Social Capital Reconsidered

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all be expected to contribute more to building the sorts of skills and attitudes and commitments often ascribed to participation in the associational life of the community. Our review of recent research on "social capital" also suggests that a conception focused on norms and attitudes like "trust" and "reciprocity" yields little new insight and may even undermine understanding where measurement at the national level renders invisible the actual mechanisms by which social relations facilitate or block individual and collective access to resources. In this light, we have argued, a conception of social capital that takes the notion of "capital" seriously and pays attention to the ways in which social ties themselves provide access to resources better fulfills the promise of the concept to provide insight into the critical role of such ties in social differentiation.

The civil society debate has served to focus attention on neglected aspects of social relations. Future research, however, will have to move beyond the broad and contested generalities of civil society to consider the concrete, context-dependent processes by which organizations and informal social ties alike reproduce inequality or transcend it, promote inclusive and cooperative relations, or build boundaries and reinforce hostility. The concept of social capital, properly specified, gives us purchase on some, but not all, of these processes. The studies collected here demonstrate some of the richness of the results.

Notes

1. While Coleman's formulation (1988) is the most well known, in the United States the term can be traced back to L. J. Hanlan's 1940 book entitled The Community Center (Boston: Silver, Burdett and Co.), 78–79, and later to Jane Jacobs's and Bourdieu's Bourdieu first used "social capital" in 1972, eventually developing the triad: physical capital, cultural capital, and social capital. See Bourdieu (1972) and Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992).

2. For a recent attempt to situate the U.S. debate in its normative context, see Benjamin Barber's "Three Kinds of Civil Society" (1998).

3. Nevertheless, a long tradition of European and American thought had concerned itself with the problematic place of groups in modern politics, without invoking the term "civil society." The corporatist tradition represents one distinctive, if disorderly, line of thinking on these issues. See Schmidt (1970). See also Castells (1985) and Dahl (1952) for overviews of the issues in the "pluralist" tradition. In the United States, starting with Arthur Bentley's The Process of Government (1952), the focus was on in the "interest groups" in a democratic polity whether adjudged an integral part of the system of representation (Truman 1952) or a source of systematic distortion (Buchanan, Tollison, and Tullock 1980).

4. The major exception lay in the beginnings of the "communitarian" movement, with Peter Berger and Richard Neuhäusler's call for a re-examination of the public and private sector in contemporary societies. See Berger and Neuhäusler (1977).

5. Lester Salamon has convincingly demonstrated the positive effects of the United States' distinctive "public-private partnership" for the growth of the non-profit sector here in this country (1993). He tends to side with those, accordingly, who emphasize the continuing importance of government in stimulating and supporting private initiative, and much of his recent scholarly effort has been to distinguish the "independent sector" from both market and state (Salamon and Anheier 1992a, 1992b).

6. In recent presentations and forthcoming work, Putnam (2000) has adopted a more nuanced understanding of social capital that focuses on "networks" and has argued that social trust must be understood endogenously, that is, as a reflection of the experiences and social setting in which individuals find themselves and not as an independent variable.
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FIGURE 1
Broader sociohistorical context

\[ A \rightarrow B \rightarrow \text{stratification patterns shaping the kinds and "use" value of resources present in specific context} \]

\[ \text{Resources present within a specific social context} \]

\[ \text{Knowledge that resources are present} \leftrightarrow \text{Access to resources present in the social field} \]

Social capital

\[ \text{Resources accessible (mobilizable) to individual or collective actors in particular sociohistorical context; resources available for use} \]

\[ A \rightarrow B \rightarrow \text{Individual or group agency/strategy responsive to collective perspectives of broader context, rather than individual "rational choice"} \]

\[ \text{Resources utilized/mobilized for particular purposes in specific situations} \]

that some specific resource is present within their social field and must have some form of social relationship that provides access to those resources. Social networks provide direct access to both resources and information. They also constitute the most proximate spheres of interaction in which individuals come to perceive resources to be both available and valuable.

