

WHY WE STUDY PLANNED EVENTS and HOW WE VALUE THEM

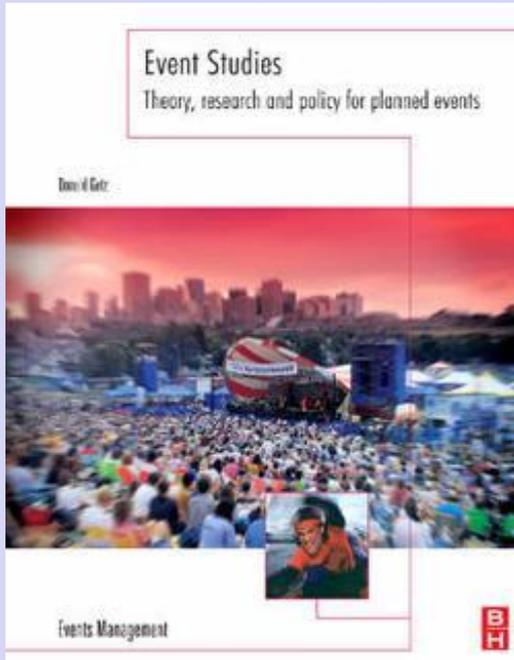
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PURPOSE

A personal view on Event Studies, why we study planned events, and how we value them, with reference to a number of philosophical and theoretical considerations.

EVENT STUDIES

- The academic field devoted to the study of all planned events, the event experience, and meanings attached to them.
- It exists mainly as an outcome of the numerous degree programmes established in Event Management, but it also exists within Event Tourism and a number of foundation disciplines.

THE WORLD OF PLANNED EVENTS

- We usually classify events on the basis of their form, or programme.
- These are, in fact, social constructs.
- Owing to globalization, these are tending towards standardization of names and forms.
- Festivals and other cultural celebrations remain the most diverse (authentic).

rites and rituals

In all societies, throughout time, there have been important personal, religious and political rites and rituals. These have always been gazed at by travellers, and have been studied by sociologists and cultural anthropologists who view them as texts.

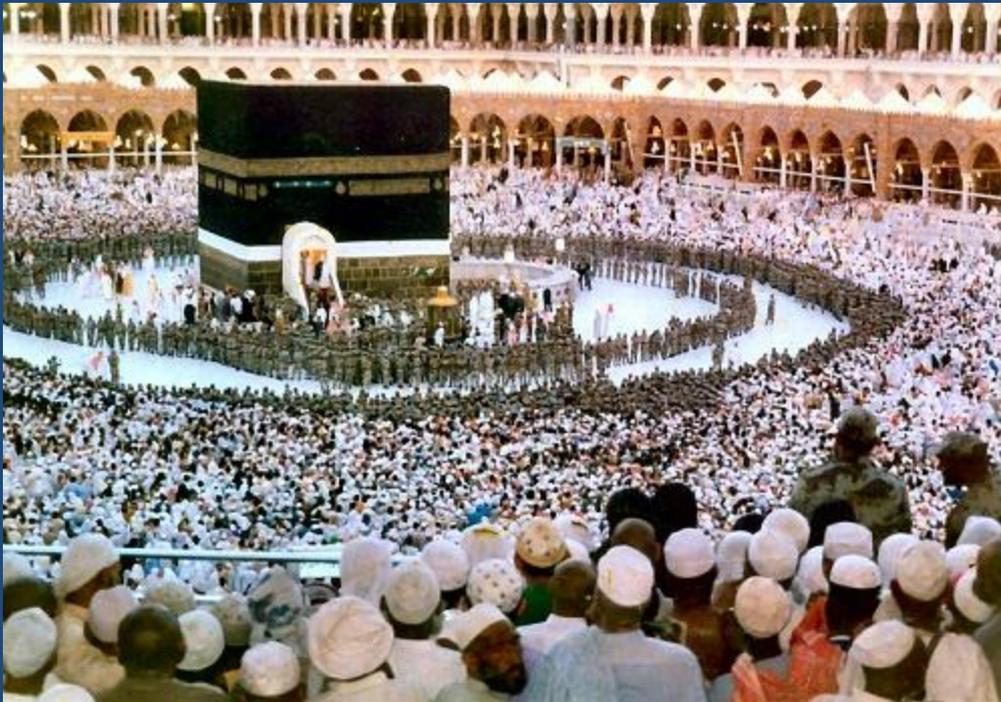
Various rites and rituals are part of most planned events, including opening and closing ceremonies.

