

Cashing in on resources, social and cultural capital: the role of local markets in the Great Southern district of Western Australia

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Abstract: This paper focuses on the role of local fairs and markets in building upon and exploiting the physical resources and social and cultural capital of Albany and Denmark, two towns in the Great Southern district of Western Australia. It builds on earlier work of the team that has examined some of the drivers of local change in the region (e.g., Selwood *et al.* 1996; Curry *et al.* 2001). That work shows how in the recent past the region has experienced several waves of innovative in-migrants who have largely transformed the traditional forestry and agricultural economic base of the area with the introduction of new crops and a variety of services catering to a growing tourism industry and early retirees to the district. Partly in response to these changes and also influenced by more global trends in social values, such as organic farming and the increasing emphasis on sustainable local economies, Albany and Denmark, the two most important towns of the area, have recently established periodic local markets which are catering to both the local population and to the growing regional tourism market. As such, they support the thesis that ‘creativity’ is an important and necessary ingredient in the development of rural communities. The marshalling of this creativity is a manifestation of social and cultural capital at work.

Key words: *markets, sustainable economies, regional development, tourism, social and cultural capital, creativity*

Introduction

A special focus of the investigation will be the role of social and cultural capital in enhancing the southwest district of Western Australia's attractiveness both to tourists and to actual and potential new residents. It builds on earlier work that has examined some of the drivers of local change (Selwood *et al.* 1996; Curry *et al.* 2001; Selwood and Tonts 2003) and a growing appreciation in these earlier works that social and cultural capital have played an important role in the evolution of diversity and change in the region's population and economy. Furthermore, one manifestation of these changes has been the growth of markets, here as elsewhere in favourably endowed agricultural regions, firmly based on elements of local production. This paper investigates the characteristics and the role of local fairs and markets in building upon and exploiting the social and cultural capital of the district.

The paper's main argument broadly parallels Richard Florida's (2002, 2005) contention that, in certain metropolitan regions, there are concentrations of high-tech workers, artists, musicians, gays and 'high bohemians,' or a 'creative class,' who are associated with an environment both producing and reflecting higher levels of economic development. This environment, in turn, will attract more creative people, as well as businesses and capital. Florida is by no means the first to have recognised the importance of cities as centres of creativity. Peter Hall, for example, in his massive tome, *Cities and Civilization*, devotes much of its content to this theme (Hall 1998). However, others have been quick to point out that this rationale can be extended beyond the metropolitan context to include less populated, though characteristically well-favoured regions. Indeed, Sorensen demonstrates that creativity exists to a very significant degree in the Australian rural environments he has investigated. He also insists that creativity must go hand in hand with adaptability if creativity is to find acceptance and flourish. Sorensen is adamant that "residents at the spatial margin have to try harder to keep up with the rest of the world" (Sorensen 2007, 22). Furthermore, it is likely that the impact of creative innovations can be more profound in smaller communities than in larger centres. Recent social and demographic changes in the relatively isolated southwestern corner of Western Australia present the opportunity to investigate this thesis.

The objectives then, are: first, to demonstrate that Florida's detractors have a valid claim in that the 'creative class' is not confined to metropolitan areas; to show that creativity can be manifested through the exploitation of social and cultural capital; to demonstrate how this works using the growth of periodic local markets as case study examples; to remind readers

that such markets have had similar functions for millennia; and, finally, to show that they are now widely acknowledged to be another weapon in the competitive world of place promotion.

The research for this paper is an extension of earlier work completed by the research team in the southwest of Western Australia that has tracked the region's transition from a relatively traditional agricultural and resource based economy into one that is more diverse and based increasingly on tertiary activities. This paper deals specifically with the recent creation of periodic markets that reflect this transition. The methodology involved fieldwork that permitted the compilation of a complete inventory of the markets' offerings, and to observe the markets, their stallholders, and their patrons in operation. These observations were supplemented by formal interviews with principal actors and promoters of the two markets, along with informal conversations with other participants among the stallholders and their clients.

