Rural Education and Rural Community Viability

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the following research question:

In what ways do rural schools support or undermine rural community viability in the United States?

Following a methodology first recommended by C. W. Mills, the study was organized to include historical, cultural, social, and economic dimensions, which are explained in the first chapter. Chapter 2 looks back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to explore how such a diverse people--originating from Asia, Africa, North American, and Europe--all came under the power of a single ideology of progress and the superiority of urban, modified English culture. The chapter then investigates the American transition from a rural people who labored on the land to an industrialized people today who have little connection to the land or to any particular place. This lack of connection has had a negative impact on the environment and on the viability of rural communities. The schools are part of the story as producers and reproducers of human, cultural, and social capital. Chapters 3-5 take a closer look at three rural groups in the United States: the Old Order Amish, the Menominee Nation, and rural Appalachians in West Virginia. Each chapter examines how events outlined in chapter 2 played out locally, and what sorts of impacts the schools continue to have on community viability along cultural, social, ecological, and economic dimensions. Chapter 6 draws conclusions for rural education today, including rural educational research and reform.

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Chapter 1.

Escaping Earthly Bonds

In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt (1958) began her philosophical and historical interpretation of our shared existence with an account of the launching of the first manmade satellite into orbit around the earth. Many observers of that time commented about the inevitability of mankind's eventual escape from the bonds that tie us to the earth. She then posed this question:

> Should the emancipation and secularization of the modern age, which began with a turning-away, not necessarily from God, but from a god who was the Father of men in heaven, end with an even more fateful repudiation of an Earth who was the mother of all living creatures under the sky?

It is possible to view modernity as being just that: humankind's effort to dissociate itself from the bonds of earthliness. In this light the efforts to unlock the secrets of DNA and create genetically engineered life forms, to travel in space, and to extend our life spans are all connected. They are attempts to make life "artificial" or in other words, part of the human artifice, thereby separating us from the forces of nature we cannot control.

In our effort to create an artifice that assures us some security against the uncertainties of nature, Americans have considered it necessary to tear materials from the earth and refashion them to create ever more elaborate structures and technologies. Most people in the United States live and work deep within the human artifice, and many have very little contact with nature other than coping with the weather as we move between one artificial environment to another. Further, most of us have come to believe that we could not live outside of the opulence of this artifice we have created together. Everything else seems secondary to its maintenance, which has always been supported through the labor and resources of people and lands in remote and rural places. Despite warnings of environmentalists who tell us we cannot go on like this, economic, social, and cultural forces continue to impel people to leave their rural communities and become jobholders in urban settings.

The history of this great migration and an account of its cultural, social, economic, and ecological costs to rural people are subjects of this thesis. A second focus of this work is an exploration of the ways we have interpreted our experience since the late nineteenth century and subsequently decided what knowledge, skills, and values to pass along to our children in schools. By investigating these issues, I hope to address the following

question: How do rural schools support or undermine rural community viability in the United States?

Following a methodology first recommended by C. W. Mills, I will include historical, cultural, social, and economic dimensions to this investigation, which are explained more fully in the balance of this chapter. Chapter 2 looks back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to explore how such a diverse people--originating from Asia, Africa, North American, and Europe--all came under the power of a single ideology of progress and the superiority of urban, modified English culture. The chapter then investigates the American transition from a rural people who labored on the land to an industrialized people today compelled to wander from place to place in search of work in the industrial artifice. The schools are part of the story as producers and reproducers of human, cultural, and social capital. Chapters 3-5 take a closer look at three rural groups in the United States: the Old Order Amish, the Menominee Nation, and rural Appalachians in West Virginia. Each chapter examines how events outlined in chapter 2 played out locally, and what sorts of impacts the schools continue to have on community viability along cultural, social, ecological, and economic dimensions. Chapter 6 draws conclusions for rural education today, including rural educational research and reform.

Rural Education and Modernization

The enduring negative stereotypes of people living in rural areas--rednecks, hicks, and hillbillies--can be viewed as an expression of modernity's dismissal of people who continue to resist the benefits of life in the urban and suburban artifice. Rural people today are seen as a residual population whom urban people regard either sentimentally or with a sense of superiority. Either way, such people are regarded as naive, not capable enough to leave, as incomplete, or perhaps as another part of nature that needs subjugation and enlightenment. Urban education officials worry about the inefficiency of small rural schools and the tendency of many rural youth to shun the schools and colleges the state does provide. They shake their heads over the low aspirations of these young people and try to find ways to persuade parents to collaborate more fully in the education of their children thereby making them more employable in the twenty-first century.

Civilizing the Primitives

> If the State in capitalist democracies is viewed as responsible for providing justice and equity to compensate for inequalities arising out of the social and economic system, education's role then is seen as improving the social position of have-not groups by making relevant knowledge and certification for participation available to them (Carnoy & Levin, 1985, p. 27).

The difficulty for rural students is, that the "relevant knowledge and certification" offered by the state is generally more useful in settings other than where rural people live. To benefit from it, youth and retrained adults often face the choice of leaving their communities or joining in on the exploitation of local natural resources.

Rural people have long understood that the students who become most involved in striving toward educational goals tend to be the same ones who end up leaving home and joining the migration to urban places. School officials, convinced that the local community holds little promise for such students, encourage this migration either consciously or unconsciously. They prepare students in a way that gives them a choice, they will tell you, to stay at home in their own community, or to leave and succeed somewhere else.

Carnoy and Levin (1985) explain that the traditional knowledge that students bring to school with them is tolerated in the spirit of pluralism, but viewed as apart from "universal" knowledge derived from modern scientific research which prizes "rationality." Inkeles and Smith (1974) describe a continuum of social and psychological development--from traditional to modern. Carnoy and Levin explain that

> This implies that not everyone in a society has the same kind of rationality. Traditional individuals are rational in a parochial sense, whereas modern individuals

> have universal rationality. . . . modernity theory argues that traditional members of society would not be able to make rational decisions functional in a modern, complex society (p. 30).

Carnoy and Levin go on to explain that schools fulfill their obligation to provide a level playing field for participation in the market economy when they succeed in their

> task of transforming individuals from nonrational to rational social and political actors by changing their attitudes. ... The schools inculcate children with the norms and values necessary for "rational" decision making and rational participation in the political culture. (p. 30)

Said differently, they prepare students to accept the primacy of modernist science and technology, the unequal distribution of privilege and wealth, and the basic tenets of the market system. Eventually, these young people, too, long to break the bonds that tie them to nature, believing they cannot be fully adult until they break the first bond--the one with their family and place--which they learn to characterize as merely sentimental.

But at times, government, industry, and banking leaders collaborate in a process that goes beyond this sort of social conditioning, and resort instead to coercion.

A True Story: The Dispossessed

Michael Apple (1996) tells the story of his visit with a colleague in a "developing" country. His colleague took him on a

tour of the countryside, a vast plain under cultivation for potatoes. After touring through this monotonous landscape for a time, he realized he had seen very few people. He asked his friend where all the people were. His friend explained that several years previously the government of the country had decided to develop their agricultural exports in order to import foreign capital, thereby speeding up the development of industry, jobs, and other foreign investment and quickening their pace into the economy of the twenty-first century. So they negotiated with a fast-food restaurant from the United States to grow potatoes. The restaurant chain was eager to quit buying potatoes in the United States because agricultural workers there had recently organized to negotiate and had succeeded in getting a livable wage. Besides, this developing country had the terrain and lack of environmental restrictions that would make a highly mechanized operation possible.

However, the plain on which Apple was traveling, now planted entirely in potatoes had once been populated by local farmers, who had grown enough food to export small quantities and sustain their families with the rest. The families had lived and farmed these lands for generations, but they did not actually have deeds for the land, so it was not difficult for the military government to move them off the lands and into a nearby city. The city, however, lacked the capacity to absorb all these workers, so they now lived in slums on the city's outskirts. Officials there also did not have

the means--because they had attracted the foreign industries by offering 20 years of exemption from paying taxes--to provide services for this large immigration of families, including thousands of children. So the children there were receiving little or no education, health, or other basic services. All of this, of course, was done in the name of job creation. Apple's friend summed it up:

> The root causes of this situation are not to be found in the immediate situation. They can be uncovered only if we focus on the chain of capital formation internationally and nationally, on the contradictory needs of the state, on the class relations and the relations between country and city that organize and disorganize that country ... these fields are the reason there're no schools in my city. There're no schools because so many folks like cheap french fries (p. 4).

Although this story took place in another country, a similar process has taken place throughout the past 150 years of modernization worldwide. Here in rural America, the story began with the dispossession of the American Indians, who had practiced various forms of subsistence in the North American continent. They were pushed off their lands by the invasion of progress, the Manifest Destiny of the European--at first, mostly English--invaders. That era of dispossession was complete only a century ago. Within 20 or 30 years, the dispossession by coal companies of rural people in the Appalachian region took place. Industrialists bought up mineral rights under farms, then exploited the labor of the former subsistence farmers, and finally, as the miners began to make income gains

through the formation of an effective labor union, the mechanization of the mines reduced the number of jobs to a fraction of former levels, resulting in the outmigration of tens of thousands of miners and their families to urban areas in search of livelihoods. Those who remained in the coal fields suffered a ruined landscape, silted rivers and lakes, poor housing and schools, and low health standards--the latter because of the low taxes paid by a long list of energy companies, which enjoyed decades of profits (Berry, 1990).

David Orr (1994) reports on the extreme proportions of the shift in U.S. population overall from rural to urban locations, with 77.5 percent living in metropolitan areas and over 50 percent living in *large* metropolitan areas. Further, he reports that the number of farms has dropped from 6.5 million in the late 1930s to less than 2 million in 1990; the farm population has dropped so low--4.6 million--that the Census Bureau will no longer keeps separate records on it. With the loss of each farm, there is a loss of three to five jobs. The poverty rate in rural areas (17 percent) now exceeds that in urban areas (9 percent). Orr summarizes, "Farms and farming communities are dying, and the U.S. food system is increasingly dominated by 'super farms,' which are roughly to farming what WalMart is to retailing"(p. 174). He goes on to explain:

> Concentration throughout the food system . . . means that formerly self-reliant rural communities, consisting of owner-operated farms and local markets, have lost control

> over their economies. Taxes, land-grant university research agendas, and public policies have combined to favor concentration of ownership, suppliers, banks, processors, speculators, and large-scale corporate farming. (p. 176).

There is another disturbing aspect to this loss of permanent farm jobs. While the sons and daughters of people who once lived on family farms are forced to find careers in urban settings, breaking the chain of tradition and knowledge handed down from generation to generation, our nation looks away as industrialized agriculture exploits the labor of "undocumented workers," who toil in the fields cultivating and picking by hand 35 percent of the nation's food crop. Most of these workers are from Mexico; many are peasant farmers who have been forced off of their traditional lands by the industrialization of farming in Mexico (Martin, 1994). They are a scorned and largely invisible group to most Americans, but their low-cost labor subsidizes agriculture in large segments of the country. Further, they and their children--many of whom toil alongside their parents in the fields--are daily exposed to dangerous pesticides and other hazards of mechanized farming. Agriculture is the one segment of U.S. business and industry that does not fall under the jurisdiction of laws protecting child labor (Davis, 1997).

But the damage caused by this kind of industrialization is not only to our moral and social fabric. The damage to the biosphere is

mounting at an alarming rate: male sperm counts worldwide have fallen by 50 percent since 1938, human breast milk often contains more toxins than what is considered safe in dairy milk; topsoil is rapidly being depleted; 20 percent of the world's life forms that existed in 1900 will be extinct by the year 2000; and damage to the ozone layer may cause climate destabilization (Orr, 1994).

It is as if, in our march toward a "global economy" all ties are severed with the land and with what not long ago was a "normal" experience of community. We are all required to wander the earth in search of jobs as capital concentrates in one place or another, all in the name of efficiency, development, and progress. So are we more civilized or happier? Orr (1994) asserts that "To the contrary, statistics on virtually every kind of crime, social pathology, and insanity suggest that we are moving in the opposite direction: Toward a kind of insensate high-tech barbarism" (p. 174).

Implications for Rural Schooling

As for the role of education in this march to global capitalism, Orr writes,

> Education is not widely regarded as a problem, although the lack of it is. The conventional wisdom holds that all education is good, and the more of it one has, the better .... The truth is that without significant precautions, education can equip people merely to be more effective vandals of the earth (1994, p.5).

Teachers in a rural Idaho community in the 1980s, when asked about how they were preparing their high school students for adulthood were very clear in their responses:

> "We try to give them things so they can leave," explains [teacher] Van Thompson. "Kids could go from Elk River to somewhere else and fit right in. And that's what we encourage them to do." ... Apparently it is the school staff's intent to channel students away from Elk River, and it is an intent that has the support of school board member Margaret Pflanagan: "There's only one real world," she says. "We want them to be prepared for it." (Gjelten, 1982, p. 220)

Perhaps we have reached a time when, in many people's mind "the real world" does not even include the natural environment, but comprises only the artifice. This perception of reality may be what feeds the dreams of Trekkies and others who believe that the salvation of the human race may be to leave this planet altogether, and live in huge machines hurtling through space. Nature on *Star Trek* and other shows of that genre tends be something that can be conjured by a computer in a holographic image--to be enjoyed for awhile and then shut down. Sometimes, the space travelers land on an alien planet, where they encounter the dangers of unknown life forms, and where they are helpless without their machines. These mass culture images may reflect a societal mind-set that perceives nature as wild, people and creatures living in nature as savage beings, and safety and happiness as existing only in the artifice. Working within the limits of such a mind-set, responsible rural educators believe they

have little choice but to prepare students for migration to the urban industrial economy or to work in collaboration with state economic development officials to help attract an outpost of global industry by preparing a local workforce with industrial technical skills.

Theoretical Perspectives for This Study

In *The Sociological Imagination*, social theorist C. Wright Mills (1959) defined the task shared by all social scientists: To study the ways that history intersects with biography. He also located our place in history as being . . .

> . . . at the end of what is called The Modern Age. Just as Antiquity was followed by several centuries of Oriental ascendancy, which Westerners provincially call The Dark Ages, so now The Modern Age is being succeeded by a post-modern period. Perhaps we may call it: The Fourth Epoch. (p. 166)

The ideological mark of this period, according to Mills, "is that the ideas of freedom and of reason have become moot; that increased rationality may not be assumed to make for increased freedom."

Thus, more than 40 years ago, Mills' called for a reintegration of social research including economics, political science, sociology, and history to provide the intellectual craftsmanship needed to help those in power to understand the issues (manifested at the societal level) and troubles (manifested at the personal level) taking place in our time. He described a rupture in

the relationship between rational thought and reason resulting from the division of labor--including intellectual labor--inherent in the rise of the bureaucracy.

Mills challenged researchers to become involved in a study of society that includes the dimensions of moral thought and historical specificity. He also attempted to define the meaning of the social sciences for the cultural tasks of our times. He was especially interested in some of the *distortions* of social science. Mills demonstrated examples of these distortions by quoting passages from works by Talcott Parsons, then translating them into plain English to expose the paucity of useful ideas. This is an interesting exercise to perform today in much of the school reform jargon issued by state departments of education.

More importantly, though, Mills exposed the tendency in Parsons, as an example of all grand theorists, to speak only in the most general terms, never attaching concepts to particular places and times. Mills contrasted this approach to the work of Tocqueville and Frans Neumann, whose work was historically and geographically specific, rich in detail, and illuminating.

In contrast to the grand theorists, who tend to fetishize The Concept, the abstract empiricists fetishize The Method. Mills considered both to be withdrawals from the true tasks of social scientists. Modeling themselves after the physical sciences, abstract empiricists set up elaborate studies and collect lots of

"data" that is usually based on public opinion and is made quantifiable. In education research, the data tends to involve some sort of standardized student intelligence or achievement testing. Researchers in this ilk then run the data through a series of sophisticated statistical analyses, which then may or may not be interpreted.

Forty years ago, Mills considered such studies expensive to conduct, generally producing trivial results. Abstract empiricists have always justified these studies as a way of adding to the body of scientific knowledge, which they believe will add up like pieces in a quilt to a greater understanding. Mills expressed doubt that the sort of work being produced in this way--usually without any theoretical context to guide it--would ever add up to anything.

Taken together, Mills contended, the practices of grand theorists and abstract empiricists "may be understood as insuring that we do not learn too much about man and society--the first by formal and cloudy obscurantism, and the second by formal and empty ingenuity" (p. 75). Mills believed these practices are driven by the needs of the bureaucracy, to avoid producing knowledge that might challenge bureaucratic structures.

> To the bureaucrat, the world is a world of facts to be treated in accordance with firm rules. To the theorist, the world is a world of conceptions to be manipulated, often without any discernible rules. Theory serves, in a variety of ways, as ideological justification of authority. Research for bureaucratic ends serves to make authority more effective and more efficient by providing

information of use to authoritative planners (p. 117)

Mills saw no need for developing one best method for social science. He urged social scientists to develop as fully as possible a sense of the problem at hand. Once the social scientist had the problem fully in focus, the problem itself would limit and suggest the theoretical concepts and the methodology needed to search for solutions or understandings.

Promising areas of inquiry in social science, according to Mills, include comparative studies of the variety of human society. This sort of study involves selecting smaller-scale milieux, studying them in terms of larger-scale historical structures, and integrating knowledge from all disciplines--economics, sociology, political science, history, and others. Mills considered historic specificity to be essential to good social science, including inquiry at the societal level as well as the personal level (as in psychology). History provides context, which is essential to understanding.

An Expanded Critical Theory--Counting the True Costs

Marilyn Waring (199X), a former member of the New Zealand Parliament, has often written and spoken about the inadequacies of our current understanding of what constitutes value in human economies. She figures part of the problem is the lack of language

needed for talking about the real costs of the contemporary global industrial economy. My use of the word *capital* to describe unrecognized elements in the true economy of a rural community, is an attempt to give shape to concepts that have usually been treated as if they were too insubstantial to really matter. Using the word *capital* in discussing community could be viewed as an inappropriate or contrived choice when considering the sorts of issues I have taken on in this thesis. However, there were two main reasons for making this choice:

- to regain the original meaning of the concept of *economy* as being something more than what preoccupies the gamblers on Wall Street. A community's economy includes all of its productive, life-sustaining activity, and is based on the use of the gifts of nature (Berry, 1987).
- *Capital* is the surplus stock of goods accumulated beyond that needed to sustain ongoing production, which is available for reinvestment in the economy (Smith, 1776/1993).

I and others have extended the meaning of the word *capital* to include all parts of the economy: the stock of goods, mutual obligations, trust, stories, topsoil, timber, know-how, and money that people possess and invest to make their lives something more than mere biological survival. More specifically, the following and other conceptions of capital have been developed in the social science literature:

- *human capital* includes the labor, skills, experience, training, and education of individuals that is available for use in the economy;
- *social capital* includes the relationships of trustworthiness, information and resource sharing, and enforcement of norms for group members' mutual benefit that help create conditions for economic vitality (Coleman);
- *natural or ecological capital* includes water, soil, forests, biodiversity, and scenery that can be employed in creating a human economy (Flora & Flora, 1996)
- *physical capital* includes the factories, machines, and research and development facilities used in production;
- *money capital*, (which has been decoupled from physical capital) is stocks, securities, bonds, and cash that can be applied to creating or expanding production (McMichael); and
- *intellectual capital* includes information and knowledge useful for maintaining or expanding production.

I have employed these definitions of capital as theoretical lenses through which to view relations, conditions, and resources available to support local economies. Michael M. Bell (1995) explains

> A theory is a technology . . . that provides a lens for viewing the world. It is a refractive medium for focusing attention and a set of frames in which to place that medium. Like any such framed medium, it gains its power as much from what it ignores as from what it focuses upon . . . (p. 624).

Bell reminds us to use theories simply as tools instead of as guides to correct thinking. Mills reminds us of the dangers inherent in choosing to view reality through only one of them. Heeding their advice, I have attempted to create a historical and multifaceted view of several rural economies. To test how this works, and to explore the idea of intellectual capital creation at the local level, consider the case of the graziers of Wisconsin.

Another True Story: Developing a "Grass Eye"

Early in this century, university-based research and development stimulated a shift away from the use of seasonal growth of permanent pastures and toward milk production based on feeding forage to livestock kept in confinement all year round (Hassanein and Kloppenburgh, 1995). This method of agriculture requires heavy inputs of money for equipment, fuel to run machines, and pesticides and fertilizers. All of these expenses have added up to a staggering debt burden for many farm families, who in many cases have had to give up their farms. The industrialized approach to farming has other costs: the erosion of topsoil, and the pollution of ground water and the atmosphere by pesticides and wasted manure (Orr, 1994).