They always have high symbolic value.



PILGRIMAGE

Religious experience;
devotion; celebration;
communitas



The Hajj, Mecca)





Meetings, Conventions



Business Events

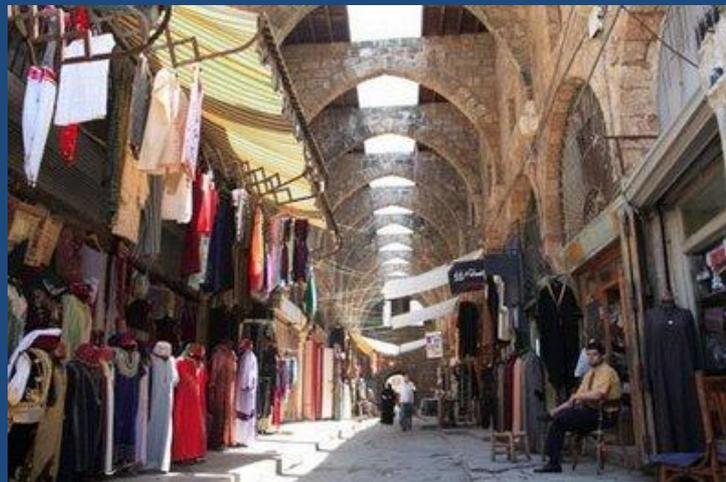
Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations:

- learning (sharing, training)
- economic exchange (market; sell)
- having fun, socializing, networking

Fairs,
Exhibitions,
Shows

MARKETS AND FUN-FAIRS

- No longer solely concerned with daily survival, shopping is entertainment and markets are leisure palaces and event venues.
- Markets as special events remain popular.



MILITARY

(other than warfare)

- practical, symbolic, spectacular
- The Edinburgh Tattoo - an iconic image





SPORT and RECREATIONAL EVENTS

Participation, media or spectator orientation

-games; challenge; identity building for persons and groups; entertainment; spectacle



Corporate Events

Instruments of corporate needs and strategy.

Internal: meetings, seminars, etc.

External: sales, marketing, branding, and public relations



PRIVATE EVENTS

- Party
- Wedding
- Anniversary
- Reunion



- rituals
- celebration
- consumption
- hedonism



Festivals, Carnivals, and other Cultural Celebrations

- Festivals as themed, public celebrations
- They provide a “time out of time” in a valorized place (Falassi);
- Turner’s notion of “communitas” (belonging and sharing)
- cultural authenticity



- Socially-sanctioned revelry and role reversals
- Ritual, tradition; spectacle; sacred and profane



SPONTANEOUS CELEBRATIONS

- When people celebrate it is not always formally planned, yet their actions and emotions serve as markers for all those who try to ‘design’ experiences.



The “RED MILE” in Calgary



Flash Mob: Pillow Fight

UNPLANNED EVENTS AND EVENTS AT THE MARGIN

-the meanings of events at the fringe

-the significance of using this space

-what is the appropriate regulation,
policy?



Recreational Rioters?



Entertainment

- a component of most planned events or as business

-to many young people, rock concerts are probably the only 'festivals' they know



-some cultural productions are viewed simply as entertainment, especially by tourists

ANCIENT SPECTACULARS



The Grand Procession of Ptolemy II Philadelphus as witnessed by Athanaeus (c. 285 BCE)

Was it the longest parade ever?

