



SOCIAL IMPACTS OF THE SYDNEY OLYMPICS

Gordon Waitt

University of Wollongong, Australia

Abstract: This paper, drawing on social exchange theory, examines the changes in enthusiasm between 1998 and 2000 towards Sydney's Olympics among a socially diverse sample of host city residents. In particular, it studies variables that differentiate respondents' altering attitude. Results suggest that for the majority the reaction to Sydney's Olympics intensified from 1998, reaching euphoria in September 2000. Elation was particularly evident among those living in the city's western suburbs, those with dependent children, those from non-English backgrounds, or who perceived the event's wider economic benefits as outweighing personal costs. Implications arising from this project are considered for future researchers and organizers of hallmark events. **Keywords:** Sydney Olympics, hallmark events, social impacts, exchange theory. © 2003 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

Résumé: Impact social des Jeux olympiques de Sydney. Cet article, qui fait appel à la théorie d'échange social, examine les changements dans le niveau d'enthousiasme entre 1998 et 2000 envers les JO de Sydney parmi un échantillon socialement divers des habitants de la ville d'accueil. En particulier, il examine les variables qui différencient les attitudes changeantes des personnes interrogées. Les résultats suggèrent que, pour la majorité, la réaction aux Jeux olympiques s'intensifiait dès 1998 et a atteint l'euphorie en septembre 2000. L'exultation était évidente surtout parmi ceux qui habitaient la banlieue ouest de la ville, ceux qui avaient des enfants à charge, ceux des milieux non anglophones et ceux qui percevaient que les bénéfices économiques plus larges l'emportaient sur les coûts personnels. Les implications suscitées par ce projet sont considérées pour les chercheurs futurs et pour les organisateurs d'événements de marque. **Mots-clés:** Jeux olympiques de Sydney, événements de marque, impacts sociaux, théorie d'échange. © 2003 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

At the turn of the century, cities as sites of tourism spectacle have given hallmark events a new economic role and heightened significance. Global sporting events are perhaps the ultimate example of the city as tourist spectacle, given their million dollar budgets, world markets, and the rapid turn-around of capital. However, relatively little is known about the events' social impacts. Indeed, Fredline and Faulkner (2000) argue that far greater concern has been given to evaluating the

Gordon Waitt is currently Associate Professor in the School of Geosciences, University of Wollongong (Wollongong, New South Wales 2522, Australia. Email <gordon_waitt@uow.edu.au>). He is a graduate of the Department of Geography, Edinburgh University, United Kingdom. His current research interests address the geographies of urban and nature based tourism particularly the commodification of nature, the social impacts of tourism, cities as spectacle and destination marketing.

political, cultural, economic, and environmental consequences. This argument is confirmed by publications about Sydney's Olympics. Such an emphasis may be misplaced on ethical and pragmatic grounds. A planning/management regime sensitive to quality of life and equity outcomes is an essential ingredient of sustainable tourism, since hosts who are positively disposed to special events will enhance the tourists' experience and contribute to the destination's attractiveness (Madrigal 1995). Social impact assessments have often relied upon secondary data including court records and newspaper reports (Hall, Selwood and McKewon 1989), or often a "snapshot" of resident attitudes at a particular time (for an important exception see Ritchie and Aitken 1985). Carpenter (1992) lamented the absence of a temporal dimension in social impact research.

The purpose of this paper is to address such acknowledged limitations in examining the temporal dynamics of the social impacts of Sydney's 2000 Olympics, drawing upon primary data from two telephone surveys conducted 24 months before and then during the games. The study was designed to permit examination of whether a wave of euphoric mass consciousness increasingly captures resident imaginations and, if not, whether enthusiasm is differentiated along spatial, socioeconomic, demographic, or altruistic lines. The temporal analysis presented here provides some insight into these issues. Equally important is to identify how planners and managers of future global sporting events may effectively target strategies aimed at both maximizing positive and minimizing negative social impacts.

RESPONSES TO TOURISM AND EVENTS

Theoretical frameworks examining tourism's social impact have received increasing attention following Ap's (1992) critique. In addition to theorizing the impact of tourism at the level of individual and collective affect, various schools of thought have theorized the subject in terms of frameworks prioritizing self-identity (Wearing and Wearing 1996), social representations (Pearce, Moscardo and Ross 1996) and political economy (Cox and Mair 1988). This paper is positioned within the humanist school, seeking to measure individual affects.

Social exchange theory accounts for divergent resident evaluations of tourism impacts primarily in terms of experiential or psychological outcomes. Feelings or psychological states result from the experiences conveyed "symbolically through the objects exchanged, the functions performed by the exchange, or the meanings attributed to the exchange" (Bagozzi 1975:138). This theory suggests that residents evaluate tourism/events as either positive or negative in terms of the expected benefits or costs deriving from the services they supply.

A positive perception is suggested to occur only when both actors have high levels of social power within the exchange relationship. According to social exchange theory, power derives from having, controlling, or influencing resources that another actor needs and values (Wrong 1979). Negative perceptions, in contrast, are related to low

social power levels among actors, since they perceive little gain from the exchange. In addition, this theory suggests that residents' evaluations of tourism are reliant upon the "relationship form" between residents and the event's organizers. Positive or negative evaluations are theorized in terms of the presence or absence of certain "antecedent conditions": rationality, satisficing benefits, reciprocity and the justice principle (Searle 1991). Rationality pertains to an actor's behavior being based upon reward seeking. Consequently, in the tourism setting, residents who perceive rewards of either maintenance and/or improvement of their social and economic well being are overall likely to evaluate the event positively (Ap 1992). Satisficing of benefits suggests that residents may well be aware of the negative effects but nevertheless accept tourism because they perceive the positives as outweighing the costs. Residents are assumed to seek to obtain a satisfactory, reasonable, or acceptable level of benefits from the social exchange relationship rather than maximization of benefits. However, a threshold of tolerance of tourism is assumed to exist that varies both spatially and temporally and which, once exceeded, unleashes negativities. Consequently, a resident will only develop a positive attitude if the expected benefits meet an acceptable predetermined level of satisfaction. Reciprocity proposes that if resources pred exchanged between the host residents and the industry are roughly equivalent, the effects are perceived positively by all parties. In the context of hallmark events, the perceived rewards should equal residents' willingness to carry the infrastructure costs, extending friendliness, courtesy and hospitality to tourists, and tolerating inconveniences (such as queuing for services, sharing local facilities, overcrowding, traffic congestion, and route disruption). The justice principle suggests that each exchange be underpinned by norms of fairness to ensure that residents receive reasonably equitable returns for their support or participation. Residents are more likely to have positive perceptions if they have a sense of participation in planning policies and trust in the event organizers. Public participation in the planning process is often advocated as a mechanism for implementing social justice through reconciling host residents and tourism development objectives (Lankford and Howard 1994). Local activism, spurred by negative perceptions, is likely when the resource exchange value is perceived to bias the event over residents. Critically, for this paper, exchange relations are not temporally static. Residents constantly re-evaluate the perceived consequences of the exchange transaction within a dynamic social setting. However, it is assumed that this must remain positive if they are likely to continue in future exchange behavior (Figure 1).

