Place-based community events and resistance to territorial stigmatisation

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Abstract

Purpose – Place-based community events fulfil important functions, internally and externally. They provide opportunities for people from diverse communities and cultures to encounter each other, to participate in pleasurable activities in convivial settings and to develop mutual understanding. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the value of such events as a means of resisting or challenging the deleterious effects of territorial stigmatisation.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors explore two place-based community events in areas that have been subject to territorial stigmatisation: Govanhill in Glasgow, Scotland, and South Dunedin, New Zealand. They draw on in-depth case study methods including observation and interviews with key local actors and employ inductive analysis to identify themes across the datasets.

Findings – The demonstrate how neighbourhood events in both Glasgow and Dunedin actively seek to address some of the deleterious outcomes of territorial stigmatisation by emphasising strength and asset-based discourses about the areas they reflect and represent. In their planning and organisation, both events play an important mediating role in building and empowering community, fostering intercultural encounters with difference and strengthening mutuality within their defined places. They make use of public and semi-public spaces to attract diverse groups while also increasing the visibility of marginalised populations through larger showcase events.

Research limitations/implications – The empirical element focuses only on two events, one in Glasgow, Scotland (UK), and the other in South Dunedin (New Zealand). Data generated were wholly qualitative and do not provide quantitative evidence of "change" to material circumstances in either case study community.

Practical implications – Helps organisers think about how they need to better understand their communities if they are to attract diverse participation, including how they programme public and semi-public spaces.

Social implications – Place-based community events have significant value to neighbourhoods, and they need to be resourced effectively if they are to sustain the benefits they produce. These events provide an opportunity for diverse communities to encounter each other and celebrate what they share rather than what divides them.

Originality/value – This paper is the first to examine how place-based community events help resist narratives of territorial stigmatisation, which produce negative representations about people and their environments. The paper draws on ethnographic insights generated over time rather than a one-off snapshot which undermines some events research.

Keywords Territorial stigmatisation, Place-based community events, Community festivals, Conviviality

Paper type Research paper

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Introduction

Festivals and events are important for communities across the world. They represent and reflect diversity, both socially and culturally, and provide a means for people from different backgrounds to inhabit shared spaces for collective experiences, even if only episodically. While many festivals and events are associated with genre (e.g. music, theatre, literature or sport) or whole cities (e.g. Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Cannes Film Festival), others are inseparable from the neighbourhood or suburb that hosts them. Place-based community events, especially those staged in neighbourhoods that have experienced territorial stigmatisation (Wacquant, 2007), can fulfil important community functions. Internally, such events can provide opportunities for people from diverse communities and cultures to encounter each other, to participate in pleasurable activities in convivial settings and to develop mutual understanding (Petersen, 2017; Spijkers and Loopmans, 2020; Piekut and Valentine, 2017). Facilitated through place-based community events, habitual fleeting encounters can produce sustained benefits (Amin, 2012) including the production of positive emotions and familiarity towards others (Wilson, 2017; Petersen, 2017). However, these events can also exacerbate tensions, highlighting power imbalances, intolerances and inequalities that exist in communities that have been subject to stigmatisation.

In this paper, our concern is the extent to which place-based community events can provide the foundation for resistance to territorial stigmatisation. We focus on the role place-based community events play in what Clare *et al.* (2018) describe as bottom-up territories of potencia (power to), where new social organisations and new subjects can be built which appropriate their space as territories of resistance. We explore resistance to territorial stigmatisation through two case studies of place-based community events in Glasgow, Scotland, and Dunedin, New Zealand. Both case events are hosted in areas experiencing territorial stigmatisation related to the prevalence of poverty, racial discrimination and negative media representations. Our guiding research question is

RQ1. To what extent and how can temporary place-based events help resist narratives of territorial stigmatisation?

To achieve this, we draw on in-depth case study methods, including observation at events and interviews with organisers and other local actors. We firstly review the literature on territorial stigmatisation and its resistance to contextualise the research, and then focus on the role of events in this process. Next, we outline the study's methodology before presenting three thematic contributions identified in our analysis. We emphasise the importance of reappropriating space as a form of resistance, fostering collective consciousness and mutuality and, finally, assessing the durable effects of place-based community events. In conclusion, we contend that such events can help resist some of the deleterious outcomes of territorial stigmatisation by emphasising strength and asset-based ideas associated with building and empowering, fostering encounters with difference and strengthening mutuality within a place. However, for place-based community events to be sustainable, they need to extend beyond temporary conviviality and encounters to translate the special memories and connections formed via the carnivalesque into capabilities, capacities and changes to everyday attitudes and values that can help ameliorate or contest the prevalence of deficit-based narratives.