The Lower Southwestern District of Western Australia

Western Australia's 'Lower Great Southern' district (Figure 1), occupies the area roughly centred on Albany, with its population of about 35,000 making it the largest city in the region. However, it should be noted that the city boundary now incorporates the recently amalgamated Shire of Albany. The former Town of Albany's population was closer to 20,000, whereas the district's total population at the 2006 Census was 52,593 (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2007a); Government of Western Australia 2008). The Lower Great Southern district is an extensive area of some 14,828 km² that spans a heavily forested area to the west around the much smaller town of Denmark, with its population of approximately 4,000 people (ABS 2007b). The district's borders extend north and east into the significantly drier wheat belt, with the Southern Ocean defining its southern boundary. It is a highly diverse region, distinguished by unique landscapes and natural vegetation, along with a wide variety of human activities that reflect its natural features and chequered history. The area still contains vestiges of its original Aboriginal occupation, but the contemporary landscape is far different from its appearance when the first European settlers arrived in 1827. These settlers established an outpost at Albany, but the region soon lost its colonial importance to the more centrally located administrative capital of the state at Perth, some 400 km to the north-west. For most of the state's recent history the Great Southern district remained at the periphery of the more densely settled area to the north, although it continued to contribute to the state's economy in a number of



Figure 1: *The Great Southern region and its location relative to Perth.*

Source: Reproduced with permission of Great Southern Development Commission

ways. Because of its scenic beauty and other attractions, this part of the country has, from its early days, enjoyed some considerable popularity as a tourism destination. The forests have been an invaluable resource both for their timber and as an amenity. Agriculture in its varied forms has made an important contribution too. However, its uniqueness, the peripheral location and what Blainey (1968) has dubbed the ‘tyranny of distance’ has given a sense of identity and allegiance to the local population and generated in it a source of social capital (Western Australian Planning Commission 2007).

This ‘social capital’ first emerged during the earliest days of European settlement, once the initial ruthless exploitation of the magnificent forests had run its course. The remaining pioneers, bolstered by newcomers to the land, had to fight desperately hard to overcome the isolation and harsh conditions that prevailed on the remote south coast. They then managed to survive the Great Depression and the difficult days of Group

Settlement which introduced new settlers, but taxed the pioneers to the limit, driving out all but the most tenacious of the settlers (Brunger and Selwood 1997; Brays Shay and Selwood 1998). More recently, successive waves of newcomers have migrated into the district, drawn there by the inherent beauty and distinctiveness of the area, bringing with them a variety of different lifestyles and skills. Although the newcomers have not always blended readily into the existing community, their commitment to the region has nevertheless led to a strengthening of the social networks and has contributed significantly to the wealth of the area. Furthermore, this inflow is now occurring at an accelerated pace and the continued flow of migrants into the district has brought with it a rapidly increasing range of ideas and innovations that are being incorporated into the local economy and social activities (Selwood *et al.* 1996; Curry *et al.* 2001). Given that the population of the Lower Great Southern district increased by another 9.2 percent between 2001 and 2006, this trend is continuing (ABS 2007c).

The main purpose of this paper is to illustrate how the periodic, largely local produce based markets of Albany and Denmark are reflections of the effective employment of this expanding social capital in widening the attractions of the two communities and how this has in turn been instrumental in creating additional social capital in them. As a result, they have contributed significantly to the development of those communities, especially through encouraging incoming migrants and increased visitor numbers. The former have brought with them a diversity of skills as well as other forms of capital, while the latter are making an increasing contribution to the support of new enterprises that include the establishment of local markets. These, in effect, represent a form of commodification of elements of social and cultural capital as well as the merchandising of material products.

The Nature of Social and Cultural Capital

Social and cultural capital are complex concepts, given to a variety of different understandings, approaches and forms of analysis. A very useful recent overview of the notion of social capital is available through the work of the Canadian Government's Policy Research Initiative as ably reported in Franke's paper *The Measurement of Social Capital* (Franke 2005). Franke's review of the literature, which builds on the seminal works of people such as Bourdieu (1986), Colman (1998) and Putnam (1995a, 1995b, 2000), also indicates that worthwhile studies have emanated from the UK, USA, Canada and Australia in particular. In analyzing the many pieces of research and writing on the topic, Franke concludes that the best

way of defining the concept is to use a comprehensive, broadly encompassing definition which takes into account the myriad ways in which social capital is made manifest at different levels of activity:

Social capital refers to social networks that may provide access to resources and social support (Franke 2005, 7).

