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Community Economic Development: Theoretical Development

by

Cynthia Keary

A Thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

School of Canadian Studies
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
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submitted by Cynthia Keary, B.A., Q. Year
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August 1995

Abstract

In the literature on community economic development an absence of theoretical development is acknowledged, but not pursued. This paper strives to fill this void. Because the focus is process, rather than structure, the theoretical basis can only be found in postmodern cultural theory. This study uses postmodern theory to develop a political economy that is based on community economic development and Canadian intellectual thought.

This is a search in the Canadian tradition of seeking middle ground, of attempting to balance the rights of the individual with those of the group, and resolve the tension between Canadian nationalism and regional expression. This is also a discussion of values which could provide a foundation for building structures conducive to achieving the social and economic goals of community economic development.

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Introduction

Paul Hawken in The Ecology of Commerce states that industrialism is over. The question that remains is "how we organize the economy that follows."¹ The left/right debate of the industrial (modern) age has given way to a centre/margin debate of the post-industrial (postmodern) age. There is no extant political framework articulating the decentralized position and offering a credible critique of the drive, by corporate capitalism, to the centralization represented by globalization and its neo-conservative philosophy, a philosophy imported from the United States that is supportive of capital, not people, communities, or nations. Nor is there a non-centralist social critique to counter pervasive neo-conservatism within the discourse of decentralization. Such decentralization is a call for the devolution of legislative authority that frequently is in opposition to national principles of social equity, pursuing a deficit reduction agenda and answering only to those who support such an agenda, essentially international financial markets and big business interests. It is the goal of this paper to explore the possible bases for such a critique and the economic organization that results from it.

The organizing principle to be explored in the following discussion concerns a bottom-up development strategy that serves to pursue social and economic goals at the same time. Community Economic Development (CED) has been a struggling marginal activity in North America since the 1960's. It has been well documented and evaluated in the United States over the last twenty years, but in Canada the interest is relatively new. This interest is growing rapidly, as it is throughout the industrialized world. This increased interest poses certain problems for theory and evaluation of development plans because CED is a combination of radical social goals and capitalism.

The following work is an attempt to combine cultural studies with the study of political economy. The methodological basis for this is found primarily in feminist scholarship and its assertion that the personal is political. In the case of the subject of this discussion, economic development that focuses on the community, or region, acknowledgment of the lived experience of individuals in communities is necessary in determining what is possible or likely to succeed. To interpret this lived experience, the study of cultural production over time, the process, content and distribution, is a relevant area of inquiry for students of development theory. It is a position that is interdisciplinary, encompassing both micro and macro levels of investigation.

John Gaventa, in the preface to Power and Powerlessness, talks of his personal experience in trying to organize miners in the Appalachian Valley of the U.S.

In this opportunity to move against one of the longstanding

inequities, though, the miner showed no particular interest. His response did not seem one of apathy or ignorance. It seemed to grow from past experiences in the Valley, as well as from his situation in the present. The miner understood something of powerlessness, of power, and of how the two could serve to maintain inaction upon injustice, even in a 'democracy'. Of that knowledge, my rather traditional schooling at the nearby university had taught me very little.²

This gap between theory and practice is evident in the work of community theorists. The call for local control, participatory democracy, and "community" found in the literature are all well intentioned ideals, but in practice seem devilishly difficult to institute.

The optimism of the literature is infectious. CED puts to use unused, under used, and previously scorned resources, making the unproductive productive, achieving both social and economic goals. Sustainability, in both ecologically and social terms, is built in because the values on which CED activity is based dictate behaviour and structures that are conducive to principles of sustainability: small scale and responsible, both socially and ecologically. The combination of economic with social goals in Community development is a meeting of traditionally opposing interests, a site for reconciliation of that which was separated under an industrial paradigm, the public and private spheres. CED is, then, a blueprint for both a post-industrial political economy and sustainable development.

There is one common lesson taught by markets, by evolution, by co-operatives, and by the nature of community development: the changes that count the most are the changes that start small and reproduce themselves. Social systems, like economic systems and natural ecologies, are too complex to be changed at a single stroke. What counts the most is a new idea, a new structure, a new policy, which is small and simple and sustainable, and ultimately is more than sustainable, reinforcing communities as it reinforces itself.

