

Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital



Moving From Durkheim to Putnam

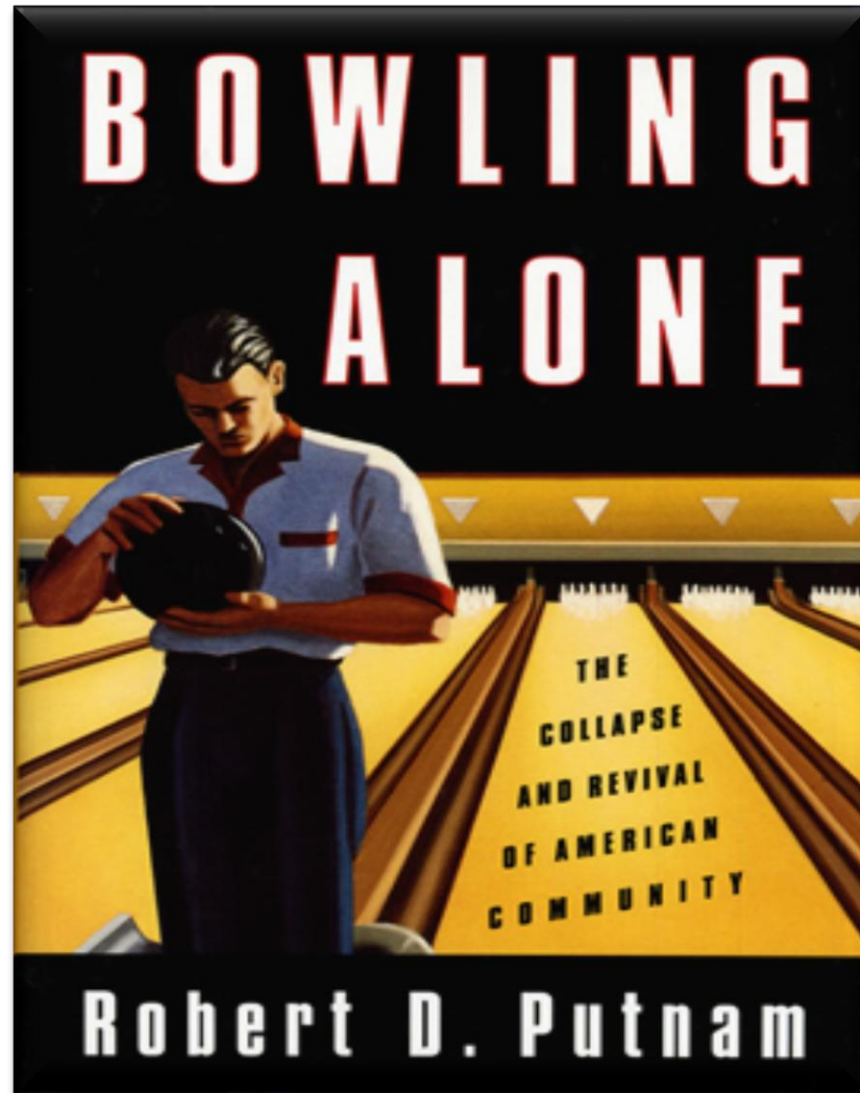
Durkheim

Preindustrial	Industrial
Mechanical Solidarity	Organic Solidarity
Homogeneous	Heterogeneous
Collective	Individualistic
High Social integration	Low Social integration
Consensual norms	Anomie

Putnam

Industrial	Postindustrial
Higher Social integration	Lower Social integration
More civic engagement	Less civic engagement
Secondary Associations	Tertiary Associations
Higher Social Capital	Lower Social Capital
Higher Social trust	Lower Social trust

Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*



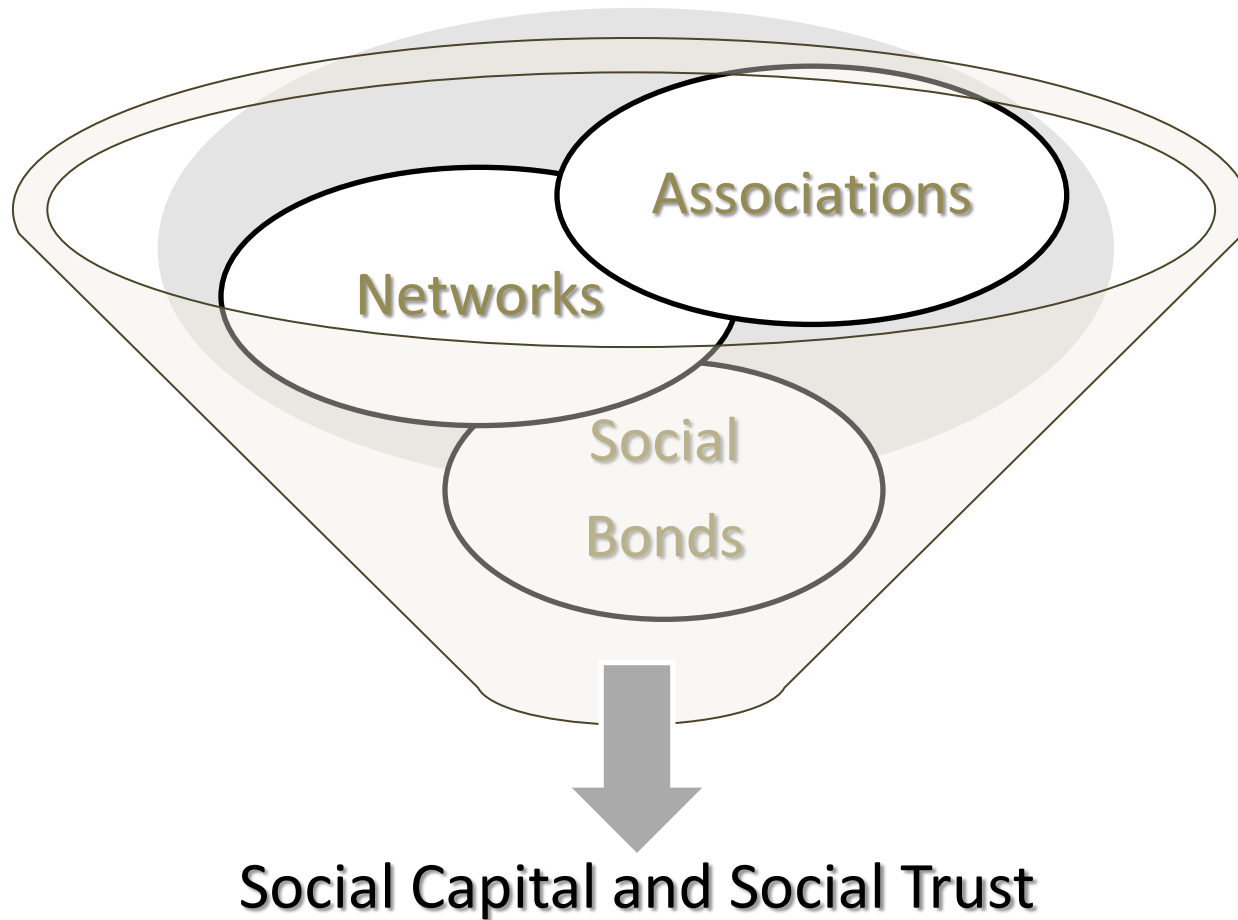
Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* 1835

"Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of disposition," he observed, "are forever forming associations. There are not only commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but others of a thousand different types--religious, moral, serious, futile, very general and very limited, immensely large and very minute. . . . Nothing, in my view, deserves more attention than the intellectual and moral associations in America."

Social Bonds and Social Networks

“Far from being paleoindustrial anachronisms, these dense interpersonal and interorganizational networks undergird ultramodern industries, from the high tech of Silicon Valley to the high fashion of Benetton”.

Civically Engaged Communities



“Life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital.”

Networks of civic engagement foster sturdy norms of generalized reciprocity and encourage the emergence of social trust.

Life is easier...

Networks facilitate coordination
and communication.

Life is easier...

Networks amplify reputations.

Life is easier...

Networks allow dilemmas of collective action to be resolved.

Life is easier...

Networks reduce opportunism.

Life is easier...

Networks serve as a cultural template
for future collaboration.

What's happening to civic engagement in traditional secondary associations?

- decline in voter turnout.
 - decline in participation in community meetings
 - decline in trust of government
 - decline in sports groups, professional societies and literary societies
 - decline in religious affiliation
 - decline in labor unions
 - decline in parent-teacher association (PTA)
 - decline in civic organizations
 - decline in fraternal organizations
-and decline in bowling leagues...

Life is easier...

Networks broaden the participants'
sense of self, developing the "I" into
the "we."

What does the new civic engagement look like?

