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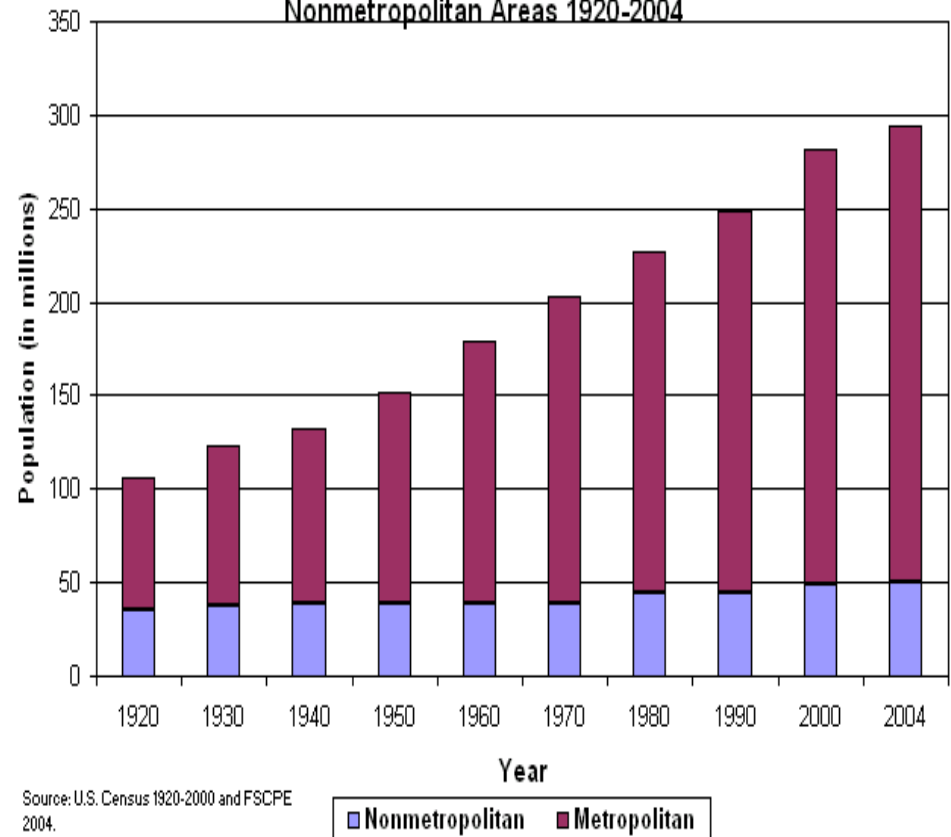
This morning I will

- Provide a context for thinking about poor rural areas
- Build on the report to describe obstacles to sustaining strong community institutions in poor rural communities, and
- Consider the policy implications.

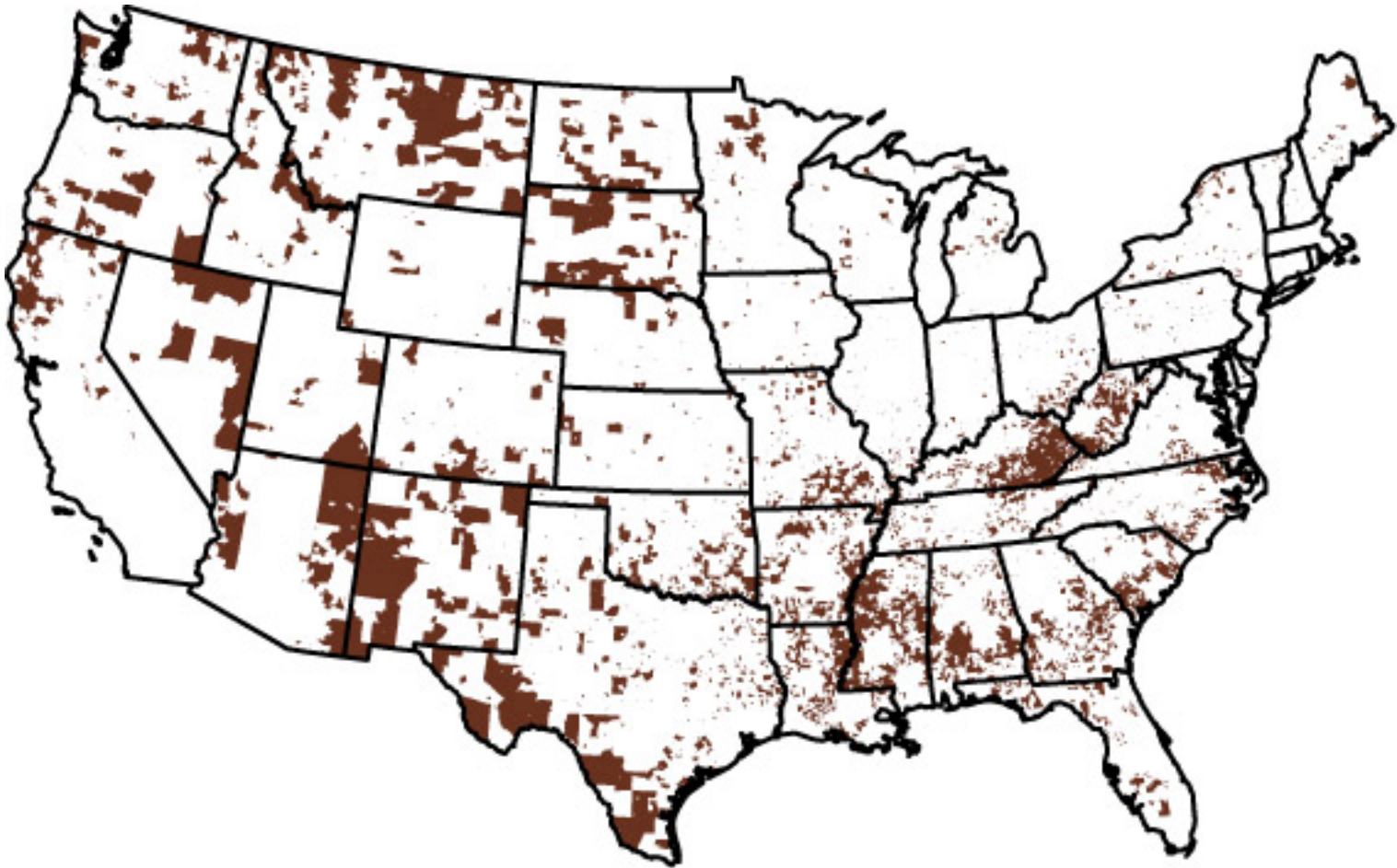
50 million people live in small town and rural communities

