

School of Occupational Therapy and Social Work

**Place Management:
Social Policy, Government Authority, Community
Responsibility**

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Doctor of Philosophy
of
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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

Signature:

Date:

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Abstract

This thesis explores and analyses the questions: *What is Place Management theory and practice, and how does Place Management inform social policy decisions in Australia?* A concept that has captured the attention of policy and programme designers across many Western nations, Place Management remains poorly understood. In a community of disadvantage, around a select issue, and through collaboration between service systems, Place Management claims to be based on principles that represent a radical change for government. A policy intervention, aimed at improving childhood health and wellbeing, embracing principles of community development, capacity building, social capital and strengths-based practice with an aim to involve community members in devising 'local solutions' to 'local problems' is a commendable aim of government policy makers. What ideas and previous developments inform these principles? How they are engaged in practice? And what are the experiences of those people implementing the policy? are questions explored in this thesis. The policy analysis of Place Management traces ideas, implementation and development within a case study approach focusing on the Australian Federal Government's Stronger Families and Communities Strategy and its sub-initiative Communities for Children. Using a critical reflexive framework this policy is interrogated across the period from 2004 to 2007, during which the policy was designed, implemented and evaluated. Interviews, documents, a survey and participant observation were used to gather information. This research represents insider and outsider perspectives, and enables the critical reflexive praxis which has been employed throughout the analysis. The thesis is organised in such a way as to demonstrate the cyclical nature of Action Research and its potential to contribute to policy design and development in the complex domain of addressing childhood disadvantage through intersectioning layers of policy.

Prologue

A PhD scholarship is available within the [Independent Research Centre] to research and evaluate the newly established Communities for Children initiative in two locations in [Western Australia]. Funded by the Australian Government and facilitated by [the 'Facilitating Partner' NGO] these projects adopt a community development approach to improving outcomes for young children. Postgraduate research will focus on formative evaluation of program interventions as well as the overall effectiveness of a service delivery model operating within a community capacity building framework (News paper advertisement, 2005¹).

In a meeting held in Perth in December 2004, representatives from a NGO sought a proposal from a research centre to undertake a formative evaluation of the Communities for Children programme in Western Australia. It was at this point that a PhD scholarship to undertake a formative evaluation was conceived. An advertisement (excerpt above) called for interested people to apply and I was the successful applicant. The research centre was positioned as 'chief investigator', providing supervision to the student and to oversee the whole project. The industry funder, also the Facilitating Partner (later detailed), put forward money to provide a stipend of \$22,000 over a three year period as well as access to the sites and relevant information as necessary. The University offered administrative support and assistance as aligned for the research student.

This arrangement was bounded by a 'Local Evaluation' model programme. The Industry Funder aimed to forge a partnership with the research institution to maximise the 4% of funding allocated for evaluation. The two C4C sites were together in receipt of \$5.8 million dollars to provide services to young children, their families and whole communities. Evaluation was a critical

¹ To maintain anonymity references identifying individuals or organisations is withheld and available on request by the examiner.

component of each site's ability to progress and develop from earlier learnings and implement practices congruent with wanted outcomes.

As a formative evaluation project, the doctoral research will be focussed on monitoring and recording developments, processes and outcomes in both C4C Initiatives in accordance with overall strategic and annual service delivery plans established in each site. Specifically, this project will provide ongoing information and feedback to each site about their progress towards agreed goals so that effective and timely action can be undertaken. This scholarship offers a unique and exciting opportunity for an industry/university partnership within the social sciences. It provides a doctoral candidate with the opportunity to be engaged in action based research, evaluation and theoretical development in a new and important area of community capacity building aimed to assist families, their children and communities to participate in building a better future in place (The NGO Facilitating Partner, 2005).

Action Research was the methodology and research process agreed to by the Facilitating Partner and research centre and one that interested me. Action Research was chosen for its ability to inform practices with people themselves feeding their experiences back into these practices, including both recipients and implementers of projects, in an ongoing development process. Action research, as a formative process, was intended to improve projects through people participating and iteratively feeding into planning and developments in a cyclical and ongoing way.

My entry into this project and my positioning is relevant as it mirrors sites of struggle closely shared by people involved in the C4C programme. Together, those lived actualities in terms of macro, cultural, social, economic and political relations currently shaping government policy is what this process reflects. At a crucial point in this research journey I was granted an opportunity to deviate from what was expected towards matters of significant interest to me, particularly to those mechanisms of power and the dominance of discourse greatly influencing C4C developments. Interleaves throughout this thesis offer reflections on this journey as it relates to and is relevant to this research.

It is the concept of Place Management that is the starting point for this research. It was knowledge on and of this concept that the industry partner wanted in order to inform its organisational strategic direction, even though this research did not progress as the industry funder had anticipated.

The C4C policy programme between 2004 and 2009 is the focus for this research.

Acronyms

| | |
|---------|--|
| AAP | Australian Assistance Plan |
| ABCD | Asset Based Community Development |
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ACCAP | Australian Council for Children and Parenting |
| AEDI | Australian Early Development Index |
| AIFS | Australian Institute of Family Studies |
| ARACY | Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth |
| C4C | Communities for Children |
| C4CC | Communities for Children Committee |
| CAF | Community Action Fund |
| CAFCA | Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia |
| CALD | Culturally and Linguistically Diverse |
| CDEP | Community Development Employment Projects |
| CPTED | Crime prevention through environmental design |
| CP | Community Partners |
| CSP | Community Strategic Plan |
| DPC | Department of Premier and Cabinet |
| EYS | Early Years Strategy |
| FaCS | Family and Community Services |
| FaCSIA | Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs |
| FaHCSIA | Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs |
| FP | Facilitating Partner |
| LE | Local Evaluator |
| LSAC | Longitudinal Study of Australian Children |
| NAEC | National Agenda for Early Childhood |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| NEF | National Evaluation Framework |
| NEC | National Evaluation Consortium (Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) at the University of New South Wales, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS)) |
| NGO | Non-Government Organisation |
| NPM | New Public Management |
| PM | Programme Manager |
| PPP | Promising Practices Profiles |
| SDP | Service Delivery Plan |
| SEIFA | Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas |
| SFCSP | Stronger Families and Communities Strategy Partnership |
| SFCS (Strategy) | Stronger Families and Communities Strategy |
| SFLEX | Stronger Families Learning Exchange |
| SPRC | Social Policy Research Centre |
| TCM | Town Centre Management |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| US | United States of America |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

Interview respondents and positions they occupied²

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Alex | NGO Manager (moved into State Government) |
| Bernard | Independent research consultant |
| Beryl | Independent research consultant |
| Carol | State Government |
| Desera | NGO Manager |
| Eva | Community Partner |
| Freda | Indigenous Committee Member |
| Gail | Community Partner |
| Helen | Community Partner (moved into State Government) |
| Ian | Policy Programme Designer |
| John | Community Partner |
| Joyce | State Government |
| Kevin | Community Partner - School Principal |
| Linda | Local Government |
| Meredith | Local Government |
| Morgan | Independent research consultant |
| Nadine | State Government |
| Owen | Facilitating Partner NGO |
| Petra | Facilitating Partner NGO |
| Rose | NGO (moved into independent role) |
| Stephanie | Policy Programme Designer |
| Steve | Local Government |
| Tom | Independent research consultant |
| Ulga | Community Partner |
| Vince | Policy Programme Designer |
| Wayne | Facilitating Partner NGO |
| Yulia | Facilitating Partner NGO |
| Zac | Community Partner |

² To protect the identity of respondents pseudonyms are used

Place Management: – Early years, joined-up governance, communities of disadvantage

This thesis focuses on the policy approach known as Place Management, addressing questions about its practice and theory through consideration of a programme, adopted at a Federal level in Australia: the Communities for Children programme. In this Section I describe this programme and its parent policy, the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, followed by an outline of the format and structure of this thesis.

Section³ introduction

This Section provides the context for this thesis, in particular locating it in the way government responds to childhood disadvantage through the policy programme of Communities for Children (C4C⁴). Childhood disadvantage is a policy area increasingly targeted by Western nations as being worthy of investment with the belief that early childhood events impact upon later life outcomes. Place Management, as a theory and practice, is intended to offer a way to strike a balance between government authority and the needs of

³ Major parts of this thesis are referred to as ‘Sections’ rather than ‘Chapters’ as a stylistic preference.

⁴ This section introduces the many acronyms used throughout this thesis. To familiarise the reader with these, many continue to be referred to in full for this section only (see acronym list).

citizens in a collaborative and partnered arrangement. Place Management has therefore captured the attention of policy and programme designers at all levels of government and non-government as a way for people to work together on issues that impact upon them. This research is about an Australian Federal Government policy that aims to improve the long-term opportunities for children through what has come to be known as a Place Management approach.

Policy designers of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS or the Strategy) believed in the new policy direction of a place-based response in its aims to address childhood disadvantage. The Strategy emphasises community participation, cross sectorial collaboration and partnerships with and between agencies, building capacities and favouring local knowledges in the field of childhood development. However, Place Management and place-based approaches are not well understood by policy designers or implementers with little research being available to inform its practical or theoretical application. Some of the questions framing this research are: what is Place Management? What issues are being addressed by the policy? What principles and practices inform this approach? Why at this time? Who decides and on what basis? Who benefits and in whose interests? And, where is this approach heading and is it desirable? This research examines and analyses the Place Management approach used by the Australian SFCS.

The Communities for Children (C4C) programme is a sub-initiative of the SFCS, and it is this particular programme that can offer understandings of Place Management as a concept in practice. This research looks closely at how Place Management developed: its design, rollout and implementation, ideas, and perceptions and experiences of people in the programme, using C4C as an example.

My own positioning in this research, as research-participant initially and then as research-observer, is comparable with particular developments of the

policy programme. Thus personal reflexive interleaves are placed between sections and serve as contextual reflections. In order to reflect on and analyse Place Management in Communities for Children I use Action Research (AR). Action Research was earlier identified by the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy policy as a useful mechanism through which to evaluate this policy's outcomes. It was discontinued in later developments of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy policy, particularly at the time Communities for Children was announced even though many researchers, contracted to Communities for Children sites, were expected to evaluate employing Action Research methodology. It remains a valuable method of informing the development and progress of projects designed under this policy and the merits of an Action Research approach are offered in its practical framework used in the presentation of this research. Each section of this thesis represents one stage of a helix motion of **looking, thinking, reflecting** and **acting** of an AR process as illustrated in Figure 2 (page 24).

The C4C policy's main ideological platform, its overarching aims and principles and the model from which it is enacted are outlined in this section. The theoretical lens adopted through which to view this research follows. Ideological perspectives shaping my way of *looking* are inseparable from that which is researched and these are provided in the introduction to the methodological framing which is discussed in more detail in Section Three: Critical Reflexivity – framing the inquiry.

AR is cyclical and spiralling and it can be argued never to 'begin' or finish. I commence the discussion here through the lens of *Looking*: the cyclical nature and representation of AR is explained at the end of this section. Here, I commence the *Looking* phase of research cycle one, dealing with the social policy environment of the SFCS and its sub-initiative C4C.

Stronger Families and Communities Strategy

Stronger Families and Community Strategy's first stage, from 2000-2004, funded five programmes: Invest to Grow, Local Answers, Choice and Flexibility in Child Care, and Volunteer Small Equipment Grants Programme and the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (Davies & Taylor, 2005). Common to all is the focus upon the early years, 0-5 years, and the development of children in families and their community. The SFCS aimed to:

strengthen young children, their families and communities by investing in locally developed, whole-of-community projects that build resilience and the ability to deal with problems before they develop (Davies & Taylor, 2005, p. 106).

Characterised as a new social policy direction, signifying a “fundamental departure from more traditional government programmes” (Emerson, McKay, Delahunt, & Gifford, 2000, p.1), the Strategy's approach, deemed a “comprehensive, more coordinated service system response (at a local community level)” (Rogers & Moore, 2003, p. 5), was introduced in April 2000 by the Australian Government, then led by Prime Minister John Howard. This approach was said to be “breaking new and innovative ground in policy development” and aimed further to provide a national framework on sustainability and capacity building taking into consideration individual, family and community needs (Davies & Taylor, 2005, p. 106). The next phase of the SFCS which led to the implementation of C4C was informed by learnings from this first phase (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005c).

Communities for Children

The second stage of SFCS in 2004 was unveiled under new ministerial direction with C4C introduced in seven pilot sites. These extended to include a further thirty-eight sites in subsequent stages, from 2005 to 2009. This marks the period of the C4C model which, while continuing on in name, has ceased to develop in the form originally launched. Three broad policy ideas were merged into the C4C: building partnerships, reflected in community

capacity building and joined-up strategies; targeting families and in particular the early years of children; and implementing services in purposefully selected places of disadvantage. These aspects of the policy direction are discussed in following pages. Figure 1 (page 6) represents the complex set of relations involved in the Stronger Families Communities Strategy's Communities for Children.

Stronger Families and Communities Strategy's Communities for Children Structure

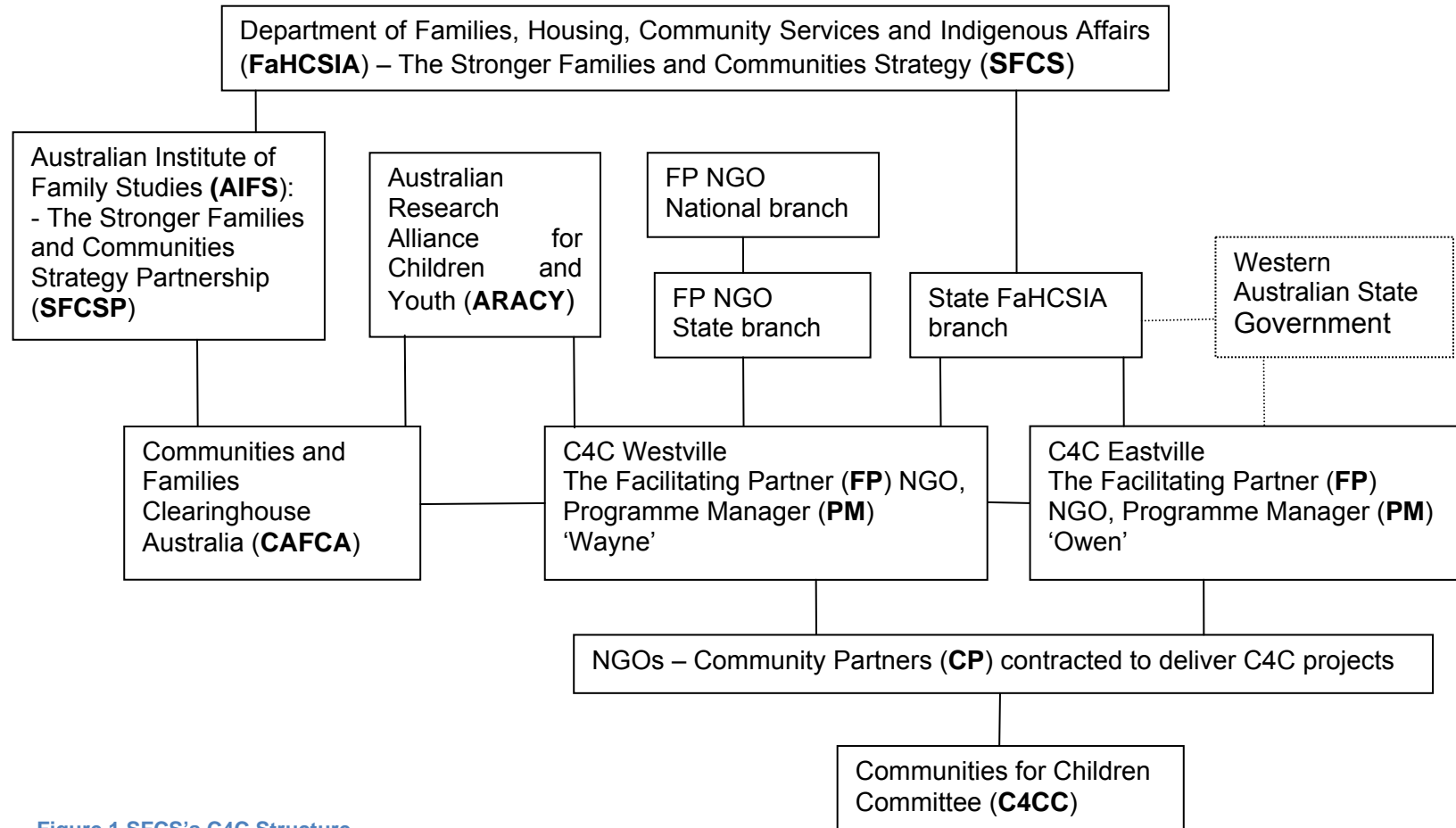


Figure 1 SFCS's C4C Structure

C4C's Management

A non-government organisation or consortium selected as a 'Facilitating Partner' in each site was funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to "manage and facilitate the Initiative [C4C], work with the community and stakeholders, develop a response tailored to the particular needs of the community, and deliver and sub-contract services" (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2005b, p. 9). C4C was premised on the idea:

that effective support for communities required a 'bottom-up' development and delivery, and that partnership approaches were critical to achieving sustainable outcomes. It also recognised that strong communities required strong leadership, skills and knowledge; partnerships between public and private sectors; and a core of committed volunteers (Taylor, 2006, p. 1).

Further forging of partnerships with other non-government organisations was expected under a contractual arrangement where these organisations or agencies were expected to already occupy a position in the community. As noted by the policy, this approach was believed to be 'new ground' in that the intervention was designed and implemented as a result of services in a select 'place' working with the local families to facilitate change: "change that will be driven from within your community, not 'imposed' on you from the outside" (Australian Government, 2005a, p.3). An approach that is "grounded in community development principles" (Harmer, 2005, p. 110), C4C involves partnering all sectors of society on a national scale and crossing national/state divides, representing a different governance system than that used previously.

Sites were selected from statistical data which were used to identify pockets of disadvantage based on the number of children 0-5 years of age and other socio-economic factors (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a). Contributions were also sought from stakeholders:

selected following consideration of a range of issues including relative disadvantage of the community; proportion of children under 5... and information on local issues gained through consultation with State [the then] FaCS offices and input from other stakeholders (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 10).

The government department responsible (then named Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA)) announced this programme as an “innovative approach to service delivery, *Communities for children* is emerging as a new model for public policy development and delivery at a national level” (2007c, p. 3).

The Facilitating Partner Model

The C4C policy programme was predicated on a model (see Appendix A in conjunction with above representation) reliant on a ‘lead’ non-government agency coordinating activities of local community non-government agencies. A Facilitating Partner (FP), place manager or consortia, as a ‘lead’ organisation was selected in a competitive tendering process (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 4). The Facilitating Partner was funded to manage and facilitate the C4C site, work with community members and stakeholders towards the development of services responsive to the particular needs of the community and then facilitate the delivery of the sub-contracted services (FaCS 2005a, p. 9). In each C4C site a Programme Manager (PM) or ‘place manager’, appointed by the Facilitating Partner NGO, was to oversee and manage all C4C operations: these Managers were at both state and national levels answerable not only to their employing NGO but also to the funding Department of the C4C. The Facilitating Partner NGO (the same for the two sites) appointed a Programme Manager to manage each site.

Another component of the model was the establishment of The Stronger Families and Communities Strategy Partnership group (SFCSP or Partnership group). This group, comprising people with early childhood and

community development backgrounds, was established following selection of the first seven sites to provide advice to the Minister about successful Facilitating Partner applicants, and “emerging issues and needs, gaps in service delivery and improvements that could be made to the initiative (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007c, p. 2). Initially this Partnership group, funded by FaHCSIA and managed through the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), aided in the selection of the sites and advised the current Minister about the NGO applications. This development fitted within the ‘social coalition’⁵ agenda under the then Federal Coalition Government.

Support for the sites, in particular the Programme Managers, was to be provided through AIFS with development of the Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia (CAFCA), and further support provided by the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY). Establishment of both CAFCA and support through ARACY aimed at providing evidence based literature on early years prevention and intervention in areas of disadvantage to service providers working in these areas (Australian Institute of Family Studies (Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia), 2009). The Australian Council for Children and Parenting (ACCAP) was also an advisory body to the Minister (Department of Family and Community Services, 2003).

In each site Programme Managers established a C4C Committee (C4CC) that offered a “broad representation from stakeholders in the community” (FaCS, retrieved November 1, 2005) and “a wide range of community stakeholders” (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005 Glossary). The committees’ composition in the beginning included many Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) from large NGOs and representatives from Health, Child Protection, Education and other departments, and it was up to this committee to develop

⁵ “the great social coalition where the Government, individuals, voluntary organisations and the business community working in partnership and coalition produce the best outcomes”:- Howard J, Address 50th anniversary of first Liberal government, Parliament House, Canberra, 9 December 1999

a four year Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and an annual Service Delivery Plan (SDP). The concern for each non-government organisation, 'contracted' to this task in partnership with the funder, was what services should be provided to meet the identified need. The C4C Committees were also tasked with determining which projects to run, their length and funding and the choice of which local organisations were to manage them. The professional classes, mostly NGO or government employees, had majority representation on committees with few parent, community or citizen advocates. Once agreement was reached about projects, funding, and local organisations, these 'high level players' retreated and were replaced by people with a direct service delivery role, namely contracted 'Community Partners' (CPs).

Community Partners

Responsibility for enacting those activities and strategies outlined in the Service Delivery Plan was that of the Community Partners (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 19). A Community Partner, as defined in the Service Provider Guidelines (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 3), is a non-government organisation sub-contracted by the Facilitating Partner to deliver services that meet the outcomes identified in the Community Strategic Plan. Also known as 'sub-contractor' (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 6) and with sixty percent of the overall funding for sites allocated to Community Partners (Edwards et al., 2010, p. 36) projects were broadly framed around the implementation of services including:

- home visiting programmes
- early learning and literacy programmes
- early development of social and communication skills
- parenting and family support programmes
- child nutrition programmes, and

- community events about the importance of children, families and the early years (Australian Government, 2009b, p. 4).

The rationale behind the Facilitating Partner model, contracting Community Partners to deliver projects, was supported by research suggesting families are more likely to approach NGOs than government organisations, particularly families previously involved with child protection authorities (Australian Government, 2009b, p. 15). The form projects were to take, their target groups, and their purpose or goals, was to be negotiated between Community Partners and Facilitating Partners guided by the Communities for Children Committees.

These embryonic designs and applications of what was to become known as Place Management, albeit innovative, had little critical analysis informing their design. Information presented in relation to Place Management is limited to 'insider' accounts and discussion of specific initiatives with models similarly applied: models said to be "straddling communitarian, competitive market and more traditional hierarchical public sector models" (Reddel, 2005, p. 195). The lack of supporting evidence, poor definition and being under theorised (Mant, 1998; Stewart-Weeks, 1998) is problematic and indicates a need for research exploration into the complexities of this policy approach and analysis.

This thesis attends to this vacuum by exploring the performance of Place Management as a practice and policy approach as adopted under the Strategy's C4C programme. Described as "a government initiative to give families, their children and communities the opportunity to build a better future" (Harmer, 2005, p. 110) most materials informing this Place Management approach are generated by public servants, from a public relations perspective, in support of the policy rather than providing a critical insight into its theoretical, conceptual and practical applications. It is important to consider how this approach differs from competitive tendering

processes and other community development initiatives or social service programmes.

The central concepts driving the Place Management policy approach were:

- Partnerships at government, non-government, business and community levels;
- Early years development and targeting disadvantaged families; and
- Place based programmes.

Each is concept is now introduced.

Partnerships

Past policies and programmes targeting families have tended to be operationalised from government departments, which fund or contract services to address issues affecting families (such as health or poverty), even though it has been widely accepted that these issues intersect and are larger than one policy portfolio or departmental mandate. Such policy compartmentalisation, treating issues separately, is now widely acknowledged as inadequate (Ling, 2002; Mulgan, 2002; Smyth, Reddel, & Jones, 2004). The complexities involved in social issues are not easily separated; instead they present interdependent complex problems across various domains and many Western societies are now turning to new or revised ways of tackling these evident complexities. Increasingly, policies worldwide are calling for 'joined-up solutions' to 'joined-up problems' (Henrik, 2004; Rogan, 2002; Stewart-Weeks, 1998). This has required renewed thinking and a restructuring of existing governance and government arrangements. As stated in an Australian Council of Social Service paper (Harmer, 2005, p. 109), the shift characterises a deliberate "re-orientation of thinking" from previously devised departments focusing on particular existing social problems in an effort to harness local people's capacities to solve problems.

Delivery through ‘partnerships’

SFCS deviated from the tradition of targeting policies and services by compartmentalised programmes in specified departments, devising instead projects that were implemented within a wider civil society and community development framework through a reshaping of departmental systems concentrating on prevention and early intervention (Emerson et al., 2000, p. 3). Place Management in this sense is about a system in which partnerships develop across all levels of government, between non-government and government organisations, industry and community services (Emerson et al., 2000, p. 1). The C4C service provider guidelines stipulated:

building partnerships between all spheres of government, community organisations and business to provide easier access to a comprehensive range of services that will help our children, our families and our communities achieve better outcomes (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 8).

Ideas of partnerships speak further of collaborative processes that are valued and needed in forming service systems better able to support children, families and whole communities. The idea of partnerships incorporates notions of relationships and considerations of participation, responsibility and self reliance. These concepts are discussed in one of the analysis sections - Section Six, “A policy analysis of Communities for Children”.

Targeting families and childhood disadvantage

Children, families and whole communities form the combined site of interest targeted by the SFCS’s C4C programme: a site where employment, education, social services, health and economic participation cross key policy decision making areas at all levels of government. Research worldwide is pointing to childhood development and more specifically the developmentally vulnerable (Centre for Community Child Health and Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, 2009), where disadvantaged children are targeted in an effort to improve their overall health and wellbeing. Early intervention policies interrupt cycles of disadvantage, or life factors known to lead to unfavourable social and economical outcomes (Carbone, Fraser, Ramburuth,

& Nelms, 2004; Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007d; McCain & Mustard, 1999; Shonkoff & Meisels, 2000). International research (McCain & Mustard, 1999; Stanley, Richardson, & Prior, 2005) emphasising the importance of the early years for healthy development was influential in the formation of C4C especially when it was suggested that services and supports at this age could interrupt and even turn around social, emotional, psychological, and economic problems that may otherwise develop in the lives of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, thus affecting the 'inter-generational transmission of welfare dependency' (Seth-Purdie, 2000, p. 46). Margaret McCain and Fraser Mustard's (1999, p. 5) research using neuroscience and early brain development at this developmental stage is considered of critical importance in determining a person's "learning, behaviour and health throughout life". This early intervention is further backed by longitudinal studies (Rogers & Moore, 2003; Seth-Purdie, 2000). It is through the identification of 'risk factors' that a difference is evidenced when services are directed to offset these, particularly in these formative years. When there are comprehensive systems cooperating towards commonly agreed outcomes the ability for positive change is ever greater (Rogers & Moore, 2003; Scott, 2000; Taylor & Nguyen, 2006).

The number and type of programmes targeting children is increasing, particularly over the past decade or so (Rous, Hallam, Harbin, McCormick, & Lee, 2007), underscoring a growing political commitment to focus on children and families in Australia (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2005). Such commitment is seen with the establishment of the Australian Government Taskforce on Child Development, Health and Wellbeing, a Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, and the development of the National Agenda for Early Childhood (NAEC) (FaCS 2005a). The National Agenda for Early Childhood focuses on four key areas which provide the overarching structure guiding the Government's policy decisions including ways of collaboration with State and Territory governments in support of the early

years (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007d).

Programmes aiming at prevention rather than traditional crisis responses reflect evidence from early intervention and prevention programmes: “the early years of development from conception to age six... set the base for competence and coping skills” throughout life (McCain & Mustard, 1999, p. 5). Until a decade ago “prevention and early intervention was much less visible in the policy menu” (Emerson, 2000, p. 5) yet with the enormous social benefits purported there is a strongly supported economic outcome when investing in these early years. As influential economists James Heckman and Dimitriy Masterov (Heckman & Masterov, 2007, p. 1) assert:

on productivity grounds, it makes sense to invest in young children from disadvantaged environments [because] interventions that partially remediate the effects of adverse environments can reverse some of the harm of disadvantage and have a high economic return.

Attending to the early years needs of children anticipates economic benefits longer term with governments investing less in crisis response and intervention strategies.

Place based focus

Further research (Cattell, 2001; Developmental Crime Prevention Consortium, 1999; Homel et al., 2006; Zubrick & Silburn, 1996) points to ‘problems in place’ where some localities are identified as evidencing a higher incidence of social and economic problems than their neighbours. An emphasis on considering problems as ‘place based’ informs a recent move by governments to work in partnership with an entity or ‘coordinating council’, as the central driver, to provide leadership and facilitate processes in the select place where all key people are involved in developing a shared vision, policies, best practices and developing structures and processes towards successful management for change (Rogers & Moore, 2003, p. 7). Governments are seen to call on ‘local knowledges’ to assist in the

development and implementation of policy programmes: a plan aimed at “building community capacity to address local issues, especially in disadvantaged areas” (Smyth, Reddel, & Jones, 2005, p. 39). The title of ‘Place Manager’ (or Programme Manager), however, belies this idea by clearly locating the power of decision making within the agency responsible.

Interest in the community as the locus for the delivery of community services (Lynn, 2006) relies significantly upon a philosophy underpinning civil society where partnerships between non-government, business and private sectors are encouraged to collaboratively address a range of issues previously managed by individual departments. These diverse organisations are brought together under designated ‘partnership’ arrangements in policy programmes such as C4C. Accordingly place based ‘community’, which has emerged as a political target (Rose 1996), has within it the seeds to enable great social and economic change with sustainable and highly favourable outcomes. Engagement with civil society and community also offer the promise of new and more equitable ways of implementing policy and democratic decision making: ways which have implications, possibly unforeseen by government, for the role of the state and government in their responsibility to tackle social issues. Don Edgar (2001, p. 107) in his book *The Patchwork Nation*, calls on government to rise to the challenges faced in a “postmodern society [with its] complexity and diversity” by changing its role to one of “facilitating community-building through a range of genuine partnerships with business and community organisations, not as providing (or even purchasing) services top-down”. Edgar (2001) echoes the sentiments of many other advocates on the subject of pooling resources in an attempt to deal with the excess of multifaceted and intricate social and economic problems facing today’s citizens. The complications for both government and civil society which arise out of this approach will be seen through the examination of C4C.

The Strategy’s C4C programme encapsulates the funding body’s goal to build ‘strong and resilient communities’ (Harmer, 2005) with the focus on

families 'in place'. 'Place' is variably conceptualised, and used synonymously with constructs of 'community', concepts that are highly subjective and contingent upon people of that place. The considerations and assumptions underlying government policy may or may not coincide with people's realities and sense of belonging to place. 'Place' under C4C is a site for managing social issues based on assumptions of ways of being in that select place. Principles informing a place based or Place Management approach are congruent with the policy's aim to include community development, community and capacity building, and social capital which in a 'joined-up governance' approach is described as "meshing a 'top down' framework with a 'bottom up' programme response" (Emerson et al., 2000, p. 9). It is at this site or place, named 'the community', that greater responsibility for change resides. It is a forward thinking government that devolves greater power to communities: a liberating practice with people themselves involved in the change process. When people are involved in decision making, planning, development and implementation sustainable outcomes can be achieved (Tesoriero, 2010). A common public perception is that governments often speak rhetorically of change when practices vary little from traditional top down approaches.

The 'new FaCS⁶' was conceived when "the machinery of government changed in 2004" and, in this same year, the then Prime Minister John Howard announced changes by promoting the 'new' Department as having greater focus on "families, their children, and the communities in which they live" (Harmer, 2005, p. 107). "Strong and resilient communities" was to be one of the funder's key outcomes. While the emphasis upon place, as geographically defined, went unchanged through the various developments of C4C, other changes in direction were evident under the various Ministers and governments. For example, the focus of process changed to a focus on outcomes under Minister Mal Brough. The incoming Labor Minister in 2007

⁶ Then known as the Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS), with a renaming in 2006 to the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA), and again renamed, as still known today, as the Department Families, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

changed the direction yet again. Place Management as a policy approach to childhood disadvantage raises the questions: what and how is place conceived? What influenced the development of Place Management, by whom and for whom? And, how is Place Management implemented?

Posing questions

C4C is a model of service delivery in a select 'place' and 'managed' by a non-government organisation contracted to 'facilitate' particular services to children 0-5 years around specified core areas. It is a model that implies a near horizontal partnership which advocates inclusion rather than exclusion, reciprocity rather than non-representation, trust rather than deceit, civil society (Cox, 1995) rather than market-driven processes, and collaboration rather than authoritarianism. These considerations raise important discussions about responsibility and in particular 'whose responsibility' – local, State, Commonwealth, communities, families, individuals or parents?

Place Management as an approach to social issues has been applied to various fields of practice. From improving Indigenous communities to improving the design of particular localities, all levels of governments have adopted policies to effect change at the local level by trying to 'manage' the place or locality. Crime prevention (Estill and Associates Pty Ltd, 2003; Lee & Herborn, 2003), Indigenous affairs (Western Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2005), ecological problems (Total Environment Centre Inc., 2003), sustainability (Government of Western Australia, 2003; P. Newman, 2003), urban design (Stewart-Weeks, 2000) all have used Place Management approaches. Such varied contexts, applications, models, designs and definitions of 'Place Management' raise the question: what exactly is Place Management and how do we do it? Further: on what evidence is its practice founded and from what particular historical and contextual situations does it derive? If an approach is to build strengths of communities then what role does 'community' play in Place Management and importantly, in what way and in what context are the terms 'community',

'place' and 'management' defined when implemented from a Federal level? When principles of community development, capacity building, strengths-based practice and social capital are included how and in what ways are these principles defined? And how are they matched in practice? If Place Management is about partnerships between government and communities then what can be said of the purchaser-provider dimension of past and current contracting trends? How are decisions made? Who makes them? And, where does the authority and power to decide lie? This thesis considers these questions, dominant discourses and sets of ideas influencing Place Management as both theory and concept, the complexity and interwoven dimensions of Place Management as illustrative of 'social policy, 'government authority', and 'community responsibility'.

The predominance of individual responsibility as a policy goal in Australia, as in many Western nations, provokes questions about collective and community focused policy of C4C and how that is to be enacted and sustained. What role should the State have in family disadvantage and how to change disadvantaged circumstances if the State relies on individual responsibility and not structural change? If consultation was a central driver (Leech & Lewis, nd) informing key aspects of the National Agenda for Early Childhood, what processes of consultation occurred and between who and what organisations? With an emphasis upon joined-up governance between government, non-government and the private or business sectors what mechanisms were put in place to include these differing and often disparate parties? How were they involved and what role did they play?

In examining discursive ideas, language plays a vital role in making and interpreting meaning with values, concepts and principles constantly being constructed by a variety of stakeholders. Crucial to this thesis is the understanding of meanings attached to concepts and the ways in which language is used. For example, the term Facilitating Partner as a title may be interpreted as a democratically related position or in a more hierarchical form by some community people. Choice of terminology is important

particularly as C4C clearly adopts a Place Management approach (often referred to as area-based or community renewal or regeneration) without explicit reference to what this means or information supporting its effectiveness. As already mentioned, the public relations aspect of publicising the term 'Place Management', affects its interpretation by members of the community, thereby creating a paradox because they may not relate to the 'place' being 'managed'. There are many other paradoxes which are discussed in later sections.

The social policy of C4C is founded upon principles of social capital, community development and capacity building;

- In what ways did the Liberal/Coalition Government's reliance upon the idea of a free market work to strengthen community and issues people face when poverty, unemployment and lack of education are as much about structural issues as equal opportunity?
- When aiming to build stronger ties in a select community and provide skills to targeted people how does the notion of competition support these principles?
- Is this move towards a place based or managed process really to cultivate a more civil society as that proposed by civil servants and research consultants commissioned to evaluate SFCS who are largely the authors thus far on the SFCS policy, or is it simply a shifting of responsibility from government purses (or tax payers) to those of the already resource stretched third and volunteer sectors?

To some authors (Goddard, 2006) this approach is simply a matter of policy 'dressed up in lamb's clothing'.

This thesis considers the following questions: how has this policy direction emerged as influenced by discourses, as a set of ideas, central to this social policy; how was it conceived, then developed and further informed; what characterises 'Place Management'; and how can future directions inform this policy area? With many competing and varied discourses influencing the

development of this policy it is those concerning mechanisms of power which raise questions: what are the objects, concepts, practices and processes of power? Place Management is influenced by and emerging from discourses in urban planning, civil society, and neoliberalism, in a select time, and within set contexts. Tracing events and ideas that have influenced the development of a Place Management approach, as seen under the Strategy, is useful when addressing questions posed.

Research Contribution to Knowledge

Place Management as a policy and a model of practice is poorly understood and conceptualised. In addition to the many questions raised above are those that ask why was this model and policy direction chosen when little data supports its theoretical and practical application? When considering the rollout of the Place Management model what can be said about how decisions are made? And where do authority and power lie? What can be said of community, 'place' and 'management' in regards to C4C and the SFCS in the social policy area? Further, there is the need to consider the broader context in which SFCS sits in terms of new government approaches with particular regard to the purchaser provider split (Zamprogno, 2003, pp. 37-44). All these questions lead to a framing of the research question and methodology for this research.

Research objectives and questions

A number of research objectives are developed from the preceding *looking* section. They are addressed as follows:

1. Analyse and describe a specific Australian Federal Government social policy domain that has a Place Management orientation; (Sections One, Two, Four, Six, and Seven).
2. Identify and trace the origins, developments and meanings associated with theories and concepts of Place Management; (Sections Two, Four, Five, Six, and Seven).

3. Provide an understanding of Place Management as a practice model through a case study of two Western Australian sites applying Place Management as a social policy direction; (Sections Four, Five, Six, Seven, and Eight).
4. Critically reflect upon the rollout of Communities for Children in these two Western Australian sites (Sections Three, Six, Seven, and Eight).

Whilst interwoven and complex, each section maintains a dominant theme with respect to one of the research aims, with overlap, development and engagement of ideas and concepts.

This research is contained by the overarching question:

**What is Place Management theory and practice and
how does Place Management inform social policy decisions in
Australia?**

With a sub-question:

**What can we learn from the use of Place Management to inform social
policy in Australia?**

Research orientation

The theoretical orientation informing this research is a critical reflexive one drawing literature review, case study, archaeological tracing, and policy analysis together in a bricolage (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994a, p. 2) approach to research. My own position as researcher is considered with particular emphasis on the research journey; at times my research experiences parallels dimensions of the policy programme. Experiences of self in research, provided as interleaves, are presented at relevant places between sections. For the contributions to this research I am indebted to all those

people, from policy designers through to people implementing the policy, for their time in sharing with me their experiences and perceptions of this programme. With C4C aiming to address inequalities, particularly in families in select communities, this research pays important attention to the strategies identified to change circumstances for children, families, cultural groups, and service systems in particular communities. The methodological framing is guided by my research questions.

Methodological Framing

I started this research journey as a PhD candidate to assist in a formative evaluation of the C4C programme in two sites using an Action Research methodology. This arrangement concluded before the completion of the evaluation. I maintained the methodological framing for construction of this thesis. Given the reflective nature of AR and its use of a cyclical spiral to engage people towards creating change, the *Looking, Thinking, Reflecting, Acting* components of the AR methodology enable a consideration of the different stages of the research as well as the different layers of influence. Its attention to critical reflection importantly involves consideration of those who were involved, from people at the policy making end of the spectrum through to those to whom the policy is aimed.

Critical theory (Crotty, 1998; Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994; Leonard, 1990; Morrow & Brown, 1994; Ray, 1993) is consistent with AR as a practice, and said to have emerged from critical theory traditions (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009, p. 141), in its emphasis on change and its use of reflexivity. Critical theory accentuates power relations, dominating discourses and practices, deconstruction of these discourses and reconstruction of alternative, transformative ideas and practices. A review, drawing largely upon works of Michel Foucault (1972b, 1980, 1983, 1984, 2004) and Bent Flyvbjerg (2000, 2001), enables consideration of the local and contextual, and how meaning construction is contingent and partial.

The thesis presentation using an AR cycle is detailed in Figure 2 (page 24).

Thesis presentation: Action Research Cycle

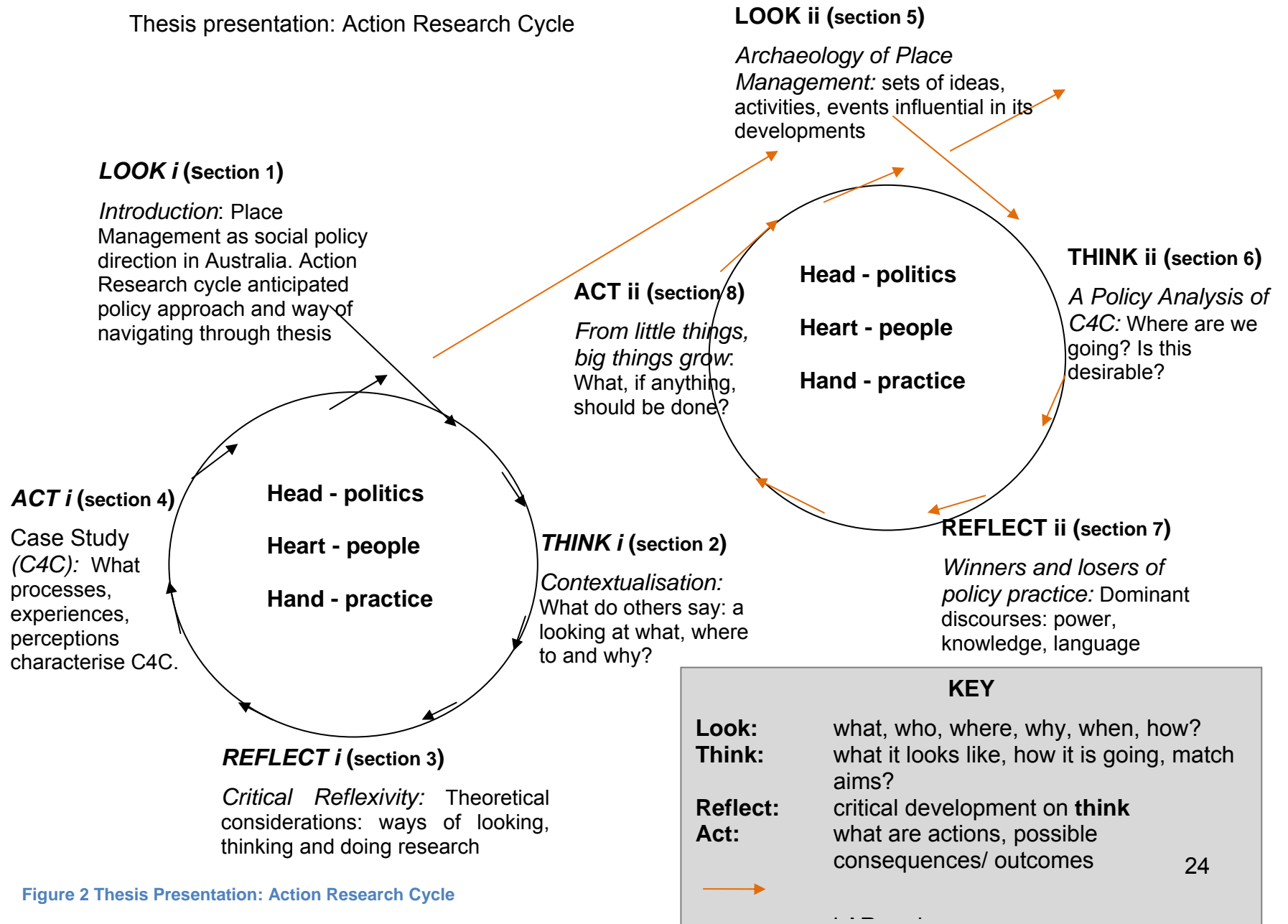


Figure 2 Thesis Presentation: Action Research Cycle

Action Research & *Head, Heart, Hand*

I use two interconnecting frameworks for presenting this research. Action Research reflects both the original intent and opportunities for programme development. Anthony Kelly and Sandra Sewell's (1988) trialectic of *Head, Heart Hand* is a community building framework which allows more in depth examination of the knowledges, values, and practices used in the policy performance.

Thesis Structure

Consistent with an AR process each of the eight sections (rather than conventionally termed 'chapters') reflects a single, yet interdependent, part of two cycles: each cycle containing four segments of *Looking, Thinking, Reflecting, and Acting*. However, it must be noted that this is a snapshot in time and additional cycles both precede and follow this thesis. The content of each section, following this introductory *Looking* section, is summarised below.

Section One has presented the first part of the cycle, *Looking*, in its presentation of the policy context and a brief introduction to the theoretical framing of the research.

Section Two, *Thinking*, describes the literature which was used to underpin and develop the SFCS and the C4C programme.

Section Three, *Reflecting*, presents the critical reflexive praxis framework used and considers the ontological and methodological weaving of the 'I' through the research cycle. The methods employed to carry out this research are detailed in part two of this section: Methodology (part one) and Research Methods (part two).

Section Four, *Acting*, considers how Place Management as a concept and model was applied in the Australian social policy context. This section

provides a closer examination of C4C in the Western Australian context through presenting a case study, which details developments in two sites. Place Management as a policy direction and process through which to deliver services to the 0-5 year olds age group is detailed in this examination of Westville and Eastville⁷ Communities for Children in Western Australia. This section reports in depth experiences of the people involved in the roll out and development of C4C.

Section Five, *Looking ii*, presents an archaeology of Place Management. It considers the enunciated modalities (ideas, concepts, policy constructs, information and so on) as they have contributed to a Place Management approach.

Section Six, *Thinking ii*, is a policy analysis of Place Management using a critically reflective and analytical framework. This section commences the policy analysis with questions: *where are we going* and *is this desirable?* (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Attention to the complex multifaceted aspects of the policy is considered in this section.

Section Seven, *Reflecting ii*, considers a second component of the policy analysis framework: who wins, who loses and by what mechanisms of power? Implicit and explicit mechanisms of power embedded within C4C's design are interrogated in this section. The endless possibilities for exploration made easier by this section's focus on the event in which there are winners and losers is further aided by its concentration on how this has translated into practice. The analytical theme around dominant discourses and mechanisms of power with consideration of how the policy conceptualises objects of family, volunteers and organisations is presented here.

⁷ Both pseudonyms

Section Eight, *Acting ii*, represents concluding thoughts based on the previous discussions and looks to future directions: looking at the big picture as guided by findings at the local level. An identification of learnings for future policy making in applying a Place Management approach is discussed. What are some of the learnings of this Place Management approach to policy practice? And how can it and AR contribute to future social policy directions? In completion of the policy analysis framework this section's overall focus is on the question what should be done, if anything? I extend this questioning by looking at points of connectedness between Place Management and AR and look towards a model of practice congruent with the aims and principles of the C4C policy programme.

Contextual background

Section introduction

This section begins by detailing the broader social policy context followed by a review of the policy literature both informing and describing the ‘new’ social policy direction in Australia. How these new directions apply to early years child development, in areas of ‘community of disadvantage’ and through joined-up governance, in what is described as a Place Management approach to policy, provides context to following sections. Principles of a Place Management approach, under Communities for Children (C4C), include social capital, community development, capacity building, strengths-based approaches, and Action Research (AR) and these are considered to provide further context and a literature review of these areas. This section presents the context including the literature used to frame the policy of Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS) and C4C.

The literature selected for review considers three areas which define a Place Management approach as revealed in C4C. These are:

- targeting problems: such as early years child development as a pathway to prevention from the effects of disadvantage;
- focus on places: specific ‘communities of disadvantage’; and
- joined-up solutions (partnerships): through coordinated and collaborative service systems working together.

The focus of this research about Place Management is addressing childhood disadvantage in Australia.

Social Policy Domain: childhood disadvantage in Australia

A rise in wealth of some western countries, characterised by a resource rich 'boom time', is not necessarily shared equitably between citizens. Comparisons between differing communities reveal a wide gap between those who benefit from these developments and identifiable neighbouring communities and groups, within the same nation, even region, who receive no gains. This is evident in Australia where there may be extreme wealth in one community or region while the adjoining community or region is described as deprived, in disrepair, dysfunctional based on a number of indicators (Harding, McNamara, Tanton, Daly, & Yap, 2006). An example is readily found in Western Australia where less than three kilometres away from the Pilbara mining town of Newman "Aboriginals live in squalor" (Newman, 2009). This inequity has spawned policy ideas requiring organisations, including government and non-government organisations, to target particular problems in and of place. From this identified need, Place Management or place based strategies using joined-up governance responses had grown (Green & Zappalá, 2001). The 'joined-up' approach describes a place managed policy in which social, economic and public service systems were intended to work collaboratively (Steuart, 2003; Stewart-Weeks, 2000). The C4C programme identified early childhood for particular attention, and communities with high proportions of young children and locations with a range of social problems were selected (Lewis & Taylor, 2005). Detail is provided below of the three main components of a Place Management approach under C4C: early years; joined-up governance and community of disadvantage. An overview of the C4C Australian policy application of this approach is then presented.

Early Years - pathways to prevention

While the 1980s and 1990s marked a time of increasing gaps between the 'haves' and the 'have nots', by the turn of the twenty-first Century neuroscience research emerged, highlighting the importance of early brain development. The belief was that intervening early with cases of childhood disadvantage would positively impact upon later life developments. Arguably social problems including juvenile crime, child behaviour problems, mental and physical illness, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence and drug use, relate to these earlier life experiences (Developmental Crime Prevention Consortium, 1999; Glover, Harris, & Tennant, 1999; Keating & Hertzman, 1999; McCain & Mustard, 1999; Pollard, Hawkins, & Arthur, 1999; Tomison, 1999; Tomison & Wise, 1999). McCain and Mustard's (1999, p. 5) influential work in Ontario, which led to the publication of *Reversing the Real Brain Drain: Early Years Study Final Report*, outlines:

the early years of development from conception to age six, particularly for the first three years, set the base for competence and coping skills that will affect learning, behaviour and health throughout life. The new evidence expands our understanding of: The interplay between nature and nurture in brain development; How extensive brain development is in utero and the first years of life; How nutrition, care and nurturing directly affect the wiring of the pathways of the brain in the early period; How nurturing by parents in the early years has a decisive and long-lasting impact on how people develop, their capacity to learn, their behaviour and ability to regulate their emotions and their risks for disease in later life; and How negative experiences in the early years, including severe neglect or absence of appropriate stimulation, are likely to have decisive and sustained effects.

Jack Shonkoff and Deborah Phillips (2000, p. 383) support an emphasis on prenatal development and suggest taking note that the emerging empirical data have the capacity "to increase the odds of favourable developmental outcomes through planned interventions". Neuroscience researchers promote early intervention as a 'prevention science' to improve human wellbeing.

Through such scientific evidence the importance of early years has become a priority for social policy attention: this at a time when "the position of children

in the contemporary world was uncertain” (Jamrozik & Sweeney, 1996, p. 1). Consequently, all levels of government developed an early years and childhood agenda with various intervention programmes and policies. Childhood interventions are considered “more a concept than a specific program” (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000, p. 338) with programmes as diverse in nature as in design. Much of the diversity reflects the differing focus of interventions: health promotion, family violence, substance abuse among others, with varying degrees of success and illuminating the ‘turf wars’ that are indicative of silo approaches:

At its best, early intervention embodies a rich and dynamic example of multidisciplinary collaboration. Less constructively, it can reflect narrow parochial interests that invest more energy in the protection of professional turf than in serving the best interests of children and families (Shonkoff & Meisels 2000, pp. 338-339).

In itself the idea of early intervention and prevention is not new. Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological model of child development of the 1970s places the family in the inner circle through to outer layers of neighbourhoods, policies and social values, emphasising the necessity of all these layers to provide supportive mechanisms to ensure healthy growth. Since this time research has supported the idea of investing in early childhood intervention.

Cost benefits

There is significant support for investment in the early years as a cost effective policy intervention strategy. Heckman, a Nobel Laureate economist and others (2006; Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Heckman, Stixrud, & Urzula, 2006), point to the effects of early environments on children suggesting “early inputs strongly affect the productivity of later inputs” (Heckman, 2006, p. 1900). They demonstrate not only how the elasticity of neurological formation of the brain is easily affected by early experiences but that when spending is prioritised in preschool programmes (for disadvantaged persons in particular) the return is greater than when funding programmes target older groups (Heckman, 2006, p. 1901). Such ideas, or discursive formations

(Foucault, 1972b), shape political thought and the consequent strategies of interest in this research.

Specific risk factors

A common characteristic of early intervention approaches is the identification of specific 'risk factors'. Adverse conditions in early childhood are often followed by poor outcomes like drug dependency, school failure, welfare dependency, poor health and criminal behaviour (Durlak, 1998; Keating & Hertzman, 1999; McCain & Mustard, 1999). The risks identified can be grouped as: child characteristics (poor attachment or poor social skills); parents and parenting style (single parentage or lack of warmth or affection) and poor parental guidance, discipline and encouragement to learn; family factors and life events (poverty or marital disharmony); and community factors (socioeconomic disadvantage or lack of support services). Some reports and researchers consider these risks to be offset by good antenatal and maternal nutrition, positive attention from parents, family harmony and participation in social networks (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005f; Davies & Taylor, 2005; Feeny, 2006).

Acknowledging 'risk factors' or 'causal roots' has been the impetus for intervening early in a person's life cycle to prevent unwanted social behaviours later on. 'Risk factor' research has flourished in an environment of extensive empirical evidence supporting early brain development and the danger of associated 'risk factors'. This represents a significant shift in thought from historically attributing health problems to individual disorders (Edwards & Wilson 1975, p. 102), where the belief that the root of social problems lie in one's 'psyche' rather than one's environment. Such 'risk factors' are said to include poor parenting skills, decreased education attainment (particularly low literacy levels) of parents, low socioeconomic status and social isolation (Acheson, 1998; McCain & Mustard, 1999; Shonkoff & Phillips 2000), which when intercepted early have been proven to

impact noticeably upon a person's overall health and well-being (Hornell et al., 2001). The Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health report (Acheson, 1998) cites research which establishes that intervention in the early years is the key preventive tool for avoiding the effects of social disadvantage.

The 'early years' has been a policy concern over several Government administrations. The National Agenda for Early Childhood (NAEC), endorsed by the Australian Coalition Government, under John Howard's administration in December 2005, established "that all children in Australia are supported and encouraged to realise their full potential" (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007d, p. 3). This Agenda drew on available evidence showing "the most effective ways to influence child development positively, is by increasing protective factors and decreasing the risk factors in a child's environment" (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007d, p. 3). Following a change of Government in November 2007 the Rudd Government continued this initiative and announced the Family Support Programme (FSP) in January 2009 (Australian Government: Department of Families Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009). Communities for Children, under the FSP, had changed to include a wider target group of children 0- 12 years, as well as implement a more therapeutic focus with funding of \$100 million for a further three years extending the end date to 2011-2012 for the forty five sites (Australian Government: Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009a).

Policies of the NAEC and more recently the FSP are aligned to earlier policy papers on the health of children and young people. Paul Keating's Labor Government endorsed *The Health of Young Australians* report in 1995 (Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, 1995). This report, accepting the World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of health, whereby "the health of children and young people is influenced by a broad range of family, social, educational, environmental, economic and biological

factors” points to the correlation between poor health, sub-standard housing, unemployment and economic disadvantage as long having been recognised (Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, 1995, p. 2). Given this policy attention, questions are raised about why such inequality in the provision of health services to children and families continues to exist (Jamrozik & Sweeney, 1996, p. 163). Social class differences in relation to the allocation of resources remain significant across health services in Australia despite such reports (Murray, Frenk, & Gakidou, 2001). Following soon after The Health of Young Australians report the Australian Council for Children and Parenting (ACCAP), an advisory body to the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), set about a promotional campaign in 2001 called *A Happy Childhood Lasts a Lifetime* promoting the importance of early years through posters, brochures and television stations throughout Australia. Even though these reports and programmes pointed to inequalities and the need for intervention, prevention and early intervention were “much less visible in the policy menu” prior to the twenty first century in Australia (Emerson et al., 2000, p. 5).

Pathways

The identification of risk factors has given rise to studies of ‘pathways’ to antisocial behaviour, with this term emerging in many projects in policy and programme design (Rogan, 2002, p. 18). ‘Pathways’ illustrates the growing interest concerning, mostly, young people’s transition through to successful outcomes, be it in education, employment or independent living. Some Australian examples include: Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce established in 1999, Pathways for Indigenous People, Pathways to Work, Pathways Home, Family Law Pathways Advisory Group set up in 2000, and the particularly influential Australian Government commissioned *The Pathways to Prevention Project* (Hornell et al., 2006) recommending early years intervention approaches. The term ‘pathways’ is believed to have emerged from this report (Emerson et al., 2000, p. 6) and contributed to the

emergence of SFCS. A definition of developmental prevention provided by *The Pathways to Prevention Project* involves:

intervention early in developmental pathways that lead to crime and related problems, emphasising investment in child-friendly institutions, communities and social policies and the manipulation of multiple risk and protective factors at different levels of the social ecology and at crucial transition points, such as around birth, the commencement of school, or graduation from primary to high school (Hemel et al., 2001, p. 272).

This report was instrumental in the policy direction Australia was to follow (Hemel, 2006) and responsive to those developmental areas as identified by Mustard and McCain (1999). These developments found favour with the then Prime Minister John Howard who stated “if you can get in early, identify the problem, you not only produce better citizens, happier children, fewer criminals but you also save money” (Howard, 2006). The push in the direction of early intervention through joined-up responses in areas of disadvantage was driven by the Howard Government.

‘Communities of disadvantage’

The term ‘communities of disadvantage’ has been coined to describe a trend corresponding with “stress-inducing changes in Australian society” (Manitoba, 2005, p. 3). Such areas and neighbourhoods are characterised by a decline in social relationships and increase in crime, family breakdown and conflict, youth alienation, apathy, rebellion, delinquency, and violence, amongst other adversity. This occurs alongside an overwhelming decline in the health and well-being of young people compared to a decade or two earlier (Keating & Hertzman, 1999, p. 1). Such social transformation sheds light on another risk factor where significant changes in values and a sense of belonging, or ‘cultural shifts’ as described by Ross Hemel et al. (2001, p. 270), significantly impact upon people’s overall health and well-being (2001, p. 270; Stanley et al., 2005). While Marc Renaud (1994, p. 322) considers that innate abilities help adaptation to adversity he also agrees that “longevity and good health are to be found in one’s social, economic, and cultural

circumstances” and stresses the importance of supportive networks in dealing with adversity.

Such communities have been characterised as locational disadvantage (McClelland, 2005, p. 10) and reflect on Tony Vinson’s (1999) work in Victoria and New South Wales in which he argues during the past decade “the issue of *slums and a bad environment*” (author’s emphasis) points to a growth in spatial inequality with regards to work, income and housing. Measures of social disadvantage in certain areas of Australia identified a concentration of social problems including low-birth weight, child abuse and child injuries, emergency housing as well as economic indicators including employment status, low income, and early school leaving (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008). Policies in the 1930s and 1940s were intended to save people from poor environments with the encouragement of self-supporting strategies, such as gained through employment, implemented in hope of people recovering ‘hope’ and ‘dignity’ (McClelland, 2005, p. 3). Current policy attention differs in directly targeting children. Increasingly research into these notions of ‘community of disadvantage’ are framed by Putnam’s (1993, 1995; 2000) ideas of social capital, building community and people’s own capacities to manage adversity and create change.

‘Place-based’ practice is an attempt to address the ‘spatial’ dimensions of poverty, disadvantage and exclusion in recognition of the importance of early brain development and risk factors found to be influenced by environment (Green & Zappalá, 2001). Across nations and all levels of government ‘community renewal’, ‘social inclusion’ and ‘regeneration’ projects have emerged with their specifics as diverse in practice processes as they are in theoretical formulations. For instance, many theories exist about ways in which neighbourhood and community processes affect children’s development. So Merton’s structural functionalist theory (Jamrozik & Sweeney, 1996, p. 46), is concerned with the support of a harmonious interrelationship between the individual and society. Like systems theory (Poole, 2005, p. 29) it focuses on the organic nature of a well functioning community and both theories acknowledge the importance of enhancing

social capital, including support systems, networks, trust and relationships, in defining community capacities (Shonkoff & Meisels, 2000, p. 330). Such approaches to intervention have witnessed a shift over the past fifty years from a problem-focused, deficit perspective, to a strengths-based view that emphasizes resources and capabilities (Cohler, 1987; Howard & Dryden, 1999; Keogh & Weisner, 1993; Spekman, Herman, & Vogel, 1993). This shift in the direction of early intervention through joined-up responses in the area of disadvantage was driven by the Howard Government.

