

2014

Local news counts: a focus upon local news and its effects on community attachment

Sela Rose Harcey
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Sociology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Harcey, Sela Rose, "Local news counts: a focus upon local news and its effects on community attachment" (2014). *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*. 14157.

<http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/14157>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.

Local news counts: A focus upon local news and its effects on community attachment

by

Sela Rose Harcey

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Sociology

Program of Study Committee:
Stephen G. Sapp, Major Professor
Terry L. Besser
Deborah M. Tootle

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2014

Copyright © Sela Rose Harcey, 2014. All rights reserved.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Caitlin Epple. Her love of education is the motivation in my passion of learning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	ii
LIST OF FIGURES	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
ABSTRACT.....	vii
CHAPTER 1. RESEARCH TOPIC AND CONCEPTUAL APPROACH.....	1
CHAPTER 2. METHODS AND RESULTS	30
CHAPTER 3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	48
APPENDIX A. CORRELATION TABLE	55
APPENDIX B. SURVEY INSTRUMENT.....	57
REFERENCES	69

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. Conceptual Model.....	23

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Summary chart of indicators used for measuring linear-development, systemic model, and social capital.....	24
Table 2. Social-demographic characteristics of the respondents	36
Table 3. Standardized parameter estimates for the observed and latent variables reliability estimates for the latent variables	44
Table 4. Standardized parameter estimates for the conceptual model.....	45
Table 5. Summary of Hypothesis Testing.....	47

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my major professor Steve Sapp, for his guidance, wealth of knowledge, and unwavering support from the beginning to the end of this research. His mentoring, patience, and understanding have been invaluable in my pursuit of a Masters Degree at Iowa State University. Also, thank you Terry Besser and Deborah Tootle for your guidance, critical eye, and support throughout this process. I thank my family for their many forms of steadfast support and encouragement throughout this endeavor called graduate school.

ABSTRACT

To what extent does a focus upon local news affect residents' expressed attachment to their community? Albeit relatively unexplored in previous research, an examination of this effect might significantly improve social science understanding of attachment, a key element of community quality of life. This research examined the effect of a focus upon local news on community attachment using a conceptual model informed by three sociological approaches: linear-development, systemic model, and social capital. The model was evaluated by the extent to which it fit data gathered from a social survey of 860 adults living in rural areas within 10-selected states. The results indicate that a focus upon local news has a strong direct effect on community attachment. Implications are discussed with respect to how community attachment might be improved by fostering a greater focus upon local news.

CHAPTER I

RESEARCH TOPIC AND CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

Introduction

“At a time when mainstream news media are hemorrhaging and doomsayers are predicting the death of journalism (at least as we’ve known it), take heart: The free press is alive and well in small towns across America, thanks to the editors of thousands of weeklies who, for very little money and a fair amount of aggravation, keep telling it like it is” (Muller 2011).

This thesis examines the extent to which a focus upon local news might significantly improve individuals' attachment to their community. To conceptually understand a focus upon local news it is defined within the context of social capital theory as a form of bridging social capital. To more fully understand empirically the potential role that a focus upon local news might play in influencing community attachment, using data gathered as part of a nationwide social survey of 860 adults this thesis examines its effect on community attachment in relation to other concepts representing the social capital perspective and to concepts representing the linear development and systemic theoretical approaches to community attachment.

Defining community has been a particularly challenging task (Surratt 2001). Although a common thread in defining communities is locality and/or a territory and a shared “culture,” the differing ideas and meanings of what constitutes a territory/location and

what is meant by shared culture pose intriguing questions regarding the definition of place and the interactions that occur among the residents living in it. Surratt (2001) summarizes four conceptual frameworks used to define community: urbanism, culturalism, urban ecology, and urban political economy/world systems theory. These four frameworks have much in common, especially in their theoretical underpinnings. Although they are not mutually exclusive from one another, it is necessary to distinguish among them to clearly define how community is conceptualized here.

Urbanism explores the changing of societal organizations, core institutions, and the significance of territory in response to changing population size and density (Surratt 2001). Works by Tönnies, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber highlight this comparative and historical perspective on community, wherein it is argued that the “aggregation of heterogeneous peoples in densely settled areas affects the nature of social organization” (2001: 48). Urbanism focuses on the effects of population growth on changes in social organization. Culturalism, in a manner similar to urbanism, also addresses the effects of population change on societal institutions, but additionally addresses the effects of population change on individuals' behavior and attitudes (Surratt 2001). Culturalism, in contrast with urbanism, addresses how changes from a community characterized by primary interactions and little division of labor (i.e., *Gemeinschaft*) to one more characterized by secondary interactions and much division of labor (i.e., *Gesellschaft*) affect individuals' attitudes and behavior (Tönnies [1887] 1957; Wirth 1938). Urban ecology, which emerged as a subset of human ecology (Park 1936; Hawley 1950), examines patterns of social relationships and individuals' adaptation within the urban

environment in response to changing population size and density as well as the key function(s) of the community (Surratt 2001). The urban political economy/world systems approach examines the extent to which more economically and politically powerful communities intentionally alter economic and political institutions, thereby affecting the economic and political efficacy, social cohesion, and social solidarity of less powerful communities (Surratt 2001). In defining community, this thesis will rely upon the culturalist and urban conceptualist perspectives.

Selecting one definition of community can be a challenging task in that the culturalist and urbanist perspectives offer various definitions of community. From an approach that can best be described as culturalist, Christensen and Robinson (1980) define community as “a collection of individuals in a geographically defined area who interact with each other, have psychological ties with each other and identify with each other” (Besser 1994: 74). Similarly, from a perspective that best represents a conceptual merging of the culturalist and urbanist perspectives, Wilkinson (1991) defines community as having three components, a locality, a local society, and a process of locally oriented collective actions. A locality is “a territory where people live and meet their daily needs together” (1991:2), thereby reflecting an urbanism framework. For example, a territory could be a township or city limits, essentially anything that provides the locality of a community. A local society represents “a comprehensive network of associations for meeting common needs and expressing common interests” (1991: 2), and in this sense reflects a culturalist perspective. For example, a network of associations could range from the essentially primary interactions that occur among friends with intimate ties to the more secondary

interactions that occur among groups and organizations in which an individual participates. The third component of community as described by Wilkinson is “a process of interrelated actions through which residents express their common interests in local society” (1991: 2). For example, civic participation might provide a conceptually accurate and empirically accurate operationalization of collective action. Thus, the locality principle reflects an urbanist framework. Wilkinson further develops the locality principle to describe how individuals might be more oriented toward special interest fields—one that serve the specific needs of the individual—or community-level fields—ones that serve the broader community. In relying upon both the culturist and urban conceptual approaches, Flora and Flora (2008) define community as consisting of three elements: place, social system, and common identity. Communities consist of people rooted to a specific place. This place can be oriented around geographical boundaries, but changes based on the characteristics of people and the relationships of the people within the community; that is, in some sense the people make the place. The second element of community posed by Flora and Flora (2008), social systems, is “the organization or set of organizations through which a group of people meets its needs” (2008: 13). Embedded within the element is interaction, these interaction for networks to which individuals in a community can strengthen bonds. The third element of community is identity. In some cases the identity of a community is not tied to locality, but yet functions as a unifying element that fully encompasses the breadth of social cohesion. These elements closely mirror the ones described by Wilkinson, but omit Wilkinson's attention to how individuals might focus their attention to either special or community fields. With these conceptual issues and prior definitions of community in

mind, this thesis will utilize the definition provided by Flora and Flora (2008) because it most closely provides a conceptual linkage between a focus upon local news and community attachment.

Attachment is defined as a feeling that links individuals to their community of residence via sentiment, involvement, and friendship (Goudy 1990; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Sampson 1988; Stinner et al. 1990). High community attachment has been conceptually and empirically linked to community quality of life indicators such as economic well-being (Brehm, Eisenhauer, and Krannich 2009; Tolbert, Thomas, and Irwin 1998), quality of public schools (Campbell et al. 1976), and decreased crime rates (Hartnagel 1979). Given its empirically supported relationship with these and other indicators of community well-being, attachment to community has been a topic of a large volume of previous research (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Sampson 1988; Wirth 1938). The two questions addressed here are, 1) how might a focus upon local news be conceptually integrated within extant theories of community attachment, and 2) to what extent does a focus upon local news affect community attachment, taking into account the influence of variables implied by other theories of community attachment?

Attempts to understand relationships between individual-level characteristics and attachment have been guided for the most part by three theoretical perspectives, all three of which to some extent reflect the culturalist and urbanist frameworks. The linear-development perspective focuses on the extent to which attachment is influenced by structural characteristics of the community, such as its population size, level of

industrialization, and extent of urbanization (Wirth 1938). In this regard, the linear development perspective reflects key elements of the urbanist framework. The systemic perspective examines how characteristics of the individual, such as their length of residence, income, age, and years of formal education, affect their attachment to community (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Sampson 1988). The systemic perspective thereby reflects key elements of the culturalist framework. Social capital theory, from an individual perspective, examines individuals' bonding and bridging relationships as these affect their attachment to their community, and in this manner also reflects a culturalist framework. Key advantages and limitations of each perspective are described below. Importantly, these perspectives are not mutually exclusive of one another. Rather, taken together they can be used to gain a broad perspective of community and serve as the theoretical foundation for the development and testing of a comprehensive theoretical model of attachment to community. In this manner, this thesis will propose a generalized model of attachment, one that incorporates central elements of the linear development, systemic, and social capital approaches while integrating a focus upon local news as an element of bridging social capital.

A focus upon local news is defined as an interest in learning about activities taking place within the community and a perceived importance of engaging in this activity. A focus upon local news, therefore, is considered as a participatory form of engagement with ones community, a way in which residents' can understand and learn about on goings in their community. For example, reading a local newspaper or listening to a local radio station will provide residents' with knowledge of community events enabling them to better

engage with their community. In this manner, by a focus upon local news, I do not mean to refer to activity that disengages individuals from their community in the sense of their entrenching themselves within a cloistered environment of neglect of others about them. Rather, I mean to say active participation by the individual in becoming aware of the events of the community.

This examination of the effect of a focus upon local news on attachment provides a relatively unexplored but potentially important addition to previous inquiries. This exploration might illuminate one way in which community members interact with their social environment to perhaps increase their attachment to community. To the extent that a focus upon local news can favorably and significantly affect attachment we might discover new approaches by which practitioners can maintain and enhance community well-being. It is apparent, for example, that weekly newspapers are important to small town America. In fact, the Community Newspaper Readership survey found about 67% of residents in small U.S. communities read local newspapers at least once a week (Community Newspaper Readership year). Muller (2011) points out that many weeklies are not only surviving but thriving through a tour of small town newspapers in rural America. This example highlights one way in which local news is valued within rural America. But what role does a focus upon local news play on community attachment?

First, I will review each theoretical perspective guiding the conceptual model proposed here: linear-development, systemic, and social capital. Next, I will describe the similarities and differences in conceptualizing and measuring components of each

perspective. Third, I will situate a focus upon local news within the social capital perspective as a form of bridging. After the review of the literature and positioning the potential contribution of a focus upon local news, I present the conceptual model, hypotheses, and research expectations of this thesis.

Theoretical Approach

Three theoretical perspectives have been developed to understand determinants of community attachment: linear-development, systemic, and social capital. These perspectives complement one another in attempts to fully understand community attachment. After reviewing previous literature that describes the conceptual foundations of each perspective and some of the pertinent empirical studies that support them I propose a conceptual model of community attachment that incorporates key elements of each perspective.

Linear Development

The linear development perspective emphasizes how population growth, density, and heterogeneity, urbanization, and industrialization affect individuals' attachment to their community (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Wirth 1938). This perspective was developed, "because linear increases in the population size and densities of human communities are

assumed to be primary exogenous factors influencing patterns of social behavior" (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974: 328). Tönnies ([1887] 1957), for example, describes how the transition (in a linear form) of a community from *Gemeinschaft* (i.e., little division of labor, primary forms of social interaction) to *Gesellschaft* (i.e., much division of labor, secondary forms of social interaction) reflects changes in population size, density, and heterogeneity and the extent of urbanization and industrialization (see also: Buttel, Martinson, and Wilkening 1979; Goudy 1990; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974). Community size, for example, has been shown to have an inverse effect on community attachment (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Sampson 1988; Stinner et al. 1990; Wirth 1938). Wirth (1938) studied common threads among the size of population, density, and heterogeneity. Ultimately, he concluded that urban areas are faced with weaker ties and less attachment to one's community.

It is important to note here that the linear development model was developed in regard to understanding the social dynamics of larger, urban centers. Within this thesis, the communities being studied are rural and nonmetropolitan. This limitation in the scope of the community might pose a limitation to examining the efficacy of the linear development approach to understanding community attachment. Within the linear model, for example, one would hypothesize that the greater the extent of urbanization the lower the attachment. Testing this hypothesis in this thesis might prove problematic because some studies of rural communities indicate a potential threshold effect of size, wherein when truncating the size of community, research finds that the larger the rural community

the higher the attachment (Goudy 1990). This finding seems counterintuitive when examining the linear model. Yet it might be understood as meaning that very small towns cannot offer sufficient resources to engender attachment. Thus, community characteristics such as population size, density, and heterogeneity, and extent of urbanization and industrialization might to some extent have non-linear effects on individuals' attachment to their community.

Systemic Model

The systemic approach to understanding community attachment focuses upon individuals' social demographic characteristics, such as their age, income, and length of residence on their attachment to their community. Theoretically, the greater the number of years lived in a community, the greater the satisfaction with it and attachment to it. Flaherty and Brown (2010), for example, examine the systemic model to determine the role of community attachment finding that at an individual level, length of residence is associated with community attachment via social ties.

The systemic model was developed as way to account for exogenous variables affecting a resident's attachment to community, apart from, and partially in relation to urbanization (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974). The systemic model views community as: "a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and on-going socialization processes" (1974: 329). This perspective

relies especially upon length of residence as a key contributor to community attachment (Flaherty and Brown 2010; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974). Length of residence proves influential in numerous studies even when taking into consideration the partial effects of other variables associated with the systemic model such as age, education level, and socioeconomic status (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Sampson 1988).

Social Capital

Flora and Flora (2008) identify seven capitals of community: cultural, human, social, political, natural, financial, and built. Community capitals function as a way to organize the community as a way of disentangling the many elements of community. Capitals are resources. By categorizing, differentiating, and interpreting the elements of community as a resource sets a foundation for community development. For example, by developing a particular capital, say political, other capitals may increase. These capitals are not mutually exclusive. The seven community capitals can be differentiated into two groups 1) nonmaterial/intangible and 2) material/concrete. Cultural, social, human, and political all are nonmaterial capitals wherein each capital contains social or human attributes that cannot be quantified. Whereas, natural, financial, and build have elements that are material. For example, a natural capital could be an amenity, such as a natural forest or tramping trails. The main capital that I will be examining is social capital. Social capital offers a way for other needed capitals to be accessed. By developing social capital, communities can develop by increasing community well-being and needs to foster greater attachment. Social capital is an examination of social ties and networks that directly

affect or potentially benefit groups (communities) or individuals (Portes 2000, Sundblad 2008).

Social capital theory is rooted within the classical keystones of Durkheim, Tönnies, Weber, and Marx. Durkheim's mechanical and organic solidarity, and Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* influence structural as well as interactional changes in relation to social capital. Tönnies' perspective ([1887] 1957) is indicative within social capital through the theory of "reciprocity transactions." Weber's two types of rationalities (substantive and formal), the protestant ethic, and Marx's class solidarity are also seen within social capital. Weber (spirit of capitalism) contributes crucial elements in defining social capital with the concepts of networks and trust. Although not coined as social capital, Weber provides theoretical underpinnings for understanding key components of social capital. Substantive and formal rationalities (Britton and Nee 1998; Weber [1922] 1947) reinforce trust that is utilized widely as a component of social capital. Through the obligations and benefits provided to a group through substantive rationality and open exchange and transactions through formal rationality, Weber fosters the connection of trust and networks, both as crucial components within social capital theory. The Marxian idea of solidarity is highlighted within social capital theories. Taking Portes' (1998) membership to a network or social structure and the benefits received by the actors via the association is grounded within solidarity. The melding of individuals to a network can only happen through high consciousness bounded within solidarity.

Coleman (1990: 302) defines social capital by the way in which it functions, “It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure.” The individual analysis of social capital is embedded within the research of Coleman. Coleman’s research encompasses the role of individual benefits and personal social ties that one has in the community (Coleman 1988). Social capital at the individual level also is grounded in the writings of Bourdieu. As resources and ties increase, then theoretically so does social capital. Bourdieu (1986: 243) defines social capital as, “made up of social obligations (‘connections’), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility.” Robert Putnam, influenced by these definitions provided by Bourdieu and Coleman, applied social capital in reference to a community level analysis. Putnam (1995: 67) defines social capital as “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.” Putnam is well known for researching social capital from a communal level from his research in Italy. His findings suggest that the higher the social capital the more effective communal systems (government, resources, amenities). The same key components are permeated within the individual and communal levels of social capital; however, there is a distinction within the level of analysis, wherein individual versus community benefits and assets are accessed.

Other well-known definitions of social capital are taken from Flora and Floras as well as Portez. Portez (2000) developed a definition of social capital that encompasses networks and relates them to a larger structure via resources. Portez, similar to Coleman, aligns social capital with a goal seeking, network producing entity (Wall, Ferrazzi, and Schryer 1998). Portes (1998: 6) identifies social capital as, “the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures.” Flora and Flora (2008) highlight the multi-dimensional aspects that are incumbent of social capital in which it is context specific especially in regards to communities. The Flora’s contribution to social capital is focused around community development and efficient way to increase social capital that is addressed later in the section. Overall, distinctions in the level of analysis (individual or communal) separate the different forms of social capital. However, there are general similarities in the understanding of components of social capital. For example, Coleman and Bourdieu understand social capital as very similar things but study the implications of social capital in two different ways. Putnam takes the understanding of social capital and applies it to a larger level of analysis. In doing so, Putnam examines the community in regards to low social capital.

Bonding and Bridging Social Capital

Durkheim's work on the shift from organic and mechanic solidarity as well as Tönnies' conceptualization of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* help describe the dichotomy of bonding and bridging social capital. These classical tones silhouette the way social capital is understood not only in the affect to individuals and societies (in this thesis, communities) but also to the role of ties to individuals and communities seen within bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital is the networks and ties between homogenous groups, whereas bridging social capital is the networks and ties between heterogeneous groups. For example, bonding social capital would reflect a tight relationship between close friends or family. Bridging social capital, on the other hand, would reflect a network or tie among different groups, such as different ethnic groups sharing diverse interests. Granovetter (1973) makes a distinction between strong and weak ties, which match up well with the conception of bonding and bridging social capital. Liu and Besser (2003) identify informal social ties, formal social ties, trust, and norms of collective action as four dimensions of social capital. Each of these four dimensions are encompassed in different components of social capital; that is, both in the community and individual levels as well as in relation to bonding and bridging.

Bonding social capital takes place within groups and among individuals that are homogenous (Flora and Flora 2003). Bonding social capital is highly associated with trust (Coleman 1988, Liu and Besser 2003; Portes 2000). In contrast to bonding social capital, bridging social capital seeks to increase networks and trust to various, potentially

diverse, groups within as well as groups outside to the community. Granovetter's "strong" and "weak" ties are illuminated within bonding and bridging, wherein strong ties are measured within the density of ties, specifically to those close to oneself (bonding). Weak ties on the other hand are less dense and focus around bonds between groups and individuals that are dissimilar.

Putnam (2000: 20) summarizes the distinction between bonding and bridging as:

"Some forms of social capital are, by choice or necessity, inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogenous groups...Other networks are outward looking and encompass across diverse social cleavages...Bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing social solidarity. Dense networks in ethnic enclaves, for example, provide crucial social and psychological support for less fortunate members of the community... Bridging networks, in contrast, are better for linkage to external assets and for information diffusion... Bonding social capital is ... good for 'getting by.' but bridging social capital is crucial for 'getting ahead.' Moreover, bridging social capital can generate broader identities and reciprocities, whereas bonding social capital bolsters our narrower selves."

This summary of the element of social capital (bonding and bridging) provides a clear utility and potential problems associated with each form. Bonding and bridging social capital also has been purposed to have differentiating effects when further examined. The influence of bonding and bridging social capital on communities can have great impacts when there is prevalence of one over the other. Flora and Flora (2003) offer an in-depth analysis different circumstances in which a community lacks social capital (low bonding and bridging), the potential for conflict (high bonding and low bridging), and external

influence (high bridging and low bonding). Overall there are potential barriers that communities face when any of the three cases are examined. Take for instance, the potential for conflict. The major setback of high bonding and low bridging is a resistance to change that can inhibit or prevent community development. As a solution to the differentiating levels of bonding and bridging, entrepreneurial social infrastructure (ESI) was developed as way to create equilibrium between bonding and bridging to ultimately maximize community development and attachment (Flora and Flora 2003).

Flora and Flora (2003) when discussing the positive outcomes of high social capital, via the equilibrium of bonding and bridging, state that: “Strengthened relationships and communications can result from the fostering of increased interactions among unlikely groups inside and outside of the community and increased availability of information and knowledge among community members” (pg. 215). Within this context of understanding the need to achieve higher social capital illuminates the way in which a focus upon local news can foster heightened social capital; that is, through providing knowledge and information to a community.

