regulars.

Organising around SWM was an extremely difficult mission to accomplish in Yeoville and once again attempts at organising were tempered by the investment of residents in the neighbourhood. A different set of reasons prevailed from those in Old Dobsonville. In Old Dobsonville, there was an articulated resistance to undertaking the work that was considered to be the domain of local government whereas in Yeoville it was more a case of disinterest. Collective action on the part of residents, therefore, was often confined to a particular building or street.

From the mid-1990s onwards, both residents and City employees were confronted with SWM issues for which they were ill-prepared, from the mid-1990s. Yeoville was not only a residential neighbourhood, but also had a large recreational economy. In particular, Rockey and Raleigh Streets, with a high proportion of nightclubs and bars, were well known localities for recreational activities. This nightlife generated much additional solid waste. Further factors contributing to the solid waste problems were the

upsurge in informal taxi ranks and the increase in informal traders. In response to the increase in waste in public spaces the Yeoville CDF embarked on clean-up campaigns. There was one in 1998 (Smith 1998) and another in 1999. However, these initiatives were not sustained in the longer run.

### **City of Johannesburg Solid Waste Strategy**

Socio-economic, locality-based transformation in Johannesburg occurred alongside substantial institutional changes. The City of Johannesburg adopted an ambitious waste management programme in the inner city as part of the regeneration attempts and to attract big businesses back to the inner city. As discussed in Chapter Four, a waste utility called Pikitup Johannesburg was established in Johannesburg in January 2001 (City of Johannesburg, 2001c).

Allan, Gotz and Joseph (City of Johannesburg, 2001c) argue that one of the major problems associated with waste management in Johannesburg was the loss at which the public service ran. They record that in 1999/2000 the waste management departments experienced a loss of R90 million (City of Johannesburg, 2001c: 82). In part, this was attributed to the fact that the private sector had taken over many of the Council's more commercial services where money could be made. The restructuring of the waste management service worked to the advantage of the inner city in particular. Bambanani Consortium's Local Integrated Development Plan for the Inner City conceptualised waste management problems as follows:

....in areas where there are changes to residential and mixed use or an increase in density, the waste management service is perceived to be inadequate and in need of restructuring in order to provide an adequate and environmentally sustainable service. (City of Johannesburg, 2001d: 39)

The City's response to these new challenges was an intensification of solid waste collection programmes. The inner city developed a 24-hour service. Practically, this meant that there was one shift of people who worked from 6am until 3pm, and then a second shift from 8pm until 3am. The landfill site at Robinson, which served the inner city, was open for 24 hours because of the double shift. Although this did not mean that household collection was constant (it was supposedly twice weekly), it certainly helped

in maintaining the cleanliness of public space. Furthermore, in March 2001, the City of Johannesburg launched a campaign entitled 'A Deep Cleaning Blitz' to clean up Johannesburg.

Operationally, this meant that inner city neighbourhoods, including Yeoville, were the recipients of an intensive clean-up campaign (City of Johannesburg, 2001). Around 2000 employees of the City of Johannesburg tackled the litter issue. Restructuring within the waste management department meant that the service in the inner city improved dramatically in the late 1990s. This was augmented through restructuring within the waste management depots servicing inner city neighbourhoods.

Echoing complaints articulated by local residents, waste management staff expressed concern that most residents did not take responsibility for the urban environment. This was manifest in the behaviour of commuters, traders and pedestrians who displayed limited interest in keeping the city clean. Another huge area of concern for the City of Johannesburg's waste management staff were informal traders who were responsible for leaving their boxes and litter on the streets. This was combined with people making fires, killing chickens, haircutting and carrying on other such activities on pavements and street corners. Illegal dumping was also considered problematic with flat residents throwing waste out of their buildings onto vacant lots.

A specific set of projects was anticipated for dealing with hawkers. These included distributing brooms and plastic bags to informal traders. This was done in conjunction with an intensive education programme. Local waste management staff described their job as a mission to ensure that the inner city was clean and spotless, in fact, the cleanest city in the world. This was seen to be achievable through a partnership approach with the private sector, residents and various traders on the streets.

### **Yeoville Waste Projects**

There were no formal recycling programmes in the Inner City but Yeoville was the recipient of a national government project on waste management called Yeoville Village. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Department of Welfare identified the inner city as a site for a pilot waste management programme.

Within the inner city, Yeoville was selected. The major objective of the project (1999/2000) was to clean up the inner city whilst simultaneously providing job opportunities.

Similarly to Dobsonville, resident participation in SWM issues was determined by the potential for economic capital, rather than out of a deep commitment to environmental improvement. A buyback centre was established on the corner of Harrow Road and Hendon Road in order to begin the process of recycling some of the waste generated in the inner city. The project started as a community project, not as a profit-seeking project. The project manager worked directly with the City of Johannesburg. The general locality was serviced through transfer stations that were satellite stations with collection drums situated in strategically selected public spaces. Furthermore residents could call for assistance to have the recyclable waste collected. The buy-back centre was staffed in 2001 by 15 sorters, one cashier, two managers and the project manager. The project manager commented as follows on the social difference made by the buy-back centre:

I can notice the difference because people can get some change, some money. There are really poor people out there. I remember one old lady was so happy because when she brought her stuff she could actually catch a train and go home to the Eastern Cape and be able to bring something like meat and bread and so on to her children. So it does help. ( Thembi)

But the impact on the physical environment was more difficult to detect:

No I have not noticed, I have not really noticed I think because things are not actually really in place up until the structures have changed. Local government? I think everything is set up because I think one of the priorities of the local government here is to clean up the city. And this is one of the projects that they can use for those projects. (Thembi)

The actual use of the buy-back centre was limited. It was not a service utilised by the majority of residents, but instead was exploited primarily by entrepreneurs who removed the recyclables from the waste stream to sell. This is in line with recycling experiences elsewhere in the developing world (Altaf and Deshazo, 1996; Beall, 1997).

## **Conclusion on SWM in Yeoville**

Yeoville pre-1994 received a 100 per cent SWM service from the then WLA. The highly regulated and efficient service delivery satisfied residents and allowed them the luxury of mobilising around broader environmental issues. Since 1995, poor SWM has been associated with the decline of the urban environment in Yeoville. This has been in part explained by the high mobility of the population as well as densification. And in conjunction with these factors, the public space in the inner city became more accessible thereby introducing activities such as informal trading and increased pedestrian populations. This has generated additional SWM trials for both residents and the City.

For local residents, despite the findings of the Monitor study (2000b), it was found in the present research that issues regarding grime were not uppermost in most Yeoville residents' priorities. It was of concern to a more established, better off proportion of the population, but survival was much more pressing for most newcomers. Although there were active components of Yeoville's population mobilising around SWM issues, particularly as it pertained to public space, it is questionable whether or not the City would have responded so vociferously to the concerns had the inner city not possessed strategic value, or been party to a specialist national level project.

## **6.2 SAFETY AND THE CITY**

As argued in Chapter Four, public safety is about more than crime. It is also about the context within which crime is located. Yeoville provides an entirely different context from that discussed in Old Dobsonville, both historically and in terms of the present social environment. Public safety considerations in Yeoville were not notable historically. Unlike Old Dobsonville, policing was good and highly effective in the locality at issue, at least while it fell within the jurisdiction of the WLA and the Johannesburg City Council. Unlike in the townships, police in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s worked in the interest of the White residential communities. It was only from the 1990s when it became a neighbourhood associated with the problems of 'crime and grime', that Yeoville began experiencing public safety issues. Factors such as increased urbanisation, growing urban poverty, immigration and social and physical

change all played a role. The effects of these underlying factors were intensified by the concentrated criminal activity that co-existed with a corrupt police service.

This part of the thesis specifically discusses public safety issues in Yeoville. It traces the type of public safety issues that emerged in Yeoville as well as the community responses to these issues. It shows how public safety issues have evolved according to an entirely different set of circumstances from those operating in Old Dobsonville. It explores both community responses to public safety as well as the roles played by institutions. It begins with an analysis of the history of public safety in Yeoville until 1990. The section then marks how from 1990 onwards, changes in national apartheid legislation had an enormous impact on inner city neighbourhoods. It explains how criminal activity in inner city neighbourhoods escalated and how this escalation occurred concurrently with extreme social and physical transformation in Yeoville.

This section then moves on to an examination of post-apartheid policing in Yeoville. This includes an analysis of the SAPS and local institutional attempts to deal with the growing public safety issues particular to the inner city. It also outlines the significance of community initiatives such as block and flat committees and partnership arrangements. Finally, the section discusses factors that worked as disincentives for the involvement of local communities in public safety - in particular, the nature and influence of the criminal world in Yeoville.

**‘We have an “inner city condition” developing in Yeoville’<sup>156</sup>**

In direct contradiction to the policing experiences of urban township residents, residents in apartheid White suburbs enjoyed the benefits of a well-resourced civil police force. Unlike township areas, White residential neighbourhoods were not subjected to the vagaries of the municipal police (as explained in Chapter Five) or the involvement of police in political violence. Palmary (2001) relates that 74 per cent of police stations in apartheid South Africa were located in White areas (Palmary, 2001: 4). In addition, from 1961 police reserves were set up in White areas to confront perceived increasing crime (Brewer, 1994: 242). What crime there was in Yeoville in

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<sup>156</sup> This quotation is taken from a statement made by a key interviewee respondent in Yeoville.



the 1980s was dramatically reported.<sup>157</sup> There were newspaper accounts of reserve policemen surging through Yeoville in crime prevention operations (*Sunday Star*, 29 September 1983) and the establishment of the Yeoville Police Station was considered newsworthy and attributable to the interventions and energies of the Progressive Federal Party Member of Parliament for Yeoville (Manuel Correia, 1983).

Although there were accounts of escalating crime in Yeoville during the 1980s, the experience of policing only really intensified for residents of the inner city with the 'greying process' or deracialisation. But, once again, it was Black residents in the inner city who were subject to constant police harassment, not their White counterparts (Morris, 1999a: 56). Whilst Black residents in the inner city experienced police harassment pertaining to the Group Areas Act, other types of criminal activity were minimal. Before the 1990s, Yeoville ambled along without any real fear for public safety. As with other White neighbourhoods in Greater Johannesburg, crime became an increasingly pervasive problem in the 1990s. Yeoville residents were confronted with intensifying crime in the 1990s in a way that they had not experienced before.

Although accounts of crime persisted in Yeoville from the early 1990s, residents contended that crime actually increased dramatically from 1995 onwards. Further, the nature and severity of the crimes intensified from petty theft to violent crimes of armed robbery. The dangers in Yeoville were first expressed vocally in 1995 after the stabbing of a Jamaican owner of Crackers Bar situated in Yeoville. It was seen to be a turning point in the neighbourhood and it was described by a local resident as a 'real morale blow'.

A range of interventions was instituted by local business people in response to the upsurge in crime. At first, the 'Hells Angels'<sup>158</sup> were hired to clean up the streets. Thereafter, shop owners paid guards to patrol the streets. Discourse among progressive and active residents began to reflect the need for Yeoville to confront issues regarding public safety.

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<sup>157</sup> A *Sunday Star* headline in 1983 is evidence of this. The article was entitled 'Where danger lurks on every corner'. The article referred to the 'staggering crime rate', and to the park that 'attracts the dregs of society – drug pushers, robbers and hoodlums' (*Sunday Star*, 10 September 1983).

<sup>158</sup> The Hells Angels are a motorcycle club more often associated with crime and gangs in public consciousness.

Richard Levin, a well-known local activist, argued in a newspaper article:

We have an 'inner city' situation developing in Yeoville and surrounding suburbs. The crime situation is very worrying and there is also a seediness taking hold in the area. Women don't feel safe walking around anymore. The time has come for community-based organisations to formulate a campaign to save Yeoville and its environs. (Capel, 1995)

The acknowledgement of this increase in criminal activities was accompanied by racial accusations. There were accounts that crime was on the increase due to the changing population or the influx of immigrants. This was not the case in Old Dobsonville where such accusations were less pervasive as a consequence of the racial homogeneity of the township.

It transpired that responses to Yeoville crime were not uniform, nor community-based. Instead, residents in Yeoville were alienated from each other and different groups cast blame on each other for the increase in crime. South Africans blamed foreign Africans for the crime, and White South Africans blamed Black South Africans. Furthermore, whilst some residents energetically participated in policing structures, others actively sought invisibility, and others still, chose to live in Yeoville because it was a neighbourhood that facilitated criminal activity.

Unlike Old Dobsonville, the implications of the problems regarding public safety manifested themselves in both the physical and social environment. A number of shops closed down. Book shops, coffee shops and trendy restaurants were replaced by discount wholesale outlets and banks closed down or accepted only deposits (Hogan, 5 May 2000: 1). The banks 'redlined'<sup>159</sup> Yeoville as a neighbourhood and Rockey Street, a well-known recreational venue, became less popular. Business opportunities declined or were replaced by far less acceptable business operations such as the drug trade. Accompanying the physical transformation in Yeoville were the social effects. Many residents dealt with public safety issues by retreating from the public domain and community life. One resident commented:

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<sup>159</sup> 'Redlining' was the practice of banks whereby they would not give mortgages for the purchase of houses in neighbourhoods considered by them to be high risk in terms of bond repayments.

When I come back from work, I close the door and do not go out because of the fear. There is no trust – nobody trusts nobody. I work, go home – stay there – sleep – work – go home – I just stay there. You can't go out. (Progressus, 2000: 14)

This sentiment was common amongst residents who feared public spaces. Those elaborating this fear most strongly were women and older men. Young men were less inclined to articulate their fear. Another critical factor is that the urban and social environment of the inner city is such that it facilitates the presence of criminal elements and it is these residents who have been most able to roam the streets freely. This view was echoed amongst many residents, and especially pensioners, who increasingly became victims of crime. Pensioners posited crime as their greatest concern and stated that they too withdrew into their homes for fear of being victims. Even though there was a desperate need for local residents to confront public safety issues, they did not assemble in response to this crime and violence. A former township resident and current Yeoville resident commented:

I have realised that if you stay in a place which has got no security, like a security which is in charge of the whole suburb, it is better to go to the township. The township is safer than these areas. Everybody minds his own business here. It is not easy to go into a house in the township to steal something. If they catch you, they burn you. They know that. You are in trouble if you are caught. (Jack)

Admittedly, responses to public safety dilemmas were not only those of recoil. There were ad hoc incidents where residents in flats bonded together. An example was given of how when several units in a building were all victims of crime, tenants stood together and went to the police as a group (Progressus, 2000). In other streets, experimentation with street committees had taken place but these were largely unsustainable. The local councillor however did seem to work directly with established street committees in Dunbar Street, St Georges Street, Jolly Street, Becker Street and Francis Street.

Given that many Yeoville residents lived in flats, there was some expression of a greater need to feel safe in the block of flats rather than on the street. Generally, public space, if threatening, was avoided. One implication of the avoidance of public space is the diminished likelihood that bridging social capital might emerge. On the contrary,

responses to public safety issues were manifest in patterns of behaviour that might be more appropriately be characterised as bonding social capital. These findings are similar to those in the work of Sampson (2001). Sampson argues that neighbourhood-level public safety initiatives hinge upon the nature of the neighbourhood itself. Those neighbourhoods with palpable mistrust and absence of shared expectations are unlikely to organise. Furthermore, his findings suggest that 'social capital and collective efficacy appear to be undermined by the concentration of disadvantage, racial segregation, family disruption, residential instability, and dense population concentration' (Sampson, 2001: 99). All those conditions were found pertaining to contemporary Yeoville.

### **Welcome to Yeoville and the City of Gold**

Experiences of crime were not found to be uniform across population groups living in Yeoville. African immigrants were much more likely to be targeted for both criminal activities as well as police harassment. Public safety issues obviously spilt over into the foreign African community and Morris's study (1998) on problems facing Congolese and Nigerian immigrants in another part of the inner city presents crime and violence as one of the major concerns of these groups. Morris (1998: 1129) contends:

In Johannesburg's inner city, the strong social networks among the Nigerian and Congolese communities meant that nearly every criminal incident involving a Nigerian or Congolese as victim was widely reported within the respective communities.