However, in Wisconsin, two researchers studied a phenomenon that seems to be gathering strength and may help others to lead the way to a different form of dairy farming. A group of dairy farmers

have begun to develop a method, *rotational grazing*, which involves the use of permanent grass pastures. In developing this methodology, farmers have looked for information not from the hierarchical knowledge dissemination of the land-grant universities, but instead they have looked to each other. Hassanein and Kloppenburgh (1995) explain, "Through local and regional networks, graziers have forged organizations appropriate to horizontal information exchange. By openly sharing their experiences of and their thoughts on 'grass farming,' graziers have steadily gained confidence in their own ability to think, to discover, and to know" (p. 722). Hassanein and Kloppenburgh discuss this form of knowledge development and information exchange as *cognitive praxis*, which has recently been identified as an important element in social movements' ability to transform society (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; in Hassanein & Kloppenburgh, 1995).

Rotational grazing replaces monocultures of corn and alfalfa with perennial polycultures of grasses--as one farmer described it, a sort of salad of different grasses, many of which are the indigenous survivors after decades of monoculture cultivation. Cattle are moved through pastures enclosed with wire and electronic fences. When cattle have finished grazing one pasture, they are moved to another in a rotation that allows each grazed pasture to recover. During the winter months, cattle are given feed either grown on the farm or purchased elsewhere. Farmers in this process

must develop a keen "grass eye," that is the ability to "observe and interpret the constant flow of signals from a dynamic production system and knowing when a pasture is ready to be grazed" (Hassanein & Kloppenburgh, 1995, p. 727).

They teach each other by organizing their own conferences and by visiting each other's farms for *pasture walks*. During a pasture walk, a group of graziers visits a fellow grazier's farm and spends a day walking the pastures and hearing about how the host farmer has confronted and solved problems as he or she has gained experience. In this way, the idiosyncratic local knowledge developed by the farmer is shared and other's learn from it. This method of grazing management requires less labor and produces improved animal health, greater productivity per acre, better profitability, and greater satisfaction for the farmers (Hassanein & Kloppenburgh, 1995).

There were 18 formal networks around Wisconsin in 1995 when Hassanein and Kloppenburgh reported on their study. Through these networks, which are built on mutual appreciation and trust for each other's experiential knowledge, the "graziers are asking *themselves* what the appropriate questions are and they are looking to *each other* for answers" (p. 734).

Using the various theoretical lenses for exploring relations of capital, consider the costs and benefits of the industrial and rotational grazing methods of dairy farming. In the industrial approach, money capital had to be invested to procure physical

capital in the form of silos, harvesters, cultivators, and other sorts of equipment, as well as fuel, pesticides, and fertilizers. Natural capital--fields, streams, and groundwater--was used and misused such that it was depreciated in value due to pollution and soil erosion. Intellectual and human capital had to be bought from the land grant universities or from equipment and other suppliers, creating a kind of top-down dependency. The steady loss of farms to agribusiness meant the outmigration or impoverishment of farm families and others whose labor was no longer needed as farming became more technological and expensive. This resulted in an erosion of communities and social capital available for mutual aid in the economy. Further losses of medical and banking services, and schools through consolidation also reduced community viability. This has been the basic process at work in the farm crisis since the 1980s.

The grazier's, however, were able to arrest this process by creating their own intellectual and human capital through their individual observations and experiences and through knowledge created and shared via their networks, conferences, and pasture walks. They created social capital, as well through the web of mutual obligations and trust as they shared their observations and supported each other's efforts, and also through the organizational structures they created. They reduced their need for money capital by switching from a high input to a low input form of farming, and

they maintained or improved the quality of their ecological and physical capital (pastures, streams, groundwater, and livestock). Consequently, they were able to dramatically reduce their dependency on bankers and chemical and equipment manufacturers and to farm more sustainably and with greater financial security.

The theoretical perspective offered here stands in stark contrast to theories undergirding economic development efforts in this country and globally in the second half of the twentieth century. The role traditionally assigned to rural schools and adult training programs by rural economic development specialists has been that of increasing human capital. But the limits of the modernist development paradigm become increasingly evident both within the United States and globally--especially in light of concerns about sustainability of ecological and social systems. Both the environment and society are being steadily undermined. As McMichael (1996) explains,

> . . .development is perhaps the "master" concept of the social sciences, and has been understood as an evolutionary movement bringing rising standards of living--a logical outcome of human rationality, as revealed in the European experience . . .(p. 26)

He goes on to explain that the development paradigm was based on two additional premises: that national economies could be managed for growth in a *replicable* way; and that technological advances in manufacturing and agriculture would play important roles in

increasing wealth worldwide. However, this paradigm collapsed with the 1980s debt crisis and the dismantling of development institutions resulting in a new institutional framework, wherein nations no longer develop, but rather position themselves in the global economy. This has resulted in the demise of the first world welfare state, and the collapse of the second world socialist regimes. It has also resulted in "a general reversal of thinking," in which "the present is no longer the logical development of the past; rather it is increasingly the hostage of the future: a future defined by globalists as one of inexorable efficiency" (McMichael, 1996, p. 26).

Implications for Rural Schooling

Perhaps it is clear that at this point in our effort to reform rural schools, it is not enough to reduce dropout and attendance rates, improve test scores, and increase the number of rural high school graduates who go on to college. Nor is it an adequate response to rural environmental degradation, widespread poverty, and continued decline of rural communities to plug everyone into the information superhighway.

It may be necessary instead to begin by reexamining what it means to be rural today. Will we continue to act as if rural people and communities are merely vestigial populations whose existence is increasing irrelevant to the "one real world," as one rural school

board member described urban society. If so, then rural schools exist only as outposts of urban culture. If, however, a healthy countryside is viewed as important to a sustainable national economy and society, then rural schools have a different role to play.

By studying the Old Order Amish, the Menominee Nation, and rural Appalachians in West Virginia, I will explore some of these ideas, including the tensions that have always existed between modernist schooling and rural people. But first, I will set the stage with a brief history of how the schools evolved into the institutions we are familiar with today, and the role they have played in developing our nation.

Chapter 2.

Rural Schooling: The Historical Context

This chapter begins by briefly describing the progress of industry and agriculture in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the impact of the Homestead Act as economic forces impelling the westward invasion of settlers. Next the chapter describes who those settlers were, and what their motivations were. The first section of this chapter closes with a description of the schools they created, the role these schools played in "Americanizing" and modernizing the diverse ethnic groups of the American frontier as it moved westward, and the resistance of some groups to the common schools. The second half of the chapter describes the period of school reform that began at the end of the nineteenth century and modeled itself after the industrial efficiencies.

Schooling as an Instrument of Manifest Destiny

In most accounts of the nineteenth-century conquest and industrialization of the American West, schooling is scarcely mentioned. Yet, the development of mass education and the common

school occurred during this time period, first in the Eastern states, and then moving westward with American and European immigrants. Some historians credit the common school as the institution that played the single most important role in assimilating immigrants and indigenous peoples into American culture. Historian Henry Steele Commanger called the Blue Back Speller, (Noah Webster's *The Elementary Spelling Book* which sold 35 million copies) ". . .as essential a tool of civilization in frontier America as the Kentucky rifle" (Commanger, 1950; in Gulliford, 1991, p. 54).

Late Nineteenth Century Empire Building

By 1830, agriculture was undergoing profound changes due to advances in transportation. The upper Mississippi valley was being deforested and turned into farmland and farmers were beginning to produce for the market. According to Cubberley's 1922 account, ". . . the steam railroad and the steamboat provided an easy and cheap means of transportation; and the flood of farm products from the great interior . . . began to disturb the economic equilibrium of the East and of the Old World" (p. 14).

This was a period of intense activity in increasing the mechanization of agriculture. Prior to 1830, nearly everything was done by hand labor. The mower was patented in 1831, the reaper in 1833, the thresher in 1860; by 1865 every process (except husking)

in the raising of wheat and corn could be done by machine. Agricultural societies, fairs, and college courses were organized; a substantial effort was begun to improve breeds of live stock and fruit and orchard stock. Farming became a profitable industry as prices for farm products increased and crop specialization began. By 1860 railroads offered continuous service all up and down the eastern United States, reaching westward to Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas. Over 50,000 miles of telegraph wires were carrying messages (Cubberley, 1922).

The Morrill Act of 1862 provided for land grant colleges to complement common schools. The states were granted 30,000 acres for each senator and Congressional representative on which to establish colleges to promote agriculture and the mechanical arts (Goldenstein, 1991).

According to Takaki (1990), the second half of the nineteenth century was for European Americans a period of buoyant self-confidence based on moral self-assurance and self-deception, especially in their treatment of the Indians. For this was also the period during which American Indian nations were reviled, removed, and dispossessed of all or nearly of their lands from the Carolinas to California. It was also the time when the United States declared war on neighboring Mexico, annexed half of her territory, and dispossessed the Mexicans, who frequently lacked formal deeds for their ancestral lands.

There were early signs of labor unrest, too. Some historians believe that the passage of the Homestead Acts of 1864 and 1866 was the government's response to the widespread worker unrest in the industrial capitals of the East. It gave disaffected industrial workers an opportunity to do something else, thereby siphoning off some of the pressure (Piven & Cloward, 1979).

Whatever the original motivation for passage, the Homestead Acts made it possible for immigrants to become the owners of 160 acres of land that had been taken from Western tribes, under the condition that the settlers live there for 5 years. The opportunity to get a cleared farm of rich land and without price soon attracted great numbers of "the more intelligent and hardy peasants from other lands," according to Cubberley (1992). Early immigrants were from England, Ireland, Germany, and Scandinavia. (Cubberley characterized later migrations from southern Europe less favorably.) This period also saw the completion of the transcontinental railroad, and the continuing increase of agricultural efficiency--estimated in 1895 at 500 percent over what a single farmer could produce in 1830 (Cubberley, 1922).

To provide a social context for the tremendous changes taking place in lands west of the Mississippi, consider these statistics reported by Gulliford:

> In 1890, one year after North Dakota achieved statehood, 43 percent of the state's 191,000 people were foreign-born. In 1900, [European and Asian] immigrants made up

> 47.6 percent of the population of the 11 western states. In Utah, Montana, California, and Nevada, they were the majority. Immigrants composed 77.5 percent of the population in North Dakota, 74.9 percent in Minnesota, and 61.1 percent in South Dakota. Most of the current population in the West and the Midwest is descended from these pioneers (1991, p. 91).

Early Schools

The founders of the United States, especially Thomas Jefferson, believed that free public education was imperative for a strong democracy. (Other, more nativist reasons for the establishment of schools are discussed in later sections.) Thus, in 1785 and 1787, the Northwest Ordinances were passed that provided a legal framework for education that was adopted throughout the Northwest Territory (Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan) and later in all the western states. It allowed public lands to be leased for local schools. The federal government allotted one section out of every 36 sections for support of common schools, usually a one-room country school (Gulliford, 1991, pp 63-64).

Most of the first frontier teachers came from the Eastern states, seeking independence, adventure, or matrimony--since single women were scarce in frontier communities. By 1880, most of the teachers were daughters of settlers. Territorial or state regulations required certification, usually by taking an examination at the county clerk's office. Depending on their level of

competence, teachers were certified to teach at various grade levels for various lengths of time.

In the early frontier schools there was no uniformity from school to school. No standardized texts, and few books or materials. Teachers were supposed to reflect community values, impart "a sense of culture and knowledge" and live under close scrutiny of community members. By the 1890s, most of these teachers were young, single women, and in most states they were supposed to be at least 18 years old. But it was not uncommon for teachers to be as young as 16. Both men and women taught; men were better paid and preferred for the winter term, which was most frequently attended by older farm boys believed to be hard to control by women. Women taught the younger children in the spring and summer terms (Gulliford, 1991).

The usual pattern for the establishment of a school was for pioneers to settle in an area, and once the first winter's provisions were laid by, a subscription school was started, usually in someone's home. Within a few years, a building would be erected. As territories became states, school laws were enacted that set compulsory attendance and teacher qualification standards. These schools were supported by local taxes. In most of the western states, this process took place rapidly.

In Kansas for example, by 1863, 16,000 pupils attended 500 common schools with 600 teachers. Most of these early schools were

dugouts with burlap-covered dirt walls and floors. Nineteen years later, in 1882, 269,945 children were enrolled in schools for an average of 5.7 months. Schools were run by elected school boards, and children between the ages of 8 and 14 were compelled to attend at least 12 weeks of school a year (Jones, 1982, pp. 3-11).

Schools as community centers. There are numerous accounts of the country school as the first community building in most settlements. It served as the central meeting place for local leadership, elections polling place, entertainment center, and meeting place for early church schools and services (Jones, 1982; Barthell, 1981; Scofield, 1981; Birkenshaw, 1981; Barthell, 1981; Hatton, 1981; Carlson & Carlson, 1981).

According to these accounts and Gulliford, "The school housed the activities that joined people into a community, and the identity of rural communities became inextricably linked with their schools" (1991, p. 35). The uniformity of these accounts from state to state is remarkable, perhaps because the various schools were modeled on a tradition formulated back East, where most of the first teachers were trained.

Teachers were expected to organize cultural events for the whole community at the school. Because they were easy to organize and did not require staging or special preparations, the most common event was the *literary*. This was an evening that began with

recitations of poetry or dialogues (usually from Shakespeare) and readings (primarily from McGuffey readers). The literary was followed by a debate, sometimes on serious subjects, but often on frivolous topics. Sometimes the evening ended with a spell-down. Melodramas and spoofs were performed, and sometimes musicians performed. Other times there were dances. Nearly every account mentions the Christmas program and the graduation program as the two major events of the year (Jones, 1982; Barthell, 1981; Scofield, 1981; Birkenshaw, 1981; Barthell, 1981; Hatton, 1981; Carlson & Carlson, 1981).

The western Black communities followed much the same model, with teachers taking the lead, forming debating and literary societies, church lectures, and home libraries. Black Americans held great hopes for the power of the schools to raise the prospects of their new communities, founded after the trans-Mississippi migration following the Civil War. Lecturer Andrew Hall, in a lecture delivered at a Kansas school in 1875, expressed his belief that, "[education] will fit us for positions where caste would be obliterated forever by the brilliance of our intellectual attainments" (Katz, 1987, p. 293). Carnoy and Level (1985) explain, "Americans believed that education [in the nineteenth century] had something to do with social mobility and with civilizing the poor" (p.8).

Schools as agents of cultural hegemony. All of this sounds much like classic American lore. However in a recent article, Benjamin Schwarz (1995) warns against the benign patina this picture has taken on. He points out that in 1790 about 60 percent of the White U.S. population was of English origin, yet even with 40 percent of the White population comprised of non-English peoples, plus the African and indigenous peoples, the "American 'nationality' was not a blending of all the peoples that populated the United States, or even an amalgam of the white Europeans inhabiting the country. An 'American' was a modified Englishman" (p. 62). He quotes John Quincy Adams, who confidently declared in 1811--at a time when the North American continent was inhabited by hundreds of indigenous nations and claimed by Spain, Great Britain, and the United States--that the U.S. was "destined . . . to be peopled by one nation, speaking one language, professing one general system of religious and political principles, and accustomed to one general tenor of social usages and customs" (in Schwarz, 1995, p. 64). By 1916, after wave upon wave of immigrants had entered the United States, Adams' vision was fulfilled. Richard Bourne, a liberal critic, in that year decried the "melting pot" that the U.S. had become, preferring a more cosmopolitan, heterogeneous culture: "English snobberies, English religion, English literary styles, English literary reverences and canons, English ethics, English superiorities" (Schwarz, 1995).

The curriculum--taught to children during the days and to adults through literaries, debates, and lectures--was comprised nearly entirely of recitations and discussion of the early American and English canon. Content in the classroom and the literaries was usually comprised of English literature, spelling, citizenship, hygeine, arithmetic, and geography. In early schools, some of the instruction was delivered bilingually--especially in parochial schools--but as the territories became states, all passed English-only laws for instruction in the common schools (Gulliford, 1991).

According to Sandra Scofield (1981), writing about Nebraska,

> Generally, the schools were not especially prepared to help children learn to speak English. Former students interviewed in western Nebraska felt that learning a new language was primarily the responsibility of the individual student. When asked how they did this, they almost always replied, "I learned from the other students" (p. 18).

Gulliford, too, wrote that teachers were not helpful or tolerant of non-English speakers in many cases. Children were often whipped for mispronouncing words or not speaking because they didn't know English. However, other accounts tell of teachers who helped not only their students but also their students' parents to learn English. Through the nineteenth-century readers, children received a classical and moral education. Students at this time attended school in a system of eight grade levels, and by graduation from

eighth grade they were expected to have read McGuffey's fourth or fifth reader.

> Selections included short essays, poems and stories by some of the most significant figures in English literature . . . [including] Francis Bacon, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Richard Henry Dana, Charles Dickens, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Gray, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Thomas Jefferson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Francis Parkman, Edgar Allan Poe, and William Shakespeare (Gulliford, 1991, p. 97).

Historian, Henry Steele Commanger (1950), writing in praise of the country school and the factors that "created unity out of diversity," claimed that through the schools the contributions of poets, novelists, editors, naturalists, historians, jurists, orators, and painters helped create this unity.

> Through the whole 19th century, novelists like Cooper and Sims and Hawthorne, poets like Bryant and Longfellow and Whittier, painters like Trumbull and Stuart and Peale, historians like Jared Sparks and George Bancroft, Schoolmen like Noah Webster with his spellers and the McGuffeys with their readers--all these and scores of others created and popularized that common group of heroes and villains, that common store of poems and stories, of images and values of which national spirit is born (1950, October 16).

Commanger, of course, saw this as a positive factor. However, in a different analysis of various writers of this period, Takaki (1990) points out that many of the heroes were Indian killers and the villains were Mexicans resisting the conquest of their lands through banditry or Asians trying to survive despite a complete lack of

civil rights. Further, this celebrated national spirit was based on White supremacy and the concept of Manifest Destiny.

Gulliford describes the geography books of the era as depicting "proof of human progress." They contained many errors and racial stereotypes. Indians were depicted as savages, and the White race as supreme. "Most geography books were partly fiction, yet they were accepted as doctrine by country school teachers and students who shared the narrow social views of their generation" (1991, p. 56).

Students in frontier schools were learning about ethnicity in other ways, too. Katz describes how the White pioneers carried traditional European American attitudes with them to the west, wanting not only land and liberty, but also a Whites-only environment. Katz (1987) reports that in 1855, California State School Superintendent, Paul K. Hubbs commented, "Whilst I will foster by all proper means the education of the races, I should deem it a death blow to our system to permit the mixture of the races in the same school" (p. 134). Katz also reports that "Repeatedly and by overwhelming majorities, white settlers voted to keep black people from entering their land, voting in their elections, testifying in their courts, serving in their militia, or attending their schools and churches" (p. 307). Jones describes the reception Blacks received in Kansas after the Civil War. "In 1879, the number of blacks who migrated to Kansas made many white residents fearful,

and the first legislature of Kansas made provisions for separate racial schools" (Jones, 1982, p. 5).

The schools were also strongly committed to citizenship education, even from the earliest days. Students were given Puritan maxims to practice handwriting, for example (Scofield, 1981). Most schools began the day with some sort of patriotic song or poem and generally had a ceremony attached to raising the flag. In fact, in Wyoming, one of the requirements for becoming a standard school was the erection of a flag pole (Barthell, 1981, p. 41).

With the advent of compulsory education, and the need to raise taxes locally to support the schools, citizenship education became a major selling point. In Detroit, the establishment of free schools midcentury met with very little opposition in principle. There was some opposition over the taxes necessary, however, from some merchants and wealthier citizens. In the end, the issue was seen as an investiment decision: "school taxes versus a tax for poorhouses and prisons" (Angus, 1979). An early example of cost-benefit analysis, writers of the time thought education was a good way to prevent pauperism and crime by instilling values of industry, temperance and economy. Bitter debates ensued midcentury over "taxing one man's property to educate another man's child" as the nation moved toward free, compulsory education. Gradually the issue was settled as the belief in education as a means to national progress and social control took shape. The slogan that sold the

idea was, "Every schoolhouse opened closes a jail." According to Gulliford, "By 1860, the question of free public education has been largely settled, and the concept became firmly established as an American ideal" (1991, p. 40).

Schools had a clear mission: To teach the children of immigrants, Mexican Americans, former slaves, and American Indians to speak English, cherish the English canon, accept the ideas of human progress and the superiority of Anglo Americans, embrace the Puritan values expressed in their readers and spellers, and honor the U.S. government.

Schools as developers of human capital. Schools were also charged with teaching students skills that would be useful in scientific agriculture and industrial society. An example of the merchantile orientation of the curriculum is Nicholas Pike's arithmetic textbook, first published in 1788. It covered interest, compound interest, pensions, annuities, weight systems, measurement, and explanations of barter (Gulliford, 1991).

The national tendencies toward *mass production* in industry and agriculture and the *standardization of products*, also caught on as goals for the schools. The curriculum of the common schools became increasingly uniform across the states as the nineteenth century approached its end. According to Barthell, "Part of the task of . . . mass education was to produce citizens who had basic skills suitable for an industrial society, make students aware of their

nationality through language and geography studies, and introduce some element of hygiene through the school system, good health being a necessity for a strong government and strong army" (Barthell, 1981, pp. 2, 28).

The new curriculum was based on sex role stereotypes--girls were to study domestic science, and boys were to learn a trade. This was the era of the cult of true womanhood, which severely circumscribed training for girls. The one career possibility open to young women was to become a teacher. But even that career was seen only as a temporary calling. For young women on the American frontier, teaching was roughly the equivalent of factory work back East in helping young women achieve some economic independence or contribute to their paternal families while awaiting marriage. In investigating why teaching was dominated by women by the end of the century, when it began as a mostly male profession, David Tyack and Myra H. Strober (1981) found there were three basic factors: women were believed to be inherently better at teaching young children, women would work for less than men, and teaching became a socially acceptable activity for young women before marriage.

> Pioneers in women's education like Emma Willard, Catherine Beecher, and Mary Lyon publicized a rationale for training young women specifically as teachers and for hiring them to replace men. They claimed that women were *by nature* and God's design the ideal teachers of little children: nurturant, patient, able to understand young minds, and exemplary in their moral influence on the rising generation. To these promoters teaching served

> the millenial dream of a Protestant-republican society, one in which women teachers could be missionaries of civilization (1981).

That women were less well paid is well documented. For example, in Kansas, the average monthly salary of male teachers was $31.42; for females it was $24.95 (Jones, 1981, p. 2). In other places the discrepancies were greater, and usually the communities that had the largest difference between male and female salaries, had the largest number of female teachers.

According to Barbara Brenzel (1983), Catherine Beecher advocated for institutions of higher education for women that would offer a sound curriculum tailored to the needs of students. Female education should, Beecher believed

> have a decided influence in fitting a woman for her particular duties, . . . the physical, intellectual, and moral development of children. . . . A desirable course of studies should form correct moral principles and strengthen religious obligation . . [and] store the mind with useful knowledge (Benzel, 1983).

Thus, the prevailing wisdom--even among prominent female advocates of education for women--was that training for the teaching profession was ideal for girls in that it prepared them to be better mothers in a progression from parental home to schoolhouse to conjugal home.

Katz (1987)reports that these values were apparent in frontier Black communities as well. According to the 1890 U.S. Census, Black

females exceeded White females in school attendance in the West, and "Black women spearheaded community goals toward formal education, moral piety and economic uplift. They built the black western church" (p. 292).

Higher education opportunities for males were more varied. The late 19th century saw the establishment of the land grant agricultural and technical colleges, whose purpose was to conduct research in improved crops, farming methods, livestock, and technology. By the turn of the century, all of the states had a system of free common schools for children and youth with compulsory attendance laws, normal schools for the training of teachers, and agricultural and technical colleges for the training of farmers and industrialists.

In the upper grades of the common schools, there was a strong push for vocational training for boys. This was due in part because of what was happening in the labor scene. The 1870s-1890s marked an era of particularly ruthless industrial capitalism that resulted in the organization of the first national trade and labor unions. Skilled workers at the turn of the century wielded a fair amount of power over production on the shop floor. They hired their own assistants and controlled recruitment through their apprenticeship system. Employers wanted to reduce this power. Industrial capitalists at the turn of the century, reacting to early fears of German competition, and to the power of the trade unions, looked for

ways to develop skilled labor in the schools, consequently industrial education was born.

Those Who Resisted

All through this history there were those groups that resisted the influence of the common school, especially as it was developing in the West. In a later chapter I will discuss the history of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and its efforts to "civilize" American Indians, who by the end of the nineteenth century were restricted to living on reservations located mostly in states west of the Mississippi River. First Christian mission schools and later BIA off-reservation boarding schools made a conscious effort to strip away Indian students' cultures and languages and replace them with the American ways (Takaki, 1990).

Similarly, the California legislature tried to enforce English-only schooling on the native Californios, who in turn developed their own system of parochial schools. However, as the Californios became increasingly marginalized after the Gold Rush and the subsequent invasion of settlers, maintaining these schools became difficult. Camarillo (1979) explains,

> Education as a vehicle to ensure high social status was becoming infeasible by the 1880s. Californio families could no longer afford to send their young sons to the Fransciscan College at the mission or their daughters to the private Catholic school in the city as they had done since the 1860s (p. 69).

Eventually, they had to begin attending the common schools, where they were required to speak English only.

There was also resistance to the common school and it's English-only curriculum among many of the European immigrant groups. Many immigrant groups established in their communities parochial schools, intended to provide religious and language instruction for their children. These groups included German Mennonites, Italian Catholics, Swedish Lutherans and Latter-Day Saints (Gulliford, 1991). However the states passed laws requiring longer attendance at public schools in the early 1900s. Before that time people could live out their lives in rural communities without learning English. Some groups were especially resistant to Americanization through language, and encountered problems with teachers who could not speak the language of the immigrant community. At a Wyoming school, a Finnish settlement did not care about learning the American language, and parents had many problems with non-Finnish speaking teachers (Barthell, 1981, p. 22).

The Americanization of the Mormons in Utah Territory was especially difficult. The Mormons settled Utah in 1847 after persecutions in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois (where their founder, Joseph Smith, was murdered by a mob). Brigham Young, their second president, led them to the Great Basin in Utah, where they established colonies in Salt Lake City and in many other outreaching places in Utah. By settling in widely dispersed areas, even with

the influx of non-Mormon settlers, Mormons still dominated nearly all of the new communities. The Church of the Latter-Day Saints was international, thus there was a large immigration of European members to their "Mecca" in Utah. This group of European immigrants considered themselves Mormons before they considered themselves Americans. Eventually, the confrontation between the Mormons and the dominant American culture--especially with regard to Mormon polygamy and theocracy--led to a definition of Mormons as un-American (Birkinshaw, 1981).

During the 1870s a plan was developed to Americanize Mormons through education. Denominational schools were founded by the Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists for the purpose of "Christianizing" and Americanizing the Mormons. Many of the teachers were trained in normal schools and colleges in the East. These new schools raised the standard for education in the state, which had not been very focused on education up to that point.

> Before long Protestant teachers were in demand in the ward schools and in the Mormon-dominated District schools. This made Mormon leaders uneasy. They did not want the Protestants to lure their children away from the Mormon fold. Mormon leader George Teasdale said, "I would sooner my children should go without any scholastic education than that they should be educated by an enemy" (Birkinshaw, 1981, p. 20).

The church leaders responded in other ways, too, by strengthening their own programs.

The story continues, however, according to Birkinshaw, the U.S. Congress began a legislative crusade to Americanize the Mormons, outlawing polygamy and unlawful cohabitation. The Mormons defied these laws, viewing them as violations of the constitutional right to freedom of religion. Finally, Congress disincorporated the Church, seized all of its assets and drove its leaders into hiding. These measures led the Church's president to capitulate and declare in 1890 a manifesto outlawing the practice of plural marriage.

There is a post script to this story: The majority of the mission schools closed during the 1890s, because the backers felt their objective of Americanizing the Mormons had been accomplished. In chapter 3, I will discuss another group that resisted Americanization via the schools, the Old Order Amish.

Taylorism and the Education of the Labor Force: Early Twentieth Century Schooling

This section provides a brief description of the way public primary and secondary education was organized at the turn of the twentieth century. It then describes the effect scientific management, as developed and promoted by Frederick W. Taylor, had on the organization of schooling during subsequent years and how this movement was driven by the influence of urban leaders in business

and industry. School reforms developed in the name of efficiency and scientific management during this period included IQ testing, tracking, vocational training, school consolidation, and increases in class size. This section concludes with a comparison of this 30-year period of reform to the current era of educational reform.

Schooling at the Turn of the Century

Since the turn of the century, education has occupied a prominent position among the institutions of American life. There are several reasons for this, ideological and structural. First, education is believed to be the great equalizer in a democratic society. Americans cherish the belief that through our comprehensive system of free public elementary and secondary schools, the lowest-born among us can develop into fully participating members of a democracy, and can rise, if they choose, to positions of prominence. This ideological function--though certainly more complex as it is played out in the lives of most impoverished Americans--has once again been reinforced with the election of President Clinton, who rose from humble beginnings.

Structurally, the schools perform the function of helping to perpetuate a capitalist economy. According to Bowles and Gintis (1976), this goes beyond increasing the productivity of workers by imparting technical and social skills needed in the work place (i.e. increasing human capital). The schools also serve to perpetuate the

social, political, and economic conditions through which the production process can continue. In other words, by perpetuating the belief that anyone with adequate gumption can make it in America, the schools help depoliticize the inequality of the class structure of our society.

Whether or not one accepts this analysis, it is an inescapable fact that business and industry have at various times exerted great pressure on American education to change in ways compatible with their interests. The beginning of such a period of intense pressure from the private sector was the second decade of this century.

But first, what were the schools like at the turn of the century? According to Larry Cuban--who conducted extensive research of newspaper articles, photographs of classrooms, and other materials of the period--schools one hundred years ago had already established organizations and patterns familiar to us today.

> Schools were graded. School was in session nine months out of each year. Teachers were expected to have had some formal training beyond a grammar or high school education. Each teacher had a classroom to herself (by 1890, 65% of all primary and grammar school teachers were female; 60% of high school staffs were female). Rows of desks bolted to the floor faced a teacher's desk and blackboard. . . . Courses of study set the boundaries and expectations for what had to be taught and when. Report cards and homework had already become standard features of the urban classroom in the 1890s (1982, p. 15).

Primary school included grades 1-4; grammar school included grades 5-8. Most students (67 percent) were educated in rural

schools, which spent roughly half as much per pupil as urban schools. Textbooks were the primary teaching tool.

As for teaching methods, Joseph Rice, a pediatrician and journalist conducted a study of classroom teaching in 1892 (Cuban, 1982). In his observations of 1,200 teachers in 36 cities, he described the deadening drill, memorization, and "busywork" students were required to perform. He also described the unquestioned obedience to the teacher's direction. In some classrooms, students were not allowed to turn their heads without permission.

High school attendance was growing rapidly at the turn of the century. In 1900, over half a million students attended over 6,000 high schools, up from less than a quarter million students attending just over 2,500 high schools ten years earlier. New schools were appearing at an average rate of one a day (Cuban, 1982, p. 23). High school students studied English, U.S. and English history, algebra, geometry, Latin, earth science, and physiology.

The Progressive Movement

During the same period that public schooling was gaining prominence as an institution of American life, businessmen were gaining top status and their values and beliefs were becoming widely admired (Callahan, 1962). In fact, this was a period when great fortunes were accumulated (eg., Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, Edward H. Harriman, and others), and

capitalism was passing through a stage so ruthless that the Progressive Movement was spawned.

> This movement was primarily an attempt to cope with the problems which were a product of rapid industrialization: The consolidation of industry and the concentration of wealth; the ruthless exploitation of the country's natural resources; the corruption and inefficiency in government; the tremendous growth of cities; the flood of immigrants who added to the complexity of the social and political problems in the urban areas; and finally, the fear among the middle class that America would react to these problems in an extreme or radical way . . . . (Callahan, 1962, p. 3)

Muckraking journalists writing for *McClure's, Munsey's,* the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and the *Saturday Evening Post* helped drive this reform movement by conducting research into the corruption and inefficiencies of various branches of government. During this period, the business ideologies of efficiency, consolidation, and the elimination of waste were connected in the public mind with progress and reform. It was perhaps inevitable that as government and other institutions were undergoing this intense scrutiny, education would receive its fair share of attention. The criticism usually consisted of making unfavorable comparisons between the schools and business, and suggesting that business practices of economy and efficiency be applied (Callahan, 1962).

Progressive school administration. The schools were assuming extraordinary burdens at this time, which made them vulnerable to criticism. For one thing, schools were being pressured to increase

their success rate. Whereas, in earlier times, it was considered acceptable for schools to achieve a success rate of about 30 or 40 percent of children achieving an eighth grade education, society now demanded a higher ratio (Graham, 1974).

Schools were also functioning to Americanize the children of millions of immigrants who continued to arrive in the United States during the early years of this century.

> The schools, then, were critical at the turn of the century as a means of acquiring literacy, of adopting American ways, and of acquainting oneself with the immense variety of knowledge that no longer could easily be passed on from one generation to another in the home. The states rapidly passed--though less rapidly enforced--compulsory education laws, which reflected the society's recognition of these new responsibilities of the schools. Curiously enough, these laws mandated school attendance, not literacy, or some other demonstrable academic achievement (Graham, 1974).

There was also pressure on schools to adopt a more "practical" curriculum. Along with this theme came a strong current of anti-intellectualism that denigrated "book learning." Andrew Carnegie became a prominent business commentator on education, declaring that he had "known few young men intended for business who were not injured by a collegiate education" (Callahan, 1962).

This call for a practical focus sometimes was expressed in extreme terms, as in a speech before the National Education Association in 1909 by the Superintendent of the Illinois Farmer's Institute:

> Ordinarily a love of learning is praiseworthy; but when this delight in the pleasures of learning becomes so intense and so absorbing that it diminishes the desire, and the power of earning, it is positively harmful. Education that does not promote the desire and power to do useful things--that's earning--is not worth the getting. (Callahan, 1962, p. 10)

The push for practical education was evident in the call for vocational education. There was an often-expressed concern about the ability of the United States to compete with the Germans, and many calls for a system of industrial education similar to the one Germany had in place.

Fear of competition from the Germans may not have been the only impetus behind the call for vocational education, however. Skilled workers at the turn of the century wielded a fair amount of power over production on the shop floor. They hired their own assistants and controlled recruitment through their apprenticeship system. Employers had a vested interest, therefore, in developing skilled labor outside of the trade unions.

Taylorism and Scientific Management

Frederick W. Taylor burst onto the scene in dramatic hearings before the Interstate Commerce Commission in the fall of 1910. Several engineers testified in opposition to a request for an increase in freight rates for several railroads in the Northeast. They described how, using scientific management developed by Taylor,

railroads should be able to lower rates by increasing efficiency. The idea quickly swept the media, and was soon applied to nearly every institution in American life.

The ideas had already partially appeared in education. By 1907, William C. Bagley, had published a textbook on education titled, *Classroom Management*, which was widely used in training teachers. It went through 30 reprintings in the next 20 years. It was saturated with business terminology, describing classroom management as a question of getting the largest dividend on the investment of time, energy, and money.

Scientific management provided an ideological basis for vocational education. The tenets of Taylor's system held that the behavior of workers, down to the very movements involved in a mechanical operation, must be controlled and dictated by technicians and managers according to scientific principles. As employers seized on vocational education as a means of breaking the worker's control over skills training, Samuel Gompers and the A.F. of L. took a firm stand against the movement (Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

The trade unions took an active part in negotiating the federal legislation that eventually funded the development of vocational education in 1917. They resisted the emulation of the German system of tracking children early into a dual system of schooling (academic or industrial). The federal legislation set 14 as the minimum age at which students could enroll in vocational

training. This was in opposition to the push to make the newly emerging junior high schools the "vocational preparatory school of the future." (Bowles & Gintis, 1976, p. 194)

Another way in which education employed scientific techniques was in the development of intelligence testing. Increasingly during the early 1920s through the 1930s, IQ tests were used as a way of assigning students to curriculum tracks. They were also used in a 1912 study sponsored by the U.S. Immigration Service, to declare 80 percent of Hungarians, 79 percent of Italians, and 87 percent of Russians feeble-minded, based on "culture-free" tests (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). These test results were used later in a movement to restrict immigration. Recognizing the general usefulness of testing, the Carnegie Corporation financed much of the early work on developing testing. Later, in the 1930s, the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations financed the development of the tests that act as gatekeepers to higher education to this day--the Scholastic Aptitude test, and other tests of the Educational Testing Service, which was founded with $7 million dollars from the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations (Bowles & Gintis, 1976, p. 200).

Teaching, as a profession, was severely circumscribed by the infusion of scientific management principles into the educational bureaucracy. According to Bowles & Gintis (1976),

> In the interests of scientific management, control of curriculum, evaluation, counseling, selection of texts, and methods of teaching was placed in the hands of

> experts. A host of specialists arose to deal with minute fragments of the teaching job. The tasks of thinking, making decisions, and understanding the goals of education were placed in the hands of high-level administrators. Ostensibly to facilitate administrative efficiency, schools became larger and more impersonal. The possibility of intimate or complicated classroom relationships gave way to the social relations of the production line.

School governance, too, underwent changes reflecting the dominant values of the times. School boards became smaller (more efficient) and were increasingly dominated by businessmen. It was widely believed that the best sort of board members to have were "Men who are successful in the handling of large business undertakings--manufacturers, merchants, bankers, contractors, and professional men of large practice. . . . Those who did not make good board members were: Inexperienced young men, unsuccessful men, old men who have retired from business, politicians, saloon-keepers, uneducated or relatively ignorant men, men in minor business positions, and women . . ." (Cubberley, 1922).

A last major result of the scientific management movement was its emphasis on cost effectiveness. What this translated into was the massive movement to consolidate schools, and an increase in teacher loads, a process that continues to the present time. Even as early as the 1930s, cities were building high schools to house 1,500 to 3,000 students. In some large cities, even larger schools were built. Teacher loads increased to 150-170 students (five classes of

30-35 students each). Students moved from class to class in standardized schedules, which all amounted to an educational process that resembled more and more an assembly line in a factory (Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

Some Parallels to Recent Educational Reform

The most obvious parallel to the education reform movement launched by the U.S. Department of Education's alarmist publication, *A Nation at Risk*, is its deference to the pronouncements of current leaders in industry. Today we worry about our ability to compete in the global economy. We are told to reduce our dropout rate to 10 percent, improve our mathematics and science curriculum, and to generally gear up to the needs of the global economy. As business and industry go through constant fluctuations and relocations, Americans are urged to adopt the notion of lifelong learning. Americans are expected to constantly retool according to the demands of the work place. Classrooms are reorganized to emphasize cooperative learning, instead of ability grouping, as industry adopts quality circles and management by objective.

Another parallel is the negative press that the schools have received for a decade or more, despite real gains in achievement, dropout rates, and reductions in the gap in achievement between minorities and Whites. In the same way that the muck-rakers prepared the ground for the introduction of reforms to make the

schools more efficient--through tracking, vocational education, increasing class size, consolidation, and assembly line schooling--we are told now that public schooling has been a failure, and that parents should be given choice through the use of vouchers. It appears to be a movement to privatize education, possibly leading to the dismantling of the public school system in this country.

In Summary

Nineteenth century schools--often romanticized as classic Americana--were instrumental in promoting, instilling, and perpetuating the hegemony of American culture, including its lofty ideals, racism, and belief in its Manifest Destiny. The impact of the schools was felt not only among the children of the nation, but also among the adults, whether they were immigrants, religious minoritites, American Indians, or Mexican Americans. The teacher's role as manager of the local community's social activities was a powerful one in developing a cohesive, and increasingly Americanized community.

In the 20th century, schools and other governmental functions were reorganized along the lines of efficiency, and educators became collaborators with industry to train students in skills considered useful to industrialists of that era. An anti-intellectual stance was taken by certain powerful voices in school reform, and the system of land grant colleges and universities had a

clear mission to conduct research to support the industrialization of agriculture and other enterprise in the country.

This system has been firmly in place since early in this century, from primary to postsecondary education, and for most of us who came later, it seems like the natural order of things.

Chapter 3.

Resisting Modernity: The Old Order Amish

> Consider that virtually 100% of [Amish] are engaged in an independent livelihood though none go beyond eighth grade--and wouldn't even go that far except the law forced them to. Almost 50% of the Lancaster Amish operate small businesses, not farms, although not one of them uses a computer, electricity, or drives a motorcar. The community is crime-free, prosperous and has a 5% business failure rate compared to a non-Amish rate of 85% among computer-using, electricity dependent, motorcar-mad un-Amish competitors.
>
> Isn't that a puzzle? (Gatto, 1996, p. 23)

Since the early twentieth century, the Amish have understood clearly the role of public schools as the primary institution for the formal transmission of modernist culture and knowledge. Despite strict prohibitions against involving themselves in litigation, they have resisted participation in public schooling. Their withdrawal from public schooling began at the time of the efficiency and modernization reforms inspired by Taylorism shortly after the turn of the century. The Amish view the curriculum of public schooling as a curriculum for living in the "World." There are similarities between what I have been calling the *artifice* and what the Amish

think of as Worldly. Both have to do with separation from nature (or God and the Creation), and both are associated with exploitation of resources and fellow human beings. Amishmen strive to live in the kingdom of God, which requires them to separate themselves as much as possible from the kingdom of the World.