Faulkner and Tidswell (1997) summarized the variables that may differentiate both individual and collective exchange relationships by an intrinsic and extrinsic dichotomy. Personal evaluations of tourism or events may vary in association with both perceived social justice and other intrinsic variables including: residential proximity to attractions, evaluation of the event in terms of "altruistic surplus" (Fredline and Faulkner 1998), and demographic characteristics. In brief, residents who live in close proximity to heavy tourism concentrations are more

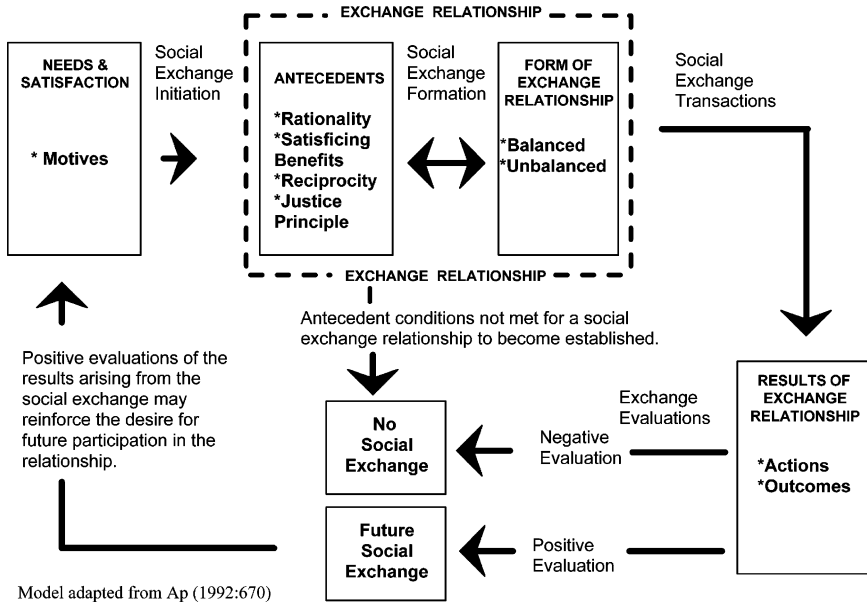


Figure 1. A Model of the Social Exchange Process

likely to be negatively disposed by virtue of their greater exposure to its negative externalities such as traffic noise, congestion and litter. The altruistic surplus effect is demonstrated when, summing the social benefits accrued, an individual puts group interests ahead of his/her own. Demographically based effects are also likely to be dependent on the degree of similarity between the resident population and the target market of the event in terms of identity, age, or socioeconomic characteristics.

The extrinsic dimension comprises overarching, contextual variables. Historically these include the stage of tourism development, the seasonal patterns of tourism activity, tourists/resident ratios and host/guest cultural differences. Such ideas are exemplified in Butler's (1980) destination lifecycle model and Doxey's (1975) 'Irridex' model. However, mounting contradictory empirical evidence undermines the value of these particular extrinsic variables (Fredline and Faulkner 1998). Resident responses to impacts are simply too differentiated by the societal and temporal context for theoretical frameworks conceived along evolutionary projections of increasing dissatisfaction. In this paper, the extrinsic variables have been reconceptualized in terms of an event's social representations and role in the "place wars" between competing cities in a globalizing economy.

The Societal Context of Sydney 2000

In theory, the Olympics offered Sydney's entrepreneurs and politicians an event to both reposition the city as a global city and to

restructure the local economy in “creative” industries. Its economy had not been immune to deindustrialization in the 70s and 80s, witnessing the closure of manufacturing activities and the growth of information technology, regional headquarters, financial services, and tourism.

Sydney was also not exempt from problematic social features following the economic transformations to global city living, particularly the highly controversial phenomenon of social polarization. In Australia, Badcock (1997) demonstrated that particularly Sydney had increasingly divergent life opportunities and socioeconomic circumstances, with the greatest division occurring between the northern and western suburbs. The latter had higher levels of youth unemployment and numbers of unskilled migrants, and lower levels of household income, education, and English proficiency. In comparison, the former became home to many highly skilled service economy employees. Local media representations underscore this west/north binary polarity, portraying a city divided between the uneducated/intellectual, poor/affluent, criminal/law abiding, and violent/safe (Mee 1994). Sydney’s population was increasingly understood as empirically and symbolically polarized.

In 1991, within this polarizing context, Sydney Olympic Bid Limited (SOBL) was established to secure the rights to host the 27th Olympiad. As a public-private partnership, securing the games for Sydney was a business venture. Public transparency of this organization was never a requirement. Indeed, as a registered limited company, all SOBL documentation remains protected for 30 years from freedom of information provisions.

Creating and sustaining substantial public support for the bid was a key SOBL role. Economically, the bid’s chief-executive, Rod McGeoch (1994), repeatedly argued that the games were an imperative part of securing Sydney’s status as an Asia-Pacific regional headquarters and international tourism destination. Socially, the bid was also employed to manufacture consensus in an era of increasing socioeconomic polarization. SOBL (1993) invited Sydney residents to “Share the Spirit” in wide-ranging and innovative ways to sustain public interest and legitimize claims of an unqualified Australian public support. Invitations included television campaigns, fashion designs, ‘high-jacking’ public events and federal and state government sponsored Olympian education packages designed to teach pupils to “Share the Spirit”. Knowledge of sporting traditions in sustaining Australian national identity unified these diverse campaigns. The “community spirit” that SOBL invited Sydneysiders to share was specifically that of an imagined national identity within sporting traditions.