A Focus Upon Local News

A focus upon local news might provide for a broad dissemination of knowledge and information. In this manner, we might situate a focus upon local news conceptually as a form of bridging social capital. By associating a focus upon local news in the framework

of bridging social capital, it cannot be considered as a direct action (i.e. participating in clubs and organizations) to obtain knowledge and information about the community. Rather, a focus upon local news is proposed as a means by which the individual can gain a broader, more diffuse understanding of the community. Putnam (2000) found a correlation between television viewing and how active individuals are in community life. Putnam finds that “the more time spent watching news, the more active one is in the community” (2000: 243). For example, when more time is spent watching television talk shows, game shows, and soap operas, the less active one is within community. Putnam posits television as form of bridging social capital by conceptualizing it as a gathering place. Putnam states, “Television at its civic best can be a gathering place, a powerful force for bridging social differences, nurturing solidarity, and communicating essential civic information” (2000: 243). Putnam is careful to point out that watching television, for example, does not necessarily imply a form of bridging social capital. In fact, this activity might represent a form of disengagement with the community. In this latter sense, wherein watching television represents a way in which individuals might cloister themselves apart from their community, Putnam finds that television viewing negatively affects social capital. As a form of engagement with the ongoing events of the community, however, viewing local news can contribute positively to social capital. Thus, it is in the former sense of the term that I suggest that a focus upon local news, wherein individuals seek information about their community to engage with it, represents a form of bridging social capital.

Television viewing is not the same activity as a focus upon local news; however, it can be understood in quite a similar fashion. Putnam, among others (see Flora et al. 1997) have used newspaper readership as a measure in capturing components of a healthy civic community (Wall, Ferrazzi, and Schryer 1998). As discussed above, bridging social capital can “generate broader identities and reciprocities” (Putnam 2000: 22) and ultimately, increase networks and trust in and outside of the community. When conceptually incorporating a focus upon local news within this understanding of social capital, the concept can provide a broader understanding of bridging, wherein residents can increase their attachment they attune to knowledge disseminated about the community.

I note that a focus upon local news also might significantly contribute to our understanding of attachment, specifically in reference to bridging social capital.

Although there are previous studies on community attachment that examine a focus upon local news (Hoffman and Eveland 2010; Stamm 1988; Stamm, Emig, and Hesse 1997) few of them address more than one community. Attachment is suggested to be a product of media use (Stamm 1985; Stamm, Emig, and Hesse 1997); however, Hoffman and Eveland (2010), for example, try to understand the opposite of community attachment leading to more media use. Kang and Kwak (2003) found that media use generated civic citizens when examining length of residence and its interactional effect with media use. Therefore, although some previous research examines the effect of a focus upon local news on community well-being, no previous work has examined this concept within the

context of the broader range of community theory or with empirical observations expanding beyond a single community. There is also a need for understanding the causal relationship between attachment and news. Besser (1994) suggests a potential reciprocal relationship between attachment and newspaper readership. Although this thesis does not attempt to understand the relationship between a focus upon local news and attachment, it is necessary to understand the ambiguity around the impact of local news. One may consider 1) if a focus upon local news contributes to higher levels of attachment to community, 2) if attachment to community contributes to a greater focus upon local news, or 3) if there is a reciprocal relationship present?

I posit that local news is best positioned as representing an element of social capital. That is, this concept reflects the individual's interest in and engagement with the ongoing social interactions throughout the community. As such, it seems to represent the individual's connection specifically as a diffuse form of bridging social capital. How bonding social capital is understood prevents an inclusion of a focus upon local news; that is, bonding is close ties wherein there are high levels of trust. Bridging social capital, on the other hand, provides a “bridge” in which two separate entities can create weaker bonds. As such, a focus upon local news is situated within bridging social capital as a way to foster the dissemination of knowledge and information to a variety of different individuals—ergo, bridging. Understanding what goes on in a community via a focus upon local news can provide a removed sense of knowledge that is diffuse. It spans

across the entire community, theoretically enabling the opportunity for increased attachment via increasing networks and trust.

Conceptual Model, Hypotheses, and Research Expectations

Given that much research supports each of the three theoretical perspectives listed above, none examine all three perspectives together. Due to the high level of overlap in the theoretical underpinnings, measurement of, and applied connection to community literature of all three theoretical approaches presses the importance of conducting an investigation that includes all three perspectives together. This review of three theories in relation to community attachment, the following conceptual model and hypothesis are formulated to test each theory. Once the conceptual model and hypotheses are presented, I briefly describe my expectations for the research.

Conceptual Model

Taken together, with the understanding that to some extent each theoretical perspective incorporates conceptual elements of the others, I can posit a broadly conceived theoretical model that attempts to capture the essential constructs of community satisfaction and attachment. Based upon previous studies that have utilized the three theoretical perspectives stated above to understand satisfaction and attachment from an

individual/micro perspective, I believe that this model should include constructs that address the social demographic characteristics of the individual, their length of residence, their personal bonding and bridging social capital, and their perceptions of neighboring.

Although this micro level approach can offer important insights into individual satisfaction and attachment, I must recognize that to some extent these perspectives are influenced by the social structure—or macro-level characteristics—of the community and at the same time reflect the emphasis of the linear development perspective on community structure. Therefore, I include in our conceptual model, concepts that address the social and economic conditions of the community. These social and economic conditions of the community include indicators of economic activity, population size, and racial diversity.

My conceptual model (Figure 1) is informed by the three complementary theoretical perspectives: linear-development, systemic, and social capital. The model positions community attachment as the key dependent variable to be explained. Each theoretical element reflects elements derived from previous measures used in operationalizing the theory.

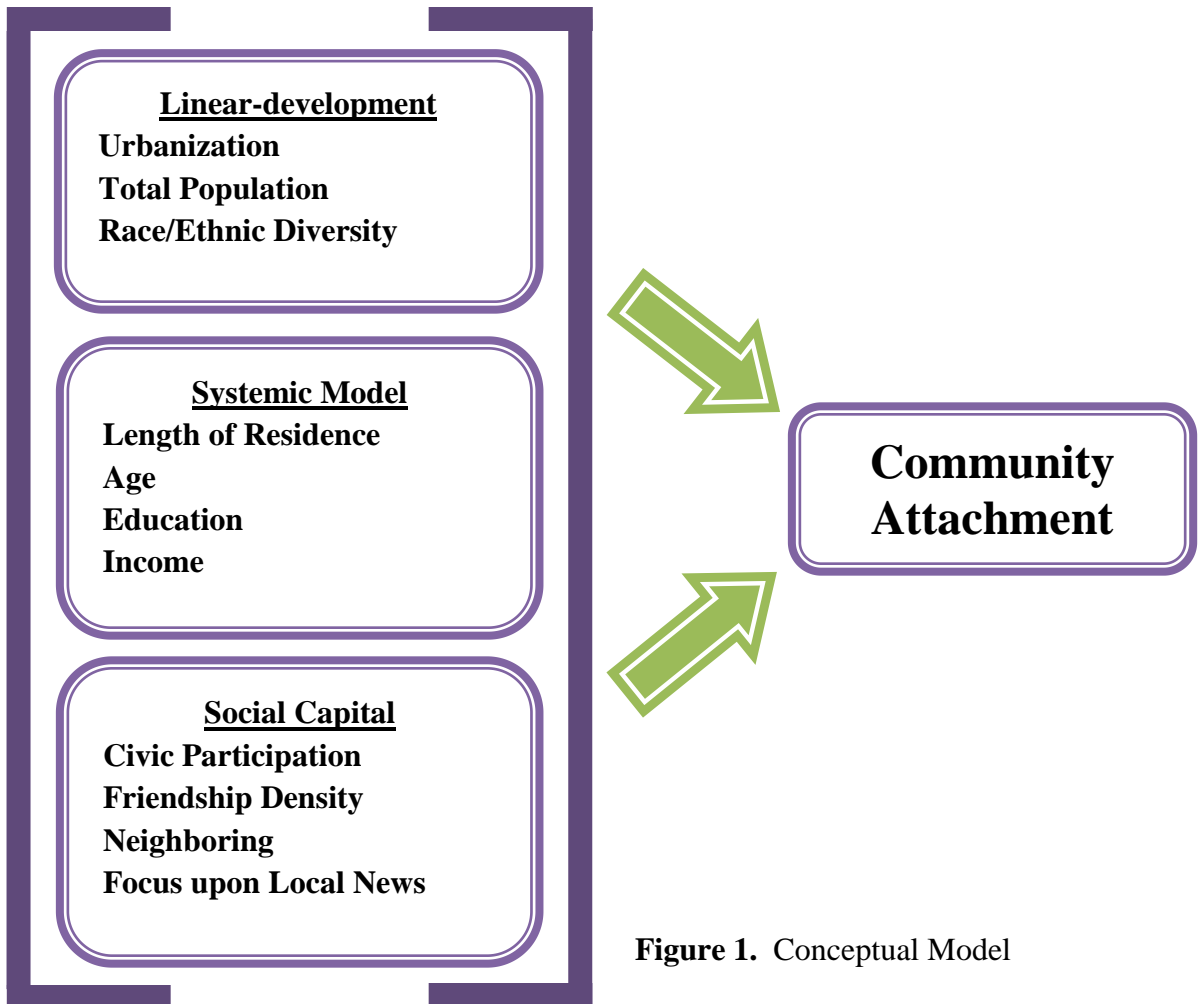


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Research Hypotheses

Can a focus upon local news be linked with positive outcomes such as community attachment? I utilized components of three theoretical perspectives to create a broad model for understanding community attachment. Due to the overlap in theoretical, empirical, and conceptual components of the three theoretical perspectives, Table 1 seeks to provide a summary of common measures. Also, Table 1 will reinforce the justification of measurement within each hypothesis.

Table 1. Summary chart of indicators used for measuring linear-development, systemic model, and social capital.

		Linear Development Measures	Systemic Model Measures	Social Capital Measures	Hypothesis/Measures
Linear Development	Wirth (1938)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of Urbanization • Industrialization • Heterogeneity • Density 			Hypothesis 1 Hypothesis 2 Hypothesis 3
Systemic Model	Goudy (1990)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Populations size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of residence 		Hypothesis 4 Hypothesis 5 Hypothesis 6 Hypothesis 7
	Kasarda and Janowitz (1974)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population Density • Community Size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of residence • Age (Life-cycle) • Social class 		
	Sampson (1988)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of residence 		
Social Capital	Bourdieu			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends/associations 	Hypothesis 8 Hypothesis 9 Hypothesis 10 Hypothesis 11
	Freudenburg (1986)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Density of acquaintanceship (friendship density) 	
	Putnam			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership in organizations • Newspaper readership 	

Linear-development

Population size and density have been key measures of linear-development (Buttel, Martinson, and Wilkening 1979; Tönnies [1887] 1957; Wirth 1938) as exogenous factors to understand human behaviors context to communities. These hypotheses account for urbanism, total population, and diversity index to operationalize and measure linear-development. Each measure when accounting for linear-development is distinct from the other two perspectives. The linear model is based on extend of urbanization, industrialization, and population density (Wirth 1938); however this model does not take into account industrialization as a measure of attachment. Due to the sampling method, with a high level of communities it posed as a problem to get an accurate industrialization measure. Heterogeneity of resident's (Wirth 1938) is widely used within the linear model. For example, the more urbanized and industrialized the community, the more diversity within the residents of the community. It is hypothesized that the more heterogonous the community, the less attached a resident will be to the community. Within this thesis, I will use a race/ethnic diversity to measure heterogeneity.