A call for joined-up solutions

The role of the state in social provision and the degree to which it can be called a welfare state remain long-standing debates amongst political analysts in Australia; although there is agreement that there is a limit on either the state or market meeting the diverse array of modern day social, cultural, environmental and economic needs. The 'blind spot' (Edgar, 2001, p. 100) between the *social* and *economic* in social policy has led to renewed interest in the role of the third or community sector (Considine & Lewis, 2003). This worldwide interest, noted as that of the 'Third Way' (different from 'third sector') is often argued as "nothing more than a soft compromise between government and the market" (Latham, 2003, p. 35). There is a need to address the ever more complex and fragmented nature of society where political leaders promote concepts of 'partnerships' and 'collaboration' in efforts to bridge those economic and social boundaries within the context of creating "new communities of interest and purpose" (Latham, 2003, p. 35). This has increased a focus on *capital* as something outside its usual economic meaning extending to 'human', 'social' and 'community' capital. Choice of the word 'capital' speaks perhaps to the dominance of economic discourse.

The idea of 'joined-up' approaches emerged in many Western societies as a response to tackle concepts of exclusion, disadvantage and inequality (Rogan, 2002). 'Geographical pockets of crime' existing in a small number of urban Australian regions (Vinson & Homel, 1975) has provided impetus for

'joined-up solutions' in 'communities of disadvantage' applying place based practice interventions (Homel, et al., 2001, p. 270). Social service systems in Australia, and elsewhere, are considered archaic and ineffective because of the often fragmented operation of the siloed departments. For instance, different funding sources and services lacking coordination within and between programmes with no continuous service available for families and their children, are seen as resulting in an "insufficient focus on prevention, early detection and early intervention, with most resources going to families in crisis" (Rogers & Moore, 2003, p. 5). Therefore, 'joined-up solutions' to 'joined-up problems' has emerged as a policy direction (Cornwall, Lall, Kennedy, & Owen, 2003; Mulgan, 2002).

Traditionally interventions aimed at averting social problems have been addressed by separate Departments, commonly called 'silos' (Green & Zappalá, 2001; Faris, 2004; McCain & Mustard, 1999). The shift away from silos and towards collaborative approaches was pioneered by Tony Blair's Labour Government in the United Kingdom (UK). In his first term, in 1997, he instigated a public sector reform establishing the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal through the Social Exclusion Unit (United Kingdom: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005a). The main aim of this Unit was to tackle social exclusion within 'communities of disadvantage' in a 'joined-up' approach (United Kingdom: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005a, 2005b). This joined-up approach grew in popularity (Ling, 2002, p. 616) prompting similar policy approaches in other countries, like Australia. *The Pathways to Prevention Report* (Homel et al., 2001, p. 269) cites much evidence from these earlier experiences in the United Kingdom. The Australian 'Social Coalition' implies a forging of 'partnerships' between individuals, government, the community and business sector mirroring a joined-up policy platform with governments needing "the help and understanding of great community organisations, dedicated individuals and the corporate sector" (Howard, 1999). These 'joined-up' approaches were recognised as more effective than the traditional silos even though Ling (2002) notes they had been used before. What differed over this past

decade was the increased currency governments of all persuasions gave to adopting 'joined-up' notions to combat a variety of social issues (Ling, 2002, p. 639). Clyde Hertzman (2000, p. 15) identified a number of 'strategic conclusions' that pointed to a call for joined-up responses to issues of childhood disadvantage:

Improving child development will occur by improving the environments in which children grow up. The challenge is one of adopting an environmental perspective when agencies have traditionally understood their role to be the provision of one-on-one client services. The fact that health, well-being and competence all have essentially the same principal determinants means that the objectives of a wide variety of government departments can be met [through] intersectoral action for child development.

The ideas of changing or better controlling environments towards improved childhood disadvantage and joining services systems towards this end was increasingly favoured by governments.

Third Way

A call for joined-up governance sits within, at this same time, discourses about a Third Way, a notion which also emerged under the UK's Blair administration. Third Way politics, in the UK of the 1990s, suggests a centralised positioning between the left and right side of politics, a way that would "chart a course between the extremes of state-dominated welfare and the market" (Taylor, 2004, p. 122), it is about governments increasing the role of the voluntary and community sector in service provision. To Nikolas Rose (1999, p. 171) this time in policy programme designing reflected concepts of 'community' as "infused with notions of voluntarism, of charitable works, of self-organized care, or unpaid service to one's fellows" in which the term third way is often used interchangeably with 'third sector'. The elevation of civil society was, according to Jeremy Rifkin (1995, p. 238), the result of the public having little choice "but to begin looking out for itself, once again, by re-establishing viable communities as a buffer against both the impersonal forces of the global market and increasingly weak and incompetent central governing authorities". Increased focus by governments on 'partnerships'

and new government arrangements across government, non-government organisations, business and the broader community sector gave concepts of the 'third way' its broader currency at this time.

Partnerships

Among other effects, joined-up approaches extend beyond the traditional role of government to one of 'partnership' with the wider community sector. Much ambivalence surrounds this term 'partnerships', its implied meanings, applied contexts and underlying assumptions (Frank & Smith, 2006; Geddes, 2003; Johnson & Osborne, 2003; Rawsthorne, 2003). Partnerships can be problematic for a variety of reasons, including: different degrees of individual and organisational power; how membership and representation of partnerships are ascribed; and accountability and funding arrangements (Frank & Smith, 2006; Smyth et al., 2005). Within the Australian context 'partnerships' is a central principle of 'local governance' (Geddes, 2005, p. 13) and local partnerships can be classified depending upon their relation to the state, market and civil spheres of society (Geddes, 2005, p. 15). Notions of partnering in service delivery again mirror policies seen in the United Kingdom's (and EU's) social exclusion policies (Rogan, 2002, p. 2). The idea of partnerships "lay at the heart of successive waves of urban development policies from 1960s" with varying kinds of public-private partnerships apparent (Ling, 2002, p. 626). The more recent interest in partnerships implies more than partnerships between service sectors in which "Australia's fortune lies not so much with parliaments or business, or political parties or money markets but with individual Australians" (Howard, 1999). Partnerships are supposed to be more inclusive of community and individual participation in policy programmes.

Governance Arrangements

How these new joined-up partnership arrangements are managed is the concern of governance. Governance, like partnerships, is not a term used consistently and has many definitions and variations in arrangements (Ling,

2002, p. 624). Rod Rhodes (1997, p. 53), for instance, identifies six broad usages of governance:

- governance as the minimal state;
- corporate governance;
- governance as new public management;
- 'good governance';
- governance as socio-cybernetic system; and
- governance as self-organising networks.

Governance is often referred to as the decision making processes of governments where a "multiplicity of decisions rather than a single strategic chore of government" occurs, which to Jan Kooiman (2000) characterises a 'heterarchical' meaning, or a structure combining vertical and horizontal relationships. The "anachronistic" (Ling, 2002, p. 624) silos of government are thereby replaced. Rhodes (1997, p. 53) settles on a definition that "governance refers to self-organizing, interorganizational networks" with new service models said to be based upon partnerships, networks, 'flat' relationships, and trust (Ling, 2002, p. 624). Another author (Loughlin, 2002, p. 3) postulates the differences between government and governance in that:

Government and governance are both ways of governing society but government relates to the forms associated with liberal representative democracy, the traditional state, while governance involves a wider set of actors, including elected politicians and public officials but also various non-elected interest and pressure groups. As society becomes more complex and differentiated and governing from above more difficult, governance, understood as "steering" from below, tends to replace government.

'Associational governance' emerges in this new round of policies aimed at spatial disadvantage, which includes a "'social inclusion' discourse, and in economic policy, the impact of the 'New Regionalism'" (Smyth, Reddel, & Jones, 2004, p. 37). Increasingly seen are differently considered forms of participatory (Edwards, 2001) or engagement (Cavaye, 2004, p. 16) approaches to governance. Participatory governance occurs when government collaborates with the community sector in the policy development or design phase. However, even though the community is considered to be involved throughout all stages of the policy development

process, government remains accountable for final policy decisions (Edwards, 2001, p. 81).

The literature (Henrik, 2004; Rhodes, 1997) on governance reveals recurring themes that any governance structure, be it across government, non-government or private sectors, requires the following key ingredients:

- it takes time, for governments to understand sufficiently the complexity and diversity of the community sector, and the community sector to better understand government structures and decision-making processes;
- it takes trust, based on mutual trust that also takes time to develop, not always possible within timeframes such as electoral cycles; and
- it requires clear expectations.

Embedded into these governance arrangements are ideas and methods but little specified structure and process. This is despite the principles of collaboration and 'joined-up-ness' which suggest 'horizontal', 'flat', 'bottom-up' or collaborative governance responses. Where such 'co-governance' is proposed by policy programmes supportive processes and appropriate funding needs to match these in order to ensure its success (Johnson & Osborne, 2003, p. 147).

Questions abound about the use of different governance structures, in given political climates, and particularly in relation to systems in which contracting, tendering, and the purchaser-provider formulations are used. For instance, with competitive tendering arrangements there is a tendency for groups or organisations to assume a secretiveness which remains counter to building collaborative trusting relationships (Cauchi & Murphy, 2004 p. 55). The purchaser-provider split in the human services, traditionally conducted by governments, is characteristically problematic and complex where tendering organisations provide services under contract (Zamprogno, 2003, p. 37). Many components of such constructions remain counter to intended relations of trust, reciprocity and obligation, which are the aim of such arrangements. Who do these governance arrangements benefit and to what outcomes do

they aspire? Jodi Goddard (2006, p. 1) considers that many governance structures or 'partnerships' "continue to be developed within existing structures, processes and frameworks of power", effectively obliterating the possibility of real partnerships. The case study section and following conceptual sections detail these elements further.

Social Policy Focus Area

This specific social policy area can be summarised as: the Australian Government's SFCS targets a select community; a select community identified as socially and economically disadvantaged with a focus on the early years of 0-5 year olds; the early years as a problem issue and recommends a joined-up approach; and a joined-up approach, crosses civil, public and private spheres.

The guiding principles of SFCS as set out by the then Department for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) include:

- working together in partnerships;
- encouraging a preventative and early intervention approach;
- supporting people through life transitions;
- developing better integrated and coordinated services;
- developing local solutions to local problems;
- building capacity;
- using the evidence and looking to the future; and
- making the investment count

(Smith & Davies, 2002, p. 7; Taylor, 2006, p. 1).

Smith and Davies (2002, p. 9) go on to state that SFCS further "reflects a strong theme in Australian social policy that individuals have responsibilities and obligations to society and that they should plan and respond to problems in a self-reliant matter". The Strategy complements changes in the welfare reform agenda ignited by the McClure report in 1999 (McClure, 2000; Smith & Davies, 2002). Smith and Davies (2002, p. 9) highlight three major areas where SFCS and the recommendations of the McClure report coincide: first,

the Strategy is said to be “implemented according to a set of principles, which when reflected in project outcomes, will deliver a measure of family and community strength that provides a foundation for welfare reform practices and longer-term processes”; second, targeting areas, or ‘communities of disadvantage’, it aims “to build community and family capacity” thus aligning with aims outlined in the McClure report in that it targets disadvantaged people on income support across Australia; and third, capacity building was a central theme of the McClure report and SFCS in encouraging social and economic participation placing importance on the “role of volunteering in building individual and community capacity”. It was clear that the Strategy intended to both encourage development to address disadvantage and focus on individual self reliance and self responsibility to do so.

C4C as Policy Offspring 2004-2009

The key focus of the C4C initiative was to “positively impact on early childhood development of children 0-5 years through responding to the need to improve the coordination of public, private and community sector activity, particularly in areas experiencing high levels of economic and social disadvantage” (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 1). The Australian Government’s \$142 million initiative (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005d) claims a community development approach, represented in its C4C model (see Appendix A) (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005; Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2004). Representing principles of community development and community building, and capacities including the building of human, social, institutional and community capital, it further contains applications of action learning and research principles, although these are referred to mostly within documents of particular C4C sites rather than policy documents referring more broadly to SFCS.

C4C, as an early intervention and prevention programme, claims that effective support for communities requires ‘bottom-up’ development and

delivery and a partnership approach to achieve sustainable outcomes (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 1). Spanning forty five sites, C4C's focus on early childhood development has been guided by the previous Government's NAEC. This is said to have been developed in consultation with policy makers and specific communities, as well as guided by national and international evidence and learnings from the first phase of SFCS (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005e; Davies & Taylor, 2005). The Department notes that "interventions and approaches that make families and communities strong" are the goals (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007b, p. 2). The objectives of C4C are twofold, first:

To improve the health and well-being of families and the health, well-being and early development of young children, from before birth to school age (Department of Family and Community Services, 2005b, p. 12)

This objective pays particular attention to three identified priority areas: *healthy young families*, which supports parents in caring for their children from prenatal until five; *early learning and care*, provides early learning experiences prior to school entry with early identification of developmental and behavioural problems; and, *supporting families and parents*, assisting parents to provide children with "secure attachment, consistent discipline and quality environments" (Department of Family and Community Services, 2005b, p. 12).

The second objective of C4C is to:

Create *child-friendly communities* that understand the importance of the early years, acquire the features of strong communities and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being and early development of young children at the local level (Department of Family and Community Services, 2005b, p. 12).

Added to these broad objectives is the expectation that members of the specified community select particular outcomes according to these priority areas. This presents the policy context of C4C in which this study sits with further policy detail presented in the case study, Section Four.

The priority areas are clearly aligned to identified risk factors where the FaCSIA document notes “the path to poor outcomes such as school difficulties, welfare dependency, and poor physical and mental health” (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2004). These accompany other stated deficiencies associated with child characteristics (low birth weight, poor attachment, poor social skills), parents and parenting style (single parentage, lack of warmth or affection), family factors and life events (poverty, marital disharmony, family instability), community factors (socio-economic disadvantage, lack of support services). Identified protective factors such as breastfeeding, competent parenting, positive family relationships and community participation (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 3) are expected to offset these risk factors. Intervention activities in the C4C sites aim to counter identified risk factors through services such as home visiting, early learning and literacy, early development of social and communication skills, parenting and family support, child nutrition and community events celebrating children, families and the early years (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 1).

Evaluation

The Strategy also took a different approach to evaluation. SFCS was built “around the philosophy of action learning” effectively employing an Action Research (AR) evaluation methodology of “looking for ways to improve processes to achieve outcomes as they develop” rather than engaging traditional impact evaluations commonly undertaken at the project’s end (Smith & Davies, 2002, p. 7). AR projects contribute to the evidence base of programmes by building learnings into programme responses, delivery and future policy (Smith & Davies, 2002, p. 6). However, AR as an evaluative tool did not feature in the second stage of C4C’s development (Hendrick, 2008a). In place of an AR evaluative model in this later stage, the Communities and Families Clearinghouse Australia (CAFCA) provided

access to current information and resources for those people working in early years and community development. This included provision of information on AR among other topics targeting staff from C4C sites. The Clearinghouse acted as a conduit for information exchange for all SFCS projects (Australian Institute of Family Studies, nd).

CAFCA continues the work of the Stronger Families Learning Exchange (SFLEX), initially developed to support evaluative processes of earlier stages (SFCS 2000-2004), and is an arm of the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), in partnership with the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC). Together these organisations were commissioned by the now Department of Families, Housing and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to develop a National Evaluation Framework (NEF) overseeing the whole of SFCS. The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), also contracted by FaHCSIA, was engaged to provide research evidence and information to support the development and implementation of C4C as earlier identified.

A Place Management Approach

As discussed above, in the 'new' policy terrain of Place Management, the three areas which gained international momentum and merging to provide common policy platforms are: first, the significance of brain development in the early years on later life experiences; second, spatial conceptualisations of "communities of disadvantage" where unequivocal levels of prosperity exist alongside social, emotional, and economic dearth even within 'resource rich' communities; and third, the inability of specialised departments to address multiform socioeconomic problems through identification of common 'risk' factors. These areas of concern contributed to the growing popularity of 'joined-up' solutions to 'joined-up' problems in policy and practice design and delivery and the promise presented by ideas of social capital.

The analysis of Place Management as both theory and approach is provided in Section Five, where I use an archaeological approach (Foucault, 1972b) to

'uncover' its practices and contributions as an idea which has become incorporated into the SFCS and C4C policy programme. Embedded in this and woven through the policy environment are other terms and concepts which remain contested. These are social capital, community development, capacity building, strengths-based practice and Action Research.

Social Capital

Social capital is a multifaceted concept (Forbes & Wainwright, 2001) with competing definitions (Boeck & Fleming, 2005, p. 261) spanning many disciplines and a history mapped as far back as 1916 (Winter, 2000). Little reference to social capital appears again until the 1960s and as in 1916 it is in relation to urban planning (Winter, 2000, p. 7). Since then there has been a renewed interest in social capital theories as responses to social and cultural shifts as shown by Robert Putnam, with his work in *Making Democracy Work* (1993) and *Bowling Alone* (2000). To Robert Putnam (1995, p. 664-665) social capital incorporates "features of social life—networks, norms, and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives". A general agreement is that social capital is related to trust, participation, cooperation and reciprocity (Eckersley, 2001, p. 52; Stanley et al., 2005). Eva Cox (1995, p. 15) further influences debates concerning the concept and in many ways shares Putnam's explanation, by considering social capital to be "processes between people which establish networks, norms and social trust and facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit". Trust she goes on to say, requires an ethical base in order "to do the right thing by the client groups" (Cox, 2007). If, for instance, people in the community expect to have input to and influence in policy outcomes and this does not happen, then the process will be constructed as yet another 'government initiative' with set agendas thus affecting trust in that group.

Social capital is increasingly applied as a measure of health and wellbeing of a population, is often framed in terms of civil society and as a response to

problems such as locational disadvantage (Cox & Caldwell, 2000, p. 46). Current responses are mainly through community development and community building projects that tend to see the causal agents or risk factors as the lack of social capital within communities, rather than, for example, the absence of jobs and uneven economic development requiring national regional development strategies (McClelland, 2005, p. 11). Governments are considered to have a significant role in assisting the development of social capital as part of a strong civil society “where tolerance, mutual respect and meaningful relationships prevent social disintegration in the form of family breakdown, delinquency, crime, interest-group conflict and ethnic violence, and where business can thrive” (Edgar, 2001, p. 102). The inherent risk in this ideal is making an assumption that social capital is a tangible, ready-made object waiting to be applied to any given community. For instance, “research links social capital, and access to it, with direct and indirect benefits for children and families” (Rogers & Moore, 2003, p. 9) which presumes an unproblematic application of solutions to local problems.

The generic application of the term social capital to varying settings and policy directions renders it relatively useless as a practice guide. Especially difficult is the lack of attention to power differentials (Smyth et al., 2005, p. 2); the separation of social from economic capital (DeFilippis, 2001, p. 781); and how social capital can inform community practice (Bullen, 1999; Dixon, Hoatson, & Weeks, 2003; Kenny, 1997; Lyons, 2000; Scott, 1999; Stewart-Weeks & Richardson, 1998; Winter 2000). As a policy principle, greater theoretical, conceptual and practical articulation is needed to give practitioners guidance for application in positive ways. The different interpretations of social capital, particularly its conceptualisation as a tangible object, can adversely impact outcomes of social capital initiatives (Cox & Caldwell, 2000, p. 71). Examples have been given where power is seen to be incorporated into a framework of social capital, where for instance “organised crime or gangs involve a social network that entails shared norms but they do not constitute a societal good” (Boeck & Fleming, 2005, p. 263). In Australian policy it is not surprising that social policies applying concepts of

social capital in their conceptual form but without theoretical or practice articulation remain unclear.

Social capital and C4C

Global applications of social capital feature extensively in social policy literature emphasising values of civil society, localism and citizen participation and this is also the case for SFCS and C4C. The increasingly popular social capital theories emphasise community involvement and participation in order to promote social cohesion. The meaning of social capital remains unclear and this is evidenced in C4C where the responsible Department states that “community strength, social capital and building community capacity are often used interchangeably” (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 5-6). While no specified definition is found in C4C policy documents the National Evaluation Framework (NEF) narrowed the concept of social capital to the context of children 0-5, their families and communities. For instance, the NEF identified elements such as trust, engagement (volunteering, attending community events), perceptions of neighbourhood safety, stability, support (someone to turn to), service, and whether community members know about and have a positive attitude to accessing services as critical to the concept of social capital (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 5-6).

Joe Cauchi and John Murphy (2004) suggest, what is clearly needed is a sound theory base with a thorough knowledge of the particular community through which to apply understandings and practices. If social policy is to have any opportunity to be useful to social capital enhancement there first needs to be dialogue between the three salient debates [being the ontological, the empirical and the practice orientated] about social capital, so that theory, investigation and application can inform each other and develop some degree of synergy (Boeck & Fleming, 2005, p. 259). Richard Eckersley et al (2001, p. 55) raise important questions towards a theorising of social capital, for instance, “how do we develop social capital?” Is it something that

can be produced, nurtured, undermined, and misused? As cultural factors in social support and coping strategies are important (Eckersley, 2001) to turn these into tangible researchable qualities, such as measurable indicators, what can be said for the social, cultural and economic aspects of people's lives (Boeck & Fleming, 2005, p. 264)? And "if psychosocial factors are important in explaining health inequalities, then culture must be an important part of the equation of social determination" (Eckersley, 2001, p. 55). Wendy Stone and Jody Hughes (2000, p. 2) caution this can "ultimately result in a failure to realise the benefits of social capital, or even in the destruction of existing social capital through misdirected social capital policy interventions". While social capital, in terms of networks, and building and nurturing trusting relationships, is a worthy pursuit what is required is clearer understandings of its application in policy settings and in particular to the community to which it is directed. This raises the problematic of community and community development.

Community Development

Place Management models embrace the ideas of community development, capacity building, and strengths-based practice. Tasked with building 'child-friendly communities', the funding body, (then) FaCSIA, specified the Service Delivery Plan to include working in partnerships (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2005a; Department of Family and Community Services, 2005b, p. 12). A review of the community development and capacity building literature examines these concepts as applied to this policy.

Community development is regarded by FaCSIA as "communities and outside agencies plan, organise or implement general improvements of community resources, facilities, economic conditions and so on, to improve the standard of living through community driven, capacity-building activities" (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2006b, p. 32). Amongst the blend of features of a community development approach

is the 'distinguishing' feature of community engagement in "the push to develop partnerships between individuals, families, businesses, government, welfare and charitable organisations collaborating to solve social and economic problems" (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007c, p. 1). Within broader aims of 'strengthening communities' the funder of C4C recognises "there is no single model or design for strengthening communities so the best approaches are those which arise from local circumstances or are tailored to suit them" (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007b, p. 2).

While Australian community development literature theorises power according to agent, state, elite, structural or pluralist conceptions (Kenny, 1999; Ife, 2002), Foucault (1981, 1991) offers 'a different grid' of 'decipherment'. He claims that many theories of power refer to formal public decision making, while the most significant governance of Western democracies occurs invisibly by shaping the discourses through which people's sense of self and aspiration is articulated. A number of writers influenced by Foucault (Rose and Miller, 1992; Dean, 1994; Osborne, 1998; Rose, 1999) have argued that Western populations are largely governed 'at a distance' (Rose, 1999). We as individuals are shaped by the current dominant discourses. This extends to the nature of our relationships and aspirations. For instance, in the Western world, corporate liberalism has replaced social democratic discourse, with a subsequent emphasis on: project promotion and performance as opposed to public service and accountability; 'place marketing' – developing and selling the State, city or suburb, as opposed to planning for it; 'place competition' for capital investment rather than planned or negotiated responses (Gleeson & Low, 2000). Workers, largely on short-term contracts, self-promote and perform in order to survive the corporate sphere. These public discourses intersect with private life, shaping aspirations through discourses of lifestyle, body, home renovation, investment and so on. Hinging everything to the market naturalises the division of those who are self-reliant through private

investment, superannuation, private health insurance, private education, and so on, from those who are dependent on the State or, in its most sublime proposition, on the taxpayer. Section Three expands on these conceptual framings.

This shift in a dominant discourse has had an effect on meanings and practices of community development. In the context of C4C: how is 'community' conceptualised given the potential for homogenising its construct?; who defines 'community' in terms of who is included and who is not?; how is this policy and practice perceived as successful or otherwise by those people involved in its development and implementation? These questions, along with others, are examined in later sections.

The Development of Community

Community development, or the development of community is not a new idea, with its roots easily recognisable in community development initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s (Brackertz, 2006) and evidenced in its recent strong resurgence since this time (Healy, Hampshire & Ayres, 2004, p. 248). Many definitions offer broad theories of community development while others focus upon practice components and others offer both. Fred Powell and Martin Geoghegan (2004, pp. 18-19) consider community development a discourse of "social action informed by communitarian values that aims to promote social inclusion and democratic participation", further "emphasising its rootedness in concepts of empowerment". These authors extend the notion of community development within a critical reflexive framework attributed to Paulo Freire's conceptualisation of 'conscientisation', or consciousness raising, with community development being a "core construct" that links power and knowledge (Powell & Geoghegan, 2004, p. 19). Here we see slight variations on the concept of community development which are unified by broad notions of social action and empowerment or self and collective realisation. For instance, Jim Ife (1995, p. 2; 2002, p. 2) defines community development broadly as a process "of establishing, or re-establishing, structures of human community within which new ways of relating, organising

social life and meeting human need become possible". Ife (2002, p. 2) differentiates community based service delivery from the main activity of community development which is defined by the structures "drawing on the resources, expertise and wisdom of the community itself" and with which workers and others engage.

Kelly and Sewell (1988, p. 2) appreciate an action component when they consider community development in their collective use of *community building* as "primarily an oral and an action tradition" and go on to outline principles underlying such an approach. This is a process:

- with no fixed beginning or end point;
- involving many people and events;
- consisting of many equally important dimensions;
- which try to avoid binaries of 'good and bad' or 'included and excluded';
- which remains responsive to the diverse nature of communities, places, times and people; and
- one requiring flexibility, honesty and openness (Kelly & Sewell, 1988, p. 2-3).

Community building is also about "participation and empowerment, inclusion and accessibility, tolerance and diversity, and sustainability of which people of a particular community define their own particular service needs and desired programs of action based upon their perceptions of the issues identified" (Rogers & Moore, 2003, p. 8). All these ideas can be related to C4C.

For the purposes of this research I draw on the main premises unifying those reflections and identified by Ann Ingamells (2002, p. 1) as being inherently modernist: that community development or community building is an approach underpinned by social justice and social democratic principles, one in which the process concerning a select issue(s) is determined by the people for the people and implemented at their own pace. Community development involves a set of processes, tasks, practices and visions towards "collective responsibility" which is about communities having

“effective control over their own destinies”, defining effective control as that requiring:

The development of ongoing structures and processes by which communities can identify and address their own issues, needs and problems within their own terms of reference. Effective community control requires adequate resources, including income, material resources and knowledge and a strong skills base (Kenny, 2006, p. 10).

According to this conceptualisation community development and community building is used to empower rather than disempower or manipulate disadvantaged groups through simple rhetorical manifestations. Some writers locate community development practice in Third Way discourses, policies and programmes as disparate as community renewal, Place Management, social entrepreneurship and social capital (Everingham, 2003; Gardner & Jamieson, 2000; Mayo, 1997; Reddel, 2005). Given this, there is inherent risk of its use as little more than rhetoric.

In current government policy which advocates community development approaches there is potential for progressive and regressive change (Ife, 2002, p. 11). Progressive change would see policies shaped by the people for and by whom they are devised while regressive policies and practices assume it to be no more than a clever technique (Homel et al., 2001, p. 273) in which inherent conservatism exists.

Defining ‘community’

How ‘community’ is framed, implied and assumed is crucial in understanding how it is employed in different contexts with diverse groups, particularly in the policy arena. Margaret Lynn (2001, p. 3) concisely considers the various uses of ‘community’ in the Australian context:

The complexity of community is expressed in popular and discursive forms, and from a variety of professional stances. These include it being locational or relational, seen as place, as source of personal and cultural identity, as interconnecting networks, as social context, as support system, as symbol, as ideology, as target group, as problem, as vehicle or as target for change, as a service system, as market, as audience, as the public, as fund source, as resource, as legitimiser (real or

imagined), as non-institution, as non-government, as the 'third sector', as technique of governing, governing at a distance, as local social system, as embodying rurality, or as 'us' (i.e. middle-class, aware, concerned, active, empowered citizens?), contrasted with community as 'them', likely to be target population.

Karen Healy et al. (2004 p. 247) identifies two main conceptualisations of 'community': "communities of place" and "communities of identity". The first is about people in place, or a geographical location, and the latter is where people are drawn together through a shared identification, for example, new parents or a particular cultural group. Discourses of community further highlight the complexities involved in working with and through community. Lynn's (2006, p. 120) later work identifies ten community discourses which provide a comprehensive overview of relative components such as accountability, relationship to the state, power, community integration, consensual and conflictual processes, membership, agency, value position, and theory. These discourses range in hierarchical descent from that depicted as "devolution of the state/death of the social" where top down processes are market pre-eminent based upon pure economic rationalist models, through to "radical communitarianism" that is driven by bottom up processes where dominant power is challenged in search of democratic forms of power based upon advanced social democratic theory (Lynn, 2006, p. 120). Community wellbeing presents yet another dimension when offering discourses of community which considers community 'capital' (Cuthill, 2006), positioning community as foundational and consisting of five key capital assets, natural, physical, financial, social, and human. With social and human capital most recently added, the 'local' is emerging as the newest key component (Cuthill, 2006). The complexity of 'community' meanings and approaches impacted on the C4C programme and its ability to effect change.

Capacity building

Capacity building is an important consideration of community development or community building, and while interrelated they remain distinct (Frank & Smith, 2006, p. 2; Young, 2006). Capacity building is a more recent

contribution to social policy witnessing a 'rediscovering' of community whereby new initiatives have emerged, including C4C, aimed at building local community capacity (Young, 2006, p. 3). Capacity building can be seen as 'empowerment' promoting human capital (Kenny, 2006, p. 168) whereby people participate in decision-making, particularly policy development, which directly impacts on their lives. Such trust in people's capacity corresponds to social justice and participatory principles and models of practice which see strengths in people's abilities to make contributions to policy making. This has been framed as strength-based community development or strength-based intervention more broadly (Scott, 2000) and governments are dedicated to exploring such notions and their connections to policy as seen in the *Contemporary Literature on Capacity Building and the Strengths Perspective for the Capacity Building Strategic Framework 2005 to 2007* issued by the Government of Western Australia (Government of Western Australia, 2005a).

Under SFCS community capacity building is one of the principles aimed at strengthening families and communities. Four types of capital identified under this SFCS are set out as those components of capacity building:

- human capital (levels of skills, knowledge and health status);
- social capital (networks, norms and trust);
- institutional capital (leadership, capacity to plan and implement projects);
- economic capital (local services, infrastructure and resources) (Department of Family and Community Services & RMIT University Circle, March 2004).

Other types of capital are also identified as contributing to community capacity, for instance, natural capital and cultural capital (Department of Family and Community Services & RMIT University Circle, March 2004).

FaCSIA proposed that the combined influence of a community's commitment, resources and skills could be deployed to build on community strengths and

address community problems. Expected outcomes from capacity building included:

- Partnerships between service providers, different levels of government, business and early childhood stakeholders;
- Develop and maintain networks of people and groups with common interests in children aged 0-5 years;
- Build on existing strengths and resources;
- Integrate and coordinate community approaches to child, family and community issues; and
- Engage committed community members prepared to take action to address issues of concern (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 6)

Community capacity building has within it an ability to influence great change as that desired by the Department. The difficulties associated with uncertain meanings and unclear processes means that community capacity building can be a means of 'growing the organisation' rather than 'genuine community ownership of organisations' (Mission Australia, 2004 cited by Graig, 2010, p. 50). Such ambiguity or imprecise understandings mean capacity building risks being a "difficult, [and] long process that is often unsuccessful" which is a process that is "almost certainly always incomplete" (Kenny & Clarke, 2010a, p. 249).

How terms are interpreted, applied and used to convey meanings is subject to a mix of factors; authors' views, political, ideological, social or political contexts as well as practice applications framed within these conceptualisations. This is an important element of this research where many terms, concepts and principles make up a complex policy agenda from which shared understandings are necessary for the purpose of analysis of C4C in this research.

Strengths-based

The C4C programme aims to build on the strengths of children, families and whole communities. The Service Provider Guidelines advises: “*Communities for Children* Initiatives must build on the strengths of the community and the existing infrastructure of organisations, networks and resources” (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 10). Documents informing C4C refer extensively to the existing strengths of families and communities and the need to build upon these (Davies & Taylor, 2005; Leech & Lewis, nd). In this regard the policy assumes a strengths-based practice although, again, what this entails is unclear. Shared Action (Beilharz, 2002) is a well known case study detailing strengths-based practice as implemented in an Australian inner city suburb demonstrating many social and economic hardships. This project successfully addressed issues of child protection and wellbeing given a NGO’s ability to work alongside community members to identify inherent strengths and enhance these to develop solutions to problems the community itself noted as important to change. By capitalising on existing strengths this community was seen to develop in positive ways towards improved child safety and wellbeing (Beilharz, 2002). This was not, however, only to take a micro community building view (Scott, 2000) but acknowledge also that communities at times need to look outside community, a macro view, to secure resources or infrastructure otherwise needed. In many ways this is what C4C hoped to achieve by taking a strengths-based perspective to practice implementation.

Strengths-based approaches have many advocates (Beilharz, 2002; Berg & Kelly, 2000; Blundo, 2001; Saleebey, 1996; Scott, 2000). However, criticisms need also be considered. There are authors, for instance, who point to the risk posed to children whose parents are empowered over them (Holland, Scourfield, O’Neil, & Pithouse, 2004) and considered further is the lack of research evidence of the effectiveness of strengths-based practice (Schmidt, 1997). Strengths-based approaches may also mask family problems or minimise these (Saleebey, 1996) and other families having

experienced multiple failures often can find it difficult to identify strengths (Barber, 2005). Such are the difficulties of strengths-based approaches making it a demanding task for workers wanting to apply strengths-based practice.

Action Research

This focus on localised solutions to local problems extends to the different evaluation techniques identified by the Strategy. Evaluation strategies, applied differentially according to the emergent learnings unique to the different sites, also differ in success achieved across sites. The NEF, developed to inform the ongoing implementation and policy development of the Strategy, aimed to inform policy development rather than site development for which each site was responsible, and further each service or project was required to evaluate outcomes. Earlier inclusion of Action Learning and Research was said to assist staff employed under the first stage of SFCS in reflecting on learning and adjusting practices accordingly (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Evaluation Consortium, 2002, p. 23). As a “form of institutional learning and capacity building” (Australian Government: Australian Institute of Family Studies) Action Learning and Research was considered as “a tool through which to ‘up skill’ people in ‘place’” (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services & RMIT University Circle, 2004, p. 22) even though this same document declares a need to “read up on AR literature before designing the project” (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services & RMIT University Circle, 2004, p. 4). Facilitating Partners and Community Partners expected to evaluate projects and whole programmes using AR methodology were often left unclear about evaluation processes for which they were responsible.

AR has developed from many philosophical, political, psychological and ecological considerations. Common to most AR approaches is ‘along together’ rather than ‘to do for’ (Heron & Reason, 2001, p. 179). It involves

people together *looking* at issue or problem identification, together *thinking* about possible options available to address an identified issue, together *reflecting* on what is the most agreeable option, and together *acting* on agreed processes. It is a process in which people are themselves involved in designing and managing processes of looking through to acting, again looking within a continuing spiral.

Three dimensions of AR are often highlighted as essential. These are:

- Development or creation of knowledge, such as in human capital;
- Knowledge creation take place outside the institutional contexts, like research centres; and
- Participation in decision making and processes from stakeholders (Reason & Bradbury, 2001, preface).

Ernie Stringer (1996, p. 15) stresses the importance of “consensual and participatory procedures” which enable participants to methodically work through recognised problems and issues, devise methods and processes to obtain people’s accounts of their own positioning, and invent ways to attend to problems identified. The principles of empowerment and consciousness raising are enacted through these steps taken. It is also an approach where people themselves are involved in the designing, further developing and implementing of policy and programmes with AR able further to form an inquiry at any stage along this process.

Interest in notions of civil society, social capital, community capacity building and its variations, reflects an increased focus on the social aspects of our lives which gives Place Management its wider recognition (Stewart-Weeks, 2000, p. 3). AR which has a longer tradition is similarly accepted across disciplines and fields of practice and focusing on participatory processes and an ability to adapt to various policy settings. AR and Place Management share theories of social change where engagement in action leads to change. They diverge, however, in the degree of participation, by whom and in what ways. Within this research AR assists with the vital component of informing practice through participant involvement whereby “a set of

interrelated theories of action for dealing with problems typical to practice situations involves the constructing and testing of theories in practice by the actors” (Friedman, 2001, p. 161). A theoretical construction of Place Management involves actors to less a degree than that of AR, where people involved are generally limited to NGOs and those ‘clients’ within its reach.

Summarising reflections

The SFCS’s C4C was founded on influential research which is seemingly accepted in the Western world that early brain development is instrumental in shaping outcomes in later life. Alongside this were ideas that there exist ‘places of disadvantage’ and that government services are better placed and more effective if service providers join their efforts to produce a more seamless approach to address childhood development. These beliefs used concepts of social capital, community and capacity building, and strength-based to promote this policy programme. With the exception of the neuroscience, which is in its infancy and may well be overtaken or disproved, all these ideas are profoundly contested and this is discussed in later sections.

Critical Reflexivity: framing the inquiry

Section introduction

This section outlines the methodology and methods applied to address the objectives of this research. There are many ways to consider Place Management, with its various applications under various disciplines, across various contexts and towards various ends. Action Research frames this study and helps to embrace a range of views towards a greater understanding of a Place Management approach, as applied under the policy of Stronger Families and Communities Strategy. The methodology and methods outlined here assist in illuminating the many ‘voices’ of the Communities for Children policy programme. The methodological orientation of this research remains consistent with guiding principles of Action Research and with the project aims outlined in the opening section. The choice of conceptual framing for this study was guided by two considerations:

- to value and include the various people (and their positioning) involved with the C4C; and
- to critically reflect on connections between C4C and its broader societal structures.

Place Management, supported by internationally acclaimed evidence, is presented under the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy’s (SFCS or the Strategy) Communities for Children (C4C) as a solution to improving

health and wellbeing of young children, 0-5 years. This approach broadly encompasses strategies that:

- are within a specified place;
- names community as disadvantaged;
- target particular people of this select place or 'community'; and
- aim at 'joined-up' approaches, with service systems working more efficiently together.

In the previous section I discussed the literature which was used to inform the strategies in this section. I suggest this literature was informed by particular discursive framings with those most prominent discourses of neoliberalism and civil society influencing and informing the C4C. This raises the questions posed by this section, *Reflecting*: what methods can give voice to those people implementing the policy aims and objectives as set out by the C4C, and can the development of this policy be further informed by, as well as, reflect those needs of the target groups? Further, what learnings can inform future Place Management policy decisions in Australia? These and other questions are critically interrogated with a review of the research question framing this study stated as: What is Place Management theory and practice and how does Place Management inform social policy decisions in Australia? Discourses of neoliberalism and civil society are considered in the examination of Place Management, as detailed later in this section.

Inevitably, the subjectivities of the researcher influence the material considered, in which as researcher, I am unable to stand apart from that being researched, so a reflection on 'self' in relation to research is also detailed in this section. This thesis section (*Reflecting I*) consists of two parts: 'Methodology – a conceptual framing' which outlines the methodological approach, including my epistemological and ontological positionings, and theoretical framework; and 'Research Methods – weaving the threads in method' where outlined are the methods used. Methodology is defined here not simply as data gathering but expanded to a study of methods, an articulation of the theories and philosophical underpinnings as they relate to particular disciplines, which when analysed, reveal an epistemological and

ontological positioning. This methodology shapes the range of possible and resultant methods and those methods used in this project are detailed in this section. This positioning characterises a researcher's paradigm, exemplifying the way in which research is interpreted, and contextualise 'me' as researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994a, p. 13). Considerations of this nature further the reader's understanding of a research process that I consider to be predominantly privileged, middle class, Eurocentric, and white. It is therefore the theoretical orientation and positioning of the 'authorial voice' (Altheide & Johnson, 1994, p. 490) that leads the discussion in this first part of the section.

Methods and processes engaged for the purpose of this research are discussed in the second part of this section. While presented separately from my methodological orientation these two parts are mutually supporting. The multi method approach adopted for this research is represented in a schematic outline which is followed by details of each method used. The limitations and problematics of the methodology conclude this section.

Part One: Methodology – A conceptual framework

Self in the research context

To locate the complex and interwoven self (white, female, researcher, author, professional, privileged, mother, partner, daughter, sister, friend, among others) within this dynamic, and often contentious research journey, it is vital that a researcher's multivocal perspectives, voices and actions are provided at the onset. As Denzin and Lincoln (1994a, p. 11) describe, "every researcher speaks from within a distinct interpretive community, which configures, in its special way, the multicultural, gendered components of the research act". The authorial voice, this situating of the 'I', is crucial as it involves a reflexivity of "interpreting one's own interpretations looking at one's own perspectives from other perspectives, and turning a self critical eye on to one's own authority as interpreter and author" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 1). This also draws attention to a particular context at a particular time in

her/history (Richardson, 1994, p. 518), with positionings differing over time. In the case of research, it is not probable that one speaks of a subject matter “without exposing oneself to a permanent mirror effect” (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 4) as the values and experiences entwine with the research processes, providing an important component and contribution to any analysis given.

It is a critical reflexive methodology that frames this research, requiring an iterative process of constant reflection on self and in relation to others. This is enacted through researching, dialoguing with others, reflecting on our starting points and journey, our companions and what we make of these experiences. Considerations of this sort acknowledge the different and varied perspectives others bring, each bearing their own merits, to the research journey. The many selves I present in this research journey are wound up in and implicated by the various roles and expectations given to it by myself and the various other players who too have a vested interest in this research. Along the different stages and at different points of the journey this research emphasises change, as will be explained. This is noteworthy from the outset. Although analysed throughout this thesis my role and involvement is incorporated as a means by which to further conceptualise and contextualise this research area and also importantly to locate ‘my selves’ as someone who brings a particular set of values (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003) to this research process. Smith (2005) suggests further that those lenses embraced by the researcher, layered over mainstream or dominant discourses without adequate critical reflection, can unknowingly perpetrate the ruling of the dominant text. This research attempts to manage this problematic with acknowledgement of self in a constant dialectical and reflexive relation to ‘others’. This is with the awareness that to indulge in the subjectivities of the researcher can also act to silence those voices assuming a place in the research (Lal, 1996) with the risk of narcissistic tendencies (Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000, p. 109). I seek to limit this by taking myself outside of the text at times, thus the use of interleaves.

Mainstream research practices are generally implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, gender and other oppressions (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 140). Here it is my resolve to do justice to this research by remaining mindful of those complex arrangements and actions in research that act to reinforce these inequities. This includes looking at all forms of text (spoken and unspoken) that also aid in the reproduction of these. During this process it is important then to reveal “assumptions, expectations and vocabularies that guide the entire project [that] are crucial to the results we arrive at” (Alvesson, 2002, p. 3) as part of my inquiring journey. This thesis is written in a way that captures the nuances and tacit underpinnings of research and gives a critical reflexive account of the often taken for granted assumptions and under challenged social constructions present in Western worlds. Formative evaluations assist here in providing avenues for researchers seeking understandings about power dynamics and interactions between people which summative evaluations do not do so well.

I interpret and reflect upon the research topic and the overall process through the practice of reflexivity. Reflexivity, often used synonymously with reflectivity, is that process emphasising my ‘self’ insertion and exploration within and between the various layers of this research (Alvesson, 2002, p. 171). With ‘reflexivity’ describing a process of “always making knowledge in practice” it differs from ‘reflectivity’ in that it incorporates experiential and tacit knowing rather than only considering formal ways of knowing usually attached to some discipline (Healy, 2005, p. 102). This is not to focus upon self in research to the extent of hedonistic susceptibility; rather, the task is to put forward my ontological orientation upfront, which then supports my resolve not to ignore dimensions of power inherent in the research process. So I acknowledge Flyvbjerg’s (2001, p. 124) assertion that power is transferred and produced through discourses as “no discourse is unequivocally oppressive or always emancipatory”. In this sense critical perspectives highlight an awareness of the “political nature of social phenomena and develop the ability of researchers to reflect critically upon those taken-for-granted realities which they are examining and of which they

are also – as members of society – an inevitable part” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 111). This conceptualisation of self in context brings together thinking and doing in a critical reflexivity.

Methodological Orientations

A conceptual guide

Critical theory provides a useful lens through which to address these research questions as it supports social responsibility within a social justice framework which is the stated goal of Place Management, as applied under the C4C programme. A critical theory approach also allows for a consideration of the impact of dominant discourses in the design and implementation of social policy. It is a framework whose core values emancipation, empowerment and social change question the ways in which premises, goals and activities serve to maintain power and resource inequities in society (Green 1994, p. 532). In this research a Foucauldian discourse analysis and specifically Foucault’s work on genealogy and the archaeology of knowledge (1979, 1984, 1991a) are used in analysing ‘government authority’ and ‘community responsibility’. Given the several traditions of power theory that exist (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 116), critical theory maintains that “all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 139). In this process of power dynamics “the study of abnormality is one of the main ways that power relations are established in society. When an abnormality and its corresponding norm are defined, somehow it is always the normal person who has power over the abnormal” (Fillingham, 1993, p. 18). Critical theory guides this research towards looking at those constructions (theoretical, practical or abstract) of C4C as a Place Management policy approach.

Critical theory, emphasising an emancipatory process based upon a social justice framework with one of its guiding principles being “an emancipatory interest in knowledge” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 110) is that framing

this research. Critical theory provides a site through which to consider the dialectical nature of society and historical contexts which play an important part of understanding social phenomena. “Realised patterns”, Mats Alvesson and Kaj Skoldberg (2000, p. 110) assert, necessitate an understanding of binary opposites to help explain the “possibility of social conditions of a qualitatively different kind”. This theoretical telescope draws on various strands of critical theory to assist in viewing those specific political struggles, which when identified, are elements of “reasonable, rational, and potentially liberating political practices” (Leonard, 1990, p. 87). This is poignant given my critical reflexive approach began by critiquing the developments of this policy and its many nuances rather than a critical reflexive engagement. So, for instance, I found myself considering the top down approach of C4C to be oppressive and reinforcing the status quo rather than seeing the liberating elements, as pointed out by Leonard (1990, p. 87), which are also a part of its being.

Critical theory, having some commonality with post-structuralism, encompasses discourses of emancipatory processes which concentrate on and analyse political and social inequalities with the aim of liberating knowledge and encouraging transformative action (Leonard 1990; Ray, 1993). Critical theory is consistent with a social justice framework and provides an alternative and critical view of the dominant ideologies of individualisation, economic rationalism and social hegemony. A critical theory perspective facilitates a thorough explanation and understanding of the political structures, decision-making processes and dominant ideologies that converge to form particular discursive framings surrounding the SFCS. Critical theory, post-structural thinking and Action Research (AR) assist in this enquiry.

Ways of Knowing

Taking this critical theory and post-structural approach reflects a widespread questioning of the appropriateness of applying natural science research methods to the social sciences. This movement has come to be known by

various terms such as the linguistic turn, the narrative turn, or the interpretive turn with social research having moved from a dominant discourse searching for 'truth', as proclaimed importantly by Rene Descartes (1596-1650), to consider the social world through versions of subjectivism, idealism, perspectivism and relativism (Hamilton, 1994, p. 63). Importantly there has been a move away from the construction of reality and values whereby ontological realities exist outside the mind and meaning exists in objects independently of any consciousness as in the concept of objectivism (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994b; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Reality, conceptualized for this research, as socially constructed means that the views held by people involved in the policy programme are valued, rather than finding a 'truth' based only on measurable attributes.

The position taken here is that subjectivity, the social construction of one's identities, is contextually influenced and situated, resulting often in changing, contradictory and multifaceted selves and positions. This is not to deny objective realities but to note one's reality is constructed in environments composed of observable facts and constructed meanings. The interplay between objectivity and subjectivity is the site of my episteme which connects to that of Freire (1996, p. 32), educational liberationist, when he claims that,

One cannot conceive of objectivity without subjectivity. Neither can exist without the other, nor can they be dichotomized. ...but rather subjectivity and objectivity [are] in constant dialectical relationship.

What is vital, Freire suggests (1996), is the meeting point where those subjective voices, those spoken from subjective experiences of what is occurring to people themselves, are met through a dialectical relationship or at the very least transmitted to those people with decision making power. In particular, the decision making power of policy makers and funders, in a marriage of praxis, or policy and practice, is a vital component of this research.

Informing approaches

The evident complexities inherent in the variations within and between different ways of knowing, can be clustered under a broad interpretive approach as compared with traditional empiricist approaches (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994b, p. 13). Under an interpretive umbrella three differing though potentially interplaying streams are identified: the constructivist-interpretive, the critical (for example, Marxist, emancipatory), and the feminist-post structuralist which considers multiple realities bound by historical epochs and particular contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985); a view of reality not shared by positivist and post positivist paradigms. This research is located within this interpretive group of paradigms affiliated with those perspectives relating to streams specific to critical theory and post-structuralism. Together these reflect a *critical reflexive praxis* methodology, similar to that taken by Jan Fook (2002, 2004). Common to these perspectives is a philosophical framing whereby “current epistemological and ontological shifts taking place in social theory must be firmly grounded in human narratives of emancipation and social justice” (McLaren & Leonard, 1993, p. x). And further, there is justification of a critical theory framework that “acts to erode ignorance and misapprehensions, and the extent to which it provides a stimulus to action, that is, to the transformation of the existing structure” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 114). Fertile ground for a critical paradigm is, furthermore, found in post-structural understandings which help provide a consideration of those mechanisms of power in society offering possibilities for change through a deconstruction of dominant discourses (Foucault, 1972b; Weedon, 1987).

Perhaps the greatest influence of a critical theory paradigm stems from Guba and Lincoln’s (1994, p. 108) outline in which they describe a conceptual framework proposed by the ontological question about the form and nature of reality and what can be known about it. For instance, the C4C is part of a taken for granted policy direction embedded in an unquestioned reality that children’s health and wellbeing rests in their developmental achievements and improvements to their environments while still very young. But, what of posing questions like, how has the C4C under the SFCS come about? From

what policies, practices and previous thinking has it emerged? What political, international and national influences motivate C4C? Further, an epistemological inquiry within a critical theory paradigm is interested in what is the nature of the relationships between the knower and what we know (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). What, for instance, are the experiences and perceptions of those people involved with the C4C programme and how can we make sense of these in the policy context within which it was developed and now operates?

Critical theory comprises many strands, which have altered and developed through time and have had different aspects and quite distinct historical phases (Bohman, 2005), although they remain united in a quest for emancipatory processes. Consciousness raising of political and structural forces that impact upon people's experiences is critical and the adage *the personal is political* suitably applies here (Hanisch, 1978). This is complemented further by feminist writings that consider those "sites of struggle" (Smith, 2005, p. 39) through which standpoint theory, including the positionings of the researcher, is celebrated as that approach which assists to identify the problematic for investigation: an approach not only informed by ethno-methodological pursuits but also by "Foucauldian sensibilities" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003, p. 232). Critical theory, then, is a theory having 'practical intent' of bringing together a critical analysis of social, political and institutional structures and processes with a view to ignite positive social, cultural and political change. The theoretical terrain is broad, and for this study, I will concentrate on the political and cultural hegemonic discourses which affect the SFCS and the C4C, as considered below.

Bringing fundamentals from critical theory in an acceptable bricolage approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994a, p. 2) in the field of qualitative research offers credibility, triangulation and rigour to the research venture. It presents research as "an interactive process shaped by his or her personal history, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity, and those of the people in the setting" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994a, p. 3). Norman Denzin and Yvonna

Lincoln (1994a, p. 3) maintain that the 'bricoleur researcher' understands, or at least attends to, the power implicated in and by the research process. While acknowledging my own position of power in this research process every effort is taken to offer rigour through triangulation of data, citing multiple sources of data and through prolonged engagement in the field and topic. By taking a critical theory stand, however, I seek to uncover injustices and suggest ways to address these.

Critical theorist Peter Leonard (1990, p. 93-4) draws a link between critical theory and other theories in his assertion:

Theories share a similar metatheoretical self-understanding that preserves the demand for solidarity and the recognition of plurality and difference. Taken together, they suggest that critical theory can take different forms, each working with different theoretical and practical emphases as their context demands, each providing insights into the complexity and intricacy of the critical-theoretic project, and each attentive to the contingency and particularities of their claims.

Hence, while theories tend to be contextually based, identifying and seeking those variations and attributes linking theoretical persuasions, concerned with emancipatory struggles, allows for a consideration of what unites them. Where they share important features "they are in fact complementary components of a larger project" (Leonard 1990, p. 94). Underlying this consideration of the similarities between these perspectives is the understanding that in isolation they are deficient in providing a full account from which to explore and explain the particular issues posed by this research. A discussion of the application of these perspectives is not complete without a discussion of their limitations.

Critical Theory Limitations

To engage in a critical theory perspective yet not take heed of its confines suggests it is devoid of limitations. Dealing with its limitations also allows for identification and consideration of other perspectives that may present a fuller conceptualisation of areas insufficiently explained by a critical theorising. Critical theory has been criticized for its perceived tendency to be

absorbed by adverse dimensions existing in society and for too much of an 'intellectualizing' theoretical stance (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 145). Stephen Leonard (1990) however, directs our attention to a Foucauldian response in that the focus is not necessarily on the bad or negative but rather the 'dangerous' or disadvantageous. Here, critical theory provides insight for "those who are oppressed in making the best choices" (Leonard, 1990, p. 93), as they are given the chance through a critical reflection on selves, others, underlying societal assumptions, decision making processes and other implicit nuances.

Another assessment is that critical theory as an interpretive style leaves "unclear the methodological side of the interpretive process" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 509). Despite these criticisms about the lack of methodology there appears to be much guidance in this area presented by Raymond Morrow and David Brown (1994) and other authors (Crotty, 1998; Fook, 2002; Wandel, 2001) who dedicate their writings to critical theory as a research programme, dealing expansively with methodological issues. Further highlighted is the difficulty in evaluating those qualities attributed to a critical theory doctrine: the consciousness raising elements towards transformative action (Alvesson, 2002, p. 165). While this is plausible, there is unparalleled value gained from anecdotal accounts and the everyday/everynight narratives (Smith, 2005) that are increasingly acceptable and implemented to obtain evenhanded and rounded views of problems often under investigation by social researchers. Critical theory is used to illuminate the subjective experiences in relation to those positions of power which are enacted on those subjectivities.

Post-structural Thought

If critical theory is said to be weak in methodological matters post-structuralism provides an additional framework. The extent to which critical theory and post-structuralism can complement each other is an over simplified appreciation of the profoundly complex theorising at play (Agger, 1991; Morrow & Brown, 1994). Writing from a constructive counter discourse

perspective, Morrow and Brown (1994, p. 22) consider that there are not fixed “totalizing theories of society and history” and that social theory must content itself with local analyses that accept the essential relativity of all values and modes of cognition”. With its apparent weaknesses and development of varying historical perspectives over time critical social theory requires,

a critical confrontation with other works of social explanation that not only establishes their good and bad points but shows the reasons behind their blind spots and misunderstandings, and demonstrates the capacity to incorporate their insights on stronger foundations (Calhoun, 1995, p. 35).

This research uses critical theory enhanced by the ‘intellectual tools’ (Fook, 2002, p. 69) and particular techniques from post-structuralism, such as Foucault’s archaeology of knowledge, enunciated modalities and discursive framings (Foucault, 1972b, 1984). These are discussed below.

Foucault and Post-structuralism

C4C is a policy programme, within it, power can be understood as dispersing and flowing through the different relations, processes, ideologies and mechanisms and is made up of different players, various stakeholders and targeted people across the several policy divides. The view taken here is that power is not held by people as though a commodity but rather moves “around and through different groups, events, institutions and individuals” (Danaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000, p. 73). This conceptualisation is important to the analysis presented in this research. How, for instance, ‘place’ is defined and how ‘people in place’ perceive their connectivity to (or not) the C4C programme, given overarching aims and objectives, allows a conceptualisation of how certain people manage to exercise relations of power in their interactions with others both from above and below (Danaher et al., 2000, p. 73). Rather than viewing power as owned by a few decision makers at the ‘top’, power is seen to exist as an “omnipresent dimension in human relations, [in which] power in society is never a fixed and closed regime, but rather an endless and open strategic game” (Gordon, 1991, p. 5). This conceptualisation supports the notion that certain mechanisms,

strategies and processes can give leverage to less powerful groups in society.

Foucault's conceptualisations are useful here, and while said to be aligned to a post-structuralist paradigm, or postmodernist ideals (Agger, 1991, p. 112), Foucault did not so label himself (Alvesson, 2002; Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000). Modernist approaches depict power as that which represses "nature, instincts, a class, or individuals" with a tendency to look to "mechanisms of repression" (Foucault, 2004, p. 15). Power as understood here does not 'act' precisely in this way. There are instances, for example, when individuals and groups within C4C advanced in their progress towards achieving civic ideals despite structures and processes operating to prevent these. What is more, examples of marginalised individuals and groups, despite dominant discourses or despotic practices, shifted from positions of powerlessness to assume roles as activists moving outside of the C4C context. A Foucauldian conceptualisation emphasises that "marginality and domination makes his thinking sensitive to difference, diversity, and the politics of identity, something which today is crucial for understanding power and affecting social and political change" (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 104). These conceptualisations are dense and complex, although presented as straightforward. Writers (Fraser, 1981; Haber, 1994; Soper, 1993) have pointed out, for instance, contradictions in Foucault's work whereby he presents subjectivity as formed and shaped by discursive framings (ways of knowing that form discourses), at the same time suggesting actors perform as agents towards change, as indicative of his work with prisons. Foucault's work is further critiqued for its gender bias and lack of interest with feminism although his work, particularly on power, is usefully applied by many feminist theorists (Ramazanoglu, 1993).

It is not the purpose of this thesis to enter into a meta-theorising on the mechanisms of power, which is covered elsewhere (Fielding, 2003; A. Ingamells, 2006), rather the aim is to apply a theorising useful to the aims as set out by this thesis. Power conceptualised in modernist terms supports

notions of rationality while the view taken here is that there exist many ways of knowing, arguing against logocentrism and simple binary positions. Thinking about power is a thinking about the multiplicity of ways we each, and collectively, interpret, relate to and with and shape the world around us at the same time as others in the world shape these very same things. The complexity is further complicated by Foucault's refutation of the individual as self-knowing and self-governing but in his theorising he considered individuals as profoundly shaped and influenced by the world in which they are constructed (Gordon, 1991, p. 5). This theorising continues in following sections.

Foucault's view on power is not dissimilar to that taken by critical theorists (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 201), elucidated in the intimate relationship between power and knowledge. While some authors (Agger, 1991) emphasize the differences between critical theory (particularly the Marxist tradition) and Foucault, other writers (Morrow & Brown, 1994, p. 17) refer in favourable terms to links between critical theory and Foucault, saying they offer "important impulses towards a reflective social science, and that they can play complementary and balancing roles in a field that is thus charged with a constructive tension" (Alvesson and Deets, 1999, in Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 151).

To Foucault, and many post-structuralist writers, knowledge is power:

they imply one another: there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge; and similarly there is no knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 5).

Knowledge production, its contexts and involvement of the knowledge producer all play a significant role in policy and program development where different, often conflicting, theoretical and practical elements merge in the forming and development of knowledge, "during which empirical material is constructed, interpreted and written" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 5), and from which such elements are traceable (Foucault, 1972b, 1980). Rather

than aiming at 'truths' (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 5) an analysis of mechanisms of power and knowledge construction aids to elucidate particular discursive framings which occasions an opportunity for understandings.

With the acceptance that power and knowledge are inseparable and where knowledge is shaped and influenced through dominant discourses (Fillingham, 1993) the operations of power therefore concern the ways in which some discourses become dominant over others. Society is an ever changing phenomenon and in order to analyse and interpret societal events it is imperative to locate these discourses within a historical context, where "all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 139). That is not to reject the present but rather to appreciate the profound transformations that continue to shape today's society. This can be achieved not only through considering dominant discourses affecting policy making processes but is also captured through an archaeological examination of Place Management. By tracing ideas, links, themes, and perspectives past and present, influencing the 'why' and 'how' of place based practices, an archaeology of knowledge aids in an understanding of the Australian enactment of the C4C. More on this is provided below under the 'methods' part of this section.

Knowledge is also inseparable from the language that gives it birth, whereby language does not simply embody 'reality' without implicating itself in relations of power:

usually as a totalizing system situated in the dominant strain of modern Western thought in which interpretive strategies are employed to categorize and classify the way 'we' understand the social and cultural practices of 'them' (McLaren & Leonard, 1993, p. 57).

Language, the main medium through which constructions of meaning are formulated, influences people's experiences and interactions with their world (Foucault, 2004, p. 30-31). This will later be seen in the language used by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous

Affairs (FaHCSIA) when, for instance, terms including *community development, community building, capacity building, community renewal, social capital, place based* and *Action Research* are extensively used they are done so assuming common understandings or taken for granted meanings. With an interest in those values, ideologies, principles and ideas that are carried through particular language uses, as considered here, it is language, which when in action, is itself considered a discourse (Foucault, 2004, p. 31).

Language, power and knowledge (integrally part of one other) are constitutive of greater discursive framings that, given a Foucauldian interpretation, influence events in society, such as policy practice. The idea of critical reflexive praxis is now detailed.

Critical Reflexive Praxis

Emancipatory transformative action through understanding people's actualities, as discussed above, presents a meeting point between critical theories and post-structuralism through the theory-action nexus, or praxis. This again advocates a social justice and emancipatory methodological grounding in a process of pedagogical liberating reflexive praxis, in which praxis consistently illustrates how "theory and practice always work together and unite in the dialectical and political act of knowing" (McLaren & Leonard, 1993, p. 54). In this way the dialectical, holding three or more components in constant tension offers a 'trialectic', as in Kelly and Sewell's (1988) *Head Heart and Hand*, through which to view the *thinking, experiencing* (and reflection on experiencing), and *doing* of Place Management as applied by the C4C policy programme. This links further with the AR approach used in this research where the cycle of *looking, thinking, reflecting, and acting* depicts an iterative process linking practice with theory and theory with practice.

'Praxis', also involving action on reflection and reflection on action, facilitates change in the desired direction. Through this process, people gain heightened awareness of how decision making processes made by groups in powerful positions can impact on them (Freire, 1996). Action without reflection generates 'pure activism' and reflection without action results in 'armchair revolution' (Freire, 1996, p. 68). For the purpose of this research, praxis is a weaving of:

- *experiential learnings*, where 'management' in 'place', through 'Facilitating Partners', 'Community Partners' and policy makers, provide accounts of experiences and perceptions of the rollout of C4C
- *theory*, embedded in the concept of and implementation of a Place Management approach and further framed around issues of knowledge production and mechanisms of power, and
- *practice*, in the actions observed on the ground (project activities); the acting on those experiences and previous learnings (seen, for instance, in the application of community development and capacity building approaches).

Questions stem from each of these elements: whether practices are inclusive, if principles of community development, capacity building and AR are enacted, and if so, how, and if not, why not?

The iterative process of praxis involves a reflection on the material gathered and continually linking it with processes of knowledge building. This allows participants to reflect and shape the development of the C4C programme, and its various projects, alongside this research. The collection of people's perceptions and experiences, following AR principles, allows a progression of their own understandings and determinations. It is through dialogue with people involved in the many aspects of C4C that peoples' perceptions and experiences of the implementation and development of a Place Management model in Western Australia are better understood.

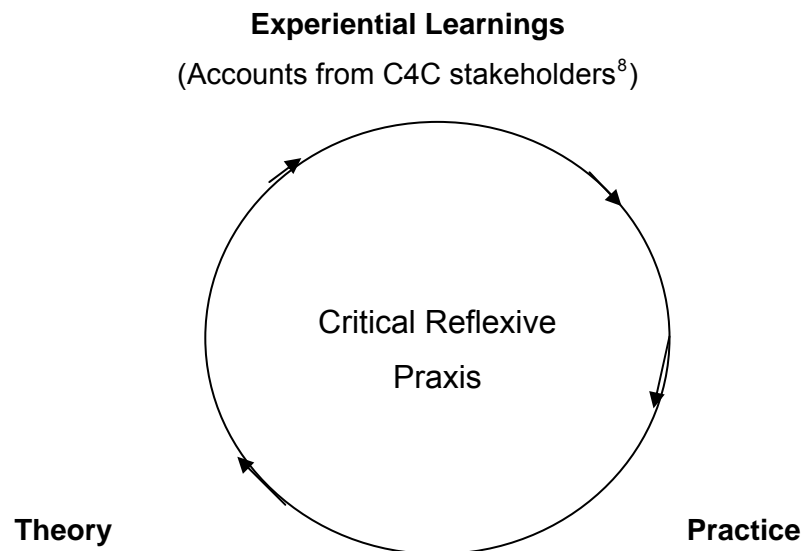


Figure 3 Experiential Learnings

Theory & Practice of Place Management: **theory**, early years focus, in communities of disadvantage, through joined-up governance, with the aim of building capacities and social capital; **practice**, local answers to local problems through local engagement.

Other authors and theorists draw linkages between many opposing paradigms, similarly undertaken here, in what can be developed into “meaningful way[s] of learning through experience” and critical reflection (Fook, 1996; Pease & Fook, 1999). Fook’s (2002, p. 18) ideal in which the aim is towards furthering “society without domination, exploitation and oppression” is achieved through understanding structural inequalities and people’s constructions of these structural as well as cultural, social, political and other relational forces.

Discursive framings allow for a sense making process which reflects on the complex social structures and people’s perceptions and experiences of these. These framings consist of sets of ideas which result in particular social, political and cultural constructions of society.

⁸ Stakeholder in this instance refers to a person with an interest in C4C, as defined in Section Six.

Discursive framings

The notion of ‘uncovering’ or displaying the ways ideas have developed into practices is a useful Foucauldian (1972b) construction of discourse. This is a form of analysis linked with Derrida’s deconstruction work (1978), and is applied to ‘*discourse*’, which is another of those many ill-defined terms, producing confusion given their differentiations and contradictory usages. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault (1972b) contemplates the way in which an analysis of discourses might be applied to the pursuits of policy analysis, for instance, by taking political thought and subjecting political behaviour to analysis. Theoretical constructions as outlined by Foucault (1972b, 1979) attempt to reveal particular discursive framings that shape practices or strategies. Rather than identifying particular political theories and subjecting them to discursive analysis, Foucault (1972b, p. 194) invites consideration of uncovering the objects enunciated in the political elements, the particular forms taken for enunciation, what particular concepts are used and the choices that form the *strategies* to be used. As he goes on to explain, such an analysis would seek to:

explain the formation of a discursive practice and a body of revolutionary knowledge that are expressed in behaviour and strategies, which give rise to a theory of society, and which operate the interference and mutual transformation of that behaviour and those strategies (Foucault, 1972b, p. 195).

It is through an application of this process to the examination of Place Management as policy and practice in shaping contemporary Australian society that I provide a more detailed examination of its *objects*, *enunciative modalities*, *concepts* and *strategies* (Foucault, 1972b). Particular objects of political behaviour might include certain targets, like the family, volunteers or organisations, as objects upon and through which discursive practice are observed. The way in which these practices are enunciated may refer to ‘who speaks’, what they say and how they say it, through which an examination of language is plausible. Complexity exists however in that objects are conceptualisations, representing both a concept and constitutive of concepts. How these objects are conceptualised provides a much more intricate and complicated field of study. For instance, family, volunteering

and organisations all having a conceptual framing as well as containing sub-conceptualisations, like 'nuclear' as in family, 'mutual obligation' as in volunteering, or 'welfare' as in organisations. Possible too are hierarchies of concepts within discursive framings such as the conceptualisation of 'father' and 'mother' and the specific roles assigned these. There are also what Foucault (1972b, p. 60) refers to as the 'techniques of rewriting' where rank orders are seen to be re-conceptualised, such as configuring grandparents, aunts and uncles as extended family, which is later reconfigured as 'carers', denoting modern day acknowledgement of the demise of extended family, which were depicted as supportive systems in the past. The ideas and systems of conceptualising are those components that shape, construct and re-order previously formulated ideas on a given concept, like family. Foucault (1972a, p. 63) warns against believing in the self as a self-knowing subject when he summarises objects, enunciative modalities and concepts:

In order to analyse the rules for the formation of objects, one must neither, as we have seen, embody them in things, nor relate them to the domain of words; in order to analyse the formation of enunciative types, one must relate them neither to the knowing subject, nor to a psychological individuality.

The idea is that a fluidity or indeterminacy exists with analysis demonstrating sets of relations, which are in a constant state of instability, and are specific to time, place and people. As a contemporary example, the C4C policy programme illustrates powerful forces that operate as 'strategic reversibility' in which structures and processes at times have the effect of (re)creating 'losers' and at other times (and often concurrently) 'winners'. It is here that a Foucauldian (1972b) conceptualisation of objects, enunciated modalities, concepts and strategies aid in uncovering the rules or systems of ideas that form particular discursive framings around specific events, at particular times with selected people.

The actions engaged towards given ends form the final part of this approach which Foucault identifies as being the theories or themes that emerge from the way in which concepts are organised, objects regrouped and enunciations typified (Foucault, 1972b). For example, the discourse of

Neoliberal politics offers the family (as object) the opportunity to elucidate a theme of the autonomous rational, self-responsible individual who acts towards self interest. The relationship between that family and government then emerges to describe one of independence. When the family is not able to provide in ways expected by the State then it is constructed as the fault of the family rather than a lack of resources or structural conditions, such as employment opportunities. These themes affect how the concepts, objects and enunciative modalities operate. Taking again the object of family, it is possible to show that an independent family which operates according to other themes inherent in a Neoliberal politics such as the workings of the free market, assumes a tight economic unit, whose deviance from this type (nuclear) and expected performance (presence in the workforce) must need to be curtailed and re-shaped. Language and concepts all intertwine creating a complex discursive pattern.

This is not to suggest that this is a linear process, as there are many differences and contradictions embedded even within the same knowledge forms. The aim is however to reveal, define and analyse these differences (Foucault, 1972b). In this process it is important not to be constrained by all that discourse entails but rather see that actions and change occur as a result of people adding to these discursive framings, said to be 'transformations in a practice' (Foucault, 1972b, p. 209). Such a contextualisation assists with a policy analysis of C4C in which an unraveling of the complex social arrangements promotes an understanding of "the power operating through our knowledge [which] is anything but innocent: We inhabit the lives, the identities, the worlds, which our language, our practices, our ways of knowing, construct for us" (Sellick, Delaney, & Brownlee, 2002, p. 494) at the same time as we shape these discursive framings through 'meaning making' of such constructions.

The complex and often fragmented course of C4C, as a Place Management approach, is better understood by undertaking a tracing of ideas, concepts, activities, events and so on: a tracing as made up of the "accidents, the

errors, the false appraisals, and the false calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us”, within particular times that act to shape present day developments (Fillingham, 1993, p. 102). Questions arise from this *Looking* – represented in the second cycle of this AR presentation – around what language framed earlier constructions leading to place based approaches, and what events and accounts influenced its current and developing application as seen in C4C. From what body of thought, from what ideological transcriptions, and in what direction is it heading, as the term Place Management is embraced by all levels of government across Australia? Exploring the archaeology of Place Management works in tandem with an examination of dominant discourses affecting this policy practice by tracing the introduced ideas and their interaction with systems.

The stated aims of C4C are to minimise: inequality, disadvantage, social isolation, and exclusion, through processes designed to build social capital and sustainability of projects. It is therefore a policy approach derived from certain *ideological* viewpoints about society, citizenship, participation and government intervention. C4C is a policy programme further shaped by historical trajectories as well as formed and informed by ‘specialised’ knowledges supporting its operations. The use of particular language helps to describe its structure and processes with language used as a coercive mechanism that implies one thing yet in practice is seen to do another. These credited meanings, the structures and processes interact in the shaping of C4C. When considered together, these elements merge helping to identify particular discourses fundamental to the C4C policy development process. A discussion on *discourses* surrounding any policy event, taking a critical reflexive framing, must attend to the strategies and relations of power that shape and further define the policy process. Those prevailing ideologies and dominant discourses which benefit certain individuals and groups yet not others, are crucial to the analysis taken up by this research. Before any further discussion I will clarify how I use the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘ideology’.

Discourse and Ideology

Discourse and ideology referring to distinctive properties are often used interchangeably. They overlap, with each concept often used differently, adding to imprecise use and meaning. This is how discourse is understood, as imprecise, for instance, with varying ways used amongst theorists from across disciplines, with its application suggestive of a way “to signal a certain theoretical sophistication in ways which are vague and sometimes obfuscatory” (Mills, 2004, p. 1). Differences in meanings assigned to discourse are seen, for example, when Fook (2002, p. 63) considers its linguistic components, the ways of meaning making and constructing the world through language. Influenced by discourse analysis and linguistic components, Foucault (1991b, p. 54) views discourse as a set of objects, enunciated modalities, concepts and strategies, and transforming mechanisms as well as their association with other similar and different discursive formations. An infinite set of processes that are neither “uniform nor stable” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 123) that include articulations, both stated and un-stated, which include what lies outside as much as that which lies within (Danaher et al., 2000, p. 35) can describe discourse. For the purpose of this research I draw on Foucault’s conceptualisation where discourse takes in wider social, cultural and political considerations than are implied by a consideration of language, its use and application, on its own.

Ideology is a more normative concept and refers to a set of ideas, principles or ethical notions about the way society is governed, as seen for instance in relation to ‘political ideology’ where certain views are conveyed in the policy practice about what should happen. Used here is the definition provided by Bridget Somekh and Cathy Lewin (2005, p. 346) who write ideology “is the term for a body of ideas that is shared by a social group, nation or political party and provides the basis for action”. Ideology represents the normative conception of what should be, taking in broad, and often uncritical, ideas of a dominant collective.

With this differentiation made, there are many discursive framings possible through which to interpret C4C. I focus on three main discourses: neoliberal discourse, civil society discourse, and cultural hegemonic discourse, as these speak directly to the operations of C4C and in some formulations could also act as ideological impulses.

Neoliberal and Civil Society Discourses

Neoliberal and civil society discourses have a profoundly complex and interrupted trajectory in themselves constituting a broad ranging and diverse body of knowledge. These discursive formations have substantial relevance and impact on shaping social policy today, in particular the C4C programme. Separate attributing properties are assigned to each for ease of analysis yet they are acknowledged as nonlinear and intricately traversed. A third discourse which in many ways stems from, as well as informs, neoliberal and civil society discourses is cultural hegemonic discourse and an explanation of its application in this context is also provided.

Neoliberalism refers to a favouring of: market systems and corresponding economic discourses (Vidovich, 2007, p. 288); the 'free', responsible and self-reliant citizen (Ingamells, 2006, p. 8); and language constructions that often are perceived of and experienced differently to what is practiced. Neoliberal discourses, in current policy contexts for instance, embrace notions of 'mutual obligation', 'reciprocity', 'social capital' and 'inclusion' and can be seen in policies constructed to engage the 'citizenry' in 'partnership' and 'participation'. Each notion is highly problematic given wide adoption by differing people in different contexts and to different ends. What can be said is that such constructions are rooted in previous ideas about welfare provision, responsibility and role of the State and are further implicated by past policies such as the English Poor Laws where people were classified depending upon their economic viability: as either 'deserving' or 'undeserving poor'. Ideas of this nature while not so overt are carried forward in current policy application with the expectation that often disadvantaged and poverty

stricken people 'give back' to society, being couched in language of 'reciprocity'.

C4C developed at a time (since its inception through to its current application) in which social problems were, and continue to be, represented in ways reflective of a neoliberal discourse: one that relies on economic rationalist policy programmes as underpinning the ideological approaches governing the funders. This is evidenced when, for instance, C4C is bounded by an 'economistic schemata' (Foucault, 2004, p. 15) in which childhood disadvantage, social isolation, poor parenting, 'communities of disadvantage' are targets for investment that is expected to see improved outcomes; reduced government spending in the future and increased self-reliance of families and their communities.

Civil society

Civil society, in contrast to neoliberalism, espouses ideas of the decent, respecting, good mannered and just individual: "the badge of civil virtue" (Deakin, 2001, p. 5). It has developed in the contemporary period to include organisations representing non-government, voluntary and private-not-for-profit sectors that also aim for civic virtues and rights of a better and more 'just' society: work that is carried out collectively and towards a common interest (Van der Plaat & Barrett, 2006). These organisations are located outside government, state, private-for-profit and the market sectors and are a commonly understood form of civil society. Cox's (1995) conceptualisations assist the policy analysis of C4C by providing a definition of civil society based on ideals of trust, reciprocity and mutuality. Cox (1995, p. 7-8) contends these are vital components to the three spheres of our lives that together make up civil society: family life, working life and the *vita active* which she describes as our public life "in which we collectively create civil spheres". Another definition considers civil society as "a space of uncoerced human association and also the set of relational networks – formed for the sake of family, faith, interest and ideology – that fill this space" (Walzer cited in Deakin, 2001, p. 4). Together, these accounts draw together that meaning

implied here: inclusion of the non-government, not-for-profit and volunteer sectors and informal groups which include relations founded on systems of trust, reciprocity and mutuality.

This explanation however, is an over simplified notion of civil society and there is a much contested body of literature (Lavalette & Ferguson, 2007). Previous conceptualisations posed by thinkers of the 19th and 20th Centuries - Georg Hegel and Antonio Gramsci to name two most prominent thinkers - have present-day relevance. For instance, civil society is considered closely aligned to notions of neoliberal discourses in that civil society functions less to cultivate civic virtues but furthers instead the socio-economic base of the state; said to contribute to the cultural and ideological capital of hegemonic capitalism. Gramsci, in particular, located civil society within the political superstructure (Ehrenberg 1999, p. 208) pointing to its properties that maintain dominant and coercive social structures. Habermas' (1996, p. 367) significant contribution to the concept of civil society is captured in his statement that it acts as a "network of associations that institutionalizes problem-solving discourses on questions of general interest inside the framework of organized public spheres". Thus for Habermas democracy takes place within this public sphere. While mindful of the minefield attributed to conceptualisations surrounding civil society, a modernist interpretation often refers to civil society as the third sector or third way (Rose, 1999). Whatever interpretation used there is agreement, at least, of the heightened interest in civil society in current policy applications (Anheier, 2004; Kaldor, 2003).

Cultural Hegemonic Discourses

Cultural hegemony refers here to the unquestioned acceptance that strategies to improve childhood disadvantage have universal appeal. While C4C policy acknowledged localism and cultural diversity, the practice operated on the premise that children will benefit from such activities as those designed to promote health and wellbeing. This may be so, but the underlying assumption is one of cultural hegemony: play groups, parenting

services, toy libraries, speech therapy and the like, all of which are designed by expertise for children and their families. Cultural hegemonic discourse was prominent in this research even though issues of gender, class, different abilities or any other socially constructed and targeted group or issue could have also been considered. This focus was guided by respondents' perceptions and experiences, as well as my own observations. A paradox with this policy was that a certain homogenisation resulted when C4C mostly approached the number of different issues, experienced differently by the many and diverse groups experiencing these, in much the same way. It is as Pat Shannon and Susan Young (2004, p. 13) say "every statement about social problems has both perceptions of reality and value elements attached", evident often in the design, development and implementation of policy. For instance, a homogenisation represented by the uniformity of many of the projects rolled out across the forty five sites suggests a view that what works for one group will inevitably work for another, regardless of place, culture, or need.

Evidence from interviews, policy documents and observations (researcher as participant) suggests C4C designers and implementers represent a cultural majority, namely middle class, white Anglo Celtic, and able bodied with a high proportion of men, whose involvement in its evolving growth highlights the non-involvement - the non-participation of those groups it targets and sets out to change. In a policy programme that purports to lead locally grown initiatives sensitive to the needs of community questions must be asked including: how are diverse groups encouraged to participate, what do the mechanisms or structures say about how diverse groups' views are valued, and who are the beneficiaries of such structures and strategies?

Processes that subvert others, those who are done for rather than with, are made apparent when conceptualising the notion of 'othering' (Fine, 1994). How normative views centralise and maintain a subordinate other which is racially constructed is critically analysed. It further demonstrates how previous thinking influenced by neoliberalism institutionalised past and

continued racial oppression. As articulated by Fozdar, Wilding and Hawkins (2009, p. 126), “integration and assimilation remained at the forefront of the government’s policy, despite the demonstrated cost of this approach to the culture, custom and lives of Indigenous Australians”. Clear articulations under the Howard Coalition Government are seen where such ideas prevail, for instance, Prime Minister John Howard’s defence of Australia’s refusal to ratify the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples stating “the indigenous people of Australia have a special place in our community, but we also believe their future lies in being part of the mainstream of this country” (ABC 2007). In another speech Howard spoke of Australian values in which “he was not talking about Indigenous values when he labelled the values ‘Australian’” (Fozdar et al., 2009, p. 21).

This image of the national type and of a ‘typically Australian way of life,’ clearly left out of account the everyday lives of a numerical minority of the population, who found themselves racialised, gendered, and ethnified in ways that differed from the so-called norm (Toorn & English, 1995, p. 2).

This ‘othering’ is identifiable when interrogating discursive formations that give rise to such divisions in society.

I use multiple and varied texts (written, spoken, and unspoken) collected and recorded for this research towards an analytical discussion: a discussion which provides a critical reflection on and of “systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak” (Lessa, 2006, p. 284). Analysis of the dominant discourses, made up of objects, concepts and strategies, knowledges, processes and her/historical trajectories, which have acted to shape, inform, and influence C4C is presented in the second *reflect* cycle, comprising Sections Five through to Eight.

Linking the knowing with doing is discussed in Part Two: Research Methods, where I outline the processes and methods used for this research.

Part Two: Research Methods

To recap the overall aim of this research is to examine: What is Place Management theory and practice and how does Place Management inform social policy decisions in Australia? With a further sub-question: What can we learn from the use of Place Management to inform social policy in Australia? These research objectives were jointly reached between the three major parties involved in the initial setup of this research: the industry funder, the independent research centre, and myself as doctoral candidate.

Weaving the threads in Method

This research journey is reflected as an iterative, dynamic process engaging people's perspectives and experiences, including my actions and reflections. Documents and a variety of other sources provide additional data and cyclical analysis, reflection and further analysis on reflection. This analysis includes reflections from people experiencing this policy shift as well as my own reflections and learnings along the way. Presenting information from a variety of sources in a 'mixed methods' approach is described as 'old' at the same time as 'emergent' with such methods said to entice dialogue about "how to integrate new theoretical and praxis lenses within mixed methods research" (Hesse-Biber, 2010, p. 16). This section presents a description of those processes used.

A formative evaluation, or process analysis, aims to examine and feed into a programme's planning, development, and implementation and is generally descriptive (Marlow, 2001, p. 38). This research builds knowledge through formative and participatory processes. In terms of an evaluation, this research provides stakeholders with an avenue through which the implementation and development of C4C is described, contextualised and analysed. It is hoped that such views will inform future action and direction of C4C, or learnings incorporated into future social policy and practice directions.

This iterative process began with dual, yet not disconnected, responsibilities: the end production of a scholarly thesis and industry funded quarterly reports to feedback on each stage of the programme. This iterative process of feeding information back into the sites concluded with the unexpected and sudden termination of the contract in September 2007 following six quarterly reports and over two years into the project. This critical reflection on the C4C will contribute to policy practice at all levels as this research continued to address the original objectives.

The following table provides a guide to those processes engaged in meeting the aims of this research.

| Research Objective | Data Sources | Conceptual Framing | Research Method |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1. <i>Analyse and describe a specific Australian Federal Government social policy domain that has a Place Management orientation (sections 1, 2, 4, 6, & 7)</i> | Policy documents, scholarly literature and organisational reports and documents Interviews Researcher as participant-observer | Foucauldian conceptualisation: Object, enunciated modalities, concepts and strategies as expressed and explicable through discursive formations or discourses | Policy analysis: Flyvbjerg's framework, with O'Sullivan and Down's questioning, for analysis alongside Foucault's discourse analysis Interviews |
| 2. <i>Identify and trace the origins, developments and meanings associated with theories and concepts of Place Management (sections 2, 4, 5,6, & 7)</i> | Literature: Journals, conference papers, policy documents, ministerial speeches, Hansard, media, reports, research Interviews | Foucault's archaeology: Drawing on Foucault's Archaeology of Knowledge to trace ideas & concepts, influential in C4Cs Place Management | Archaeological investigation: tracing 'a history of ideas' of Place Management – a Foucauldian framing Interviews and literature |
| 3. <i>Provide an understanding of Place Management as a practice model through a case study of two Western Australian sites applying Place Management as a social policy direction (sections 5, 6, & 7)</i> | Organisational and other relevant documentation (broader representative): strategic, operational, minutes, reports, reviews, evaluations, speeches, Hansard, scholarly literature Interviews/survey | Action Research Stake's instrumental case study | Case study detailing: peoples reflections and perceptions based on interviews/ survey and other data including document analysis (policy, guidelines, minutes, reports, speeches, and so on) |
| 4. <i>Critically reflect upon the rollout of Communities for Children in two Western Australian sites (sections 3, 6,7 &8)</i> | All data sources, including those listed above: iteratively weaving common threads as influenced by research participants & conceptual framing | Bricolage approach: intertwine the methodological orientations, including critical theory, post-structuralism, critical reflexive praxis and Action Research | Critical reflexive methodology: overall analysis |

Table 1 Outlining Process

In order to describe and analyse Place Management as a model of practice, a case study approach is used to capture developments as detailed by people actively engaged in the design, development and implementation of C4C within the two Western Australian sites: named Westville and Eastville for the purposes of this thesis.

Research processes are entwined and iteratively connected with each separately detailed for ease of presentation.

Case Study

Robert Stake (1994) distinguishes between three types of case studies: intrinsic, instrumental and collective case study. The type adopted for the purpose of understanding C4C in context of the wider policy process is an instrumental case study that is defined as follows:

a particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory. The case is of secondary interest; it plays a supportive role, facilitating our understanding of something else. The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, as this helps us pursue the external interest (Stake, 1994, p. 237).

A case study approach emerged to examine, describe and analyse the implementation and development of a Place Management model in these two Western Australian C4C sites given a system bounded by policies, guidelines, specific aims and objectives. Such an approach allows for a focus on details of the policy and practice as described by those people who have experienced and perceive of C4C's design, implementation and development. Westville and Eastville are bounded by a set of policy practices, with specific physical boundaries drawn, and these components can be analysed as a case study.

The case study approach was chosen because it is expected to advance our understanding of what interests exist in relation to place based approaches in policy making, particularly within the Australian context. The attributes within a case study such as this are innumerable and therefore it was essential to

focus on components considered important by those who are instrumental in this programme's development. What to focus on is directed by the methodological framing as detailed above, with a view to those discursive formations, like family, volunteering and organisations, that largely form those objects through which to analyse further mechanisms of power.

Limited generalisability is often a critique of case study methodology. Information gained is restricted only to the selected sites although it is plausible that certain aspects common to similar studies such as those related to place or area based research remain useful. Flyvbjerg (2006) for instance argues against the misunderstanding that one cannot generalise on the basis of a single case. Taking reality as socially constructed, and accepting "situational constraints that shape inquiry" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994b, p. 4), the aim is not to generalise or silence local voices but rather report learnings as gained from the accounts of people experiencing this policy practice. In turn this can inform future policy programme design, implementation and development.

An Archaeological Exploration

A focus upon the particular rather than the general is needed for a thorough conceptualisation of the tacit assumptions underlying a Place Management approach so that those genuinely important interrelationships are expressed comprehensively. Identification of the ideas, notions, meanings, assumptions, trajectories, theories and concepts associated with Place Management builds our knowledge of its application and its growing trend with governments across Australia: in particular being charged with improving disadvantaged communities and the health and wellbeing of children 0-5 years. This is important given the clear shift in government focus towards interventions in the early years of a child's life. Discussion must include those social and political struggles and pathways that offer insight into some of the ideas surrounding this policy direction. This is accomplished through an archaeological exploration of ideas which have influenced the development of Place Management.

An archaeology of knowledge – ‘a history of ideas’ (Foucault, 1972b), unlike a modern history, does not interpret the past through a present-day perspective but rather provides:

a history of the present in the sense that it finds its point of departure in problems relevant to current issues and finds its point of arrival and its usefulness in what it can bring to the analysis of the present (Henriques, et al., cited in Rosenau, 1984, p. 67).

Place Management is examined using Foucault’s (1972b) archaeological approach as it is considered useful in locating historically located strands, ideas and discursive practices influential in the formation of Place Management, as embraced by C4C. The tracing of ideas enables input for ongoing social dialogue and social praxis. Archaeology opens possibilities for action by describing the connections of thought of a given situation and showing that this is not connected to any one historical activity. Combined with Foucault’s focus on domination, this insight is also embraced by feminists and others, as pointed out by Flyvbjerg (2000, p. 12), in helping to understand how relations of domination between different peoples can be changed. As such an archaeological tracing can contribute to praxis: reflection on theory and practice.

Policy Analysis

The policy analysis of the C4C is offered as both an analysis *of* policy and *for* policy. Michael Hill (2005, p. 4-5) believes analysis *of* policy concerns itself with a description and explanation of the origins and development of policy as well as “how policy decisions are made and how policies are shaped in action”. Analysis *for* policy (Hill, 2005, pp. 4-5) is that which describes the act of writing this thesis, for instance, and other connected papers/presentations that inform policy makers towards development of C4C and further informing like policies. Stephen Ball brought more post-structuralist perspectives to a critical policy analysis (Vidovich, 2007, p. 288) and constructed policy as “both text and action, words and deeds, it is what is enacted as well as what is intended” (1994, p. 10). A policy analysis of the C4C complements an archaeological exploration with tracing ideas influential

in the formation of a Place Management approach which together offer insight into its many, complex and interwoven components.

Framework for analysis

In undertaking a policy analysis questions are drawn from Flyvberg (2001) and O'Sullivan and Down's (2001) own applications. These frameworks are chosen for their contextual appropriateness, political awareness, alignment with a critical theory perspective, local applicability and focus on the beneficiaries of the policy process. O'Sullivan and Down (2001, p. 56) argue that policy cannot be "easily reduced to, or explained through, a single policy analysis model, as significant aspects of policy remain hidden". They frame their work, based upon an analysis of the two decision making models, crisis theory and rational comprehensive, by identifying that many policy analysis models often fail to acknowledge how decision making even in the policy area "involves choices about desired sets of social arrangements" (O'Sullivan & Down, 2001, p. 66). Their framework considers strengths from both models including paying attention to the role of key actors, critical decision making points and criteria used to determine policy outcomes.

This research asserts that events, motives, personalities, and politics surrounding SFCS remain difficult to explain as "traditional decisionmaking models fail to give due consideration to the impact of wider structural forces on policy change" (O'Sullivan & Down, 2001, p. 66). Here, the O'Sullivan and Down framework is useful as it pulls together elements from a number of models with a critical eye upon the wider structural forces. This compares to policy analysis models which often focus upon micro-level analysis of social policy. The particular value of this policy analysis framework is in its drawing together of the broader structural levels of analysis with middle level and micro level investigation: creating an awareness of the interconnection between the inherent contradictions of politics and the state and the way in which these underpin change. This leads to directing focus to mechanisms of power and dominant discursive framings as congruent with my taking a

Foucauldian conceptualisation. In the case of the increased popularity of Place Management in Australian social policy, this means achieving greater understanding of the conflicting ideology between collective democratic ideals and individualism and economic rationalist notions. These conflicts are further revealed in those mechanisms shaping social organisations such as tendering and contracting arrangements, and the merging of the private and public spheres with the recently emerging triple 'P bottom-line' models: public, private partnerships.

O'Sullivan and Down (2001, p. 67) detail middle level analysis as that which focuses on agenda-setting processes where particular issues emerge on to the public arena, including: the impetus for policy change; how problems are defined; the role of media in public policy formations; and "exposing whose interests are being served and how structural inequalities based on class, race, and/or gender are reinforced". The final level of analysis focuses attention on the role of key decision makers and non decision-making processes at the local level: how decisions are made, by whom, and in whose interests. This element of policy analysis raises questions about participation and non-participation of particular groups in the decision making process as well as the intended and unintended consequences for the target group. Analysis that involves both structural and process dimensions reveals not only those obvious policy elements but also those covert values and interests underlying the policy process (Jamrozik, 2005, p. 56).

The policy analysis framework applied for this research commences in Section Six, *Thinking II* of the second AR cycle. Flyvbjerg's (2001) framework is the main guide with inclusion of questions posed by O'Sullivan and Down's framing as influenced by a critical discourse. Covering three sections, Section's Six focus is on the broad question of *where are we going* and *is this desirable?* Section Seven follows with attention to matters of *who gains* and *who loses?* The final section, Section Eight, deals with the concluding component of the framework considering *what should be done, if*

anything? The policy analysis is therefore achieved over three sections (six, seven and eight).

Information from respondents and observations from the field that go “beyond surface meanings” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 135) assist with the analysis and examination presented here. Included are not only words and meanings as conveyed by respondents in how they themselves make sense and meaning of C4C’s operations but this “in combination with subconscious processes, represents constraints and ‘noise’ in the way meaning is developed and existence is constructed” (Morrow cited by Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 135). Where, for instance, there is a mismatch between what is said (aims and intentions - theory) and what is enacted (activities – practice) this provides the point at which meanings can be made. The endless possibilities for exploration made easier by Section Seven’s focus on the event in which there are winners and losers (Flyvbjerg, 2001) is further aided by its concentration on how this has translated into practice.

Action Research

An Action Research (AR) practice of *Looking, Thinking, Reflecting* and *Acting*, as identified in Section One, offers the overall framework through which to present this thesis. AR as a principled approach to research and practice lends itself also to the idea of a liberating and critical reflexive praxis as a useful and valid method of inquiry (Hendrick & Young, 2009; Stringer & Dwyer, 2005). There are two interlinking uses of AR here: one, which relates specifically to its philosophical and theoretical dimensions; and one, which is used by the National body governing the Strategy. This latter use is often at odds with key theoretical frameworks developed by scholars actively involved in articulating AR theory and practice.

AR is about “establishing liberating dialogue” hinging on linking mechanisms of power and knowledge (Reason, 1994, p. 325). Such an approach was followed with people directly influencing and influenced by this social policy and practice application. Logically then this research began by engaging

participants through a process of reflexivity in a cyclical approach as part of a *plan, act, observe and reflect*⁹ process (Stringer 1996). This cycle, aimed at participants themselves engaging with the research aims has claims to be an “emancipating approach because it is said to ‘liberate’ those who are researched from the prevailing value-sets of the contexts in which they work” (Cherry, 1999, p. 62). While the original contract, under which this research was funded, intended that Action Research be used as an evaluation process it, like the earlier Strategy, did not evolve in the way envisaged, by either myself as researcher or by the contracting parties. The working of power during the process is the story that has emerged through considering the data gathered through this AR approach.

AR, valuing local knowledge and the voices of the local people, aims to capture those themes, experiences, perceptions and considerations as relevant to and revealed by the people affected by a particular policy issue.

An Action Research model as applied in this research aims to:

“bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities” (Reason & Bradbury, 2001, p. 1).

It is often these voices that are missed in the reporting and evaluation processes at a bureaucratic or senior management level. Therefore, the purpose was not to evaluate practice against policy aims or programme outcomes, in such a way as expected of summative evaluations, but to engage with and document people’s experiences and expectations of a Place Management practice model in their day to day operations, alongside text related rulings (Smith, 2005). This is the purpose of this research, which, however, for reasons explained through this thesis, has become more an Action Learning process for myself and others involved.

⁹ The AR cycle is formed differently by different writers.

Data Collection

Empirical data collection methods were used (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), including interviews, with a wide range of stakeholders, participant observations, extensive literature and document reviews, informal discussions with stakeholders, and 'researcher as participant' on the various committees and meeting groups in both Westville and Eastville. In the early stages of this research, a significant component entailed familiarisation with the overall policy project given its complex nature and different dimensions. This enabled an understanding and knowledge base of the policy, programme design, implementation, and rollout through to the individual programmes delivered. Taking time to gain this 'helicopter' view of the policy was not only necessary for my ability to participate but also an instruction given by my original supervisor and further supported by University structures which required a candidacy proposal reflecting such broad understanding. The interleaf between this and the next section offers further reflections on this aspect of the research. Each data collection method is now detailed.

Interviews

Interviews, comprising one of the main data collection methods, began in August 2006 and were completed in August 2007. Both face-to-face and over the telephone interviews were conducted. Participation was voluntary with respondents provided anonymity and advised of the ability to withdraw from the process at any time during or following the interview. All respondents received an Information Sheet (Appendix B) and a Consent Form (Appendix C) to sign before they participated in an interview. A Question Guide (Appendix D) aided in the interviewing process, with interviews audio-taped with notes taken and later transcribed. The interview question guide was similar across all respondents, although slight modifications were made where necessary to suit the role of the interviewee.

Twenty nine people were interviewed in total with many more informal discussions conducted with people involved in the C4C programme. Each

interview lasted between half an hour to one and a half hours; with most interviews taking one hour. The following Table lists people interviewed, their sector and/or role they held.

Table 2 Interview Respondents

| Number of Respondents | Role/ Sector |
|-----------------------|---|
| 3 | State Government |
| 7 | Community Partner (Non-Government Organisations) – also C4C committee members |
| 3 | Non-Government Organisation, 2 later moved to State Government and 1 into an independent role |
| 4 | Independent Research Consultant |
| 3 | Local Government |
| 1 | Non-Government Organisation |
| 1 | Committee member (not Community Partner) |
| 3 | Policy Programme Designer |
| 4 | Facilitating Partner (Non-Government Organisation) |

Of the State Government respondents, one was from the Office of Premier and Cabinet, one from the Department of Education and one from the Department for Child Protection. The respondents from the NGOs who later occupied other positions were people pivotal in the initial establishment stages of C4C across both sites. One respondent identified as Indigenous and one as being from a CALD background. Respondents represented both state and national organisations.

Where appropriate, direct quotes have been taken from interview transcripts to illustrate key points, however, all quotes are de-identified for reasons of anonymity, with pseudonyms provided. People interviewed, as pseudonyms, and positions broadly stated are listed at the beginning of this research. It is possible that respondents may identify sites as they read this research but every effort has been made to protect their identity. Most respondents

moved on from the C4C projects when the new focus was announced by the current government in 2009.

Interviews gathering detail from significant people were selected purposefully (Patton, 2002, p. 40) in order to: provide historical context to the introduction of the Place Management model in these two sites; and importantly, to obtain perceptions from people involved in the design, implementation, and development of the C4C. People were selected for their 'expertise' or knowledge of C4C (for example, design, development, history), position with and to the programme, and knowledge (of varying forms) of its being. Participants were engaged through my association with the programme through the original contractual arrangement with the 'industry funder'.

Transcriptions of interviews and notes taken of preliminary discussions were returned to interviewees for amendments, clarification and or follow up until final agreed upon. These final transcripts were used as data for analysis.

Interpreting Texts

A policy analysis of Place Management is unattainable without thorough consideration and examination of the text and subtexts surrounding this topic. Texts included in this research are: reports, media, speeches, academic literature including journals, public service briefings, organisational documentation (minutes, reports, newsletters), personal text (interview transcripts, emails), conference papers and proceedings, Hansard records, dialogue recordings and observations. All of these text related components bring together a shaping and interpretation of the social, cultural, political and economic dimensions of this particular Place Management strategy. These texts assisted in comprehending forms of social organisation (Campbell & Gregor, 2004, p. 32), which furthermore, provides research rigor in that data triangulation is achieved (Janesick, 1994, p. 214), given the inclusion of a wide range of data sources, as well as methods.

Site specific documentation was collected, sorted, reviewed and analysed for this research. These documents included (but were not limited to) C4C Committee minutes, Project Status Reports, Programme Manager Reports, Quarterly Reports, Service Delivery Plans, Community Action Plans, Annual Progress Reports, Steering Committee and all other C4C Committee meeting minutes (including those from the various reference groups), and Terms of Reference. Only those documents that are in the public domain are named while those used for this research yet not publicly available are referred to as personal communication to preserve anonymity.

Surveys

A survey undertaken was useful in capturing a wide number of views within a tight time frame without the necessity of large resources. This component of the research also evolved out of my involvement in discussion with site Programme Managers (also referred to as site managers). For instance, during August 2006, while involved in researching governance structures in Westville it was suggested that an electronic survey instrument (Appendix E) be generated to capture committees' views on where they were at and where they would like to go. This survey was devised with input from the Programme Manager, committee members and my former supervisor. It was further piloted with a number of Westville C4C Committee Members prior to the final survey design. In this way, the process embodied Action Research principles of valuing and including contributions from members themselves involved in processes towards change. Combining interviews with surveys yields "wider confirmations about the extent to which these judgments were widely shared in the community or among elite members too numerous to interview" (Considine, 1994, p. 19). Thus, this method offered participants the opportunity to explore and obtain information about governance issues, with themselves assisting in the survey design, as relevant and of particular interest to them. Respondents, as themselves participants in this process, were engaged prior to and following the survey implementation. From this data participants were able to decide in what direction they wanted the committees to head.

Data Analysis

In the early stages of the research a significant component entailed familiarisation with the overall policy project given its complex nature and different dimensions. This enabled an understanding and knowledge base of the policy, programme design, implementation, and rollout through to the individual projects delivered.

Through interviews, discussions and participant observation the searching for “concepts or categories that appear meaningful” to the participants provides the shape and direction of the research (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 378). Emerging themes or issues were used as the baseline of questioning in focus groups and interviews (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 379). An immersion and crystallization style was adopted for the purpose of analysing this data as detailed by William Miller and Benjamin Crabtree (1994, p. 347): from emergent understandings to a ‘telling the story’. The crystallization approach is useful in Action Research to “distil or *crystallize* the data in ways enabling research participants to interpret, understand, and make meaning out of the collected materials” (Stringer & Dwyer 2005, p. 103) (These authors’ emphasis).

NVivo, the computer software package was useful when coding and identifying emerging themes as further explored through collection of documents and written data. Such software also aided in sorting and storing this data, in a safe and password protected domain. Endnote was also used to search through documents and store data. Five themes, then a further one to make six, were specified for this research, as directed by the industry funder. These were: interagency collaboration; funding structures; community engagement; early years focus; governance structures; and sustainability (the focus area later added in 2006). These themes were used to code data imported into NVivo.

Complimentary to this form of data analysis are those frameworks employed to direct focus, such as through the policy analysis framework and archaeological examination of Place Management in the Australian social policy context.

Ethical Issues

Within all research there are “political perils and ethical pitfalls” particularly in fieldwork which is definitely not “a soft option”, rather representing “a *demanding* craft that involves both coping with multiple negotiations and continually dealing with ethical dilemmas” [author’s emphasis] (Punch, 1994, p. 85). First, as required by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee, prior to all interviews, discussions, observations, and surveys, consent forms and an information sheet were issued, including the option to withdraw from the research at any time without prejudice. Permission was gained prior to participant-observation: for instance, when participating as part of the playgroups, permission from playgroup leaders was first sought. No data were used without participant consent and are only used following approval from the participant. In the case of telephone interviews, and in the case of surveys, consent forms were sent electronically and signed and returned prior to the telephone interview taking place. Ethics clearance for the project was received from Curtin University’s Human Research Ethics Committee on 28th April 2006 - HR 13/2006.

A further ethical consideration relates to the possibility of non-voluntary participants in that certain stakeholders may feel coerced due to their relationship to the project. This ethical dilemma was overcome to some extent through a building of relationships with many respondents more likely to discuss their perceptions and concerns about their involvement in the research. Because some interviewees may have considered it obligatory to ‘participate’ in my research I choose the term ‘respondents’ rather than ‘participants’ to describe their role as this seems a more candid observation. There was an occasion however where a respondent, provided her/his views and requested I be the conduit for such views. These views offered were

derogatory and critical of not only the C4C programme but scathing of the Programme Manager and I had to carefully choose my way through the perceptions given. To further gain people's trust in the integrity of the process and outlined aims of the research, I stressed that confidentiality in all data collection processes for the research and later writing would de-identify anyone offering their views.

Another limitation is the absence of voices from those children to whom this policy programme is directed. This, however, is more the aim of an impact study which, as previously outlined, is not the aim of this research. Consideration and analysis given to the processes, practices and theoretical underpinnings of the SFCS through information sought from those people providing services to 0-5 year olds, their families and communities in each site is most relevant to the aims of this research. Although, it is acknowledged that policy programmes, and therefore research, is able to shift the views of those most affected.

Further ethical aspects were addressed in the "Application for Ethical Approval of Research Involving Humans", Form A, as per a requirement of Curtin University of Technology.

Limitations of this Research

A limitation with all policy analyses is that the views of the people directly affected by the policy are often not heard. This is not a limitation but rather acknowledgement that policy analysis cannot always include all voices. I believe a policy analysis, including a thorough analysis of its complex and multifaceted components, can contribute to the theory and practice of policy programmes in a mutually engaging manner. Such analysis can be used to aid any dialogue with people directly affected by that policy, and it is hoped that the AR orientation suggested here can contribute to the inclusion of people in policy development. I acknowledge that families and children did not have a presence in my research and hope nevertheless to have done the analysis of policy intended to change policy processes within the limitations

posed by design, time and resources. I did, however, speak with people at the grassroots level who either work with people targeted or advocates for this target group. With this research and its theoretical position I have also been able to consider analytically the target groups and the people who gain and those who lose as a result of this policy programme. This is an initial step towards giving a voice to those groups who are targeted and also in promoting awareness about the issues. This has been achieved in the form of quarterly reports (in the initial stages), participation in meetings and gentle probing for reflection within the interviews conducted.

How do the targeted populations and interested groups perceive and experience C4C's interventions and overall implementation? Do they consider themselves better off, worse off, or unchanged as a result of these programmes? Who is included and who excluded? These questions allow a depth to what is known about the C4C intervention as it has developed under the direction of two Australian Governments. The purpose of this research was to present a formative study of C4C reviewing two sites. Given its formative undertaking, this study was designed to gain an understanding of C4C's rollout from the perspectives of stakeholders, rather than gathering impact statements. So, while a limitation of this research is found in its lack of representation of the specific target groups, attention to its ideological underpinnings and practices employed can build upon knowledge for future policy programmes with similar focus and design.

Summarising reflections

The policy analysis of what might appear on the face of it a simple policy programme is in fact a complex matter involving many players and positions: including my own positioning as researcher and in the beginning as participant. The values and interests reflected and processes used in any policy environment are bound to be contested and this policy programme is no exception. As such my choice of methodology and methods reflect this contested ground and what has been useful for me is to take a critical

reflexive approach which draws from critical theory and post structuralism. This has enabled me to interrogate the objects, enunciated modalities, strategies, concepts and notions of the policy and its performance which is detailed in Section Seven. The contribution of Action Research is important through which to consider the enactment of this policy programme and further it is through this approach I have enacted an emancipatory project.

Interleaf

*In the previous section I referred to my initial involvement in this research project as defined by a **looking** in which I observed the various and complex components of the policy programme from an outsider's positioning. This was necessary as any active participation prior to obtaining my candidature was not ethical. During this period I met with the Programme Managers many times, sat in on committee meetings and shadowed the research consultant, employed by the Independent Research Centre involved in the original contractual arrangement, who visited various people across both sites. Eight months, from the end of August 2005 to the end of April 2006, marked the time when my candidacy was approved and ethical clearance granted: a process expected by all parties to take only three months. While a necessary process as part of doctoral studies this delay to my active involvement was cause of much frustration for the Programme Managers. Reporting and funding pressures experienced by the Programme Managers, from both their employing NGO and the funding body, impacted early experiences of the evaluation arrangement.*

The first quarterly report, as the main method through which to provide formative accounts back into the sites, was issued in April 2006. This quarterly report reflected my 'outsider' position with activities listing observations and those to do with policy programme familiarisation. The following July quarterly report included reflections from the site and was first submitted to my supervisor (the chief investigator) as due process required reports be approved at this level prior to submission to site Programme Managers. Directives given to me at this point were to report on activities undertaken (meetings attended, reports reviewed/ analysed, and any emergent themes or issues) and reduce reflections to allow broad rather than detailed statements. A specified reporting template was issued, as designed

(see Appendix F) by my supervisor, for this task. This, for me, was the first sign of disparate expectations between the three parties involved in the original contract: the Programme Managers, the Independent Research Centre and the Auspicing University. The above mentioned processes meant time lines were not met, reports were not detailed with information anticipated and wanted by the Programme Managers, and what was expected from a doctoral student researcher appeared to be outside the realms of what was appropriate for this position. What transpired was a gradual break down in relationships which negated the SFCS policy programme's aim of community capacity building and building partnerships across sectors. Instead processes reflected competitive and idiosyncratic positionings reproduced by the neoliberal context in which people were operating.

This marked the beginning of the end for the relationship between the research centre and the two sites, and effectively for my role with the evaluation as a PhD candidate. There were conflicting positions as to what I should and could and would be allowed to do. The roles people occupied meant they saw the processes quite differently and this was overlaid by other personal interpretations of what the various roles meant. For instance, a Programme Manager requested I contact other Local Evaluators (later detailed) to consider what approaches are being adopted across the nation. Supervisory responses to this request from the sites was to leave this aspect as it required commissioned research, considered outside postgraduate abilities. Other personnel were allocated, but this aspect of the research did not eventuate.

The formation of strong relationships was a necessary aspect and aim of the C4C programme yet many processes were seen to inhibit rather than enhance these. NGOs successful in tendering to one or more of the proposed projects, then becoming Community Partners (CPs), spoke of positive relationships with other NGOs, including the lead agency Facilitating Partner (FP), in the first instance, which then gave way to conflict and caution

at the time contracts were signed and project delivery began. At this point in the rollout, general agreement amongst CPs was that the increased demands for detailed service delivery reports, including outputs, as well as expectations about how often they were to meet with the various committees and reference groups soon became a tension given the overall C4C programme aims (collaboration, partnerships, capacity building and community development), and what CPs were experiencing. With the FP driving such directives, as further issued by FaHCSIA, scepticism about meaningful collaboration and partnerships was expressed.

An example of my involvement at this time illustrates this changed atmosphere from relationship building to a more careful and cautious engagement. Staff of Westville requested I attend and observe playgroups as part of a CP project. When I telephoned the CP to enquire about attending a playgroup it was firmly stated that a meeting was to be arranged with the manager of the CP prior to attending any playgroup. It emerged, at this meeting with the CP Manager, that the uncertainty around process and who I was, who I represented and why I was involved fostered a belief that I was a 'spy' for C4C to make sure this CP was doing their job. I was permitted to view a number of the playgroups and later interviewed this Manager who offered further experiences and reflections. Importantly, information provided for this research highlighted tensions and conflict about the way certain issues were handled at the FP level, concerns which were later included in a milestone report provided to the FP at the end of the original contractual arrangement. Anonymity was maintained for protection of this CP in this milestone report and further respected here.

Action Research Cycle – Act I

Set within an Action Research cycle, this Act section continues on from the initial Looking (Section One, introduction), Thinking (Section Two, contextualisation), and reflecting (Section Three, critical reflexivity). These sections are cyclical and iterative with blurred boundaries, even when presented separately. To direct the circular motion of this particular section, I

apply the trialectic of Head, Heart and Hand, as conceptualised by Kelly and Sewell (1988). This framing also provides a way of thinking about the inherent complexities implicit in the activities of C4C: analysis of which follows in later sections. This approach is suited to examining Place Management because of its focus on community building and because it allows an examination which does not reduce policy to a rational objective process. Rather it allows for consideration of many interwoven dynamics that can be in tension. Here I consider: reflecting on place and relationships in and to others of place (Heart), the acting or 'doing' of C4C in place (Hand), followed by a thinking on both the acting and reflecting (Head).

In this section the emphasis is on those actions defining C4C (Actions of the Hand): actions that characterise Place Management as a national policy response to childhood disadvantage. In this narrative, as told by people involved in C4C's development alongside C4C's policy text, the practice and theoretical components of Place Management are considered through the trialectic lenses offered by Kelly and Sewell (1988).

The Practice of Policy - C4C in two sites

Section introduction

The *act[ing]* of Place Management is offered here as ‘thick’ description (Geertz, 1973) and presented in case study form. The design, implementation and development of Communities for Children (C4C) raises the following questions: what were the relationships between activities, processes and the people involved; what are those processes and operations defining a Place Management approach as applied under the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS); what were people’s perceptions and experiences of these activities; and, what was informing people’s knowing or understandings of these many aspects of the C4C policy programme? In detailing these aspects of the C4C model this section concentrates on my third research objective, listed previously as:

- To provide an understanding of Place Management as a practice model through a case study of two Western Australian sites applying Place Management as a social policy direction.

The two Western Australian C4C sites, Westville and Eastville (pseudonyms) as detailed through fieldnotes and participant input are examined to describe what was achieved in the grounded enactment of policy. First a description of each site is provided offering contextual information in which to locate this section’s account.

Site Description

The two sites of Westville and Eastville were joined in their low socio-economic status and high incidence of risk factors, as identified by Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (Australian Bureau of Statistics), other statistical data and the federal funder as previously detailed. This component is where the sites meet: in their high proportion of children living in low income families, often headed by one parent and where educational attainment is low. What set them apart was found in their geography, population, demographics and 'how they behaved' (Bernard – Independent Research Consultant). The overview provided here offers sufficient description for a contextualisation of the sites yet is deliberately broad to maintain anonymity.

Westville

Westville crosses two local government boundaries, includes five suburbs and is home to a high proportion of newly arrived refugees, Culturally and Linguistic Diverse (CALD) groups, and smaller groupings of Indigenous Australians. Services are plentiful with state agencies representing health, child protection, education, and justice. Many NGOs in the area are concentrated mainly in one of the five suburbs. While well serviced by the social service sector there is clear absence of industry or business activity in the area. Transport in and out of the site centres on a main shopping precinct. During the short time I was involved in this site I observed, as also supported by respondents, the fast pace of change in the area of housing in particular. Increasing housing prices and the gentrification of the area of Westville and surrounding suburbs, as predicted by research respondents, will force many of the low socio-economic residents further away from services and to more remote locations.

Eastville

Eastville is more geographically bounded than Westville with major arterial roads providing natural boundaries. As described by one of the respondents

“you need to have a purpose to call into [Eastville] otherwise you’d drive right by” (Owen). The site is governed by one city council and the area is not well serviced with a significant absence of social and other services. Apart from a few schools, a small shopping complex, child care facilities, and child protection authority presence, the site is home to marginally more businesses than social services. Consistent with other C4C sites, Eastville’s demographic is characterised by a high number of young children, low income families, single parent families, poor school attendance and high unemployment. A significant population of Indigenous people reside in Eastville with very few other minority cultural groups. Eastville’s ‘community’ reflected greater sense of attachment to historical roots than did Westville with many permanent and long term residents. Alex offered this reflection in comparing Westville and Eastville:

[Eastville] is surrounded by bush in a metropolitan area and it behaves like a big country town. It doesn’t behave like a set of suburbs like [Westville] does. Like people will say that they’re from [Eastville], people will never say they’re from [lists Westville suburbs], and they have an affinity to one of those suburbs maybe and when you actually go and ask them they actually have an affinity to their primary school locality (Alex).

Heart (belonging, relationships)

C4C aims to capitalise on people’s connections (social, economic, and political) to place. People’s connection to others and to place is addressed through the trialectic component of *Heart*. This covers questions concerning: what characterises people’s sense of belonging to place, and how do they feel about their relationship to place and to others of that place. People’s sense of belonging relates to notions of *space*, *place* and *base*, and this is important in understanding the implementation of C4C at Westville and Eastville.

Belonging

Place Management, through the C4C programme, is about particular people in a particular place. What is it that assists, or facilitates, people's sense of connectedness, belonging or relation to that place? Belonging can variously refer to a geographical, spiritual, physical, historical, political or other form, influencing one's connectivity to place. When a place is selected based upon statistical data of disadvantage how do people in that externally defined place experience or perceive their belonging, connection or relationship to that place? People's connections are often found in common interests such as peer groups, parent groups, youth groups and so on, which characterise their sense of belonging. In Eastville, for example, an annual event organised through the city council celebrated children's week. This occasion brought together many groups from within the community who, it seemed, were already known to and familiar with one another. I participated in one of these events and observed people assisting one another and socialising across the different stalls and activities offered. I sensed a connection amongst people based on what I believed to be earlier formed relationships. This contrasted with a C4C event in Westville which I observed residents to respond to as separate and distinct activities. I noted an absence of existing relationships across the various represented groups even though not all residents were new to the area. Westville C4C led events, however, were successful in bringing many families together.

Another sense of 'belonging' or not is illustrated by Ian's statement below referring to young people discussing stealing a car from across the road.

Sense of community differs for people, sometimes from one side of the road to another (Ian).

These young people did not identify with 'across the street': this was 'other'. In these examples, people's sense of belonging was described in relation to a geographical 'place' yet not contingent on C4C boundaries.

There is no one way of knowing the ways in which people belong to, or are connected with, place so a focus needs to be on remaining open to the

dynamic nature of belonging. Some of these considerations are explored below under the headings *space*, *place* and *base*. As one participant framed the issue of belonging:

Question is, who do community identify with – funder of service or provider. The Federal government has an expectation of this (Owen).

While government expectations were for people to know C4C as a national strategy this assumption ignored the distance between policy planning processes and locally tailored enactment. This next respondent's statement reflects the instance when a change in ministerial leadership, from Kay Patterson to Mal Brough, was met with a change in policy focus from process to outcomes.

Personalities can be that which influences: you can have the same programme with different people and the kind of language people use - they did a lot of work in trying to get across what they were about (Gail).

One state FaHCSIA representative conveyed to a Communities for Children Committee (C4CC) meeting at the time of this ministerial change that on the arrival to any C4C site Minister Brough wanted to see the C4C banner flying throughout the site, to ensure that people knew about and belonged to C4C in some form.

Space

Westville, straddling two municipalities, includes (and therefore excludes) people based on their geographical positioning; if inhabiting space outside these zoned areas they are excluded from the C4C defined 'community' and from participating in or benefiting from its projects. These boundaries were not designed to correspond with any existing community defined boundaries. For instance, local and state government boundaries include a portion of C4C targets but not all. This complicated C4C's aim of multi-level government and non-government service systems working effectively together. One respondent pondered the five suburbs included in the

Westville site by stating there were “suburbs right next door that are just as eligible” (Owen). The C4C defined boundaries did little to reduce competition for resources between local and state organisations and C4C funding further complicated arrangements around responsibilities. In effect by implementing these additional C4C boundaries, particularly to Westville, where many overlapping services existed, the increased number of stakeholders and potential players involved in negotiations and coordination of services presented difficulties.

Certain C4C projects were better able to capitalise on attributes of space than were others. The Public Spaces Project utilised the physical nature of space by bringing people together in activities held across the many parks in the Westville site. These spaces, previously seen as off limits to families and the wider community due to excessive drug and alcohol use in these areas, were successfully ‘reclaimed’ as open spaces by the broader community. I return to this consider this project later.

Spaces, where information sharing and relationship forming could be maximised, were optimised in both C4C sites and referred to as ‘community hubs’. These occurred around central localities that were easily accessible and highly frequented. In both Westville and Eastville it was the main shopping precinct which served as the community hub. At the entrance to the shopping centre, the ‘hub’ in Westville was near the many services in the area and offered seating, lawns, water features and other open spaces for people to gather. Attracting many families, including those from various cultures this was a non-threatening setting, and was often used by C4C and others for its effectiveness in bringing people together. On one occasion for instance, a youth group and an Indigenous group performed singing and dancing to gathering crowds as people came and went. An ambiance was observed when I noted different age groups, parents with young children and people from a range of cultures periodically stopping to watch and listen, some remaining for some time and with others only slowing for a few minutes. A vibrant and lively event there was also a sense of richness in the

diversity of cultures coming together in this non-threatening space. Eastville's 'hub' did not offer the same extent of attractions although it did offer a central location effectively used for the dissemination of information, including invitations to events held in the area, rather than activities like dancing and singing. Both sites reflected their population composition as well as possibly decisions as to how to use the spaces.

Place

Place simultaneously shapes people as well as being shaped by them (Gruenewald, 2003) and is that which connects us to our culture, traditions, history, particular language, dialect and an overall sense of identity. How, then, place is defined, by whom, and for whom is important in considering C4C's aim of improving the health and wellbeing of young children. C4C's Place Management focuses on 'place' as geographically defined which questions other attributes of place, such as how people connect to culture, traditions, language and so on. Gail, as a Community Partner, spoke of the need for the C4C programme to consider what already existed in the 'community' defining it as such rather than coming into the area with the aim of planning for change based on preconceived notions of what was needed.

Probably, I think, there wasn't enough just sitting with [the community and clients] – there was more the advisory bit, vision stuff: what we're going to do and how we're going to do it (Gail).

The unique qualities of *this* place often went unrecognised even though recognising existing strengths of place was C4C's aim (Taylor, 2005). Many respondents reflected on the lack of time spent to get to know place and people of place with all accompanying cultural, traditional and historical richness.

A place is further shaped by past events continuing to impact upon political, social, cultural, spiritual and other conditions of place. Westville was a place of rich cultural diversity sitting alongside deeply embedded experiences of past losses, grief, displacement and isolation. Home to many newly arrived

migrants, Westville is also occupied by diverse Indigenous groupings some of whom call this their country. A clash of values, perceptions and expectations is evident in memories of past instances where policy strategies are perceived to favour particular groups over others. The C4C was not exempt from such notions of privileging groups. Respondents talked of newly arrived migrants being housed in new apartments while Indigenous families, having experienced long histories of policy injustices, remain on waiting lists.

With Westville and Eastville considered as “communities [that] are remarkably different” (Owen) the generally accepted view across respondents was that:

There is a very much stronger community orientation, sense of community in [Eastville]. [Eastville] is one place even including [name of suburb], whereas [Westville] isn't one place. [Westville] is a set of adjacent suburbs, each with its own identity and without community (Bernard).

