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# JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

S O C I E T Y

Volume 27, No. 2  
1996

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*Niza R. Licuanan*  
*Rosintan Panjaitan*  
*John C. van Es*

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*Thomas R. Harris*  
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An Analysis of Visitation Potential and Corresponding Economic Impacts of the Great Basin National Park



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## EDITOR'S NOTE

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Good Bye. This editor's note completes my five years as the editor of the *Journal of the Community Development Society*. It has been a fast and a very important five years. Like most things in this dramatically changing world, in those five years the practice of community development has changed. Likewise the Community Development Society has changed, and I think so has its *Journal*. Two of these changes are worth noting. First, while still retaining its social science character, the *Journal* has published articles with broader research questions. In other words, the goals of the articles have changed. While many of the questions still deal with theoretical issues, many also address important issues of community development practice. There are now an equal number of articles that deal with research (or theory) and practice.

And secondly, in addition to the changes in the nature of the research questions, the definition of community development has also broadened. The *Journal* now publishes a wider range of topics connected to community development. An examination of the Cumulative Index, from 1990 to 1996, included in this edition of the *Journal*, is illustrative of the changing nature of community development. In particular, economic development has emerged as the most important "new" topic in community development. This includes community-based or community-implemented economic strategies, and the assessment of specific economic development strategies (like entrepreneurship and retail trade). Rural economic development is another important "new" *Journal* topic.

I have enjoyed very much serving as the editor of the *Journal of the Community Development Society*. I would enjoy hearing from the readers. My address is on the back of the front cover and my e-mail address is [rblair@unomaha.edu](mailto:rblair@unomaha.edu).

As always the editorial staff wants to thank all of the reviewers who spent hours reviewing the many manuscripts that are submitted to the *Journal*:

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# **GENDER AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES: DOES GENDER MATTER?**

**By Niza R. Licuanan, Rosintan Panjaitan, and  
John C. van Es**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The importance of gender in community development has been a neglected issue in U.S. community development. This study analyzed the extent to which male and female respondents differed in their willingness to support community services. Using data from needs assessments conducted in eight rural counties in Illinois, the authors tested the hypothesis that certain community services are more likely to be supported by women than by men, since women are more affected by them. Tests of significance showed virtually no differences between men and women in terms of the type of services they were willing to support. Several implications of the findings are discussed.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Community development aims to improve the socioeconomic conditions of all segments of a community. Yet, some researchers argue that there are significant groups in the community who are not included in United States community development research (Stoneall, 1983). One of these neglected groups is women in rural areas. Little (1986) argued that the experiences of women in rural communities have not received the same attention as other aspects of community life. This neglect is due mainly to assumptions in community development that men are the major actors in the community (Stoneall, 1983). Very little research has been done on gender issues in areas of community building, needs assessments, program evaluation, and other programs implemented under the aegis of community development. This is a cause for concern, since experience in third-world development shows that excluding women from development efforts has led to further marginalization of women's status, and the eventual failure of some of these programs.

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Niza R. Licuanan and Rosintan Panjaitan are Research Assistants and John C. van Es is Professor of Rural Sociology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Laboratory for Community and Economic Development.



Do women represent different interests in community development? This paper addresses the issue of gender in United States rural community development by examining the extent to which male and female respondents differ in their willingness to support certain services through taxes. The literature on women and development, as well as that of feminist geography, suggests that traditional sex roles assigned to women include domestic roles in maintaining the household and care of its members. Based on these views of the roles women play in their households, the authors hypothesized that women are more willing to support services related to child care, the elderly, public transportation, medical services, and education. Data sets from eight rural counties in Illinois have been used to test these hypotheses. Tests of significance were performed to determine whether differences exist between which services male and female respondents were willing to support.

### RELATED LITERATURE

Boserup (1970) and others (Ward, 1988; Beneria & Sen, 1981; Elson & Pearson, 1981; Buvinic, 1976) argued that development based on modernizing the community often leads to further marginalization of women's status in underdeveloped countries. Most community development programs in the 1960s and 1970s ignored women's contributions and the roles they played in their communities. As a general rule, the policies carried out during this period operated under the assumption that either the agricultural producers were male or that the gender of the producer was not a relevant factor (Fortmann, 1981). Development policy makers only considered women in the context of *welfare* or social service projects. This reduced women's status to that of being merely consumers of goods and social services (Mead, 1976). These perceptions of women's roles in their communities had effectively removed women's concerns in mainstream development projects.

These erroneous assumptions about the role of gender in agricultural production also created unfavorable conditions for female agricultural producers. Studies have shown that females do more agricultural work than males in most underdeveloped countries (International Labor Organization, 1981; Bingswanger et al., 1980). The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (1985) estimated that women in underdeveloped countries were responsible for 60 to 80 percent of the total agricultural work. In some areas, women produced as much as 90 percent of the food (CGIAR, 1985). Because of the incongruence between what policy makers assumed about the gender of the agricultural producer and what was really happening on the farms, women were often hurt by programs of agricultural development. In general, the technological innovations diffused to agrarian communities were designed primarily to enhance the agricultural work of men, rather than that of women (Blumberg, 1978; Ahmed, 1985). Farm machines, for example, were designed

primarily to fit a man's physiology but not a woman's (Cain, 1981). A greater negative consequence of farm mechanization was the displacement of women by men and machines, even in areas traditionally within the sphere of female economic activities. Tinker (1976) stated that small implements such as presses, grinders, or cutters generally had been introduced to men, even when the work for which they were a substitute traditionally had been done by women.

Research findings have shown that regardless of economic strata, size of farm, and willingness to innovate, women were the ignored group in receiving agricultural and educational services (Staudt, 1976). This means that rural women had very limited access to information about technology, or how it might affect them. Women were excluded not only by virtue of their position outside the mainstream of such information flow, but also because of the selective perceptions of those controlling or choosing the technology (Cain, 1981).

In summary, experiences in community development in underdeveloped countries demonstrated that ignoring women in development efforts had led to adverse consequences for women. The technology introduced to these developing countries was not a neutral or value-free tool (Cain, 1981). Technology instead became an instrument which reinforced the pre-existing gender hierarchy (in which the status of men is higher than that of women). This contributed to further loss of women's access to technology and such resources as credit. Blumberg (1981) argued that planned development policies in various underdeveloped countries frequently led to greater economic marginalization of women. These development programs had the general consequences of increasing rural women's workload, while decreasing their resource base (both absolutely and relatively to their menfolk) and, consequently, decreasing their well-being and opportunities as people (Blumberg, 1981). In response to these findings, recent development programs carried out in underdeveloped countries have often included a gender component that addressed the specific concerns of women in the community.

In the United States, rural women may suffer the same neglect in community development efforts. There is a dearth of research on the importance of gender on community development efforts. Haney (1982) stated that community development practitioners are relatively ignorant about the everyday world of rural women, and how their lives are specifically circumscribed by social processes and public policies. Christenson and Robinson's seminal book, *Community Development in Perspective*, (1989) reflected this lack of attention to gender issues in community development. The book has no chapter that deals with gender, and neither *gender*, *sex*, nor *female* appear in the index. A review of the articles published in the *Journal of the Community Development Society* in the last ten years shows that only two articles dealt specifically with women and community development. One article focused on the importance of women in women's organizations and behind-the-scene arenas of local politics and economics (Stoneall, 1983). The other article was about the low participation of

female community development practitioners in their professional field (Lackey & Burke, 1984). Lackey and Burke stated that the lack of female participation in the community development profession may be a reason why women's issues have been relatively neglected in community development studies.

The limited literature on the conditions of rural women in the United States indicates that women are likely to have special concerns. Lichter (1989) found that roughly one of every three rural female workers was a "discouraged" worker, jobless, employed part-time involuntarily, or working for poverty-level wages. In terms of leadership positions, several researchers have shown that community and political leaders tended to be males (Licuanan et al., 1993; Ayres & Potter, 1989; Molnar & Smith, 1982; Stuart & van Es, 1978). Thus, the absence of women in public offices makes adequate representation in decision-making bodies difficult. Salamon and Kein (1979) argued that, due to restricted mobility and opportunities for women, the growth of women's solidarity groups has been very slow, and they exert little power in their communities. Maret and Chenoweth (1979) suggested that traditional views about the economic roles of women are more strongly held in rural than urban areas. The sexual inequalities in rural areas led to women's substantial isolation and restricted employment opportunities (Chenoweth & Maret-Havens, 1978). Little (1986; 1987) also argued that the rural ideology (a belief in which the family is seen as central to the stability of the community, and the mother as the "lynch-pin" that holds the family together) places women in a domestic role. Thus, women have been viewed strictly in terms of their roles as mothers and wives (Little, 1986; 1987).

### Analytic Framework

Are there gender-based concerns of which community development practitioners in the United States should be aware? In her book, *The Second Shift*, Hochschild (1989) discussed men's and women's gender ideologies, or beliefs about manhood and womanhood. According to Hochschild, gender beliefs are forged in early childhood and thus anchored to deep emotions. She argued that these gender ideologies lead to gender strategies, or plans of action through which a person tries to solve problems at hand, based on the existing cultural notions of gender. Thus, women and men have different notions of how to solve problems confronting them.

Are there distinct *women* and *men* interests on which community development needs to focus? This paper attempts to address these questions of the importance of gender on community development. Based on the literature on women in development and feminist geography, the authors hypothesize that there are certain issues in the community in which women are more interested than men are. Specifically, these issues center around the problems of child care, the elderly, public transportation, medical services, and education. The authors believe that services addressing these issues are more likely to receive support from women since women are the most affected by these issues.

Maret and Chenoweth (1979) have suggested that women in rural areas face greater sex discrimination than women in more urbanized areas. Little (1986) argued that the rural ideology has restricted women to the domestic role, depriving women of economic/work opportunities. For example, women are tied to their homes due to their domestic chores and, therefore, have fewer opportunities to go out and look for gainful employment. Thus, women are more likely to support services such as child care centers that would alleviate the burdens of their domestic roles. This then will allow them to have more mobility to pursue economic opportunities. Little (1986) stated that women are also physically restricted by their roles as mothers/wives. For example, a one-car family would most likely let the husband use the car, while the wife would have to use public transportation if available. Her arguments suggested that women are more likely than men to support better public transportation facilities since they tend to use these facilities more than men.

Increased funding for education and medical services are more likely to be supported by women than men. These services are associated with the quality of nurturing that society expects women to give to their family members. Mothers may also be more likely than fathers to be involved with the education of their children. Thus, mothers may become more aware of the needs of the educational system than their husbands. Fraser (1993) and Gill (1983) found women more likely than men to advocate increased funding for education.

The availability of quality medical services is also likely to generate more support from women than from men. Little (1991) argued that the rural ideology assigns to women the responsibility of maintaining the health of the family. Roos (1985) stated that women are primarily responsible for the physical care of the family. Thus, women are more likely to support services that would attend to the health needs of the family.

Abel (1991) and others (Davis, 1990; Gross, 1989; Winfield, 1987) stated that daughters are more likely than sons to take care of their elderly parents. Often, these daughters are the main caregivers of their elderly parents. Studies also shown daughters-in-law more likely to take care of their mothers-in-law than sons (Merril, 1993). Further, Weinstein (1989) noted that women who shoulder this responsibility tend to suffer from physical, emotional, as well as financial stress. Since women are most likely to perform eldercare, they are more likely to support services for the elderly.

In summary, previous research has shown that women perform traditional gender roles in their communities. These traditional gender roles also restrict women's economic opportunities as well as social mobility. The authors hypothesize that women are more likely to show support for services that would alleviate some of their responsibilities in maintaining and taking care of the members of the household.

## DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES IN EIGHT ILLINOIS COUNTIES

### Methodology

Data for this paper were obtained from needs assessment surveys carried out in eight rural counties in Illinois. The data set from Kendall was from a survey conducted by the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service. The other seven data sets were part of the project "Helping Rural Communities Prepare for Economic Development," which the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service conducted in collaboration with Rural Partners and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The population of the study consisted of adult (19 years old or older) residents of the counties. The respondents were randomly selected using voter registration lists (Cass, Ford, Henry, Kendall, Shelby, and Pike counties) or jury lists (Saline and Wayne counties) as sample frames. The sample size differed from one county to another. The smallest sample size was Cass, which had 266 respondents. The Kendall sample was the largest, with 799 respondents. Survey questionnaires were distributed and collected by volunteers in some counties. In other counties, the questionnaires were mailed to the respondents. Response rates ranged from 55 to 75 percent.

The authors selected a question that asked the respondents whether or not they are willing to have additional tax money spent on the following services: to provide better education, improve medical services, help finance youth programs, provide better housing for the elderly, provide better transportation for the elderly, help finance child care facilities, and provide public transportation.

Willingness to spend tax money can be used to indicate the respondent's priorities in solving community problems. Korsching (1979) stated that the spending preferences might provide an additional dimension of the specificity and extent of commitment residents have to resolving a problem. Moreover, Molnar and Smith (1982, p. 499) argued that "a spending preference can give some indication of the degree to which the respondent supports the service as a solution to some need." Thus, the degree to which respondents are willing to spend additional tax money on certain services is considered to reflect how the respondents perceive the severity of the problem that the services address. However, Coleman (1966) stated that when analyzing spending preferences, the "free rider" problem is an issue. There will be respondents who endorse resources for services that benefit them, and oppose those where their needs are currently being met otherwise, regardless of general community needs (Molnar & Smith, 1982).

In practice, spending preferences are frequently used by researchers and community developers to ascertain needs in the community. For example, the data in this study were part of needs assessment surveys that have been used to gather baseline information for preparatory work for a community development

program. For the current analysis, we were not concerned with the validity of the expression of community needs. Instead, we were examining likely differences in expressions of community needs by gender. The data are appropriate for purposes of our analysis.

The variables studied, gender and responses to the spending preference questions, were transformed into dichotomous variables. Female was coded as 1, and male as 0. A "yes" response was coded as 1, and the "no" response was coded 0. Tests of significance were conducted to see if there were differences between female and male responses to the spending preference questions.

## **Findings and Discussions**

In general, the respondents, both male and female, were willing to give greatest support to provide better education, and the least support to provide public transportation (Table 1). In all counties (except in Kendall, where the question was not asked) between 71 and 84 percent of respondents endorsed the idea of spending tax money to improve education. Improving medical services or helping finance youth programs were the second most supported services.

Although the percentages showed that more than half of the respondents were willing to support education, medical services, and youth programs, these proportions also showed that in no county were these services unanimously supported by the respondents. These findings suggested that people make different judgments in terms of which services are more essential to their respective counties.

Table 2 represents the results of the analysis for each county. As has been described, the items have been selected because the literature indicates that women should be more supportive of spending increased tax dollars on these items than men. Table 2 does not substantiate a pattern of systematic differences between men and women. Even by the weakest criteria of evidence, just looking at percentage differences between men and women, 16 of 53 items indicate either 2 percent or less difference between responses of men and women, or that men were more supportive than women of spending tax money on the item. Accepting conventional criteria for dealing with sampling bias (a statistical significance level of .05) shows that in five of the eight counties there were no differences between women and men in their willingness to use tax money to support services.

Contrary to the authors' hypothesized model, gender did not show up as a very important factor in terms of supporting the services. Out of the eight data sets tested, only Pike County followed the hypothesized model fairly closely: women were more likely to show support for four of the eight services identified in the study. Kendall showed significant differences for three services, and Henry showed differences for two services.

Table 2 indicates that in all cases where a statistically significant difference existed, women were more likely than men to support these services. However,

**Table 1. Summary of Percentages of Respondents Willing to Support Services in Eight Illinois Counties**

<i>Services</i>	<i>County Population</i>							
	<i>Cass (13,437)</i>	<i>Ford (14,275)</i>	<i>Wayne (17,241)</i>	<i>Pike (17,577)</i>	<i>Shelby (22,260)</i>	<i>Saline (26,551)</i>	<i>Kendall (39,500)</i>	<i>Henry (51,159)</i>
Provide better education	76.8	74.3	71.8	84.2	74.9	81.7	N.D.	77.5
Improve medical services	65.7	55.5	66.1	77.6	56.6	63.4	42.5	59.0
Help finance youth programs	56.5	57.0	64.4	73.6	57.6	66.4	51.8	57.9
Provide housing for the elderly	54.2	50.0	50.9	66.4	52.9	69.6	47.2	53.5
Provide better transportation for the elderly	43.2	45.6	50.9	50.0	40.3	69.9	46.4	44.7
Help finance child-care facilities	33.5	N.D.	38.7	42.9	28.1	48.8	24.3	36.6
Improve public transportation	21.9	N.D.	13.2	26.5	10.6	42.6	26.5	24.4

**Table 2. Summary of Percentages of Male and Female Respondents Willing to Increase or Use Tax Money to Support Services in Eight Illinois Counties**

<i>Services</i>	<i>Cass (13,437)</i>	<i>Ford (14,275)</i>	<i>Wayne (17,241)</i>	<i>Pike (17,577)</i>	<i>Shelby (22,260)</i>	<i>Saline (26,551)</i>	<i>Kendall (39,500)</i>	<i>Henry (51,159)</i>
Provide better education								
Females	82.1	72.6	74.4	93.1**	77.8	82.9	N.D.	76.8
Males	73.2	75.7	68.9	75.4	72.3	80.5	N.D.	78.3
Improve medical services								
Females	67.4	55.7	67.2	86.0**	57.6	68.9	46.6*	62.3
Males	64.6	55.3	64.7	69.3	55.6	58.4	38.6	55.3
Help finance youth programs								
Females	55.3	57.0	66.1	75.3	59.5	63.8	54.5	59.8
Males	57.3	57.0	62.4	73.7	56.0	68.8	49.3	55.6
Provide housing for the elderly								
Females	57.9	50.0	54.3	73.0*	56.9	71.4	52.2**	52.6
Males	51.7	50.0	47.0	59.6	49.5	67.9	42.4	54.5
Provide better transportation for the elderly								
Females	42.6	42.1	50.0	55.9	42.3	63.7	49.0	47.5
Males	43.7	48.3	43.0	44.1	38.6	58.2	43.8	41.5
Help finance childcare facilities								
Females	29.5	N.D.	42.2	52.7*	30.1	53.4	27.0	40.9*
Males	36.2	N.D.	34.7	33.3	26.5	44.4	21.7	31.8
Improve public transportation								
Females	22.3	N.D.	13.4	30.6	13.6	45.5	31.6**	28.7**
Males	21.7	N.D.	13.0	22.5	8.1	39.8	21.7	19.6

\*significant at  $p < .05$ \*\*significant at  $p < .01$



one must keep in mind that for all items, the differences between women and men were true at most for two counties. There were no significant differences between women and men in any of the eight counties in their willingness to help finance youth programs, or to provide better transportation for the elderly.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

What do the findings tell us? Contrary to the arguments posed by literature on women and underdeveloped countries, and feminist geographers, gender did not appear to be a consistently important factor in defining community development issues in the communities involved in the analysis. In the great majority of cases, male respondents were likely to show the same support as female respondents for community services that according to the literature should have been favored by women.

Frankly, the results were unexpected, and we can only suggest some possible areas of further inquiry and likely implications of the results. One of these areas focuses on the nature of the questions asked in needs assessments, as well as the process through which communities undertake such activity. A community needs assessment survey designed by citizen groups may not be a place in which gender differences are likely to show. Even though women have been involved in determining the content of the surveys included in this study, we do not know to what extent women have been successful in influencing the decisions regarding the survey's content. In other words, we do not know to what extent women have been able to introduce those items which are of special concern to them. Perhaps women's concerns have been ignored in the citizen committees' dynamics involved in designing the questionnaire. It is also possible that the committees have looked specifically for community-wide concerns, de-emphasizing more narrowly defined concerns, such as those of women.

In practical terms, the data illustrate the potential danger of drawing inferences from the study of a single community. If we had analyzed only the data from Pike County, the results would have been most plausible and in accordance with expectations based on the literature. Yet the data from any one of the other seven counties lead us to largely, or completely, reject our inferences from the literature. Since community development research is frequently based on data from a single community, researchers need to be cognizant of the possibly unique characteristics of such data, and be cautious in any generalizations.

The results of this inquiry indicate the importance of further research on the role of gender in community development. Lessons from third-world development experiences serve as a warning to United States community developers about the danger of ignoring women. Furthermore, Stoneall (1983) suggests that including women in community studies allows development practitioners to address the private, familial arenas where people work and make decisions about communities. Research (Hochschild, 1989; Rosenfeld, 1985; Scanzoni &

Szinovacz, 1980; Salamon & Kein, 1979) showed that the degree of women's participation in decision-making can influence the outcome of decisions reached by the household which may profoundly affect community development priorities and actions.

On the other hand, community development research issues are overwhelmingly generated by practical concerns, and the lack of attention to gender issues in community development research and practice may accurately reflect that gender is not a major issue in community development in the United States, or at least in the needs assessment involved in such a process. While such a conclusion will be counter-intuitive to many, it is dangerous to introduce assumptions about gender roles in rural society, or research results from other societies, into community development theory and practice without appropriate empirical underpinnings.

For example, if there are situations where community residents are not operating from a gender perspective, community development professionals who enter such communities with their own set of perceptions should be aware of this community consensus, and anticipate that people may perceive special attention to gender issues as divisive to the community.

The present study has raised issues about the role of gender in community development and the data have probably raised more questions than they answered. The authors urge others to investigate the role of gender in community development and report their findings.

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# BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF McPHERSON COUNTY, KANSAS

By David E. Procter and Leah E. White

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## ABSTRACT

As citizens in McPherson County, Kansas, engaged in strategic planning to position themselves economically for the future, they also worked to build community. Data were collected during seven months of strategic planning. Two visions of *community* emerged during the strategic planning sessions. One group of citizens articulated community as the entire county while another group constructed community as individual towns and population groups within the county. Ultimately, the county-wide view of community dominated the strategic planning discussions. Conclusions are offered to explain this outcome and implications are provided for community development.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1990, the Kansas State Legislature adopted a three-year program of community strategic planning grants that provided funds to county-wide and multi-county economic development entities (Ott & Tatarko, 1992). Legislators believed it important for Kansas counties to assume responsibility for planning and development so as to strategically position themselves within the rural, state, national, and international economies. The goal of these strategic plans was to strengthen and expand local and regional economic development efforts, thereby maximizing chances for county stability, growth, and long-term survival. According to Section 3 of House Bill 2603, The Community Strategic Planning Assistance Act, the purpose was to:

- a. build and enhance economic development capacity at the local and regional levels;
- b. develop and sustain long-term commitments for local development efforts;

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- c. encourage broad-based local and multi-county development strategies that build on local strengths and to complement and reinforce statewide economic development strategy;
- d. maximize state investments in economic development through more efficient implementation of limited resources.

The strategic planning sessions also became, however, moments in which the rural culture reflected upon itself. Consistent with other strategic planning experiences (see Bryson & Roering, 1987; Kaufman & Jacobs, 1987), county citizens spoke of their visions for the future, their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Rural Kansans told of their history and dreams, their needs and goals. Interestingly, however, these strategic planning participants also worked to build community during these sessions. Bellah et al. define community as

a group of people who are different yet interdependent, who are bound together by mutual responsibilities arising out of a common history, a history which they have not simply chosen to be a part of but which they are nonetheless responsible for carrying on (1987, p. 246).

During the strategic planning process in McPherson County, Kansas, two conceptions of community were articulated: one focusing on the county as community, another viewing individual towns and population groups as the locus of community. By the end of the strategic planning process, the county view of community emerged as the pre-eminent perspective.

To fully explore this case, this article will: (1) provide a brief context of McPherson County, (2) detail the method of data collection and analysis, (3) present the results of the analysis by detailing the argument structure of the two positions on community, and (4) offer some conclusions drawn from this study as well as implications for community development.

## **A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY BUILDING**

### **Study Area**

McPherson County, named in honor of Civil War General John Birdseye McPherson, is located in south central Kansas. The county is approximately 190 miles southwest of Kansas City, 450 miles east of Denver, and 60 miles north of Wichita. The county is thirty miles wide and thirty miles long, about the size of Rhode Island. The county is very rural, encompassing nine communities: Lindsborg, Roxbury, Canton, Galva, Inman, Moundridge, McPherson, Marquette, and Windom. Approximately 27,000 people live in McPherson County with nearly half that population residing in McPherson, its largest city. The county ranks among the top ten Kansas counties in number of farms and total

acres harvested (Docking Institute, 1992, p. 22). The population of this rural county, as in many Kansas counties, is aging. In 1980, the median age was nearly 32 and by 1990, almost 35 (p. 1). Per Capita personal income in McPherson County averaged just over \$17,000 in 1991 (p. 21).

## METHOD

Communication scholars explore various types of discourse to examine the process of community-building, including mythic language (Malinowski, 1948), ideological language (Procter, 1991), fantasy themes (Bormann, 1985), and narratives (Langellier, 1989; Fisher, 1992). In the current study, communication from a variety of sources was examined, and from that communication, narrative structures of community-building were discerned. Walter Fisher, professor of communication at the University of Southern California, explained that, "Communities are co-constituted through communication transactions in which participants co-author a story that has coherence and fidelity for the life that one would lead" (Fisher, 1992, p. 214). These co-authored stories create common bonds and identity in citizens by constructing a common knowledge base, expressing and instilling values, and motivating action for groups of people (Fisher, 1992; Langellier, 1989; Lewis, 1987; Peterson, 1991).

**Data Collection:** Most data were collected at seven monthly strategic planning sessions. Each meeting was approximately two and one half hours long. The meetings were held at a variety of locations in McPherson County, including a hotel conference center, a public grade school, a local bank, a Lutheran church, a college library, and an American Legion hall. An average of fifty people attended each meeting. Participants represented a wide variety of ages, occupations, incomes and opinions. Two researchers attended the meetings as participant observers. One served as a meeting facilitator and the other as a meeting recorder.

Each meeting was audiotaped. Strategic planning participants would organize in small groups around tables. Researchers randomly selected two of these tables for each meeting and recorded the interaction at those tables. Participants were told that the meetings would be audiotaped so that the facilitators received an accurate record of what transpired at each meeting. Additional communication data were collected from comment in a county-wide survey, newspaper reports of the meetings, and from informal discussions with several county residents.

**Data Analysis:** After collecting the communication, grounded theory—"the discovery of theory from data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)—was selected as the method for data analysis. The initial coding began by "breaking down . . . an observation, a sentence, a paragraph and giving each discrete incident, idea, or event a name, something that stands for or represents a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 63). For the current study, individual sentences represented

the unit of analysis for initial coding. This step of analysis revealed twenty-seven different initial codes which viewed community as county and twenty-one initial codes which articulated community as individual town or population group (Table 1). The second step was to group these initial codes to recognize linkages and identify attitudes, causes, and motivation. The following narrative, delivered by a farmer at one of the strategic planning meetings, illustrates the coding process.

I've been trying to get the EPA to come out here and live with me for about a month now. (*Initial Code: EPA / government agency*) I want them to understand what it's really all about (*Initial Code: lack of understanding*). They're out here mandating for us, but they don't have to live out here (*Initial Code: unfair mandates*). We're all gonna go hungry someday because of all the rules and regulations of the EPA (*Initial Code: harmful and excessive regulations*).

From this narrative and these initial codes, a focused code was created and labeled *Government agencies are perceived negatively*. After completing the initial and focussed coding process, researchers engaged in theoretical sampling, or the process of collecting and analyzing additional data in order to check and refine the identified categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Specifically, after all data were collected, ten percent of the data pool was set aside and examined only after all the initial categories and focused categories were identified. This step seeks to (and did) verify that the identified categories accurately and exhaustively represent the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Once all data were coded and theoretically sampled, analysis was conducted to organize focused codes into overarching community-building narratives. This grouping revealed two general and competing narratives differing in basic knowledge, value structure, and proposed actions. In the following section, the argument structure of each narrative is outlined, then each element of the overarching narrative is illustrated through the words of the strategic planning participants.

## RESULTS

Two competing community narratives were articulated in McPherson County during the strategic planning process. One narrative constructed community as encompassing the entire county (Table 2). This narrative (1) contrasted strengths of McPherson County with surrounding counties, (2) stressed the interdependence of the entire county and the importance of cooperation and broad vision, and (3) warned of the threats to McPherson County and the strategic planning process. In a competing narrative, community was located within groups and individual towns of the county (Table 3). This narrative (1) urged protecting the unique characteristics of specific towns and groups within the county, (2) emphasized the importance of individualism, and (3) warned listeners of threats to individualism existing in the county.



**Table 1. Perceptions of Community in McPherson County: Initial Codes for Communication Analysis**

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**Initial Codes Constructing Community as County**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• joint projects</li> <li>• cooperation</li> <li>• sharing</li> <li>• working together</li> <li>• county-wide issues</li> <li>• broadness of scope</li> <li>• interested citizens</li> <li>• involved citizens</li> <li>• lack of separation</li> <li>• participation</li> <li>• need for integration</li> <li>• interdependence</li> <li>• unity</li> <li>• uniqueness causes problems</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diverse representation</li> <li>• county economic strength</li> <li>• county farming strength</li> <li>• long range planning</li> <li>• planning beyond specific issues</li> <li>• General McPherson as county symbol</li> <li>• inclusiveness</li> <li>• equitable</li> <li>• threat of losing faith</li> <li>• threat of competing interests</li> <li>• threat of pessimism</li> <li>• broadness of vision</li> <li>• knowledge / understanding of county</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**Initial Codes Constructing Community as Individual Town and Population Groups**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• locally-owned</li> <li>• local control</li> <li>• uniqueness</li> <li>• county harms localities</li> <li>• separation</li> <li>• possessiveness</li> <li>• protectionist</li> <li>• isolationist</li> <li>• self-sufficiency</li> <li>• self-reliant</li> <li>• negative perception of government agencies (EPA, County Commission, City Commission, Universities)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual interests / needs</li> <li>• individual talents</li> <li>• lack of involvement</li> <li>• lack of understanding of county</li> <li>• entrepreneurship</li> <li>• rivalries</li> <li>• self-serving</li> <li>• unfair government mandates</li> <li>• threat of loss of freedom</li> <li>• threat of loss of uniqueness</li> </ul> |
|--|--|
- 

**County-Wide Narrative**

Those county citizens who supported a vision of a county-wide community spoke highly of the county as a whole rather than of focusing on individual towns. These citizens spoke favorably of the "county's leadership," "the progressive nature of the county," and the county's ability to "address industrial prospects, their individual problems and idiosyncrasies and make positive moves to address those issues." These citizens contrasted the strengths of McPherson County with weaknesses of other counties. One banker contrasted McPherson County farming with that of surrounding counties:

I used to be in the bank in Herington and you drive into Dickinson County and Morris County and northern Marion County and you'd see farmstead after farmstead that was vacant and you just don't really see that out in McPherson County. Farming here is strong.