All the modern elements of style we associate with parades were present:

-floats

-costumes

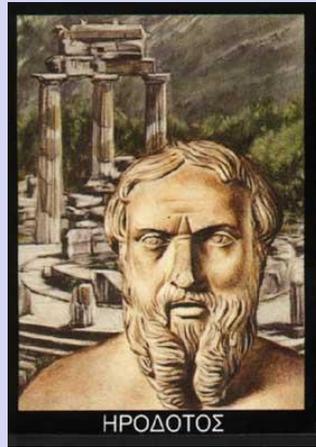
-marching bands and military units

-animals

-food and beverages

Egypt

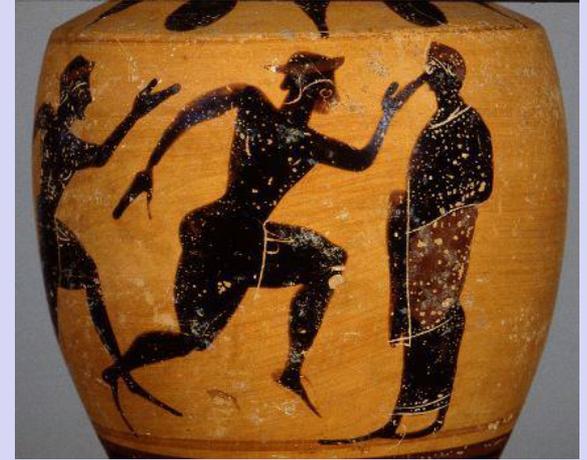
- Herodotus (464-447 BCE) on the festival of Isis in ancient Egypt:
- “...they hold festival celebrating great sacrifices, and more wine of grapes is consumed upon that festival than during the whole of the rest of the year.”



GREEKS

Olympic Games:

- have become the ultimate mega event
- once symbolic of amateurs and youth, now a commercial spectacle highly sought after for mostly symbolic plus economic benefits



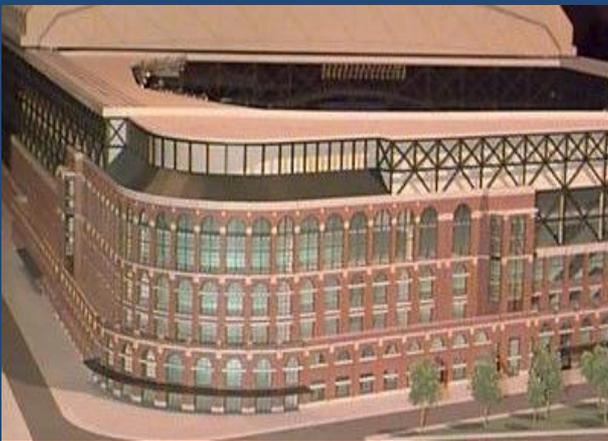
Roman Games

- **Modern gladiators no longer (deliberately) kill their opponents, but essentially this form of spectacular entertainment survives in many sports and entertainment events**
- **Who were the event designers and producers of the day?**



EVENT VENUES

The Coliseum remains in use today for special events! It was the prototype of modern arenas, exhibition and shopping centres.



Anyone in the facility management business is automatically in the event management business! And probably tourism as well.

THE PLANNED EVENT EXPERIENCE

- Every event has a purpose and goals
- They are transforming processes, not ends in themselves
- Leisure and event experiences are highly personal, yet socially moderated
- Designers can influence experiences but cannot create them
- All too often event managers constrain experiences, rather than facilitate them

Experiential Typology?

- Because experiences are primarily personal (cognitive processes; memories, emotions, behaviours) there is no way to predict what they will be at any given event.
- Events can suggest a range of desired and prohibited experiences through theming, programme, setting, management systems, communications.
- Events tend to constrain experiences rather than enable (i.e., managers do not aim to liberate people to experience anything unusual or unsanctioned)
- There are many different people / groups having event-related experiences (volunteers, guests, performers, competitors, media, officials, etc.).
- I have tried to indicate the major experiences associated with different types of events, but these are really what we expect certain events to offer, not what is possible at the personal and groups levels.

