

# Social Capital Course

## Tutorial Week 1

An opportunity to review the course content for the week, discussion of key points, and ask questions

# Summary of main points

- Social capital has many different meanings
- It is an important and useful concept for a wide range of applications
- It produces many different outcomes
- It is not a new idea, but it is framed in a new way – as “capital”
- It can be difficult to identify what social capital “is” and separate it from what it “does”
- There are many different and overlapping conceptual approaches
- This has made the concept complex and it can be confusing

# What is the value of the concept?

- Social capital communicates something that is often overlooked or undervalued from conventional analysis and reporting
  - Part of a trend in recent decades to communicate non-economic value as 'capital' such as Natural capital, Human capital, Intellectual capital, etc
  - Other attempts include social impact, social value, social investment, and social return on investment (SROI)
- It provides a way of understanding and improving practice
  - Being more aware of its importance influences behaviour
  - Identify and implement simple ways to improve
  - Identify and avoid things that may damage

# Why is social capital important for your area of interest?

For example,

“Social capital provides a way to understand and improve the  
productivity of teams”

# Outcomes of social capital

- Social action

- Cooperation and collective action
- Prosocial actions - giving, sharing, helping, caring, supporting, etc.
- Social introductions
- Reduced transaction costs
- Nature and frequency of various actions with various consequences

- Intrinsic value

- Belonging, social identity, etc.

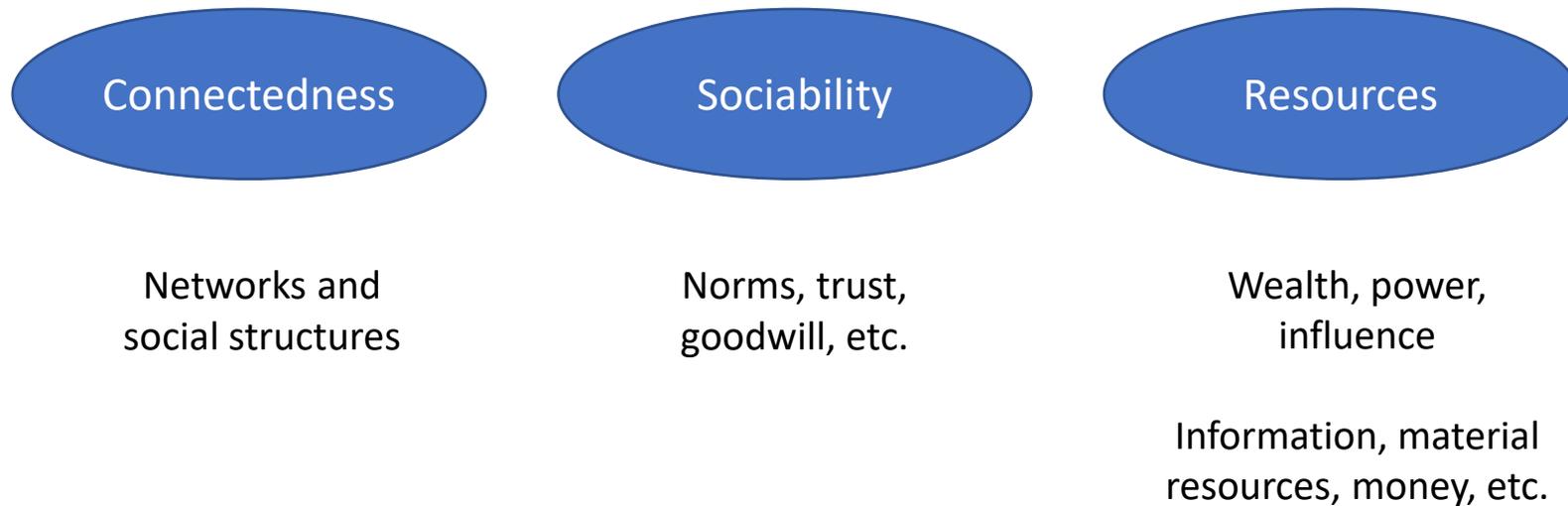
- 
- Information flows
  - Innovation and creativity
  - Problem-solving and conflict resolution
  - Resilience
  - Economic development and opportunities
  - Psychological and physical wellbeing and happiness

What outcomes are most relevant for your area of interest?