- 17% of the U.S. population on 80% of the land
- Slow, modest growth, though trends vary by type of community
- There are 7.5 million rural poor, half living in areas with high poverty

Figure 1. Population Trends in Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Areas 1920-2004



Concentrated Rural Poverty Is Widespread: and Half the Rural Poor live in Poor Areas



Big challenges impact rural America differently, depending on conditions

Economic challenges

Loss of stable, blue collar jobs that pay a living wage and decades of neglect in poor areas

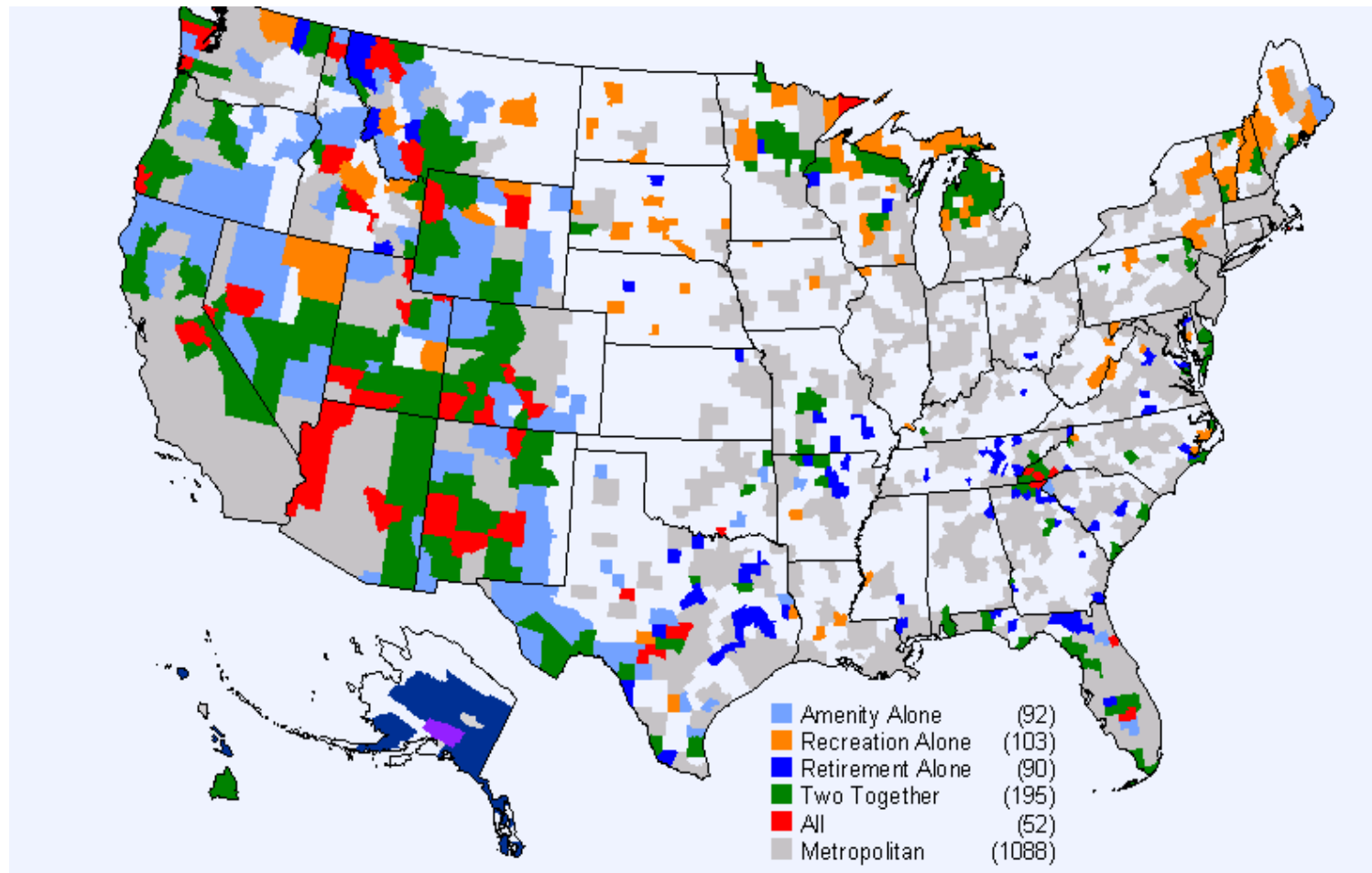
Demographic changes

An aging population, outmigration of young and the educated, and a growing immigrant population

Environmental pressures

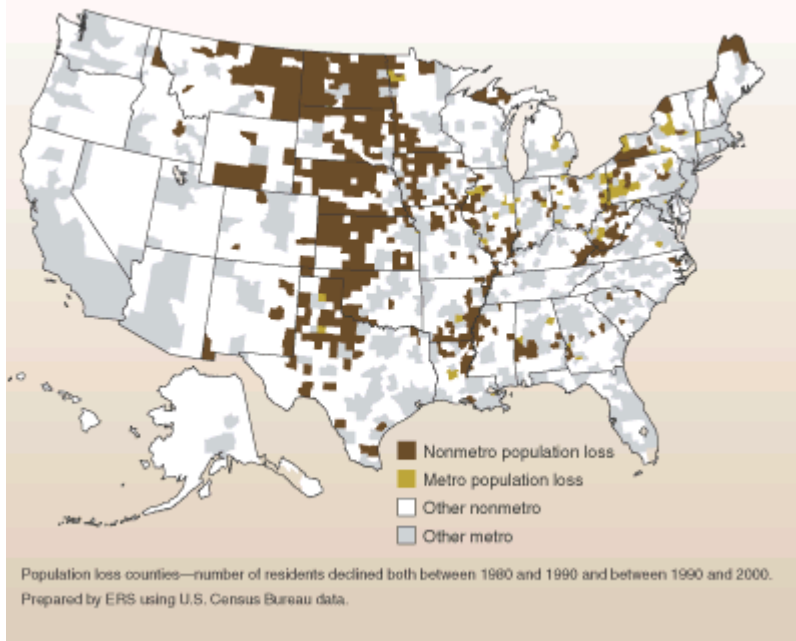
Environmental degradation and stress on natural resources; impact of climate change and high energy costs