Individual or collective actors can be said to have social capital when their sources are present and accessible, in other words when they are actually available for use. Thus, social capital = resources + access. Consequently, measures of network attributes should not be treated as direct measures of social capital; any more than the presence of some sort of resource should be. Measures of access can be taken as indirect indicators of social capital in the sense that one cannot have social capital available without access, so more means of access increases one's likelihood of having greater social capital available for use. Nevertheless, measures of access are better indicators of one's potential social capital than would be some indicators of the resources generally present in a given context.

Finally, the bottom arrow of figure 1 indicates the role of individual or collective agency in making use of social capital. Simply because individuals or collective actors have social capital available for use does not mean that they use it immediately until it is exhausted, or that they use it well. The basic distinction between mobilizable resources (social capital) and resources actually used needs to be maintained. Actors may use social capital for good or ill. While a rich endowment of social capital certainly helps an individual, group, or community to success (however defined), it is strategic choices in the use of social capital determine actual outcomes.

The formulation captured here has several strengths. First, it accounts for the context dependency of social capital—not all actors have access to the same resources. One reason that social capital is context dependent is because neither of its necessary components (resources and access) is distributed evenly. Thus, a social system of stratification that view of social capital depicted in figure 1 is that it allows for the differentiation and righting of attention to the fact that resources are not equally available to organizational boundaries. But, more broadly, the use value of social capital depends upon how specific networks are embedded within the broader system of stratification, that is, how and why different networks provide access to richer or poorer stores of resources. Both network position and the judgment of the value of the social capital available to an individual or collective actor utilizes all available social capital available for use. Sources, yet one can have social capital and not use it at a particular time for made between the possession of social capital and the use of social capital; one, rather than implicitly presumed to be constant.

Conclusion

The rich empirical work surrounding the notion of social capital over the past five years has demonstrated that the character of "civil society" indeed possesses both "civil society" and "social capital." The sorts of mechanisms slected here may have served the interests of mafia and militias as well as those of both "civil society" and "social capital." The sorts of mechanisms selected a major role in organizing civil and rights organizers. As several of the studies collected in this volume demonstrate, organizations differ tremendously in their effects on social capital. This means for the role of the polity itself. However, as we see in this volume, organizations differ in different settings, depending on the political and social context. The meaning for actors of the polity itself. The results should warn us against analyses that lay too much weight on "civil society" as voluntary associations. As Kenneth Newton supposed elsewhere (1997), schools, the home, and the workplace might...
than centrality in more neutral (i.e., weak) ties such as advising. In this case, that some individuals were regarded as crucial sources of technical information by their colleagues provided these individuals with a certain degree of access to professional resources, yet that kind of social capital was not automatically converted into resources of political influence when proposals for unionization were put forward.

Under closer scrutiny, apparently similar outcomes may indeed turn out to differ in important ways, reflecting different types of operative social ties. For example, DiMaggio and Lodi (1988) found that the kinds of ties that help in recruiting people to environmental groups changed according to the degree of radicalism of the organizations concerned. Recruitment to radical environmental organizations was frequently facilitated by activists’ previous experiences of collective action. Adhesion to more traditional conservation groups depended more frequently on private ties, such as personal acquaintances developed in neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, etc., but not in organizations promoting collective action. These researchers suggested that adhesion to more demanding and controversial forms of collective action requires more specific forms of social capital (although they did not use the term), where people are not merely offered opportunities for collective action but are socialized to a critical political perspective; in contrast, adhesion to largely uncontroversial groups—conservation, for instance—could simply depend on the practical opportunities provided by more generic social linkages.

Finally, while more, or more diverse, network ties increase an individual’s likelihood of accessing crucial resources in a given sociopolitical context, resources are accessed one tie at a time. As Briggs concludes, “adding just one steadily employed adult to an adolescent’s circle of significant ties has dramatic effects on perceived access” (1998: 177). Or, as we discussed above, knowing that just one reliable parent is in the neighborhood park enables a child’s caregiver to benefit from that social tie. In other words, more ties are better, but one tie might be sufficient to gain access to a crucial resource.

“Context dependency,” therefore, means first of all that the mere number and intensity of ties is not necessarily an adequate measure of social capital. It also means, however, that individual (or ego) networks may—should—be considered as embedded in broader patterns of social relations. In this perspective, the network is the immanent structure (Bourdieu 1986) that necessarily influences the “use value” of an individual’s network position or status. The amount of access an individual gains from a network depends on various things. First, it depends on the structure of the network itself and on an individual’s precise position within it. As the contours of the network change over time, the amount of access to resources that individuals demand by virtue of their network attributes also changes. Second, the social location of the entire network within the broader socioeconomic context shapes the ways that specific networks can and cannot link their members to resources. An individual may have extensive access to resources in a specific network, but the network as a whole may be embedded in a declining sector or an oppressed constituency (Edwards and Foley 1997, 1998; Tilley 1998). Recent discussions of social capital from a social structural perspective underline this point in referring to the “linkages” or “social bridges” that local networks need in order to gain access to a greater array of resources (Burt 1992, 1997; Woolcock 1998; Lang and Hornburg 1998; WIlken, Brenner, and Saegebarth 1999).

Network analysis offers inroads into both versions of the “context dependency” of social capital. It offers first of all a set of indicators and concepts to measure the location of specific individual actors within a network, focusing either on the amount of ties they are involved in or on their capacity to act as intermediaries between other actors (Freeman 1979; Scott 1992; Wasserman and Faust 1994; Borgatti, Jones, and Everett 1998). It also allows analysts, however, to examine the structure of global networks to assess to which extent centrality in a specific network may be regarded as an indicator of influence on a broader scale (Scott 1992; Wasserman and Faust 1994). However, network analysis tools are no substitute for a proper understanding of the specific relationships being analyzed. Without some knowledge of the content of ties, and of the specific resources available through networks, we have no way of judging how much social capital an individual or group actually has at its disposal. Whether conceived as the number or diversity of ties, as network position, or as structural attributes of entire networks, networked access is but one component of social capital, albeit a crucial one (Bourdieu 1986; Portes 1998). Social capital is best conceived as access (networks) plus resources.

A Model of Social Capital

In closing, we draw together these points in order to clarify a model of social capital. Figure 1 helps illustrate the relationship of social context to social capital and of social capital both to means of access and to the agency of specific actors. The top arrow in the figure denotes the undirectional contribution of social resources across specific social contexts in a given society. It signals the fact that the “use value” of resources available in a given context varies according to the location of that context within the larger socioeconomic setting. The second arrow problematizes the question of access to the specific resources present in a given context. That is, the more for such resources, the “raw materials” of social capital, to be converted into social capital, individual or collective actors must perceive
we can see very little use in applying a new label to the traditional stock of
terms. We judge that a primary focus on "generalized social trust" (as
measured, e.g., by one or more of the three GSS items commonly used for
these purposes) is a dead-end. While there is no doubt that trust of some
sort is crucial to many social relations, there is little evidence that, when
larger or lesser proportions of a population consider themselves to be
trustful of "people in general," this has any bearing on the health of de-
mocracy or the prospects for economic achievement in a given country.
On the contrary, such expressions appear to reflect the peculiar social, eco-
nomic, and political positions of the respondents: social trust is the result
of a social, economic, or political system that works well for some, if not
others; it is not the cause of their felicity. Trust, moreover, is not some uni-
versal lubricant that oils the wheels of cooperation wherever it is applied.
Rather, cooperation is achieved through a variety of mechanisms, not the
least important of which is effective government regulation (Kenworthy
1995). Where cooperation succeeds, trust may be presumed to follow.

On the other hand, we find much that is promising in the context-
dependent and social structural/relational approaches of Bourdieu and
Coleman. Research cited here has shown how interpersonal relations and
institutional context may affect outcomes as diverse as individual exploita-
tion of their own human capital, juvenile delinquency, and the success of
communities in attracting resources for economic development. At the
same time, other work has shown to what extent economic and political
context may shape the level and kind of social capital a community may
enjoy. Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes may force people to adopt
more inward-looking strategies; corporate disengagement or government-
mandated professionalization of nonprofit social service provision may
undermine community spirit and voluntarism (Garth-Nowland 1998); dif-
ferent sorts of organizations may produce different mixes of self-regarding
and civic behavior.

We need to think more seriously about the ways in which the elements
of social structure facilitate or constrain individual political participation
or collective action and look for sources of data that can capture such phe-
nomena. Verba, Scholzman, and Brady (1995) and Rosenstone and Hansen
(1993) have pointed the way in devising new datasets and creatively ex-
ploring older ones to get at such variables. Diani (1995), Minkoff (1995),
and J. Smith (1997) have each built extensive datasets focusing on region,
national, and transnational organizations, respectively, each of which has
provided considerable leverage for thinking about how the connections and
structures embodied in them work. Rose (1998) has designed a series of
instruments expressly designed to tap social capital variables and the vari-
ousing strategies of individuals in employing available social capital for
economic survival and advancement.

"Networking" Social Capital

Finally, the notion of social capital has already proven useful for political
scientists and others concerned with understanding local processes of re-
source mobilization, economic development, and political recruitment and
mobilization (Maloney, Smith, and Stoker, this volume). At the same time,
social capital research in political science and political sociology need not
confine itself to local politics, as the work of Minkoff and Smith cited
above demonstrates. What these efforts have in common is attention to the
social structures in which social resources are embedded, and to the kind
and degree of access to such resources they provide individuals and groups.
Understood in this way, the concept of social capital provides useful lever-
gage for understanding the ways in which individuals, groups, and societies
to our maneuvering the diverse social settings of which the economists'
"marketplace" is only a subset.
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either locally or across the nation. The difficulty of achieving lasting peace in Belfast and Beirut should warn us against assuming that "associational density" has the same meaning in all social and political contexts. Social structures must be "appropriable" by individuals and groups to really be social capital; their use value as social capital will be multiplied to the extent that they enable multiple linkages across communities and beyond them (Bebbington 1997; Flora, Sharp, Flora, and Newton 1997). Moreover, as the mention of Northern Ireland and Lebanon suggests, not all examples are so happy as the ones we have sketched here. Social networks and institutions may limit mobility's connections with the wider community; they may include some and exclude others; they may serve selfish and/or antisocial as well as "civic" ends (Portes and Landolt 1996); and they may battle one another furiously over the nature of the "public good."

Social scientists who have treated social capital as an independent variable have been attentive—to a much greater degree than have proponents of the "political culture" perspective—to the role of informal social networks and formal social organization in providing both individuals and their communities with vehicles for the advancement of their goals. Because the former have tended to conceptualize social capital more as a structural variable than an attitudinal one, even their use of survey data to measure the concept has differed markedly from that of most political scientists. In developing an analytical model of volunteering, for example, Wilson and Musick (1997) employ parsimonious measures of social capital—the number of children living in the household (on the assumption that children help connect adults to other adults) and self-reported informal social interactions—clearly tied theoretically to the extent to which respondents are embedded in social networks. Wilson and Musick find that individuals who report more children in the household and more frequent informal social interactions are also more likely to volunteer.

Social structural variables can also be employed in studies of "meso-level" effects of social capital. In an effort to explain varying development trajectories among six communities in the Ecuadorian and Bolivian Andes, Bebbington (1997) focuses on the presence (or absence) in each community of base and federated organizations and of specific individuals who linked communities to extra-local institutions and resources. The "organizations first helped create pre-conditions for intensification, and then helped catalyze process of intensification" (1997:194). The key individuals played crucial roles in renegotiating existing relationships among state, civic, and market spheres, that is, in establishing linkages between local organizations and extra-local agencies. Flora, Sharp, Flora, and Newton (1997) surveyed elected or appointed officials in a random sample of nonmetropolitan communities to test the relationship between local variations in "entrepreneurial social infrastructure"—the community's capacity to accept controversy ("legitimacy of alternatives"); its ability to mobilize resources from diverse sources; and variations in the structure of community projects—and their having undertaken an economic development project. The authors find that an unbiased local newspaper (legitimacy of alternatives), contributions to community projects from several types of financial institutions (resource mobilization), and more extensive network linkages to other communities were significant predictors of economic development activity.

These studies illustrate fruitful and relatively parsimonious models for gathering reliable data on social capital at the same level of social organization as the political or economic outcome of interest. In so doing they avoid entirely the methodological difficulties inherent in aggregating individual attitudes or actions into a single measure of political culture with effects posited at the level of the polity or region.

Explaining Social Capital

A final group of analysts have taken up the task of explaining social capital as a dependent, rather than independent, variable. By seeking to explain patterns in the production, presence, and use of social capital, they must wrestle directly or indirectly with the ways specific social contexts shape the "use value" of social capital and broker access to it. Thus, Hepzing (this volume) and Schulman and Anderson (this volume) demonstrate the impact of economic restructuring during the twentieth century on production of and access to social capital. Similarly, Portney and Berry (this volume) and Booth and Richard (this volume) make clear that local and national political contexts exert substantial influence on the kind and degree of mobilization of social capital.

Others, notably Stolle and Rochon (this volume), Eastis (this volume), and Booth and Richard (this volume), have shown that different sorts of groups are associated with different sorts of attitudes. Even when analysts focus on the "neo-Tocquevillian," that is, normative, interpretation of social capital, context proves to be important once we ask under what circumstances what sorts of social capital are produced, as in Stolle and Rochon's analysis of differences between type of group and levels of generalized trust, community reciprocity and tolerance among members.

It Is Time to Divest Ourselves of Stock in the Social Capital Concept?

Our answer is a qualified "No." If, on the one hand, social capital is considered as little more than a stand-in for the old political culture variables,
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GSS has been administered. A more careful look at the data shows no clear overall trend but reveals that misanthropy ("negative social trust") is shaped by socioeconomic and minority status, nongovernment life events, religion, and age-cohort. It is higher among "the less educated, those with lower incomes, and those with recent financial reversals," among subgroups toward the social periphery, among victims of crime and those in poor health, among non-church goers and fundamentalists, and among younger adults" (1997:172–80, 191). Clearly, "social trust" itself depends upon a larger social context than that captured by the usual measures of associational membership. By the same token, its "use value" to individuals will vary systematically in ways scarcely considered by macroanalysis of the sort preferred by most of the political scientists in this literature.

We might sum up these observations with the following axiom: The more the "use value" of social capital is shaped by systematic variations between and within groups, the more distorted will be the connection between the "grand mean" of self-reported attitudes and beliefs among survey respondents and the varying social locations and contexts within which social resources are capitalized and made accessible to people.

Both theoretical and methodological considerations, then, point to the difficulty of sustaining the sorts of claims that have been made about the relationships between social capital, conceived in fundamentally normative terms, and macroeconomic, political, or social outcomes. Work outside the social capital framework can be the determinants of political participation in American politics points to a complex interplay of factors influencing the kind and degree of political participation people undertake—especially the skills learned through participation in churches, higher levels of education, and networks of mobilization and recruitment (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). Comparative research on the bases for economic growth in industrial nations suggests that, while cooperation is important, it is won more through conflict, the threat of sanction, and institutions than as a result of exogenously generated trust or norms (Kenworthy 1995, and this volume).

Associations, Social Capital and Social Structure

The political culture approach to social capital assumes that associations facilitate economic growth or democratic performance through their impact on individual norms and attitudes, which in turn have an impact on society through individual behavior (Stolle and Rochon, this volume; Easton, this volume). Coleman's conception, however, is both more expansive and less indirect. Social capital includes social organization of all sorts, including "appropriable social organization" and "intentional organization..."
the sorts of effects posited for "generalized social trust," or even the "civic norms" of some of this research, are likely to be highly mediated by much more "local" social structures (Borrow 1996). Even when "generalized social trust" is taken as survey respondents' assessments of the trustworthiness of their social environment, aggregate scores at the national level can tell us little to nothing about what social groups enjoy trustworthy environments and under what circumstances. Moreover, if analysts wished to examine respondents' assessments of their everyday social environment, rather than the trustworthiness of the respondents themselves, exact survey data offer more direct indicators.2