For example,

“Cooperation that facilitates innovation”

# What is social capital?



Some authors regard social capital as the 'wires' (or social structure), while others regard it as the 'electricity' (or resources), and others regard it as the 'conductivity' (or the environment that enables or facilitates the flow of benefits)

From your perspective, what  
is social capital?

For example,

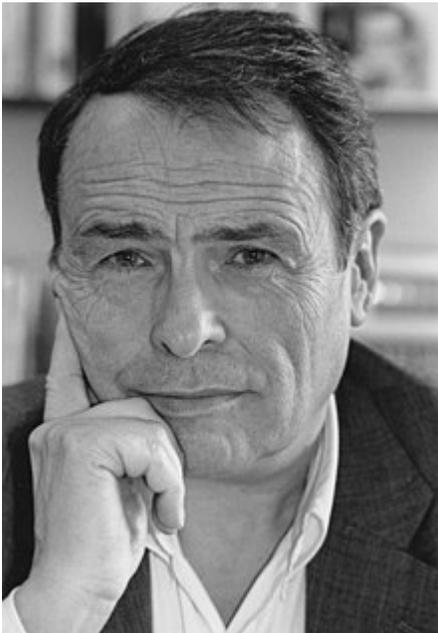
“Social capital is social networks that provide access to resources”

# Modern conceptual development

- Contemporary authors are generally considered to be:

**Pierre Bourdieu**

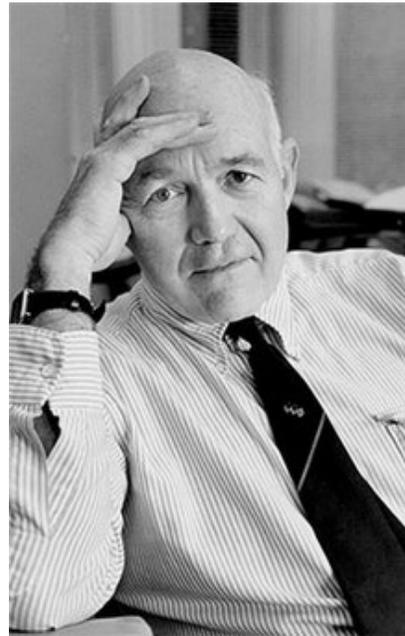
Theory of capital



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre\\_Bourdieu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Bourdieu)

**James Coleman**

Rational-choice sociology



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Samuel\\_Coleman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Samuel_Coleman)

**Robert Putnam**

Civic perspective



Source: <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty/robert-d-putnam>

Of the contemporary authors,  
who aligns with your  
understanding of social capital?

For example,  
“Pierre Bourdieu”

# Concepts with some similarity to social capital

- Solidarity
- Goodwill
- Relational trust
- Social trust
- Belonging
- Social identity
- Organisational culture
- Prosocial behaviour
- Social norms
- Citizenship
- Group dynamics
- Networks
- Reputation
- Culture
- Social value
- Social license

In your field of work or study,  
what concepts are similar to  
social capital?