Franke shows how social capital operates at different levels: the individual, the group and the community scale, thus making three levels of analysis possible, although they are interconnected:

- cognitive (micro) – individual predispositions (practices and beliefs)
- structural (meso) – the structure and activities of local groups that create new opportunities
- institutional (macro) – the elements of the local context that promote or impede collective action

Figure 2 indicates how social capital can be conceptualized within a wider context. It operates and is influenced to greater or lesser degree by the totality of the surrounding environment, which includes the cultural, political, legal, institutional, economic, social, and physical conditions, along with other complementary forms of capital, for example, financial. The strength or weakness of social capital is then determined by the characteristics of individuals and the organizations and institutions that are available to them. Social capital's effectiveness is then reflected in the variety of outcomes and the ways in which they may be identified. Figure 2 clearly identifies the interconnectivity and interdependencies between social capital and other, non-monetary forms of capital. Although not specifically mentioning them, the figure incorporates elements of cultural capital as well.

The now quite extensive literature dealing with these concepts supports the foregoing conclusions and reinforces claims that they can be important contributors to development. In particular, Jim Macbeth, in his most helpful discussion of Social, Political and Cultural Capital (SPCC), does a sterling job of illustrating their close and overlapping relationships, and in offering a clear exposition of the nature of cultural capital and the forms it can take that are of particular relevance to this study, he places them squarely in the fields of tourism and regional development (Macbeth *et al.* 2004). Drawing on another comprehensive review of the associated literature by Mendis (1998) and also the work of Jeannotte (2003), Macbeth and co-authors argue that:

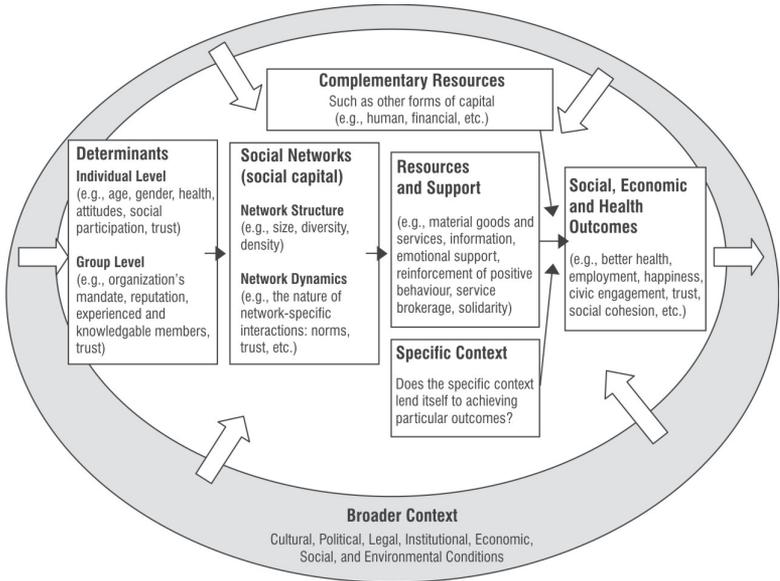


Figure 2: Social capital within its wider context.

Source: Reproduced with permission of Policy Research Initiative, Government of Canada from original by Franke (2005, 9)

Cultural capital is defined as the resources that can be drawn on by people and includes both cultural activities and artefacts. Thus cultural capital involves a range of aspects including ideologies, performing and spectating, architectural and historic heritage, forms of artistic enterprise, and cultural products such as CDs, books and art works. Also included in this definition are forms of sport and religion. Culture is an important resource. It represents the accumulated capital of generations of skilled, creative, and innovative people and is made up of the historical record of our societies; it can be a source of inspiration for creativity and innovation (Macbeth *et al.* 2004, 216).

Following both Mendis and Jeannotte, Macbeth *et al.* insist that “cultural capital may determine the *quality* of social capital” (Jeannotte, 2003, 39). Others, for example, Bourdieu (1986) and Zweigenhaft (1992) have argued that there is a tendency for more wealthy communities to boast higher levels of cultural capital as well as economic capital. In other words, they benefit from a derived comparative advantage which can build upon itself. Moreover, Jeannotte’s citations of and acceptance of research demonstrates how “. . .engaging people in community arts

activities is a popular and effective community development process; that is, engaging in cultural (capital) activities strengthens social capital” (Macbeth *et al.* 2004, 516). Conversely, it must be remembered that these mechanisms can operate to the disadvantage of communities if or when members of a community break into competing factions with different ideologies, objectives or views as to how to realise their goals (Tonts 2005). The dangers of insensitive tourism orientated developers and government agencies co-opting and commodifying cultural capital to the detriment of the subject communities and their sustainability are also underlined (Macbeth *et al.* 2004, 518).