Given the many connections people make to place; people “can simultaneously belong to a number of different places, across almost any amount of physical space”, it is the “quality of the belonging that counts” (Kelly & Sewell, 1988, p. 48).

In March 2006 at the launch of its new Language as No Barrier Project (LaNB) a C4C site invited an Indigenous dance group to perform at the opening ceremony. There were many representatives at this launch including high profile staff and NGO CEOs. Following the dance, which involved a number of different dances, each telling a story, there were speakers and then the official opening of the LaNB. Activities were arranged to cater for children and create an inclusive and fun filled morning of events. Experiences of what C4C and other groups in collaboration with C4C had achieved in the short time the programme had been running were shared. The C4C staff assessed the event as well attended and as a success overall.

In the days that followed, it emerged that the arrangements made that day offended some individuals from the local Indigenous groups.

The Indigenous group invited to dance at the launch was not from the region, nor neighbouring suburbs, but rather from a different place and representing a different tribal group altogether.

This Indigenous dance group, approached to perform at a C4C run event, was found, only after the event, to not have connections to that place. Their performance enraged some local Indigenous people who later pointed out these differences to C4C staff organisers of this event, evidence of their lack of knowledge of place and people's belonging to place. In this instance, they missed vital opportunities to build relationships based upon respectful knowledge and understanding of people of place.

'Culture' and the importance of different cultural contexts and values, particularly relevant to Indigenous groups provides a set of internalised meanings that are carried into people's interactions with the social and physical environment (place), with social structures (C4C) further influencing patterns of social relationships and transactions among people within a particular social system (Eckersley, 2001, p. 51). The example above is analysed further in Section Seven.

In the C4C policy, place was pre-defined through statistical examination of few or many suburbs, and subsequently in the planning process became loosely referred to as 'community'. In relation to a Community Action Plan (later entitled Community Strategic Plan), which C4C sites were expected to institute early on in the implementation phase of the programme, one of the Facilitating Partner NGO respondents reflected on this process by stating:

you can't have a community plan if you don't have a community to start with (Owen).

The fact that the implementation of C4C did not centre on knowing place, its characteristics, history and other nuances or how people relate or belong to place is significant to understanding how 'community' was conceptualised under the C4C banner.

Base

Base refers to people's auspicing in place shaping people's actions around political, social, economic and other aspects of their lives (Kelly & Sewell, 1988). A perception shared by a number of respondents, for instance, reflected upon the purpose and aim of policy as significantly influenced by the person in charge of the families and children's services portfolio, with outcomes also:

shaped by the minister of the time (Ian).

In order to arrive collaboratively at goals, community development work, on which C4C is said to rest, required greater development and partnership alongside people of place. In contrast to this official claim, Westville and Eastville both developed from a top-down managerialist framing, from national baseline data information and with minimal community consultation. At both sites engagement was with representatives of NGOs who can be thought to represent a form of 'middle class welfare' (Mendes, 2003, p. 42) at least for its employment prospects in an industry if not for the way it also reflects values. Servicing potentially long-term welfare recipients whose connection to community may be limited was a frustration expressed by

many respondents who at times felt as one State government official reflected:

When you have a universal program it's sometimes difficult to drill down into those real pockets of disadvantage (Carol).

Lack of deep engagement with the people in place diminishes the potential for developing greater understandings about the issues relevant to that place. At a political, geographical, social and cultural distance from space and place, the C4C model was implemented with a preconceived idea of these aspects of community, resulting in a capacity builder employed by a state government organisation stating:

There are still marginalised people that [C4C's] not getting to – just the same for all agencies in [Westville] (Nadine).

Opinions shared also related to where and what type of services would most benefit that place. For instance, a C4CC representative commented that community nurses have performed similar tasks to projects observed under C4C and this was where the money was best placed – with community nurses. To another respondent:

Schools should be the centre of child focussed community development. So we should drive all our services, health, family through schools. 'Cause schools know everybody and they know before they come to school who's struggling and who's not. That doesn't mean that schools provide the services, school provides the venue and the knowledge that schools have - primary school type community nodes (Alex).

Thinking about space, place and base informs our understanding of belonging which further entwines with and is dependent on relationships and his/herstories. Captured here is a reflection on the inadequacy of the simplistic concept of place used in the implementation of C4C and the blindness to a variety and diversity of meanings. A harmony day event

aiming at bringing together the different groupings of the Westville community failed which is described in Freda's narrative:

They [C4C] were trying to get the two groups to work together – the Aboriginal and the Sudanese... I haven't really sat down and talked to Aboriginal people about why they haven't participated in the harmony day because there's still like, I don't know, I think people are unsure 'cause they don't know the background of people, the history. We can only see what's happening around and the biggest thing: I was talking to a group of people, this is going back a while, and they were uptight about the Sudanese people coming to Australia and getting brand new houses and Aboriginal people have been on waiting lists for years and when they get a new house it's not a brand new house, people have lived in it two or three times or more and they are very upset about that. It's just the way the powers of being do things and it will take time for change. But some people have made friends – the children (Freda).

The perception that one group was favourably treated over another group meant tensions existing run deeper than one 'harmony' event could fix. The 'pearl' of wisdom shared by Freda was in her last comment which if explored further has potential to build on what was already occurring amongst the younger generations in bringing these groups together.

Relationships

How we connect to each other and how these connections relate to place is important when considering C4C as a Place Management approach: particularly as there exist many levels, many layers, and many people in the process of forming relationships.

We know that it takes a community. You find that people work in silos a lot; different agendas, different funding sources, they target different groups. But [C4C] brought a whole array of people together; a whole lot of people from a whole lot of different areas coming together (Kevin).

Relationships crucial to a community based approach were predominantly formally portrayed in C4C's structures of Facilitating Partners, Community Partners (CPs), and the Communities for Children Committees. Informal or semiformal sets of relationships are those presumed to be operating at a community based level often referred to as the social 'glue' or 'fabric' that binds people of place (Cox, 1995). The C4C model was constructed on the premise that committee members (who were mostly NGO and state government officials) would feedback information about the needs of the community. This was supposedly in response to either previous consultations with client groups or established knowledge of clients – informal relationships. For reasons established and detailed later this social 'glue' had many barriers to overcome.

There were instances, however, where projects did overcome the many obstacles and developed relationships towards successful outcomes. The Public Spaces Project (PSP) illustrates how processes of building relationships with and between families and children and different cultural groups worked in practice.

Communal spaces not accessed due to antisocial behaviours were targeted by a project in C4C Westville. The Communities for Children Committee (C4CC) identified in its Community Plan the need to regain access to public open spaces and build upon existing assets of the community.

An NGO operating in the region was successful in its tender for the contract in 2005. With an already well developed relationship linking this organisation with many diverse groups in the site this NGO was well resourced.

The Public Spaces Project (PSP) began with the NGO consulting community members (informal relationships) about what activities they would like to see in the parks. At this time also the NGO organised activities for families in a number of well accessed and communal locations (like the 'hub') to attract people and ideas around wanted activities in the local parks.

Following relationship building with agencies and transparency around its intentions the NGO approached families through playgroups and other early years events in the area to ask what activities they would like in their local public spaces. From these consultations free events were organised in and across the many community parks in the region. Over the course of a year or more the various activities like face painting, craft making, dancing, games and cultural activities like African drums, Indigenous dancing and so on were offered.

The PSP successfully obtained funding, post C4C, to buy a trailer and equipment to continue running activities with many people from diverse groups seen to participate and involve themselves in this project.

The communal spaces were reclaimed.

The PSP demonstrated successful negotiation of creating 'safe' spaces within the community by bringing together diverse groups around non-conflictual activities and events. The project also contributed to activity rich behaviours that promoted respect for difference as well as safe open community spaces.

The contracted NGO (CP) initially set out to involve many of the agencies in the community. Barriers to overcome in the first instance included the competitive tendering nature of the policy context. This often works to hinder rather than harness relationship building particularly amongst organisations

themselves (Australian Council of Social Service, 1997). Given the project was different enough to be new territory and did not overlap or compete with existing programmes it was more readily accepted by the people of the C4C Westville site. As more and more people were drawn to the activities and relationships strengthened, existing community capacities grew. For instance, there were people seen to participate regularly and offer their time and knowledge of a particular activity, such as African drumming. The evidence of this programme's success was demonstrated in the increased participation and engagement from people in the community and the ability for the various groups to not only engage with these activities but then to instigate and develop their own.

This Project grew of its own accord and gained success in that a submission to Lotterywest resulted in funding for a community parks trailer to allow for continuing visits to the numerous parks across the community. Mobilisation of information on parenting and services as well as moving activities around to different suburbs also meant there was an increased number of fathers accessing this resource. This example presents a project where the exchange of ideas, successful information sharing and relationship building resulted in a project that has moved beyond the confines of C4C – although is still reliant on external funding ('from outside community') for its survival: rather than driven by the people for the people or given permanent funding from the CP NGO under the C4C model. Awareness of the connections between people of place and the place of people is vital and successful projects rely upon processes that allow time needed to develop and build trusting relationships and share information that will engage and encourage participation rather than isolate groups targeted by policies, as was the example of the Indigenous dance group.

Earlier activities in the C4C programme shaped such collaborative relationships and they were evidenced in later phases of the programme. This next text box exemplifies an approach taken in Eastville which proved

successful in building relationships and valuing existing relationships from which a wealth of knowledge and capacities were drawn.

In the early stages of C4C in Eastville a research consultant employed as part of the Local Evaluation process was requested by the Facilitating Partner to identify what early childhood needs were needed by Indigenous groups residing in the area. The independent research consultant visited key people in the site to establish firstly who the leading representatives within the Indigenous groupings were.

Once identified, these people were invited to problematise how best to obtain information around early years needs of Indigenous peoples knowing that forums, meetings and other forms of consultation were unbecoming and often met with scepticism. These people, offered an honorarium, effectively became community researchers and alongside the independent research together designed a survey tool which the researchers themselves implemented.

The community leaders themselves as community researchers, with their relationships, their knowledge, their language, their cultural expertise and their trust were best placed to acquire information around early years needs as perceived by the people themselves experiencing these.

The response rate to the surveys was remarkably high, demonstrating effectiveness, and provided a platform from which to successfully follow up on later developments, issues and so on.

This research group carried on beyond C4C boundaries with the group setting themselves goals towards effecting change around issues pertinent to them. This group continues today with a life beyond C4C.

This example demonstrates processes which produced cohesiveness between people where negotiated aims and reciprocal processes developed further the relations of each stakeholder group. At the time I was to interview the community researchers the contract for this research project was being withdrawn by the industry funder. As a result I was unable to interview this group although I did speak with the group's coordinator as well as the independent researcher who was involved in this process.

There were distinct phases in the rollout of C4C. Initially positive relationships were built, only to change later as people became more cautionary, uncertain and untrusting as competitive tendering processes took hold. Respondents, for instance, were united in the view that the nature of the relationships changed away from collaboration following the contract design and development stage, and calls for expression of interests. The competitive nature of tendering for funding and contracts moved perceptions of the PMs, as representing the Facilitating Partner, as one from negotiator and supporter to one of contractor with specific 'powers' attributed to this task. A sense of prudence formed around notions of collaboration and 'partnerships': partnerships implied a more equally balanced relationship than is usual in a contractor/contracted arrangement. This was particularly the case in Eastville where the scarcity of service organisations meant those few vying for contracts were expected in one phase of the C4C programme to unite in ways of delivering services collaboratively then, in the following phase, compete for funding where only one organisation was contracted to the position.

In such a small community as this [Eastville] it's difficult as there are not many organisations so what happens in one organisation certainly impacts upon that of another (Eva).

Partnerships were expected by the designers of C4C to form not only between the Facilitating Partner, CPs, and others within the public or civil sector but also between this sector and the business or private for profit sector. Such relationships between these often competing sectors were expected to end service duplication and to bridge economic and social rifts towards developing sustainable community structures.

A brief outline of the C4C facilitating partner model and committees formed under this direction has already been provided in Section One, but it is relevant here when discussing relationships. These represent a non-voluntary and top-down instigated process which owed little to the principles

of community development. While this will form much of the discussion in the policy analysis in Section Six, it is also described later in this section.

Hand

C4C was intended to create change, enacting strategies to overcome situational disadvantage; working at improving the collaboration of service systems in their assistance to families; and planning through community building and development models of practice. Tied to place, C4C, as a National policy response, aimed to act differently from any previous similarly pitched programme in this area of early years child development. This was initially received with excitement from two NGO representatives who in the first instance were willing to deliver C4C projects in collaboration.

I got really excited about the idea of what it [C4C] was. In terms of it being a model put across like this: that was federally government funded, that was giving money to a NGO to then support other agencies in doing whatever it was the community wanted (Quin).

And

When C4C started there was this massive sort of force and I know that service providers had that sense of 'wow look what's going on here', like everyone had to get involved (Gail).

With it also came an energy, creating a vibrancy that gave people hope of something new, something that would deliver a better future for not only the families and whole communities it aimed to touch but also for service systems working together to this end.

The C4C programme espoused widely accepted values and principles.

I think the [C4C] project has a lot of merit in its own right. It's important how it is governed and how it is administered and all that sort of stuff but the project is so simple and valuable in and of itself (Gail).

To many people C4C's inexact framework meant an ability to work more creatively in a complex field where previous controls and mechanisms were seen to stifle rather than promote change. To others, however, inexact frameworks meant a lack of clarity and feelings of ambiguity and of being unsupported in the process. In such cases people often resort to more familiar strategies. Where expectations meant a degree of knowledge of certain processes, committee members, for instance, were sometimes seen to turn to expert-led service provision as a default strategy. As one FP NGO reflected:

People start something and they don't think how they're going to do it, they don't think about it beforehand then start doing it and then end up reducing to generic guff which is not particularly useful (Owen).

Reverting to what is known can have the effect of cementing existing behaviours leading to inaction or responses previously found to be ineffective. For example, rigid timelines, funding and reporting requirements result often in "pressures to conform [that] can creep into community building and set up expectations as rigid and excluding as those in mainstream culture" (Kelly & Sewell, 1988, p. 80).

In Eastville, for instance, two NGOs were invited to engage in initial negotiations to creatively devise a way of collaboratively and jointly providing projects in the area. Negotiations became heated when ideas promoted by one of the NGOs were rejected by the FP which led to further conflict and eventually the NGO's withdrawal from C4C processes altogether. This reflection was offered in relation to the incident in which this happened.

In terms of people's energy this can be hijacked by some of their own governance issues [which] makes it really hard in terms of the spilling of senior positions [across departments] and that stuff impacts upon how you can work together (Eva).

The ideological views and personalities of different people involved with the programme were considered by respondents as defining a site's overall success. Most common was the different Programme Manager styles found in the two sites: controlling behaviour, bargaining, consensus seeking, blocking, confronting or other behaviours, neither good nor bad in themselves, becoming part of the actions of the policy programme and an indicator to many as to its success or otherwise (Kelly & Sewell, 1988).

Describing the actions, activities and behaviours that give life to C4C gives a clearer idea of what characterises this application of Place Management, especially when the participants, including me, in C4C reflect on and provide commentary on their actions, activities, and behaviour. In many ways my research path parallels the exploratory, iterative and evolving nature of the initial setting up stages of C4C: a sentiment similarly shared by Alex, involved in early developments of C4C, who spoke of his interpretation of what FaHCSIA wanted from FPs, when he stated:

So, therefore, coming into a new role, given a green field site, a set of statements of principles rather than statements of operation and saying we want you to do this kind of work. We're (FaHCSIA) happy for you to explore what this might be (Alex).

I detail the various aspects of how C4C was implemented in these two sites by first considering the structures and their mechanisms, with attention also paid to the funding, reporting and contracting procedures, then the processes used, and finally, the activity of reviewing.

The committees and their structures

Governing

Governance structures guiding the enactment of the C4C model remained complex and diverse leaving people unclear about their own roles in the model and their relevant decision making powers. The hierarchical structure

of the model, despite its collaborative, ‘tailor-made’ rhetoric, resulted in distrust because of these varied arrangements. Issues of trust were on the minds of policy programme designers from the programme’s commencement:

Early issues included NGOs not sure about working with government – new partnerships, issues of trust (Ian).

The C4C Selection Document (Department of Family and Community Services, 2005b, p. 23) outlines “principles and standards of good governance” listing broadly defined aims from “achiev[ing] results for the public good” through to “comply[ing] with all Australian Government policy relating to government contractors”.

Part of the beauty of this model is we should be able to do things better rather than reproducing the governance system (Owen).

Flexibility of design was perceived by many, including Owen, as an opportunity to do things differently rather than regress to previously unsuccessful practices. This was not always possible or what was experienced. Although as implied by Desera, knowledge of what to do or how to do it was not always apparent:

Governance structure: not always knowing what to do or having the knowledge [of the processes or what was wanted] (Desera).

Respondents raised three main issues relevant to governance structures: representation on and composition of committees; decision making processes; and leadership. Their skills, knowledge and views held by committee members was also of interest and will be discussed later. A survey aimed at reviewing governance in Westville provided insight into this component of the research project which is now detailed.

Representation and composition

When all local agency CEOs are sitting on the committee you know that something big is around (Gail).

Gail's comment reflects the initial involvement of agencies in the C4C. While this was not to fully continue, it also indicated the nature of authoritative involvement which again reflected how C4C was structured.

Representatives of non-government and government members on the committees who were required to sit on the committees considered this to be little more than part of their paid employment. This is in contrast to community members who were integral to providing 'local solutions' to 'local problems' but for many this was not paid time. The structured nature of committees is a particular format, posing for many people, particularly parents and cultural leaders, additional barriers to representation/participation. Moreover, the committee forums themselves were not structured to allow families, cultural groups and other community members to express their needs, concerns and aspirations.

Additionally inconsistent committee representation at meetings often hindered and prolonged the meeting process with previously absent members requesting updated information or further revisiting previous discussions and decisions. Lack of continuity of members attending any given meeting also made decision making about future funding and planning difficult. For instance, the committee meeting to evaluate and review Westville projects in May 2007 had four with potential voting rights¹⁰ of the thirteen people in attendance. At least two people present stated that they were ill equipped to make decisions due to the lack of knowledge about the reviewing process undertaken by an evaluating committee many months beforehand (many of whom were not in attendance at this particular meeting), and the information of options was presented to the committee only

¹⁰ Government representatives not being permitted to vote.

at the last moment. This was less than appropriate when deciding on future funding of projects as this respondent reflected:

Some of the summary papers were sent out the day before and some that morning of the meeting. [I] don't think it fair to make decisions at that time (Owen).

It was only following much discussion that CPs in attendance determined a conflict of interest requiring they leave the review meeting while decisions were made about funding allocations.

In Westville the C4C committee was structured to include a dedicated chairperson, an identified and pre-circulated agenda (most often set by the FP). Committee membership was consistent in the beginning and during the rollout of the projects but changed with staff changes and with differing priorities of the CPs. In Eastville the C4C committee rotated the chair's position and the committee also included a core group of people from the initial set up stage through to the planning of services stage. This group of committee members, with a few staff changes, remained involved for most of C4C's funding period.

Westville's governance structure was typified as "interventionist" or "directive" while Eastville was considered by one respondent as "more developmental" (Owen): developmental in that committee members had greater input into decision making processes. In part, such differences reflected the size and composition of each site as much as they referred to different management styles. For instance, in Eastville the ability to work with fewer agencies, which were skilled in democratic governance practices, meant leadership over such processes came more easily than to Westville where greater navigation was needed. In Westville numerous services and territoriality over jurisdictions complicated governance structures and processes. Eastville was further able to learn from earlier experiences of Westville.

Sub-committees and reference groups set up to inform the C4C committee operated in each site with C4C staff represented on each committee in Westville and the PM in Eastville attending only those reference groups or committees if invited or if this was expected.

The reference group is not a contract management tool. If there's a management issue then I'll deal with that – they don't need to have us on their reference group. ... If they want us on their reference group that's ok. We don't go anywhere unless we're invited (Owen).

The particular roles and functions of the various reference groups were determined according to the projects but mostly these were to act in support and review of the various projects. With Westville's presence at each reference group it was commonly perceived that these forums acted in the main as an evaluative tool. In Eastville reference groups invited input from interested people as a measure to offer accountability to the C4CC.

Developmental work or consultation to include the many diverse community groups in Westville was further thwarted by the timelines as set by FaHCSIA. A finding from my survey (conducted electronically and on behalf of the industry partner originally funding this research, see Appendix E) suggested frequent reviews as a way to improve representation. Other suggestions were to develop a stakeholder list and circulate it to committee members so that additional individuals, organisations, and community groups could be included. None of these suggestions were enacted, even though results from this survey were made available to the Facilitating Partner at the end of 2006.

Overall governance arrangements were centralised with the funding body dictating timelines, reporting, and required outcomes. There were variances, as reflected by the different PM managing styles but also reflective of the composition of the sites.

Decision-making

The emphasis in C4C was intended to encourage locally identified solutions to local issues which initiated some local decision making. This was experienced differently in the two sites. The ability of committee members to effect change during the decision making process was significant to participants involved in C4C processes.

The forming of the committee was almost the most powerful thing that [the PM] could do, 'cause the committee had the decision-making clout arguably (Alex).

Even though the formation of committees was intended to represent community views arguably the final decision making rested with the FP or the PM, who could choose to filter ideas upwards or not at all, even changing their emphasis, especially as the permanent position of the Chair of Westville put this person in a very powerful position. Once the people on committees experienced outcomes to be different from what they participated in then they had little incentive to continue to the ongoing planning of the programme.

Now it seems to me counterproductive that if C4C identified a service need at one level that someone from a National level, in this case [the FP NGO] would then see it as appropriate to say we don't want it to run (Desera).

Behind the scenes decision making occurred prior to the coming together of people at meetings and forums to discuss agenda items:

[The PM] came up with a proposal for a new position of Community Development team leader and to employ additional staff to cover the two sites. So a lot of that was done before they [committee members] even agreed to do it. ... they [FP NGO] presented all these changes like a 'fait accompli', with all these other changes (Owen).

The Governance structures of C4C were often experienced as being authoritarian with respondents seeing little influence or effect with relation to

their input into these structures. The committees' representation, composition as well as the decision making process were to many respondents confirmation that C4C was a government led programme.

Leadership

Strong leadership, as in 'person in place', stood out as respondents believed either a particular management style worked in favour of C4C reaching its broad aims or not.

It's the Person who does the work not the position. I just think who the people are makes it or breaks it, makes it or breaks it (Bernard).

Carol echoed these sentiments about the success of the C4C sites:

Probably each of them [C4C] is only as good as the [Programme] Manager (Carol).

Comments were offered on the two varying styles of management suggesting:

Most often it's the person that makes the difference, although, you know, I'm sure [Eastville] would get there and we couldn't find two [Westville Project Manager's] but operationally what we should have done was line managed [Eastville] through to [Westville] so he could have had some say in how it went (Alex).

Again this supported the notion that management of Westville was somehow superior compared to Eastville. Also reflected by Tom:

[Westville PM] made things happen and [Eastville PM] slow to get going (Tom).

With Westville implemented in the first round, the FP was able to apply similar structures, people and processes to the Eastville context. For example, the same consultant was employed to discuss programme logic with the PM of Eastville having first undertaken a similar process in Westville. However, there were weaknesses of transferring similar processes when, for

instance the sites, quite different to each other, meant that by using an external person to undertake this work prevented local people from having an opportunity to be involved and furthermore prevented the application of local knowledge.

These groups were responsible for the overall management of the C4C programme, through the contracting and allocation of funds which, as we shall see, was the major link to the government and which largely directed how the initiative was to proceed.

Contracting

The initial stage of relationship forming began to erode when expressions of interest (EOI) were invited from select NGOs to provide services or programmes for children and families.

It's a ruthless sector: the NGOs should all be nice to each other but they're not. [NGOs] they won't give away their trade secrets so a bit of that has spilled over into the C4C (Alex).

This is not surprising given the way the new public management affected the not-for-profit sector with its emphasis on competitive tendering (Munro, 2004). Following the appointment of contracts the PM's role, particularly in Westville, was seen as fluctuating between being 'supportive' and 'surveillance' (Gail). The PM and C4C staff in general were supportive in that useful assistance was given at the time of contract development but surveillance involved close monitoring of the projects when they were set up and operationalised. This differed across the two sites again supporting perceptions of the different management styles.

Couldn't get my head around the whole C4C or what it was about or how it fitted so that took me a long time. It wasn't until the contracts started to come out that I realised how it all fitted and what it was actually about and what it wanted to do – it was very confusing I think (Gail).

The first stage announced in 2004 (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005) involved the selection of seven sites across Australia (FaCS 2005) and was noteworthy because the NGOs appointed to these sites were not subject to the same rigorous contracting processes required of the subsequent NGOs tendering for the project. Some respondents considered the process to be “unprofessionally” (Desera) handled with CPs being unclear of the processes. Many groups intended to be included were effectively excluded and conflicts affected the aims of forming collaborative partnerships. An example in Westville involved the PM expressing dissatisfaction with a CP directly to the funding body without raising it first with the CP. Without protocols or procedures guiding fair and equitable processes, collaborative and partnered work was stifled.

Timelines meant that for many CPs it was not feasible to apply for shorter contracts because of the requirements and processes involved but also time taken to put together submissions. Many CPs echoed Gail’s claim that they:

needed longer contracts to get started.

There was also the issue of time and resources required to participate in submission writing:

Most organisations can’t afford to apply. They can’t afford five days writing all this stuff, they just don’t have the capacity (Desera).

Eastville is a location poor in established services so the EOI for two of the three projects were advertised outside the C4C defined community. Subsequently there were lengthy negotiations between the PM and two NGOs interested in managing proposed C4C projects. One NGO was invited into the community from outside, not having previously been present, while the other having been in the community for a considerable time had established significant relationships with client groups. These competitive

negotiations broke down, as previously mentioned, with the local NGO withdrawing from C4C altogether leaving the outside NGO to run two of the three projects.

We [NGO] tendered for both [projects] with a strong wish to conduct the projects in a joined up way 'cause that would mean efficiency in terms of staff and so we could have a really good interdisciplinary team. We won the projects for both and I gather that's fairly rare: because one organisation has had two thirds of the project. There may be some community resentment around us leading two projects but I haven't heard of this (Eva).

While relations were maintained between this contracted NGO and the local NGO it was perceived that:

the disjunction that it caused amongst several organisations down there - that was unnecessary (Desera).

Funding and reporting mechanisms

The funding arrangements for this programme were complex spanning the federal-local continuum but excluding direct state involvement. As already mentioned the Western Australian government was effectively excluded from the decision making process as to where the sites should be located and how they were to be managed. Funding was intended to be time limited with an expected outcome of local sustainability. This affected the operations and processes. Intended to be flexible and responsive to the local communities, funding was the subject of much anxiety for CPs and FPs despite the funder's ambition to "engage" CPs and FPs as "partners with Government to develop, implement and deliver whole-of-community approaches to early childhood issues, in consultation with the local community (Leech & Lewis, 2005, p. 13). The advice of "social policy observers" was that these shifts in responsibility of having NGOs manage funds "results in a creation of a 'development corporation'" (Mant 1998, cited in Leech & Lewis, 2005, p. 10) where business involvement further leads to sustainability, believing that

longer term investment through “input focused agencies” results in attracting additional funding and sustainable outcomes (Mant 1998, cited in Leech & Lewis, 2005, p. 10). NGOs were unfamiliar with or unpracticed in managing the sorts of ‘business’ models required by FaHCSIA.

Stringent funding timelines in addition to rigorous reporting requirements prevented some organisations from competing for the FP position. This representative declared her NGO:

Decided not to tender as Facilitating Partner because of the enormity of the application and turn around, so we thought we’d like to vie for service delivery instead (Desera).

Another NGO considering the FP position reflected:

Originally we thought about becoming the Facilitating Partner but we thought we were too small so decided against it (Helen).

The selection of which organisation to fund as FP and the funding of what projects and through which NGO were questions on the lips of many people involved in these initial considerations. The overall logic of the programme was also often questioned, especially the choice of non-Aboriginal organisations to deliver predominantly to Aboriginal people. As Freda states:

People [were] cross at [name of FP NGO] ‘why them?’ (Freda).

Other respondents talked about the C4C money being better spent on more child health nurses:

I think of the child health nurses and they say that if they had that money they could put on two more child health nurses which would have been [money] better spent (Carol).

And:

Now we could argue, operationally, whether it's having an effect to the value of the money put into it: is it efficient? And it may not be compared to other models we could engage, like let's put another 100 health care nurses out there, or fifty or whatever. It may have the same impact (Alex).

The establishment of the C4C programme was affected initially by the late approval process and subsequent payment of funds which affected NGOs' ability to effectively start and operate the contracted programmes. The implementation timeline involved the first year starting the contracts, the second year the implementation period of the programme and the third and fourth years anticipating full service delivery. A 'lull' was experienced by both PMs in the first year of setting up where a period of awaiting approval from FaHCSIA meant some projects had submissions returning a number of times before gaining authorisation to proceed. While acknowledging that unclear guidelines and delays were the experience of many PMs, it was noted in response to these difficulties in the November 2007 *Baseline Report on Communities for Children Process Evaluation* that "C4C represented an entirely new format for Government funding of NGOs, and in addition was a relatively large initiative. From a governmental perspective, therefore, comprehensive accountability arrangements are necessary whenever substantial funding is committed to a new model" (Social Policy Research Centre, 2007, p. vii).

The duration of contracts differed across the two sites impacting upon reporting requirements and expectations of CPs in each site. Eastville and Westville funded projects for different lengths of time; variously reflecting the context of 'place', committee views, and further considerations made by the respective PMs. With a total allocation of 3.8 million dollars in Westville projects had contracts lasting one year or little more. In contrast in Eastville, with a 2 million dollar allotment, C4CC in conjunction with the PM, made the decision to contract projects for the full length (four years) of the funding period. The rationale was to allow for consistency of service delivery of the projects, reduce administrative duties and support a community visioning

towards sustainable structures. Benefits of both arrangements were noted. Shorter contracts allowed Committees and PMs to refund projects doing well and reallocate money from projects with less reach or not meeting set objectives to projects considered more successful in these areas.

The length of the funding period was directly influenced by the PMs while also reflecting views of the respective committees. In Westville, the decision made was to “have points of review” (Wayne) allowing for intermittent evaluation of projects with the flexibility then to refund or not depending upon desired outcomes. The refunding of projects at the end of their short contracts in this site was in the context of a sector already experiencing high demands and stretched in administrative duties. Additionally, short contracts affected staffing employment and retention rates, ability and capacity for flexible services as well as inclusion of other agencies to C4C. This was noted in Westville as well as other C4C sites across Australia (Australian Government: Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009b). Limited durations however allowed Westville to reallocate money from one project to other projects when it was deemed unsuccessful. An example was the Volunteer Breast Feeding Project (VBFP) which had minimal reach and did not meet the specified outcomes. This example is detailed and analysed in following sections. Eastville contracted three projects for the four year funding period of the C4C programme. These projects were: preparing children for transition to school (Ready for School Project); bringing parents, families and communities together (Family Support Project); and an ante/postnatal care project (Baby Care Project). The PM of Eastville held the view, alongside the C4CC, that contracts of this duration had a better chance of effecting change.

Once decisions and submissions for projects were completed the lengthy waiting times in obtaining a response from FaHCSIA left CPs little time after receiving advice of success to prepare, plan and operationalise the various aspects of the projects they were to deliver. In an evaluation document FaHCSIA (Australian Government: Department of Families, Housing,

Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009b) affirm as a dot point under the heading: 'Funding and timelines – challenges'; "projects were required to be implemented quickly. For some sites, the timeframes were not reasonable". This was a sentiment also expressed by respondents to this research.

At the start of things ... the wait time was too long. For us [CP NGO] it took a long time before we knew if we had funding so we couldn't plan, couldn't employ people and then you were under the hammer (Helen).

Staggered payments were also a cause of confusion.

Waiting for the funding to come in which was an awfully long time – because FaHCSIA, it took them months to get back to us. By this time, the first years' payment (full payment for the whole year) had to come about a few weeks before the end of the financial year. So then it caused great issues in how we were going to budget that – because the timing was way out and it threw everything out and we weren't sure how we were going to allocate funds for the first year, because the money had come at a late stage the second, third and fourth year they paid much less it was really strange and I had a hard time getting my head around it (Helen).

One respondent referred to C4C's overall funding structure as:

cliff funding, [whereby organisations] put [their] hat in the ring for money but then walked if no money. [Initially] all agencies were interested in getting on board, then when they didn't get funding some vanished with no further involvement (John).

John named an organisation already active in Westville keen to get involved only to withdraw when unsuccessful in its tender. In this regard, funding arrangements created competition that worked in opposition to C4C's aim of establishing collaborative relationships based on a 'partnership' model. Evidently, at this early stage the need to be involved in a new initiative or programme was perceived as crucial otherwise:

they might miss out. We knew it was something big (Gail).

The fact the national local relationship excluded the state had unintended consequences. Two initiatives evolving at the same time as C4C withdrew their funding, either in full or in part, from the Westville area on hearing of the funding going into this area. These were the State Government's Early Years State Strategy and an NGO that had a submission into the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) for funding in the area of crime prevention. The State Initiative did progress although with less investment than previously planned, while the submission to DPC was dropped. Annoyance was expressed locally at the lack of consultation as to this DPC decision and at the lack of recognition that this NGO had previously invested in the area of early years and in this site. Referring to the lack of coordination between levels of government someone involved in the community planning process, concluded:

improvement would come from shared outcomes rather than own outcomes (Rose).

The reporting requirements linked to FaHCSIA funding cycles posed a real difficulty for CPs and PMs. Long periods were spent by them adhering to timelines they considered inflexible and detracted from service delivery. These were small local non-government agencies, not large organisations with extensive resources. Having to forward plan funding allocations for subsequent years was the cause for much anxiety.

Too much reporting: extent and detail and evaluation process was a nightmare. Too many hurdles went on for too long. Only got heads around it after fifteen months (Gail).

And this was sensed by one of the FP NGO representatives:

You get a sense from meeting with them [CPs] that there was an over prescription, like over reporting. They were all doing a template, a long and involved template (Owen).

PMs were not immune from these reporting challenges which in the first stages of the programme were required quarterly. PMs at this stage were

required to collect all relevant data from CPs, LEs and input this into a FaHCSIA specified template. The reporting process continued as convoluted and complex, a situation becoming evermore complicated as reports were first sent to the FP NGO, State branch, for approval and then back to PMs. The next step was to send reports to the state FaHCSIA branch which would then go to the national FaHCSIA office. The two PMs were required further to report to a steering committee in Sydney, the national office of the FP NGO, although this structure met irregularly and changing representatives prevented consistency of process. To the PMs reporting to their steering committee was more a matter of accountability than their being provided support.

Initially C4C did not provide stringent reporting templates in order to allow local articulation as suitable and appropriate to the CPs. This was also to reflect the iterative and collaborative measures FaHCSIA aimed for when “the development of funding agreements, service provider guidelines, strategic plan and progress report templates, etc were undertaken in collaboration with non-government organisations” (Leech & Lewis, 2005, p. 9). This soon however was contravened with rigid and prescriptive reporting requirements issued by FaHCSIA and implemented by PMs.

Before [reports] could be your own style and clearly they [FaHCSIA] got varying styles from people, so I guess from their point of view of trying to manage it [C4C projects] that’s what they’ve been reduced to as there were so many styles (Owen).

This instance illustrates how everpresent tensions between centralising, standardising tendencies and local, different and contextualising practices were resolved by the centralised authority.

One notable example illustrating ongoing difficulties with funding and reporting arrangements was the Community Action Fund (CAF). Small amounts of money were allocated to projects to encourage community groups to devise community activities for early years child development. While the idea had overwhelming support, the required format of applying for

funding included a formal twenty minute presentation. This for many negated the inclusionary aim of the CAF by intimidating potential applicants:

CAF has been good apart from them having to present (Nadine).

The small amounts of money involved, up to \$1000, seemed disproportionate to the formal process required for its allocation and effectively put community members off from applying. A local community builder, and later other service workers including C4C staff, moved to have this requirement struck from the application process for its exclusionary effects as well as resulting in unspent funds. This decision was granted.

Embedded in all these requirements and affected by them were how the community partners performed their expected roles with feedback suggesting that this was a challenge to some of them. Additionally they noted the demonstrated lack of the specific skills of consultation and collaboration. These are now presented.

Process attributes

Skills and knowledge

The C4C model acknowledged existing strengths and capacities of individuals, communities and organisations (Lewis & Taylor, 2005). The main mechanism, targeted by the funder, for recognising and harnessing these strengths and capacities was through NGOs. Instances were demonstrated where existing skills and knowledge of people and organisations resulted in positive outcomes, yet the reverse was also evident, where people or organisations not versed in practices and principles expected of the programme were perceived to have failed when projects or practices went wrong. Lack of experience in dealing with the complex social issues which were the subject of C4C or not having the necessary resources presented challenges to NGOs leaving them feeling inadequate or having failed through their participation in the process.

The policy emphasis of C4C was that local people could contribute to the identification of and planning for services for early years development. However, it also required that people who sat on committees had a good understanding of the social and economic issues affecting their locales.

I think the lesson the Commonwealth has learnt should be that you've actually got to contract organisations that have the expertise to deliver the process over and above a knowledge of the community. 'Cause they've fallen over badly where they've employed NGOs that didn't have the expertise to deliver (Alex).

While commended for its encouragement of local participation, the C4C model at times reflected and reinforced the views, tensions and negative stereotypes already apparent in the community. An example of this was observed at an early committee meeting when a prominent community member stated on the subject of aggression within the Indigenous population that 'they were all like that'. This inference could reinforce a negative perception held more generally leading to apprehension, conflict and distrust which work against achieving collaborative relationships. Addressing these views in some way seems an important step in the development of committees towards the aim of inclusive practices that encourage greater tolerance and collaborative processes. It is an important aspect of leadership to allow these views to be aired in order to address them and avoid them staying under the surface where they can have negative effects, but it also requires that they then be used to produce positive and inclusive outcomes.

Exacerbating the apparent lack of skills and knowledge necessary for a complex and multifaceted programme was also the frequent movement of staff. The continuation and further cementing of divisive and draconian ideas go unchallenged when there is a lack of skills and knowledge to address the intricacies related to many of the social issues C4C aims to address.

Overall feelings of constraint and inflexibility when trying to cater to local solutions were commonly expressed by research participants. A lack of

clarity surrounding the whole nature of the C4C model including limited understanding of funding structures, the aims and intended outcomes of the projects, who they were answerable to, and initially the relationship between the FP NGO and C4C, were common experiences reflected in comments such as:

A lot of agencies have struggled with the concepts [of the C4C model]; a lot of agencies have struggled with the motives about why they got involved in this. To the [FP NGO] it aligns with their strategic objectives but with other agencies it's just another contract they're running (Owen).

The SFCSP and other establishments developed to 'upskill' and inform organisations were in part to remedy this aspect of the model. However, as previously stated, the availability of CPs to engage in workshops, seminars or webinars on top of their overstretched work loads prevented many from benefiting from such structures. PMs also had difficulty in disseminating information for similar reasons.

Consulting, engaging and collaborating

Concepts of consulting, engaging and collaborating are difficult to separate: each informing the success of the other two. Who was consulted, by whom and how, impacts upon who was engaged in the process which further had bearing upon the success of collaborative measures. Within its literature, FaHCSIA often relates community engagement with interagency collaboration processes as though each represents the other (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2005b). Here, this reads as though engagement is pitched predominantly at organisational engagement towards collaborative outcomes: "the development of funding agreements, service provider guidelines, strategic plan and progress report templates, etc [sic] were undertaken in collaboration with non-government organisations" (Leech & Lewis, 2005, p. 9). However, in the context of community engagement C4C assumes a wider meaning than that implied by

merely engagement at an organisational sector level only which tended to be the main focus for improving service systems through NGOs. A significant principle for C4C's community building is informing and engaging people in all processes involved in new projects, which meant collaborating and consulting with community people not just agencies who had differing relationships with and representation of the local people.

The experience of engaging people in the sites for the overall Strategy about specific needs and programmes was varied. On the one hand there was evidence clearly demonstrating that this programme was designed by policy makers in Canberra, while on the other, some processes enacted locally indicated understanding and preparedness to genuinely consult and engage.

C4C's frequent reference to 'local solutions' to 'local problems', through inclusion of community members, is reflected in this statement:

The Australian Government recognises that locally based non-government organisations, in consultation with the local community, have the necessary skills, experience and governance structures to understand local issues for families with young children (Taylor, 2005).

A key person involved in the policy programme design believed there to be considerable consultation:

Across governments and met with every state – early childhood, state managers with [the then] FACS so as not to duplicate but work across funding and encourage NGOs to participate (Ian).

However, statements to the contrary suggested:

Had the State Government been invited to consult around the model [design, implementation and development] and the projects then it would be well placed to develop further the model (Alex).

Even so the consultation did not involve community members.

Additionally and as already mentioned, it appears that consultation was less than adequate in that a State Strategy was postponed on finding out that

C4C funding was directed to an area already earmarked for State money in the area of early years prevention initiatives. The introduction of Western Australian State's Early Years Strategy by the (then) Department for Community Development coincided with the establishment of both Westville and Eastville C4C sites. Westville had been an agreed Early Years Strategy site prior to C4C implementation and with knowledge that C4C was targeting the same area, at the time there was some discussion as to whether the State Strategy would be reconsidered in response to a concern around duplication of services on essentially the same target group.

[Westville] had been chosen quite some time before C4C as an Early Years [Strategy] site and that's why there was some debate about maybe not doing that given all this [C4C] money into the area (Carol).

Respondents to this study commented on a 'lack of consultation' from the Commonwealth as causing some delay in the State's decision to introduce the Early Years Strategy to that site. There is a whole literature on the politics of lack of consultation and coordination of policy programmes (Argus, 1999; Brackertz, 2006; Cavaye, 2004; Dawkins & Colebatch, 2006; Harbin, 1996; Pocock, 2003), and it would appear that state and federal 'ownership' of programmes here could have been a contributing factor. However, one respondent reflected that:

Early Years were established before C4C with eighteen sites across the state. C4C is a lot of money over the short period of time whereas Early Years Strategy is about relationships and community partnerships on the ground, and so slightly different tangent of focus (Carol)

Had there been state and federal collaboration, a stronger and more sustainable strategy could have resulted.

Information generation, its flow and various formats through which it is carried significantly impacted upon C4C's overall aim of engaging the many targets across the multiple policy layers.

The strategy builds on the principles of community engagement and ownership by giving communities a mandate to identify and resolve their own issues by facilitating partnerships between service providers, community members, NGOs, business and all levels of government (Davies & Taylor, 2005, p. 2-3).

This statement underscores the notion that when sufficient information (and time) is provided, to which people respond and build on this information and the many ways of knowing (as in reciprocal exchanges), then responses, as generated from the bottom up, have far greater impact on establishing long term sustainable outcomes. The scholarly literature (Alcock, 2004; Stringer, 2008; Young, 2006, p. 3) supports taking the necessary time to allow stakeholder participation to contribute to sustainable practices, as those aimed at by the C4C programme.

Time given to consult, engage and collaborate was not enough:

We couldn't consult people really. We had to put in a draft for funding after five months or something. We had to ram people through a process (Alex).

The information flow was experienced by participants as top down, not forthcoming nor easily available, and at times presented in ways inaccessible for many members of the community.

Earlier consultation did not include Indigenous people - needed to have Aboriginal community forum to first hear from our people (Freda).

Nor was information necessarily provided in ways most appropriate to the target groups.

The Aboriginal grapevine is a great way of getting things out. You tell one family who will tell another family, so it's word of mouth. And it's also how people feel and how they are perceived (Freda).

Other people complained that information was generally lacking:

because we don't know what's happening [in the C4C programme] it means nothing for our own client group (Desera).

While other respondents approached the C4C with caution:

My first thoughts were of a sceptical nature, one of another agency taking over and thought about the little consultation and that it may be a hijacking (John).

Once people were armed with even a little knowledge through exposure to what was occurring and expected then smooth transitions and adaptations were possible. For instance, in the second roll out of C4C:

[Eastville] and Early Years went into the area at the same time so we decided that we'd present a seamless approach to the community (Carol).

This was made possible given earlier experiences in Westville where staff of the Early Years Strategy were common to both sites. These earlier learnings allowed collaborative and smoother transitional processes in Eastville.

Early scoping exercises in both sites were evidence that the researchers at least understood community engagement principles and practices and were prepared to use them. These were seen to successfully engage minority groups and solicit their views on early childhood needs. These methods interestingly aligned with AR principles on which earlier expectations of C4C hinged. The first mapping exercise by the C4C research team (involving the PM and an independent consultant) held in Westville, with its diverse population and a large influx of refugee immigrants housed in the area, sought the assistance of nineteen community volunteers to interview people from their own family groups. Bilingual volunteers representative of the many diverse backgrounds inhabiting the area were sought. Each volunteer, having attended training, interviewed twenty five people each then with their information collated informed the C4C of the early years' needs of these groupings. Although this strategy was successful in recruiting volunteers,

engaging people and obtaining information, these volunteers did not participate or become involved in the various committees, even though there was periodic involvement with a couple of the C4C projects. An opportunity for participation and partnership was lost by the FP.

A similar approach undertaken in Eastville focused on engaging Indigenous people of the area as earlier identified. Involved in constructing questionnaires and then implementing these with their families alongside the same independent researcher as that employed in Westville, significant time taken to gain people's trust and build relationships with these people meant meaningful outcomes resulted. Such early explorations of asking who needs to be involved, what information is required, and what do people think in these cases allowed evaluators and programme operators to better get to know some sections of the community. Reflecting on this early experience, Alex recognised the value of identifying key people.

There was a couple of key people in [Eastville] that you'd want to bottle and transport to every other community in Australia (Alex).

Unfortunately, for whatever reason, these key leaders seemed to disappear from the operationalising of C4C. Perhaps the perception by some that such consultation was 'tokenistic' (Quin) was accurate and led to their disengagement. However, the fact that this group of co-researchers continued into different projects is a comment about the overall C4C process.

Collaborative efforts in both sites needed sensitive handling because of different jurisdictional aims and responsibilities. Other agencies, especially those at the state level, already had operations with their own boundaries which did not necessarily coincide with those of C4C. For example, child protection authorities had been working with the local Sudanese population and C4C staff wanted to work with this same group so sought to build relationships with the capacity builder of the state agency. The 'new' C4C workers necessarily had to tread carefully and delicately with the statutory workers who had different mandates. The capacity builder perceived the

time and efforts made to build relationships with the Sudanese people were threatened once C4C staff wanted to become involved.

In one of the five suburbs in Westville thirty one services were counted at the outset with little apparent coordination between them:

none of them knew what the other was doing (Alex).

And the tendering process sets apart collaborative efforts and competition where organisations are positioned in contest to one another:

[C4C processes] pitted us against [name of NGO], although have managed to maintain a relationship with [this NGO]. If we didn't have a relationship before [C4C] we wouldn't have survived through that (Desera).

Staff movements included the departure of the PM from the Westville site which influenced how the operations continued, as subsequently Westville and Eastville came under the one PM. The particular management styles have already been mentioned and overall staff changes contributed to changes in the organisations.

Changing of Community Partners in some of the projects has altered cohesion with few [of us] getting together now (Gail).

Also noted as contributing to a change in emphasis were changes in FaHCSIA ministers.

New minister so a change in way of thinking with new PR importance: a selling of the model internally and externally. So now they want us to tell them how many brochures and newspapers we put out (Owen).

While the relationship building and collaborative aspects overlap, here community consultation, engagement and collaboration are used to distinguish those relationships between those members of the select community with the aim of 'building community'.

All these aspects of the enacting (Hand) of C4C, however, were contained with what Tim Muirhead (2002) refers to as a social programme approach rather than a developmental approach which casts into doubt the extent to which C4C met its community building descriptions. Kelly and Sewell's (1988) characterization of the different modes of work involved in community building assists in understanding their practices, all of which necessitate direct involvement of local people, albeit using different strategies. C4C, in contrast was initiated at a location far removed from the sites where activity was to take place, and structures used with all their requirements mitigated against collaboration, cooperation and direct involvement by local community people.

Although community and capacity building were principles in the policy, at least one person believed it to:

Highlight[s] more a social planning model (Owen).

The FP, as broker, is strategically positioned to take on those tasks as described within the community work method of work (Kelly & Sewell, 1988). But, as predicted by Kelly and Sewell (1988, p. 91), the processes and requirements as handed down by FaHCSIA often resulted in FPs being perceived as "co-opted by the status quo and ... a P.R. machine for the system". An adaptation of a community development mode embraced under the C4C is provided above where ideas including greater horizontal decision making coupled with identifying community resources anticipate sustainable structures, thus reducing the community's need for government services. In the attempt to address complex social problems through these mechanisms, however, it is evident that local community building strategies are unlikely to have this hoped for effect.

Irrespective of the local relationships which were central to the success or otherwise of the community building aspects of the C4C programme, a significant player which dominated the way these relationships were enacted must be acknowledged and I turn now to the way C4C embodied a social

programme approach with its mixture of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' processes.

'Top-down and bottom-up'

Despite the acknowledgement in the written documentation that "there is no single model or design for strengthening communities so the best approaches are those which arise from local circumstances or are tailored to suit them" (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007b, p. 2) it is clear that other imperatives underpinned the implementation of C4C.

Much of what transpired under the C4C model had already taken place elsewhere, as evidenced in the UK and US.

I had read the Sure Start stuff so my knowledge of Place Management operational principles like a whole of government stuff came from my reading of Sure Start and from my observation of it in the UK (Alex).

The international models and evidence of the relationship between local ownership and programme sustainability (provided in Section Two) influenced government policy in designing a programme of top-down planning with bottom-up activities. These are not new ideas. This suggests and strongly supports the principle of partnership where effective implementation of programmes does not rely on any one individual, group or sector of society for the answers, nor all the knowledge needed to succeed.

Nevertheless the general perception was of a top-down authority and process.

It's essentially a top down process – if it was a purist developmental process then it would develop over time but I think that it's a bit unfair for the community to pick it up especially in a community like this [Eastville] when community pride is really obvious (Eva).

The perceptions that PMs needed to manage down to remain compliant – and demonstrate abilities to secure the next funding increment – meant a top down directive approach was also necessary.

It was organised the way it was as there were no rules, but [Westville C4C staff] were new to the area and didn't know the community, service providers, didn't know the individuals, so in those circumstances they didn't have much option than to try and control things as best you can, in the time frame – especially in any absence of direction from Canberra (Owen).

Top down management of Westville was one of necessity in the 'absence of direction from Canberra' (Owen). Essentially the fast tracking of processes to get projects underway resulted in some ideas generated by community members but most often reflective of the FP, as managed by the PM.

Someone like [the Westville Project Manager] will manage it so that he kinda makes key decisions as well, behind the committee (Alex).

While C4CC was seen to 'drive' decisions the commonly agreed view was that the PM of Westville influenced agenda items and their outcomes even before committees would meet.

In the transition between policy programme aims and objectives messages are influenced by values, ideologies and discursive framings along the way. With such a gap between planning at the top and implementing projects at the bottom processes are bound to become complicated.

My understanding was that this was supposed to be a community development model. [Eastville PM] went to head office where it [committee plans] got stymied. The [FP NGO] head office and whoever was their head guru at that stage had a particular view of what should or should not be [counted] in. [This] would then change if [the FP NGO] didn't like that. [It is] counterproductive having someone at National office level change plans; [a] lack of transparency of process. May have been better earlier to inform people from the beginning (Desera).

And,

I just felt that it was a bit top heavy and I felt that community forums would have been better. I know that they did that at times, in the early stages and not a lot of Aboriginal people attended (Freda).

Only a few CPs were able to affect the sort of change that was hoped for with the constraints. This is evidenced given the Public Spaces Project example earlier identified. Most however, found its confines too restrictive for any positive change wanted by the community to result.

It's the whole thing about community development work and government funding and timelines and trying to find a way to respect these processes, as government needs to make sure that [its] spending tax payers money appropriately. I'd say that probably had they [C4C] employed an Indigenous consultant to go in and start thinking and building partnerships right at the beginning that would have been better (Carol).

It was expertise, built from years of practice, and ample resources that helped this NGO to achieve change from working within confines set by FaHCSIA.

We have been able to work with community health to build in sessions with them around dads and kids. (Casswell) has requested to add on a session to their already established five [information sessions] but at a time that dads will be there, 5.30pm would begin the sessions which then sets up dads' involvement or importance from the beginning. This too then demonstrates to the child health nurse a number of things impacting on practice such as when they do sessions and who they include and content (Eva).

In this example, parents expressing their need to exercise but unable to get the time while looking after children presented as a challenge to the NGO contracted to two of the projects in Eastville. The NGO came up with a way to integrate the parents' wishes to remain with their children while exercising.

We came up with a programme for parents to do an activity on their own then add kids later. But parents didn't want to part with children, they didn't want to leave them in crèches so the program incorporated their children so they did work with their children, so they would exercise but not be parted from children, so they could incorporate exercise in their lives with babies. In time we'll be able to step back from that, we're careful not to jump in as experts but to say we've got some money how could we work together and model good practice (Eva).

This example demonstrated an ability to work within a system in a bottom up way achieved optimal outcomes for project operators and people targeted.

Reviewing

Evaluation as an integral component of the C4C model was also a loosely determined structure with opaque processes. Two main evaluation processes were expected to inform one another: a National Evaluation Framework (NEF) and a local level evaluation. In practice they did little more than co-exist. This left those people involved unclear about the intersections with the additional complication of Action Research (AR) suggested as an evaluative tool. The expectation was that during the implementation stage the initial seven sites would form strong and collaborative relationships towards the development of 'micro-policy' and further processes in guiding future developments (Davies & Taylor, 2005, p. 6) and that this would feed into the ongoing evaluations. To PMs the reviewing of projects and C4C overall was a constant source of anxiety and frustration. Both PMs agreed that:

NEF was useless (Wayne).

And

It's [evaluation] has been largely an experiment with no guidelines for LEs which could be done better. We should have more local control given all these issues (Owen).

The NEF, following the broader frame of reference, incorporated evidence collected from only few C4C sites and was only operationalised many months into the implementation stage.

The NEF has been, in my view, a complete and utter farce. It started too late and only involves the first seven [sites] which weren't operating from the same guidelines as the rest of us... The data collected was too broad. I think the science behind this stuff is poor (Owen).

With this respondent believing:

[what is] missing is that there is little information about what is working from the national level. More sharing of learnings – it would be great to have that knowledge (Carol).

A Local Evaluator (LE) was appointed by the FP to each C4C site to evaluate the programme, in part or overall, depending on the contract and what was negotiated in each site. A common framework outlining the Local Evaluator's role, as set out by FaHCSIA, incorporated five basic functions:

- To advise the C4C Facilitating Partner on applying evidence to project design and implementation;
- To provide consultancy to local projects in relation to evaluation, management of information, data collection, storage and analysis;
- To undertake or supervise evaluation activities commissioned by the local projects;
- To quality assure the data produced by the local projects; and
- To coordinate local data collection on behalf of the National evaluation (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005b).

The breadth of these guidelines left open opportunities for creative and interpretive evaluation approaches, but which could also lack rigour. It also left LEs exposed to often harshly scrutinised processes, ambivalence and uncertainty about these same processes and a lack of clarity about their roles and expectations of them. Tense relationships between PMs, LEs and CPs were often seen to result. My research reflects many of these tensions as

demonstrated in the prologue and interleaves. Such broad guidelines meant evaluation approaches across the forty five sites were applied varyingly with differential success, as well as how each LE was connected to each site. Arrangements included: evaluator as a PhD candidate (as in my case); an employee within the FP organisation; a research institute; an independent consultant' an auspicing body; a self-governing organisation; a consortium; or any combination of these.

My view is that the research sector is so starved of funds that they've been forced to act in ways which you just get what you can – like a used car market (Owen).

Common to these differently structured arrangements was the ambiguity about the role and processes expected of the LE.

While particular forums were set up through ARACY and CAFCA little contact and/or information sharing actually occurred between the seven sites. Feedback from the PMs suggested this was due to the competitive nature embedded in the programme: a theme regularly emerging throughout this research. While encouraged to support each other and share information each site had its own characteristics and were further set apart through the establishment of the Promising Practices Profile (PPP); a process set up to measure best practice across the C4C programme (Australian Government: Australian Institute of Family Studies, nd). Additionally, the PMs of Westville and Eastville assumed the position of not needing 'help' by locating themselves as authorities on the C4C programme model, from which others (from other C4C sites) could draw expertise and knowledge. Westville was to many considered the leading C4C site across Australia:

[Westville] is very clearly the national leader and success story (Bernard).

In a mid-term review meeting held between the LE and the FP, the PMs spoke of their unique position as social workers which equipped them with skills to make the complex and multifaceted decisions needed. Both PMs

believed their training better placed them, over other C4C PMs, to manage their sites compared to other sites across Australia, mentioning that other PMs would frequently contact them for advice. Comparisons were made between other C4C sites and Westville, as 'national leader', which was perceived as leaving Eastville in its shadows despite the PM of this site confident in his competencies to deal with the complex issues of the model.

Some of the major differences between these sites (which affected how their success was perceived) included: geography; starting time; infrastructure; allocated funding; management styles; projects and processes employed; population; and demographics. While common to both were the indicators and risk factors linked to childhood disadvantage. To one respondent, successes perceived in Westville included more than simply the management of this site.

In [Westville] the demographics is changing quickly and therefore it will show an outcome because the socioeconomics of the neighbourhood will improve and so will the health indicators of the 0-5 year olds. They need clever evaluators to factor that in 'cause raw score performance - they will be good. The housing prices are forcing the poor people out, is another way of saying it (Alex).

AR was suggested at the inaugural SFCS in 2001 as a useful methodological tool for evaluating projects which would allow early learning to be fed back into practice processes.

Once found something that works AR processes record and build on those activities (Ian).

As Ian noted in the application of AR, a cyclical process would allow CPs and PMs to build on those activities that work.

Of the early stages of the Strategy it was said that: "the funds associated with the Strategy have been deliberately phased so that we can start small and

build on early learnings, and so that new projects can be 'mentored' or otherwise draw on the experience of others" (McKay, 24-26 July 2000). Later documents do not, however, refer to AR as an evaluative method, although it was often expected that LEs would implement evaluation processes based on AR methodology. This was the case for research undertaken by this NGO and as contracted under the LE arrangement.

[Our CP NGO] is using AR principles and always thinking about what people are asking for. Embedding that [AR] into practice and asking questions and not taking on that expert role, that's fundamental to how we work (Eva).

Confusion about the employment of AR to evaluate projects and whole sites soon turned to anger when PMs realised structures and processes were not always suitable for such methodology.

Clearly, FaHCSIA has been sold at the high level that this concept [AR] is feasible... but this is not what's happening (Owen).

Research respondents were concerned that the outcomes were imprecise and undefined but constrained by performance measures. Despite this they noted many positive aspects yet their measurability remained difficult to demonstrate.

We only want to give our time to good programmes and their evidence-based stuff: you want stuff that is well supported; you want things that have been in place for a while. When the [Coming Together Project] came up our community was ready for that (Kevin).

Describing the importance of the Coming Together project (CTP), Kevin gave the example of a previously isolated father for whom his involvement was significant both for him and his children:

That's a huge development for people who are isolated in a group of three hundred people. [CTP] gave one family the opportunity to have their father being involved. To that boy, to him, that was a major outcome. How do you measure that night? (Kevin).

I conclude this segment by providing a reflection on the workings of C4C which is the final of Kelly and Sewell's (1988) trialectic –Head.

Head – Summarising reflections

The C4C policy was intended to be enacted using community capacity and community development approaches. However we have seen that misunderstandings of these processes, their differential application by and within the FPs structures all overlaid by the changing requirements from the funding body, FaHCSIA, meant that the general perception of the programme was that it did not fully allow for local people to be instrumental in decisions, design or development.

There were other aspects that remained problematic, such as the requirement for sustainability. When the end of the original four year funding period was pending, for instance, there was much anxiety in both sites about the future status of C4C:

That's the biggest challenge we've [C4C] got here now because no one is saying anything about the future (Owen).

The expectation of the funder was that the four year government funding responsibility would be replaced by business in partnership with the community. Yet, in one of the sites of this study there was little opportunity for this because of the absence of large corporations, even should they be willing to underwrite these activities. This left the responsibility for sustainability with the community and as Eva states:

How much can we really expect the community to pick up?

And Linda adds it was:

really naive to think that other agencies are suddenly going to find resources to take over service provision: it's not reality, it's not going to happen.

Being at the interface between federal and state interests with the potential for territorial disputes as well as electioneering cycles of marginal seat funding presented other challenges. As one respondent notes:

in terms of influence the Commonwealth government policy, that's what they do, is to feed money into certain things that will focus on marginal electorates. How it could work different is hard. I think it's been heart breaking for some people (Carol).

However this situation also offers benefits as Gail reflects:

It's certainly got some projects or service provision happening. Our project wouldn't be here if it wasn't for C4C. It's certainly targeting the early years and it reaches families that it wouldn't if it had not been here (Gail).