Hypothesis 1: Urbanization—The greater extend of urbanization of the community the lesser the attachment to one's community.

Hypothesis 2: Total Population—The greater the total population of the community the less the attachment to one's community.

Hypothesis 3: Race/Ethnic Diversity—The greater the diversity index of the community the lesser the attachment to one's community.

Systemic Model

Length of residence has been the key measure of the systemic model to understand community satisfaction and attachment (Flaherty and Brown 2010). To test the systemic model, I operationalize and measure it based on length of residence. Table 1 suggests that there should be measures of friendship ties and participation (Goudy 1990; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974), however, within this thesis, since I am examining social capital, these will not be measured within the systemic model. For this thesis, the systemic model will only be measured based on the individual's length of residence, age, socioeconomic status (via income), and higher education level. There are potential limitations when not including friendship ties within the systemic model; however, I will argue there are not studies which encompass each of the three perspectives that are covered within this thesis. In order to create a more holistic model of community attachment, friendship ties and participation in organizations will be measured as bonding and bridging social capital. Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) posit that length of residence is the key factor within the systemic model and other factors will be less significant (age, education, income), yet, each are necessary variables that ought to be included within the model. In all, the longer the length of residence, theoretically, will lead to greater community attachment.

Hypothesis 4: Length of Residence—The greater the length of residence the greater the attachment to one's community.

Hypothesis 5: Age—The greater the age the greater the attachment to one's community.

Hypothesis 6: Education—The greater the education the greater the attachment to one's community.

Hypothesis 7: Income—The greater the income the greater the attachment to one's community.

Social Capital

The two general measures for bonding and bridging social capital are civic participation and friendship density (Besser and Liu 2009; Kasarda and Janowitz 1988, 1974). Like many other scholars, I also use civic participation and friendship density to operationalize and measure social capital to understand its effects on satisfaction with both government and community services as well as attachment. Freudenburg (1986), for example, examines friendship ties and density of acquaintanceship in relation to community attachment. And Altman and Seta (1992) focus on place attachment and the role it plays in attachment to community. The more people one knows and is in close relationship with, for example, can lead to higher bonding social capital. This is evident within Freudenburg (1986) measurement of “density of acquaintanceship.” Friendship ties have been used as a measure within the systemic model (Goudy 1990; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974). This could be seen as a similar measure of bonding social capital that is based around the idea of “density of acquaintanceship” (Freudenburg 1986). However, there is a clear distinction and within this thesis, I will conceptualize friendship density as a measure of bonding social capital. That is, the higher the friendship density the greater the attachment to community. Similarly, within this model, I will utilize one measure of bonding social capital as friendship density.

Hypothesis 8: Civic Participation—The greater the civic participation the greater the attachment to one’s community. This hypothesis addresses one of the bridging elements of social capital.

Hypothesis 9: Friendship Density—The greater the friendship density the greater the attachment to one’s community. This hypothesis addresses one of the bonding elements of social capital.

Hypothesis 10: Neighboring—The greater the neighboring the greater attachment to one’s community. This hypothesis is the second measure addressing one of the bonding elements of social capital.

Hypothesis 11: Focus Upon Local News—The greater the focus upon local news the greater the attachment to one’s community. This hypothesis addresses the second element of bridging social capital.

Research Expectations

An essential role of sociology as a basic science is to develop and test theory. One purpose of sociology, therefore, is to “offer a commentary—a refinement on the knowledge we possess and make use of in everyday life. It extends the social map beyond our personal experience so that we can get an opportunity to understand areas of human activity” (Dasgupta and Driskell 2007: 10). Although important in their own right, there are other applications of sociology that go beyond theoretical contributions. Theory building when applied to a specific social issue brings into focus applied sociology. Although the value and

merit of applied sociology has been debated in academia (Dasgupta and Driskell 2007), applied sociology has implications on broader society. Community development itself is situated in a public sphere. Due to the contributions to community development posed here, applied sociology becomes an essential element of sociological inquiry. Ergo, this thesis contributes not only to social capital and community theory broadly to understand community attachment; it provides a clear applied connection too. By understanding the role of a focus upon local news within small nonmetropolitan, rural communities, a clear opening for contribution to community development at an applied level is necessary.

The purpose of this research was to understand if a focus upon local news significantly affects a person's attachment to their community. The results of this investigation add to the discourse in community research in that few previous studies have examined the potential importance of local news on community attachment. To the extent that a focus upon local news significantly affects attachment to community, community development specialists and local citizens can develop programs and policies to enhance the development and dissemination of local news, under the presumption that such actions can further enhance attachment—two key indicators of community vitality and quality of life.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Methodology

Introduction

The study relied upon data collected as part of a social survey of a 10-state region, wherein these states were identified with respect to the purposes of a broader research project. The survey received approval from the Iowa State University Institutional Review Board (IRB ID 13-471). The procedures for data collection and measurement of concepts are described below. The survey yielded quantitative data for 860 respondents. The analysis procedure consisted of five steps. First, I decided which cases needed to be deleted from the data due to conceptual and empirical considerations. Second, I evaluated the content and face validity of each latent variable, wherein I define content validity as the extent to which the observed variables intended to measure a latent variable cover the conceptual domain of the latent variable and face validity as the extent to which the observed variables conceptually capture the meaning of the latent variable (Carmines and Zeller 1979; Nunnally 1978). Next, I evaluated through the use of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis the construct validity of the latent variables, wherein I define construct validity as the extent to which the latent variables yield statistically significant parameter estimates on the observed variables intended to measure them. As a fourth step, to determine the extent to which the measuring

instruments provided consistent scores on the latent variables, I calculated the Cronbach (1951) reliability coefficient for each latent variable (Carmines and Zeller 1979; Nunnally 1978). The fifth step consisted of relying upon a series of simultaneous linear equations (Bollen 1989), as defined within the Statistical Analysis System (PROC CALIS 2014), to estimate the parameters specified by the conceptual model (Figure 1). This procedure provided the information needed to evaluate the extent to which the conceptual model fit the data. As an outcome of this procedure, I was able to test the research hypotheses using statistical analysis techniques. Included in this step was an evaluation of the extent to which each observation might be an outlier or influential data point within the sample (Bollen 1989).

Sample

The sample was selected in accordance with meeting the goals and objectives of a research project that investigated the efficacy of using wind turbines to supplement the energy requirements of television broadcasting stations located in rural areas. There are a vast number of television stations (3,757) that provide service to over 1,600 counties in the Midwest alone. Next to personnel, energy accounts for the most cost intensive element of television broadcasting. The amount and consistency of wind in some states has led to an influx of wind energy production technologies. This relatively rapid development of wind energy over the past two decades might offer some rural television stations an opportunity to reduce their operating costs. Technical issues can arise, however, when stations use wind turbines for television transmitting in that wind turbines can cause interference with

television signals. Broadcast Wind, LLC (<http://broadcastwind.com/>) has created a technology to avoid potential interference caused by the operation of wind turbines. As part of the objectives of this broader project, the sample focused on a 10-state region that holds promise for the development of wind-aided television broadcasting: California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

In addition to its potential contribution to lowering the operating costs of rural television broadcasting stations, the technology developed by Broadcast Wind, LLC might have additional appeal if the broadcasting of local news enhances residents' attachment to their community. To explore the effect of an interest in local news on community attachment I sought out individuals living in non-metropolitan areas not directly adjacent to a large metropolitan area.

In 1993, the U.S. Census Bureau developed urban influence codes that characterize the nation's 3,143 counties (or their equivalents) within 12 mutually exclusive categories. The county's code is updated periodically as it either grows or declines based upon the extent of urbanization. The counties are divided into two major categories and assigned a code from 1-12 based upon population size and geographic locale. The two major categories are metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. Metropolitan is described as, "large metro areas of a million or more residents," or as "small metro areas of fewer than 1 million residents" and are given an urban influence code of a 1 or 2. Nonmetropolitan is classified with ten different categories that range from "micropolitan area adjacent to a large metro area" (urban influence code = 3) to the most rural classification of "noncore not adjacent to metro or micro area and

does not contain a town of at least 2,500 residents" (urban influence code = 12). I selected our sample from zip code areas with county-level urban influence values of 5-12, thereby excluding metropolitan areas as well as areas immediately adjacent to metropolitan areas that would be classified as a value of 3 or 4. This procedure yielded a sample of persons living in areas classified as predominantly rural.

The sample frame from which the respondents were contacted self-enrolled themselves in a panel developed by Survey Sampling, International (SSI). Since 1977, SSI has been widely recognized as a reliable company providing surveying services. The resulting convenience sample from this frame consisted of those panel members who chose to participate in the study. The study set quotas to create a sample that was approximately 50% male and 50% female in composition. The self-selected nature of this sample should be kept in mind in interpreting the results of this study, wherein one would use caution in generalizing the mean scores on attitudes, opinions, and behavior to those of all rural residents. Given that this study focuses upon an analysis of the contributions of complementary theoretical perspectives in explaining variance in residents' expressed attachment to their community, theoretically, the convenience sample is sufficient. Keep in mind also that the sample focuses upon just rural residents and those persons living within a selected 10-state area.

Data Collection

Upon being contacted by SSI, panel members who chose to participate used their unique code to gain access to an online survey instrument (see Appendix A). Data collection took

place December, 2013 to February, 2014. As part of the data collection process, SSI has instituted systems to identify "speeders" and "straight liners." Timestamps initiated by SSI flagged surveys that were completed in a manner that indicated little attention by the respondent to the questions (hence: speeders). Also, responses were evaluated for indications that a respondent provided the same answer to large sets of questions (hence: straight liners, or "response sets"). SSI deleted cases that were flagged as speeders or straight liners. These safeguards help ensure the validity and reliability of the responses. Upon completion of the designated sample quotas, SSI removed personal identification and delivered the anonymous survey responses to the principal investigator.

Measurement and Results

Step One: Eliminating Nonmaterial Observations and Recoding Variables.

As part of a broader evaluation of the potential role that Broadcast Wind, LLC might play in rural development, one part of the survey sample included persons who donate to the Iowa Public Television (IPTV) Foundation. Also, as part of the objectives of the broader study, the sample included persons residing in towns classified with urban influence codes of 3-4. All cases with these characteristics—donors to the IPTV Foundation and persons living in towns classified in some manner as adjacent to large, metropolitan areas—were omitted from the analysis here.