**Table 2. Elements of County-Wide Community Narrative****Contrasted Strengths of McPherson County with Surrounding Counties**

- Economic strength
- Diversity as strength
- County leadership as strength
- Farming as strength

**Stressed Importance of Interdependence, Cooperation, and Broad Vision**

- Issues are county-wide
- The more one community gains, the more everyone gains
- Total county involvement needed
- Working together = survival

**Warned of Threats to County Community**

- Negative attitudes
- Lack of participation
- Competing interests, including parochialism, outside economic entities

**Table 3. Elements of Individualist Community Narrative****Urged Protection of Unique Characteristics of Individual Towns and Groups**

- Allegiance not to McPherson County, but to local town or group
- Competing interests acknowledged as fact of life
- County gains perceived at expense of localities
- Specific towns / ethnic cultures need to be preserved and protected

**Emphasized Importance of Individualism**

- Entrepreneurship
- Volunteerism
- Neighbors helping neighbors
- Self-reliance

**Warned of Threats to Individualism**

- Big government / government agencies
- Outsiders (big business, university officials)
- County-wide attitude

In another comparative narrative, a CPA highlighted McPherson County's ability to deal with prospective industry. He contended that,

There's a lot of counties that don't have the abilities, the economics, and the mechanisms to address prospective industries that are coming into the county. They come into our county and we say, "O.K., this is what your problem is, we'll address it. You tell us what you need and we'll fix it, we'll find it." We've got those abilities, we've got the mechanisms in place to do it, we've got the economics, we've got the money to do it.

Diversity and uniqueness were also discussed as strengths of the entire county. A vice president at a local college stated, "We have populations that represent a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and we celebrate that. Communities that generate positive public interest from the state, from the national and the entire world. We are drawing attention to ourselves and we are proud of it."

Citizens who promoted a county-wide vision of community talked of the county's interdependence. One participant told the story from the perspective of the small towns.

Being from Canton and Galva, we realize we're going to be bedroom communities for McPherson. So we feel the more McPherson gains, the more people they can draw, that's going to benefit communities that surround McPherson.

Another county citizen spoke of the significance of interdependence for the entire county.

To tell you the truth, McPherson as a city, whether you realize it or not, cannot get along without the rural people. Any more than the rural people can get along without the city. When the farmers hurt, they don't know it, but everybody hurts. There's just no way. And I'd like to see a unity where you don't think of yourself as a rural person, you think of yourself as a county person. And you work together. And if we work together, that's how we survive.

Because of their interdependence, citizens argued it was important to cooperate and participate in joint projects. They believed this would help deal with a variety of issues and would benefit the various communities and ultimately the county as a whole. A business owner explained:

I was born and raised in McPherson and it's time that we stop thinking about McPherson and Canton and Moundridge and Marquette. For economic development, for youth, for education we need to be thinking McPherson County, if not a little larger area. . . . We can recruit business, we can train people and promote tourism or whatever that helps the whole county.

Thus, this group of citizens argued it was important for all people to participate in the planning process and stressed the need for a "dedicated effort in the macro of this effort," "to see this in a broader scope of the community-wide being a county-wide effort." These county citizens wanted a county vision that was "not necessarily trying to maintain or expand at the expense of someone else, but that we try very hard to be fair and open-minded so that everyone can be a net winner." These citizens stressed the need to maintain "cooperative spirits in terms of communities helping other communities."

Finally, these citizens warned of threats that could derail the county's strategic planning and ultimately hurt the county as a whole. This narrative identified such threats as negative attitudes, lack of participation, and competing interests. One woman lamented that "people don't get involved unless it's something

that's gonna smash their toe. And then they'll be there." Another woman from Inman told this story about the threat of negative attitudes,

Well, if you have a group of people who are all for something, it doesn't take very long and one person can make the whole group feel like what they're doing is not worthwhile or they can't do it or just a negative attitude. It's a threat. It's a threat to growth, to getting the job done.

A banker warned of another type of negative attitude—defeatism.

Do you think the fact the group is smaller is the fact that maybe some people . . . I don't mean to be critical here at all . . . but maybe sometimes people go into something real "gung ho" and when they see what it is all about they lose faith. . . . And I wonder if maybe some people perhaps almost see this as a lost cause. And if we see it as that, then truly we have already lost.

A final threat to building community identified in this narrative was competing interests. County citizens spoke of such competing interests as emphasizing individual towns rather than the county as a whole, one segment of the population being singled out for help rather than the entire county. As one citizen stated, "I feel that McPherson County as a whole is a pretty good place to live. Just like any other place in the U.S., we take each other for granted, have certain cliques of people who do not go outside of their clique. I would hope that we can all work together for the benefit of everyone, not just a few."

### **Individualist Narrative**

This conception of community was organized by an overarching belief in individualism. This was a narrative characterized by a focus on the interests of individuals, specific communities and groups within the county over the interests of the entire county. For example, instead of venerating the entire county, these citizens celebrated individuals, specific groups and communities, including the Mennonite population, farmers and entrepreneurs. The key for each of these groups was that they possessed qualities characteristic of individualism—perseverance, pride, willingness to work hard, and a desire to help others in the county. For example, Mennonites "tend to establish deep roots. And if there is ever a tragedy or need, they're the first ones there and they're very willing to help." This narrative also celebrated entrepreneurs. For example, a female participant offered this story:

My dad is from a very small community, about 500 people. They decided they wanted to have a medical clinic in their community, and after, what, ten years, they finally got one built. They had to recruit a physician and recruit people to fill it up. And after, what, two years, they finally got a physician and now they have a full clinic and he's looking for another physician to help him. So, you know, it took a long time and a lot of hard work, but it happened.

This success story came not because of county effort or government help, but the energy of citizens in one town. In addition to celebrating individuals and specific groups of people, this narrative also valued specific communities and their interests and needs over the county at large. Embedded in this discussion was the issue of protecting what existed in the individual communities. As one participant pointed out, "Well, there's your comments about a county-wide library system, but you know, I think we are the last Carnegie library in the state. We don't want to give that up at any cost." A banker from Canton spoke frequently and eloquently about this issue. He explained why protectionism was so important:

We've lost so much, so to speak, and we are so fearful that we are going to lose more that now we're clinging to what little we have left and we are becoming so protectionist. In our thought process, we say to hell with everybody else, what is mine is mine and I'm going to put my big arms around it and I'm not going to let go.

The perception was not of interdependence, of cooperation or working together, but rather of a win-lose relationship. Participants talked of "not feeling a part of McPherson County," and "looking out for their own yards first." Statements representing this narrative argued that "some of the [suggestions for county-wide cooperation] would be a detraction or subtraction from elements within the local communities," that some suggestions for county-wide cooperation were based on "the assumption that smaller communities perhaps will, for lack of saying it better, wither on the vine and not see growth."

Finally, this narrative also identified threats to their way of life. Threats in this narrative came mainly from government and big business. Government and big business were viewed as villains because they were "out-of-touch," "uncaring," and "self-serving." In one narrative, a farmer talked of his frustrations with the government and its insensitivity concerning local environmental conditions:

Well, you can talk about cutting trees. I got myself in trouble with the tree huggers back in D.C. I cut maybe a thousand hedge trees a year, but now I'm screwing up the environment. I've been trying to get the EPA to come down here and live with me for a month. See what it's all about. I want them to understand. They're out here mandating us, but don't know nothing about what's going on.

Besides government, this narrative constructed big business as a threat because it was perceived as self-serving and not caring about local communities. Several stories were offered about cities where big business was very disruptive. One man talked about a business in Hays, where a company "at one time, employed 1,100 workers, then downsized to around 600 people, then all of sudden closed the plant." Another participant recalled Hutchinson, "where Cessna had 3,000 people working and now they've cut back to 500." A local banker summarized this fear using the banking industry as an example:

I think there is a tendency sometimes for the large metropolitan banks when they come in and purchase a local institution to not be quite as concerned about whether we go quite as far out on the limb, so to speak, to support local efforts and opportunities.

## CONCLUSIONS

In their discussions, one group of McPherson citizens articulated a rhetoric which urged the planning participants to think of their community as one which encompassed the whole of the county. Others in McPherson County endeavored to identify community within the framework of the individual towns and population groups. While it was difficult to precisely chart the process in which the county-community rhetoric emerged over the individual-community rhetoric, there were indicators that this, in fact, did occur. Initially, the report which emerged from the strategic planning sessions promoted county-wide projects. Examples included creating a pipeline/aqueduct system to provide a potable water supply to the county; creating a county-wide economic development consultant position; conducting a survey of businesses in McPherson and surrounding counties; improving lines of communication among county businesses; establishing a county business-incubator program; developing a videotape production to promote McPherson County's economic development and tourism potential; creating a county-wide recruitment enhancement network for physicians, nurse practitioners and other health-care providers; enhancing county-wide recycling programs; and establishing a county-wide information clearinghouse (McPherson County Assembly, 1992). Each of these action steps promoted the good of the entire county over the needs of a specific town or population group and is premised on the concepts of interdependence and cooperation articulated by the group supporting a county-wide perspective on community. These actions, approved by the McPherson County Assembly for Strategic Planning and the McPherson County Commission, moved the county toward a larger sense of community. Indeed, only one individual community project (construction of a swimming pool in Inman, Ks.) made the final list of proposed actions (McPherson County Assembly, 1992). Second, evidence of success of the county-wide perspective also came from post-session survey information in which participants indicated that the number one benefit they received from the strategic planning meetings was "increased cooperation and bonding among communities within the county" (Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing, 1992).

Why did the county-wide perspective of community prevail over the more individualistic community perspective? Essentially, we believe that those citizens urging a county-wide view were more successful in constructing community because they articulated a rhetoric of civic responsibility. This rhetoric created the interdependence, mutual responsibilities, and common history that Bellah et al. argue is fundamental to community. Thus, their rhetoric naturally

led to the county-wide perspective of community. These participants created this rhetoric through the communication of definition, value, and group communication.

Professor of communication studies David Zarefsky writes, "Since the meaning of a situation is not intrinsically given, it must be chosen. By selecting which symbols indicate a situation, people define what it means" (1986, p. 3). Indeed, as the participants defined the situation, they worked to construct the scope of community as "the county" rather than "the town" in their planning process. The enabling legislation, for example, argued that the purpose of the legislation was to "encourage broad-based local and multi-county development strategies" and it directed funds to "county-wide and multi-county economic development entities" (Ott & Tatarko, 1992).

McPherson County participants also defined the process from a county perspective. The county-wide perspective admonished participants to think no longer of the individual communities, but think in terms of the county at large. In fact, the county-wide group's language subsumed many of the concerns of the individualist perspective. For example, the county-wide group recognized the uniqueness of the Mennonite population, the Swedish population, and the diversity of the small towns, but defined that uniqueness as a strength of the entire county. Thus, many of the concerns of the individualist perspective were obviated by the rhetoric of the county-wide group.

The county-wide group also emphasized more universal and general values. Citizens in this group stressed "unity" and "interdependence," while citizens advocating the individualist narrative promoted the more narrow values of "protectionism" and "looking out for their own yards first." These values then translated into different action steps. The more broad-based group supported actions which would touch the entire county, while the individualist group advocated projects which would enhance a specific community, such as building a swimming pool in Inman and renovating the Opera House in McPherson. Most participants could find some benefit in county-wide projects and thus, as the strategic planning group worked together, they came to support projects based on group benefit rather than individual town benefit.

In addition to definition and value communication, group communication also helped explain the dominance of the county-wide perspective. Ryan argues that in a group situation, "individual interests are 'welded together' into a higher form of group consciousness." He further explained that this type of bonding "typically occurs among individuals experiencing a common crisis" and that this "increases their propensity for shared collective action" (1994, p. 12). In fact, strategic planning in McPherson County was often described in the crisis language of survival. One participant pondered, "I wonder if maybe some people perhaps almost see this as a lost cause. And if we see it as that, then truly we have already lost," while another participant argued that, "if we work together, that's how we survive." Indeed, most individualist narratives came

from a survey residents completed on their own, while in the small group meetings of the strategic planning sessions, most narratives supported the vision of a county-wide community.

Celeste Condit, professor of speech communication, contends that “there is a tendency of public argument, *because of its very nature*, to favor those values, stories, and descriptions directed at the most universal audience present” (1987, p. 1; emphasis Condit). In this strategic planning situation, the more general audience supported a county-wide community rather than individual towns or population groups as community boundaries.

### **Implications for Community Development**

Strategic planning sessions such as those held in McPherson County and around Kansas are vehicles which improve the health of rural communities. Dr. Leonard Duhl argues that a healthy community exhibits the following characteristics:

- A common sense of community, including its history and values that are strengthened by a network of leaders,
- People and community groups who feel empowered and have a sense of control,
- An absence of divided turf, conflict, and polarization,
- Structures where people from diverse groups can come together to work out decisions about community,
- Leadership that functions both from the top down and the bottom up, and
- Effective channels for networking, communication and cooperation among those who live and lead there (1993, pp. 87–112).

The strategic planning in McPherson County addressed, in some way, each of these characteristics. Histories and values were often discussed. A clearer sense of community emerged from the meetings. People from all social and economic stations discussed their concerns, identified issues needing attention, and helped formulate plans of action to address those issues. Certainly, there was some conflict and turf protection in the meetings, but the strategic planning sessions provided a structure in which these differences of opinion could be addressed. The strategic planning meetings helped to empower county citizen and provide a channel for networking, communication, and cooperation.

Perhaps in the end, public-sector strategic planning is not only an “effort to define organizational mission, translate that mission into strategic goals, and implement these goals programmatically” (Baum, 1994, p. 251), but also a way to build a sense of cooperation and community.



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# AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THEORY AND PRACTICE: A GEORGIA CASE STUDY

By Libby V. Morris and Gina L. Gilbreath

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## ABSTRACT

This case study examines an ongoing community development project in a majority African-American county in Georgia. Using interviews, publications, and survey data, the characteristics of the local development effort are identified and compared with the essential elements in the black organizational autonomy (BOA) model of community development. Other important components in the ongoing project are introduced to add efficacy to Horton's BOA model of community development.

## INTRODUCTION

This analysis compares an established community development project in a predominantly African-American county with a model suggested in theory by Horton for black community development. As noted by Horton (1992), very little research has looked at community development in African-American communities; yet, in 1990, African-Americans numbered approximately 30 million, 12.1 percent, of the United States population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992a).

The need to understand and develop models for minority community development is significant. In the forty-year period from 1950 to 1990, minorities increased from 10.5 to 25 percent of the total United States population, and African-Americans doubled in number (Hodgkinson, 1992; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992a). The need for community development with minority populations in the South is particularly acute. Nearly 16 million (53 percent) of the approximately 30 million blacks nationwide live in the southern census region, and 93 percent of all rural blacks live in the South (Falk & Rankin, 1992; Wimberley et al., 1992). Across the eleven southern states that contain the historic Black Belt region, 379 counties have 25 percent or more black residents.

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A total of 84 of the 379 counties are over one-half black (Wimberley & Morris, 1993).

Many of the counties in the Black Belt with large black populations experience the social ills of poverty and lack of opportunity (Wimberley & Morris, 1993). These areas and populations have problems and needs which can be addressed by grassroots community development efforts; however, much more needs to be known about effective community development in minority populations and across disadvantaged areas.

## **Background**

The community development project examined here was initiated in 1989 in Warren County, Georgia, by the Association for Quality of Life in America (AQUOLA). AQUOLA is a nonprofit, community-oriented association that "establishes partnerships with rural localities and works with them to create and sustain functioning communities" (Association for Quality of Life in America, 1993a, p. 1). AQUOLA encourages community development in disadvantaged communities in the South by initiating the organization of local Quality of Life Associations (QUOLAs). In focusing on disadvantaged counties, AQUOLA generally works with counties ranging from 6,000 to 20,000 in population with majority black populations. AQUOLA is currently cooperating in community development projects in seven states in the South. The Warren County community development effort is the oldest in the AQUOLA network and has been in existence long enough to be useful in field-testing the black organizational autonomy model proposed by Horton (1992).

This research addresses the question, What are the essential characteristics of effective community development efforts in African-American communities? The research objectives are to identify the essential characteristics of the Warren County Quality of Life Association community development project; to compare the characteristics identified as essential to QUOLA with the five elements offered in the BOA model; to consider similarities and differences between the QUOLA case study and the BOA model; and to propose additional elements from the case study to enhance the BOA model.

## **CONCEPTUALIZATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

For this study, community development is regarded as

a process in which local actors attempt consciously to create or strengthen the networks through which they can work together to solve their community problems and express their shared interests in the locality. When this occurs, it is community development, whatever might be its prospects of actually bringing about the intended changes (Wilkinson, 1991, p. 93).

Community development is also

a situation in which some groups, usually locality based such as neighborhood or local community . . . attempt to improve [their] social and economic situation through [their]own efforts . . . using professional assistance and perhaps also financial assistance from the outside . . . and involving all sectors of the community or group to a maximum (Voth, 1975, p. 148).

Thus, community development is regarded as a purposive activity with a positive purpose, which exists in the efforts of people and is oriented toward the development of the community (Wilkinson, 1991).

In this study, the unit of investigation is a county which is examined as a community. A county may be regarded as a community because "communities are where people have common interest in local schools, stores, sources of employment, churches and other institutions and services whose availability to individuals in their own locality is part of the total pattern of American society" (Warren, 1978, p. 37).

### **The Black Organizational Autonomy Model**

Several community development models have been proposed and subsequently utilized by communities engaging in development activities. Christenson and Robinson (1989) discuss three basic types of community development models: the self-help approach, the technical assistance approach, and the conflict approach. Although these approaches may be useful in certain community development projects, Horton proposes that they are of little use to African-Americans who wish to engage in the development of their own communities "because [they] are all too simplistic to adequately address the complexity of the issues of concern to black communities" (Horton, 1992, p. 7). Horton states that there are two basic problems with the more traditional models of community development. First, these models fail to consider black history and culture, which includes incidents such as the exploitation of blacks during slavery, unfair competition with whites in the labor market, violence from whites, and unfair treatment from the federal government (Liebersohn, 1980; Jaynes & Williams, 1989; Butler, 1991). All of these are experiences that blacks consider unique to their history and culture.

Horton (1992) also states that the traditional community development models are not generalizable to both external and internal problems of black communities. External problems are "beyond the direct control of the black community" and include social phenomena such as racism, civil rights, and white apathy (Horton, 1992, p.7). External problems were the primary focus of the civil rights movement over the past thirty years. Internal problems are those "that are amenable to the direct control of the community members" (Horton, 1992, p. 7). Internal problems include issues such as black teenage pregnancy, conflicts among African-American leaders, and discordant relationships among the different social classes within a black community. Horton notes that interrelationships exist between internal and external problems, but the distinction is

important because the nature of the problem should dictate responses that are more likely to succeed.

Taking the internal and external problems of black communities into consideration, Horton (1992) developed the black organizational autonomy (BOA) model of community development for African-American communities. This model differs from traditional approaches for community development because it considers the distinctiveness of the black community in its history, structure, culture, and organization. Five principles or elements are described as important to the BOA model of community development.

First, the BOA model encourages the development of *economically autonomous* black institutions. Horton contends that economic autonomy is the most important component of the BOA model because it is the element which creates independence and emphasizes internal control of programs. Horton does not call for a complete rejection of outside funding, although he cautions that projects that must depend on outside funding are subject to loss of control to external forces. Furthermore, internal funding allows the community to exercise control over all aspects of the community development process.

Secondly, the BOA model emphasizes the *creation and maintenance of internally developed data sets*. By developing internal data bases, blacks can examine trends and issues and determine for themselves which problems need to be addressed. These data may also be useful in developing programs that will tackle identified problems in an informed and well-planned manner. Also, if internal data are used, Horton argues that African-American leaders can speak about black community needs and issues based on demonstrable fact, rather than strictly on emotional appeal.

Third, the BOA model advocates the use of *women in leadership* positions. Traditionally, black women are key players in important indigenous institutions such as the black church. In this model of black community development, Horton advocates the development of leadership by black women in other areas and institutions. He notes that leadership in the black community tends to be male-dominated, and he advocates women having equal access to leadership positions.

Another essential element in Horton's model is an emphasis on *black history and culture*. Horton feels that the increasing levels of class inequality in the black community can be offset by emphasizing the culture and history that African-Americans have in common. He believes that emphasizing commonalities among all groups in the black community would build a cohesive community and positive change for all.

Finally, Horton stresses the need for *socially inclusive* leadership and participation. Class issues have long been an area of divisiveness within the black community. In the BOA model, therefore, effective community development is seen as representing blacks from all social classes and political views in the process.

## STUDY DESIGN

Warren County, Georgia, the site for this case study, is a small, nonmetropolitan, and largely disadvantaged county (Table 1). A majority (60.2 percent) of the 6,078 residents are African-American (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992c). Three municipalities are located in Warren County: Camak, with a population of 220; Norwood, with a population of 238; and Warrenton, with a population of 2,056 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992c). African-Americans outnumber whites in all three municipalities. Based on population density, Warren County may be classified as a rural county, and like many rural counties, large differences in median age are noted for blacks and whites. Large differences in educational attainment are also evident (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992b).

In educational attainment, both blacks and whites in Warren County have low high school completion rates. In 1990, 57 percent of Warren County's population aged 25 and older had less than a high school education, as compared to 29 percent in this category for the state of Georgia. Among the black population, almost 7 in 10 residents aged 25 and above in Warren County had not completed high school (U.S. Census Bureau, 1992b).

The low educational levels combined with the remoteness of the region contributed to 45 percent of the households having annual incomes of less than \$15,000. The median household income in 1989 was \$17,284. The annual median household income of blacks was even lower at \$11,961 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992b). Economic and educational disadvantage in the population are two criteria, along with southern and rural location, that the Association for Quality of Life in America uses to identify areas and populations for AQUOLA assistance.

The Quality of Life Association of Warren County was selected to field test the black organizational autonomy model for several reasons. First, the QUOLA

Table 1. Demographics of Warren County, Georgia

Total Population (1990)	6,078	
	<i>Black</i>	<i>White</i>
Race (percent)	60.2	39.7
Median age (years)	27.8	43.7
Educational levels (percent):		
Less than 9th grade	40.7	21.01
Some high school, no diploma	27.2	24.3
High school graduate	26.8	34.3
Some college	3.5	13.4
College graduate	1.3	5.01
5 or more years of college	0.5	2.01
Median household income	\$11,961	\$24,176

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992.

constituent and administrative makeup is almost entirely African-American. Second, based on the 1991 evaluation study of the Warren County QUOLA, the association was engaged in activities that meet Wilkinson's (1991) definition of community development. In fact, the evaluation addressed QUOLA's progress "... in establishing a local board, in networking with existing agencies, and in involving local citizens. . . . in bringing about change in the community" (AQUOLA, 1993c; Morris, 1992). The evaluation found that QUOLA exhibited "purposive activity" oriented toward positive development of the community.

Because the Warren County QUOLA was largely an African-American community development effort, this case was viewed as useful to identify the elements important to community development in a largely black community, to field test the BOA model, and to increase what is known about black community development.

### **Methods and Respondents**

The Warren County QUOLA has been in continuous operation since 1989. As a case study, it allowed "... an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group" (Merriam, 1988, p. 9). Interpretive case studies, as used here, seek to describe and "... to develop conceptual categories or to illustrate, support, or challenge theoretical assumptions held prior to the data gathering" (Merriam p. 27).

A combination of interactive and noninteractive strategies was used to collect information from three sources: official documents, interviews, and a short questionnaire (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993). Four publications were used as the official documents describing the elements and characteristics of the Association for the Quality of Life in America. Three of the documents explain the AQUOLA philosophy, organization, and general procedures (AQUOLA 1993a, 1993b, 1993c), and the fourth document is the initial evaluation of the community development effort in Warren County (Morris, 1992).

Interviews with six community leaders in Warren County, conducted by the two researchers, provided a second source of data. Community leaders were purposively sampled based on the assumption "that in-depth interviews with a few key participants, individuals who are particularly knowledgeable and articulate, will provide insights and understandings about the problem under investigation" (McMillan, 1992, p. 220). The community leaders included the executive director of the QUOLA of Warren County, the chair of the QUOLA board, the superintendent of schools, the director of the Chamber of Commerce, the mayor of Warrenton (the county seat), and the chair of the Warren County Board of Commissioners. The interviewees consisted of three white males, two black females, and a white female. These particular individuals were interviewed because they were judged to be extensively involved in the local community and to be aware of this community development effort. Thus, these individuals could

respond with observations and insights about Warren County, the population, and the QUOLA community development effort.

Interviews ranged from one to one and one half hours. The interviews were designed to seek the respondent's perspective. As suggested by Merriam (1988), the respondents were allowed a wide range of responses. An interview schedule was used to ensure that general areas of interest were covered during all of the interviews. Still, the interviews allowed for open-ended responses.

Questionnaires mailed to members of the QUOLA board of directors were a third source of data. It was assumed that those persons active on the QUOLA board would be able to identify the important components of their community development effort, and that these elements then could be compared to Horton's five categories, or used to propose new categories, as applicable. Eleven of the twenty-two board members responded to the brief questionnaire after two mailings. The responses from four black males, four black females, two white females, and one white male suggest that African-Americans were actively involved in QUOLA. This profile of respondents, combined with the fact that the executive director and board chair are African-American, suggest that the QUOLA community development activity was greatly, though not exclusively, organized and directed by the black community.

The questionnaire posed three central questions:

- (1) In your opinion, what are the special strengths of the QUOLA effort in Warren County?
- (2) In your opinion, how could the Warren County QUOLA be improved?
- (3) If QUOLA were established in another community, what do you see as being the three essential characteristics necessary for it to succeed?

These open-ended questions allowed respondents to generate their own answers and avoided leading the respondents toward accepting or rejecting the elements proposed by Horton as essential.

To analyze the data, the two investigators searched for common themes, examples, and patterns from the surveys, published documents, and interviews to identify major categories descriptive of the QUOLA community development project. According to Yin (1994), pattern-matching is one of the most useful analytical strategies for case study research. Next, the identified categories were compared with the five proposed "essential" elements in the black organizational autonomy model (i.e., funding, data, leadership, black history, and inclusiveness). Individually, each researcher analyzed the content, first, for the presence of the "essential" category (i.e., was the concept mentioned) and then, secondly, whether the response from the local QUOLA was in agreement, neutral, or disagreed. Next, the researchers compared their assessments of the presence and degree of concurrence with the BOA in each of the five categories.



New categories also were proposed at this time, based on the individual assessments and the comparisons. The findings are summarized below.

## ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### The AQUOLA Approach

The community development approach of the Association for Quality of Life in America, as noted above, is directed at partnership with rural localities to assist in creating and sustaining effective communities. The community development project in Warren County helped all sectors of the community in networking to assess community needs and to acquire the skills necessary for responding. A guiding philosophy was "that local residents must acquire the skills and ability to do it themselves," to create and sustain functioning communities (AQUOLA, 1993a). Through the creation of a local board of directors, community leaders and grassroots residents were brought into the QUOLA community development effort.

The assessment of the interview data, publications, and survey data identified six important characteristics of the Warren County QUOLA community development effort: (1) external start-up funding, (2) a community needs assessment survey, (3) local coordinator and board, (4) total community involvement, (5) networks, and (6) technical assistance. Table 2 lists the six characteristics identified as important in the QUOLA approach to community development and the five essential elements in the BOA model. The areas of overlap were in funding, internal data, leadership, and inclusiveness. The following discussion of each characteristic will show that characteristics one through four in QUOLA's approach to community development shared some commonalities with characteristics one through four of the BOA model. Additionally, it was determined that the QUOLA approach had two further distinctive elements, networks and technical assistance, while the black organization autonomy model had one such distinctive element, the inclusion of black history and culture.

Table 2. Characteristics of the AQUOLA Approach and the BOA Model

<i>Characteristic</i>	
<i>Association for Quality of Life in America</i>	<i>Black Organizational Autonomy Model</i>
1 Start-up funding	1 Economically autonomous funding
2 Needs assessment survey	2 Internal data
3 Community coordinator and board	3 Females in leadership
4 Total community involvement	4 Socially inclusive
5 Networks	5 Black history and culture
6 Technical assistance	

**Comparison of the BOA Model and the QUOLA Elements**

Table 3 presents the five elements in the black organizational autonomy model and indicates the presence or absence of these characteristics in the AQUOLA approach. The table also shows the source of evidence (official document, interview, or survey) for each AQUOLA characteristic, and the level of qualitative congruence found from each data source with the similar BOA characteristic, from total or high agreement to low agreement.

**Economic Autonomy.** Although Horton’s model contends that economic autonomy is the most important element, the Warren County QUOLA did not totally support this assertion. The Warren County project was started with funds from AQUOLA, a nonprofit foundation, and relied upon this external support for three years. AQUOLA referred to its involvement as “. . . providing the local QUOLA with an umbrella of technical assistance and start-up funding, [where] residents are responsible for maintaining the programs as soon as they acquire the confidence and the ability to do so” (AQUOLA, 1993a, p.2). Further AQUOLA stated, “Our goal is an independent community . . .” (AQUOLA, 1993a, p.5).