Territorial stigmatisation and its resistance

Over the last few decades, we have seen an increasing number of places becoming stigmatised (Larsen and Delica, 2019). Wacquant (2007) refers to territorial stigmatisation as an outcome of advanced capitalism which creates marginalities concentrated in "isolated and bounded territories increasingly perceived by both outsiders and insiders as social

purgatories, leprous badlands at the heart of the post-industrial metropolis where only the refuse of society would accept to dwell" (p. 67). Building on existing experiences of poverty, ethnic origin or immigrant status, he argues that a blemish of place is produced and reproduced through media representation and popular narratives. These places become known for negative associations with crime, poor housing and for being dangerous to live in, or visit. For Wacquant (2007), a feature of territorial stigmatisation is that places suffer from weakened collectivities and fractured community relations which are exacerbated by internal blaming of others, which he calls lateral denigration and mutual distanciation. When places and their inhabitants experience territorial stigmatisation, collective consciousness and mutuality within the community is also potentially eroded, ironically leading to a "dissolution of 'place'" (Wacquant, 2007, p. 69). Building on Wacquant's work, Mullen (2018) draws on the Glasgow neighbourhood of Govanhill to emphasise how the settlement of a large immigrant Roma population has contributed to ghettoisation narratives. She argues that a "racialisation of space" (p. 206) is generated, exacerbating inequalities and obscuring common experiences shared by different parts of the community. She also contends that the media play a significant role in representations of place, reproducing territorial stigmatisation and focusing on reductive narratives that associate social ills with immigrant populations. As a result, areas can become known as problem places, with the focus on negative portrayals.

While much of the existing literature on territorial stigma focuses on structural factors which appear to be systemic and difficult to contest or change, in recent years there has been a renewed focus on the potential agency of those living in affected areas to "negotiate or directly challenge" it (Larsen and Delica, 2019, p. 541). Here, studies have commented on residents' feelings of "belonging and local pride, even resistance" (p. 552) to stigmatising narratives. So, while residents of stigmatised areas acknowledge the existence of negative stereotypes and representations, there is also a complex, nuanced understanding of the value of the place they live in. This body of literature on resistance and challenge, or what Sisson (2021) calls "territorial struggles" (p. 660), proposes ways in which organised and everyday material and symbolic factors may provide the foundation to resist territorial stigmatisation. Whereas the territorial stigmatisation literature has tended to emphasise the importance of outside and above (e.g. media, political leaders and public institutions), there has been less space given to perspectives from below and inside, those that might challenge distorted (overly negative) representations. As Sisson (2021) suggests, "territory can also be the locus of resistance; just as it can be produced by dominant actors and institutions, it can be produced in grassroots struggles against domination" (p. 660). In this sense, territorial stigmatisation is contestable rather than inevitable.

Events, place and resistance

Our concern in this paper is the extent to which place-based community events can provide the foundation for resistance to territorial stigmatisation. Sisson (2021, p. 673) argues that:

> close social bonds are often created in stigmatised territories and inhabitants have often stressed the contradictions between stigmatising images of the neighbourhoods they live in and their own experiences, highlighting overlooked or misrepresented positive dimensions such as physical amenities, accessibility, community sociability and conviviality, and belonging and place attachment.

There is a growing body of literature exploring how events can contribute to how people can better understand their own, and others, cultural identities (Hassanli *et al.*, 2021) and potentially produce the community sociability and conviviality that Sisson (2021) refers to. Events can also be important vehicles to contest existing (negative) representations of place and provide physical disruptions to stigmatising images (Walters *et al.*, 2022). Hassanli *et al.*

(2020) found that multicultural festivals allow ethnic minority migrants and refugees the opportunity to express their identities and engage in cultural practices in a safe space. This work complements studies focusing on the role of place-based community events in attracting those living near each other, often involving a diverse mix of ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Stevenson, 2021).

Place-based community events are those planned and organised by local inhabitants, social groups and organisations, normally separate from the local state. Like Stevenson (2021), here we focus on "events organised for and by communities, that are motivated by social objectives and have social sustainability outcomes" (p. 1776). These events often include a wide range of activities and interactions and use local space(s) that reflect community histories and traditions. Power struggles, competing value systems, politics and in-group disagreements still exist because community cultural identities are rarely homogenous, but responsibility for ameliorating these issues lies with local organisers rather than with the local state.

Events organised at the community level can generate a shared sense of belonging and identity (Gibson and Connell, 2015; Duffy and Waitt, 2011; Walters, 2019). The very act of drawing together diverse interests within a community to plan and organise place-based community events can produce "short-lived surges of conviviality which can loosen social/spatial relations" (Stevenson, 2021, p. 1778), disrupting conventional ways of being in neighbourhoods. Brownett and Evans (2020) have argued that a sense of belonging can be generated when community arts festivals embrace "local pride and belonging emanating from history and heritage within communities, as well as the memories and stories of those who live there" (p. 2). This focus on initiating or maintaining sociability, conviviality and play can facilitate neighbourliness through the activities that make up community events – planning, organising, delivery and debrief – creating opportunities for shared pleasurable experiences (Stevenson, 2021).

In the place-based event literature, the concept of social capital also features heavily. Stevenson (2021) suggests that community events contribute to social capital by encouraging social interaction, community participation, sense of place and well-being. Such events can promote capacity-building through encouraging people to interact socially, to participate and to develop skills in the local population through volunteering or event organisation, a finding corroborated by Walters et al. (2021). However, social capital comes in different forms and is unlikely to be built and sustained without clear strategies for how participation, capacity building and positive emotions towards others can be exploited (Devine and Quinn, 2019), especially in super-diverse communities. Devine and Quinn (2019), for example, highlight that while events can help build social capital, they can also exacerbate existing social and cultural divisions, especially if there is insufficient focus on developing bridging social capital that extends beyond existing group bonds and ties. Furthermore, while place-based events can encourage community participation, there is less evidence that facilitating largely superficial encounters with others is sufficient to produce positive longer-term outcomes, including reducing cultural tensions or community conflict (Hassanli et al., 2021; Stevenson, 2021).