The Amish believe the education of children to be the responsibility of parents--who consciously teach them through daily participation in Amish life how to farm, nurture a family, and participate in an Amish community. Sons work alongside their fathers in the barn and in the fields; as they work they learn both the technique and spiritual meaning of each activity. Daughters work alongside their mothers, and in a similar way learn how to garden, cook, care for children, sew, and manage a family farming enterprise. An essential element in becoming an Amish adult is learning the Ordnung, an orally transmitted set of detailed rules governing individual lives in their church district. Compared with this rich text of Amish life, reading, writing, mathematics, and the English language are an important but secondary set of skills. Schools are assigned the task of teaching this set of skills--and as far as the Amish are concerned, these skills can be mastered by the end of eighth grade. Further, the Amish discourage their schools from assigning homework. When children are home there are many things they must do to contribute to the upkeep of the household and farm.

Historical Sketch

The Amish--along with the Mennonites and Hutterites--are descendants of the Anabaptists, a radical wing of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, originating in Zurich, Switzerland in 1525. The Anabaptists believed in freely chosen adult baptism upon confession of faith and in living their lives within a highly disciplined community of believers. At the time, adult baptism was deemed an offense against the Catholic church that was punishable by death. Anabaptists rejected participation in war, the swearing of oaths, engaging in litigation, and they insisted on the ultimate authority of the New Testament for faith and life (Keim, 1975). In sixteenth century Switzerland, this meant yielding themselves to what they believed to be God's will, even in the face of torture and death. During the first few decades of Anabaptist history, thousands of believers were burned at the stake, drowned in rivers, starved in prisons, or beheaded. The historic themes of submission and obedience recorded in the twelve-hundred page, *Martyrs Mirror,* are read and retold from generation to generation and undergird Amish values even today (Kraybill, 1993).

The followers of Jacob Amman broke off from the Swiss Anabaptists in 1693. Amman advocated celebrating communion twice a year (instead of once of year, according to the Swiss custom) and incorporated foot washing--a demonstration of humility and servanthood to the fellowship--as part of the ceremony. He promoted

the doctrine of purity and discipline through the distinctive dress worn by the Amish down through the centuries; he enforced this doctrine through the practice of excommunication and shunning of those who did not follow discipline (Kraybill, 1993). His followers, who became known as the Amish, were driven out of Switzerland, and forced to migrate to the Palatinate, Bavaria, and Baden; eventually in the mid-1700s, they emmigrated to Pennsylvania. At the turn of the twentieth century, they numbered about 5,000 in this country (Keim, 1975); today there are approximately 150,000 (Kreps, Donnermeyer, & Kreps, 1994).

Unlike other immigrants of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Amish resisted assimilation. They developed their own communal and cultural structures and lived as much as possible separately from mainstream society. In the early nineteenth century, the Amish created nearly no educational institutions. They educated their own children in reading and writing.

As the country embarked upon building a comprehensive and compulsory school system in the last half of the nineteenth century, Amish parents sent their children to local public schools. Most Amish children continued to attend those schools up through the first half of the twentieth century. "As long as public schools were rural, locally controlled, and reflected the general Protestant ethic, the Amish were content to let their children attend them" according to Keim (1975, p. 11). However, in the early 1900s, two

elements put Amish in conflict with the schools--consolidation and secondary education. The Amish thought high school was irrelevant--even an obstacle--to the goal of an Amish life, to attain salvation. School officials in rationalizing consolidation of schools proclaimed its ability to expand horizons for students. However, Amish thought the new educational initiatives weakened parental authority over their children and employed faulty pedagogy. They were especially skeptical of education that encouraged asking questions and critical thinking because their worldview called for submission and acceptance (Keim, 1975).

The first clash with public school officials occurred in 1914 in Ohio when parents refused to send their children to a newly consolidated school. Through the next six decades they lost all but one court decision when they came in conflict with the authorities over attendance after eighth grade or at consolidated schools. In community after community, Amish parents were subjected to penalties and jailings. Many communities sold their lands and moved to other regions where they would have less trouble with authorities. This ongoing conflict with education authorities ended in 1971 with the Supreme Court decision in *Wisconsin v. Yoder et al.*, which ruled that state education laws constituted an unjust restraint on the Amish free exercise of religion (Keim, 1975).

Characteristics of Group

Today, the Amish remain one of the United States' last unassimilated ethnic groups. Their population has grown steadily--increasing between 30 and 48 percent each decade (Hostetler, 1980). They live in 22 states and Ontario--with nearly three-quarters living in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana--in more than 900 loosely affiliated church districts comprising 25 to 35 families each. Some diversity exists among the church districts--each district has its own Ordnung--but there is a fair amount of continuity as well. According to Kraybill (1994),

> . . . [S]everal badges of identity unite the Old Order Amish across North America: horse and buggy transportation, the use of horses and mules for field work, plain dress in many variations, a beard and shaven upper lip for men, a prayer cap for women, the Pennsylvania German dialect, worship in homes, and eighth-grade education in one-room schools, the rejection of public electricity, and the selective use of technology (p.7).

Among Amish communities divorce is nonexistent, and there are very low rates of out-of-wedlock births, rowdyism, or crime. Eighty to 90 percent of all Amish children choose the Amish way of life when they become adults.

In the following sections, I will analyze Amish society according to the concepts laid out in the previous chapter, that is, as a system successfully integrating cultural, social, human, ecological, and economic capital formation. Capital as conceived

here is an input or an intermediate output that contributes to a community's wealth, income, or quality of life (Flora & Flora, 1996). Running through this analysis will be a focus on the role of education in helping to sustain the Amish way of life. The Amish, like other groups in the United States, are facing problems in today's economy. Information about threats to the Amish way of life and the response of Amish communities to those threats will be included.

Cultural Capital

The Amish have during the three centuries of their existence developed a strong base of cultural capital, which is invested in each member as he or she grows up and takes part in Amish life. Written culture includes the Bible and an Amish canon, including the *Martyrs Mirror* mentioned above and other works including *Die Botschaft, A Weekly Newspaper Serving Old Order Amish Communities Everywhere*, and directories for Amish communities, song books in German such as *Kinder-Lieder,* and *Does Neue Kinder-Lieder* for children, and *Gesang-Buch* for adults, and the Amish hymnal *Ausbund*. Many Amish households also have classics from the mainstream literature, e.g., *Black Beauty, Heidi,*and the Laura Ingalls Wilder books (Fishman, 1987). Other parts of the Amish material culture include their distinctive, plain clothing for all members, horses and buggies for transportation, and farming and household implements

needed for an agrarian household and farming technology.

Other aspects of their culture include an oral tradition formalized as their church district Ordnung, which sets boundaries for Amish life. The Amish actually think of their Ordnung as a boundary--a fence to protect the community from outside pressures. In 1870, Bishop David O. Treyer of Ohio explained this belief: "All Christian Churches must be fenced-in with rules and regulations which are grounded in God's word. For without such a spiritual fence no church can long survive" (in Keim, 1975, p. 10). The Ordnung was developed in the United States as a response to religious freedom. It was built on a belief that Christians must be a peculiar people, not conformed to this world or yoked to unbelievers--part of the New Testament teachings.

Amish separate themselves in other ways, too, by refusing to switch to daylight savings time with the rest of the country, then, when the rest of the country switches to back to standard time, the Amish will set their clocks off one-half hour. All of these efforts to stay separate do not necessarily imply that the Amish believe the rest of the world to be completely evil--it is often said that the Amish do not judge nonAmish people; many members maintain friendships outside of the community. Joseph Stoll (1975), a leader in the Amish parochial school movement explained,

> Today, in our country we have not experienced the persecution of former years. Satan, instead, comes to us in a subtle way, setting before us enticing temptations,

> or bringing about changes so gradually that we are not aware of what is happening until it is too late (p. 17).

The goals of an Amish life are to live this life according to the principles of Jesus Christ--nonviolently, loving and caring for neighbors and enemies, and turning the other cheek when harmed--and to prepare for the life to come after death. Both parts are equally important. These themes are woven into all aspects of the Amish existence. Amish parents in raising their children seek to reproduce the Amish way of life in all aspects of their upbringing. This is what has sometimes put them in opposition to the schools. They believe that public schools are in the business of imparting worldly knowledge meant to ensure worldly success for students, and to make good citizens for the state. They identify problems both with the teaching staff and the nonAmish children. With regard to the latter, Stoll (1975) explained,

> Children have a great influence on each other . . . . It is important to belong in order to be accepted . . . . This tendency to conform is a help in a church school . . . . But the opposite is true when the children are from worldly homes" (p. 29).

With regard to the teaching staff, the Amish believe the only teachers qualified to teach Amish children are teachers committed to Amish values, who can teach based on example and learning by doing. Teachers must understand that their purpose is to prepare children

to live spiritually in this life and for eternity.

Hostetler explains,

> In the Amish school, . . . arbitrary distinctions between school and life do not exist, for the primary function of the Amish school is not education in the narrow sense but the creation of a learning environment continuous with Amish culture (p. 106).

By identifying with teachers and older students, who identify with them, children acquire understanding essential to becoming an adult. Emphasis is on continutiy, not skills that are prized in "worldy" schools, such as creative or critical thinking. Also school is meant to reproduce the Amish culture as it is--not improve upon it. In public schools, efforts are made to reshape students to address problems in the larger society, such as racism, teen pregnancy, violence, and so forth.

Another essential aspect of Amish culture is the spoken language. They continue to speak Pennsylvania Dutch German at home and as the language of worship. On Sundays, children study German language, not the Bible, in Sunday School. Keim believes that the continuing use of the German language is the single most important element in the continuity of the Amish community. "It is doubtful whether the community could survive its loss" (1975, p. 9).

The Amish have successfully maintained their cultural heritage, which for the purposes of this essay, I am referring to as cultural capital. The cultural lens through which Amish people view

their lives provides individuals with a strong sense of identity, a clear set of rules by which to make decisions, and a pattern of social relations that organizes their lives. It also defines the relationship of the Amish to the technologies they employ.

Neil Postman, in his cautionary book, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*, elaborates our postmodern worship and uncritical acceptance of the latest technology--no matter what the price to society. He explains that the relationship between people and technology has been altered. Whereas tools were once invented to solve "specific and urgent problems of physical life, such as in the use of waterpower, windmills, and the heavy-wheeled plow" (1993, p. 23), today it seems as if people--called consumers--are viewed as existing in order to utilize the machinery, computers, and other consumer goods offered to them for their purchase and consumption. Our culture does not seem to provide much guidance for judging the acceptability of or need for technologies as they are introduced. The development of new technologies is seen as unstoppable, and because it is a part of "progress," a good thing.

The Amish, on the other hand, do not embrace new technologies without a meeting of the church district to discuss the impact such an introduction might have on the community and on their lives in service to their God. They will from time to time decide to adopt a technology and adapt it to their community's culture, but they have

done this thoughtfully and at a pace far slower than the larger society.

Social Capital

James S. Coleman (1988), in his trailblazing work on social capital explained that--

> Just as physical capital is created by changes in materials to form tools that facilitate production, human capital is created by changes in persons that bring about skills and capabilities that make them able to act in new ways.
>
> Social capital, however, comes about through changes in the relations among persons that facilitate action (p. S100).

He goes on to explain that while physical capital is wholly tangible because it is embodied in observable form, human capital is less tangible because it is embodied in the skills and knowledge an individual acquires. "[S]ocial capital is less tangible yet, for it exists in the *relations* among persons. Just as physical capital and human capital facilitate productive activity, social capital does as well. For example, a group within which there is extensive trustworthiness and extensive trust is able to accomplish much more than a comparable group without that trustworthiness and trust" (pp. S100-101).

Coleman elaborated his theory by describing aspects of social relations that can constitute useful resources for individuals:

obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness of structures; information channels; norms and effective sanctions; closure of social networks; and appropriable social organization. In this section, I will apply Coleman's concepts to two main Amish social insitutions, the church district and the family.

Obligations, expectations, and trustworthingess of structures. Coleman explains the reciprocal favors people will do for each other in some social systems. As an individual does things for others, that individual builds up a collection of credits among family members and friends. These credits can then be called in during a time of need. Persons doing favors establish expectations, while persons receiving favors establish obligations. In this way, a community member who generously provides assistance to others whenever the occasion arises accumulates a great deal of social capital. Obviously, such expectations and obligations can only exist within a social atmosphere of trustworthiness.

One of the key descriptors applied to Amish life is *mutual aid*. Within the community, this takes the form of gatherings for barn-raisings, and other projects individuals cannot tackle themselves, and assistance for people with medical needs or who are temporarily or permanently disabled and cannot perform their regular work. Amish midwives deliver babies, usually collecting no fee for the service. In times of disaster, trouble, or illness, people contribute labor and money to community members in need. Elderly

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people, after a lifetime of accumulating social capital within their families, retire in a house next to their original farmhouse, called the Grossdaadi Haus, or Grandfather House, where they live, cared for by their children and grandchildren (who now occupy the big house) until they die. This pattern of mutual aid is so effective, that the Amish do not participate in the Social Security system, Medicare, or other types of insurance.

Children are raised to believe that the meaning of work is to help one other. They are not thanked for carrying out responsibilities expected of them, and they are encouraged to make themselves useful (Hostetler, 1980).

Information channels. Another aspect of social capital is its potential for information that is passed along when people spend time with each other.

> Information is important in providing a basis for action. But acquisition of information is costly. At a minimum, it requires attention, which is always in scarce supply. One means by which information can be acquired is by use of social relations that are maintained for other purposes (Coleman, 1988, p. S104).

In the example of the Wisconsin graziers discussed in chapter 2, the networks of farmers employing rotational grazing were formed consciously as information-sharing mechanisms. Through their conferences and pasture walks, farmers were able to trade information they had gained in solving problems they encountered on

their individual farms. Many of their solutions were adaptable to other farms. Robert Putnam, in his study of Italian regional governments identified the presence or absence of an active civic life--in the form of fraternal and charitable organizations, choirs, sporting leagues, and other organized or informal gatherings--was the key variable in explaining the success or failure of the new regional governments in developing their local economic, service, and democratic institutions (Putnam, 1993). When people get together--even for recreational activities--they can consciously or unconsciously build relations of trust and share information.

The Amish have active social lives. Their civic life revolves around the events organized within their church district--a congregation of 25-35 families who live in close enough proximity to make it practical to gather and visit via horse-and-buggy transportation practical. Congregations gather at one family's home every other Sunday for worship and a potluck shared meal. On off Sundays, families visit each other and write letters to one another. They also use other occasions for social events, such as when a family retires or moves and has a sale of household items. Amish people--even those who do not intend to buy anything--gather for the sale and turn it into a social event. There are also occasional regional events, where church leaders gather to discuss various decisions they must make regarding their respective Ordnungs and other practical matters. Young people gather for songfests (a type

of mixer for singles), and families will travel long distances--sometimes using public transportation--to visit family and friends who live in other districts or states (Hostetler, 1980).

All of these examples of social gatherings help constitute a form of social capital that provides information, which may at some point facilitate action.

Norms and effective sanctions. Norms also constitute social capital. When norms exist against crime, safety is realized in a community. Likewise, norms supporting hard work and selfless acts for the sake of community create social capital in productive societies with a strong safety net of mutual aid for members. This type of social capital facilitates some actions and constrains others, sometimes through the use of sanctions (Coleman, 1988).

The Amish have a highly elaborated set of norms in the Ordnung of each community. All Amish adults know the Ordnung and pledge themselves to living according to it's provisions when they reach adulthood and decide to become baptised into the fellowship. Young people who choose not to be baptised into the fellowship are treated respectfully, and can maintain a level of relations with the community. However, those who choose baptism and fail to live up to the rules contained in the Ordnung are excommunicated and shunned. When this happens members of the home church district of the shunned person and other church districts are not allowed to communicate, do business with, or break bread with the individual. It is a strong

negative sanction against rule-breaking. The excommunicated person can, however, be restored into the fellowship by publicly repenting and repledging commitment to the Ordnung (Hostetler, 1980).

Human Capital

Human capital is usually understood to mean the skills and capabilities developed in individual people. As discussed earlier, human capital formation in Amish communities takes place primarily in the home and community. Coleman (1988) points out that in families where there is a great deal of social capital--that is information sharing, mutual help, and trust, the human capital of the parents is more readily shared with the children. This certainly seems to be the case in most Amish households.

> Amish children experience great freedom of movement as they accompany older persons around the farm. They are encouraged to be useful but are not pushed to perform tasks beyond their ability (Hostetler, 1980, p. 175).

Parents pass along skills, not only for operating a household and farm, but also for living life in the kingdom of God as realized in Amish communities. Strong social capital is not the only factor involved in parents ability to develop human capital in their children. The parents must be present with the children during substantial portions of their nonschool time. This has meant restricting themselves to farming and other home-based economic activities.

There are pressures in many Amish families impairing the ability of a growing number of fathers to work at home. The high birth rate (an average of seven children per family) combined with the success of their socialization of the young (an estimated 80-90 percent of children choose to be baptized and remain in the Amish community) has led to a population that is now at 150,000--double the number of Amish in 1970. Although the Amish are constantly looking for more farmland, and settling in new areas, the pressures are mounting, leading many to seek nonfarm work. According to Kreps, Donnermeyer, & Kreps (1994) in their study of the Wayne/Holmes settlement area in Ohio, approximately 61 percent of Amish males were involved in nonfarm occupations, compared with only 29 percent in 1965. As Amish males become increasingly involved in work away from their homes, there could be pressures for increases in education beyond the eighth grade to train boys in skills they are unable to learn from their fathers, since boys often cannot work alongside their fathers on a construction site or sawmill to learn these trades.

Ecological (or Natural) Capital

Natural or ecological capital includes water, soil, forests, biodiversity, and scenery that can be employed for human production (Flora & Flora, 1996). In farming, which is still the primary occupation of Amish people, natural capital is the land they farm,

the streams and groundwater. "Soil," says Hostetler (1980) "has for the Amish a spiritual significance." Old Testament lessons teach that mankind is to tend the garden, and protect it from harm; New Testament parables teach the Amish that farmers are stewards of the land owned by the absentee landlord, God. Hostetler (1980) further explains that the Amish enjoy the land for its beauty, and that they do not farm the land to earn money, but instead they work and save so they can farm and raise their families in close communion with God's creation, with as little interference as possible from the world.

David Kline, who like many other Amish farmers bought a depleted farm, has worked for years to restore its fertility, employing techniques that his ancestors have used for centuries--rotating crops through a progression of nutrient-restoring cultivars--bluegrass and white clover, legumes, alfalfa, and so forth. But beyond that, there is the daily devotion of small things that a farmer does.

> These are acts my family and I often perform as the teams are resting while plowing and planting. Maybe it is only carrying a rock off the field, or moving a piece of sod to some low spot to check possible erosion, or moving a killdeer's or horned lark's nest out of harm's way. These small acts of stewardship, multiplied a thousand times, do add up (p. 38).

Lately, Amish farming has come under some criticism for the traditional practice of spreading manure on the fields during the

winter, which can cause pollution of streams and groundwater (Napier & Sommers, 1996). However, researchers have also found that Amish farmers, who typically do not participate in any sort of government program, have indicated an interest in learning techniques for reducing this sort of pollution (Sommers & Napier, 1993).

In some regions, such as in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, population pressures combined with rising land prices have resulted in much smaller farms--or, according to the terms of this analysis, a lower level of ecological capital. This has forced them into more intensive land use, and an increase in specialized farming, raising crops for cash, and the production of fluid milk and poultry. All of these changes have had implications for the community's use of various technologies (Hostetler, 1980).

Physical and Financial Capital

Amish farmers have relatively small farms, ranging in size from 30 to 120 acres. High land prices and fluctuations in crop prices have forced Amish farmers into intensive land use. They raise a variety of crops, some (such as tobacco, fluid milk, and poultry) they raise for cash. They continue to resist mechanizing their farms, although in some communities Amish mechanics have adapted farm machinery for use with horses or mules. Also, due to health regulations, some Amish milk producers have had accept the use of refrigerated bulk milk storage tanks, and several other

technologies. They refuse to power any of their machinery using electricity or natural gas supplied by power companies; instead they run diesel generators when they need electricity. Having electric or gas lines running into their farms links them too directly to the World. They are moderate consumers of fossil fuel, and in many communities they build windmills and water wheels to supply energy. They rely on their own labor and the use of animals to do much that modern farmers use machines to do. In this way, they have avoided heavy borrowing and major financial crises.

Amish farmers usually own their land, homes, outbuildings, equipment, livestock, and draft horses and mules. They accept no government subsidies of any kind. Thus, they own the physical capital needed for production of a livelihood for their families and communities. Acquiring this type of material wealth involves monetary or financial capital.