Economic autonomy, however, may be interpreted in various ways. The Warren County QUOLA, for example, is no longer dependent upon external funding from a single source. Rather, external funding has been diversified across government grants and foundations, and the local QUOLA has learned to seek and apply for alternative sources of financial support. The start-up funding allowed the organization to hire a community coordinator and to organize for later efforts aimed at independence through grant writing and networking with state programs.

**Table 3. Comparison of AQUOLA with the Black Organization Autonomy Model**

<i>AQUOLA Data Sources</i>	<i>BOA Elements</i>				
	<i>Economically Autonomous 1</i>	<i>Internal Data 2</i>	<i>Females In Leadership 3</i>	<i>Socially Inclusive 4</i>	<i>Black History And Culture 5</i>
Publications	●	●	●	●	⊗
Interviews	○	●	●	●	○
Surveys	●	⊗	⊗	●	⊗
Overall	●	●	●	●	○

- = High agreement
- = Moderate agreement
- = Low agreement
- ⊗ = Not addressed

None of the interviews or questionnaire responses advocated the almost total reliance on internal funding as proposed by Horton. Several respondents, however, were aware of the need for QUOLA to become self-sustaining and current grants and cooperative funding have assisted QUOLA in reaching that goal. The element of economic autonomy showed only moderate congruence between the BOA model and AQUOLA (Table 3).

**Internal Data.** AQUOLA shares Horton's belief in the importance of having internal data to identify local needs so that local solutions can be crafted to address self-identified problems. Two door-to-door needs assessment surveys covering a large part of the population were conducted in Warren County. In each case, AQUOLA funded these surveys, and it was noted that programs (e.g., daycare, Girl Scouts) were initiated on the basis of needs identified from the internal surveys. However, none of the Board respondents cited the creation and maintenance of an internal data base as important.

Although there was high congruence between the philosophies of AQUOLA and the BOA on the importance of internally created data bases, QUOLA, in reality, has made less use of the data than was originally intended. After the initial programs were identified and launched, the information contained in the data base was used less often. Therefore, the QUOLA case showed only moderate congruence with the BOA on the overall importance of data base creation and maintenance (Table 3).

**Females in Leadership.** Although women as leaders are not explicitly designated in the AQUOLA literature, the selection of black women for key positions and their high degree of participation in QUOLA's programs reflect the involvement specified in the BOA model. The two major leadership positions in the Warren County QUOLA were held by African-American women, and women made up one half of the QUOLA Board of Directors. Additionally, the QUOLA volunteers and coordinators are predominantly women. One respondent said, "Women are more dedicated." Another woman estimated that the ratio of active women volunteers to men was approximately five to one. The low involvement by black men in actual programs was cited as a problem. As a result of the strong evidence of women in leadership roles, high congruence was observed between this BOA component and the actual leadership elements of the QUOLA (Table 3).

**Socially Inclusive.** QUOLA board members represented a wide range of occupations in Warren County, for example, an educator, a housewife, a program volunteer, and a factory worker. Several respondents noted that the diversity of the board brought wide community approval, support, and legitimacy to the local QUOLA. The effort was not viewed as being exclusively controlled by one group. One respondent, however, said that like most boards, not all board members were actually active. One respondent claimed that QUOLA "got more done with regular community members" as compared to high profile leaders.

The executive director, an African-American woman, was cited repeatedly by the interview respondents for building social inclusiveness, for being accessible, for “having a heart,” for knowing how to network, and for being “in touch with the people.” Because much evidence of social inclusiveness was found in the publications, interviews, and questionnaires, high congruence was deemed to exist between AQUOLA and the BOA on this characteristic.

**Black History and Culture.** Although Warren County is two thirds African-American in population, and according to program data, the majority of the program participants are black, none of the publications or respondents stressed black history or culture. Those interviewed said that the effort was designed to be all-inclusive and “community-based” rather than emphasizing only the African-American community.

To ensure that this was not overlooked, the QUOLA director and other community leaders were asked directly if QUOLA of Warren County currently implemented programs that emphasize African-American history and culture. The answer in every case was “no.” It was noted, however, that QUOLA supported (e.g., through announcements) other community activities that emphasized black history and culture such as Martin Luther King Day.

Several respondents stated that QUOLA was viewed initially as a program specifically for a black constituency, although the community organization had made efforts to serve the entire population of the community. One respondent stated that the emphasis on the entire community “brought the community together as a whole.” Because of the lack of explicit efforts to emphasize black history and culture, AQUOLA and the BOA were in low congruence on this item.

In summary, high congruence existed between the BOA model and AQUOLA on two characteristics: social inclusiveness and females in leadership. Moderate congruence was found between the BOA model and AQUOLA on the importance of economic autonomy and the creation of internal data sets. However, little agreement existed between the BOA model and AQUOLA on the importance of stressing black history and culture.

### **Additional Elements**

**Networks.** A repeated theme in the interviews and from the surveys is that QUOLA establishes networks with other programs and services. This networking function has been regarded as important to the development effort because it allows the local population to become aware of potential programs, funding resources, and other opportunities for individuals and the community. The process of networking was often discussed in tandem with the term, “total community involvement.” Through the QUOLA structure, new networks were formed, and individuals were brought into contact with other individuals and organizations, many unknown to each other, who could collaborate in assessing needs, sharing information, solving problems, and reaching goals.

When asked about the role of external involvement in community development, one interviewee noted that "it [the program] won't be as good if someone else comes in." The respondents emphasized the importance of local involvement and internal efforts (i.e., self-help) to bring about positive change, while recognizing the importance of external involvement (i.e., technical assistance) and start-up funding as a catalyst to launch the development effort. Networks were seen as essential to maintaining the development project.

The AQUOLA approach of broad representation on the local board set in motion the structure to build the foundation for the community to learn to network both internally as well as with state and federal programs. Networks were cited as a key element, and QUOLA was termed a "valuable link" by one of the respondents.

**Technical Assistance.** AQUOLA provided technical assistance in organizing the first community meetings, conducting the needs assessment, and funding the initial organization of the local QUOLA. Technical assistance allows community members to learn from a technical practitioner how to establish a process to assess needs, to set goals, to network, and to find resources. The respondents, in fact, identified several areas in which they had needed and received additional technical assistance: grant writing, data collection, board development, and program evaluation.

## CONCLUSIONS

While sociologists should attempt to develop new and different models of community development as Horton (1992) has done, it is equally important that apparently effective applications be used to guide the development of models that incorporate the characteristics of a community and the particular community development needs at hand.

In Warren County, external funding was essential to the community development effort. In inner city neighborhoods or in remote rural areas, the requisite financial and technical resources may not be available to launch a broad-based development effort. Start-up funding or sponsorship is found to be vital for the initial stages of a community development effort, especially in less affluent, and otherwise disadvantaged communities. With this outside sponsorship, local community development organizations have means with which to operate while establishing resource and informational networks that are crucial later to its operation and means to obtain autonomy.

Horton's purpose in economic autonomy is to maximize independence and self-direction, certainly important objectives; however, the Warren County Quality of Life Association did not report any external threats to self-direction because of the source of funding. Perhaps the guiding philosophy of the Association for Quality of Life in America, i.e., to assist in empowering communities, not directing communities, was key in this regard. Horton's (1992)

call for economic autonomy in African-American community development efforts was met in QUOLA only after the expertise to be economically self-sufficient had been developed through networking. Thus, this case study revealed that external funding is an important catalyst for launching community development efforts.

The black organizational autonomy model's emphasis on women in leadership roles and social inclusiveness was clearly illustrated in the Warren County QUOLA. The local coordinator and the executive director of the board are highly-respected African-American women in Warren County. The term "concerned leadership" was frequently used to describe these key leaders and the other African-American women involved with QUOLA.

Although ownership of a community development effort may be strengthened by the creation and maintenance of internal data bases, the QUOLA case study shows that a great deal of technical assistance may be needed for local groups to collect, utilize and manage data. Also, the data base may have been more useful if the community groups could have supplemented the local data with data from the Census and other data bases. In fact, in the QUOLA case, the initial activity of data collection appeared to serve the purpose of building community as much as identifying needs. The importance of technical assistance is overlooked in the BOA model, and although stressed in AQUOLA, technical assistance was underutilized in this local QUOLA. A balance between self-help and technical assistance is difficult to achieve, but perhaps could be achieved more fully through training programs for local coordinators and volunteers.

The BOA's call for the inclusion of black history and culture in community development efforts for and by African-Americans should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In Warren County, although the development effort is largely by and for African-Americans, the QUOLA did not wish to include black history and culture as part of the formal community development effort and risk losing support from other segments of the community. The QUOLA solution was to be supportive in networking to other community groups in this focus.

Horton's emphasis on the importance of black history and culture for empowering people and building racial and cultural understanding is shared by many writers, such as Banks (1994), who emphasize the importance of multiculturalism in education and throughout the society. Additionally, it might be argued by some that the decision by African-Americans involved with QUOLA not to include black history and culture was evidence of the sometimes subtle, longterm, and pervasive control exercised by whites in society, even in places with majority black populations.

While emphasis on black culture and history might be essential to development in some predominantly African-American communities, this emphasis may not be necessary in all projects in which a majority of the population is black, as evidenced by QUOLA. Again, the unique structure of a community along with its particular concerns are the first order of importance.

## **Implications**

In this study, the black organizational autonomy model was examined according to the experiences of a community development program that operates in a predominantly African-American community. The Association for Quality of Life in America philosophy of a community board guided by social inclusiveness in assessing problems and seeking solutions to local problems has garnered widespread support for the Warren County QUOLA. As one participant noted, "The white community supports this, although more of the blacks participate." Generally, the QUOLA was seen by both those interviewed and surveyed as a positive entity for the community. However, this assessment of QUOLA and the characteristics uncovered from the research might shift if the community development changes being pursued were more external in nature.

Many of the problems addressed by the community development effort in Warren County might be classified as "internal" as opposed to "external." The QUOLA's emphasis on literacy, effective parenting, and teenage pregnancy to name three foci, are more internally-oriented than, for example, voting rights and affirmative action. The QUOLA emphasis on "internal" problems rather than "external" problems may have made QUOLA more acceptable to the minority white population.

This case study also shows that the QUOLA development effort, which has become well-established in the community, exhibits some, but not all, of the elements of the BOA model. Both the QUOLA community and the BOA model emphasize some degree of economic autonomy, the importance of internal data, social inclusiveness, and significant levels of female leadership. Additionally, QUOLA shows the importance of networks and technical assistance. These two characteristics are found in many development models and these may be implied in the BOA. QUOLA, however, did not emphasize black history and culture, and this characteristic is one of the five essentials in the BOA model. The effect of adding this characteristic to the Warren QUOLA cannot be determined; for example, the Warren County QUOLA might be even stronger, or support from the more affluent white community might be eroded. Perhaps, the inclusion of black history and culture in African-American community development should occur after the initial problems, i.e., those identified and pressing most on the quality of life of individuals and communities, are addressed. Additionally, whether a development effort that used only the elements of the black organizational autonomy model would have fared as well or lasted as long as the Warren County QUOLA, of course, is unknown.

Grassroots programs in rural counties, such as the case of Warren County, are needed to address the internal and external problems facing these communities. The importance of effective models for African-Americans and other minorities will increase in response to the growth of these populations in communities and also in response to special problems faced by these groups. This study, while it

confirms much of what Horton advocates in the BOA model, questions the inclusion of black history and culture and economic autonomy as essential first elements in black community development. Equally important, this research shows that continued study and inquiry are needed to construct effective models in theory and practice for the development of communities which include diverse populations.

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# DIVERSIFICATION TRENDS OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY OF MILL-TOWN COMMUNITIES IN NORTHEAST OHIO, 1980-1991

By Frank Akpadock

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## ABSTRACT

This study evaluates industrial diversification trends of four county communities in northeastern Ohio after more than ten years of attempts to stimulate the regional economy following steel mill closings of the mid-1970s. With the application of a multiple-model replicants technique, employment in 39 compatible sectors of the region's 2-digit industrial sectors were analyzed. The study shows that while a few sectors grew above the state and national averages, a majority experienced modest to declining growth rates. In particular, the analysis shows that the general regional growth trends are predominantly skewed towards *low-technology* service-producing industries with little or no value-added activities—consistent with the lack of a diversified economic base. The region needs to attract a *blend* of high value-added manufacturing and service-producing industries if it is to withstand future structural/cyclical shocks from the national economy as well as remain competitive in the global economy.

## INTRODUCTION

Many communities in the U.S.—and some communities in the Midwest, specifically in northeast Ohio—witnessed in the 1970s and 1980s an unprecedented period of economic reconstruction brought about by increased global competition which triggered plant closings of alarming proportions. These plant shutdowns were particularly devastating because the employment and tax bases of these communities revolved around a single propulsive industry such as steel, automobiles, machine tools, and other types of heavy industrial production.

For example, when steel mills closed their doors in most of these communities, their economies were shattered as workers were retrenched by the thousands. As these communities faced increasing population out-migration, tax base erosion, rising unemployment, and increasing crime waves, it became clear to the community elites that they had to regroup and do something, albeit radical,

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to stimulate their ailing economies. In what Jacobs (1984) characterizes as a "distraught time of failed development schemes," these communities became laboratories of strategic community economic planning and experimentation of the 1980s and 1990s. Referred to by some analysts as the 'third industrial revolution,' or 'third wave economic development' (Plosila, 1991; Ross & Friedman, 1991; Akpadock, 1993), these communities' much publicized attempts to rebuild and diversify their economies have created curiosity among researchers, policy analysts, planners, and economists, as they seek to evaluate the accomplishments of the most massive economic rebuilding since the post-World War II period.

Communities in Mahoning, Trumbull, Columbiana, and Ashtabula counties in northeast Ohio—as a rule rather than the exception—were devastated by steel mill closings of the period (Figure 1). Invariably, steel had been their single lead industry. Consequently the local government development agencies and the Chambers of Commerce of these communities have been engaged in economic development strategies associated with business attraction and recruitment programs. Specifically, the economic policy of these communities has been to *diversify* their economic base so that they could survive any future structural changes in the national economy. Conroy (1975, p. 492) asserts that "the pursuit of 'diversified' local economic structures in response to potentially unstable dependence upon single industries or groups of industries is a thoroughly ensconced dimension of virtually every contemporary local development effort."

Today, about a decade after the region-wide efforts to diversify the economic base of the area have yielded little or no changes in employment growth statistics, concerned citizens especially the unemployed of the four counties, are asking whether the strategies taken to attract and/or recruit businesses were effective in accomplishing the stated goal of economic diversification. Buss and Redburn (1987, p. 175) report that "although organized responses to plant closings have been legion, there has been little effort to evaluate their effectiveness, and those evaluations that have been completed have not been widely publicized." The concern expressed by Buss and Redburn is shared by others nationwide, but especially by the community residents of the four-county area in northeast Ohio who need some form of assurance.

This study has a dual purpose. The first purpose is to show that an innovative technique entitled *multiple-model replicants (MMR)* is a better technique for measuring diversification trends than the existing models. The second is to devise a policy strategy for the decision-makers of the area to pursue if the study shows insufficient diversification trends to facilitate a strong and stable economic base in MTCAC. The subsequent sections show the methodology that guided the entire study and how it was laid out to produce the conclusions that were reached.



Figure 1. Northeastern Ohio

## METHODOLOGY

### A Literature Review: Industrial Diversification Models

Since the 1960s and early 1970s following a series of business fluctuations that produced regional economic instability nationwide, regional economists have hypothesized that unless the economic base of a community is diversified, its economy may become more unstable as a result of cyclical fluctuations in the national economy. Since the inception of this hypothesis, many controversial diversification models have mushroomed to test it. As John Jewkes (1968, p. 45) said, "Fashions in economic thinking are notoriously infectious and fickle. They run through communities with the speed of wild fire." These models include rank correlation, ordinary least squares (OLS), minimum requirements, industrial portfolio, entropy, and ogive approaches. The last three of these models will be reviewed with a view to sorting out their weaknesses.

### The Industrial Portfolio Model

Conroy (1975) applied the idea of 'financial portfolio' to evolve an "industrial portfolio" diversification model of the type:

$$\hat{a}_p = \sum_i \sum_j z_i z_j \hat{a}_{ij}$$

where:

$z_i$  and  $z_j$  = proportion of regional resources allocated to industries  $i$  and  $j$ ;  
and  $\hat{a}_{ij}$  denotes the covariance of a predetermined returns criterion over time for industries  $i$  and  $j$ .

Conroy (1975) attempted to quantify the existence of a diversification trend for an industrial base by focusing not only on individual industrial stability or the lack thereof, but also on the interdependence of other industries in the system he characterizes as "industrial portfolio." His analysis failed to determine the existence of optimal diversification trends on cross-sectional analysis. Specifically, Kort (1981, p. 596) feels that the weakness of the portfolio model lies in the "inconsistency of the empirical results obtained in previous studies."

### The Entropy Measure

The entropy measure, along with asymptotic distribution theory, was applied as an index for determining "geographic concentration of economic activity for a 194-county Tennessee Valley region" by Garrison and Paulson (1973, p. 319). Neither researcher was completely satisfied with the outcome. Two years later, Hackbart and Anderson (1975, p. 374) undertook a similar entropy measure to determine the existence of diversification trends in four river-basin regions and the state of Wyoming with the following formulations:

$$D(p_1, p_2, \dots, p_n) = c \sum_{i=1}^n - p_i \log p_i$$

where:

$p_1, p_2, \dots, p_n$  denote the relative share of each sector,  
while  $c$  is an arbitrary constant.  $D$  attains its maximum value  
when  $p_1 = p_2 = \dots = p_n = 1/n$   
such that  $D(1/n, 1/n) = c \log n$ .

After the analysis, Hackbart and Anderson (1975, p. 378) found that the model failed either to determine what constitutes an optimal diversification pattern or to establish causal relationship between "economic diversification and economic development policy variables."

**The Ogive Model.** In the same way, the ogive model was criticized by Wasylenko and Erickson (1978) on the grounds that there was no proof of correlation between cyclical instability of economic activities and city size.

Community leaders across the nation need a reliable measurement technique to evaluate whether or not a given economic base is diversified. The principal weaknesses of these models are their inability to delineate diversification and economic instability among small and/or big regions both theoretically and empirically, and their inability to replicate results from previous applications. The following section describes the context of the multiple-model replicants (MMR) technique as an innovative approach in measuring the diversification trends of a regional economic base in which substantial weaknesses of the above models are reduced to the barest minimum if not completely eliminated.

### **Multiple-Model Replicants**

It is not our intention to leap into the debate over which one model is best. Rather, we suggest the use of a combination of standardized models characterized here as multiple-model replicants (MMR) in carrying out diversification analysis. This innovative approach is aimed at minimizing some of the weaknesses of previous models, including inability to replicate results of previous applications.

The selected combo-model consists of the *shift-share*, *Lorenz curve* and *Gini coefficient* models. Results from applications of these sub-models respectively mirror one another as to the existence of diversification trends or the lack thereof. Through these comparative results, the researcher can be sure of the reliability of the result. This replicability capacity, a unique characteristic lacking among the existing diversification models, makes MMR a superior technique for measuring diversification trends of a given economic base. Even though each of these models is not new in economic-base analyses, no study has been found in the literature where these models are being used not only to study diversification trends, but also to measure the reliability of the existence or the lack of diversification.

## **THEORETICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE SHIFT-SHARE MODEL**

The analysis of diversification trends in Mahoning, Trumbull, Columbiana and Ashtabula counties will be based on 2-digit standard industrial classification (SIC) codes between 1980 and 1991 by all the three models above. First, the shift-share model has traditionally been applied as a descriptive analytical tool in the estimation of regional economic growth patterns, and hence has been widely recommended for planning and policy decision-making and adjustments dating back to Ashby (1964; 1965), Perloff, et al. (1960), Harris and McGuire (1969), Dunn (1960), Fuchs (1962), Helly (1975), and Harris (1969).

Its principal weakness is in data aggregation (Houston, 1967; Brown, 1969; Stilwell, 1970; Mackay, 1968). Despite this weakness, Hellman (1976), Floyd and Sirmans (1973), and Andrikopoulos (1990) attest to the ability of the model

to determine the performance of an industrial base vis-à-vis the national growth patterns.

A diversified growth pattern involves *both* industrial-mix and the competitive-share components. While the former focuses on the extent of concentration of growth and non-growth industries located in an economic landscape, the latter determines how much of the so-called comparative regional advantages (market share, input materials, business environment, etc.) influence the growth differential observed among the sectors. The shift-share model can be used to investigate both aspects of the growth patterns in a regional economy. The following section describes the shift-share model.

### The Shift-Share Model

The shift-share model includes three components of growth analyses that can be used to examine the growth rate of regional employment. These three components are the national share, industrial-mix, and competitive-share or regional components. Modified after Brown (1969), the components can be stated as follows:

#### The National Share Component

$$\Delta E_i^* \equiv E_i^* - E_i \equiv E_i [(US^*/US) - 1] \dots \dots (1)$$

where:

- $E_i^*$  = regional employment in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  industry at the end of the period,
- $E_i$  = regional employment in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  industry at the beginning of the period,
- $US^*$  = total national employment at the end of the period,
- $US$  = total national employment at the beginning of the period.

The national-share component is defined as the growth that could have occurred in a region if the employment in each sector of the region had grown at the same rate as the national average. Used as a basis for delineating regional growth sectors with growth above and below the national average, the national share highlights those sectors on which decisionmakers should focus their attention for retention and expansion programs.

#### The Industrial-Mix Component

$$E_i [(US_i^*/US_i) - (US^*/US)] \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

where:

- $E_i$  = regional employment in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  industry at the beginning of the period,
- $US_i^*$  = national employment in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  industry at the end of the period,
- $US_i$  = national employment in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  industry at the beginning of the period,

US\* = total national employment at the end of the period,  
 US = total national employment at the beginning of the period.

The industry-mix component, also called the “proportionality shift,” measures the growth in regional employment due to the fact that the region shares a certain proportion of industries characterized as above or below average growth rates relative to their national counterparts. If the regional proportionality shift of an industrial sector is positive, that sector is characterized as having above-average growth rate over its national counterparts. If, on the other hand, the proportionality shift of a sector is negative, then that sector is characterized as a slow-growth or declining industrial sector relative to its national counterparts. The industry-mix component is critical as it shows whether or not a region shares a significant proportion of above/below average growth industrial sectors compared to the nation.

**The Competitive Share Component**

$$E_i [(E_i^* / E_i) - (US_i^* / US_i)] \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

where:

- $E_i$  = regional employment in the  $i^{th}$  industry at the beginning of the period
- $E_i^*$  = regional employment in the  $i^{th}$  industry at the end of the period,
- $US_i^*$  = national employment in the  $i^{th}$  industry at the end of the period,
- $US_i$  = national employment in the  $i^{th}$  industry at the beginning of the period.

The competitive share component, also called the “differential” or “regional-share” component, measures the competitive growth performance of each sector in the region relative to the nation. If a sector has a positive/negative growth differential, it means that the sector has above/below average growth rate relative to its national counterpart. This growth differential may result from the presence/absence of the so-called regional comparative advantage (access to markets, overhead costs, etc.) relative to the sector concerned.

In particular, this component highlights the fact that if a sector has a positive competitive share, it has favorable comparative advantage in the region. The overall analysis will pinpoint what sectors of the MTCAC’s economy have the so-called competitive-share advantage necessary to stimulate a diversified economic base. The total employment shift per sector ( $\Delta E_i^*$ ) between 1980 and 1991 can be expressed as follows:

$$E_i [(US^* / US) - 1] \dots \dots \dots \text{(National Share)} \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

$$+ E_i [(US_i^* / US_i) - (US^* / US)] \dots \dots \dots \text{(Industry Mix)} \dots (2)$$

$$+ E_i [(E_i^* / E_i) - (US_i^* / US_i)] \dots \dots \dots \text{(Competitive Share)} \dots (3)$$



## DATA COLLECTION AND SECTORAL SELECTION PROCEDURE

In order to calculate the shift-share for each employment sector in the four northeast Ohio counties, data were collected from the County Business Patterns publications for 1980 to 1991. In a few sectors where data were suppressed, averages were taken. It is assumed that any errors introduced through this procedure were not significant enough to affect the overall result of the regional growth trend analysis.

Even though the four counties constitute the economic region, there was no uniformity among all the sectors located in each county area. In order to minimize random errors during the selection process, sectors were selected only if they were uniform in description and standard industrial classification (SIC) codes. Based on this procedure, a total of 39 (two-digit) conforming sectors were selected for analysis which depicted the general growth trends in the region.

## CALCULATION OF THE SHIFT-SHARE MODEL AND STATISTICAL RESULTS

**Calculation of the shift-share model.** The sum of the national-share, industry-mix, and competitive-components gave the abstract growth figures. The national share component grew at an average rate of about 28.1 percent for all the 39 sectors under analysis (Table 1). The figure indicates the employment growth rate that would have occurred in each sector of the study region if every sector were to grow at the same rate as the national average. For example, employment in SIC 17 (Special Trade Contractors) in the region had a percentage growth rate of about 8.8 percent (i.e., national-share + industry-mix + competitive-share) which was 217.6 percent slower than the national average for all 39 sectors (28.1 percent). The *sectoral* growth rate of SIC 17 at the national level was calculated to be 18.6 percent between 1980 and 1991 (Table 2). The regional sector grew at a rate of 111 percent slower than the nation—indicating a steep growth decline.

For the industry-mix component, seventeen sectors had positive shifts. As has already been explained above, those with positive industry-mix components were classified as sectors having *both* higher and lower growth rates relative to the national average. For example, SIC 59 (miscellaneous retail) with a positive industry-mix of 2.8 percent, had an overall growth rate of 128.5 percent, well above the national average of 28.1 percent. On the other hand, SIC 65 (Real Estate) with a positive mix of 3.7 percent had an overall growth rate of 12.1 percent below the national average (Table 2).

For the competitive-share, again, some sectors in the region had positive competitive shares, and others had negative shares. Those with positive competitive share components were of two categories: (1) those with growth rates above the national average growth rate of 28.1 percent; and (2) those sectors

**Table 1. Shift-Share Components: Regional Percentage Change, 1980–1991**

<i>2-Digit SIC</i>	<i>Industrial Sector</i>	<i>National Share</i>	<i>Industry Mix</i>	<i>Competitive Share</i>
15	General Contractors and Operative Builders	28.0739%	-33.6282%	-2.2732%
16	Heavy Construction Contractors	28.0739%	-48.4188%	32.4227%
17	Special Trade Contractors	28.0739%	-9.4357%	-9.8013%
20	Food and Kindred Products	28.0739%	-31.0669%	15.6707%
24	Lumber and Wood Products	28.0739%	-38.5646%	25.6641%
27	Printing and Publishing	28.0739%	-8.8253%	-12.0640%
28	Chemicals and Allied Products	28.0739%	-34.3912%	3.5732%
30	Rubber and Misc. Plastic Products	28.0739%	-18.0861%	12.5138%
33	Primary Metal Industries	28.0739%	-69.3076%	-14.2805%
34	Fabricated Metal Products	28.0739%	-45.5160%	-7.7716%
35	Machinery, Except Electrical	28.0739%	-54.0043%	-4.2672%
41	Local and Interurban Passenger Transit	28.0739%	-3.3242%	34.2246%
42	Trucking and Warehousing	28.0739%	-8.5366%	-35.5161%
48	Communication	28.0739%	-25.3292%	-24.9546%
49	Electric, Gas, and Sanitary Services	28.0739%	-1.3838%	-21.0765%
50	Wholesale Trade—Durable Goods	28.0739%	-10.1375%	-11.7337%
51	Wholesale Trade—Nondurable Goods	28.0739%	-7.0534%	199.3634%
52	Building Materials and Garden Supplies	28.0739%	0.0082%	-5.1164%
53	General Merchandise Stores	28.0739%	-21.5662%	-40.2252%
54	Food Stores	28.0739%	11.8772%	-32.4236%
55	Automotive Dealers and Service Stations	28.0739%	-13.1076%	-14.6969%
56	Apparel and Accessory Stores	28.0739%	-1.6189%	0.8557%
57	Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	28.0739%	1.1342%	-30.9447%
58	Eating and Drinking Places	28.0739%	14.7639%	-14.6600%
59	Misc. Retail	28.0739%	2.7704%	97.6636%
60	Banking	28.0739%	19.9038%	2.1265%
63	Insurance Carriers	28.0739%	-4.9530%	-33.0576%
64	Insurance Agents, Brokers, and Service	28.0739%	18.6055%	-28.9104%
65	Real Estate	28.0739%	3.7286%	-19.6619%
70	Hotels and other Lodging Places	28.0739%	10.8129%	-21.3562%
72	Personal Services	28.0739%	0.8698%	-25.7407%
73	Business Services	28.0739%	45.9197%	-36.4844%
75	Auto Repair, Services, and Garages	28.0739%	25.8412%	12.4648%
76	Misc. Repair Services	28.0739%	-2.1947%	11.6673%
79	Amusement and Recreation Services	28.0739%	22.0706%	-35.1253%
80	Health Services	28.0739%	46.9258%	-35.2415%
81	Legal Services	28.0739%	58.8227%	-39.6239%
83	Social Services	28.0739%	53.7888%	59.4429%
86	Membership Organizations	28.0739%	34.0452%	-42.0873%

with growth rates below the national average. Those sectors that experienced above-national-average growth rates were favored due to the presence of the so-called local comparative advantage.

