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OBSERVING COMMUNITY BASED ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SOCIAL NETWORKING AT PLAY IN AN URBAN VILLAGE SETTING

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is a manifestation of change and is regarded as vital sources of jobs, business dynamism and innovation. However, entrepreneurship is a social activity which occurs in time and space (not just in a geographical sense). Entrepreneurship is seen as a natural, organic process that follows the manifestation of change. There is of course an assumption that this change will occur naturally but what happens if as is increasingly the norm a process of planned change interrupts the natural order of progression. In this observational study, we examine the influence of socio-cultural factors on the evolution of community based entrepreneurial activity in an urban village setting. Using the social metrics of home, habitus and habituation this study examines how community based entrepreneurial activity develops when there is a rupture in the natural societal order caused by the building of a mono-cultural middle class enclave. One cannot get any closer to the social in entrepreneurship than to study entrepreneurial activity in one's home environment. Studying entrepreneurial activity in a setting where the social context has been fixed permits us to investigate the embeddedness of the entrepreneurial process in a naturally occurring environment because the planned environment allows us to comment upon a social experiment in progress. Preliminary findings indicate that when the natural order is interrupted entrepreneurial activity becomes disjointed and finds new avenues of emergence as community based entrepreneurial activity in which business is facilitated by social networking and entrepreneurial identity is socially constructed through play.

KEYWORDS

Entrepreneurship, Economic sociology, Economic geography, Social Entrepreneurship, Societal Entrepreneurship, Social Networking.

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INTRODUCING THE STUDY

As noted by the editors, the topic of community-based, social and societal entrepreneurship is a recurring theme in this journal. Indeed, this expanding literature has grown significantly in the past decade (Johannisson & Nilsson, 1989; Bull & Winter, 1991; Hemingway, 2005; Peredo and Chrisman, 2006). This paper contributes by demonstrating how people in business network in a social, as well as a business, context to create and extract value from their environment (Anderson, 1995). In this paper, we therefore classify community based entrepreneurship as being an activity whereby people act corporately to pursue a commonly held purpose. This may be for personal as well as being business orientated. This paper therefore spans many areas of interest to this special issue. The micro entrepreneurial activity it highlights is purposeful activity which occurs at a societal level and in a social setting although it is not social entrepreneurship. It makes a sound theoretical contribution by demonstrating that regional development may be facilitated by the enactment of community based entrepreneurship in a social as well as business setting¹. Therefore, in this paper we are interested in what Mezias and Kuperman (2001) refer to as the 'community dynamics of entrepreneurship'. Johannisson and Wigren (2006) in their study of the Swedish industrial district of Gnosjo examined how community identity and the entrepreneurial spirit can be shaped by the dynamics of place and the actions of entrepreneurs embedded in the community. Also, Johannisson and Wigren (2006: 188) articulate that local communities accommodate entrepreneurial processes.

¹ Regions are composed of cities, towns, villages and a variety of urban and rural areas. In this study we adopt a micro approach studying entrepreneurial activity at a local community based level.

Entrepreneurship and the small businesses it generates are vital sources of jobs, business dynamism and innovation. Entrepreneurship is driven by change but in conceptualising entrepreneurship as the manifestation of change, we privilege change per se. When we conceptualise entrepreneurial activity we have a tendency only to consider the business environment and ignore the richness of the social and the personal environment. As a consequence, we conflate entrepreneurship with new firm creation. Be this as it may, entrepreneurship has social aspects and as a social activity occurs in time and space. It is not confined merely to the office or place of work as was established by Simon Down (Down, 2006). In naturally evolving free markets entrepreneurship is seen as a natural, organic process, a manifestation of change. In this Darwinian model there is of course an assumption that this change will occur naturally. In this paper we investigate what happens if, as is increasingly the norm, a process of planned change interrupts the natural progressive order. Moreover, this paper considers a scenario where entrepreneurship is socially constructed via a network of personal ties and commitments.

In this paper we thus investigate the evolution of community based entrepreneurial activity in an urban village setting². The use of observational techniques allows us to examine the influence of socio-cultural factors on the evolution of this often hidden activity. Using social metrics such as home, habitus and habituation (Bourdieu, 1993) we trace how entrepreneurial activity develops when there is a rupture in the natural societal order caused by the building of a mono-cultural middle class enclave. By habitus, Bourdieu meant the patterns, or dispositions resulting from the internalization of culture or objective social structures through the experience of an individual or group. Obviously home and habitus are

² Pahl (1968) refers to the 'Urban Village' concept as being part of a rural-urban continuum.

related through family ties and neighbourhood networks. One cannot get any closer to the social than to study of entrepreneurial activity in one's home environment. Studying entrepreneurial activity in a setting where the social context has been fixed permits us to investigate the embeddedness of the entrepreneurial process in a naturally occurring environment because the planned environment allows us to comment upon a social experiment in progress. When the natural order is interrupted entrepreneurial activity becomes disjointed but finds new avenues of emergence as community based entrepreneurship.

The following section reviews selected literature on the geographic nature of entrepreneurship linking entrepreneurship to a social context whilst introducing and reviewing the concepts of entrepreneurial cities, urban villages and the paradox of planned change. This sets up a body of knowledge which informs observations made in the field. Thereafter, there is a brief section on the methodology of observation; followed by the introduction of a case study on an urban village. This is followed by a section on observations from the field. The final section reflects upon the urban village concept and its links to planned community based entrepreneurship. In this paper we seek answers to the research question - Is entrepreneurial change natural or perhaps prompted by entrepreneurs responding to external change or even implementing it?