Amish save money to buy farms for their sons and daughters, and they regularly invest in the upkeep and improvement of their farm buildings. Land is always kept in the family. Additionally, parents will lend money at a low interest rates to their married children. Thus, Amish farmers receive capital from their immediate family when they first start out. Amish teenagers do not go to high school, so they begin working at the age of 16 to save money toward the purchase of a farm when they reach their 20s. Girls will live in with another family to help with chores, or teach, make crafts,

or do other income producing work to contribute to their savings. Boys work as farmhands or in various Amish businesses. Their savings are invested in farm machinery and livestock. "Renting usually precedes buying a farm. Amish boys who receive considerable assistance from their parents will obtain a farm in their own name a few years after they are married" (Hostetler, 1980, 133).

Another aspect of Amishmen's[1] ability to accumulate monetary capital is the frugality of their lifeways. They view the mainstream society's devotion to every-rising standards of living as a form of "worship of the golden calf," a biblical reference to idol worship (Hostetler, 1980, p. 135).

Lastly, Amish people, including children, work hard. They invest tremendous labor capital into their way of life. Children are taught to work and to value family labor in various contexts--on their own farm, on the farms of their extended families, and in their church district.

The Amish are not immune to the pressures imposed by population growth, rising land prices, and increasing regulation of agricultural practice, however. They are constantly adapting to changing economic conditions by settling in new places, subdividing their farms and becoming more intensive producers, or establishing nonfarm enterprises, such as machine shops, bridle-makers, cheese

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[1]This is the only noun I have seen to refer to Amish people. It is gender-biased, but without a gender-neutral substitute that I am aware of.

factories, cabinet-making, and so forth. Some Amish have also had to work in nonAmish settings, while maintaining as best they can an Amish way of life. Usually this is seen as a temporary way to accumulative money to invest in a traditional Amish enterprise or farm.

Conclusions

The Amish have succeeded in maintaining their way of life due to the integration of their culture into the way they educate their children, lead their daily lives, and run their life-sustaining economy. They have done this by strictly controlling their relationship to modernist culture and the larger U. S. society. They have been able to maintain their separate way of life despite a commitment to passivism and strict prohibitions against any type of litigation. They have, as Kraybill (1993) describes it, successfully negotiated with Caesar.

One aspect of this success, however, I have not yet mentioned. The Amish suffered greatly in Europe for their minority ethnic status, which drove them out of their native Switzerland to the United States. Here, they are quick to recognize, they have had some challenges to overcome, such as being exempted from compulsory education regulations, certification requirements for their schools, and participation in the Social Security system, but they have not suffered wholesale violence or racism on the part of the state or

society. Their rights have largely been protected--sometimes by the voluntary intervention of nonAmish people who have raised money and hired lawyers to fight legal challenges the Amish cannot fight for themselves due to prohibitions defined in their Ordnung. They have mostly lived a protected life as an ethnic minority. This may be due largely to their being White, Christian, and of European origin.

Dachong Cong studied the rising popularity of the Amish in the United States (1994). Cong attributes their popularity to several factors. First, in the face of declining urban areas and seemingly intractable social problems, the Amish invoke a nostalgia for the good old days of a more rural and "innocent" time in the United States. Second, there has always been a longing in American culture for utopian community which, from the outside, the Amish seem to have created. Many Americans currently seek alternative models for living--and the Amish seem to present one. Third, they are accepted as a "model minority," their separateness may be more accepted because of the White European origins as mentioned earlier. Lastly, because of their pacifist approach to life, they avoid posing a challenge to the power elite in the United States.

This was not always the case. As farming became more mechanized, and industrialization took off in the U.S. landscape, the differences between the Amish and the mainstream society were looked upon with more suspicion. Amish attempts to keep their children out of high school and mainstream schooling were

interpreted as being evidence of their willingness to exploit their children and the unwillingness to provide the money required to support a good education. Some areas of the country see the Amish's refusal to develop monocultural, high input, high output approaches to farming as holding back local economies.

Still, the pressures that have been put on the Amish by the political system have been minor compared with the group discussed in the next chapter, the Menominee Nation located in northeastern Wisconsin. The relatively protected status of the Amish seems to constitute another form of capital they possess--political.

Chapter 4.

Resisting Individualism: The Menominee Nation

Menominee history can be divided into three periods--the preinvasion period, the fur-trading period, and the American period.[2] Throughout the American period, the Menominee have been "under siege" by American expansion and encroachment on their territory and economy. Their economic base and autonomy have been constantly threatened and at times nearly destroyed, but due to their actions as a tribe, much of the American agenda for the Menominee has been deflected, and they have emerged from a very difficult period, still Menominee, still on their indigenous lands, and with an economic base that--although not completely adequate to support all of the Menominee people--appears durable and sustainable for the foreseeable future.

Historical Sketch

The Menominee originally lived throughout much of what is now

[2]The richest source of information about the Menominee that I was able to obtain was a dissertation written by historian David Robert Martin Beck, titled *Siege and Survival: Menominee Responses to an Encroaching World* (1994). Most of the historical information is based on this work.

northern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. They lived mostly along the rivers flowing into Green Bay during the summers, and in the winters they moved further inland to hunt. They have lived in this region longer than any other tribe and there are no stories of them ever having lived anywhere else. Their name is derived from an Algonquian word for wild rice, *mano'min*, thus they were known as the wild rice people by neighboring tribes (Beck, 1994).

They adapted to the arrival of the French in the seventeenth century, viewing them as trading partners. The Menominee lived in the outer reaches of the French empire, so their contact with these Europeans was largely in the area of trade, although there were also some soldiers and Catholic missions.

The French set up a fort at La Baye (in the Green Bay area) in 1717, and a small town grew up around it. Some Menominee women married French traders, so the population of the town became mixed blood, but most other Menominee had only limited contact with the French because they only traveled to the Green Bay area in the summers.

Later, when the British began to arrive, the Menominee fought with the French against them--often under French officers who had kinship ties with the tribe. After the French withdrew from the area, the Menominee traded furs with the British for items that they adapted to their use without altering the basic way of life--much as

they had with the French. They still subsisted on hunting, fishing, and wild rice (Beck, 1994).

During the American Revolution and again in the War of 1812, the Menominee fought with the British, believing they were more likely to maintain control of their lands if they could defeat American incursions into the territory. However, after the Americans defeated the British, the fur trade ended and the land rush began. Farmers, miners, and loggers moved into the region in large numbers, and ushered in the treaty process. Loggers moved into the territory first, clear cutting the trees that covered nearly all of Wisconsin, and shipping the logs to Chicago--making Chicago a center for supplying the lumber needed to build railroads, fences, and farms all across the Midwest. In the wake of the loggers came the farmers in large numbers. Beck writes,

> The federal government's goal of extinguishing Indian titles to lands in Wisconsin peaked in the 1830s and 1840s. At the same time as the loggers reshaped the area's economy, the Americans also legally and politically redefined the landscape.... The Menominee treaties after 1817 all purported to convey real estate from the tribe to the federal government or other parties, and in two cases (1848 and 1854), also conveyed land to the Menominee. (pp. 60-61).

The treaty negotiations were complex political contests and the Menominee, whose traditional economy was steadily destroyed during this period, were by the end of the process exhausted and struggling for basic survival. The 1854 treaty left them with ten

townships in northeast Wisconsin along the Wolf River, an area of approximately 235,000 acres, which did not have enough wild rice, game, and fish to sustain the people. From this point onward, the Menominee were subjected to the same treatment endured by Indian nations across the United States. Their traditional economies destroyed, the U.S. government in collaboration with the church set out to "civilize" Indian people by training them to be farmers and citizens in the European mode. However, Menominee efforts to farm failed because the land was not well suited for agriculture. Nevertheless, for several decades at the end of the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth century, the federal government attempted to clear-cut Menominee lands, and turn it all into farm land.

The entire story of how the Menominee resisted these efforts is complex and too detailed for the purpose of this chapter. They suffered over a century of paternalistic control over nearly every aspect of daily existence--from the management of the forest, to the running of the schools, the allocation of tribal funds (earned from the sale of their lands and timber), the construction of housing, and provision of sustenance. Menominee leaders worked with local federal agents whenever possible to provide for their people, and to preserve their forests and lands in the face of continuing efforts to encroach upon the timber and the land itself. When local agents

proved uncooperative, corrupt, or incompetent--which was generally the case--the tribe sent delegations to Washington to negotiate with Congress directly. When the federal government wanted to relocate the tribe in Minnesota, they lobbied for a provision that they be allowed to visit and inspect the Minnesota land before signing the treaty. They subsequently rejected the land and made their 1854 treaty to stay on a small portion of their traditional land in Wisconsin. They presented various legal obstacles to local loggers and agents throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, thereby preventing the cutting of their timber--or at least most of it. The federal effort to divide Menominee lands into allotments after the passage of the Dawes General Allotment Act, was also successfully averted--making the Menominee reservation the only one in Wisconsin not divided into allotments under the Dawes Act.

In 1908 Congress enacted the La Follette Bill. Maneuvered through Congress by Progressive Senator Robert La Follette, the bill provided for the Menominee forest to be logged on a sustained yield basis. This was a turning point for the Menominee, in that it protected their ecological resources. They had many decades of struggle after passage of the bill before they gained complete control of their own forest management--which did not happen until the 1970s--but the forest was effectively preserved with the passage of the La Follette Bill, leaving them in the position today of

having a forest that contains more timber than it had at the turn of the century, even though over 20 million board feet have been logged from it each year since 1908.

Characteristics of the Menominee Today

Tom Davis, writing in 1988, reported that "there can be no claim that the Menominee Indian Reservation in Northeastern Wisconsin represents a fully functioning sustainable society"(p. 1). He based this statement on a definition of sustainability developed by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. According to this definition, "sustainable development requires meeting the major needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life" (in Davis, 1988, p. 1). The Menominee, despite economic gains, did not at Davis's writing meet these criteria, and continued to suffer problems with

> . . .poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, social welfare dependency, lack of successful educational achievement by many students, child and spouse abuse, and crime. . . .The Menominee have also failed to achieve perfection as environmentalists. Beer can litter strewn beside a lake hidden deep in the Menominee Forest is not an unusual phenomenon. Menominee have also been known to contaminate the soil with leaking gas tanks, to leave a number of types of chemical or nonbiodegradable debris behind them after logging a place in the forest, or to attempt to achieve a personal profit. . . (p. 1).

More recent reports place Menominee County (the site of most of the Menominee nation) as the poorest county in Wisconsin and leading the

rest of Wisconsin in juvenile delinquency and incidences of violence (Washinawatok, 1993).

But even with these difficult problems to solve, the Menominee's accomplishments in the area of sustainable development and restoration of their culture leave them positioned to aggressively pursue solutions to their problems, which are primarily poverty-related.

Most people assume when they first encounter the Menominee forest that it is old-growth, pristine forest land. It is described as a thriving, healthy ecosystem, that is more productive today than it was a century ago. (Davis, 1988; Henderson, 1996; Johnson, 1995; Landis, 1992; LaDuke, 1994; Pecore, 1992). They also have a highly successfully gambling enterprise that has generated income sufficient to support development of their own College of the Menominee Nation. The College offers courses to Menominee citizens and the citizens of other Indian Nations in gaming and hospitality, sustainable forestry, and social services addressing alcohol and drug rehabilitation and other social welfare concerns (Layng, 1996; Vinje, 1996).

These efforts and others in the areas community cultural celebrations and school-based language and culture restoration programs indicate an aggressive effort on the part of the Menominee to overcome the problems created by the extended period of suffering wrought by the destruction of their indigenous economy and the

systematic assault on the tribe's ability to raise its young and conduct its own affairs..

Cultural Capital

I begin my discussion of the cultural aspects of Menominee life by defining more carefully what is meant by the term *cultural capital*. Then, I will discuss the role of the federal government in damaging American Indian cultural capital, finally I will discuss the outcome of this process for the Menominee.

Henry Giroux (1981) credits Pierre Bourdieu (1977) with developing the concept of cultural capital and explaining the role of schools in reproducing it. Bourdieu does not see the social and cultural reproduction that takes place in schools as a neutral process of knowledge transmission, or as the site where people from lower social strata are given the intellectual tools for rising to higher levels of socioeconomic status. Instead, he views schools as involved in the reproduction of the hierarchical distribution of class and power relations, all of which underpin the existing capitalist mode of production and its social divisions of labor power. More specifically, Giroux (1981) explains that cultural capital

> . . . consists of those attitudes, dispositions, tastes, linguistic competencies, and systems of meaning that the ruling-class deems as being legitimate. This specific form of cultural capital is institutionalized in schools

> and is passed off as natural, unchanging, and even eternal. As a mechanism of social control, dominant cultural capital posits itself in both the form and process of the educational experience (p. 71).

In the previous chapter, I described the rich cultural capital of the Amish, which, although different in some fundamental ways from the dominant American culture, seems to have been widely accepted by the larger society, perhaps because Amish culture resembles aspects of American culture that can be traced back to shared European origins. The major battle the Amish faced in gaining control over the schooling of their children was in insisting that they be schooled by Amish teachers once schooling was modernized and consolidated, and in insisting that 8 years of schooling was enough.

However, there were few aspects of Menominee culture that were recognized as being legitimate or of any use in a "civilized" society. Although Menominee leaders welcomed education of their children, seeing it as necessary for their survival in drastically changed circumstances, they could not have anticipated the lack of respect for their language, religion, or other aspects of their culture that their children would encounter in the schools.

In fact, as Joel Spring (1994) explains, the United States government attempted to *replace* through education the cultures of conquered peoples with the dominant culture of the United States. He called this process of stripping away the culture of a conquered

people, *deculturalization*. In 1858, just 4 years after the Menominee made their last treaty with the United States, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles E. Mix declared that holding large tracts of land in common limited the ability of the schools to civilize the Indian because it prevented Indians from learning the value of separate and independent property (Spring, 1994). This was the time during which the Menominee were being pressured to clear cut their land and turn it into farm land. Eventually this line of thinking led to the Dawes Act, which divided many reservations into separate farms under private ownership by individual members of Indian nations.

Education and agriculture were considered the keys to civilizing the Indians. To speed the next generation into civilization, manual labor schools were established. Most of these were off-reservation boarding schools, where children were required to reside after being forcibly removed from their families. The manual labor schools taught basic skills in reading, writing, arithmetic, and agricultural skills for half of each day. But for the rest of the day, children were forced to labor in the fields in order to mold "the character of future generations of Indians for what [Commissioner Mix] called 'habits of industry.' (Spring, 1994, p. 17)

These schools also forbade students to speak their native tongues. An 1868 report of a Congressional commission recommended

restricting use of Indian languages and replacing them with English. In the words of the Indian Peace Commission

> Through sameness of language is produced sameness of sentiment and thought; customs and habits are moulded and assimilated in the same way, and thus in process of time the differences producing trouble would have been gradually obliterated (in Spring, 1994, p. 18).

In the case of the Menominee, the federal government collaborated with the Catholic and Episcopalian churches to "educate" Indian children. Beck (1994) explains,

> The early school teachers were the missionaries who supported their mission work to some extent with government money. Eventually both the church and the government built boarding schools on the reservation. Even after the creation of government schools the Catholic church continued running them, with subcontracts paid from government funds. (p. 65)

For the adults, "A government farm, a government-paid farmer, government-paid blacksmiths, and farming equipment and seed, [all] provided from tribal funds [as was the funding for the Catholic-run schools], were all part of this civilizational funding" (p. 65).

At the national level, in 1889 Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan went even further. Students were required to revere the American flag and to pledge allegiance to the U.S. government. Spring (1994) explains Commissioner Morgan's instructions actually required "that schools inculcate in students allegiance to government policies designed to break up tribal lands"

(p. 21). They were to celebrate the anniversary of the Dawes bill, which was intended to allot Indian lands to individual people and break up the reservations. Morgan also advocated early childhood education as a method of counteracting the negative effects of Indian homes, and stripping away the influences of Native culture and language.

The boarding schools were sites of the terrible abuse of American Indian children. Their labor supported the expense of running the schools, according to several investigations conducted in the 1920s. They were fed poorly, and lived in overcrowded quarters that led to the spread of tuberculosis and trachoma. They were organized on a military model, with constant drilling, and a day that began at 5:00 a.m. Required to march to each activity, they had little time for recreation. Anthropologist Oliver La Farge in the 1920s called the Indian schools "penal institutions--where little children were sentenced to hard labor for a term of years to expiate the crime of being born of their mothers" (in Spring, 1994, p. 23-24).

In 1928, the Merriam Report, which described the abuses of the Indian Boarding School system and the devastating impact it had on American Indian family life and customs led to a reversal in this policy. Yet, despite repeated lobbying in the 1930s, Menominee officials could not get the Office of Indian Affairs to close the large and costly boarding school on their reservation and open day

schools in towns throughout the reservation, which would have cut costs and allowed children to live with their parents (Beck, 1994). It was not until the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act in the 1970s, that the Menominee and other Indian nations gained legal mechanisms to exercise control of their schools.

After such an extended period of mistreatment by the schools, many American Indians remain alienated from them. I began this section explaining the role of schools in reproducing the power relations of the larger society through the education of the young. The cultural capital that is promoted in American schools is that of the dominant society and it "consists of attitudes, dispositions, tastes, linguistic competencies, and systems of meaning that the ruling-class deems as being legitimate" (Giroux, 1981, p. 71). John Ogbu (1989) argues that the high failure rate of American Indian (and African American) students is the result of the students' awareness of the source of the school curriculum, and their decision to resist it. Considering the school to be a representative of European American culture, doing well in school is viewed by many American Indian students as an act of betrayal of one's culture. To do well, a student had to "act white." Joel Spring (1994) quotes Elenore Cassadore, an elder in the Apache tribe and a bilingual teacher who argues that the parents and grandparents of many Apache children remembered school as a place where Anglos

tried "to make them forget they were Apaches; trying to make them turn against their parents, telling them that Indian ways were evil." As a result of this history, many Apache parents today only send their children to school because they have to legally. But they tell their children "not to take school seriously.. . .to them, printed stuff is white-man stuff" (in Spring, 1994, p. 101).

Of course, by resisting education, American Indian students cannot participate in mainstream society--they lack the cultural and human capital that is the currency of the market economy. On the other hand, the cultural capital that they receive through their traditions may seem to them irrelevant at the eve of the twenty-first century. The result for too many Indian people is poverty, alcoholism, and self hatred. The description of problems faced by the Menominee earlier in this chapter bears out this result. Norbert Hill of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society explains,

> Even if the hate or oppression we've experienced stops coming in from the outside, we are still left with internalized oppression--self-hate in the present because we were hated by others in the past. Suicide among Indian youth, ages 15 to 24, occurs twice as frequently as among young white people (1995, p. 14).

Little has been written about Menominee K-12 education today. There is evidence that efforts are underway in the community to restore traditional cultural values and narrative traditions in the schools.

In an article on a Teacher Corp project, Antes and Boseker (1983) tell of a student project to investigate past values and practices of childrearing that might help solve some (unspecified) problems Menominee youth were then encountering. They interviewed elders in the community and found that they were concerned with two important values: respect and sharing.

> Children in an Indian community were respected as individuals and played important roles in the extended family. They were taught to share and to cooperate but not for selfish gain. The elders felt that children should be taught from early on to respect everything in nature; the earth, the trees, the lakes, and the animals. When they have been taught to respect their environment, children are much better able to respect themselves, other human beings, and the whole world (p. 30).

Respect for nature and for the interconnectedness of all life, cultural values that make the creatures of the forest and all Menominee people members of an extended family, are strong themes in Menominee mythology. The Menominee creation story tells of the original two members--the Bear and the Thunderer (or Eagle) deciding to become brothers. The Bear brought rice and the Thunderer brought corn and fire. Eventually they invited the Beaver, a woman, the Elk, the Sturgeon, Crane, Wolf, Dog, Deer, and Moose into their family. Each of these became clan leaders, which formed the basis of the political leadership. Bear clan leaders served as the tribe's civil leadership, while Thunder clan leaders took charge of

the tribe's war leadership. The tribe was originally organized into bands that each had a mixture of the various clans. The bands lived separately with loose political links, and strong cultural and social ties (comparable to Amish Church districts). They came together once or twice a year for the rice harvest and for religious celebrations (Beck, 1994).

According to another version of the origins of the tribe, the first people brought a kettle with them, which they carried to the river. The leader filled the kettle with sturgeon, which he used to feed his people. "Because he was thus able to provide for his people, the other clans brought him their own foods and joined the Bear" (Beck, 1994, 22). Beck goes on to explain,

> This story is significant not only because it shows the leader providing for his people, a critical role, but also because it shows the generosity which has remained part of Menominee cultural institutions. (pp. 22-23)

Menominee believed they lived in part in a spiritual dimension inhabited by power that could support or end life. Individuals could communicate through ceremonies and tobacco offerings with the spirit world, who communicated back through dreams. They believed it required daily activities--offerings, songs, and so forth to keep the world in balance. Beck (1994) summarizes this way of life as follows:

> Menominee life was governed by the Menominee world view, in which spirituality was an integral part of everyday

> experience. The family, band, and clan units formed the social system in which functions of daily life and tribal decision-making occurred. A leader's strength was defined by how well he could provide for his people. Generosity was an integral cultural trait.(p. 26)

According to Beck, the Menominee way of life has retained its core values of family and the greater good of the community.