This necessarily abbreviated synopsis does only limited justice to the complex conceptual aspect of the research. Recent data now gathered by the ABS and published in their Community Profile Series (ABS 2007b, 2007d, 2007e) identify and give an accounting of a number of the commonly employed variables used to evaluate levels of social capital in communities. However, due to space constraints, this study is concerned only to identify the broader historical and regional environmental contexts and then to illustrate, through case study examples, how they are operating in the local markets of Albany and Denmark. Thus, it is useful to remind the reader of just how important markets have been to the development of communities in the past.

The Historical Importance of Markets

Fairs and markets have been an integral component of not only economic activities, but other community attractions, such as sporting and cultural events and entertainments, since time immemorial. They were features of cities of the Classical Period, being essential components of the Greek agora and Roman forum (Mumford 1989). They have also been credited with the resurgence of urban centres in the Medieval world (Pirenne 1925), while their continued importance is reflected in the development of market functions and urban systems as highlighted in the work of Walter Christaller (1933), writing of cities in a European context, as well as the extensive literature on central places that has followed (Berry and Pred 1961; Marshall 1996).

The creation of, or, more accurately, the restoration of fairs and local producer markets after years of decline, has been part of a wider contemporary development of place marketing in the increasingly competitive world of inter-city and regional tourism and economic development (Kotler *et al.* 1993; Ward and Gold 1994). At the metropolitan scale, no self-respecting major centre has for decades been without its

convention and trade centre and many cities have recently invested millions of dollars in building newer and grander complexes to host trade shows and the like. In Western Australia, Metropolitan Perth now boasts one of these, the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre, opened in 2004 at a cost of \$220 million (Perth Convention Centre 2008). As elsewhere, the convention centre, frequently featuring locally produced items, has become an integral component in the city's place marketing.

Similar efforts are being made at a more local scale and with smaller places, particularly as places and place promoters have taken up the practice of 'branding' themselves and using local products, festivals and events as their unique selling points (Hall and Sharples 2008). The growth of 'food tourism,' with its strong emphasis on featuring locally produced foods and regional menus is but one example of this (Kneafsey and Ilbery 2001; Selwood 2003). The revival of farmers' markets has been another manifestation of these trends as illustrated in the works of Feagan *et al.* (2004) in Canada, Coster (2004) in Australia, and Guthrie *et al.* (2006) in New Zealand, with Hall and Sharples' (2008) recent work now providing a comprehensive overview of the place of farmers' markets and similar events in the marketing spectrum. The selling of other speciality products has also been carried along in this revitalization of the market phenomenon. Several outstanding examples of world famous markets in London, England, that have undergone transformation and rejuvenation can be cited as evidence of such trends. Both Covent Garden and Spitalfields have experienced major restructuring and revival. Another market of more immediate relevance to this study is Borough Market, London's oldest surviving produce market, originally a wholesale market, but now acknowledged as one of London's finest retail food markets specializing in locally specific and organic produce (Figure 3) (Borough Market 2008). Nevertheless, it does not quite meet the stringent requirements of the United Kingdom's National Farmers' Retail & Markets Association (FARMA) which requires that "farmers, growers or producers from a defined local area are present in person to sell their own produce, direct to the public. All products sold should have been grown, reared, caught, brewed, pickled, baked, smoked or processed by the stallholder" (FARMA 2008). It is these criteria which are now becoming increasingly important in positioning places and their local markets and thereby attracting their clientele. It is within this now global framework, that the local markets of Albany and Denmark must be contextualized.



Figure 3: A stall at London's Borough Market.