LINKING ENTREPRENEURSHIP TO THE GEOGRAPHIC AND THE SOCIAL

Entrepreneurship and geography can be complimentary disciplines and indeed merge as in the study of economic geography. Consequentially, geographic approaches to entrepreneurship (Krumme, 1989; Braunerhjelm and Borgman, 2004; Stayaert and

Katz, 2004; Acs and Armington, 2006) are an established feature of entrepreneurship scholarship. Approaches such as economic geography (Amin and Thrift, 2000; Grabner, 2006) and of late urban studies are contributing to an emerging body of knowledge. Indeed, Stayaert and Katz (2004) urged scholars of entrepreneurship to reclaim the space of entrepreneurship in society and to take cognisance of its geographical, discursive and social dimensions. Indeed, they sought, via active reflection, to explore how entrepreneurship is conceived at a societal level and in particular how it can be reclaimed as a space in which entrepreneurship is seen at work in society. For Stayaert and Katz consideration of the geo-politics of everyday entrepreneurship help us develop a clearer understanding of the entrepreneurial spirit.

In a similar vein, Zafriovski (1999) also sought to probe the social layers of entrepreneurship arguing that entrepreneurship possesses an eminently social character, subject to the operation of definite societal processes. Despite the congruence between entrepreneurship, geography and regional development certain geo-spatial factors of entrepreneurship (such as the urban village concept) remain neglected areas of study. Ritsilia (1999) understood that some regional and environmental differences affect how enterprise is operationalised. To fully understand the entrepreneurial processes at play in an urban environment it is helpful to consider the literature of 'Economic Sociology' (Granovetter, 1985; Thornton, 1999; and Fligstein, 2001) because economic sociology reintroduces the person into the equation and injects a richness and thickness of detail (Granovetter, 1973) that is devoid in research grounded in the study of economic geography.

The holistic approach adopted in this study therefore combines the benefits of economic geography and economic sociology. Nevertheless, studying the geographical influences of place and space on entrepreneurship is quite a difficult

activity to undertake. A good point to begin is to review the emerging literature on entrepreneurial cities before examining some theoretical aspects of the urban village setting and the paradox of planned entrepreneurship. This is necessary to embed the case study in a theoretical and conceptual framework.

The entrepreneurial city and the emergence of the urban village

There is an emerging literature relating to the concept of the 'entrepreneurial city' vis-à-vis Jessop (1997); Jessop (1998a); Jessop and Ling Sum (2000); Chatterton and Hollands (2002); Ward (2003); Steyaert & Katz (2004); and Geenhuizen (2004). Jessop and Ling Sum (2000) argue that entrepreneurship can be applied to cities as strategic actors; whilst Steyaert and Katz (2004) that entrepreneurship is connected to the city and in how cities themselves develop entrepreneurial images and discourses. They explore and reflect upon how we conceive entrepreneurship as a societal rather than economic phenomenon pointing to geographical, discursive and social dimensions. Geenhuizen (2004) articulated cities as entrepreneurial spaces; as did Begg (1999: 805) who refers to the competitive ethos of cities. Likewise, Malecki (2002) highlighted the competitive standing of cities in relation to regions vis-à-vis other places. Hobbs *et al* (2003: 15) citing the works of Davies (1988); Harvey (1989a); Randall (1995); and Hall and Hubbard (1996), argue that since the early 1970s Western cities have been transformed via economic development from industrial to post industrial and that this has been aided by a reorientation of urban governance. This entrepreneurial stance focuses upon the facilitation of local growth in a post-industrial age (Hobbs *et al*, 2003: 16). Moreover, Ward (2003) refers to the spatially selective nature of entrepreneurial urbanism in cities and talks of a new

dimension in the governance of older industrialised cities. Ward refers to this an 'entrepreneurial turn' whereby capitalist competitiveness is encouraged.

Healey *et al* (1992), Pacione (1997) and Martin (1999) stress the significance of post-industrial restructuring in former 'rust belt cities' where invariably, as a response to deindustrialisation, urban villages are being built upon sites with a rich industrial heritage incorporating industrial architecture in the design. Till (1993) highlighted the cultural production of otherness and the deliberate creation of exclusionary, territorial based identities via traditional symbolism by the grafting on of the symbolism of an expired industrial heritage. Barnes *et al* (2006) highlight the importance of revitalising urban heritage.

Indeed, Scott (1997: 323) talks of a marked convergence between the spheres of culture and economic development. Hobbs *et al* (2003: 32) echoing Hall and Hubbard (1996: 2) highlight the trend of local governments in working in partnership with the private sector leading to the latter becoming "*imbued with characteristics once distinctive to business – risk taking, inventiveness, promotion and profit motivation*". In a similar vein, Leitner (1990) positions the local state as entrepreneur and Cochrane (1995: 268) talks of localities operating in an entrepreneurial fashion in ways which provide economic growth and employment opportunities for residents. Hobbs *et al* (2003: 32) branded this as a new form of 'Municipal Capitalism' facilitating local economic growth and development. Moreover, Hobbs *et al* (2003: 27) discuss a changing landscape in which city councillors and businessmen buy old warehouses and together plan new lives for their town. Hobbs *et al* (2003: 247) talk of an urban renaissance, but talk of planning, economic growth and public-private partnerships leaves little room for the residents as mentioned by Cochrane (1995), albeit Grabner (2006) discusses the role of networking in economic geography.

However, in studying the literature of entrepreneurial geography, conceptually one is discussing entrepreneurship in a variety of (macro) abstract levels. There is an obvious rupture between activity and the personological not to mention the social, albeit Marceau (2008) acknowledges that cities house innovative people. For Scott (2008) the logic of a city is based upon the provision of a locus for accumulation of capitals and social reproduction. The geography of place must include consideration of people, residents and communities. We now consider some theoretical aspects of the urban village concept.