Hosting the games required not only public support but also a site that could contain most of the sporting venues. In 1990, the 760-hectare Olympic site at Homebush Bay had already been identified by the New South Wales government as the only available location (Figure 2). The land was mostly a government owned brownsite. Redundant space appeared from closure of noxious chemical industries, armament depot, and abattoir. An opportunity was provided to generate a public legacy of remediated land, housing, parkland, and sports facili-

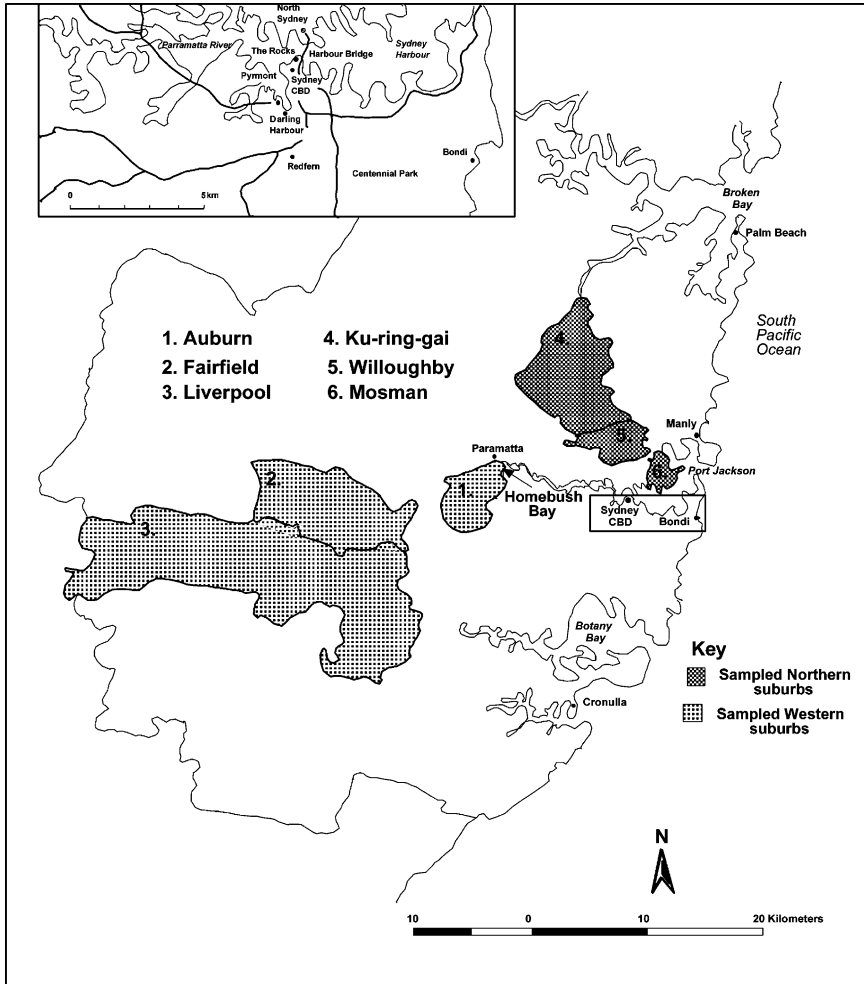


Figure 2. Location of Sampled Statistical Local Areas in Sydney

ties in Sydney's socially disadvantaged west. Locating an Olympics at Homebush provided a mechanism by which to implement a material and symbolical site transformation, from a marginal brown site of noxious industries and dump to a central, vibrant, clean, "green" economic base sustained by consumptive practices of culture economies, primarily sport.

Ever since being awarded the bid, public controversy has surrounded the games (Kell 2000). Questions have been raised of Aboriginal social justice and human rights violations, "greenwashing" the remediation process and dioxin levels at Homebush (Beder 2000), and creative accounting regarding the actual public costs (Booth and Tatz 1996). In 1998, public revelations began about the bid team's use of "inducements" to various International Olympic Committee delegates

(Burroughs 1999), culminating the next year in the investigation of high profile Australian committee members. Also in 1999 the proposal to erect the temporary Olympic beach volleyball stadium on Bondi beach (an Australian icon) was attacked (Owen 1999), together with a ticketing fiasco and increasing fears of a budget shortfall. Inevitably arrangements for the Olympics began to disrupt rhythms of household and business life. In the seven years leading up to the event, for example, daily trips were inconvenienced by a building and transport infrastructure program that transformed the Central Business District, Homebush, the airport, and Bondi Beach. The closer the games approached the more wide-reaching and personal the impacts became, of school terms, university semesters, day-light hours, public transport timetables, and access to certain roads. Such widespread disruptions to daily routines were a potential source of personal irritation to many Sydneysiders.

During the 16 days of the games, however, the Olympics appeared to provide a reason to celebrate rather than protest. Boisterous celebrations did little to confront stereotyped notions of Australianess. Attendance in the hundreds at public protests, such as the temporary Aboriginal Embassy in Victoria Park, were dwarfed by a public presence in the thousands at Olympic inspired social activities. Sydney 2000, although centered on celebrating sport, also generated a multitude of official and unofficial parties, often underpinned by patriotism. Immediately before the games, public interest, imagination, and nationalism were captured by the 100 day torch relay, beginning at the symbolic heart of the nation (Uluru/Ayers Rock) and culminating in the arrival of the flame in Stadium Australia (Sinclair 2000). The opening ceremony stirred patriotism to new heights through a four-hour extravaganza, celebrating national identity. The party atmosphere was sustained throughout the games by providing free entertainment at a number of street venues in the city. The party atmosphere culminated in the closing ceremony's fireworks display. Given the emergent public controversies and transformation from anticipated to lived experience, a temporal dimension is clearly an essential element in addition to spatial and demographic variables to examine a hallmark events' social impact.

Research Methods

One way to measure at the level of affect and feelings, the individual exchange evaluation of hosting an event, is to construct an enthusiasm scale. Procedures employed in developing one for measuring host residents' appraisal followed widely accepted procedures for attitudinal scaling. Three steps were involved: creating, pre-testing, and refining the multi-scale item.