Amenity-rich areas are growing and likely to grow more over the next decade

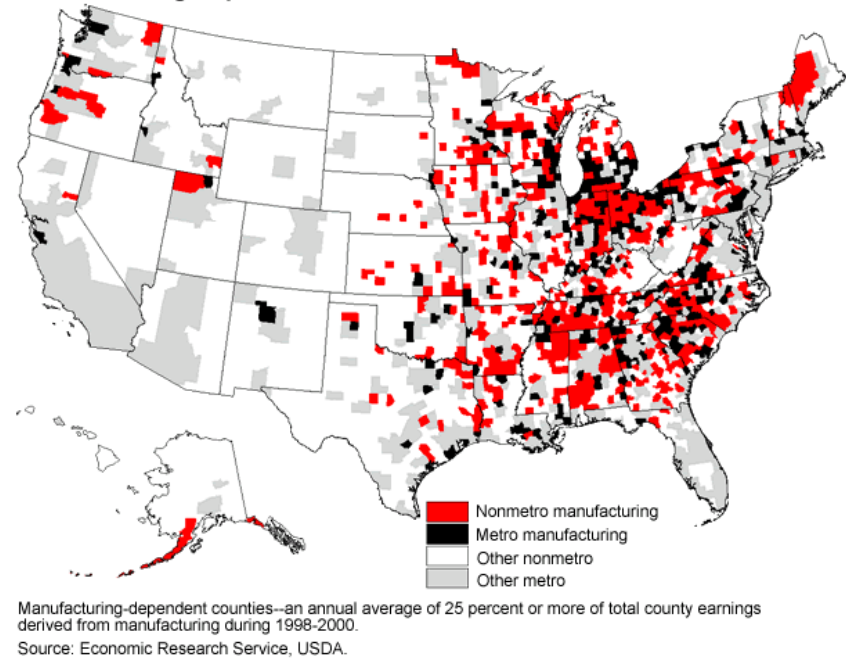


Declining resource dependent areas see population loss and job loss

Population loss counties are clustered in the Great Plains, Corn Belt, and Appalachia

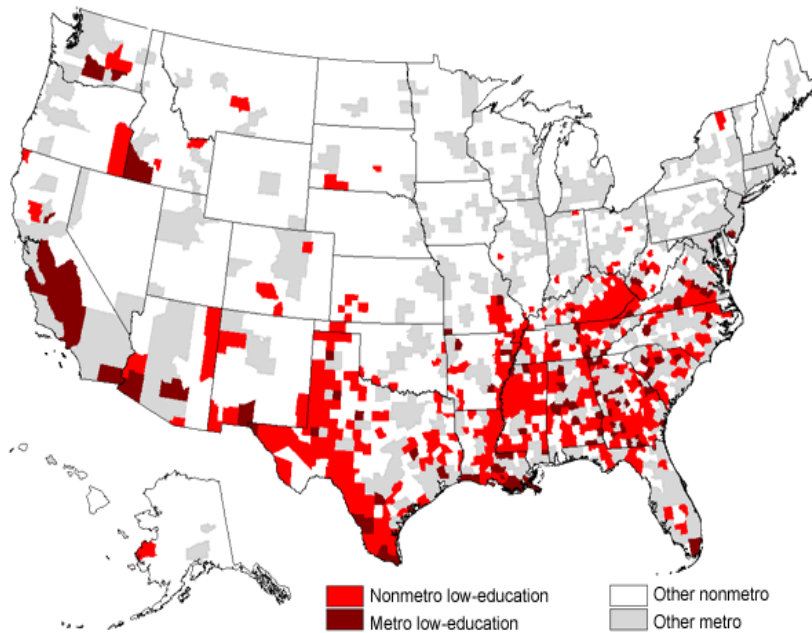


Manufacturing-dependent counties, 1998-2000



Chronically poor communities, places with majority people of color and low education

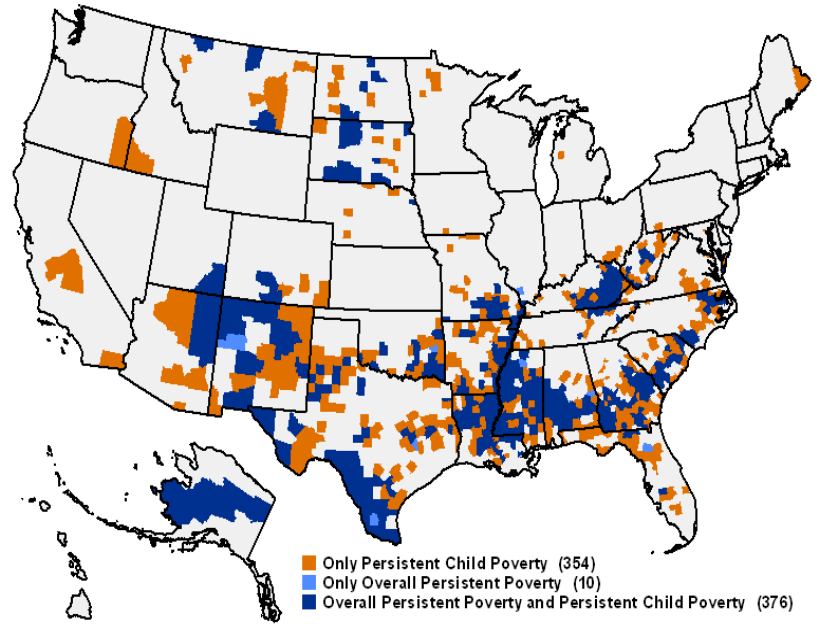
Low-education counties, 2000



Low-education counties--25 percent or more of residents 25-64 years old had neither a high school diploma nor GED in 2000.