Theoretical aspects of the urban village concept

The 'Urban Village' concept as operationalised by planners and property developers in the United Kingdom 'centres around' making better use of under utilised 'Brownfield sites' and other de-industrialised urban space (Hobbs *et al*, 2003: 20). Alberti (2006) researched the theme of industrial decline and recession from an entrepreneurship perspective. Taylor (2000) appreciated the changing nature of the urban landscape and patterns of habitation³. Discourse on urban villages is located at two levels. Firstly it is very much a working discourse situated at the level of architects, property developers, planning departments and regeneration officers. At another level it is an academic one located in 'Urban' journals⁴. A major element in the discourse relates to the entrepreneurial themes of revitalisation and regeneration

³ A general overview of the concept and theory relating to urban villages can be found in book '*How to build an Urban Village*' by Sucher (2003).

⁴ Such as Urban Studies, Journal of Urban Design, Urban Issues in the UK, City and Policy Studies.

(Osborne, 1996)⁵. Significantly, there are no published studies in entrepreneurship journals relating to urban villages.

A review of the urban based literature uncovered the eclectic studies of Kelbaugh (1992), Calthorpe (1993), Katz (1994), Iglitzin (1995), Sucher (2003) and Bell and Jayne (2004). Katz (1994), Calthorpe (1993) and Kelbaugh (1992) explored the new urbanism – urban village nexus; whilst Iglitzin (1995) argues that urban villages emerged during the 1980s-1990s in planning strategies as a backlash to the dangers of urban sprawl and the attractiveness of urban revitalization. Urban villages were conceptualised as a positive change in the urban landscape linked to sustainability, quality of life, community building, public / private partnerships and entrepreneurship. Iglitzin describes how many American cities became laboratories for testing the various hypothesis and premises of theorists ranging from public policy, urban planning, political science, philosophy, geography and architecture. Indeed, Bell and Jayne (2004) refer to urban villages as “*happening post industrial spaces*” underpinned by the institutional vision of entrepreneurs and cultural leaders in developing urban villages. Again there is little thought for people as residents.

Jessop (1997) analysed trends in the drive toward a more entrepreneurial urban political economy: including - 1) the redefinition of local economies as entrepreneurial units; and 2) the link between this redefinition and new forms of governance. For Jessop cities must increasingly use new, entrepreneurial modes of production and governance to secure competitiveness; and that the state must exploit the competitive advantages created by successful entrepreneurial cities. This is in line with the adaption of a planned approach, albeit entrepreneurship is difficult enough to

⁵ Significantly, Osborne suggested that that there are alternative strategies to be considered in planning urban villages than planning *per se*.

define let alone plan for. Indeed, it can be argued that entrepreneurship as a macro social activity is notoriously difficult to plan for. Weight (2006) summarises some important requirements of an urban village. Firstly, a sustainable population of 3000 to 5000; Secondly, there must be mixed land-use for residents to live, work and play. Thirdly, there must be community facilities and an infrastructure to meet a range of local needs in terms of different types of housing, daily shopping, primary education and some health, social and recreational facilities. These are important to the generation of entrepreneurial activity at a community level because they factor in the needs of people. In planning change it is important to cater for the social needs of the community (Scott, 2008).

An observation on the paradox of planned entrepreneurship

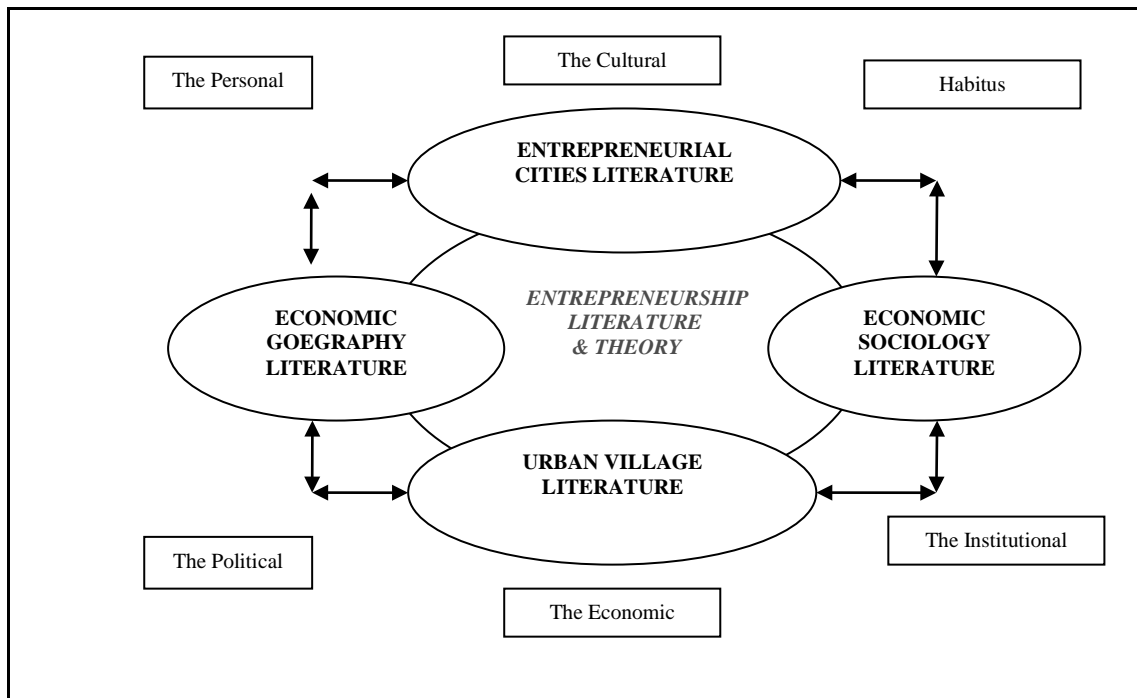
There is a definite relationship between people, place and enterprise which planners would be wise to take cognisance of. Entrepreneurship as manifested in cities, towns and villages differs subtly. Traditional settlements, whether urban or rural, evolved naturally over time and because of this contained a balance of all social classes. Nevertheless, entrepreneurship has become associated with urban and especially industrial areas and the urban entrepreneur (Osborne, 1996). According to the economist Ulrich Beck (Beck, 1994: 97) "...traditional forms of settlement have frequently been replaced by new urban housing projects".

As a practice, entrepreneurship is deeply influenced by behavioural and cognitive approaches. It is essentially a planned behaviour. Entrepreneurship scholars who adopt this approach include Krueger and Carsrud (1993) and Krueger *et al* (2000). Indeed, Krueger *et al* (2000) consider entrepreneurship as an intentional planned behaviour following the model of Ajzen (1991). The paradox of planned

entrepreneurship lies in that there appears to be a significant difference between entrepreneurship as envisaged, planned and purposefully enacted by individual entrepreneurs and corporations as part of an action plan, or strategy, and that envisaged and planned by urban planners. Miller (1983) suggests that for planners only planned, regular, and predictable entrepreneurship is palatable. Entrepreneurs actively build in planning into their visions for the future but the type of planning imposed by civic planners differs from this entrepreneurial process.

Critics of urban villages include Biddulph (2000) and MacLeod (2002). Indeed, Biddulph (2000) talks of a paradox between good urban design and the urban village concept. The crux of the problem lies in the fact that traditionally entrepreneurs emerge from the communities in which they live and work. Such communities, and particularly villages, usually consist of a mixture of social classes. Thus seeking to foster entrepreneurship via urban design is anathema because such villages attract socio-economic elites of successful middle class families. MacLeod (2002), whilst acknowledging the rise of urban entrepreneurialism points out that European cities face sharp inequalities and entrenched social inclusion and that urban villages escalate contradictions and spatial injustices. From this review and ensuing debates it is possible to develop a literature based model for theorising urban entrepreneurial growth that unites the literatures. See figure 1 below:-

Figure 1
A Literature Based Model for Theorising Urban Entrepreneurialism



The diagram maps and thus conceptualises the social geography of entrepreneurship but it is apparent that one very important element is missing – namely that of community. We now turn to consider the methodology used in the paper.

METHODOLOGY AND OBSERVATION AS METHOD

This study is based upon the processes of unobtrusive, naturalistic observation (Robson, 1996; Adler and Adler, 1994) and empirical theorising (Down, 2006). This ‘lived in’ methodology allows the researcher to merge into the research situation (Wigren, 2003). Moreover, it permits the researcher to join together successive observations (Brundin, 2007: 288) into credible stories of place. Another element of the methodology is the exploration of space and place by walking about (Jones et al, 2008) thus enabling an audit of the physical manifestations of enterprise as they develop through time. The study is also part ethnographic in that the author lives in the Urban Village in which the case study is set and is thus embedded in the

community being studied. This permits a process of objective, critical and active reflection (Steyaert & Katz, 2004) to develop naturally over time.

The case study methodology (Yin, 1994) compliments the reflective ethnography and the physical audit of entrepreneurial manifestation. Both methodologies go hand in hand. In conducting the research the author was less interested in the people than their surroundings and immediate environment. Being a resident of the village, the author was privileged to be part of the milieu and avoiding the necessity of declaring one's intentions to conduct a research study sidesteps restrictive obligations⁶. The absence of respondents with emotions, feelings and expectations permits a researcher to probe deeper into environmental aspects of entrepreneurship whilst still acknowledging the contribution of residents as individuals. The environment becomes inanimate and observation as a technique is thus an ideal mechanism to capture the fluidity of time and place in which people merely pass through or occupy for a period of time. The case study below presents the basic facts and sets up a platform from which critical observations can be made. The name and location of the village has been changed for ethical reasons. The Urban village setting permits the entrepreneurial process to be analysed in greater detail than it would have been possible to do so in a naturalised geographic setting by considering geographic and social aspects of everyday life via multiple observations conducted through time.

AN URBAN VILLAGE, ITS PEOPLE AND ENTERPRISE CULTURE

⁶ The observations on the socio-cultural factors underpinning the development of entrepreneurial proclivity would not have emerged without the embeddedness of the author in the networked habitus.

This case study charts the planned remodelling of an urban area by property developers and civic planners and sets the changing population of an urban village in a socio-economic context. The study concentrates upon the effects of this planned entrepreneurship upon the environment and inhabitants of the village and how these often combine to negate the planned entrepreneurial culture of the village. The study presents important issues such as issues ‘Civic infrastructure’, social class and home, aesthetics, habitus and habitation (Bourdieu, 1993) which are often ignored in entrepreneurship research. In the ‘The Village’ the manifestations of entrepreneurial change and entrepreneurship *per se* are not self-evident but have to be read from the environment. Thus the key themes upon which we focus are natural versus planned change. As will be seen a lack of planning can also introduce spatial contradictions if not injustices as articulated by Bidulph (2000) and MacLeod, (2002) as the ‘Village’ becomes an ‘urban playscape’ (Chatterton & Hollands, 2002) for the successful middle classes and Hollands⁷.

A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE IN AN URBAN VILLAGE

The ‘Village’, now stands on the site of a former mill with a proud entrepreneurial and Industrial heritage stretching over a two hundred year period. It was once home to a world known clothing brand. The founding story is an entrepreneurial fairytale and it is told that the founder travelled to London on horseback to sell his wares. Two hundred years later a recession and succession problems led to the closure of the once thriving family business. This was despite the Mill owners being entrepreneurially inclined. They had initiated a visitor centre depicting life at the mill since the 1800s. The centre also boasted a restaurant, coffee shop, picnic area and riverside walks. But alas, times change and life moves on as change and decay become part of the entrepreneurial cycle. Although the Mill was described several years ago in an internet review as being situated in rural surroundings this description was somewhat disingenuous marketing. The truth is that it was surrounded by urban housing estates and was desperately clinging to life in an Industrial area where other riverside industries had already passed from being. Other mills and factories had long since ceased production and all that remains of them are street names such as Weavers lane, or the rusting hulks of large Victorian mill wheels and gear mechanisms. These are now merely features in a nearby park to remind us of a once proud industrial heritage.