Creating an enthusiasm scale to appraise events came after a comprehensive literature review (Fredline and Faulkner 1998, 2000; King, Pizam and Milman 1993; Lankford and Howard 1994; Syme, Shaw, Fenton and Mueller 1989). Seven questions were designed to measure respondents' degree of enthusiasm towards the games from their level

of agreement or disagreement with various statements. Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (Likert 1967). The wording was reversed for approximately half the items in order to avoid response set bias. The seven emotional affects of the enthusiasm multi-item scale were desire to attend, desire to be a volunteer worker, support for the Olympics if it were to occur today (the survey date), sense of community spirit, sense of pride in Sydney as a result of the 2000 Olympics, sense of excitement as a result of the games, and sense of pride in Australia as a result of the games. In addition, five questions were asked regarding perceived economic impacts (economic importance, tax increases, employment opportunities, costs of living, and responsibility of organizing authorities) and perceived environmental impacts for air, water, and biodiversity.

Rather than sampling from the whole of metropolitan area, only Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) containing Sydney's socioeconomic extremes were selected to explore how the process of social polarization might influence the games social impact. The highest socioeconomically ranked SLAs were Mosman, Ku-ring-gai, and Willoughby; Fairfield, Liverpool, and Auburn comprised Sydney's lowest scoring. With a target of 200 respondents for the pretest, a sample proportional to each SLA's total population was randomly selected from the telecommunication company's (Telstra) CD-ROM. Telephone calls were made to the household at each randomly identified number. A stringent three-phased call back procedure was adopted to minimize non-response biases that might result from residents not being home. Potential respondents refusing for reasons of inconvenient timing were asked to specify their preferred time to minimize non-response bias. In each household only one person aged 18 years or over was an eligible respondent. Each interview had a similar question format. The overall response rate was 30%, with no difference in response rates between SLAs.

Scale purification began with the computation of Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Results for the 7-item Olympic enthusiasm scale provided an Alpha coefficient of .8 (where 1.0 is the most accurate measure of the phenomenon). Exploratory factor analysis was employed to further examine the validity and dimensionality of the enthusiasm scale. In this case 15 items were subjected to exploratory principal component factor analysis, the seven questions identified as measuring enthusiasm, the five perceived economic impacts, and the three perceived environmental implications. As expected, within the results of this analysis, the seven questions intended to measure "enthusiasm" loaded on a single factor. The variance accounted for by this factor was 47.7%. Statistically, these results suggest that the 7-item scale accurately measures the social impact of either anticipating or experiencing a hallmark event.

Two telephone interviews provided the primary data. The first sample was gathered over a period of three weeks in March 1998 from 658 Sydney residents. The distribution of completed interviews by SLA is provided in Table 1. The sampling strategy broadly mirrored that used in the enthusiasm scale pretest. This time, however, over 2,000 telephone calls were made, giving a response rate of 33%. Of those

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Statistical Local Area

	Western Statistical Local Areas			Northern Statistical Local Areas			Total
	Fairfield	Liverpool	Auburn	Mosman	Ku-ring-gai	Willoughby	
1998 Survey	157 (24%)	149 (22%)	44 (7%)	50 (8%)	168 (25%)	90 (14%)	658 (100%)
2000 Survey	45 (25%)	23 (13%)	19 (11%)	13 (7%)	54 (30%)	24 (14%)	178 (100%)

who declined to participate, 10% claimed English language difficulties, 45% were not interested, and a similar percentage refused on grounds of insufficient time.

In 1998, 456 (70%) respondents expressed a willingness to participate in a second follow-up questionnaire. In September 2000, during the three weeks of the Olympics, all were contacted again but only a smaller subsample of 178 respondents were available or willing to be re-interviewed. Of the repeat telephone numbers dialed, 30 (7%) were ineligible because the initial respondent no longer lived there. Of the remaining eligible respondents, 93 (20%) could not be contacted, 76 (17%) were no longer interested, 9 (2%) were too busy, while in 66 (14%) cases the telephone number had been disconnected since the first survey. In addition to the generic problems in longitudinal research of maintaining participant interest and contact details, vacations coinciding with hosting the Olympics may have further reduced the response rate. The 2000 survey's similar proportional distribution to the one conducted in 1998 (Table 1) suggests that these reasons operated uniformly across metropolitan Sydney.

Data limitations arise from the sampling strategy. Concerns of a response bias stem from the participants' decision to continue with the survey. Without any reward for participation, the decision to cooperate may have been due to already having a positive disposition towards the Olympics. By purposefully sampling only from Sydney's socioeconomic extreme SLAs, this sample makes no claim to be representative of the total metropolitan population, only the areas from which it was drawn. By relying upon listed telephone numbers from one telecommunications supplier, the survey technique excludes the homeless, those who can not afford a telephone, and those unlisted or opting for an alternative supplier. Furthermore, there is no post-Olympic data to determine whether enthusiasm is sustained after the event.

In the surveys of 1998 and 2000, the instrument comprised three main parts. To measure an individual's "exchange evaluations" respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement on a five-point Likert scale with each of 7 enthusiasm statements. The second part recognized that these evaluations might differ among individuals; therefore, respondents were asked about their demographic attributes and proximity to Homebush. Their willingness to

make personal sacrifices for Sydney's benefit and their need for social justice were inferred from answers to questions about perceived economic impacts. Further, a series of open questions allowed respondents to express their own evaluations. Using questions worded similarly to those in Ley and Olds' (1988) analysis of the 1986 World Exposition, respondents were asked "in what ways they could illustrate the best and worst aspects of Sydney's Olympics?", "what they would remember most?", and "whether they thought the games were worth the estimated cost to the New South Wales taxpayers of some US\$1.3 billion?"

Potential data constraints may have been introduced by the interview schedule's structure, particularly with the open-ended questions appearing after the closed ones. Some respondents, rather than supplying their own words/ideas, may also have chosen to repeat simply those concepts supplied in the closed questions. However, the majority narrated a story around a personal experience rather than simply reiterating a supplied construct.

