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1 Title: The Agenda Setting Power of News Media in Framing the Future Role of
2 Tourism in Protected Areas

3 **Abstract**

4 This exploratory paper examines the agenda-setting and framing role of news
5 media in the ongoing development of the Draft Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens
6 and Domain Trust Master Plan. The paper will argue that the publication of the
7 Masterplan and ensuing public commentary has drawn into stark focus future
8 challenges in juxtaposing the frames of public use, commercial tourism and
9 scientific/ cultural values in the sustainable management of protected areas.
10 Agenda setting and framing theory provides the theoretical foundation for the
11 paper. Guided by critical discourse analysis, the analysis of the paper is
12 supported through the use of Leximancer and Gephi software for visually
13 illustrating the relationship between different framing perspectives. This paper
14 contributes to a fresh understanding of the complex nature of the sustainable
15 management of protected areas in urban spaces.

16 **Keywords:** Protected Areas, Agenda Setting, Leximancer, Co-stakeholder
17 analysis, Media, Gephi

18 **1 Introduction**

19
20 For more than two hundred years botanical gardens including the Royal Botanic
21 Gardens in Kew (United Kingdom), the Cairo based Orman Gardens (Egypt),
22 Bartram's Garden in the United States and the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney
23 have been seen by some as the epitome of a nation's cultural attainment.
24 Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens, which are the subject of the present paper were
25 developed initially in 1816 by Governor Macquarie as part of the so called
26 Governor's Domain (Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, 2015). Protected
27 by a gubernatorial proclamation from the excesses of the colony's early convict
28 population and from the use of the land for the grazing and feeding of cattle of
29 any kind; the gardens were to be reserved for the use of that respectable class of
30 inhabitant for innocent recreational purposes (Endersby, 2000).

31

32 Since their inception botanical gardens over the world have played an important
33 role in colonial expansion (Brockway, 1979; Ginn, 2009), horticulture and
34 conservation (Avery, 1957; Desmond, 1998; Maunder, Lyte, Dransfield, & Baker,
35 2001; Waylen, 2006) and medical research (Heywood, 1991). The focus of the
36 present paper is with their use as a site for tourism and recreation (see
37 Ballantyne, Packer, & Hughes, 2008; Connell, 2004; 2005 for previous coverage
38 of botanic gardens based tourism in the *Journal of Tourism Management*).
39 Globally, botanic gardens and arboretums have been estimated to attract more
40 than 250 million visitors per year (Ballantyne et al., 2008). It is this earning
41 potential that has made tourism an important player in the debate over the
42 interplay of neoliberalist and natural resource discourses in protected area
43 management (Darcy, 1995).

44

45 Tourism interests have played an important role in defining the future of the
46 Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens during the development process for the Royal
47 Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust (hereafter RBGDT) Masterplan. The
48 Masterplan was designed “to ensure the exceptional heritage, scientific and
49 cultural aspects of the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney and Domain are maintained
50 or enhanced for public enjoyment, education and recreation. It also emphasises
51 the Royal Botanic Garden’s core values of horticulture and science” (Royal
52 Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, 2016, p. np). For all of its potential benefit,
53 however, on June 10 2016 an article was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*
54 (hereafter SMH) under the banner headline “*Win for Sydneysiders as Royal*
55 *Botanic Garden Masterplan shelved on its 200th birthday*” (Dumas, 2016).

56

57 The focus of the present paper is to develop a further understanding of the effect
58 that media (the third estate) has on the setting of agendas and framing the
59 management of complex protected area locales, which tourism is often an
60 important component¹. Through the use of Leximancer and Gephi software and

¹ For context it should be noted that the original aim of this project was to examine the various formal public submissions made to the RBGDT as part of the Masterplan process. When the Masterplan process was delayed by reasons internal to the RBGDT we then made the decision to shift our focus to consider the agenda setting power of news media, drawing on documents that were already in the public domain.

61 co-stakeholder network analysis we will examine four exemplar articles from the
62 SMH, which were published in 2014 shortly after the RBGDT Masterplan process
63 began. In addition to representing a cross section of different types of newspaper
64 reporting on this particular issue (opinion piece, news piece etc.), the sample
65 articles also encapsulate the framing of a number of disparate and influential
66 stakeholder groups in the debates. Framing occurs through new media
67 comments that accompany the traditional online newspaper articles. Leximancer
68 and Gephi software are used to graphically illustrate the links between the
69 framing (and framer) of the article(s) and ensuing community commentary that
70 was evidenced on the SMH. In the next section we will consider theoretical issues
71 surrounding the notions of strategic planning, agenda setting and the role of the
72 media in framing protected area debates, which will serve as a precursor to a
73 detailed discussion of the site, our methodological approach and our empirical
74 results.

75 **2 Tourism Planning and the Role of the Media in Agenda Setting and** 76 **Framing in Contested Protected Area Locales**

77
78 Rational comprehensive approaches to decision making are premised on the
79 idea that policy makers will make decisions on the basis of due consideration of
80 all possible courses of action and all available information. As Dredge (1999) has
81 noted, rational comprehensive approaches to planning have long been seen as a
82 strategic management ideal and have for many years influenced the planning of
83 tourism destination regions. Rational comprehensive planning approaches
84 follow a ten step basic structure from settling on terms of reference, and
85 determination of planning approaches to monitoring/evaluating and feedback.
86 Since their inception, however, there has been a realization that the innate
87 complexity of rational comprehensive approaches make it challenging to
88 operationalise (see for example Hostovsky, 2006). Innes (1996) has written on
89 the way in which processes of consensus building can assist with the
90 operationalisation of the rational comprehensive. Consensus building she notes
91 is premised on notions of a “collective search for common ground”, the power of
92 subjective knowledge and active stakeholder engagement (Innes, 1996, p. 463).

93 In the present paper we will consider the role of the media as facilitators of
94 consensus building in heterogeneous protected areas. McCombs (1997) has
95 written on the ways in which the media is able to promote consensus in
96 communities through their ability to ensure the salience of particular issues and
97 frame our perspective on aspects of those issues that deserve ongoing
98 community attention. For example, writing on the interplay of national media
99 organizations and environmental protests over the proposed damming of the
100 Tasmanian Franklin River (Australia) in the early 1980s (see also Brookes, 2001;
101 Law, 2001; Sewell, Dearden, & Dumbrell, 1989), Hutchins and Lester (2006)
102 identify an emerging disconnect between the motivations of news media and
103 protestors over the cause of the conflict. Whilst initially showing tacit support for
104 the positions of environmentalists taking part in the Franklin River Blockade
105 (see Law, 2001 for a history of the Franklin River Campaign); news media were
106 identified as being increasingly unsympathetic to what the media viewed as the
107 stage-managed actions of environmental campaign groups and the apparent
108 hijacking of the media's attempt to manage the flow of information around an
109 important national resource management issues (Hutchins & Lester, 2006).