One advantage of the online surveying program used by SSI is that it forces respondents to answer every question, with the exception of the question regarding income. Therefore, no items in the survey had missing data except total household income before taxes. For respondents with missing data on household income ($n = 63$), I substituted the median income from the zip code area. These procedures yielded a final sample of 860. I used reversed coding to make certain that all of the questions were posed in the same logical direction. I examined the frequencies and distributions of all the model variables (Table 2) to check for any logical errors or low frequencies per response cell. I observed, for example, that very few respondents listed their income as \$250,000 or more, leading us to collapse this top response category with the previous category of \$100,000 to \$249,999.

Table 2 displays the social-demographic characteristics for the sample. The average age of the respondents is 52. The average respondent has lived in their community for 22.7 years. The sample consisted of 50.9% males and 49.1% females. Education of the respondents varied, with 34.4% having a high school education, 23.4% vocational or technical, and 8.8% college. Total household income before taxes is comprised of 25.7% less than \$25,000, 37.2% \$25,000-\$49,999, and 23.0% \$50,000-\$74,999.

Table 2: Social-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents and Their Communities (n = 860).

<u>Individual Characteristics</u>	<u>Percent, Mean</u>	<u>Std. Deviation</u>
Average age	52.0	
Males	438 (50.9%)	
Females	422 (49.1%)	
Years of education		
Less than high school	1.5%	
High school	34.4%	
Vocational or technical	23.4%	
College	29.9%	
Post college	10.8%	
Total household income before taxes		
Less than \$25,000	25.2%	
\$25,000 to \$49,999	37.2%	
\$50,000 to \$74,999	23.0%	
\$75,000 to \$99,999	9.0%	
\$100,000 or more	5.6%	
Attachment ¹	6.12	2.77
Length of residence in the community (years) ²	18.50	
Civic participation	5.68	6.78
Friendship density	2.66	1.13
Sense of neighboring ¹	6.22	2.42
Interest in local news ²	6.73	2.53
Perceived importance of local news ²	6.40	2.21
<u>Community Characteristics</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Std. Deviation</u>
Total population	12,552	11,576
Urban influence code	6.61	1.86
Diversity index	1.59	1.43

1. Standardized scores for this first-order factor were used in the regression analysis.
2. Standardized scores for the second-order factor (i.e., focus upon local news) were used in the regression analysis.

Step Two: Measurement of the Latent Variables.

This section describes the measures of the model concepts and the procedures undertaken to assess the content and face validity of them.

Concept Measurement

- I defined *community* as the zip code area in which the individual resides. Potential respondents were recruited if the zip code area of residence was associated with a county-level urban influence code of 5-12.
- *Community Attachment* (i.e., the social bond to the place of residence) was measured by the mean response to four statements, wherein respondents could answer with "0" (strongly disagree) through "10" (strongly agree). The four statements measuring community attachment were: I feel "at home" in this community, I would like to continue living in this community rather than elsewhere, I would feel sorry if I had to leave this community, and I feel attached to this community.

In previous research, friendship ties and bonds have been used as measures of community attachment (Beggs et al. 1996; Goudy 1990; Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Sampson 1988). Other studies (Sundblad and Sapp 2010; Theodori and Luloff 2000) incorporate measures of trust and neighboring into measures of community attachment. These approaches, which conflate the conceptual and operational definitions of attachment, can present difficulties in comparing studies across theoretical perspectives. These theses nevertheless as best as possible highlight the

extent to which differing theoretical perspectives contribute to our understanding of community attachment.

- *Extent of Urbanization* is based upon the urban influence code from 2013. An explanation of the codes is noted above. By hypothesizing that greater rurality is associated with less satisfaction and attachment; I mean to say only that typically fewer services related to smaller towns would yield less satisfaction and attachment. I do not mean to say that small towns are undesirable places to live. In this sense, urban influence code is used as a statistical control to understand an individual's proximity to an urban area.
- *Total Population* equaled the 2010 total population for the zip code area in which the respondent resides.
- *Race/Ethnic Diversity* equals the Index of Qualitative Variation (IQV), wherein this measure typically is attributed to Mueller et al. (1970). The IQV measures the extent to which a collectivity reaches a maximum value of 50 percent white and 50 percent nonwhite population. Thus, the greater the extent to which the population is evenly divided between white and non-white residents, the greater the score on diversity. In their review of six alternative measures of race/ethnic diversity, Guseman et al. (1976) recommended the IQV as the most appropriate measure of race/ethnic diversity when these concepts are measured using nominal-level data.

- *Length of residence* equals the total number of years lived in the community. This measure takes into consideration the fact that individuals may have lived some place different throughout their life. This concept was operationalized as: How many total years have you lived in your community, knowing that you might have lived elsewhere during part of your life?
- *Civic Participation* is the amount of activity one has within the local community, measured as responses to the question, "How involved are you in local groups and organizations, ones that hold meetings in your community?" Civic participation equaled the total number of organizations in which the respondent participates, wherein each organizational participation was weighted by the extent of participation.
- *Friendship Density* equals the response to the question: "About what proportion of your close personal friends live in your community?" This variable is included as a measure of social capital that has been linked to community satisfaction and attachment. Because previous research suggests that the density of acquaintanceship (Freudenberg 1986), as well as other measures of satisfaction and attachment such as friendship ties, influence one's satisfaction to and attachment with his/her community, I included this measure as an exogenous concept within our conceptual model.
- *Perceived Quality of Neighboring* was measured as the mean response to four questions, with response categories, "0" (strongly disagree) to "10" (strongly agree). The four questions asked to operationalize perceived quality of neighboring are: I can

always count on my neighbors when I need help, my neighbors, can always count on me when they need help, my neighbors feel close to one another, and my neighbors trust one another.

- *Focus upon local News* represented a combined score derived from two components: interest in knowing about local events and the perceived importance of local news sources. Interest in knowing about local events was operationalized via two items that the respondent could rate from "0" (strongly disagree) to "10" (strongly agree). The two items that measure the interest in knowing about local events are: I am interested in knowing what goes on in this community and I like to keep up with local news for this community. The importance of local news was rated in the same manner and measured as the mean response to the question, "How important is it to you to learn news about people and events in your community [related to] news about local: politics, the economy, crime, religious issues, education issues, health issues, sports, arts and entertainment, and civic events."

Assessments of Content and Face Validity

Given their importance in understanding community viability and quality of life, community attachment and the key indicators of them such as quality of neighboring, have undergone extensive investigation for many years. Consequently, community development scholars have established well-documented procedures by which to measure these latent variables. In that the measures of the observed variables described above were derived from these

previous studies, they reasonably can be considered as having a strong foundation of support for their content and face validity. The latent variables introduced here—interest in local news and perceived importance of local news—have undergone less scrutiny than those associated with investigations of community attachment. In this regard, to ascertain the content and face validity of our measures of them, I sought reviews from three sources.

The first source was three representatives of Broadcast Wind, LLC, the principal partner in this investigation. The second source was a representative of the Iowa Public Television Station, located in Des Moines, Iowa. The third source of review was two scholars (a sociologist and a scholar of mass communications), each holding doctorate degrees in the social sciences and with expertise in conducting research on relationships between people and mass media. The three sources of reviews provided valuable insights into how best to measure an interest in local news and perceived importance of local news. With these reviews in mind, I believed I had successfully captured the content and face validity of the latent variables related to a focus upon local news.

Step 3: Assessments of Construct Validity

Principal components exploratory factor analysis (minimum eigenvalue = 1) was conducted on each of the latent variables specified within the conceptual model. The results of this analysis indicated that all the latent variables with the possible exception of the measure of a focus upon local news were unidimensional (Table 3). The observed variables intended to measure a focus upon local news seemed to represent two first-order latent variables: an interest in local news and the perceived importance of local news. Subsequent investigation

using maximum-likelihood confirmatory factor analysis indicated that a focus upon local news was best specified as a second-order latent variable with the measures of interest in local news and perceived importance of local news serving as first-order latent variables. Note, for example, that although interest in local news and perceived importance of local news are strongly correlated with community attachment, they are weakly correlated with one another (Appendix A).

The parameter estimates for the effects of all first-order latent variables on the observed variables intended to measure them and the effects of a focus upon local news on the first-order latent variables used to measure it are shown in Table 3. The score values on the latent variables used in subsequent analysis equaled the mean weighted responses to the observed variables used to measure the latent variable, wherein the weighting scheme used by the SAS System relies upon regression algorithms, a common approach to factor score weighting (Gorsuch, 1983).

Step 4: Assessments of Reliable Measurement

The reliability of the measures of the first- and second-order latent variables was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Cronbach 1951). The community of scholars prefers that this coefficient equal a value of at least .70 (Carmines and Zeller 1979; Nunnally 1978). As shown in Table 2, the alpha coefficients for all first- and second-order latent variables exceeded this criterion.

Step 5: Estimation of the Conceptual Model

I used the SAS algorithm PROC CALIS to estimate the simultaneous linear equations implied by the conceptual model (Figure 1). Prior to this estimation, I investigated the extent to which one or more observations might be considered as outliers and influential data points with respect to the model. Bollen (1989) describes a procedure that relies upon examining stem-and-leaf diagrams of a multivariate matrix of deviation scores for all model variables. This procedure indicated no distinguishable outliers or influential data points. A final data set of 860 observations, therefore, was used for subsequent analysis.

Table 3: Standardized Loadings for the Observed and Latent Variables and Reliability Estimates for the Latent Variables.

<u>Observed and Latent Variables</u>	<u>First-Order Latent Variable</u>	<u>Second-Order Latent Variable</u>	<u>Cronbach Reliability</u>
<i>Community Attachment</i> .....			.93
I feel attached to this community .....	.898		
I would feel sorry if I had to leave this community.....	.908		
I would like to continue living here rather than elsewhere.....	.909		
I feel "at home" in this community.....	.913		
<i>Neighboring</i> .....			.90
I can always count on my neighbors when I need help .....	.926		
My neighbors can always count on me when they need help .....	.796		
My neighbors feel close to one another.....	.887		
My neighbors trust one another.....	.913		
<i>Focus on Local News</i> .....			.93
<i>Interest in Local News</i>.....		.809	.89
I am interested in knowing what goes on in this community .....	.866		
I like to keep up with the local news for this community .....	.919		
<i>Importance of Local News Regarding</i>... ..		.815	.92
Local politics.....	.775		
Local economy .....	.836		
Local crime.....	.799		
Local religious issues .....	.613		
Local education issues.....	.817		
Local health issues .....	.839		
Local sports .....	.535		
Local arts and entertainment .....	.698		
Local civic events.....	.799		

Table 4. Standardized Parameter Estimates for the Model Variables (n = 860).

	<u>Community Attachment</u>
Linear Development	
Urbanization.....	-.027
Total Population.....	.070*
Race/Ethnic Diversity	-.053*
Systemic	
Length of Residence .....	.057*
Age .....	.018
Education	-.001
Income .....	.041
Social Capital	
Civic Participation (Bridging) .....	.014
Focus on Local News (Bridging)....	.352**
Friendship Density (Bonding) .....	.157**
Neighboring (Bonding).....	.409**
<i>Adjusted R-Square</i> .....	.55

* Parameter estimate is statistically significant at prob. < .05.