In both 1998 and 2000 frequency distributions drawn for the enthusiasm item scale revealed a positively skewed response bias. Non-parametric Wilcoxon signed rank paired tests were calculated to identify whether the perceived emotional benefits from hosting the 2000 Olympics had changed over two years. For the same reason, non-parametric Kruskal Wallis and Mann Whitney *U* tests were performed to ascertain whether there were significant differences between groups in mean rank scores of enthusiasm, differentiated by respondent perceptions of economic and environmental impacts and socioeconomic or demographic attributes. A form of content analysis, or "framework analysis", was then performed on the qualitative responses, following the procedures of familiarization, classification, and indexation recommended by Ritchie and Spencer (1994). This allowed the identification of different themes underpinning respondent appraisal of the games, categorized according to a specific intrinsic variable.

Study Results and Discussion

Between 1998 and 2000, enthusiasm levels were not only sustained but increased. Overall, frequency distribution bias for both years suggests respondents held very positive attitudes towards Sydney 2000. In 1998 and 2000, item by item comparison of the frequency distributions suggests that the very strong positive desire to bid for another Olympics remained unchanged over the two-year period, with 61% strongly agreeing in 1998, and 67% in 2000. Greatest percentage increases over the period were in the degree of willingness to participate as a volunteer (up from 3 to 35%) and feeling a sense of community inspired by the Olympic spirit (increasing from 43 to 68%).

In 2000, the level of experienced enthusiasm was also significantly more positive than that anticipated two years earlier (Table 2). The Wilcoxon paired signed rank analyses confirm that the most significant transformations of respondents' attitudes involved the desire to participate as a volunteer worker, and feelings of sharing in an Olympic community spirit. Equally, statistically significant positive changes occurred

Table 2. Temporal Changes in Respondents Enthusiasm Toward Sydney 2000

Wilcoxon Paired Signed Rank Analysis	Rank <0 Count ^b	Rank <0 Mean Rank	Rank >0 Count	Rank >0 Mean Rank
Overall Enthusiasm Attitude ^a (<i>Z</i> value=0.05, <i>P</i> -Value=<0.0001)	54	71	119	93
Desire to be a volunteer at the Sydney Olympics ^a (<i>Z</i> value=-5.4, <i>P</i> -Value=<0.0001)	21	42.9	78	51.9
Feelings of a sense of community spirit as a result of Sydney 2000 ^a (<i>Z</i> value=-5.2, <i>P</i> -Value=<0.0001)	26	44.7	80	56.3
Feeling a sense of pride in Sydney as a result of Sydney 2000 ^a (<i>Z</i> value=-4.3, <i>P</i> -Value=<0.0001)	27	38.5	66	50.4
Feelings of pride in Australia as a result of Sydney 2000 ^a (<i>Z</i> value=-2.8, <i>P</i> -Value=<0.0001)	38	51.6	69	53.3
Feelings of excitement about Sydney hosting the 2000 Olympics ^a (<i>Z</i> value=-4.7, <i>P</i> -Value=<0.0001)	27	36	67	52
Desire to bid for the Olympics again if it was to occur today (<i>Z</i> value=0.67, <i>P</i> -Value=<0.0001)	54	53.8	53	54.1

^a Statistical significant results, with *P*-values <0.05.

^b Rank <0 count is the number of respondents who scored a higher value on the attitudinal scale in the year 2000 than 1998, suggesting a decreasing level of enthusiasm. Conversely, the rank >0 is the number of respondents who scored a lower value on the attitudinal scale in the year 2000 than 1998, suggesting an increasing level of enthusiasm.

in respondents' feeling a sense of Olympic derived excitement and pride in Sydney and Australia. Together, these suggest that "euphoric" might best describe the social impact of the Olympics operating at the level of feelings during two-week period. Yet, in neither year was the social impact at an emotional level operating homogeneously across all respondents. Consequently, each intrinsic variable was analyzed to explore if it could account for response variability.

To develop a rationale for attitude variability, the relationships to respondent demographic characteristics were explored using non-parametric tests. Results from a series of Mann-Whitney *U* and Kruskal Wallis tests suggest for both years that socioeconomic variables (education, income, and employment) do not differentiate significantly among respondents' attitudes. This result supports findings by other tourist-focused studies (Ryan and Montgomery 1994). Such a finding also confounds proponents of the "bread and circus" school, who argue that the most socioeconomically disadvantaged will be those most absorbed by an event's "party" syndrome. Rather, it would seem

that the “redemptive ideology” in Australian sporting traditions offered by Sydney 2000 appealed across all socioeconomic classes. In contrast, however, enthusiasm for Sydney’s games was clearly differentiated by respondents’ demographic characteristics (Table 3). Generally, older respondents were least enthusiastic and those with young dependents were generally most positive. Those born in non-English-speaking countries or respondents who identified themselves with a hyphenated-Australian identity, such as Vietnamese-Australian, were also very positive towards the Olympics, regardless of age or marital status. Clearly, Sydney’s Olympics, from the period of anticipation to actualization, held greatest appeal for younger adults, families with children and migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds. For example, as one parent explained “[I]t’s encouraging to see my children playing the sports they’ve watched at the Olympics. I hope my children, and grandchildren in generations to come, are inspired by Sydney’s Olympics”. Importantly, the perceived reward was not couched in terms of training future champions but rather embedded within arguments of improved health and social networking.

Another theme involved rewards centered upon the opportunity for their children to experience the social harmony that notionally underpins the Olympic ideal. Several parents spoke of how, in their experience, the games helped in various ways to dissipate perceived differences between people and to illustrate to their offspring the principles of global citizenship, social equity, and respect for cultural difference. The Olympics is “such a worthwhile event to put on ... [pause] ... uniting a city and the world ... [pause] ... upholding many ideals” and “[The] games are special, each person [is] counted as equal.” For these respondents, the Olympics were played out not only in Homebush, but also in countless backyards and streets within Sydney. While the movement has been accused of having an ideology of world peace through sport that is nothing but rhetoric, for many Australian families the ‘Olympic dream’ became a lived reality enacted, whether by play, watching television, a visit to the city or at a sporting venue. In part, this positive evaluation can be perhaps understood as an outcome of parental perceptions of the social and health benefits for their children from hosting the games.

Similarly, content analysis of the open questions provided insights into why immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, or those Australians expressing a hyphenated-identity remained very positive. From their responses it appears that the best and most memorable characteristics of the games involved feeling part of an Olympics’ inspired “community”. Such expressions included: “I will always remember walking down the Olympic Boulevards with crowds, it was such a buzz to be part of something this big”, and “it doesn’t matter where you go in Sydney you can sense a camaraderie and friendliness”.