110 The ability of news services to function as agenda setters requires the
111 moderation of objects, attributes and frames (McCombs, 2005). Together these
112 three concepts of objects, attributes and frames encapsulate the central building
113 blocks of the theory of agenda setting in the media that was begun more than
114 four decades ago in McCombs and Shaw's influential study of voter intentions for
115 the 1968 US Presidential Election (see McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The essential
116 premise of the theory of agenda setting is to understand how "the popular
117 agenda of the media affects society and attempts to explain why mass media has
118 gained so much power over the thoughts of people everywhere" (Adams, Harf, &
119 Ford, 2014, p. 2). Since its inception a number of works have been published
120 which have tracked the evolving theoretical and application of agenda setting
121 concepts (e.g. McCombs, 2005; McCombs & Shaw, 1993; D. H. Weaver, 2007). At
122 the time of writing there has only been limited uptake of agenda setting
123 principles in tourism (e.g. de Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Hall, 2003).

124 Objects represent the basic building blocks of agenda setting scholarship,
125 representing topics of investigation (McCombs & Shaw, 1993). Agenda setting
126 scholarship has tended to view objects in terms of the political sphere through
127 examinations of political candidates and related public policy issues. However,
128 more and more the scope of agenda setting scholarship has expanded to grapple
129 with a range of socially constructed “wicked problems”² (see McComas &
130 Shanahan, 1999; Pralle, 2009). Tourism is not immune to these issues, with Hall
131 et al. (2015, p. 5) identifying that sustainability is a “wicked or meta – policy
132 problem that has led to new institutional arrangements and policy settings at
133 international, national and local levels”. Botanic gardens of the type discussed in
134 the paper exist in a complex urban environment, frequented by a range of
135 stakeholders including recreational visitors with different issues, motivations
136 and concerns (Ballantyne et al., 2008; Connell, 2005). The partially industrialised
137 nature of the tourism system have been described by Hall (1999, p. 276) as a
138 “meta problem which represent highly interconnected planning and policy
139 messes”.

140 Such messes manifest themselves in attributes, which form the second core
141 component of agenda setting scholarship. Attributes refer to the various
142 characteristics and traits that stakeholders can use to describe an object
143 (McCombs, 2005). Denzin illustrated the manner in which an attribute can
144 evolve over the lifespan of a protected area (Denzin, 2005, 2007, 2008). Taking
145 Yellowstone National Park as his backdrop he demonstrated how concern for
146 Native American Indians has progressed through stages of apathy, to forceful
147 removal and dislocation, and finally reintegration into the mindset of the wider
148 American population as efforts were made to rediscover the complex histories of
149 native populations and reintegrate them into the marketing and management of
150 protected area environments. The methodology that Denzin (2008) employed
151 recognizes that words and images have a power to express to their reader the
152 various fault lines that exist in heterogeneous protected area environments.

² A wicked problem can be defined as those types of social problems that cannot be definitively described and for which there is no universally agreed perfect solution (Rittel & Webber, 1973)

153 If we consider for the moment the environment of Sydney of which the Royal
154 Botanic Gardens are an integral part; McManus (2015, pp. 350 - 351) observes
155 that “nature is presented [variously] as the setting for Sydney’s grandeur, a basis
156 for prosperity and something vulnerable that means the most valuable parts of
157 nature must be conserved”. While the attributes that can be used to describe an
158 object such as nature are therefore endless, McCombs (2005) has observed that
159 there are certain dominant perspectives or frames that tend to predominate in
160 discussions of objects in agenda setting debates. Within the news media Pan and
161 Kosicki (1993) note that every news story has a theme that serves as a central
162 organizing idea. Meanings underpin themes and it is through the imparting of
163 meanings to an audience that a writer has the ability to draw attention to certain
164 ideas and simultaneously restrict access to perspectives that fall outside of their
165 particular frame of reference (McCombs, 2005). While the news media therefore
166 have considerable power to influence public perception in a range of tourism
167 management contexts (see Hall, 2002); equally the public itself has the ability to
168 variously reject or accept the media’s position. McCombs (2005) has referred to
169 this as second level agenda setting.

170 Simpson et al. (2014) have identified that the growth of online media over the
171 last decade has encouraged previously passive consumers to become involved in
172 the development, generation and dissemination of new material. Whilst
173 sometimes lacking the characteristics of rationality and critical deliberation that
174 may be said to characterize mainstream news media (Diakopoulos & Naaman,
175 2011; Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009), online comments have none the less
176 proven valuable for many readers as a mechanism for validating their own
177 personal perspectives on complex policy issues and as a means to gauge the
178 nature of current community perception. Weaver (2010) has noted that so called
179 traditional media has the tendency to cover over societal complexities and afford
180 greater attention to the values and discourses of society’s more dominant
181 members (incl. politicians). The effect of this is that whilst media in a top down
182 environment might correctly identify objects, the attributes of a situation are
183 often better conceptualized in a horizontal media setting. Writing on the
184 interplay of culture and power Engelstad (2009, p. 218) notes that message

185 formation needs to balance the interplay of message clarity with a deep appeal to
186 the value positions of their readership, “mobilizing their well-established frames
187 of interpretation”. Framing theory in media has been a well-established
188 theoretical and analytical framework (Scheufele, 1999). In particular it
189 recognises the importance of inputs (e.g. organisational pressures, ideologies, or
190 other elites), the process of frame building (e.g. the Masterplan), outcomes (e.g.
191 media frames) and the audience frames (e.g. reaction to the media frames,
192 attitudes, behaviours). Framing theory has had limited use within tourism
193 (exceptions include Mason & Wright, 2011; Ugglå & Olausson, 2013; Waterton &
194 Watson, 2013)

195 In the next section we will focus on illustrating how the Sydney Royal Botanic
196 Gardens has evolved over the last century, at various time acquiring different
197 conservation and utilitarian management focuses. It is against this historical
198 background that we will then examine the agenda-setting role of the media in
199 response to the current RBGDT Masterplan (2014, April).

200 **3 Research Context: Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens**

201
202 The Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens is located on a 30-hectare site in the heart of
203 the Sydney Central Business District. Originally declared a botanic garden by
204 Governor Macquarie in 1816; the gardens have a history dating back to the
205 earliest days of European settlement when they served as a private reserve for
206 the governors of New South Wales. Before this the gardens formed part of the
207 ancestral home of the first Australians, the Cadigal people of the Eora Nation.
208 Since 1980 the RBGDT have managed the gardens, a statutory authority
209 established under the provisions of the *Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Park*
210 *Trust Act 1980*³. For readers interested in the history of the site we would direct
211 them to a number of excellent works already in publication (see Endersby, 2000;
212 Gilbert, 1986). In the present section, rather than seeking to provide a
213 chronological history of the gardens we wish to instead focus on their contested
214 history.