This is possibly the most sustainable outcome perceived by respondents: the message regarding the importance of early years.

In terms of leaving a sustainable footprint in the community and changing the way people think it's probably going pretty well (Alex).

The introduction of the programme was greeted with enthusiasm and hope with local community agencies, and the FPs welcoming the prospect of really local strategies to attend to pressing social needs. To many respondents the idea of collaboratively delivering services to children and families with the aim of improving childhood development was an exciting prospect. The overall philosophy and espoused principles of community development, capacity building and strengths-based practice were also valued, even though, in the event, the skill to fully enact these was patchy at best.

Overall, however, while it is possible for ownership and management to be separate, the performance of C4C tended to give a greater authority to the 'manager' thus contravening the policy principles of community ownership, and reinforced perceptions that this was just another government funded programme. The tensions, frustrations and realisation of the many limitations soon displaced the initial enthusiasm leaving many bruised by their

involvement. The incongruence of what was anticipated with what was experienced is examined in later sections through analysing the contributors to Place Management as a policy approach (Section Five), asking where the policy/programme was going and whether or not it was desirable (Section Six), and identifying who are the winners and losers of such an approach (Section Seven), before concluding with an examination of what could be done and how (Section Eight). The next section moves into the second of the *Looking* phases of the Action Research cycle in its archaeological examination of Place Management as a policy approach.

Discourses of Place Management: an Archaeological Tracing

One last precaution must be taken to disconnect the unquestioned continuities by which we organize, in advance, the discourse that we are to analyse: we must renounce two linked, but opposite themes. The first involves a wish that it should never be possible to assign, in the order of discourse, the irruption of a real event; that beyond any apparent beginning, there is always a secret origin – so secret and so fundamental that it can never be quite grasped in itself. Thus one is led inevitably, through the naivety of chronologies, towards an ever-receding point that is never itself present in any history; this point is merely its own void; and from that point all beginnings can never be more than recommencements or occultation (in one and the same gesture, this and that) (Foucault, 1972b, p. 27).

Section presentation

This section begins cycle two of the Action Research helix: again building upon the previous *looking, thinking, reflecting and acting*, and *looking for a second time*. This section addresses research aims:

2. Identify and trace origins, developments and meanings associated with theories and concepts of Place Management; and
3. Provide an understanding of Place Management as a practice model through a case study of two Western Australian sites applying Place Management as a social policy direction.

Bearing in mind Foucault's words at the start of this section, this section elucidates ideas I consider to have contributed to the development of a Place

Management discourse. The term Place Management is recently used to describe spatial or place based policy and practice. Two broadly significant and overlapping strands of thinking attributed to this policy development include considerations about 'problems' of place and design of place. Societal responses to instability in and of place as well as changing demographics which lead to the desire for 'better' (more productive and better functioning) places are evident through her/history. Foucault's thinking presented in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972b) offers a way to conceptualise discursive ideas or formations, by subjecting a concept or some other idea to interrogation. As such, Place Management is subjected to such interrogation to uncover particular discursive objects, practices, and concepts, enunciated through particular events, at particular times, places and contexts. Place Management is an expression or adaptation of earlier ideas: relics from often competing fields of practice and thinking influential in a contemporary discursive framing.

This section's archaeological tracing of Place Management is guided by such expression, as observed and collated for this research. In an unlayering process, this section's *looking* aims to reveal enunciated modalities, earlier seen as "the techniques, the structures, the forms of know how by which people are able to produce and recognise utterances" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 35) as influential in the formation of C4C's Place Management approach. There are many possible discursive framings, pathways, continuities and discontinuities accentuating Place Management as enunciated under the C4C policy practice. Here I consider those which relate to 'problems' of place and design of place which have informed current thinking about what to do about the 'wicked' problems and social needs of childhood disadvantage.

Place Management is a theoretical and practical construct reflecting a discursive set of policy responses influenced from previously formed ideas. From C4C's enunciations (articulations in policy and practice), I trace pathways significant to the formation of its Place Management approach.

While set out as though progressive, one activity leading effortlessly into another, this reflects the genre of writing more than a direct line of sequences. These ideas and discursive formations involve discontinuities and a multiplicity of interconnections with other ideas and discourses paralleling, intersecting, competing and at times ceasing altogether. Foucault's (1972b) *Archaeology of Knowledge* offers no precise way to 'do' an archaeological investigation of ideas so I take guidance from ideas, themes and connections that emerge from this research: particularly those ideas most represented (as recurring and repeated by respondents). Policy documents informing C4C provide further guidance with links often explicitly drawing connections between what occurred elsewhere with what transpired in C4C. My approach maintains fluidity accepting the idea that knowledge construction is in constant formation with *doing* (practice) on *knowing* (theory) informing further actions. This nexus assists to problematise the topic with further analysis and therefore builds on knowing: a problematising offered in subsequent sections.

The task of an archaeological investigation is complex and challenging not least due to the improbability of tracing all possible series or sets of ideas connected with the concept or theory of Place Management. An archaeological consideration of Place Management is an interpretive process of discovery: "to disconnect the unquestioned continuities by which we organize, in advance, the discourse that we are to analyse" (Foucault, 1972b, p. 27). Highlighted are those differences and contradictions, valuable for the analysis of later sections, of Place Management's application under the Australian Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS).

An archaeological tracing

This section's looking back, "that form of critical reflection on 'today' as difference in history" (Ashenden & Owen, 1999, p. 32), helps to alert us to the transformations that continually shape current activities: those involving social, political, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual contexts. A

looking at the ‘history of ideas’ (Foucault, 1972b, p. 152) where an archaeological investigation is that which “describes discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive” (Foucault, 1972b, p. 148) is helpful in viewing the ideas which influenced Place Management policy and practice. For example, historically, the settlement movements in the United States and England in the middle of the 19th century illustrate the connection of ideas to present Place Management applications. The “focus of settlement houses, then as now, was on city slums and the amelioration of wretched living conditions” (Blank, 1998, p. 2). There are many examples around the Western world of attempts to solve these conditions through social and economic change. Improvement and or development of place, cities, regions, communities, and urban areas subject to other, often interrelated, considerations of place towards making these spaces more viable (often economically but also socially) is also apparent. Such instances can be seen to be influential in C4C’s own adoption of Place Management. Further critical reflection on those elements of discourse: of objects, practices (or operations), and concepts (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 44) is the subject of Section Seven.

C4C’s connection to the United Kingdom’s Sure Start Programme presents one possible starting point given specific articulations in practice and policy documents linking these two programmes.

Sure Start in the UK informed the C4C model. I spent a couple of months in the UK looking at the model and talking to Government about this policy (Ian).

Many of the same ideas and practices directing Sure Start influenced C4C. Particular people appointed to high decision making positions in the design of C4C also had previous involvement in the Sure Start Programme:

[The Programme Manager] had a significant knowledge base about how to go about this [implementing C4C], he had the methodology, which I don’t think anybody in Australia arguably had at that stage. I had read the Sure Start stuff so my knowledge of Place Management’s operational principles, like a whole of government stuff, came from my reading of Sure Start

and from my observation of it in the UK. I hadn't seen it work in other areas, like, where else might you see it? You might see it in youth at risk 15-17 like our current area or drugs or where there's cross government action. He'd run a Sure Start, he knew the methodology so he had a starting point (Alex).

And

[The Programme Manager] came from the Sure Start Programme in the UK – and walked in standing up and walked in with the knowledge of how to get projects up, how to approach people, how to write up evaluations, you know all those things (Kevin).

Among people with experience in working with the Sure Start Programme is Professor Ilan Katz who is currently the Professor and Centre Director with the Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC)¹¹ and who was the Chief Investigator of the National Evaluation Framework (NEF). He recently wrote a report on *Lessons for Australia from the UK Sure Start Programme* stating:

The UK initiative Sure Start is probably the most ambitious attempt of any government to improve the outcomes of children living in disadvantaged areas. ...Sure Start has an ecological focus that comes from theoretical research and empirical evidence on the importance of family and neighbourhood to how children fare. Sure Start shares several characteristics with current Australian initiatives and is based in some cases on identical research. Moreover, the long history of intellectual exchange and networking between the UK and Australia, and the impact of new information technologies on research, policy and practice dissemination, means a great deal of traffic between Sure Start and Australian Programmes takes place (Katz & Valentine, 2009, p. 1).

Katz, involved in Sure Start's evaluation (Centre for Community Child Health, 2008), is reputed to have been instrumental to the knowledge base informing C4C given his previous work with Sure Start. I was present at a meeting held in one of the sites in late 2005 at which Katz addressed a group of research consultants around issues, expectations and processes of C4C's local evaluations and how these related to the NEF, drawing on his experiences in

¹¹SPRC and the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) were contracted by The Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) to evaluate the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS) 2004–2009.

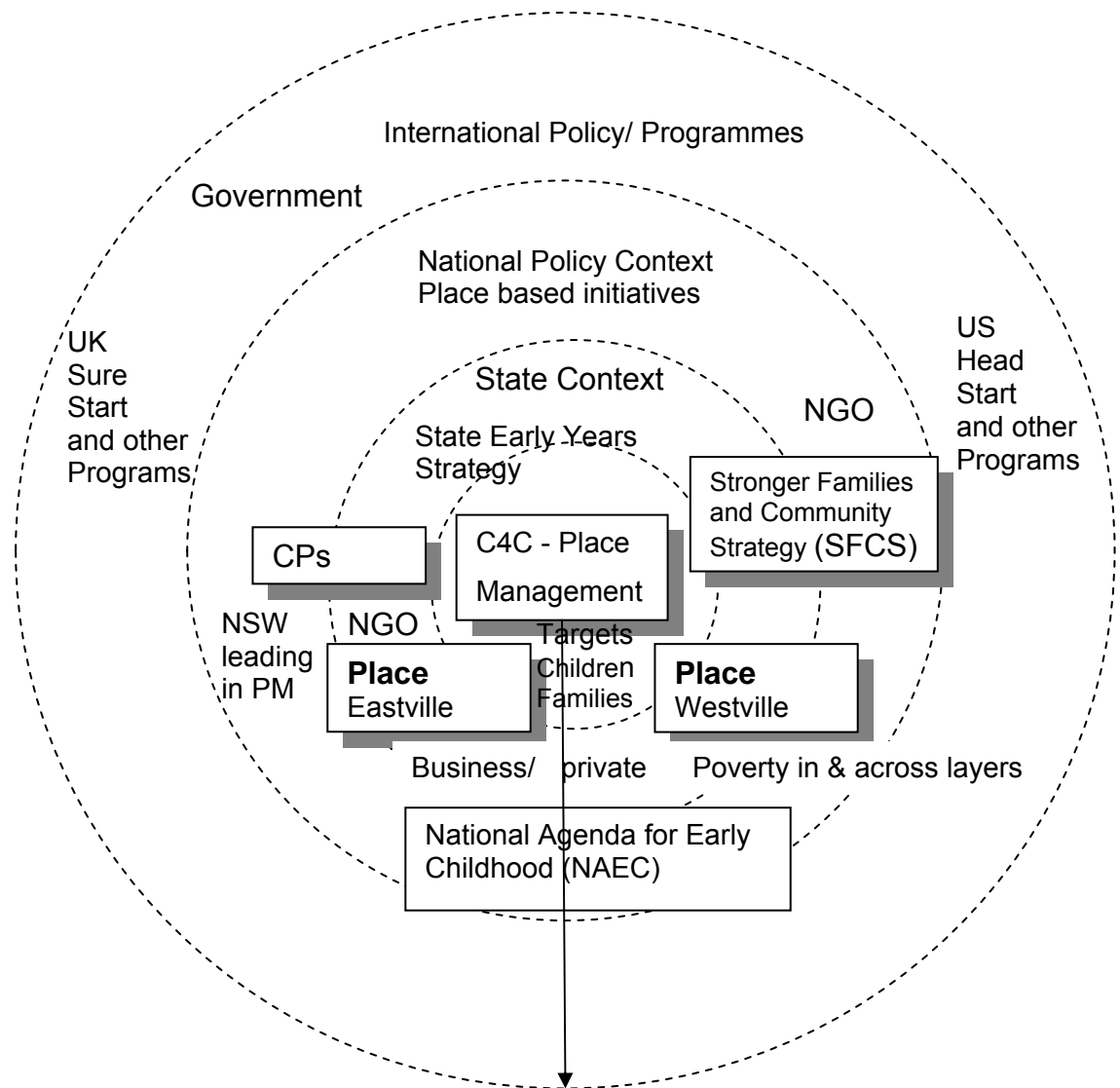
Sure Start. Katz has provided many articles and reports contributing to ideas and evaluations in the ongoing developments of C4C (Edwards et al., 2010; Katz, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Katz & Valentine, 2009).

Although a tracing of ideas can commence with C4C's link to the Sure Start Programme, where to begin is somewhat irrelevant as an archaeological investigation moves across a range of domains with no one idea being assigned as Place Management's origin. To Foucault (1972b, p. 153) a history of ideas:

recounts the byways and margins of history. Not the history of the sciences, but that of imperfect, ill-based knowledge, which could never in the whole of its long, persistent life attain the form of scientificity.

A deconstruction that "sets out to cross the boundaries of existing disciplines, to deal with them from the outside, and to reinterpret them" (Foucault, 1972b, p. 153) is the subject of my *looking* here. To locate a time when Place Management first developed is not important, as proclaimed in the above quote.

Various layers and domains are presented in the ecological map (Figure 4) below which I developed to help illustrate the leading ideas in the formation of C4C's Place Management approach. The map depicts C4C at the centre expanding outwards to layers and contexts containing discursive framings, objects, concepts and processes able to assist in explaining ideas influential to its development. While acknowledging the 'secret origin' (Foucault, 1972) is neither present nor sought, what I capture in this map is that which is some of the connections between the programmes and organisations which made use of similar ideas.



What: Early Years

How: Joined-up governance

Why: 'Communities of disadvantage'

Figure 4 Ecological Map

Margins and byways

Place Management's origins, it is said by some, is to be found in urban and regional planning (Faris, 2004; Lee & Herborn, 2003; Stewart-Weeks, 1998). Managing human behaviour through environmental design and management is not a new concept:

For over 5,000 years, architects have used design and space management concepts to manipulate human behavior. History has recorded these methods. Yet, for the past several decades, mistakes have been made in community development, urban planning, and architectural design that belie our ever having had a historical knowledge of such design concepts. It may be that the incredible gains of technology may have corrupted our thinking, because many environmental conditions (but not all) can now be controlled by machine (Crowe, 2000, p. xi).

Interest in regionalism, itself an idea conjuring sovereignty in a select place with a central governing 'ruler', was witnessed in Australia when the Whitlam Government (1972–1975) introduced the Department of Urban and Regional Development's (DURD) Australian Assistance Plan (AAP) in December 1972.

A strategy to give all the people in Australia a better opportunity to take part in planning, developing and controlling their own local community services. The Plan ensures that where there is dynamic innovative local community effort for the provision of better social services this effort will be complemented by the financial and personnel resources of the Australian Government (Graycar, 1974, p. 56).

John Mant was the Senior Adviser to the Minister and Assistant Secretary within this Department providing a clear and early link between ideas of 'place', urban planning and development thereof through his writing (1998, 2002). Mant (1998, 2002) and others (New South Wales Premier's Department, 2002; Randolph, 1999; Stewart-Weeks, 1998, 2003; Walsh, 2001, 2002; Zappalá & Green, 2000) writing on Place Management projects positioned New South Wales as the national pace setter in Australia in engaging spatially based policy activity (Smyth et al., 2005, p. 1) with similarly designed approaches quickly spreading to other parts of Australia by the 1990s (Smyth et al., 2005).

Two decades on and Place Management remains a term and idea variously understood and applied with little research literature or practice models informing fully the topic. Authors tend to agree that there is no single, concise or neat definition of Place Management (Steuart, 2003, p.1; Walsh, 2001, p.4) which is a concept “as elusive as it is evocative” (Stewart-Weeks, 2004, p.2) and significantly “a concept in search [and need] of a definition” to understand its potential value and impact (Stewart-Weeks, 2000). Its elasticity as a concept and term is highlighted in the literature where Place Management is used synonymously with community renewal and related place-based regeneration projects (New South Wales: Premier's Department, 2002; Stewart-Weeks, 2004, p.8) which Lyla Rogan (2002, p. 18) believes is simply a case of shifting language, for example from Place Management to community renewal. With existing material relying on only a few authors (Green & Zappalá, 2001; Mant, 1998, 2002; Randolph, 1999; Stewart-Weeks, 1998, 2000; Walsh, 2001) there is vastly more literature dedicated to those aspects and principles said to underlie Place Management approaches such as: community development (Ife, 2002; Ingamells, 2007; Kenny, 2011; Tesoriero, 2010), capacity building (Atkinson & Willis, 2006; Chaskin, 1999; Kenny & Clarke, 2010b; Mowbray, 2005; Rogan, 2002; Young, 2006), social capital (Commonwealth of Australia, 2000; Healy et al., 2004; Putnam, 2001; Stone & Hughes, 2000), and strengths-based practice (Beilharz, 2002; Blundo, 2001; Bowes & Hayes, 2004; Graybeal, 2001; Green, McAllister & Tarte, 2004; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). There is an abundance of literature (Everingham, 2003; Jamrozik, 2009; McClelland & Smyth, 2006; Rose, 1999) also debating top down and bottom up processes with the machinery of government blamed or applauded for successful or unsuccessful approaches in policy decision making models. The focus on place has led to strategies for forming partnerships across organisations in place, which is considered “a new, emergent policy regime” (Smyth et al., 2005, p. 2). This juncture of the New Public Management and the ‘third way’ politics of the Blair Government in the United Kingdom is also said to be the genesis of early ideas of Place Management (Lee & Herborn, 2003, p. 27).

What then is Place Management?

Area-based community development, community renewal, community regeneration, place-based practice, and Place Management are terms often used synonymously. With such a range of terms used interchangeably attracting a range of different meanings dependent upon contexts, it is difficult to pinpoint an exact and precise meaning of Place Management. Its ambiguity is not surprising given its variously used applications across different contexts, different practice areas, by different organisations and to different ends. When aiming at improving the aesthetics of place then urban planning or regeneration are terms often used (Gleeson & Low, 2000). When tackling problems of a community then community development is known to be applied (Zapalá & Green, 2001). When organisations work together this is collaboration towards a goal which is frequently described by joined-up governance or strategies (Randolph, 1999). These ideas are not necessarily contingent on a fixed 'place' or imply 'management' as resting with any one organisation. Stewart-Weeks (1998, p. 14), who is one of few to grapple with meanings of Place Management, considers 'civic entrepreneurship' as a good illustration of the concept. Another conceptual element is then added with the idea of entrepreneurship implying the taking of risks in business arrangements towards making a profit. In the context of Place Management, Stewart-Weeks' emphasis is on "collaborative economics" in which the term 'civic entrepreneurship' refers to "the role of business leaders in creating public partnerships" (Leadbeater & Goss, 1998, p. 6) which is different to entrepreneurial profit making. Rogan (2002, p. 18) posits that social entrepreneurship in this context is not about making profits but "seeking new and innovative solutions... to build 'social capital' and 'social profit' to improve the quality of life in some of the most difficult and excluded communities". There are ideas linking many of these above mentioned strands in what is known as Place Management, further evidenced under the C4C policy programme.

A contextualisation of the literature surrounding Place Management is necessary as much of it dates from around the mid to late 1990s through the

2000s. Many authors agree that Place Management is about 'place' and a concept which aims at designing and implementing better policy processes to improve that place. Mark Latham (1998, p. 35), former Labor Party leader, embraced concepts of Place Management asserting, "progressive governments around the world are all examining new models of better integrating service delivery systems, with the current consensus being towards a local brokerage structure". Governments wanting to find improved ways to attend to social problems find favour with the joined-up responses detailed earlier.

It appears from the available but sparse literature that Place Management incorporates a philosophical consideration of how it can affect the social condition, a method of performance. Walsh (2001, p. 8-9) characterises Place Management as including four main components:

- addressing social/ economic disadvantage across communities or regions;
- appointment of a 'place manager' responsible for allocation/ accountability of funds, coordination of services towards defined outcomes within an area;
- delivery of coordinated and integrated policy and service responses to the community; and
- institutional reorientation of the basic processes of governance and public administration.

The C4C programme is seen to incorporate these criteria.

While some authors consider Place Management to derive from community development principles in governments' "new and improved radical approach to service delivery" (Green & Zappalá, 2000, p. 1), to others (Stewart-Weeks, 2000, p. 4) the notion is both subject to romanticisation and pragmatism with the latter explaining governments' attempt to improve service delivery in a significantly disadvantaged area and the former invoking a revolutionary restructuring of the current system and role of government. Lee and Herborn (2003, p. 27) provide a different perspective in declaring management in place as a "synonym for local government". These considerations are

dependent upon how 'place' and 'management' are defined as well as the particular discourses which affect and are used in the current political context. For instance, some people argue that local Councils have always played a place management role (Stewart-Weeks, 1998, p. 4). I concur with Faris (2004, p. 34), that "there are social-historical, ecological, cultural and political economic dimensions to the evolving concept of Place Management worthy of further investigation". The lack of theoretical substance and definition however raises questions about Place Management's utility in policy and practice especially as it appears popular with all levels of government. This is critical given "there has indeed been a neo-liberal tendency in much community-based and place-based policy in welfare states, but national and local politics still create significant variation (Smyth et al., 2005, p. 2). If Place Management is concerned with a restructuring of government services then it is important to consider how the focus on 'place' and 'management' is translated into specific structures, processes and systems, like the allocation of resources, accountability, community engagement, sustainability, management and decision-making. What is it then, about 'place' that ignites interest in its management?

Managing 'place'

Place Management has geographic, historic, identity and social connotations. This was already discussed in an earlier section in relation to Kelly and Sewell's (1988) conceptualisation of place and belonging to place. This discussion builds upon this earlier one. Place is loosely defined with no tangibles and many dimensions of meanings (Untaru, 2002, p. 171) which can refer to a space or beginning point from which to engage in creative, local action. The concept of place is also elusively used to incite creative active 'community participation', especially when part of government policy (Lynn, 2006, p. 117). Place, as a geographical concept, not only emphasises "location and space" but also "the spatial distribution of social and economic activities" (Untaru, 2002, p. 171). Any geographical conception of place must also consider how "place-based identity is constituted by the interactions

between the extra-local forces of political economy and the historical layers of local social relations” (Oakes, 1997, p. 509) and place as both geographical and spiritual entities are of vital significance to Indigenous peoples. As previously noted, the C4C programme selects a ‘place’, referred to as a ‘community’, from a centralised National ‘place’. It is at this central location that chosen areas are selected and bounded socio-geographically using data indicating disadvantage from such sources as the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Having the focus on ‘place’ in all its cultural, political, spiritual, ecological meanings (and others) questions remain about the programme’s implementation with the funding body (FaHCSIA) being located from outside ‘place’.

A heightened concern for ‘place’ or ‘community’ is distinguishable in English-speaking countries where periods of profound social change are occasioned. Through times past there are many such occasions where social change gives rise to policy programmes focusing on ‘place’: the Great Depression, both World Wars, population and economic moves associated with agrarian and industrialised societies, globalisation, to the most recent 2007 World Financial Crisis. For instance, at the time of the Industrial Revolution a mass of people migrating to urban centres was followed by further technological development witnessing even greater increases in city dwelling but also fluctuations in movements of people in rural and urban settings (Laslett, 1971). Mass movements of people to and from particular areas impact in many and various ways, with impact on the economies of localities and whole nations most notable and to which governments have had to respond. This change has evidenced a living in feudal social systems to living in societies increasingly reliant upon industry and technology. With it is a shifting of roles and responsibilities with differences evident in how people connect to others and their government.

Explanation can be found in Ferdinand Tönnies’ (2002) prominent work from the nineteenth century where he discusses the way individuals adapted to such transformations from ancient civilization to modern society. It was his

concepts of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft that aided in complex considerations of these transformations. Tönnies' Gemeinschaft, translated as 'community', was used to classify informal yet multitasked relationships, such as family, village relations with face to face interactions where people knew each other in many different roles within small numbers and knew each other well (Harris, 2001). His concept of Gesellschaft, translated as 'society', however describes people having interactions with many more people in society but the interactions are mechanical and limited to specific roles and activities (Harris, 2001, p. 17). Gemeinschaft further describes a geographical area consisting of multiple players who were all known to one another and even though they each held multiple roles and tasks, separation of the private and public spheres was neither common nor pronounced. Gesellschaft however describes how people's interactions differ when more people are involved and across greater geographical spaces, as characteristic of industrial societies.

Tönnies' complex theorising, despite the critiques that accuse him of romanticisation (Lindenfeld, 1988) is helpful in understanding the changing relations between people and between people and their state. In C4C, for instance, Gesellschaft provides a good description for many of the actors' relations that are mostly role based as defined by their occupation and job descriptions. This interaction between people based on ascribed roles formalises relationships in ways that are counter to the more personal settings of the family and community. Taking this theorising, we see an active and increasingly popular move by governments towards trying to recreate Gemeinschaft connections: C4C's focus on social capital, community development/building and maximising the strengths of such relationships and human capital further illustrates this.

The idea of managing or manipulating environments towards improved outcomes is a feature of the human condition with the social, political and economic conditions of the time both being shaped by and shaping the environment. 'Management', taken as 'management in place', infers that the

control, direction and handling of services delivered to nought to five year olds lies with the incorporating body contracted to 'manage' or oversee that C4C site. The 'Facilitating Partner' or 'place manager' is in control of the whole project site and all associated relations. While it is possible for ownership and management to be separate, the processes of C4C vested greater degree of authority to the 'manager' again raising questions about the policy principles of community ownership. The other important dimension in consideration of 'management' is that outside the selected 'place' distinctly centralised management continues.

A relatively recent example in which governments responded to the negative impacts of external forces on localities is that seen in the Town Centre Management (TCM) scheme in the UK in the 1980s (Coca-Stefaniak, Parker, Quin, Rinaldi, & Byrom, 2009). This response was a reaction to large shopping precincts on the margins of many localities which drew people from local retail outlets leading to their demise. The TCM scheme relied upon the cooperation of many private and public enterprises to maximise "management of public and private space" through such collaborations across private, public and business partnerships (Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2009, p. 75). Other EU countries initiated schemes similar to TCM, yet these were named and often implemented differently.

Reflections on the differential nature of society and community include, but are not restricted to, the contemporary trend of people working away from where they live and occupying role-based jobs, and the interactions that occur between people and workers in local areas are more often formal rather than informal or relationship based. The increasing beliefs about neighbourhoods being unsafe and the lack of informal activities with neighbours are other indicators of the disconnection between local people. And here the focus moves from democratic challenges requiring planning, to societal conditions cast as problems requiring solutions: problems that require government attention but also provide the paradox aptly described as 'modernity's paradox' (Keating & Hertzman, 1999).

Modernity's paradox

The evident 'falling between the gaps' noted of much of the state service delivery outcomes of the 1980s and 1990s has given rise to an ever increasing distance between those who are benefiting from Australia's current climate of economic growth and prosperity alongside those people with a marked unequal, if any, share of the economic 'boom time' (Hayes, Gray, & Edwards, 2008; Stanley et al., 2005). More recently known as 'modernity's paradox', in which notable increases in health and other problems in children as compared with lack of improvement in the social gradients which would be expected from considerable economic growth (Keating & Hertzman, 1999, p. 1) is that commonly seen in many western nations. If, however, we consider countries such as Canada and Scandinavia which invest in social assistance for unemployed, low paid parents and childhood disadvantage we witness lower child poverty rates. Evidenced in Scandinavia where there exist high rates of single parent families, like in other OECD countries, there is lower child poverty given investment in these areas (Acheson, 1998; McCain & Mustard, 1999; UNICEF, 2000). Investment in the early years of children's development and in their families is therefore considered an economically viable option for many governments (Vimpani, 2001, p. 207).

'Modernity's paradox' is qualified by a 'gradient effect' that measures variables associated with people's wellbeing, which is connected to one's social status. The steepness of the gradient gives "important clues about whether a society is supporting or undermining the developmental health of its population" (Keating & Hertzman, 1999, p. 1). In Australia however, Homel and others (2001, p. 270), point to a lack of "evidence for the social gradient hypothesis" making it "difficult to determine or substantiate an increased gap between economic groups that result in children living in poverty". Of particular interest to policy scientists though is the clear evidence signifying "marked geographical variations in socio-economic status across Australia" (Homel et al., 2001, p. 270) which is said to have increased (Harding 2000, cited by Homel et. al., 2001 p, 270) and remains as trends

and problems that are inadequately researched (Stanley et al., 2005). Gradient effect or not, these arguments give rise to long-standing debates about the decline of the welfare state and the dominant liberal ideology purporting a need for reduction of state intervention and further reliance on market based economies. How does this information, as discursively framed, inform, shape and define social policy in Australia?

Embodied in the above account are various strands of theorising that in part reflect the complexity and problematics of contemporary society. It is the negative effects of complex socio-political and economic arrangements on this society that C4C was developed to address, but in its construction there were various and often divergent ideas. This archaeology of Place Management does not clearly answer how these diverse ideas about the significance of place, community or locality emerged but it is evident that they were used in order to address the development of children in disadvantaged localities.

Children and Place Management

C4C rests on two overarching principles: that early childhood development is crucial in producing productive, self reliant adults and that places (their environment) can have negative and deleterious effects on their development. What principles influence Place Management, what basic assumptions exist and what does this mean for programme design?

'Early development of children is important' as a central idea underpinning C4C's operations is one that transcends many policy and practice domains and the importance of childhood development is not disputed. The neurosciences literature concentrates on the importance of brain development in the early years of life, and this theorising was significant in formulating C4C as highlighted in Section Two. The plasticity of the brain in infancy and early childhood, this literature suggests, is most vulnerable to periods of change in which children who experience profound adversity are

deemed more likely to have adverse outcomes later in life. External stimuli, those events in the child's environment, are crucial to the development of the child's brain and affect positive or negative adult outcomes. This influence on brain development during these formative years is a premise underpinning C4C which in response aims to intervene in the environments of children, specifically 'disadvantaged' children, to mitigate those risk factors believed to impact upon outcomes for these children. Such intervention aims further to involve 'community' and localities in the prevention of risk factors by managing environments through harnessing the capacities of residents and local service systems in a coordinated effort towards this end.

C4C joins a long list of programmes influenced by research literature assessing the epidemiology of childhood disadvantage as being contingent on external stimuli. Examples of (re)creating environments that offset identified risk factors with a response aiming to enhance protective factors through some variation on place based intervention are plentiful. Listed in Appendices G and H are national and international expressions of many of these (past and present) programmes. Manipulating environments to prevent diseases for instance is seen in malaria and cholera cases (Last, 1988) as well as applied to the prevention of behavioural disorders including violence, alcohol abuse and suicide (Mercy, Rosenberg, Powell, Broome, & Roper, 1993; Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994). In Australia one of the first named Place Management projects introduced into Kings Cross and Woolloomooloo by the New South Wales Government in 1996 and Cabramatta in 1997 focused on crime prevention and drug and alcohol reduction (Boyce, 2000; New South Wales Premier's Department, 2002). Named a 'prevention science', where "negative health outcomes... can be prevented by reducing or eliminating risk factors and enhancing protective factors in individuals and their environments during the course of development" (Hawkins, Catalano, & Arthur, 2002, p. 951), these approaches reflect an etiology of cause and effect. While as relations may be present, it may be that future research will not be so definitive in predicting positive societal outcomes for children on the basis of

the early brain development research, but at present this research is unquestioned.

The 'prevention' factor in the construction of a Place Management approach to early childhood disadvantage here takes a turn from early brain development into the area of crime management. Murray Lee and Peter Herborn (2003, p. 28) link theories of crime prevention and Place Management when they state that "criminals are imagined as victims of circumstance or a product of environment. They are essentially to be corrected and trained; saved from circumstance, normalized". Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is a specialised area, drawing from concepts of environmental psychology (Crowe, 2000, p. xi) which accepts a positivist view where mainly criminal or other undesirable behaviours is causally linked to internal and external factors outside an individual's control. Environmental psychology was supplemented by behavioural psychology, using the psychological learning theory of Skinner, to effect individual change. CPTED ignited much interest particularly in the United States where policies embracing ideas of cause and effect are seen in many policy documents (Newman, 1996).

C4C projects reflect similar thinking when, for instance, parents (as main targets) are provided information on parenting, nutrition, attachment issues, education and overall health and hygiene, with the aim of educating them in particular ways of improving their parenting and hence outcomes for children. In this instance, parents and families (predominantly expected to be nuclear family forms) are a conduit or mechanism through which to change a child's environment towards desired outcomes, as stipulated by government. Similarly, some parents who are constructed by neoliberal thinking as having deficits in skills and knowledge (diet, hygiene and so on) can be 'corrected' and 'trained'. C4C Programmers aim to change behaviour through provision of information and skills, thus reducing risk factors. However, in this neoliberal framing, these risk factors exist in the family environment with such constructions taking little or no note of structural factors shaping external

environments, such as low employment opportunities. As such, when parents do not progress quickly enough or fall behind, they and not the external environment are considered at fault. To Hawkins and others (2002) this 'prevention science' while demonstrated in many community prevention programmes seen across many western nations and given its widespread investment is found not to be effective for many communities. Such over-reliance and focus upon local level services and programmes are critiqued because they often discredit external structural problems generated by wider social, economic and political factors (Parkinson, 1998).

The etiology of problems and how these manifest and are responded to, by whom and for whom is a 'scientificity' (Foucault, 1972b, p. 153) with 'problems' commonly presented by a "positivistic welfare perspective' and which are prevented through the reconstruction and correction of social conditions, communities and/or individuals" (Lee & Herborn, 2003, p. 28). The exacting idea or nature of a 'prevention science' reflects modernity's view. Here, in C4C, children (discursive object) and disadvantage (discursive concept) are addressed by changing environments (discursive practice) in particular ways. Narrowly viewing social problems through dominant scientific or medical framings is problematic where "open-ended text, fraught with competing rhetorics and systems of meaning" (Willard, 2005, p. 115) produce practices that may empower people targeted but may also disempower individuals and groups further. Social problems are complex with a myriad of theories available about effective interventions all which are value based (Shannon & Young, 2004, p. 13). Such values influence what is held to be moral, good, decent, and so on and thus how problems should be addressed. Reducing social problems to 'prevention science' invokes the age-old debate between empirical knowing and the 'radical uncertainty of all knowledge' (Sellick et al., 2002, p. 493).

Many of these ideas pervading C4C have roots in neoliberalist discursive formations. For instance, alongside seeking change within 'communities of disadvantage' through attempting to increase protective factors, there is also

a strong emphasis upon economic benefits, sustainable outcomes and the feasibility of investing in the area of early years prevention for governments.

The burden and cost of these [social and economic] problems are high and increase over time. Evidence suggests that the most effective way to address these problems is before they become entrenched, or to prevent them happening in the first place. In implementing the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, the Australian Government has recognised that strong families and communities create an environment where the incidence of these problems is lessened and where they can be more effectively supported and resolved (Davies & Taylor, 2005, p. 3).

Further references to 'cost-benefits', 'valued behaviour', 'participation' and employment of 'mothers' (Lewis & Taylor, 2005) and 'economic participation' (Davies & Taylor, 2005) are terms reflecting neoliberalist ideas where individual responsibility and rolling back of state intervention are valued. Such is explained as embedded liberalism by Mark Harvey (2007, p. 22) as "a hegemonic discourse with pervasive effects on ways of thought and political-economic practices to the point where it is now part of the commonsense way we interpret, live in, and understand the world". This approach to dealing with the effects of inequality, poverty, profound societal and global changes that impact upon communities and create severe disparities between those who are rich and those who are poor also requires encouraging local communities and other support systems to take greater roles with 'social inclusion' being a desired outcome.

The inequalities that result from these effects reflect the way a society is organised, where resources are invested, and in whose interests these are executed. The inequitable circumstances of health and wellbeing of children casts a wider net than simply the absence of disease or affording children many benefits of their neighbouring counterparts. Decisions about how to intervene in these social, economic and other aspects of our lives are based on values that are reflected in policy formations at the same time as policy constructs shape what is valued in society. How people parent, who parents,

the relationships between people and problems, and how we are governed all reflect value positions. Again this forms analysis in following sections.

The contemporary focus on social exclusion can be traced back to theories of social inequality where economic (Karl Marx 1818-1883), political and social (Max Weber, 1864-1920, and Emile Durkheim, 1853-1917) factors were causally linked. Exclusion from education, relationships, suitable housing, material possessions and more are normative attributes of place, which are the focus for attention in childhood disadvantage. Social exclusion as context specific, multidimensional (more than exclusion from wealth or capital) and relational (Silver, 2007, pp. 5-6) supports the policy of targeting problems of place to address inequality. Social inclusion, a conceptual opposite to social exclusion (Habibis & Walter, 2009, p. 81), is therefore part of the discursive framing fuelling “growing national and international debate about civil society, social capital and the apparently increasing focus on the social dimension of our lives in common [thus giving] place management its (potentially) wider context” (Stewart-Weeks, 2000, p. 3). For instance social inclusion is often used as an encompassing concept to address the many and varied inequalities in society when often it is “equated directly with labour market participation” (Habibis & Walter, 2009, p. 81) in policy direction. Seemingly contradictorily, the key policy areas of targeting early years, through a joined-up approach, in a disadvantaged place run concurrently with inclusion of ‘community’ and ‘social inclusion’ in policy discourse, and “break – rhetorically at least – with the hyper-individualization of the neo-liberal regime” (Smyth et al., 2005, p. 2).

Earlier thinking that may have influenced ideas of Place Management in relation to solving social problems rather than planning for democratic changes can be found in the operation of the settlement movement. The policy of ‘neighborhood improvement’ was included in 1904 for the first time in National Conferences of Charities and Correction in the United States (Camilleri, 1996). At this time the idea of ‘needy families’ was contextualized in poverty based upon a complex relationship between the state and the

economy resulting in poverty rather than a moral condition (Camilleri, 1996, p. 32). An example is found in the work of Jane Addams in particular at the settlement house Hull House. There she identified issues of poverty, unemployment and lack of education of women and immigrants as social rather than individual conditions, and responded accordingly to enable development towards addressing these social ills for people (Addams, 1912). Her work also involved working alongside people in a particular location engaging in social reform, political activity as well as providing services to those people who were marginalised and seen to be disadvantaged and in need. The aim was to improve people's lives through developing their social environments, predominantly through increasing their access to and engagement in economic activities. This was a direct challenge to ideas which allocated blame for their circumstances on the people experiencing them rather than seeking contributing factors elsewhere and particularly in the actions and mechanisms of the state.

Ideas about citizens and or non-government service systems (civil society) as conduits to change through active participation, particularly in areas targeting profound and complex social and economic problems of the state, are highly contestable. Participation of citizens in changes that affect them is another consideration testing governments through time: how to encourage participation (force, coerce, encourage, engage?) and to what degree can people be held responsible for certain situations (living in poverty, unemployed, not educated, no social networks). When terms of 'consumer choice', for instance, are used often the assumption is one of individual choice, where individuals are free to participate and exercise their right to choose. There are many variables within this construction of 'consumer choice' and 'participation' because of the many barriers inhibiting people from participating. Cultural norms and expectations are found to prevent many individuals and whole groups from participating in C4C designed events. This was earlier detailed in relation to the harmony day which did not witness the representation of many groups from within the community because of the 'feuding' between different family and cultural groups in the community.

'Non-participation' often characterises people as inherently 'lazy', unwilling, and even defiant, perhaps unwittingly recalling labels of 'deserving' and 'undeserving poor' which reach back to The Poor Law Act 1601. Inclusion, then, becomes a challenge for mainstream policies and services.

However, the desire to include citizens in local decision making is not new. To return to Whitlam's AAP, this aimed for "co-operation, harmony and interdependence among structures" (Graycar, 1974, p. 54) in hope of putting the AAP at the forefront of social policy development (Hayden, 1978). Closely resembling C4C in its overall framework, timeframe, localisation of issues and encouragement of local participation the AAP differs in its broad focus on needs as identified at the regional (local government) level rather than as nationally defined, and as such a new direction for government.

No matter the perceptions of success, reporting on the AAP pointed to a lack of administrative support, unclear state/federal boundaries, difficulty in boundary definitions at the local level, and limited involvement by people particularly outside social welfare organisations (Munn, 1993, p. 15). These short falls are echoed throughout what little literature exists on the evaluation of C4C at a national policy level (Australian Government, 2009b; Social Policy Research Centre, 2007) and at the site level (Young, 2009) raising questions about what was learnt from previous policy approaches. Many actions, aims and processes employed in the C4C Programme are seen where there is a formal role of the state aiming to capitalise on the informal strengths of 'community'. If we reflect on principles of work with and within communities we can begin to appreciate the tensions and elements of power that exist. For example, the principle underpinning many community development approaches of: "go to the people, live among them, learn from them, love them, serve them, play with them, start with what they have, and build on what they have" (Lao Tzu, Chinese Philosopher 600 BC – 531 BC), in many ways conflict with industrial and modern day emphasis upon economic participation rather than relational and spiritual connections.

The complex social problems of poverty and unemployment which characterise the target areas for C4C are of concern to many governments. How they go about addressing them varies, often wavering between the 'market approach' in which prosperity 'trickles down' to the poor, and a state provided system of resources to change the shape of inequality. The use of a place-based approach for C4C merely drew on past ideas and approaches despite being given a new title of Place Management by its proponents. 'Localising' social problems through the Place Management approach had many effects. Major social problems such as poverty and unemployment are beyond the skills and knowledge of many small NGOs to solve and so they can only deal with the more individual issues of information provision or providing treatment programmes. In an early evaluation it was reported that many CPs lacked "the capacity and skills required for managing and delivering the service" (Social Policy Research Centre, 2007, p. 53). Wider structural and economic inequalities are often minimalised when communities, particular groups and individuals although believed to have great capacities and strengths, are assumed to also have answers to solve these complex problems. Civil society proponents may argue such intervention is more about masking government control and absolving itself of responsibility than about belief in citizens' abilities to respond to social and economic issues.

Dreams of Civil Society

Place Management, then, can be seen to incorporate the desire of Western governments including Australia, for their social policies to create (or 're-create') safe, trusting, civil communities by way of a 'whole of community' approach targeting specific problems through cross-sectoral collaboration. This interest, it is suggested, is "caused primarily by the impact of globalisation on labour markets, transitions in household and demographic structures and shifts in welfare state and public policy" (Walsh, 2001, p.4). With a history of place, area-based or Place Management programmes said to date back to the 1960s in the United Kingdom (Walsh, 2001, p.5), and in

the United States where Head Start was developed, these provided the impetus for widespread urban regeneration policy partnerships adopted in various forms across many western nations, as previously discussed. Martin Stewart-Weeks (2000, p. 3) credits this growing national and international interest in civil society and social capital for elevating Place Management as a policy entity. However Paul Smyth et al. (2005, p. 37) assert policies aimed at addressing poverty, inequality and disadvantage requiring a spatial dimension have “a long, albeit sporadic tradition in Australian politics” with interest in place-based interventions dating back to the 1940s in Australia.

Place Management in Australia

C4C is evidence enough of Australia’s Place Management policy dais, which follows similar lines to the previous AAP, clearly depicted by the Department (FaCSIA) as taking “a place-based approach to policy development, program management and service delivery” (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 4) through a regional as well as urban response to disadvantage. This approach uses “local issues, circumstances and characteristics” as a ‘bottom-up’ response (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007a, p. 4). Although New South Wales is considered the leading state in applying place-based approaches similarly conceptualised projects are seen to burgeon in other States (Smyth et al., 2005, p. 1). The Western Australian Government provides us with an example where it employs Place Management “to counter high levels of dysfunction in particular locations” in its crime prevention policies (Western Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2004, p. 4). Another example is found in the Gordon Inquiry (Western Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2005), which in aiming to prevent child abuse and family violence in Aboriginal communities embraces Place Management as its key strategy. It gives greater depth by articulating it as a method aimed at outcomes rather than inputs; a shift in decision-making to a local and community level; and a focus on places rather than the functions of Government agencies (Government of Western Australia, 2005b, p. 20; Western Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2005, p. 7).

Summarising reflections

A *looking* at the layering of ideas and thinking (past as a reflection on the present) influential to this policy development offers insight into its diversified and variously applied applications of Place Management. With different and often competing disciplines informing place based policy practice these reflect different assumptions, different explanations, different expectations and therefore different formulations for dealing with social issues. This is important as a Place Management approach is very much reflective of certain ideas and notions about social problems and how then to intervene. Ideas formative to a shaping of C4C's Place Management approach suggests an over dominance of neoliberalism overlaid with democratic ideals which compete to find a balance between the role of government and local level participation. Foucault's *Archeology of Knowledge* has guided a way of thinking about key ideas in this formation which requires further analysis particularly in relation to how they translate into action. Such a process is useful to disconnect from these past ideas or assumptions to consider further of where Place Management is to go: a consideration of all possibilities for change towards those principles and aims as anticipated by the C4C programme.

Interleaf

*Kelly and Sewell's (1988) Head, Heart, and Hand trialectic is again useful in structuring this and the next two sections, so in this section the policy analysis of Communities for Children is viewed as the Thinking, or Head aspect of Action Research and developmental work. Additionally I put Flyvbjerg's (2001) questions to the policy to tease out particular intricacies and in this section those questions I ask are: **where are we going? Is this desirable?** to which I add, why Place Management as a policy approach? Following questions **who gains and loses, and by what mechanisms of power?** are considered under the main heading of Heart, which refers to people and their relationships. Finally the question what, if anything, should be done about this? is dealt with in Section Eight and refers to the 'doing' which befits the final acting of the Action Research cycle presented by this thesis. If, indeed, anything is to be done, it is here that I examine how it may be done. To begin with the posing of questions about the value and desirability of Place Management as a policy approach this section critically reviews surrounding ideologies and principles informing and guiding Stronger Families and Communities Strategy's (SFCS) Communities for Children (C4C). This includes the use and construct of 'community' as the mechanism through which practice principles of community development, community building, capacity building, strengths-based practice and building social capital are enacted. The use and description of policy analysis frameworks as well the framework applied is subject of this current Section Six - thinking II.*

A Policy Analysis of Communities for Children

Section introduction

What follows is a critical reflexive examination of the C4C programme as a Commonwealth policy decision, made at a particular time, implemented within specific communities, devised and delivered by a particular government, bounded and bonded by disparate ideological visions and values and shaped further by institutional directives. This section provides description and analysis of C4C as a Place Management policy approach in Australia. My aim in detailing and analysing this social policy direction is to extend policy discussions in a developmental and dialogically inclusive way. The intention, consistent with Flyvbjerg's (2001, p. 61) caution on presuming an all complete analysis, is to provide an analysis both *for* and *of* policy (Hill, 2005, pp. 4-5). Iteratively feeding back into the policy process this analysis addresses the Stronger Families Community Strategy's (SFCS) Communities for Children (C4C) policy and its progress towards further development, as aligned to its central aim of improving the health and wellbeing of children 0-5 years within targeted communities. To Flyvbjerg's (2001) questions I add Deborah O'Sullivan and Barry Down's (2001) critical questions to construct the policy analysis framework used here.

C4C is located within a number of broad discourses, including: early years brain development and early intervention; joined-up governance through

linking the layers of government with business, private and not-for-profit organisations; and interventions targeting place and spatial disadvantage. The principles underpinning this policy include community development, community building, social capital, strengths-based practice and capacity building. These principles present sites of contested meanings which are revealed and analysed here and continued in the following section. An enhanced conceptualisation of how C4C developed as a Place Management approach within the Australian social policy context is the subject of this section, dealing with my research aims:

1. To describe and analyse a specific Australian Federal Government social policy domain that has a Place Management orientation; and,
4. To critically reflect upon the rollout of Communities for Children in two Western Australian sites.

HEAD

Asking critical questions which enable analysis is an appropriate action for the 'Head' dimension. To set the scene I first discuss generally the use of frameworks then move on to the rational and incremental policy approaches which are traditionally used for analysis of policy and policy making and implementation. A framework constructed for application in this section follows.

Policy Analysis Frameworks

Frameworks are a valuable tool for both modelling and unpacking the various components of policy practice. A framework can attend to the different aspects of policy such as the economic, social, environmental, legal, and political dimensions and help in an understanding of how constitutive influences interplay, even when there is intersection and overlap (Bridgman and Davis 2004, p. 57). Frameworks are at times, however, limited in their capacity to provide complete accounts (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, p. 119) because of their often deterministic nature and the modernist trap of assuming a supreme right way of knowing (Tesoriero, 2010, p. 299). Any

framework for analysis, whether borrowed or constructed, should only be considered as reflecting the values of the analyst who “should be aware of his [sic] own political and ideological biases and the preconceptions, assumptions, and sheer wishful thinking” (Hogwood and Gunn 1984, p. 63). Any analysis will be dependent upon the researcher’s method, scope and the aim of the project (Jamrozik, 2005, p. 55). A critical reflexive framing that looks at structural and ideological arrangements and how these actions affect particular people and the course of policy is a further aim of this section’s policy analysis while declaring my own underlying values and positioning as author.

Framing the analysis

Flyvbjerg’s framework (2001) serves to generate questions for analysis useful in *thinking* about C4C. Flyvbjerg (2001, p. 60) raises the importance of praxis in questioning social and political actions. The aim of questioning “is to carry out analyses and interpretations of the status of values and interests in society aimed at social commentary and social action” (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 60). The three value-rational questions of “classical phronetic research” he then suggests, include *where are we going? Is this desirable? And what should be done?* (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 60). When considering Place Management as a policy construct this suggests we identify clearly what we mean. Additionally it is important to identify the strengths and challenges in using this policy construct.

Policy is “an expression [and act] of governmental authority” (Considine 1994, p. 5, 6) but variously includes those people in positions of policy making, people who are presented as influential, people who are excluded from the decision making processes, and people who achieve what they want in the processes. This raises the implications of power. Flyvbjerg (2001, p. 60) refers to this when he asks another question: *who gains and who loses and by which mechanisms of power?* Issues of power consider, among other things, who are the decision makers and what are the dominant discourses

influencing C4C as a Place Management approach. This is the topic discussed in Section Seven.

Arguing that policy is about making decisions and choices around desired outcomes O'Sullivan and Down (2001, p. 66) merge two decision-making models, crisis and rational comprehensive. In their analysis they focus on key actors in the policy process, critical decision making times and what criteria are used and by whom in determining policy outcomes. They pose questions such as, *how are decisions made, by whom, why, and how?* This questioning enriches Flyvbjerg's framings and therefore is included in this framework analysis guiding this section of the thesis. For instance, O'Sullivan and Down's structural interrogation of policy processes focus upon micro systems and wider political, economic, environmental, cultural and other important areas shaping policy. How problems are defined, the role of the media in policy formation and the reinforcing of social and structural inequalities around issues of class, race, gender and other classifications are considered (O'Sullivan and Down 2001, p. 67). I explore those areas most dominant and concerning as presented by participants in this research. O'Sullivan and Down's (2001) final question asks *in whose interests?* which is relevant for consideration alongside Flyvberg's questions concerning *who wins* and *who loses?* and is discussed in Section Eight.

This analysis considers inherent contradictions with any policy programmes, as well as powerful mechanisms such as dominant discourses and normative and unquestioned ideas that influence decision making processes. The C4C policy is represented by its architects as participatory, inclusive and community led, yet my analysis of its enactment, guided by the questions above, challenges the accuracy of such representation. My analysis also highlights the contrasting process of Place Management where government is funder but also promoter of partnerships between "individuals, families, business, government, welfare and charitable organisations collaborating to solve social and economic problems" (Howard, 2000). Such a dual relationship is more consistent with centralised government direction of

activities than allowing for community choice and determination. Inflexible directives and requirements handed down by government contradict policy aims of community being encouraged to devise solutions to local problems. Tendering and contracting as prescriptive and rational by predecided processes sit in opposition to the forming of partnerships. Where collaborative working relationships intended by National funders may develop in the first instance they soon break down once expressions of interest are called due to the competitiveness of such processes. The detail of such contradictions and dilemmas was a recurring theme of data collected in the fieldwork for this study.

Flyvbjerg's (2001, p. 60) four broad questions and O'Sullivan and Down's (2001) considerations on decision making processes provide the means to analyse C4C. This framework is thus contextually appropriate, politically aware, aligns with a critical theory perspective, is locally applicable, and focuses on decision making processes. A discussion on policy making processes precedes an outline of the framework followed by its application to the C4C policy programme.

Policy Making Processes

Before engaging in analysis specific to C4C using the above framework it is necessary to further contextualise this discussion around the policy making approach. This is important as how policy is conceived of, by whom and therefore enacted impacts upon perceptions of policy but also its outcomes. The most usual form of analysis focuses on policy as rational or as an incremental process (McClelland, 2006c; Newman, 2002).

Rational approach

Policy making is suggestive of a rational and linear process (Newman 2002, p. 348) with the many frameworks devised to analyse policy remaining prescriptive. Rational decision making models often assume that by following a process and order, as directed by any given model or framework,

the result is accurate and 'right' (Stone 1997, p. 242). Attributed to Herbert Simon (McClelland 2006, p. 42; Hill 2005, p. 13) steps characterising a rational process emerge from a vertically directional framework based on the idea of bounded rationality (Simon, 1957). These steps follow a linear trajectory: first identifying and defining the policy objectives and goals, and then carefully considering "all present and potential problems and opportunities relevant to its mission or interests" [authors' emphasis] (Hogwood and Gunn 1984, p. 45). All alternatives and options, once identified, are assessed with the 'best' option determined. The 'best option' representing a rational choice is selected according to a number of influential factors, such as political leaning, skills and knowledge of operators, agendas of various personnel and so forth, and relying on the decisions made by those in positions of authority. By paying attention to a list of options as prescribed by a rational process this amounts to a loss of creative, more dynamic, policy options that could occur, to say nothing of ignoring the values underlying agendas. This latter set of considerations suggests the 'rational' model is less objective than its name would appear to promote. Rational policy making models are criticised for their lack of attention to issues of power, politics and the latent, often insidious, values underpinning the policy making process itself with any claim to objectivity questionable given decisions made are value-laden (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984, p. 6).

Rational models remain nevertheless advantageous for their ability to provide vast amounts of information needed in decision making processes, although this does not guarantee good policy making (McClelland, 2006a, p. 41). Rational approaches are also useful when providing a guide or framework to devise, enact and evaluate policy (McClelland, 2006a, p. 48).

Incremental approach

Incremental policy processes proposed by Charles Lindblom (Lindblom, 1959, 1979; Lindblom & Woodhouse, 1993) provide a contrast to rationalist policy analysis models. Incremental policy making is also described as a

process of 'muddling through' (Lindblom, 1959, 1979). Small changes, based upon experiential learnings that loop into a policy's development (Bridgman & Davis, 2004, p. 47) and in which "successive limited comparisons', starting from the existing situation and involving the changing of policy incrementally" (Hill, 1997, p. 101) characterise an incremental approach. Lindblom (1979, 1959) believes policy needs to build in flexibility based upon changes within society that impact upon policy, which he says are not as simple as is portrayed in a rational, systematic formulation. Increasingly, scholars are aiming at a 'middle ground', having considered at length those differences and similarities of rational and incremental policy approaches (Hill, 1997, p. 105). For instance, Dror (cited by Hill 1997, p. 105) discusses a developmental policy process which combines elements of rationalist ideals, where certain steps are taken, with incremental undertakings. Adam Jamrozik (2009, p. 60) suggests that policy follows four distinct parts; planning, formulation, implementation and evaluation. These four dimensions do not "take the form of a well-ordered sequence of activities; rather, it amounts to policy-making 'on the run'" with such stages overlapping. And while stages, when followed, imply the result of good policy making this is not 'guaranteed' (McClelland, 2006a, p. 55).

This thesis takes the position that policy making does not fit neatly into any set formula nor is it necessarily linear in process. Rather planning, action, reflection and further action are required components. This is separate from a predetermined rational and linear deliberation (Considine, 1994, p. 259). Policy, I argue, consists of a set of ideas and actions that can be analysed to identify overt components as well as covert aspects, such as values and dominant discourses (Jamrozik, 2009, p. 60). While many policies continue to have roots in rational ideals which continue to serve an important purpose in provision of the many and varied options, there is acceptance for needing greater flexibility in areas of the policy process. Lesley Vidovich (2007, p. 285) draws attention to, for instance, different 'theoretical framings and practical possibilities' for finding suitable common ground which "can simultaneously draw on the strengths of different approaches".

From ‘rational’ to ‘evidence based’

The brief representation of the inherent complexities of policy models above provides a contextual base in which to locate C4C as a policy decision and implementation. With clear aims, goals and targets of intervention C4C, as a programme under SFCS, presents policy in much the same way as expected of rational policy processes. Its intentions to bring about a ‘democratic legitimacy’ (Rawsthorne 2003), as a programme said to develop and mould according to each locality taking cues from local stakeholders, are however characteristic of incremental, rather than rational, streams of policy development. Articulated by the various stakeholders across the different layers of this policy platform however is the weaving of top down directives with local expectations in what Dror (cited by Hill, 1997, p. 105) accepts as “the validity of incrementalism as a descriptive theory” with little congruence between what is purported of the policy and the experience of it.

Emergence of evidence based policies and practice models in recent years (Chenoweth & McAuliffe, 2005, p. 116) are just one current policy application merging rationalist policy making ideals with participatory ideals (McClelland 2006, p. 41). C4C, in its Promising Practices Profiles (PPP), adopts its own evidence based practice of ‘what works’ in community development, early childhood development and early intervention service provision (Australian Government: Australian Institute of Family Studies, nd; Soriano, Clark, & Wise, 2008). Following “an international movement”, and influenced in part by US-based Promising Practice Network, evidence based practice “has its roots in the scientific movement of the early 20th century” (Soriano et al., 2008, p. 7) which suggests that ‘good’ policy decisions are made based on a type of ‘truth’ (Bacchi, 2009, p. 251) . Evidence-based policies, also popular given a spotlight under the Tony Blair administration (McClelland, 2006a, p. 41; Nutley, 2003) point to a small shift in policy making. Policy practices at the macro level incorporating views and experiences of those at the micro end of the policy spectrum are suggestive of this (Vidovich 2001, p. 3). Who

is involved, how, and to what degree are important considerations that are returned to later in this section.

Both rational and incremental policy decision making are evident in C4C's policy design. Rose's (1999, p. 28) reflection sums it up well:

such project or strategy or rationalization, in the name of the market, in the name of the social, in the name of the liberty of the individual, is a strategy to intervene, whether in thought or in reality, upon a set of messy, local, regional, practical, political and other struggles in order to rationalize them according to a certain principle.

While C4C's policy aims and intended processes are valuable there are many competing principles and practices needing further critical engagement. What is questionable, for instance, are those disparities existing between what is operationalised and that which is experienced by local people: both those implementing the policy projects and those targeted by these. The following policy analysis framework at Table 5 aids in exploring the intricacies of C4C, its nuances and unspoken attributes, towards understanding Place Management as a policy approach in Australia. The first question posed by Flyvberg's question *where are we going?* is addressed below.

Policy Analysis Framing

Where are we going? - Head (who are we?)

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Issue: | What issue(s) is the policy addressing? |
| Context: | Historical, Social, Political, Environmental, Economic, Global |
| Role of: | Government (Local, State, Commonwealth), Private/ Business Sector, Non-government Organisations |
| Decision Making: | Who decides, what and on what basis? (who, what, why, where and how?) |
| Targets: | Individuals, families, groups, organisations, communities |

Is this desirable? (why Place Management as an approach?)

| | |
|---|---|
| Policy principles and practices: | Peoples' interests and broader perspectives including issues of inclusion/exclusion, decision making, participation |
| Processes: | Top down/ bottom up, vertical, horizontal |
| Decision Making: | What values are reflected in the decisions made? (how, by whom, why and in whose interests?) |



Who gains and who loses? - Heart (by what mechanisms of power?) (Section Seven - *reflecting*)

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Discourses: | (dominant discourses, discursive objects and concepts) |
| Targets: | as above |
| Power: | Attention to differentiation of power based upon social status, for example, race and gender, as well as construction of and mechanisms of power |



What should be done? - Hand (if anything?) (Section Eight - *acting*)

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Evaluation: | What works? What is the evidence? How does this inform practice and its development? How can what we know guide our next steps? (incorporating what we know in policy development in an iterative cyclic motion of <i>looking, thinking, reflecting, acting</i>) |
|--------------------|---|

Figure 5 Policy Analysis Framing

Where are ‘we’ going?