The new planned ‘Village’ is set in an 18 hectare site and is described by its developers as a charming, sustainable mixed-use community, an attractive community where people want to live, work and relax. The development enhances the sense of a village in a city and comprises 300 homes which are a mixture of 3 – 6 bedroom detached houses, three storied contemporary town houses (without

⁷ Urban playscapes are planned ‘up-market’ environments initiated by planners and developers to exploit the nexus between people and city space.

gardens) and 1 – 3 bedroom flats. The ‘Village’ has received numerous awards and commendations within the Construction industry, including a best ‘Newbuild Village’ category. It is basically a prestigious housing estate and houses prices have escalated in line with increasing property prices in the area. The granite built Mill buildings have been incorporated into the architecture of the site. The village is mixture of the old industrial aesthetic and contemporary imagery associated with middle class enclaves. The visage is constructed to be aesthetically pleasing - a blend of well cut lawns shrubbery and fyffe stone facades. The end result is that no building looks out of place.

In relation to civic infrastructure there is no primary school or village hall. There is a Residents Association for the civically inclined which is predominantly made up of home owners not flat owners. Likewise, there is a Neighbourhood Watch Association and a toddler group which brings the mothers and children together and brings social cohesion and friendship. A factoring fee, payable by residents pays for the services of a land agent who arranges for services such as grass cutting. A sheltered housing complex was provided as part of the planning gain.

Having described the physical environment of the ‘Village’ it is necessary to make some critical observations on the evolution of entrepreneurial activity in the community.

SOME CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE EVOLUTION OF ENTREPRENEURIAL PROCLIVITY

It is extremely difficult to observe entrepreneurial activity in everyday settings because being a life theme (Bolton & Thompson, 2000) it pervades society and its social institutions. This section reports on empirical research in the form of objective observations narrated by the author and mediated by consideration of home and habitus. The observations focus upon the ‘Village’ as an entrepreneurial milieu and in particular on (1) the visible manifestations of entrepreneurial activity; and (2) the entrepreneurial proclivity of the residents. These activities can be united under the rubric of community based entrepreneurship.

Observations on the visible manifestations of entrepreneurial activity

In the three years since the village was built it is patently obvious that the twelve planned shop and industrial units are difficult to let. Only six are occupied – the remainder remain empty. The businesses include an architect's practice, a hairdresser, a beauty salon, a dentist's practice and two companies. There are no newsagents or corner shops because the profit margins are not viable. Nor do residents have the necessary experience or social capital from running such premises. Traditionally, corner shops arose in housing areas where property was plentiful and affordable. Such shops worked because they had a flat above them. The new units in the village are purpose built but do not have accommodation above. The presence of three supermarkets and two shopping areas within five minutes drive make it even less likely that a corner shop will be sustainable. Moreover, because the village is a dormitory for workers, during the day it is like a ghost town. It therefore does not retain the volume of residents to make a corner shop viable. A development of eight offices has just been completed but only two businesses have taken up residence so far. These businesses have relocated from elsewhere in the city.

There is no local pub. Ironically there is a restaurant with a wine bar culture (shades of the ethos of 1980s enterprise culture) as middle class values generate middle class haunts. The restaurant is a thriving focal point although the business experiences slow periods. It has changed hands due to the previous owner's business model proving unviable. Likewise, were the offices fully occupied this may reinvigorate the community during the day times, making the provision of other shops and businesses viable. Unless these new businesses provide opportunities for locals, then the vibrancy of the planned village culture may not materialise. These observations are deeply social relating to social class, housing and the lack of provision of amenities. The most important observation is that people and

importantly residents were not factored into the planning process. However, the outlook for the future is not as bleak as it would appear because despite the above negative analysis of the situation an entrepreneurial culture pervades the 'Village'.

Observations on the entrepreneurial proclivity of the residents

The residents of the 'Village' are essentially a mixture of middle class professionals and successful business people. This restricts the socio-cultural diversity we would expect to find in traditional mixed economic spaces, such as in a traditional rural village or small market town. Elsewhere, Cameron (2003) has discussed this '*Gentrification*' process which often results from the introduction of affluent populations into regeneration areas. Cameron (2003) argues that there is often a conflict between the perceived need for a 'critical mass' of affluent incomers and the inclusion of local residents. Lyons and Snoxell (2005) warn of the consequences of separating individuals from long-established social and kinship networks, and from familiar livelihood strategies. In the case of planned urban villages such established social and kinship networks are not in situ. Latham (2003) therefore argues that the new urban landscape is socially divisive. In a similar vein, Beck (1992) talks of the fragmentation of traditional communities leading to an erosion of class based structures and working patterns. Polland (2004) also highlighted this undemocratic, exclusionary practice which often results from such regeneration schemes. This resonates with the findings of MacLeod (2002) in relation to the perpetuation of social injustices. Barnes *et al* (2006) also criticise such misappropriation of place in seeking to develop the creative city suggesting that this exacerbates social marginalisation rather than address it. According to Scott (2008) this widening social divide poses a major dilemma for urban life. Polland (2004) warns against this aestheticisation of an

area and argues that concentrating upon aesthetics to the exclusion of other important social issues may ultimately undermine the economic and social bases of the area. Nevertheless, the village is a space which provides legitimation of the shared cultural capital of the residents (Hobbs *et al*, 2003: 85).