Regional employment in six SIC sectors grew faster than national employment in the 39 industries. These SIC sectors had positive competitive-share

Table 2. Employment Growth Rates (Region vs. The United States) 1980-1991

2-Digit SIC	Industrial Sector	Region				United States			
		1991 Employment	1980 Employment	Absolute Change in Employment	Percentage Change	1991 Employment	1980 Employment	Absolute Change in Employment	Percentage Change
15	General Contractors and Operative Builders	2308	2504	-196	-7.8275%	1187919	1257780	-69861	-5.5543%
16	Heavy Construction Contractors	1095	977	118	12.0778%	681468	855523	-174055	-20.3449%
17	Special Trade Contractors	5727	5262	465	8.8369%	2781238	2344302	436936	18.6382%
20	Food and Kindred Products	1902	1688	214	12.6777%	1471535	1516937	-45402	-2.9930%
24	Lumber and Wood Products	797	692	105	15.1734%	635024	709450	-74426	-10.4907%
27	Printing and Publishing	2566	2394	172	7.1846%	1502760	1260191	242569	19.2486%
28	Chemicals and Allied Products	1524	1567	-43	-2.7441%	865888	924277	-58389	-6.3173%
30	Rubber and Misc. Plastic Products	5651	4613	1038	22.5016%	846320	769467	76853	9.9878%
33	Primary Metal Industries	9806	22043	-12237	-55.5142%	688280	1171216	-482936	-41.2337%
34	Fabricated Metal Products	9711	12985	-3274	-25.2137%	1383586	1675898	-292312	-17.4421%
35	Machinery, Except Electrical	7279	10428	-3149	-30.1975%	1854527	2503762	-649235	-25.9304%
41	Local and Interurban Passenger Transit	558	351	207	58.9744%	335608	269025	66583	24.7497%
42	Trucking and Warehousing	3970	4725	-755	-15.9788%	1535227	1284308	250919	19.5373%
48	Communication	2098	2697	-599	-22.2099%	1355110	1318909	36201	2.7448%
49	Electric, Gas, and Sanitary Services	2220	2102	118	5.6137%	941541	743184	198357	26.6902%
50	Wholesale Trade-Durable Goods	7996	7529	467	6.2027%	3495496	2963882	531614	17.9364%
51	Wholesale Trade-Nondurable Goods	4841	1511	3330	220.3839%	2403191	1985772	417419	21.0205%
52	Building Materials and Garden Supplies	1617	1315	302	22.9658%	685000	534813	150187	28.0822%
53	General Merchandise Stores	5809	8764	-2955	-33.7175%	2092928	1965049	127879	6.5077%
54	Food Stores	8885	8263	622	7.5275%	3114494	2225416	889078	39.9511%
55	Automotive Dealers and Service Stations	6327	6310	17	0.2694%	2005613	1744522	261091	14.9663%
56	Apparel and Accessory Stores	2741	2153	588	27.3107%	1193534	943841	249693	26.4550%
57	Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	1641	1670	-29	-1.7365%	745872	577264	168608	29.2081%
58	Eating and Drinking Places	17304	13500	3804	28.1778%	6415683	4491587	1924096	42.8378%
59	Misc. Retail	12344	5402	6942	128.5080%	2504481	1914092	590389	30.8443%

Table 2. Continued

2-Digit SIC	Industrial Sector	Region				United States			
		1991 Employment	1980 Employment	Absolute Change in Employment	Percentage Change	1991 Employment	1980 Employment	Absolute Change in Employment	Percentage Change
60	Banking	5042	3359	1683	50.1042%	2214815	1496722	718093	47.9777%
63	Insurance Carriers	1423	1580	-157	-9.9367%	1519104	1233831	285273	23.1209%
64	Insurance Agents, Brokers, and Service	1193	1013	180	17.7690%	678423	462521	215902	46.6794%
65	Real Estate	2614	2331	283	12.1407%	1303845	989241	314604	31.8026%
70	Hotels and other Lodging Places	1247	1061	186	17.5306%	1508273	1085973	422300	38.8868%
72	Personal Services	3061	2966	95	3.2030%	1228938	953081	275857	28.9437%
73	Business Services	7442	5412	2030	37.5092%	5212688	2995907	2216781	73.9937%
75	Auto Repair, Services, and Garages	2321	1395	926	66.3799%	861757	559891	301866	53.9151%
76	Misc. Repair Services	1110	807	303	37.5465%	401532	318982	82550	25.8792%
79	Amusement and Recreation Services	1792	1558	234	15.0193%	1060453	706288	354165	50.1446%
80	Health Services	29830	21344	8486	39.7582%	9201534	5258027	3943507	74.9997%
81	Legal Services	1134	770	364	47.2727%	940976	503474	437502	86.8966%
83	Social Services	4288	1777	2511	141.3056%	1861985	1023841	838144	81.8627%
86	Membership Organizations	6040	5032	1008	20.0318%	1968382	1214158	754224	62.1191%

factors. Those sectors and their absolute and percentage growth numbers were as follows (Table 2):

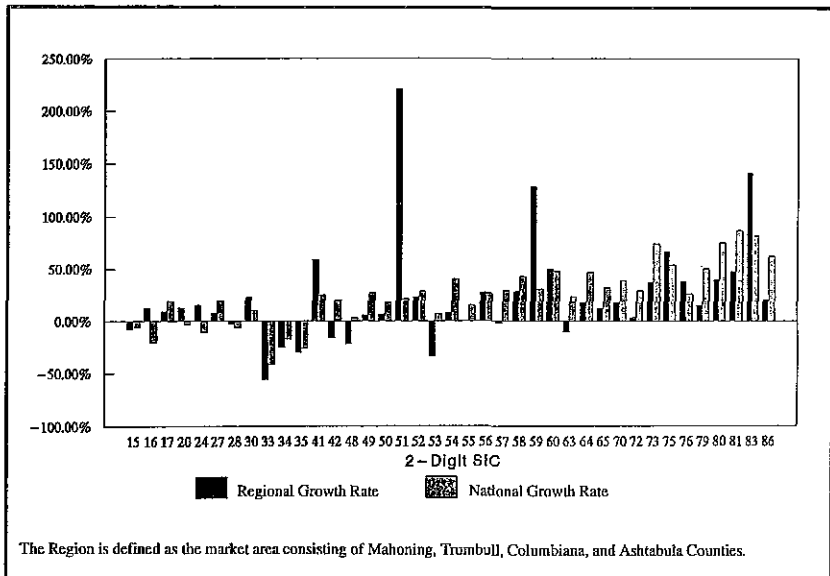
SIC 41 (Local and Interurban Passenger Transit), 207 or 59 percent,  
 SIC 59 (Miscellaneous Retail), 6,942 or 128.5 percent,  
 SIC 60 (Banking), 1,683 or 50.1 percent,  
 SIC 75 (Auto Repair, Services, and Garages), 926 or 66.4 percent, and  
 SIC 76 (Misc. Repair Services), 303 or 37.6 percent  
 SIC 83 (Social Services), 2,511 or 141.3 percent,

The sectors with negative competitive-components are affected by sub-optimal comparative local advantage and their growth rates are generally below the national average (Table 2) above.

In sum, 11 or 28.2 percent of the 39 sectors grew above the national average employment in their sector, 18 or 46.2 percent grew below the national average, while 10 or 25.6 percent were in decline (Figure 2).

### Growth Trends vs. Ohio

Another shift-share analysis was run between the region and the state of Ohio to see if there would be any variation in the outcome compared to the nation. Except for minor variations, the outcome was the same in terms of growth



**Figure 2. Employment Growth Rates for Selected Industries in the Region vs. the U.S., 1980-91.**

patterns observed previously with the nation. For example, 17 or 43.6 percent of the 39 sectors grew above the state average of 15.7 percent (state share + industry mix + competitive share), 12 or 30.8 percent were below, while 10 or 25.6 percent were in decline (Table 3, Figure 3).

**Table 3. Shift Share Components Regional Percentage Change 1980-1991**

<i>2-Digit SIC</i>	<i>Industrial Sector</i>	<i>State Share</i>	<i>Industry Mix</i>	<i>Competitive Share</i>
15	General Contractors and Operative Builders	15.7397%	-19.2185%	-4.3487%
16	Heavy Construction Contractors	15.7397%	-42.5952%	38.9333%
17	Special Trade Contractors	15.7397%	5.9131%	-12.8158%
20	Food and Kindred Products	15.7397%	-34.4969%	31.4349%
24	Lumber and Wood Products	15.7397%	22.8760%	-23.4422%
27	Printing and Publishing	15.7397%	-11.6954%	3.1404%
28	Chemicals and Allied Products	15.7397%	-28.5942%	10.1104%
30	Rubber and Misc. Plastic Products	15.7397%	-24.3683%	31.1302%
33	Primary Metal Industries	15.7397%	-55.6091%	-15.6448%
34	Fabricated Metal Products	15.7397%	-35.2805%	-5.6729%
35	Machinery, Except Electrical	15.7397%	-47.8838%	1.9465%
41	Local and Interurban Passenger Transit	15.7397%	21.9613%	21.2734%
42	Trucking and Warehousing	15.7397%	-20.3213%	-11.3972%
48	Communication	15.7397%	-22.0839%	-15.8656%
49	Electric, Gas, and Sanitary Services	15.7397%	3.0438%	-13.1697%
50	Wholesale Trade—Durable Goods	15.7397%	-6.5756%	-2.9614%
51	Wholesale Trade—Nondurable Goods	15.7397%	12.3669%	192.2773%
52	Building Materials and Garden Supplies	15.7397%	20.0662%	-12.8401%
53	General Merchandise Stores	15.7397%	-28.0082%	-21.4489%
54	Food Stores	15.7397%	4.4089%	-12.6210%
55	Automotive Dealers and Service Stations	15.7397%	-8.8544%	-6.6159%
56	Apparel and Accessory Stores	15.7397%	11.6811%	-0.1101%
57	Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	15.7397%	11.1463%	-28.6225%
58	Eating and Drinking Places	15.7397%	20.8221%	-8.3840%
59	Misc. Retail	15.7397%	22.1914%	90.5769%
60	Banking	15.7397%	34.4436%	-0.0791%
63	Insurance Carriers	15.7397%	4.1178%	-29.7942%
64	Insurance Agents, Brokers, and Service	15.7397%	20.3830%	-18.3537%
65	Real Estate	15.7397%	13.8852%	-17.4841%
70	Hotels and other Lodging Places	15.7397%	-7.5989%	9.3899%
72	Personal Services	15.7397%	6.8883%	-19.4250%
73	Business Services	15.7397%	59.1119%	-37.3424%
75	Auto Repair, Services, and Garages	15.7397%	27.0105%	23.6298%
76	Misc. Repair Services	15.7397%	11.8986%	9.9082%
79	Amusement and Recreation Services	15.7397%	14.7679%	-15.4884%
80	Health Services	15.7397%	42.7279%	-18.7094%
81	Legal Services	15.7397%	43.1572%	-11.6241%
83	Social Services	15.7397%	56.8461%	68.7198%
86	Membership Organizations	15.7397%	29.2111%	-24.9190%

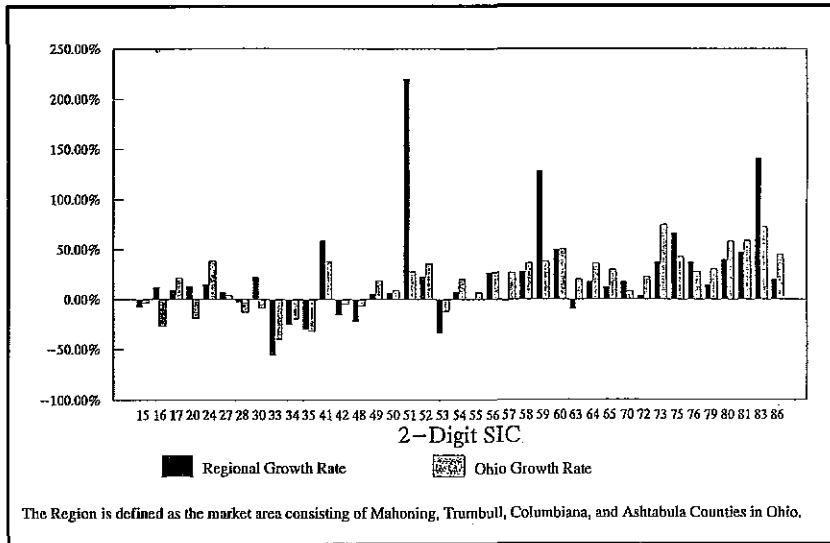


Figure 3. Employment Growth Rates for Selected Industries in the Region vs. Ohio, 1980-91

At both the national and state levels, the growth sectors in the region were predominantly skewed towards the low-technology service-producing sectors,<sup>1</sup> with little value-added economic activity. In short, the shift-share analysis shows few diversification trends among the sectors. In order to further confirm the presence or absence of diversification trends in the area, other analyses were carried out using the Lorenz curve and the Gini coefficient sub-models. If the statistical results of these sub-models *reflect* those obtained earlier with the shift-share model application, then the reliability of the whole analysis would be confirmed.

### The Lorenz Curve Model

The Lorenz Curve model was applied to measure the extent of employment inequality among the existing industrial sectors in the region's economic landscape. This was achieved by measuring the cumulative percentage of total employees against the cumulative percentage of selected industrial sectors located in the region. The cumulative percentage of total employees was drawn from the largest to the smallest of the 39 selected sectors.

Line **Z** designates a situation of complete diversification of the regional economic landscape if each industrial sector were to have an equal number of employees (Lorenz Curve theory). Curve **M** indicates the spread of cumulative

<sup>1</sup> Service-producing industries as used in this study relate to those business establishments other than manufacturing, generally between SICs 40 and 89.

percentage employees in the region among the sectors (Cadwallader, p. 1985). In this study, the first cumulative 20 percent of industries employed the cumulative 62 percent of total industrial employment in the region, and so on (Figure 4).

Of the 39 industrial sectors used in the computation of the Lorenz Curve, 8 sectors or 20.5 percent constituted the manufacturing establishments, while the remaining 31 or 79.5 percent were from the service-related establishments. Of the top ten sectoral employers in the region, only two were from the manufacturing establishments. This means that for this study, the overall ratio of service employment to manufacturing, including the ten highest sectoral employers is approximately four to one. Furthermore, at the time of this study, one of the top manufacturing employers in the region was losing money and was on the verge of filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection as well as laying off workers.

### The Gini Coefficient

The Gini coefficient is a statistical device applied in the verification of inequality of distribution. Its number lies between 0 and 1—where 0 represents perfect equality, and 1 represents perfect inequality of the distribution). It was applied along with the Lorenz curve to measure employment distribution among the growth sectors. After the computation, the employment distribution among the sectors was found to be **.6852**. The result of this computation confirms the existence of inequality in employment distribution among the two sectors. Although it is unrealistic to expect any region to have an equal number of

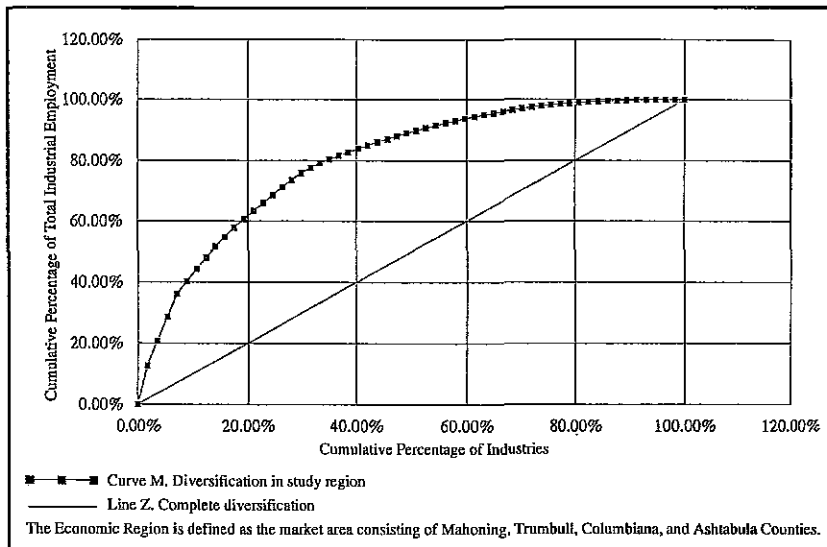


Figure 4. Lorenz Curve: Economic Region Based on Selected Industries 1993.



employees between the service and manufacturing establishments, the need for the establishment of more manufacturing activities in order to diversify the economic base of the area is evident in this analysis.

In sum, the results obtained from each of the three models mirror or replicate one another in terms of the trends observed in the eastern Ohio economic study area. The economic area is not diversified well enough in terms of the existence of high-technology manufacturing and service-producing industrial companies necessary to stimulate and stabilize the regional economy into the 21st century.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DECISION-MAKERS OF THE ECONOMIC REGION**

The shift-share, Lorenz curve, and Gini coefficients computations indicate little evidence of diversification trends in the area after an economic policy to diversify the area was implemented nearly a decade previously. Having a regional economic landscape that lacks future-growth technological industries in today's competitive global economy is a lot like floating a ship in the Atlantic Ocean without an engine—the ship is going nowhere. New high-technology industries with high value-added activities both for the service and manufacturing establishments are seriously needed in these communities.

Taking into consideration the comparative advantage of the region as it relates to its strengths and weaknesses, such industries as pharmaceutical preparations, electromedical equipment, food products machinery, construction machinery and equipments, sanitary paper products, and laboratory apparatus and furniture should be considered. The following policy areas are suggested for action by the decision-makers of the area.

#### **Beef up the Business Environment**

In order to improve upon the status quo, the regional economic development decision-makers should step up efforts towards the retention and expansion of the existing manufacturing establishments of the area through financial support and/or technological transfer assistance. The study also shows that some of the manufacturing sectors that performed below the national or state average growth rates did so in *sub-optimal* business environments.

In order to address these problems, efforts should be directed towards the improving the regional business climate, such as creating financial incentives for businesses, developing technology transfer and incubator centers for businesses, enacting right-to-work legislation, creating a free trade zone, establishing ready-to-use industrial parks, maintaining roadways and other physical infrastructure developments, and finally, implementing an aggressive national and overseas marketing strategy for the region.

The establishment of a user-friendly business climate in the area could facilitate the recovery of the existing declining manufacturing industries, as well

as their retention and expansion. Such a business environment will make it easier to attract and recruit new businesses such as high technological firms in which a strong and diversified economic base can be realized.

### **Develop a Strong Public-Private Partnership**

The issue of public-private partnership is not new to the language of strategic regional economic planning. However, the community leaders in the eastern Ohio study area have never utilized this concept in theory or in practice in their bid for economic revitalization of the area. Communities with a strong public-private partnership can do more to forge communality and facilitate a successful economic planning and implementation strategy than communities which do not. So far, the Mahoning-Trumbull-Columbiana-Ashtabula community lacks this important relationship. The importance of this relationship is aptly expressed by the Committee for Economic Development (1982, p. 4):

Private [sector] initiatives [should] include actions by businesses or associations in development assessment and planning, promoting the community's image, establishing favorable purchasing and hiring policies, providing technical assistance to other firms, and making corporate operating and investment decisions designed to enhance the local economy. Government [sector] initiatives [should] include helping businesses to expand or solving problems that could lead to their departure, promoting the community to attract new investment, assembling land for development, providing physical infrastructure and public services.

This study suggests the need for the decisionmakers to bring these two bodies together to formulate a plan for promoting economic diversification in the area.

### **Develop a Comprehensive Long-term Economic Development Strategy**

Under this category, local leaders should be realistic about the state of their local economy in the present, at the same time planning for the future through a well-structured, long-term economic development strategy. After the implementation of the strategic plan, actions should be taken to monitor and evaluate performance regularly and alter strategies if necessary to achieve set goals.

### **Provide Leadership Role**

The adage that "if you do not know where you are going, then any road will take you there," impinges generally on leadership roles and the ability to make choices. Fosler (1991, pp.xix-xx) suggests local leadership should take charge and engage in "[business] recruitment, business financing, technical assistance, technology transfer, and marketing information, . . . public education, physical infrastructure, such as roads, water resource systems, housing, and telecommunications networks."

This study further suggests a grave need for a *systems support approach* which will incorporate grassroots groups—businesses, environmentalists, labor,

non-profit organizations, civic institutions, and education—a community economic development alliance. This will be the first step towards building confidence among the people and faith in the local leadership that there is seriousness about economic reconstruction of the area. The community economic development alliance would be the vanguard for public advocacy, coalition-building, and planning. Its members would participate in the development of a visionary long-term economic development strategy for the area. It is assumed that making the people aware of what is at stake and winning their support is not only good politics, it is common sense, especially today when people are cynical about government actions either at the local, state or national levels.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Generally, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, communities in the midwest and those in Northeast Ohio in particular, whose employment and tax bases revolved around a single lead industry such as steel and other heavy industrial establishments, were hit the hardest when those industries closed their doors. Realizing that the roots of their economic downfall originated from their over-reliance on the now-defunct single propulsive industrial enclaves associated with steel, community leaders in northeastern Ohio decided to implement a policy of reconstruction focused on economic diversification.

However, this study was undertaken to evaluate the success of this undertaking relative to the development of diversification trends in the economic base of the area, using an innovative technique entitled multiple-model replicants (MMR). The MMR is a quantitative analytical tool which can be used in the measurement of the diversification trends of an economic base of any community. Depending on what one defines as a community economic base, this may include metropolitan statistical area (MSA), meglopolis or region. The MMR consists of the Shift-share, Lorenz curve, and the Gini coefficient models. Each sub-model of MMR has its unique statistical interpretations capable of replicating the results of the others by which an analyst can verify the existence or lack of diversification trends.

In this study the composite result shows not only that the region has few diversification trends, but that the bulk of the growth establishments are skewed towards low-technology service-producing sectors that have little value-added activity. The few existing manufacturing sectors are not of high caliber in terms of the application of new technology in the production of new products: hence, they are slowly but steadily diminishing in employment growth and profit margins in an increasingly competitive global market place. However, while a reduction in the manufacturing employment is not a surprise—since this is the trend for the nation, if not the world—the regional employment loss in the manufacturing sector has been growing worse in the study counties since the demise of steel over a decade ago. The region needs a diversification economic

base if it is to compete with other regions of its size in the coming decade and remain secure from the vicissitudes of future structural and/or cyclical shocks in the national or global economy.

The implications of this study are not, by any means, limited to the study area in question, but in fact are applicable to other communities nationwide and the world generally with similar or related problems. Accordingly, there are some communities out there which have *unique* economic situations as the study area described above, and which have engaged themselves in some form of diversification programs willy-nilly. First and foremost, these communities should develop a comprehensive long-term economic development strategy based on strong public-private partnerships, provide an effective user-friendly business environment and a strong economy conscious leadership. The recruitment of any growth company should be based on whether the community in question has the competitive, comparative advantage both in material and human resources associated with the existing agglomeration economies of the area. Under such conditions, the community has more to gain from the productive capacity of the company while leakages to the community can be reduced to the barest minimum.

It is also important to understand that one of the ways to accelerate the economic growth of a community is to diversify its economic base with strong growth industrial companies that have high value-added productivities, while the retention and expansion of the existing growth sectors are *sine-qua-non*, and structurally invaluable assets. The application of multiple-model replicants (MMR) would measure the level of diversification trends of a given economic base, which would enable the decision-makers to make changes where necessary to cope with an increasingly volatile but competitive economic environment.

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# AN EVALUATION OF THE NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM METHODOLOGY FOR STIMULATING DELIBERATION IN RURAL KENTUCKY

By Ronald J. Hustedde

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## ABSTRACT

Deliberation is implicit in the community development literature. Yet it is seldom addressed as a topic in its own right. Deliberation is defined as the weighing of policy choices by the public. It involves critical thinking and open dialogue that creates a sense of the *public* and the movement towards a *common ground*. This article address the problems associated with deliberation: 1) hyperindividualism; 2) a culture of limited public dialogue; and 3) the increased hegemony of science and technology. The National Issues Forum (NIF) methodology was employed as a tool to overcome these problems of deliberation in rural Kentucky. A naturalistic evaluation model was used to critique the application of NIF in rural settings. The ten lessons learned contain insights about the problems, successes and the limitations associated with the NIF methodology for stimulating deliberation.

## INTRODUCTION—THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF DELIBERATION

When community developers create a climate to move people out of their own backyards and away from their parochial perspectives, that is deliberation. When people in a community can see the issue from another person's perspective, deliberation is occurring. If a community makes a conscious attempt to strengthen its emotional and intellectual maturity before making a decision, they are deliberating. In essence, deliberation is the heart of democratic problem-solving and visioning. Although the quality of deliberation is implicit in community development, it is seldom discussed as a topic in its own right. It is implied in concepts such as local empowerment, needs assessment, vertical networking, strategic planning and action (Miller & Hustedde, 1987; Christenson & Robinson, 1989). This article focuses on the quality of deliberation as a key component of community development and citizen capacity-building. The

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author evaluates a methodology for deliberation, the National Issues Forums, that was applied in rural Kentucky.

Deliberation differs from expression. Deliberative discussion occurs when the public comes together to talk and think through options. Expressive talk, on the other hand, emphasizes giving people a chance to speak or vote. Deliberative talk occurs when a people are confronted by a serious problem and "talk through" or weigh the alternatives that they face. Deliberation can occur through forums or dialogues and often leads to a sense of *public* where common ground can emerge. In contrast, expressive talk involves individual explaining and proclaiming of likes and dislikes. Expressive talk tends to be characterized by bitter power contests or a debate of extremes. On the other hand, serious deliberation is marked by listening to each other's interests and concerns and then moving towards a common understanding of how to act as a public. Mathews (1994a) argues that deliberation means to weigh. He contends that the costs and consequences of possible actions must be weighed by the public. This weighing strengthens the likelihood that the choices will be sound. Without deliberation, the public's decisions and actions are based on ignorance and caprice. Hence, democratic decision-making, a pivotal component of community development, loses its legitimacy (Fishkin, 1991).

### **Problems of Deliberation**

This article focuses on the lessons learned about deliberative public discourse through the Appalachian Civic Leadership Project, a program funded by the W.K.Kellogg Foundation from 1990 to 1993. The Appalachian Project emerged to strengthen the civic infrastructure of the mountain communities in Eastern Kentucky. Special attention was devoted to leadership building as well as strengthening deliberative public discussion. The decision to focus on deliberative skills in Eastern Kentucky was not based on empirical studies or a needs assessment process in the region. For the most part, the decision came from the project organizers' interest in the theoretical literature on deliberation as well as their own stories about discordant public meetings in the region. The literature suggests at least three major problems regarding the quality of public discourse in democratic settings that could be applied to rural Appalachian Kentucky.

**Hyperindividualism.** Bellah et al. (1985) critiqued an ideology that focuses on individual needs rather than the commonweal. In such settings, public dialogue is not deliberative because it focuses on the needs of various groups. Public policy hawkers market their ideas in language and images just like soft drink manufacturers. Those with the catchiest phrases or best jingle are able to sell their ideas to a relatively passive citizen consumer. Dionne, Jr. (1991) contends that America is drowning in phony issues. He argues that the key to winning elections is to reopen the same divisive issues into an "us versus them" argument. For example, instead of talking how street crime might be reduced, voters get arguments about the death penalty. He blames conservatives and

liberals alike for trivializing issues. Appalachia, a region known for its rich individualism and where relations are important, has become a place in which issues are so personalized that people have lost a sense of what the choices really are for the community. People ask, "Whose side are you on?" rather than, "What are the choices for the common good?" The problem has been exacerbated in the region, with its historically bitter power struggles about the environment versus jobs and labor versus management (Eller, 1989). These issues have been closely linked to individual self-survival. These difficult power battles, shouting matches and harsh debates make it difficult to arrive at a sense of "we" or a rational common ground.

**A Culture of Silence or Limited Public Discussion.** Some critics argue that a culture of silence exists which stifles participatory dialogue and involvement in public affairs. This culture of silence occurs in many settings that have the external trappings of democracy, but hinder public deliberation. For example, Appalachia has been compared to Atlantic Canada and colonized Third World countries in which wealthy families or dominant industries govern the land and people, in ways which could be described as paternalistic or feudal. In more subtle forms of suppression, citizen wants are shaped by the dominant culture of social myths, language and symbols. Individual differences with the dominant culture tend to be discussed in private settings rather than in more public environments. In essence, dependents internalize ideas of the elites and believe concepts such as the "victim deserves the blame" or "you can't change anything." The result is a culture of silence marked by non-participation, non-consciousness and a lack of deliberative dialogue (Freire, 1982; Gaventa, 1980).

**Increased Hegemony of Science and Technology.** Habermas (1984) suggests that science and technology have emerged as the new *modi operandi* to address complex public issues. Engineers, technicians and scientists are often employed to deal with both the physical and social infrastructure of communities. Habermas views science and technology as "ideological." Science and technology maintain the illusion of being value-free and inherently rational. In practical terms, community people find it difficult to conduct a rational-critical dialogue with "more rational" scientists and technicians. The problem is compounded by some scientists who view citizens as ignorant. Hence, citizen deliberation is likely to give way to scientific dominance. For example, U.S. land-grant universities are encouraging communities to expand or strengthen existing businesses. Such a strategy seems rational and unbiased. After all, the bulk of new jobs are created by existing firms (Armington & Odle, 1982; Morse, 1990). However, some Appalachians have questioned this empirically rooted approach as alien to local values. They say, "These existing firms are not always good neighbors. They stifle our political, economic and social life and hinder new ideas. Why reward them further?" Can citizens (with limited technical knowledge) engage in deliberative dialogue with scientists and technicians about complex public problems?



## **DEVELOPMENT OF A DELIBERATIVE PUBLIC DISCUSSION PROGRAM**

The organizers of the Appalachian Civic Leadership Project wanted to strengthen deliberation skills in the region to enhance democratic participation and the quality of local decision-making. It was also believed that rational public discourse would lead to a greater sense of the *public* and would minimize needless fractionalizing. The project attempted to address the problems that hinder deliberative public dialogue in rural Kentucky. The problems of hyper-individualism, a culture of silence and domination by technocrats were addressed in three ways. First, the project included an Appalachian leadership program for adults and community college and university students in the region. Participants learn more about their local heritage as well as complex public issues, and learn how to lead deliberative public dialogues.