Photograph: J. Selwood, 2007

The Lower Great Southern's Local Markets

Several communities in Western Australia's southwest now boast periodic markets devoted to the sale of a variety of products, many of them locally produced. Not many of the products featured at the Albany and Denmark markets are truly indigenous to the area, or even to Australia. Most of the so-called Australian products have been introduced to the district and many, the temperate fruits, for example, are definitely exotic to the Antipodes. Furthermore, significant amounts of product are manufactured outside of the region and marketed through sellers who have obtained their goods from international/global agencies. It can also be said that many, if not most, of the producers/sellers are relative newcomers to the area. The southern districts have also benefited greatly from the importation of crops, other innovations and technology that have boosted local production immensely, whether from indigenous or from the introduced materials and by way of the in-migrants. Among the more significant developments in the area under study have been the growth of tourism and the spawning of a variety of new agricultural products and craft industries to supplement the pre-existing relatively traditional farming sector (Curry *et al.* 2001). With the assistance of a number of state agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture and Food, the Western Australian Tourism Commission, Great Southern Development Commission and Great Southern Regional Marketing Association, these are being very

effectively harnessed and exploited by non-government agencies such as the Albany Farmers Market (AFM) and the Denmark Community Market (DCM), two recently established markets which have taken advantage of the strong sense of community and co-operation that has evolved in the district. Their efforts have encouraged producers to showcase their output and supported promotions of the district.

As their names would suggest, the markets of Denmark and Albany are rather different in their emphases and content. Not to be confused with the much older and larger scale market connected to the Denmark Arts Festival, Denmark's Community Market has been in place for a shorter period of time, commencing operations in 2006. It is a local initiative, started with a minimum of external support as a commercial endeavour by Amelia Lymburn, a recent migrant to the community from the Eastern States. This market offers local agricultural and seafood produce for sale, as well as a wider variety of non-food products, many of which are the output of local craftspeople, but some of them originating elsewhere in Australia, or even overseas. On the other hand, Albany Farmers Market, operating since 2002 with substantial government and non-governmental support, emerged from a group of local farm producers and is devoted almost exclusively to marketing locally grown fresh and processed agricultural products.

Denmark Community Market

Drawing extensively on her considerable experiences in working at markets in the Eastern States, Amelia worked basically from scratch in Denmark to develop interest and participation in her community market project. Being a relative newcomer and initially not having an extensive network of locals to call on, in recruiting stallholders, she called every enterprise listed in the local directory, offering them space at the market. Through an association with the Cub Scout leader, she was able to secure a venue for the market at the Scout Hall, renting their facilities for the occasion. From there, the operation grew as converts also helped recruit participants. Advertising has been mainly through placing posters at strategic locations around the community and through Amelia's work with an advertising agency. Working without remuneration, she and her partner were responsible for virtually all of the management and 'donkey work' until she was forced to slow down because of a pregnancy. Since then, maintenance of the market has fallen to a group of volunteers who have recently formalised their activities through incorporation (Lymburn 2008; Lovelace 2008). It is therefore clear that an 'outsider' was the first to recognise and harness the latent cultural capital in the community, then

the network of participants subsequently created has strengthened the community's social capital.

The essence of Denmark's Community Market is revealed by its website (Denmark Community Markets 2007):

Our Community Market is all about creating opportunities (*sic*)...For locals to promote their goods and services! For tourists to see what we have to offer!

For local musicians to perform! For people to catch up with one another!

For non-profit groups and charities to inform us about their cause!

The organizers place considerable emphasis on the market's contribution to community building. To quote again from their website:

Children are such a big part of our community, we have so much to keep your kids busy while you enjoy the market! At our seating area outside under the trees, there are colouring books and pens, toys and puzzles to keep little hands busy while you sit back and watch the entertainment!

The market's inclusiveness is also reflected in the five diverse groups into which the stalls are categorized: food products, crafts, healthy living, entertaining and relaxation, and attractions for the kids. Figure 4, taken on market day, provides supporting evidence for the website's claims, whereas the five categories help define and reinforce Denmark's image as a place with a distinctive, inclusive community, embracing a variety of lifestyles, producing a wide range of local bush and ocean products, along with agricultural, homeopathic remedies and other goods and services especially attractive to less conventional tastes and alternative lifestyles. The local population is enthusiastically urged to participate as contributors, customers or both in a wide range of offerings (Denmark Community Market 2007). Its founder's vision was to create an attractive gathering point where people could enjoy themselves, but which would generate income for herself, the stallholders and to the community (Lymburn 2008).

