

DAVID L. BROWN

THE UNEVEN SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

Ann R. Tickamyer

Department of Sociology  
University of Kentucky  
Lexington, KY 40506-0027

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## INTRODUCTION

There is mounting evidence that the future of rural America remains unstable. Preliminary accounts from the census indicate population loss for nonmetro areas. Rural populations and households are changing as they age, migrate, have smaller families, and engage in different vocational and avocational pursuits. Poverty persists in many rural regions, and its effects are exacerbated by shrinking budgets for public goods and services at the same time that demand grows. Cyclical downturns coupled with the profound restructuring of national, regional, and local economies leave rural America's economic future uncertain at best. Finally, the global scope of the economy creates uncertainty over the extent to which any of the foregoing trends and problems can respond to local efforts at change or control.

These are the "facts" of the uneven development that has come to characterize the problems of rural regions in advanced societies. Social scientists concerned with rural society and its problems are proficient at identifying and describing these and related outcomes of this process. They are less well-equipped to explain this process or to understand it sufficiently to suggest effective strategies for change.

In this paper, I argue that part of the problem stems from an inadequate understanding of the spatial dimension of uneven development. The lack of a theory of space to explain an inherently spatial phenomenon undermines the otherwise real progress made in conceptualizing and empirically researching rural society. To advance this argument, I review the meanings of uneven development and its formulations in rural-oriented social science (largely but not exclusively sociology). Then I show how this failure combines with other problematic aspects of the study of rural society to hamper theoretical progress. In this paper, I do not try to analyze the nature of uneven spatial

development in rural America or to speculate about future outcomes. Rather, I outline ways that an enhanced conceptualization of space in combination with the advances made recently in other social theories (theories of capitalism and patriarchy or critical and feminist theories) can help improve research with this mission and help set an agenda for future research on the uneven development of rural America.

#### UNEVEN SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT

Uneven development has become shorthand for characterizing the different levels of social and economic development found in the modern industrialized world. Since most of the globe has become incorporated into this modern world in some form or other (with few prospects for even the most remote areas remaining significant holdouts), and there are massive variations in levels, forms, and types of social and economic well-being, it has become a truism that different places develop at different rates and in different ways. In fact, however, referring to development as an uneven process represents a profound paradigm shift. Until fairly recently, the dominant theories of development, whether concerned with inter- or intra-societal processes, posited a smooth, unidirectional, and largely evolutionary change in which urban, industrialized nations and places pioneered an inevitable progression that all localities were destined to follow. Observed unevenness in development represented historical lags that ultimately would equalize.

The hegemony of modernization theory first received serious challenge in the international arena in the form of dependency theories, world systems theory, and similar critical accounts of the ravages of colonialism, imperialism, and the creation of underdevelopment in the third world via western economic, political, and social dominance and exploitation. It wasn't long, however, before these theories were adapted for domestic use to explain

the vast differences within developed nations. Remote rural areas, persistent regional poverty, declining industrial centers, and deteriorating inner cities have all been "explained" by reference to uneven development.

Much of this explanation, however remains at a shallow descriptive level, in which uneven is synonymous with lagging which is equivalent to poor or depressed. The exception is in Marxist and neo-Marxist accounts of uneven development. Here the process specifically refers to the uneven penetration of capitalist forms of production and reproduction across different places, regions, and nations. In this formulation, the exploitive logic of capital accumulation and the accompanying contradictory class relations, while part of an inexorable process, nevertheless is historically specific and contingent, and thus, develops at different rates and in different ways in different places. The result is inequality not only between social classes but across space.

In one area, the political economy model has made little progress over its conservative predecessors in accounting for this uneven pattern of development. Both traditions have an uneasy grasp of the spatial nature of the process. Both approaches can be (and have been) accused of ignoring, trivializing, or reifying notions of space.

Modernization, industrialization, and urbanization, as these terms imply, are "unfolding models of change" in which development occurs from an internal logic inherent to the society or system in question (Giddens 1979). On the one hand these approaches polarize ideal types in a before vs after logic that juxtaposes primitive with modern, agrarian with industrialized, and rural with urban. Hence the prevalence of variations on a rural-urban dichotomy as the spatial metaphor that has dominated rural sociology for so long. On the other hand, space is immaterial in these formulations since these processes are

thought to unfold rather inexorably across time and space. In the same way that these theories have been accused of being ahistorical despite purporting to explain change, they can also be indicted for being aspatial, despite describing changes which extend across natural and constructed landscapes.