* Parameter estimate is statistically significant at prob. < .01.

Table 4 shows the parameter estimates for the model variables. It is important to note that within this model, the adjusted R-square for the endogenous variable—community attachment—which has a higher value than those found in previous research. This finding indicates that the model provided an improved understanding of attachment to their community over previous studies.

Six of the standardized parameter estimates of the effects of the exogenous and independent variables on community attachment were statistically significant ($p < .05$)

ones (Table 4): total population, race/ethnic diversity, length of residence, focus upon local news, friendship density, and neighboring. Out of these six, neighboring (.409) and focus upon local news (.352) were the most influential variables in explaining community attachment.

Summary

The five-step procedure described above provided the results needed to test the research hypotheses. The results of hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 5. Three hypotheses were used to test liner development, two of which were statistically significant. Total population and race/ethnic diversity both significantly improved community attachment. Four hypotheses were used to measure the systemic model; two out of the three were significant; only one of which was statistically significant. Length of residence was statistically significant with community attachment. To measure social capital, four hypotheses were tested. Of the four, three were statistically significant. Focus upon local news, friendship density, and neighboring all have significant positive effects on community attachment. Neighboring and a focus upon local news have the highest significant effect on community attachment.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Summary. (Reference Table 3)

	<u>Statistical Significance</u>	<u>Test Result</u>
<u>Linear-Development Theory</u>		
Hypothesis 1: Urbanization		Fail to reject the null
Hypothesis 2: Total Population	*	Reject the null
Hypothesis 3: Race/Ethnic Diversity	*	Fail to reject the null
<u>Systemic Model</u>		
Hypothesis 4: Length of Residence	*	Reject the null
Hypothesis 5: Age.....		Fail to reject the null
Hypothesis 6: Education		Fail to reject the null
Hypothesis 7: Income		Fail to reject the null
<u>Social Capital</u>		
Hypothesis 8: Civic Participation		Reject the null
Hypothesis 9: Friendship Density.....	**	Reject the null
Hypothesis 10: Neighboring	**	Reject the null
Hypothesis 11: Focus on Local News.....	**	Reject the null

* Parameter estimate is statistically significant at prob. < .05.

** Parameter estimate is statistically significant at prob. < .01.

CHAPTER III

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

This research examined the effect of a focus upon local news on community attachment. The research relied upon three theoretical perspectives to estimate the relative effect of a focus upon local news on community attachment: linear-development, systemic, and social capital. Two of the three variables measuring the linear-development model were had statistically significant partial coefficients within the conceptual model: total population and race/ethnic diversity. Out of the four variables representing the systemic model, only length of residence had a statistically significant partial regression coefficient. This finding was not surprising in that previous studies have found similar results (Flaherty and Brown 2010). The social capital perspective was represented by four variables: civic participation, a focus upon local news, friendship density, and neighboring. Neighboring, as a measure of bonding social capital, was statistically significant. In fact, neighboring accounts for the highest amount of variance explained within the model. Friendship density, as a measure of bonding social capital had a statistically significant parameter estimate on community attachment.

A focus upon local news had the second highest standardized parameter estimate. Prior research on social capital has examined the role of newspaper readership (Putnam 2000; Flora et al. 1997). However, little has been done when accessing a general focus upon local news. More concrete forms of news have been linked to community attachment. Besser (1994), for example, found that the presence of small town newspapers can increase community attachment. Putnam (2000) assesses the role of television watching in correlation to civic activity.

In addition to its contributions to community theory, this study sought to enhance our applied perspective for community development through the empirical examination of the conceptual model (Figure 1). An applied perspective within social science research is necessary especially when community development is in the spotlight. Community development aims to build communities and support sustainability. However, when examining sustainable communities, it is evident that rural America is in particular threat. This thesis attempts to provide a new consideration for community research. The addition of a focus upon local news can, theoretically, provide sustainability and support within rural communities. This research provides a clear applied implication, which is to enhance a focus upon local news. An implementation of a focus upon local news will, in theory, contribute to community attachment. By implementing a focus upon local news within communities, for example, might lead to more developed communities' overtime. Wilkinson, for example, suggests the role of community development in such a way that, "community development is justified by the assumption that it contributes to social well-

being” (Wilkinson 1991: 76). By situating a focus upon local news as a diffuse form of bridging social capital, Wilkinson’s assumption can be met. Theoretically, therefore, a focus upon local news ought to contribute to social well-being by providing information and knowledge among community members (Flora and Flora 2003). Through the diffuse dissemination of local news within communities, bridging social capital can be increased. The result of high bridging can then foster higher attachment.

Overall, through an examination of three theoretical approaches a focus upon local news (.325) and neighboring (.409) emerge as the most influential factors to positively impact community attachment. Previous research has highlighted the importance of linear-development, the systemic model, and social capital perspectives as having significant effects on community attachment. The key findings suggest that a focus upon local news and neighboring foster greater attachment to community. These findings expand and contribute to previous studies in the genre of community attachment and therefore might provide practitioners a potential way to improve community development.

The results of the regression analysis of three theoretical approaches on attachment to community provide some interesting implications. Neighboring and a focus upon local news, for example, emerged as the most important factors influencing satisfaction with and attachment to community. Prior research on community and communication, specifically local news, pertain to a single community and are limited within a single media system (Hoffman and Eveland 2010). Pairing this research with the expanding

horizon of technological advances in mass communication illuminates how a focus upon local news can provide a new venue in the applied sociology of community development.

The contribution of a focus upon local news presented within this thesis provides clear theoretical and applied components; however, it is not without its limitations. By only using parts of three theoretical frameworks, many veins of community research are omitted: leadership, power and the reproduction of power; networks, broader global contexts, globalization, and community interactional field are a few. Also, the model is not an all-encompassing, holistic model. The model contains components of community attachment, yet not all are measured. Results are based upon responses from an Internet panel, which essentially is a convenience sample of rural residents. It must be recognized that the Internet panel design might not fully represent the beliefs of rural residents. Furthermore, the residents surveyed lived in just 10 states, those identified as relevant to the development of wind energy.

Conclusion

These findings enhance our understanding of the relative contributions of three theoretical perspectives to understand community attachment. By understanding the contributions of significant variables within our board model, we can increase understanding of significant key variables to improve community development. At the

applied level, given technological advances, a focus upon local news can provide a supplemental contribution to community development. Building upon previous efforts of community development, a focus upon local news might provide a tangible, inexpensive, and timely way to promote greater community attachment which might ultimately lead towards development. For example, local newspapers (weeklies), contrary to popular belief, are “alive and well,” even thriving (Muller, Los Angeles Times 2011). Muller (2011) took “big stories from small towns” to assert that many weeklies are not just surviving but thriving. Besser (1994) indicates, although potentially frivolous or superficial, newspapers have the potential to strengthen attachment.

Given the role of a focus upon local news on community attachment within this research, it is evident that a creation or improvement of a weekly paper within a community could lead to greater development. The influxes in “microlocal news,” for example, and weeklies have the potential to significantly contribute to community development in a tangible, efficient, and inexpensive way. Microlocal news is a newer phenomenon that is directed towards specific neighborhoods or communities (situated generally in larger metropolitan cities) that produce a “local” news outlet. Although this “micro” news is expanding within urban communities it provides more justification for examining a focus upon local news. Relevance of local news in urban as well as rural locations places significance on the contribution of a focus upon local news in a variety of contexts. By understanding the role a focus upon local news holds, the assertion within this thesis is reinforced. That is, the role of a focus upon local news and implementing greater community attachment. Although the causal relationship between local news and

community attachment is debated (Hoffman & William 2010; Stamm 1988) even if reciprocal (Besser 2004), local news can contribute to community attachment and development. One way for local news to diffuse and disseminate through the community could be as simple as a Facebook or Twitter account, even, a free or inexpensive webpage or blog.

To the extent that the applied connection to this thesis is evident, below are potential outlets and ways to implementing these findings within communities. There are organizations within Iowa that help local newspapers create networks. The Iowa Newspaper Association, for example, is a useful way to disseminate this research to all Iowa newspapers. I will write a brief summary of finding, potentially a news report, and send it to the Iowa Newspaper Association to distribute to its members. Local newspapers are not the only outlets available. University extension, public radio, even public television, for example, can be utilized in making this research available and known within the public. I plan on writing a best practice that can be given to local extension representatives. My hope is that this research may provide a new outlet for community development.

Even though this research expands on and challenges prior studies, it dually generates questions to be further examined. Is the result of a focus upon local news a determinate of community well-being including satisfaction with and attachment to community, or does a community with high community well-being lead to a greater focus upon local news? The causal relationship of a focus upon local news and community well-being

(satisfaction and attachment) is yet to be understood. Are there more useful theoretical frameworks that might explain a focus upon local news better?

The role of technology proves significant to question the changing dynamics of local news. Avenues for further research will be to seek to answer key questions that might affect the extent to which the dissemination of local news can occur. How does technology impact the dissemination of local news in rural, non-metropolitan communities? What facet of local news provides greatest contributions to community well-being?

APPENDIX A
CORRELATION TABLE

	Attachment	Total Population	Urban Influence Code	Diversity Index	Length of Residence	Age	Education	Income	Civic Participation	Friendship Density
Attachment	1.0000	-.0302	.0234	-.0539	.2002**	.1381**	.0601	.1611**	.2891**	.3697**
Total Population		1.0000	-.1881**	.4639**	.0899**	.0059	.1432**	-.0128**	.0073	.1699**
Urban Influence Code			1.0000	-.1361**	-.0036	.0046	.0119	-.0107	.0543	.0368
Diversity Index				1.0000	.07934*	.0140	.0256	-.0468	.0132	.0669*
Length of Residence					1.0000	.3869**	-.0372	-.0255	.1050**	.3592**
Age						1.0000	.1020**	-.0138	.0854*	.0961**
Education							1.0000	.2768**	.2459**	.0277
Income								1.0000	.2461**	.0827
Civic Participation									1.0000	.2744**
Friendship Density										1.0000

	Neighboring	LOCKNOW	LOCIMP	Focus Upon Local News
Attachment	.6357**	.6486**	.4356**	.5853**
Total Population	-.0024	.0878**	.0684*	.0845*
Urban Influence Code	.0612	.0184	-.0201	-.0015
Diversity Index	.0064	.0471	.0175	.0346
Length of Residence	.1257**	.1439**	.0577	.1081**
Age	.1066**	.1378**	.0779*	.1162**
Education	.0679*	.1163**	.0548	.0919**
Income	.1457**	.1531**	.0799*	.1253**
Civic Participation	.2875**	.2835**	.2459**	.2869**
Friendship Density	.2982**	.2637**	.1476**	.2215**
Neighboring	1.0000	.4847**	.3715**	.4631**
LOCKNOW		1.0000	.6953**	.9157**
LOCIMP			1.0000	.9255**
Focus Upon Local News				1.0000

** . Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX B

COMMUNITY NEWS AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Thank you for agreeing to share your opinions regarding your community and your sources of news.