The South African Police Services played a specific role in exacerbating the problem as they became notorious for victimising foreign African immigrants. Police raids on foreign migrants were a common occurrence and the police often deliberately targeted the African immigrant population. Flats were frequently raided, goods stolen and bribes demanded. Refugee communities complained that even with legal documentation they were arrested by police and once arrested they could not afford to pay the required bribes for release (Harris, 2001b: 8). A respondent said of the Yeoville police:

A foreigner was shot in my presence. And when they came they said 'yes you will all die one by one'. Not that they told me, I heard that myself. So why should I rely on the police, anyway? They did nothing about that crime.

The broader implications of this policing trend were that there was a process of immigrant communities turning inwards. The establishment of specific identity-based organisations for foreign African migrants meant that they were better able to survive and respond to this persecution.

Although, the immigrant/refugee African population was subject to much discrimination in the inner city, it was still seen as the place to reside, at least initially, because of the definite presence of fellow 'countrymen'. This presence provided the assurance of assistance if the need arose (Sinclair, 1998: 66). Yeoville also displayed the phenomenon of immigrant communities choosing self-exclusion as a protective mechanism that manifested in a bonding form of social capital. This bonding social capital emerged as a response to a perceived threat. It was a resource that was not equally mobilisable in relation to SWM. South African residents noticed and commented enviously on the coherence of the foreign community. A local resident reported:

Once there was this lady who worked for a Nigerian family – a domestic – She contacted robbers to come when the Nigerian people left the house. But one other Nigerian saw that and called the others and within a minute they were all there – it was terrible, but they stood together: The ones with guns used the guns, the ones that could fight were fighting, the others that could pray were praying and so they were all helping and the robbers lost badly. (Progressus, 2000: 15)

Significant for the study of public safety and social capital in Yeoville was the finding that even without a collective historical experience, social capital was present amongst immigrant/refugee communities. The bonds that formed engendered some assurance of assistance and support in a hostile environment. Although the organisations formed amongst immigrant or refugee populations were not specifically constructed to deal with public safety, the latter became an adjunct advantage. As argued above, while history and context may have been responsible for the lack of social cohesion and limitations on the development of social capital on the one hand, it was equally responsible for creating a context that necessitated the development of more contained stocks of social capital on the other.

This trend has been acknowledged by African urban theorists (such as Halfani, 1997 and Simone, 1999, 2001a, 2001b) who argue that conditions within African cities often act as catalysts for the development of social capital amongst some groups, in most instances socially excluded groups. Simone (1999: 8) argues that African cities are largely characterised by a lack of effective governance, the implications of which include the creation of an unsafe and uncertain environment. Residents, in response to these uncertainties, consolidate geographically in blocks or in neighbourhoods to compensate for the lack of an institutional presence and in an attempt to approximate an institutional presence, structures emerged to recreate lost social ties. It is because of these specific circumstances that these social structures emerged.

### **Adapt or Organise**

The most structured organisational response to public safety was the Yeoville Community Police Forum (YCPF). This forum was formed in 1995 as the product of a nationally-coordinated project. From 1995, its activities were sporadic and it appeared to have battled with the lack of community involvement (*North Eastern Tribune*, 7 March 1995). Numerous attempts were made by community members to stimulate the involvement of residents in the YCPF but these largely failed. Among the actions were workshops on the role of the CPF and attempts to set up street committees.

Several activities were initiated by the YCPF. But the CPF experienced a lull in activity, duly explained as follows by a former member of the Executive. This story reveals how partisan politics and the competitiveness within civil society cannot be ignored and how these dynamics impacted negatively on processes intended to construct social capital. According to the respondent, in the 1999 elections for the CPF, the ANC decided that such a powerful community organisation could not exist without falling under its control. The existing YCPF executive had a number of 'old' residents who worked effectively with the police at that time, but they were not ANC members. The ANC in Yeoville therefore voted its own members onto the executive of the YCPF. Yet, in the aftermath of the elections, some ANC members voted onto the executive submitted their verbal resignation for personal reasons. Because the meeting had ended,

no new elections could be held and constitutionally the CPF ceased to exist.<sup>160</sup> Only some segments of Yeoville's population were aware of the existence of the YCPF. Foreign Africans in particular had no sense of this organisation, unlike the situation that pertained in Dobsonville where residents knew of the CPF, but chose not to participate. That the organisation failed to survive in a landscape littered by complaints of corrupt police, the harassment of foreign residents, drugs, crime, prostitution and absentee landlords was indeed striking.

Explanations for this lack of involvement were attributed to a number of factors including the culture of fear and apathy amongst residents and poor policing. There were also the sentiments of residents reluctant to participate in public safety initiatives for fear of reprisals, those who felt safe in the neighbourhood once they were familiar with the area, and others who argued that the transience of the population discouraged ownership of the public safety issue and investment in the place. Those who were 'in the know' felt less threatened in the neighbourhood. One resident stated:

Most people they know me and I am used to the place and I can identify this person does not stay in Yeoville. For me while I find it difficult but I know that there are parts or whatever. But for me, I don't. I always know people who are doing those kinds of things maybe but even if they did not tell but I can hear of this kind of person is doing this kind of thing. (Zanile)

The non-response of the majority of local South Africans interviewed to public safety issues compared to the responsiveness of foreign Africans in Yeoville would seem to suggest that in addition to context and history, a perceived direct threat played an important role in social capital development.

Gradually through the 1990s inner city neighbourhoods became home to illegal activities, partly because they were home to a plethora of residents with varying interests. Some of the new residents gravitated to the inner city because of the pull of criminal life and the environment of the inner city allowed this both physically and socially. Physically, the type of accommodation provided through predominantly rented flats with absentee landlords meant that invisibility was more assured. The transience

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<sup>160</sup> Against this background, attempts to launch it again were made in January 2001.

of the population and everybody 'minding their own business' meant that prying neighbours were a limited likelihood. Socially, the majority of residents were young, single and away from home. Furthermore, inner city neighbourhoods were overcrowded. This assisted in the desire for relative anonymity.

Consequently, it was fairly easy to be involved in crime without being detected. For instance, youth involved in muggings were able to lose themselves in the crowds, slip into their flats, change and come out onto the street again, undetected. Flats, in turn, became the focus of burglaries because the urban environment was such that criminals were able to enter the flat, steal the goods and then transport the same goods into a waiting taxi without creating too much suspicion. Taxi drivers were then paid off for their role and to keep quiet. This sort of activity would have been much more difficult to undertake in an urban township of row houses where neighbours are close and local residents easily known to each other.

### **Criminal Life**

As discussed above, some inner city residents were attracted to the area particularly because it facilitated criminal activity. Others were drawn into criminal activity once they had settled in Yeoville. Yeoville constituted a melting pot of residents, many of whom were struggling to survive and were therefore amenable to the lure of crime.

The implications of the presence of these residents in Yeoville for understanding the relationship between public safety and social capital are threefold: firstly, these residents were not likely to engage in public safety initiatives; secondly, whilst these residents were able to move around freely, other residents retreated from public space in fear; and thirdly, whilst social capital appeared in short supply amongst those residents in Yeoville in general, a form of symbiotic engagement was discovered through the research process amongst residents whose existence was underpinned by criminal activity. Criminal activity flourished in the absence of a more generalised locality based social capital (Harrison, 2002b). However, a presence in public space was required in order for them to be drawn into criminal activities.



A local resident explained the process as follows:

When I first met with Al they had a shop down here. See by the shops. A game shop around the corner and they were selling like cell phones and so on. So that is where they used to hang out in most cases and they would see me passing by and sitting downstairs basking in the sun and so on. They did not know and I did not know them but I would just look at them as days went by and weeks went by. A couple of weeks went by and they started like just greeting, and I greet back and greeting and greet back and sometimes I would maybe ask for cigarettes and so on and they would give me one. And they would start to invite me to their shop and stuff like that. I would come there and start saying jokes and so on and so on. (Terence)

This process was common in a neighbourhood such as Yeoville with its high unemployment and young residents. Gotz and Simone (2003) have argued that the newness of Johannesburg's inner city residents created the conditions for interactions between different groupings (Gotz and Simone, 2003: 2). One of the interactions was crime, framed by an ethos of 'every person for themselves'.

The impression should not be left that interactions in the inner city neighbourhoods are random and atomistic; and there are networks at play, founded not on close knit or familial networks, but conducted on the foundation of common business interest. Mark Shaw (2002) contends that in these crimes individuals work together for profit. He explained that 'loose and often temporary alliances or associations may be formed around specific projects' (2002: 16). It was aptly put in an interview I undertook: 'No, it's not about building up trust. It's a matter of let me do what you want, pay me my money.'<sup>161</sup>

But there were two obvious categories of networks engaged in criminal activity in inner city neighbourhoods; namely local networks and foreign networks. Local low level networks were usually involved in muggings, mobile phone robberies or burglaries. These 'boys' were called *tsotsis* by local residents<sup>162</sup> The second category was the foreign networks that controlled much of the inner city drug and the prostitution trade.

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<sup>161</sup> Personal communication with key informant in Yeoville.

<sup>162</sup> The original definition of a '*tsotsi*' came from the 1940s. It referred to a 'flashily dressed African street thug'. Nowadays '*tsotsi*' is the name mainly given to individuals involved in street crime. This definition is also presented in Chapter Five. Its origins have also been explained by the South African pocket Oxford Dictionary 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition as perhaps from the Sotho corruption of zoot suits.

Much has recently been written about foreign-based networks, particularly the Nigerian-controlled drug trade in Hillbrow (Leggett, 2001; Shaw, 2002). Ted Leggett's description of the sleazy hotel syndrome in Hillbrow, for example, established that most Nigerians' involved in the drug trade in Johannesburg's inner city were Ibo Nigerians (Kirk, 2000: 2). There were also accounts of networks engaged in fraud and the fake mineral businesses.

The third category of networks, however, was the one in which South Africans and foreign residents worked together in 'crews' on common projects. This was an interesting finding for the discussion on social capital and public safety. The relationship between immigrant population and local South Africans was considered rare because of the animosity between foreign and local residents. The present research established that in fact the relationship was a lot more common and co-dependent than the literature has described thus far. Foreign and local residents were prepared to abide by each other for a good business arrangement.

Shaw's study (2002) confirms that West African networks were prepared to engage with local networks for business purposes. He uses the example of mobile phones commenting that West Africans were prepared to purchase mobile phones from local residents who had acquired them through muggings. These business relationships cannot be described as bonding or bridging social capital. Their significance lies in the fact that the locality constructed a safe domain for these players to operate in Yeoville and led to the detriment of public safety for other residents.

### **The Local '*Tsotsis*'**

In the case of local networks there was a necessary brotherhood required for managing successful small-time criminal activities. It was explained that '*tsotsis*' involved in muggings worked in teams of two or three. This was similar in the case of housebreakings. The execution of a housebreaking was a well-planned activity. Each member of the crew was involved in one aspect of the crime. For instance, on the occasion of a flat robbery there was a distinctive order of business. One person was responsible for going into the flat and packing up the goods. Another person would take the goods out of the flat and put them into a car. The goods would then be transported

and sold directly to a pawnshop. Generally, these relationships are tight and each person has their role to play in the execution of the crime. It therefore follows that a crucial aspect to maintaining this circle of crime is the brotherhood with its assurance of complicity and silence.

Some reference has been made to this kind of phenomenon in the social capital literature which refers to these bonds as 'bad social capital'. Moreover, similar relationships, for example the Sicilian Mafia, have been described in the literature (Portes, 1998) before the prominence of the social capital debate. Cottino's (1999) article on the 'Sicilian culture of violence' emphasises the types of social relationships required to sustain such organisations as the Mafia hinge dramatically on high levels of trust (Cottino, 1999: 106).

But the form these criminal networks took in the case of Yeoville did not seem to replicate the type of bonding social capital associated with the Ku Klux Klan or the mafia. Moreover, Glaser's work, cited in Chapter Five, speaks of the locality-bound identity of gangs in Dobsonville and Soweto. This was not the case in Yeoville where relationships were more flexible. These findings suggest that the terms 'bad social capital' or 'anti social capital' are narrowly conceived. Social capital in the pursuit of illegal activities is as complex in its execution as in any other forms it takes.

There were of course incidents mentioned where relationships broke down. The betrayal by a member of the group was called 'knocking',<sup>163</sup> and it was not recommended for survival. The '*tsotsis*' operating in neighbourhoods tended to be aware of each other. A local interviewee explained:

Cos, I mean if I was robbing people, I would also know other boys that were robbing people. Because sometimes we will meet at the same person trying to sell things to him. Come up with a computer. They would come up with a cell phone.<sup>164</sup> We would see one another and say maybe this guy is also busy. Basically it is that way.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Knocking is the term used for double crossing.

<sup>164</sup> In South Africa, mobile phones are called cell phones.

<sup>165</sup> Personal communication with key Yeoville informant.

This relationship extended beyond just knowing each other. It also served as a referral system for the purchase of stolen goods and of illegal firearms.

### **Far-Flung Networks or 'Home-boy' Ties<sup>166</sup>**

Immigrant/refugee residents settled in the inner city when they arrived in South Africa as it was often the only place that they knew (Morris, 1999b). Either they had friends and relatives who already resided in the inner city or they were referred to the inner city as the place where other countrymen could be located (Morris, 1999a; Shaw, 2002; Leggett, 2001). Accommodation was also simpler in the inner city, particularly in the context of deracialisation and absentee landlordism. If their contacts were involved in illegal activities, it was in many instances the case that 'new' blood was recruited into the business – at least initially (Leggett, 2001).

The most frequently written-about business is the Nigerian-run drug and prostitution business. This is primarily because it was specifically the target of two major studies, one undertaken by Ted Leggett (2001) and the other by the South African Institute for International Affairs (2001). The present research was only able to investigate these trades at a fairly superficial level. Aside from drugs, some residents were involved in activities ranging from telephone scams<sup>167</sup> to the illicit buying and selling of minerals.

Many of these businesses originally mushroomed because they were unique in the South African context, they were businesses associated with foreign migrants - an untapped market. The inner city was selected as the location for this business because it facilitated the business. On the supply side for example, the case of telephone tapping required an available telephone box to tap into and a population with connections abroad. Once the box was located and connections established, international calls were offered at cheap rates. Whilst these types of informal enterprises were found commonly in other countries, they had not as yet been put into operation in South Africa. The virgin market provided perfect business opportunities and the inner city community

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<sup>166</sup> 'Home-boy Ties' refers to the ongoing relationships African urban dwellers have to their place of origin. These ties are used as mutual aid amongst the group (Harries-Jones, 1969: 298).

<sup>167</sup> Telephone scams involved tapping into legitimate phone lines and using these lines to make international phone calls.

provided custom. It followed that these sorts of businesses became closely associated with foreign migrants.

Similar to the referral system operating in local networks, these systems were run on the same word-of-mouth and familiarity system. A Ghanaian resident explained:

Most of our friends are brothers from Ghana. Not all Ghanaians are doing phones, some do minerals like platinum, diamonds, you know things you mine. You do business that you good in – I don't know anything about minerals so if I find someone with a good business I take him to the brother then after they deal my brother will give me something.<sup>168</sup>

A further example was given by a Nigerian resident involved in credit card fraud. He explained that he was known in the area as someone who dealt in fraudulent credit cards. As such, if someone was trying to flog a card, they would be referred to him. The next step was for the two of them to 'hook up' with each other and strike a business deal. This information suggested that there was direct engagement between residents concerned with illegal activities. Accompanying this engagement was a code or conspiracy of silence thereby making public safety initiatives targeting by-law enforcement inapt.

### **Connected Networks**

This chapter has established, thus far, that the stocks of social capital in the locality of Yeoville were not all encompassing. When present it was bonding social capital that could be evinced in palpable networks operating within discrete, exclusive pockets. Overall, the research indicates that in the inner city there was negligible interaction between foreign African migrants and locally established associational groups except in respect of individual business transactions. This was despite the fact that inner city neighbourhoods in Johannesburg were often in the news because of the extreme levels of xenophobia directed at foreign African immigrants (Morris, 1998, 1999a,b). The difficulties experienced by foreign residents in the inner city at the hands of the police and local population have been extensively written about (Harris, 2001b), (Reitzes, 1998) and (Morris, 1998, 1999a,b). However, this was not found to be the whole

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<sup>168</sup> Personal communication with key Yeoville informant.

picture. There were those immigrant/refugee residents in the inner city who were deeply complicit in criminal activities and it was as criminals that they became closely associated with local South African criminal networks. A Nigerian resident explained: 'A stranger cannot do something alone in somebody's country. If we work in South Africa we need South African help. But I only go to them if I see I really need their help' (Sammy).