Hence, despite Magdalinski’s (2001:306) concerns that the spirit invented by the SOBL valorized the mythical Australia imagined as the mono-cultural paradise of the 50s, most non-Anglo Celtic respondents spoke of Sydney 2000 as sustaining experiences of inclusion. Furthermore, they did not comment that the reward was being able to cheer

Table 3. Test Results for Expressed Feelings of Enthusiasm

Year of Birth	Mean Rank 1976–82 ^a	Mean Rank 1966–75	Mean Rank 1951–65	Mean Rank < 1950
1998 Survey ^b (H-value=15, <i>P</i> -value=0.001 ^b , DF=3)	68	67	73	100
2000 Survey (H-value=3.3, <i>P</i> -value=0.34, DF=3)	86	86	76	93
Country of Birth		Mean Rank Australia	Mean Rank Eng. Speak	Mean Rank “Other”
1998 Survey (H-value=1.3, <i>P</i> -value=0.5, DF=2)		92	86	83
2000 Survey ^b (H-value=5.4, <i>P</i> -value=0.06, DF=2)		96	76	79
Identity		Mean Rank Australian		Mean Rank Hyphenated- Australian
1998 Survey (<i>U</i> value=3591, <i>Z</i> -value=-0.17, <i>P</i> -value .86)		89		86
2000 Survey ^b (<i>U</i> -value=3844, <i>Z</i> -value=-2.44, <i>P</i> -value=0.01)		96		76
Dependents		Mean Rank No		Mean Rank Yes
1998 Survey ^b (<i>U</i> -value=2949, <i>Z</i> -value=-1.81, <i>P</i> -value=0.06)		94		79
2000 Survey ^b (<i>U</i> -value=2786, <i>Z</i> -value=-2.32, <i>P</i> -value=0.02)		95		76
Location		Mean Rank Western SLAs		Mean Rank Northern SLAs
1998 Survey ^b (<i>U</i> -value=3279, <i>Z</i> -value=-1.9, <i>P</i> -value=.04)		81		97
2000 Survey ^b (<i>U</i> -value=7195, <i>Z</i> -value=-1.8, <i>P</i> -value=.05)		82		96

^a Given the mean ranks are calculated from responses to a 5-point Likert scale with 5 indicating strong disagreement, 3 indicating uncertainty and 1 indicating strong agreement. Higher mean rank values indicate a less positive attitude towards Sydney’s Olympics.

^b Statistical significant results, with *P*-values <0.05.

for their former home country. Instead, several commented that the games best aspects were Australians winning gold medals, particularly Ian Thorpe. Such perceived rewards perhaps confirm optimistic arguments that global sporting events can operate to help ethnic minorities recognize themselves as part of a wider imagined national community.

Proximity to Homebush is also important in accounting for different enthusiasm levels. In both surveys statistically significant differences between northern and western Sydney were identified (Table 3). Respondents from the western SLAs had a more positive reaction towards the games than those from northern parts. In this case, apparently, proximity to Homebush sustained higher enthusiasm levels for the event from 1998 to 2000.

Why western suburb respondents were in general more positive in their appraisal, despite disruptions created by construction activities before and traffic congestion during the event, may be attributable in part to the demographic characteristics. For example, the demographic profile of western Sydney had a higher proportion of younger adults (a median age of 31 versus 37 in the northern suburbs), families, and overseas born. (Fairfield is Australia's most ethnically diversified SLA, having residents born in over 20 countries in certain census collection districts.) Such demographic attributes are those most receptive to the "buzz" surrounding the games. Equally, respondents commented upon a number of material rewards; a legacy of sports facilities, the revitalization of a once highly toxic site and the re-imaging of Homebush as Sydney's new heart. Any short-term inconvenience for some was perceived as offset by these new resources. In short, in Sydney's western suburbs the demographic profile and an iterative process between the local material and symbolic rewards of Sydney's games sustained positive levels of evaluation.

Altruistic Surplus, Social Justice and Exchange Evaluations

Results from Kruskal Wallis tests suggest enthusiasm of respondents was also associated with their willingness to make personal economic sacrifices. Those who were generally negative about Sydney's Olympics seem to have envisaged far greater personal games related economic penalties, for example in the form of increased taxes and/or higher general costs of living. During the anticipation period, perceived personal economic burdens were a key source of respondent concern. Undoubtedly, the potential for a public financial burden surrounding a "failed" games worried some respondent; many spoke of Montreal's US\$500 million debt inherited from the 1976 games. However, over the two-year period, the number of respondents who perceived increased taxation and living costs declined (Table 4). Perhaps with hindsight, none of the worst case economic scenarios had eventuated. In contrast, those who rated the games positively in both surveys generally displayed a higher level of personal altruism. They perceived wider economic benefits deriving directly from the games through the creation of permanent jobs and the positive spin-off impacts on Sydney's economy, despite many having personal reservations. Similarly, in

Table 4. Expressed Feelings of Enthusiasm by Perceived Economic Impacts

Item	Mean Rank Strongly Agree	Mean Rank Mildly Agree	Mean Rank Mildly Disagree	Mean Rank Strongly Disagree ^a
Tax Increase				
1998 Survey (H-value=9.6, <i>P</i> -value=0.22 ^b , DF=3)	85 (40%)	76 (31%)	60 (8%)	46 (6%) ^c
2000 Survey (H-value=8.0, <i>P</i> -value=0.04, DF=3)	88 (15%)	62 (23%)	63 (25%)	71 (14%)
Living Costs				
1998 Survey (H-value=10.2, <i>P</i> -value=.016, DF=3)	96 (28%)	88 (37%)	67 (16%)	66 (12%)
2000 Survey (H-value=4.3, <i>P</i> -value=0.22, DF=3)	89 (21%)	88 (16%)	72 (30%)	50 (21%)
Positive Impact on Sydney's Economy				
1998 Survey (H-value=37.7, <i>P</i> -value=<0.01, DF=3)	60 (40%)	87 (31%)	116 (10%)	120 (12%)
2000 Survey (H-value=8.0, <i>P</i> -value=0.04, DF=3)	88 (15%)	62 (23%)	63 (25%)	71 (14%)
Permanent Jobs				
1998 Survey (H-value=14.4, <i>P</i> -value=0.002, DF=3)	54 (14%)	79 (30%)	86 (18%)	97 (30%)
2000 Survey (H-value=11.7, <i>P</i> -value=0.008, DF=3)	56 (19%)	66 (17%)	79 (22%)	87 (23%)
<hr/>				
Estimated Public Cost US\$1.3 Billion	Mean Rank Yes	Mean Rank Unsure	Mean Rank no	
<hr/>				
2000 survey (H-value=24.6, <i>P</i> -value=<.001, DF=2)	76 (42%)	108 (5%)	123 (18%)	