Source: Economic Research Service, USDA.

Counties with Overall Persistent Poverty and Persistent Child Poverty

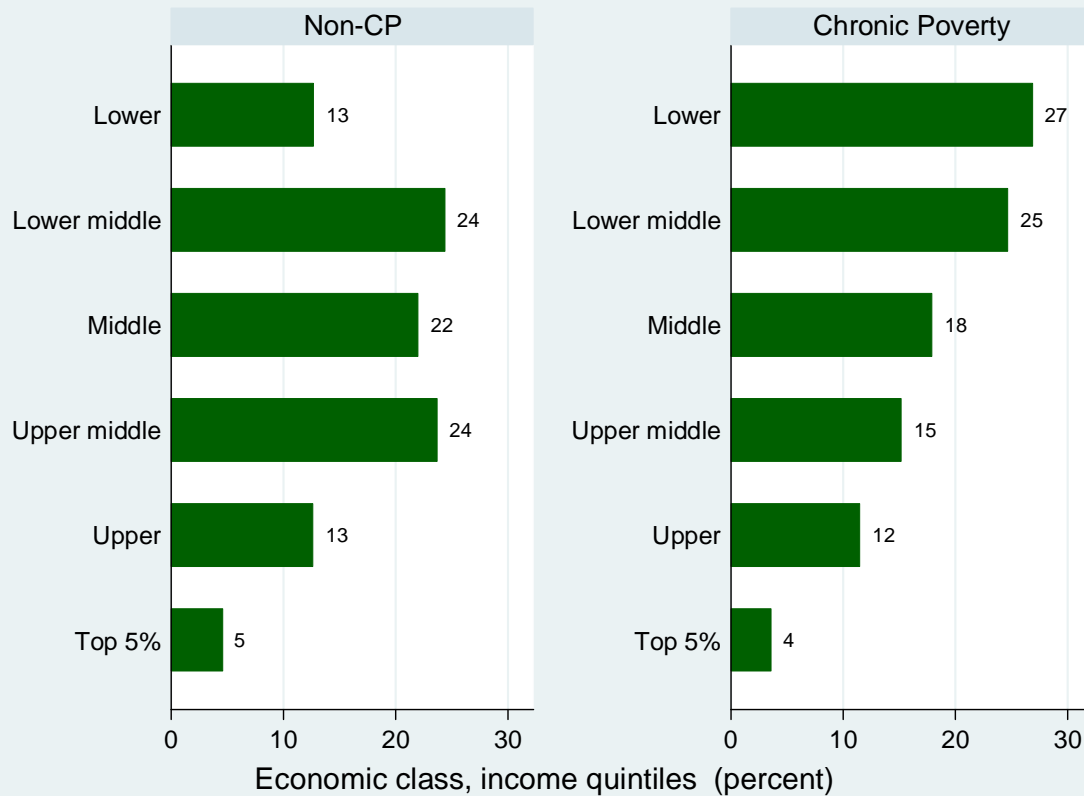


Data: Census data supplied by Economic Research Service, U.S.D.A.

Carsey Surveys of Rural America: Population Loss in Declining Areas, Low Education, Low Work, and High Poverty in Poor Areas

REGION/TYPE	POPULATION % CHANGE 1990-2005	% CHANGE IN POPULATION AGE 25-34 1990-2005	% AGE 16-64 WORKING 2000	% w/o HS DIPLOMA 2000	% IN POVERTY 2004
ROCKY MOUNTAINS/ AMENITY-BOOM	71%	41%	72%	9%	10%
PACIFIC NORTHWEST/ AMENITY-DECLINE	2%	-1%	68%	17%	14%
NORTHEAST/ AMENITY-DECLINE	3%	-24%	73%	20%	12%
UPPER PENINSULA/ AMENITY-DECLINE	9%	-11%	56%	19%	14%
MIDWEST/ DECLINE	-19%	-50%	78%	14%	11%
APPALACHIA/ CHRONIC POVERTY	-12%	-28%	43%	41%	27%
DELTA/ CHRONIC POVERTY	-3%	2%	56%	40%	29%
BLACK BELT/ CHRONIC POVERTY	-4%	-21%	54%	32%	22%

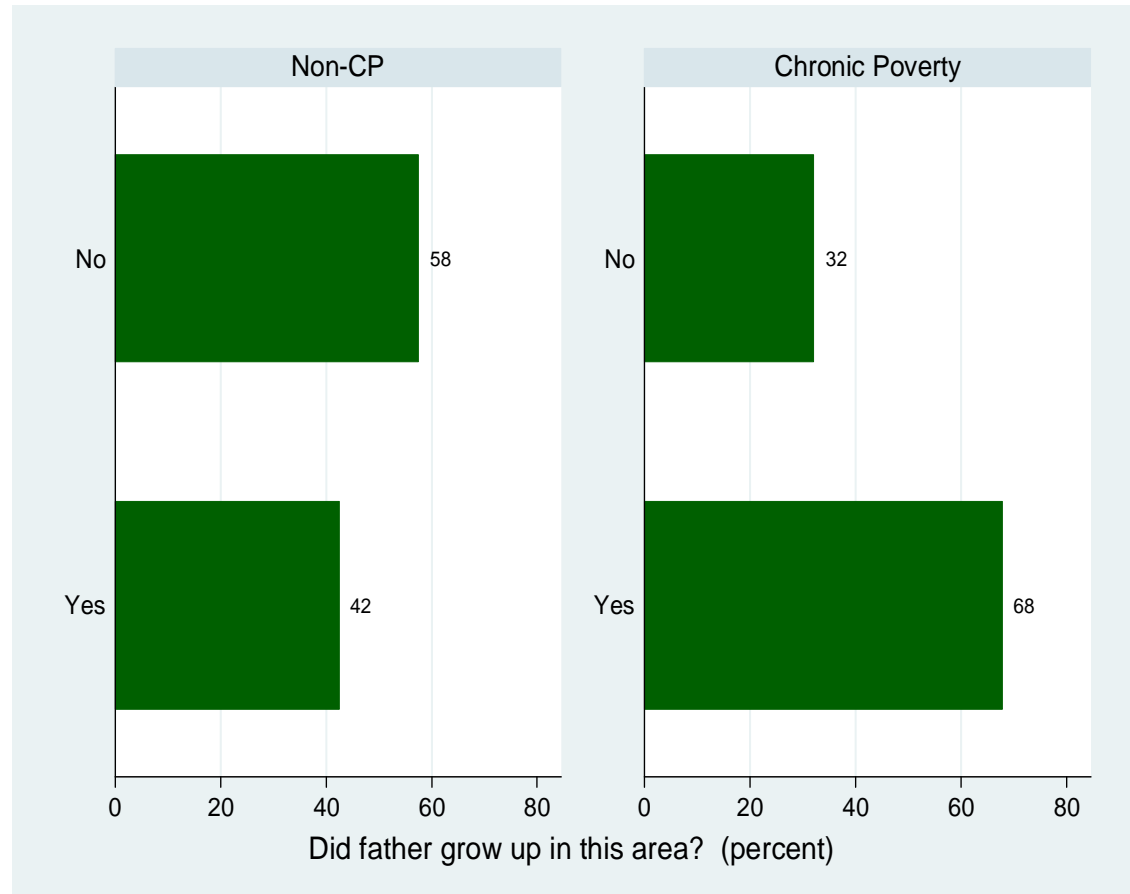
Poor areas have a small middle class and a large lower class with very low education