Similarly, the political economy approach, although having a better claim to historicity, struggles with spatiality. Despite homage to the importance of space, Marx dismissed it as an "unnecessary complication" to his larger theoretical project. As Soja (1989:32) points out, "the motor behind uneven development was quintessentially historical..." via class struggle rather than spatial. In some (crude and generally repudiated) versions, Marxism shares the unfolding assumptions of its mainstream counterparts. Marx is often cited as juxtaposing town and country as the model of the contradictory social relations which ultimately undermine this form of social organization. Although the dynamics of the theory suggest an historical transformation of each, the practical result is a spatial dualism that mirrors the rural-urban dichotomy. The theory's recognition of historical contingency prevents the abstractions that generalize particular historical events into universal sequences. At the same time, it cannot guard adequately against the equally problematic tendency to overextend the generality of the process itself. The result is an abstraction and reification of spatial categories that rivals that found in bourgeois social science.

More recent neo-Marxist theories that build on the town-country dichotomy to create spatially based concepts of center and fringe, core and periphery, still tend to subsume space to economic factors. In many of these analysis the social relations of production define space in a reductive and deterministic way that does little to advance understanding of the way uneven development is manifested spatially. For example, Markusen's (1987)

explanation of region as the arena for the interplay of economic forces generated by local resources and history fails to take account of the diversity of natural, economic, and social forms found in the places she unquestioningly accepts as regions. Appalachia, in her work, is defined by the social relations of production and ensuing class struggle located in the coal industry with little regard for the economic diversity in the geographical area in question or the serious ambiguity entailed in drawing the boundaries of this region (Billings and Tickamyer 1990).

Despite the criticism of Markusen's work, she exemplifies a major source of new ideas in explaining spatial inequality. She is one of a number of geographers, planners, and regional scientists, in recent years, who have undertaken the project of "spatializing" social and economic theories and conversely, "socializing" geographic models. Geographers such as Harvey (1982), Castells (1983), Smith (1984), Storper and Walker (1989), and Soja (1989) have made dramatic and compelling strides in the "reassertion of space in critical social theory" to borrow the subtitle of Soja's 1989 volume on Postmodern Geographies. To a large extent their efforts have revitalized what was once considered a moribund field, and their influence has begun to permeate other social scientific disciplines. From a sociological perspective, their influence can be seen in many of the most interesting examples of current theoretical and empirical scholarship, such as Giddens' ongoing development of his theory of structuration (1979, 1984) and the urban sociology of Logan and Molotch (1987).

These exemplars, however, also illustrate the limits of much of this work: either it is part of a theory building (or even paradigm construction) exercise or it is focused on urban issues. Many of the geographers are eager to reclaim the honor of geography and have written what are essentially

histories and sociologies of geography. Their theories have not yet totally translated into well-designed empirical studies. To the extent that it has, it falls into the other problematic category (from the rural scholar's point of view): these theories are applied to a world which is defined by the dominance of urban forms and problems. A glance at the indices of several of the most widely cited of these works show no listing for "rural" anything (eg Smith 1984; Storper and Walker 1989; Soja 1989). Similarly, the sociologists cognizant and influenced by this work focus on urban sociology, whether they do so from the traditional vantage point of urban ecology (cf Kasarda 1988) or from a political economy perspective (cf Logan and Molotch 1987).

There are exceptions to this observation which will be discussed below. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that while we live in a world mapped by the outcome of uneven development and in which the problems inherent in this process are more evident daily, we have yet to develop satisfactory theories or analytic tools to explain it much less develop policies and programs to alleviate the ensuing problems. Despite the urgency of a satisfactory explanation for uneven spatial development, the disciplines and theories charged with dealing with it have only begun to spatialize the study of uneven development. As true as this is of sociology, economics, and demography, it is still more true of rural sociology, especially the branch concerned with problems of rural poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment within advanced industrial nations.