^a Given the mean ranks are calculated from responses to a 5-point Likert scale with 5 indicating strong disagreement, 3 indicating uncertainty, and 1 indicating strong agreement. Higher mean rank values indicate a less positive attitude toward Sydney's Olympics

^b Statistically significant results have *P*-values <0.05.

^c The number in parentheses is the percentage of respondents in the Likert scale category. Where item percentages do not total 100%, this can be attributed to respondents remaining undecided over their perceived economic impact.

2000, it was this subgroup that was generally not concerned about a possible cost blow-out.

Nevertheless, it also worth noting over the period that a higher degree of skepticism and uncertainty emerged over the perceived broader economic impacts. In 2000, far fewer respondents perceived positive economic impacts arising from hosting the Olympics than in 1998 (Table 4). Similarly, the percentage of those who were uncertain about how they perceived the economic implications of Sydney's Olympics increased from around 7 to 20%. For many the initial rose-

tinted perceptions regarding economic benefits for Sydney were fading.

To develop possible explanations for divergent reactions regarding the economic impact, content analysis was applied to responses to the open question which asked whether the Olympics was worth US\$1.3 billion of taxpayers' money. Framework analysis revealed that the minority of respondents categorized by their negative evaluation of the public expenditure expressed two recurrent themes, "social injustice" and "no personal rewards". The former theme suggests that respondents felt that public monies could have been better spent on other welfare facilities, particularly transport, the homeless, and the public medical system (Medicare). For example: "No. The Olympics is good for competitors, but the money could've been spent elsewhere, on hospital, schools or roads". These responses were particularly common among the elderly. The social injustice perceived among this subgroup perhaps reflects a personal vested interest in provisions of public health care facilities.

The "no personal rewards" theme was clearly expressed by respondents who, from their experiences of the games, perceived only drawbacks for either themselves or for other Sydneysiders. One respondent expressed displeasure with the Olympics in terms of personal disruptions to daily activities as follows: "It's been bloody chaos, mate. It's [The Olympics] all bad. Nothing but [a] disruption to my life. It's done nothing for me, mate". Alternatively, for others the event was regarded as exclusionary, a show to entertain overseas tourists. As one respondent stated: "Definitely not worth it [US\$1.3 billion] ... done to favor tourists ... hasn't done anything for the locals. Overall, how terribly irritating the whole thing [Olympics] is". The minority of respondents who articulated negative attitudes based their evaluations upon a perceived mismatch between the public expenditure involved and their perceived needs as local residents. Or, alternatively, for them, personal disruptions impacted more heavily than any benefits.

The majority of respondents, however, perceived gains as outweighing costs, agreeing with the public expenditure. Three altruistic themes recurred in their responses, namely "community and national spirit", "international promotion", and "future business investment". Three social justice themes also were present: "budget", "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity", and "public infrastructure".

The frequent recurrence of the altruistic theme "community and national spirit" indicates that this was perhaps the most powerful psychological reward for many respondents. They expressed the rewards from patriotism in the following ways, "... everyone who went [to the Olympics] was on a natural high, [I have] never seen such enthusiasm and pride in Australia" and "[the] community spirit is amazing. Just being in Sydney was amazing even if you didn't go to the games". In other words, a community identity born of Australian's imagined sporting traditions emerged under the weight of the entertainment provided by the event.

The altruistic theme "international promotion" also suggests that another substantial psychological reward stemmed from the feeling

that, after the event, Australia would no longer be a marginalized destination. A Eurocentric conceptualization of the world map had for too long positioned Australia as the land “down-under”. These respondents believed that the tyranny of distance would no longer dominate in informing overseas people’s worldview. As one respondent remarked, “not many people know what Australia is, [The Olympics] put us [Australia] on the map”. Similarly, another expressed that, “Australia would be put on top of the world, many nations have not known Australia’s advantages”. Furthermore, the Olympics were envisaged by many respondents as a mechanism that might help to dismiss widely circulating popular cultural myths of an Australia informed by its distinctive marsupials rather than its human achievements.

[The Olympics] raised consciousness [of the] entire world to Australia...[pause]...its beauty...[pause]...not a backward nation with kangaroos in the street that is often the overseas view. You know, we managed [to host an Olympics] without stuff-ups, apart from the torch.

National economic rewards were also perceived as stemming from the higher international profile, summarized under a altruistic theme of “future business investment”, as can be seen from the following statement: “It [the US\$1.3 billion] will come back [in the future] through tourism and business investment”. Adding the Olympics to Sydney’s profile was often perceived by respondents as an important mechanism for increasing its international competitive advantage over other cities. Therefore, an important psychological reward from hosting the Olympics in terms of national and community pride included the belief that the place where they lived, both Australia more generally and Sydney in particular, had now achieved a greater international profile, standing and recognition. For these respondents, Sydney had come-of-age through hosting the games. Mueller and Fenton capture this rationality antecedent in terms of the sense of pride and the self-esteem of host city residents, expressed in a feeling of “we can do it!” (1989:275).

The social justice “budget” theme refers to the point that some respondents perceived the public expenditure as either inexpensive or justified in terms of community esteem. One respondent captured this theme: “Yes, for the community spirit, even if it (The Olympics) cost ten billion!”. Furthermore, the themes of “once-in-a-lifetime-opportunity” and “public infrastructure” suggest that many respondents also regarded the event as a mechanism for positive social discrimination. Some claimed that their lives would be somehow enhanced by this unique lifetime experience: “Maybe we’ll never have it [The Olympics] again in a lifetime”. Others argued that the infrastructure provided for the games would result in a lasting legacy, enhancing Sydney’s urban facilities and ambience. This theme is apparent in such statements as: “Yes, Sydney needed a facelift and improved infrastructure”. Apparently, the urban legacy of the event and the world’s insights into the city would contribute to making the city a better place to live. Despite allegations of creative accounting over Olympic’s budget, for the

majority of respondents a sense of fairness underpinned the social exchanges spawned by the event. They perceived material and social rewards far greater than the public costs.