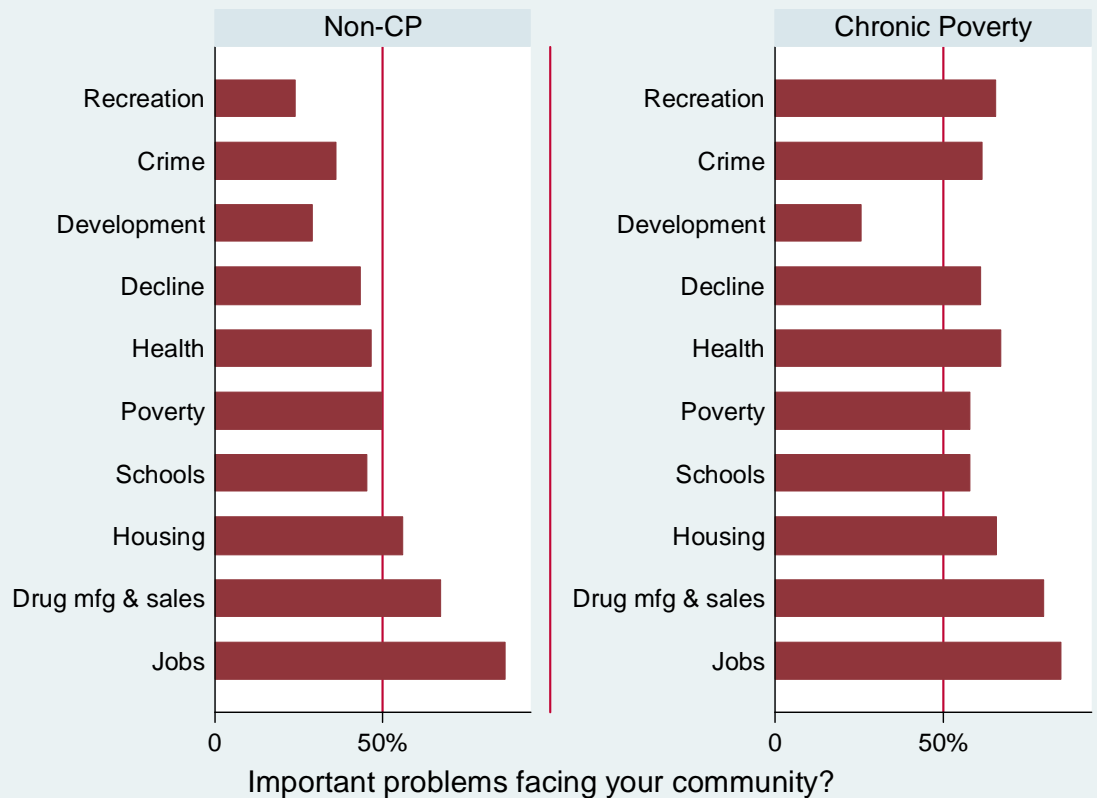
In chronic poverty areas 40% say their father did not go further than the 8th grade...

Roots run deep for the poor in chronically poor places, and there are few newcomers

- 70% of poor area residents say their father grew up in this community
- Only 20% are newcomers



Community conditions are much worse in poor areas



- In poor areas people worry more about the lack of social services, especially health and recreation, affordable housing and drugs. Everywhere people worry about jobs.

The report finds similar conditions in concentrated poverty areas

- Isolation
- Bad schools, low levels of education, high dropout rates
- Low skills, low labor force attachment
- Teen pregnancy and lone parent families
- Lack of public safety, crime and drugs

Defining Poverty

“Poverty is the lack of adequate resources to participate in the accepted ways in society.”