Second, community college faculty and Cooperative Extension Service agents in the region, highly regarded as effective adult educators, were invited to learn about how to encourage deliberative public discussions about controversial issues. It was believed that the Cooperative Extension Service, through its agents, could transform itself from an institution that focuses on technical solutions to a leading regional player in encouraging and teaching deliberative public dialogue and issues education.

Finally, both of these training programs used the Kettering Foundation's National Issues Forums (NIF) as a methodology for stimulating deliberative public discussions about complex problems (Oliver, 1987). Appalachian Project organizers applied the NIF approach to Appalachian issues and taught this methodology to leadership participants, community college faculty and students, Extension agents and others who might be interested in particular issues or might want to encourage public deliberation. It was believed the methodology could affect the hyperindividualism which had led in the past to bitter shouting matches and power contests, and engage citizens instead in active learning about complex and technical problems.

### **The NIF Approach for Deliberation**

In 1981, the Kettering Foundation and the Public Agenda Foundations, nonpartisan research foundations, launched NIF as a unique forum that reframes problems into three or four public policy choices. As citizens explore the pulls and tugs of each policy choice, NIF proponents believe that individual participants will move from opinions towards reflective and shared perspectives. NIF uses issues booklets to stimulate discussions. These booklets outline the problem in neutral terms. Scientific and technical components of the issue are explained in lay terms. Three or four choices are posed to address the problem, reflecting the diversity of thought and values about the issue. Each choice contains a discussion about how that particular choice has been effectively applied (or

might be applied). Usually, there is a brief discussion about the limitations of each particular choice. Typically, the booklets are researched through citizen focus groups, interviews with elected officials, scholars, technicians and others. The goals of the forums are “to help people become a public, to develop the skills needed for public politics to speak in a public voice, and to contribute to defining the public’s interests” (Mathews, 1994b, p. 108). Instead of devoting time to listening to technical experts or debating opposing technical solutions, the forums stimulate citizens to deliberate with other citizens to determine the best policy options (Yankelovich, 1991, p. 249). Appalachian Civic Leadership Project organizers viewed the NIF methodology as a way to overcome problems of hyperindividualism, the culture of silence and technical hegemony in the region.

NIF discussion leaders are trained to use a seven-step approach. First, there is an agreement on ground rules for a healthy discussion. For example, one ground rule is that “the discussion leader and scribe will remain neutral at all times.” Another ground rule calls for a “respect for everyone present.” Second, the discussion leader asks people to agree on goals for a healthy discussion. One goal is to “walk away from the meeting with the ability to defend choices we dislike, critique our favorite choices and consider new choices we haven’t considered before.” Individuals are encouraged to walk in each other’s shoes through the deliberative process.

Third, the discussion leader presents information about the problem from the booklet in neutral terms. Three to four public policy choices for addressing the problem are outlined on flip chart paper. Typically, this presentation does not last more than 15 minutes. Fourth, the discussion leader asks participants to walk in the shoes of the defenders of choice one. The participants are asked to explore what the critics might say about the first choice. This step is repeated for the following two or three choices. Typically, the discussion leader asks the participants to identify the underlying values that guide each choice. Comments are recorded on flip chart sheets as a visual aid for the group’s memory. Fifth, participants are asked if there is another choice that should have been included among the original three or four choices. If there is such a choice identified, the participants will be asked to explore what critics and defenders might say about it.

Sixth, after examining what advocates and critics say about each choice, the discussion leader attempts to move people towards a common ground with questions such as: Is any choice unacceptable to the group? Which choice are you leaning towards? After discussing the choices, what values do we hold most dear about addressing the issue? What happens if we don’t make a choice? If you were a jury, what choice would you select? In essence, the discussion leader does not force people to make a choice but moves them towards a decision that can be discussed further. Seventh, the meeting concludes with questions about the process and follow-ups: How did this meeting differ from other public

meetings you have attended? Would you like to meet again or take some kind of action on this issue? If so, what would you like to do? The seven step approach reflects the spirit of the National Issues Forum methodology for deliberation. The model is fluid. Some deliberation sessions will last for an hour or less while others will continue over several weeks. Groups may be heterogeneous or homogeneous.

### **Literature About NIF**

There is a significant amount of literature about NIF. McAfee et al. (1991) argued NIF often changes the way citizens view their roles in politics, their relationships with others as well as their views on national issues. Others have viewed NIF as a model for stimulating democratic leadership (Gastil, 1994). Yankelovich (1991) argued NIF has an alternative to the standard "PR approach" in which public opinion is manipulated by skillful technicians and engineers. He contended NIF is becoming institutionalized in civil society through its use of choice work which allows people to make up their own minds about issues. Others viewed NIF as an effective way to build classrooms where students can engage in public and productive deliberation that transforms shallow ideas into considered judgment (Leppard, 1993 (a and b); Morse, 1993; Bragaw, 1991). Rehm and Davidson (1991) identified three benefits that professional home economists gained from NIF: professional development to strengthen leadership skills, advocacy roles and informed judgment on policy issues; collective action; and organizational networking among professionals and corporate groups to empower families and individuals. Castelli (1992) explained how libraries cooperated with NIF to enable citizens to have a more effective voice in politics. He also described the public relations benefits to libraries that participate with NIF. The literature about NIF tends to focus on NIF strengths and successes, with relatively little mention of any problems or limitations.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ISSUES FORUM APPROACH IN RURAL KENTUCKY**

The Appalachian Project organizers replaced the term, "National Issues Forums" with "Community Issues Gatherings" because they perceived it as friendlier. A series of NIF-type booklets served as an informational focus for the Community Issues Gatherings. One addressed regional economic issues while another focused on environmental problems in the region. Four public policy choices for addressing each issue were outlined in each issue booklet.

After NIF training at the Kettering Foundation, project organizers and discussion leaders had varying expectations about the Community Issues Gathering component of the project. Some project organizers wanted to provide a climate for healthier discussions that would move away from local problem-

solving to regional problem-solving. Others viewed it as an opportunity for people from different economic and social classes, educational levels and technical backgrounds to meet and come together as a *public* to discuss the common good. Others wanted to use the NIF approach to teach people how to understand why people would hold positions different from their own. Others viewed the Gatherings as a mechanism for lay citizens to understand the complexities of difficult and often technical issues. While discussing these goals, project organizers also expressed their fears that the region's political elites would view the Gatherings as threats to the social order and would find a way to stifle them. Notes from meetings of project organizers and discussion leaders indicate that goals were not prioritized. There was a reluctance to set measurable objectives because project organizers wanted to learn by doing. There was agreement that a maximum number of Eastern Kentucky discussion leaders should be trained in the NIF methodology and that Gatherings should take place in most of Kentucky's forty-nine Appalachian counties.

Hundreds of potential discussion leaders were recruited from the leadership groups, the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, community colleges and other organizations, to take part in a series of six hour interactive workshops that focused on group dynamics, the philosophy of deliberation, facilitation skills, dealing with difficult behaviors, and practice in preparing and leading Community Issues Gatherings (Hustedde, 1994). Just as the Kettering Foundation encourages autonomy among NIF conveners, the Appalachian Civic Leadership Project organizers encouraged Community Issues Gathering conveners to be creative and to deviate from the model as needed. However, they were urged to maintain their neutrality during the Gatherings. Initially, discussion leaders were discouraged from using the Gatherings as a "call to action." It was believed that deliberation should be valued for its own sake and that talk of "action" would threaten political leaders and jeopardize the project. Although political leaders were invited to the Gatherings, they were asked to function as "expert listeners" rather than become involved in discussions.

Over the course of the project, discussion leaders conducted hundreds of Community Issues Gatherings in the region. Many discussion leaders used the first booklet on economic development in church groups, farm organizations, schools and in other relatively homogeneous settings.

### **Innovative Community Issues Gatherings**

Typical gatherings took place in settings with existing homogeneous groups. Most meetings involved 20 people or less. Many of the early gatherings were demonstrations rational public discussion as much as a consideration of a specific local need. Appalachian Project booklets or NIF booklets were often distributed prior to the community issues gatherings.

Creative discussion leaders developed and led a variety of gatherings that addressed local and regional concerns. A Community Issues Gathering on

economic development was held on talk radio and cable television, to involve the sick and shut-ins. It was also geared to individuals who preferred the anonymity of making a telephone call to the station rather than attend a conventional meeting. Several hundred people participated.

During the Persian Gulf War, a community discussion took place on four potential choices for the local public to respond to the war. One of the choices included a pacifist response. It was believed this choice could have led to a brouhaha in a region noted for its strong support of the military. However, the meeting was deliberative and thoughtful. For example, pro-military supporters were asked to walk in the shoes of pacifists and to explain why a pacifist would support or critique certain choices. Although few people changed their minds, it led to new understandings of why people think the way they do.

In another case, mining representatives and environmental and community groups from Southeastern Kentucky came together to deliberate post-mining land use. This gathering brought together people who had faced each other in the past with court warrants, bulldozers and demonized characterizations. As participants discussed the choices for restoring post-mining land, they agreed there should be greater flexibility in restoring post-mined land. A common ground emerged that led to the creation of a task force and several statewide gatherings.

Another Appalachian community used the Gathering approach to discuss whether it would permit the sale of alcohol. "Wet/dry" issues in Kentucky are often characterized by highly emotional responses. However, the Gathering was designed to examine the trade-offs in values about this issue. According to the discussion leaders, the structure of the Gathering led to a deeper understanding of the choices involved.

In another setting, discussion leaders led a Community Issues Gathering at a general store in Woodstock, Kentucky, during coffee break where people normally gathered to discuss public problems. The facilitators enhanced an existing discussion base that was characterized by trust, comfort and openness (King & Hustedde, 1993).

Based on the reputed success of the gatherings, statewide authorities invited facilitators to design a series of Community Issues Gatherings on sustainable development and the governor's health care reform package. According to the evaluations from facilitators, participants and authorities, the process provided rich feedback to statewide leaders.

## **EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNITY ISSUES GATHERING PROGRAM**

Project organizers wanted evaluation to empower the facilitators and discussants and to provide useful feedback to the Appalachian Project. There was concern that evaluation could be viewed as an annoyance for the participants.

Hence, a naturalistic and participant-oriented model of evaluation (Worthen & Sanders, 1987; Guba & Lincoln, 1981) was used. Advocates of naturalistic evaluation have questioned the perceived deficits of evaluation systems that rely on numbers, figures, charts and tables without any understanding of the phenomena and first-hand experiences of the participants. Thus, naturalistic evaluation grew quickly in the 1970s and 1980s to address the human element that was often missing from most evaluation strategies. In contrast to other evaluation strategies, naturalistic evaluation does not rely on a inquiry plan projected before the evaluation occurs. Naturalistic evaluation strategies have four commonalities. They rely on inductive reasoning; grass-roots observations, discoveries and understanding of issues and events are viewed as integral to the evaluation. They use data from a variety of sources that include subjective, objective, qualitative and quantitative data. They do not follow a standardized plan; the evaluation process emerges as participants gain experience in the project. Finally, they recognize that people see things and interpret them in different ways. There isn't a single reality, it involves descriptions and judgments of the program, its contents and relevance. (Worthen & Sanders, 1987). Although naturalistic evaluation has many strengths, its weaknesses should also be noted. Critics of this approach have found its reliance on the intuitive data process can be a potential source for bias evaluator bias (Sadler, 1981). It can also be more time-consuming for the evaluator than standard evaluation approaches. In spite of these limitations, the naturalistic approach was used because it was believed it would best meet the needs of non-technical program participants, the key stakeholders. Ordinary language and informal logic were used. Preordinate evaluation designs were avoided. The emphasis was on program activity rather than program intent.

Data were gathered through focus groups of discussion leaders, regularly scheduled meetings of program organizers, written reports of discussion leaders and organizers, collections of informal comments and two weekend retreats with program participants that extended over the first three years of the project. Persistent themes were identified in notes generated from these evaluation activities. These themes are reflected in "lessons learned" from the project.

### **Lessons Learned**

Through the evaluation process, ten lessons were learned about fostering deliberation through the application of the National Issues Forum methodology in rural Appalachian Kentucky.

1) Discussion leader dependence on issues booklets from a central source (i.e., the university) leads to a situation of disempowerment. The project could not produce issues booklets to satisfy the variety of local issues that needed to be addressed quickly. To feel empowered, discussion leaders requested instruction on how to frame local issues that would reflect diverse interests and values.

They wanted to learn how to write their own 3–10 page neutral issues briefs about local issues.

2) Elected officials should have been actively involved in the Gatherings. Most viewed the Gatherings as rational public discussions that were interesting but irrelevant. Other rational-critical public talk programs should explore how deliberation can meet the self-interests of elected officials.

3) The National Issues Forum methodology should not be viewed as the only tool for rational and democratic dialogue and problem-solving. As the discussion leaders matured, their field work gradually incorporated other tools such as storytelling or consciousness raising (Freire, 1970; 1982), nominal group technique (Delbecq et al., 1975), mediation (Carpenter & Kennedy, 1988), force-field analysis (Lewin, 1951) and other rational-critical discussion approaches. Without a variety of tools, it is difficult for discussion leaders to foster rational-critical dialogue. In some cases, the National Issues Forum approach was inappropriate for addressing public problems because choices were not apparent.

4) The National Issues Forum methodology is difficult to learn. While project participants found the approach useful, they also remarked how cumbersome and difficult it was to practice it or explain it to others. In order to feel comfortable with the NIF approach, discussion leaders should practice leading three or four forums. They should receive feedback and encouragement from more seasoned discussion leaders about their strengths and weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement.

5) Project leaders should have anticipated the structural impediments in the program. For example, it was assumed that community colleges and the Cooperative Extension Service would be transformed through the project and emerge as active promoters of public issues education and facilitation. Relatively little attention was paid to the personal values of key administrators and policy makers about the role of the public in deliberation. Project organizers did not anticipate the structural problems that inhibit institutional change such as pay or promotion incentives or mission statements. Hence, institutionalization of the Community Issues Gatherings as a form of public issues education was not as profound as expected.

6) One or two facilitators (or neutral public issues educators) are likely to face more obstacles when fostering rational-critical public dialogue in a community. In many cases, trained facilitators complained that if citizens deliberated in ways that were averse to ideas of the power elite, the neutral discussion leader would be blamed and suffer negative consequences. These obstacles were minimized when a critical mass such as a local team of 10–20 community discussion leaders were trained and organized to frame issues, write issues briefs and organize and lead discussion groups. The Community Issues Gatherings were more easily sustained when such teams emerged.

7) Deliberative public talk can be ingrained into public life by nourishing it among children and youth. Many adults had difficulty understanding the struc-

ture or purpose of the Community Issues Gatherings because deliberation seemed alien to them. On the other hand, they tended to understand debate and its value because it was taught in their schools. Some adult participants in the Community Issues Gathering blamed their educational institutions for not teaching deliberation.

8) At their worst, the National Issues Forums or the Community Issues Gatherings are interesting intellectual exercises with little relevance for addressing real problems or creating a sense of the public. This occurs when overemphasis on the intellectual sifting and winnowing of ideas leaves little room for emotion, personal stories or a linkage with the world of action. At their best, the Community Issues Gatherings and National Issues Forums blend reason with local values. Both are needed for real deliberation to occur. Some of the most powerful Issues Gatherings have involved the richness of Appalachian storytelling and humor. It was a mistake for the Appalachian project to focus exclusively on deliberation and to discourage community-initiated action during the first year of the project. Project leader ambiguity about methods affected the public reception of the program. In some gatherings, story telling was discouraged because it was believed that the stories would be too time-consuming and "touchy-feely." Such restraints do not encourage citizen empowerment.

9) The structure of the National Issues Forums provides an ambience for reasoned dialogue to occur. Most Community Issues Gathering leaders found the ground rules for behavior and the focus on choices to be particularly helpful. Some Appalachian leaders warned that the Community Issues Gatherings were likely to become explosive. However, out of the several hundred gatherings that took place in the region, no shouting matches or other disruptive behavior occurred.

10) Discussants should not be expected to read an issue booklet or issue brief prior to the Community Issue Gathering. In some rural Kentucky counties, the illiteracy rates (under current standards) approach 40 percent of the population. In most cases, even literate citizens are relying less on the written word and more on the spoken word or visuals for information. Greater reliance on these non-written resources for deliberation should be encouraged.

## CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

Deliberative public dialogue is an essential prelude for democratic problem-solving and creating a sense of the public. Without deliberation, people express their views and interests but they do not listen to each other. Hence, it is difficult to arrive at a sense of the common good.

Barriers to deliberation such as hyperindividualism, a culture of silence and the hegemony of science and technology can be minimized through an educational program of deliberative public discussion. Yankelovich (1991) also contends that the expert-public gap and the reliance on public opinion can be turned



around if there is the political will to strengthen the level of public judgment. He cites the National Issues Forums as a practical way to put the theory of an informed citizenry into practice. The Appalachian Civic Leadership Project was able to incorporate the National Issues Forums methodology for deliberation into Eastern Kentucky rural settings. Creative discussion leaders brought the uninvolved and disputants together to rationally discuss and work on difficult public problems.

The author identified ten major lessons from the application of NIF in rural Kentucky that might be useful to other community development practitioners. The NIF methodology has several practical limitations. It works best when clear choices can be identified. However, other deliberation tools can also strengthen public discussion. However, the Community Issues Gathering program has continued after using the seed money provided by the Kellogg foundation. Facilitators are framing local issues and writing their own issues briefs. Community Issues Gathering training is still being conducted because of regional interest in acquiring deliberation skills. One of the spinoffs of the gatherings is the creation of the Kentucky Environmental Mediation Center, a coalition of third party neutrals to mediate public disputes as an alternative to litigation. A master facilitator program has been proposed as a way to empower citizens with more deliberation skills such as field-based research, negotiation and conflict resolution.

The field of deliberative public dialogue is ripe for further research. Some have suggested examining how citizens naturally deliberate without communication tools such as the NIF or the Community Issues Gatherings. Are there differences in how deliberation occurs by region, class or gender? It would also be useful to contrast and compare the strengths and limitations of the NIF model with other deliberation approaches such as the Cooperative Extension Service's alternatives and consequences model (Favero, Meyer & Cook, 1994). In any case, the ideal of deliberative conversations about issues is to develop an informed citizenry who then make better decisions about important issues of widespread public concern. Community development scholars and practitioners need to re-examine the importance of deliberation in community capacity-building.

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# THE GREENING OF STATE RURAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS: A CALL FOR RESEARCH

By Mark K. McBeth

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## ABSTRACT

Recent studies assert that rural residents support the protection of environmental quality of life features over environmentally insensitive economic development strategies. Rural development policy, however, is not typically created by common rural citizens. Instead, officials from state government agencies, non-profit corporations, national associations, and private business firms create strategies, often hand-in-hand with local interest groups and elites. Research into the attitudes of development officials could play an important role in understanding rural environmental and economic development policy. This study uses a national sample of 305 rural development administrators to define a group of *green rural development officials* (GRDOs) based on age, organization of employment, and educational background. The findings demonstrate that GRDOs possess strong environmental attitudes on all three areas tested: rural environmental problems, environmental rural policy options, and environmental policy considerations. Preliminary theoretical explanations for the potential new paradigm, suggestions for future research and implications for community and economic development are provided.

## INTRODUCTION

### The Environment and the Economy

The sometime mythical image of rural<sup>1</sup> communities remains one where the air is clean, the water is pure, and the landscape remains as unscathed as it was one hundred years or more ago. This picture of an environmentally sound rural America has some truth in it. Environmental problems, however, profoundly affect the small community. For example, landfills are full and some are leaking hazardous materials into the aquifers below; animal feedlots, leaky underground

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<sup>1</sup> There are many definitions for *rural*; this article uses the term to describe municipalities located outside standard metropolitan areas, with populations under 5,000 and possessing specialized economies (Deaver, 1992). To avoid repetition, the article uses *nonmetropolitan*, *small community*, and *rural* as synonymous terms.

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storage tanks and abandoned wells often contribute to the contamination of groundwater; pesticides, fertilizers, and industrial waste are running into river systems, killing fish and producing alga blooms; habitat for wildlife is disappearing, and development creeps upon once pristine lands.

All the while, resource dependent nonmetropolitan communities struggle to maintain some sense of economic well-being in a political and social environment that is increasingly environmental in its rhetoric and substance. As a result, environmental and economic survival are crucial policy concerns. It is an issue that will become increasingly important for state and local governments and will grow in importance in the intergovernmental arena (Barker, 1993). Despite the central importance of economics and the environment, empirical research neglects the relationship between the two issues. Specifically, the development literature ignores the environmental attitudes of rural economic development officials. Economic development officials have the opportunity to pursue either environmentally benign or environmentally destructive development policies.<sup>2</sup> Despite the impact that development officials have on the environment, there is no framework to study the level or the predictors of environmental support among this important group. This situation must be addressed by development researchers. This article seeks to move the field's research agenda in that direction.

### **Rural Environmental Attitudes**

While the literature neglects the environmental attitudes of rural development officials, a significant amount of research exists on the environmental attitudes of rural residents. These studies provide a reference for the study of development officials.

Early citizen studies found either no significant relationships between rural residency and environmental concern (Buttel & Flinn, 1974) or more environmental concern among rural residents compared to their urban counterparts (Buttel, 1975). Tremblay and Dunlap (1978) discovered lower levels of environmental concern in rural areas and offered two theories to explain their results: differential-exposure theory and extractive-commodity theory. Differential-exposure theory asserts that nonmetropolitan residents, compared to urban residents, are less exposed to environmental problems and therefore possess lower levels of environmental concern. Extractive-commodity theory suggests that since rural economies are resource-based, residents will resist environmental attitudes in favor of resource exploitation. Lowe and Pinhey (1982)

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<sup>2</sup> Environmental development officials, of course, may have to implement development policies established by elected officials. However, it is well documented in the public administration literature that high level administrators (such as those studied here) have tremendous influence over the creation of policy agendas and hence policy. A classic study of how administrators assert their influence on public policy creation is found in Rourke (1969).

follow this anti-environmental tone both in their findings and theoretical assertions. Elite theory lends support to the rural anti-environmental hypothesis by suggesting that environmental concern among the public positively relates with income, political liberalism, and education, and negatively relates with age (i.e., Dillman & Christenson, 1972). As a result, nonmetropolitan residents who, as a group, have typically lower incomes, less education, are politically conservative, and older possess anti-environmental attitudes.

More recent studies dispute the rural anti-environment hypothesis and instead suggest a greening of these communities (i.e., McBeth & Foster, 1994; Alm & Witt, 1995; Fortmann & Kusel, 1990; Rudzitis & Johansen, 1991). Finlay and Gunter (1988) argue that rural residents who are considered nonenvironmental will nonetheless support environmental causes when there is a perceived threat to health and safety. Other studies show nonmetropolitan public concern for the effects of economic growth on the environment (i.e., McBeth, 1995; Willits & Crider, 1993). While these studies lack a coherent theoretical basis, the theories that underpinned the notion of rural anti-environmental attitudes may be unraveling. First, differential-exposure theory is less important given the amount of environmental problems facing contemporary rural communities. Second, resource-based industries play a lesser and lesser role in rural economies (Pulver, 1988). Rural communities have diverse occupational structures including manufacturing and service industries, and this unravels the principles of extractive-commodity theory. Finally, Morrison and Dunlap (1986) and Van Liere and Dunlap (1980) dispute the elite theory of environmentalism and destroy many of the reasons behind rural anti-environmentalism. This study accepts the *rural greening* hypothesis and explores its applicability with rural development officials.

### A Green Rural Development Paradigm?

Writing in the special symposium issue of the *Journal of the Community Development Society*, Ryan (1994) and Leonard (1994) both assert that the key task confronting community development (this should include economic development) is a rediscovery of the common good. Nowhere is the division between the common good and individual interests more apparent than in the economic development—environmental preservation conflict. To some individuals, economic development is merely the pursuit of economic self-interest where the common good is defined in individualistic economic terms. The impact of development on the “commons” is ignored even though economic development greatly impacts the commons in dimensions far greater than economic impact. We would expect that not all officials would share this reductionist view of development. Rural development may be *greening* as part of a national and international *greening of rural policy* (Harper, 1993).

The term *greening* is often misunderstood and misapplied. Buttel (1992:1–2) defines greening in the following way: “I mean the processes by which

environmental concerns are nurtured within social groups and modern environmentally-related symbols become increasingly prominent in social discourse." Buttel contrasts greening with "environmentalization" which is the "concrete processes by which green concerns and environmental considerations are brought to bear in political and economic decisions, in educational and scientific research institutions, in geopolitics, and so on. Environmentalization is thus the concrete expression of the broad force of greening in institutional practice." We would assume, given the greening (not necessarily environmentalization) of the general population, that a certain percentage of rural development officials would hold this green worldview. If the view represents a large percentage this would signal a rural development paradigm shift, as environmental concerns and symbols become incorporated into the development dialogue.

The concept of a paradigm shift is an often overused, overstated, and misapplied attempt to describe changes in worldviews of particular disciplines or professional fields.

The term is used here to analyze the environmental attitudes of rural development officials. The paradigm construction is based on the idea that certain groups of development officials may exhibit differing views of environmental problems and policies. If a paradigm shift is occurring, it may end the dichotomous relationship that typically exists between environmental and economic development policy. Instead, sustainable development policies which attempt to balance environmental and economic values may well be the favored policies of a greening development profession. This study proposes that certain factors will determine an official's environmental attitudes, and when combined, these factors define a group of *green rural development officials* (GRDOs).

What factors predict members of the new paradigm? First, a series of studies consistently demonstrate that age and environmental concern are inversely related (i.e., Mohai & Twight, 1987). Therefore, we expect younger rural development officials to possess stronger environmental attitudes.

Second, there is reason to hypothesize that industries and businesses feel threatened by environmental policies. In particular, industries whose major activities require the use (and potential abuse) of natural resources are more likely to possess anti-environmental attitudes. Therefore, we expect rural development officials employed by such industries or by national associations representing these industries to possess lesser degrees of environmental concern. Likewise, respondents who are employed by state government agencies that have been "captured" by these industries likely possess weaker environmental attitudes. Conversely, respondents working for non-profit organizations and for universities are more likely to express attitudes in the context of the public good, which in our case means expressing stronger environmental concern.

Finally, an area virtually ignored by the environmental literature is the impact of educational background on environmental attitudes. This study suggests that educational background is a significant factor in influencing the environmental

attitudes of respondents. Respondents educated in business and engineering fields are more likely to view development as a private enterprise (in the case of business) or a technical enterprise (in the case of engineering) and therefore will be possess weaker environmental attitudes. Respondents educated in the social sciences, humanities, and public administration are more likely to recognize the common good and hence the potential for negative environmental consequences from development.

## THE DATA

### Survey Methodology

A survey assessing the attitudes of rural policy makers and practitioners was mailed to 750 non-elected officials listed in the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) directory *Rural Policy Makers and Practitioners* (1993). A comprehensive listing of such officials, the CFED is a leading authority in this area. The small group of listed elected officials was not included in the sampling. The respondents are public and private non-elected officials of some state agencies, university centers, funding organizations, national associations, non-profit corporations, and utility companies. A systematic random sample was drawn from the approximate 1,450 non-elected officials listed in the book. Seven hundred fifty (750) surveys were mailed; reminder postcards followed, to increase the response rate. Budgetary limitations prevented follow-up mailings. A total of 305 surveys were returned for a response rate of 40 percent. This is an acceptable response rate. Importantly, in terms of geography and category of employment the sample is very similar to the composition of the CFED directory. Babbie (1993: 267) argues that “a demonstrated lack of response bias is far more important than a high response rate.”

### Environmental Attitude Measures

Three questions measured the environmental attitudes of respondents. There was a specific rationale behind each question.

1. Respondents were offered six environmental problems and were asked how much they worry about each problem in rural communities in their state. These questions were adapted from Mohai (1985). The questions were refined to apply to rural communities in the respondent's state. A composite measure was created for the six questions. This question was asked to establish general environmental concern on behalf of the respondents.

2. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a series of rural policy options that involved environmental matters. This was again adapted from Mohai (1985). This question was asked to measure respondents' opinions toward environmentally sound and non-environmentally sound policy options.



3. Respondents were asked to express their opinions toward the costs, benefits, and impact on economic growth of environmental policy in their state. Mohai's (1985) questions were refined to apply to rural communities in the respondent's state. Whereas Mohai's questions asked the respondent to answer a general question about environmental policy, the adapted question specifically asked the respondent to evaluate rural environmental policy in that state. This question was asked to measure saliency. It was well known that support for environmental protection declines when costs or competing values are attached.

### **The Definition of the Green Rural Development Officials**

This exploratory research study assumed that gender, income, and education would influence environmental attitudes among development officials. These variables, however, were not significant predictors of environmental attitudes for these respondents. In this sample, three independent variables were identified as important predictors of environmental attitudes:<sup>3</sup> age, type of organization, and nature of educational background (the Appendix provides a correlation matrix of the three dependent and independent variables). Earlier, we offered some simple theoretical explanations of why these variables are important predictors of environmental attitudes. Below, we briefly expand upon these ideas.

**Age.** Age is an important independent variable in general studies of environmental attitudes (i.e., Mohai & Twright, 1987). The relationship is an inverse one. Younger individuals, compared to older ones, are more likely to incorporate new societal values into their belief systems. Therefore, younger rural development officials tend to be more environmentally concerned.

**Organization.** A chi-square test demonstrated an association between organization of employment and environmental attitudes. It was then decided to test, using regression analysis, whether there were differing attitudes among categories of similar organizations. A dummy variable was created based on two categories: (1) individuals employed in non-profit corporations, universities, educational organizations, and funding foundations; (2) individuals employed by business, industry, or utility companies, state government, or national associations. The first group included organizations considered relatively independent of specific economic interests. These respondents may well be more concerned with environmental issues since their organizations do not have a direct economic interest in development. The second group included organizations working directly for economic interests and growth (i.e., utility companies and bankers' associations). The Appendix demonstrates that this was the most important independent variable in the study.