CONCLUSION

This paper departs from the recent emphasis in the hallmark event literature on the relationship between the tourist-city and economies of signs and symbols (Zukin 1991; Urry 1995; Waitt 1999). Instead, it contributes to the literature examining the social impact of tourism, particularly host residents' appraisal of events. As a longitudinal study examining individual and collective enthusiasm towards Sydney's 2000 Olympic Games, the paper sought to explore the importance of time, place, demographics, and perceived economic impacts in differentiating responses. Resident reactions in Sydney's most socioeconomically polarized SLAs are examined within social exchange theory. Attitudes towards an event are argued as modifiable across time because the formation of an exchange relationship between the individual and the event is not static but rather constantly negotiated and renegotiated. According to social exchange theory, underpinning these mediated social relations are issues of rationality, satisfaction, reciprocity, and social justice. Increasing feelings of antagonism, expressed in negative reactions, are suggested to occur when the perceived social costs outweigh the benefits of the exchange relationship between the event and the individual.

Conducting telephone surveys with the same respondents, of a targeted sample, two years before and then, again, during the 2000 games, provided a unique insight into how residents' reactions changed. Multi-item attitudinal scaling provided an established methodology for examining the positive or negative attitudes towards Sydney 2000. Faulkner and Tideswell's (1997) identification of "extrinsic/intrinsic" variables provided a range of *a priori* constructs regarding the dimensions along which residents responses may be differentiated and tested using inferential statistics. Indirect open questions identified the best, worst, and most memorable aspect attributes of Sydney 2000. Qualitative analysis sought emergent themes, otherwise obscured by closed questions. Qualitative results were employed to provide insights into why enthusiasm levels differed among respondents.

Particularly for a longitudinal project, telephone surveys, while cost effective in accessing a large number of respondents in a short time, brought constraints to the data quality. Establishing and maintaining any sense of continued commitment to the project among respondents whose only contact with the researcher was a telephone conversation proved extremely difficult. There was little sense of personal rewards or ownership amongst respondents. One expression of this was often minimalist responses, often one-word answers. Therefore, the telephone survey seems less satisfactory for eliciting qualitative responses than providing responses to attitudinal scales. Qualitative responses also lack social qualities often generated within focus groups through

debate and discussion. Future projects examining social impacts of events may wish to consider these design limitations.

Paired non-parametric tests indicate that while in 1998, respondents generally felt positive as they anticipated the games, enthusiasm for the event became even more pronounced during 2000. The "buzz" surrounding the games was expressed particularly in feelings of patriotism, community spirit, and the desire to participate as a volunteer. Unquestionably, a significant psychological reward for many respondents was that the imagined bond that underpins national identity became a lived reality over the 16 days.

Nevertheless, the feelings aroused by the Olympic Spirit were not shared equally. The results suggest that it is not the most socioeconomically disadvantaged in society who are most enthusiastic about the event, as theorized within the euphoric mass consciousness of the civic boosterism school. No statistical difference in levels of enthusiasm could be found when the sample was differentiated by surrogate measures of class (education, occupation, income). Thus, the validity of the "bread and circus" argument is questionable. Certainly, the results of these surveys suggest it is difficult to sustain arguments that global sporting events are a mechanism that the state can employ either to homogenize public mass consciousness or to legitimize its authority among those most economically disadvantaged in society.

Since respondents who were most enthusiastic tended to be either families with dependent children, from non-English speaking backgrounds, or those who perceived the event's economic benefits as outweighing the costs, these findings have important implications for organizers of future events. First, they confirm that global sporting events can be employed as a mechanism to generate patriotism and a sense of community or belonging, particularly among the young and ethnic minorities. Such psychological outcomes may in part help combat the culture of nihilism that is often said to be undermining both spatial and other identities in global cities everywhere (Lash 1990). Many residents of global cities are argued to be living within a potentially alienating void of self-understanding because of the loss of family, gender, class, ethnic, religious, or other social relations that once acted as a source of self-identification and understanding of the past. As clearly demonstrated by Sydney's Olympics, global sporting events provide the opportunity for government and city authorities to (re)establish or increase the attachment and identification of people to place. For Sydney, the possibilities presented by these outcomes are particularly relevant in an era marred by increasing levels of youth suicide, homelessness, and drug addiction as well as accusations of racism against those not conforming to an Anglo-Celtic Australian national identity (Chan 1997; HREOC 1991). However, a hallmark event's relevance in addressing any of these social issues diminishes if such benefits are not sustained after the "circus" has left town. Furthermore, the community spirit that the Olympics inspired may have only revived a flag-waving form of nationalism rather than claims of a new spirit of Australianness that breaks with a racist legacy. Future research must address these questions.

Perceived economic rewards appear crucial in further differentiating appraisals. For some, public expenditure on sports and transport infrastructure may never be justified. In Sydney, this was particularly the case among elderly respondents, who held more negative attitudes. They spoke instead of their preferred state government budget priority on welfare facilities, especially hospitals. For others, these findings also suggest that the level of public expenditure may not generate negative attitudes, particularly among those who display a level of altruism—that is, perceiving potential economic gains flowing to the national economy from international tourism and foreign investment. In contrast, it appears that among Sydneysiders, the Olympics' most bitter critics were respondents who evaluated the public costs as excessive, and spoke only of the disruptions and inconveniences to their personal lives. Such findings suggest that residents' perceptions of the personal and national economic impacts arising from hosting a global sporting attraction have the potential to undermine public confidence in the event. In Sydney's case, and despite controversies over the public budget, the perceived rewards arising from place specific attributes helped sustain enthusiasm. These included the widely held perception that this Olympics would counter outdated Australian stereotypes, stimulate future overseas tourism and investment, as well as provide new urban infrastructure. Place specific attributes, including respondents' perceived evaluations of the host nation's role, city, and people in the world economy is critical to how a global sporting event is appraised. **A**

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