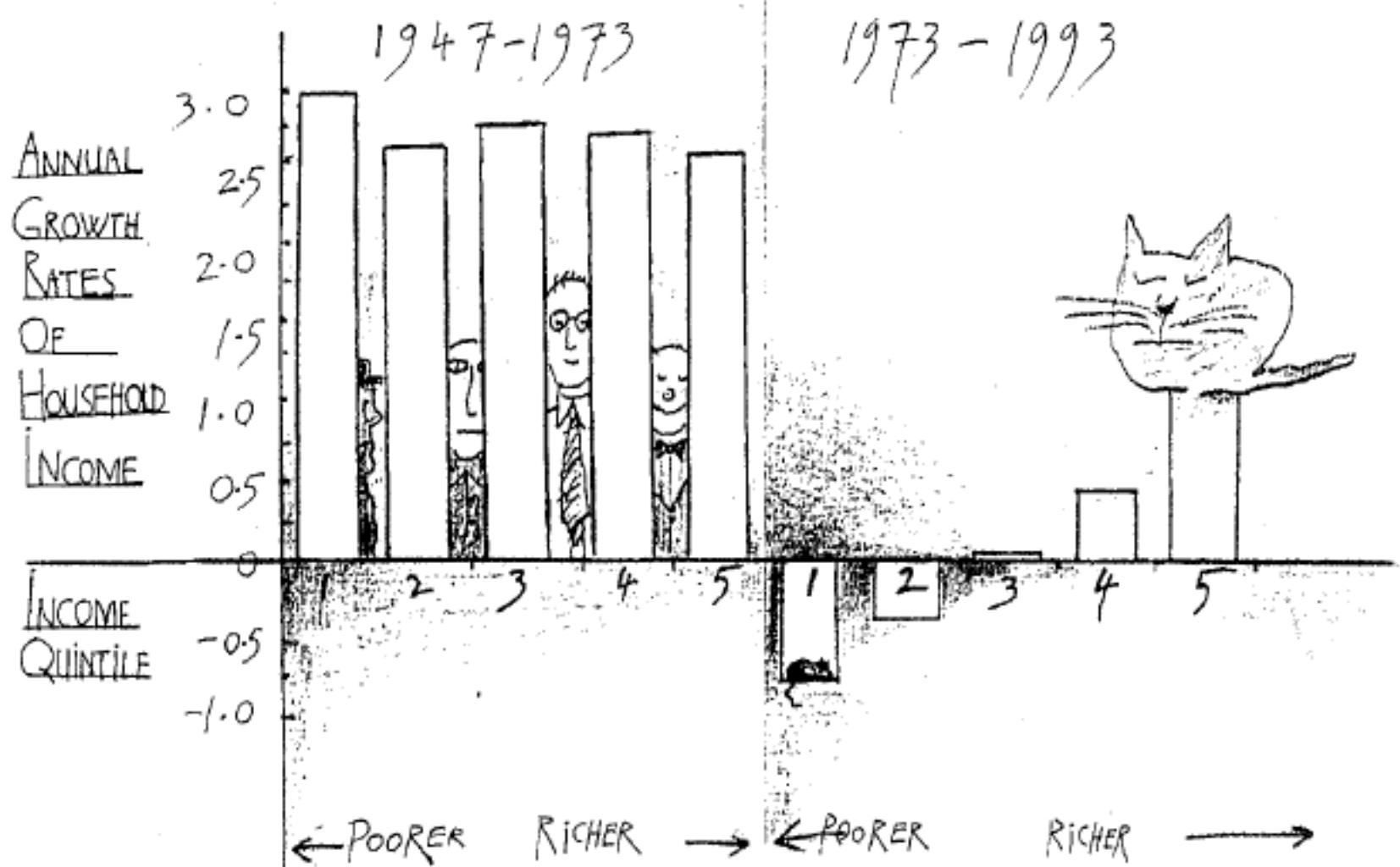
“Social exclusion” – being cut off from, left out of, the mainstream and participation in the wider society

In the 1980s William Julius Wilson's Chicago studies moved us beyond the old "values versus structure" debates

- Work disappeared, especially for low skill workers seeking stable blue collar jobs.
- The black middle class left the ghetto, leaving neighborhoods
 - without role models
 - with little access to cultural learning about the mainstream, and
 - disinvestment in community institutions.

The report's observations about causes of concentrated poverty

- Economic change – job loss in core industries
- Out-migration of the middle class
- Historical race and economic segregation
- Poor schools
- Changing patterns of family formation and structure
- New poor immigrants in gateway communities



THE PICKET FENCE AND THE STAIRCASE

During the postwar Golden Era, real incomes rose at the same rate for everyone. But from 1973 to 1993 the gap between the classes grew enormously.

Consensus on policy to help working families earning low wages

- encourage work and make it pay
 - raise minimum wage, expand EITC;
- support working families
 - with child care, health insurance, paid leave;
- invest in educating poor children and connect youth to the mainstream
 - early childhood education, quality child care, youth mentoring and training programs

Less consensus on how to address intractable concentrated poverty

- Bill Galston says give up, we don't know anything that works, target individuals and families in need.
- Geoffrey Canada, immersed in a poor area with all its social problems and cultural challenges, focuses on kids, builds supportive systems and institutions—97 blocks in Harlem.

Challenges in rural places

- Isolation – physical as well as social
- Low education
- Stigma and low expectations for chronically poor families
- Scarce jobs, controlled by a few
- Broken institutions, lack of investment in the “common good,” political corruption

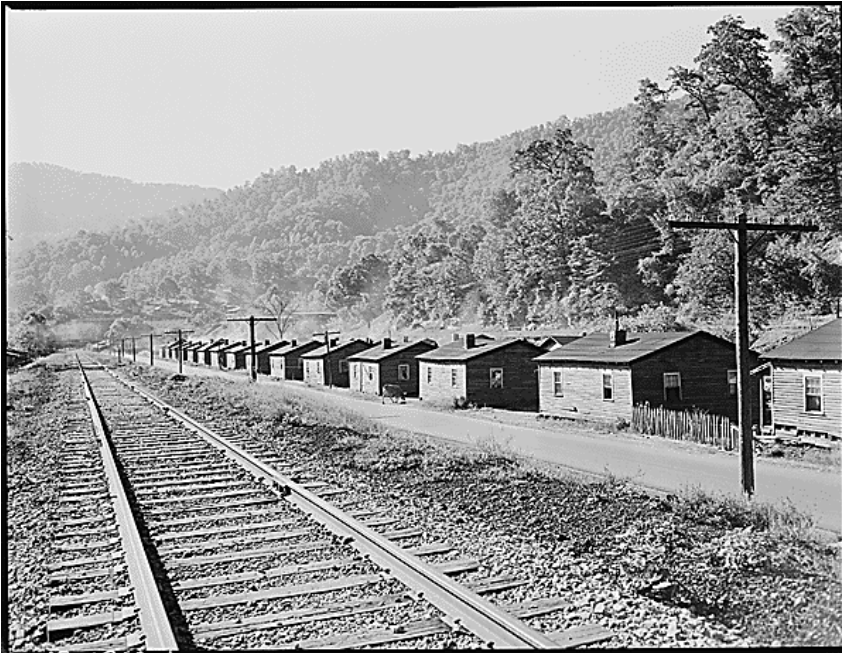
Haves and Have-nots.