The aggregate profile of typical occupants is of married couples in their mid thirties to late forties with children. Typically both couples work in the city. Education appears to be a key feature, as is shared social capital. Indeed, Beck (1994: 93) refers to the educated person as a producer of “*his or her own social biography*”. And so it is with the residents of the village who have already produced their social biographies. Furthermore, Beck (1994: 35) talks of class specific risks, arguing that risk accumulates in the lower strata of society and because of this poverty attracts risks and risk-takers. The already successful residents may therefore have little need to take risks or embark on new entrepreneurial trajectories. Stroper and Manville (2006) argue that there is a need for a greater understanding of urban choice behaviours. A walk around the detached houses which form the outer circle of properties in the ‘Village’ illustrate that it is an area which has attracted wealth. In the driveways of the houses are parked a variety of top of the range expensive cars. Mercedes, BMWs, Range Rovers and Porches predominate. Most households have three cars. These observations are not startling but highlight deeply social issues such as class, homophily, social injustice, wealth accumulation and the capitalisation on a collective social capital.

The above profile underpins further observations articulated below. This protean entrepreneurial class do not have a shared heritage as they undoubtedly would have if they had been raised in a traditional village but possess a class based

homogeneity (monogeneity) which does not auger well for the development of a vibrant enterprise culture because an enterprise culture requires a balance class system where the established elite are sold services by the petty bourgeoisie. Granted the 'Village' has not yet developed a history or culture of enterprise. Indeed, Zafriivski (1999) considered the cultural-historical and social-structural to be important social layers in the sociology of enterprise. However, an alternative reading of the situation is that the members of the emerging entrepreneurial elite may be entrepreneurs in residence and it is significant that the entrepreneurial activity has emerged from the socio-cultural milieu. This suggests that community entrepreneurship emerges from society irrespective of the conditions prevailing in a particular milieu.

Entrepreneurs as residents (or entrepreneurs in residence)

Although 'The Village' taken in isolation does not appear to provide much genuine opportunities for entrepreneurial activity there is nevertheless an entrepreneurial class in residence. As one would expect, there are entrepreneurs living in the community and they are making an obvious impact. One tradesman and his friend have started a joinery/construction company and several others run businesses from their homes as consultants and self-employed advisors etc. The tradesman business has expanded phenomenally and he now employs five people but does not have a business premises. Another 'Millionaire Tradesman' has taken up residence and operates his business from his house. Such occupations do not require premises and can easily be run from home. One resident owns an oil related company, whilst another owns a family haulage company. Five others work in senior managerial positions in oil companies – of these one appears to be doing very well financially and owns a yacht. Another

regularly travels to Russia on business. One of these managers has bought a second house in the village and rents it out to generate extra income. This energetic individual aspires to start his own business. Another resident owns a fish processing business in the city. Many are the sons or daughters of the established entrepreneurial community and as such have a heritage of succeeding in business and access to business networks across the city. Of course this is not immediately apparent until one starts to form friendships. Such dense networks are notoriously hidden from view. What is significant is that those with entrepreneurial and business acumen have formed a noticeable clique as a form of protean community-based entrepreneurship facilitated via personal networking (Johannisson and Nilsson, 1989). This evidences the power and importance of networking with like minded individuals.

Another manifestation of the rise of this urban entrepreneurial elite is visible in the sphere of local politics because it is the same clique who have capitalised upon their position within the Community Council. This gives them a powerful voice in the community and their position of power gives them added gravitas. Indeed there are signs that the established business community is beginning to merge with the entrepreneurial elite. Several business owners who are outsiders have joined the Residents Association and one owner has bought a house in the village and importantly has adopted a philanthropic stance towards community based activities. These are small steps but important ones. This is an example of the emergence of entrepreneurial governance in an urban environment as highlighted by Hobbs (2003), albeit at a community based level.

The residents are successful people at the height of their occupational attainment, having turned their physical and human capitals into social and cultural capitals. Many also possess what Lyons and Snoxell (2005) refer to as urban social

capital. In terms of fiscal capital house ownership in the village has also proven to be a sound investment. Nevertheless, Malecki (2002) argues that private sector metrics such as profitability are not enough and that such interactions are sustained by networks. Although Malecki was undoubtedly referring to networking between planners and developers the statement is also applicable to residents because once a regeneration project is passed by planners the opportunity for public-private networking is often missed. Malecki (2002) argues that to be effective such networks must operate at many levels including the regional and local scales where knowledge can be gathered via social interaction through 'soft' networks – such as the cliques described above.

It is through such soft networks that friendships and business opportunities flourish. In this respect we are possibly witnessing a 'bringing togetherness' of an entrepreneurial elite. From an ontological and epistemological basis this is of great sociological importance because in the dense, albeit loose network of bonds that are already forming in the routines of everyday socialisation lies a potential force for creativity and regeneration. As an entrepreneurship researcher the dynamic around the socialisation and partying that has formed around the group is a joy to behold. The 'get togethers' arranged around familial and social occasions such as St Andrews Day, Halloween, Bonfire Night, Christmas, Hogmanay and Burns Night are a venue for masculine bonding and camaraderie but in the convivial atmosphere business opportunities are discussed and mulled over. These occasions are venues for socialising and the consumption of alcohol. The men talk about business opportunities and the women likewise network. Investment tips and advice are proffered and accepted. At such parties the talk is of how well everyone has done for themselves. The men swap stories of starting off with nothing and working hard as a