MEANINGS ATTACHED TO EVENTS AND EVENT EXPERIENCES

- Meanings are culturally influenced
- The value we place on events reflects their meaning to persons, groups, corporations, government
- Any functional typology of events is based on what they do as instruments of strategy or policy

Functional Typologies

- As instruments of policy and corporate or industry strategy, events can be classified by their functions.
- Tourism: hallmark events; mega event; media event
- Social marketing: educational/communications event; fund raiser
- Corporate Strategy: live communication; publicity stunt; sales event

EVENT POPULATIONS

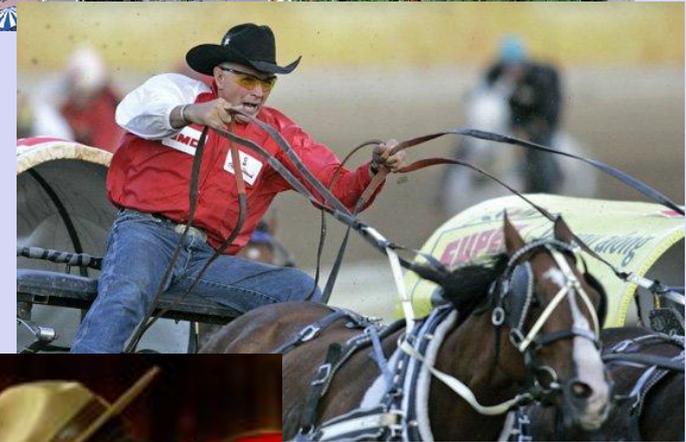
- Little is known about event populations in cities and countries; research has just begun
- The health of the population is more important than any single event.
- What is the right balance? the necessary level of government intervention?
- Festivalization is a concern (lack of authenticity; duplication of effort; resources wasted?)

EVENTS IN CALGARY: and POPULATION ECOLOGY

- Every community has its population of planned events, periodic and one-time.
- Although many are organic, springing from the community, increasingly, these are viewed as ‘portfolios’ for strategic purposes - especially tourism, cultural and social policy.
- The health of the population (and how do we measure this?) is more important than the survival of any one event.

Calgary Traditions

- From agricultural fair, to industrial exhibition, to the Stampede, in 125 years.
- A celebration of (mythical?) Western cultures and lifestyle.
- At once a fair, rodeo, exhibition, festival, parade and excuse for partying.
- Calgary's Hallmark Event (i.e., co-branded with the City's image)
- Stampede Park and Urban Renewal



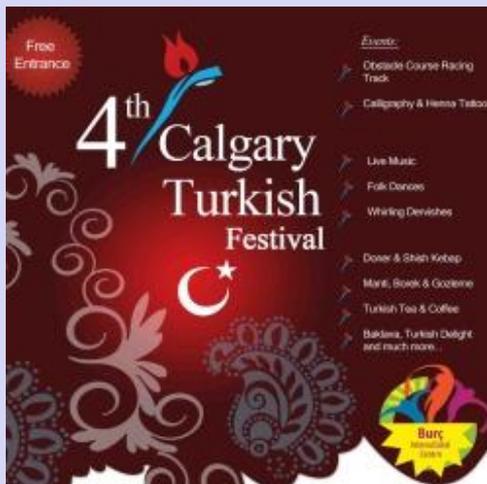
Calgary and the Arts

- A Summer of Arts Festivals
- The city is trying to develop an arts-friendly image and become a cultural tourism destination



Calgary Communities

- Ethnic and Multicultural
- Special Interests



Calgary Sport

- Teams and venues
- 1988 Winter Olympics (and the venues/volunteer legacy)
- Positioning as a Winter Sports Capital
- Sport Tourism Strategy and Successes



HOW WE VALUE PLANNED EVENTS

- ECONOMIC (has dominated from a policy and strategy perspective)
- SYMBOLIC: the place marketing and branding (symbolic) roles of events has been gaining importance; this also applies to many causes (social marketing)
- CULTURAL (value recognized mostly by culture and arts policy makers)
- SOCIAL (increasing emphasis on events as instruments of social policy, including integration, identity building, and health)
- PERSONAL: individuals benefit from engagement with events, both as organizers, volunteers, participants and spectators
- ENVIRONMENTAL (usually considered in terms of negative impacts; but events should be viewed as proactive instruments of environmental policy)

Events as “Public Goods”

Many events help implement existing policies on health, culture, sport, community development, the economy.