So amidst the tensions between foreign immigrants and local South African residents was a domain where these two groups needed to engage with each other. There was a set of 'informal business' networks, not all of them illicit. It was these informal business networks that consolidated a relationship between foreign residents and South African residents, all of whom played a role. These networks were based on a loose sense of trust but they did not emulate a 'gang' culture because access was fairly easily obtainable and trust was efficient, utilitarian and in some ways transient.

This makes it difficult to liken these relationships to other written-about forms of bonding social capital found amongst criminal networks such as the mafia. In the inner city, connections between heterogeneous groups emerged out of market relations before they did out of any evolving or contrived construction of social capital *vis a vis* local service issues and politics. What made the phenomenon in Johannesburg's inner city unique, was that, woven into the criminal discourse was a symbiotic relationship between some foreign residents and local residents engaged in the same lifestyle. A Nigerian resident stated frankly that in order to survive in the inner city he acted like a 'local'. He wore a cap and clothes like South Africans to fit in and to be invisible. He befriended or knew South Africans specifically to assure safety around the place, arguing that foreign residents needed to know people to be safe. Moving around with local '*tsotsis*' also assured some measure of security for foreign residents surviving in Yeoville where they were susceptible to attack. Knowing a local South African *tsotsi* could also mean accessing stolen goods more cheaply and efficiently because contacts amongst '*tsotsis*' involved in burglaries meant by-passing the pawnshops as the middlemen. For South Africans, knowing foreign residents provided access to business opportunities and bigger deals.

Foreign residents also claimed that they were vulnerable and less accustomed to the use of guns and violence (Shaw, 2002).<sup>169</sup> They were certainly more visible in these dangerous neighbourhoods because they did not speak a local language. Often, according to interviewees, violent activities were outsourced to South African youth. Leggett's study in Hillbrow yielded similar information. He suggested that 'Nigerian drug dealers do not engage in violence themselves, but if a "hit" is required, they hire Zimbabwean or local thugs. However, a more common way of dealing with a maverick is to have a police contact arrest them' (Leggett cited in Kirk, 2000: 3). A comparable account was told to me in Yeoville where it was stated that if the Nigerians wanted someone dealt with, they would not be directly involved in executing violence. Instead they would pay a local person to do the job. It was explained in crisp terms 'they give you the money, you go there you do the job whatever they want you to do and that is it. It is finished' (Terence).

The ramifications of this reality are manifold because of the impact it has on other residents. Within this inner city world dwell other residents who attempt to eke out a living in a more legitimate manner. The frustration amongst residents is intense. Some residents struggle to confront the disintegration. Others are resigned to it but are not involved, while others too live in fear in their neighbourhoods. It therefore becomes the case that the risks associated with criminal activities of this nature are limited. So whilst constructive relationships are struck between those engaged in the criminal economy, other residents who are not engaged in this lifestyle have to retreat indoors. This propagates immense distrust amongst residents. Those involved in crime have cleverly created domains where they feel reasonably safe. Agreements are struck and complicity ensured amongst the players, whilst most other residents increasingly withdraw into private space.

The feeling amongst residents that there was no formal organisational assistance exacerbated this scenario. Resident accounts also suggested that the local police were one of the players in this criminal world. Conversations with a range of local residents, those with and those without a hand in illegal activities, suggested that some local police were involved in corruption. One resident stated: 'There is no police in Yeoville,

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<sup>169</sup> This is considered highly unlikely by academics who worked closely on crime at an empirical and theoretical level. Personal communication with Denis Rodgers, 11 February 2003.

they are all criminals.’ The threat of arrest seemed allayed through a well-timed bribe. One interviewee claimed he always had a R50<sup>170</sup> note in his pocket just in case local police confronted him. It follows that residents were reluctant to approach the police for assistance in solving public safety problems. Instead the overwhelming sense was that they were untrustworthy and to be avoided, a problematic starting point for facilitating or advancing bridging social capital or co-production of public safety.

## **Policing**

The context above has described the setting in which public safety initiatives and policing are required to operate. Post-apartheid policing in the inner city certainly became much more challenging from the 1990s onwards. The SAPS was confronted with a myriad of factors which made policing much more difficult than it had been in the past. According to police crime statistics from January – June 2001, the most widespread criminal activities in the area included: robbery with aggravated circumstances involving a firearm, robbery, assault with the intent to cause grievous bodily harm, assault, theft and malicious damage to property (SAPS, 2001).

During the apartheid years, as described in Chapter Four, policing was primarily concerned with implementing and enforcing apartheid legislation. In the post-apartheid period, the Yeoville police were expected to deal with organised crime syndicates, a sophisticated drug trade and a proliferation of gun crime. The SAPS was largely ill-equipped for dealing with these new challenges. As discussed in Chapter Four, post-apartheid policing was underpinned by the concept of community policing. This meant that communities should play a role in crime prevention in conjunction with the police. Unlike Old Dobsonville, where historically local police had tormented residents, Yeoville as a locality had not suffered a similar set of circumstances. Nevertheless, various residents brought with them to Yeoville, established conceptions of the police, and post-apartheid policing successfully created distrust of the police in the minds of residents. Much of the empirical work undertaken for this thesis suggested that local police were both corrupt and inefficient. Accusations from residents were varied.

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<sup>170</sup> R50 was the equivalent of £3.50 in 2001.



One resident explained:

Because first, for if I was to go and ask for an affidavit maybe my ID<sup>171</sup> book is lost or something, they will demand somehow a coldrink for me. Ja, which makes it like, you are paying for an affidavit. So, who is going to trust the police? (Sol)

Others argued that reporting a crime to the police was a pointless exercise. Some residents repeated tales whereby the police response to reporting a crime was that the local resident should attempt to find the people responsible for the crime and then they should go back to the police station. Another worrying trend was reflected in the comment of a respondent who was involved in criminal activities in Yeoville. He said:

Yeoville is no longer safe like before but you know we watch our backs wherever we go. If someone approaches and asks me for a gun/drugs etc. I will say I can organise even if I am not into such things mainly so that no one can identify my weaknesses. I say I will see what I can do. Safety is much more guaranteed once you know the place. After six months I felt at home in Yeoville. I knew people, I recognised faces from hanging around in nightclubs and bars. Also, I am a good dancer and was recognised by that. So, it's not different from Hillbrow.<sup>172</sup> The police in Yeoville are corrupt – even criminals are better than them. The police know me and approach me and say they feel like tea and I would know to give R10 or whatever cash I had on me and they will leave me alone. (Sean)

All residents in the neighbourhood grappled with the possibility of falling prey to crime but responded differently to the risk. One resident explained his reluctance at being involved in the CPF:

Personally, I would like to be involved there but I would give it a lot of thought. The thing is you are involved. You cannot just stick your neck for nothing you know. Things like that because as a result when you get involved in fighting crime. You grow enemies. You know that. There has got to be a certain incentive. (Sol)

Not all police were corrupt but those that were not confronted an institutional culture of conspiracy and silence that had been in existence for decades. The police knew there were regulars involved in crime but in order to arrest them, they needed to be caught

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<sup>171</sup> An ID document refers to an identity document which all South Africans are required to have.

<sup>172</sup> Hillbrow is an inner city neighbourhood but far more dangerous and chaotic than Yeoville.

with either drugs on their person or stolen goods. Both social and economic infrastructure worked against their efforts. Police suggested that when they went to the scene of the crime, witnesses were not prepared to offer any assistance. This was a consequence of fear and distrust. In addition, the physical environment further complicated both the apprehension of criminals and the visibility of criminal activity. Invariably flatlands more effectively protected residents involved in illegal activities than those in the townships which had been set up specifically to allow easy police access.

It was this combination of factors that suggested that dealing with this criminal world was not easy. Firstly, it appeared that this lifestyle was pursued largely with impunity. Secondly, most residents of these neighbourhoods were not prepared to confront the criminal world for reasons of their own safety. And thirdly, the police were trapped in a paradoxical relationship with criminals. Either they were complicit in the activities of the criminal world or they were unable to deal with it due to constraints such as insufficient evidence and a lack of personnel.

### **Safer Inner City Neighbourhoods**

Unlike Soweto, where public safety considerations were distant from the minds of most policy makers, the Inner City of Johannesburg was at the forefront of public safety initiatives from 1995. Upon such widespread recognition that public safety was a concern in the inner city, Johannesburg's institutional resources were propped up to assist in combative strategies. Whereas Old Dobsonville primarily had the resources of the local community and police in order to tackle public safety issues, Yeoville had the additional investment of various inner city task teams and institutional support for the project.

One such programme was the Safer Cities programme established in 1997 (Palmary, 2001: 7). The programme advocated by Safer Cities included three strategic interventions. These were: making urban environments less conducive to crime; developing a culture of crime prevention, providing information and tools for assisting victims and preventing victimisation (City of Johannesburg, 1997: 13). The Inner City of Johannesburg was the focus of these interventions. Palmary (2001, 7) argued that the

Safer Cities programme in Johannesburg was an unsuccessful scheme as a consequence of the failure of the City of Johannesburg to implement the programmes that the Safer Cities collective suggested. This suggests, as argued in Chapter Three, that the political and financial objectives of government institutions are key to determining the success of these types of projects. Nonetheless, the significance of the Safer Cities programme lies in the fact that the inner city was the focus of this crime prevention agenda. Furthermore, the concept of visible policing also seemed more purposeful in the inner city. Women's safety, in particular, in the urban city environment was an additional consideration and there were discussions pertaining to the ways in which the urban environment in the city (effectively, inner city) could be amended so as to deal with the problem (Palmary, 2001: 14).

Although local government was not responsible for public safety, conditions within Inner City neighbourhoods necessitated that local government engage directly with crime. This engagement meant integrating crime into local government strategies. The means by which this was done was through the establishment of a metropolitan police service. The notion of a metropolitan police service was contained in the South African Police Service Amendment Act (1998) (Rauch, 2001: 1). The tasks of the municipal police service were: traffic policing; policing of municipal by-laws and regulations and crime prevention (Rauch, 2001: 1). The Johannesburg Metro Police Department was launched in March 2001 (Rauch, 2001: 6). Although it was operational in all jurisdictions of the City of Johannesburg, the inner city was one of its main priority areas (Rauch, 2001: 7). This meant additional resources for inner city localities. At first, it was expected that the role played by the metropolitan police would be minimal and the policing of the Inner City would remain firmly entrenched in the hands of the South African Police Services. In truth, the Metropolitan Police have played an important role in maintaining a visible presence. However, Yeoville whilst getting the spin off from other parts of the Inner City, also suffered relative neglect. Moreover, the jury has to remain out given the relatively short lifespan of the metropolitan to date.

## **Conclusions on Public Safety in Yeoville**

This section has outlined how public safety trends in Yeoville changed rapidly in the past two decades. Accompanying these changes have been public safety developments that have created a scenario in which it has been difficult for police or residents to engage. Although legislatively and administratively the conditions have been created for a partnership between police and local residents, the results have not been promising. A common view amongst residents, that police are untrustworthy and corrupt, has meant that residents have not responded to the notion of community policing. Instead a process of resident withdrawal from public space has been evidenced.

In addition, to the framework of community policing, the City of Johannesburg has initiated a series of programmes in a bid to address crime in the Inner City. These too have largely sought to address directly public safety concerns. The Yeoville Police are not considered trustworthy and this presents an obstacle to the creation of partnership arrangements with all residents. The escalation in crime has meant that residents who feel vulnerable to crime have sought refuge 'inside' and this acts as a deterrent to the establishment or nourishment of social relationships. Long-term activists, however, continue to work towards the revitalisation of Yeoville and an accompanying decline in crime.

Of greatest importance for the study of associational life, social capital and improved government performance was the finding that inner city neighbourhoods, such as Yeoville, are often seen as pit stops en route to another, better life. Ultimately, the greatest desire, amongst residents, seemed to be the ability to escape the inner city. It appears that living in a better neighbourhood was the definitive indicator of success. A range of residents articulated this.

One foreign resident explained (again highlighting an important difference compared to Dobsonville):

if I am R50 000 richer today, I am leaving Yeoville tonight. I would go to areas like Randburg, Roodepoort.<sup>173</sup> I prefer to stay there. Because it is quiet and nobody will pick up what you are doing. Everybody minds his own business.

Another local resident commented:

As I say there are lots of people in Yeoville and people come in and they move out. We see a person for three months and the fourth month he is not there. You meet him the next time in Sandton<sup>174</sup> and he would tell you 'No, I am living in Eastgate' or somewhere.

The biggest dilemma of all is that the cycle seems to be a vicious one. It is the desire for escape that fuels activities undertaken in inner city neighbourhoods and the knowledge that escape is possible that prevents residents from investing in these neighbourhoods as a place of safety in any substantive way. These factors would seem to suggest that the conditions necessary for social capital growth do not abound in the inner city.

### 6.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter uses the empirical evidence generated from the qualitative research conducted in Yeoville to bear out some of the theoretical issues raised in Chapter Two. It also serves to locate Yeoville within the context outlined in Chapter Three and Four. It expressly seeks to illustrate that no local context is without its own specificity and that urban services have a bearing on the relationship between social capital, collective action and improved government performance.

It is within this framework that this chapter suggests that, as with Old Dobsonville, Yeoville provides an interesting illustration of the role of history and context in

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<sup>173</sup> Randburg and Roodepoort are middle-income suburban neighbourhoods in the City of Johannesburg. They were both White residential areas during apartheid but are progressively becoming integrated.

<sup>174</sup> Sandton and Eastgate are both more affluent neighbourhoods than the inner city and Randburg and Roodepoort. They are sought after places to reside because they represent social and economic mobility.

determining the forms of social capital in a locality. On the one hand, the mobility and transience of Yeoville's residents has certainly inhibited the generation and maintenance of a locality-based bridging form of social capital. On the other hand, select stocks of largely bonding social capital have emerged spontaneously amongst particular groups of residents struggling to survive in the area, either socially, physically or financially. The findings presented in Chapter Six demonstrate that in Yeoville a combination of factors has been responsible for the vacillating engagement and non-engagement between government institutions and residents. Building on the details of Chapter Four, it has been demonstrated how activities in respect of the two urban service issues have differed substantially.

The chapter shows that SWM was not an issue of great concern until the post-apartheid period and the densification of the population in Yeoville. It then became a concern symbolically associated with the economic downslide of the neighbourhood. Understandably, during the apartheid era, service delivery was not an issue much at all for collective action in White residential areas. In the 1990s, concern with SWM, or as it is termed in inner city localities, 'grime', was distinctively different among various groups. The restructuring of local government since 1995 and the creation of the Inner City Manager's Office resulted in a transformed waste system from the local government side. This transformation was the consequence of both a national government project as well as the increasing emphasis in the City of Johannesburg on SWM, in part at least in response to the demands posed by the better off local residents regarding informal traders, increasing populations and the need for 24-hour waste management. In contrast, the responses to SWM in Dobsonville were closely associated with the broader struggle for urban services in Soweto during apartheid. With the demise of the accompanying political capital, concern for SWM as such has largely diminished.

The chapter establishes that the issue of public safety has grown in post-apartheid Yeoville. A dramatic increase in crime in Yeoville has left the residents largely unprepared to deal with it. Responses to concern with public safety have varied widely since the 1990s. Significantly, the responses have been at both a formal institutional and at a community level. Yeoville residents reacted in distinct ways. In this chapter it has been shown that some residents withdrew from public space in order to deal with

public safety concerns. Other residents attempted to regenerate the area through the CPF, the Rockey Raleigh Management Committee and, in some instances, the sporadic creation of tenants associations in flats and street committees in residential streets.

Amidst the social transformation within Yeoville, forms of associational life emerged to deal with the institutional gap and the need to survive in a hostile urban environment. These associations included stokvels, burial societies, church groups and identity-based societies. In Yeoville, formal community-based organisations were the domain of a committed few, while informal networks abounded. This demonstrates the heterogeneity of associational life at the local level. Not all associations respond in the same manner to social transitions. Furthermore, the findings have highlighted that residents were able to belong to various associations simultaneously, and to be mobilised in various ways around different types of issues, depending upon their significance or urgency.