#### UNEVEN RURAL SOCIOLOGY

Despite periodic bouts of navel gazing and crisis mongering, too many rural sociologists remain captive to variations of the unfolding models of change described above. Abandoning the rural-urban continuum threatens to make the discipline obsolete or to overwhelm it with its more numerous and

politically powerful urban counterparts. Hence, even when abstractly rejecting the dualistic notion of rural vs urban subject matter, in practice most rural sociologists stick to a residual rural niche defined largely by the absence of urban forms and its otherness from urban life. Rural sociology itself is the victim of uneven intellectual development.

Once again, a possible exception to this generalization also is found in the approach that is sometimes identified with political economy or critical theories. At the beginning of the last decade, concerned with the shrinking vistas for rural sociology, a number of its practitioners argued that the unique calling for rural sociology was to develop understanding of the political economy of agriculture (Newby and Buttel 1980). The reason this is an exception is that its rationale lies not in its social or spatial contrast to urban development, but rather that it is what remains uniquely tied to rural locations and concerns in an increasingly urbanized and industrialized world. The logic of this approach follows from the standard political economy model which dictates that the social relations of production are the defining process of an area's social, political, and economic life. Since agricultural production must be located in the countryside even if the forms it takes are increasingly industrialized, it follows that rural society (and sociology) is formulated around this economic fact. In the same way that Markusen defined Appalachia on the basis of coal production, rural is defined by agricultural production. And the same criticisms apply: rural is more diverse, there are many other (and increasingly dominant) forms of economic activity, and these as well as the other realities of rural existence cannot be relegated to mere epiphenomena (superstructure in Marxist terminology).

In practice, over the last decade, this effort to redirect rural sociology has been only partially successful. While some of the most



interesting research and discussion over the future of rural society has arisen from this perspective (cf work on the future of the family farm as in the debate between Mann and Dickinson 1987, Mooney 1987 and others), more generally, rural sociology and social science have recognized the constrictiveness of this approach. There have been numerous influential discussions of the need to broaden the study of rural society beyond agriculture, especially at policy levels, and a great deal of empirical research in the last decade has followed this prescription. ERS and the Aspen/Ford Rural Economic Policy Program have been behind many of these efforts (cf Brown et al 1988). Other work has attempted to show how agriculture and other forms of industrial production combine to structure rural society, explicitly recognizing the diversity of rural socioeconomic life (cf Falk and Lyson 1989, Labao 1990).

This still leaves rural social science uncertain of its mission in an urbanized society. Despite good research on agricultural production and good research which looks beyond agriculture, the question of what is rural remains problematic because of a failure to directly confront the issue of the meaning of rural place. Rural is still either the residual category (what is not urban) or it is defined in terms of particular forms of productive activities. Neither approach adequately addresses the realities of current rural life.

#### BEYOND RURAL ECONOMIC PRODUCTION INTO THE REALM OF REPRODUCTION

The problems of production based approaches are broader than the lack of spatiality in these economic models. For the most part they also inadequately address issues of how to integrate social reproduction processes into the study of rural life and how these are spatially constructed and distributed. Social reproduction is used in the enlarged sense found in feminist and neo-Marxist theories to refer to the processes of reconstituting the social

relations of human society necessary for all social and economic activities. Abstractly, it entails reproducing the systems of class and gender relations. More concretely, it covers all the work necessary to sustain household and economic activities, including childbearing, rearing, housework, household consumption, and a variety of other noneconomic activities. While the household is the locus for most of these activities, the state also plays a fundamental role in shaping how social reproduction is implemented. State involvement in reproduction entails a large number of diverse activities ranging from regulating the economy, to providing social welfare and assisting in the development of human capital. Finally, social reproduction in its entirety cannot be understood without understanding the linkages between the household, the state, and the economy (Dickinson and Russell 1986). To this standard model of social reproduction, it is necessary to add that these processes occur in time and space, and that once again, understanding of the spatial dimension is lagging.