³ See http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/rbgadta1980364/

215 Botanic gardens have been defined as “institutions holding documented
216 collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation,
217 display and education” (Botanic Gardens Conservation International, ND). As
218 with other classes of protected areas this identifies botanic gardens primarily as
219 a site for conservation, with the neoliberalist concerns of the tourism industry a
220 more peripheral planning consideration. Since antiquity, however, human kind
221 has identified a range of spiritual, physiological and other benefits from engaging
222 actively with garden environments (Benfield, 2013). The Sydney Royal Botanic
223 Gardens of 1816 should thus be seen historically as part of the broader evolution
224 of humankind’s interest in the study of the natural world, an interest which
225 peaked in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the development of
226 Gardens such as Kew became exemplars not only of scientific endeavour, but
227 also of European colonial expansion (Brockway, 1979; Desmond, 1998; Ginn,
228 2009; Grove, 1996). In the early years of the Gardens many iconic directors of
229 the ilk of Richard Cunningham, Charles Moore, Allan Cunningham and Sir
230 William Macarthur undertook a range of initiatives designed to simultaneously
231 improve the scientific credentials of the gardens, whilst simultaneously
232 improving public access. In the 1830s Allan Cunningham was said to approve of
233 access to the park for the elite, if for no other reason than it helped on public use
234 grounds to justify the considerable cost of works associated with the park’s
235 creation and upkeep. In the late nineteenth century such works under Charles
236 Moore included land reclamation projects in Farm Cove and the creation of sea
237 walls that are now an iconic part of the tourism vista of the area.

238 Ken Boundy (Chair of the RBGDT, and ex CEO of Tourism Australia) recently
239 noted that if “Elizabeth Macquarie⁴ were to sit on her favourite chair today on
240 Mrs Macquarie’s Point ... and look back to the city through the garden, I’m sure
241 she would be filled with pride and a sense of possibility” (Boundy, 2015). Within
242 these words lays the idea that in addition to their scientific, recreation and other
243 responsibilities, perhaps the principal role of gardens is to serve as a
244 representation of a city or nation’s cultural achievement. The former curator of

⁴ The wife of Governor Macquarie who is immortalized in the landscape of the Sydney Domain precinct as the namesake of a stone chair and access road on Mrs. Macquarie’s Point on the north eastern side of the Botanic Gardens Precinct.

245 the Royal Botanic Gardens' Allan Cunningham once noted that the "primary
246 object to be kept in view in conducting such an establishment [the creation of the
247 gardens] ... is to render it valuable to the colony" (Gilbert, 1997, p. 283).

248 The work of Mwebaze and Bennett (2012) has sought to map tourist valuations
249 of the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens site using standard contingent valuation
250 and travel cost methodologies. The tourists in Mwebaze and Bennett's study, as
251 with other gardens throughout the world will place different values on the
252 environment. Ballantyne et al. (2008) identifies such values as including: the use
253 of gardens as a site for recreation playing games and social interaction; the
254 opportunity the gardens provide for general relaxation and their general
255 spiritual and restorative potential. Whether it is Mrs Macquarie's Chair, Pyramid
256 Glass House, the Lower Garden Pond or the now sadly destroyed Garden Palace
257 created for the first Australian International Exhibition; the Royal Botanic
258 Gardens have had or continue to have a range of attractions and infrastructure
259 that have proven attractive to visitors.

260 In 2014 3.6 million people visited the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens, accounting
261 for 15% of all international visitors to Australia (Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens
262 and Domain Trust, 2015). During the 2000 Sydney Olympics it was estimated
263 that over 100,000 people a day used the gardens to watch events including the
264 triathlon or take part in the range of free interpretive and passive recreation
265 activities on offer over the two week games period (Benfield, 2013). The Sydney
266 Olympic Games offered the RBGDT the opportunity to market Australian culture
267 to the world. One of the main faces of this culture is the formal recognition of the
268 traditional gardening practices of the traditional Aboriginal inhabitants of the
269 area as portrayed in the Aboriginal garden entitled *Cadi Jam Ora*, which was
270 established in 1999.

271 Since 1994 there has been an increasing awareness of the importance of the
272 Royal Botanic Gardens as a site not just for recreation but also for tourism to
273 raise revenue to offset the public cost of on-going management of the site (Darcy,
274 1995). Over the ensuing twenty years there has been a growing
275 commercialisation of the gardens through exclusive use for payment for

276 activities such as parking, weddings, corporate events, outdoor cinema, and for
277 major tourism events (e.g. New Year's Eve fireworks). Today new tourism
278 futures are planned for the site. The establishment in 2014 of the Botanic
279 Gardens and Centennial Parklands authority was predicated on the goal to
280 provide a world leading botanic gardens and parklands, espousing aspirations to
281 make a positive contribution to the life of people who visit is, whilst protecting
282 the national and cultural heritage of the area etc. (Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens
283 and Domain Trust, 2015). The Draft RBGDT Master plan, which was similarly
284 commenced in 2014 represented, in the eyes of its proponents, an opportunity to
285 ensure the site's future.

286 The RBGDT Masterplan proposed a radical revision of the way people engage
287 with the "lungs of the city" (Boundy, 2015). Aspects of the plan included: the
288 development of new science and education facilities, enhancement of visitor
289 access routes and recreation facilities including at the iconic Mrs Macquarie's
290 Chair, the development of a hotel on the site of the current Domain Car park and
291 the establishment of new ferry and train transport nodes to aid visitor access.
292 Whilst there was an overt focus on the sustainability of the site in many of the
293 draft master-plan documents, as we will show in the following sections the plan
294 have also been a subject to concerted opposition from certain stakeholder
295 groups. Such opposition is not surprising when one considers the inherent
296 wickedness and complexity in the management of protected areas. Christensen
297 Jr. (2012) has identified that successful leadership in contested environments
298 involves the ability to merge a clear vision and road map for the future with the
299 pragmatic ability to reconcile competing value propositions of other
300 stakeholders. Much as Simpson et al. (2014, p. 269) argued in an organisational
301 context when they suggested that organisational compassion "requires a degree
302 of tolerance of ambiguity and complexity and less commitment to the idea that
303 compassion, per se, as seen through the eyes of the beholder, is an unequivocally
304 good thing"; so too must land management agencies be conscious of the network
305 of power relations that exist amongst stakeholder groups in a contested
306 protected area environment.

307 **4 Research Design**

308 This paper examines the agenda-setting and framing role of news media in the
309 ongoing development of the Draft Sydney RBGDT Master Plan. The sustainable
310 management of Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney has laid the groundwork for our
311 analysis of contemporary stakeholder discourses. We have employed Critical
312 Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the objects, attributes and frames
313 presented in the media articles and social media commentary on the
314 announcement of the RBGS Masterplan and the surrounding social context. CDA
315 represents an ideal methodological lens for the present study on account of the
316 fact that it begins, as we have previously discussed with a perception of the
317 socially constructed nature of society (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999).