Please enter the numerical password from your invitation e-mail and click "next" to begin.

This web survey is designed to be viewed in Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher. Lower versions of Internet Explorer or other browsers such as the AOL browser may result in some pages being displayed in less-than-optimum manner. Although it will not affect the functionality of the web survey, switching to Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher is recommended.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please send an e-mail to Dr. Steve Sapp, ssapp@iastate.edu or call (515)294-140, M-F, from 8:00am to 5:00pm, CDT.

Please note: a blue indicator bar will appear at the bottom of each page showing your progress as you take the survey.

Sample A (Internet Panel)

Total = 1000

Quotas

(1) Male (500)

(2) Female (500)

Sample B

Do not watch PBS (S7 = "0")

Maximum = 200 (male or female)

Sample C (IPTV Donor List)

Unrestricted total and no screening or quotas. Allow 30 days to respond.

S1. What is the zip code of your home address? _ _ _ _ _

(IF NOT ON LIST-THANK AND TERMINATE)

S2. Are you . . .

(1) Female **(CHECK QUOTAS)**

(2) Male **(CHECK QUOTAS)**

S3. Please provide the year in which you were born:

_ _ _ _ **If Year GE 1995: THANK AND TERMINATE**

S4. Do you have access to viewing a television in your home?

(1) Yes

(2) No **THANK AND TERMINATE**

S5. Approximately how many hours per week do you watch television when you are at home?

— — — **IF ZERO, THANK AND TERMINATE**

S6. How do you receive your television signal?

- a. cable.
- b. satellite dish.
- c. antenna.
- d. do not know.

S7. Please type a number from 0 to 7 in the box below to indicate the number of days each week you watch a public broadcasting station (PBS) when you watch television at home?

— **IF ZERO:**
a. DO NOT INCLUDE IN SAMPLE A
b. CHECK QUOTA FOR SAMPLE B (MAXIMUM OF 200)

Questions About Your Community

We want to know your opinions about your community. By community, we mean the place, town, or city in which you currently reside. If you live in the countryside, we mean the town that you refer to as the place near where you reside.

1. Do you live within the city limits of your community?

- a. Yes **GO TO Q2.**
- b. Outside the city limits, but not on a farm. **GO TO Q1A.**
- c. Outside the city limits, on a farm. **GO TO Q1A.**

1a. How many miles by road do you live outside the city limits of your community?

— — —

2. Please rate each of the following services/facilities for your community. Use 0 to provide the lowest rating and 7 to provide the highest rating. You can use any number from 0 to 7 to express your opinion. **RANDOMIZE**

		Very Poor					Very Good			Do not Know
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
a	The number of jobs.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
b	The quality of jobs.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
c	Medical services.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d	Public schools.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
e	Shopping facilities.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
f	The availability of housing.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
g	The quality of housing.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
h	Recreation.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
i	Entertainment.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
j	Child care services.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
k	Senior citizen programs.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
l	Programs for youth.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
m	Local news broadcasting.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
n	Public television broadcasting.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
o	Community spirit.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
p	People working together.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
q	Commitment to community projects.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

3. Please rate each of the following government services for your community. Use 0 to provide the lowest rating and 7 to provide the highest rating. You can use any number from 0 to 7 to express your opinion. **RANDOMIZE**

		Very Poor					Very Good		Do Not Know	
a	Police protection.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
b	Fire protection.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
c	Condition of the streets.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d	Condition of the parks.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
e	City or regional water availability.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
f	Water quality.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
g	Garbage collection.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
h	Emergency response services.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

4. Imagine a scale for each pair of words listed below. For the first pair, for example, 1 on the scale indicates totally friendly and 7 indicates totally unfriendly. The numbers between 1 and 7 are degrees of friendliness. For each pair of words, please mark one number that best describes your community. **DO NOT RANDOMIZE**

Friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unfriendly
Dangerous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Safe
Supportive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Indifferent
Trusting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Trusting
Boring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Exciting
Well kept	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Run down

5. How many total years have you lived in your community, knowing that you might have lived elsewhere during part of your life?

___ ___ ___ Total years I have lived in this community.

6. About what proportion of your close personal friends live in your community?
1. None of them.
 2. Less than half of them.
 3. About half of them.
 4. Most of them.
 5. All of them.

7. Please tell us your opinions about your community, using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you strongly disagree with the statement and 10 means you strongly agree with the statement. You can use any number from 0 to 10 to express your opinion.

RANDOMIZE

		Strongly Disagree										Strongly Agree
a	I feel "at home" in this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b	I would like to continue living in this community rather than elsewhere.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
c	I would feel sorry if I had to leave this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
d	I feel attached to this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
e	I am interested in knowing what goes on in this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
f	I like to keep up with the local news for this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
g	It is important to me to know what happens in this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
h	Overall, this community has a lot going for it, compared with other communities of similar size.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
i	Being a resident in this community is like being with a group of close friends.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
j	When something needs to get done here, the whole community gets behind it.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
k	If you do not look out for yourself in this community, no one else will.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
l	I am trusted by the people in this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
m	I trust the people in this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	If I had an emergency, even people I don't know here would help me out.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
o	I believe that "every person for themselves" is a good description of this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
p	It is important to me to feel as if I am a part of this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
q	It is important to me to participate in this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
r	It is important to me to join clubs and organizations in this community.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

8. Please tell us your opinions about your neighbors, using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you strongly disagree with the statement and 10 means you strongly agree with the statement. You can use any number from 0 to 10 to express your opinion.

RANDOMIZE

		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree
a	I can always count on my neighbors when I need help.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
b	I do not have time to visit with my neighbors.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
c	My neighbors can always count on me when they need help.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
d	My neighbors feel close to one another.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
e	My neighbors trust one another.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
f	My neighbors feel attached to one another.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

9. Please tell us how important are the following sources of information about local events in your community, using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you strongly disagree with the statement and 10 means you strongly agree with the statement. You can use any number from 0 to 10 to express your opinion. **RANDOMIZE**

		Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree
a	The local newspaper is an important source of information about local community events.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
b	The local radio station is an important source of information about local community events.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
c	The local television station is an important source of information about local community events.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
d	My friends are an important source of information about local community events.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
e	My neighbors are an important source of information about local community events.	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

10. How involved are you in LOCAL groups and organizations, ones that hold meetings in your community? **DO NOT RANDOMIZE**

	Do Not Belong	Belong But Never Attend	Attend 1-5 Times A Year	Attend 6-10 Times A Year	Attend Once A Month	Attend Weekly or More
Service organizations (Kiwanis, Rotary, Eastern Star, Lions, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fraternal organizations (Elks, Masons, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Recreational groups (softball, bowling, card clubs, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Civic groups (PTA, PEO, historical groups, local development groups, education-related groups)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Job-related organizations (labor unions, professional associations)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Political groups	1	2	3	4	5	6
Elected positions (city council, school board).	1	2	3	4	5	6
Appointed positions (city or, county boards/commissions).	1	2	3	4	5	6
Church, and related groups (choir, committees, study groups)	1	2	3	4	5	6
All other local groups or organizations	1	2	3	4	5	6

11. Considering ALL of the types of groups and organizations listed above, about how many LOCAL groups in total do you belong to?

__ __ __ Total local groups and organizations.

12. Considering ALL of the types of groups and organizations listed above, about how many OTHER groups in total do you belong to?

__ __ __ Total groups and organizations that are not local.

Television and News

Next, please tell us about your television viewing and how you obtain news about world, national, state, and local events.

13. How many days in each week do you watch the following types of television channels when you are at home? **DO NOT RANDOMIZE**

	Television Channels	Days per Week							Never Watch
a	Movie channels (HBO, STARZ, Showtime, Cinemax, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
b	Sports channels (ESPN, Golf, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
c	24-hour news-related channels (CNN, Fox News, MSNBC, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
d	Local TV station channels (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, CW, Telemundo, Univision).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
e	Public broadcasting TV channels (PBS).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
f	Special subject channels (CMT, BET, Travel, MTV, Comedy Central, Food Network, Weather Channel, E!, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
g	Special broadcast channels (USA, TBS, TNT, TRU, Lifestyle, We, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0
h	Children's channels (Nickelodeon, Disney, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	0

14. How many days in each week do you obtain news from media sources other than television, such as from newspapers or the internet? **RANDOMIZE**

	News Not From Television	Days Per Week							
a	World news.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b	National news.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c	State news.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d	Local news.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. How many days in each week do you watch video content from the following types of internet outlets when you are at home? **RANDOMIZE**

	Internet Video Media	Days Per Week							
a	Entertainment video (Netflix Watch Instantly, Amazon Instant Video, Hulu, YouTube).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b	National news (Live.CNN.com, NBCNEWS.com, Live.Fox.com)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c	Local news (local TV station web sites).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. How much do you trust the following sources of national news? Please describe your trust on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means no trust and 10 means complete trust. You can use any number from 0 to 10 to express your opinion. **DO NOT RANDOMIZE**

	Trust in the National News	No Trust									Complete Trust	
a	National news broadcast on network television (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox, MSNBC, CW, Telemundo, Univision).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b	National news broadcast on PBS.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
f	National news printed in a national-level newspaper (either paper or online version).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
g	National news printed in your local newspaper (either paper or online version).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
h	National news published in blogs.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
i	National news published from internet-only sources.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

17. How much do you trust the following sources of local news? Please describe your trust on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means no trust and 10 means complete trust. You can use any number from 0 to 10 to express your opinion. **DO NOT RANDOMIZE**

	Trust in Local News	No Trust										Complete Trust
a	Local news broadcast on a local television station (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, CW, Telemundo, Univision).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b	Local news broadcast on PBS.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
g	Local news printed in your local newspaper (either paper or online version).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
h	Local news published in blogs.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
i	Local news published from internet-only sources.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

18. How important is it to you to learn the news about people and events in the United States, regardless of what media source you use to obtain it? Please rate the importance of learning the news on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means not important and 10 means very important. **RANDOMIZE**

	Importance of National News	Not Important										Very Important
a	News about politics in the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b	News about the U.S. economy.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
c	News about natural disasters in the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
d	News about crime in the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
e	News about religious issues in the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
f	News about education issues in the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
g	News about health issues in the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
h	News about sports across the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
i	News about arts and entertainment in the U.S.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
j	News about the U.S. armed forces.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

19. How important is it to you to learn the news about people and events in your community, regardless of what media source you use to obtain it? Please rate the importance of learning the news on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means not important and 10 means very important. **RANDOMIZE**

	Importance of Local News	Not Important									Very Important	
a	News about local politics.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b	News about the local economy.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
c	News about natural disasters locally.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
d	News about local crime.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
e	News about local religious issues.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
f	News about local education issues.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
g	News about local health issues.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
h	News about local sports.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
i	News about local arts and entertainment.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
j	News about local law enforcement officers.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
k.	News about local civic events.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Background Information.

Just a few more questions remaining to answer. Thank you for your patience!