The learnings and experiences of the initial three years of the SFCS policy implementation were said to inform C4C’s inception in 2004 (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007b, p. 2). At this time no one definitive policy statement was identified as introducing C4C but rather mention of its goals, aims and intentions is to be found scattered through various documents and papers. This is common with many policy plans (Bridgman & Davis, 2004, p. 94). Undoubtedly, investing in early childhood development with the aim of improving overall health and wellbeing of children 0-5 years and families in select communities is C4C’s central objective. The focus of the various people, groups, and organisations involved in C4C, however, appears divided between a concentration on service to children and families, and building collaborative children and family service systems. Both of these outcomes and intentions of C4C are included under the five key areas, as drawn from the National Agenda for Early Childhood (NAEC) (Australian Government, 2005b), which was only formalised subsequent to the rollout of C4C. The outcomes, listed in Section One, attend to the improvement of health and wellbeing of children and families through promoting healthy young families, early learning and care, and supporting families and parents. The second outcome focuses primarily on the creation of:

child-friendly communities that understand the importance of the early years, acquire the features of strong communities and apply this capacity to maximise the health, well-being and early development of young children at the local level (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 11).

This latter consideration is Government’s response to the economic, social and political changes which have contributed to a decline in community and networking arrangements: “a perceived decline in social cohesion which has placed stress on family and social functioning” (Zubrick, Williams, Silburn & Vimpani, 2000, p. 1x). The focus then is for family and children’s services to work more effectively and collaboratively as a system to support childhood development. The processes for both outcomes (improved health and

wellbeing for children 0-5 and services systems working in partnership) focus on different processes, even though overlapping, which serves for analysis later.

Who are ‘we’?

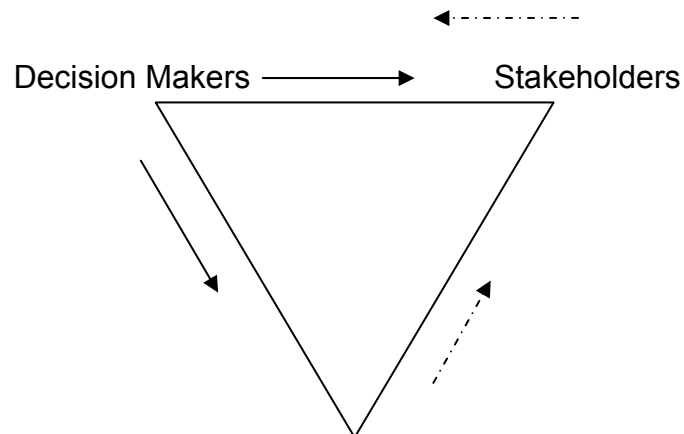
Any discussion of where we are going and the issues surrounding this policy must include an unpacking of *who are we?* Reference to ‘we’ is not intended to represent an all inclusive unitary voice. Included, however, are the decision makers, the people targeted by this policy, as well as stakeholders.

Stakeholders are defined by FaHCSIA as:

people, organisations or agencies that have an interest in *Communities for Children* in the site. Stakeholders can include, for example, community leaders and members, family and community service providers, business and other service providers and the three levels of government (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 6).

While this definition includes community members it simultaneously mutes that focus by naming up leaders and service providers and the three levels of government. A more simple, yet precise, definition offered by the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, and that preferred here, is where stakeholder represents “a person with an interest or concern in something” (Soanes & Stevenson, 2004, p. 1404). ‘Stakeholders’ differs from ‘decision makers’ in that the immediacy or the impact of ‘interested’ and ‘concerns’ differ. For example, individual families are immediately concerned to receive speech therapy services for their children, but programme planners are less affected than they are by balancing the budget. Stakeholders, however, can influence decision making although they are not necessarily decision makers in the event of policy production. ‘Targets’, is a term and concept needing particular consideration, and is returned to below. In brief, targets can include people who influence decision making and who have an interest in the policy issues. Not all ‘targets’ fall tidily into one or other camp, with many sitting outside these altogether.

These groupings frequently overlap; for instance an NGO may be easily positioned as decision maker and stakeholder and at other times also targeted by the funder to provide services. The form of an inverted triangle is a helpful representation of a way of thinking about the connections between these groupings with the unbroken line indicating a greater strength of influence.



Targeted: children, parents, groups, organisations (the 'community')

Decision making happens across many levels, of which Uphoff (1986, p. 11) identifies ten, ranging from international through to individual decision making processes. Decision making is seen across most of these layers in C4C and can include Federal Government personnel, national and state FaHCSIA representatives, NGOs, from CEOs to service staff, state and local government officials, and other interested people within business and community organisations and groups. Decision making as a shared action between social networks and services corresponds to the view that government's ability to solve problems is limited therefore requiring input from other sectors of society (McClelland, 2006a, p. 45).

Previously considered is the 'I' in this research process and the ideological framing informing my particular standpoint. Given these groupings in the diagram, my positioning further aligns more with that of the stakeholders grouping in that I am an interested person with a concern in the directions and processes of policy, which impact upon people. Any influence this

research and my earlier involvement in the projects may have on the developments, processes or thinking about Place Management as a social policy approach remains unknown but has influential potential. I turn now to a discussion of targets: services, people, place and systems.

'Targeted Universalism'

Policies tend to be either universal, for all to benefit, or targeted, where those considered most in need are intended recipients (McClelland, 2006c, p. 35). C4C joins universal services, early years health, wellbeing and development to all children 0-5 years and their families, with targeted interests, contained by forty five nominated communities considered as 'areas of particular disadvantage' (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007b, p. 2). The concept of 'targeted universalism' (Young & Hendrick, 2008, p. 7) is described as an approach that is "staged or phased implementation [which] accommodates local needs and conditions" with universal provision such as health services. Targeting within these select localities is outlined within the 'Service Provider Guidelines' as that including "specific population groups, specific places where people interact" (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 10). The scale at which C4C was implemented, with a common set of directives, aims and specifications, while expected to be "tailored to the particular needs of the community" (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 10) however resulted in a certain uniformity of projects across the sites. Although guided by those broad aims and directions specified under C4C the ability to design and direct projects suited to the needs of groups of people within sites was possible. This concept of 'targeted universalism' is both a critique of programmes such as C4C which cloud the implications of their targeted approach under a veil of universalism, while at the same time it is an attempt to meet Doyal and Gough's (1991) desire for a way forward from the dichotomy. As they (Doyal & Gough, 1991, p. 181) state,

the re-emergence of the idea of citizenship – particularly the concern with social exclusion; and, postmodernism, where the ‘recognition of diversity ... offers us a way of going beyond the universalism versus selectivity debate in social policy and of taking account of people’s different needs as well as their universal rights.

The extent to which C4C found middle ground between its universal spread and targeting projects individually ‘tailored’ to the needs of the people of that site was the exception rather than the rule. Earlier examples of the Eastville site with the community researchers and Westville with the Public Spaces Project, highlight creative means towards the same outcomes with successful results.

Further the target of ‘community’ in itself is a contradiction because ‘community’ in this context as a universal concept with its romanticised connotations is not the reality of communities which represent diversity and connect in different ways, with different people and around different interests and especially for those whose relationships were external to the imposed community. This was illuminated through the earlier examples where the assumption of a homogenous Indigeneity led to mis-representation of people of place.

Targeted people in place

‘Target’, implying a direct line, in actuality is indirect and convoluted with C4C evidencing a number of ‘targets’. Any description depends upon how ‘targets’ are represented, by whom, what assumptions underpin these groupings and in what ways these groups are engaged or not in policy making processes. While children 0-5 years are the immediate targets, those with responsibility for caring for children, be it in a parental or organisational capacity, also are the targets of this intervention. Families, specific groups, for example Indigenous and CALD groups, organisations, and other groups of place with their own complex intersecting systems which also cross boundaries into other groupings are targets. This produces a very complex map overlaid by such classifications as culture, age, religion, and gender. To

treat these as separate policy matters is to continue the siloed approach which C4C aims to prevent. The notion of intersectionality, where these characterisations are interwoven is the basis of my discussion below. First, a little description on each targeted area is required.

Targeted Place

Spatial disadvantage and the spotlight on problems of place coincide with international policy developments that focus on social inclusionary policies, community rejuvenation and renewal projects. Although social inclusion as a policy concept was not adopted by the government of the day the C4C programme is considered to be an approach addressing poverty as well as “inadequate social participation, lack of social integration and lack of power”: all concepts synonymous with social inclusion (Hayes et al., 2008, p. 4). While the focus on place is also defended for the ability to target scarce government resources (Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2007b, p. 2) it has at the same time the ability to exclude in the process. For instance, many families living just beyond C4C boundaries, often just on the other side of the road, were as much in need of services offered under the programme. One FP representative stated:

Because [the C4C site straddles] two local governments, [with a] selection of 5 suburbs that aren't connected, [there are] suburbs right next door that are just as eligible, like [name of suburb]... Significant challenge in an urban environment in any case... I would have thought that you'd have to look at the Sure Start model where you have a much more smaller place so you don't cut through 50,000 people (Owen).

Place conjures up different meanings and sense of belonging, as seen in Section Four. The meanings of and belonging to place are often bound up with people's sense of self and others, people's relationships to others, and how those connect or not to people of that place. One respondent stated that one's “sense of community differs for people, sometimes from one side of the road to another” (Ian). Another respondent, actively involved in setting up

C4C in Eastville and Westville, reflected on a story shared during the initial setting up period:

I remember one story ... 'if we're gunna knock off a car we don't pinch it from this area, like [name of suburb], we walk across [the road] and we knock it off, 'cause that's not our people (Alex).

Targeted Systems

Children and family service systems, from NGOs through business and private organisations, are targeted to provide services and supports for the programme with children and families being the end targets. Improved service delivery between and across these different, and often disparate, layers was expected to result in flow on benefits to children and families. Other systems of change include those macro systems which include the three tiers of government. The conceptualisation underpinning the targeting of service systems is that improved service delivery is possible when organisations work in collaboration and partnership towards a common cause: the health and wellbeing of children in this instance. This signifies not only a change in how government perceives of its role but how too it sees its relationship with other layers of government as well as other sectors. C4C, depicted as an innovative programme demonstrating new governance arrangements and service systems, challenges the traditional siloed approach and is said to be in response to the ineffectiveness of such responses with some success evidenced (Australian Government, 2009b; Social Policy Research Centre, 2007).

The policy direction, while seemingly clear remains complex with any number of influential factors impacting upon its implementation and development. Factors which complicate the policy include but are not restricted to, the standpoint of stakeholders, decision makers and 'targets' of this policy, government ideology of the day, international and national activities, and the diverse and unique qualities characteristic of each select place. The policy journey, of *where are 'we' going?* is therefore not a straight forward one,

marked by a complex web of arrangements that requires greater critical engagement. In a palimpsest approach to knowing, where layers of knowing build upon what has gone before, critical awareness of this policy programme is obtained through further consideration of who makes the decisions, what do they decide and on what basis these decisions are made.

The following table summarises these decision makers' relationship to the policy decisions and provides a brief description of the context for the discussion. As Ian notes, the policy was intended to be a 'bipartisan investment' with "NGOs as the delivery arm", stating clearly that

Government ideology influences policy of the day (Ian).

As we have seen and is reiterated through the discussion that follows, ideology (or the shaping of ideas about what should be done) engaged the NGO in a less than equal partnership.

Table 3 illuminates the decision making aspects of who were the primary decision makers, deciding what and on what basis. The table details this according to relationships, outcomes, place, timelines, rationale and methods.

Table 3 Who, What, Where, When, Why, How

| C4C (PM) | Identifies | The Programme Details | Implements | Monitors | Evaluates |
|---------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| WHO (relationships) | FaHCSIA defines overall aims/ objectives - NGOs as 'partners' help meet these. | CP propose service details and FP adjusts/ amends according to FaHCSIA requirements and own organisational standing. | CPs implement and FP oversee this process by supporting and guiding along the way. | FP oversees the projects to feedback to both CP & FaHCSIA. | While FP responsible for employing a LE to evaluate overall processes, some are included in CP project evaluations. CPs are required to report progress but no formal process of evaluation embraced across the board. FaHCSIA provides national framework. |
| WHAT (product) | C4C committee suggest what services needed with FaHCSIA reaching final decision. FP is able to reject suggestion made by committee. | CP in consultation with FP put into place project details. This are supported or not by FaHCSIA. If not supported then have to revise. | CP implement as per contract devised with FP. | FP is largely responsible for monitoring projects and overall C4C processes through meetings and quarterly reports. | LE is expected to use programme logic as foundation for evaluation processes at CP level. This differs depending upon each sites' interpretation & agreement between LE and FP. |
| WHERE (place) | FaHCSIA decide on site based on statistics and other externally defined boundaries. | Specified by FaHCSIA according to externally identified boundaries. | As determined by FaHCSIA site and infrastructure of organisation (buildings, location of services etc.). | FP is responsible for the breadth and reach of cover within the geographically defined site. | Evaluation of site responsibility is that of FP within the LE model as loosely determined by FaHCSIA. |
| WHEN (time) | FaHCSIA sets timeframes. | FaHCSIA sets timeframes which itself is often unable to meet defined turn-around times for projects for funding allocations. | FaHCSIA set timeframes. At times CP contract is delayed for various reasons further delaying service provision. | FaHCSIA dictates reporting requirements: format/ how often. These were often changed. FP some discretion. | FaHCSIA determines milestones as per its five broad key areas. |
| WHY (rationale) | FaHCSIA valuing early intervention, cross-sectorial partnerships, & community capacity building processes. | FaHCSIA determined based on international evidence outlining benefits (cost effective etc) | FaHCSIA supported by international evidence. | FaHCSIA wants to know that it works and if not what did not work | FaHCSIA wants to know that it works and if not what did not work. |
| HOW (methods) | FaHCSIA determined, again based on research & belief in approach. | FP and CP in collaboration. Shaped by each Auspicing organisation & by FaHCSIA | CP as per contract as supported/ overseen by FP | CP & FP collaborate to determine how this will look for each project. | FP looks to FaHCSIA for guidance, CP looks to FP for guidance and FaHCSIA looks to FP and CP for details of how it will look/ work |

I now turn to the policy context shaping C4C as a Place Management approach.

International/ National Policy Context

Preceding sections have demonstrated how international events and decisions influence current policy practices. Australia is often positioned as closely aligned to policy development processes observed in Britain and North America: “policies in these countries draw on the same academic discourses although the manner in which these discourses are put into policy and their social outcomes are refracted through their own particular political contexts” (Everingham 2003, p. 9). Other policies impacting upon this policy influence its development – economic reforms, work place reforms, social security reforms and so on, all of which are interrelated (Pusey, 2003, p. 132) as previously evidenced in the archaeological tracing in the preceding section. Recalling these events, a closer look at the Australian social, political, economic, and cultural landscapes helps further to understand, *where are we going? Is this desirable, and for whom? Who benefits and who does not? and, in later sections what should be done, if anything?* The actions of the various players, in the various contexts converge into what we see as the current context, which continues to be formed by the fluidity of society.

Who decides?

The formation of policy involves decisions made regarding relationships, governance structures, model and programme development and implementation, who to include and who not to include, decisions that are influenced by the ideologies and political leaning of the people making these decisions (Considine, 1994). The context for decision making: the what, by whom, where, why and how decisions are made are questions considered here. Decision making and “the political context of decision-making is relevant at all levels of the policy process, and so investigation involves

looking into the contexts of power and authority that determine policy design” (Potter & Subrahmanian, 1998, p. 34).

In the name of ‘welfare reform’

One of the first expressions of SFCS was in what is widely known as the “McClure Report”, a report commissioned on the 29th September 1999 by the then Minister for Family and Community Services, Jocelyn Newman (McClure, 2000). This review into the Australian welfare system made recommendations central to the establishment of SFCS, and subsequently C4C. Of the many principles and values listed in the Report, reciprocity features as extending from the idea of ‘mutual obligations’. This concept of the “exchange of mutual obligations” (including social obligations) from those in the job market to “all of the community” including non-profit organisations and businesses (McClure, 2000, p. 37) becomes significant in the development of C4C.

Alongside individual obligations the concept encompasses exchanges with the wider community including private and not for profit organisations. Mutual obligation and reciprocity similarly support notions of ‘participation’, which is believed to be a critical component to successfully reforming the welfare system. Participation in the context of the Report hinges on an idea of ‘giving back’ to society, which may require “ways... to actively persuade them [people] of the benefits of participation” (McClure, 2000, p. 43). The Report claims that “ the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy underpins the important role that families and communities play in nurturing children, caring for people in need and linking people to jobs and opportunities” (McClure, 2000, p. 42). Families and communities are targeted by way of ‘persuaded’ participation to become actively involved.

The strong focus upon employment, wages and the emphasis upon individual responsibility to ‘give back’ to society are indicative of neo-liberal leanings, evident in John Howard’s term in office as Australia’s Prime Minister from 1996 – 2007 (Quiggin, 2004). Howard advocated strongly for free-market

reform in Australia with a push “towards microeconomic reform” (Quiggin, 2004, p. 170). In his pre-election speech, Howard (7.20abc radio, Thursday 22nd November 2007) claimed that he had developed Australia from a “welfare state to an opportunity state”. His claim included and relied on moving the power for work place relations to employers and away from unions. Some commentators consider that among the many paradoxes under the former Howard Government, where in its “rhetorical at least” commitment to reduce the burden of ‘welfare dependency’ in Australia, the policies do just the opposite (Smyth, 2006a, p. 132). Therefore the idea of spatial policy, given Howard’s interest in social capital, community and participation, while important, is framed by neoliberal tendencies articulated in the McClure Report (Reddel, 2005, p. 193). These same concepts if framed in terms of citizen rights and needs and as defined by the citizens themselves are arguably more favourable to participatory processes which were the aim of the originators of C4C’s design.

Policy of ‘Participation’ and Third Sector ‘Engagement’

One of the main planks of neo-liberalism is to increasingly rely upon notions of participation and third sector engagement (Lawson, p. 5) which echo concerns of real or rhetorical (Harvey, 2007) use of such concepts across the political spectrum. C4C is but one example where public participation as civic responsibility is intended to feed its implementation plan, development and ultimately expected to be the key to its overall success. Policies and programmes incorporating ideas of participation, collaboration and partnership draw strength from beliefs that these lead to greater ownership and involvement of programmes and that uptake rates are better when people targeted by programmes are themselves involved in their overall development and implementation (Kenny, 2006, p. 335). This was certainly the outcome of the Community Researchers example earlier detailed. The research literature further supports participatory approaches as leading to growth in social capital and sustainable outcomes (Temkin & Rohe, 1998; Thorson & Beaudoin, 2004). Much is written about ‘participation’ as a policy construct (Alcock, 2004; Kunnen, 2005; Mayo, 1997) and while not the focus

of this thesis its relevance to the aims and processes enacted under C4C towards meeting its aims are worthy of further exploration. One of the possible consequences of taking this view of the centrality of participation is that it puts the onus on the participants not the programme designers and if programmes are not successful then the participants are considered to have failed, not the programme designers.

The premise then is that where there is greater civic participation in policy programmes there is greater social capital within the targeted community which in turn leads to less overall disadvantage: less crime, less need to lock homes, less isolation, and so on. The notion of participation is contextually defined, like its conceptualisation depicted as a 'giving back' as per the McClure Report. In this way participation is seen by some as a move "towards reducing government activities [which] ignores the effects that selling off public resources may have on social capital" (Cox, 1995, p. 51). The idea that social capital is developed from people engaging in voluntary work is possible to interpret as reducing government direct services and pushing for greater participation in the voluntary sector (Cox & Caldwell, 2000, p. 43). With many families perceiving themselves as "owners of the nation state", as a citizenry, "they see public services and public ownership of resources as extensions of their personal property to which they have the right of access" (Cox, 1995, p. 51). This is often the basis of conflict between a neoliberal interpretation of participation, or 'reciprocity' and 'giving back', and service provision as citizen rights.

Programmes emphasising building human, organisational and community capacities towards improved social capital raise further problematics. Ideologically framed programmes, which attend to building individuals' capacities, while commendable, can lose sight of those inherent and already existing capacities of individuals, whole groups and communities. Social capital is further presented as encompassing all that is good in and for communities with little dialogue about adverse features of this same concept. This point is returned to in an analysis of *is this desirable?*

Role of government, non-government, and third sector

Working collaboratively with and across sectors is one of the aims of SFCS and of C4C in particular. The adoption of a collaborative approach is in part a consequence of the acknowledgement that social issues are complex and need to be addressed in context rather than as isolated and separate occurrences (Baty, 2010). SFCS and C4C reflect an interest in shifting to a more networked approach of new public management (McClelland, 2006a, p. 46) rejecting siloed approaches to policy designs. However, “the influence of management ideas imported from the private sector” (Warhurst, 2004, p. 175) advantages larger organisations with greater financial and information capital. They are therefore able to monopolise their involvement to the detriment of smaller organisations. Taking this view suggests a less collaborative approach and, based on citizen rights, to a situation more like an extension of government operations (Mowbray, 2005). For instance, ‘community’ often depicted as the third sector, is often considered the space in between state intervention and free market ideology and “it is through the political objectification and instrumentalization of *this* community and its ‘culture’ that government is to be re-invented” [author’s emphasis] (Rose, 1999, p. 173).

The complex inter-relationships of the policy makers are restated in this following presentation.



Governmental Relations

Relations between federal and state governments are worth considering given the emphasis on participation and forming collaborative partnerships under C4C. Social policy in Australia must encompass State and Commonwealth government relations and their respective responsibilities as shaped by the Australian Constitution which gives specific powers to the Commonwealth, with others shared between the states and the Commonwealth (McClelland, 2006b, p. 84). Policy interest in the early years of life spans both Federal and state jurisdictions with national interests cast largely in broad education, family or employment policies and states having overlapping, separate or conflictual programmes. C4C as a specific Federal Government intervention raises questions, however, about State/National relations and responsibilities of each government level. For instance, and as earlier identified, the Western Australian State Government was devising its Early Years Strategy (EYS) in one of the sites included in this study (Gallop, nd) which was said to be scaled back once it knew of Federal intentions.

Interviewees commented on government relations, between the federal funder of C4C and state government, by stating that “little consultation” (John), if any, engaged state governments. Federal Government pitched C4C as a collaboration of sectors in ‘partnership’ towards improving childhood development yet little was seen in the way of state national relations or collaboration in the design, implementation or rollout of C4C despite an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) on Federal Financial Relations (Council of Australian Government (COAG), 2010). The Closing The Gap: National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2009) established under Kevin Rudd’s administration was too late to provide evidence of any change experienced in this area.

The difficulties of working across sectors and across jurisdictions were noted, with COAG being the only ministerial level body with cross-sectoral decision making capacity. It was proposed that a useful strategy might be to identify one Minister in each state best positioned to play a lead role. This is the approach currently being taken in the *National Agenda for Early Childhood*.

Local Government

Local governments, unlike the Commonwealth and State governments, have no constitutional authority and are governed by state government legislation (McClelland, 2006b, p. 84). With the roles and responsibilities of local government often differing from state to state their responsibilities include provision of infrastructure and property services, recreation facilities, basic health services, building and planning approvals, cultural services and more. The role of local government in the implementation and development of C4C depended largely upon processes of engagement within each C4C site. The role and involvement of local governments or councils varied across the sites with this being reported in the 2009 national evaluation report (Australian Government: Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009):

The overall limited coordination with state and Australian Government departments was one of the weaknesses of CfC. Standard government processes, such as budget allocation and spending based on financial years, and the formal and contractual nature of working relationships, presented barriers to service coordination.

This same report suggested “traditional tensions relating to federalism” posed barriers which included:

concerns about which government should be responsible for early childhood, the extent of consultation, or the lack thereof, CfC activities covering state and territory responsibilities with the implicit expectation that states and territories would provide funding once Australian Government resources ended (Australian Government: Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2009).

Of the two C4C sites observed for this study, both councils were interested in C4C developments in the first instance and were often represented at C4C committee meetings. Following the first year or so of the rollout of C4C less involvement was evident. Reflections offered by respondents suggested that local council participation was most successful when components of the C4C programme supported council’s direction and were congruent with its strategic plans. However, in Eastville it was suggested that the local council was less involved because C4C was addressing certain issues which might otherwise require council attention, there was no need for council to do so and their involvement reduced to representation at interagency meetings and an annual children’s party. This reflection was offered by a council member:

The processes I was putting into place were very similar to what [FP NGO] were looking to do, like engage community and get community development strategies happening so there was synergies at that point. So we worked in tandem since those early days and it’s been a good process... We’ve basically left all the early years networks and C4C to sort of look at what are the needs of the younger population... so that’s where early years and C4C should focus. That’s what they’ve done and put the groups together to identify what the needs and gaps are and they’ve done that extremely well. From the town’s [council] perspective we’ve taken a more strategic view.... It’s a mutually beneficial situation (Linda).

To some, local government is “ideally placed as the locus of direct citizen involvement because of its local knowledge and already existing community ties” (Brackertz, 2006, p. 5). Yet this shifting of national government responsibility to the already under resourced local government sector is problematic. The same could be said of NGOs:

I think what the Commonwealth [FaHCSIA] and [FP NGO] didn't do was pay enough attention to getting strategic buy-in at higher levels in the State Government. The State Government owns 0-5 year olds, any way you look at it, like Health, Education, Family, DCD [now DCP], none of those are Commonwealth jurisdictions by birthright. They're all State Government. So, arguably, this is where we got caught in Commonwealth/ State relations. We should have thought much more strategically about engaging the State Government in that process. And they needed to have owned it, not the Commonwealth but that's the problem, the Commonwealth wanted to own it. 'Cause the politicians wanted to announce it. So the negotiations between the Commonwealth and the State should have been better (Alex).

With questions about whose responsibility and what is meant by ‘partnership’ in complex governance arrangements as seen under C4C, such issues are analysed in subsequent sections.

Business Sector

The importance of partnership between government, NGOs and the business sector was promoted and emphasised under John Howard’s concept of a *social coalition* (McClelland, 2006b, p. 71). The increased representation of businesses in the welfare sector, as boards and committee members and philanthropic activities, has shaped the way governments think about, engage with and deliver social policy. There are many instances where large mining firms invest in community projects. For instance Alcoa (ALCOA, 2010) invested \$6 million in community programmes in 2009 with others evincing commitments to ‘mutual respect, ‘active partnership, and ‘mutual commitment’, ‘trust’ and ‘openness’ (Rio Tinto, 2007). Another example is

found in Perth's Telethon Institute for Child Health's Rio Tinto Child Health Partnership which seeks to balance 'top-down' responses with 'bottom up' community building around children's needs in Aboriginal communities. Described as a Place Management programme, the then Western Australian Premier, Geoff Gallop (2003, p. 6) referred to this as:

a program that has great synergy with the aims of the Rio Tinto Child Health Partnership. By this I mean the Place Management Program will take into account all the valuable information gained from the West Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey and integrate it into its own self evaluating framework for community capacity building.

Two important roles for business in C4C include investing capital (giving back) and aiding in the programme's aim of sustainable outcomes. While this is laudable the lack of large industry presence in many of the C4C sites meant that this flow on effect in C4C did not occur with local sites finding attracting industry partner difficult. This was the case for Westville which:

had no business [presence on which to attract funding] (Bernard).

Corporation and business involvement did not factor highly in the operations of C4C in either site considered for this research. This echoes the National Evaluation Consortium's (Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies) finding where "CfC committees were generally unsuccessful in recruiting smaller service providers, business representatives, and parents of young children" (Australian Government, 2009b, p. xiii). The FPs had little time to engage in activities that would build relationships with for-profit organisations and one of the sites lacked businesses with which to form 'partnership' and so this aim of the programme was not successful. Where, however, this was seen as achieved was in relation to the earlier detailed Community Researchers who, outside C4C operations, acquired backing from a large mining company to pursue issues pertinent to them.

Non-government Sector

The non-government sector, also termed the third sector, civil society, not-for-profit sector, and the welfare sector as earlier identified (McClelland 2006, p. 74) has been included in the Liberal Government's *social coalition* with an expectation of the formation of 'partnerships' between these sectors (Leech & Lewis, nd, p. 2). In an early C4C document, an NGO is defined as "non-profit groups *that combine resource mobilisation, information provision, and activism to advocate for changes in certain areas*" (DLSpar, La Mure LT cited by, Department for Families and Communities, nd, p. 1). The presence of NGOs in the study sites was also patchy with few NGOs in one site while the other had many to the point where respondents often referred to the 'over-serviced' or saturation of services in the region. The engagement of these NGOs depended upon a number of critical factors: time to build relationships, clarity about division of roles, equality of relationships rather than expert positioning, trust, capacities and knowledge. The significance of the role of FP NGO, its own perception of its role and its decision making abilities under the C4C model is, for instance, influential to issues of participation of other NGOs as highlighted now.

The FP role, in the case of this NGO's appointment to this position, resulted in this NGO shifting from its traditional charitable role to one more closely resembling that of a children's services broker, supported by the FaHCSIA's direction that this role is that of "facilitator or enabler" (Davies & Taylor, 2005, p. 1). As a representative from this NGO stated:

Our role as a lead agency in C4C provides us with the opportunity to put into practice what we have been learning in terms of Place Management methodology for social change (Vince).

Conceptualising "Place Management a participation methodology" for community regeneration, Vince identified the key method for developing communities as that of enhancing their capacities and resources. Many respondents involved in C4C's early stages assumed the broad idea was that

the FP was to facilitate and oversee the programme with community investment and participation driving its processes:

the framework for the project was strictly laid down, the managing not-for-profit agency is a manager not the owner, and so on. The ownership is to be vested in the local community (Bernard).

Even though this NGO is well resourced and embraced C4C, its selection as FP was often the subject of speculation. The government decision to engage an organisation as one of the first seven which had no previous experience or understandings of early childhood development and its appointment to manage the C4C in an area where it had no previous history or connection to the community raises questions about the policy coherence and its ability to match national aims and objectives with local level processes. This is particularly so when local NGOs, with their local knowledges, were not selected either as FP or CP. The questions in both sites about the 'outsider' NGO were widespread with Westville's FP NGO new to the site and a NGO contracted as CP also new to Eastville following its successful tender for two projects.

This challenged ideas of 'partnerships' and 'participation' with NGOs promoted because of their local and often specialised knowledges, connections with community members, and the ability, given proximity to the issues, to collaborate on processes of intervention. NGOs targeted to provide direct service to children 0-5 years, as CPs, were also perceived to work collaboratively towards improving service systems. These alliances were expected to build social capital. With funding periods of government programmes mostly finite and time limited this trend is ever increasing with NGOs becoming "responsible for delivering outcomes that were previously the responsibility of government" (McClelland 2006). These structural changes and new public management models stem back to the globalisation of economies where in the 1970s and 1980s public management sector reviews led to governments looking for ways to cut back spending in social welfare. In Australia, devolution and decentralisation by government was a

strategy towards greater flexibility in government operations (Everingham, 2003, p. 97). Those programmes mentioned in earlier sections and many listed in Appendices G and H exemplifies several of these new governance arrangements.

Structures and processes of the C4C model that aim to encourage NGO participation, however, work in opposition to what it sets out to achieve: improved relationships, coordination and better partnerships between children and family services. Literature and the research on the purchaser provider models of these times (O'Flynn, 2007; Street, 1994) speaks volumes to the competitive nature of these arrangements. The discrepancy is that often the very structures developed to encourage partnerships in actuality work to erode these same structures. Further, the purchaser provider arrangement often means the NGOs tend to represent "provider interests" rather than those of the people the service targets (McClelland, 2006b, p. 78) emphasising compliance (Cox, 1995, p. 51). The case study section demonstrates this where for instance, stakeholders reported satisfaction with the early stages of C4C's implementation, characterised by collaboration and a period of building relationships which when expressions of interest were called NGOs were set in opposition to one another as part of a competitive environment. As one respondent said of her initial thoughts to apply for the FP position of Eastville:

it would have been a significant amount of money [in securing the FP position] but it would really be hard to get that because of the [current FP NGO] size and they'd already been in [Westview] ... the tender process works against collaboration, it actually sets you up in opposition (Desera).

As this research demonstrates, those organisations with less capital in all its forms and 'buying power' were often unsuccessful in securing contracts.

Trust and impartiality of organisations

Trust in the processes used and the government bodies themselves is a necessary component of the formation of partnerships, yet for some of the

CPs trust was betrayed not earned. One respondent stated in relation to C4C projects:

if feds live up to normal pattern – they’ll all fall (John).

Contradictions in the policy aims and process made it difficult for NGOs to trust either their counterparts or the process although some organisations initially approached the arrangements positively. That was until the contracting process positioned these same organisations in competition vying for funding of a project or two. One respondent said of this process:

The conspiracy theory would say that this is government’s aim (Desera).

The contracting led to the withdrawal of some of the organisations, taking with them expertise and knowledge of the area and the client group.

Initially all agencies were interested in getting on board then when [they] didn’t get funding some vanished with no further involvement (John).

Suspicious of partiality also affected the trust organisations had in the process, specifically relating to the seven ‘hand-picked’ NGOs:

[name of FP NGO] had been involved with Government through other programmes [selected based on infrastructure and understandings of Early Years]. [Policy makers] spoke directly with the CEO from each organisation [and] NGOs [were] informed of the policy and asked if interested in this direction. The seven were from the big end of town that had connections with and previously involved with Government (Ian).

The impartiality and ability of organisations to provide information and report on progress of C4C, including AIFS, ARACY, SPRC and specific NGOs, that too had affiliations with other organisations or key stakeholders, was often questioned. Such institutions “need to consider whether the aim of the research project they undertake is to arrive at findings through a process of intellectual objectivity or to validate the social policy of the government of the day” (Jamrozik, 2009, p. 320). One FP spoke of attending many forums and

regularly feeding back what worked and what did not to an advisory body in Sydney which in turn was expected to feed information to relevant institutions, namely the funding body. Many of the issues raised at this level of accountability were seen to be overlooked, with instead the PM being directed to change his operations rather than considering or attending to the structural or process issues of the programme.

All these considerations in answer to the question of *where are we going* reveal a complex policy direction which sought to span state boundaries using the power of the funding arrangement. The target of addressing childhood disadvantage through a community model was complicated by the differential loci of decision making responsibilities and powers. Place Management as a policy approach was thereby affected. Flyvbjerg's next question asks *is this desirable?*

Is this desirable? Why Place Management as an approach?

The principles which SFCS, and C4C in particular, represent; investing in early childhood, working collaboratively across governments and other sectorial boundaries, participatory processes encouraging 'home grown' solutions to local problems alongside people of place, practicing principles of community development, capacity building and community building, while of undeniable worth were found to be vaguely addressed. When closely considered a number of ideological incongruities and implicit assumptions surface needing critical engagement, which is provided here and in the next two sections.

What was intended by the policy programme with implementing a Place Management approach, incorporating all its descriptors and conceptualisations, was not what was experienced. Decisions made, for instance, were from a deficit framing that has the effect of labelling those targeted, when projects do not work, as incompetent and lacking ability. Historically, health models have been based on a deficit framing (Morgan & Ziglio, 2007) with current approaches needing to look beyond the classified

needs of a population to those existing capacities, skills and assets of this same group of citizens (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Morgan & Ziglio, 2007). Such focus on problems, itself having a place in policy making, inhibits people from devising their own solutions to social problems with people often falling into a passive role of being done unto rather than actively participating in decisions affecting them. This was even though C4C aimed to build on to the capacities of people in place.

There resides also a presumption underpinning this policy that certain people require intervention around early years as decided and directed by government. In this instance it is people in particular places as selected based on statistical data. Enhancing opportunities for all Australians means their 'lot' should not be determined by where they live (for instance, riverside mansions or state housing). Duncan et al (2004, p. 197), for example, suggest rational thinking would mean that affluent families are equally in need of early years information and support with parenting, as poor parents. Poverty is not limited to impoverished places but extends to emotional, relational and other forms of poverty, questioning the assumption that wealth can either buy whatever services and supports are needed or that this status itself presumes this group has inherent and well developed parental and child rearing practices. A normative misconception then is wealthy families with purchasing power are also inherently skilled at raising children and growing communities. This logic further supports the idea that those people of less affluence require help with raising children.

Highlighted within the social capital literature is the idea that even within the most marginal and poverty stricken regions or communities there are strengths and capacities that are able to sustain a group or community: strength-based practice stems from this ideological view. The opposite can be true of affluent suburbs where occurrences of abuse, neglect, and family dysfunction are also evident (Luthar, 2003). The argument follows that where there is a concentration of poverty problems are most evident and the intersectionality of problems is heightened when seen alongside communities

or places 'doing well'. Where there appears to be lack of affluence is also considered to be a lack of ability, capacity, knowledge, skills, drive and other value-laden attributes and as Jamrozik (2005, p. 320) claims this, leads to pathologising social problems. A common assessment of policy and practice of the post-welfare state is the act of "converting the political nature of social problems into the problems of individuals (Jamrozik, 2009, p. 291) referred to as 'the individualization of the social' (Ferge, 1997).

A concentration on people of place can have a rather narrow view of social problems leaving the onus for identifying solutions on people themselves rather than other extenuating issues impacting upon people and place. For instance, problems of place and people and their effect can be considered in at least four different ways:

- Place-focused to affect place;
- Place-focused to affect people;
- People-focused to affect people; and
- People-focused to affect place (Griggs, Whitworth, Walker, McLennan, & Noble, 2008).

These authors highlight the need for a holistic person and place approach. This is supported by Bill Randolph (2004) who points out that many place based programmes, including C4C, aim to improve outcomes for people. What we are seeing in the enactment of C4C is that the main direction was on people and place from outside place with consequences of some social coercion and lost opportunities for engagement and participation. The holistic approach of connecting the four is a quadrant framework that was not pursued.

Communities as policy makers

Participation in partnership with policy makers can be rewarding for community members seen in the success of policies such as Circles of Care (Branch, Freiberg, & Homel, 2010), Family Group Conferences (Fulcher, 2001; Munford et al., 2001) and others. The aim of the C4C was to include

'community' as a partner in its design and this raised the implication that 'community' would also 'be' a policy maker. However, as we have seen, the tendency towards fashioning an individualistic underpinning to the rationale for the policy – people's deficits – means it was always more likely that 'community' would be both targeted and target with very little upward opportunity to effect policy in its development. Marjorie Mayo (1997, p. 23) offers five criteria for the involvement of 'community' in policy making:

- Information (maximum public access to as much information as possible);
- Independence (including community access to independent specialist advice);
- Initiative (enabling community groups to develop their own ideas and agendas);
- Influence (assisting communities to influence and see their influence in decision making); and
- Implementation (facilitate communities to participate in implementation, monitoring and supervision of policy outcomes).

What degree of autonomy or involvement people, themselves the target of the policy, have is important to any policy analysis embracing such concepts.

Power in partnerships

C4C's success nestles upon the notion of forming relationships between all sectors in partnership around early years: "these strategies will provide frameworks for the Commonwealth Government to work more effectively in partnerships with other governments, the business sector, communities and families to improve the lives of individual Australians" (Newman, 1999). Partnerships imply an equal footing, a horizontal distribution of power yet decision making processes reside with one body, in this case FaHCSIA, with those most powerful decisions made around setting the aims and outcomes, time frames, reporting and administrative requirements, as well as allocation of funding, doing little to permeate those organisational boundaries in sharing the distribution of power. In many ways then, "the language of partnerships used by government is relatively new but is still top-down, still a way of

fulfilling the government's rather than a community agenda, thereby governing at a distance" (Lynn, 2006, p. 113). In 'partnerships' people can also get burnt out due to the number of partnering arrangements expected of them.

The paradox of 'partnerships' in the C4C setting is seen previously where processes enacted by C4C actively eroded the forming of relationships between the FP and CP as well as between CPs themselves. This dimension of the programme was characterised by many CPs as having dual and oppositional purposes, that of *support* and *surveillance*. Initial stages of working through committees to determine community needs and tailor particular programmes was characterised as collaborative and unifying organisation around common issues. The FP in this instance was perceived as supportive and receptive to community ideas. Once the formalising of contracts was complete many respondents spoke of the changed nature of the relationships. These were described in the case study section.

Mayo (1997) reflects that there is an assimilation of sorts where voluntary organizations and private agencies are considered to become more 'businesslike' or like the more powerful player (in this case the Government) with the most powerful party setting the agendas and timeframes. This is evidenced in the excerpt below about C4C committees.

C4C Committees

You always have an eye out for the leaders, the movers and shakers, and I was the only one who did know that. We decided that it would be a very pro-active approach to selecting the committee. In other words we did not call for nominations; we invited people to join the committee and I've got the list because I knew them all and there were a whole range of influences in education, in not-for-profits, in key government agencies and I'd met them all (Bernard).

In each site PMs established a C4C Committee (C4CC) that was to offer a “broad representation from stakeholders in the community” (FaCs, retrieved November 1, 2005) from “a wide range of community stakeholders” (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005 Glossary).

And we, the Facilitating Partner, worked out who had to be represented and then we added them to who actually knew stuff and who should be on the committee and then somehow we worked a way to get the right people on the committee (Alex).

The committees’ composition in the beginning included many CEOs from large NGOs and representatives from Health, Child Protection, Education and others, and it was up to this committee to develop a four year Community Strategic Plan and an annual Service Delivery Plan. The C4CCs were also tasked with determining which projects to run, their length and funding and the choice of which local organisations were to manage them. The professional classes, mostly NGO or government employees, had majority representation on committees with few parent, community or citizen advocates. Once agreement was reached about projects, funding and local organisations, these ‘high level players’ retreated and were replaced by people with a more direct service delivery role, namely CPs contracted to this position, although these were still generally professional workers. In these early stages a prominent C4C staff member from Westville spoke of inviting an Indigenous person to be representative on the C4C who:

[we] knew wouldn’t come but invited out of representation (Yulia).

An example of community engagement regarding breastfeeding (leading the next section) examines the C4C model which was intended to engage the local community given limited funding with the anticipated participation of a large number of volunteers. This presented some challenges. Not only was the potential pool of people to draw from perceived to be small but the lack of clarity about the programme and their tasks led to misunderstandings. The perceived lack of expertise of volunteers in the areas sought, such as

breastfeeding and parenting support projects, proved the most difficult issue for PMs who were attempting in the early stages to engage volunteer assistance. In meetings within the sites concerns were often raised about the ability and appropriateness of volunteers dealing with the delicate family matters. Also as there was no provision made for honoraria for people attending committees this inadvertently favoured participation from people in paid positions - mostly being those community service organisations with an interest in C4C - while many ordinary citizens were effectively excluded from these decision making processes. In the earlier cited Community Researchers example, an honorarium meant their valued participation even if the amount paid did not equal their worth. In Westville, lack of such provision contributed to the lack of volunteers:

we weren't able to find other people that were prepared to come along to [volunteer on] what is a pretty bureaucratic government meeting (Alex).

Access to forums, their format and ability for community members to input into these was often contrary to that intended by the model: in many ways, mechanisms operating excluded the very people in the community targeted for inclusion and participation. For instance, CPs, making up the majority of the members on the C4C committees, were further assigned to reference groups appointed to each project. In Eastville however, one reference group covered two of the three projects as it was serviced by the same NGO. Subcommittees, at different times in the C4C project, emerged as additional forums for people to attend. For example in Westville a research sub-committee was established to inform the Local Evaluation (LE) process.

It was one of the tasks... I had to participate on that committee (Gail).

While time and format was a factor in people's ability to participate so too was the composition a barrier to people participating:

Most of the reference group are made up of government which is a shame (Helen).

The organising structures of C4C in these two sites evidenced from the beginning a distancing from the local communities through the structures used, and the selection and representative processes. The local level participation and relationships said to be sought in the planning documentation, was difficult to achieve when formalised structures of C4C prevented this from occurring. Furthermore, there were differences in the extent of decision-making authority that FPs confer to their committees. Most C4CCs operate like management committees, with members involved in decision-making. One C4CC member commented:

I think the committee is broad enough ...so there is a good measure of accountability, making sure that the programmes are delivered the way they're meant to be (Wayne).

However, a few C4CCs were more like advisory groups making recommendations that were subject to the decision of FPs. In these sites, some C4CC members complained that they had to rubber-stamp the FPs' decisions. They felt either they had no time to understand what they were agreeing to, or the FP did not consider their opinions enough. In one site, both the FP, represented by the PM, and other committee members were unsure about the function of the C4CC at a crucial time when decisions about refunding of projects was expected. A CEO present at this meeting, and newly involved at this point (approximately half way through the four year funding period), asked what the aims of the original community plan were, to which the PM was unable to respond with certainty. This was more a reflection of the changed role for this PM who had inherited the site but also the lack of continuity of committee representatives, many of whom were not present or had moved on from the programme.

Mayo's five criteria were not met. Rather the relationships between community and C4C managers were less partnerships and more reflective of servant-master relationships.

Real or Perceived Participation

What was experienced throughout C4C were the many barriers to people in the sites, mainly NGOs, participating in processes to effect certain outcomes. Mark Considine (1994, p. 130) describes participation in two main ways: as having an instrumental value and a developmental value. Instrumental participation refers to any “observable effect it has upon the improvement of any single decision or plan”, and developmental participation considers “the effect it has upon persistent capacities within a system or community” (Considine, 1994, p. 131). Regularly observing the lack of engagement with those ideas and suggestions put forward by non-C4C personnel meant instrumental or developmental participation was often not achieved. The following comment reflects the frustration of one CP whose idea went unsupported:

[name of school in Eastview] didn't support the programme as she [principal] was never available and no space was given or storage – no support at all from the school. It should have been moved to another school when it was realised that they weren't on board (Helen).

John spoke of a multicultural event in which it was envisaged that people from the various ethnic groupings in the community would come together and celebrate difference. A C4C project had the idea and acted upon it without consultation with these groups who were later assessed as ‘feuding’ and hence there was poor attendance.

[there were] multicultural dilemmas when a barbeque has been arranged through the parent support programme on National Food Day [and] they didn't get anyone as it was organised through parent support team [and further there were] feuding families and cultures not sure about so [people] didn't come (John).

On many levels participation was expected, from children and parents at project level through to policy programme designers developing the policy in an incremental fashion: based on feedback from the sites. What was

perceived as more an occurrence however was that participation required people across the various layers to 'fit' within the already designed programme towards achieving already defined outcomes. When participation was not experienced, as seen in the example of the school principal, it was often perceived as an act of individual defiance or personality rather than related to a centralised programme using 'bottom-up' rhetoric but enacting a top-down process.

Skills, capacities and presumed knowledges

Set out above is the context in which existing skills and capacities of those groups considered most disadvantaged were largely ignored. C4C's implementation, however, presumed a degree of understanding and skill base on the part of people involved in C4C's implementation and development, namely the NGOs. This was evident in three main ways. There was a presumption that people involved with C4C, particularly contracted staff, CPs and affiliated organisations, were skilled in areas of community and organisational functioning, including contract management and operational practices. The assumption was that these people were skilled in organisational operations, and practices of community development, capacity and community building, and strength-based practices. A third assumption concerned the belief that early childhood (0-5 years) health and wellbeing is more important than overlapping and interrelated areas of culture, race, gender, poverty, structural disadvantage, as well as other influential factors impacting upon disadvantage and inequality. These three presumptions hinge around a fourth: knowledges of place. The expectation that local organisations were equipped in knowledges of organisational functioning and community development practices, assumed these same organisations to also be knowledgeable about the complex constructs and arrangements of the community in which it operated: a community defined and bounded from a distant and centralised place. We have seen that in some cases more of these assumptions applied and often one or more of them were not accurate. So, not only were some skills not present (as in the ability of some CPs and FPs to adequately

manage developmental processes of consultation for example), cultural factors were overlooked in relation to perceived needs of young children (as in the breastfeeding example to come), and knowledges of place were missing (with several examples such as the Indigenous dance group).

Underlying premises

The underlying premises are that knowledge of these overarching principles exist in mainly white, middle class, male dominated settings while capacities and skills of those targeted disadvantaged groups are needed to be built and developed by the already skilled. Again the implicit assumption here is that there exists a deficiency of the knowledges and skills of a particular people in place. For instance the PM's in each site were assumed to have the acquired knowledges and tools necessary to adequately engage in those processes directed by FaHCSIA. This respondent spoke this sentiment, further suggested to be that of many in the community, where this 'expert' or position of power often alienated those to which it aimed to join:

There was this massive sort of force and I know that service providers had that sense of 'wow look what's going to bring this place forward'. So that was a sense that a lot of people had – mostly service providers. [then the FP] were kinda everywhere, and it was like you couldn't go to a meeting without C4C coming. Even in areas where it felt unnecessary or unwelcome and yeah there's a presence of that always being there. And I don't know if they get that, or if they've ever been told (Gail).

The premise (echoed above) was that what FAHCSIA decreed as important is superior knowledge and to be adopted across each C4C site, regardless of diversity of population, ideas on child rearing and so on. This assumption, in turn, presumes that people of place are ill equipped and ill-informed in this area and therefore require correcting, informing and or educating. Of course, this supports previous information evidencing early years as a site of intervention that is seen to successfully thwart later life adversity. The breastfeeding exemplar introducing the next section makes lucid this flawed

perspective and further highlights the nature of rational policy models that are top heavy and directive.

My understanding is that parents in [Eastview] don't have any idea or understanding of parenting (Helen).

This respondent's view and overall generalised perception omitted opportunities for policy formation to include seeking information about what stakeholders already knew about the area and what they could offer and therefore identify areas needed to be fully informed about processes necessary for further implementation and development of C4C. The complex nature of this area and diversity of community needs including cultural differences in child rearing and the value placed upon white, middle class, paternalistic views of child development are issues requiring further consideration.

Shifting or sharing responsibility?

In an era where much debate exists about the rolling back of the welfare state and greater leaning by governments towards market driven policies there is a discussion needed around this aspect of the SFCS policy. Engaging community on the understanding that its members have specialised knowledge and skills to contribute to solving local problems is rather contradicted by the policy decision making responsibilities. An associated suspicion is that government divests itself of responsibility while retaining control. Another conjecture is that by funding programmes in this area these same organisations and communities at large, seeing the benefits, will continue to fund and run these programmes thus creating sustainable outcomes and growth in social capital (if indeed this is a realistic outcome). The presumption here is that organisations have the infrastructure to fund such initiatives and that social capital is a tangible and easily achievable goal. The implications of adopting policy towards sustainable growth and towards the ideal of social capital are a matter for analysis in the following section: as follows the policy analysis framework applied here.

C4C suggests locally devised answers to local problems; evident however across most of the forty five C4C sites is programme uniformity. Christine Everingham (2003, p. 101) theorises this well in her analysis of the (mis)use of language where she speaks of the event of postmodern thinking with which came a merger between the language of community politics and “celebrating cultural difference and radical individualism”. She further explains how this language is easily absorbed into new managerialism of government policies where celebrating difference and individual choice ties in neatly with the rhetoric of locally devised solutions to local problems (Everingham, 2003, pp. 101-102). These set prescriptions disallowed deviations through rejection or by being blocked at committee level where either the PM or state FaHCSIA representative would intercede and bring back policy ideas in line with the funding bodies ideology.

C4C wants to manage and be in charge of all that is happening in [Westview] (Nadine).

This respondent went on to speak about C4C staff members who would attend interagency, or other, meetings unannounced and the general feeling that this was not appreciated. The programme was promoted as the ‘answer’ to childhood disadvantage in place as though no other answer existed.

Summarising reflections

This section’s exploration of questions *where are we going, who are ‘we’, who decides, is this desirable and why Place Management as an approach?* offers insight into the central and various aspects of C4C. What was decided, why, for whom and by whom are those questions answered by this section’s policy analysis of C4C. People, places and issues targeted for intervention were decided from a centralised bureaucracy with little, if any, interplay between those intended beneficiaries and what was decided and therefore what rolled out on the ground. The programme’s overall looking to deficits (what people needed) overshadowed the multitude of capacities, skills, knowledges and achievements that existed: aspects which the programme aimed to build. The many incongruencies, tensions, and

paradoxes revealed through policy analysis open up the potential for those alternate possibilities for action which otherwise might lie dormant or not be recognised. So while there were inconsistencies revealed so too were those aspects of the programme wanted by the funding body: community development, recognised capacities towards sustainable results in locations of 'disadvantage'. These are still possible to meet and include in future policy planning. This analysis is continued in the following section where discursive framings influential in shaping this policy programme offer greater critical reflexivity of the dominant discourses and how these impact upon policy and practice.

Winners and losers of policy practice

Volunteer Breastfeeding Project

Under the priority area of Healthy Young Families one C4C site concentrated efforts in developing a Volunteer Breastfeeding Project (VBFP) as, “this would result in re-shaping existing health services and recruiting a team of community members to be trained as peer breast-feeding support ‘buddies’. This would also add to the capacity of the local community and result in a responsive service that would reflect the needs and ethnic diversity of the community it will serve” (Quarterly Progress Report, 2004). The Facilitating Partner and health services in this area supported this service based upon growing international evidence on the benefits of breastfeeding.

A non-government organisation from outside the area answered the call for expression of interest in the proposed project as it had extensive expertise in the area of parenting young babies. It was awarded a two year contract.

The contracted NGO developed sound relationships with other C4C organisations early in the project. Staffing the project however, was difficult with variations on what was expected of the project experienced by the various stakeholders involved. The project also experienced delays outside its control during this initial setting up phase.

A year into the project there was “small scale service delivery”, with the recruitment of twenty five people, from diverse backgrounds, trained to provide support and information to mothers in their homes. A small number of Indigenous Australians expressed an interest in becoming volunteers although the NGO reported difficulty in subsequent engagement of these people.

Despite all its efforts the project reports “the lowest reach of all programs” (Project Status Report, 2006). Volunteers commented that CALD groups, representing the main recipients of the project, were interested more in gaining information about ‘how to be Australian’ than about breastfeeding practices.

Although reaching its full 2 year term the project outcomes and outputs were not achieved. A different direction including greater public information sessions offered by skilled workers and less reliance on volunteers and in home services was the result.

When it was time to renew contracts, a committee meeting assigned to the task of deciding on funding of the projects, of which only two original committee members were present, agreed to fund the VBFP at a much lesser amount. The direction of the project, under new staffing arrangements, focused more on information dissemination to a wider audience.

Section introduction

This vignette begins this section's exploration of *winners, losers* and *how* of the C4C policy event, as a continuation of Flyvbjerg's questioning (2001, p. 60). It represents one example, of many others presented here, comprising ideas, concepts, processes and ideologies all of which will be examined and considered in relation to dominant discourses. Examples used offer thick descriptions (Crawford, Dickinson, & Leitmann, 1999; Geertz, 1973) detailing subliminal as well as conscious elements of the policy process, which are useful in identifying and explaining the many discourses, and the interdiscursivity of discourses (Foucault, 1991b, p. 58). These offer a way of examining the effect and impact on C4C's target groups. The notion of discourses (Foucault, 1991b), as used here, presents the conceptual framing and systems of ideas which influence, shape and transform practices in their many forms. This approach considers the discursive objects and concepts of those main events shaping C4C. Discursive objects refer to elements of policy like the family, volunteers and organisations (of which many more are possible), while the discursive concepts refer to the ideas by which the conceptual components, such as the use of language, expert knowledge, disadvantage and race, influence the C4C policy process through enunciated modalities.

The previous consideration of *where are we going* and *is this desirable?* is extended when I explicate the C4C policy process by focusing on the questions, *who gains and who loses, and how?* Attention to the beneficiaries of policy is common to many policy analysis models and this section's focus contributes to the second objective of this thesis: analysing a social policy domain that has Place Management as its orientation. Critical reflection on winners and losers remains consistent with the critical theory positioning taken throughout this thesis.

The emphasis in this section is on *reflection* with the *act* of writing itself a process building upon previous phases of this research. Critically reflecting is an invariable part of the Action Research helix. It epitomises a motion of

iteratively feeding into a loop of *looking, thinking, reflecting* and *acting*. Representing the second reflective cycle, this section, by peeling away further the layers of complexity, as it identifies and discusses the neoliberal and civil society discourses, presents a way to understand the development, implementation and rollout of C4C. Kelly and Sewell's (1988) trialectic of *Heart* further follows the preceding section's focus on Head (policy analysis).

Discourses

Discourses include sets of ideas, objects, concepts, operations, and theoretical options. There are many discourses which affected the formation and development of the C4C. The concepts of community, disadvantage and inequality, social policy, place making or management, and civil society are discussed here. This choice results from analysis of the accounts or narratives of those people involved in C4C: the interviews, researcher as participant in the field, observations and information from the many documents sourced. I begin this discussion by noting the tensions between discourses in explaining policy formation and implementation and their interconnectivity.

Holding contradictory explanations

The vignette above holds several discourses in tension. For instance, directives framed as preventative strategies aimed at 'early years', 'local geographical place', and 'local people' can be read and understood as two pronged: to reduce the need for government intervention, and increase collective responsibility for solving social problems. The equally applicable discursive lens through which to view these aims include economic rationalism (also known as neoliberalism); civic liberalism and discourses of community. My intention is to explore the ways in which these discourses designate the winners and losers of policy practice. To illustrate, government, as funder of initiatives that include community members in local problem solving, 'wins' with respect to targeting and involving community members to maximise their capacities (a community perspective) at the same

time as reduce government's need to outlay financial capital (a typical economic argument). The local community too is a winner as projects are tailor-made to its particular needs rather than having to accept the traditional silo and universal approach which tend to overlook the diverse and complex needs of each community. The flipside to each is that government funders 'lose' in that as we have seen the policy approach fails to fully deliver the stated aims and outcomes, leading to failed policy. Community also loses when another top down approach by government fails to include their wishes and ways of addressing problems in the policy process. Both views hold currency and can be understood via different discursive framings.

Fluidity and interconnectivity of discourses

As a set of objects, concepts, operations, theoretical options and transforming mechanisms (Foucault, 1991b, p. 54) discourses are constructed as an infinite set of processes that are neither "uniform nor stable" (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 123). They are as much about what lies outside as what lies within (Danaher et al., 2000, p. 35). The "individualization of discourses" (Foucault, 1991b, p. 62) demonstrates the complexity here leading to some theorists (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001) maintaining a pluralistic view although Foucault (1991b, p. 62) refers to prominent discourses, or sets of thinking, that are useful in explaining selected actions, decisions and developments. With this in mind, I conceptualise the operations of C4C, from its ideological origins and underpinnings through to its local articulations in practice. Those articulations, both overt and covert, do not default to discourses as an 'either/or' framing but rather offer many possible formations. Not fixed or finite, discourses are continuously forming, joining and separating, wherein C4C, as a contemporary policy practice example, illustrates the ebbs and flows, the fluidity and interconnectivity of discourses: at times complementary and others conflicting. This changeability is likened to the road systems in, out, and across both sites where roads at times parallel, crisscross and at others veer off, with many stopping altogether in dead ends. So too do the many discourses influencing C4C's formation and development.

Earlier mentioned is the interchangeability of 'ideology' and 'discourse' and how I think about each in the context of this research. To recap, ideologies, as "part of the common furniture of political discourse" (Festenstein & Kenny, 2005, p. 1) are particular sets of relatively fixed aims, ideas and expectations expressing political views or positions. Discourses are distinguished from ideology in that a Foucauldian understanding of discourse suggests that looking at patterns among objects, subjects and enunciations can indicate a formation of influences to accepted beliefs resulting in common practices (Foucault 1991). For example, it might be said that a neo-liberalist *ideology* informed the policy direction of the C4C through a belief that the children of economically and socially disadvantaged families were more likely to 'fail' on a number of indicators, and this was more because of inadequate parenting and poor educational attainment than it was through lack of resources. A study of neoliberal discourse reveals the mechanisms employed to practice the business of 'non-government' in withdrawing from the planning for individuals, instead relying on individuals to plan and manage for themselves. In the case of refusal to do so government then takes the 'reluctant' path of imposing planning regimes on individuals as a corrective.

Looking at the programme discursively invites us to look at the objects, concepts, operations, theoretical possibilities and transforming mechanisms. Taking a discursive view reveals that all is contestable and replaces the need to look at the *winner*s and *loser*s as a simple binary. Here, the C4C policy programme presents a present-day example illustrating powerful forces that operate as 'strategic reversibility' in which structures and processes at times act to (re)create 'losers' and at other times 'winners' (Gordon, 1991, p. 5).

Dominant discourses

Two main discourses are offered here as generative of the C4C policy programme: neoliberalism and civil society. Neoliberal discourses, currently predominant within Western societies, refer to those ideas, concepts, notions and ideologies that require shifting control of economic performance from states or governments to the private sector. Under this discursive framing

the unfettered market provides opportunities for all citizens to increase their life chances through the 'free' choices made by the 'free' and 'rational' individual. Political processes are often voiced in the language of 'individual rights' and 'equality of opportunity' arguing that no state intervention should undermine the right of the individual to make his or her own choices. Under this construction, poor choices will result in poor outcomes which are then the responsibility of the individual. Civil society discourses overlap somewhat, supporting individual freedom and choice, but the individualist emphasis is tempered by a belief in the effect of collective action through forming community networks based on trusting, reciprocal, and mutual relationships (Cox, 1995, p. 8). Such collective perspectives are based on the many community discourses (Lynn, 2006). Interestingly these are also points at which civil society and neoliberalism discourses overlap in their shared aspirations and focus on social capital: itself a discourse (Everingham 2003).