This is not to say that rural social science lacks research on social reproduction activities and processes. There is an enormous body of work on these issues following the traditional rural-urban continuum approach. Since rural is the arena for study (disregarding for the moment how the boundaries of the arena are defined), anything that takes place within rural regions is fair game for study. This means there is a rich tradition of study of rural families, organizations, and institutions, as well as rural socialization, education, politics, religion, ethnicity, cultural practices, and finally rural demography. This research ranges from community studies concerned with particular locales to national studies in which any place considered rural or any person living in a rural area is surveyed. Finally there are rural-urban comparative studies in which the purpose is to delineate differences in any of

the preceding topics. While all of these provide important sources of information on social reproduction, they share the limitations of studies in this tradition described above. They result in inventories of information about places defined as rural as well as a number of implicit or explicit comparisons with urban versions of the same phenomena. But since they are predicated on a notion of rurality undergirded by the rural-urban continuum, they do not offer much guidance for understanding the nature of rurality, places that are rural, or how these components of human society construct rural life and are constructed by it.

The political economy studies have had a different problem. Since this approach has traditionally relegated reproductive activities to a secondary status outside the formative realm of economic production, it has tended not to devote much attention to these topics. When it has the tendency is to subordinate these to issues of production or state regulation and intervention. Fortunately, this is changing, heavily influenced by the women and development literature as well as new interest in race and gender issues, inequality, and theoretical advances made in feminist theory. No longer can studies of production isolate themselves from reproduction processes. For example, much of the research on the status and future of the family farm concerns itself with the household division of labor, the relationship of different family members to the formal labor market, and variations of these processes across the life course (Barlett 1986; Bokemeier et al 1982; Buttel and Gillespie 1984; Simpson et al 1988). Nevertheless, integration of reproductive issues into these studies remains sporadic, secondary, or concentrated in the semi-ghettoized literature focusing on women and gender issues. Furthermore, since in rural sociology the political economy approach

largely has concentrated on agriculture, it remains only inconsistently developed across the full realm of rural studies.

The importance of space in social reproduction ranges widely and can be illustrated by a number of examples. Urban geographers and sociologists describe the importance of the urban landscape for fulfilling family and household responsibilities. Much of this entails availability of resources, including access to consumer goods and services such as health care and health care. The relocation of neighborhood amenities has a major disruptive impact on the ability to satisfactorily perform gender based tasks. Finally, there is evidence that women who work outside the home work closer to home than men and may even choose their employment on the basis of proximity while employers often locate on the basis of proximity to such captive sources of labor (Hanson 1991; Hanson and Pratt 1990).

Another example goes back to the family farm. Increasingly this form of enterprise is partially supported by off-farm employment. Who among the household members works on the farm and who works off it is determined by a number of factors, including type of farm commodities, type of off-farm employment opportunities, individual human capital, and family composition and life course stage. Women with young children are more likely to engage in productive (economic) activities close to their reproductive (childrearing and household) responsibilities. This means they will be more likely to engage in farm work, informal labor market activities, or home-based employment depending upon the availability and location of formal labor market employment. As children leave home women are less constrained, and the farm-household division of labor among family members may shift as their labor market opportunities expand.

Still another example comes from the ongoing study conducted by Bonnie Dill and her colleagues of poor women in rural communities in the Mississippi Delta (as reported in Center News 1991). Although there are few opportunities for these women, and their living conditions are wretched, they are tied to their locale by dependence on networks of community and kin that would be sacrificed if they migrated. The importance of such networks reinforces the findings from classic studies of the urban poor (Stack 1974, Gans 1962). What is underscored in this work is the importance of the physical proximity of these networks for survival and the determining influence they have on life course decisions.

It may not be too fanciful to push this account even further into territory not generally considered in spatial terms. Giddens (1979) points out the importance of space (and its link with time) in even the smallest scale interaction. He cites Goffman's (1959) work on what he calls "regions" which are the locales for face to face interaction. Regions help structure the nature of communication between actors. They may be differentiated in their use to the point of incorporating very different meanings and values. One example of stratified space is found in his notion of "front and back regions" which correspond to arenas for socially acceptable vs compromising behavior and activity. The importance of household geography has been better recognized in literary circles (the classic example is Virginia Woolf's powerful essay, A Room of One's Own), by ethnographers who describe who does what where within the household, and by some feminist scholars who have examined the spatial design of urban housing as it helps or hinders the performance of household activities and responsibilities (Hayden 1981; Markusen 1981). To my knowledge there is no comparable evaluation of rural household geography.