After an initial burst of enthusiasm, with up to 30 stallholders participating, the number of regulars has declined somewhat to about 15. Unfortunately, the market's location has been determined by agreement with the local Scout Hall which accommodates the market on affordable financial terms. However, its location is less central and convenient than it could be. Because of this and other marketing opportunities, fewer fresh food producers now attend the Denmark market. Another factor is that a perceived demand for second-hand, or 'trash and treasure' stalls cannot



Figure 4: Scenes from Denmark Community Market.
Source: Reproduced with permission of Denmark & Districts Market, formerly Denmark Community Market

be satisfied owing to a prior agreement with the Scouts that prevents the market from competing with the Scouts' own annual fund raising 'bring and buy' sale. Nevertheless, the market caters to a few hundred patrons, continuing to operate year-round, generally on alternate Sundays, but monthly during the slow winter months when visitor numbers are lower. Ironically, the characteristically informal, casual behaviour of the stallholders, one of the market's strengths, is also seen as a disadvantage in that patrons cannot always be assured that certain products will regularly be available. However, the core group of stallholders has now taken over market operations, determined to keep it operating as much as a community meeting place and social event, as for its profitability (Lovelace 2008). Thus the market, based on the initiative and creativity of a single individual, and despite its setbacks, continues to demonstrate its role in both exploiting and building on the social and cultural capital of the local community.

Albany Farmers Market

In contrast, the Albany Farmers Market (AFM), established somewhat earlier, has received more institutional support, operates according to stricter guidelines, gives every indication of being a viable commercial endeavour and definitely serves a much larger market area. According to the Great Southern Regional Marketing Association's (GSRMA) website:

The markets were established by two very hard-working volunteer (*sic*) board members, Ms Pam Lincoln and Ms Debra Hartmann, with support from the GSRMA board and a growers committee. ... Pam & Debra spent 10 months prior to the first market ... planning and organising a workshop to bring together growers and key stakeholders, establishing market guidelines, organising insurance, a venue and a raft of other essentials (GSRMA 2007 www.greatsoutherntastewa.com/farmersmarket.html).

It is also important to note that Pam Lincoln was another relative newcomer, both to farming and to the district. She had formerly been in the health field and, while there, had gained a very good knowledge of funding agencies and 'grantsmanship.' The expertise she brought with her was instrumental in tapping these outside sources for start-up monies and in getting the market off the ground (Lincoln 2008). The GSRMA has now given over the operation of the market to an independent group that is self-managed, funded and owned by the producers themselves. They employ a part-time co-ordinator, Ian Haines, whose responsibilities are "to administer the market operation, promote the markets and recruit new

producers” (AFM 2007). It is important for the research objectives to note that Ian Haines, although a longer term migrant, is another of the innovators to make Albany his home. Haines makes the legitimate claim to have been the first restaurateur in the community to feature ‘fine dining’ on his menu at a time when Australian cuisine was more reminiscent of the worst in English cooking (Haines 2008). The Albany Farmers Market is a member of the GSRMA and also the Australian Farmers’ Markets Association (AFMA). Another part of Haines’ mandate is to operate in accordance with the aims, objectives and guidelines laid out by these bodies. To quote the AFMA:

A Farmers’ Market is a predominantly fresh food market that operates regularly within a community, at a focal public location that provides a suitable environment for farmers and food producers to sell farm-origin and associated value-added processed food products directly to customers (AFMA 2003).

Following the criteria established by the senior organizations, the Albany market management encourages local sustainable production and added value. This is borne out by the offerings of all the 30 or so stalls at the market, all of which featured locally produced fresh or processed products. The market management also has the objectives of educating consumers and regenerating community spirit, making the claim that:

Many customers now rely on the markets for their major weekly shop because of the comprehensive range and sustained quality of produce, enjoying the wonderful interaction with the producers, whilst at the same time enjoying the camaraderie and delight of catching up with old friends! (Albany Farmers Market 2007).

It was clear from field work that these objectives were being actively addressed. After considering several locations in and around the city, the market organisers obtained space in the centre of town, which although somewhat cramped, has become the market’s permanent home. Producer stall expansion has been limited by space needs, but it has also been through controlled competition, the selection of appropriate complementary products, and quality control. In contrast to Denmark’s Community Market, Albany’s Farmers Market has rejected several aspiring stallholders because they failed to meet the more stringent product requirements. Ian Haines, maintains that there is a strong degree of mutual support among the stallholders of Albany’s market, with operators offering advice and assistance to others in the group when needed (Haines 2008). The stallholders and patrons were indeed observed to be generally cheerfully

engaged in quite animated conversation, with operators enthusiastically discussing the distinctive characteristics of their products. Producers are delighted to by-pass what many regard as the depredations of the large, corporate food wholesalers and retailers and to receive better prices for their output, which even if not organically produced, is generally very labour intensive.