Civil society discourses are often used to describe the non-government sector, including voluntary associations and not-for-profit organisations, or that which has come to be known as the third sector (Howell & Pearce, 2002) and more recently a fourth sector is proposed (Alessandrini, 2010). This amalgam can present an unrealistic and simplistic notion of civil society (Lavalette & Ferguson, 2007). Cox (1995, pp. 7-8) proposes that three spheres of social life make up civil society: family life, working life and the *vita active* which she describes as our public life "in which we collectively create civil spheres". Civil society in this sense is often portrayed as neither the state nor family but those spaces where these both meet in public, our social selves. Although the juncture where the private meets the state is often called civil society, in Australia there is some justification for labelling this organisational site quasi-government as there is little which operates here without government auspice, through its funding mechanisms. C4C may be viewed as a mechanism of the state in this regard, although it is more complex than this and there are aspects which can be said to exist outside government influence or despite government directions, which is discussed over these final sections.

Discursive Objects

Discourses contributing to these two main discursive fields are themselves open to interpretation and are often used ideologically to gain political advantage. Across both discourses, however, ideas crystallize as to what is *right* and what is *wrong*, what is *normal* and what is *deviant*. Within a particular belief system certain views, thoughts or actions become unthinking and unspoken norms. These ideas, being considered undeniable "truths", come to define a particular way of seeing the world, and the particular way of life associated with such "truths" becomes normalised. Foucault (1972b, p. 194) offers a way of thinking about political thought by subjecting political behaviour to analysis that uncovers particular discursive practices. Exploration of those objects, or 'subjects' as offered by Rose (1996, p. 340), of neoliberal political behaviour then includes family, volunteers, and organisations as those objects entailing and illuminating discursive practices assisting in an explanation of winners and losers of policy practice: remembering each discursive object holds in tension one or more discourses at any one time. First, the discursive objects of family, volunteers and non-government organisations are discussed using the two main discourses of neoliberalism and civil society, to be followed by a discussion of the discursive concepts of language, expert knowledge, disadvantage and race.

The family

Family, as a discursive object assumed under C4C, highlights the ways policies employ processes that serve to reinforce and reproduce dominant discourses. While less prevalent than at earlier times and seeing an increase of one parent families (Jamrozik, 2009, p. 114), the nuclear family continues as the 'ideal' family type in Australian dominant discourse (Leonard, 1997, p. 39). C4C does not specify an 'ideal' family form yet processes enacted under its direction support this as a preferred family type, of a male and a female parent with children. This 'ideal' is reinforced by policies and processes that carry dominant discourses in various ways. In her book *Social Justice and the Politics of Community* Everingham (2003) provides

detail of the many policies influential in shaping constructions of the family, for instance the Harvester Judgement of 1907 which supported the formation of the nuclear family as the normative type.

Targeting, while having a place in policy making, is another mode suggestive of powerful discourses in the way groups are portrayed as deficient and therefore are in need of intervention. By targeting and classifying people of CALD and Indigenous backgrounds as those most needing intervention C4C effectively 'others' those people and groups. This 'deficit' perspective, underling many current policies, is often enacted unequivocally and irrefutably when on close inspection paradoxically these measures are often reinstating these same inequalities and disadvantages. The policy pursuit of healthy and well balanced families is constructed in the likeness of the dominant groups (mainly white, middle class families) and within an invisibility of 'whiteness' (Habibis & Walter, 2009, p. 198). The question then is through whose [and which] lens are disadvantage and solutions to social issues characterised, defined and 'sold'? What family *is* "remains subject to cultural interpretation" (Bowes, Watson, & Pearson, 2009, p. 91) and how it intersects with constructions of disadvantage is important in this context.

The ideal of the conjugal family is perpetuated further by the implication that anything other than this type is 'broken' and 'dysfunctional'. The policy targets, mainly single headed households, which comprise mostly women as carers of children; people with low level educational attainment; with low incomes and dependent on income support are the social indicators used to define people 'in need' within a set geographical place and become needy 'families'. While research uses evidence from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), the Australian Early Development (AEDI) Index and the field of neurosciences on brain development, suggesting the high incidence of childhood disadvantage based on these demographics it does little to expose or elaborate on the countless examples world wide of non-nuclear families thriving against the backdrop of poverty given their intense and sustained levels of social capital

(Graham, 2005). Western research, while presenting a 'truth' in the form that breastfeeding, for example, is beneficial to children in their first year, risks imposing a set of ideological beliefs at the same time as dismissing associated strengths and capacities of a group of people who have for the most part practised this in their child rearing for centuries. The case example at the beginning of this section demonstrates how policy overlooks strengths in its universal acclaim to address 'disadvantage'. The group may have needs, but breastfeeding as a practice was not that which was lacking.

As a unit crossing into public life, particularly the economic sphere, the family is positioned as a crucial target for policies to address anticipated adverse outcomes of a child's life path. In this way C4C is a policy suggestive of two or more theoretical framings of family. For instance, families as systems (Poole, 2005, pp. 29-30) and the 'resources' children have access to are seen as impacting upon developmental outcomes. This is emphasised in the "perceived decline in social cohesion which has placed stress on family and social functioning" (Zubrick et al., 2000, p. 14). Family stress adaptation theory (Hill, 1949) is also a theoretical framework informing C4C with Hill's prominent work on measuring the impact on families of the post war years seen to contribute its information base. Family systems theory suggests families are 'dysfunctional' when many of those indicators listed earlier are apparent: low income, single headed household, unemployed and so on. A common perception, from this construction, is that families defined by this classification are predicted to proceed through cycles of disadvantage and deprivation which are anticipated to flow from one generation to the next. This family type is targeted as in need of 'fixing'. The 'resources' theory, where "children's success in the world is affected by caregiver norms and values, which are dependent on a caregiver's type of employment, community and position in the social hierarchy" (Zubrick et al., 2000, p. 19) also contributes to C4C's knowledge base. Family stress adaptation theory is ubiquitous seen in C4C's attention to the early years of children, 0-5, at which point intervention is believed to prevent later life adversity accepting in its intervention the conceptualisation that contributors to stress (risk factors)

are thwarted when buffers against stress (protective factors) are implemented. Distinct connection (McDonald, 2002) is made with the theory of family stress adaptation theory and a project contracted for a term under C4C. This project, the C4C Coming Together Project, is a well established project provided by a NGO prior to C4C and continues to do so.

Based on a theoretical construction around what is 'ideal', involving a widely accepted linear progression through stages starting with marriage (breadwinner/dependent model reinforcing gender inequalities (Pascall, 1997, p. 15), to childbearing, to the 'empty nest' where children are expected to leave home in their late teens to early twenties, and finally the death of partners (Bowes et al., 2009, p. 94), ignores the many other pathways chosen by individuals and families (for instance, same sex families). Deviation from the 'norm' presented by this life cycle perceives of anything other as deviance or aberrant. This theoretical framing, like that used to construct the nuclear family type, poses dominant archetypes of what 'family' is from which any departure is often met with policy programmes and other activities aimed at a reconstruction of these 'ideals', as preferred by dominant groups.

Early childhood investment is pivotal to C4C's intervention policy with the cost benefits expected to result in less government spending in the future on social problems like unemployment and poor health. This aligns with neoliberalist perspectives where the market economy is considered better than governments to provide and serve families in need. Hence C4C's policy direction was to engage with business and industries to encourage investment into specific local projects. This long term view, which neoliberalism posits will result in reducing government spending on these issues, while undeniably proactive, commodifies the individual or family: treating people as commodities subject to a cost-benefit analysis in the future, rather than individuals with rights and freedoms in the here and now. That is "the value of children was in the significant contribution they made to the family income through their labour and in their expected responsibility for

supporting parents in their old age” (Jamrozik & Sweeney, 1996, p. 14). I argue this view still has legitimacy among dominant discourses influencing C4C. Elliot (1986 cited by Poole, 2005, p. 33) maintains that this idea uses the centrality of “capitalist ideology” in its relation to the socialisation of families. This view regards children as the property of parents with little noted in the rights of the children themselves (Jamrozik & Sweeney, 1996, p. 14). Both the civil society and Neoliberalist discourses advocate for individual rights and freedoms yet differ in their philosophical positionings. Exponents of civil society advocate that individual rights and freedoms are to be protected from the power exerted by the state and any attempt to reduce government investment undermines these freedoms. Neoliberal thought while also maintaining a position in support of individual freedom proposes this is only achieved through opportunities as provided by the market and the role of government is to build people’s economic and productive capacities.

Considering the C4C project above, through a Neoliberal lens, the aims were to build people’s capacities and educate select people, mainly people of races other than the dominant cultural group, on breastfeeding practices, thus instilling westernised values to encourage conformity under the guise of childhood health and wellbeing at the same time as it contributes to future productivity. This speech prepared by Michelle Scott, the Commissioner for Children and Young People, challenges this sentiment:

Increasingly I notice there is a tendency to talk about providing services to young children in the context of ensuring they have productive and harmonious adult lives. We argue that investing in children will mean reductions in crime, welfare dependence, health issues later on, and when children reach adulthood our investment will be realised. We talk about early childhood in the context of a broader ‘productivity agenda’: invest in them now so they can join the workforce later. Children have become a ‘human capital’ argument... But only viewing children through this lens has inherent risks. It fails to recognise children as hugely positive additions to our society in the present. It shrinks them to the limited role of adults-in-waiting. The productivity argument raises questions about whether we have children to support the economy, or whether we have an economy to support our children (Conference in Perth, Western Australia, in April 2009).

From a civil society discourse perspective, building on existing strengths leads to sustainable outcomes, a view consistent with many strengths-based approaches, as C4C's suggested approach. Mothers from CALD and Indigenous backgrounds were denied opportunities to demonstrate and build on their strengths and knowledges when the Volunteer Breastfeeding Project (VBFP) was imposed from above as a social planning response rather than a developmental one. Iris Young (2000, p. 108) suggests:

...under circumstances of structural social and economic inequality, the relative power of some groups often allows them to dominate the definition of the common good in ways compatible with their experience, perspective, and priorities. A common consequence of social privilege is the ability of a group to convert its perspective on some issues into authoritative knowledge without being challenged by those who have reason to see things differently. Such a dynamic is a major way that political inequality helps reproduce social and economic inequality even in formally democratic processes.

A brief consideration of the ideological views implied in the 2020 summit report (Australian Commonwealth Government, 2008) illustrate a neoliberalist discourse where a working life balance is documented as a central focus point in the aim of supporting, improving and empowering families. This document supports placing the family centre-stage as the source of social support, but does not consider government has a responsibility to provide for those families where distribution of resources is inequitable. Civil society discourses however, include broader interpretations adding important social, political, spiritual, cultural, environmental and symbolic dimensions of family lives. It is with the family, civil society proponents argue, that a developing and nurturing of civic values and morals takes place sustained by the established networks and relationships which make up society. This they argue comes not from a 'fixing' of the family alone but the systems in which the family is centrally placed.

There is agreement here in between the two discourses acknowledging that service systems need greater collaboration and partnerships towards achieving reciprocal benefits. The focus, in civil society discourses, is on the equilibrium of these dimensions with much more than reliance on the market

economy to bring back balance to families, which are constructed as in need of fixing. It is as Cox (1995, p. 18) proclaims, civic virtues including cooperation and trust are elements of a society or community in which “the law rests lightly” and it is this social capital, with all its components, that “prosperity and economic growth follow”, rather than the other way around. It is the role of an active state (Everingham, 2003, p. 110) in which a “collective tool” of people form components of civil society to address inequalities not just at a local level but also global issues that impact adversely on local livelihoods.

These ideas overlap with concepts of mutual obligation, citizen participation and volunteerism and how each intersects with discourses of disadvantage.

Volunteering

Volunteers have historically held a significant place in human services with reliance on this sector ebbing and flowing determined by the values of society and of the government at the time. The concept of volunteering, often describing altruistic acts unmotivated by financial gain (Deakin, 2001, p. 8), illustrates the tensions between the two main discourses considered here as most prominent in shaping the case of winners and losers of policy practice. Volunteering, a recognised component of civil society and increasingly relied upon by the human services sector (Jamrozik, 2009, p. 178) forms an essential component of current policies. C4C Program Managers (PMs), for instance, sought assistance from volunteers and were encouraged to take advantage of the newly legislated fifteen hours per week volunteer work required of people on low income or disability support payments under the 2006 Disability Support Pension (Australian Government, 2006). Both PMs spoke of the difficulties when enlisting volunteers for reasons including issues of insurance, people unskilled in process, requirement for volunteers to obtain and pay for a “working with children check”, incongruent expectations and different abilities particularly at a time marked by skills shortage and a labour shortage (Richardson, 2007;

Robb, 2007). Let us consider this point in relation to the breastfeeding project which turned to volunteer labour for its own development.

The reason for recruiting volunteers for the breastfeeding project was to be cost effective and hence reach a large number of people in the C4C site. A project with minimal funding and resources sought people from different cultural groups by tapping into existing relationships within the C4C location in order to implement the project's aim. In this way the breastfeeding project met many of its requirements as determined by the funders: utilising human capital (using existing relationships towards building networks) improving social capital (through building such relationships) and increasing breastfeeding rates across the targeted population. The value placed on volunteers was to extend economic advantage for a project with minimal funding as well as strengthen community. When the PMs realised that the aims and outcomes of the breastfeeding project did not match the actualities of the project it was considered to have "lost its way" due to "internal management changes, clash of personalities [and] difficulties in relation to direction, reach, and the ongoing development and expansion of the program" (Project Status Report, 2006). The volunteer group, "representative of the African community", wanted to gain information that would assist with their becoming "more Australian" (Quarterly Report, 2006). They were consequently blamed for not performing as the Facilitating Partner (FP) and funders expected. Above all, requiring conformity to the programme's objectives affected its ability to benefit from the experiences and knowledges of the volunteers which was an opportunity lost.

The relationship volunteerism has to the economic conditions of society can be explained through both neoliberal and civil society discourses. Both positions view 'economic' differently. A neoliberal position focuses on financial wealth while a civil society position incorporates social, relational, cultural and other 'wealth' (Shuman, 1998). The breastfeeding project illustrates these contrasting positions. Using volunteers meant stretching few resources further yet, as reported in a Quarterly Report, uptake and support

for the project by other organisations in both the maternal feeding and C4C area was minimal due to the risk of losing paying positions to volunteers. Volunteers were seen as an economically and socially viable option to the Programme Managers (PMs) at the same time as a threat to the current order in which nursing staff and others trained in this area could lose paid positions to volunteers.

Volunteering serves to build economies, social capital and people's own skills, expertise and self efficacy (Austin, 1998). While Austin (1998) refers to corporate volunteering he notes the widespread use of volunteering to increase skills and so on. As demonstrated by the breastfeeding project issues of sustainability meant that its reliance on volunteers also meant its demise in a climate where volunteering is increasingly commodified, under the guise of welfare reform and mutual obligation (for example, the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations' Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) and other community work issued to people as part of education, employment or justice orders). Edgar (2001, p. 96) describes this as a "strangely schizophrenic campaign by the Howard Government about the need for reciprocal obligations, personal responsibility and a return to [nuclear] family values". Focus upon 'giving back' translates into a unilateral direction of giving, with people, often the most disadvantaged, expected (even obligated) to restore social order in place of governments which are to provide supportive mechanisms to the most marginal.

C4C also relied upon volunteers who were committee members, expected to submit significant portions of their time, often on a number of committees and sub-committees, and tasked with overseeing the many projects. There were, however, people attending as part of their paid job alongside others committing their time voluntarily. This process simulates a microcosm of differential means of wielding influence. The many community members targeted to provide input into C4C consultative and planning processes, mostly mothers and/or low paid participants, were expected to volunteer their

time while others, mostly Anglo Celtic male breadwinners as organisational employees, are paid while participating. Not only does this create inequitable representation in a policy programme purporting to support locally owned solutions to local problems but reinforces existing inequalities based on race, gender, different abilities and dominant ideologies. More significantly, practices become less sustainable when there is a lack of community representation and ownership of decision making processes and participation.

The tendency is for these meeting spaces to be dominated by CEOs, managers, organisational staff most of who are of Anglo Celtic origin. This too was the case for C4C as earlier demonstrated in the case study section. If aiming to foster engagement and collaboration with ordinary citizens to develop local solutions to local problems then committees, as discursively framed objects and constructed under the guise of volunteering and community caring, represented those of dominant groups which ensure the continuation of ideas already embodied in the superstructures of the state. Volunteers coming to the rescue of 'failing' members in the first instance favour a neoliberalist interpretation where government is the last recourse. The alternative is a civil society discourse which does not take an instrumental view of volunteers, instead valuing their contribution to community networks, the development of trust between people and the production of the myriad of activities which develop health and wellbeing.

Organisations

The thrust of C4C towards making family service systems work in partnership provides another meeting place to discuss the influence of neoliberal and civil society discourses. Many writers of social policy direct us to the New Public Management models (NPM) that have emerged over the past decade or two as a popular political push by many western countries aimed at finding a middle ground between capitalist ideology and communism (Hill, 2005, p. 198). Dimensions of power, with respect to who decides and how decisions

are enacted, are central to this discussion. Proponents of civil society, for instance, contend that top down directives with power centrally located undermines democratic ideals preventing 'out-groups' their best chances of having their needs met (Cox, 1995, p. 47). Hence what NPM models propose are a more complex arrangement where contracts are issued under government direction but non-government organisations are positioned as independent bodies. Even with government funding local initiatives encouraging local ownership and greater control over decision making, which requires less government control over implementation processes, then more equitable, inclusive and sustainable outcomes can be reached (O'Flynn, 2007). However, as we have seen the practice of C4C showed decision making and local implementation were not free from influence from hierarchical structures.

Discursive objects derived from C4C's ambition of collaborative partnerships, combining government, non-government and private organisations illuminate beneficiaries of the policy decisions under C4C and the inequitable participation and rewards which result and these are now explored in more detail.

Non government Organisations

C4C relied upon the NGO sector to enact the overall programme aims to address one or more of the five key objectives. Tasked with operating projects for those people targeted rather than alongside these same people, the contracted organisations were in control of decision making at this level. The authority in this arrangement was predicated on partnerships between organisations rather than partnerships between organisations and the people targeted for the delivery of services. Consequently, a greater value was placed on the expertise, knowledge and problem solving skills of organisational players than those of parents and other groups within the community. It was the task expected by FaHCSIA of the Community Partners (CPs) to build people's capacities and 'up-skill' targeted individuals and groups towards improved outcomes for children, their families and whole

communities. The underlying assumption was that agency workers have expertise, the 'right' knowledge and capacities while those people targeted in the community lack these.

The idea of working in collaboration, through partnerships across the service sector, under a competitive tendering process, paradoxically resulted in divisions when forming partnerships was its aim. This paradox is illustrated by reflection on two C4C projects, although there were more accounts suggesting such divisions. As mentioned, common to many C4C projects was the initial setting up phase of the programme which focused upon forming relationships and bringing together service organisations in partnership. This period was followed by an expression of interest for the selected projects and then a stage to secure contracts and sign agreements. It was at this point that research respondents voiced concerns about organisations being "pitted against one another" (Desera) rather than encouraged to work collaboratively. The 2006 Quarterly Report reported of the breastfeeding project;

While noted that partnerships were developing well between three main organisations in this field [hospitals and other allied organisations and services] were difficult to engage presumed as a protective mechanism from losing work.

Other instances were recorded where partnerships were developing yet these tended to be exceptions where for example volunteers promoting breastfeeding in the community were perceived more a threat to the existing order in which staff of organisations, targeted for 'partnership', were seen not to engage for fear of losing paid positions to volunteers.

Ideas supporting partnerships and working collaboratively across government and non-government sectors, as seen in A National Compact for Australia (Australian Government, 2008; Stephens, 2008), are widely critiqued and at the same time supported (MacNeill, 2009; Mayo, 1997), as seen in burgeoning policy practice applications. The following two examples illustrate both positions. One organisation specialising in services to Indigenous people, the Indigenous Support Centre (ISC), operating in the

designated C4C site of Eastville, failed to secure a contract, as Desera has already been quoted as identifying the competitive nature of tendering.

Early negotiations identified the ISC as a vital partner but once its proposed project was rejected by the funding body and then bidding commenced between it and another organisation the ISC withdrew from negotiations and any future activities with the C4C. Desera stated that the decision not to be involved with C4C was due to a sense that:

Our expertise was put aside. This is not sour grapes this is process (Desera).

Considerable expertise in relationships and specialised knowledge of the community and client group was lost due to this clumsy attempt at partnering.

Consequently, this organisation's rival, The Family Support Service (FSS), secured the contract for more than one project in Eastville. This success was despite the FSS having no prior relationships with or within the community, prior to C4C (it was from outside the community), and despite its lack of experience in the specialised knowledges of the client base and their presenting issues which the ISC arguably had. The FSS was however well resourced. As was mentioned earlier, the FSS manager was successfully awarded the two projects in Eastville considered it gratifying but "rare" (Eva) to be granted two large contracts. This was more surprising given there were only three contracts available in Eastville C4C. However, the FSS, despite government requirements and stringent timelines, managed to effectively develop grass roots initiatives that included key players around early years intervention. The FSS, as an organisation invited by the FP to participate in the programme because of its capital base, expertise, and limited competition, was tipped to succeed in a community site lacking in social services. In this case the 'partnered' arrangement worked well even though success was contingent on a number of key features: organisational expertise and experience, resources base of the organisation and knowledge of the organisation's ability to perform based on government expectations.

The FSS's reputation within the community grew from strength to strength throughout the course of its management. Its ability to engage and work from a community development perspective including practising Action Research (AR) meant that community members were involved in the projects' developments.

Embedding that [community development and Action Research] into practice and asking questions and not taking on that expert role, that's fundamental to how we work (Eva).

NGOs were not immune from negative consequences of expectations by the funders. In their project contracts with C4C NGOs were often faced with additional but un-resourced tasks, such as submission-writing and interagency meetings, for which government agencies drew on their own resources. A common complaint was voiced by Carol that small organisations find this demand on resources prohibitive.

As a result, maintaining relationships, networking and collaborative processes are all necessary activities differentially resourced according to whether or not the agency is government or non-government. It is no surprise that those NGOs with greater resources were advantaged in not only acquiring contracts but were also perceived to be more successful in delivering projects, leaving smaller organisations fighting to survive in a climate of competitive tendering: a process characterised by direct compliance of the contracted organisation to the contractor not the people whom the service targets (Cox, 1995, pp. 51-52). This is a marked difference between the neoliberal and civil society discourses. The dominance of the market and 'level playing field', proposed by neoliberalism, assumes equal opportunities for all competitors. In contrast, civil society proponents would argue there is no 'level playing field' with inequitable processes and structures favouring some organisations over others, as demonstrated in the example of the FSS: superior in financial capital and resources, overpowering the ISC, seen as less financially competitive despite a resource rich knowledge and networking base. Furthermore, civil society proponents

would also argue that if services are required by government to be so circumscribed then it is government's responsibility to provide them leaving civil society organisations to provide a diverse and locally relevant array of services.

Although the aim of the C4C was for community to have greater control of local solutions to local problems, this translated into organisations assuming greater control, with the larger organisations sometimes external to the locality gaining more control than others, irrespective of local embedded knowledge. As has been seen, an FP NGO in one site was new to both the location and the 'business' of early years.

The positioning, responsibility and authority given to NGOs to perform government duties supports an economic rationalist view which supporters of civil society and liberal democratic ideas purport is the intent of such policies like C4C (Connell, Fawcett, & Meagher, 2009; Harvey, 2007). When projects are not successful the NGO is often blamed for having botched the process. This was evident in Westville where a CP was requested, as a component of the project, to design and produce a manual to guide staff in facilitation processes of playgroups. With timeline pressures posing a tension between the FP and CP the greatest issue expressed by a research respondent (Petra) who was a community partner of the project was frustration at receiving a Quarterly Report almost a year and a half into the project which was the first indication that the project was not on target to achieve the agreed outcomes. The quarterly report, also sent to the funders, affected the relationship building that occurred earlier which was further damaged when this same respondent "felt spied upon" (Petra) when a C4C staff member of the FP arrived at a playgroup unannounced apparently negating or destroying trust, an essential component of social capital.

The non-government sector increasingly is perceived as 'big business', a source of growing capital gain, a means for achieving a government agenda: with NGOs needing to 'carve' out and claim a role other than "as service-

provision arms of government” (Alessandrini, 2010, p. 136). A recent Issues Paper entitled, “Contribution of the Not for Profit Sector”, endorsed by the Australian Government, “has identified successful collaboration with the sector as necessary to achieve the goals of its social inclusion agenda” (Productivity Commission, 2009, p. 6). The Issues Paper identifies the non-government sector as a “major contributor to the Australian economy, employing close to 888 000 people and utilising the services of some 2.4 million volunteers (ABS 2008 cited by The Productivity Commission, 2009, p. 7). In WA alone it contributes \$6.6 billion to the economy (Ironmonger, 2009). While these two reports maintain an independence from Government other writers suggest such institutions are “quasi-independent government-created arm’s length bodies” (Wanna & Keating 2000, cited by McClelland, 2006b, p. 89). As the sector contributing extensively to social wellbeing the emphasis, suggested by this Issues Paper, remains driven by economic gains made possible by ‘partnering’ with NGOs under contract arrangements that further government operations. That is the authority and centre of control remains with government and so NGOs, as objects of government, undertake processes replicating dominant discourses of neoliberalism.

This idea of NGOs as quasi-government or big business further resonates with a respondent involved early on in the development of C4C who spoke of the initial seven C4C pilot sites as headed by NGOs from “the big end of town” (Ian). These NGOs were selected through Government’s association with the Chief Executive Officers of these NGOs on other projects. Whether it was known or not that the first seven sites were ‘hand-picked’ is uncertain with this point not reflected in information provided by respondents to this study. What was known and commented on by respondents was that the FP NGO of Westville, one of the original seven, was not located in that ‘community’ prior to the arrival of C4C.

Government Organisations

Government embodies a complex set of relationships between political decision makers (in parliament), ministers (in both parliament and their

ministries/portfolios) and Departmental heads and other senior bureaucrats (in the departments themselves). Previous sections described many issues about the management of C4C from its design and implementation throughout its rollout by the relevant departments. Here, the question is less about what the staff of FaHCSIA did or did not do, but rather how this department operated as a discursive object through which C4C was initially framed as a 'community' located and driven policy programme, but became a government driven set of activities. This may be illustrated through the concept of consultation.

Government consultation processes are frequently criticised for not allowing the time needed for effective engagement of people with varying views (Considine, 1994, p. 162). Here, not only were timelines so tight to allow for effective consultation, the failure to identify all the necessary players to consult resulted not only in a lack of community participation but also, as has already been mentioned, the withdrawal of services which could have enhanced C4C. Consultation practices tended to be with select groups such as particular NGOs (a process suggestive of an elite NGO sector) with the aim of enlisting support from these organisations for the programme. Consultation processes that do not 'listen deeply' as in mutual dialogical practices characteristic of effective consultation approaches are unable to capture views from the many people to whom the policy is directed. This reflects a consumerist ideology of 'participation' in consultation processes that relies on recipients' passive involvement rather than active connection (MacNeill, 2009, p. 659).

Alex, who previously represented the NGO sector but who, by the time of the study, had moved into State Government, commented that:

The Commonwealth rhetoric was good but they forced the process too much. The timeline was too short to allow the principles to be played out in practice. We couldn't consult people really; we had to ram people through a process (Alex).

Another State Government representative remarked on the lack of consultation with the States which saw parallel strategies in the area of Early Years (personal communication, 2005). The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee of Western Australia more recently recorded:

Currently, there are many players involved in the delivery of children's services, including the 3 levels of government and a diversity of government departments. Funding arrangements for service delivery can be across Federal, State and Local levels of government and result in a duplication of services in some regions and no services in another. For example, some WA regions have received both Commonwealth 'Communities for Children' funding and State 'Early Years Funding', creating confusion at times amongst stakeholders when reporting on programs, extent of services and lines of responsibility. This also results in confusion amongst possible consumers of these services as to "who is eligible for what" (Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, 2009, p. 124).

The importance placed on eligibility overshadows what would otherwise be considered, from a civil society perspective, to be more important: ensuring broad inclusion and the creation of sustainable community partnerships.

The Early Years State Strategy drastically rolled back budgeted funding in a designated urban area when it was revealed, after the decision was made, that C4C was being implemented in that same area. Overall respondents suggested what was required was more time for consultation and greater overall planning and fortifying opinion that government processes are rhetorical. Furthermore, and as seen in the above reference, there was confusion for many as to how they related to the C4C programme or projects with a conceptualising of these complex governance arrangements often taking up to a year, sometimes beyond, for many people involved, including CPs. One CP tried to explain her connection to the various organisations;

It still took a year of being in the project to really understand how the puzzle fitted; that I'm with [the Community Centre] in the [Public Spaces] Project in C4C which is facilitated by [the FP organisation] (Gail).

Not only was the programme's aim of encouraging and engaging local involvement hindered by lack-lustre consultation processes but also by the

oratory surrounding the devolution of government control. Participation, by people affected by policy, leads to observed influence on policy processes which is seen in service delivery and policy planning reflecting local needs (Alcock, 2004, p. 91). The extent of devolution, where it occurred, was to the NGOs and even then government restrictions hindered their authority. I observed directly the withdrawal of one local council when it became evident control remained with the FP who in turn was answerable to FaHCSIA. And that the research respondents clearly identified the desire of both ministers and FPs to be seen to be in control rather than them as partners.

Other respondents believed C4C staff were intruding with further perceptions that staff wanted control of other projects previously established by other organisations. As one respondent put it:

there was duality of issues around who is the [FP, NGO] and what right have you got to be working in our community when you've never been here before and secondly, what's the Commonwealth doing this time? (Alex).

Intricacies of place and issues of control are further exemplified in this example. A youth group formed prior to C4Cs inception was identified by C4C which then attempted to formalise processes for the group. This was neither what the group wanted, nor was it in keeping with the workable and flexible structures as developed by the group. Nadine, a State Government official, reflected that the capacities of the group were not realised by C4C staff and actions taken to engage the group were pitched at channelling accepted processes by the group into more structured and controlled practices. This example is demonstrative of specific knowledges about processes as being either 'right' or 'wrong' without reflecting on and valuing what works in a given context.

Private for profit

The notion of 'third way', described by Smyth (2006b, p. 109) as "a new mix of economic neo-liberalism and social democratic social policy", is suggestive of a collaborative approach crossing business, public and private domains. Investment from industry and private enterprise under such arrangements was a particular strategy under the brand of 'Social Coalition' assuming sustainable outcomes for projects successful in obtaining financial backing from business. Amongst the multitude of arrangements, and with some more successful than others, arguments for such 'partnerships', particularly with the business sector, did not account for those C4C sites where there was no industry presence. With no industry presence in Eastville it made difficult the seeking and obtaining of financial support:

**There's no BP and there's no Alcoa in the community
(Alex).**

Furthermore, NGOs restricted to operating around core business and integrating C4C projects within this structure reportedly found seeking outside assistance to be arduous if not unworkable. Neither Westville nor Eastville was able to secure industry support for C4C projects past their funding period.

We have so far examined some important discursive objects present in the C4C. These form part of the discursive analysis which also includes discursive concepts and enunciative modalities. Next we consider some of the concepts, those of community development, social capital and 'expert' knowledge as embraced under C4C.

Discursive concepts

Discursive concepts (Foucault 1972), also of and for objects (where objects are able to be concepts, for instance, 'family' as both an object and concept of policy), are examined with consideration of language used, reliance upon 'expert' knowledge, constructions of disadvantage and cultural hegemony as perceived under the C4C policy programme. Able also to be discursive

objects, these areas considered are 'discursive concepts' and enunciative modalities because of their intangible yet powerful influence in the formation of this policy response to early childhood disadvantage. These areas are chosen for their authoritative and unassailable presence as well as demonstrating how language and concepts intertwine to create a complex discursive pattern.

Enunciative Modalities

It has been clear that institutional sites and authority to speak derive from the highest echelons of government. As such personnel in C4C are empowered by senior officials with delegated power to declare the 'truths' of the practices and performances of C4C. Here I discuss how the types of enunciative modalities are shaped through language.

Language as a vehicle for the many ways of knowing and being in the world is one way through which certain "social and political [and cultural] consequences are defined and contested" (Weedon, 1987, p. 21). Specific ideas pervade society through language at the same time as particular ideas influence the construction and application of language. Accordingly, realities are embedded in interpretation, with 'truth' being a product rather than a 'real' representation of language, in that "'reality' emerges from the language of people" (Allan, Pease, & Briskman, 2003, p. 6). The C4C policy lexicon, referring liberally to concepts of community development, along with many similarly associated concepts, is increasingly aligned with third way policies aimed at community renewal, and Place Management (Ingamells, 2007, p. 237). The panoply of meanings of the many concepts used under C4C (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005; Department of Families Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, 2005a, 2006a) result in lack of clarity, inconsistency and complexity in interpretation, with these terms increasingly associated less with social democratic ideals and more with neoliberal discourses (Gleeson & Low, 2000). This language is suggestive of a particular discursive framing

although analysis of the way 'community development' as a conceptual and practical approach was implemented by the two PMs reveals how differently this term can be applied. Social capital and capacity building as two other main discursive concepts under C4C are also analysed.

Community Development

Community development was a key principle and process of C4C, and has a theoretical and practical construction, both of which are not clearly defined in the FaHCSIA documentation (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005; Department of Family and Community Services, 2005b, p. 20). FPs are expected, under requirements of the Community Resource Funding, to perform broadly defined functions and services including pre-eminently programme management. This title itself is suggestive of more a top down authoritative approach than a developmental one. The second function refers to community development: "an approach grounded in community development, although not based on a purist community development model" (Davies & Taylor, 2005, p. 2): with a 'purist' design left undefined invoking images of a modernist project. The descriptors listed were:

- establish support for a Communities for Children Committee;
- engaging existing service providers and facilitating links in service delivery;
- engaging local early childhood expertise and quality technical support provided by agencies such as a university;
- building connections between key community settings – family, school and community;
- engaging community leaders, and meaningful involvement of the community in achievement of goals; and
- establishing links and strengthening working relationships between service agencies, person with early childhood and community development expertise and/or research groups, local institutions (e.g. schools) and the community.

Functions as broad as these did not provide direction or any practical information about how to practice community development, nor was any clear rationale or philosophical base provided to guide practices. The different approaches taken by the PMs to the same task illustrate not only how the same concept is interpreted differently but also how it carries forward dominant discursive framings as enunciative modality.

The two PMs spoke of their role in the following ways:

[the PM role was] a funding one ... early years initiative with guidelines from government.... (Owen).

And

[the PM role was a] busy role. [It] depends on background and previous experience. Could do contract management role as hands on or standing back. But [I] took on [the] role as working closely with Community Partners and developing [the] team (Wayne).

The differing approach and conceptualisation taken by each PM is apparent. While Owen considered the programme as a social planning model Wayne considered it developmental with ability to make lasting and significant changes with and within communities. The significance of their differing leadership styles of the programme impacted upon planning as well as other aspects of the programme as discussed elsewhere. While funders emphasised the flexibility in community development processes both managers agreed at least that the bureaucracies that funded them were constraining and paternalistic. Differences between the site management styles was a recurring theme throughout this research.

The differential experiences from both managers and perceptions from the respondents offered a way to understand discursive framings and dominant discourses. Both managers occupied polar positions. As one respondent observed and earlier shared, one manager was seen to make many important decisions “behind the committee” (Alex). This approach, described as “interventionist” by Owen was a common reflection with the site generally

regarded as the 'leading' site (of the two) and the PM often referred as the 'golden boy'. The other PM was described as, "water on a rock", facilitating processes "slow to get going" (Tom). Interestingly, this management style was more consistent with developmental processes. Here views from community members were reflected in decision making and their participation and involvement were observed to be greater. Rotation of chair and close association of CPs with other members of the community in decision making processes supported this view, even if processes at higher levels prevented enactment of decisions made at this level.

Discourses of community need to be considered with relation to the power dimensions existing within community:

on the one hand there are economic, fiscal, industrial and even defence policies that support an economic rationalist paradigm that arguably can harm the interests of communities, and on the other, social development and regional infrastructure policies that promise attention to community and individual need (Lynn, 2006 p, 111).

With social, cultural, political, economic and other aspects inextricably linked community development is commonly thought to be about the redistribution of power and control from service providers and policy programmers to service users (MacNeill, 2009, p. 659). However, few CPs were able to identify instances of power redistribution meaning they had authority to enact their own decisions. Within a consumerist model of participation, Virginia MacNeill (2009, p. 659) suggests 'representation' is the outcome rather than inclusion of service users, or in this case CPs embraced as equal partners. Community to be 'developed' in this case suggests a stagnant homogenous community rather than a contestable place which is used by government as a resource – "a 'partner' in a 'social coalition' consisting of individuals, businesses, charity and religious organizations" (Everingham, 2003, p. 14), more illustrative of a vibrant civil society.

Community development, as practice and theoretical application, frequently "an object of warm-and-fuzzy ritual worship for politicians of all stripes" (Gibson & Cameron, 2001, p. 1), depends upon common understandings on

agreed processes and a shared theoretical orientation. 'Community development' as a discursive concept applied under C4C, however, presumes a 'commodification' of practice where this is a model that can be 'bought', as though it were a product. 'Community' as a political notion (Rose, 1996) becomes governmental when used as a technique. Such interpretations seem commonplace, yet implicit in their techno-rational intent: the ways in which democratic language of civil society is used is often done "mask[ing] an ongoing project of privatizing state welfare provision" (Lavalette & Ferguson, 2007, p. 448). This respondent described the 'selling' aspects of C4C in which the notion of 'community' is to be bought:

The service providers were interested in the notion [community development] and the community itself. It's kinda hard to engage the community in a Commonwealth project when you've got a pretty ideological set of principles and you tell them it's going to be wonderful for them (Alex).

Others (Bryson & Mowbray, 2005) suggest 'community' is an ideologically driven object (spray on solution) submitted as panacea to highly complex social problems. While community members can be assisted or facilitated in ways of working creatively towards sustainable outcomes such processes require more conceptual and procedural considerations than were given to the C4C programme. For instance, contrasting the consumerist model of participation identified by MacNeill (2009) is the democratic approach which relies on equity and empowerment. This approach assumes greater responsibility on the part of community members, whose decisions are reflected in the design, implementation and development of programmes in much the same way as Participatory Action Research processes. To many respondents, the idea of working community development was not what was experienced in practice of the C4C, even if it were possible to have common agreement as to the underlying philosophies. While it is evident the PMs thought about their connection with both the programme and the community differently, the general absence of community members in decision making and participation suggests the aim of using developmental processes was not delivered.

I now turn to social capital to further demonstrate how discursive concepts are both objects and concepts for and of enunciated modalities.

Social capital

Social capital, a concept which joins 'community' as its 'conceptual cousin' (Putnam, 2001, p. 21), is another ill-defined and indiscriminately used term but one which has come onto the political stage to bridge policies traditionally led by rational markets with policies aiming to restore and build civil societies (Winter, 2000, p. 1). Heightened interest in social capital originates from a general acceptance that cohesive trusting relationships, where established norms and networks are generated, offer a great source of sustained support to families and communities. Much of the literature surrounding this discursive concept supports the notion that communities which measure high levels of social capital are less likely to depend upon or require residual social services. Therefore, policies that encourage social interaction, networking and partnership anticipate outcomes in which "social outcomes can be achieved cheaply" (Bryson & Mowbray, 2005, p. 92). Unsurprising then that many scholars on the subject insist on a critical analysis of policy shifts, particularly within neoliberal and economic rationalist contexts like Australia, where social capital, like the other discursive formations, is often offered as a tangible objective, or product of trade (Alessandrini, 2002). Authors (Alessandrini, 2002, p. 111; Mowbray, 2005) highlight how particular policies and programmes in Australia have employed social capital in ways that support neoliberalism ideals.

C4C offers a view into the way social capital represents an enunciative modality or who is given authority to speak, in that, where there are groups in communities with already strong social capital they are those groups most likely to be represented, therefore increasing their social capital further. This is further supported by Mowbray's (2005) research into a Victorian community building scheme which he suggests targeted communities with already developed social capital. Such groups, advantaged by social capital

through easy association and connection to mainstream society, that is in the likeness of dominant groups, exasperates those existing divides within community. The earlier example of a committee member stereotyping Indigenous people has the potential to impact upon building social capital (Bourdieu, 1990) by instilling, in this case, a sense of fear of the 'other'. The notion that social capital is not all good, particularly when used as a "private rather than a public good" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 260) further suggests the concept of social capital has the capacity to widen distances between those who have and those who do not, thus reinforcing power differentials. Representations of what should be and how, therefore, remain with a dominant social structure. Discourses of social capital used by government as tangible, measurable and replicable serves government interests (Everingham, 2003, p. 11). Those existing inequalities are paradoxically reinforced by those very aims attempting to build social capital, as illustrated in the following exemplar and has earlier been mentioned.

A small grants fund established under C4C was aimed at community groups who could apply for grants up to \$1000 for local initiatives. This was entitled the Community Action Fund (CAF). The application required a detailed outline of how the money would be used and projects approved were those seen to advance social capital and the building of community networks in some way.

Local groups, particularly from diverse cultural backgrounds, were approached and invited to apply for these grants with suggestions offered as to how the money could be spent. Groups, or individuals, once securing a grant were expected to present their intended project(s) to a committee; its aim and outline expenditure.

At the end of each funding period, when there was money left over, C4C staff would send emails inviting services to encourage more groups to apply. Almost a year into C4C, a research respondent (representing state government) offered information, for this research and later at one of the CAF committee meetings, that people were overwhelmed, often intimidated, by the need to present for the grants.

This excerpt hints at the complexities involved in policy practices. Here social capital was a driver for grants but the application process was too difficult or contrary to the usual practices of the groups.

These are often people [CAF applicants] who are uneducated and disempowered and to have to make them get up for twenty minutes or so to present so as to get money is very disempowering and defeats the purpose of CAF (Nadine).

C4C embraced the concept of social capital but it was translated in practice to produce cohesive, collaborative, partnership arrangements between service systems, of government, NGOs and business organisations, rather than community members themselves. This can be explained (Boeck & Fleming, 2005, p. 260), as supporting a meso perspective of social capital

whereby “values provide general guidelines for behaviour and they are translated into more specific directives, in terms of roles and norms”. The emphasis on increasing social capital at this layer, although intended to work its way down to community grass roots, positions organisations as ‘experts’, authorities able to *produce* social capital. While argued that social systems can increase social capital, interactions at this level need to “involve space, time, opportunities, precedent and the valuing of processes” (Cox, 1995, p. 23) to do so. Earlier discussions have pointed to areas of incongruence between C4C policy aims and its selected practices, as well as directing attention to the negligible time allocated for processes known to be effective even if lengthy. Social capital is that which relates to civic virtues including trust, reciprocity and mutuality (Cox, 1995) and many policy practices prevent, even erode, the development of these attributes when issues of power differentials are ignored.

Capacity Building

Another component of the C4C approach is capacity building. Policy documents referring to capacity building consigns it to that which empowers both NGOs and community (Davies & Taylor, 2005; Lewis & Taylor, 2005) through which it is “the combined influence of a community’s commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities” (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services & RMIT University Circle, 2004, p. 1). As an important principle of SFCS, capacity building is “about increasing the personal and collective resources of individuals and communities, to help them develop the skills and capacities they need to respond to challenges and to seize opportunities that come their way” (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services & RMIT University Circle, 2004, p. 3). With a value placed on the “importance of a vibrant non-government sector in solving social problems” (Leech & Lewis, nd, p. 9) there is no further evidence of a model or theoretical substance by which NGOs are to practise capacity building. With governments across Australia (and elsewhere) increasingly drawn to

community capacity building approaches authors (Rogan, 2002) caution that as its application is ill-defined (Cuthill & Fien, 2005) the capacity to engage in such practices is restricted (Eade, 1997). This reduces the enunciated concept to a 'spray-on solution' (Bryson & Mowbray, 2005), ineffective and impractical, leaving policy makers secure that they have provided policy guidance. The inability of the practitioners to satisfactorily employ the policy is therefore not the fault of the policy.

A Place Management or community development approach that seeks first to identify individual and community capacities is commendable. Many government policies of regeneration and other similar programmes however give insufficient recognition of capacities already existing in the community, effectively missing entirely these strengths on which they aim to build (Mayo, 1997, p. 20). The ISC was evidence of an organisation with a wealth of knowledge and connection to important relationships with the Indigenous groups in the site yet this 'capital' went unrecognised, and was therefore replaced by an organisation with greater economic capital. The VBFP illustrates how individuals targeted by a project, and with their own knowledges of a practice well developed, were not realised and therefore opportunities for enhancing capacities in other areas were missed.

With participation part of FaHCSIA's capacity building agenda (Lewis & Taylor, 2005, p. 10), which is integral to capacity building strategies, how and in what way 'participation' is conceived is important to any concept of capacity building. Participation as a concept in the McClure Report was essentially a consumerist interpretation, rather than as a means to include people in decision making impacting upon them – a democratic participatory model, such as is found in Action Research.

The overlap of social capital, community development and capacity building could be their strength: as practices to work at different levels with people in community to envisage their participation and development of activities and strategies they wish to enhance their lives and circumstances through

drawing on their abilities in developing relationships and so on. Instead, the concepts have been co-opted and serve to validate those who speak therefore more successfully reinforcing the service industry.

'Expert' Knowledge

Information in support of the VBFP relied on research undertaken prior to any knowledge gained of the area or groups targeted by C4C. Breastfeeding was listed as an activity or project (Leech & Lewis, nd, p. 11), widely accepting (World Health Organization, 2001) Western ideas that breastfed children have far greater chances later in life than those babies not breastfeed. Considering John Stanfield's (1994, p. 180) point that "post-1970s Western and Westernized academic disciplines, particularly in most social sciences, continue to marginalize and exclude ethnically diverse interpretations of reality and styles of knowing in relation to mainstream normative knowledge creation and reproduction", it is questionable as to 'whose interests' the breastfeeding project served. Research which is often used for "policy validation" (Jamrozik, 2009, p. 53) demonstrates that this project was not the only one to be decided outside the locale, despite the C4C framework explicitly stating that local committees were to be engaged to identify local needs and local projects. For instance, projects across the forty five sites were often mirror images offering similar services, even if named differently, to different people and groups in different geographical, cultural and social environments. This is seen as 'policy transfer' discussed here.

Policy transfer – contextualisation

As already mentioned, C4C was derived from UK and USA place based and community renewal policies, and Sure Start and Head Start policies, and is testimony to the international influence of policy decision making elsewhere. Policy transfer theories that policy direction of like nations is shaped by ideas that gain momentum and prestige when international organisations, like the World Bank and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, make it a business in "offering policy prescriptions" (Hill 2005, p. 88). Such

an example is found in the World Bank's "extraordinarily influential" promotion of "building 'capacity building' and creating 'social capital' as part of its seemingly 'post Washington consensus' development formula for economies in transition" (Weeks, Hoatson, & Dixon, 2003). Dominant discourses, ideologies, concepts and processes are carried through such policy transfer shaping policy applications in the likeness of other transnational and decontextualised models. There is an argument for learnings to be appropriated in this way although this conflicts with situated learnings (Lave & Wenger, 1991), in which knowledge is context based and a culmination of co-constructed learnings built from the ideas formed in the present based on what is important to people of place. While C4C is formed in the image of other western nation policies, nationally its rollout also demonstrates a 'one size fits all' ideology.

'Expert' knowledge issued from the top echelons of Government represents a mechanism of power or enunciative modality where an acculturated and elitist view of the world is presented through selected and assumed knowledges. Dominant views permeating policy practice prevents other knowledges or ways of knowing from a legitimate place in policy making. The development of projects based on community needs, as determined by people experiencing these needs, supports the notion that 'locally grown solutions to local problems' is rhetorically pitched in the language used under the C4C. On learning decisions were made centrally with little upward mobility of ideas local people gave less to the programme which was evident from the drop in number of original committee members from the outset, demonstrating their powerless position and lack of the authority to speak. These sentiments were recorded in an early Quarterly report in one of the C4C sites where it was stated:

It is notable that despite the high level of commitment and involvement by Committee members that the Community for Children initiative is driven by the Facilitating Partner and not by the Committee as is intended. This can be attributed to a number of factors which range from the short time available in which to complete the plans, the stage of development of the Committee itself which has not progressed beyond the forming stage and the fact that Committee members are largely devoting

their time and energies on top of existing jobs and/or commitments.

This is despite a policy directive stating, “it is important for the Facilitating Partner to ensure that the Committee does not become, and is not perceived to be, a Committee of Government departmental representatives” (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 15).

Measuring outcomes

Policy transfer and the scientism surrounding C4C exhibited the policy’s emphasis on outcomes and evidence based practice. Changes across early years child health and wellbeing, while hard to measure, were expected to yield particular outcomes, even though these include equivocal outcomes like social capital. Evidence based practice, considered by some to be a “vogue catchphrase” (Bryson & Mowbray, 2005, p. 91) sits similarly to other discursive concepts under C4C in which there was a tendency to ‘sell’ notions of flexibility and collaboration with evaluation processes suggestive of Action Research and formative evaluation methods. For instance and as earlier outlined, this research was initially advertised as involving a formative evaluation including Action Research and learning practices and methodology, which includes contextualised knowledges iteratively feeding back into a progression of *look think* and *act*. What transpired simulated the policy programme’s dismissal of these principles where time constraints, top down directives and disparate expectations across the different political spectrums prevented this ideal from being enacted.

Some individuals benefit from the development of C4C projects: parents and children attending the playgroups; the children who are provided with literacy based programmes; individuals and groups in receipt of small grants for specific projects; teen mothers who are supported in childcare while encouraged to further their education, and so on. Some organisations benefit when secured in the knowledge that C4C project funding contributes to ongoing operations and hopefully further expansions. Some communities

benefit when government funding often provides momentum for greater investment and overall lifting the community's profile. Government funders benefit too as they are seen to be doing something in an area undisputedly of value. For each person, family, group, organisation or community that benefits from C4C projects there are those who do not; there is an adversarial/oppositional other side. With benefits there are losses. Dominant discourses, objects and concepts of discursive framings, together with modes of infiltrating systems of ideas converge in what I claim here is an overarching race related hegemonic discourse, where certain interests are reinforced and reproduced while at the same time suppressing the interests of others. The ways in which policies construct particular ideas is discussed with reference to how conceptualisations of 'disadvantage' are constructed under C4C.

Disadvantage and inequality

Daphne Habibis and Maggie Walter (2009, p. 186) maintain that "the result of inequality is winners and losers" of which the reverse is also acknowledged: the result of 'winners and losers' is inequality and disadvantage. In Australia policy programmes are predominantly understood in terms of 'dependency' and 'deserved' which is apparent in C4C: that is people and/or communities targeted as disadvantaged, as determined by socioeconomic indicators, ideologically positions people and communities as 'needy', often 'undeserving', and frequently pathological (Jamrozik, 2009). The starting point is one of deficits not strengths. This ideology befits a neoliberal economic rationalist discourse in which people, considered to be given access to equal opportunity, either choose to seize these opportunities or not. Those who are believed to have chosen poorly are constructed as an 'undeserved poor' (Jamrozik, 2009). This ideology stems back to the English Poor Laws where a classification of people as either impotent, idle poor or vagrants was the norm prior to the emergence of the modern welfare state: a time which "informed practices in the Australian colonies (Smyth, 2006b, p. 100). Inequality and disadvantage is therefore constructed within discourses

of 'rights' and 'needs', which, as argued by civil society and democratic liberalism discourses fail to recognise structural and other disadvantage. Research respondents reflected on C4C projects not reaching the most 'needy' in the sites. Constructed as 'hard to reach' those people most targeted were those least likely to benefit from the projects in actuality. People benefiting from C4C projects were those to which respondents referred to as supporting a 'middle class welfare'.

The simplicity implied by this 'either/or' framing is not intended with many problematics and complexities inherent with such examinations. Among the many obstacles faced by both policy makers and policy recipients in addressing disadvantage and unequal access to goods and services is the influence of (differing) collective values and strategies. As Corin (1994, p. 128) asserts:

People in the more 'fragile' communities tend also to be the more reluctant to use mental health or social services. If these communities are simply targeted as 'at risk,' the labelling effect could destabilize the collective survival strategies that the community has developed to maintain its social identity. The potential 'gatekeepers' through which it is necessary to pass in order to reach and mobilize the community will vary from milieu to milieu, as will their degree of openness toward outside intervention.

C4C aimed at building communities on foundations of trust, reciprocity and mutuality to solve their own problems of childhood disadvantage. Impoverished people characterised as deficit will suffer from others' beliefs in their ability to trust, reciprocate and help themselves. Bryson (1992, p. 25) states that "nations are constructed in the likeness of dominant groups" and policies often serve these interests. A hegemonic discursive framing offers a way to look at how dominant groups, through their privileged positions, repress and reinforce disadvantage and inequality in society. This is now discussed.

Discourses of Race

The opening vignette and other activities earlier described illustrate the dominant views or discourses inherent in C4C concerning issues of race. Many of these actions and processes make obvious an absence/presence model (Lucal, 1996) in which a conceptualising of people who are not white, people mostly described and targeted as people of Indigenous and CALD backgrounds by C4C, are recast in ways that reinforce existing inequities and oppressive practices based on differences of race. An absence/presence model is described as that which “treats race as something possessed by people of color and as something that affects their lives” (Lucal, 1996, p. 245), while neglecting the idea of white people as belonging to a race, including the idea that Caucasian features and ‘whiteness’, equals “institutional, mental and moral superiority” (Oommen, 2002, p. 122). This discursive framing governs Australia’s welfare discourses through systems and practices that associates ‘white’ with everything that is ‘normal’ and ‘natural’, while all other is less given this standard (Young, 2003).

The absence/presence model not only illuminates the effect of ‘othering’ (Fine, 1994) but it also sheds light on oppressive aspects of race which significantly portrays racial power as invisible (Lucal, 1996). That is to suggest mainstream policies, like C4C, perpetuate repressive practices and maintain the status quo through its aim at reducing disadvantage based on race, as one of its targets, which is considered in need and therefore based on a deficit framing, at the same time as employing practices suggestive of collaboration, consultation, and representation. The power to decide, the power masked in the language used, the ways of knowing drawn from white Westernised texts remain ‘mainstreamed’ and bureaucratic which is a world moulded through an uncritical and often unconscious belief in ‘white’ supremacy (hooks, 1989). Dominant groups then, like bureaucrats, CEOs and managers, wield power under C4C in ways that reinforce this distinction based on race. Examples below illustrate how such hegemonic discourses are carried through policy processes recreating winners and losers based on the privilege of race.

Assumptions, expectations and particular beliefs lie beneath the breastfeeding project which carry distinctive cultural and race related discourses. People of colour targeted not only to execute the project, through their recruitment as volunteers, but also as recipients of the service were constructed as in need (of breastfeeding information) and having inherent deficits (unable to perceive the importance of the practice without outside intervention). The information and service provided with the aim of educating this group in breastfeeding practice, as mentioned above appears condescending to people who have practiced this way for centuries. In a Report¹² it is recorded that 89.8% of respondents agreed that 'breastfeeding is practiced widely in my culture'. While the rhetoric was up-skilling, educating and building capacities of these people, the practice was devaluing, demeaning and assimilatory. Iris Young (2000, p. 155), writing from a critical theory perspective, says that many of these ideas and intentions of policies, aspiring to create civil society, are often promoting "democracy and social welfare under liberal constitutionalist regimes".

The 'power' associated with 'whiteness' became apparent in the discovery that the many white volunteers of the breastfeeding project were requested to speak of information about 'how to be more Australian'. People of colour wanted to know ways to assimilate; ways to better have their needs and wants met in a society clearly marked by racial distinctions and unequal power balances. Furthermore, one respondent to the report cited above, spoke of how it was an "embarrassment among ATSIC young mums to breast feed publicly", an example illustrating disparate needs are often met with dominant groups imposing the 'right' way.

Consider comments from the research respondents below.

Real target of Indigenous people not reached. You need to communicate with grandma to get to kids but [that's difficult when] two sections of the Aboriginal community that don't like to get on (John).

¹² Reference excluded to protect identification of people and the project and will be provided to examiners on request.

The complexity with “drill(ing) down into those real pockets of disadvantage” (Carol) was an issue common to many stakeholders of the C4C programme. The frustration of not reaching the “real targets of Indigenous people” where questions of reach were echoed at all policy layers was captured by the respondent of the quote above. While I was present as researcher at a C4C committee meeting, this same respondent shared his personal view that it was difficult to engage the Indigenous people in particular because they were “aggressive ... particularly the youth” (John). This statement masks the absence/presence conceptualisation that aggression is an inherent characteristic of Indigenous people, an issue separate from non-Indigenous peoples, and is therefore used to explain why engagement and participation by Indigenous peoples in C4C projects was poor. This assertion went unchallenged at a committee level, and while acknowledged as not a view shared by all committee members, its potential for maintaining dominant ideas and stereotypes is seen as representative of a dominant group upholding a racial distinction based on notions of superiority.

Juxtapose the previous statement with another respondent’s account:

I was working at the time and I couldn’t get to all of the meetings. I did get to a few. Then I began going to the Community Development meetings. I didn’t attend all of those either. I found there were times when it was one sided. What I mean is I was the only Aboriginal person.... I just felt that we, our voice wasn’t going very far anyway. I didn’t feel the Aboriginal voice was being heard (Freda).

This statement holds up a mirror to the former account. Asked to be involved in the development of Westville from the beginning this respondent not only felt like a solitary voice but also felt unheard and discouraged from participating. More stark is the obvious awareness of difference based on race. The previous respondent did not allude to nor make mention of his ‘whiteness’ or privileged status while this last excerpt suggests a reality where there is no distinction between her race and how she experiences the world around her. Common to the absence/presence conceptualisation is also the ignorance of differences within races. As one of very few Indigenous

representatives, this person was assumed to be the 'voice' or spokes-person for all Indigenous peoples. Commonplace to policy projects is the notion that the one or two people fitting a particular description, based on race, meets its need to be representative and consultative of that select racial group within the community. This inaccurately portrays a unified and homogenised group where one view is reflective of all people of that characterisation. Ignorance, of the diverse nature of racial groups, connectedness to place and the invisibility of 'whiteness' is further illustrated in the reference to the example earlier described of the Indigenous researchers.

The community researchers' experience presents an effective and highly successful framework which demonstrated capacities in utilising and developing local capabilities, building relationships, capitalising on local abilities, knowledges and skills. It must be said also that while presented as though lineal it is an iterative and cyclic motion. This project acknowledged and worked with harnessing local strengths, knowledges, skills and through developing relationships which enable the work and engagement in the work to continue that building on the strengths of people who were the targets of policy programmes: people who have a more profound and intimate understanding of, and relationship with, the complex interplay of components in their lives and environment, those factors which impact them. Such processes must adhere to ethical practice and cultural sensitivity is needed when working alongside such diverse groups. This is particularly important given the skill level of workers employed, often from outside community, who will not always have the cultural awareness or cultural context to be suited to these tasks. Often what can be found is negative stereotypes and attitudes prevailing at this level of service delivery, amongst professionals/ staff/ researchers themselves, thus further reinforcing harmful values and judgments rather than acting towards 'common-unity' (Stringer, 1996).

The Indigenous Dance example inadvertently offended local Indigenous people of Westville and exemplifies the absence of 'whiteness' cognisance, yet entails much that depicts 'whiteness' such as culturally specific practices

of holding formal meetings, hierarchical decision making processes in order to remain accountable to superiors and so on. It further illustrates the presence of 'non-white' in that people of colour are included on the basis of skin colour alone and while the dance group performed the opening ceremony they did not represent the 'country' on which they danced. This instanced a homogenising of a raced group.

With planning from the top down and without an understanding of the people or culture, it is a bad thing. Development can be a good thing when it is the creation of the people, when it uses their thinking, their decision-making powers, their resources, and their knowledge (Smith, Williams & Johnson, 1997, p. 27).

One research respondent put differential treatment based on race like this:

That's where they [East African Nations] get housed on an unwritten government policy. A bit like the way Collie's the dumping ground in Australia for the misfit single parents.... Now it's not a stated government policy to concentrate and isolate such people, East African or single parents....what they say is this is where the housing is. But most of the population of Dalkeith have never seen an East African humanitarian refugee (Alex).

Discursive framings around race are not isolated from other discourses or hegemonic processes. Neither are such processes discussed above either 'black' or 'white', 'good' or 'bad', but rather a discursive field shaped and formed by many intersecting and overlapping components. Some strategies and processes of the C4C, for instance, gave way to proactive groups making a difference which later developed independently of C4C. These examples previously included are further considered in the following and concluding section.

Summarising reflections

This section critically reflects upon the instance in which there are winners and losers of policy practice, as highlighted in the C4C examples. The examination presented through consideration of two main discourses,

neoliberalism and civil society, has elucidated processes that advantage certain groups over others. A focus on people experiencing disadvantage is an important focus of social policy, this is indisputable. The policy aims and its congruence in practice needs, however, careful and thoughtful consideration so as not to reinforce existing inequalities and oppressive practices. While processes enacted under C4C are informed by mainstream ideology there are instances where rhetoric became reality with some groups and individuals developing a voice able to obtain small but meaningful change. There will always be community narratives and community development work that continue to demonstrate progressive ways forward in pursuit of win-win outcomes. However, the dominant discourses of neoliberalism and economic rationalism and where these feed into civil society discourses there remain many mechanisms of power reinforcing the status quo. This does not mean we are to do away with community participation and Place Management but rather question: issues of participation, expectations, cultural insensitivities, ruminants of historical hegemonic rule, and community development processes that are *said* not *done*. Systems values that continue unchallenged, patriarchal historical ruminants carried through organisations and cultural hegemony need critical and urgent examination in such policy formulation. It is through such a careful consideration and a look to at contextual knowledges that it is more likely we see strengths rather than deficits, which was the aim of C4C's policy implementation.