Finally, at the other extreme, the state has a major role in the creation and maintenance of social reproduction, but the spatial dimensions of this relationship are less well-understood. At the national level, the state is territorially defined, but within these parameters there are multiple layers of political and administrative boundaries. It is these overlapping and often competing jurisdictions that give concrete expression to the policies dealing with social reproduction. Social welfare and safety net, labor laws and regulations, expenditures for social goods, etc. are well-known to vary geographically with major differences across regions and urban and rural locations. They are less clearly understood to shape geography itself (Jones and Kodras 1990, 1991). This is even more apparent in the burgeoning literature emerging from gender and feminist theories that examines the complex interrelationships between state policies and gender based experiences and outcomes. Prominent examples include work on the gendered nature of the welfare system and state policies of control and regulation of biological reproduction (policies affecting fertility, conception, and contraception), but these rarely look beyond the crudest national or regional variation. There is much room for integrating spatial theories into this work.

#### CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT OF SPACE

This critique has thus far focused on the importance of space and the inadequacies of the rural literature's treatment of this topic, but it has not yet specifically addressed the way space is typically incorporated both theoretically and empirically into this literature. Nor has it explicitly specified alternative approaches. In this section I will briefly outline the ways space is conceptualized and measured in rural studies.

The two most common formulations for space in most social science, are to conceptualize space as an arena or container for particular social activities or as a determinant of those activities. Numerous examples of both approaches come readily to mind, and the two are by no means mutually exclusive. In some sense, almost any study which defines its interests in terms of delineating social activity within rural areas uses the former approach. The subjects of study are located in rural areas defined by size of community, type of economic activity, or location and proximity to census defined metropolitan areas. Most of rural sociology and demography exemplifies this approach. Virtually any issue of Rural Sociology will be dominated by such work.

The second approach is exemplified in the myriad studies which predict some sort of social behavior (education, occupation or income attainment, poverty status, marital and family status, attitudes and opinions, political activity, migration, etc.) using ecological or geographical measures as predictors. The data are the same or similar to those that define the arena approach, but this time they are incorporated as characteristics of the subjects of the study. Examples include size of community of origin or residence, farm residence or occupation, residence in or proximity to metro areas. Such studies may examine the impacts of either rural vs urban location or of variation within rural areas.

Two variations combines features of each. One is to use locational variables as control variables (either as independent variables in quantitative analyses or as stratifiers for separate models). A second more elaborate technique is to include contextual measures of the relevant spatial location for the subjects of the study. For example, a study of individual income inequality might include measures of county level unemployment rates, poverty rates, or population composition, testing the hypothesis that these

structure individual opportunity (cf. Tickamyer 1991, Tickamyer and Latimer 1991 for elaboration of this point).

The above examples are most easily recognized when individuals are the units of analysis, but they are not restricted to methodological individualism. Ecological studies using aggregate measures also can be classified in this way. For example, the arena approach might examine all rural or nonmetro counties in terms of economic activity, poverty rates, or demographic processes. The rural predictor approach would incorporate these same measures into models using counties, states or other available geopolitical entities as units. Independent or control variables include population size, density, or metro status or proximity.

As discussed previously, these approaches are immensely valuable for providing information about how rural areas differ from urban, the variation within rural areas, and the relative importance of spatial and ecological measures. They are less satisfactory as explanations for why rural differs from urban, how they are connected, and how differences or similarities are generated. One reason they fail on this score is that they fail to incorporate the reconceptualization of space emerging from the critical geography literature and its followers. In this literature, space is conceptualized as socially constructed as well as a structuring factor of social relations. Space creates and is created by social relations of production and reproduction in a dialectical process which cannot give primacy to either side of the equation.

#### THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF SPACE

Typical rural social science is quite good at recognizing the structuring component of location, but fails miserably to recognize the agential aspects. The notion that spatial arrangements are socially constructed, that geography



is a product of human activity is foreign to the models generally employed in empirical social science research which takes geography as a given. In the following section I will briefly outline three examples from diverse literatures to illustrate directions for rural social science.