318

319 Throughout their respective academic and popular histories different
320 commentators have developed texts that have attempted to frame the debate
321 according to their own ontological and epistemological positions. Hannam and
322 Knox (2005, p. 23) note that discourse analysis treats texts very much as
323 “mediated cultural products, which are part of wider systems of knowledge”.
324 Imbued with power relations between the author and reader CDA methodologies
325 have been employed in a variety of tourism contexts in recent years (Mellinger,
326 1994; Nilsen & Ellingsen, 2015; Paraskevas, Altinay, McLean, & Cooper, 2013;
327 Santos, Belhassen, & Caton, 2008; Sigala, 2011; Small & Harris, 2014; Williamson,
328 Tregidga, Harris, & Keen, 2009).

329 **4.1 Data selection**

330 Fairclough (1992) has noted that CDA begins with the identification of a corpus
331 of news texts. In the present exploratory paper the authors have chosen to focus
332 on four exemplar articles from the *Sydney Morning Herald* (hereafter SMH) (see
333 Table 1). These articles form part of a larger body of fifteen news stories that
334 were published nationwide on the Masterplan process in the days immediately
335 following the release of the draft community consultation document in April
336 2014.

337

338 **Table 1:** Profile of four-newspaper article in Sydney Morning Herald

Title	Date	Author	Nature of the newspaper	Number of newspaper comments
Paul Keating attacks Sydney Botanic Garden	April 6	Sean Nicholls (Journalist)	News article	52
Royal Botanic Gardens Master plan: a vision not so splendid	April 9	Paul Keating (former Australian Prime Minister)	Column/ Opinion piece	113
Why the Botanic Gardens and Domain need a plan for the future	April 9	Ken Morrison (Chief executive of the Tourism and Transport Forum)	Column/ Opinion piece	36
Five-star 150 rooms hotel blooms in radical Botanic Gardens and Domain revamp	April 10	Tim Barlass (Journalist)	News article	87

339

340 The four news article cases that have been chosen for this exploratory study are
341 all drawn from the SMH. Founded in 1831, the SMH is the oldest continuously
342 published newspaper in Australia and has a daily readership of 525,000 (Roy
343 Morgan Research, 2015). The RBGDT identified the SMH as the news source that
344 led the coverage of the Daft Master Plan in the weeks following its release (Royal
345 Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, 2014). Articles from the SMH in this period
346 were identified by the RBGDT as focusing on the appropriateness or not of
347 development and the sustainability merits of the proposal.

348 From Table 1 it can be observed that the selection of exemplar cases includes a
349 combination of news pieces, along with columns/opinion pieces from key
350 stakeholders including the Former Prime minister of Australia the Right
351 Honorable Paul Keating. Newspapers, Farbotko (2005) notes function as an

352 arena for discursive interaction where opinion columns, letters to the editor and
353 more recently online reader comments afford the opportunity for active
354 engagement by readers. In this way they serve as an ideal mechanism for
355 exploring the ability of the author to frame particular agendas through the use of
356 mapping tools like Leximancer, which can be used to understand the impact of
357 the central message of the article on subsequent reader sentiment. The selection
358 of different types of media pieces including opinion columns in the sample has
359 been done deliberately to magnify the effects of different frames on the issues
360 under investigation.

361 In examining agenda setting through objects and attributes, the research design
362 recognises that the focus of this study is on the frames presented in the media
363 stories and new media comments. Entman (1993, p. 52 in D. Weaver, 2007, p.
364 143) argues that “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and
365 make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a
366 particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or
367 treatment recommendation for the item described”. Scheufele (1999) provides a
368 4 stage process for understanding the frames of interpretation: inputs in this
369 case the organisational pressures, ideologies, and other internal and external
370 stakeholders; the process of frame building in this case the Masterplan process;
371 outcomes are the media stories presented; and the audience frames that can be
372 interpreted through their reaction to the media frames by their attitudes and
373 behaviours in the new media commentary.

374 While we are not claiming generalizability, either with respect to the content of
375 articles or the ensuing reader commentary, it is worth reflecting on who the
376 readership of the SMH is. Farbotko (2005) has identified the readership of the
377 SMH as being predominantly white-collar professionals, and the framing of the
378 paper’s coverage of environmental management issues to often being done in a
379 way that appeals to its largely urban geographical epicentre. In a bid to further
380 understand this process in the context of the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens,
381 online reader generated comments were treated in this project essentially as
382 public-domain media content, which was then linked with media pieces to
383 capture the full scope of discourse between the framers and the recipients of

384 each news study. The length of the reader comments ranged from a few words to
385 a length of more 200 words.

386 **4.2 Analysis of the Text**

387 Qualitative software Leximancer 4.0 was used to perform the first level of text
388 analysis where the key themes from the articles were investigated. Leximancer is
389 a qualitative analysis (e.g. content analysis) tool based on Bayesian statistical
390 theory that is increasingly employed by tourism researchers (Cheng, Edwards,
391 Darcy, & Redfern, 2016; Darcy & Pegg, 2011; Pabel & Pearce, 2015; Scott &
392 Smith, 2005; Sun, Zhang, & Ryan, 2015; Tseng, Wu, Morrison, Zhang, & Chen,
393 2015; Wu, Wall, & Pearce, 2014). By aggregating fragmented pieces of evidence,
394 the whole document could be envisioned through a holistic manner (Watson,
395 Smith, & Watter, 2005). Leximancer transforms “lexical co-occurrence
396 information from natural language into semantic patterns in an unsupervised
397 manner” using “two stages of extraction – semantic and relational” (Smith &
398 Humphreys, 2006, p. 262). As such, it helps to reduce the preconception biases
399 embedded in manual text analysis techniques (Randhawa, Wilden, & Hohberger,
400 2016; Smith & Humphreys, 2006).

401 For qualitative research this increases the trustworthiness of the analysis and
402 reported findings. In a discussion of the distinction between manufactured and
403 naturalistic data, Silverman (2007) draws on the ideas of Kozinets in arguing
404 that the “analysis of existing online community conversations and other internet
405 discourse combines options that are both naturalistic and unobtrusive”
406 (Kozinets, 2010, p. 56 in Silverman, 2007, p. 33). In the present paper we have
407 sought to treat reader comments on the four news stories as naturally occurring
408 data provided by readers who have registered on the SMH website. They are not
409 comments that are provided in the context of a question posed by a researcher
410 but are instead, in the main, the candid reflections of a reader on the articles they
411 have read, their understanding of issues at hand; and reflections that a reader
412 might not always feel comfortable to mention unless behind the veil of
413 anonymity that is afforded by the internet (see Simpson et al., 2014).

414 In Leximancer, the output is a heat map, where importance of a theme is

415 indicated by the brightness of the label and circle (Leximancer, 2011). Concepts
416 that semantically have strong relationships are also mapped closely together
417 (Campbell, Pitt, Parent, & Berthon, 2011; Rooney, 2005; Smith & Humphreys,
418 2006). Absence of a concept is an indication that “important concepts fail to
419 occur sufficiently frequently within the text to be identified and associated with
420 other concepts” (Liesch, Håkanson, McGaughey, Middleton, & Cretchley, 2011, p.
421 25). Reader comments in the subsequent sections are provided as they appear in
422 the newspaper articles and are not edited for typographical and/or grammatical
423 errors.