- **Mass membership tertiary associations**
(AARP, NOW, Sierra Club)
- **Nonprofit service agencies**
(Oxfam, Metropolitan Museum of Art)
- **Support Groups**
(AA)

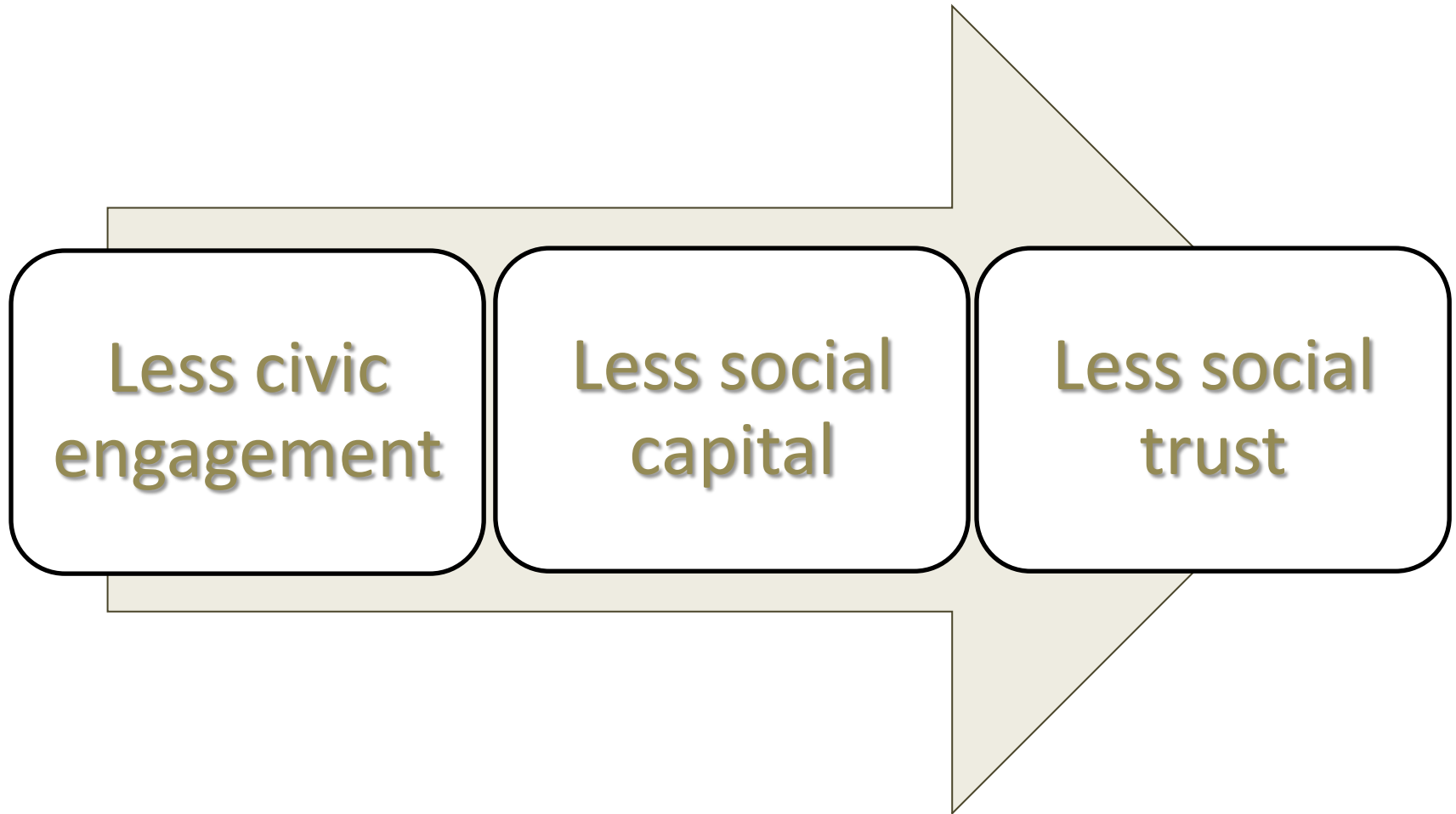
The New Associations

Politically important but...

Socially, ties are to leaders or ideals, not to one another.

Does not produce the same type of social capital.

The New Associations



Four Reasons Why....

1. the movement of women into the labor force
2. mobility: the "re-potting" hypothesis
3. other demographic transformations
4. the technological transformation of leisure

What Do We Do?

1. Expand our definition of 'social capital' and explore what types of association produce it.
2. Investigate how other social changes affect social capital.
3. Analyze both the positive and negative characteristics of tight knit communities.
4. Explore how public policy affects social-capital formation.