There is no strict limit on what human creativity, commitment, and co-operation may achieve.³

In spite of the optimism of CED theorists and practioners that CED is a panacea for economic, social and ecological crises, an inherent danger exists in the popular push toward decentralization which CED represents. That danger is the legacy of neo-conservatism, which threatens social equity. Closed and restrictive definitions of community harbour similar threats. To deal with what much of the literature seems to refuse to recognize, postmodernist cultural theory and post-structuralist analysis offers a starting point in the development of a new social criticism that is appropriate for a post-industrial economy.

This entire discussion is about process, rather than content or structure. The theoretical discussion, therefore, has to fall within the parameters of postmodernism, which although an imprecise, even vague, term, generally can be defined as seeking to replace the elitism of modernism with more democratic forms. There are three facets of modernism that are rejected by postmodernism: the sovereign rational subject, a theory of truth, and the idea of progress.⁴ No discourse has privilege, the ideology of progress is suspect, and knowledge is a cultural construct. Modernism, on the other hand, is the search for the underlying order, the master narrative. The term post-structuralism is frequently used interchangeable with postmodernism, however, here it is interpreted as the beginning of giving form to a postmodern conception of society.

If CED is to provide a model of development that can live up to its aspirations, a political analysis that facilitates policy development supportive of CED is required. Surprisingly this is not a theme pursued in the literature. Both practitioners and theorists in the field of CED insist on an apolitical stance. Politics, it would seem, is seen as divisive and negative and the entire CED movement appears to be part of a larger lack of faith in government and political process. Different streams of CED exist having various and ill-defined ideological roots. This nonpartisan stance gives the illusion of unity and common purpose, but in fact serves to protect the discourse from both political reality and a discourse on power dynamics within organizations and vis-a-vie the greater society.

There is a striking parallel here between the CED of today and the Co-operative movement of earlier in the century. Co-operativism in Canada also rejected politics and consequently struggled and failed in an environment not conducive to its success. In the absence of a political framework, there is no vehicle to pressure policy makers to pursue an agenda in support of CED. Nor are there reference points to evaluate CED in terms of social equity. Both a vehicle to enter mainstream discourse, and reference points, are necessary if CED is to contribute to Canada's future in a positive way.

CED, generally speaking, is the combining of economic and social goals. However, the path to this end is diverse. It is impossible to discuss the concept of CED and be precise as to a definition of either "Community Economic Development" or of "community". In fact, to do so would be

unfaithful to the postmodernist theory discussed. Postmodernism denies the possibility of what is termed "totalizing" theories. To restrict such definitions would deny the reality of the field of study. Such tidy definitions would be academic constructs unrelated to the diversity revealed in the literature. In spite of the imprecise use of the terms throughout this examination of ideas associated with CED, a theoretical position that could form the basis of a national development strategy, serving both national political unity and regional interests will be developed.

A case has been made by dependency theorists, neo-Innisians and new Canadian political economists that wealth creation in Canada has more often than not served individuals with no ties to the region where the "development" took place, or indeed, even to the country itself. The criticism levied against any consideration of community as a legitimate site for the organization of political economy, in our complex world, is a criticism defining community in terms of this past; a past created by the values of industrialism and colonialism. A postmodern perspective suggests that we are informed and molded by history, we need not, however, be bound by it.

Local planning and development within a global economic and environmental context is an opportunity to recapture (or create for the first time) political community. It means to break away from a culture of compliance. Localized development, in spite of problems that exist at this point in the evolution of the idea, is a viable alternative to top-down

development strategies that have favoured, large-scale and environmentally damaging, industrial capital.

Frank Tester criticizes the Bruntland Commission, in its proposed strategies to achieving sustainable development, for failing to address the issue of the power of transnational corporations (TNCs), noting that the primary decision makers in the global economy are corporations larger than nation states. He concludes that community-based programs "hold out hope for solving the problem of sustainable development using alternative perspectives and frameworks."⁵

This redefinition of national development does not threaten the existence of Canadian nationalism, as critics of regional variance tend to assert. It does, however, redefine it. Robert Wright in Economics, Enlightenment, and Canadian Nationalism uses Foucault to argue for a redefinition of economics that values not only universal knowledges, but local knowledges:

Hence, it is concluded that nationalism is desirable, feasible, and timely. But if nationalism is the game, the real prize is the possibility of achieving a more enlightened social arrangement based on a coalition of universal and local knowledge in which we seek to establish tense dialectic relationships between an array of fundamental opposites.⁶

In the Canada envisioned by Wright

America is no longer a society to be emulated, tolerance is transformed into a militant demand to be tolerated, regionalism ceases to be a divisive force and becomes that basis for an enhanced resilience, and liberalism gives way to a new type of noble indigenous conservatism whose direction is guided by an interventionist government.⁷

Hence, this paper is not advocating decentralization of the Canadian state, a devolution of legislative authority to smaller units, provincial or otherwise. Rather it is suggesting a redefinition of national economic development policy that is locally and regionally focused; developed from the bottom up through consultation and consensus, and not imposed from the top down according to the latest economic model. Such a policy would speak to the limited autonomy of national governments in the global economy, and the impact on society of such fiscal and legislative impotence, by dealing with social and development issues at the regional and community level. Because of restrictions imposed by a global economic system based on competition, any community development project being undertaken at this time must assume that there is likely to be little financial help from governments; the activity must be economically viable.

Given the small business nature of community development it is a challenge not to be drawn into a corporate discourse of efficiency. This, however, would serve the interests of capital and neo-conservatism, and in the end serve to reduce the autonomy of individuals and communities.

In order to pursue the goals of community building there must be a critical place to stand. The Gramscian concept of hegemony is a good beginning to contemplate representation and increased democracy. "Gramsci suggested the importance of the ideological and cultural dimensions of politics and the way in which social classes were mobilized."⁸ Community development, then, is a counter-hegemonic project, a way of subverting

dominant values and creating alternative ways of doing things. It is a model for the future and a site to recreate meaning.

In this recreation of meaning other sources of insight are Canadian-bread social democracy, Red Toryism, and cooperativism, all of which are indigenous sources of organization and values from which a Canadian political framework for community development can be articulated. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, the emerging field of conflict resolution provides an alternative philosophy to oppositional thinking, and alternative means of dealing with conflict.

Outline

The first chapter begins with a discussion of culture, defined as lived experience and a signifying system that represents it, as a central component of the development of individuals. Within a Canadian cultural context, there is inherent in this organizing principle for political economy a new basis for cultural nationalism. Culture takes its rightful place in the economy by recognizing that cultural products are part of a signifying system that is instrumental in maintaining structures and constituting the individual.

It is in this initial discussion that the shortcomings of the modern paradigm are pointed out and post-structuralism is introduced. (Further discussion will follow in Chapter 2 and 3.) The cultural perspective articulated is that of Eastern Canada, the signifying system English

Maritime writing. This serves to illustrate the importance of place in the creation of the individual. This perspective provides a place from which to interpret the ideas discussed and also serves to offer unique insights into the problematic nature of "community".

The second part of chapter 1 deals more specifically with the idea of community, offering a theoretical critique of dangers inherent in elevating community to an ideal, as well as providing a theoretical basis for establishing ground rules that could inhibit negative aspects from materializing. This theoretical development is intended to offer support for the optimism of the writing of community theorists.

After this theoretical discussion of community, an evaluation of CED practice and theory will be introduced in Chapter 2, pointing out the absence of theoretical work in the field. Having established what CED theoretical work is missing, Chapter 2 sets out a theoretical framework offering a basis for a new theory of social critique. This framework is grounded in post-structuralist theory, specifically feminist post-structuralism, .

CED as theory and practice is fraught with difficulties. However the reduced autonomy of governments in the face of global forces means there have to be other structures for pursuing social equity. This postmodern social reality must be approached with postmodern assumptions in which the ideal of progress is suspect, hierarchy is challenged and experience is recognized as being mediated by ideology. Two intellectual positions are

key here: feminist, because of the need for all theory and policy to have a basis in lived experience, and post-structuralist because of the importance of different conceptions of language in the constitution of the individual. In the information economy, language in the form of knowledge, communication and information, are the mode of production. Therefore language becomes the focus of social and economic inquiry.

Another consideration in devising development policy in our postmodern reality is the need to deal with ecological issues. Therefore, Chapter 2 also discusses values that are based in an ecological world view. These three perspectives (feminist, post-structuralist, ecological) all shun dominance and seek to promote cooperation and restraint. It is a framework for community in a postmodern Canada. One that can embrace the idea of community without being in opposition to the individual.