424 As Small and Harris (2014) note, CDA involves consideration of the processes by
425 which the various media forms under consideration are produced, distributed
426 and consumed. This is then followed by attention being given to the
427 “interpretation of the ideologies supporting the discursive practice” (2014, p.
428 31). To capture the complex relationship between different stakeholders, a co-
429 stakeholder analysis was performed. The idea of co-stakeholder analysis comes
430 from co-word/author analysis in bibliometric methods (Callon, Courtial, &
431 Laville, 1991). That is, we use the co-occurrence of stakeholders in each reader’
432 comments to establish relationships between stakeholders by constructing a
433 relationship strength measure (He, 1999). If two stakeholders co-occur more
434 frequently in readers’ comments, they are closely related. To perform co-
435 stakeholder analysis, a range of key stakeholders in reader ‘comments were first
436 identified by one of the researchers and then a comparison between other
437 researchers was conducted to ensure the stakeholders identified capture the
438 meanings they represent. In the second stage a co-stakeholder network analysis
439 was performed using Gephi. Gephi is a network analysis and visualization
440 software that offers a high level of interactive and responsive visualization that is
441 suitable for various types of networks (Bastian, Heymann, & Jacomy, 2009). The
442 various relationships between these stakeholders are presented through a
443 visualized network. The connections between the stakeholders are based on 1)
444 the normalized weight of the stakeholder co-occurrence in readers’ comments,
445 2) the distances between any stakeholders through normalized strength score
446 and 3) the size of the bubble reflecting the number of times the stakeholders

447 mentioned in a single comment.

448 **5. Findings and Discussion**

449 **5.1 Analysis of the texts**

450 Figure 1 shows the concept map that was the foundation for exploring reader
451 comments from the four newspaper articles. The connectivity rate for all frames
452 was higher than 10% as stipulated in undertaking Leximancer analysis (see
453 Smith & Humphreys, 2006). In Leximancer, connectivity rate describes the
454 internal items in the frames being mentioned together with a proportion and
455 indicates the importance of the frames from 10%-100% (see Smith &
456 Humphreys, 2006; Tseng et al., 2015). Figure 1 illustrates a number of important
457 issues for the present study.

458 The most important frame (red bubble – online version) is the *public interest*,
459 which includes the use of the public space, land and facilities in the city. At the
460 time of writing the City of Sydney council has released a *Draft Central Sydney*
461 *Planning Strategy* (City of Sydney, 2016). The plan, which called for the
462 development of increased high-rise development to facilitate greater commercial
463 opportunities for the City of Sydney also prioritized the importance of the
464 preservation of access to public spaces with specific reference to the Royal
465 Botanic Gardens. Next attention was given to the level of consideration afforded
466 by readers to the specifics of the garden itself and the RBGDT Masterplan. While
467 not surprising given the nature of the media pieces in the sample, the references
468 to the historical development of the urban environment and nearby
469 developments at Barangaroo showed evidence of a willingness of readers to
470 position the management of the gardens and by implication tourism in the wider
471 and evolving geographical and socio cultural context of the urban environment
472 (see Hayllar, Griffin, & Edwards, 2010).

473

474

491 Sydney. McManus (2015, p. 352) has noted that the release of the new
492 metropolitan planning strategy for Sydney in 2014 was characterized by the
493 presence of potentially contradictory goals of: a “sustainable and resilient city
494 that protects the natural environment and has a balanced approach to the use of
495 land and resources” and the creation of a “competitive economy with world class
496 services and transport”. Later in the paper we will return to the issue of
497 sustainability and ask whether it is possible, in the context of their socially
498 constructed evolution to remove tourism from the gardens and still achieve a
499 sustainable environment.

500 Some commentators framed references to Sydney’s past as a mechanism to
501 justify opposition to the proposal (e.g. G2 – Table 2). In seeking to link current
502 debates over the sustainable management of the RBGDT to larger historical
503 issues, the commentators are in effect asking ‘whose responsibility is it to ensure
504 the sustainable management of the park?’ As SW 2 (Table 2) noted:

505 I may no longer live in *Sydney* but as an *Australian* I have enjoyed many
506 visits to ‘*The Gardens*’ and believed that this historic place was securely
507 protected for all time. Until now that I learn that the *Vandals* are at the
508 door

509 If the RBGDT is indeed the property of all Australians, as the former Australian
510 Paul Keating also suggested when he characterized it as “the nearest thing to a
511 sacred site in Sydney – held sacred by the non-Aboriginal community as well as
512 the Aboriginal community” (Nicholls, 2014), then there is evidence in the
513 community commentary of a problem with its operationalization at the local
514 level. Within the community commentary was evidence of considerable apathy
515 of the right of former politicians to continue to offer views on the management of
516 the site (K1 and K2 – Table 2), along with concern over the NIMBY (Not in My
517 Backyard) mentality of other Sydney residents who were viewed as being happy
518 to promote development, so long as it was not in their immediate home
519 environment (PD 2 – Table 2).

520

521

Table 2: Newspaper and New Media Frames

Frames (Themes)	Representative Comments
Public Interest	<p>PI 1) Most people believe that the needs of <i>Sydney</i> and tourists are already being extremely well served by the existing gardens and parkland that have sustained the city and that plonking (sic) a whole lot of structures in and around it contribute nothing and degrade to its intrinsic value and experience. It is better known as development creep.</p> <p>PI 2) When I watched the fly over I was left wondering where the botanic gardens and all this 'green space' actually was. In true <i>Sydney</i> style, this is yet another jaw droppingly ludicrous funnelling of public money into an unnecessary, poorly planned project that achieves nothing, does little to enhance public amenity, but rather destroys yet another of the very few open public spaces left in the city region.</p>
Garden	<p>G1) Was this <i>Ken Morrison</i> and his <i>Tourism and Transport Forum</i> also in favour of the <i>Helipad</i> on <i>Sydney Harbour</i> wouldn't surprise me! There should be no additional structures built on or around the <i>Botanic Gardens</i> for the purpose of expanding the "experience" or for entertainment</p> <p>G 2) <i>If pre-European</i> settlement vistas are what he wants, why doesn't he call for the demolition of all existing buildings in the <i>Gardens</i> and the ripping up of all the landscaping?</p>
Plan	<p>P 1) To those agreeing with <i>Keating</i>, have you actually read the draft concept and plan or just gone off of his emotive, misleading and factually incorrect opinion?</p> <p>P 2) I think that the master plan fails to integrate the domain to the botanic garden by not addressing the major planning issue of the road canyon dividing the precincts I would love to see a mesh supporting bridges over that expressway supporting pedestrian bridges and specimen potted trees so the gardens are integrated <i>East</i> from the library to the <i>Art Gallery</i>. As well there are still no bar- bbq amenities within the park and covered picnic rotundas</p>
Sydney as a whole	<p>SW 1) Every time I visit <i>London</i>, construction is taking place in <i>Hyde Park</i> and other parks, because <i>London</i> has to modernise, as much as it preserves its past. <i>Sydney</i> has to move forward, by creating new icons and tourist facilities, and the suggestions put forward so far will move us forward into a new realm of tourism opportunity</p>