Although Flyvbjerg's (2001), and O'Sullivan and Down's (2001) questions seek to identify differential impacts on people through policy enactment and articulate how these impacts are experienced and with what results, what is shown here is less a definitive win/lose binary and more a critical examination of the way the discursive field is shaped. This then shapes the actions and performances of all people involved, from those enacting policy to the recipients. That they do not necessarily recognise how these discursive fields shape their experiences speaks to the silent power of these influences.

Interleaf

The overall goal of the Pathways report was to translate developmental prevention planning and implementation from the 'laboratory' to the community. On the one hand, there is the world of science, which includes the results of a small number of carefully designed thoroughly implemented and rigorously evaluated field interventions. On the other hand, there is the 'real world' of disadvantaged communities and routinely delivered government and non-government programs which have wide reach but one seldom if ever evaluated and are only imperfectly influenced by the scientific literature (Homel, Elias & Hay, 2001, p. 271).

I came to this research with a critical eye, an enquiring mind and a desire to capture the views and stories of those people connected to a policy programme. This thesis details the many complexities influencing those events, thoughts, actions and developments of C4C as a set of policy activities, which were not transparent, were made at a centralised policy level that was not in touch with grass roots needs of the community it invested in. Translation was lost somewhere between “developmental prevention planning and implementation from the ‘laboratory’ to the community” (Homel et al., 2001, p. 271). A critical theorising has offered a way to reflexively explore these processes and practices (political, ideological, contextual, structural and other). It is a means to inform and raise consciousness of mechanisms and structures that can be inequitable, oppressive and maintain the status quo. This theoretical lens, while drawing attention to policy structures and processes within the broad socioeconomic context in which C4C operates, helped to illuminate discursive practices affecting the policy process. By documenting such knowledges and awareness this research has provided a critical evaluation of the programme and input as how the programme could be improved. This was C4C’s original intent as a programme incorporating local knowledge in design and development and was the aim also of considering Action Research in the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy’s (SFCS’s) earlier policy considerations. It is this

looking, thinking, reflecting and acting that is the precursor to enabling change.

This research considers the successes and highlights the learnings and experiences of this policy programme alongside aspects that did not work so well in order to inform the shaping of further policy and programme decisions. I have argued the need for a more collaborative, holistic and informed praxis: one more aligned to the original design, principles and values. It is through this critical reflexivity that an analysis of what Place Management in theory and practice offers is considered. With an emphasis on action and looking forward, this closing section draws together earlier deliberations and considers how they could inform future policy directions. While many more questions are posed than answers given it is hoped that through a trialectic process, involving a systematic method similar to look, think, reflect, act of an Action Research cycle, that Place Management provides a theory and practice model capable of addressing many inequalities and lead to improved outcomes for (particularly) children, their families and the communities in which they live.

In this section I suggest, in answer to Flyvberg's question What, if anything, should be done?, that Action Research with a strengths approach, as exemplified by a particular community development framework of Asset Based Community Development, has the potential to add to policy decision making and implementation and in particular Place Management as a policy programme approach.

From Little Things Big Things Grow¹³

Section Introduction

This thesis has used an Action Research (AR) cycle in its presentation, and by incorporating further the trialectic *Head, Heart* and *Hand*, I have revealed those practices, principles, paradoxes and discursive framings which were significant in the shaping of a Place Management approach, as evidenced by the C4C policy programme. This process of *looking, thinking, and reflecting* highlights ways forward (*acting*); ways that accentuate aspects of the Place Management model that worked well and suggests ways of alignment between the policy's aims and its processes.

This section begins with matters of the *Hand* (action) where framings around the preceding *looking, thinking* and *reflecting* presented in earlier sections inform actions on the development of C4C and options for future policy decision making. A focus on *acting* not only completes the second cycle of the AR helix but also the trialectic *Head, Heart, Hand* that commenced in Section Six, *Head* – with the policy analysis, and followed in the last section (seven), *Heart* – with discursive framings. To conclude I summarise the paradoxes of Place Management as a policy approach followed by a return to the research questions. This section concludes with a discussion about how Place Management and evaluation practices from AR can meet to offer a framework for a Place Management policy practice.

¹³ This title is taken from Paul Kelly and The Messenger's song released in 1991

Policy paradoxes

This thesis details a number of practices that run contrary to those stated aims and principles of the C4C policy. The following summary provides those key points of difference between its declared principles of social capital, community and capacity building, and strength-based practice, and what was experienced in the implementation and enactment of the policy. In addressing Flyvbjerg's (2001) final question, *what, if anything, should be done?* I offer a policy and practice approach in Australia.

I have shown that Place Management, with some of its origins in urban planning and design (Faris, 2004, p.30; Stewart-Weeks, 2004, p.4), has developed a particular strand positioned "in public sector discourse as a potential solution" to issues of social dislocation and disadvantage in particular communities or regions (Walsh, 2001, p.1). The seemingly 'technical' discipline gave rise to a social policy to effect the social management of disadvantage. Place Management has emerged as a popular response by governments in an attempt to close the increasingly evident socio-economic gap across localities where current systemic deficiencies have resulted in governments considering "new approaches to public administration" (Walsh, 2001 p. 4). Stewart-Weeks (1998, p. 3) considers Place Management an approach defined by a "shift in the structure and design of public governance and management from functional or output units to a focus on outcomes. In its simplest terms, it is about a concern with ends, and not with means" (Stewart-Weeks, 1998, p. 3). Constructed as a new approach to public management, Place Management is considered to be a 'radical new way' of government intervention (Green and Zappala 2000, p.1). I advise caution in adopting this perception, as does Ling (2002, p. 622) and in this section summarise the evidence provided in this thesis to demonstrate that this 'radical new way' is stronger and more vivid in rhetoric than it is in the experience of communities where it has been implemented.

What knowledge(s) count?

Critical reflection and knowledge that influences actions shaped by a knowing that “uncover[s] privileged binary oppositions within logocentric discourses not necessarily apparent before critical reflection”, result in people themselves building upon what works towards a more collaborative form of action that does not favour one way of knowing (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994, p. 150). My stance taken throughout this research is that viewing knowledge and information solely from within a positivist or evidence-based framing, while not in itself negative, prevents seeing other creative means and forms of collecting data and hence this may restrict problem solving and knowledge creation. For example, much of the information collected by the various evaluations involved in C4C were aimed predominantly at measuring outcomes, thereby missing the ‘measurement’ of the countless instances of strengths, relationships, resilience and other assets and resources existing within individuals, groups and whole communities. Such interactive happenings known to practitioners at the front line challenge the idea that local community members are lacking ‘expertise’, such as seen in the examples of the Volunteer Breastfeeding Project and Indigenous Community Researchers detailed earlier. A genuine community development response is to emphasise local knowledge over universal knowledge: although not to the disparagement of universal knowledge (Tesoriero, 2010, p. 122). Assuming an expert position based upon an understanding of childhood development (as presented in Western research literature) makes invisible the inherent expertise of the parents, families and whole communities that have their own expert/lay knowledges and practices in helping children grow into healthy and productive adults.

Like so many other conceptualisations of C4C, the knowledge which informed it relied on international and national sources and was often intellectual. It was therefore very removed from many of the programme participants and limited the extent to which they believed themselves able to participate either by adding to this knowledge or accessing much of its contents. This gap reinforced the division between those who have this

'expert' knowledge and those who do not, and somehow provided license for a 'do unto others' approach. Knowing, for instance, that breastfeeding improves the overall health of babies was enough for Programme Managers (PMs) to implement a project aimed at increasing breastfeeding rates in the community despite greater needs as assessed by the target group of wanting to 'fit in'. This intellectual knowing was the basis on which C4C was designed, implemented and then rolled out which resulted in the forty five sites offering similar projects despite individual contexts and nuances of place. If Place Management, as seen under the C4C programme, is about closing the gap between the 'haves and the have nots', and about citizen participation, then what counts as knowledge and expertise, as a powerful discursive mechanism, needs reframing. Careful listening at a local level and being responsive to what practitioners heard in an iterative process is that most likely to achieve outcomes as intended by the C4C.

What solutions are acceptable?

C4C's aim to improve childhood disadvantage through 'local solutions to problems of place' is the premise from which projects were to evolve with each place identifying its own needs. This premise was undercut when projects similar in aim and design across sites were reflective of a form of targeted universalism suggesting that rather than projects emerging from people of place they were the result of ideas pre-existing in the minds of the policy designers, the CEOs and the PMs. This was demonstrated clearly in the breastfeeding project in Westville where earlier research identified breastfeeding rates as relatively high among non-Australian born mothers yet this group were the main targets of this project. Its failed efforts, and subsequent change in focus from intervention to education, reflects that what was 'needed' locally did not marry with what programme funders saw as 'needs' to the area. Indigenous playgroups provide another example of targeted universalism where these playgroups were implemented in many sites "founded on ideas which originated from a Western setting" (Abdullah & Young, 2010, p. 98) and were not necessarily relevant to the community in

which they were located. If by 'local solutions' C4C meant that solutions are merely implemented locally then this runs contrary to those notions it aspires to, those including empowerment, capacity building, community development and building, and strengths-based practice. Furthermore, a deficit framing and viewing problems through a set of 'culturally specific lenses' poses barriers to identifying existing strengths of individuals and communities from which solutions are best sourced and generated. Even though, inadvertently, the push for Indigenous playgroups "fitted well with Indigenous family models" (Abdullah & Young, 2010, p. 98), the methods used by C4C programme managers did not necessarily engage parents in partnerships in order to identify what was needed. Programme design thus missed the opportunity for sustainability.

The transferability of programmes, in respect of contextual considerations (Homel et al., 2001, p. 273), directly challenges the supposed 'local solutions to local issues' principle. What works well in one community or place does not mean it will work or be appropriate in another. While it is possible that some principles of process and approach are adaptable, what is important in the interests of local ownership is that the processes and programmes are planned and enacted by those most affected by them. Participation of those people for whom the programmes are designed is vital. Homel et al., (2001, p. 273) point to the importance of local ownership, as often those people accessing the designed programmes are not those targeted in disadvantaged communities. Noting poor take up rates across many projects (Corin, 1995), Homel et al. (2001) highlight this point by giving the example of the *Children at Risk* programme in America where low participation rates resulted in the programme's failure. This was the case for C4C where respondents considered those most disadvantaged were relatively untouched by C4C projects. As mentioned, reports in Australia (Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, 1995) suggest people most disadvantaged are more likely to access crisis response services than they are preventative services.

When issues of access, equity, and needs which are disparate are the experience between funder and expected recipients of services, targeting disadvantaged groups and whole communities is even more complex.

What is meant by ‘partnership’ and between whom?

Effective support of optimal child development has an impact at all levels; family, neighbourhood, and community. This underlines the importance of a strategy that is cross-sectorial, multi-level, and has strong local leadership (Hertzman, 2000). To focus upon building and establishing important relationships or *partnerships* across organisations and particularly between NGOs is therefore a valuable aim and intention of C4C. Compatible with this aim, time and processes were provided to form partnerships in the first six months of the programme. However, the benefit of this was diminished when, after this short period, these same organisations were requested to competitively vie for funding of projects. This could be seen as contrary to one of its key aims to strengthen service systems. Broader aspirations of building social capital are essentially eroded when agency personnel are distrustful of, or unskilled in process and implementation. People’s experiences as captured by this research explicate the erosion of early productive relationships thus destroying the potential for strong collaboration.

Straddling local, state and national policy divides meant collaborative aspects of the policy were imperative to its successful implementation, and to the support needed to meet C4C’s aims. While early meetings were held to inform developments of C4C under the SFCS these were exclusive to invited NGOs, which were nationally competitive and had a stake in the outcomes. Consultations were often held in the form of information giving rather than reciprocal processes where the needs of communities could be heard. Consultation, as previously discussed, is an enunciated modality and discursive concept by which community is seen to have been ‘consulted’. The inference is then drawn that community therefore had participated in decision making (Everingham, 2003). The many people offering their views

and experiences of C4C considered consultation was top down and insufficient. Many conceded to feeling 'done unto' rather than experiencing 'alongside together'.

Who decides?

Incorporating different players and their views should ideally begin with consultation, starting "at the issues identification stage" (McClelland, 2006a, p. 58). The structure of a NGO contracted as Facilitating Partner (FP) yet answerable to FaHCSIA resulted in many Community Partners (CPs) conceiving C4C as yet another government programme rather than a locally based community development programme as was intended by the funding body. The representative from FaHCSIA, for instance, was supposed to attend all C4C Committee sittings and would offer committees information about what was possible, wanted, needed, and so on as determined by the central body. The committees often found themselves guarding ideas against the FaHCSIA representative, in anticipation of what was possible for the community, and what was not. Generally, there was the belief that what was first suggested as an opportunity for the C4C committees to determine creative solutions to local problems soon turned into fitting projects around tightly defined areas of intervention. This was the case for the third project in Eastville, which focused on children's transition to school, in which the FP and FaHCSIA rejected earlier designs and ideas forwarded by the CP. This supported the CPs' perception that unless projects were desired by the FP and funder they were likely to be thwarted. Stringent, yet often changing, reporting requirements and timeframes often meant little time was available to engage in processes of community building. CPs therefore provided services that focused on clear and measurable outcomes rather than processes of engaging children and families. Who has the "power to decide" in policy practice is a common question asked with rational policy processes assuming that "this problem has been resolved or does not exist" (Stone, 1997, pp. 241-242). To Carol Bacchi (1999) the idea of problem identification (what's the problem represented to be?) is important as this sets the basis

and context for policy intervention. In the case of C4C the power to decide and on what 'problem' rested with the centralised funding body.

Who counts?

Relationships between people drive these local 'social governance' arrangements (Reddel, 2005, p. 198) and are therefore vital to the success of any policy programme: relationships influence policy from its design through to policy implementation and development. Whether these relationships are horizontal or vertical, informal or formal, imposed or voluntary, intentional or accidental, outcome focused or process driven, these sets of associations and links are critical to policy practice outcomes. The danger in the types of arrangements that can be seen in the C4C situation include the complex 'power differentials' and 'overly generalised' accounts that infer citizen participation "which assume a consensus [yet] fail to address the conflictual nature of contemporary social, economic and political relations" (Lowndes & Skelcher, 1998, p. 315). For instance, power differentials were clearly revealed when the first instances of relationship building occurred for governance purposes. These quickly moved from collegial and participatory relationships to those of compliance to funding structures. When competitive tendering arrangements challenged early relationship building, FPs, CPs and others were again alerted to structures of unidirectional power which did not favour reciprocity or sharing of ideas and knowledge.

Who provides?

Particular attributes, including specific funding periods, other services in the area and outside the area, the degree of community engagement, a community's composition and culture, other infrastructure or economic capital in the area greatly influence life chances and outcomes, opportunities and one's ability to navigate through diverse life courses. Many of the interviewees believed that, had C4C not 'arrived' to that select community it is plausible that another service or services would similarly attend to the needs of the community. The probability of this in at least three instances

was recorded during the fieldwork for this study. The Coming Together Project (CTP) while contracted for a short term under C4C was a project already running, in various locations across Perth, under the auspices of an independent NGO. This project continues to run separately from C4C. A series of Pathways to Prevention projects (Homel et al., 2006) was being developed prior to C4C's introduction in Westville which was looking at educative programmes directed at playgroups: the aim being to make transitioning to school easier. This development was the result of the partnership between two well resourced NGOs. With the arrival of C4C to Westville attention by one of the partners, having successfully secured a C4C contract, turned to establishing a variation of the proposed programme within the structure of C4C rather than with its original partnered organisation. The respondent who offered this information said that while this was unfortunate it did not damage relationships developed between the two NGOs. Rather, she said, it reflected the current competitive political climate. Interestingly, a submission was put to a State Department for the proposed pathways project which was rejected as a result of the injection of Federal money into the site. The third instance is that of the Volunteer Breastfeeding Project. With its emphasis on education and promotion this was presumed by interviewees to be the responsibility of the State Health Department. Breastfeeding education and promotion was part of the core business of Health Nurses.

This discussion above is not to say developmental work did not occur. Consistent with a 'strengths' focus, and not to discredit projects that worked well under C4C, processes and principles that demonstrated effective practice and which incorporated evaluative techniques are highlighted in this thesis. And while few, these instances assist towards viewing possibilities for future policy making. While examples under the C4C banner have succeeded in embracing a strengths-based perspective, involving a genuine respect for knowledge of a people and their understanding of issues as relevant to them, capturing, recording and analysing these examples has been less successful.

Returning to research questions

What, then, is Place Management theory and practice? And how does Place Management inform policy decisions in Australia? Detailed in this research are the complexities and problematics of policy and, therefore, identification of the aspects that together merge to shape Place Management as seen under the SFCS's C4C programme. Involved are multifaceted, and difficult to isolate, aspects, events and sets of activities detailing Place Management as a policy approach to childhood disadvantage. The programme did not specifically detail the micro processes to be enacted in the Place Management approach and so made enacting the policy more difficult. What a Place Management approach proposes, notwithstanding its imperfect form, is guided by those broadly stated principles alongside those activities observed for this research. It is these principles that are worth detailing further.

Principles to guide a Place Management policy approach

There is no question that C4C was guided by sound and just principles; ones which provide a strong foundation from which to develop a policy practice for the people by the people. What is evidenced, however, is that what was espoused in principle was not always what was enacted in practice. Government's aim at inclusivity of the people affected by policy and closing the gap on childhood disadvantage was commendable. To support structures towards efficient and collaborative service systems was equally worthy. It is also understandable that the target population acknowledges the need for government accountability and that outcomes are important products. What follows, having considered the complexities, problematics and various components of this policy practice, are considerations about how these inform and shape future policy decisions. Returning to the said principles of C4C, possible suggestions are made for building upon its development into future stages. These suggestions cover community development, sustainability and children's voices.

Community Development

Dorothy Scott (2001, p. 1) asked in late 1999 “if it takes a village to raise a child then what might it take to rebuild the village?” Said in the context of communities lacking supports and resources necessary to nurture children’s health and wellbeing, this question promotes a way of thinking about the complex networks and relations within community settings which, when positively harnessed, can cultivate a setting bound by respect, reciprocity, trust, cooperation and collaboration, and a willingness to ‘do the right thing’. Policy and practice designed to be responsive, flexible and culturally sensitive (Corin, 1994, p. 129) merge well with principles of community development. While resources and supports from outside communities are sometimes necessary, particularly in communities with too few services and complex needs, it is vital that the vision and efforts towards change are locally formed (Ingamells, Holcombe, & Buultjens, 2010, p. 7). It is from this premise that community development has within it the seeds to develop sustainable outcomes.

This thesis considers community development as:

an approach to communities based specifically on validating wisdom, knowledge and expertise from the community itself, allowing communities real control over their own processes, and emphasising process rather than pre-determined objectives or outcomes (Ife, 2010, p. 67)

Community taking control over processes towards solutions as identified by its members requires effective engagement and shared meanings of those many principles and processes as discussed in this research. It also requires a strong skills and knowledge base, infrastructure, and adequate resources (Kenny, 2011). Community development, often describing an organic and emergent process (Ife, 2010), maintains processes imposed from centralised and bureaucratic places are those least likely to facilitate long lasting change. Rather, processes involving people who are themselves impacted by policy, programme or other interventions are best placed to decide future actions. With its attention to the social, economic, political, cultural, spiritual, environmental and other aspects of our lives, community development

presents a holistic approach able to achieve social justice and greater equality for people disproportionately represented.

How, then, is Place Management different from a community development response to childhood disadvantage? While some argue there is no difference other than in the terms used to reflect the change in times (Steuart, 2003, p. 2) the way that Place Management was employed in C4C suggests otherwise. If Place Management could be represented along a continuum, with one end representing social planning and the other representing developmental work from the ground up with community development depicted in-between, then we can see many relevant and appropriate components. A strengths-based framing is one such component and was intended to guide C4C's Place Management approach, however the detail as to what this meant or what strengths were valued is missing.

Sustainability

A key stated outcome of C4C was sustainability. But there are questions about its meaning. Who determines how it was to be assessed? What encourages sustainable practices? And how do these translate into practice? As with the other concepts under C4C, sustainability has varying considerations. Frank Tesoriero (2010, p. 10) advocates for a holistic understanding of sustainability especially considering the implications of its use when politicians and 'public figures' cast it in self-contradictory terms of 'sustainable growth'. C4C too is cast in this 'self-contradictory' style reflected in the national evaluation where continuation of the projects was most often considered that demonstrated sustainable outcomes. This, the evaluation report declares (Australian Government, 2009b), was an unrealistic goal given the short timeframes set and the respondents' view (to the national evaluation) that the end of the funding cycle would also witness the cessation of projects. The exception noted was in the instance of well resourced organisations able to continue projects after the funding period (Australian Government, 2009b). The report made mention, however, of networks, service coordination, and professional development as other attributes of

sustainability with potential outcomes for families, children and communities that it was too early to assess (Australian Government, 2009b). These views also held true for respondents of my research. Further, many relationships formed under C4C are in several cases sustainable in that they provide support, networking and 'gift sharing' that may not have otherwise occurred had certain processes under C4C not been introduced. The isolated father who participated in the Coming Together Project was evidence of this. Emphasis placed upon early years, as a target for intervention, in particular was seen by many respondents of my research as a sustainable measure of C4C, in that people in C4C sites have a heightened awareness of the needs of young children and the supports necessary for healthy outcomes.

The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) which was commissioned to provide evidence based research to the forty five C4C sites, urged organisations to consider sustainable outcomes in terms of:

- family and community participation
- sustained outcomes for families
- sustained community capacity
- sustained project activities
- and sustained project ideas (Rogers, 2006, p. 2)

These principles imply a mix of developmental activities to enable families to build on strengths and capacities, develop new skills, and form trusting and productive relationships in concert with promise of adequate resources from outside the community. Irrespective of the lack of practice guidelines, it is questionable as to what degree information reached CPs who often lacked the infrastructure and time to digest and then act on such research following the commencement of projects. ARACY and other bodies commissioned to provide research to sites largely targeted FPs who were expected to disseminate information to CPs and other community members. The sharing of this information was difficult due to the number of committees, reference groups and contact needed around reporting and budgeting requirements. Many organisations had vital skills and knowledges which could have served to further build partnerships towards the desired 'service systems working

together' aim of C4C. The fact that these were not used represented a missed opportunity. For sustainable outcomes, government supports and resources needed to be more closely matched (complementary even) to existing community capacities. Sustainability, furthermore, cannot be conceived of without consideration of the aspirations of the people involved (Ingamells, Holcombe, & Buultjens, 2010, p. 4) with these authors outlining factors often associated with the sustainability of communities.

Children's Voice

Central to this research are children and their wellbeing even though the views of children were not canvassed. Young people (including children) are often omitted from the development of policy practice resulting in the invisibility of children even though they are policy targets (Matthews, 2003). Hugh Matthews (2003) draws attention to this lacuna and invites policy makers to consider creative ways of involving young people's views in processes of policy design. The absence of children's voices from activities was evident across the two C4C sites with project implementation expecting children to engage in processes they themselves had no input into and were often found not to need. There is a growing literature of practice examples showing how children can participate in policy decisions (Cavet & Sloper, 2004; Matthews, 2003). And policy documents include the requirement that children are consulted and involved. In Western Australia, for instance, the WA Parliament passed the Commissioner for Children and Young People Act in 2006 (2006) with one of its guiding principles listed as "the views of children and young people on all matters affecting them should be given serious consideration and taken into account". Further, in its 2010-2012 Strategic Directions report the Commissioner stated one of the Commission's goals is to "promote children and young people's participation (consult directly with children and young people)" (Commission for Children and Young People, 2010, p. 6). As demonstrated by this thesis, the knowledge base informing C4C derived predominantly, and unquestionably, from Western literature providing particular accounts about how to improve child health and wellbeing. Silencing children's voices promotes Eurocentric

design and implementation of activities reflecting dominant ideals of 'proper' and 'preferred' ways of play, learning and development. Other successful alternative practices are therefore lost to a 'superior' (Western) knowing. Charging parents, community members and service systems with the responsibility of changing environments in which children live towards outcomes as centrally determined from a place thousands of kilometres from that place or environment is therefore questionable.

Research evaluation

A formative evaluation was the starting point for this research. With its own developments shaped by discursive objects, practices and concepts, what ensued during this research journey was not that which was first envisaged, as is illuminated in the prologue and interleaves. There were disparate expectations which were affected by insufficient time and inadequate processes, and were seen by many stakeholders and targets to have resulted in a failed project. This thesis embraces these learnings to offer information and reflections useful in the development of policy programme designs and evaluations. Here, I argue that formative evaluation demonstrates capacities which when included as part of the process rather than subsequent to the programme's implementation assist with improved development in ways that meet the expectations of programme designers.

As depicted here:

Nor can implementation and evaluation reliably be distinguished from the other steps..... policy evaluation, often regarded as the end of the line, does not actually constitute a "step" in policy making unless it throws light on possible next moves in policy, in which case evaluation becomes intertwined with all other attempts to appraise and formulate options for reshaping government activity (Lindblom & Woodhouse, 1993, p. 11).

What works? What is the evidence? How does this inform practice and its developments? These are all questions with components of both summative and formative processes and while this research was not aimed at a summative assessment it embodies information useful to such evaluations. Traditionally evaluations of programmes are summative when they produce

information about the programmes' success or failure. Often such processes, while appropriate in certain settings, provide information too late to make changes. Formative processes however include greater qualitative evidence in support of ongoing progress and development with questioning that is able to act as an overarching framework for checking progress. Questions posed could include those as set out by Kemp et al (2008, p. 460):

- Are we doing what we say we are doing?
- Are we measuring what we say we are doing?
- Are we measuring what we say we are measuring?
- Are we introducing evidence-based practice for which there is no evidence?

Unfortunately, the original industry funded contract was terminated before many of these reflections were able or seen to inform future actions. Of course this is not to understate reasons for such termination, which at times are considered a necessary move towards affirmative action. Often, however, retrospection about what was needed to improve processes and develop ways to progress in the direction wanted by all parties is only possible following an opportunity to again *look* at what went before with further *thinking* and *reflecting* towards future action. The AR cyclic feedback loop structuring this thesis captures, in part, these earlier reflections and demonstrates how evaluations are integral to policy programme delivery processes rather than subsequent to these.

Like those social interventionist programmes having a causative theory (Chen, 1990), such as C4C, there is need to evaluate effectiveness over the longer term rather than provide purely summative reports. This is particularly so when a programme aims, for example, to improve parenting skills, early literacy, breast feeding rates, healthy eating and greater parental involvement in the overall health and wellbeing of children. To measure these various and often non-tangible components of the C4C programme, longitudinal studies, along with summative and formative evaluations, charting interventions, strategies, processes and outcomes of the programme over a longer period are necessary (Zeesman, 2000, cited by Vimpani, 2001, p.

213). While the *Growing up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children 2008-2009* (Australian Government, 2009a) provides an overall snapshot of the lives of children living in Australia it is not able to provide information on C4C as a particular policy approach aimed at tackling this area of concern.

The evaluation processes established for the C4C were confusing. The overarching National Evaluation Framework (NEF) was developed to inform the ongoing implementation and policy development of the SFCS, and continued well into the service delivery stages of C4C. The information gained was also provided too late to support further improvements. Groups of experts were established in conjunction with the NEF to advise and support C4C although again research participants were unclear of their roles or in which ways they could provide support. While important, their centrally based operations of these expert groups were not useful in the day to day operations of the projects running on the ground. Even the Promising Practices Profiling (PPP) as a key component of the cross-strategy national evaluation of the SFCS 2004-2009, was set up to identify 'what works' rather than provide direct support for C4C staff at site level (Soriano et al., 2008, p. 2). None of these could really contribute to strengthening what worked or change what did not. Furthermore, these social research units were not equipped and not in a position to interrogate the beliefs that underpinned the programme.

As discussed, my induction into this research was confusion around the Local Evaluation model. What I expected and experienced were incongruent with what was expected of this role by other stakeholders leading to their confusion and ultimately a breakdown in relationships and withdrawal of the original industry funded contract. The disparate views formed around issues of evaluation of the C4C programme provides evidence that the PMs were subjectively expecting one thing from this research and other affiliated parties expecting another. When evaluations did not proceed or produce what was expected the problem was often framed as some deficit of that person or

organisation, while issues of structure and design were less critiqued. The forty five sites across Australian had differently designed local evaluations with different degrees of success and different contractual arrangements. This heightened the competitive rather than collaborative nature of this role.

The theoretical framing of critical theory, which shines a light on inequities, differential effects of practices, processes and structures on people and operations, and oppressive processes and structures, was therefore an appropriate conceptual framing for this research.

Theoretical framing

Critical theory guides attention to mechanisms of power and in particular those mechanisms by which some people and voices were omitted from participating in this policy development process. Application of AR principles and processes highlight further those developmental aspects of the C4C programme that worked well, rather than narrowly focusing, as critical theorists are often criticised as doing, upon aspects that did not work well. To illustrate the connectedness of both theoretical persuasions I present a Venn diagram to engage Place Management with AR and possibilities for change. This diagram originally presented as a paper, entitled “Value Adding to National Social Policy Evaluation Processes: The ABCD of C4C” at The Inaugural Asset Based Community Development Oceania Conference 2008 (Hendrick, 2008b), is further developed here to consider how AR can mediate ‘Management’ in ‘Place’, and contribute to answering Flyvbjerg’s (2001) final question, *what, if anything, could be done*.

Reviewing AR literature is useful because initially it assists with considering the C4C policy process from a strengths perspective rather than through a deficit lens, even though C4C was ‘sold’ as a strengths-based approach. Gazing critically at government interventions, particularly centrally funded and controlled policy practices that ambitiously purport to build social capital and improve social inclusion through adopting community building,

community development, and capacity building language, is useful in any policy analysis to better understand in whose interests policies are designed and implemented. This thesis demonstrates a critical review of such a model. However, what is presented is one way government interventions may be enhanced through considerations offered by AR that highlight those strengths of a community which when identified have potential for reinforcement and fortification. This too aligns with the programme's original intent of implementing a strengths-based practice.

Place Management and Action Research

Action Research models are well defined and better understood than are Place Management models, even though AR approaches derive from different philosophical, political, psychological and ecological orientations. Place Management as a concept, in comparison, is less well known yet ostensibly shares with AR approaches an ability to respond to context (Hendrick, 2008a, p. 35). As an approach valuing cooperation and participation AR is about 'along together' rather than 'to do for' (Heron & Reason, 2001, p. 179) emphasising a process of people *looking* together, *thinking* about a problem or issue together, *reflecting* upon agreed processes together, and identifying a way of *acting* together on what was identified: with everyone together involved in the design and management of the inquiry (Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Stringer & Dwyer, 2005).

Essential dimensions of AR include knowledge creation (human capital), the non-monopolising of knowledge creation, for instance sharing knowledge outside institutional dominions like universities and research centres, and encouragement of stakeholder participation (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Processes for reaching consensus and outcomes based on participatory procedures are more defined than are Place Management approaches. People are empowered through consciousness raising processes and involvement in decision making exercises affecting them. This is effectively illustrated in an AR project in East Timor which was to develop and implement a national strategy for instituting Parent Teacher Associations

(Stringer, 2008) thus demonstrating the possibility of bridging the national-local policy practice divide. AR therefore is an approach drawing on a different logic to that of top down decision making processes by which stakeholder groups are done *to* rather than done *with* (Hendrick, 2008a).

What joins Place Management and AR is their common ground in theories of social change where engagement in action leads to change. The degree of participation and reflection seems to be the point that separates Place Management from AR. AR assists with the vital component of informing practice through participant involvement whereby “a set of interrelated theories of action for dealing with problems typical to practice situations involves the constructing and testing of theories in practice by the actors” (Friedman 2001, cited by Hendrick, 2008a). Theoretically constructing Place Management as applied within C4C however does not involve ‘stakeholders’ to the same degree as that of AR evident by people’s participation being limited to NGOs and those ‘target groups’ within its reach.

The means and ends of C4C, as a Place Management approach, are clear and non-contentious: early years as policy area, interventions implemented in a defined place, and via ‘joined-up’ service systems in partnerships – crossing government, non-government, business and the broader community. The processes of C4C, however, are less clear. It is here that Action Learning and Research, as proposed in earlier drafts of its parent policy the Strategy, provide valuable considerations for policy designers in development of a Place Management policy approach.

The Venn diagram following (Hendrick, 2008a) outlines C4C processes as categorised by the terms embraced under the programme, with the second circle listing classifications ascribing to the ideals of a civil society using Muirhead’s (2002) developmental framing. The middle represents the common ground which can be considered ‘Place Management’. Analysis provided in this thesis informs the development of this diagram since its earlier construction in 2008. I will now explain.

Place Management and Action Research
“Meeting Ground”

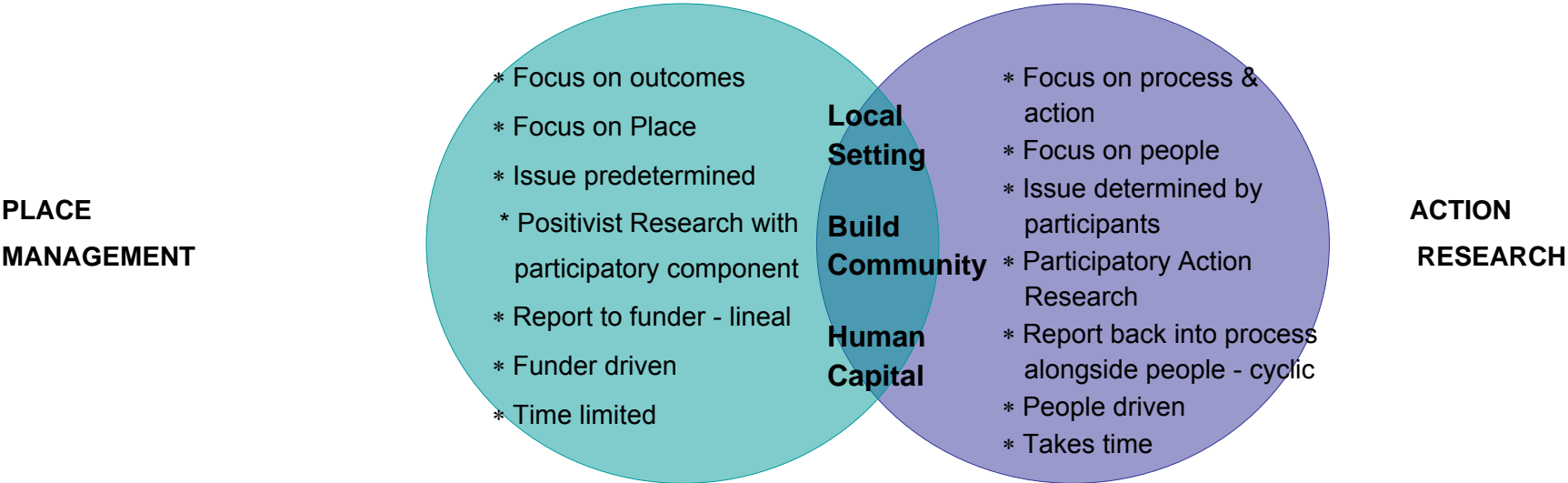


Figure 6 Place Management and Action Research

Points of connectedness between Place Management and AR are noted as local setting/knowledge, community building, and human capital. The points of departure noted Place Management focused on:

- outcomes rather than processes;
- place rather than people;
- issues as predetermined rather than as devised by participants;
- research which defaulted to a positivist tradition rather than participatory AR;
- reporting to the funder rather than back to people involved in the process;
- funder driven rather than by the people targeted;
- and
- time frames rather than taking time that was needed.

Local Setting

In Place Management, as seen in the C4C programme, 'place' is defined by a location's socioeconomic disadvantage and in the case of at least ten sites as selected also by the Minister for the then Family and Community Services (FaCS) (Communities for Children Implementation Team: Department of Family and Community Services, 2005, p. 8). Those elements characterising place are as diverse as is people's sense of connection to or belonging to 'place'. Importantly, any select place must be careful not to assume completeness, similar to or a homogenising of 'community' (Hendrick, 2008a). To take Place Management beyond a social planning model of intervention requires a mapping of the entire community assets, including gifts and capacities of individuals, community groups and organisations (in a continuous process). This is congruent with its suggested strengths-based approach. When those people who have the knowledge base and the relationships do this mapping then their enriched understanding of the area favours 'tailor-made' services appropriate to place. As was seen in the community researchers' example, ownership of such processes is powerful in linking people and organisations on issues. When people are themselves involved in an ongoing and iterative way, outcomes are able to feed into programme development towards sustainable results, as also shown in a

collaborative partnership between an international corporation and local Indigenous group in Regional Australia which provided a labour force for mining operations (Abdullah & Young, 2010). These long standing tensions between participatory democracy and community development approaches are evidently able to be smoothed.

To formulate a mutual community vision and plan, even using the national funders' five broad key areas, relies upon these relationships and respect for what community members themselves know and value: this is community development practice and while this may have been the intention of C4C in practice this did not occur. C4C committee members for instance often experienced top down processes which left many feeling unheard and their views not respected or valued. The notion of a committee comprising community members is a structure that can accommodate core community group representatives who together with funders plan and develop a vision which is collaboratively constructed. This however needs to include all voices and follow consensual processes in a regularly reviewed format of coming back to *where are we going? With whom? Why? And, is this happening? If not why not?* As also similarly set out by those questions posed by Kemp (2008, p. 460) above.

Building Community

Capacity building, envisaged from Federal Government (FaHCSIA), is that which will strengthen and build community through place making processes. Traditional silo responses ineffectively dealing with complex social problems has, in part, prompted governments towards different policy constructs. Forming partnerships across sectors in a target area has challenged conventional administrative approaches presenting new challenges around improved ways of working together. With new forms of governance frameworks emerging through complex processes, what is important in building community is an ability to “work with many different kinds of people, organisational structures and action emphases” (Kelly & Sewell, 1988, p. 12). In building community the process requires both action and reflection in an

iterative movement as is illustrated by AR cycles. These processes further honour the time and commitment to devise such processes that are more likely to match those principles on which C4C rests.

Successful outcomes are more likely when people feel respected and experience inclusion in processes and decisions that impact upon them. If for instance, using AR processes, people involved at the level of the committees, were involved in the deliberations of C4C operations and witnessed this as reflected in outcomes, then as identified by research participants the action and change are not only more probable due to a sense of ownership but also more likely to be sustainable as each participant has contributed and hence more likely to work towards the desired and agreed upon goals. When considering community building processes it is important to embrace the principles of participation, empowerment, inclusion, access, tolerance, diversity and sustainability towards a “common unity” (Stringer, 1996, p. 25). Rather than, for example, C4C focusing narrowly on family and children service systems and other individuals with a stake in early childhood disadvantage, a shift to link people across different sectors of the community towards self-direction, building strong ties and problem-solving is more sustainable and more compatible with community development principles (Kretzmann & Green, 1998; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). This can be measured by increased and improved relations across individuals, groups, and agencies in a community. Success of such an approach is possible when community participation and engagement forms a part of particular structures, such as committees, which are widely representative. In the C4C examples, the invisibility of parents, children, families and other community members, not attached to NGOs, suggests representation from an ‘elite’ group not connected to the targets of this policy were responsible for making decisions on behalf of the whole community.

Partnerships, in the building of community, rely upon connections with other components of the community, looking beyond NGOs or industry for continuation of projects. This marries C4C with community development.

However, the current model contributes more to agency specific concerns particularly their funding and less to community as a whole. Paradoxically, this was despite children and families as perceived beneficiaries of such gains. When targeting service systems fails to include existing capacities and contributions of other community members developing local economies, identifying, mobilising and harnessing community assets, including the skills and resources of individuals, groups, agencies, whole communities, is not attainable. Identifying and mobilising community assets, as another important resource, is a further act of strengthening communities' capacity in the sharing and shaping of information. When select information is targeted and directed through the FP, which is further governed by the instituting funding body, then very little autonomy is granted to the FP, the CPs or the committees. This acts to immobilise resources or community assets rather than mobilise information sharing. The flow and exchange of ideas is inextricably linked with relationship building.

Those resources and supports sought from outside community should reinforce and complement existing and identified community strengths and capacities rather than diminish or undermine these. External supports and resources are often required in communities that are low in financial and other resources, as identified by C4C. C4C's place based intervention of injecting money into low socioeconomic areas is not then to be underestimated. However, this needs to match with, extend, or assist with the development of resources as required by the community rather than be predetermined. Employing local people and local organisations (not just NGOs) and utilising and building upon existing structures and capital complement and extend these structures and builds upon existing capacities. This is again C4C's aim.

Human Capital

While the broad conceptualisation of Human Capital appears to unite Place Management and AR there seems a divergence based on the definition of Human Capital provided by SFCS. As identified in an earlier publication, the

SFCS's aim of building human capital (Australian Government: Department of Family and Community Services & RMIT University Circle, 2004, p. 1) implies human capacity as being about developing the psychological status of people, having first identified a set of personal deficits. This inference results in a differentiation between training people in desired skills and valuing people's contributions, for which a collective set of skills once identified, are developed (Hendrick, 2008a, p. 42). An AR contribution is one advocating an intrinsically iterative and naturally evolving set of events as determined by those people impacted by these: it harnesses the existing strengths and capacities rather than framing individuals as devoid of skills and efficacy. Here, AR helps to identify strengths of people as part of the process and not just focus on the deficits. The development of human capital, however, is only part of the equation, for relationships between knowledgeable and skilled people are the glue which creates sustainable communities.

What they don't need is a sequence of 17 different people knocking at the door. They need one person who's in touch with the other 16 knocking at the door and building a trusting relationship (Bernard).

In this quote Bernard was talking about how relationships are an essential ingredient in successful programme design. C4C, claiming a strengths-based approach, agrees in principle, at least, that peoples' and communities' capacities, once identified, can effect sustainable change. AR approaches assist people with identifying strengths and capacities as identified by them rather than those strengths and capacities predetermined or prescribed by others. It further incorporates evaluative processes as a way of enabling national policy to engage with the processes and policy design.

This thesis suggests that Place Management has a role in assisting government attend to 'wicked' social problems through:

- Directing resources to the local setting in locally decided and relevant ways;
- Assisting local people construct and develop structures and systems that meet their ways of managing their lives; and
- Encouraging the development of relational human capital.

Bureaucratic challenges and ways forward

Bureaucracies face many complex and diverse challenges. To be charged with spending taxpayers' money to effect lasting change in righting the wrongs of society is undeniably easier said than done. The ministerial portfolio concerned with children and families is one necessitating difficult policy decisions should be made with careful consideration about how to respond to multidimensional issues. Reflected in such decisions are values and moral judgments about the place of children and families, the forms these relationships take and what roles they are to assume in society. The causal roots too are reflected in policy decisions and actions. This thesis illuminates many covert and often insidious ideas and discursive framings shaping policy decision making to do with the C4C. For instance, previous failings surrounding the compartmentalisation of social and economic issues has seen a move under the SFCS towards what Anna Yeatman (1998, p. 3) describes as "a democratic state administration which works on behalf of and develops a citizen-based community". What a 'citizen-based community' or community development meant to policy makers differed considerably from conceptualisations by the people implementing the policy and others invited to participate in the policy programme. If government wants to assist community then it has the responsibility to listen to community processes and needs.

The dominance of neoliberalism, as underpinning the C4C policy design, results in people who enact policy needing to find creative ways of working

within “poorly designed policies” (Yeatman, 1998, p. 3) to meet the needs of people. Within the context of governments needing to ‘do more with less’ it is unsurprising that governments are also turning to creative ways to respond to complex social needs. Hence, principles of social capital, community development and capacity building are seen as (and are indeed) favoured and are useful as long as they are interpreted and enacted locally. However, in their widely accepted and uncritical engagement these principles and approaches risk becoming little more than ‘wolves in lamb’s clothing’. While C4C was a praiseworthy direction for governments, it is one requiring greater trust on the part of government funders to ‘listen deeply’ to what people want, to allow people the time to participate and to provide people relevant skills so they are able to participate. This research demonstrates the trust and other vital components that are required to form partnerships and relationships towards effecting positive change. C4C is not the only high level government policy programme aiming for social change. Those principles outlined by Stringer (2008) in an Action Research project in East Timor are relevant to C4C. These include (but are not limited to) a need for:

- shared understanding or meaning making about what is the purpose and what is expected;
- macro visioning and planning to merge with micro processes for ongoing information and development;
- trust in process and being heard, as reflected in policy design and implementation;
- democratic or civil society processes mediating and negotiating paths between the various and often disparate needs and values; and
- openness to different values and ways of thinking and doing.

Action Research is a process that provides a highly effective tool as both a practice and theoretical guide to facilitate change as wanted by people of place and people making policy.

Concluding remarks in looking once again

I came to this research with a pre-understanding that C4C was ill-informed, lacking meaningful consultation and opportunities for participation, and was unequivocally top heavy. These assumptions were important to acknowledge and were made clearer when considering this research through a critical reflexive lens. My own realisation was a surprising one as what I was critical of in the first instance I too was a part of: a discursive framing in which I was caught by virtue of my own standpoint. While practices were contradictory to principles of a community development approach and notions of capacity building, strengths-based practice and social capital there were the intentions, the aims, the ambitions, the ideas towards that which I too aspire: greater equality, greater justice, greater opportunities for all, greater voice to those faced with adversity. In this I shared many beliefs of the C4C programme.

My selection at an interview in 2005 was based on the interviewees' belief that my previous experiences and knowledge matched what was wanted by the industry funder and independent research centre. This selection was made based on a decision about abilities to participate in an Action Research project of the C4C programme in the two sites. As already mentioned, implicated by the ill described Local Evaluator position, what was envisaged, expected then experienced by myself and other stakeholders was contrary to what was first considered. Embarking on a project that was to use AR methodology and guided by such a philosophical framing was further challenged. Although presented in an Action Research helix cycle, this research ceased to enact Action Research in its participatory form when the original industry funded contract ended. However, action learning, a process enabling a reflection on activities able to then inform further actions (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009), continued as a process for both me and participants in the C4C as has been evident throughout this thesis. Action learning processes allow for more explicit insight about intentions, strategies and processes of activities from which critical reflections are able to further inform and influence future policy practices.

This section while ending this thesis is thought of as just the beginning: the beginning of dialogue and processes of again further *looking, thinking, reflecting* and *acting* towards better policy developments in Place Management and other suitable areas. As a doctoral researcher embedded in an Action Research process knowledge gained is both personal and political, and involves both theory and method. It is hoped that this information may benefit participants involved in the social policy programme as well as informing the understanding of Management in Place.

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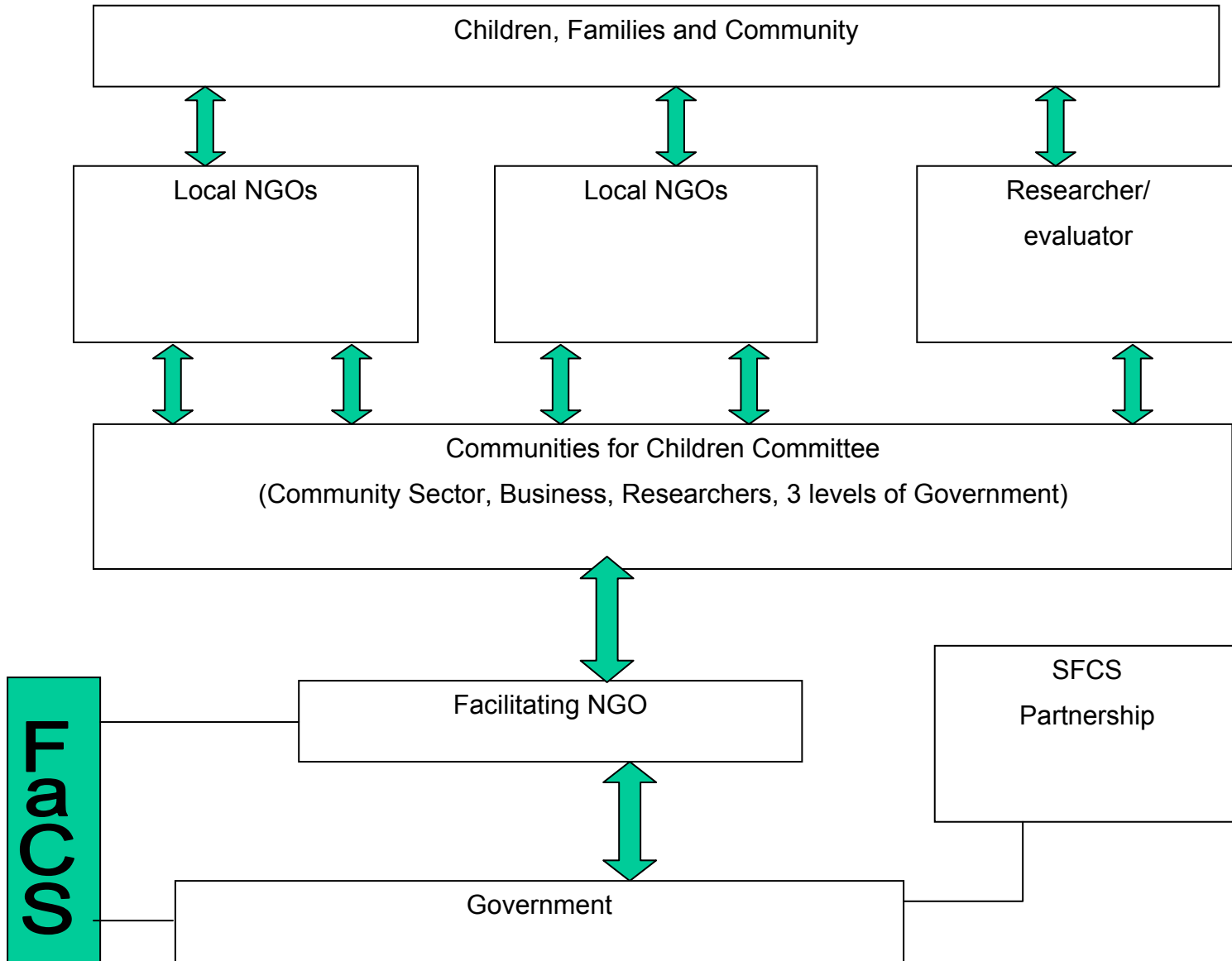
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Appendix A Communities for Children Model



Appendix B Information Sheet for Participants

Project Title: Place Management: 'social policy, government authority, community responsibility'

Student Researcher: Antonia Hendrick, PhD Student, Curtin University of Technology.

Dear [insert name],

Thank you for agreeing to be further informed about this research. The title of the project and the researcher conducting and managing the research are outlined above.

About the Project: Under the Communities for Children Initiative (C4C), the Australian Government is forging a new and innovative approach to policy development and service delivery under its Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (SFCS). *Communities for Children* takes a collaborative approach in seeking to achieve better outcomes for children aged 0-5 and their families. It is implemented through a national framework which allows for tailored approaches at the local level and provides communities with the opportunity to develop flexible and innovative approaches that best reflect their circumstances.

This is a three year research project, jointly funded and supported by the Alcoa Research Centre for Stronger Families, Curtin University of Technology and The Smith Family. It seeks to explore the views and experiences of people associated with the introduction of a Place Management policy in Australia. The intended outcome of this project is to contribute to the direction, theory and practice of Place Management. This

research is towards an academic thesis that explores the relationship between Place Management and social policy.

Participation: You will be invited to do one or more of the following: a) participate in a focus group, b) participate in a semi structured interview and/or, c) give permission for participant observation. You will be participating in an Action Research process. In this way solutions identified by participants are considered and may form the basis of further action. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice, or to withdraw permission to use any information that is provided. Information provided will remain in confidence.

This study has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee. If needed, verification of approval can be obtained either by writing to the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee, C/- Office of Research and Development, Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U1987, Perth, 6845 or by telephoning 9266 2784 or by emailing hrec@curtin.edu.au.

You are of course welcome to discuss your participation in this study with myself or my supervisors [names and telephone number supplied in original].
Thanking you in advance, Antonia Hendrick

Appendix C Consent for Participation in Research Project

Project Title: Place Management: 'social policy, government authority, community responsibility'
Student Investigator: Antonia Hendrick
Supervisors: [name of supervisors, chief investigator and research Assistant, supplied in original]

Statement of Participant/Interviewee

I, _____ voluntarily consent to take part in this research project, which has been explained to me by

I have received a Participant Information Sheet to retain and I fully understand the requirements of participation in the study.

I understand that participation in this research is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice, or to withdraw permission to use any information that I have provided.

I understand that the information I provide through an interview will be kept in confidence and that I will not be identifiable in any reports or publications that emerge from this research unless I agree (in writing).

I understand that information will be provided to me throughout my involvement. I have read the above statement and the Participant Information Sheet and give my consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D Interview Question Guide

Interviewees are able to withdraw their answer/ comment or withdraw from the interview at any time without prejudice. Interviewees are able to refrain from answering any questions as they deem necessary.

Tell me about your involvement in C4C – from initial contact made (events leading up to this involvement)?

How has your involvement developed in relation to the project?

What are your perceptions of C4C's introduction to this community? (asked with relevance to interviewee i.e. particular site/ across sites)

What do you see working well under the C4C model? (may consider things such as governance, community engagement, interagency collaboration, funding structures, early years focus, sustainability – six focus areas as per agreed with facilitating partner)

What might be done better?

That covers everything that I wanted to ask. Is there anything else you'd like to comment on?

**Appendix E Survey of Operational & Strategic
Committees**

This survey uses a Likert scale, and a Yes or No response. The Likert scale reads as: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree. Please place the number of your response where appropriate or if Yes and No answer delete the one that is **NOT** your answer.

Please feel free to provide further comments under any of the questions listed. All comments are welcome.

Were you part of the initial C4C Committee Review Day in February 2006?

Yes Or No

b) At the Review Day discussions were held regarding the future governance of the Committee and a decision was made to split the CCC into two Committees (Strategic and Operational). Was this decision something that you supported?

Yes Or No

Which Committee:

a) are you now a member of?

Operational or Strategic or Both

b) and for how long has your involvement been? (Please type your answer ie beginning, 1 year, 2 months etc.)

The workings of both Committees were discussed in the initial stages – are you clear about the:-

a) Committee(s) functions? Yes Or No

b) Committee(s) Aims? Yes Or No

c) your role as a member of the Committee? Yes Or No

Membership representation has often been a consideration of the Committees. As a CC Committee Member do you consider it necessary for the Committee to identify individuals and/or organisations that are not currently represented?

a) If not, why not (please provide brief explanation)?

b) If so, are there processes towards improving representation?

Currently meeting dates are set for bi monthly (every two months) – from your experience is this regular enough?

If you disagree, what advice would you have?

The Review Day asked you about the effectiveness of Committee meetings. Do you consider adequate time is available for discussion and decision-making processes?

If you disagree, what advice would you have about use of such time?

Is there something you would like to see done differently by the Committee/s within its broader vision – the vision as set out in the Community Action Plan

as, “to promote a caring and inclusive community where all young children are supported in achieving their full potential”?

If agree you would like to see something done differently, please comment:

With consideration for the future operations of the Committees and what may be a result of their functions (beyond the funding period), what are your hopes for C4C or your hopes as a result of C4C in:

12 Months?

2 Years?

5 Years?

Please add any further comments

Appendix F Confidential Quarterly Report

Of

A Formative Evaluation of the Introduction of the Communities for Children Program in Western Australia by [name of Facilitating Partner NGO]

by

Principle Investigator: [name/Research Centre listed]

Student Investigator: Antonia Hendrick, Ph.D. student

NB: This report details activities undertaken since the previous report only.

Date of this Report: / /

Activities undertaken:

Stakeholder meetings attended:

Reports/Documents reviewed and analysed:

Emergent Themes:

Emergent Issues (if any):

Attachments (if any):

Appendix G International place-based programmes

| Programme/Policy | Year Implemented | State/s | Government Persuasion | Practice Aims |
|---|------------------|---------------|--|--|
| Communities for Children | 2004/5 | National | Fed/ Coalition | 5 key areas (earlier identified) |
| Neighbourhood Improvement Programme | 1990s | NSW | | Improve localities (neighbourhoods) and reduce crime.. |
| Communities that Care | 2000 | National | Fed/ Coalition | Promote healthy development of children and young people, and prevent health and social problems. |
| Local Areas coordination Scheme | | | | Funding directed through community which identify local needs |
| Strengthening Communities Unit | 1990s | NSW | Labour | |
| Families First | 2002 | NSW/ Victoria | | |
| Stronger Families | | | | |
| Community Renewal Prgm | 1998 | QLD | | Crime prevention |
| Neighbourhood Renewal Programme | 2001 | Victoria | Labor (influenced by UK policy) | improve community participation, employment, economic activity, safety, health and access to services |
| Place Management in Moree | 1990s | NSW | | Crime prevention – provision of recreational/ employment opportunities & economic development with emphasis on Aboriginal communities. |
| Canterbury-Bankstown Place Management Project | | NSW | | |
| Community Options Project | | | | |
| Best Start Building Better Cities Programme | 1991 | | Labor (Dpt Housing & Regional Development) | Improve efficiency, equity and sustainability of cities towards social justice, economic growth etc |

Appendix H National place-based programmes

| Programme/Policy | Year | Country | Government persuasion | Underlying Principles | Practice Aims |
|---|-------|---------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Stronger Families and Communities Strategy | 2001 | Aust. | Liberal | Community development, capacity & community building, | Improve child health and wellbeing |
| The Australian Assistance Plan | 1973 | Aust. | Labor | Inclusion, collaborative decision-making | Regionalize welfare services |
| Building Better Cities | 1996 | Aust. | Labor | Changes to environments (cities) increases peoples' use of these spaces | Improve physical, social, economic aspects of cities |
| Sure Start | 1998 | UK | Labor | Place-based services improve health and emotional development of children | Give children best start |
| Health Action Zones | 1998 | UK | Labor | | |
| National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (Social Exclusion Unit) | 1990s | UK | Labor | Social exclusion | Addressing inequality |
| Town Centre Management | 1980s | UK | | Partnerships and broad networks | retain local economy/ reduce crime) |
| Head Start | 1965 | US | | Community development and building children's, family, staff and community resiliency | Improving school readiness helps break poverty cycle |
| Best Start | | US | | | |
| Communities that Care | | US | | | |
| (Ministry of Children and Youth Services) | | Ontario | | | |

Place Management (underlying principles, common aims, methods of practice, questions of responsibility- under C4C)

| UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES | COMMON AIMS | METHOD(S) OF PRACTICE | WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY? |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Equity (social & economic disadvantage):- People who are considered disadvantaged in areas of education, labour force participation, social isolation, and connections to social and economic networks are considered at risk.</p> | <p>Targeted intervention:- To close the gap between 'disadvantaged' communities and those demonstrating higher economic productivity with fewer social issues.</p> | <p>Place Management:- Targeted place ('community'), as geographically defined and bounded based upon levels of disadvantage as statistically (usually) constructed. Can focus on a number of social and economic problems or target one or two: Childhood development.</p> | <p>Funding body:- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). Funding allocated to an organisation or consortium to enact.</p> |
| <p>Civil Society and Social Capital:- Community renewal and regeneration reacquaints itself with notions of 'community' through concepts of social inclusion/exclusion.</p> | <p>Focus on Outcomes:- Rather than inputs and outputs the Programme focuses upon outcomes.</p> | <p>Practice methods:- Community building including more specifically: Community development, capacity building, strength based practice, Action Research and social capital.</p> | <p>'Person' in 'Place': 'Place Manager' responsible for the allocation and accountability of funds, coordination of services, community participation, and interagency collaboration.</p> |
| <p>Strengths-based Discourse:- Building upon organisational strengths and knowledge of community, including the involvement of businesses and further tapping into strengths and capacities of people are processes of community building.</p> | <p>Improved service provision and coordination across community:- Interagency collaboration in the vertical presentation of policy and practice, involving all levels of government and the community private and public sectors.</p> | <p>Institutional and Organisational Reorientation:- Restructuring the basic processes of governance and public administration.</p> | <p>Community Representatives:- Delivered through a committee structure.</p> |
| <p>Ineffective silo approach (NPM Discourse):- Intervention cross-cutting organisational bureaucratic boundaries towards greater involvement of community to solve own social and economic problems.</p> | <p>Sustainable Structures:- Inclusive processes, locally defined and designed, suggesting sustainable outcomes.</p> | <p>Time limited:- Time frame necessarily dependent upon funding allocations.</p> | <p>Community/business Services:- Take over projects once funding round has finished or projects successfully acquire funding for a further term.</p> |