- The poor are socially isolated, worlds apart from the haves.
- They rely on different institutions – schools, churches.
- They do not develop the “cultural learning,” skills and contacts that they need to participate in the mainstream.

The middle class is missing

- Families with middle incomes ally with the elite, hold themselves separate from the poor and invest in separate institutions.
- There is no middle class to demand high standards in public schools and hold public officials and employers accountable for honest fair practices.

Appalachia: family name matters



- *“A lot of times you can hear somebody’s last name and before you even meet, you’ve already got the idea that they’re either a good person or they’re sorry as can be.”*
- *Those that have a family with a horrible name, when they come in, we know them, and they’re not worth two cents. They’re sorry as can be – stealing, selling dope, bootlegging, picked up for driving drunk, in and out of bankruptcy court.”*

Family, not community, concerns

“I see people very, very concerned about their own families, and their concern stops there. They’re strongly family oriented here. And they would do anything for their family.

They have a great concern for their own family. I've talked to my congregation. This concern ought to go beyond family.”

-- Minister in Appalachia

Delta: Blacks are the have-nots, and they are still vulnerable



- *“If one of the blacks was to piss Jimmy off--you know he drives for a farmer--he could make it hard on him if he said something to his boss. He could make it really hard on the boy, make him get fired.”*
- *It’s just over here the blacks don’t have the opportunities that whites does. They’re really disgraced.”*

--Truck driver’s wife in the Delta

Change comes slowly

“Blacks who have known only the plantation and a life in which they relied on the bossman will vote with him out of habit and deference...”

Uneducated people need to go through someone, they need to get help from Toms that have been there for a long time and the whites have gained control of them.”

-African-American leader in the Delta

Places with a middle class have trust, cooperate, include rather than exclude and invest in the common good. Thus community institutions work and the poor have greater opportunity.



- *“We're a working community... There's very little difference between people. There doesn't seem to be any class-level distinctions...”*
- *We have a broad, working middle-class. Most of the people who live here feel that they're part of the community...*

-- small business leader in northern New England mill town

Community Challenges

- Isolation and remoteness makes it hard to implement programs
- Small social worlds mean family stigma can have real consequences.
- Few new people and businesses make changing local leadership and politics challenging.

Economic challenges

- Weak markets
- Physically remote
- Low education and skill levels

And training is not enough to link people to jobs because jobs do not exist.

Policy strategies for rural America

- In declining places build on human and social capital, and provide incentives for investment – New Homestead Act
- In poor places invest in child and youth education *and* strengthening community institutions:
 - early childhood education, schools that work, youth recreation and mentoring programs
- In both – build on opportunity to steward natural resources and create alternative energy sources
 - technical colleges to train for middle skill jobs not only in health, construction, but also jobs to restore the natural environment, provide local energy and food.

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New Immigrant Settlements in Rural America: Problems, Prospects, and Policies

EDITED BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

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Rural Workers Would Benefit More Than Urban Workers from an Increase in the Federal Minimum Wage

BY DAVID M. HARRIS AND JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
The minimum wage is a critical policy tool for addressing low wages in the United States. While the minimum wage has increased over time, it remains significantly below the living wage for many workers. This report examines the impact of a minimum wage increase on rural and urban workers. Rural workers, who are often employed in lower-paying industries and have fewer alternative employment opportunities, would benefit more from a minimum wage increase than urban workers. This is because rural workers are more likely to be employed in low-wage sectors and are less likely to have access to higher-paying jobs. A minimum wage increase would therefore have a more significant impact on rural workers' income and living standards.

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The State of Working New Hampshire 2007

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
The labor market in New Hampshire has shown significant growth in recent years, with a steady increase in the number of jobs and a decline in the unemployment rate. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the state's labor market, including trends in employment, wages, and benefits. The report also examines the impact of the state's economic policies on the labor market and offers recommendations for improving the state's economic performance. The state's labor market is characterized by a strong service sector and a growing manufacturing sector. The unemployment rate has declined from 5.5% in 2006 to 4.5% in 2007. The state's labor market is also characterized by a high level of education and training, which has helped to attract high-paying jobs and improve the state's economic performance.

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The Changing Faces of New Hampshire
Recent Demographic Trends in the Granite State

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

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CHANGING FACES IN THE SOUTH: IMMIGRATION AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
The South has experienced a significant increase in immigration in recent years, which has led to a growing diversity of the region's population. This report examines the impact of immigration on the South's political attitudes and social norms. The report finds that immigration has led to a more liberal and inclusive political climate in the South, with a greater emphasis on civil liberties and social justice. This is due to the fact that immigrants are more likely to be employed in low-paying jobs and are more likely to be affected by economic inequality. As a result, immigrants are more likely to support policies that would improve the lives of all workers, regardless of their background.

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Substance Abuse in Rural and Small-Town America

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Substance abuse is a major public health problem in rural and small-town America. This report examines the prevalence of substance abuse in these areas and the factors that contribute to the problem. The report finds that substance abuse is more prevalent in rural and small-town areas than in urban areas. This is due to a number of factors, including a higher rate of unemployment, a higher rate of poverty, and a higher rate of isolation. These factors create a social environment that is more conducive to substance abuse. The report also offers recommendations for addressing the problem of substance abuse in rural and small-town America, including increasing access to mental health services and community-based programs.

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New Faces at the Helm for New Hampshire Presidential Primary

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
The New Hampshire Presidential Primary has long been a key event in the presidential election process. This report examines the impact of the primary on the candidates and the state's political climate. The report finds that the primary has led to a more diverse and competitive field of candidates, which has helped to improve the quality of the election process. The primary has also led to a more informed and engaged electorate, which has helped to ensure that the election is a fair and accurate reflection of the state's will.

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Rural Teachers More Likely to Be Gifted

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Rural teachers are more likely to be gifted than their urban counterparts. This report examines the reasons for this and the impact of being gifted on a teacher's career. The report finds that rural teachers are more likely to be gifted because they are more likely to have a strong sense of community and a deep understanding of their students. This is due to the fact that rural teachers are more likely to live in the communities they teach and are more likely to have a long-term relationship with their students. Being gifted can have a positive impact on a teacher's career, as it allows them to use their talents to the fullest and to make a greater contribution to their students' education.