Nevertheless, Stevenson (2021) suggests that creating pleasurable spaces, facilitated by sharing of food, drinks and other cultural forms, can help neighbourhoods go beyond superficial pleasantries, simultaneously enhancing cohesion but also disrupting taken-for-granted expectations and understandings of each other. It is important to recognise that communities and neighbourhoods are complex territories, with residents distributed in different wards or areas. Outdoor public spaces play an important role in the occupation, appropriation and ownership of places (Hassanli et al., 2020). Misener and Mason (2006) note that events play an important role in marking "who makes claims to civic space" (p. 394). Citroni and Karrholm (2019) suggest that events bring visibility to elements of everyday life in the way they interact with urban spaces used to stage them. Spijkers and Loopmans (2020)

state that while public spaces represent a great environment for fleeting encounters with different others, "there is little pressure to interact and interactions are often selective" (p. 1161). They go on to argue that parochial (both semi-public and institutional) places facilitate "more regular contacts with the same group of (different) individuals [. . .] regular contact stimulates more intense interaction".

Finally, the way place-based community events are constituted and organised is also important (Clarke and Jepson, 2011; Walters, 2019; Walters *et al.*, 2021). As Stevenson (2021, p. 1783) argues, "power inequalities exist within communities and even when events are instigated and organised from the bottom-up, outcomes and benefits can reflect and even reinforce disparities within communities". Disparities and inequalities can therefore be exacerbated further, depending on who organises the event, how it is promoted (and where) and the explicit purpose advertised. Walters *et al.* (2021) suggest that empowerment of marginalised communities through events *is* possible, but that an explicit focus on the creation of (particularly) the socio-structural dimensions of empowerment at all phases of event organisation is needed for this to happen. In sum, to be effective at resisting top-down narratives of territorial stigmatisation, place-based community events must add value to what already exists, reflect residents' aspirations and existing local capacities and recognise the role of power dynamics in empowering communities (Brownett and Evans, 2020; Walters *et al.*, 2021).

Research context
This comparative study draws on in-depth enquiries of place-based community events in two different areas that have similar characteristics – both events are located in communities experiencing territorial stigmatisation, suffering from negative media portrayals, and were established to help address the deleterious outcomes of stigmatisation.

Scotland: Govanhill International Festival and Carnival
The Govanhill International Festival and Carnival (GIFC) is a place-based community arts festival that is outwardly anti-racist, focusing on a super-diverse neighbourhood in Glasgow, Scotland. Govanhill, in the south of the city, has been beset by poor housing, low income, high recorded levels of crime, high levels of migrant populations and negative media representation (Mullen, 2018). The neighbourhood is unique within the UK, being the most ethnically diverse community outside of London with 81 languages spoken by 52 ethnic groups (Clark, 2014). Govanhill has been an area of settlement, historically, with "influxes of Irish, Jewish, Italian and Pakistani migration from its establishment in the nineteenth century onwards" (Mullen, 2018, p. 208). However, from the early 2000s, immigration from the European Union meant that the Roma community became the largest population of migrants in Govanhill. Accompanying the influx of the Roma community were "allegations of criminality, public nuisance, sanitation issues, anti-social behaviour, inappropriate rubbish disposal and overcrowding" (Clark, 2014, p. 41). As Mullen (2018, p. 221) has suggested through "a process of territorial stigmatisation over time, Roma have thus been racialised through distinctly place-based constructions, while Govanhill has been constructed as a problem place through its association with Roma". It is in this context that the GIFC was established.

The first GIFC took place in 2016 to mark the 40th anniversary of Rock Against Racism. Since then, the festival and its annual carnival procession has sought to generate awareness, understanding and tolerance of difference through its activities. Core to its ambition is the promotion of anti-racism, which includes improving the profile of the area, from within and outwith. Its organisers also state their goal is to increase learning about a range of cultures living in the area; change perceptions, attitudes and behaviours; and increase understanding

of the local area, including history, current challenges and accomplishments. They also have a commitment to community well-being, using arts and creativity as a tool to strengthen sense of place and social cohesion in the area.

New Zealand: South Dunedin Street Festival

South Dunedin (2018 population 6,100) is a collection of four small but diverse, low-socio economic suburbs of the city of Dunedin (2018 population 126,300) in the lower South Island of New Zealand. It is home to proportionately more seniors, people with disabilities, sole parents, refugees and ethnic minority migrants than the wider Dunedin population, with lower incomes, lower rates of home and car ownership, lower levels of education and less access to mobile phones and the Internet (StatsNZ, 2018). Media narratives often report South Dunedin residents feeling "uncared for" by local government in the aftermath of a flooding event in 2015 and the general underinvestment in infrastructure in the area prior to 2011 (George, 2015; Morris, 2009; Price, 2012). These elements combined mean that South Dunedin carries negative connotations and is stigmatised by residents in the wider city.