The **Social Equity Principle**: for “public goods” it is justifiable for governments to subsidize or produce events in order to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy them or otherwise gain benefits from them.

Events as “Public Goods”

To be considered as “public goods” the following criteria should be met...

- Public benefits are substantial, inclusive (everyone can gain), and can be demonstrated through evaluation.
- There are rules for investing in events, and there is an accountability process.

Economic Justifications

- **“Market Failure”**: the private sector cannot profit, so governments must get involved if events are to be held or event facilities built.
- **“ROI”**: Government can make money, and its **Return on Investment** is usually in the form of taxes generated by events and event tourism, or perhaps in terms of employment created.
- **“Economic Efficiency”**: stimulating event tourism is a good way to more efficiently utilize (and justify) public parks and facilities.

ECONOMIC EXCHANGE THEORY

The common theme in all planned events is exchange, because they are all social experiences with a purpose and important meanings –whether economic, social, cultural or familial in scope.

EVENTS PROVIDE NECESSARY MEANS OF ECONOMIC EXCHANGE

- (fairs, markets, exhibitions, trade and consumer shows)

AND THE EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE

- (business meetings, learning and demonstrating events)

POSSIBLE ECONOMIC GOALS	RELATED POLICY INITIATIVES	VALUE (Performance Measures)
-foster event tourism	-establish event tourism as a policy domain	-measure event tourism yield relative to other tourists
-leverage events for general economic development	-develop an event portfolio strategy for the community or destination	-tourism growth
-use events to maximize venue efficiency	-integrate event policy with venue investment and operations	-demonstrable ‘legacy’ benefits
-use events in place marketing (e.g., image enhancement)	-integrate event policy with place marketing and other economic development	-evaluation of image enhancement

Social and Psychological Justifications

Events can create “**psychic benefits**” that are intangible, but citizens value them:

- feeling good; relief from stress
- learning; being entertained
- socializing
- civic pride



“**Existence Value**”: (people might support events even if they do not believe they tangibly benefit from them)

Social and Psychological Justifications

- sub-group identification and legitimacy
- social integration (inter-group mixing and understanding)
- host-guest contacts (tourists and residents)
- encouraging **civil society** (volunteering, donating) or **“social capital”**
- providing positive role models (athletes, artists, entrepreneurs)



Cultural Justifications



- All cultures need to celebrate their core values and what makes them different (these events are powerful attractions for cultural tourists).
- Culture-led urban regeneration, renewal, and development benefits from festivals and events to animate places. Some critics claim this leads to “festivalization”.
- **“Cultural Capital”** (what exactly is at risk? Invested? Or does cultural capital just keep accruing through participation in cultural festivals?)

POSSIBLE CULTURAL GOALS	RELATED POLICY INITIATIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
-foster arts and cultural development through investment in events	-integrate events in cultural policy and arts development strategies	-assess the overall effectiveness of arts and cultural development in the community
-leverage events for general and indigenous cultural development	-integrate events in policies for indigenous peoples	-measure effects on indigenous community well being
-use events to maximize venue efficiency	-develop specific event funding programs	-determine the contribution of events to cultural facility viability
-foster sustainable cultural event tourism	-develop cultural themes and programming for all events	-measure economic and other benefits of cultural event tourism

SOCIAL DIMENSION

- In this dimension the emphasis is on groups coming together for many purposes.
- Social significance increases as events progress from those that are small and private, or affinity-based, to large, public gatherings like festivals.
- Social policy aims to harness the power of events to create or reinforce identity (place and cultural), integration, and civil society.