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Low Wages Prevalent in Direct Care and Child Care Workforce

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Low wages are a major problem in the direct care and child care workforce. This report examines the impact of low wages on the quality of care and the well-being of workers. The report finds that low wages lead to high turnover and a shortage of qualified workers, which in turn leads to a decline in the quality of care. Low wages also have a negative impact on the well-being of workers, as they are unable to meet their basic needs and are more likely to experience stress and health problems. The report offers recommendations for addressing the problem of low wages in the direct care and child care workforce, including increasing the minimum wage and providing additional training and support for workers.

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Children's Health Insurance in New Hampshire: An Analysis of New Hampshire Healthy Kids

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SEC is Vital for Thinking from Frontiers to Rural America

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
The Small Enterprise Clearinghouse (SEC) is a vital resource for entrepreneurs and small business owners. This report examines the impact of the SEC on the state's economy and the factors that contribute to its success. The report finds that the SEC has helped to create a number of new jobs and has provided a valuable source of information and support for entrepreneurs. The SEC is successful because of its focus on providing personalized and practical assistance to entrepreneurs. The report offers recommendations for improving the SEC's effectiveness, including increasing its funding and expanding its services.

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The State of Coos County: Local Perspectives on Community and Change

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
The State of Coos County is a unique and vibrant community. This report examines the state of the county and the factors that contribute to its success. The report finds that Coos County is a strong and resilient community, with a high level of community involvement and a strong sense of identity. This is due to a number of factors, including a high level of education and training, a strong service sector, and a high level of community involvement. The report offers recommendations for improving the county's economic performance, including increasing access to capital and providing additional support for small businesses.

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Urban and Rural in Rural America: A Study of Rural, Urban, and Small-Town America

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Rural America is a diverse and complex region. This report examines the differences between urban, rural, and small-town America and the factors that contribute to these differences. The report finds that rural America is characterized by a high level of community involvement and a strong sense of identity. This is due to the fact that rural communities are more likely to be close-knit and have a long history. The report offers recommendations for improving the quality of life in rural America, including increasing access to services and providing additional support for small businesses.

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Rural Families Choose Home-Based Child Care for their Preschool-Aged Children

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Rural families are more likely to choose home-based child care for their preschool-aged children. This report examines the reasons for this and the impact of home-based child care on the quality of care. The report finds that rural families choose home-based child care because it is more convenient and more affordable than other options. Home-based child care also provides a more personalized and flexible environment for children. The report offers recommendations for improving the quality of home-based child care, including increasing access to training and support for providers.

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Child Poverty in Rural America: New Data Shows Increases in 41 States

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Child poverty is a major problem in rural America. This report examines the impact of child poverty on the well-being of children and the factors that contribute to the problem. The report finds that child poverty leads to a number of problems, including food insecurity, housing instability, and limited access to health care. Child poverty also has a negative impact on the well-being of children, as they are more likely to experience stress and health problems. The report offers recommendations for addressing the problem of child poverty in rural America, including increasing the minimum wage and providing additional support for low-income families.

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Rural America in the 21st Century: Progress and Prospects

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Rural America has made significant progress in recent years, but there are still a number of challenges that the region faces. This report examines the state of rural America and the factors that will affect its future. The report finds that rural America is a strong and resilient region, with a high level of community involvement and a strong sense of identity. However, there are still a number of challenges that the region faces, including a high rate of poverty and a high rate of unemployment. The report offers recommendations for addressing these challenges and ensuring a bright future for rural America.

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Some Small Businesses in Rural Areas Face Persistent Job Loss

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

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Some small businesses in rural areas face persistent job loss. This report examines the reasons for this and the impact of job loss on the well-being of workers. The report finds that small businesses in rural areas face a number of challenges, including a high rate of unemployment and a high rate of poverty. These challenges make it difficult for small businesses to attract and retain workers. The report offers recommendations for addressing the problem of job loss in rural areas, including increasing access to capital and providing additional support for small businesses.

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Increasing Spatial and Racial Diversity

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

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Rural Children Increasingly Rely on Medicaid and SCHIP

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Rural children are increasingly relying on Medicaid and SCHIP for their health care. This report examines the reasons for this and the impact of Medicaid and SCHIP on the well-being of children. The report finds that rural children are more likely to be poor and more likely to live in rural areas. These factors make it difficult for rural children to afford health care. Medicaid and SCHIP provide a valuable source of health care for rural children, but there are still a number of challenges that the program faces. The report offers recommendations for improving the program, including increasing funding and expanding eligibility.

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Rural America Depends on the Food Stamp Program to Make Ends Meet

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Rural America depends on the food stamp program to make ends meet. This report examines the impact of the food stamp program on the well-being of rural Americans and the factors that contribute to the problem. The report finds that the food stamp program is a vital source of food for rural Americans, but there are still a number of challenges that the program faces. The report offers recommendations for improving the program, including increasing funding and expanding eligibility.

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Coos County Community Indicators: A Profile by Town

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

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Refusing Rural Development: Making the Case for Linking Rural Production to Rural Renaissance

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
Rural development is a complex and controversial issue. This report examines the case for linking rural production to rural renaissance and the factors that contribute to this case. The report finds that rural production is a key component of rural renaissance and that linking the two can lead to a number of benefits, including increased economic growth and improved quality of life. The report offers recommendations for linking rural production to rural renaissance, including increasing access to capital and providing additional support for small businesses.

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Good Life
Demographic Trends in Rural and Small-Town America

BY JAMES H. JOHNSON

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New England Has the Highest Increase in Income Disparity in the Nation

BY DAVID M. HARRIS AND JAMES H. JOHNSON

Introduction
New England has the highest increase in income disparity in the nation. This report examines the reasons for this and the impact of income disparity on the well-being of New Englanders. The report finds that income disparity leads to a number of problems, including food insecurity, housing instability, and limited access to health care. Income disparity also has a negative impact on the well-being of children, as they are more likely to experience stress and health problems. The report offers recommendations for addressing the problem of income disparity in New England, including increasing the minimum wage and providing additional support for low-income families.

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