For example,

“Social Support, or Organisational Culture, or Belonging”

## Robert Putnam

“features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that can facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”

(Putnam, 1993: p35)

21%



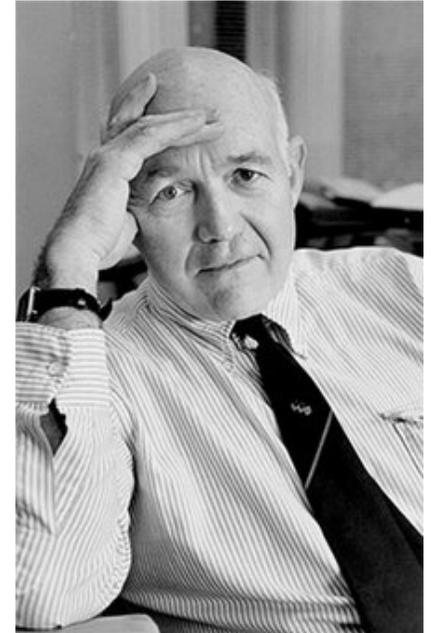
Source: <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty/robert-d-putnam>

## James Coleman

8%

“...defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors ... within the structure.”

(Coleman, 1988: pS98)



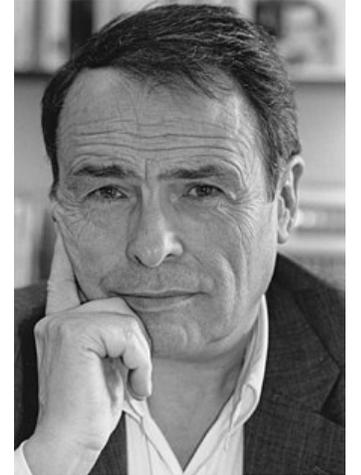
Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Samuel\\_Coleman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Samuel_Coleman)

## Pierre Bourdieu

15%

"the aggregate of the actual and potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition"

(Bourdieu, 1986: p248-249)



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre\\_Bourdieu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierre_Bourdieu)

## Janine Nahapiet and Sumantra Ghoshal

5%

"the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the relationships possessed by an individual or social unit"

(Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998: p.243)



Source: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0263237302001494>



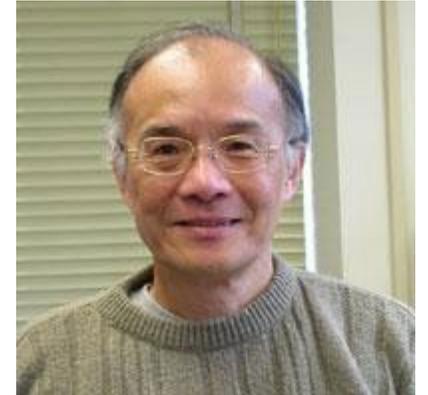
Source: <https://homerenaissancefoundation.org/experts/janine-nahapiet/>

## Nan Lin

“resources embedded in one’s social networks,  
resources that can be accessed or mobilized through  
ties in the networks”

(Lin, 2001: p73)

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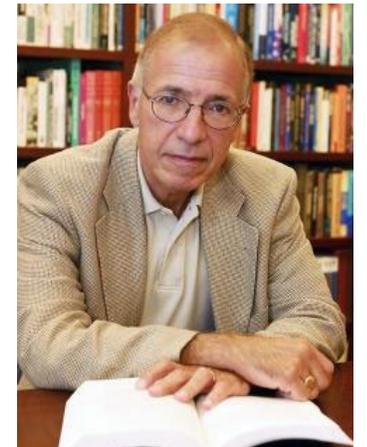
Source: <https://scholars.duke.edu/person/nanlin>

## Alejandro Portes

“the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of  
membership in social networks or other social  
structures”

(Portes, 1998: p6)

4%



Source: <https://sociology.princeton.edu/people/alejandro-portes-phd>

## Francis Fukuyama

“an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals”

(Fukuyama, 1999, p.1)

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Source: <https://cddl1.fsi.stanford.edu/people/fukuyama>

## World Bank

“the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions”

(World Bank, 1999)

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**THE WORLD BANK**

## OECD

“networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups”

(Cote and Healy, 2001, p.41)