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<sup>3</sup> The theory building in this study followed an inductive approach.

**Educational Background.** Many studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between education and environmental concern (i.e., Morrison, 1986). The respondents here were all highly educated and the amount of education was not a significant variable in influencing attitudes. Nature of educational background, however, provided a stronger influence on attitudes. A dummy variable was created based on respondents with academic backgrounds in: (1) liberal arts, social sciences, natural sciences, public administration and (2) business/accounting and engineering. Respondents with non-business educational backgrounds would be presumed to possess stronger environmental values. Business education tends to emphasize private profit and ignores the larger social implications of market exchanges (Mangan, 1994). In other words, environmentalism is not a major part of many business college curricula although there is evidence that this may be changing (i.e. Benton, 1993; Freeman, 1995; Mangan, 1994).

Age, organization of employment, and educational background were then used to define the group of *green rural development officials* (GRDOs). This group includes respondents aged 48 years and younger, educated in a non-business/non-engineering field, and employed in public or non-profit organizations.<sup>4</sup> A total of 59 respondents, or 20 percent of the sample, fell into this category. Table 1 provides a demographic profile of respondents.

### Statistical Tests

To test for statistically significant differences, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for the GRDOs and the rest of the sample. Data for two of the three tested propositions came from seven-point likert scales allowing for interval-ratio statistical treatment. Data for the third proposition came from a question whose answers implied a ranking (ordinal data) but were treated statistically as nominal data. A one-tailed t test (using pooled estimates of the standard deviation) was calculated for the first two propositions (listed below) to test for differences between sample means. Following the lead of Healey (1984: 161), the t-test was used because (1) the subsamples were drawn from a random sample, (2) the level of measurement is interval-ratio, and (3) the sampling distribution is normal. Means were calculated for proposition three but a chi-square F test was calculated for proposition testing. The chi-square F test was used to test for differences in the frequency of response by strength of attitude between the two groups.

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<sup>4</sup> Combining three significant independent variables into a composite measure is a well accepted research methodology. See Babbie (1993: 51).

**Table 1. A Demographic Profile of Respondent Rural Development Officials**

	<i>Green Rural Development Officials</i>	<i>Rest of the Sample</i>
<b>Geographic location:</b>		
Northeast	14 (24%)	54 (23%)
South	12 (20%)	38 (16%)
Midwest	7 (12%)	22 (9%)
Southwest	7 (12%)	34 (14%)
Plains/Rockies	8 (14%)	49 (21%)
Pacific Northwest/West	11 (19%)	41 (17%)
Income (mean)	\$50,767	\$63,723
Age (mean)	41.5	49
Education (mean years)	18.09	18.04
<b>Organization:</b>		
Educational organization	14	67
Funding organization	2	9
State government	0	65
University affiliate	9	22
Legislative branch	0	11
National association	0	4
Non-profit organization	32	72
Private industry/utility	0	27
Other	0	31
<b>Educational background:</b>		
Liberal arts/social science	40	108
Business/accounting	0	42
Public administration	15	49
Natural sciences	3	43
Engineering	0	14
Other	0	32

Note. Geographical location, education (in years), and income are included to give the reader an understanding of the sample's demographic composition. A respondent had to meet the criteria of all three categories (age, organization, educational background) to be defined as a GRDO. It would have been preferable to compare GRDO's with older, privately/state government employed, business/engineering graduates rather than the rest of the sample. This subsample, however, would have been too small for statistical testing.

## PROPOSITIONS

To test whether there are significant differences between green rural development officials and the rest of the sample, the following propositions were created:

**Proposition 1: Rural Environmental Problems.** Green rural development officials will be significantly more concerned about rural environmental problems in their state compared to the rest of the sample.

**Proposition 2: Environmentally Based Policy Options.** Green rural development officials will be considerably more supportive of the future adoption of environmentally-based rural policy options compared to the rest of the sample.

**Proposition 3: Support for Environmental Policy.** Green rural development officials will be significantly more supportive of strong environmental policy in rural communities, regardless of costs and the effects on growth.

## Results and Discussion

**Proposition 1: Rural Environmental Problems.** In Table 2, we find that green rural development officials were significantly more worried about rural environmental problems on four of the six dependent variables. There were statistically significant differences on the hygienic environmental problems of waterway pollution ( $t = 1.46$ ) and soil contamination ( $t = 1.36$ ). These findings suggest that the rural development officials were in touch with citizen concerns towards environmental threats to health and safety (Finlay & Gunter, 1988). A

**Table 2. Respondents' Levels of Concern About Rural Environmental Problems**

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>t Test</i>
Pollution of drinking water <sup>1</sup>				
Green rural development official	5.45	1.20	60	0.78
Rest of the sample	5.29	1.51	240	
Pollution of rivers, lakes, reservoirs				
Green rural development official	5.70	1.09	60	1.46*
Rest of the sample	5.45	1.33	240	
Contamination of soil				
Green rural development official	5.59	1.28	61	1.36*
Rest of the sample	5.33	1.34	239	
Loss of natural habitat for wildlife				
Green rural development official	5.27	1.16	60	1.62*
Rest of the sample	4.93	1.52	239	
Loss of farmland				
Green rural development official	5.00	1.40	60	1.76**
Rest of the sample	4.62	1.70	240	
Loss of forests for timber				
Green rural development official	4.52	1.68	60	-0.07
Rest of the sample	4.54	1.80	239	
Composite score				
Green rural development official	5.27	0.93	61	1.57*
Rest of the sample	5.03	1.08	240	

\* $p < .10$ .

\*\* $p < .05$ , (one-tailed).

<sup>1</sup> Respondents responded to a list of six environmental problems and were asked how much they worry about each problem in their state. The answer was scaled from 1 (*do not worry*) to 7 (*worry a great deal*).

study of how these respondents' mean scores compare with rural residents, however, would be a productive line of rural research.

In general, the scores overall seem to be consistent with how rural residents view environmental problems. McBeth and Foster (1994) found that rural citizens regardless of age, income, and years in community express environmental concern in the context of local quality of life features. McBeth (1995), likewise, found that rural residents resist development that threatens these quality of life features. Other significant differences among rural development officials include concern of the loss of natural habitat for wildlife ( $t = 1.62$ ), concern for loss of farmland ( $t = 1.76$ ), and the composite score ( $t = 1.57$ ). The loss of wildlife habitat is a very divisive issue in small communities. In the Idaho, Montana, Wyoming region, the development battle lines are drawn among the rhetoric of "grizzly bears" v. "jobs." Generally, rural residents who are tied to traditional rural job structures (ranching, timber, mining) are opposed to the protection of grizzly bear habitat. Rural citizens who are tied to new rural job structures (service industry and manufacturing) are much more likely to support habitat protection. The findings presented here suggest that GRDOs' attitudes were more consistent with the latter rather than the former group of residents.

GRDOs concern for the loss of farmland was not surprising.

A key issue facing rural communities is the lack of profitability of agriculture. Non-profitable agriculture encourages farmers to subdivide their property contributing to sprawl, the loss of rural culture, and environmental degradation. GRDOs seem to realize the environmental importance of agricultural preservation. Proposition 1, which asserts that GRDOs are more concerned about environmental problems in rural communities, is accepted.

**Proposition 2: Environmentally Based Policy Options.** Table 3 demonstrates that green rural development officials had significantly higher support for rural environmental policy options compared to the rest of the sample. These included *saving resources to benefit future generations* ( $t = 1.64$ ), *emphasizing environmental protection over economic growth* ( $t = 1.98$ ), *preserving nature for its own sake* ( $t = 2.02$ ), and *emphasizing conserving and improving natural productivity of the soil* ( $t = 1.75$ ). GRDOs also scored significantly higher on the environmental policy composite score ( $t = 2.47$ ).

Once again, research that compares these scores with rural citizens would be very interesting. These findings suggest that GRDOs, compared to other officials, more strongly supported ecological policy options. Neither group supported the statement "environmental protection is more important than economic growth." Comments on the survey indicated that most GRDOs believed that the economy and the environment are not mutually exclusive. Recent empirical research also suggests that environmental and economic health are not mutually exclusive (i.e., Templet, 1995; Power, 1988). We can accept proposition 2. Green rural development officials were significantly more supportive of environmentally-based policy options.

**Table 3. Respondents' Views of Environmental Policy Options****Rural community policy should emphasize:**

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>t Test</i>
Saving resources to benefit future generations <sup>1</sup>				
Green rural development officials	5.73	1.33	60	1.64*
Rest of the sample	5.41	1.35	240	
Environmental protection is more important than economic growth				
Green rural development officials	3.94	1.58	60	1.98**
Rest of the sample	3.48	1.62	237	
Preserving nature for its own sake				
Green rural development officials	4.61	1.41	61	2.02**
Rest of the sample	4.12	1.73	240	
Conserving and improving the natural productivity of the soil to grow more food				
Green rural development officials	5.75	1.13	61	1.75**
Rest of the sample	5.41	1.39	239	
Environmental composite score				
Green rural development officials	4.96	0.98	60	2.47***
Rest of the sample	4.58	1.09	237	

\*  $p < .10$ .\*\*  $p < .05$ .\*\*\*  $p < .01$  (one-tailed).

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with a variety of rural community policy directions. They rated each question on a scale of 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 7 (*very strongly agree*).

**Proposition 3: Support for Environmental Policy.** In Table 4, we can see that GRDOs were significantly more supportive of environmental policies when considering costs and the impact on growth (chi-square  $F$  test = 7.39). Sixty-five percent (47% + 18%) of GRDOs, compared to 47 percent (36% + 11%) of officials who failed at least one of the 3 greenness tests, were strongly supportive of environmental policies. The fact that only 22 percent of GRDOs were non-supportive of environmental policies when costs are attached, compared to 41 percent (15% + 26%) of the rest of the sample, is the strongest indication of the importance of GRDOs in a greening rural development field. We can accept proposition 3.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

Green rural development officials, compared to other rural development officials, expressed stronger concern towards environmental problems, were more supportive of environmentally-based policy options, and were more likely

Table 4. Respondents' Perceptions of Rural Environmental Policy

<i>Choices</i>	<i>Green Rural Development Officials Frequency (Percent)</i>	<i>Rest of the Sample Frequency (Percent)</i>
Environmental programs have gone too far—they cost more than they are worth and they hamper economic growth.	3 (5%)	33 (15%)
We have made enough progress—we should now consider the costs and the impact on economic growth.	10 (17%)	60 (26%)
Not sure.	8 (13%)	29 (13%)
We have made some progress—more is needed before we worry about costs, and the impact on economic growth is negligible.	28 (47%)	81 (36%)
Improving the environment is so important—improvements must continue to be made regardless of costs and the impact on growth.	11 (18%)	25 (11%)
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
Green rural development officials	3.57	1.12
Rest of the sample	3.02	1.28
		<i>Chi-square F Test</i>
		7.39***

\*\*\* p < .01.

to believe that the benefits of environmental policy outweigh its costs. All three tested propositions were accepted. GRDOs are a group worthy of further research and theoretical refinement.

A challenge for rural development researchers is to reinvigorate their study of rural environmental attitudes among relevant stakeholders. These stakeholders include development officials, residents, private developers, corporations, environmental interest groups, economic interest groups, local elected officials, state elected officials, and other groups. An understanding of their attitudes and actions toward the rural environment would provide better understanding of how environmental and economic development policy is formulated in nonmetropolitan areas.

The analysis presented here involved examining mean differences between a defined group of *green rural development officials* and other development officials, and determining whether these differences were significant. From this analysis we know that differences existed between these two groups on a select number of environmental matters. Untested are the various factors that specifically influence one's environmental and economic development attitudes.

Finally, we do not know how these attitudes translate into actions. The current research, however, creates a framework to answer such questions. Suggested future research areas include:

1. Longitudinal studies determining whether there is a greening of the rural development profession, to complement the current cross-sectional study.

2. Studies of the clientele of GRDOs compared to other rural development officials: does this group professionally interact with residents or communities, while other officials deal with corporations or interest groups? Further research along these lines could also focus on how the GRDOs interact with their clientele group compared to other development officials. An important question is whether the interaction is in typical one-way relationships (the bureaucratic approach) or in the context of facilitators and dialogue builders between communities and administrative agencies (the community development approach).

3. Studies of how educational background affects environmental attitudes: is there a need for increased environmental education in business colleges?

4. Research on the development strategies of GRDOs: does environmental support translate into green economic development strategies? If so, what are these strategies?

5. Studies of how GRDOs view other rural policy issues such as poverty, growth, education, etc.: does this group have differing views of these issues and do these translate into differing economic development strategies?

6. Research on how the data presented in this study compare with other populations (most importantly rural citizens and interest groups).

This work's potential implications are not limited to creating an academic research agenda. Rather, numerous potential implications for rural communities, local governments, state policy-makers, and community development officials arise out of these findings. These include:

1. Non-profit corporations and universities may play increasingly important roles in rural development matters as rural citizen support for environmentally sensitive economic development continues to grow.

2. State government officials involved in rural development must reevaluate their attitudes toward environmental problems and policies. State development officials, as a group, had relatively low levels of environmental support.

3. The future of rural development rests in citizen-based planning. Rural residents, not interest groups, should develop strategic economic development plans. The GRDOs seem best prepared to handle such a philosophy of development, as they seem the most in touch with rural residents' emerging environmental values. Only future research can empirically determine whether this is accurate, and the level of environmental concern among nonmetropolitan residents remains controversial.



## CONCLUSION

Sound public policy is based on an understanding of groups and citizens involved in the policy process. Extensive research into the environmental attitudes of rural development officials would be a valuable contribution to the community development literature. This article sets the stage for research into this increasingly important area. It is hoped that community development researchers will be invigorated in their research efforts and will help find constructive alternatives to the conflict that currently dominates economic and environmental policy.

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**APPENDIX****Environmental Problems Composite Score (Proposition 1)**

Composite	1.00000			
Organization	-.11098	1.00000		
Age	-.05556	-.10998	1.00000	
Education	-.04115	.09916	.03262	1.0000
	Composite	Organization	Age	Education

**Environmental Policy Options Composite Score (Proposition 2)**

Composite	1.00000			
Organization	-.09725	1.00000		
Age	-.06074	-.10998	1.00000	
Education	-.09034	.09916	.032620	1.0000
	Composite	Organization	Age	Education

**Support for Environmental Policy (Proposition 3)**

Policy	1.00000			
Organization	-.19826	1.00000		
Age	-.07781	-.10998	1.0000	
Education	-.18875	.09916	.03262	1.0000
	Policy	Organization	Age	Education

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Note. A negative Pearson's  $r$  demonstrates a relationship consistent with the defined GRDO categories.

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# LOCAL VS. SOCIETAL INTERESTS: RESOLVING A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DILEMMA

By James E. Malia and Peter F. Korsching

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## ABSTRACT

Locally conceived and initiated development projects are more successful than externally imposed projects, but outside intervention is sometimes necessary to bring about change for a societal good as well as helping to alleviate a local problem. Even with external intervention, however, there is a need to create and sustain local involvement and commitment. The dilemma is to cultivate the local involvement, commitment and ownership without compromising the integrity of the program. Examination of the Little Sioux watershed project implementation in western Iowa, basically a technical assistance project, yielded eight key factors relating to the external agency-local actor relationship with potential negative effects on externally initiated programs. These concepts are discussed in the context of the Little Sioux watershed project, and several strategies to overcome their potential negative effects are suggested.

## INTRODUCTION

Research and experience have shown that locally conceived and initiated development projects are more successful than externally imposed projects. Local projects with significant participation from the community result in a higher level of commitment and a greater probability of sustainable development. Not all problems, however, can be solved, or indeed, can wait for the initiation of a solution from within the community. In some cases, the pressing interests of society and the lack of local resources dictate external initiation of projects. Creating and maintaining local involvement and commitment however, is imperative for sustained development. The Little Sioux watershed project in western Iowa is a case in point.

By the early 1940s, commercial agriculture in the Little Sioux watershed had caused severe soil erosion and flooding. This environmental degradation was destroying the rural landscape and economic viability of the area. In response,

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the federal government through the Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service (SCS) initiated a series of watershed projects to build structures, small water impoundments with earthen dams, to control flooding and soil erosion. Projects were initiated by SCS with the cooperation of local sponsors who were to have continuing responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the structures. Currently there is wide variation in the condition and maintenance of the structures, and in the awareness, interpretation and fulfillment of the agreements between SCS and local sponsors for the operation and maintenance of the watershed project. Over time, the codified agreement for local maintenance responsibility has eroded, and from the perspective of SCS, many of the structures are inadequately maintained, threatening the integrity of the project.

The purpose of this study was to examine the Little Sioux watershed project for insight on how agencies external to the local community can effectively implement programs that meet broad societal needs while achieving sustained input and commitment from the community. Through a historical analysis and in-depth interviews with individuals and organizations having a connection to the project, problems leading to the impasse between SCS and local actors in the project's initiation and implementation are identified. These problems suggest several factors critical to community development professionals in cultivating local involvement and commitment in externally initiated programs.

### **THE LITTLE SIOUX WATERSHED PROJECT**

Less than 50 miles wide, the Little Sioux watershed stretches 135 miles along the Iowa-Nebraska border from southern Minnesota to half-way between Sioux City and Council Bluffs, Iowa. The area is characterized by rugged hills and fertile but fragile loess soils. White settlement and tillage of the land began in the middle of the 19th century. Poor land management practices, however, brought about severe soil erosion and flooding that created huge gullies, 20 to 50 feet deep and 100 to 200 feet wide. Active gully heads eventually destroyed lanes, roads, bridges, buildings, and rich farm land. Tons of dirt were moved off the hills through the ditches, creeks, and tributaries of the Little Sioux to be deposited on the Missouri River flood plain, completely inundating ditches built to drain the bottomland for agriculture. Damages totaled more than one-half million dollars each year (House Document No. 268, 78th Congress 1943, p.1).

To control this flooding and soil erosion, the Soil Conservation Service initiated the Little Sioux River Basin Watershed and Flood Prevention Project in 1946. The program was designed to: "treat farm lands in the loess-covered portion of the watershed to reduce flood run-off at its source and minimize erosion; and build structures to control major gullies; that is, gullies so large that they cannot be stopped by individual action" (House Document No. 268, 78th Congress 1943, p.1).

## **Local Input and Responsibility Requirement**

The watershed program was conditional on local cost-sharing of the construction costs of the earthen dams and local responsibility to “inspect, operate, repair, replace, and otherwise maintain the major gully control works in perpetuity” (House Document No. 268, 78th Congress 1943, p.2). The conservation districts—the local agencies in each county that link the federal government, as represented by SCS, with the farmer—were designated as the local sponsors of the Little Sioux watershed program. The conservation districts accepted this responsibility with the understanding that the county boards of supervisors would share in it. Three groups of local actors thus became key to the success of the Little Sioux watershed program: the landowners, the soil conservation districts, and the county boards of supervisors. The fourth actor, the local office of the Soil Conservation Service, played a coordinating role, and ultimately became the driving force behind the program.

Upon completion of construction work, each conservation district accepted responsibility for the structures and by letter indicated that it would “follow through with establishing maintenance responsibilities with [the board of supervisors] and the farmer cooperators” (Eberly, 1952). Landowners would assist with this responsibility by maintaining all farm land improvements (waterways, channels, diversion ditches and dikes, terraces, and vegetative cover) and controlling weeds and trees around the structures. The district would maintain the major structures built on farm lands, and titleholders to land in other uses, such as roads, would maintain the structures built on their land (Lamp, 1958, pp. 5–6).

By statute, the federal government could incur no costs for the operation and maintenance of the watershed program (House Document No. 268, 78th Congress 1943, p. 2). Therefore, a cooperative funding mechanism was created. Owners of farm lands paid the district an amount equal to 2 percent of the estimated construction costs of structures on farm lands within the watershed area. To finance maintenance in counties where boards of supervisors refused to provide funds or to assume maintenance responsibilities, landowners were required to make 15 annual payments to the district equal to one-fourth of the initial payment (Amendment to District Program and Work Plan 1954, p. 3).

## **Changes in the Program**

In the program’s early implementation, SCS deemed construction costs excessive. To reduce costs, SCS streamlined construction procedures and standardized designs (Williams, 1952), and gave a higher priority to land treatment measures. Treatment standards were increased to require that at least 75 percent of the “sediment source areas which, if uncontrolled, would require a material increase in the cost of construction, operation, or maintenance” (Moon, 1972) be adequately protected by terraces and grass waterways before federal funds

could be spent for the construction of watershed structures. This requirement reduced the number and cost of structures to be built.

Because the Little Sioux project did not provide land treatment funds, the new requirements increased the landowner's participation costs. Many landowners were not willing to pay these costs, especially with few or no direct benefits to be derived from the structures. When cost-sharing funds for terracing became available through other federal and state conservation programs, landowners were more cooperative in completing the required land treatment.

### **Relations with the Soil Conservation Service**

SCS's early involvement with the watershed project set patterns of interaction and expectations that are still in effect. SCS persuaded reluctant landowners to join organized watersheds by promising to take care of maintenance and any problems that might occur. Thus local landowners believed that they would have no continuing responsibility for the structures. Also, the streamlined construction process affected the durability and longevity of the watershed structures. The design and construction procedures, particularly in the early days of the program, were not standard, and the goal to build as many structures as possible led to mistakes. When problems developed, SCS assumed responsibility for structures with design or construction deficiencies.

Problems resulting from design deficiencies were hard to distinguish from those resulting from inadequate maintenance. The distinction often was influenced more by political and financial considerations than by technical criteria. The issue became even more complex as new technologies and construction methods made it possible to repair structures to a higher standard than original construction. Using the higher standard of state-of-the-art criteria, SCS could justify making structure repairs even though the structures met the standards of design and construction when built. This strategy extended SCS's responsibility for structure maintenance and compromised local incentive and need to assume maintenance responsibility. With design deficiencies defined by the latest design knowledge and technology, local sponsors responded to needed major repairs as design deficiencies and hence not a local responsibility. Though design deficiencies decisions are seemingly standardized, under this scenario they become a matter of negotiation. The process conveys a sense of fluidity which is not present in the written agreements.

The availability of funds and cost of repairs also are important in determining what maintenance tasks SCS is willing to assume. For example, in 1985 SCS used money from a federal jobs bill to hire summer employees for maintenance work. At other times it has refused to complete repairs because of lack of funds. When the task is small and inexpensive, SCS does not object to completing the work. When repairs are expensive, it is less willing to assume responsibility. A perception exists that the availability of funds is the primary determinant of SCS's willingness to take responsibility for repairs.

Despite the emphasis on local control, the Soil Conservation Service has remained heavily involved in the Little Sioux watershed program, and it has strongly influenced the operation and direction of the program. The consequence has been to blur even further the lines of authority and responsibility between the conservation districts and SCS.

### **Land-Use Changes**

The early phase of the program significantly reduced the flooding and soil erosion in the watershed. In the 1960s and 1970s, however, cattle price decreases and government grain support programs motivated farmers to convert more land to row crops. Because the watershed structures were designed for land use patterns with little row cropping, they silted faster than planned. The structures in place could not be changed to meet changing land use. Only farmers' values and behavior could change to prevent their deterioration. There was no incentive, however, for farmers to change. The fundamental societal values of individualism, private use of land, and entrepreneurship for economic gain prevailed.

Against this background, structure building continued in the Little Sioux watershed program, often with little attention to maintenance issues. Some structures were completed without landowners' agreements to participate in the program and to complete the required land treatment. Also, it was possible for an organized watershed to meet the 75 percent land treatment criterion and yet not have all structures in the watershed actually protected by land treatment measures. The cross compliance aspects of the Food Security Act in 1985 and its 1990 extension did motivate farmers to adopt more conservation practices, which has relieved some of the pressure on the structures.

### **Failures of the Little Sioux Watershed Project**

The Soil Conservation Service legislation defines maintenance as "work required to keep works of improvement in, or restore them to, their original physical and functional condition. Maintenance includes performance of work and application of measures to prevent deterioration as well as restoring, rebuilding, replacing, and putting together parts that have been torn, broken or deteriorated" (Operation and Maintenance Handbook 1971, p. 1).

The SCS currently repairs separated concrete pipes and chutes, serious seepage on dams, undermined pipes or chutes, and serious berm erosion. Local expectation is that SCS should continue to fix these kinds of problems. In contrast, SCS personnel feel local sponsors have not assumed their maintenance responsibility. They are concerned with such obvious lack of maintenance as dams overgrown with trees and brush, overgrazing, areas in need of reseeding, and pipes needing to be replaced.

Local sponsors have not assumed control and responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the watershed structures as specified in the original legisla-



tion, and maintenance tasks are not being completed as specified in the agreements between local sponsors and the Soil Conservation Service. Also, SCS continues to be more involved in the operation and maintenance of the watershed structures than believes it should in terms of the enabling legislation and the implementing documents that describe the responsibilities of local sponsors and of SCS.

### **A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE**

The Little Sioux watershed project is in the best tradition of the technical assistance approach to community development. "Technical assistance is intended to help communities define their problems, needs and potential solutions and may allow for some degree of community autonomy, or 'ownership,' of problem definition and solution" (Fear et al., 1989, p. 69). This approach assumes a consensus perspective. Change in society is inevitable, but the change should be to improve the current organization and structures, including bureaucratic authority, rather than to attempt to replace them (Fear et al., 1989). The scientific method for the collection and analysis of data are highly valued for the planning process. Planning is extremely important, and bad decisions are considered the result of poor planning (Fear et al., 1989). The initiators of technical assistance programs often are the legitimate authority on bureaucratic structures.

Because technical assistance emphasizes accomplishing a task with some tangible outcome such as a community center, a water system or soil conservation structures, it likely has had more lasting impact on people and communities than the other two community development approaches, self-help, and conflict or confrontation (Christenson: 1989). But unlike the other two approaches, technical assistance may include little or no citizen participation. Traditional technical assistance programs are based on the premise that the design and implementation of community development projects in a highly complex, technological postindustrial society requires experts and a bureaucratic management model (Hyman, 1990). At its worst, the technical assistance approach becomes directive as the part of an outside agency which makes decisions on ". . . whatever it thinks people need or ought to value or ought to do for their own good, and sometimes how they ought to behave . . . The agency and its workers think, decide, plan, organize, administer, and provide for people. Always the main initiative, and the final say, remain with them" (Batten, 1975, p. 5). Such technical assistance is not community development in the sense of "a group of people in a locality initiating a social action process (i.e. planned intervention) to change their economic, social, cultural, and/or environmental situation" (Christenson et al., 1989, p. 14).

Accepting the assumptions that some problems must be addressed for the common good of the larger society and that most individuals, if left to their own

devices, probably will not seek solutions to those problems, the technical assistance approach can play an important role. Fear et al. (1989) suggest the impetus for technical assistance may be imposed from outside the community, initiated by the community or negotiated between the two. Furthermore, some organizations have specific auspices in either or both geographic area and issue. Local communities have geographic auspices for what their name implies; the local area. Some problems, such as environmental problems, however, often exist on a scale that far exceeds the boundaries of one or even several local communities. In such situations legislative auspices, “. . . having the powers to create, legislate, and appropriate,” and administrative auspices, “. . . having the power to manipulate resources, knowledge, and information,” (Fear et al., 1989, p. 73) are imperative for initiating and facilitating solutions to problems.

The key to resolving the issue of impetus and auspices is local involvement, commitment and capacity building. Unless these three elements are considered and incorporated in the change program, the program is likely to fail.

### Study Design

Data were obtained to evaluate the operation and maintenance of the watershed structures in selected counties of the Little Sioux watershed area. Sixty five personal interviews were conducted with landowners, soil conservation district commissioners, boards of supervisors members, and local SCS personnel who were knowledgeable about the operation and maintenance program of the Little Sioux watershed project in Ida, Monona, and Woodbury Counties. Background data on the project were obtained from SCS state personnel, from the Iowa State University archives, and from general publications about the watershed program.

A series of research questions was developed to guide the interviews and to provide a framework for analysis. These questions were:

1. What understanding do local actors have of their obligations for watershed structure maintenance?
2. What are the linkages among local actors, and how do these linkages support or deter implementation of the program?
3. How do local actors understand soil conservation, and how does this shape their behavior and assignment of responsibility for watershed structure maintenance?
4. What important values influence local actors' cooperation in watershed structure maintenance?
5. What external factors impede or support appropriate maintenance activities?

A prepared questionnaire guided the interview process. Many follow-up and clarifying questions were asked to better understand the respondent's perspective and meaning. Amplifying notes were taken, along with recording the answers to specific questions. At the end of each day, the questionnaires and notes were reviewed, comments were edited and clarified, and a summary of the major findings for that day was completed.

Data were then analyzed to gain an understanding of how the watershed program developed and functioned in each county, and to identify key factors that outside agencies might use to implement successful locally controlled programs. The analysis begins with a summary of the findings generated by the five research questions.

### **Understanding of Obligations for Maintenance**

All actors generally agreed that the local conservation district has primary responsibility for structures maintenance. The scope of that responsibility, however, differed between the districts and SCS. The districts believed they were responsible for routine maintenance such as repairing the berm (the soil at water's edge), cutting weeds and brush, and patching holes. The districts lacked financial resources, so they believed SCS should be responsible for major repairs, such as washouts, collapsed chutes, major leaks, and for structure replacement. In disagreement, the SCS official position was that maintenance includes replacement and is a local responsibility.

The county boards of supervisors, for their part, were satisfied with the current arrangements. They maintained only road structures. The supervisors of Monona and Woodbury counties had been providing financial assistance to the districts to help them financially with their maintenance responsibility. Budget constraints and political considerations prevented the supervisors from doing more. The supervisors also did not feel bound by past maintenance agreements with the Soil Conservation Service. An opinion by the Iowa Attorney General concluded that a county board is not encumbered by the decisions of a previous county board and hence is not obligated to provide maintenance funds (Norby, 1986). The supervisors, therefore, were more interested in negotiating informal local agreements in the best interests of local actors, irrespective of federal mandates and prior agreements with federal agencies.