POSSIBLE SOCIAL GOALS	RELATED POLICY INITIATIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
-foster social integration and community development through a program of public events	-integrate events with urban renewal, social and community development policy	-assess the overall effectiveness of social policy and the roles of events
-combat social problems at and surrounding events (hooliganism, crime, etc.)	-provide resources for combating social problems associated with events	-assess all events on their behavioural impacts
-leverage events for urban renewal	-formulate policy regarding the use of public spaces for events, both formal and informal	-determine the value of events in animating urban spaces
-use events to enhance health and wellness	-integrate events with policy for sport, parks and recreation -integrate events with health and wellness policy	-connect events to health and wellness benefits

SYMBOLIC VALUE

- Numerous rites and rituals for persons and small groups might generate travel, but seldom attract public attention.
- Any planned event can be created as a media event, thereby contributing to place or social marketing (causes).
- Pilgrimages, VIP tours, summits and other large media events hold high symbolic value for cities and even nations.

POSSIBLE SYMBOLIC GOALS	RELATED POLICY INITIATIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -enhance the image of destinations and communities -place marketing (attract residents, investors, visitors) -create a sense of place (uniqueness, authenticity) leading to place identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -integrate event policy with planning, marketing, communications strategies -apply consistent place branding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -measures of media reach and effectiveness are needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -leverage events with positive media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -provide messages to all events; develop their media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -measures of media reach and effectiveness are needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -communicate important messages through the media of events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -create and build events as communications media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -measure changes in attitude and behaviour