Finally, regarding Yeoville, a key finding of this Chapter is that given the transient nature of the area, the intensity of engagement by residents with civic life and with government differed dramatically from that in Old Dobsonville. Locality and the spatial environment regarding public and private space as well as the tenure and length of residential commitment to the area mattered and structured residents' responses to difficulties. Overall, the impact of place in Yeoville was found to be less binding on the identities of its residents than was the case in Soweto, primarily because the duration of residence in Yeoville was much less than in Dobsonville. Contemporary Yeoville is inhabited by groups of residents of different duration and with different, inconsistent understandings of their responsibilities to urban environment and expectations of the local state and the legacy of history.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION

*Dull, inert cities, it is true, do contain the seeds of their own destruction and little else. But lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves (Jane Jacobs, 1993: 584).*

Addressing how social capital might be used as a resource in cities in the developing world has been the overarching policy objective of this thesis. Whilst a sizeable literature on social capital exists, and the debates are prolific and fruitful, there is limited, locally-based empirical research undertaken in complex urban contexts in developing countries. Furthermore, there is inadequate attention paid to the distinctiveness of social capital as a resource with regard to urban services. This is an enormous oversight at a time when urban service delivery is vital in developing cities and policy makers are increasingly reliant on participation or buy-in by residents.

Whilst it was not the intention to undertake an in-depth theoretical project, this thesis has endeavoured to highlight some theoretical gaps in the social capital literature through the use of empirical data. On the basis of these insights it has constructed key lessons that can be drawn from this study for Johannesburg. These in turn inform more generalisable policy recommendations and suggestions.

### 7.1 CRITICAL FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

#### **Social Capital, History and Locality**

The objective of this thesis was to generate a framework for discussing the numerous dynamics that exist in constructing the relationship between associational life, social capital, collective action and improved government performance in Johannesburg. The thesis critiqued Putnam's conception of social capital as a resource in the relationship between civil society and the state by arguing that his suggested relationship between associational life, social capital and improved government performance is simplistic and flawed when applied to an urban context characterized by complexity and flux



(Putnam, 1993). More than the wealth of associational life, the nature of social capital and the forms it took were determined by a micro-locality. Participation was not found to be the variable underpinning the generation of social capital. Rather the history and context of a locality had enormous roles to play. The nuance characteristics of these factors could not be understood without detailed, local-level empirical research.

The relationship between associational life, social capital, collective action and optimum government performance was analysed at the local level in two research sites. The important theoretical point advanced, on the basis of the findings in these areas, is that the mobilisation of social capital depends on a myriad of interconnecting factors that were found to be more complex than simply a dense associational life, as argued by Putnam. These factors included: context, that is the importance of place; and history, that is the legacy and experience of collective action. The nature of the urban service at stake was another key variable discussed below.

Important to the understanding of locality in social capital formation was the provision of a detailed picture of the City of Johannesburg in order to get to grips with the internal workings of its administration. Presenting a comprehensive discussion of the framework within which policy decisions were made, historically and in the present, the empirical evidence outlined in Chapter Three explained how the City of Johannesburg was administratively and politically upended between the late 1980s and 2000. As a consequence of this flux, financial and political priorities were severely affected, as was the impact on the different localities in the jurisdiction of the City. These changes had an enormous effect on the local populations. Thus, unlike in Putnam's account of Italy, where he chose to ignore the role of politics and intricacies of formal institutions, it is argued here that local government is a crucial determining factor in the usefulness of social capital in its own right. Therefore, government institutions cannot be viewed as only respondents to collective action, but are equally positioned to construct realities in neighbourhoods through political manoeuvring. Indeed, innovations in SWM in both localities came from initiatives within local, and in the case of Yeoville, national government, as much as in response to resident action or organisation.

Chapter Four narrowed down the analysis to the specifics of the social, political and economic infrastructure of Old Dobsonville and Yeoville. This chapter explored the distinctions and diversity in history and associational life in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville and discussed the implications of this locality-based distinction and diversity for social capital. The findings of the chapter suggested that a combination of the dynamics within a micro-locality, in conjunction with broader political issues, created the milieu that determined the nature of social capital. In both Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, stocks of social capital varied, depending upon an assembly of factors. Variance in social capital stocks was a consequence of the distinctive nature of each neighbourhood<sup>164</sup> and the complex interplay between history, context and service.

The historical analysis of Old Dobsonville showed that although healthy stocks of social capital and high levels of trust had existed in Old Dobsonville during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, this did not result in the transfer of co-operation on a broader social scale, or lead to widespread demands on local government for improved performance. This outcome pointed to the need for a closer examination of the particulars of associational life. In the case of Old Dobsonville, dense networks of social capital did not translate into collective action. The findings suggest that it was the construct of a conformist residential identity that meant local norms were inconsistent with organising for collective action. Stocks of social capital worked instead to ensure the maintenance of traditional socially conservative norms and values even in an increasingly exploitative context. The paternalistic relationship between Dobsonville residents and their local administration also mitigated against the intervention of militant civil society organisation at this time.

Chapter Four demonstrated that the norms and values that associations foster or which 'communities' solidify at certain times, depend upon the point at which they are initiated, as well as the context within which they operate. It is because of particular sets of circumstances that these social structures emerge. The historical analysis of Old Dobsonville revealed that social capital had an historical presence in Old Dobsonville as illustrated through a culture of co-operation amongst residents, given both their long history of association and shared identity.

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<sup>164</sup>Cattell's findings in two neighbourhoods in East London were similar. She argues 'neighbourhood characteristics influence network patterns and forms of social capital created' (2001: 1512).

The empirical findings in Dobsonville revealed that Putnam's conception of social capital was more easily recognisable in Soweto than in the inner city, because in part Dobsonville reflected more directly his contention that stocks of social capital grow incrementally. However, the point here is that this was possible due to the continuity among the make up and collective memory of residents within a stable locality. This may have been the consequence of the harsh rules of apartheid that prohibited free movement and limited population movement, coupled with a paternalistic administration. These factors created the necessary preconditions for locality-based social capital formation at this point. However, over the years, the forms of social capital were constantly reconstituted as a consequence of the injection of other variables into the locality. One such variable was the changing nature of formal institutions of government. The nature of local government in Dobsonville vacillated between a paternalistic relationship with local residents, to draconian policing and oversight, finally shifting to the current democratic forms of local government. Significantly, amidst these fluctuations, some associational life remained constant: the associational life embodied within organisations such as churches, stokvels, burial societies and other community organisations. However, when politicised forms of associational life emerged in the 1980s, the relationships between these political or politicised community-based organisations and government institutions were altered and collective action became increasingly likely. Under these circumstances state-society engagement was intense but it was a case of being locked in opposition rather than co-production or positive engagement. The case of Old Dobsonville provides evidence to support the view that local history is important in social capital formation but does not automatically sustain it.

Chapter Four also discussed the state of social capital in Yeoville. Unlike in the case of Old Dobsonville, Yeoville residents were highly mobile. The Yeoville case led the thesis to argue against the importance of locality in understanding social capital discussions. As highlighted in Chapter Two, stocks of social capital have most often been discussed relative to the geographical locality in which they are found (Pritchett and Narayan, 1997; Grootaert, 1999). In fact, it was found that physical locality was less significant in the context of Yeoville than other identities when it came to the application of the social capital argument. Many Yeoville residents, both local and international, felt a greater affiliation with far reaching networks than they did with

Yeoville. This had important implications for stocks of social capital because it necessitated that social capital was most often identity-based and less likely locality-based. This diminished the likelihood of turning social capital into a public resource for urban service delivery. Loyalty to the locality thus became more conditional than in an area with a traditional sense of local identity, such as Old Dobsonville. Furthermore, social capital in these fragmented neighbourhoods was contained and constrained. It followed that in instances where social capital was present, it most often took the form of bonding social capital amongst new residents or indeed threatened or embattled old residents. As a result, bonding social capital became the most prevalent form through which groups of residents sought safety and survival in a hostile urban environment.

In Yeoville, it was found that the power of informal institutions in many instances superseded that of the local state. The explanation for the former's dominance in inner city neighbourhoods, such as Yeoville, was attributable to feelings of disconnection from Yeoville as a place. This seemed to be the consequence of a combination of factors: the lack of a shared local identity; the lack of commitment to the area because of a commitment to another place (this has made residents reticent about becoming involved in civic life); and the feeling amongst residents that they could not in fact impact on institutional performance.

On the whole, the local residents in Yeoville, aside from those who shared a history of activism, were atomistic in their engagement in civic life. Nonetheless, there were pockets of social capital in the area. The bonds of social capital that consolidated in Yeoville often existed amongst those groups who had no access to institutional support or in those groups that had successfully engaged with institutions in the past. These bonds facilitated the survival of these groups and intensified existing identities through constructing a measure of certainty in an otherwise hostile environment. Although these residents did not have a fixed history, they shared a broader acknowledged identity and sufficiently powerful (but selective) relationships of trust with each other. These bonds, however, were often exclusive. Putnam's emphasis of the relationship between civic life, social capital and institutional performance is challenged in the case of Yeoville because social capital did not lead to a reaching out or public engagement.

With the finding that social capital was not geographically contained or confined to the locality in which residents resided, it becomes clear that the terms of reference are broad ended to those beyond locality. The empirical work discussed in Chapters Three and Four shows how stocks of social capital are both reflective of micro-localities as well as of broader interactions. Nevertheless, the case study sites both fell within the domain of the City of Johannesburg, but demonstrated extreme difference in their experiences of social capital, associational life and institutional performance. Thus even within the context of a single city, findings are not generalisable.

In both Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, institutions in the post-apartheid era were put in place to ensure new participatory democratic processes. However these institutions were hamstrung by the historical legacy of associations that residents had with local government. Furthermore, it was evident that some neighbourhoods were still more equal than others, certainly in terms of allocation of resources for public services. Therefore, regardless of the state of associational organisations or stocks of social capital, government institutions themselves set the agenda for the allocation of resources according to political decision-making. This was most apparent in the case of SWM where the restructuring of service delivery in the City of Johannesburg had a fundamental impact on the optimal performance of local government.

In review, Chapters Three and Four ascertained that the existence and mobilization of social capital hinged upon a multiplicity of factors, specifically local history and context as well as the existing political terrain. Findings further demonstrated, how social capital is mobilisable and able to be constructed in different ways in the same locality at different times. Indeed, further to that, in both case study sites, social capital was not a public resource and indeed was more fragmented in its efficiency as a resource. This is further illustrated through the comparative study of the two urban services in both localities discussed in the next section.

### **Social Capital and Urban Services**

Chapter Five assessed the relationship between social capital and urban service delivery in Old Dobsonville and Chapter Six repeated the exercise for Yeoville. The investigation of two urban services in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville established that

the relationship between social capital, collective action and institutional performance is further contextually determined. In addition, it was not necessarily the presence of social capital that ensured government performance: government policy weighed heavily in favour of some services and this assisted greatly in terms of formal institutional performance.

The two public services discussed in the thesis, SWM and public safety, revealed how collective action regarding urban service delivery was inconsistent and unpredictable. This finding suggests that in addition to locality-based factors, the inconsistency in the resourcefulness of social capital was due to the nature of the service at stake and this in turn was sensitive to flux. Thus, the assumption of social capital theorists (Putnam, 1993; Coleman, 1990) that social capital is a fixed and inclusive resource was further contested as a result of the findings regarding urban services. Social capital was found to be by no means a shared resource in all circumstances. In fact, some residents were more 'equal' in some contexts than in others. Furthermore, the relationship between social capital and collective action was changeable and the link between social capital and collective action seemed dependent on a range of variables.

The analysis in Chapters Five and Six, on urban services in the two case study sites, is important because it points to the reality that bonding and bridging forms of social capital can either exist independently, or co-exist in a neighbourhood, depending on timing and the service in question. Bridging and bonding forms of social capital differed depending on the context, history and service.

The empirical research ascertained that responses to SWM and public safety differed substantially in each locality. The overall conclusions suggest that SWM and public safety are likely to draw on and/or elicit different types of social capital at different times. Both Chapters Five and Six showed that SWM was not an issue of great concern in its own right – it was a service but not one associated with collective action. Only when coupled with broader political and economic capital did the social capital of residents get mobilised around service delivery issues. This social capital was related to the service, and I have called it *magnetic* social capital because of its latent presence. The capacity for mobilisation existed in both localities, but, the issue at stake (in addition to other mentioned variables) determined the viability of a collective response

to SWM. In Dobsonville, it was the conflation of SWM with broader political capital as evident through the rent and service boycotts in the 1980s that led to action. By contrast, concerns around SWM in Yeoville by contrast were heightened by perceptions of urban decline from the 1980s onwards on the part of established better off residents and local business interests.

In both localities, improved institutional performance in the domain of SWM was almost entirely attributable to the actions and activities of local government itself. Improvements in SWM were importantly also the result of the institutional restructuring of the waste system from the local government side as proposed by *iGoli* 2002. In Yeoville, the political and economic imperatives to revitalise the inner city provided further impetus for improved SWM. This was closely associated with the ascending importance of the inner city to local institutional politics.

Public safety proved an altogether different collective urban service. Historically, public safety in urban townships was of particularly critical concern given the lack of formal government assistance. Albeit that public safety is theoretically a public good (Narayan, 1999; Graham and Marvin, 2001), this was not the case in Soweto. It was the physical vulnerability of the residents associated with the lack of public safety in the locality that has had an important role to play in public mobilisation around the issue. Necessity required the intervention of local residents to address public safety needs in the absence of a formal and legitimate presence. This they did very effectively through establishing numerous informal institutions. Ensuring that neighbours participated in these initiatives hinged upon the shared belief in the importance and efficacy of the initiatives by residents. As the history and context within Old Dobsonville changed, so too did the form these public safety initiatives took.

With the growing size and heterogeneity of Old Dobsonville since the mid-1980s, initiatives regarding public safety have metamorphosised. There was an ongoing desire to manage public safety through known and trusted community organisations as well as an acceptance that the neighbourhood had changed and could no longer rely on all local residents to behave according to a strict normative framework. Along with the changes to policing, which were often for the worse, residents had to respond to increasingly dangerous situations and circumstances. Up until the mid-1990s, residents responded in

the form of what could be termed bridging social capital. This was evident in the case of street committees and *makgotla*. Increasingly, however, as Old Dobsonville began reflecting a more complex urban social landscape, residents sought to manage public safety in a more contained way in their own neighbourhoods. This took the form of vigilante activities or the neighbourhood whistle method. Bridging social capital became less viable and was replaced by bonding social capital in respect of public safety. This shifting down and retreat was largely because involvement in public safety hinged on factors such as loyalty, trust and fear. Many residents in Old Dobsonville retreated from active participation in public spaces at all times and confined interactions to small trusted groups. As such, they sought to manage their immediate realities through a bonding form of social capital.

In Yeoville, responses to concerns with public safety also varied. In the apartheid years, it was indeed a public good provided courtesy of the WLAs. But as iterated in Chapter Six, crime and public safety issues escalated tremendously in Yeoville in the 1990s. Significantly, the responses to this escalation came both from the government and the community. Yeoville residents responded in very distinct ways to crime, given that there was no 'traditional' means of dealing with public safety issues in the area. Further to that, residents had discrepant understandings of and trust in the police and therefore differed in their approaches to the burgeoning problem of crime.

The findings from Chapter Six recount how in Yeoville, some residents withdrew engagement with the police and policing in a bid to deal with the complexity and dangers of public safety. Amongst immigrant communities, a bonding form of social capital was apparent and operated as the means to manage the disorder they experienced in their lives. Long-term residents of Yeoville sought instead to utilise forms of bridging social capital to confront the uncertainties of public safety. This was evident through the establishment of forums such as the CPF and CDF. Although conceptually these forums were anticipated to represent the needs of all residents, in reality most Yeoville residents chose not to engage with them. Within Yeoville, social capital amongst residents was a means through which to garner collective action but these groups took the form of identity-based groups or the ad hoc establishment of committees to deal with a particular issue in a building or a neighbourhood – so called magnetic social capital. However, there was not a sufficiently powerful sense of



belonging or community in the area to generate a broad and inclusive stock of bridging social capital that could endure and spread.