The first example returns to the Appalachian case. On the surface few would question that Appalachia is a region. Everyone knows this, and a mountain of research (not to mention policies, programs, and tax dollars) has been devoted to studying the region's problems. It is only when one looks closer that one discovers all the difficulties entailed in specifying its boundaries, whether historically or currently.

In fact, Appalachia may be the perfect example of the dialectical nature of geography. There is little evidence for the identity of an Appalachian region as it is currently constituted until it was defined in a political act with the creation of the Appalachian Regional Commission. But as is well-known, the politics of the ARC were such that the gerrymandered boundaries extended well beyond any reasonably grounded or even intuitively based definition (eg topography, economy, local culture, etc.). It can be argued, however, that the creation of the ARC region in turn has affected the lives and opportunities of the region's residents. Furthermore, in the process, it may be creating an Appalachian identity which is partly defined by the official boundaries and partly in response to them. These issues are treated extensively elsewhere (Billings and Tickamyer 1990), but they serve to indicate the intricacies of the relationship between space and society and the direction rural research needs to take in its effort to understand the social construction of space.

The second example comes from the urban sociology of Logan and Molotch (1987) who elaborate a theory of urban development based on "growth machines."

The growth machine is a set of progrowth interests representing individual and collective groups of entrepreneurs and business interests in coalition with governmental agencies. These interests promote policies of and conditions for unregulated economic growth as a means of profiting from real estate markets. Places are conceptualized as commodities with both use value (they provide shelter, protection, sentimental meaning, etc.) and exchange value (they provide rent and profit). In pursuit of the latter, the growth machine engineers the social landscape to produce new exchange value, generally in disregard of use value. These manipulations create inequality among places (uneven development) and perhaps more profoundly, create place itself. Neighborhoods, zones, and political jurisdictions are created and dissolved in the pursuit of profit. As they state (Logan and Molotch 1987:43-4):

Places are not simply affected by the institutional maneuvers surrounding them. Places are those machinations. A place is defined as much by its position in a particular organizational web -- political, economic, and cultural -- as by its physical makeup and topographical configuration. Places are not "discovered," as high school history texts suggest; people construct them as practical activity.

The final example comes from the work that created the D version of the 1980 Public Use Microsample and that will hopefully replicate it in 1990. PUMS-D is an effort to operationalize the concept of local labor market by constructing local labor market areas from census journey to work data. The concept of a labor market is employed to describe the exchange between buyers (employers) and sellers (workers) of labor power. It is an important intermediate institution incorporating a set of social relations that link household production and reproduction to economic production (under state

control). While it evokes the image of an arena where this exchange takes place, in fact it is usually conceptualized in a highly abstract manner as a process which operates outside normal constraints of time and place. In part this is because the operation of a labor market is in reality the aggregate of immense numbers of seemingly private transactions between workers and employers that do not actually take place in a central marketplace. Thus, there is an important conceptual distinction between labor markets and labor market areas. The aggregation of transactions between employers and workers is a set of social relationships, and it is this set of relationships which is defined as a labor market. Since the transactions occur in actual time and space, they are situated in a labor market area. To define labor market areas empirically counties were grouped on the basis of commuting patterns data showing where people live and work. The resulting 382 county clusters defined local labor market areas which became the primary sampling units for the D version of the one percent sample of the 1980 Census (Tolbert 1989, Tolbert and Killian 1987).

This work is relevant for several reasons. First, it actively illustrates the joining of spatial relations to social relations by operationalizing the concept of a labor market with an empirically determined geography. In other words the abstract set of social relationships composing a labor market is connected to a particular geographic area. Second, by constructing a geography which corresponds to a set of social relationships it illustrates the way place is socially constructed. The local labor market areas do not directly correspond to official administrative boundaries, yet I would argue that if they are valid constructs, they have as much right to be considered real as any official area. Finally, they exemplify an effort to accomplish the previous tasks for rural areas. They were devised by a

consortium of rural social scientists who were interested in the construction of rural space and social relations.

Each of these cases exemplifies a slightly different aspect of the task of injecting spatiality into social theory and research. The first case baldly illustrates the construction of a region. The second delves into the forces that push this process. The last case deviates from the others by using an example designed to study rural space and by providing an empirical example of how new quantitative research can be conducted on this process (incidentally illustrating that it is not limited to case study or historical methods).