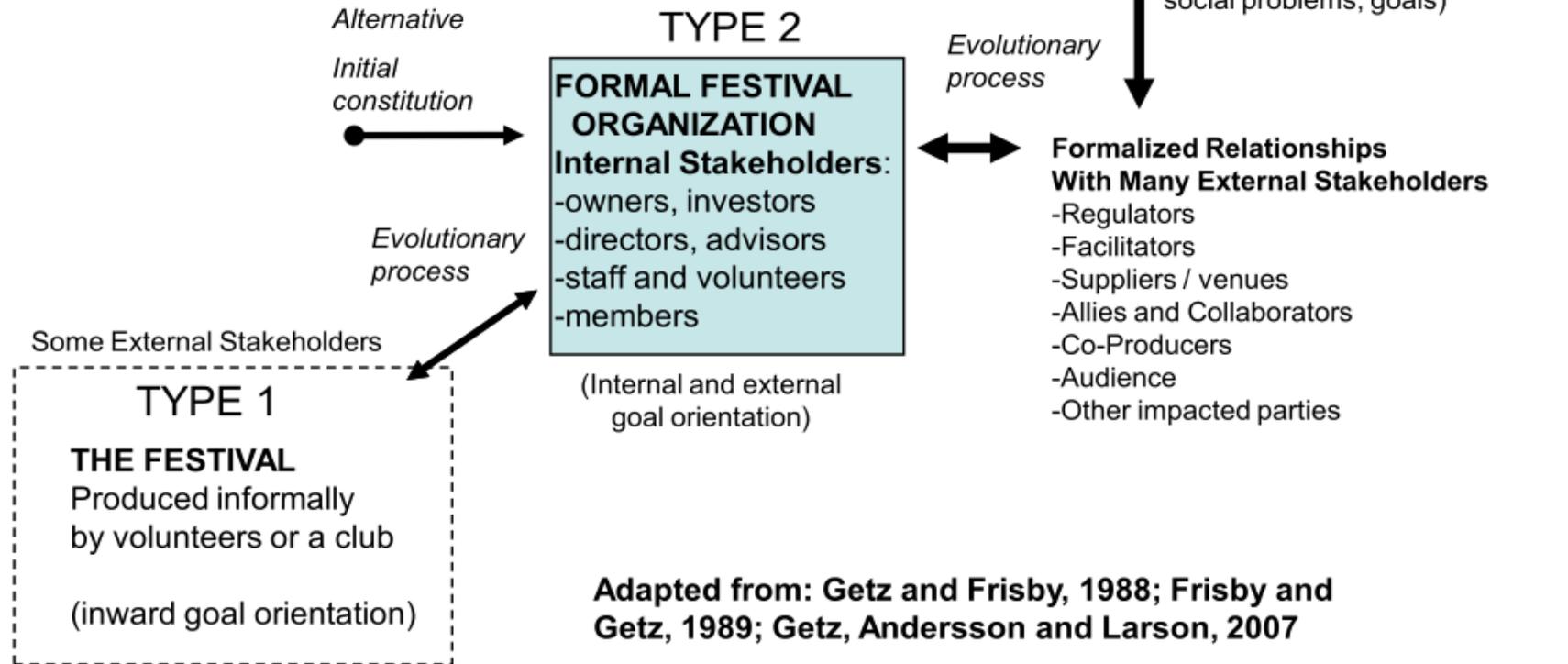
EVENTS AS INSTITUTIONS

- Numerous events have secured a permanent place in their communities
- they perform essential roles, meeting important needs
- they are taken for granted, and if threatened must be saved
- if lost, they must be restored (e.g., Mardi Gras in New Orleans)
- they are usually Hallmark Events (iconic, co-branded with the city or destination)

Typology of Festivals in the Context of Institutionalization

This is a classification based on the degree to which events are **EMBEDDED** in their community, or within an institutional network.

Getz, D., and Andersson, T. (2009). Sustainable festivals: On becoming an institution. *Event Management*, 12 (1): 1-17.



Adapted from: Getz and Frisby, 1988; Frisby and Getz, 1989; Getz, Andersson and Larson, 2007

PERSONAL DIMENSION

- Often overlooked, planned events provide numerous leisure and personal development benefits to individuals:
 - being entertained; spectating; consuming
 - learning; aesthetic appreciation
 - volunteering
 - participating as competitor or performer
 - socializing
 - identity building (access to social worlds)
 - **Arguably, the more engaged /involved the individual becomes, the greater the personal and social benefits.**

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES AND DEVELOPMENT

- Solo attendance at events (as spectator, audience, performer or competitor) is not necessarily social in nature and does not necessarily generate economic impact
- The larger the event, the more opportunities there are for social interaction, travel, engagement with the event (personal involvement) and self development
- Public events offer a different range of personal opportunities, including service to the community, culture, or civil society

POSSIBLE PERSONAL GOALS	RELATED POLICY INITIATIVES	VALUE (Performance Measures)
-Maximise human development through events	-view events as instruments of human development; integrate events with health policy	-need to study how people benefit from events (participation in events and the event experience)
-foster participation in sports and arts through events	-integrate events with cultural and leisure/sport policy	-measure increases in participation
-increase volunteering opportunities and benefits to individuals and the community	-training and placement services for event volunteers	-measure voluntarism across the entire event population
-increase opportunities for people to be involved in event organization and planning for events	-integrate events policy with community development and social services	-measures of engagement and participation