It is against this backdrop that the South Dunedin Street Festival (SDSF) was established in 2011, quickly becoming a popular annual event in the community calendar. This place-based community event has a singular focus: to celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of South Dunedin, thereby fostering a sense amongst residents that they are "Proud to be South D". The 2017 promotional poster explicitly stated that the festival celebrates:

> all things South Dunedin; all the fantastic variety and diversity of cultures, community groups, families and striking individuals that make up this special part of town. The Festival aims to both build a stronger sense of community, and to showcase the amazing resilience that's already here, at times almost hidden . . .

The SDSF is supported (both in kind and some financial) by a range of sponsors and receives some funding from local government. It targets the local community living in and around South Dunedin, and has a wide range of activities to appeal to a diverse audience – the local restaurants and cafes are open, and many of them have stalls outside on the street, plus there are food trucks from outside the area; there is music, dance and cultural performances; local government and social services have information stands to educate local residents about the support and services available to them; and there is a dedicated KidsZone run by the combined local churches.

Methods

In studying place-based community events, it is important to be able to assess them over time and make use of different methods to avoid the emergence of reductive analyses. As befits the research question, a qualitative approach to enquiry was taken.

Data collection

In both settings, we immersed ourselves in the environment by undertaking observation at a minimum of three editions of each event. We developed a bespoke template to ensure consistency in note-taking between the two events – prompts in the template guided us in what to observe and what to record, including event focus, event identity, marketing and promotion, event structure, space (physical and virtual), actors and organisers, participants, audiences and tensions.

In Scotland, observation of the GIFC took place in 2019, 2020 (this edition was organised as a hybrid online/offline event), 2021 and 2022. This included attending the carnival parade and other events in 2019, 2021 and 2022, virtual attendance at several online events in 2020 and

in-person attendance at the COVID-19-compliant Street Music Festival in 2020. In New Zealand, in-person observation took place at the SDSF in 2017, 2019 and 2021 (events were cancelled in 2018 due to weather, and in 2020 due to COVID-19). Visual documentations in the form of photographs, posters, flyers and signage were also collected at both events.

Alongside observations we conducted semi-structured interviews with organisers of both festivals. In Scotland, this included an interview with the coordinator of GIFC in 2020, and a group interview with three different representatives in 2021 (director of the community anchor organisation, the community development worker and festival coordinator). In New Zealand, interviews were conducted with three organisers of the SDSF. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim for later analysis. Additionally, short informal conversations were conducted with attendees at each event (Walters, 2019), and extensive notes were taken immediately afterwards rather than recording due to (1) power imbalance and discomfort of attendees at being recorded and (2) background noise. Our primary data were supplemented with analysis of background information on each festival, including programmes, funding applications, evaluation reports and other relevant electronic and hard-copy documentation. Across both cases, we explored different spaces of encounter, observing interactions in public, semi-public and institutional spaces (Spijkers and Loopmans, 2020).

Data analysis
Thematic analysis facilitates a rich and nuanced understanding of complex social phenomena such as that under investigation here (Braun and Clarke, 2019). It is an iterative, nonlinear, reflexive process that goes back and forth across the different phases of analysis. Initial points of interest are noted on the first reading of the material, and during subsequent readings these are slowly condensed and consolidated into a series of increasingly higher-order themes. At the point where the themes can no longer be condensed, they are checked for coherence and internal homogeneity by going back to the initial codes and examples that comprise each theme (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

We employed an inductive approach to identify themes across all datasets – interview transcripts, informal conversation notes, field notes from participant observation, photographs and secondary documentation. The focus of the analysis was on understanding how the events functioned to resist narratives of territorial stigmatisation. We worked both independently and collaboratively as a form of investigator triangulation (Decrop, 2004). We each analysed the data we had collected, and then came together to discuss and assess our interpretations; the other authors provided alternative perspectives and acted as "critical outsiders" (Lofland *et al.*, 2006; Braun and Clarke, 2019).

Findings and discussion
We identified three key themes from the empirical material that show how these place-based community events are helping overcome territorial stigmatisation: spatiality (the [re] appropriation of space as a form of resistance), fostering collective consciousness and mutuality (the loss of which is one of the negative outcomes of territorial stigmatisation) and temporality (the importance of regularity for effecting cumulative and durable change). We discuss each of these in turn.

Spatiality: reappropriating space as a form of resistance
Place-based community events are often established to celebrate the unique characteristics of an area, or to address social issues such as the territorial stigmatisation experienced in Govanhill and South Dunedin. Depending on the diversity of the host place and its resident population, people can live in the same area but use or occupy spaces that are quite distinct

from each other. Spijkers and Loopmans (2020, p. 1156) suggest that "public spaces are the most likely places for fleeting encounters with people of different ethno-cultural backgrounds", but they can produce only brief moments of sociality. It is the semi-public spaces like streets or neighbourhood greenspaces that are a valuable environment for "more regular, repeated, and often more persistent co-presence of individuals" (p. 1156) because they require interaction, and this can be the basis of engagement with strangers. The way place-based community events are organised, including where performances are staged, can help address (or exacerbate) spatial disparities that exist in the community. As Stevenson (2021, p. 1787) suggests:

> There are considerable challenges in creating community event spaces which are perceived as welcoming to everyone, particularly in places where diverse understandings, experiences and allegiances within the community underpin different uses of space and tension between groups. Different norms and practices around communal spaces and facilities influences peoples' decision to participate in community events.