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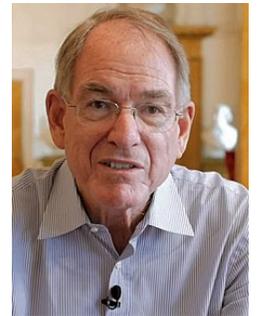


## Bowles & Gintis

“trust, concern for one’s associates, a willingness to live by the norms of one’s community and to punish those who do not”

(Bowles and Gintis, 2002)

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Source: [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel\\_Bowles](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Bowles)



Source: <https://le.ac.uk/>

# Other definitions

*\*The Google Scholar citations is the "cited by" number on Google Scholar as of 14 January 2020*

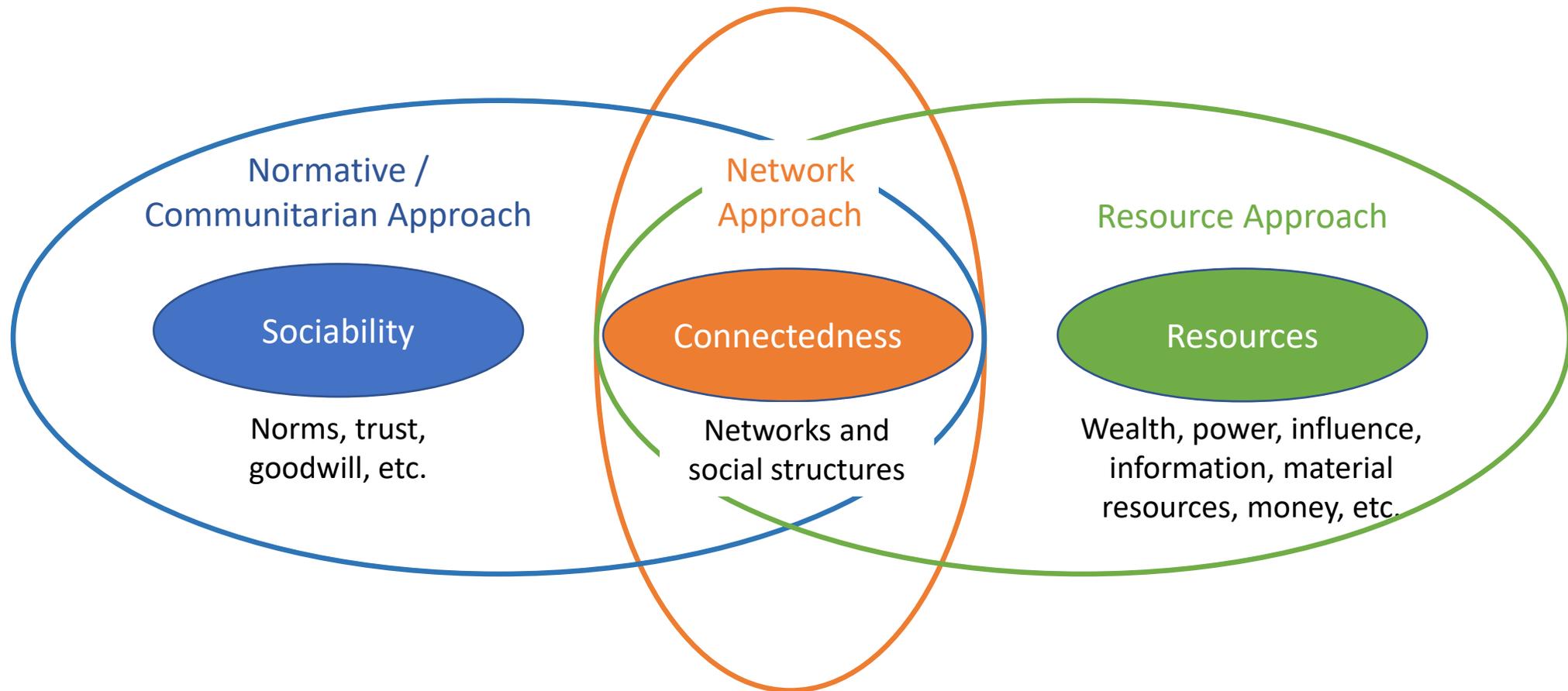
Definition	Citations*
"the institutions, relationships, attitudes and values governing interactions amongst people" (Iyer, Kitson, & Toh, 2005 p.1016)	379
"the networks, norms, relationships, values and informal sanctions that shape the quantity and co-operative quality of a society's social interactions" (Aldridge, Halpern, & Fitzpatrick, 2002 p.5)	330
"potential willingness of citizens to cooperate with each other and to engage in civic endeavors collectively" (Stolle, 2003 p.19)	309
"understood broadly as those structural, relational and cognitive features of social interaction that facilitate coordinated action and collective learning" (Staber, 2007 p.505)	111
"the many resources derived from the social interaction between individuals and groups" (Reyes, Giovannoni, & Thomson, 2018 p. e01169)	2
"accumulation of various types of social, psychological, cultural, cognitive, institutional, and related assets that increase the amount (or probability) of mutually beneficial cooperative behavior" (Uphoff, 1999 p.216)	1282
"the application or exercise of social norms of reciprocity, trust and exchange for political or economic purposes" (Cooke, Clifton, & Oleaga, 2005 p.1066)	344
"the values and beliefs that citizens share in their everyday dealings and which give meaning and provide design for all sorts of rules" (Maskell, 2000 p.111)	560
"the shared knowledge, understandings, norms, rules, and expectations about patterns of interactions that groups of individuals bring to a recurrent activity" (Ostrom 2000 p.176)	1122