	<p>SW 2) I may no longer live in <i>Sydney</i> but as an <i>Australian</i> I have enjoyed many visits to 'The <i>Gardens</i>' and believed that this historic place was securely protected for all time. Until now that I learn that the <i>Vandals</i> are at the door</p>
The need and potential need	<p>N 1) Those public services that haven't been already privatized are infected with a corporate mindset like the art gallery. State forests handed to mining companies to destroy, public land for hotel chains, public housing to be sold off</p> <p>N 2) The cafe and the 'shell' address inferior existing experiences. Most others are in the Domain/at the perimeters, particularly the hotel which will replace an eyesore and rejuvenate a 'nothing' precinct.</p>
Proposed development as an economic generator (Money)	<p>PD 1) Ken <i>Morrison</i> condemns himself when he speaks of " the visitor economy". Ah yes, the economy: everything is an ASSET to be sold or exploited; making money is the single sole objective of everything that we do; and our work on <i>Earth</i> will not be complete until we have turned every single square inch of <i>Australia</i> into theme parks, shopping malls, entertainment venues, visitor centres and cavernous drinking halls.</p> <p>PD 2) The captains of industry and their spruikers are only too keen to foist their money making schemes on the long suffering public, and then go home to <i>Mosman</i> and <i>Vaucluse</i> and <i>Palm Beach</i> where they lobby just as vociferously to protect their own neighborhoods and public spaces from commercialization and encroachment. Let them build on the <i>Botanic Gardens</i> after they've built on <i>Middle Head</i>.</p>
Preservation of the park	<p>PP 1) This should not go ahead. It is a huge development for such a beautiful and universally loved location in our internationally admired city and it could never be undone.</p> <p>PP 2) A beautiful green landscape sloping down to the beautiful harbour but it is proposed to spoil it with eateries at both ends. For god's sake, a 'viewing platform' at <i>Mrs. Macquarie's Chair</i>?</p>
Paul Keating's history	<p>K 1) So, when and where did <i>Paul Keating</i> get his credentials as an urban, town and horticultural planner? It's amazing that he still feels he has the only and right opinion on these matters, which is reflective of his time as <i>Prime Minister</i> as well.</p> <p>K 2) <i>Keating</i> once again demonstrating he is suffering from attention deprivation, and will write or say anything necessary in order to get some media exposure - if it is on a topic he knows nothing about, has no expertise in, and about which his opinion is totally irrelevant. Why are</p>

	former politicians (still sucking at the public teat I might add!)
The facts regarding Barangaroo	<p>B 1) It is the antithesis of what is proposed at <i>Barangaroo</i> which according to the government is "naturalistic"</p> <p>B 2) The destruction of the <i>Barangaroo</i> master plan gifted public land to bankers and casino bosses. Oh but we got a faux natural headland built upon a car park which redresses the theft of Aboriginal land</p>

523 In addition to the identification of key frames in the community commentary we
524 have also investigated the relative primacy afforded to the views of different
525 stakeholders. Thirteen stakeholders were identified (see Table 3)

526 When the primacy afforded to the stakeholders as objects is mapped as a
527 visualized network using Gephi one is provided with an indication not only of the
528 limits of stakeholder influence, but also of the challenges such stakeholder
529 conceptualizations present for an industry like tourism. As has been previously
530 noted the relative thickness of the lines (see Figure 2) is an understanding of the
531 co-occurrence of the reference to those stakeholders. On the one hand, as we
532 have already indicated the physical locale of the RBGDT is a 30-hectare site on
533 the southern shores Sydney harbour. The bounded nature of the site makes it
534 perhaps not surprising that within the stakeholder network all of the
535 commercial, policy and other interests that one would expect in a study of
536 protected areas tourism are present. Also evident is something of an urban
537 political ecology mindset where readers have not sought to separate society
538 from nature (Troy, 2014) but rather have viewed nature being an intrinsic and
539 active player in the development of the site. Other cultural stakeholders
540 including the Opera House, Opera Australia, the Art Gallery of New South Wales
541 and Victoria Lodge were viewed as more marginalized even though they are
542 closely located. To understand why we need to finish by examining the
543 discursive practice surrounding the development of the articles, as well as the
544 socio-cultural context in which they are situated.

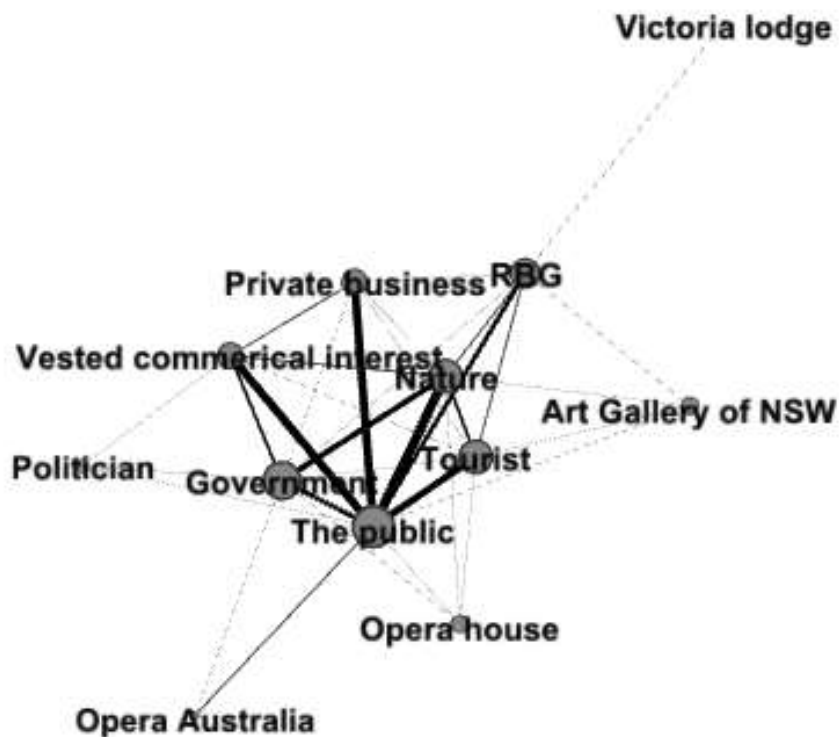
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547

548

549 **Figure 2:** Visualized Network of Stakeholders



550

551 **5.2 Discursive practice**

552 Understanding the social contextual issues of how newspaper articles and
553 readers' comments are created as frames distributed and consumed fall into
554 Fairclough model's second dimension (Fairclough, 1992). Royal Botanic Gardens
555 and Domain Trust (2014) put the Draft Masterplan out for public comment as
556 part of the organisational and environmental planning processes that form part
557 of frame creation in April 2014. The initial release was preceded by two media
558 releases entitled *Secure Future for Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney* and *Have Your*
559 *Say on the Draft Masterplan for the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney and Domain*.
560 Spence and Simmons (2006) have written on the media release both as a
561 mechanism for informing people what an organisation is undertaking, as well as
562 mobilizing the target audience to respond to the issue in question. Whilst the
563 media releases achieved their initial objective of encouraging community debate
564 over aspects of the Masterplan proposal, the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain
565 Trust (2014) was critical of the breadth of coverage in much of the ensuing

566 media frames on issues relating to the scientific values, mainstream recreational
 567 uses and broader management objectives of the Masterplan.