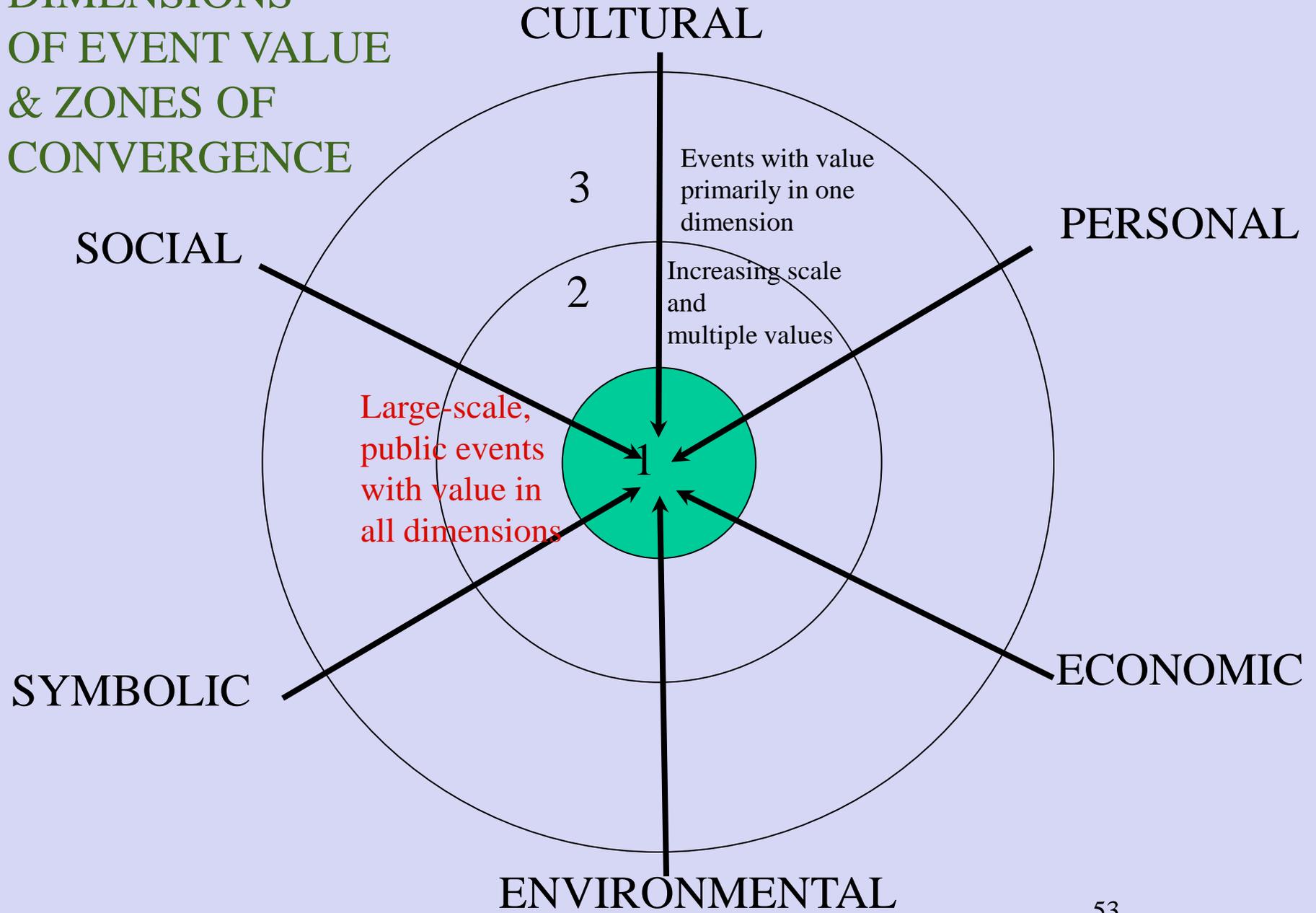
ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

- The environment as context.
- All events have environmental impacts;
- therefore all events should be green and environmentally sustainable.
- Furthermore, events should be forces for environmental education and attitude change, conservation, and recovery.
- More events should have environmental themes.
- In the future, events will be valued as ways to keep people at home (staycations) thereby avoiding waste and pollution.



POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS	RELATED POLICY INITIATIVES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>-require green and sustainable events and event venues</p>	<p>-integrate event policy with planning, land use, and all environmental management systems.</p> <p>-supply chain controls</p> <p>-full life-cycle accounting</p>	<p>-develop comprehensive environmental standards and evaluation measures for events and event venues</p>
<p>-leverage events for environmental education and development</p>	<p>-provide environmental material to events</p>	<p>-evaluate the social marketing effectiveness of environmental messages at events</p>
<p>-foster events with environmental themes</p>	<p>-create new environmentally themed events</p>	<p>-measure changes in attitude and behaviour</p>

DIMENSIONS OF EVENT VALUE & ZONES OF CONVERGENCE



NEW DIRECTIONS IN VALUING EVENTS

- We need legitimized measures and methods
- Institutions have to educate students, practitioners and policy-makers on valuing events (not just impact assessments)
- Valuing whole populations of events has not been addressed, except for some thought to event tourism portfolios.

NEW DIRECTIONS: QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

- How are events sources of social and cultural capital? (events and the civil society)
- What is the value of a permanent event institution? a hallmark event?
- What is event authenticity worth in the context of globalization?
- How can we maximize the value of events for self-development?
- How do we measure symbolic value (e.g., of a hallmark event)?
- What is the “green value” of events that keep people at home (staycations)?
- What is the educational value of events (e.g., learning about the environment, arts, culture, health)?