Informed by the theoretical discussion and critique of Chapters 1 and 2, Chapter 3 elaborates on arguments in favour of bottom up development. This discussion illustrates postmodern ideas more concretely. It also explores the need to develop an active public discourse to consider these ideas. Such renewed political community results in revaluation of what has come to be known from feminist scholarship as the "private sphere", creating a postmodernist economics that forms the bases for further development policy. Such a position is political and requires political representation. This representation is not to be based on the invention of anything new or imported, but exists in Canadian intellectual thought and experience.

The intention of Chapter 3 is the articulation of a new development strategy that is a union of CED and regional development theory. this is a strategy that can be represented politically by a redefined social democracy - a socially democracy that defines public ownership as co-operative ownership. Such co-operative ownership would be associative, not collectivist. This position becomes a critique of both monopoly capital and of the collectivist position, and as such celebrates both the individual and the community, mitigating the more negative aspects of both.

Using this new definition of public ownership as a basis, we can see the contemporary community development corporation as a reincarnation of the cooperativism of earlier in the century. Therefore, Chapter 4 examines cooperativism, its history and ideas, to look for guidance in terms of what has worked and what has not. To deal with some of the difficulties inherent in cooperative enterprise, the theory and practice of the emerging field of conflict resolution offers an alternative to oppositional thinking and is the discussion that comprises the second half of the chapter.

So, the purpose of the following chapters is to establish the community as a relevant site for development activity of national significance. If that is the case, then it is logical to take CED from a marginal practice that has minimal impact, to a new model of Canadian economic and social development. This can be done through theoretical development which

provides a basis for political representation. CED thus becomes an alternative organizing principle, a post-Keynesian political economy, that has been exorcised of the influence of neo-conservatism.

Endnotes

¹Paul Hawken, The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability (N.Y.: Harper Collins, 1993), p. 212.

²John Gaventa, Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. v.

³Brett Fairbairn et al, Co-operatives & Community Development: Economics in Social Perspective (Saskatoon: Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, 1991), p. 120.

⁴Joe Doerty, Elspeth Graham & Mo Malek (eds), Postmodernism and the Social Sciences (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 14.

⁵Frank Tester, "Canada and The Global Crises in Resource Development" in The New Era of Global Competition: State Policy and Market Power (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), p. 411.

⁶Robert Wright, Economics, Enlightenment, and Canadian Nationalism (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press), 1993, p. 119.

⁷Ibid., p. 125.

⁸Gregory Albo and Jane Jenson, "A Contested Concept: The Relative Autonomy of the State" in The New Political Economy, W. Clement and G. Williams (eds) (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), p. 203.

Chapter 1

Culture and Community: a Regional Perspective

Somehow, and I think largely because we have always been awash in the words and images of other countries, Canadians' historical memory is generally both short and narrow. We must be one of the most amnesiac countries in the world, as far as our own cultural realities are concerned. The nature of our forgetting is social, experiential, cultural and political; our own history is taught, not as a long series of political struggles, between first nations and imperialists, between Metis and white family compact, between prairie interests and Bay Street money, for instance, but as a series of smoothing over troubles by backroom politicians who smile when it's over and tell us that everything is fine, the railroad will go through (or be cut off). In public contemporary consciousness, there is not an awareness of the difficulties and complexities which make up our country: there never was a general strike in Winnipeg, there is no discrimination against people of colour, the rebellions of 1837 were innocuous and inexplicable individual acts; there never were *No Jews* signs publicly displayed on resort buildings in Ontario; pioneers were never driven to suicide by black flies; women have never been treated like chattel under the law and have always had the vote; men have never died in northern mines and lost limbs hauling logs out of the bush with horses. Central Canadians may imagine Saskatoon as a tiny backward outpost, rather than a large, beautiful city; the list could go on and on, but it is our writing, reflecting this diversity, beauty, and different realities, which can link us.¹

As the above quote eloquently suggests, lived experience is not accurately reflected in national Canadian narratives, and cultural expression. This chapter will begin by exploring what "culture" is, and is concerned with the regional aspect of Canadian culture. A consideration of culture is significant in the search for a model of economic organization in the postindustrial economy. This discussion of culture is also the basis for a theoretical framework that will be shown to be the basis of development policy and social critique.