# What definition of social capital do you use?

For example,

“potential willingness of citizens to cooperate with each other and to engage in civic endeavors collectively” (Stolle, 2003 p.19)

# Categories of conceptual approaches



# Which perspective fits your research best?

Network

Resource

Normative

Bourdieu

Heterodox

Source

Form

Outcomes

Context

Factors that create and maintain networks and that shape the structure of the network

Factors that create and maintain social resources and facilitate their mobilization

Factors that shape types and nature of social norms and sanctions as well as trust, solidarity, identity, etc.

Potential/Ability/Capacity

Network

Resource

Normative

Networks

Resources

Social structures

Trust/trustworthiness

Norms & sanctions

Belonging, solidarity

Shared understandings

Benefits

Downsides

- Cooperation
- Giving, sharing, helping, supporting
- Social introductions
- Prosocial actions
- Collective action
- Information flows
- Reduced transaction costs
- Innovation and Creativity
- Problem-solving and conflict resolution
- Resilience
- Psychological wellbeing

- Corruption and crime
- Exclusion and isolation
- Defensive or destructive acts
- Organised crime
- Cartels
- Constraints on benefits
- Cognitive lock-in and groupthink
- Downward levelling norms

SC as  $x$  → in  $t$  [context] →  $y$  [outcome]

How do you separate what  
social capital is from what it  
does?

For example,

“Social capital is the resources that are mobilised”

# What are the core elements?

Social capital is 'capital' - it is productive, beneficial, important. It has potential/ability/capacity

Therefore, social capital is “something social” that has the potential/ability/capacity to produce outcomes that are productive, beneficial, important

There is a causal relationship between the “something social” and outcomes

SC as  $x \rightarrow$  [causal relationship]  $\rightarrow y$  [outcome] in  $t$  [context]

What is the “something social”?	Form
Where does it come from?	Source
What does it do?	Outcomes

# What are the causal relationships of social capital you are most interested in?

For example,

“How strong social identity creates symbols of credibility that facilitates social introductions in entrepreneurial ecosystems”

SC as  $x \rightarrow$  [causal relationship]  $\rightarrow$   $y$  [outcome] in  $t$  [context]

Social identity  $\rightarrow$  [causal relationship]  $\rightarrow$  social introductions  $\rightarrow$  in entrepreneurial ecosystems