An example drawn from Coleman's exposition might help make clear what we mean. The presence of norms ensuring that "unattended children will be looked after by adults in the vicinity" constituted social capital for a Jewish acquaintance of his who noted the difference between her old home in the United States and Jerusalem (Coleman 1990:307). Such norms are no doubt borne by individuals. But even their wide distribution may be irrelevant to the peace of mind of parents unless they are active for their children (e.g., Arab children as well as Jewish children, Yeminite and Ethiopian Jews as well as those of obviously European origin) in their neighborhood (East Jerusalem as well as West; Arab neighborhoods as well as settler communities). The wider the distribution of such norms, no doubt, the more reason I may have to trust my children to themselves (to speak); but my knowledge that one individual possessed of such a norm is at my small neighborhood park today may be enough to allow me to permit my child to wander over there and hence may constitute social capital for me.

Even more than the distribution of certain norms, the context that makes it possible (or not) for me to rely upon other people's adherence to them determines their significance as social capital. A given neighborhood may have many individuals predisposed to such norms without the neighbors having a sense that theirs is a safe place for children. People's perception that it is so depends upon such factors as the extent to which people are out on the streets, the external reputation of the area, or a dramatic incident "demonstrating" the trustworthiness of neighbors. Conversely, high levels of "generalized social trust"—absent information about who has access to such trust under what conditions—can tell us little about a policy in a community. Context counts, and it counts crucially.

The theoretical difficulties are compounded when analysts attempt to link attitudinal data with macro economic and political outcomes by the opaque character of the aggregate data employed. Cross-national research relying on mean scores at the national level on variables such as social civic norms, or trust in government ignore the significance of varying distributions that may lie behind identical statistical profiles. In this respect...
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MICHAEL W. FOLEY, BOB EDWARDS, AND MARIO DIANI

Since Robert Putnam's 1995 "Bowling Alone" article popularized the concept of social capital, many scholars have adopted it, both in empirical research and in argumentative pieces directed toward readers of journals of opinion. Political scientists and sociologists have dominated empirical research, but economists and other social scientists have also taken up the notion in studies ranging from renewed tests of the thesis of a "decline in social capital" in the United States to analyses of the impact of social capital on economic performance, public health, or delinquency among teenagers. Others have explored variations in the kinds and value of social capital as resulting from cross-national differences in the predominance of politicized versus "civic" groups operating in a society or from historical changes in the structure of local economies.

As we noted in the introduction, research in this field has been driven by different theoretical approaches. Putnam's work has led many political scientists and economists to focus on the relationships among associations and trust as well as other attitudes and norms, on the one hand, and always any or all of these affect social, economic, and political outcomes on the other. At the same time, other social scientists, mostly sociologists, have adopted versions of the social capital concept that are more in keeping with the social structural versions enunciated by Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu (1986), in that they emphasize individual and organizational ties, in predicting individual advancement or collective action.

In this concluding chapter, we review empirical work in the hope of clarifying the notion of social capital theoretically. We distinguish two approaches which center attention on "social trust" as a prime indicator of social capital and those which take a more decided social structure view. Following Bourdieu, we contend that resources in general, attitudes and norms such as trust and reciprocity, and social infrastructures are

Social Trust and Social Capital

Scholars who privilege survey analysis in their approach to social capital (many political scientists) tend to conceive of the latter as something that varies in individuals (norms and attitudes such as trust). In this approach, social capital is an individual attribute and a fully portable resource, the value of which does not fluctuate as the individual moves in and out of various social contexts. When social capital is measured at the national or aggregating survey responses into a "grand mean," it is impossible to distinguish the impact of localized social contexts on its generation.

We take seriously the context-specific character of social capital in Bourdieu's sense, political scientists' efforts to resurrect the culture argument under the rubric of social capital appear to get relationships exactly the wrong way around. The norms and values of political culture theorists have always been treated as exogenous variables, whereas Coleman explicitly casts social capital as endogenous to a familiar social structural contexts (Jackman and Miller 1998). Moreover,