568

569 The relationship between the articles and the ensuing community based frames
 570 through their behaviour of commentary can be characterized as the relationship
 571 between vertical and horizontal media. By engaging both sources, newspapers
 572 create the potential to convey and shape the public's views (Hennig-Thurau,
 573 Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004). An important caveat on this ability, however,
 574 is that the ability of an agenda setter to influence community frames is also
 575 sometimes dictated by the level of need that can be observed in the community
 576 for orientation (Ragas & Roberts, 2009). An interesting perspective on this was
 577 provided by Reinmuth (2014) who applauded the consultative nature of the
 578 RBGDT Masterplan process in comparison to other major development
 579 processes in Sydney, whilst also observing that whilst stakeholders including
 580 Paul Keating had the right to comment on the development process, all care
 581 should be taken to avoid a situation where "the concerns of a contentious
 582 citizenry [were left disorganized and disheveled – via the utilization of decision
 583 making processes designed specifically to exclude them" (Reinmuth, 2014). This
 584 commentary in itself is recognition of the relative power of some to influence the
 585 agenda over others.

586

587 **Table 3: Royal Botanic Garden Stakeholders**

Stakeholders	Description
Nature	Nature setting of the park
The public	Community and residents
Private business	Private business sector
Government	State and federal government and local councils
Vested commercial interest	People with a commercial interest in the RBG
The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust (RBG)	The RBG management agency
Tourists	Visitors to RBG and Sydney
The Art Gallery of New South Wales	A public gallery in Sydney next to Royal Botanic garden

The Opera House	The Sydney tourist icon next to Royal Botanic garden
Victoria Lodge	A building inside Botanic garden
Politicians	Australian politicians (such as former prime minister – Paul Keating)
Opera Australia	The main opera company in Australia

588

589 An appraisal of much of the qualitative community frames from readers in the
590 four study articles evidences a high level of surety amongst many of the
591 respondents over the salient characteristics that they perceived for the
592 sustainable management of the site. Engagement of community members in the
593 online forums seemingly did little to alter perspectives amongst online
594 respondents and meld individuals to common community frames. To the
595 contrary, from our interpretation, reader reaction remained broadly divided on
596 utilitarian (e.g. Table 2 N2) and conservation lines (see Table 2 PI 2) and did not
597 change their position in response to the online collaborative process. The level of
598 apathy that is evident towards a number of the Masterplan initiatives in Table 2
599 stands in contrast to the results of survey work commissioned by the RBGDT⁶
600 who identified that 24% of respondents felt that the establishment of new
601 viewing platforms and amenities at Mrs. Macquarie’s Chair would likely make
602 the biggest positive difference to peoples’ experience of the gardens.

603

604 Dodd and Jones (2010) have argued that botanic gardens need to redefine their
605 position in society if they want to become powerful advocates for positions on
606 issues affecting society. To achieve a new social contract, Dodd and Jones (2010)
607 argue they must engage critically with their own purpose, and once identified
608 communicate that purpose throughout all of their internal organisational
609 processes. At the same time, however, there is recognition that every garden is
610 different and care must be taken in determining how best to communicate the
611 value in the capabilities of botanical gardens to society. The report notes “the
612 traditional work of the botanic garden, as a place for research and education
613 must not be lost” (Dodd and Jones, 2010, p. 8). Previous scholarship has

⁶ Survey responses were received from 685 members of the community in response to an online survey instrument, which ran from 6 April to 31 May 2014 (Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, 2014)

614 identified educational outcomes to be one of the principal attractions of botanic
615 gardens tourism (Ballantyne et al., 2008; Benfield, 2004; He & Chen, 2012). With
616 this in mind, the final section of the paper will consider the socio cultural context
617 that surrounds the discourse in the canvassed articles, and to ask can tourism be
618 a part of the site's sustainable future?

619

620 **5.3 Socio-cultural practices – benefits, responsibilities and practices**

621 At the beginning of this paper we referred to an article from the SMH where the
622 reasons for delaying work on the Masterplan were discussed (see Dumas, 2016).
623 The online version of this article on the SMH website was presented with an
624 accompanying short video entitled, "*The botanist who has grown with the*
625 *garden*". In this video long serving botanist Barbara Briggs who has been
626 associated with the gardens for 57 years seeks to highlight certain views on
627 sustainability. These views articulated the need for long term planning and the
628 gradual adoption of changes in management practices in response to scientific
629 advancement and the evolution of the surrounding communities. The
630 timelessness of the sentiments expressed by Barbra Briggs are an interesting
631 juxtaposition to the ideas in the broader article where Dumas (2016, n.p)
632 describes the role of tourism in emotive language, for example "the radical
633 proposal for a five star Botanical Hotel". The article ends with a quote from the
634 current executive director of the RBGDT who seeks to indirectly downplay the
635 likelihood of future development on the site; "It is truly remarkable that for 200
636 years this beautiful site on the harbour has remained untouched, the greatest
637 legacy we could leave is that we leave it untouched for another 200 years plus"
638 (Ellis cited in Dumas, 2016).

639

640 The purpose of the present discussion is not to offer suggestions as to what the
641 future of the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens should or shouldn't be, as these
642 questions will be answered in the course of ongoing community deliberations
643 and policy discussions in the next few years. Instead, we wish to ask what role
644 tourism interests may have in the ongoing sustainable management of the site?
645 The contested nature of community debate over the sustainable future of urban

646 botanic gardens, as demonstrated in earlier empirical results in this paper, forms
647 part of a larger debate over urban renewal and space regeneration in our major
648 cities (Matsuoka & Kaplan, 2008). Many urban spaces including parks are under
649 pressure to provide economic value to the city as part of broader neoliberal
650 planning agendas. Within Sydney there is, at the time of writing evidence of
651 considerable urban re-development around projects including Barangaroo.
652 Searle (2013) has described the redevelopment of Barangaroo as a “recourse to
653 globalization and economic development discourses in particular, underpinned
654 by neoliberalist and new public management doctrines”.

