May 27, 2010
The Carsen Institute
Mili Duncan

Poverty and Development in Rural America’s Frontier
Describe rural America as a context for thinking about poverty and change in communities; and consider how people get trapped in poverty and what that means for development and change.
America

Poor in rural areas:

Over 7 million are

Of community trends vary by type
growth, though

Slow, modest

Of the land

Population on 80%

17% of the U.S.

50 million people live in small towns

and rural communities
Change: potential in local food & energy
derelationships, stress on natural resources, climate
degradation, pressures on Environmental

Demographic changes: Aging, outmigration of

decades of no investment in poor areas

Economic challenges: Loss of blue collar jobs,

before the downturn really hit

Big challenges in rural America — even
Demographic shifts: the young have always left rural communities.

Groups are in a recent Penn study coming into the U.S....

80% of youth... over all is declining... outmigration... Recently,

Source: Johnson et al., 2005.
Distribution of Minority and Non-Hispanic White Population under Age 20, 2008
Figure 2: Demographic Change, 1990-2000 and 2000-2007
Hispanic Percentage of U.S. Population and

Source: 1990 and 2000 Census Estimates
and 2007 Census Estimates.
Hispanics (2007)

Age Pyramid

Data: U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates
Analysis: K. Johnson, Casey Institute
· Chronically poor communities
· Transitioning areas with amenities
· Declining resource dependent areas
· Amenity rich areas

Today there are four rural Americas, each with its own challenges.
more over the next decade

Amenity-rich areas are growing and likely to grow
Appalachia
Valley, and
Mississippi
the Lower
the Corn Belt,
Plains, parts of
the Great
concentrated in
Loss is

other resource dependent areas
Persistent population loss plagues
Manufacturing-dependent Counties, 1998-2000

37% of rural jobs are low skill

Rural America has depended on low-skill manufacturing — the jobs threatened by globalization (42% of rural jobs are low skill)
Occurrences of High Child Poverty, 1970 to 2007

Data: Census data supplied by USDA-ERS and SAPE, 2007
Poverty and low education go together, and are a big disadvantage in the new economy.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLACK BELT</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-12%</td>
<td>-19%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELTA</td>
<td>-21%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-28%</td>
<td>-80%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPALACHIA</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOUNTAINS/</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMENITY/</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDWEST/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECLINE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTHEAST/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMENITY/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECLINE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROCKY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOUNTAINS/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Everywhere young people are advised to leave
military to find opportunity
Americans – when young people join the
The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan touch rural
poor areas have few amenities, whereas many newcomers have moved within the past 10 years.

Cronk, Powery

Yes

No

0 20 40 60 80

Yes

No

0 20 40 60 80

Yes

No

0 20 40 60 80

Yes

No

0 20 40 60 80

Yes

No

0 20 40 60 80

Yes

No

0 20 40 60 80

Yes

No

0 20 40 60 80
newcomers 20% are in poor areas only
elsewhere compared to 42% this community,
father grew up in residents say their
70% of poor area

poor places, few newcomers, little change
Roots run deep for the poor in chronically
8th grade... further than the father did not go. 40% say their poverty areas in chronic... large lower class with very low education. Poor areas have a small middle class and a.
Disability is high in poor areas – have a dog again.
Everywhere jobs are a priority,
Poor areas have many community needs,
Unemployment Rate

The Poor Areas Have the Highest
Less Civic Engagement

Belong to any local organization? (percent)

Yes  No

Decline

Yes  No

Amenity

Chronic poverty

Yes  No

Amenity/decline

32  57  43  55  45  57  43
And Less Trust
Mainstream
connect youth to the
Invest in young children and
Support working families
Pay
Encourage work and make it

Consensus on policy to help working families earning low wages – rural families will benefit
blocks in Harlem.

Supportive systems and institutions—97 cultural challenges, focuses on kids, builds area with all its social problems and families in need.

Families in need.

anything that works, target individuals and

Bill Galston says give up, we don’t know

Interactable concentrated poverty

Less consensus on how to address
Poverty as Exclusion

the wider society
out of the mainstream and participation in "Social exclusion" - being cut off from, left society: to participate in the "accepted ways" in Poverty is the lack of adequate resources
disinvestment in community institutions.

The mainstream, and
with little access to cultural learning about
without role models
neighborhoods

The black middle class, left the ghetto, learning
seeking stable blue collar jobs.

Work disappeared, especially for low skill workers

poor areas in Chicago are still relevant

William Julius Wilson's insights about
- Lack of public safety, crime and drugs
- Teen pregnancy and lone parent families
- Low skills, low labor force attachment
- Dropout rates
- Bad schools, low levels of education, high isolation

Tough conditions in concentrated poverty areas, rural and urban
What people like us do

Where we fit

What we know of the world, how it works,

Wants

Skills and habits, not preferences and

Stories, rituals, and world-views.

Culture as a "tool kit of symbols,"
To what extent do people invest in the community - spend time and even money building things that benefit others outside their own family?

To what extent do people from all walks of life participate in community affairs and decisions?

To what extent do people trust each other?
For honest fair practices, public officials and employers accountable standards in public schools and hold
There is no middle class to demand high
need to participate in the mainstream.
Learning, skills and contacts that they
They do not develop the "cultural"
Apart from the have, the poor are socially isolated, worlds
Haves and Have-nots in Poor Rural Places
bankruptcy court.

They're sorry as can be.

They're either a good person or they've already got the idea that before you even meet, you've somebody's last name and a lot of times you can hear the story.

Those that have a family with a name that have a family with a

They're sorry as can be.
Minister in Appalachia

"ought to go beyond family."

I've talked to my congregation. This concern they have a great concern for their own family.

They would do anything for their family.

They're strongly family oriented here. And they own families, and their concern stops there.

I see people very, very concerned about their family, not community, concerns."
Truck driver's wife in the Delta.

"Disgraced." That whites does. They're really don't have the opportunities. It's just over here the blacks.

If one of the blacks was to move, make him get fired. Could make it really hard on something to his boss. He make it hard on him if he said drives for a farmer--he could piss Jimmy off--you knew he

They are still vulnerable. Blacks are the have-nots, and
African-American leader in the Delta

control of them. "There for a long time and the whites have gained they need to get help from Toms that have been, uneducated people need to go through someone, with him out of habit and deference..."

"Blacks who have known only the plantation and a"

Change comes slowly
- Small social worlds mean family stigma can have real consequences.
- Isolation and remoteness makes it hard to implement programs.
• Few new people and businesses make changing local politics challenging – the families who run things go unchallenged.

• Old patterns and systems based on former economies no longer work.

Broken social fabric and community institutions
Exit, Loyalty and Voice

Albert Hirschman talked about three choices: