

The New Rural Economy Summer 2001 Survey

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Some website addresses

- inord.laurentian.ca for local employment commentaries by Vincent & Robinson & my powerpoint presentations relating to Northern Ontario and NRE.
- nre.concordia.ca for research reports from the New Rural Economy project on volunteering, cooperatives, business development, etc.

New Economy Changes that might affect rural people

- Globalization – associated with changes in the structure of competition
- Computerization – changes in information technology, and especially in information institutions (see research by Barry Wellman)

Refer to Ray Bollman working in Ottawa living in Saskatchewan

Refer to map later

Why is rural important?

- One third of Canadians still live in rural areas
- Communities need to diversify out of resource trade
- Less influential in market
- Less influential politically

What is the NRE?

- New Rural Economy – 10 university researchers across country
- 5_year project (began 1998) to look at the effects of globalization and computerization on rural economies
- Studies 32 rural communities of different types across Canada
- Half leading/half lagging economically
- Try to maintain relationships with communities

Summer 2001 Questionnaire

- To be done in 20 sites
- Accurate within +or- 7%
- About one hour long (with no chitchat)
- Random selection of households in CSD
- Random selection of respondent within household

Seguin selection

- Analysis based on rural census subdivisions as of 1990 for statistical comparison
- Consequently statistics for our comparison project are based on Humphrey
- households within Humphrey selected using random numbers from SPSS
- Letters sent to all selected respondents prior to phoning

Questionnaire Contents

- **Part 1: About you and your household**
- **Part 2: About changes in your life and how you cope with them**
- **Part 3: About your use of the Internet**
- **Part 4: About the services in your community**
- **Part 5: About the services in your community**
- **Part 6: About the skills and resources you have and share with others**
- **Part 7: About your financial situation**
- **Part 8: Your thoughts about the future of this community**

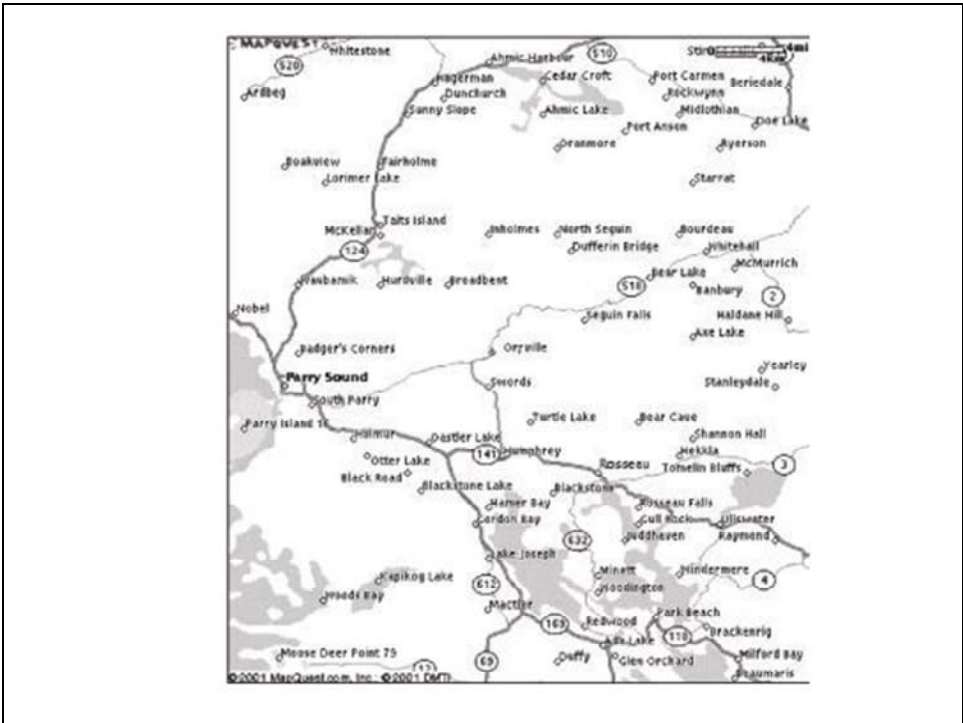
Timing of questionnaire

- Questionnaire takes about 50 to 55 minutes
- Takes longer if there's discussion, chit-chat, commentary, digressions, or distractions
- Pre-categorized questions except for a small number – your thoughts, voluntary organizations, occupation
- Thank-you page left with respondents

The Map Question

- (an instance of internet influence)
- New question about community boundaries
- Map will be digitally coded using GIS at University of Saskatchewan
- Other data entry coordinated by Mount Allison University
- Map will be coded subjectively
- Then correlated with other questions





Problems of social capital

- Bowling alone – the Putnam hypothesis
- There is a lack of participation in local government
- Possible solutions:
 - Emphasize voluntary organizations and the third sector
 - Continue to develop inclusive mechanisms for individual participation in local government

Problems of human capital

- New Economy rewards developing skills (A State of Minds)
- Youth outmigration is a perceived problem
- Possible solutions
 - People who move away can still be assets
 - Create an atmosphere that makes people want to return either permanently or temporarily
 - Concentrate on amenities

Problems of Cultural Capital

- Sometimes new solutions require new ideas
- Need to be able to re-engineer solutions
- Possible solutions:
 - Should get/maintain university connections
 - Must welcome immigrants and get them to maintain their connections
 - Maintain healthy public forum of ideas (NRE sites with newspapers lead economically)

(the major institution in society for this whatever Dick Destefano thinks)

Research done by Dr. Ivan Emke from Cornerbrook MUN

Volunteering may be part of the answer, but..

- Recruitment is difficult and membership shrinks
- Governments often give only project funding
- Applications are complicated and difficult (rural people may lack the skills)
- Often organizations have to front the \$ (rural people often have less capital)

Voluntary groups are more likely to have a more local perspective. Like municipal governments they represent the local region.

Research results on funding

- Factor analysis of 162 organizations funding source shows that there is government funding factor, common among different levels of government.
- Scores on that factor are much higher for leading communities. That is, voluntary organization funding does not equalize.

Networks – the role of ties

- Let's look at ties between communities. One way of looking at social capital is to look at the connecting links.
- Think of the ties in your community:
 - Famous study by James Coleman in 1953

Kinds of ties (social capital)

- Bonding relates to the internal ties within specific groups
- Bridging relates to ties that connect different groups
- Linking refers to vertical ties – generally this relates to political and economic elites.

One social-capital stream in the literature considers bonding, bridging, and linking as the three main aspects.

Bonding

- Voluntary organizations generally are responsible for fairs and community events.
- Social cohesion is raised by frequency of social events and rituals. There are fewer of these in rural areas because the social density is lower.

Bridging

- Poverty and visibly excluded groups can be a strong liability
- Voluntary sector and government service providers should aim to include different sectors of the community
- Language facilities are important in welcoming immigrants
- Emphasize cultural openness

Linking

- Encourage voluntary groups to apply for grants from government and business
- Encourage amalgamations (a larger municipal voice is a stronger one)
- Immigrant groups may provide links to other communities, encourage them
- Political movements (green, alliance) also have external connections, encourage them

For immigrants, not because it is politically correct, though it is, but because it helps you.

Links: The GTA is where it's at

- Ottawa may have the feds but nobody asks for fourlaning for highway 17.
- Fund-raising for CRRF, one banker stated that the majority of their business was within visual range of the top floor of their office building.
- One third of Canada's Gross Domestic Product is produced within an hour's commute of Pearson Airport.
- Politically and economically, we all need links with GTA

Rural Places could develop Amenities

- Natural environment
- Social activities – festivals, etc.
- Supportive institutions
- Entertainment
- Network connections
- Health / Education

Recommendations for municipal officials from Wilkinson Presentation to the Ontario Good Roads Association and the Rural Ontario Municipalities Association Feb. 27, 2001

Specific Recommendations

- Develop attractive policies for retired and disabled people in your community
- Do not rely on primary industry, especially for longterm planning
- Provide workshops and training programs to support voluntary groups
- Attempt to integrate young people into community governance
- Defend the amenities of rural life and lobby collectively with others to get government support

Recommendations for community groups

- Emphasize the natural environment as a form of community capital for the future and its increasing economic role
- Emphasize development of human capital through education, skills development, internet & email training, and immigration
- Emphasize development of social and cultural capital through community activities
- Encourage diversity and thus different links with other groups

Future of NRE/Seguin

- Products
 - For fall conference, papers on specific data
 - Report on home care facilities for Health Can
 - 2002 report/book on project
- New applications (for 2002 onwards)
 - Possible research-centre application
 - Possibly greater site involvement
 - Suggestions from rural communities welcomed