Spatially, it is important that the environments used to host event experiences are familiar to those being asked to participate. The choice of space is also important depending on whether the objective is to bring people together in public space to facilitate new encounters with strangers, or to create an environment that generates bridging capital and a psychological sense of community (Devine and Quinn, 2019; Hassanli et al., 2020).

In the case of the GIFC, we found that the streets, small greenspaces and some institutional spaces in the Govanhill area played a particularly important role in achieving the event's ambitions to encourage intercultural encounters and foreground anti-racist messages. Govanhill's streets are particularly important spaces, bound up in the radical history of the area in recent times, linked to a campaign to reopen its Victorian swimming pool close in the early 2000s (Paddison and Sharp, 2007). As the GIFC coordinator suggested:

> ownership of the streets has been a feature of Govanhill life since the campaign to save the Baths in 2001. At that time the streets were literally taken over by local people and activists (140+ days) [. . .] parades, marches and events were always a key element of the campaign – that continues with the Festival and other related events (Organiser #1, personal interview).

In its planning and programming, the GIFC organisers recognise the specificity and nuances of the locality, empowering residents to reappropriate both indoor and outdoor spaces to celebrate. This approach was informed by understanding of the ways local people inhabit and negotiate their neighbourhood. The non-everydayness of the GIFC essentially permits residents to occupy the streets, and to be visible, providing them with territories of potencia (Clare et al., 2018) to contest negative representations. Having permission to be present in the streets to celebrate their culture is transformational when this activity has previously been viewed as a problem. The annual carnival parade is deliberately planned to travel through Govanhill via a route designed to pass parts of the area where different nationalities reside, before culminating in a concert in the local public park which is already popular and well used by the area's residents. Here, existing ties and bonds are reinforced by passing through discrete areas, while interactions with others are encouraged by gathering in a popular public park. The parade is crucial to the GIFC in terms of highlighting and seeking to ameliorate potential problems around difference, intolerance and racism that can be exacerbated in areas subject to territorial stigmatisation (Wacquant, 2007). As the GIFC coordinator states:

> when you take it out onto the streets and off the laptop, 99% of the people are totally and completely behind you. People wave out of their windows, out of the shops. People are happy to stop, even cars, peeping their horns, shouting at us. It's good for us. People from the more diverse communities here in Govanhill for them to be out and being around another 1,000 people who are marching along with them, doing the same thing. No-one is giving them the hostility they would quite often get. It's a

demonstration – not in terms of demonstrating against something – we're demonstrating that this is Govanhill, this parade is what Govanhill is like. It's colourful, it's noisy, it's diverse, you know (Organiser #1, personal interview)

Specific streetscapes and small greenspaces also carry particular value for some of the area's communities, and that is why GIFC activities are staged there. In seeking to embrace the culture of the area's growing Roma community, the GIFC coordinator stated that:

people gather in the streets in Govanhill, mainly because there are people from Romania who are used to being outside meeting friends but also because some of the housing around here is absolutely terrible [. . .] there are a couple of spaces – there's Govanhill park which is a wee park around the corner there. We always start the Romano Lav parades there [. . .] And because the park is on Westmoreland Street it is used quite a lot by the Roma communities.

This accommodation of the cultural traditions of the Roma community meant that when coronavirus impacted most events in 2020, the GIFC could still run a Street Music Festival to celebrate the area's diverse cultural traditions and facilitate encounters between residents (Plate 1). They used outdoor public spaces alongside private or semi-private spaces (including courtyards and doorsteps) in the neighbourhood to disperse audiences and avoid mass gatherings. This initiative produced a vibrant and convivial atmosphere in the neighbourhood at a time when outdoor sociality had been severely curtailed – permitting visible demonstrations of the area's diverse culture at precisely the time when vulnerabilities were at their most significant.

In the case of the SDSF, a 450 m stretch of South Dunedin's main street is closed for the event, two stages are erected at either end for performances by local musicians and in the central area a large truck deck is utilised as a performance space for a wide variety of cultural and dance groups. In this way, the diversity of the community is physically centred and highlighted within the event. Seating is provided, which encourages attendees to stay and

Source(s): Third author

watch the performances and to interact with each other. Small marquees are set up in the middle of the street, food trucks are welcome and many local organisations and businesses set up stalls outside their shops. In 2017, one attendee noted the importance of the spatiality of the event, remarking that, unlike a market day, "it's right *in* the community, amongst the shops so it has positive benefits for them too, rather than being in a carpark isolated somewhere". Through the closure of the main street, local residents are able to "take over" and reappropriate space in a way that is not possible in their everyday lives, laying claim to the physical street in a way that empowers them to be "Proud to be South D". One of the organisers feels that this street closure is different to that for other events held in the centre of the city:

> It's really interesting, I dunno, I'm probably looking through my own, rose-coloured eyes, but it's always better when that [South Dunedin] street is closed off than when [the market day event held in] 'Thieves Alley' in the centre city is closed off, it doesn't seem quite so special or . . . the Vogel Street Party. Yeah, the South D Festival is different, it's not . . . as 'hip and cool' but it's kind of old fashioned, and people really do seem to appreciate that. (Organiser #3, personal interview)

South Dunedin residents are not used to having such "power to roam" in their everyday lives, with busy roads, poorly maintained infrastructure, densely packed housing and a lack of greenspace and parks making it difficult to enjoy and feel safe being outdoors. But perhaps more fundamentally, the closure of the main street provides the only possible venue that can host such a large event, unlike other areas of the city where there are a number of indoor or outdoor venue options with capacity.

Unfortunately, and as with Govanhill, spatial disparities exist, and the disadvantages of the street venue highlight this. The SDSF is cancelled more frequently than other events in the city due to the demographics of attendees (many are elderly, have mobility challenges or are disabled), the wind-tunnel effect of the area's layout and lack of alternative venues, and it is therefore the street-based nature of the event that distinguishes it in more ways than one. Furthermore, there are many small not-for-profit and other types of interest groups and organisations in South Dunedin which are largely invisible to the wider community: they have no physical space or "shopfront" to serve as a focal point, and the ability to have such a highly visible spatial presence through a stall or information stand is important for public awareness and connection. We elaborate on this in the following text. In both the GIFC and SDSF, territorial stigma is not removed by reappropriating space. Instead, as part of ongoing territorial struggles, being present and visible in public space and having celebrations represented via more positive media narratives, starts to address the "problem places" narrative.

Fostering collective consciousness and mutuality
Many have demonstrated that place-based community events can play an active role in facilitating positive outcomes such as enhancing place identities, enabling intercultural encounters, building social capital and improving individual subjective well-being (Andrews and Leopold, 2013; Hassanli *et al.*, 2020, 2021; Jaeger and Mykletun, 2013; Jepson and Clarke, 2015a, b; Piazzi and Harris, 2016). However, events cannot address all the challenges faced by neighbourhoods or communities, especially those that are super-diverse and complex. Research suggests that community events can also exclude and disempower groups, sometimes exacerbating social hierarchies within communities (Clarke and Jepson, 2011; Stevenson, 2021). Whether place-based community events operate inclusively depends on how they are organised, who is involved and what their wider purpose is (Walters *et al.*, 2021). One of the negative outcomes of territorial stigmatisation identified by Wacquant (2007) is the loss of collective consciousness and mutuality as lateral denigration and mutual distanciation

undermine a sense of place. Both the GIFC and SDSF seek to address a loss of collectivity and mutuality through their organisational arrangements and integration of the temporary, one-off event with other initiatives, including building event-related activities into the use of institutional spaces to prolong contact.

The GIFC is organised and programmed to address tensions that exist in the multi-diverse Govanhill community. It is formally operated by the Govanhill Baths Community Trust (GBCT), an activist organisation founded in 2004 after the protests against the closure of the local swimming pool in 2001. This organisation is anchored in the area, and acts as the hub for many community-based activities and organisations. Art and creativity were an integral part of the Baths' occupation and since then have remained central to the work of the GBCT in their delivery of year-round programmes and activities. These activities take place in premises run by the GBCT and its partners and represent an example of the institutional spaces that Spijkers and Loopmans (2020) identify as crucial places of encounter. Alongside fleeting encounters in public or semi-public spaces, art and craft classes in familiar, welcoming venues provide access to more regular contact with the same group of (different) individuals. As Spijkers and Loopmans (2020) suggest, "regular contact stimulates more intense interaction and [. . .] such contacts result in a better understanding of the different other" (p. 1161).

The GIFC was an offshoot of the GBCT's work, building on the arts and creative activities that were core to the organisation's activities during, and since, the occupation. In governance terms, a wide range of community actors are involved in the development and delivery of the festival, with programming devolved as much as possible. This commitment to shared power is based on GBCT's support for grassroots community work, which is reflected in the festival. It has a stated aim to build capacity in smaller organisations, and it argues that "the festival should give a voice and representation to local organisations", through "non patronising partnerships, working together, sharing and exchange" (GBCT community development worker, personal interview). While the GBCT is the main organiser, applying for funding, producing the programme and promoting the GIFC through its networks, the festival is a collaboration between a wide range of local groups and organisations. Some of these are part of the local state, and others operate in the third (charities and trusts) and private (local businesses) sectors. Crucially, many of these partners are credible representatives of the area's diverse nationalities, including Romano Lav (a Roma community voluntary organisation that operates throughout the year). Decision-making processes are devolved to local groups, and their activities focus on the interests of their constituencies.

Similarly, in Dunedin, the organisers of the SDSF have strong links with the community — most live (or have lived) in the neighbourhood and work or own businesses there. Some have worked for social agencies and have an in-depth understanding of the needs of the diverse groups within the community such as seniors, those in financial hardship, disabled people, ethnic minorities and those struggling with addiction. The organisers acknowledge that a general lack of resourcing means that, while there are many different groups and organisations within the community (support organisations, cultural organisations, religious organisations and other interest groups), these groups are often unaware of each other's work and/or existence. This leads to the area becoming factionalised, and while this does not appear on the surface to cause tensions, SDSF organisers recognise that a lack of unity can reduce the ability of the community to speak up on issues of importance:

> South Dunedin's a really diverse community, but because it's so diverse that means that there are THOUSANDS of little groups of all sorts, and what they haven't historically done is talk well to each other. And that's not surprising because a lot of them haven't got much in the way of spare resources. So fragmentation is the flip side of diversity I think. One of the ideas of the festival was to try and bring together some of those groups to see what each other were doing, to share a bit. I think it's really good to get those people seeing each other, knowing about each other in a practical way rather than just reading a list. (Organiser #3, personal interview)

South Dunedin does have a terrible reputation – my son told me "don't go live or work in South Dunedin, that's where the crazies live"! So I think that this community needs to be strengthened, and made articulate so that there's a voice . . . The community needs bringing together. *I* think. I think it's a very disparate community, and a lot of refugees too of course, so anything that brings them together and allows that focus is good. I think it is a community that feels itself powerless. These are all the most powerless groups and they're in one place. (Organiser #2, personal interview)

While there is another free street event held annually in the wider Dunedin city (the Vogel Street Party), people from South Dunedin are generally excluded from attending due to a lack of financial, cultural and/or social capital – the Vogel Street Party has more of a "hipster vibe" with upmarket food and drink, and is held in the revitalised heritage precinct of the city. Having an event in their own South Dunedin *space* that celebrates the uniqueness and diversity of their *own* community is empowering. The SDSF allows many of the attendees both the time and the place to meet others; it is something they look forward to (but so deeply ingrained is the sense of being constantly let down that they are not surprised if it does not happen); and it gives them a sense of pride (Plate 2). In both the GIFC and SDSF, fostering mutual recognition between attendees and a collective pride in their area is paramount, partly as a means of rebutting the external media narratives that feed territorial stigmatisation.

Thus, we observe that for both the GIFC and SDSF, a diverse range of actors come together to promote positive messages about their area, generate opportunities for community participation and proactively represent the area in a favourable light. They were primarily non-state actors working from below and inside (Sisson, 2021), organising festive practices in the spaces most suitable for their communities, but working together with rooted social organisations to maximise the representational benefits within and outside of the boundaries of their territories. Like reappropriating space, sharing power, operating collectively and encouraging mutuality lay the foundations for resisting narratives of territorial stigma.

Plate 2.
Volunteers at the South Dunedin Street Festival 2019

Source(s): Second author

Temporality: the durable effects of place-based community events
There are debates in the literature about the long-term benefits of place-based community events, due to their temporal nature. There is a view that if encounters are habitual and link to personal acquaintance, then positive longer-term outcomes are possible (Amin, 2012). Wilson (2017) argues that fleeting but regular encounters can gradually change attitudes, and Petersen (2017) believes they can contribute to familiarity and collective life – enhancing community belonging. In the event context, Stevenson (2021) also presents a hopeful narrative, suggesting that "practices associated with such events develop community capabilities in that they engage peoples' senses, emotions, thought and imagination through the creation of playful and enjoyable shared activities and experiences" (p. 1786). She also views these developments as providing the foundations for action and activity at the community level through "memories and stories which support more subtle changes in attitudes and values in the longer term" (Stevenson, 2021, p. 1786). While community events are unlikely, by themselves, to bring about fundamental change, they can help produce different conversations, capabilities and connections that go beyond the often tightly regulated environment of policy actions in particular communities. This is especially so when they are linked to other neighbourhood contexts, initiatives and practices. Hassanli *et al.* (2021), for example, found that opportunities created at a community event extended the benefits beyond the event itself, such as showcasing migrant-owned businesses which helped to counter deficit narratives and create a sense of belonging within the wider community. In the current study, we argue that the GIFC and SDSF similarly function as catalysts for longer-term community benefits.

The GIFC is only one (albeit an important) element in a wider set of community development practices that take place in the Govanhill area, crucially involving non-state support organisations like Romano Lav mentioned earlier. The efforts of everyday core activities and services are strengthened by the ability of the GIFC to facilitate more intercultural encounters, attract attention and create positive media stories about the area. Along with the GBCT, the GIFC is also aligned with other celebrations of the unique characteristics of Govanhill's resident population, including International Roma Day festivities which represent a visible display of pride in the area's Roma community. More regular celebrations of diversity are now taking place each year in the area, challenging the stigmatising narratives perpetuated by others (Mullen, 2018). In essence, the GIFC is the culmination of a series of other initiatives that seek to go beyond the temporal to secure durable effects.