Regionalism and Culture

This discussion is a treatment of culture as defined by Raymond Williams, who asserts that culture is "the signifying system through which...a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored." ²

Language and the written word, then, not only reflect, but shape, who we are. Susan Crean has observed that through institutions of official culture "the state has nourished the standard repertoire of international high culture, but it has done far too little to support the development of popular expression in these areas."³ This has contributed to the equation of regional difference with regional disparity, exacerbating divisions in a quest for a unifying national culture.

Suzan Zeller asserts that the proponents of Confederation understood that they were creating a 'new nationality': "one based upon common interests rather than common culture".⁴ Her analysis asserts that the elimination of regional culture was the outcome of the values of the industrial revolution. Thus, national development policies of the past were the

result of external pressures. The new external reality is the demise of industrialism and the rise of the information age. This is the age of a globally integrated economy and reduced national autonomy.

Cultural activities and products are reflective of social and political realities. Those on the margins, either culturally, geographically, or economically, use art as a medium to express cultural experience and establish identity.

Art then, can never be wholly decontextualized. It can be more or less professional, more or less specialized, more or less experimental, but it cannot be isolated or disconnected from the larger social system.⁵

Thelma McCormack, in *Canadian Public Policy*, discusses the three models applied to cultural policy: market (cultural products are considered a commodity like any other, to succeed or fail on the ability to make a profit), welfare (state supported with the intention of educating, and eliminating social inequities), and nationalist (subsidized cultural production intended to create a collective identity). The Massey-Levesque commission was nationalist in focus, and Applebaum-Hebert affirmed much of the nationalist focus but leaned toward a market model. McCormack suggests a new model, what she calls "Post-nationalist". Her model "starts by acknowledging that our futures are being shaped by a more political process than the terms 'adjustment' and 'fine-tuning' suggest."⁶ It recognizes artists as a diverse occupational group in which all groups of society must be represented; clients, rather than orchestras, museums, etc., are social movements; the audience is not that of investor, consumer or patriot of the other models, but individuals who interact with

the artist.

Culture, then, is political, and cultural expression is dictated by economics, a fact demonstrated by twenty five productive years of federal support for Canadian writing that has fostered success, identity, and pride at a national level. It is important to apply some of the same reasoning to regional activity, by giving serious consideration to the best ways to stimulate the production and distribution of cultural products in all parts of the country, fostering success, identity, and pride at a regional and community level..

Definitions of what constitutes knowledge, as well as access to knowledge, determine power relationships. Poststructuralist theory asserts that language is what determines subjectivity and constructs an individual's sense of self. This is in opposition to humanism which sees language as reflecting a given social reality. For the feminist post-structuralism defined by Chris Weedon "it is language in the form of conflicting discourses which constitutes us as conscious thinking subjects and enables us to give meaning to the world and to act to transform it." ⁷ Social goals, then, are best pursued by paying attention to the constitution of the individual.

Regionalism, Kelly's analysis points out, is a pejorative term used not by people who live in what is designated as a "region", but by those in an area not considered a region. Regional implies limited, not universal, by "objective" standards of what is normal and what is excellence. This

standard is defined outside of the "region". Cultural products are marginalized in keeping with economic positions, functioning to reinforce the status quo. This dynamic functions within regions as well. The terms "region" and "nation", says Kelly, are part of a federal discourse to encourage "historical amnesia." ⁸ History from a regional point of view "suggests just how inseparable the past is from the present."⁹

Another important point Kelly makes is that a consequence of late industrial capitalism is a loss of traditional communities and a crisis of identity that "has left people few places to go to seek satisfaction."¹⁰ Cultural production is important to the creation of identity, and cultural production grows out of economic prosperity and social stability.

Her argument asserts the need for small local publishers, and the elimination of barriers facing the marketing and distribution of regionally published work. Reviews of regional works are few and the dominant discourse defining what is "regional" and what is "good" keeps such books out of schools, the most effective distribution network. Books that could give meaningful identity and stimulate positive social change do not get into the hands of those who would benefit most.

Books, Kelly asserts, are ideological. They "explain in certain ways particular versions of social relations of history, language, culture, and identity."¹¹ and suggest to us what we "might become and what place we occupy in the social spectrum".¹² As a cultural product books interpret our lived experience: "As commodities and as discursive forms, books vie

for a place in our construction of ourselves and others."¹³ Thus, in this analysis, two definitions of culture overlap, culture as lived experience and culture as product.