Finally, SWM is more likely than policing to elicit bridging social capital under difficult social conditions because necessary levels of trust and the associated risks are low. Therefore, complete trust in neighbours is less relevant than a broadly shared sense of neighbourliness. Organising around SWM is less complicated and is less likely to cause personal risk than collective action for public safety. At the same time though, there is not much enthusiasm for SWM because it does not permeate the consciousness of a broad cross-section of the residents of Old Dobsonville or Yeoville as a key issue. The reasons for this were explained in Chapters Five and Six. The implications for government are that there is little likelihood that social capital can be easily constructed or mobilised into co-production by local government on the basis of SWM as a self-standing service.

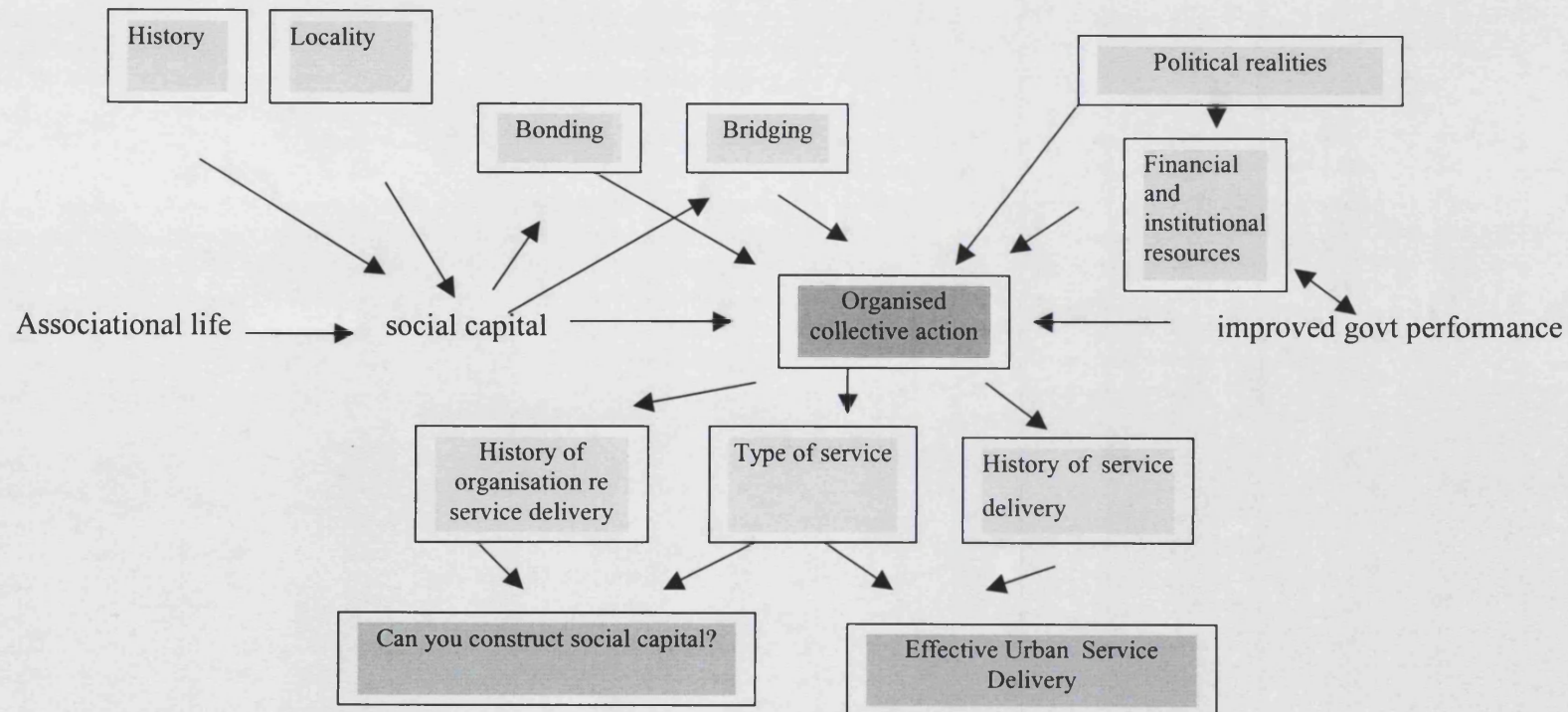
In times of deep mistrust and suspicion, public safety is more likely to be managed through bonding social capital. As demonstrated in both the case of Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, within a changing social and political climate in Johannesburg, residents were less inclined to co-operate with each other. This was largely because people felt that neighbours could not be trusted and the costs of involvement in public safety initiatives involved a high level of personal risk.

In sum, the findings suggest that social capital, in and of itself, differs substantially in each locality. Further to that, social capital is sensitive to a changing context and is not immutable. It constitutes and reconstitutes itself constantly in response to exogenous factors making history an important variable for the understanding of social capital formation and maintenance. This reconstitution not only hinges upon locality, but also upon the type of urban services around which social capital coalesces or is harnessed. In determining the viability of social capital as a development resource, these particularities must be borne in mind.

Table 7.1

DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Utilising Social Capital as a Development Resource: Looking at the possibilities through the urban service delivery lens



## **7.2 THE THEORETICAL UTILITY OF THE SOCIAL CAPITAL CONCEPT**

The empirical component of the study was conducted in response to Putnam's definition of social capital, which has been extensively critiqued throughout the thesis. This present research looked at social capital through qualitative research methods in order to get a detailed sense of the relational and institutional dimensions of social capital in the two localities. Because of the adoption of this approach, the research did not use what has become the dominant method for the study of social capital – survey-related data. Rather it used additional bodies of literature to augment and contextualise the explanatory insights amassed from the case study approach to test insights from social capital literature.

This thesis also utilised urban sociology and development literature to elicit a more composite understanding of the complexity of social capital within the City of Johannesburg. Urbanists, such as Castells (1997) and Calhoun (1991) were extremely useful because their work draws attention to the complexity of the urban environment and the fluidity of urban society. Their work also highlights the importance of considering the urban context as a determining variable in social relationships. Much like the work of Putzel (1997), Foley and Edwards (1996, 1997), Edwards, Foley and Diani (2001) and Harriss (2002), urban sociology points to the importance of political factors in shaping urban realities. Social capital advocates have largely failed to acknowledge the importance of political dynamics, an omission for which they have been comprehensively critiqued by the likes of Harriss (2002) and Fine (2000). This is clearly something that cannot be ignored in the case of a city such as Johannesburg. Krishna makes the same point, and he argues:

...social capital might predispose individuals to cooperate, and pre-existing social networks will facilitate cooperation generally, but in specific spheres of actions, especially where an external environment needs to be engaged, specific agencies such as political parties or organised interest groups will be additionally required (Krishna, 2002: 25).

This is a critical addition to the existing discussions of social capital.

Promoters of the social capital position have eagerly punted the importance of social capital as a development resource. The literature has advanced numerous ways in which this social capital can be achieved. Most current commentators on the topic, generated by international development agencies in particular, advocate that in order for social capital to assist in development initiatives, it is necessary to institute change at a macro-level and support associational activity at a micro-level (Narayan, 1999: 2; Woolcock, 1998; Evans, 1996, 2002). The broader community of academics and practitioners working with the concept of social capital, however, question exactly how this is to be achieved.

While the available literature on social capital is immense, detailed empirical work on how social capital is or can be constructed and what exactly is required for social capital to give rise to improved and responsive institutional performance is still lacking. So too, is in-depth theorisation around how social capital operates on the part of government in complex urban environments. Furthermore, what work does exist, does not convincingly disaggregate the components or dynamics of social capital. Little critical work has been done on what exactly comprises social capital or the role of social differentiation in understanding who contributed to and benefits from social capital, such as class, race and gender. Without greater understanding of these dimensions, little progress can be made in the policy domain. It is here that Bourdieu's notion of habitus and the structure/agency position, advocated by Giddens (1984), are useful because they provide a lens through which to view some of the unexpected formations and responses in urban settings. Because urban neighbourhoods bring together residents with varying structural and personal identities, the structure/agency position has useful explanatory power when applied to localities and urban service issues. It explains how residents experience different personal identities depending on the context and issue.

Phillips (2002) lists the following factors as barriers to social capital in urban areas: heterogeneity of populations, mobility, breakdown of traditional networks, cultural norms, social exclusion, relative poverty, exploitation, crime and violence, restrictive policies and restrictive laws (2002: 136).

These conclusions are consistent with the World Bank study on Colombia which argues:

...poverty inequality and rapid growth at the interpersonal level and individual levels it is sometimes argued that in situations of rapid change, societal disorganisation may mean that people have fewer bonds (2000a: 10).

However, the present study shows that for the inner city Johannesburg, social capital is fluid and not immutable, forming as well as breaking down under changing conditions. It is critical to understand, therefore the type of social capital that exists or emerges under particular conditions. However, it can be suggested overall that there is a notable hiatus in understanding how local level social relationships relate to citywide dynamics and trends in wider urban centres as opposed to in neighbourhoods in most developing countries. Social capital is but one lens through which to explore these relationships and not necessarily the most useful one. The findings of this thesis suggest that there is the potential for different forms of social capital to operate in an area at any one time. Utilising Narayan's distinction between bridging and bonding social capital suggests a way through which to explain the differentiation in the forms of social capital coexisting in one locality (Narayan, 1999), while allowing for the fact that it does not always lead to responsive government or the co-production of urban services.

As outlined in Chapter Two, institutional theory suggests that institutions are the 'organising principles of interaction in society' (North: 1990: 3). Whilst the importance of institutions has become key to social capital debates, especially in relation to service delivery (Evans, 1996; Ostrom, 1996), they have largely been analysed relative to the formal policies adopted by governments. Taking the formal organisation of local government in the City of Johannesburg – the comparative case studies outlined the role played by the institutions of the City in the case study sites presented in the thesis. The overarching policy frameworks governed by national and provincial government pertained to the whole of the City of Johannesburg. As stated in Chapter Two, accepted conceptions of what constitutes good governance are outlined in the governance literature. This included the assurance by government that indicators were met which comprised factors such as public hearings, citizen surveys and neighbourhood involvement (Sharp, 1990). As outlined in Chapter Three, these initiatives have all been implemented by the City of Johannesburg. However, the history of institutions in the

City has usurped many of the good intentions of the post-apartheid city. The post-apartheid City of Johannesburg is hamstrung by historic attitudes to local government, as well as by widespread financial constraints. Therefore, good governance must become about more than merely constructing the formal apparatus with which to make possible state-society engagement, and requires the fostering of a civic consciousness. The question is whether this resides in prior stocks of social capital and the answer provided by the thesis is that it does not.

In the pursuit of good governance, governments can institute participatory processes but this does not necessarily facilitate participation. The complexity of governance is that it hinges upon more than the formal institutional performance. The growing literature on governance highlights this. In addition to the work of NIE, the governance literature provides an additional framework through which to analyse government responsiveness. It argues that if citizens are to engage, government must be viewed as a reference point – either to be worked with or against. The aspiration of the City of Johannesburg was to construct a set of conditions that would ensure that residents worked with the City government to improve and extend service delivery. Tandler's (1997) work is useful because it gives some directive as to the requirements for the positive interaction between state and society. These can be used in a City such as Johannesburg. The factors include the following components: a highly committed core of government workers; public acknowledgement of the work done by these workers; workers being given high levels of respect for the work they do and a coherence between the work done by the workers and the needs of the broader community (Tandler, 1997). These factors begin to answer the 'how' and 'what' questions regarding the constructability of social capital, but were absent in the case study sites researched in Johannesburg.

### **7.3 METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

This thesis has contributed to the growing critiques of the social capital literature by situating the debate in a micro-context and discussing the concept of social capital relative to urban service delivery. This was achieved through undertaking in-depth qualitative research in two case study sites in the City of Johannesburg. Given that these case study sites differed vastly in terms of history, locality and service delivery,

this study provides a starting point for detailed discussions of the importance of social capital as a development resource in Johannesburg. The thesis highlights factors that worked in favour of social capital and those which worked against it in a complex urban environment, points to the limits of constructability imposed by history and context, and illustrates the significance of the nature of the service involved.

This study extends the existing social capital debates by discussing these debates in conjunction with the literature on urban sociology and cities in the developing world. On the basis of this, and other similar studies, it is hoped that some light has been shed on the complexity of urban governance in the City of Johannesburg. The broader significance of these findings is the basis upon which they can be included in work being undertaken in the domain of social development and their application to further research projects on poverty, urban livelihoods and sustainable development. On the basis of the findings of this thesis, a number of policy implications will be represented in the following section.

#### **7.4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Increasingly over the past decade, the spotlight has fallen on the conditions required for a positive engagement between state and society in order that they may work together in the provision of urban services. One of the recommended social resources for development initiatives has been social capital. The advocates of the social capital position have highlighted the usefulness of social relationships as a resource in development. Building on this contention, the idea of creating partnerships and the involvement of both state and society in combined development projects and the co-production of services have been viewed as the ideal state of play (Evans, 2002; Ostrom, 1996; Fox, 1996 and Heller, 1996). The thesis argues that securing these conditions is extremely problematic in a complex urban setting and more particularly, under conditions of social and political flux.

## Understanding Social Dynamics

The first policy implication to be drawn from the findings is that local government needs to accept that social capital exists in various ways in a given locality. The research has demonstrated the importance of understanding micro-level dynamics. Unless cognisance is given to the various forms of social capital and the conditions under which they arise in a locality, it will be much more difficult to anticipate how and when they might surface and to what effect. Furthermore, it is naïve to assume that social capital is a public good, equally mobilisable in all localities and under all circumstances. Instead, associational life, as articulated by Putnam (1993) does not conform to the requirements for collective action and automatically lead to improved institutional performance. The types of extant associations are significant, but not in the manner suggested by Putnam. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002), in the book *Uniting a Divided City*, draw attention to the nature of the City of Johannesburg. They argue further that it is key for local government to recognise that this new post-apartheid city needs to mediate between newly emerging social change and divisions (2002: 204). Carried to its logical conclusion, conditions in Johannesburg preclude the possibility of understanding associational life in the automatic way Putnam suggests. The authors' state:

We have illustrated how Johannesburg is a multilingual, religiously diverse and polycultural city and a thriving metropolitan centre. The city's diverse population hails from across South and Southern Africa, the African sub-continent, Europe and Asia. Many of its citizens maintain strong rural or small-town links: through these links, as well as through bonding networks of ethnic and national groups, social relations and the care economy are fostered and sustained (Beall, Parnell and Crankshaw, 2002: 203).

Therefore, in addition to its basic service delivery duties, it is the task of local government to understand the dynamics of the social relationships prevalent amongst its residents.

This is not a new insight, but one rarely paid accord by governments. What is a cause for optimism is the hope that as stores of urban data and resources increase, there will be a greater likelihood that urban life is better understood. Locality-based stocks of social capital exist in all neighbourhoods but as revealed in this thesis, the inventories



take different forms. Whether or not local government or residents can activate the available stocks is the difficult question. Certainly homogeneity and a collective history seem to assist in strengthening social capital and increasing the likelihood of dense associational life as suggested by Putnam. But realistically, in all cities, it is unlikely that only homogenous neighbourhoods will be commonly found. Phenomena such as national and international migration, social exclusion, changing gender relations and urbanisation diminish the likelihood of coming across unaffected stores of collective history in cities. Moreover, even in relatively homogenous localities such as Old Dobsonville, social capital can mutate and is not always easily deployed towards urban service delivery or constructive urban governance.

Therefore, whilst accepting that the social capital debates highlight the importance of social relationships as resources, this does not mean that social relationships necessarily have a productive bearing on the performance of government. Implicit within all social relationships, are dynamics of power, fragmentation and conflict. These dynamics are articulated at different times and in different ways. It is vital that this recognition is infused in the social capital debate and unrealistic expectations of an entirely virtuous civil society is not created.

### **Informal Institutions**

Acknowledging the role of informal institutions is an important step for formal local organisations in cities such as Johannesburg. The inability of local states to perform adequately for all residents has required that informal institutions have emerged to serve best the interests of residents in instances where survival is tenuous – either economically, politically or physically (Moser, 1998).<sup>165</sup> Getting to grips with what processes underpin the construction of these informal institutions is one means through which to discover how best to explore further what the requirements are for constructing social capital. Simone (2001a) when speaking of the informal urban context in African cities argues:

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<sup>165</sup> Krishna's findings in *Active Social Capital* are similar. Although his research was done in rural areas in India, it suggests the importance of considering informal institutions as a primary source of social organisation (Krishna, 2002: 5).