20. Which of the following categories best describes the highest level of education you have completed?
- (1) Less than high school
 - (2) High school
 - (3) Vocational or technical school
 - (4) Undergraduate college degree
 - (5) Master's degree
 - (6) PhD or other doctorate degree
21. When thinking about politics and government, do you consider yourself to be...?
- (1) Very conservative
 - (2) Somewhat conservative
 - (3) Moderate
 - (4) Somewhat liberal
 - (5) Very Liberal
 - (6) Unsure

22. How do you describe your political preference?

- (1) Democratic Party
- (2) Republican Party
- (3) Tea Party
- (4) Other political party
- (5) Independent

23. Did you vote in the 2012 Presidential election?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

24. Do you tend to vote in local (city/county) elections?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

25. Do you donate money to candidates for local (city/county) public offices?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

26. Do you donate money to public television broadcasting stations?

- (1) No
- (2) Yes

27. How much total income before taxes did your household earn in 2013?

- (1) Less than \$25,000
- (2) \$25,000 to \$49,999
- (3) \$50,000 to \$74,999
- (4) \$75,000 to \$99,999
- (5) \$100,000 to \$249,999
- (6) \$250,000 or more
- (7) Prefer not to say

THANK AND TERMINATE

REFERENCES

- Altman, Irwin and Setha M. Low. 1992. *Place Attachment*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Besser, Terry L. 1994. The small town newspaper from a sociological perspective. *The Small City and Regional Community*. 11th Conference, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.
- Bollen, Kenneth A. 1989. *Structural Equations with Latent Variables*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Bourdieu, P. 1986. "The Forms of Capital" Pp. 241-258 in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, J. Richardson. Ed. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Brehm, Moan M., Brian W. Eisenhauer, and Richard S. Krannich. 2004. "Dimensions of Community Attachment and Their Relationship to Well-Being in the Amenity-Rich Rural West." *Rural Sociology* 69(3): 405-29.
- Brinton, Mary C. and Victor Nee. 1998. *The New Institutionalism in Sociology*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Buttel, Fredrick H., Oscar B. Martinson, and E.A. Wilkening. 1979. "Size of Place and Community Attachment: A Reconsideration." *Social Indicators Research* 6(4): 475-85.
- Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, and Willard L. Rodgers. 1976. *The Quality of American Life: Perceptions, Evaluations, and Satisfaction*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Carmines, Edward G. and Richard A Zeller. 1979. *Reliability and Validity Assessment*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Cronbach, Lee J. 1951. "Coefficient Alpha and the Internal Structure of Tests." *Psychometrika* 16(3): 297-334.
- Coleman, James S. 1988. "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital." *American Journal of Sociology* 94: S95-S120.
- . 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Colclough, Glenna and Bhavani Sitaraman. 2005. "Community and Social Capital: What is the Difference?" *Sociological Inquiry* 74 (4): 474-496.
- Dasgupta, Samir and Robyn Driskell. 2007. *Discourse on Applied Sociology, Volume 1: Theoretical Perspectives*. Anthem Press India.
- Durkheim, Emile. (1964) [1902]. *The Division of Labour in Society*. New York, NY: The Free Press.
- Flaherty, Jeremy and Ralph B. Brown. 2010. "A Multilevel Systematic Model of Community Attachment: Assessing the Relative Importance of the Community and Individual Levels." *American Journal of Sociology* 116(2): 503-42.
- Fleming, Kenneth. 2014. "Two-thirds of residents in small towns and cities read community newspapers." *naweb.org*, February 3. Retrieved October 29, 2014 (<http://naweb.org/resources?articleTitle=two-thirds-of-residents-in-small-towns-and-cities-read-community-newspapers--1391441142--739--industry-research>).
- Flora, Cornelia Butler and Jan L. Flora. 1993. "Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructure: A Necessary Ingredient." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 529: 48-58.
- . 2003. "Social Capital." Pp. 214-227 in *Challenges for Rural America in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by D. Brown and L. Swanson. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

- . 2008. *Rural Communities: Legacy and Change*. (3rd Edition) Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Flora, Jan L. 1998. "Social Capital and Communities of Place." *Rural Sociology* 63 (4): 481-506.
- Flora, Jan L., Jeff Sharp, Cornelia Flora, and Bonnie Newlon. 1997. "Entrepreneurial Social Infrastructure and Locality Initiated Economic Development in the Nonmetropolitan United States." *The Sociological Quarterly* 38(4): 623-645.
- Freudenburg, William R. 1986. "The Density of Acquaintanceship: An Overlooked Variable in Community Research." *American Journal of Sociology* 92(1): 27-63.
- Goudy, Willis J. 1990. "Community Attachment in a Rural Region." *Rural Sociology* 55(2): 178-98.
- . 1977. "Evaluations of Local Attributes and Community Satisfaction in Small Towns." *Rural Sociology* 42 (3): 371-382.
- Granovetter, Mark. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78: 1360-1380.
- Gusman, Patricia K., Rudolf J. Freund, and Albert Schaffer. 1976. "The Measuring of Diversity: Ethnic and Socioeconomic Mixing in Residential Areas." *Social Science Research* 5: 21-34.
- Hartnagel, Timothy F. 1979. "The Perception and Fear of Crime: Implications for Neighborhood Cohesion, Social Activity, and Community Affect." *Social Forces* 58(1): 176-193.
- Hawley, Amos H. 1950. *Human Ecology: A Theory of Community Structure*. New York: Ronald Press.
- Hoffman, Lindsay H. and William P. Eveland, Jr. 2010. "Assessing Causality in the Relationship Between Community Attachment and Local News Media Use." *Mass Communication and Society* 13: 174-95.

- Hoffman, Lindsay H. and Tiffany L. Thomson. 2009. The effect of television viewing on adolescent's civic participation: Political efficacy as a mediating mechanism. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* 53: 3-21.
- Kang, Naewon and Nojin Kwak. 2003. "A Multilevel Approach to Civic Participation: Individual Length of Residence, Neighborhood Residential Stability, and Their Interactive Effects With Media Use." *Communication Research* 30(1): 80-106.
- Kasarda, John D. and Morris Janowitz. 1974. "Community Attachment in Mass Society." *American Sociological Review* 39 (June): 328-39.
- Kropf, Martha. 2009. "Won't You Be My Neighbor? Norms of Cooperation, Public Broadcasting, and the Collective Action Problem." *Social Science Quarterly* 90(3): 538-52.
- Liu, A and Terry Besser. 2003. "Social Capital and Participation in Community Improvement Activities by Elderly Residents in Small Towns and Rural Communities." *Rural Sociology* 68: 343-365.
- Mead, George H. 1934. *Mind, Self, and Society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Mueller, John H., Karl F. Schuessler, and Herbert L. Costner. 1970. *Statistical Reasoning in Sociology, 2nd Edition*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Muller, Judy. 2011. *Emus Loose in Egnar: Big Stories from Small Towns*. NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- . 2011. "Where newspapers thrive." Los Angeles Times, September 13, 2011. October 29, 2014 (<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/sep/13/opinion/la-oe-muller-weeklies-20110913>).
- Nunnally, Jun C. 1978. *Psychometric Theory*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.

- Park, Robert E. 1952. *Human Communities: The City and Human Ecology*. Glencoe, IL: the Free Press.
- Portes, Alejandro. 1998. "Social Capital: Its Origins and Application in Modern Sociology." *American Review of Sociology* 24: 1-24.
- . 2000. "The Two Meanings of Social Capital." *Sociological Forum* 15 (1): 1-12.
- Portes, Alejandro and Patricia Landolt. 2000. "Social Capital: Promise and Pitfalls of its Role in Development." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 32 (2): 529-547.
- Prus, Robert. 2009. "Reconceptualizing the Study of Community Life: Emile Durkheim's *Pragmatism and Sociology*." *The American Sociologist* 40(1/2): 106-146.
- Putnam, Robert D. "Bowling Alone: The Strange Disappearance of Civic America." *The American Prospect* 24(Winter): 34-48.
- Sampson, Robert J. 1988. "Local Friendship Ties and Community Attachment in Mass Society: A Multilevel Systemic Model." *American Sociological Review* 53 (5): 766-779.
- Sharp, Jeff S. 2001. "Place, Social Structure, and Culture: A Review Essay on Community." *Rural Sociology* 66 (1): 137-143.
- Stamm, Keith R. 1985. *Newspaper Use and Community Ties: Toward a Dynamic Theory*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- . 1988. "Community Ties and Media Use." *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 5(4): 357-361.
- Stamm, Keith R., Arthur G. Emig, and Michael B. Hesse. 1997. "The Contribution of Local Media to Community Involvement." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 74(1): 97-107.

- Stinner, William F., Mollie Can Loon, Seh-Woong Chung, and Yongchan Byun. 1990. "Community Size, Individual Social Position, and Community Attachment." *Rural Sociology* 55 (4): 494-521.
- Sundblad, Daniel R. 2008. *Community Well-being, Individual Responsibility, and Agriculture Change: An Analysis of Iowa Communities*. Ames, IA: Iowa State University.
- Sunblad, Daniel R. and Stephen G. Sapp. 2011. "The Persistence of Neighboring as a Determinant of Community Attachment: A Community Field Perspective." *Rural Sociology* 76(4): 511-34.
- Surratt, Carla G. 2001. *The Internet and Social Change*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc.
- Theodori, Gene L. 2000. "Levels of Analysis and Conceptual Clarification on Community Attachment and Satisfaction Research: Connections to Community Development." *Journal of the Community Development Society* 31(1): 33-58.
- . 2004. "Community Attachment, Satisfaction, and Action." *Journal of the Community Development Society* 35(2): 73-86.
- . 2008. "Constraints to the Development of Community." *Journal of the Development of Community* 39 (2): 91-110.
- Theodori, Gene L and A.E. Luloff. 2000. "Urbanization and Community Attachment in Rural Areas." *Society and Natural Resources* 13(5): 399-420.
- Tolbert, Charles M., Thomas A. Lyson, and Michael D. Irwin. 1998. "Local Capitalism, Civic Engagement, and Socioeconomic Well-Being." *Social Forces* 77 (2): 401-427.
- Tönnies, Ferdinand. 1963 (1887). *Community & Society*. New York: Harper Torchbooks.
- Wall, Ellen, Gabriele Ferrazzi, and Frans Schryer. 1998. "Getting the Goods on Social Capital" *Rural Sociology* 63(2): 300-322.

Wasserman, Ira M. 1982. "Size of Place in Relation to Community Attachment and Satisfaction with Community Services." *Social Indicators Research* 11 (4): 421-436.

Weber, Max. [1904] 1958. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.

----. [1922] 1947. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Wilkinson, Kenneth P. 1991. *The Community in Rural America*. NY: Greenwood Press

Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life." *American Journal of Sociology* 44 (1): 1-24.

Yates, F. 1934. "The Analysis of Multiple Classifications with Unequal Numbers in the Different Classes." *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 29: 51-66.