Another contemporary effort to strengthen such cultural values was the Menominee Values-Based Program, which provided training for teachers in the key elements of Menominee culture as based on a community needs assessment. According to a report written by Karen Washinawatok (1993), the Menominee Tribal Planning Department is organizing community and family gatherings to reinforce traditional ways and reestablish Menominee cultural knowledge. Menominee language and culture classes were being taught in the schools, and Washinawatok wrote about how the methods of teaching needed to be reformed to reflect more traditional approaches to instructing the young. She explains the role of traditional values in addressing contemporary problems faced by the Menominee Nation, such as pollution, poverty, and alienation of youth:

> [As] we come to know the trees, plants, birds, stars, animals and the universe as our family we gain respect for each other. Domination and destruction have no place in our world of harmony and sacredness, we must treat all forms of life respectfully . . . Yet exploitation and pollution are two real problems faced by Menominees today. Greediness and selfish motives are nontraditional alternatives of today's community (p. 3).

She goes on to explain the important values of family and belonging:

> Our family is not nuclear but extended to include clans and community. Traditionalists consider all life forms as relatives. We respect our totems or clan animals as ancestors. . . .Recognition of the spiritual quality is reinforced in our language. Words are animate or inanimate with respect to their living or non-living existence (p. 5).

Although the federal program to strip away the culture of the Menominee people seriously injured the community, it did not destroy it. Contemporary efforts are underway to take charge of schooling, define what cultural capital the community wishes to have reproduced in its schools, and restore those social structures based on a Menominee world view. A large portion of that effort relates to improving self-respect, and respect for the community, by displaying the Menominee National flag and reciting the Menominee Pledge (in Washinawatok, 1993, p. 17):

I dedicate my efforts of this day:	I (name) will do my best today
to my own bright future:	so I can make something of myself
the honor of those who love me:	so my parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and teachers are proud of me, and
and the dignity and progress of the Menominee Nation:	so I can grow up and become a leader and helper of the Menominee people.

Social Capital

"[S]ocial capital . . . exists in the *relations* among persons. Just as physical capital and human capital facilitate productive activity, social capital does as well," according to Coleman (1988, p. S100). As shown above, Menominee relations were traditionally grounded in a belief structure that valued generosity, sustainability, and an understanding of other tribal members and even the animals of the forest and streams as being members of a large family.

In this discussion, I will compare what I was able to learn about Menominee social capital as it exists today with other American Indian nations and the dominant American society. This will require a discussion of fundamental differences in economies based on sustainability versus those based on consumerism and growth. Rebecca Adamson (1994), president and founder of First Nations Development Institute, points out the contrasts between traditional principles of *sustainability* versus the fundamental Western principle of *scarcity of resources*; of *sharing, reciprocity and distribution* versus *accumulation, growth, and consumption;* and of *kinship usage rights* versus *individual exclusive ownership right*. These contrasts become more stark when you see how they play out in social relations.

Sustainability vs. scarcity of resources. According to Adamson, if you organize your society based on the fundamental truth

that there exists a scarcity of resources, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Habits of accumulation, consumption, production and growth result in environmental degradation, growing poverty, and wars over resources. Adamson points to indigenous societies that have not been disrupted by global capitalism, and you find lives based on ethics of sufficiency and anticonsumerism. The Menominee Nation's management of their forest, contrasted with the ongoing destruction of old-growth timber resources nearly everywhere else in the United States illustrates the differences between these two orientations.

Sharing, reciprocity and distribution vs. accumulation, growth, and consumption. In many Native societies--and from accounts of the qualities of Menominee leaders--prestige and influence in the community was based on generosity, not accumulated personal wealth. An example of this ethic was found in some Indian nations in the potlatch, a tradition outlawed in the nineteenth century. These were sophisticated redistribution of wealth mechanisms based on reciprocity--much as Coleman described the system of mutual obligations and expectations that underpins high social capital among certain communities. In the case of the Amish--this distribution of labor and money was evident in community projects such as barn raisings, aid to people suffering illness or disaster, and other sorts of communal giving. In the case of the Menominee, the distribution of income generated by forestry and

other tribal enterprises historically has supported the whole tribe, albeit meagerly for many years in this century and the last. On the other hand, in the Western system, according to Adamson (1994), 90 percent of the nonresidential capital is owned by 5 percent of the population, which has been the case since 1776. The system of taxation and welfare that we have institutionalized to redistribute wealth in our society have resulted in the degradation and dependency of the poor and the resentment of everyone else. It has certainly not been an effective system for either redistributing wealth or for nurturing relations among various sectors of our social system.

Kinship usage rights vs. individual exclusive ownership rights. The Menominee commitment to communal ownership of its lands was unwavering during the many decades of pressure imposed by federal efforts to allot lands to individuals instead of preserving the reservations for Indian nations. As mentioned earlier, there were some American leaders who thought this one aspect of Indian societies was the root of their problems, and would forever undo efforts to "civilize" the Indian. Tribes that were unable to avert the process of allotment, suffered even more extreme poverty, and individual Indians were often swindled out of their lands.

But beyond landholding, the concept of rights and relationships based on kinship rather than on individualism, could have a major impact on how people relate to one another now and

generationally. Sherry Salway Black (1996) writes:

> Imagine an economic system with *all my relations* as a fundamental belief. This understanding would not only affect the impact that people have on the environment, but also our relationship with other people and with the past and future generations. . . . The concept of *all my relations* creates a long-term basis for an economic system. . . . [It] also conveys a sense of balance and social justice (p. 67).

For such an arrangement to exist, the conditions of mutual obligation, reciprocity, and trustworthiness which make up one aspect of social capital needed for vibrant economies must exist. To the extent that Menominee values are expressed in social structures, these characteristics of traditional indigenous economies can provide a rationale for the hard work it will take to build on what they have, and make a better life for "all their relations."

Human Capital

Ever since the passage of the La Follette bill in 1908, the Menominee people have studied how to manage their forest. Today, their forest has been recognized as an international model for sustainable forestry. Managing the forest takes considerable technical expertise, which Menominee foresters regularly share with visitors from as far away as Brazil, Sweden, and Malaysia. They have worked out a habitat classification system for identifying the

species of commercially valuable timber that will do best in each of 109 plots, and they keep a continuous forest inventory, which they use in selecting which trees to harvest (Henderson, 1996).

In contrast with the Amish studied in the last chapter, the Menominee rely on some of the most advanced scientific forestry practices in the world. In fact, they have invented many of them. "The Menominee are 50 years ahead of everyone else," according to Bob Simeone, a forester with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. He adds, "In forestry practice no one holds a candle to these people" (in Henderson, 1996, p. 1).

The Menominee have also developed impressive expertise in management of the Reservation's water supply and land use. Despite heavy uses, including the influx of thousands of rafters each season on the Wolf River, which runs through the reservation, the waters have much the same quality that they had over a hundred years ago. Also, the riparian ecosystems are in excellent shape, and the mix of animal life, tree species, and plant communities are rich and diverse, according to Davis (1988).

The Menominee were among the first to enter into Indian gambling as well, opening their first facilities in 1987. Partly through trial and error, they have developed considerable expertise--enough so that they have established the Menominee Gaming and Hospitality Institute, dedicated to helping their own and other Indian people master skills needed to operate their own gaming

facilities. The Institute is located at the College of the Menominee Nation in Keshena, Wisconsin on the Menominee Reservation. The Institute has four major divisions: a think tank, which studies economic, social, and cultural issues related to Indian gaming enterprises; a central clearinghouse that includes a national database on the Indian gaming industry; certificate and degree programs (with links to the University of Wisconsin that can lead to a 4-year degree in business); and a product development center, that is involved in research and design of new gaming products (Simonelli, 1995).

The Menominee also have a well established lumber mill, which they are expanding to produce more value-added products from their forest, such as veneer.

All of this adds up to considerable expertise, based in their own community. Like the graziers that I described in an earlier chapter, the Menominee have decided to do things differently from the mainstream, and have become knowledge producers themselves. They are in communication with other communities in the country and around the world as they share their expertise.

Ecological (or Natural) Capital

The tribe's original economy was based on their life in the forest and along the rivers and streams. They hunted a variety of game that lived in the forest: deer, bear, squirrel, rabbit,

muskrat, and beaver. They fished for sturgeon and trout, reaped the wild rice, and supplemented their diet with berries and maple sugar. "To this day, many favorite Menominee recipes include maple sugar, berries, wild rice, and fish or game" (Beck, 1994, p. 24).

However, at the end of the treaty process, the Menominee were left with only a tiny fraction of their original territory. However, the lands that they have are valuable by any measure. The Reservation contains approximately 235,000 acres of land; with an estimated 330 miles of trout streams; 44 lakes ranging in size from 1,304 acres to 1 acre; and the Wolf River and several tributaries. According to Davis (1988),

> "The Wolf River is one of the most scenic, dramatic rivers in the eastern half of the United States. Waterfalls and white rapids give way to stretches of calm, meandering movement as the river waters flow past heavily forested banks marked by the dark and light of a variety of rocky formations. Bald eagles, osprey, a variety of duck species, swans and geese, heron, cranes, otters, beaver, crows, ravens, thrushes, chickadees, black bear, deer, and a host of other wildlife fly, swim, and frequent the riverine environment (p. 3).

There are also peat swamps with and without forest cover. According to several accounts I read, the Menominee forest stands out so distinctly in the landscape, that Landstadt satellite photographs clearly outline the forest boundaries on all four sides of the Reservation.

The Reservation, thus is an abundant landscape, which the

Menominee have never hesitated to use for their sustenance, but always in a nonexploitive way.

Physical and Financial Capital

The Menominee forest and the sawmill located at Neopit on the Reservation have generated profits since the nineteenth century. During most of that time, the Menominee people had no control over the money, which was managed by the federal agency in charge of Indian affairs, and spent on services for the tribe. By 1954 at the time of termination, the Menominee had nearly $9 million in tribal funds. However, the fight for restoration of federal recognition depleted tribal resources. In 1976, their sovereignty was restored, and for the first time, they were in charge of their own affairs. Since that time, the forest and lumber mill have continued to generate revenues to partially support the tribe. Additionally, the Menominee casino has generated considerable capital, which has been invested in infrastructure for the tribe, and freed up monies earned by the mill, allowing the tribe to invest in equipment to expand value-added production facilities for processing forest products (Beck, 1994).

Conclusions

A well-developed stock of cultural capital produced six or seven generations of strong leadership during the years of

oppression at the hands of federal officials. Menominee leaders possessed a clear understanding of the need to preserve the forest and use its riches in a sustainable way. They also made decisions based on the greater good for the Menominee people, who usually (but not always) unitedly supported their leaders. Because of the steadiness of the leadership, they were able to preserve their forest and to keep their lands from being allotted. However, the schools inflicted damage to the cohesiveness of the culture and social structures. Evidence exists, however, that leadership is again rising to the challenge of restoring traditional values and providing Menominee language instruction to the young.

The Menominee have invested heavily in higher education, which is an investment in the long-term viability of their community. They have not avoided use of technology, but they have also not accepted efficiency as a primary value directing their decisions (Beck, 1994). The forest and their various industries are pursued for the purpose of supplying work and income for Menominee people, and making it possible for them to remain in their homeland.

The Menominee early on also realized the opportunity they had to capitalize on their special status as a sovereign nation in charge of the internal affairs of their territory. They were among the first to enter into the highly profitable Indian gambling arena. They have become expert in running their casino and now share their expertise with others.

Chapter 5.

Trying to be Global: West Virginia Rural Education

I attended one of these mountain missionary high schools. I remember so well how the New England "Pilgrims" used to come down each year. A special train brought them on a siding to the campus. All of us little "hillbillies" were lined up with candles lighted on each side of the dirt road for half a mile with carefully coached greeting smiles. It was a "great day." --Don West (1972, p. 211; in DeYoung, 1994, p. 43)

In trying to say some things about West Virginia education, I will attempt to place its history, and cultural themes within the national context. This necessarily includes sketching in the history of West Virginia's role in the national economy as a source of abundant resources, regularly exploited. For this part of the story I will focus on the exploitation of the forests in the late nineteen and early twentieth centuries, and briefly describe the current situation. For this analysis, I will draw from the Appalachian studies literature and a smaller body of work that has been done in West Virginia, especially Alan DeYoung's ethnographic research in Braxton County conducted between 1989 and 1993. I will also use the cultural, social, human, ecological, and financial

capital lenses that I have employed in discussing the Amish and Menominee peoples.

Historical Sketch

Prior to 1860, the people living in what is now West Virginia were involved mostly in subsistence agriculture, primarily on hillsides and in the hollows of streams and rivers. At the turn of the century, Braxton County, the focus of DeYoung's study, was well situated with two navigable rivers that linked the county with the outside world. The river transportation introduced a cash economy to the area "via the salt industry, and later through timber harvesting, oil and gas, and then coal (DeYoung, 1995, p. 54).

Widening the focus to include all of Appalachia, Whisnant (1994) describes the opening of the region to large scale economic exploitation as coinciding with the coming of hundreds of missionaries.

> The first trains to reach many an Appalachian county seat bore not only the advance agents and engineers employed by the coal barons who had learned of the region's rich seams but also the preachers and missionary ladies sent by the denominations to harvest the bountiful crop of unchurched souls reputed to have burrowed back into the hollows, and to teach the swarms of children thought to be growing up in heathen illiteracy (p. 3).

Between 1870 and the turn of the century, the women's missions had established scores of new churches and independent schools. They

were the first in a series of similar groups, each working from an urban middle class bias, who cultivated the image of Appalachian people as suffering from various sorts of deprivations--mostly cultural. The missionaries were not without their early critics, though. U.S. Commissioner of Education Philander P. Claxton, speaking at a 1915 meeting of the newly formed Southern Mountain Workers Conference,

> There is a good deal of sentiment displayed when people talk about the mountains and those living in the mountains . . . There is a general impression that these are a peculiar people, and I think that you who are engaged in mountain work are largely responsibile for it (Whisnant, 1994, p. 6).

Claxton, a native Tennessean and former superintendent of Asheville schools (1988-93), went on to encourage the missionary workers to shift their attention to the exploitation of timber and other natural resources that was going on in the region. He reminded them that "The gospel that Christ preached was a gospel of discontent" (Whisnant, 1994, p. 6).

In Braxton County, the exploitation of the forests began at about the same time as large scale timber operations were clearcutting forested regions all across the country, including forests on what were once traditional Menominee lands in Wisconsin. DeYoung (1995) suggests that a combination of factors accounted for the willing participation of local residents in the timber industry. High fertility rates led to the division of marginal agricultural

lands into smaller and smaller farms--too small to support a family. Local people had little cash and land was becoming more expensive due to the competition with timber companies for lands with standing timber reserves. The market economy was beginning to create the need (want) for "store-bought" or consumer goods. Local residents by some accounts were delighted with the opportunities for employment in the timber-harvesting industry.

The new company owners of the timber immediately began the despoliation and destruction of the forests in the area. By about 1875, a local resident, Howard B. Lee, recalled, local families began selling off their standing timber to various lumber companies.

> Those early "timber hogs," as they were called by the natives, knew nothing of "scientific timber harvesting" so as to preserve the smaller growth. Consequently, they cut, slashed, and felled trees so haphazardly and recklessly that most of the young trees were destroyed. From the lower river, the destructive forces gradually moved upstream, destroying as they went; and, in three decades, the entire Little Kanawha basin was completely denuded of its forests (1968, p. 88; in DeYoung, 1995, p. 56).

A recent series of articles written by Ken Ward of the *Charleston Gazette* featured statewide research done by historian Ronald L. Lewis of West Virginia University (Ward, 1996).

> The cutting of the virgin forest caused the virtual elimination of entire ecological systems, with profound social and environmental consequences. . . The self-sufficient agriculture that had been the basis of traditional culture now was pushed aside by a modern

> commercial system. A new market system that had initially seemed reason for optimism among farmers in the deforested mountains now placed them in direct competition with Midwestern producers who labored under fewer geographic disadvantages . . . Then, with the trees gone, the railroads pulled up their tracks and left the newly market-dependent mountain population stranded. . . When it was all over, the countryside was a forlorn sea of stumps, industrial refuse and commercially devastated people . . . . (in Ward, 1996, "West Virginia's second forest")

But, Lewis goes on to explain that the destruction was worsened by fires that swept through areas where dry branches and treetops were left behind by the lumberjacks. In 1908, there were 710 fires that burned an area of 1.7 million acres--about one-tenth of the state, and one fifth of its forested area. "Destruction of the deep humus soil that had built up on the forest floor for thousands of years reduced countless acres of land to bare rock in the highest elevations of the interior counties" (in Ward, 1996, "West Virginia's second forest"). The timber cutting also was blamed for flooding throughout the state--which saw increases of anywhere from 28 to 83 percent in various parts of the state.

At about the time the timber companies finished deforesting large segments of West Virginia, the exploitation of the coal reserves began. In Braxton County, this process began with the arrival of the Coal and Coke Railroad in 1904. By 1930, most of the mines had played out; in the 1950s the railroad closed its Gassaway train yard, pulled up its rails and moved on. The out-migration

which began during the Great Depression became a flood by the 1950s. The first to leave were the owners of the sawmills, timber operations, and coal mines--who were originally from places like New York, Chicago, and Newark, New Jersey. After World War II, returning soldiers were unable to find work. Some tried to make a go of it in farming, but with no railroad transportation or passable roads available to transport agricultural products they were forced to migrate to cities in Ohio and other parts of the Midwest (DeYoung, 1995).

> In Braxton, out-migration was pronounced. There were 24,000 residents in 1920, but fewer than 13,000 by 1970. . . . Agriculture declined along with all other private sector undertakings: fully 60 percent of all Braxton workers in 1930 were engaged in agriculture, while only 3 percent remained by 1980 (p. 77).

Coal mining has a similar history in West Virginia of intense exploitation--of both the land and the miners--in the first half of the century, followed by mechanization in the 1950s, competition from overseas and open-pit operations in the Western states, and large-scale lay offs. The exploitation of the land continues--coal is still extracted in massive quantities, but the well-paid mining jobs it provides are a fraction of previous levels of employment for local people. With the decline in coal in the southern counties and the steel industry in the north, poverty, and consequently, out-migration worsened in the 1980s. West Virginia lost 8 percent of its population during that decade (Couto, 1994).

In considering how the overall decline in West Virginia's fortunes played out in Braxton County, DeYoung posits that the single most important factor--outweighing any older theories about social backwardness, traditional values, or lack of initiative--was the early dependency on exhaustible natural resources owned or sold to northern industrialists,

> who prospered more substantially from the exchange. Such "economic development" engendered many short-lived and dangerous employment industries; created primarily laboring jobs; and left a wake of environmental destruction once the resources were extracted. . . . the legacy of many early twentieth century development patterns in fact still affects all county social institutions, including the public schools (1995, p. 72).

What were the circumstances within which local people not only stood by and let it happen, but even participated? Wendel Berry, in writing about a similar scenario that played out in Kentucky and elsewhere in rural America writes,

> The bait that has opened communities to exploitation and destruction has always been ready cash for local people. But there has never been as much cash forthcoming to the local people as to people elsewhere--not by far (Berry, 1987).

People made choices and other people took advantage. The Menominee had well established understandings of the value of an intact forest, which served as a protective factor during this era. West Virginians who sold their timber or mineral rights were cash poor, and no doubt thought they were doing the right thing for their

families or communities. Some West Virginians--particularly among the political elite--were no doubt just as cussed and irresponsible as the industrialists who took advantage. Who could have imagined the ruthlessness of the subsequent exploitation and the brevity of its benefit to the local economy? And who, in hindsight, might not have made different choices?

West Virginia Today

> . . . Appalachia combines in tension the beauty of creation and the demands of commerce. The region, like a picture window, displays the potential and the consequences of social and economic policies. And, like a mirror, Appalachia reflects the trends and choices of national and global economies (Rausch, 1996).
>
> Even in times of long-term growth and expansion at the

national level, West Virginia continues to struggle with low wages, high unemployment, and ongoing out-migration. These factors continue to make the state vulnerable to exploitation by outside interests. Rausch describes the overall situation in Appalachia:

> Initially integrated into the larger U.S. economy as a mineral and natural resource colony, Appalachia now finds itself the dumping ground for garbage, toxic waste, and the unwanted members of society. Hungry for jobs and revenue, rural counties vie with one another to store the nation's refuse by filling abandoned coal mines and stripped areas with household and commercial waste. Frequently industrial parks in these counties stand idle --a testimony to the win-lose drama of laissez-faire economics.