Thus, residents who share a quarter must often find ways of not locking themselves into fixed commitments with each other – so as to pursue their own livelihoods and aspirations – but, at the same time engage each other in ways that maintain some semblance of local stability, interaction and cohesiveness (Simone, 2001a:113).

It is securing this delicate balance that could go some way towards the pursuit of the synergetic relationship proclaimed by Evans et al (1996). It is indisputable that social capital in South Africa has been shaped and reshaped by a variety of forces, but the evidence suggests it is in an informal capacity that social capital has been appropriated in its most constructive form (Moser, 1998, Simone, 2001a). Simone captures it as follows:

It is important to go beyond rudimentary divisions of formal and informal, the cosmopolitan and the parochial. Rather, it is crucial to look at the interweaving of potentials and constraints which activate and delimit specific initiatives of local communities to maintain a sense of cohesion, exceed how much cohesion is put together at any one time, take advantage of unforeseen opportunities, and mitigate the negative effects of being as opportunistic as possible (Simone, 2001a: 113)

### **Putting Different Types of Social Capital to Work**

Social capital is not locality bound, nor is it a public good available to all residents if they desire it. Just as civil society itself is contested terrain, so too is the terrain in which social capital is located. Phillips (2002), using a livelihoods approach, records as factors in favour of the formation of social capital in urban areas the following: richness of social contracts, links with rural areas, new networks needed for survival, cultural norms, social change, common struggles, common adversity, supportive policies and supportive laws (Phillips, 2002: 136). Certainly, some of these features have proved salient within the context discussed in this study, but they are by no means generic. In Johannesburg, factors such as richness of social contracts, new networks for survival, and to some extent, common struggles were the most prominent in constructing social capital.

Some forms of social capital, as illustrated in the context of the discussion on issues-based magnetic social capital, are opportunistic and can be stimulated when and if the need arises. The term magnetic social capital was developed in this thesis to describe

the circumstances under which social capital is not automatically active, but is stimulated and catalysed as the result of the issue that draws residents in. The term was introduced in Chapter Two<sup>166</sup> and refers to the type of social capital that occurs in instances where there is an issue facilitating co-operation and attracting residents to engage. These social relationships can coexist with other forms of social capital. What distinguishes it from bonding and bridging social capital is that it is the nature of the issue itself that is the determinant in the construction of magnetic social capital. Chapter Four highlights how housing in Old Dobsonville created magnetic social capital. This social capital is not constantly present. Instead, it is cyclical in its presence. In this form, social capital is often mobilised in conjunction with an additional variable such as economic capital or political capital. This social capital also most often takes the form of bridging capital. In the context of the housing problems in Old Dobsonville, responses were evident among a myriad of residents drawn from different groupings. To some extent, sufficient knowledge of the dynamics of a locality should lead policy-makers to predict what services could elicit the activation of magnetic social capital.

Further, the focus on a range of urban service issues in the study suggests additional policy proposals. Studies undertaken on violence and crime in Colombia (Moser and Lister, 1999) and on SWM in Dhaka, Bangladesh (Pargal, Huq and Gilligan, 1999) presented interesting findings for this study. It was ascertained in these studies that in the case of SWM, reciprocity amongst neighbours was the most coherent factor for ensuring voluntary SWM, whereas trust was viewed as the most significant factor in the domain of public safety. These distinctions were found to be equally relevant in the South African context. What the research found was that reciprocity amongst neighbours did not convert into the collective rallying to improve government provision in the case of SWM. Instead, it translated into neighbourliness at the most. Therefore, the likelihood of consistent collective action around SWM is minimal. SWM is a domain where magnetic social capital is highly possible. But the incentives for sustained collective action hinge upon economic or political factors. If local government were to optimally use or catalyse the existing magnetic social capital, it would have to take proactive steps in highlighting the economic benefits of

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<sup>166</sup> See Page 70 in Chapter Two.

engagement. Alternatively, political capital could inject urgency into the existing stocks of social capital necessary for mobilisation. The implication for policy is that it can by no means be assumed that participation regarding SWM in Johannesburg is a given.

Public safety is a different service to SWM because it is in the context of the urgency of physical survival that public safety initiatives, based on social relationships, were situated. The findings of the thesis concur with Moser and Lister's (1999) contention that trust is the most critical factor in the domain of public safety. The usefulness of social capital as a resource is much more visible with regard to collective action in relation to public safety although this does not always or automatically form a bridge to local government. The urban service at stake conjured up different resources and stocks of social capital depending upon the importance of the urban service to residents. Public safety was much more likely to inspire collective action than SWM as a stand-alone service. Further to that, the forms that social capital took regarding public safety hinged on the nature of the locality and the residents. For instance, during the apartheid struggle years, forms of bridging social capital amongst residents were very much in evidence as communities stood together against apartheid local authorities, government officials and police. This was a consequence of outright distrust in the existing institutional structures. The collective rejection of these structures enabled communities to engage with each other in partnership-type arrangements without viewing government as a player. Bridging social capital is equally viable in contexts where residents feel that there is some likelihood of engagement with local institutions, and partnership arrangements are a possibility. Yeoville pre-1990, and some groups in Yeoville post-1994, who had experienced a receptive local state were poised to engage in this form of bridging social capital, for example.

Understanding these distinctions provides some directives for policy making. If urban governments accept that there are conditions under which localities will assist in some services, and not others, this could help frame the practical implementation of urban service delivery projects.

## **Relationships With Government**

Determining the likelihood of social capital as a social development resource is key to this study. Implicit within this concern is the question of the viability of local government and society working together. In neither Yeoville nor Old Dobsonville has this been the norm in the post-apartheid period. Advocating that a synergetic relationship between state and society is optimal, as Evans (1996, 2002); Tandler (1997) and Ostrom (1996) do, is useful but slightly unrealistic in the South African context as it now exists. As outlined in the thesis, local governance in Johannesburg has been the site of enormous struggle for residents. Overcoming this problem must be addressed first before proposing a synergetic relationship. The World Bank study conducted around Building Peace and Social Capital in Colombia, another conflicted society, suggests the following:

At the municipal level – to rebuild social cohesion and trust, through small-scale participatory bottom up projects. This may include the formulation of municipal level strategic plans for peace and reconstruction. Community level needs assessment as well as focused pilot projects and the creation of municipal level task forces for peace and development to monitor the process. These decentralised projects would allow for the creation of peace and reconstruction plans that address the type of violence affecting specific municipalities (2000a: x).

The study argues further that a focus, which already points to rebuilding social capital using formal and informal institutions such as families, community organisations and the judiciary, is required (2000a: 21). Similar conclusions can be drawn from the South African reality.

It seems unlikely that Johannesburg residents will initiate the rebuilding of their relationship with local government. Whilst partnership approaches are very much a part of creating social capital, in order for this approach to yield success, it is necessary for municipalities to have the resources and inclination to attempt to rebuild their relationships with different communities. This desire must be driven equally by the commitment to effective resource distribution and cannot be premised simply on harnessing or creating social capital on the part of communities.

The Johannesburg case study presents an extreme case of political and social flux, but as the comparison here with Colombia suggests, not a unique one. As argued in Chapter One and Chapter Three, partnership-based structures have been set in place in post-apartheid Johannesburg. The conditions for the workability of these structures have proved unpredictable. The assumption that social capital is what underlies successful organised collective action and improved government performance is flawed. Whilst social capital as a conceptual tool helps and stimulates academics and practitioners to think about what motivates people to engage or disengage, it is not as a phenomenon, in and of itself, functionally useful. The concept is most useful analytically. Its value hinges upon provoking initial in-depth analysis of a locality and its history. It is questionable as to whether social capital is a key development resource but is nevertheless important to recognize the role that social capital plays within society, without necessarily wishing to capture or exploit it.

## **APPENDICES**

### **METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX ONE**

This appendix discusses in greater detail the specifics of the questionnaires informing the research process outlining the general rationale underlying the choice of questions during fieldwork.

As indicated in Chapter One, selected civil society associations, public sector workers, municipal officials and politicians were targeted for interviews. In-depth interviews were also conducted with selected residents in each of the case study localities. The choice of these interviewees was based on categories including age, gender, race, nationality, occupation, levels of political activity and the duration of their residence in Old Dobsonville or Yeoville. In total, 104 in-depth interviews and focus groups were undertaken. There were two parts to the interviewing schedule. A generic set of questions related to the specific case study locality and their experience of local government. This is presented in Appendix 1.A. A more specific set of questions dealing with the urban service delivery issues followed and this is presented in Appendix 1.B. These two interview schedules were undertaken simultaneously and were used to generate the comparable material for analysis.

#### **1.A The Generic Schedule**

The case studies selected for this study were deliberately chosen on the basis of assumptions about the inheritance of different kinds of social capital and the different provision and organisation of urban services arising from the apartheid past. The following schedule was drawn up for gathering information on the City of Johannesburg and the initial area profile data. Various research resources were used for collecting the area-based data profiles. These included: interviews, focus groups, primary and secondary documents and participant observation.

## **Characteristics of the Area:**

### **1. Associational Organisations**

This information was required in order to establish what associations existed and operated in the case study areas. Both a contemporary and historical analysis was done in order to distinguish between associations and organisations giving rise to pre-existing social capital and social capital that has developed as the result of specific conditions. This included tracing the circumstances under which residents came together for mutual assistance and collective action. A sub-set of questions included:

#### **1. What is the broad socio-economic profile of the area?**

These profiles were understood to include: the socio-economic-political characteristics of the residents of the area; the characteristics of associational organisations in the area in general; understanding what groups in the locality were conventionally involved in different types of associations (on the basis of age, gender, race and ethnicity).

#### **2. What is the history of the locality and settlement patterns?**

3. What is the profile of residents historically? (This is achievable in the context of Johannesburg as it is a relatively new city, founded in 1886).

#### **4. What is the profile of current residents?**

#### **5. What have been the key changes in the locality? When and why did they occur?**

#### **6. What have been the traditional issues of collective action in the area?**

#### **7. What types of associations exist in the area?**

This information was gathered to determine association function, the internal functions of organisations, the objectives of associations, relationships among associations (both local, provincial and national) and what, if any, tensions arose within and between organisations.



## **2. Formal Institutions**

The information required for this section was concerned with the organisations of local government in the City of Johannesburg. The intent was to understand further the history and the nature of the institutions, in the past as well as the present day. The information was obtained through a combination of interviews and primary and secondary documentation. The sub-set of questions asked the following:

1. How have resources in Johannesburg historically been allocated?
2. How have the politics of Johannesburg historically informed the allocation of resources?
3. How do you explain the change process and restructuring process in Johannesburg since 1990?
4. What is the political and financial impetus behind decision-making in the City of Johannesburg post-1995?
5. How is the process of allocating public resources to case study areas undertaken?

## **3. The relationship between local government and residents**

This was the preliminary investigation of the relationship between state and society in the City of Johannesburg. These questions particularly sought to understand the historical relationship between local government and residents. Interviews, primary and secondary documentation and focus groups were used to answer question three. A subset of questions was used to ask the following:

1. What is the historical relationship between local government and residents?
2. What is the current relationship between local government and residents?

## **Appendix 1.B**

### **GENERIC SCHEDULE REGARDING URBAN SERVICE DELIVERY**

Once a general sense of the City of Johannesburg was established, the questions were narrowed in order to address urban service delivery in particular. The following five sub-sets of questions framed the interview process. These questions were asked relative to urban services in the case study areas. They were used as the interview schedule in the semi-structured and unstructured interviews undertaken. The format of the interview was determined according to the profile of the respondent.

#### **1. What are the characteristics of associational life in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville, Johannesburg pertaining to SWM and public safety?**

Here information was elicited on the particulars of associational life in Old Dobsonville and Yeoville and their relationship to selected urban services. This information was then used to compare the services as well as compare the information with that referring to the generic associational life questions appearing in Appendix 1.1. The following questions were posed:

- 1.1 What specific social relationships exist amongst different groups in the area regarding these services?
- 1.2 What is the nature of associational life at a micro level and does this assist in service delivery?
- 1.3 What is the relationship among government officials, politicians and different groups of residents regarding service delivery?

#### **2. What are the internal dynamics of the City of Johannesburg as it applies to urban service delivery in the arena of the management of solid waste and public safety?**

The information was gathered in order to undertake an analysis of the restructuring process in the City of Johannesburg generally. In addition, further investigations were undertaken on how restructuring impacted on the management of solid waste and

public safety. Primary data was obtained through collecting council records, records of the strategic objectives of the City of Johannesburg, IDPs, budgets and consultant reports. In addition, Census statistics and Police Statistics were used to augment locally obtained information. The following questions were posed:

- 2.1 How does the City of Johannesburg view its technical service delivery obligations?
- 2.2 How does the City of Johannesburg view its obligations to civil society?
- 2.3 In what ways do service delivery obligations include municipal interactions with civil society?
- 2.4 Is the City of Johannesburg interested in enabling relationships between and within associational life that work to improve service delivery?

### **3. Do the expressed social needs pertaining to urban service delivery needs influence the decisions of the City of Johannesburg?**

This was investigated through an analysis of the activities and engagements of partnership-based forums. An in-depth analysis focusing specifically on these issues was done through documentary search, census data, council records and interviews. The specific questions were as follows:

- 3.1 Do the expressed social needs pertaining to urban service delivery needs influence the decisions of the City of Johannesburg? If yes, how is this done?
- 3.2 Has contact between the City of Johannesburg and civil society associations improved service delivery?
- 3.3 If not, why has this not happened?

### **4. Where do the benefits associated with social capital accrue?**

This question works in conjunction with the first three questions in seeking to establish the role played by social capital in relation to service delivery. The two sub-questions were:

- 4.1 In instances of interaction, have urban services (public safety and SWM) improved for residents of Yeoville/Old Dobsonville?
- 4.2 Have engagements between the state and civil society in Old Dobsonville/ Yeoville been beneficial to the City of Johannesburg?

## **5. What are the characteristics of social capital that need to be taken into account in understanding the relationship?**

The study sought to understand in great depth the characteristics of social capital. Therefore the questions sought to understand the difference between the forms social capital took in Old Dobsonville as opposed to Yeoville. Furthermore, the state of social capital and its depth and breadth as a resource was examined through the following five questions:

- 5.1 How deep is social capital in Old Dobsonville/ Yeoville?
- 5.2 How embedded is social capital in Old Dobsonville/ Yeoville?
- 5.3 How geographically or locationally bound is social capital in Old Dobsonville/ Yeoville?
- 5.4 How can social capital be constructed in Old Dobsonville/ Yeoville?
- 5.5 How linked is social capital to specific civil society organisations?

Depending on how familiar the respondent was with the concepts used, particularly that of 'social capital' a simple explanation of the term was provided and illustrated with relevant and identifiable examples.

## METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX TWO

### 2. 1 Data Analysis

As mentioned in Chapter One, the interview data for this thesis was recorded mostly with a tape recorder, however in instances when the interviewee seemed uncomfortable, notes were taken instead. After completing the interview, each interview was personally transcribed verbatim, recording the questions of the interviewer and responses of the interviewee.<sup>167</sup> This was done for both tape recorded and hand-written interviews. Once the interviews were transcribed, they were reconfigured into the format required for coding by a computer software programme.

Given the quantity of in-depth qualitative interviews prepared, it was considered appropriate to analyse the data with the assistance of a software programme. The data analysis for this thesis was undertaken using the qualitative software package Atlas ti. The programme provides the tools necessary to code interviews effectively according to a number of key themes. The approach used for qualitative analysis falls into what Robson (2002) refers to as template approaches. The template approach includes generating key codes according to research questions and utilising the templates as the basis for the analysis of the data (Robson, 2002: 458).<sup>168</sup>

The following themes were used to code the data:

- Accommodation
- Church
- Community Development Forums
- Community Initiatives
- Community Organisations
- Community Policing Forums
- Community Relations
- Community/Councillor Relations
- Community/Local Government Relations

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<sup>167</sup> Quotations appearing in the thesis text were taken verbatim from the interviews.