Anti-regionalism has been a norm of Canadian literary criticism, and is, says Janice Keefer, in Under Eastern Eyes, very much alive. For instance, Frye's unity-identity distinction prizes "regionalism not as a good-in-itself, but as a means of depoliticizing culture."¹⁴ The view of Kelly, discussed above, would seem to be the opposite of Fry's, a means of politicizing people.

Is regional writing, then, by definition subversive? Apparently it is considered to be, because it shows the dominant paradigm to be just another point of view. It is potentially a political force, if there were a delivery system in place to allow it to be. Changing the emphasis in education, the most effective delivery system, would be a political decision, celebrating marginality, and denying the existence of the master narrative.

At the same time the pursuit of national goals and standards are appropriate, and the question arises as to whether local expression can be compatible with national objectives. Regional culture, it can be argued, can serve both discourses. Culture ceases to be politically divisive when national culture and goals are defined, not sabotaged, by regional expression. Several writers from different regions writing in particular genres make cross-regional connections that actually serve to promote

unity, not threaten it. At the same time, recognition and support of the accomplishments of members of a region fosters regional self-respect and autonomy. The resulting sense of place is a positive force for social change. Individuals can imagine another way of being.

Modernism and Culture

This perspective is in opposition to modernist discourse, which, according to Roy Turner, suffers from "amnesia", looking only to the future, and seeking to "limit the influence of the past, or else to describe its continued presence as a threat - a threat to progress, to freedom, to democracy."¹⁵ Turner discusses the creation of identity by means of imagination, which is stifled, he says, by homogenization. For Turner, modernity fails to support imagination, because imagination "befriends difference rather than sameness".¹⁶ [M]odernity is reluctant to give imagination a prominent place in public life, fearing that it will subvert social equality, which modernity understands (and fosters) as sameness."¹⁷

Lawren Harris once wrote that 'An Art must grow and flower in the land before the country will be a real home for its people.' A generous interpretation of Harris will hear this as making a vital distinction between mere geography - 'the country' - and something that can be made of a country through acts of imagination, namely, 'a real home'. A 'real' home, this tells us, is not a simple, natural phenomenon but an artful and imaginative creation; more than a place for survival and maintenance, it is a place where an identity is cultivated; thus it is also the place that represents the local and particular that modernity threatens, according to Grant.¹⁸

Turner goes on to say that

...modernity can be understood as a denial of the possibility that the

individual may find strength in membership, since this would betray an attachment to history and tradition and would acknowledge that the individual needs to respect something other than his or her own inclinations. Following the second possibility, modernity in effect conceives of the community as though it were itself a shopping mall; in other words, it tells the individual that the community is a repertoire of opportunities, a gallery of options, a cornucopia of futures and identities.¹⁹

It can be concluded from this that for an understanding of the importance of cultural industry in both creating identity and fostering positive social change, it is necessary to forsake the modern paradigm and embrace a postmodern one that celebrates difference, fostering imagination and creativity. To create identity, one must first define "home". Access to an identity that reflects lived experience brings self worth and decreased dependence. All that is of value is no longer defined as being elsewhere.

To Know Ourselves: The Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies in the early 70's stated:

that we cannot afford, in either academic or economic terms, to ignore our problems or to adopt solutions based on an inappropriate understanding of ourselves. Nor can we always accept that someone else's solution can be imported to fit our needs....

But it is impossible to attempt to deal with problems unless our attempts are built on the strongest foundation of self-knowledge; as Northrop Frye has suggested, a citizen's primary duty is 'to try to know what should be changed in his society and what conserved' - a responsibility that we cannot begin to discharge until, as citizens, we know our country.²⁰

The Symons Report met with opposition from academics at the time because there was doubt about whether anything Canadian was worth their attention. There is a striking parallel here between the prejudice against Canadian cultural products of that time and sentiments about regional

writing and cultural expression. With accelerating social and economic problems in Canada's regions it is imperative that those in those regions come to know themselves, so as they can begin to seek solutions to their own problems. Regional publishing supported by policy and funding, for instance, linked to the education system would foster the development of a critical consciousness which would enable individuals to understand causal links. "To know ourselves" at this juncture is to understand oneself in terms of region, community, and history, for the very same reasons cited in the Symons Report. This support for regional activity does not further a disintegration of national identity, but rather helps to mature it.