#### TOWARD A SPATIALIZED RURAL SOCIOLOGY OF UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

The implications for students of rural uneven development begin to be discernable. The elements of this approach include the following:

- 1) the dictum described above that geography is socially constructed as well as structuring of social life. This has already been discussed extensively.

- 2) the necessity of locating the actors, ideologies, and political and economic events and forces that shape and respond to geography to understand its construction. As described by Billings and Tickamyer (1990), the actors instrumental in creating Appalachia ranged from nineteenth century ethnologists, to the twentieth century state, radical poverty workers and organizers, and the institutionalization of Appalachian studies in the university. Similarly, Logan and Molotch (1987) describe the different types of entrepreneurs active in pursuing the urban "growth machine" who are instrumental in creating the landscape of the modern American city. Studies of the structure of agriculture have identified conflicting class interests. These efforts need to be broadened to include other forms of production and

equally important to be linked more systematically to processes of reproduction.

3) the recognition that in an advanced capitalist society the actors include the various forms of capital (corporate, financial, etc.), the state, classes, other identifiable collective actors (eg race and ethnic groups), households, and individuals. The kinds of studies of the political economy of agriculture discussed earlier make a good start at this effort, but as described, they too often focus on factors of production, ignoring reproduction, and they take space as a given rather than a dynamic part of the model they attempt to create. To integrate factors of reproduction as well as production, it is necessary to incorporate models of gender relations (patriarchy) as well as class relations (capitalism), and to move beyond these to include race and ethnicity as well.

4) as implied in point 3, the importance of multilevel analysis, including all layers of social life from macro to micro. For example, analytic models using individual units of analysis need to incorporate characteristics of space and place, institutions, organizations, and household structures in which the subjects are embedded. Recent studies of both urban and rural income and poverty exemplify this approach. Wilson's (1987) work on urban ghetto poverty provides both positive and negative illustrations. The power of his argument lies in his ecological model that argues that part of the deprivation experienced by the urban poor is the result of the extreme social and cultural isolation found in the ghetto as a result of new opportunities for middle class African-Americans. The most notable weakness in his argument lies in his failure to include an adequate account of gender and household factors. My own work examining rural poverty using PUMSD, attempts (with mixed success) to analyze rural working age poor people's

household income using individual, household, and local labor market area measures (Tickamyer 1991, Tickamyer and Latimer forthcoming).

5) the importance of linking time and space. Virtually all the examples discussed need to be understood as the simultaneous interplay of historical, spatial, and social factors. There is an understandable tendency in social science research to act as if there were a social version of an uncertainty principle in operation -- an inability to analytically isolate or focus on more than one process at a time. This paper criticizes historical work that forgets to examine space, studies of production that ignore reproduction, and the geographically sophisticated literature that diminishes the importance of any of the other factors. My own work on poverty, cited above uses static, cross-sectional models of poverty across place, failing to incorporate historical change. Replication with 1990 data should permit a means to examine changing space across time. (It also should be noted, that members of the same project created an historical template for examining labor market areas across time.) Given the vitality of historical sociology and social history in recent years, there is a much greater dearth of good spatial conceptualization than temporal, but even more seriously missing is the simultaneous examination of all three elements of social life.

Uneven development is a political process, the outcome of struggles over resources that take place in time and space. The depressed economies of rural areas, the persisting poverty of many remote areas, the simultaneous depletion of rural areas of their populations and their resources are outcomes of these struggles. The importance of this perspective is that it makes it clear that the problems of rural places are a product of human agency as well as the outcome of larger forces. This underscores that these problems are political, and thus, so are the solutions, ie they are amenable to policy intervention

and manipulation. This runs counter to the perspective of an individual actor to whom it may appear that the problems of lagging regions are the outcomes of historical forces far beyond the control of individuals and groups. It also is contrary to the defacto wisdom of many social scientists whose disciplines are better at demonstrating the way opportunity is structured by larger social and historical factors than at showing the reverse effects. It fits all too well with the politics of many of the political actors whose interests coincide with the exploitive practices that create uneven development. In this paper I have argued that there is a politics to time and place that is part of the process of creating these times and places. Only through social theories that capture the complexity of these relationships can effective social policies be constructed.

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