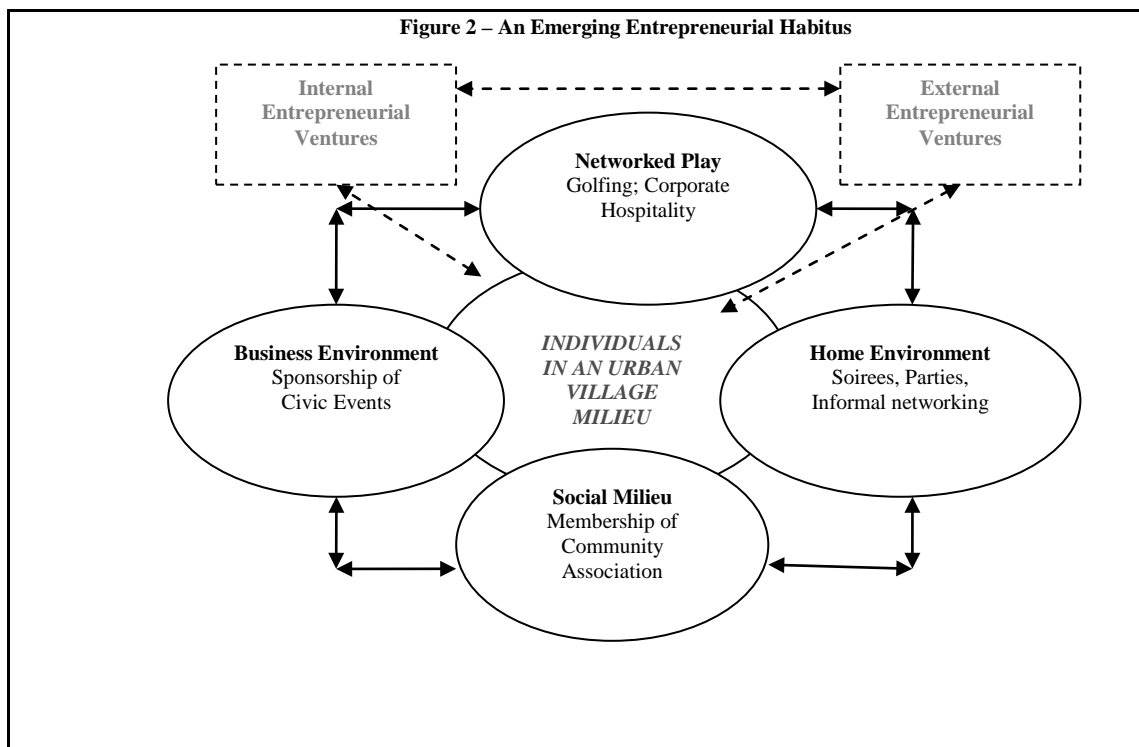
boy, of making sacrifices and of collectively 'being the salt of the earth'. Nor are the stories chauvinistic because the men include their wives as partners in their success stories. Such stories are used as reinforcing ideological props irrespective of whether or not they are seeking to cast themselves as entrepreneurs.

A clique of entrepreneurs have taken to having golfing days where they network together in a wider social and business context. This has matured into golfing holidays abroad. These activities may appear to have little to do with new entrepreneurship *per se* but they are excellent examples of networked play through which business ideas and partnerships are formed. This highlights the importance of such networking in a social context (Grabner, 2006). It also demonstrates the importance of entrepreneurial competitiveness (Malecki, 2002; Begg, 1999). This is a classic example of the cultural production (Till, 1993) not of 'otherness' but 'togetherness'. This offers a practical example of 'creation and use of space for play/innovation' as envisaged by Hjorth (2004). However, in this case we see entrepreneurship as a form of social creativity as opposed to organizational creativity. This is important because Frank, Lueger and Korunka (2007) examined the role of social and societal entrepreneurship in shaping a person's personality and business success.

This paper expands consideration of the work of Jack, Drakopoulou-Dodd & Anderson (2008) by examining networking in the temporal framework of community based entrepreneurship. The network discussed in this paper is a vital living organism, changing, growing and developing over time as envisaged by Jack, Drakopoulou-Dodd & Anderson. In this paper we have caught glimpses of the relational dynamic of networking as socially constructed by the players enacted in their entrepreneurial home environment. The players involved in the entrepreneurial

community network thus create their own socially constructed entrepreneurial identities as envisaged by Fletcher (2006). Thus the network is communally constituted. The players thus create their own opportunities and enact them in the environment. In many respects it is a 'Reflective network' emerging from a particular community of practice (Gausdal, 2008). This paper discusses a network composed of personal contacts many of whom belong to the micro-business community (Chell & Baines, 2000). In this respect they use their personal contacts as sources of useful additional information to supplement their trading and entrepreneurial networks.

From the observations it is possible to develop a model relating to an emerging self-reinforcing entrepreneurial habitus whereby individuals can engage in social networking at home, in the social milieu and engage in networked play where business and social activities merge together. See figure 2 below relating to the emerging entrepreneurial habitus:-



The outline allows us to plot more features on the research map of entrepreneurship and regional development. It is now time to reflect upon the observations.

REFLECTING ON A COMMUNITY BASED ENTERPRISE CULTURE

This study has introduced a discursive element and issues of sociality into the networking literature as called for by Stayaert & Katz (2004). It has also probed entrepreneurial proclivity in relation to social life as called for by Zafrivski (1999). Nor does the protean community based entrepreneurial activity discussed constitute an urban renaissance in a Hobbsian sense (Hobbs, 2003) - being merely a different manifestation of entrepreneurial growth. Despite the teething problems caused by an apparent lack of planning foresight it is nevertheless a better use of a previously decaying urban entrepreneurial space. Perhaps the study has been conducted too early in the life cycle of the 'Village' but this introduces the possibility of further research in the future.

So, what have we learned from this study in relation to community entrepreneurship?

- Firstly we have established that without genuine socio-cultural diversity entrepreneurial activity can be disturbed leading too a mutated version of social entrepreneurship because the socio-cultural diversity we have come to take for granted was inadvertently planned out.
- Secondly, the planning and implementation of the new urban village did not take cognisance of the inhabitants nor of socio-cultural factors which are essential to natural entrepreneurial growth.
- Nor did the planners appear to consider the importance of value systems and entrepreneurial values as a driver of entrepreneurial growth.

- Moreover, it has demonstrated the importance of social context in the entrepreneurial process.

To return to the call of Stayaert & Katz (2004) to reclaim the space of entrepreneurship this paper makes a tentative contribution to entrepreneurship theory by aligning the geographical and social dimensions in an urban village setting albeit a distinctive village enterprise culture have not yet evolved. The observational methods have permitted the use of active reflection as advocated by Stayaert & Katz but it has fallen short of investigating the geo-politics of everyday entrepreneurship because observation as a technique is not robust enough to uncover the Machiavellian nature of politics at the planning and development stage. A limitation of the study and of the observation technique used is that it has not uncovered the true extent of entrepreneurial activity being practised within the 'Village'. It would take a survey / questionnaire based study to uncover these details. Nevertheless, the paper has allowed a sketchy outline to be drawn of social layers of entrepreneurship, which come together to form a community based enterprise culture (Zafrivski, 1999).

The apparent oversight of planners and developers to take cognisance of the natural, class based order of entrepreneurial opportunity may never be overcome. The entrepreneurially minded may not be attracted to occupy the vacant shop units or start up a business in the village. Nor is there surplus fallow ground or development space factored into the planning making spontaneous development unlikely. Being a planned village there is little possibility for future expansion. This is concerning because to cultivate enterprise, one requires room for expansion. To be fair to the planners it has not been established if they set out to develop or encourage a self-sustaining spirit of enterprise within the village. Nevertheless, the subject merits

serious cross-disciplinary academic debate and planners and policy makers would do well to heed the observations made herein because it is debatable whether planned entrepreneurship is an achievable objective. In future planners should consider the mix of residents they are likely to attract and factor them into the plans. Whilst the ‘Village’ may be a “Happening Post Industrial Space” (Bell & Jayne, 2004) it is not yet a hotbed of new firm growth. Nevertheless, there are signs that entrepreneurial activity is emerging organically⁸.

This paper makes a further contribution to the entrepreneurship literature by considering issues surrounding entrepreneurial evolution which are often taken as read because the changing social environment in which entrepreneurship is practiced seldom features in the narratives of individual entrepreneurs. Entrepreneur stories are about heroism, self-efficacy and individual achievement whereas environmental change is mostly incremental and it can take months or years for the effects of change to influence an entrepreneurial milieu. Small scale changes may go unnoticed for a long period of time. Entrepreneurs’, who run businesses in areas affected by change either adapt, innovate, or relocate. In examining entrepreneurship in a planned environment such as an urban village we have had an ideal opportunity to study an (artificially created) entrepreneurial milieu in which environmental factors are more easily identifiable and studied in real time. This schism in time and place allowed us to examine entrepreneurial processes in a setting uninfluenced by historical vestiges.

⁸ The urban village concept links back into entrepreneurship at the point of development. It has been a very profitable piece of business for the builders and property developers involved because brown field sites maximise profits. The developers as innovative entrepreneurs sold the concept of a prestigious urban village to those privileged enough to afford it but may have created a village in name only.

In the community based scenario researched, it was evident that community based entrepreneurship is genderised in that we are witnessing a coming together of a masculine orientated entrepreneurial elite in which both men and women can engage but in relation to recognized roles and activities. We see openness in relation to resource mobilization where both men and their partners participate, but not equal opportunities *per se*. We see a coming together of cognitions and emotions in a social setting where business is very much a background consideration but is never entirely absent. In such circumstances family participation in the various aspects of community-based, social and societal entrepreneurship is regarded by the clique as being a prerequisite of social inclusion.

However, despite the breadth of the observations and the objective critical reflection embedded in the process it is not possible to answer the research question - Is entrepreneurial change natural or perhaps prompted by entrepreneurs responding to external change or even implementing it? The answer is still too dependent upon environmental, institutional, and situational factors to reach any conclusion other than entrepreneurial growth is a complex socio-economic activity and that it is deeply influenced by socio-cultural factors such as social class, habitus and the other myriad of apparently unrelated social factors discussed in this paper. What we can conclude is that entrepreneurial activity being a life theme will emerge from the social strata irrespective of the plans of politicians and councillors. This reinforces the importance of emergence to entrepreneurship theory and urban and rural planners alike would do well to factor for the randomness of entrepreneurial emergence as well as take cognisance of the social in the economic context.

Nevertheless, the building of an urban village breaks this cycle of incrementalism by creating a new market place. However, although the bricks and mortar of community can be planned for, future entrepreneurial activity cannot because it takes time to put into place and develop the invisible networked nodes necessary for entrepreneurship to flourish. The role of social capital and social networks in fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in communities cannot be over estimated. The involvement of the community in shaping future entrepreneurial growth was not considered by the planners. It is often the people who live in a locality who are in a position to perceive, evaluate and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities but the population are treated very much at the level of customers in a buoyant housing market and not part of the regeneration plan. The resultant lack of entrepreneurial activity has a knock on effect upon entrepreneurial place making. The urban village concept has little to do with what Latham (2003) call 'rediscovered urbanity' and far from being an urban renaissance, urban villages may encourage a retreat away from 'Urbanity' to a socially constructed 'Rurality' of sorts inhabited by a privileged middle class 'elite'. Latham (2003) argues that despite the criticism of urban renewal programmes as being destructive there is a need to engage more positively with broader issues. The regeneration of a self-sustaining enterprise culture that encourages new firm creation is one such issue.

Whilst the aim of the special issue is to demonstrate how different forms of entrepreneurship (community-based, societal and social) impact on a region's growth and development rate it is not possible to articulate whether the community based micro-entrepreneurial activity discussed herein will impact on the region's growth and development rate because it is entrepreneurial activity occurring at an urban village level. Nevertheless, the paper does provide new theoretical insights drawn from

empirically based theorizing by drawing these important areas together. This paper has considered what the nature of community-based, social and societal entrepreneurship is at a micro-level. In this respect it does not manifest itself as entrepreneurship as we would recognize at macro level or in traditional business sectors. Moreover, it has considered the role of social capital and social networks in community-based, social and societal entrepreneurship. From this it was possible to illustrate the importance of such networking behaviour to the individuals and the communities in relation to how they perceive, evaluate and exploit entrepreneurial opportunities as they emerge in the social setting.

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