Referring to academic discourse prior to the Simons report Margaret Atwood in Survival says Canadian history and culture for decades "were things that took place elsewhere, and if you saw them just outside the window you weren't supposed to look."²¹ She goes on to say that "A person who is 'here' but would rather be somewhere else is an exile or a prisoner; a person who is 'here' but *thinks* he is somewhere else is insane."²² This observation goes a long way to explain social decay in marginalized places.

But when you are here and don't know where you are because you've misplaced your landmarks or bearings, then you need not be an exile or a madman: you are simply lost...

What a lost person needs is a map of the territory, with his own position marked on it so he can see where it is in relation to everything else.²³

Atwood was talking about literature as a map of the Canadian mind. In this discussion her analogy is being extended to political community as a

map to locate the individual in the global context, both culturally and economically.

Regionalism and Canadian Culture: The Case of Maritime Literature

This digression to discuss themes in Maritime English literature accomplishes three things. First, it supports Kelly's arguments, cited above. Secondly, it provides insight into the problematic nature of "community", which to this point has been discussed in positive terms. The reality is that it has the potential for oppression, as well as liberation, and this must be acknowledged. Thirdly, it is relevant because it establishes my bias, that of an expatriate Maritimer, attracted to an ideal of community, and at the same time, fearful of its pathology. Both aspects are evident in Maritime experience and writing.

The Maritimer, it can be learned from the literature, while managing to be a fierce individualist, has contempt for pretension, distrust of materialism, a cynical response to the ideology of progress, pride in self-sufficiency, and possesses a belief in the primacy of the community. A expatriate Maritimer is a lonely individual clinging to values abandoned elsewhere with the dawn of industrialization.

Maritime fiction is marked by historical sense, cultural homogeneity, and social stability, with its corollary, stagnation. Protagonists struggle within isolated communities cleaving to the land or sea. They struggle, not against the wilderness as in other Canadian fiction, but "against the limitations and towards the strengths of communal life".²⁴ The power

these communities hold is to "nurture, sustain, and preserve meaningful experience, as well as to cramp, choke off, or exclude new forms and expressions of being."²⁵ The natural world is perceived differently than in other Canadian fiction. It is a challenge, but not a menace. "Poverty and greed, not wind and water, are man's worst enemies."²⁶

Maritime fiction is largely representational, that is, it seeks to portray reality, which for the Maritime writer, is intractable. Metaphysical inquiry is shunned in favour of practical realism. Maritime writers have been ignored, or centralized to confirm the myth of national identity, because this reality is not perceived to be shared with the rest of Canada. An important distinction of Maritime history that impacts on its writing is that, unlike the rest of Canada, it experienced eighteenth century thought and nineteenth century romanticism.

Maritime writers would seem to share a confidence foreign to modernist and post-modernist alike, a belief in the reality and significance of the accessible world of human experience common to reader and writer. ²⁷

Keefer concludes that the mimetic realism (the capacity of the literature to imitate reality) of the region's writing is the culmination of a political sensibility that is made up of the inertia of conservatism, individuality and contempt for collective action, and a new radical conservatism. This realism is a literary mode and a language which is "a means of communication between the speechless illiterate and the articulate educated."²⁸ Those who condemn contemporary Maritime fiction as class obsessed and bleak, condemn the region.

The Laurentian School of thinking, which assumes Canadian history comes of age in the French/English conflict of Quebec and Ontario has dominated Canadian historical discourse and has meant a national absence of interest in the Maritimes since Confederation. Consequently, the Maritimes is connected to the past. The history and literature of the region has been misrepresented. What is found in the national canon was produced largely by old men in tweed from a lost era. Just as there are other interpretations of history, there is other literature and other political agendas. Historical writing is important because it has the power to alter perceptions and when perceptions of the past are altered, the present and the future are also changed. In Subversive Elements Donna Smyth makes the all important statement that no "individual can situate herself outside cultural history. Except in madness. Or outside language. Except in silence."²⁹

Political and economic analysis both insist on objectivity. But the subjective experience of quantifiable phenomena can be understood from artistic expression. From Maritime writing it can be seen that poverty has as much to do with spirit as it does with economics and therefore, development should not concern itself exclusively with economics. Aldon Nowlan's work makes the distinction between poverty and impoverishment; poverty does not preclude dignity, impoverishment is something quite hideous.