655

656 Neoliberalism is a topic that has long sat uneasily with discussions on the
657 sustainable management of protected areas (Darcy & Wearing, 2009; Fletcher,
658 2010). In botanical gardens the idea of an ongoing role for tourism is often seen
659 as unpalatable on account of the perceived fallacy of thinking that it is possible to
660 reconcile the growth and conservation objectives of sustainability through the
661 presence of an industry that is to many the quintessential example of global
662 capitalism. Whilst understandable, such viewpoints ignore a reality that
663 protected areas have, since their inception in the national parks movement of
664 North America in the late nineteenth century existed on the basis of human need.
665 While needs can be expressed in a variety of forms and obviously include
666 traditional scientific discovery roles; human needs also extend to the perceived
667 right of the wider population to access sites characterized by high quality
668 examples of gardening and botany, and to grow their own knowledge of these
669 processes (Garrod, Pickering, & Willis, 1993).

670

671 Alvarez and Rogers (2006) have suggested that sustainability is perhaps best
672 seen not as a fixed state, but rather as a discourse where actors will seek to
673 control the agenda for change and development. In one of the few studies to
674 tackle the issue of sustainability as it relates to garden tourism, Benfield (2001)
675 defined sustainability around traditional measures such as carrying capacity.
676 Such analysis is useful for addressing practical issues around the management of
677 resources made available to tourists and their movement in the garden space.
678 However, it does little to shed light on the way that stakeholders will form

679 ontological perspectives on whether the very presence of tourists is acceptable
680 within a sustainable botanic garden landscape. These feelings are accentuated by
681 stakeholders in global cities with increasing pressure on natural resources and
682 open space as a counter to increasingly high-density living. Drawing on an idea
683 from Alvarez and Rogers (2006) we argue that focusing on the discourse of
684 sustainability encourages different stakeholders to critically reflect on the idea
685 that their own definition of sustainability need not be fixed; rather perspectives
686 on sustainability will evolve as a result of our experience with others. Agenda
687 setters we suggest have an important role to play in such deliberations.

688

689 Groth and Corijn (2005) have demonstrated the potential role for what they
690 define as 'informal actors' to influence the agendas of urban planners and
691 politicians through the development of in-determinant space. In-determinant
692 spaces they note are lived, they are the bound up in the ideal that "the
693 contradictions that constitute urban life are nurtured" (Groth and Corijn, 2005, p.
694 521). The arguments expressed in the four articles examined in this paper have
695 in different ways sought to draw attention to the value of these places as cultural
696 and natural resources (Matsuoka & Kaplan, 2008). Many public spaces such as
697 the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens are characterized by the complex interplay of
698 stakeholder meanings. As we have demonstrated in this paper in the context of a
699 history of the gardens, as well as through reference to the broader development
700 of global protected areas, utilitarian interests will always play a role in the
701 development and subsequent use of garden spaces. The fundamental quandary
702 for planners is that the unique experiences offered to garden visitors is the
703 product of its natural and cultural history, and the social communities that are
704 attached to them (Gobster, 2001). These are not mutually exclusive constructs. It
705 is only through engagement with the past that we are able to interpret the
706 present. Equally, however, current community expectations cannot be bound to
707 historical precedence. As Sassen (1996 in Groth and Corijn 2005, p. 504) notes
708 the urban realm "is no longer marked by more or less homogenous life patterns
709 and spatial practices, but by a pronounced plurality and fragmentation in terms
710 of lifestyles, by tensions arising from the co-existence of multiple and contested
711 identities and by new mechanisms of exclusion and polarization as the 'local'

712 corollaries of an increasing global interconnectedness and the neoliberal re-
713 orientation of the economic sphere”.

714 **6. Conclusion**

715 Using critical discourse analysis, this paper has examined the agenda-setting and
716 framing role of news media in the ongoing development of the Draft RBGDT
717 Master Plan. The Sydney gardens, which we have discussed, are characteristic of
718 the wicked and socially constructed nature of many tourism-operating
719 environments. Public sector master planning of the type described in this paper
720 is a formal legislative process. Once enacted the plan is subject to a range of
721 external influences (including from the media third estate). In the present case
722 we have sought to shed light on the influence of such alternative frames, and in
723 particular on the ability of the media to frame discussions in the community on
724 the role of tourism and other landuses in the public planning process.

725

726 From a theoretical perspective, this paper contributes to a fresh understanding
727 of the role of the media as agenda setters in the tourism literature by connecting
728 the concepts of objects, attributes and frames under the umbrella of agenda-
729 setting theory. Through the examination of the news media and its associated
730 news media comments, the paper has also added empirical evidence to the
731 “critical turn” of sustainable tourism in urban protected areas by highlighting the
732 various roles the media play in the management of contested tourism locales.
733 Ateljevic et al. (2007, pp. 1-2) have argued that the “critical turn is heralded as a
734 quiet revolution in tourism enquiry, which seeks to challenge the field’s
735 dominant discourses and inspire a series of critical dialogues, conversations and
736 entanglements into the nature of power, discourses and representations in
737 tourism”. In increasingly heterogeneous tourism localities we have sought to
738 demonstrate the important role that the media will play in directing public
739 debate and thus often management decisions over the coming years.

740

741 Methodologically, this paper contributes to exiting literature on the innovation of
742 using a computer-assisted CDA to aggregate fragmented information into a
743 cohesive visual representation. The use of automated text mining software

744 Leximancer not only helps objectively identify key frames (themes) but also
745 visually presents the relationship between them. The visualized stakeholder
746 network presents a clear network of each stakeholder's perceived position in the
747 protected area debate. Subsequently, this network helps stakeholders to
748 effectively position themselves in the debate and identify future opportunities
749 for engagement. For the public, it is easy to detect who (stakeholders) has been
750 left out and marginalized in the debate. As such, the innovation of this approach
751 adds to the body of knowledge of critical discourse analysis in enhancing the
752 power of soft science (Wilson & Hollinshead, 2015) as well as the visual analytics
753 method (Cheng, 2016; Cheng & Edwards, 2015) in tourism by utilizing advanced
754 computer-assisted techniques to effectively address data's messiness.

755

756 Future research opportunities exist to understand the process whereby
757 protected area agenda setters make decisions to select objects, attributes and
758 frames in other contexts. While this paper has largely focused on frame creation
759 in news media, opportunities exist to examine agenda setting through objects
760 and attributes more fully prior to public obligation process. Opportunities also
761 exist to broaden the research focus on framing, through not seeing framing solely
762 as a process of drawing the reader's attention to specific concerns on an issue.
763 Drawing on the work Fairhurst and Sarr (1996) amongst others, attention is
764 needed on the ways in which agenda setters may use mechanisms including
765 story, artifact and contrasts to create a frame perspectives on heterogeneous and
766 historically defined protected areas. Lastly, further research that examines social
767 media coverage (e.g. follow-up local Facebook group) and perhaps a further
768 comparison with the findings of this study will yield additional insights, as today
769 social media no longer presents a specific readership as opposed to newspapers.

770

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