<sup>168</sup> Robson outlines in his second edition the process carried out in qualitative research. The data analysis in this thesis was based on the same process and has been outlined in this appendix. However, there is more detailed information in Robson's text (2002: 459).

- Community/Police Relations
- Constraints on Organising
- Consumption Crime<sup>169</sup>
- Council/Councillor Relations
- Elderly
- Gangs
- HIV/Aids
- Immigrants
- Informal Business
- Inner City/ Soweto
- Inter resident Issues
- Johannesburg City
- Municipal Policing
- Police and Local Government
- Political Organisations
- Poverty
- School
- Services
- Social Capital
- Street Committees
- Unemployment
- Vigilante
- Waste General
- Waste Inner City/ Soweto
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Crime
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Crime Priorities
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Current Conditions
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Historical Conditions
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Organising
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Police
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Politics
- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Priorities

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<sup>169</sup> Consumption crime for the purpose of this thesis refers to crime undertaken specifically for the objectives of accessing consumables and not for survival.

- Yeoville/ Dobsonville Waste
- Youth

These themes were cross-tabulated both within the case study site and between the case study sites to generate the points of comparison thereby generating two levels of coding. The data was then further coded according to two further sets of information generated in the interview process – the generic interview schedule and the interview schedule dealing specifically with urban service delivery issues.

Atlas ti. allows the distinction to be made between general text and quotation-selected text whilst working in the programme. This assists greatly in ethnographic research as it allows for both the concurrent review of the interview as well as the selected quotes.

## **2.2 Difficulties in the Data Analysis Process**

It is important too, to note the difficulties in data analysis. Chapter One provided some information regarding the limitations in the research process. However, there were difficulties associated particularly with research analysis. One such problem is information availability. There were richer sources of information available in the case of Yeoville, than of Old Dobsonville. This is because Yeoville has been the focus of other research processes. Whilst Soweto in general has been researched, there is negligible information pertaining to the specifics of Dobsonville as a suburb of Soweto. The implication of this was missing information that I was not able to recover. For instance, all BLA records pertaining to Old Dobsonville were destroyed in a fire in 1992. Furthermore, much of the data pertaining to Dobsonville was not tape-recorded, Accessing primary documentation, minutes of meetings etc. was difficult mainly because organisations historically had not kept this type of documentation. Locating this information in Yeoville was easier. Yeoville was also the focus of two community newspapers and this assisted greatly in the search for locality-specific information (Robson, 2002: 460).

The sensitive nature of some of the issues further inhibited the collection of the type of information I would have liked. South Africans, in general, are very wary about discussing politics with outsiders. As a white woman researcher, I found that white

respondents were at greater ease being interviewed by me and were willing to disclose a lot more information.

In some interviews, respondents would not respond to questions regarding other political parties and groups in the area, as they were distrustful of what I would do with the information. There were also incidences where there were difficulties gaining access to respondents, albeit that I was accompanied by my research assistants. Access was limited in particular with the following groups:

- I was unable to gain direct access to the waste pickers on the Marie Louise landfill site due to the reluctance of the local administration.
- The criminal element in Yeoville, particularly the foreign residents, were, unsurprisingly, apprehensive about chatting to me, fearing that I was a member of the Scorpions.<sup>170</sup> This insecurity was exacerbated by a raid on foreign immigrants in the inner city of Johannesburg in early 2000. Those foreign residents with official right of residence in South Africa were fairly easy to access.
- Some politicians from the City of Johannesburg were impossible to contact, referring me to instead to officials who were not necessarily equipped with the required information.
- Access to politicians and activists in Dobsonville was greatly assisted by the presence of my research assistant. People were much more open with me if he was used as a reference point. It was notable too, that there were distinct differences in response depending upon age. For example, the youth were much more reluctant to talk on tape and less willing to give long interviews.

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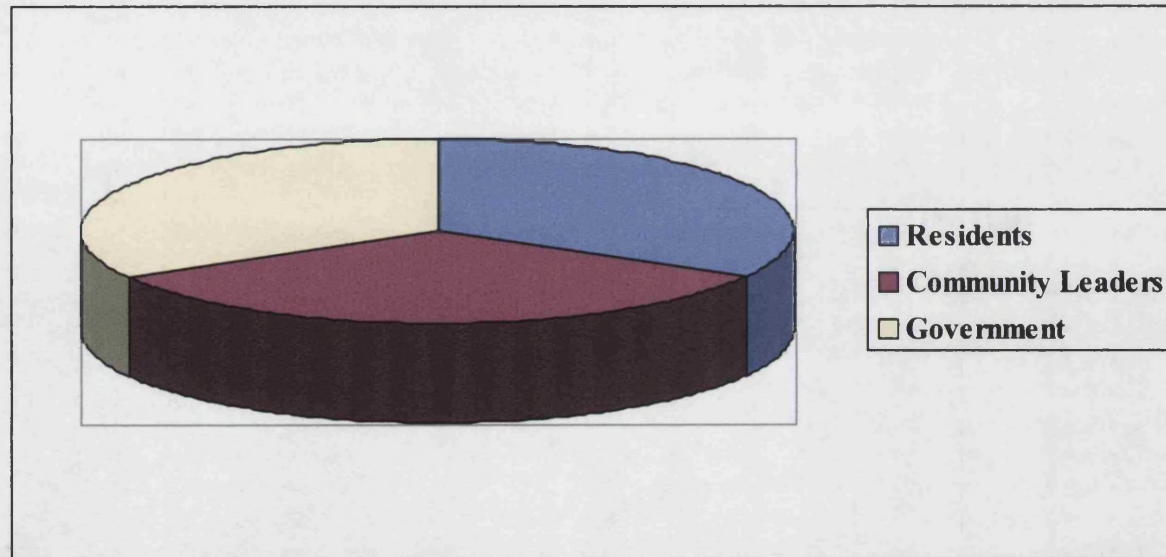
<sup>170</sup> The Scorpions are a special operations unit falling under the National Prosecuting Authority. They deal with specific types of criminal activity including organised crime.



## APPENDIX THREE

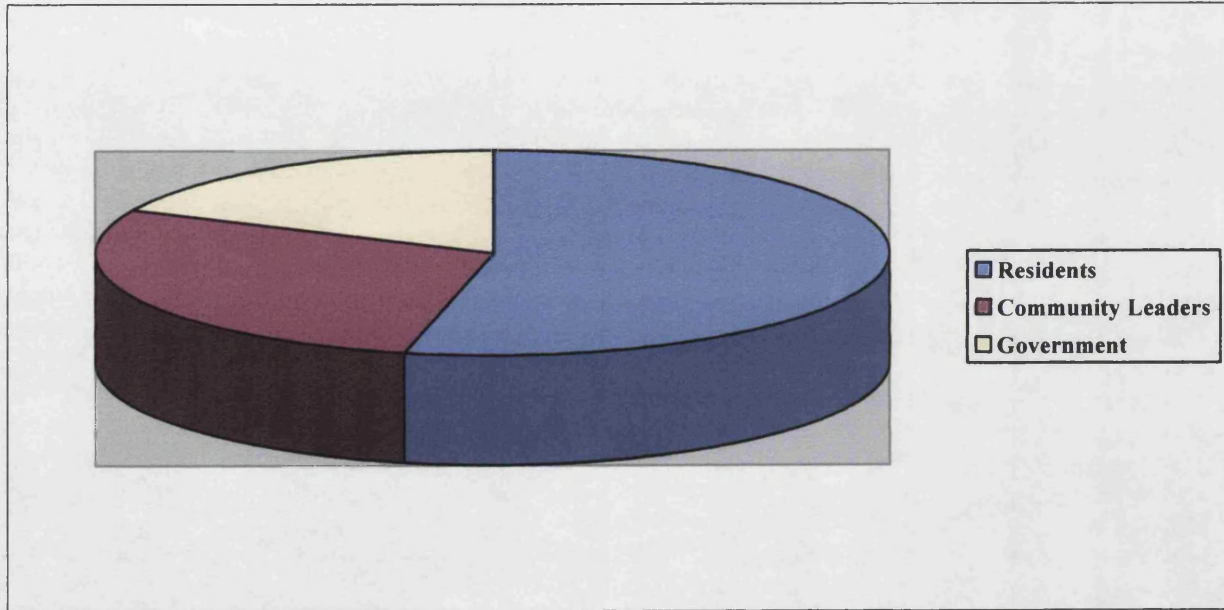
### BREAKDOWN OF INTERVIEWS IN CASE STUDY LOCALITIES

#### Breakdown of Dobsonville Interviews



**Figure A 3.1** This graph illustrates the percentage breakdown of the interviews conducted in Dobsonville. Each category comprises 33.3 per cent of the interviews conducted. The breakdown in figures demonstrates how the same number of respondents was selected from each category. In a locality such as Dobsonville, there are historic and specific community leaders and appropriate government representatives to target.

### Breakdown of Yeoville Interviews



**Figure A 3.2** This graph illustrates the percentage breakdown of the interviews conducted in Yeoville. Residents comprised 53.5 per cent of interviewees, Community Leaders 28.5 per cent and Government representatives comprised 18 per cent. The breakdown in figures differs from the Dobsonville figures. This is because Yeoville is a different locality and community leaders and government are less present in the lives of some residents than in the case of Dobsonville. Certainly, in a locality such as Yeoville, formal institutional representation and formal institutions coexist with informal institutions. These informal institutions are represented in the residents' category.

## **APPENDIX FOUR**

### **CRIME STATISTICS IN THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG FROM JANUARY 1996 – JUNE 2001**

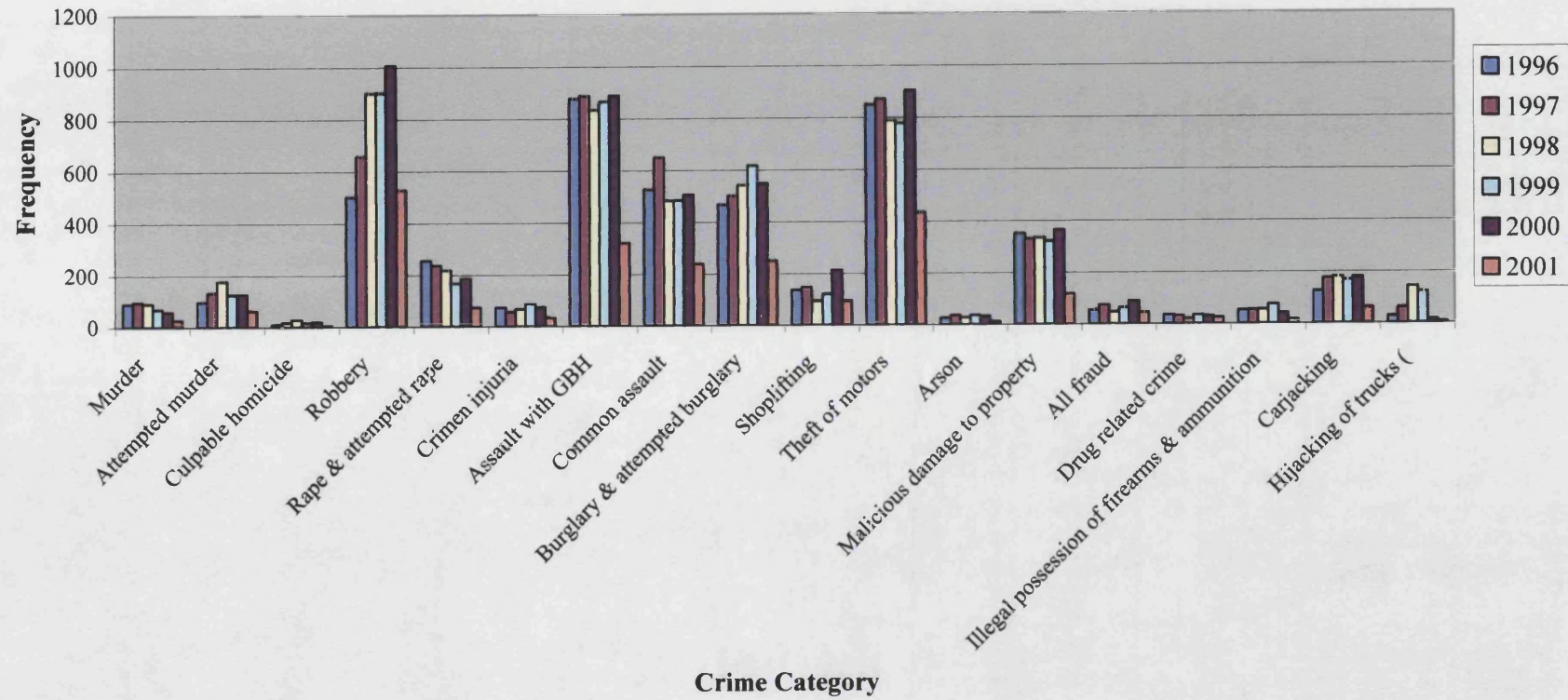
The graphs presented in A 4.1 to A 4.4 display the differing crime levels in the City of Johannesburg. These statistics are the official South African Police Services set of statistics. Each of these graphs present different figures and as such are not intended to be used as a form of comparison. Instead, they seek to illustrate the dominant crimes in each area.

Graph A 4.1 shows the crime rates in Dobsonville, Graph A 4.2 in Soweto, Graph A 4.3 in Yeoville and in the City in Graph A 4.4.

These graphs must be analysed with the understanding that much of Johannesburg's crime goes unreported and as such crime statistics are not a true reflection. The crimes are divided into two categories, those involving victims directly such as robbery and assault and murder and attempted murder, and those where the victim is not present such as burglary and theft of motor vehicles. Robbery and theft of motor vehicles has the highest figures in all four areas. This is a consequence of the fact that people tend to report these crimes for insurance purposes but they are also the most prevalent crimes.

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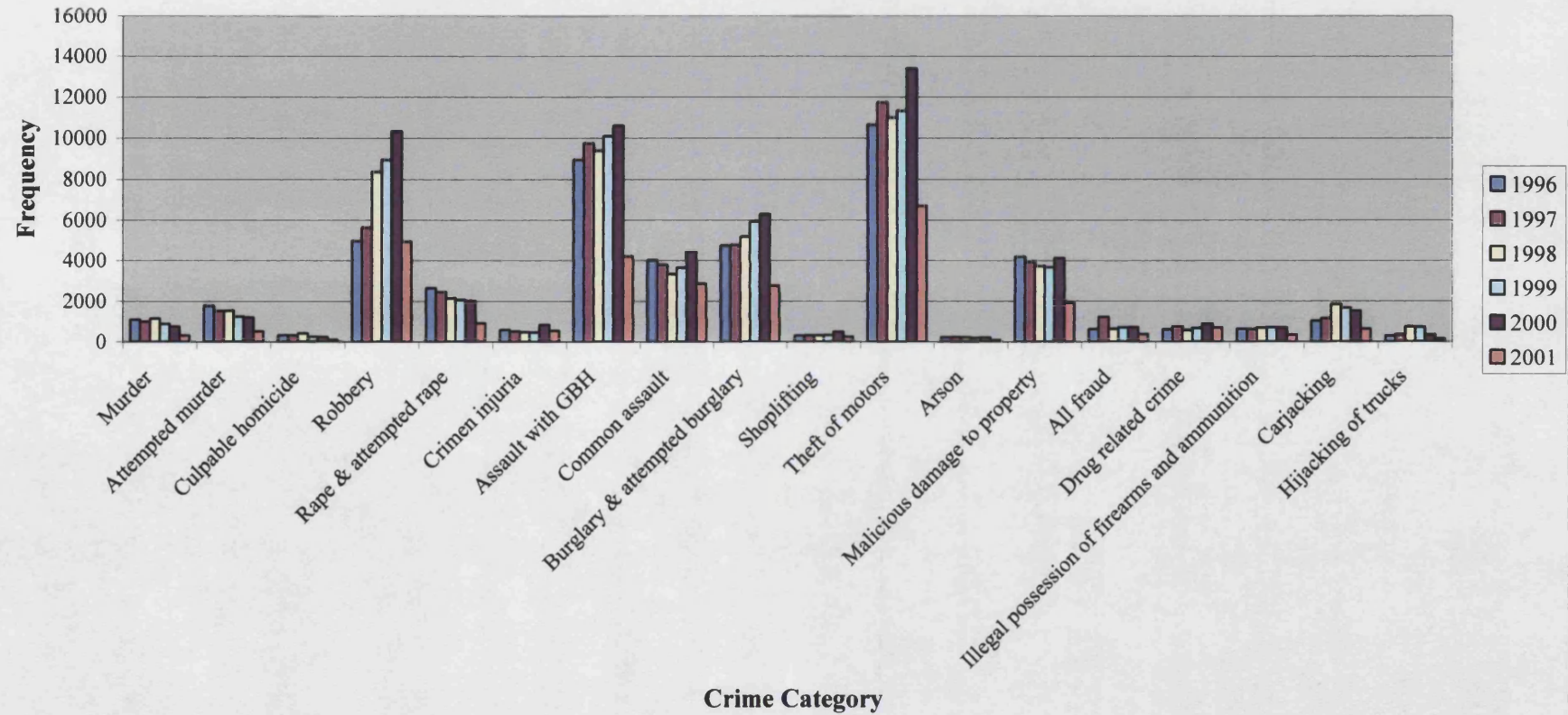
# CRIME STATISTICS IN DOBSONVILLE: JANUARY 1996-JUNE 2001