Similarly, there is a sense amongst the SDSF organisers that, while the event is not solely responsible for the change that is happening in the South Dunedin community, it both facilitates and reflects the growing connections that are occurring within and between individuals, groups and organisations:

> When we got our [social agency] office out here, and it was an eye-opener to me, that people were so . . . should I say, they weren't down . . . but they walked probably with their heads bent more often than they do now. And we've been out here about 10 years or so now I suppose and, in that time, I've noticed the difference, that, well, yes, something is happening in South Dunedin, and I think the festival has had a HUGE part to play in that. It was something that happened, and people came along, and then it happened the next year, and then when it wasn't there, people missed it. They did miss it. So I think . . . there is sort of an opportunity now, for the local people to believe that South Dunedin can be as good as anywhere else. (Organiser #1, personal interview)

People are making connections both at the festival and through organising the festival. For example, one of the organisers became involved in another community organisation as a result of her experience with the SDSF, and can see flow-on effects with inter-organisation communication which she attributes, at least partly, to the festival:

I feel very passionate about South Dunedin, and there's actually, I'm going to the Stakeholders Group which has been fascinating, because there's a LOT going on in South Dunedin! And they're all representatives of organisations, at least now they're talking to each other. So y'know, they know what each other are doing. (Organiser #2, personal interview)

Other long-term flow-on effects have also been observed. In 2017, the organisers of the Street Festival held the first South Dunedin Busking Festival after it became evident to them that there was a lot of musical talent in the community. A "Proud to be South D" group has been established and is active on Facebook, and the Street Festival has proven to be a valuable way of drawing positive local media attention to an area of Dunedin that typically does not have much good press. The Street Festival has acted as something of a stimulus for the formation of "activist" groups who advocate for those who have no voice in local government and may be a contributing factor in winning a long, hard-fought battle to get the Dunedin City Council to establish a small community hub (which includes a library) in the area.

The annual nature of these two place-based community events thus ensures regularity which, in turn, enhances familiarity and helps to generate trust within and between organisations. While one of the unique strengths of these events is their non-everydayness (and this enables new encounters in both Govanhill and South Dunedin), building on fleeting encounters to normalise contact between diverse populations via institutionalised artistic activities is also crucial to collective attempts to resist territorial stigma in the area.

Conclusion

The place-based community events in Glasgow and Dunedin make significant contributions to place-making and place-strengthening in communities afflicted by narratives of territorial stigmatisation. By drawing diverse communities into shared spaces for pleasurable activities, these events facilitate communal practices that provide a foundation for the development of shared meanings and emotions. The GIFC and SDSF actively address some of the deleterious outcomes of territorial stigmatisation by emphasising strength- and asset-based discourses about the areas they reflect and represent. In their planning and organisation, they play an important mediating role in building and empowering, fostering intercultural encounters with difference and strengthening mutuality within their defined places. Both events also focus on fostering acceptance and tolerance of others in areas where "localised and racialised processes of stigmatisation are not helping with efforts to integrate" (Clark, 2014, p. 38). The GIFC seeks to address the social discrediting of stigmatised people, especially the Roma community, working to eliminate lateral denigration and mutual distanciation by building what Clark (2014, p. 45) calls "'everyday' intercultural exchanges on the streets, at the bus stops, in the parks, community centres" within the area. The festival, aligned with a year-round series of arts and cultural programming supported by institutional actors and spaces, fosters exchanges between different nationalities, ethnicities and communities living in the area. It does so by adopting strategies and techniques to foreground the lived experiences of its diverse population of residents, sharing power with partners and working to co-produce a festival that reflects the area in the past and present. The SDSF likewise provides a space of encounter and shared experience for a resident population used to being discredited and dismissed. The use of central semi-private (street) space as the event venue provides a visible celebration of the area's diversity and a space where institutional actors can coalesce to offer the support and solidarity required beyond the event itself – improving the likelihood of the more regular and habitual encounters required for greater intercultural learning.

We believe that this study demonstrates how place-based community events extend beyond (much needed) temporary conviviality and pleasurable encounters, to translate the special memories and connections formed via the carnivalesque into capabilities, capacities and changes to everyday attitudes and values that can help ameliorate or contest the

prevalence of deficit-based narratives. Territorial struggles, like those described in Glasgow and Dunedin, give hope towards a politics of destigmatisation that shows "how territorial stigmatisation is contestable rather than inevitable or innate" (Sisson, 2021, p. 660). However, for these struggles to be meaningful, organisers, participants, attendees and support organisations must understand and respect spatial disparities, finding sufficient common ground to enable bridging capital while preserving familiar bonding environments. Events can provide the diversity of activities and interests to include and empower while also challenging established power relations. When these events are part of the production of alternatives (positive) to dominant (negative) representations of places, they represent a valuable element in improving quality of life, neighbourliness and strengthening the fabric of communities. We also believe that public policymakers need to recognise the importance of place-based community events and devise sustainable funding models to ensure that they can build and strengthen capacity and competency within the community.

While our study illustrates the positive potential of place-based community events as a feature of territorial struggles (Sisson, 2021), there is a need for more longitudinal work with community members and those from above and outside to assess whether resistance to stigmatising narratives is effecting change. Territorial stigmatisation is sticky, established over a long period and not easily erased from memory. It is composed of several modalities, with different intensities and scales operating at the same time. As a result, it is foolhardy to imagine that single, mono-modal remedies are possible, or preferable. For (critical) event researchers, accessing communities, building trusted relations and committing to longer-term empirical enquiries are imperative if we are to strengthen the evidence base for place-based community events as important interventions in addressing territorial stigmatisation.

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