The weekly market appears to be enjoying considerable success, attracting as many as 4,000 people to the Saturday morning event and adding significantly to the number of shoppers, both locally and from the surrounding district (Haines 2008). According to the local Shire's Planning Officer, Juliet Albany, the Albany Farmers Market has become a 'must see' event for visiting tourists and she, herself, now urges both friends and relatives to take in the market when they come to Albany (Albany 2008). Another measure of the market's success has been its recent receipt of *Vogue Australia's* Entertainment and Travel, Produce Award as 'Best Farmers Market in Australia 2008,' giving it countrywide publicity (Albany Farmers Market 2008). Thus, regardless of the different origins and development of Albany's market, just as in the Denmark example, it has successfully exploited the district's physical and human resources and strengthened the social capital of the community. In adding to its attractiveness as a tourist destination, the Albany Farmers Market also augments the locality's cultural capital.

Discussion and Conclusion

The Albany and Denmark markets are contemporary illustrations of social and cultural capital at work. However, they are, in effect, carrying out the function and roles of traditional local and regional markets that have existed almost since time immemorial. They exploit local resources, marketing largely locally grown or processed goods and commodified cultural capital in a personalised and often festive environment. In turn, they feed upon themselves to expand the amount of social capital available to the community. That is, they contribute not just to the economies of communities, but importantly, they support community by providing an environment for people to socialise, to share their experiences and to exploit them in constructive and sustainable ways. Where only a few years ago the markets did not exist, now they do, along with their networks of producers and those who patronise them.

Given that Denmark's market has a more localised trade area and its stallholders are drawn almost entirely from the town, the market functions primarily as a lower order service and an internal social support for the

townspeople, although there is undoubtedly some benefit derived from the seasonal holidaymakers and second home owners who virtually triple the town's population during the summer months (Curry *et al.* 2001). Conversely, the temporary residents and tourists enjoy the supplementary attractions already provided by the town. Albany's larger and more specialised market draws on a wider territory for its products, providing an outlet for local producers to market their often speciality goods directly to consumers. In doing so, they more effectively exploit the cultural capital of the area, shorten the food supply chain and can contribute to the area's economic and social sustainability (Feenstra 2002; Sage 2003; Hall and Sharples 2008). The higher number of tourists and other visitors to Albany provide greater support to these efforts and thereby further reinforce the area's cultural capital.

More research is needed to evaluate the relative impact of the markets on the very different sized economies of the two places. Further work is also needed to investigate people's attitudes and what they as individuals feel that they have benefited from their market experiences. It also needs to be said that the research revealed that there have been negative reactions and disagreements associated with some of the market developments. However, it is difficult to provide specific examples of this while protecting people's confidences and anonymity. Whereas the ABS data on community profiles can disclose something of the nature and frequency of attachments people have as they network among themselves and the outside world, only 'hands on' research can unveil the true nature of social and cultural capital within a community. The ABS statistics, by their nature, do little to reveal the contributions of individuals. However, this study reaffirms Florida's thesis that innovators attract innovators. Just as important, as Sorensen and others have insisted, it underlines the fact that the 'creative class' is not concentrated only in metropolitan areas. Rural districts and small towns can also be major beneficiaries. It was newcomers attracted to the Great Southern district because of its physical and social environment who were most immediately responsible for the establishment of the Denmark and Albany markets.

The two communities are now using news of those markets as they engage in place promotion, incorporating them in their websites in their efforts to create individuality for their respective communities. Ironically, this is now occurring globally as thousands of other communities are taking similar action. However, because of their inherent physical and cultural differences, it is likely that communities will continue to feature at least some characteristics unique to themselves. It is to be hoped that the resurgence of local markets is not just a passing fad and that the populace will maintain an interest that translates into a demand for products coming

from the nearby vicinity. A return to the personalised exchanges between producer and consumer as afforded by the less formal local market also marks a welcome alternative to the supermarkets of the multi-national corporations.

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