> The proliferation of prisons in rural areas emerges as a growth industry (Rausch. 1996, p. 31).

Today, the forests--which have largely recovered from the devastation of the earlier timber industry--may face the same fate as at the turn of the century, because many of the same conditions exist that pressured cash poor people into selling their timber to the highest bidder, regardless of the ecological consequences. Additionally a voracious lumber, wood chip, and pulp industry has moved aggressively into the southeastern United States to harvest the regenerated forest (Ward, 1996).

Besides the resurgence in the timber industry, there has been other economic growth in the region, especially along the crossroads in the interstates and corridors built by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Ron Eller cautions that these crossroads growth centers are very different sorts of places from rooted, rural communities, though. He characterizes them as being tied to the national and global economies, where they create an environment resembling urban areas outside of the region, an environment "where place is not something that is valued and community means something very different" (Woodside, 1996).

Unfortunately, these growth centers tend to drain the surrounding countryside of retail and service dollars. In Braxton County,

> . . . Interstate 79 has enabled locals to shop at large malls to the north and south of the county which are now within an hour's drive from either boundary. There is little need for either tourists or local residents to stay close to Gassaway, Sutton, or Burnsville as there once was.
>
> Things are particularly severe in Burnsville. There are no supermarkets, department stores, auto dealers, movie houses, or bowling alleys here at all today. But they are all available within minutes by auto down I-79 in Flatwoods, or Sutton (DeYoung, 1995, p. 123).

A tradition of resistance. What cannot be ignored in this portrayal of a century of modernist "development," however, is the ability of Mountaineers to organize themselves to disrupt the plans of industry and government through strikes or intensive political action in counties and the state capitol.

Lynda Ann Ewen (1996) reminds us of the myopic, ahistorical view of the Buffalo Creek disaster presented by one of the world's leading sociologists, Kai T. Erikson (1976). Erikson painted a picture of dependent, submissive, and fatalistic people who suffered various forms of mental illness following the devastating flood--caused by the rupture of a slag dam created by a local mining company--that destroyed most of their community and killed 125 people. He attributed their response to disaster as partly due to weaknesses in the cultural underpinnings of their psyches, and expressed concern and doubt about their ability to survive in the

modern world without the support of a close knit traditional community.[3]

Ewen (1996), however, points out that in response to this manmade disaster, three years later,

> the United Mineworkers' local at Buffalo Creek kicked off a strike that swept the coalfields of America, lasted two years and was the largest wildcat strike of the century. At one time, over 100,000 miners were idled by the militant pickets that had originated out of Buffalo Creek. . . . (p. 25).

The Buffalo Creek local president, Sim Howze was jailed after he refused to order his men to cross the picket line, and was later supported by thousands of miners in a demonstration in Charleston.

> By the time the wildcat strike was over the miners had both won an apology from a federal judge and forced the companies to abandon federal injunctions as a mechanism for arbitration (p. 25).

In the past several years, citizen lobbyists have also fought for and won some tough environmental protection legislation. For example, during the 1997 session just ended at this writing, citizens from Mercer county fought the establishment of a massive autoclave to process out-of-state hazardous medical waste in their community. West Virginia is conveniently located near the NY City/Washington, DC megalopolis, and has many hollows and abandoned

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[3]My copy of Erikson's book has this endorsement by columnist Anthony Lewis on the dustcover, "This is a rare and moving book. From the particulars of human sorrow and strain after a great *natural disaster* it weaves larger truths about our society." [emphasis added]

strip mines in which to tuck away urban trash. The Mercer county lobbyists convinced the legislature to pass a bill making it necessary for communities to vote before permits can be granted to build autoclaves for hazardous medical wastes (shipped in from anywhere in the country). The proposed autoclave would heat 50,000 pounds of medical waste a day, which would then be hauled to a local landfill. The citizen's group succeeded in getting the bill passed requiring community input for this kind of economic development.

Another group got a bill passed in the 1997 session that requires the state economic development office to disclose the incentives (tax and other giveaways) they are offering to corporations (like the pulp mill) to attract industry. In their fervor to attract jobs, the economic development officials have tended to offer up the state for more exploitation--promising to provide training, reduce or eliminate taxes, move schools, ease restrictions, or otherwise subsidize big business at the expense of citizens in rural areas, whose quality of life is affected not only by the degradation of the environment, but also by the lack of tax dollars to support schools and other services.

However, there probably won't be much help restricting the exploitation of the environment coming from the executive branch charged with protecting the environment. The new director of the Department of Environmental Protection, John E. Caffrey, spent over 30 years as an engineer in the mining industry. He supports the

development of a massive pulp mill opposed by environmentalists, favors the development of landfills for out-of-state garbage as long as they are properly engineered and operated, and thinks restrictions on coal mining too often get in the way of the ability of mining companies to exploit high quality coal reserves (Ward, 1997).

So, once again, the state seems poised for massive resource extraction, with only underfunded citizens' groups and the power of the ballot box standing in the way. West Virginians are once again told to choose between jobs provided as the result of intensive exploitation of the land resulting in degradation of the environment, or continuing high levels of unemployment.

Educational Reform in West Virginia.

Accounts of early educational reform, as DeYoung (1995) points out, were written primarily by school administrators, and generally told stories of resistance on the part of local school boards and to state initiatives in school accountability. In Kentucky a similar picture was created by writer Jesse Stuart, of local educators fighting the prejudiced, ignorant, and recalcitrant parents. These images continue to affect perceptions of Kentucky schools, and figured prominently in the 1991 school reform legislation. DeYoung suggests that there is a simpler explanation than recalcitrant parents for shortcomings in central Appalachian schools, that is,

the lack of resources to generate tax rates that would support good schooling. In the 1980s, particularly, as state and federal supplements to education began to diminish, schools came under increasing pressure to develop human capital. So they were being asked to do more with less money.

In West Virgnia, contemporary school officials have been working away at trying to improve schools to help students be more competitive in the global economy of the information age. School reform began in earnest after the May 1982 decision by Ohio County Circuit Judge Arthur Recht, in which he called for the complete reconstruction of the educational system in West Virginia. He found the Lincoln County schools to be inadequate in every way and the system of financing public schools discriminatory against children in counties with a low tax base. A "Master Plan" was developed to deal with all areas of public schooling from facilities to curriculum content (Childress, 1995).

In 1983, the U.S. Department of Education published *A Nation at Risk*, with delivered a scathing assessment of public education nationally and kicked off a period of school reform that continues to this day. In West Virginia, the combination of the national educational reform fervor, the Recht decision, and a statewide teachers's strike in 1987 launched an intensive reform effort involving the governor, legislature, state department of education, and business and industry executives. Some of the accomplishments of

the statewide reform in the past dozen years have included the establishment of

- a computer network in 1984 that linked all the schools to the state department of education for the purpose of downloading administrative data;
- the West Virginia Education Fund, a nonprofit, private-industry-supported foundation for providing small grants to teachers for special projects;
- an Honors Academy for students;
- a summer principals' academy;
- a statewide testing program;
- direct intervention authority for school systems whose performance levels don't meet the requirement;
- advanced placement courses in every county;
- a computer-assisted basic skills program in elementary schools;
- the School Building Authority, to fund the renovation or replacement of school buildings;
- the Center for Professional Development to provide staff development opportunities for educators;
- changes in local school board eligibility;
- a teaching internship during the first teaching position in the state;
- school curriculum teams, local school improvement councils,

and faculty senates;

- improvements in teachers' salaries;
- changes in the number of administrative personnel and administrator training;
- changes in school funding;
- full-day kindergarten;
- the Curriculum Resource Laboratory;
- frameworks for mathematics and science curriculum;
- the High Schools that Work program;
- a statewide personnel evaluation system;
- the Mountaineer Youth Science Camp and the Governor's Schools for Mathematics and Science;
- the online West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS); and safe schools initiatives (Childress, 1995).

This amounts to an impressive flurry of activity.[4] Further, some of these efforts involved sizable price tags. For instance, as of April, 1995, more than $46 million had been allocated to install in every elementary school computer equipment and software for basic skills and computer education programs; additionally, 10,000 educators had received at least 3 days of training in their use (Childress, 1995).

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[4]There was a great deal of effort at the higher education level, as well, which I will not describe for the purpose of this discussion.

As for impacts, in 1995 the West Virginia Department of Education reported trend data for student performances (in Childress, 1995):

- SAT scores, though above the national average, fell slightly in both verbal and math sections between 1989-90 and 1993-94. Only 16 percent of students took the test.
- ACT scores, though slightly below the national average, rose slightly during those same years, from 19.7 to 19.9. More than 54 percent took the test.
- CTBS Total Basic Skills scores rose slightly and remain slightly above the national average.
- The number of high schools offering advanced placement (AP) courses rose from 59 to 110 between 1988 and 1994. The percent of students who passed the AP exams rose from 44.9 percent in 1991 to 50 percent in 1994; the national average is 66.1 percent.
- The dropout rate declined overall since 1989-90 and is the lowest in the Southern Regional Education Board states, and at 16.1 percent compares favorably to the national average.
- The overall college-going rate has increased almost four percentage points since 1988. Over 46 percent of graduating seniors went on to postsecondary education, however, this still represents the lowest rate of all the states.

Overall, this looks like a mixed result, considering the effort expended. And a deeper look at the statistics also reveals some troubling trends, which I will discuss shortly.

There is an interesting postscript to this story of statewide education reform, which began in 1982 with the Recht decision. The attorney, Dan Hedges, who brought the original suit reopened it in 1995. Hedges maintained that the Recht decision focused on facility financing, the funding formula, property taxation, and educational standards. Hedges made the case that the current funding formula continues to be inadequate (Childress, 1995). On April 2, 1997, Special Judge Dan Robinson made his ruling in the case, that the state's public educational system is unconstitutional because of wide differences in funding and quality between school systems in poorer and richer counties (Kabler, 1997, April 13).

The inadequacy of the funding can be traced to the patterns of land ownership and a state economy based on resource extraction according to a recent study by Craig B. Howley (1996).

> Taxes on lands held for speculation in natural resources by absentee, corporate owners (up to 70 percent of all lands) are assessed at one-fifth of the value of all owner-occupied residential property. Worse, coal production, though taxed, is taxed at the lowest rates where production is greatest. Resources exist to fund schools adequately, but they are controlled by organizations with little concern for educational adequacy for West Virginians. Needless to say, these organizations are politically quite active (p. 6).

Beginning in 1988, the new governor, Gaston Caperton, searched for ways to address perceptions of mismanagement of state government in the wake of the previous administration and to respond to teacher demands for salary improvement. School consolidation was the mechanism he used to demonstrate fiscal responsibility and to raise teacher salaries largely by reducing the number of teachers and spreading the same dollars around to fewer individuals. He established the West Virginia School Building Authority (SBA) to fund locally initiated school building projects, but only if their plans met certain economy of scale standards (Howley, 1996).

As a result, small schools closed widely, and a disproportionate net loss of schools was suffered in rural locales and less affluent communities. In fact, over one quarter of all schools in West Virginia have been closed since 1990.

Using CTBS scores, percentage of students receiving free and reduced-price meals, and enrollment per grade level figures, Howley conducted multivariate analyses at the school and district levels to study the effect of the increased school size on low-income students. His results (which replicated the results of a similar California study) showed that in 1990, before the onset of state-enforced consolidation, small schools and districts enhanced the achievement of poor West Virginia students, whereas large schools and districts enhanced the achievement of affluent students. After consolidation, impoverished schools suffered losses in achievement,

while more affluent schools experience gains. Moreover, the negative effects of large size among impoverished schools and districts were twice the magnitude of positive effects of large size for affluent districts (Howley, 1996).

With this context set, I would like to refocus on the condition of rural schooling in West Virginia, by considering the role of West Virginia schools in developing the cultural, social, human, ecological, and financial capital in rural communities.

Cultural Capital

In earlier chapters, I have described how the schools were used to modernize or Americanize Mexican Americans, Mormons, and American Indians, usually with severe negative repercussions for the students and their communities. Rural Appalachian schools also have been viewed during most of this century as sites for reshaping students' worldviews into something more closely resembling the mainstream (urban) society (Whisnant, 1980; 1983; DeYoung, 1995).

Ongoing efforts to "fix" Appalachians. Kai Erikson was well primed to construct his version of the Buffalo Creek disaster, based on generations of writings by missionaries, secular uplift workers, and technocrats--who all seemed to be inspired by the same strain of ethnocentrism. Whisnant (1990) after extensive research into the Council of the Southern Mountains, the 1960s Great Society volunteerism programs, and the Appalachian Regional Commission,

made four basic observations about the cultural assumptions and beliefs that have driven the activities of these and other groups intent on "modernizing the Mountaineer":

1. They generally assume that Appalachia is a "deviant subculture" whose problems owe more to physical isolation, depleted gene pools, pathological inbreeding, clan wars, hookworm, moonshining, and welfarism than to the nation's unceasing demands on the region for cheap labor, land, raw materials, and energy.

2. Like the missionaries who insisted that mountain children would be saved only if they learned which side the fork goes on, the plans and programs have insisted that their grandchildren mold themselves to bureaucratic conceptions of middle-class social organization and lifeways.

3. They accept mainstream values and idealized social, economic, and political norms as the natural boundary of feasible approaches to development.

4. They reject any approach to planned, democratic, community-based public development that promises to alter--or fails to rationalize--established patterns of private entrepreneurial development (1980, pp. xix-xx).

Just as West Virginians have been told how to develop the economy, rural parents (over 80 percent of the state is rural) have been told to accept training for their children in "mainstream values and idealized social, economic, and political norms" (see item 3 above). These norms and values are uncritically accepted by state officials as the necessary and natural boundaries for a school curriculum

meant to prepare a workforce for participation in the global economy. In this way, the schools are seen as outposts of the national culture, located in rural areas (Whisnant, 1990; DeYoung, 1995).

DeYoung describes the work of rural sociologists, Schwarzeller and Brown (1960) which helped shape some of the Great Society era programming for schools.

> They argued that the kinship, political and economic systems of the region continue to instill character traits among Appalachia's youth which were inappropriate for their integration into the increasingly available outside world even into the 1960s. They applauded the expansion of federal school aid and greater state pressures on local schools to teach modern subjects, believing such policies could help mountain schools become the "cultural bridge" from an agrarian/kinship centered Appalachian subculture into the national industrial society (1994, pp. 13-14).

In other words, the cultural capital that students from rural Appalachian (in this case, Kentucky) homes bring with them to school has little currency in the school setting, and needs to be stripped away, in much the same way as the boarding schools attempted to strip away the native culture of American Indians. Many American Indian students have resisted this process in the only way open to them, often with the support of their parents. They put in their time until age 16, and then they leave (Spring, 1994). For some rural Appalachian people, a similar process of cultural discontinuity may be taking place. The school seems to be involved

in trying to turn students into strangers, who no longer value the same things parents have kept at the center of their lives.

Maureen Porter (1996) conducted a yearlong ethnographic study of a Kentucky community that was grappling with statewide school reform. She described basic differences between community values and school values: a) many families experience a conflict between the knowledge required for success in school and the kinds of abilities that enable a person to be one of the 'home folks' (common sense versus book learning); b)some parents who had strong Scripture-based values had religious conflicts with secular education; and c) many parents worried that young people who got a lot of book learning were at risk of feeling like they were better than other people and were no longer aligned with common people.

All three of these attitudes toward formal schooling have embedded in them a critique of the larger culture: a) that it has little to do with life in the country and too much schooling may actually be harmful to survival in a rural environment by reducing a person's common sense; b) the larger culture operates out of a set of worldly values and beliefs that are Unchristian and in opposition to Biblical truth; and c) the status system of the larger culture does not recognize the intelligence of common people or respect the dignity of hard work.

Porter posits that these values grew from the experiences people shared in carving out an existence in the mountains. "Life

meant very hard work, self-sufficiency within a small kinship and/or neighborhood group, reliance on the grace of God, and strong family connections" (1996, p. 79). There are striking parallels here with the Amish view of the schools as places where children go to be trained for survival in the Kingdom of the World, making state-run public schools irrelevant, even harmful, to a people who strive to live in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Because of the oppositional nature of school culture versus local culture in the Kentucky community Porter studied, parents don't push their kids to excel, and many at the age of 16 will exercise their option to withdraw with their parents' support.

> Hickory County people feel that a person who has had a lot of schooling is at greater risk of "getting above their raising" or even "losing the mountain." These phrases are used derisively to mean someone who has forgotten where they come from, feels that they are better than others, believes they know everything, and/or is no longer aligned with the common person and thus is a suspicious--even dangerous--person to be avoided (Porter, 1996, p. 78).

It is difficult to say without more ethnographic research how much of this oppositional world view exists in rural West Virginia, however, I will return to this theme in my discussion of human capital.

Social Capital

I will begin by reminding readers of Coleman's (1988)

definition: *social capital* refers to features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. Both Coleman and Putnam (1993) stressed the importance of patterns of engagement, including things people do just to have fun. When people get together for school choir performances, athletic events, PTA meetings, band booster fund raising, and so forth, they get to know each other. This can result in a community of people who know and like each other, and who cooperate to accomplish things for the school or community.

In a small, rural West Virginia community such as Burnsville in Braxton County, there may be many church congregations and large family groups, but the school is the only institution that regularly brings people together from all segments of the community. An important question then becomes, what happens when the school is consolidated with one or two other schools from different parts of the county, and relocated many miles away at the county seat? And what if only four or five of the local girls or boys make the varsity team at the new consolidated high school, instead of the much larger number who played on the local team? Further, if you have students raised in homes that value close family ties and who tend to keep to themselves, how do they fare in the large new high school or middle school?

These are questions that deserve investigation, in light of

research that shows a strong association between the presence of social capital and the amount of economic and democratic activity that takes place in a community (Putnam, 1994). Small rural communities that lose their school lose much more than convenience. In the nineteen century, communities often formed around the establishment of a subscription school, which became the shared public space within which they held elections, entertained one another, and educated both adults and children. Today, communities, which have already lost most of their stores, movie houses, bowling alleys, and other gathering places and work sites to the arrival of an interstate or corridor highway, suffer a severe blow when the school also closes. It is difficult to see how they might get together for the mutual benefit of their community once the school is gone and everyone has to go somewhere else to work, play, or learn.

However, this is a matter of little concern to economic developers who shed few tears for lost communities. Robert Reich, former Secretary of Labor, did not mourn the passing of Homestead, Pennsylvania when the steel mill closed.

> Why should we care about Homestead, or for that matter, about any town or city in decline? . . . Americans are always leaving some place behind; departures are in our ancestral genes . . . Homestead and its people . . . are separable (in Couto, 1994, p. 229).

The closing of a factory and the closing of a school are not the

same thing, but the willingness to ignore the protests of parents and the possible negative impacts on communities and schools caused by school closures demonstrates the same lack of regard for community as expressed by Reich. It can also strike a blow at nurturing parent trust and involvement in the new consolidated school.

Human Capital

As DeYoung (1994) points out, conceptions of human capital deal centrally with culture. The role assigned to schools--in West Virginia and elsewhere--is to transform rural populations into productive members of a modern workforce. A key element in this hoped for transformation is to demonstrate to children that the importance of place and kinship are secondary to adult success--not primary as they have been raised to believe. Children are taught to think in terms of occupational and professional careers, and to view their education as instrumental to the acquisition of credentials and degrees that will facilitate their entry into the world of work. Further, they are taught that it is only through a good job that they will be able to achieve all of their goals and acquire the material goods that will make life secure and comfortable.[5]

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[5]In reporting on the variety of compensatory activities offered to students at the middle school that he studied in Braxton County, DeYoung noted with irony that teachers also arranged for their students to travel to shopping malls and to eat at fast food

However, Porter (1996) found in her study of a rural Kentucky community that school was not the site recognized by many local parents as being a reliable source of the human capital development their children would need for survival locally. These parents suggested that the know-how, or common sense, required for life in their area can *sometimes* be found at school, but there are other more reliable sources in the community. Common sense, according to Porter, "spans the breadth of knowledge about how to relate to peers and elders, how to live off the land, how to work together for mutual survival and fun, how to get what you need from a distant and dense government bureaucracy, how to fix your own car and dry your own shucky beans" (1996, p. 79). Porter interviewed teachers who understood and respected this sort of knowledge and the difference between it and academic knowledge, "All college does is specialize you in one area. I studied home ec, but to can beans I called my mother!" (P. 79).

In Braxton County, West Virginia, DeYoung observed the deer hunting and gun ownership subculture. The schools accommodated it by offering gun safety classes and accepting high absences the first week of deer hunting season in the fall. Indications of parental support for practical schooling were found in comments of vocational teachers he interviewed, who contrasted the strong support they

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restaurants not available in their home communities; teachers considered these outings to be educational activities.

received from parents to the lack of support teachers of academic subjects received.