SCS, district commissioners, and county supervisors all would have liked the landowner to take more responsibility for routine maintenance. Ida and Woodbury County farmers had contributed to a long-term maintenance fund, and resisted assuming additional maintenance responsibilities. In Monona County, farmers paid a one-time maintenance fee, so they may have been more willing to take maintenance responsibilities. Long-time program participants countered they were assured at the onset SCS would take care of maintenance. Hence, Monona County farmers also were reluctant to assume additional maintenance responsibilities.

Over the past 40 years, interaction patterns among all actors have shaped and reinforced expectations for the maintenance of watershed structures. In the current study, the informal agreements played a much greater role in allocating maintenance responsibilities than the formal paper agreements. To confound the problem, new landowners with structures on their property received little if any information or direction regarding structure maintenance.

### **Linkages Among Actors**

Each county was unique in the nature of the linkages among the local actors in relation to the program. Ida County had a concerted and continuing effort among the supervisors, the conservation district, and SCS to work cooperatively. There was a focus and purpose to activities related to the watershed program in Ida County. By contrast, Monona County had a long history of fear, suspicion, and animosity between the supervisors, the conservation district, and SCS. The commissioners had been intimidated by the supervisors and had withdrawn contact, and there was little cooperative effort to address issues of mutual concern. In Woodbury County, supervisors focused primarily on urban concerns, leaving watershed issues to a hired liaison and the Soil Conservation Service.

These differences in relations among local actors, while important, are not critical to the issue of local control. In Monona County, the strained working relationship between the commissioners and the supervisors exacerbated the commissioners' sense of financial insecurity, yet the supervisors continued to support the maintenance program. By contrast, Ida County commissioners and supervisors had an excellent working relationship, yet the supervisors provided no financial support for the commissioners' maintenance responsibilities. In all counties, the farmer was accorded the scapegoat role. Farmers were blamed for degrading the land and for then being reluctant to take action to correct the problems. Relations were not always harmonious between farmers and SCS and the commissioners. Farmers looked on outsiders with suspicion and some derision, but wanted to be accorded respect.

### **Understanding and Responsibility for Soil Conservation**

By general agreement, the landowner has prime responsibility for soil conservation. Disagreement arises in defining conservation and the limits of responsibility for conservation. Respondents who did not make their living from the land (county supervisors and SCS personnel) tended toward idealistic descriptions of the land. Farmers and commissioners who earned their livelihood from the land expressed sentiments ranging from the idealistic to the pragmatic. Each farmer also described the personal dilemma between using the land to make a profit and preserving the soil for future generations.

County boards of supervisors were supportive of conservation as long as the costs were negligible. County governments lacked financial resources, and the

supervisors were unwilling to face the political consequences of raising taxes. As a result, the supervisors believed funding for the watershed program should come primarily from the federal government. In this respect, they reflected a sentiment common to most respondents: conservation funding is ultimately the federal government's responsibility.

### **Values That Influence Cooperation**

Values differed about the use of private property and the right of the public to intervene to manage that property for the public good. Similarly, opinions differed about the federal government using selected private land to build structures for the benefit of the entire watershed. Respondents did agree that the government has the right to protect its investment and ensure that the structures are maintained properly. Many farmers, however, resented the imposed obligation of maintenance responsibilities, and they resented the public telling them how to farm. Non-farmers were more comfortable with the idea that the public has the right to require structure maintenance, and more generally, benign farming practices.

### **External Factors**

There was general agreement that larger farms, more intensive farming and increases in row crops largely resulted from economic changes reinforced by government programs. Together these factors were seen as a major cause of increased soil erosion in the Little Sioux watershed and the faster-than-planned deterioration of conservation structures. Because structures were built to more benign economic and environmental conditions, local sponsors and landowners questioned the extent of their maintenance responsibility. In their minds changing conditions invalidated the original assumptions about the structures' durability and longevity.

## **KEY FACTORS FOR ESTABLISHING LOCAL COMMITMENT**

Analysis of the data from the Little Sioux Watershed project interviews yielded eight factors related to failure of local actors to assume responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the watershed structures. Eight factors are important to establishing local commitment and involvement in externally initiated programs: disparity of objectives, entanglement, false expectations, locus of problem ownership, inflexibility in program policy interpretation, non-institutionalization, contradictions in values, and perceived financial security.

### **Disparity of Objectives Between Agency and Population**

Local residents and SCS personnel had differing perspectives regarding the structures' original purpose and their continuing importance. The structures

were built to control flooding and to reduce soil erosion in the Little Sioux watershed. Long-time area residents believed that the continuation of the severe gullying and erosion would have made the area uninhabitable. Thus, the initial concern of preserving the area as a place to live and to work was resolved once the structures eliminated major flooding and severe erosion. Once flooding and soil erosion were controlled, local residents lost interest in the structures. Because the structures continue to perform those functions adequately, residents had little concern for maintenance.

To SCS personnel, on the other hand, the structures represented a personal and organizational commitment to saving soil. SCS personnel described the structures in engineering terms, and they were well aware of the problems that could result from improper care. SCS organizational commitment to prevent soil erosion sustained its involvement with the project to ensure that the structures were maintained properly to protect the land. In contrast, farmers saw the structures as fulfilling a function. Because the function was being met, farmers were content to let SCS or the district maintain the structures.

### **Entanglement of Agency in Local Decisions**

SCS's continuing involvement with the local sponsor compromised its ability to assume independent decision-making, without recourse to another agency for authority or resources. The conservation district has been unable to establish itself as an independent entity, and SCS has been unable to withdraw its involvement from the watershed program. SCS assumed continuing responsibility for correcting design deficiency problems in watershed structures, even as new design techniques and technologies were adopted. Not having to pay for these repairs, the district has been a willing participant in this arrangement. According to one SCS official, when funds were available, SCS was willing to perform maintenance tasks because it wanted to "get the job done and to do it right." However, with scarce funds and more numerous problems, SCS was less willing to provide maintenance. The district, however, had not gained the independence and control of resources needed to completely assume this responsibility.

SCS had its own office, technical and support staff, support vehicles, necessary equipment to help it carry out its tasks, and a large budget. The district had only a state clerk working out of the SCS office to provide staff support. Supplies, equipment, management and technical support, for the district were obtained from SCS, and funds from county supervisors. Thus, SCS and the district were inexorably bound together, and SCS was overly-responsible for the affairs of the district.

### **False Expectations About Role Allocation**

SCS promised landowners and the districts that SCS would assume major responsibility for maintenance. An SCS official stated that, when farmers were approached about the watershed program, "SCS made a lot of promises to get things started. People got it for nothing, and they want to keep getting it for nothing." SCS conveyed the expectation in the beginning that it would help maintain the watershed structures. Farmers reluctant to commit to the program were assured SCS would take care of everything. Many farmers agreed to participate in the program with the expectation that maintenance was not their responsibility. As a result, they had a minimum commitment, and have been more than willing to have SCS perform maintenance. SCS's willingness to repair design deficiency problems reinforced the perception that it would assume responsibility for most maintenance obligations. As one commissioner stated, "The rules were changed in the middle of the game." SCS began to require the district and landowners to adhere to the legislation and project agreements. Many landowners and commissioners felt misled, and not cooperative.

### **Disagreement on Locus of Problem Ownership**

Because the government paid to construct the dams, landowners felt the structures belonged to the government along with the responsibility to maintain them. For many landowners, the perception of non-ownership and hence non-responsibility was reinforced by paying into the maintenance fund. Some farmers were willing to help, just to be helpful, but they felt their payment absolved them of any significant maintenance responsibility.

SCS and the districts attempted to change these perceptions for recently built structures. Cooperation and understanding, had been increasing but there was little change in landowners' willingness to maintain older structures. Again, this perception has been reinforced by SCS's continuing involvement in maintenance for design deficiencies.

### **Inflexibility in Adapting Program Policy to Changes**

The official interpretation of the locus of maintenance responsibility for the watershed structures remained constant even as the social, economic, and environmental conditions that shaped the nature of the original program changed significantly over its 40 year life. Because of these changes, local sponsors believed they were justified in reinterpretation of the policy to fit the new realities.

The structures were built to last 50 years. The design of the structures assumed that most of the land would be in grass with minimal row crops. When changing economic conditions favored plowing grassland to plant row crops, erosion increased significantly, particularly on inadequately treated land. The structures collected silt at an accelerated rate, and several structures were already filled or

nearly so at the time of the study. Local SCS personnel generally agreed with this explanation for the rapid deterioration of the watershed structures. Commissioners and landowners further believed government farm policies and programs stimulated much of the increased cultivation of the land, and undermined the district's efforts to promote conservation and protect the structures. They concluded that because government policy hastened the deterioration of the structures, the districts were absolved of at least some of their maintenance responsibilities.

The revenue generating capability of the commissioners did not change to keep pace with their increased financial needs. Although the state enabled organized watersheds to tax themselves for maintenance purposes (Code of Iowa, 1987), no Little Sioux area watershed adopted this financing mechanism. Landowners did not want to pay higher taxes, and, because they believed maintenance was the federal government's responsibility, they did not support a tax increase.

### **Non-institutionalization of Policies and Procedures**

Non-institutionalization refers to the non-standardization at the local level of program operating procedures and responsibilities. Non-institutionalization has affected the local sponsors, landowners, and SCS, and has compromised program continuity. The lack of standard operating procedures was partly a result of the districts' and SCS' failure to establish themselves as independent entities, especially in relation to farmers. Farmers knew the individuals who answered their questions or solved their problems, but they are uncertain of their agency affiliation. Also, advice and counsel sometimes represented the individual's not the agency's, perspective. Agency personnel had no strict guidelines on type or amount of assistance for specific problems. This led to dissatisfaction and animosity when farmers compared notes on their problems and the assistance received.

Lack of formal training for the commissioners contributed to the non-standardization of procedures. New commissioners learned their responsibilities on-the-job from veteran commissioners. This socialization was an informal process with little control over what commissioners learned. There was also a lack of training for landowners. Few received instruction for performing maintenance.

### **Contradictions in Values**

Individually held values significantly shape behavior and yet are often contradictory to societal values. One such contradiction in values in the watershed study was the right of landowners over use of their land versus land as a societal heritage managed for the common good. This value was exemplified by one farmer who said, "Farmers have the right to use the land as they see fit, even



if they do not exercise that right appropriately." Another farmer said he needed the project pond on his land to water cattle, and he would use it for that purpose regardless of SCS or district objections.

The priority most farmers give to economic considerations when making farm management decisions is an indication of farmers' belief that land is primarily an economic input to be managed to maximize returns. Conservation is important, but farming must be profitable. Therefore, conservation is a secondary concern. Farmers will tolerate conservation structures if they do not substantially affect their profits. If any action compromises the viability of a structure, it is of little concern to farmers. This rationalization is facilitated by the perception that the structures belong to the government and the farmer has no responsibility for their maintenance.

On the other hand, the values of SCS personnel interact with and reinforce their professional values to solidify a commitment to soil conservation. When asked to talk about their meanings of and responsibilities for land, SCS personnel expressed a strong stewardship ethic, as opposed to farmers who described land in more functional terms.

### **Perceptions of Financial Security**

Perceived financial security is the confidence, real or imagined, that adequate funding will be available to cover anticipated expenditures. In one district the watershed commissioners had a relatively small pool of funds available from the initial contributions of farmers for maintenance, and they were uncertain about the continuing financial support of the county board of supervisors. These commissioners were reluctant to spend money for maintenance. Other districts, by contrast, had a more comfortable financial position, and the commissioners perceived they had adequate funding for the maintenance they believed was their responsibility. All the commissioners recognized they could not finance major repairs and replacements, and did not see this as their responsibility.

Hence, the district's perceived financial security is an important dimension in local sponsors assuming greater control of watershed program implementation. Local sponsors were willing to complete maintenance to that extent they had adequate funding. The factor also explains the districts' limited sense of responsibility for maintenance. The extent of their responsibility was bounded by the perceived availability of funds.

### **Integration of the Factors**

The history of the Little Sioux watershed project in Woodbury, Ida, and Monona Counties provides insight into reasons externally initiated programs fail to create and sustain local involvement and commitment. Local initiative and control were compromised from the beginning of the program. SCS's initial promises that it would maintain the watershed structures coupled, with its

subsequent repair of design deficiency problems, set patterns of expectations that formed landowners' and commissioners' perceptions of who had responsibility to maintain the watershed structures. Because each actor's needs were being met, none raised serious objections to these arrangements. Landowners had gullies repaired and flooding stopped; the districts did not have to expend extra funds; county boards of supervisors did not have to pay for maintenance and were able to build road structures; and SCS fulfilled its mission of preventing soil erosion. Unfortunately, landowners failed to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for the structures, while benefiting from erosion control.

Because of an inadequate resource and skill base, the districts were unable to establish themselves as independent agencies in regard to operation and maintenance of watershed structures. Each district was dependent on SCS for the knowledge and resources to carry out its mandate, and SCS was unable to remove itself from the operation and maintenance program. In addition, SCS overtly assumed much responsibility for maintenance functions, a responsibility the districts were more than willing to concede. Through inconsistent implementation of the maintenance agreements and indiscriminant mingling of the two organizations' maintenance funds, SCS obscured the distinction between itself and the district. Each agency's authority and responsibility for maintenance is now ambiguous. As maintenance fund scarcity increased, each district redefined its domain of responsibility for maintenance to fit available funding. For political reasons, county boards of supervisors were reluctant to increase their financial support of the maintenance program. The expectation was that SCS would assume responsibility for the difference.

Changing economic conditions changed farming practices, which significantly increased soil erosion and applied increased pressure on the watershed structures. Farmers' traditional values on rights to land use, combined with the desire for increased income, resulted in increased soil erosion and shortened life expectancy of the watershed structures. Accelerated deterioration of the structures increased the demands for maintenance funds and exacerbated weaknesses in relationships among local actors.

As conditions changed invalidating initial assumptions, so too did local actors' commitment and willingness to assume responsibility for the program. Potential problems that initially seemed manageable were changed by time and circumstances to intractable problems, and local actors became less willing to assume their agreed-upon responsibilities. The assumptions and conditions which guided the development of the program changed, but the formal expectations did not. As a result, local actors redefined the program to better suit their needs.

Programs that require local sponsorship for success but do not address these eight factors generally will fail to achieve local control with support of program objectives. Within any externally initiated program, local actors will attempt to reshape program objectives to more closely serve local interests and needs. Lack

of local commitment to the program and its objectives will place additional strain on participation. This in turn will pressure the outside agency to increase its involvement to assure continued movement toward the program's objectives. This reaction further impedes local willingness or ability to assume responsibility. Local participants usually see an advantage in allowing other actors to provide the resources, and they are willing accomplices.

The history of the Little Sioux watershed program suggests local actors will implement outside program initiatives in ways that are consistent with 1) their expectations of sponsoring agency behavior, 2) the availability of local resources, 3) their dominant values, and 4) their perceptions of actions necessary for survival in the existing economic, political and social environment. Hence, program development and implementation are worked out on a day-to-day basis at the local level. Paper documents are primarily enabling mechanisms with minimal consequences for implementing and sustaining the activity.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Local problems are increasingly the result of factors beyond local control and resources (Krannich & Humphrey, 1983), and local officials regularly petition outside agencies to help solve their problems (Scharpf, 1977). Outside agencies cultivate requests for financial and technical assistance, because their organizational character is defined through their activity and their survival as an agency is dependent on their ability to consistently mobilize resources to implement programs and projects. Dominant societal values of equality and democracy, however, demand that local participants be involved in planning and conducting local projects. Hence, many programs are designed to foster local participation and to build local capacity for solving problems.

The Little Sioux watershed program provides lessons on overcoming barriers to strong local participation. Eight factors were identified that can create problems in local participation of externally initiated and implemented programs. The factors of false expectations, disparity of objectives, and locus of problem ownership are concerned with issues resulting from miscommunication, misunderstanding of the program's intent, insufficient attention to unintended consequences, and lack of follow-through regarding program objectives and obligations. The entanglement and non-institutionalization factors describe lack of local control resulting from dependency on the external agency and the failure to adequately define authority and responsibility relationships between the outside agency and the local sponsor. The factors of inflexibility of program policy interpretation and perceived financial security address issues relating to external factors and the need for an adequate resource base to implement programs. The contradiction in values factor suggests that compliance with policy may be shaped more by personal values than legislative mandate on written agreements.

An effective community development strategy, therefore, will provide for accurate information about the program to ensure that the target audience has a clear understanding of the program and policy. It will seek to minimize unintended consequences. It will clearly define areas of authority and responsibility between the initiating agency and the local sponsor and minimize blurred distinctions between the two agencies. The strategy will be flexible to accommodate changes in the social, economic and political environment, and it will ensure that the local sponsor has sufficient resources to carry out its responsibilities. Finally, the strategy will attempt to reconcile personal and societal values so they are supportive of program objectives.

If the goal is for local sponsors to assume control of the program, then the strategy must begin at the local level with local input. Therefore, outside agencies charged with implementing programs with local sponsors have a dual task. They must develop local capacity, and they must create conditions for the program (both its content and the idea of local control) to readily diffuse.

The findings of this research, with support from existing literature, suggest five recommendations for achieving local participation and commitment for externally initiated and implemented projects.

### **Identify Relevant Characteristics of the Target Population**

Data gathering will provide the basis for designing a communication strategy and for determining local values. More importantly, this task also can be used to build program support by using an action research strategy. Action research "is a process through which researchers—with research concepts and skills—and citizens—with concerns about issues—work together in a co-equal partnership to develop sound information for use within a particular setting" (Littrell, 1985, p. 188). Action research provides a means to learn about the target population as well as to involve local citizens in addressing the program issues. In the Little Sioux watershed program, action research would have increased local actors' knowledge of the problem and need for action, and generated local commitment and support for a solution.

### **Select Key Individuals to Initiate the Project**

Programs are implemented through people. Hence it is important to identify those individuals who will support the initiative and who will assist in *selling* it to others: the local opinion leaders and legitimators. Opinion leaders hold positions of prestige and influence within a community and serve as role models for others in the community (Rogers, 1983). Legitimators are key individuals in a community who give sanction for action (Beal, 1964). We have no indication this strategy was used in the Little Sioux watershed program. It could have been instrumental in instilling responsibility for maintenance.

Citizen involvement in the implementation process can be expanded by working with existing associations or organizations. Extant organizations are more effective than organizations specifically created by an outside agency to assume responsibility for local programs (Hughes, 1985). Although the Soil Conservation District was involved, other influential organizations, especially the county commissioners, were not.

Local sponsors and other supportive citizens need appropriate knowledge and skills to carry out their responsibilities. Education and training in both process-oriented and technical-oriented knowledge are needed (Ryan, 1987). In this case, most of the knowledge and skills related to structure maintenance were retained by the SCS.

### **Select Information Sources and Communication Channels**

If people understand and agree with the program's goals and tactics, they will be more supportive of them. The campaign should avoid making promises that cannot be kept and creating impressions that are contrary to the program's intent. The ultimate goal should be to have local citizens and sponsors assume ownership of the program.

Merely providing information about the program, however, is not sufficient to generate local support. Personal contact and concrete examples of the program's benefits will help persuade people to support it. The credibility of those providing the information as well as the frequency of contact are important elements in generating support for a policy initiative. Also, programs often have a long life before they are considered routine (Kiviniemi, 1986). Therefore communication campaigns should be ongoing over an extended period of time. Although early participants in the watershed program received some education and training, it was grossly inadequate and not reinforced. Later participants received no education or training.

### **Understand the Role of Values**

The values of actors shape perceptions of a program's major issues and whether or not action is needed (Barrett & Fudge, 1981). A program has no particular meaning to participants until one is attached by the various participants in the implementation process (Steinberger, 1981). Because values help define meaning, outside agency personnel need to be sensitive to local values relevant to the program and consider these values in developing the implementation strategy. For example, in the Little Sioux watershed where the desire for autonomy and independence is strong, these values could have been instrumental in fostering local control and commitment to the operation of the watershed program.

## **Understand the Role of Structural or Institutional Constraints**

Structural constraints can result when the local sponsor's responsibility and authority are inconsistently defined, when over-dependence on the external agency prevents the local sponsor from controlling its resources and decision-making, when external events significantly change the original conditions that the program was designed to address, and when there are inadequate resources for the local sponsors to perform their responsibilities (Hogwood & Gunn, 1984). To overcome these constraints there should be clear definitions of responsibilities and established lines of authority and communication between the outside agency and the local sponsor. The outside agency should support the independence of the local sponsor, and it should not assume local responsibilities. As we have seen, SCS failed in developing this independence of relationships from the program's beginning.

External events include changes in societal values, the economy, the local resource base and government policy. Changes in any or all of these factors profoundly influence local events and program implementation. When this occurs, the initiating agency should adjust program policy to better fit the changed conditions and retain the program's integrity. SCS failed to make these adjustments, so farmers, the districts, and the county boards of supervisors made changes on their own, and compromised the program.

Finally, adequate resources are essential for local sponsors to implement program responsibilities (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975; Montjoy & O'Toole, 1979). Thus, a mechanism is needed to generate adequate resources for the local sponsor. Without adequate resources, it may be best not to implement local control measures or to modify them to fit the resource base. As the program demonstrated, the districts were willing to assume responsibility only for those program aspects supportable by the available resource base.

## **CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

As community developers, we understand that the initiative for action for any community development program should come from within the community. Yet for a variety of reasons this is not always possible or even probable. There are times when external initiation of programs to address specific problems is unavoidable. But the key to success even under these conditions continues to be real local participation and creation of local ownership. If external agencies involve local actors in planning and implementing their programs by incorporating tactics to address potential problems, satisfaction of both the external agency and local actors will be greatly increased, as will the potential for program success.

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# AN ANALYSIS OF VISITATION POTENTIAL AND CORRESPONDING ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE GREAT BASIN NATIONAL PARK

By Thomas R. Harris, Jeffrey E. Englin,  
Shawn W. Stoddard, Thomas R. MacDiarmid and  
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## ABSTRACT

Tourism development and promotion has gained visibility recently as a tool for rural economic development and diversification. Earlier studies have investigated the potential economic impacts of a tourism facility, such as a national park, on a local economy. Previous research has not addressed the county-wide economic impacts of enhanced park facilities, such as hiking trails, or the aging of the park, on the local economy. Nor have the potential impacts of exogenous changes, such as increases in unemployment rates or gasoline prices on park visitations, been addressed. This study addresses these shortcomings by estimating impacts on national park tourism from changes in either numbers of hiking trails or aging of the park and changes outside the control of local decision makers, such as increases in unemployment rates and gasoline prices. The study employs gravity, transfer and input-output models to derive tourism and economy-wide impacts from these endogenous and exogenous changes.

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism for many rural counties has become an important segment for local economic growth and diversification. For many western United States resource-based rural economies, the cyclical nature of the mining industry has provided impetus to diversify their rural economies through tourism development. Nationally, the Cooperative Extension Service has prioritized tourism develop-

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ment as a segment of the revitalizing rural America national initiative (Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, 1990). Hondale (1990) explored the different facets of rural tourism cooperative extension programs and discussed current state programs in this area.

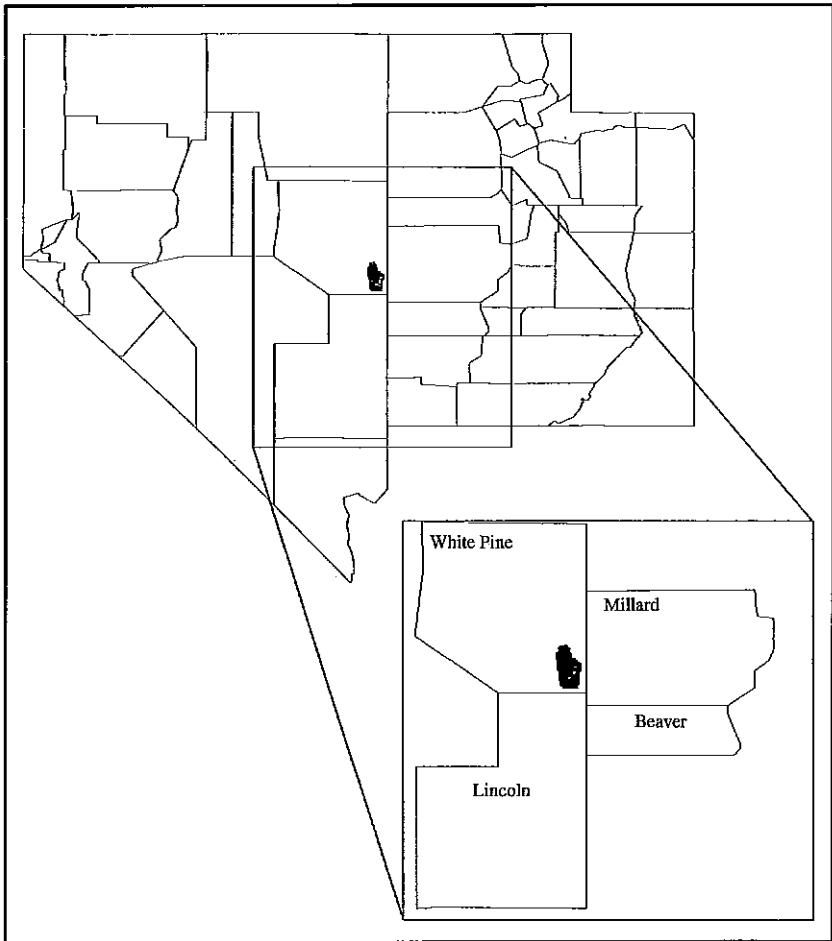
One reason for the focus on rural tourism development is that traditional rural development strategies of industrial recruitment have not always been effective in stimulating rural economic growth. Industrial recruitment is not only costly, it has large risks and may yield low payoffs. Firms ready and willing to relocate because of subsidies are also ready and willing to leave a community to take advantage of better offers elsewhere. In addition, the strategy of industrial recruitment has not been successful in increasing jobs and income in rural areas, due to structural changes in the national economy moving toward service industries (Pulver, 1986).

Given national economic structural changes and the cyclical nature of many local resource based industries, the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities to meet the increasing recreational demands of an expanding urban populace has evolved as an economic development priority (Cordell et al., 1989). National parks and expansion of recreational opportunities within national parks have been viewed as vehicles to attract urban visitors to an area's outdoor recreation resources. Previous studies of the economic impacts of national parks have focused on the potentials of a new or existing national park in a given rural economy. To date, however, research has not addressed either the impacts of manipulating park characteristics or the effects of exogenous factors such as gasoline prices on the economic importance of parks to rural areas. The primary objective of this paper is to estimate the economic potential of the Great Basin National Park on a rural county in Eastern Nevada and the role of both endogenous and exogenous factors on that potential. The paper is divided into three parts. First, the study area and the Great Basin National Park are introduced. Second, the procedures to estimate visitation potential for the Great Basin National Park are discussed. Third, estimated visitation potential and corresponding economic impacts are derived.

## **FACTORS AFFECTING VISITATION OF GREAT BASIN NATIONAL PARK**

### **Study Area**

White Pine County is located in the northeast central area of Nevada. During the 1980s White Pine County experienced severe economic instability with the closing of the Kennecott copper mine. While the overall population in White Pine County increased by 13.43 percent between 1980 and 1990 (8,167 in 1980 to 9,264 in 1990) the county seat of Ely realized a population decline from 4,882 in 1980 to 4,756 in 1990 (United States Census, 1990). Since the closing of the mine, the unemployment rate for White Pine County varied between 18 percent



**Figure 1.** Great Basin National Park four-county region, containing White Pine, Lincoln, Millard, and Beaver counties.

in 1985, to 8.6 percent in 1993. Federal agencies own 92 percent of the land acreage of White Pine County and agriculture, mining, and the service sectors (casino gaming industry) are the economic base for the White Pine County economy.

In 1986, the Great Basin National Park was created by combining Lehman Caves (previously a National Monument) and Wheeler Peak Scenic Area (previously a United States Forest Service recreation area). The major attraction of the Great Basin National Park is the unique geological formations found in Lehman Caves and the numerous groves of bristle-cone pine, which are among the oldest living things in the world. As Figure 1 shows, the park is entirely

located in White Pine County and is centrally located to a four-county region which includes the Nevada counties of White Pine and Lincoln and the Utah counties of Millard and Beaver.

Given an historic “boom-bust” economic cycle in White Pine County, the Chamber of Commerce requested a study on potential for tourism development in White Pine County. Since the Great Basin National Park is relatively new, local decision makers requested information of potential tourism development of the Great Basin National Park and consequential county economic impacts. A gravity model was developed and transferred to the Great Basin National Park. The model was applied to give White Pine County decision-makers information as to potential market size and impacts to Great Basin National Park tourism from factors which can and cannot be controlled by local decision makers.

### **Transfer Model**

Developing the impacts of changes to the Great Basin National Park would be best accomplished with data from the park itself. Unfortunately, little primary information about visitors to the park is available. The park does not have an entry permit system or other methods for identifying visitors’ origins. As a result, the gravity model used in this analysis must be based upon data drawn from another area. The gravity model is based upon the historical experience of parks and wilderness areas in the Sierra Mountains. The basic logic underlying the analysis is that the coefficients of the gravity model developed from a Sierra case study can be used to predict the changes in visitation to the Great Basin National Park. The gravity model was estimated and applied in a three step process.