Graph A 4.1

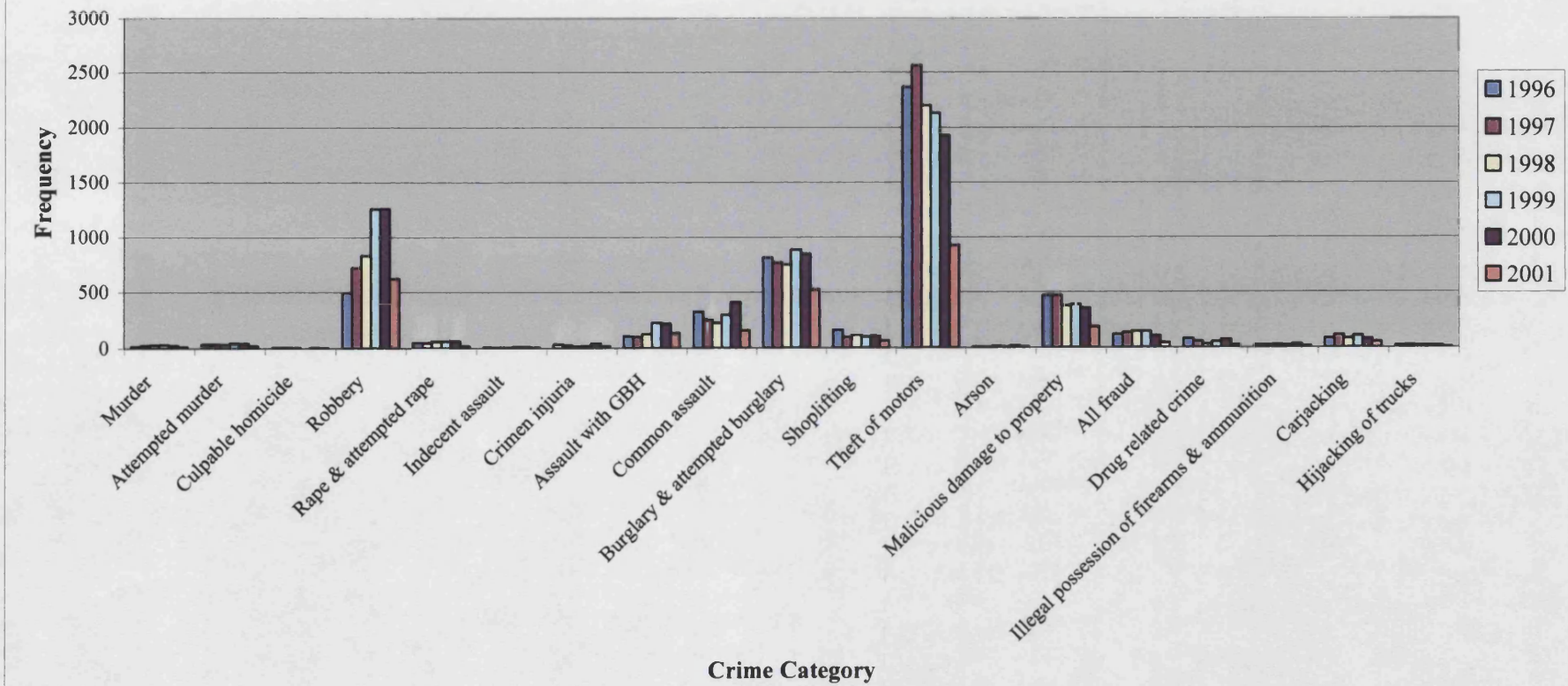


# CRIME STATISTICS IN SOWETO: JANUARY 1996-JUNE 2001



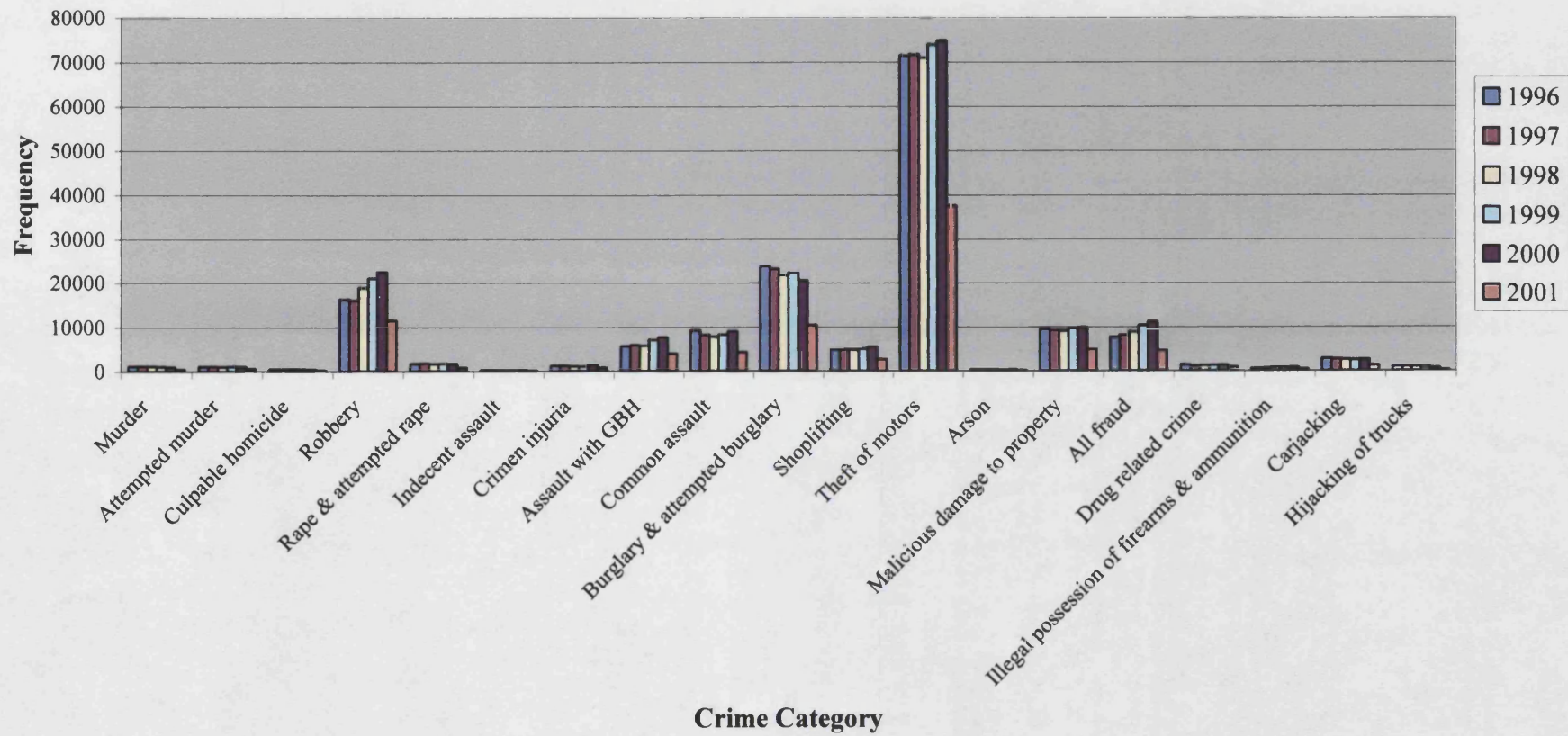
Graph A 4.2

# CRIME STATISTICS IN YEOVILLE: JANUARY 1996-JUNE 2001



Graph A 4.3

# CRIME STATISTICS IN JOHANNESBURG: JANUARY 1996-JUNE 2001



Graph A4.4



Visual Representation of the Urban Environment in Soweto

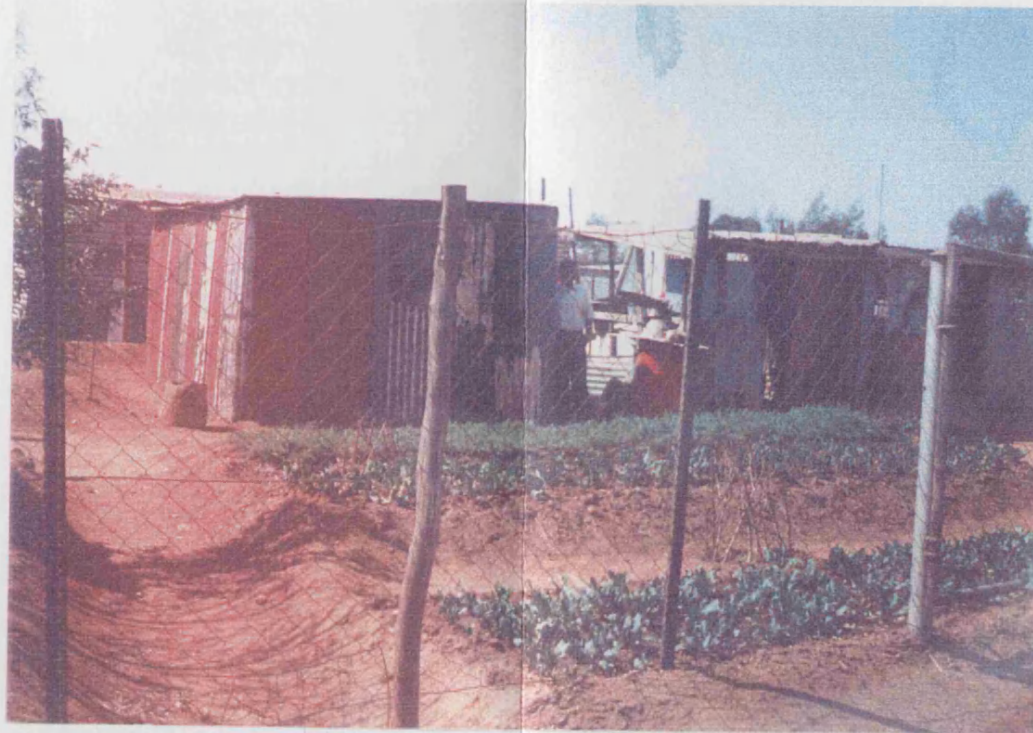


Rows of Housing in Soweto

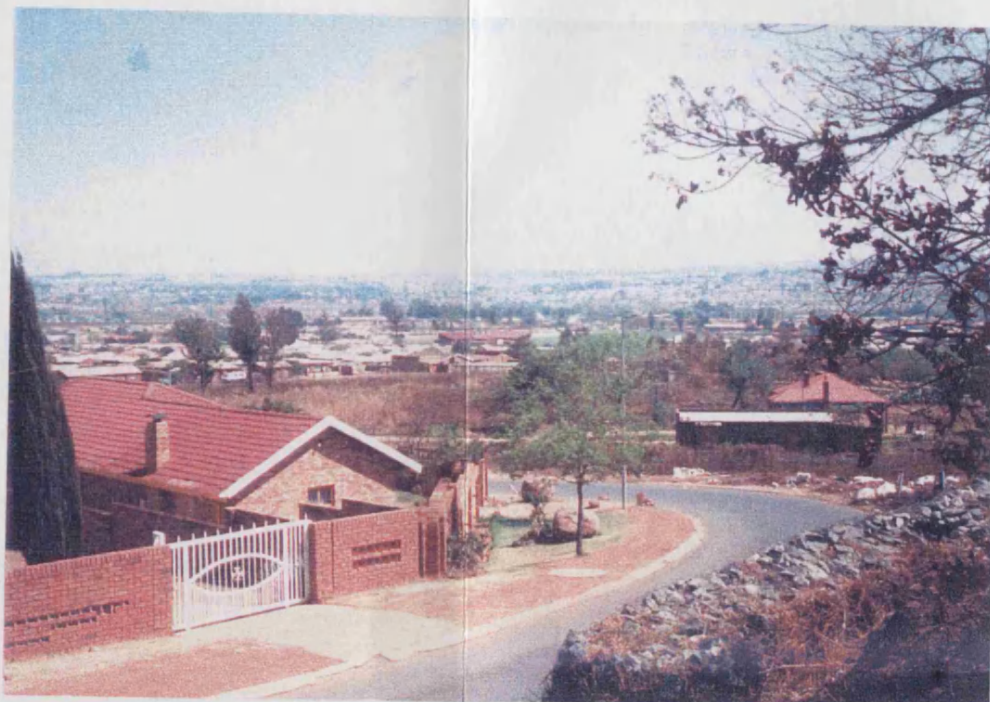


Physical and Social Environment in Soweto





Informal Housing in Soweto

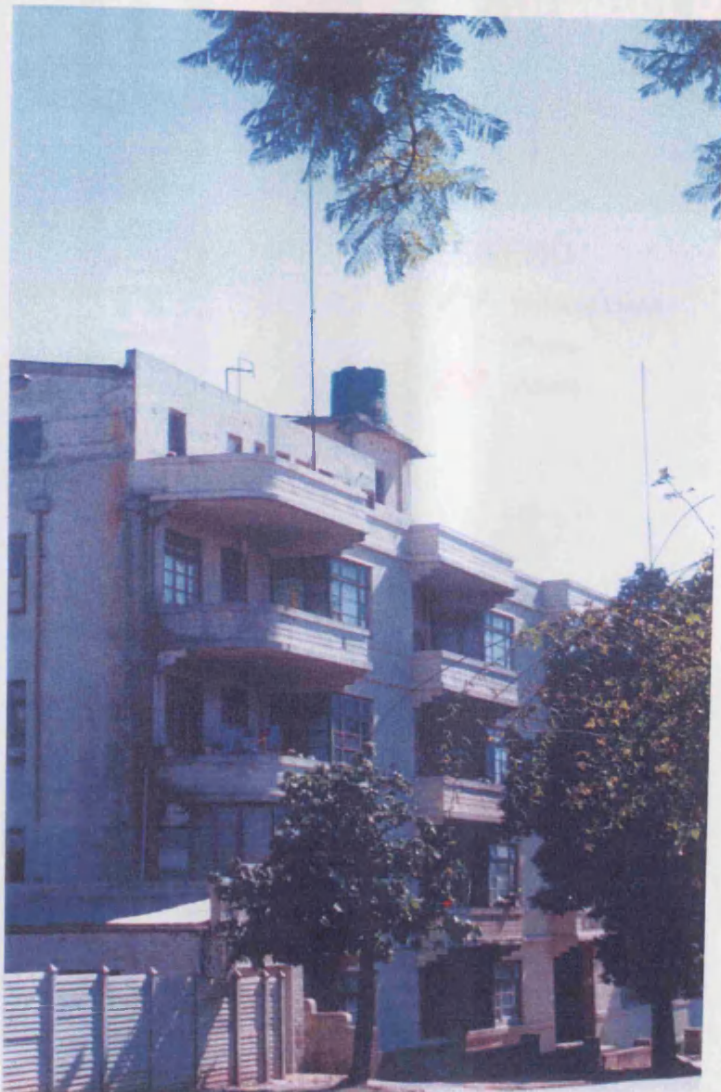


Formal Housing in Soweto



## APPENDIX FIVE

### Visual Representation of the Urban Environment in Yeoville



Bad Buildings in Yeoville



Children at Play in an Inner City Pa







Park



Uncollected Refuse in Public Space in Yeoville



Informal Trading at the Yeoville Market

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