There were strong similarities between Porter's accounts of education in Hickory County, Kentucky and DeYoung's reports of Braxton County, West Virginia. It is hard to say how much of this similarity is attributable to a shared Appalachian culture or to a rural working class culture in general. Informants in DeYoung's account told him about the clannishness of many of the families, attributing it to the Scots-Irish origins of many of the people. Ewen (1996) writes about the Celtic background of much of the region and attributes some of the ongoing tension between working class West Virginians and the company bosses and politicians to the age-old oppression of the Celts by the English. However, much American Indian literature venerates cultural elements such as strong family ties, respect for elders, and spirituality that also exist in Appalachian culture. Sorting out what elements of mountain culture can be traced back to Celtic, Cherokee, or other origins is a topic too complex for this thesis but deserving of additional study.

I am inclined to think that some values supported by parents in rural Kentucky and West Virginia may be shared in other rural places as well. For example, Cahill and Martland (1993) make recommendations for rural school guidance counselors based on their research in Newfoundland that seemed to parallel contemporary Appalachian observations. They note that career counseling theory

has grown out of assumptions rooted in urban-industrial production, and that applying these theories to rural populations may not be valid. Ignoring this urban industrial basis can mean creating counseling programs that ignore the values, practices, and social order of the rural community being served, which can have a negative impact on the self-esteem of rural students.

Cahill and Martland (1993) described four sets of basic assumptions underlying career guidance programs that may be drastically different in rural areas. First, career development theories place a lot of emphasis on occupation as central to an individual's identity, and aim to help students match their interests, abilities, and personality types to various types of work. Work in this case is understood to mean *paid* work, or job holding. The lower level of participation in the paid labor force by many rural people is often interpreted by educators as an indication that they lack a work ethic. These researchers disagree:

> In a rural setting, work encompasses a broader range of activities, all of which contribute to the well-being of the household. Cutting wood for buildings and for fuel, constructing new houses, picking and preserving berries, hunting and butchering, gardening and fishing for one's own consumption have helped most rural Newfoundlanders achieve a standard of living that would be unattainable in an urban environment with the same cash incomes (pp. 12-13).

Not only is this type of production important for sustenance, but it is also an important source of status for the provider. They

explain, "To be known in the community as a hard worker is fine praise and earning such a reputation does not depend totally on jobs found in the labour market" (Cahill & Martland, 1993, p. 13).

A second assumption--that there is a diversity of careers and occupations to choose from--is also off the mark for most rural areas, which tend to depend on one or two main industries, and which tend to provide a limited number of services to residents (some of those are on a volunteer, in-kind, or part-time basis). Under these circumstances, students need to become generalists, so they can combine a variety of work activities instead of following the urban model and becoming specialists. If students do not have the option of multitracking--learning a variety of useful skills--in their educational programs, they may come to the conclusion that they have no choice but to leave their community to find satisfying work in a specialty.

A third assumption of most career counseling is mobility, that is, the assumption that a person will be willing to move to take a job in their specialty. However, many rural people will choose to stay home or come back home even though it may mean a reduction in income.

A last assumption these researchers challenged related to occupational change. They discovered that many people used a variety of adaptations to remain at home: temporary migration to the city to earn and save some cash; taking on short-term job

opportunities as they arise; or commuting to larger towns. Persistent job changers are often seen by urban people as maladaptive, or as having some psychological defect that inhibited their ability to stick with one thing. In a rural area, it could be a positive adaptive strategy.

Cahill and Martland (1993) also described four basic occupational options for rural people:

> Firstly, they can move to the cities where there are more numerous opportunities. Secondly, they can pursue the traditional resource-based and service (including government) occupations. . . . Thirdly, they can combine several work activities that are available on a part-time or temporary basis, perhaps incorporating temporary migration. Fourthly, they can create their own opportunities (p. 16).

The last option is one that Jonathan Sher and the REAL program have explored for several years in a number of communities in Appalachia. REAL (which stands for Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning) helps rural students study their communities and their own interests, develop a plan, and obtain financing to start and operate a business (Larson & McCullough, 1996).

Cahill and Martland (1993) suggest that breakthroughs in telecommunications networks have reduced some of the problems related to distance, and may be opening up opportunities for rural economic development that do not rely so heavily on natural resources. They suggest there is a role for career counselors in

passing along information and skills that will help students find ways to succeed at home as well as in urban society.

However, the first option seems to be the one that many teachers and administrators in rural West Virginia feel it is their responsibility to prepare students for--to leave home, go to college, and work in the city. When rural schools uncritically deliver the national curriculum, they may play a role in undermining rather than increasing the local community's human capital by training people to leave.

Many rural people do not need to be told by statisticians that getting a secondary or even a postsecondary education is no guarantee that they will be able to stay home and get a decent job. For the rest of us who need numbers to be convinced, Couto (1994) offers the following observations:

- The combination of increased educational attainment and increased prosperity comes together primarily in the *metropolitan* counties on the edge of Appalachia (p. 181).
- The former economic prosperity of Northern Appalachia [which includes nearly all of West Virginia] was built on a work force with a high school education, not college. . . . By 1990, the region had improved its high school measure but its income measure had declined (pp. 181-182).
- West Virginia was the only Appalachian state that ranked in

the top half of the nation for rates of high school completion (p. 182).

- Per capita income in West Virginia fell from 80 percent of the national per capita figure in 1979 to 70.7 percent in 1989 (p. 89).

Central to any discussion of human capital development via the schools is the basic question: For whose benefit are West Virginia schools working in their school reform efforts? It is unclear that raising CTBS scores and increasing the number of students who graduate from high school and go on to college is having a positive impact on the great majority of communities in the state. Delivering the national curriculum to rural West Virginia students more adeptly and intensively is not preparing young people to become valued members of a local community, to cherish and protect the local ecosystem, or to live well in a nonurban setting. At best it may attract a chip mill or a landfill so a few local people can operate the high tech equipment used to operate such a temporary outposts of a global industry.

Ecological Capital

> U.S. 19 winds north from the Flatwoods Go-Mart, the Days Inn and the soon-to-be-opened outlet mall. Five miles up the road, past old farmhouses and weathered school bus stop shelters, sits West Virginia's newest timber giant.
>
> The Weyerhaeuser plant dominates a huge clearing

> bordered by rolling Braxton County hills. It's big enough to cover a football field. It cost $150 million to build and employs 170 workers (Ward, 1996, "Timber Boom Brings Questions").

The Braxton County plant is one of three large mills that chips trees into flakes that are mixed with glue and pressed into oriented strand board (OSB), a sturdy material used to build roofs, walls, and floors in homes and offices. The Weyerhaeuser plant in Braxton County consumes 900,000 tons of wood each year; a similar plant owned by Georgia-Pacific Corporation in Fayette County consumes 650,000 tons per year; and another OSB plant in Buckhannon, owned by Trus-Joist MacMillan, chips up about 250,000 tons of trees per year. The pulp mill proposed for Mason County by Parsons & Whittemore, which at this writing remains on hold according to company officials, would consume more than 2,000 acres of forest (an area larger than Blackwater Falls State Park) every month (Ward, 1996, "Timber boom brings questions").

The technology being used in these mills is able to chip hardwoods as well as softwoods, so hardwoods are being used to produce pulp or OSB that could be used to produce furniture, veneer, and other value-added products. In short, a process has begun, which could result in a new round of exploitation of the forests such as was experienced between 1870 and 1920, if allowed to continue with the current low level of regulation or planning.

According to Ken Ward (1996, "Timber boom brings questions"),

a combination of factors have contributed to a recent boom in the wood products industry in West Virginia:

- the recovery of the forest, with many hardwood trees over 80 years old;
- new chipping technology that can chip all types of trees, including hardwoods; and
- logging restrictions in the Northwest that have forced paper and wood industries to exploit resources in other areas, including the Appalachia region.

West Virginia currently has a large treasure of ecological capital, in its trees, natural beauty, forest ecosystems, and minerals. The pressing question is whether or not citizens will be able to use these abundant resources in a way that will not deplete and scar the land as was done earlier in the century. Surely there is a role for schools, community colleges, and universities in educating the more than 260,000 private forest owners in the state. Currently, the Forestry Division and the wood products industry are the two primary providers of forest owner education. However, environmentalists worry about the sorts of guidance these sources are providing. Industrial forest management advisors have a vested interest in efficient exploitation of the resource, while the Forestry Division--whose job it is to both promote the forest resources and to protect them--is understaffed and unable in most

cases to spend time with individual landowners (Ward, 1996, "Landowner education key factor in forest protection"). There are a few others involved in landowner education including private consultants and the Center for Economic Options, a nonprofit organization that helps develop home-based and micro businesses and business networks in the state. Currently, the Center for Economic Options appears to be the only organization with strong commitments to sustainable use of the forest resource, and to looking at the forests as part of a more complex system of potential economic development in the state (Sharlip, personal communication, April 22, 1997).

Financial Capital

There is often a sense of hopelessness in the portrayal of West Virginian and Appalachian economic realities. Characterized as an internal colony, the Appalachian region has suffered more than a century of environmental degradation and export of its natural resources, low taxation of it lands held by absentee owners, technocratic economic planning, and other heavy-handed interventions by corporate and federal interests (Whisnant, 1980; Couto, 1994). This has led to a great gap between the rich and the poor, a shrinking middle class, and the steady loss of people--many with strong education credentials provided by educational institutions supported by West Virginia taxpayers (Couto, 1994).

West Virginia state government has been involved in the traditional development schemes that organize themselves around manufacturers' preferences and that put West Virginia communities in a bidding war with other communities. The winners in these competitions tend to be those communities willing to give away the most--in wages, health benefits, environmental regulation, infrastructure, and other elements needed to sustain a decent quality of life for citizens and the natural environment. West Virginia communities that win in these competitions can never be secure, however, because at any time another community in the Appalachian region, or the United States, or elsewhere in the world could underbid them. When that happens, the community suffers all the heartbreaking effects of economic decline: people leave, businesses close, health and other services become scarcer, the schools close, and usually the community is left with a degraded environment. Educators, believing there is little future for their students in such a declining local scene, do what they believe is the responsible thing: they promote student success in the national curriculum so their students can succeed elsewhere.

Final Thoughts

What I have attempted to show in this portrayal of the West Virginia economic and education scene is how things are working now and are apt to continue working if people continue down their

current path. However, embedded in this portrayal of how to continue to reproduce failure are a few clues about how to do things differently. My final chapter will summarize what has been learned by studying these three communities and look for some ideas about how to do things differently.

In our search for new answers, we may benefit most by seeking advice from a different, more indigenous group of experts. And we may need to develop a common language for talking about what constitutes a good life.

Chapter 6.

Rural Education in the Fourth Epoch

> Universal education may lead to technological idiocy and nationalist provinciality--rather than to the informed and independent intelligence (Mills, 1959, p. 168).

In developing my investigation of the relationship of rural education to rural community viability, I have heeded the advice of C. Wright Mills. Each of the groups I have studied have offered insights compared with the others in their histories and in the relationship of schooling to the strengthening or weakening of community social, cultural, human, ecological, and financial capital. Clearly, it will not be possible for us to reform rural schools in any meaningful way unless we understand more about the local economies in which they are situated. And that will mean knowing more than a community's average income level or rate of joblessness. In this last section, I will attempt to decribe some of the insights into the relationship between schooling and rural community viability offered by the three groups I studied, the Amish, the Menominee, and the rural Appalachians of West Virginia.

Influences of Contemporary Pedagogy

I chose for this study to look most closely at the events in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which is the time during which the system of public schooling was established and then modernized to roughly its contemporary form. Today, more than a decade of school reform has done little to change the structures put in place during this time period (Cuban, 1982).

Religion. Religious forces played a major role in shaping the schools in their earliest days at the end of the last century. This fact cannot be over stated. Religion remains a major force in the lives of many rural people today, sometimes pitting people against the schools. An interesting line of research would be to trace the Anabaptist roots of some of the Appalachian churches, and see what relationship those influences may have had in disputes over textbook adoptions.

For the Amish, religion informs every aspect of daily life, and the true textbook of children's education is the Amish way of life. They are not overly impressed by the benefits of formal academic training of children and youth. They did not establish their own schools, choosing instead to send their children to the public schools until the period during which schools were modernized under the influence of Frederick W. Taylor and the efficiency movement. At that point, the schools also became increasingly secular and the Amish did what they had to do to withdraw their

children from modern schools.

The Menominee and Appalachian peoples were first schooled by missionaries, who viewed the indigenous cultures of students as inappropriate for a successful life--either in the kingdom of God or the kingdom of the world. Catholic missionaries converted many Menominee people to Christianity, while the mainstream Protestant churches converted many Mountaineers. Neither the Catholic nor the Protestant missionaries who schooled these youth were willing to offer a critique of the concurrent exploitation of resources taking place. There was no form of early liberation theology that I could detect. Instead mission educators hoped that by teaching children to be literate and to conform to social conventions of the times they would be giving them tools to protect their own resources. However, in the meantime, they may have done much to undermine the self confidence of students by showing so little respect for the lifeways of their families.

In some ways, this missionary movement was energized by an early women's movement. Caught up in a millenial dream of a Protestant-republican society, pioneers in women's education urged training for women in teaching so that they could become the missionaries of civilization. Catherine Beecher and others believed that training in teaching fitted a woman with the desired qualities and skills she would need later when she reared her own children. Women trained in eastern colleges subsequently traveled to

Appalachia, Indian reservations, and even to Utah to "civilize" various ethnic groups, including the Mormons.

The Market Economy. The period between the Civil War and World War I saw an almost incomprehensible transformation of both the national culture and infrastructure. Technology and industry were elevated in the national culture almost to the level of gods. Their combined power and might built railroads, factories, bridges, canals, hospitals, colleges, and cities. After the turn of the century, the whole society including government, schools, and other institutions reshaped themselves in the image of industry, and sought technological solutions to address humankinds needs. But of course, it took a lot of energy and other resources to fuel this power house and that's where rural people sacrificed.

At this point in history, the Amish people, who in the past had not seemed too different from their neighbors, became increasing distinct from the larger society. Amish leaders made early judgments about technology. They realized the tendency of the pursuit of efficiency to eliminate human labor, a process that they saw as destructive to what constitutes a good life. They chose to fortify their community ordnungs as sturdy cultural fences dividing them from the activity in which everyone else seemed caught up.

The Menominee had cultural and physical boundaries protecting at least portions of their way of life and their forest. The

missionary and later the BIA boarding schools worked hard, though, to strip away the Menominee identity and language from their children, and replace them with skills and work habits deemed appropriate for the industrial age. During this whole period, educators attempted to turn Menominee children into industrial farmers.

Luckily, Menominee leaders were more successful in preserving the forest. Through legal maneuverings, lobbying in Washington, and other actions over many decades, they held off the timber industry and preserved most of their forest until 1908, when an act of Congress assured its ongoing existance by allowing for sustained yield harvesting. Perhaps it is no coincidence that 1908 is also the year during which 710 forest fires burned 1.7 million acres of forest in West Virginia, causing widespread flooding and other environmental destruction. Senators and congressmen may have passed through those forest fires as they traveled to Capitol Hill from their home states. Or maybe the smoke drifted all the way to Washington.

West Virginia experienced destruction of its forests, and exploitation of its minerals and many of its people. But they also saw the creation of towns all over the state that were bustling economies involved in supplying energy and resources to the industrial centers of the eastern states. During these years, West Virginians may have thought they were becoming permanent players in

the national economy. But by 1930, the game was up, and they had little to show for their lost lands, coal, and timber. In the meantime, the schools had embraced the national curriculum and bureaucratic structures needed for ongoing participation in the urban industrial economy. And leading a traditional, backwoods life was understood to be symptomatic of a culture of poverty.

Science, technology, and universities. Wendell Berry (1987, 1990) writes often about the betrayal of the land grant colleges and universities. Meant to conduct research and educate young men and women in ways that would benefit the regions within which they were located, what they have done instead is promote a method of agriculture that has resulted in the depletion of soil, and the bankruptcy of legions of family farms. These colleges have also instilled a careerist orientation in young people that Berry bluntly labels professional vandalism. David Orr (1994), too, assigns responsibility to colleges and univerities for the type of science that is conducted at those institutions, and the failure to teach environmental ethics or sustainable technologies.

An example of this failure can be found in Wisconsin. The Menominee have organized their college to teach the sustainable forestry that they practice in northeastern Wisconsin. Meanwhile, dairy farmers in that state who decided to switch to a more sustainable form of milk production, had to look first to farmers in

other lands for possible models, and then to each other for new knowledge as they learned from their own experience in rotational grazing. The extension service had little to offer.

The Need for a Postmodern Pedagogy

Education as nation building is part of the economic development pattern that built much of what we still consider useful in our society. What hasn't been understood until recently is the toll the national curriculum took on ethnic minorities--including white ethnic minorities--and rural people generally. We need now to keep what is useful in the national curriculum and develop an equally powerful second half of the curriculum--education as local community building.

For education as nation building school people have looked to the federal research and development specialists and the universities. For education as community building, we need to look to local experts who have learned the art and science of living well locally. Like the graziers who decided to withdraw from the high-input, high-debt farming that was bankrupting their neighbors, local people have to find their own way, and share their knowledge with each other. They need to begin viewing each other as knowledge producers and experts in living well within the particularities of their own part of the country. Educators, too, must begin to view the community as a part of the curriculum that is just as important

as the training and guidance they receive in their college courses and state departments of education.

To live well in a rural place may mean different things for different students. For some young people it will mean learning to spend periods of time away--on a construction crew, or driving a truck, or working two twelve-hour shifts on weekends at a city hospital located in the region, or apprenticing in a trade union to be later on call for periodic jobs in other parts of the country. For people who choose these strategies, spending some time away will provide a way to stay home most of the time, and provide enough cash income to keep a family going.

Others will become members of a network of home-based or microbusinesses, who produce at home or locally for markets outside of the community. They may be knitters, specialty food producers, dried flower producers, furniture builders, or other crafts producers. Others will become master gardeners and produce fresh foods for their own tables and as well as a surplus that is preserved or sold to neighbors or given to elderly or disabled family members. Some will continue the tradition of hunting and gathering the riches from the forests and meadows: ginseng and other medicinal herbs, wild game in their seasons, fish, and wild fruits. Some will judiciously harvest trees. Others will farm and raise livestock. Some people will teach or work for local utilities. Most people will do a combination of these and many other things.

Teachers and administrators will need to get past the idea that there is nothing there for young people in their local community, and find better ways to help students who choose to stay to prepare for rural life. Science teachers could begin by teaching chemistry and biology through a master gardening course, and by instructing students on the forest or grassland or desert ecosystems in which they live. Middle and high school guidance counselors, instead of urging students to specialize, will spend their time seeking opportunities for students to learn multiple skills--in their home community and elsewhere--through mentoring, apprenticing, and formal training.

Students need to learn history, grounded in the events of their own community and the lives of their friends and neighbors. Many rural regions of the country suffered from the shortsighted and environmentally and socially destructive periods of conquest or economic exploitation. However, they need to be taught about these things in a way that does not make them feel overwhelmed or as if they are fated to be that of the newest generation of victims.

Postmodern educational research. Based on Cartesian assumptions--in education dating back to Taylorism--that by breaking things down and examining the parts, you can understand the whole, educational R & D has conducted various experiments to study particular teacher or administrator behaviors, and attempted to

modify them to produce a better product--as measured by standardized testing or through other sorts of formal evaluation.

Educational researchers must move beyond trying to figure out how to alter the behavior of teachers and begin studying the role of the school in local economies. For decades, educational researchers and state department officials have attempted to conduct their business as if it were a neutral enterprise dedicated only to the success of individual students in a global market economy that exists as immutably as the earth and the stars. But there are other ways to think about our age and the modern migration to the cities.

Mills announced the advent of the postmodern age and identified what distinguishes this time clearly and compellingly. He described this time in society--as well as in social science--as one of transition, to what no one yet knows.

> . . . when we try to orient ourselves--if we do try--we find that too many of our old expectations and images are, after all, tied down historically; that too many of our standard categories of thought and of feeling as often disorient us as help to explain what is happening around us; that too many of our explanations are derived from the great historical transition from the Medieval to the Modern Age; and that when they are generalized for use today, they become unwieldy, irrelevant, not convincing (p. 166).

Robert Reich and other leaders have urged us for some time to train up our children to become the new workers in the information age, an age during which the best paid people will sit in cubicles

with computers manipulating symbols, while everyone else will wait on them. But it is hard to imagine or accept the inevitability of a future economy that doesn't include rural American men and women using the earth's renewable resources to produce food, furniture, clothing, tools, and other commodities essential to human existence and fulfillment. In fact, such an idea lacks common sense.

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