In the first step, a data set was collected for estimation of the gravity model. The six areas used in this analysis were: Lassen National Park, Sequoia–Kings Canyon National Park, Ansel Adams Wilderness Area, Golden Trout Wilderness Area, Hoover Wilderness Area and John Muir Wilderness Area. Using information on entry permits from backcountry users in 1991, 1992, and 1993, the number of visitors from each zip code in a given year was compiled. Zip codes formed the basic unit of observation for the study. Since there are six parks and 2,385 zip codes, a total of 14,310 observations were used to estimate the gravity model. For each zip code that visited one of these areas, the visitation to each of six wilderness areas and national parks was compiled along with park characteristics and demographic characteristics for the selected zip code. Park characteristics included the number of trails, the park age, and the total acreage of the park. It was assumed each zip code had the same population to simplify the analysis. Demographic characteristics that did not vary by year included the average age in the zip code area, the average number of years of education and the average household income. The unemployment rate in the zip code was recorded by year, as was the travel cost to the park.

Since the number of visits to a site cannot be negative and the number of visits is an integer number, Poisson and negative binomial gravity count data models were estimated in the second step of the estimation process. Since the data include zip codes that do not visit these parks, it is not necessary to estimate a truncated model. A variety of specifications were examined. Table 1 shows the results. Since the dispersion parameter,  $\alpha$ , in the negative binomial equation is significant, overdispersion of data is presented and therefore the Poisson model

**Table 1. Visitation in Six National Parks and Wilderness Areas: Gravity Model Results<sup>a</sup>**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Poisson</i>	<i>Negative Binomial</i>
Constant	-7.4495 *** (0.2621)	-10.007 *** (0.5308)
Cost	-0.0305 *** (0.0003)	-0.03206 *** (0.00046)
Trails	0.0793 *** (0.0022)	0.07265 *** (0.000305)
Acres	-0.0003 ** (0.0001)	0.0003 (0.0003)
Park Age <sub>1</sub>	0.4726 *** (0.0237)	0.6846 *** (0.04889)
Park Age <sub>2</sub>	-0.0118 *** (0.006)	-0.0189 *** (0.0014)
Park Age <sub>3</sub>	0.00008 *** (0.000005)	0.00014 *** (0.000011)
Age	0.01415 *** (0.00105)	0.04105 *** (0.00397)
Education	2.7094 *** (0.0504)	3.2270 *** (0.1472)
Income (\$1,000)	0.02 (0.0005)	0.0154 (0.0149)
Unemployment	-4.1838 *** (0.2761)	-7.062 *** (0.771)
$\alpha$	—	1.5833 *** (0.03408)
Log Likelihood	-35305.4	-20957.3
Observations	14,310	14,310

<sup>a</sup>standard errors are in parenthesis

\*\*significant at the 5% level or beyond

\*\*\*significant at the 1% level or beyond

is inappropriate. All the variables are significant at the 1 percent level or beyond, except for the acreage of the park and income.<sup>1</sup>

For the third step, each of the variables except for park age enters linearly. Greater cost reduces total visits to a park while more trails increase visitation. Users who are older, have better educations and higher incomes visit parks more frequently. The effects of park age are fitted with a third degree polynomial, due to the high degree of non-linearity that park age has on visitation rates. The overall effect is that the rate of visitation increases rapidly during the early stages of the park's life and diminishes as the park matures. This phenomenon is most likely due to the lag time between the park's creation and its publication in sufficient numbers of sources such as guide books to really have an impact on visitation. After a while the park becomes well known and settles into a stable visitation rate.

Since the negative binomial specification is used the number of visits is modeled as semi-logarithmic relationship as shown in Equation 1.

$$\ln(\text{visits}) = \alpha_0 + \sum_{i=1}^n \alpha_i * X_i \quad (1)$$

The impact of a change in  $X_i$  on visitation is found by substituting a new  $X_i$  into equation 1 and calculating the new visitation rate for a given zip code. For example, the 1993 visitation to the Great Basin National Park was approximately 93,500 visitors per year. The Sierra Nevada model suggests that a 1 percent decrease in unemployment will increase visitation by 1.073, or total visits to the Great Basin National Park will increase by 6,833, or to 100,333 visitors because of a decline in unemployment.

Simulations were conducted for four different scenarios. Only one of these, increasing the number of trails at the park, is under the direct control of the Park Service. The other three scenarios, lowering unemployment rates, aging the park and increasing gasoline prices, are outside of the control of the Park Service. All four of the simulations are important, however, because they illustrate the impacts of both controllable and uncontrollable states of nature on the visitation rates to the park.

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<sup>1</sup> The Poisson distribution for count data analysis assumes that the conditional mean of the dependent variable is equal to the conditional variance, i.e., the variance-mean ratio is one. Overdispersion of the population is defined as the conditional variance of the dependent variable exceeding its conditional mean, giving a variance-mean ratio greater than one. Overdispersion is a form of heteroscedasticity. If the population is overdispersed, the Poisson model will yield consistent estimates of the parameters but downwardly biased estimates of standard errors (Gourieroux et al., 1984). The generalization of the Poisson distribution, which is often used to model such counts, is the negative binomial distribution (Hausman et al., 1984; Cameron & Trivedi, 1986). The negative binomial distribution is an extension of the Poisson distribution which allows the variance of the process to differ from the mean.

**Table 2. Effects of Decrease in National Unemployment Rate on Great Basin National Park Visitation**

<i>National Unemployment Rate</i>	<i>Estimated Annual Park Tourists</i>
7 percent	93,500
6 percent	100,333
5 percent	107,667
4 percent	115,536
3 percent	123,981

Table 2 shows the effect of reducing the unemployment rate on park visitation. Reducing national unemployment from 1993 levels of 7 percent to 6 percent would increase visitation by about 7,000 visitors per year. The model suggests that under the best "full employment" scenarios, visitation might increase by one third.

The effects of park age on visitation, shown in Table 3, are more dramatic. The model suggests that given all other things equal, an increase of 40,000 visitors per year in the near term may be expected. It seems likely that these estimates are high, due to the effect of transferring the model from the California area to eastern Nevada. Nevertheless, the model strongly predicts that the number of visitors should rise rapidly as the park ages. Table 4 shows the effect of rising gasoline prices. Raising gasoline prices is predicted to produce only moderate decreases in visitation. A 20-cent per gallon increase would decrease visitation by approximately 7,000 visitors per year. Smaller increases would reduce visitation less.

Table 5 shows the effect of the only variable under the control of the U.S. Park Service. In 1993, there were 17 trails in the park. The introduction of a single trail would increase visitation by about 7,500 people. More trails clearly

**Table 3. Effects of Age of Park on Increase in Tourism Visitation to Great Basin National Park**

<i>Age of Park</i>	<i>Estimated Annual Park Tourists</i>
Current age: 8 years <sup>a</sup>	93,500
9 years	135,269
10 years	190,319
11 years	260,626
12 years	347,667
13 years	452,144
14 years	573,740
15 years	710,947
16 years	860,992
17 years	1,019,950
18 years	1,182,704

<sup>a</sup> 1993.

**Table 4. Effects of Gasoline Price Increases on Park Tourism in the Great Basin National Park**

<i>Average Price of Gasoline Per Gallon in the West</i>	<i>Estimated Annual Park Tourism</i>
Current average price: \$1.208 <sup>a</sup>	93,500
\$1.258	91,661
\$1.308	89,859
\$1.358	88,092
\$1.408	86,359

<sup>a</sup>1993.**Table 5. Effects of Number of Trails on Visitation in the Great Basin National Park**

<i>Number of Trails</i>	<i>Estimated Annual Park Tourists</i>
Current Number : 17	93,500
18	101,048
19	109,205
20	118,020
22	137,844
24	160,997
26	188,039

mean more visitors. A substantial increase in the number of visitors could be obtained by increasing the number of recreational opportunities clearly identified as hiking trails.

### **Estimation of Potential Market Size**

The size of the White Pine County market depends greatly on the flow of tourists in and around White Pine County. Given the existence of the Great Basin National Park, the potential to enhance the tourism market for White Pine County exists. However, a lack of primary tourism survey data for White Pine County restricts the ability to pinpoint alternative tourism market segments.

Given a lack of primary tourism data, a gravity model was employed to derive probabilities of tourists visiting the Great Basin National Park for hiking. United States Forest Service staff suggested that hiking was an appropriate proxy for most recreation activities at the Great Basin National Park (Hickerson, 1994). In a recent study, Englin and Shonkwiler (1995) forecast a 30 percent increase in recreational hiking over the next 45 years. If hiking is an appropriate proxy for many recreational activities, this growth suggests that overall demand for recreational activities in the Great Basin National Park may also grow significantly in the next few decades.



**Table 6. Results of Gravity Model for Hikers in the Great Basin National Park**

<i>Community</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Distance to Ely (miles)</i>	<i>Probability of Visit from Community (%)</i>
Las Vegas	597,557	245	33.8
Salt Lake City	495,736	244	28.3
Phoenix	915,696	524	11.3
Denver	924,439	670	7.0
Reno	171,542	334	5.2
Tucson	624,567	640	5.2
Boise	171,419	371	4.2
Twin Falls	34,539	249	1.9
Albuquerque	495,522	746	3.0

The major metropolitan communities used for this analysis were Las Vegas, Reno, Salt Lake City, Twin Falls, Phoenix, Tucson, Albuquerque, Denver and Boise. Since the Great Basin National Park may in the future be a primary focus for tourism development for White Pine County, the results of the gravity model analysis for hiking can focus on tourism markets not currently being addressed.

Table 6 shows the probability that a tourist planning a hiking trip would choose the Great Basin National Park. From Table 6, the primary community is Las Vegas, followed by Salt Lake City and Phoenix. The Phoenix market was somewhat of a surprise, but given its large population base, the probability of Phoenix residents visiting White Pine County is high. Other communities that may have been somewhat overlooked are Tucson and Denver. Even though Phoenix, Tucson and Denver are more distant than Boise, the size of population of these three metropolitan areas increases the probability of attraction to White Pine County.

The results of Englin and Shonkwiler (1995) estimated that about one in a hundred persons in the state of Washington would take a hiking trip in a given year. Assuming the same propensity to hike in Las Vegas as in the state of Washington, the number of potential hikers from Las Vegas to the Great Basin National Park would be 2,020.<sup>2</sup> Similar calculations for the other eight cities could be completed to give an estimate of potential Great Basin National Park hikers.

Results from Table 6 suggest that White Pine County tourism information should direct their efforts to Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Phoenix, Tucson and Denver. Given the market size of these major metropolitan communities, tourism marketing efforts in these communities may be beneficial.

<sup>2</sup> Calculation of potential hikers from Las Vegas was derived as  $(0.01 \times 597,557) \times 0.338 = 2,020$ . The calculations for the other eight cities follow the Las Vegas calculation methodology. Of course, if data were available, the propensity to hike for residents of each of the nine cities could differ.

## **Great Basin Tourism Expansion Opportunities**

The existence of a major attraction such as the Great Basin National Park can provide impetus for future tourism development opportunities for White Pine County. Studies have been completed by Dawson et al. (1993) and Taylor et al. (1993) which estimated the regional impacts of visitors to the Great Basin National Park. These studies were unable to examine changes in tourist activities from decreases in the unemployment rate of visitor market areas, increased age of the park, increases in number of available hiking trails in the park, or increases in the average price of gasoline in the area.

To transfer the gravity model coefficients from the California model, the coefficients were multiplied by values for the corresponding variables for each origin in the Great Basin area. The resulting multiplication derived a baseline value for visitation to the park from that origin. By summing the values for every origin (all cities within a 300 mile radius of Great Basin National Park with a population of at least 1,000) a value is found to represent a baseline level for total visitation to the park. Varying the model baseline and using actual visitation of 93,500 at Great Basin National Park, estimated tourism from changes in selected variables can be derived. For example, Table 3 shows that a 1 percent drop in unemployment rate would increase annual visitation from 93,500 to 100,333 or an increase in visitors of 6,833. From a previous study by Dawson et al. (1993), mean per person per trip expenditures were updated to 1993 values, resulting in mean per person per trip expenditures made within White Pine County of \$18.50. Therefore the increase in direct expenditures in White Pine County from increased tourism from a 1 percent decrease in 1993 unemployment rate would be \$126,410 (6,833 X \$18.50).

The total estimated economic effects of increased visitor spending on total economic activity, value added and employment were derived by employing multipliers from the IMPLAN microcomputer software (Palmer & Siverts, 1985; Siverts et al., 1983). Total economic activity is the overall measure of total industry output in a region. Value added is a measure of new income in the region from the intermediate production and sale of goods produced within the region. Value added is the sum of employee compensation (wages, salaries and benefits), proprietary income (income from self-employment), property income (corporate, interest and rental incomes) and indirect business taxes (sales and excise taxes paid in the production process). Employment is the average annual number of jobs supported within the region as a result of visitor expenditures. These jobs are not necessarily full-time jobs, but can be seasonal. Therefore, with an increase in tourism expenditures of \$126,410 from a one percent decrease in unemployment rates, White Pine County total economic activity is projected to increase by \$221,320; value added increases by \$132,720; and employment gains 5 jobs.

As the Great Basin National Park ages, information about the park spreads throughout the tourism market. Also as the park ages, attractions and facilities are completed which can handle additional tourists. Table 3 shows the impact of the age of the park on total tourism. In 1993, the park was 8 years old. When the park's age increases by 7 years, or when the Great Basin National Park becomes 15 years old, tourism visitation is projected to be 710,947, an increase in tourism visits of 617,447 in seven years.

An increase in tourism visits of 617,447 would yield increased tourism expenditures within White Pine County to \$11,422,770. Total White Pine County economic impacts are projected to be \$19,998,920; value added impacts would be \$11,993,000; and employment impacts would be 408 jobs from the aging of the park.

One of the major attractions to the Great Basin National Park is hiking. Currently 17 trails exist in the park. If the number of trails were increased from 17 to 26, annual tourism visits to the Great Basin National Park would increase from 93,500 to 188,039 or an increase of 94,539 tourists (Table 5). Given the increase in tourism visitation of 94,539, tourism expenditures within White Pine County would increase by \$1,748,970. Total White Pine County overall economic activity would increase by \$3,062,080; total value added would increase by \$1,836,280 and employment by 62 jobs for a 9 trail increase in the Great Basin National Park.

Of course if the National Park Service were to contemplate building 9 new trails, the costs of building and maintaining these trails must be calculated. By weighing potential benefits of these new trails against construction and operation costs, the net benefits of possible trail expansion can be calculated. Also at the county level, expansion of trails may also increase public service costs to the county. As with the National Park Service, county decision makers may want to balance the increased county revenues from trail expansions with the increased cost of county service provision.

Given that tourism activities are primarily discretionary income expenditures, changes in gasoline prices can impact visitation to the Great Basin National Park. If the average price of gasoline per gallon in the West increased from \$1.258 to \$1.408, tourist visitation in the Great Basin National Park would decline from 93,500 to 86,359, a decrease of 7,141 visitors. Given a decrease of 7,141 tourists from the \$.15 per gallon increase in price of gasoline, tourism expenditures with White Pine County would decrease by \$132,110. Total White Pine County economic activity would decline by \$231,300; total value added would decline by \$132,110 and employment would decline by 5 jobs.

This analysis shows the potential impacts of the Great Basin National Park based on factors which are controllable and noncontrollable. The national unemployment rate and Western States' gasoline prices cannot be controlled or influenced by local decision makers. The age of the park is not controllable by local park managers. However the number of hiking trails is one factor that can

be influenced by local National Park management. If factors such as the number of trails increase but the corresponding local lodging industry has not expanded to meet this expanded demand, White Pine County may have missed an opportunity for tourism expansion.

## CONCLUSIONS

The national emphasis on tourism and rural development makes the enhancement of national parks an attractive possibility. However, it also raises the burden for analysts to discriminate between impacts that can be controlled and those which cannot. Successful economic development programs must account for the dynamic nature of uncontrollable events, such as gasoline prices and national unemployment rates. These factors are outside the control of county commissioners and local national park officials, nonetheless these exogenous factors do augment resultant county economic impacts.

Through expansion of trails and the aging of the park, estimated tourism activity increases along with local economic activity. The Great Basin National Park can play a significant role in future economic development and diversification in White Pine County.

For a mining dependent county such as White Pine County, Nevada, tourism offers a diversification strategy from the "boom-bust" economy dependent upon the mineral industry. Wages from tourism industries are lower than those of the mining firms but tourism does not have the instability characteristic of mining industry employment. However, tourism alone cannot revitalize rural economies, such as the White Pine County economy. This means that tourism must be part of a broad based strategy to sustain, revitalize and diversify a rural economy.

Research presented in this paper has addressed several difficult issues. One of the most taxing was the absence of key information. The absence of origins of visitor data was overcome by employing results of previous research pertaining to the Sierra Nevada Mountains. A model for the Sierra Nevada was developed and transferred to the Great Basin National Park. Also impacts to a small eastern Nevada county of approximately 9,400 persons were easily estimated by employing the IMPLAN interindustry microcomputer software. The experience shown in this paper can easily be replicated in other small communities. Clearly, these exercises are challenging and place an added burden upon the research as to transferring a model and interpreting resultant output.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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CHRISLIP, DAVID D. and CARL E. LARSON. *Collaborative Leadership*. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1994, 192 pp.) hardback, \$24.95.

Chrislip and Larson are interested in looking into what it takes to have success in communities, addressing complex public issues. They recognize that the leadership styles of the past including the good ol' boys and positional leaders do not work effectively in today's society. They acknowledge that collaborative leaders usually have no formal power or authority. They exercise leadership in what is perhaps the most difficult context—when all are peers. Authors share case studies of fifty-two successful community collaborations. They identify characteristics of successful processes and those not successful. In fact, they recognize the importance of process. This study was especially important, according to the authors, since there is limited research and references about what works. It seemed to reinforce philosophies and writings of other practitioners of leadership studies.

This book is rich with information about what works in critical decision making in diverse communities in our society. Authors recognize the work of other professionals known for their writings and expertise in group process and decision making. Key factors recognized are the importance of inclusiveness, ownership, empowerment as well as personal pride in the accomplishments of many people coming together to work for the common good of all. This is referred to as “community” or “we are all in this together.”

*Collaborative Leadership* is very readable, both in writing style and length. While based on somewhat extensive research, it is definitely practical in nature. As this reviewer digested the writings it seemed that the observations and conclusions were in concert with the work of Kouzes and Posner in *Leadership Challenge*. “Good leaders model the way. These leaders encourage the heart.”

Also recognized by the authors is the need to honor key strategies of planning, including identifying the problem or need, understanding the background of the problem, identifying stakeholders, reaching agreement assessing the potential for change, and comparing resources commitment to the potential for outcomes.

Conclusion: there is hope for cities and communities addressing their challenges on the way to becoming healthier communities. People build community when they plan collaboratively, work and accomplish projects collaboratively. Sharing of vision, stories, work and celebration are all important in accomplishing goals in communities. Collaborative leaders are indeed people

in communities who care to come together to address the shared concerns of the community.

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SCHULER, DOUGLAS. *New Community Networks: Wired for Change*. (New York, NY: ACM Press Books, 1996, 528 pp.) \$26.85, paperback.

This book offers practical advice for "community network development," discussing the concerns, directions, and underlying theory of socially-directed technology as a community-builder. At the same time, it provides a helpful reference for people trying to develop and sustain their own community-based networks. Within its pages are case studies, explanations of the short- and long-term issues these efforts face, an extensive reference section and numerous appendices. The appendices alone are worth the price of the whole book, providing a wealth of information related to community networks. Some of the appendices are also available online and, unlike the 19-year-old CD textbooks in my closet, are consistently updated.

Many people in our field still have the stereotype that communities are sunny and positive, but technology is cold, unyielding, mysterious, and dangerous. In fact, technology and community are not incompatible. The book helps its readers get beyond the collective fantasy of the congenial halcyon communities that existed in the good old days before the machine: "Technology can be complex and it can be inhumanly vast," Schuler says. "But if people don't demystify the technology, it will forever be daunting, and people will continue to be victimized. The truth is that the culture of humankind can't be separated from its tools or from its technology. Like communications, tool-making and tool-using are inseparable from our nature" (p. 32). The author's aim is to outline the social uses of technology via community network development, and in doing so he lays a groundwork that includes one of the most approachable introductions to community development concepts that's available in print.

Schuler begins with a discourse on community and its relationship to technology. Six core values for community are reviewed in the next six chapters: conviviality and culture, education, strong democracy, health and human services, economic equity, opportunity, and sustainability, and information and communication. Community networks are introduced as an appropriate technology for communities. Social and technological architectures of a community network are discussed in separate chapters. The concluding chapter contains some glimpses of possible futures for democratic technology. Since the book is about using technology, and since a modern book is out-of-date by the time the ink has dried on the pages, the web site for this book at

<http://www.scn.org/ip/commnet/ncn.htm> leads to the most current version of the parts of the extensive bibliography and appendixes that include pointers to organizations, electronic resources, and community networks.

Although this book examines both community and technology, it is more concerned with community than technology. Its vision is technology that helps people work together more effectively and more creatively, but the author cautions that this will not be created without determination and persistence. There is nothing inevitable about community network systems.

In outlining the conditions for success, Schuler summarizes: "If ordinary people do not become involved, the vision described in this book has no chance to become realized, technology won't truly serve people, and the ordinary person will remain a passive and unimportant consumer of commodities, viewpoints, and identity. . . . The world is in need of new hypotheses: new hypotheses that support the new community, new hypotheses that support the core values of society. And with these hypotheses as our new beginnings we must study, talk, reason, and act. It is possible to make the great experiment that we call life on earth a success, but it will take work" (p. 412).

The book was written by a U.S. citizen, about a phenomenon whose roots lie in the United States. The experiences it cites are mostly North American, but they translate well across borders. The focus is on community computer networks: not a pop-culture futurist's utopia but something hundreds of thousands of people currently use in hundreds of cities around the world. These are communication systems that can be developed by the community and for the community. They can be built and maintained inexpensively so access to them can be free. Finally, they can be designed so any citizen can use them.

This book is a definite asset to community developers. It is concise, exhaustively researched, and meticulously indexed. It covers everything from community development theory to Internet history, educating the novice while not boring the professional. The sample documents from previous efforts will save new community network efforts a lot of labor. The web site is a logically laid out, no-nonsense text-based resource that a user can quickly navigate to find the best resource.

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RAMSAY, MEREDITH. *Community, Culture, and Economic Development: The Social Roots of Local Action*. (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995, 163 pp.) \$16.95, paper.

The premise of *Community, Culture and Economic Development* is that events that occur in the public arena have roots in a community's history and



that it is historical roots that create local culture. Dr. Ramsay supports her thesis through an analysis of the history of Somerset County, Maryland, and its two major towns, Princess Anne and Crisfield, from the pre-Revolutionary period through 1991. The two towns share a certain amount of history through the county. According to the author, however, the towns developed differently in economic, social and cultural contexts and therefore presently have distinct values that are reflected in their political arenas. Local politics frame current discussion regarding economic development and thus, history and culture influence discussions on economic development.

A major strength of the book is that it was written by a political scientist. This reviewer is a microeconomist by training with limited experience analyzing the roots of local politics per se. As a practitioners in the economic development aspects of community development, this reviewer has often asked himself, "Why isn't politician 'X' more innovative or active?" The response was often along the lines of "... doesn't want to give up power." While that response might be valid at times, it does nothing to explain the behavior of well-intentioned officials or leaders. Dr. Ramsay presents a more satisfying explanation.

The analysis benefits from the fact that both towns are in the same county. Thus, the political and policy contexts of state and county governments are the same for each. Yet, because of physical environment, one town being on the water and the other being upland, they developed very different social institutions and relationships. Those relationships and the social hierarchies were defined through control and ownership of the resource base. In the case of Princess Anne, land ownership was key and a plantation type social system (indeed there had been plantations and slaves in the area) evolved. Thus, the initial society was quite egalitarian and open internally. In addition, the Chesapeake Bay, the major resource, has always been public property. Only access to the bay, to ships, and to seafood processing facilities could be owned and market access could be controlled. Thus, in the case of Crisfield, there was a general attitude of egalitarianism, but with a clear merchant and shipping elite. In recent times, the distinct relation to the resource base has caused differing views of economic development. In Princess Anne development has been perceived to be tied to real estate. In Crisfield development has been perceived to be tied to industrialization and economic diversification. Increased land value would increase the wealth of the elite while it impoverished the lower class even further, causing tension in the community. Crisfield businesses, in contrast, depend upon a low skill, low wage labor pool and thus the existing business community, essentially seafood packers, are against economic development. Thus, the economic elite of Crisfield is against development while the economic elite of the Princess Anne view Princess Anne as a growth machine. Interestingly, politics have supported the local economic elites. In the case of Princess Anne, the political leaders have been from the economic elite, and thus they support their own economic improvement. In the case of Crisfield, the mayor in

particular, the political elite has tried to protect the poor and uneducated segment of the population. This has led to opposition to economic development because the poor would become relatively poorer, and potentially priced out of the housing market.

The book suffers in only one aspect. Because it is based upon a doctoral dissertation, the literature review is primarily in the area of expertise of the author, that is political science. Thus, while there is some literature concerning economic development cited, it is not broad in scope. Most of the discussion is based upon *City Limits* by Paul Peterson, comparing a city to a private individual in the economy. The discussion of Granovetter's work is too shallow, although "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness" is mentioned. It is unfortunate that there is no discussion of social capital. In all, the book is enjoyable reading and would serve well as an insightful case study for a community development course.

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WILSON, WILLIAM JULIUS (ed.). *The Ghetto Underclass: Social Science Perspectives*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1993, pp 201) \$21.50, paper.

From at least the middle of the Nineteenth Century to the present, the "specter" of an underclass has haunted the precincts of Western sociological thinking, particularly that line of thinking directed at some of the worst excesses of industrial and post industrial society. Over this span of time, the "specter" has been given several different names—the Lumpenproletariate, the dangerous classes, the lower depths, the abnormal classes, the other half, the truly disadvantaged and the ghetto underclass to mention a few. However, regardless of what name it has been given, the "specter" is always associated it seems with those "classes" of people who have fallen out of a given industrial or post-industrial society's order and whose lives are thus punctuated by social unattachment, chronic unemployment, crime and demoralization. On this point at least there is some general scholarly agreement about the social characteristics of the underclass.

Agreement, however, stops here. Scholars, to say nothing of the public at large, have been from the beginning (and remain so today) sharply divided on (1) factors that socially produce in any given industrial or post-industrial society an underclass at any given point in time, and (2) socially organized measures that could be or should be used to control "excuses" of the underclass, or alternatively, to "uplift" its members and thereby restore them to a fuller form of participation in society. One school of thought emphasizes *persons* and traces the origins of the underclass to personal failure and/or biological inferiority of

members of the underclass and to their moral contamination of one another. This view has been largely discredited in academic circles over the years but has managed to persist in modified versions and finds its modern form in many popular victim blaming ideologies. A second school of thought emphasizes *place* and points to society level social structural features and social and ecological features that create poverty areas and sustain them. These features constrain and shape the everyday conduct of poverty area residents, particularly the conduct of men.

It is this thesis that William Julius Wilson (ed.) seeks to document in *The Ghetto Underclass*. This concise volume, comprised of an introductory essay and twelve empirical studies, should be read as a part of the continuing dialog between theorists of *person* and theorists of *place*.

These studies make abundantly clear that the effects of *place* are indeed corrosive of nearly all aspects of social life in America's socially and economically most distressed inner-city area. Unacceptably high rates of unemployment (joblessness) in these areas are shown to have adverse consequences on dating rituals, family formation and stability, housing/homelessness, educational equality, credential barriers, cycles of welfare dependency, social isolation, and generally diminished expectations of a meaningful future.

Altogether it is a bleak picture that is painted in this volume, it is a picture of the structural inequality in poverty areas that seems bound to become bleaker as current macro-economic shifts, dislocations and geographic redistributions of job opportunities work to the further disadvantage of the already disadvantaged. Members of the ghetto underclass have been especially vulnerable in recent years as American society has shifted from a production oriented economy to one more oriented to providing services. The net effect of these broad social processes has been the creation of inner-city enclaves with very dense concentrations of persons living at or below the poverty line, economically and socially isolated from the mainstream of American social life.

The theory of *place* as the principal cause of an underclass proposed in Wilson's *The Ghetto Underclass* is the most carefully crafted and intellectually compelling version of this theory that I have read. As such, it should be read widely in academic circles in college courses dealing with social change, urban ecology, and social problems. It should also be read widely in popular circles, particularly by those who advocate reform of existing inner-city housing and social welfare. It seems to me to be a propitious moment in this country's history to move the creation of meaningful employment opportunities for members of the underclass to a higher-order issue on our public agenda.

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# CUMULATIVE INDEX OF THE JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY VOLUMES 21-27 1990-1996

By Melanie Hayes

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## GUIDE TO USAGE

This index of the *Journal of the Community Development Society* covers the period from 1990 to 1996 for volumes 21 to 27. Earlier indexes can be found in the following issues. An index for volumes 1 to 10, 1970 to 1979, prepared by James A. Christenson, can be found in Volume 10, Number 2, 1979. An index for volumes 11 to 20, 1980 to 1989, prepared by Dauda T. Fadeyi, can be found in Volume 20, Number 2, 1989. For the sake of continuity and purpose of comparison, this index was prepared following essentially the same procedures used for the previous indexes.

The index is divided into three separate sections: an author index, a subject index, and a book review index. Articles can be located by author or subject. If the name of the author is known, the article can be located by searching for the author's last name in the author index. If there are multiple authors, the article can be located by looking up the last name of any one of the authors. Following the senior author's name is the title, year, volume, issue number, and page numbers of the article.

To locate articles on a particular subject, the subject index should be consulted. Subject categories contain subcategories and a number of cross-

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references to help simplify the search. Each article published in volume 21 to 27 appears at least once, and many appear more than once because of overlapping subject matter. The subject index contains the senior author's name, the year, volume, issue number, and first page number of the article. The complete citation, including the exact title of the article and names of the other authors, if applicable, can be found by looking up the senior author's last name in the author index.

Book reviews are listed in the book review index by the last name of the senior author of the book. After the senior author's name, the name(s) of the author(s) (when applicable), the book title, and the year, volume, issue number, and first page number of the review are cited. The reviewer's name appears in brackets at the end of each citation.

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