Nowlan's poetry also expresses the feeling of not belonging in the society from which he came because education, while the ticket out of poverty and

stagnation, was also a barrier to returning "home". The accomplishment Nowlan felt was bitter-sweet. Even though he chose to continue to live in the Maritimes and to celebrate it, he felt that there were too many he could not take with him to a reality that did not include poverty.

The fact of poverty and the experience of impoverishment in contemporary Canadian society have been overlooked or minimized by many prominent critics. One of George Woodcock's reasons for undervaluing realism as a literary mode is that, since 'we all live in the supermarket, hire-purchase, high-living standard environment that extends from El Paso to Yellowknife' realism has nothing to tell us any more about ourselves or others. Bruce Hutchison acknowledges the omnipresence of poverty in the Maritimes only to transvalue it beyond recognition. His decently, unashamedly poor Maritimes...has nothing to do with Nowlan's or even Richards's 'world of Maritimers, who, when they tire of dancing, go down the road to drink white lightning, wearing their spiked logging boots and home-made brass knuckles, a world where one finds 'men...who have never heard of Canada'.³⁰

In this world education means leaving, and the choice between going or staying, of having no future or having no home, is a common theme of Maritime fiction. Joining the mainstream means not only forsaking community, but moving hundreds of miles away. The impact on individuals and families of labour adjustment and out-migration is profound. Boom, as well as bust, is destabilizing. A constant brain drain is socially and economically devastating.

The power of community is *the* ideal of Maritime fiction, and it is very interesting to observe what is currently happening. Validation of the small society comes not from native Maritime writers but from outsiders

who have adopted the region. Contemporary fiction produced by native Maritimers represent "perceptions that crises or decay is the bottom line of communal life."³¹ This is instructive when contemplating where to search for resources for community building.

It is extremely important to note throughout Maritime writing that the often cited benefits and mythology of community are shown to become closure in hard times, limiting, intolerant and cruel. The mythology and the reality of community in Maritime life and art is often irreconcilable. This problematic face of community is glaringly absent in the work of community theorists.

The writing of Ernest Buckler expresses what it is like to be caught in the Maritime dichotomy: leaving or staying, loyalty to something that destroys you, the conflict and trauma of moving from one reality to the other, the close proximity of opposing forces, both the sustaining comfort and the suffocation of community. Depending on which view one gravitates toward determines exile or conformity. Fraser Sutherland has noted that for Maritime writers the question is: "Is one's birthplace Canaan, or the land that God gave Cain?"³² Keefer notes that

Maritime writers resettled in Toronto or Montreal, Vancouver, or Calgary will, in Ernest Buckler's words, have 'excommunicated' themselves from their imaginative homeland - should they continue to write about their native region, they risk becoming permanent tourists and nostalgia-mongers...the sense of exile from a time or place or stable moral order is a recurrent motif in Maritime writing.³³

Being educated in the Maritimes has meant being trained to live elsewhere.

Critics who dismiss East Coast writing as "bleak" can be viewed with sympathy. The characters seem trapped in realities from which the only escape is death or exile. My own experience suggests that if you are capable of imagining, and consequently living, another reality you no longer belong. The region, it seems, is reserved for those who accept without question that power is external. You do not question fate or receive pity. Your duty is to survive, not nature, but life's circumstances.

Familiarity with Maritime literature is a recent acquisition for me, although I was twenty before I left and at that time was well read in the official canon of Canadian literature. Reading this material has enabled me to feel involved in Canadian literature. The work of Atwood, Davies, and the rest, which my education led me to believe was Canadian literature, gave me no basis for identification. The cultural assumptions and the setting provided no basis for involvement. My loyalty to it was intellectual, not intuitive. This understanding led me to believe that large parts of myself were to be suppressed, rather than celebrated. Through exploration of maritime literature I have discovered how growing up in the region has shaped my perceptions and how much of a positive influence these perceptions are. Observing the conflict between the ideal and the real provides insight.

From a Maritime perspective one can also observe the effects of fierce individualism and contempt for collective action over prolonged economic depression. The ideals of community and self-reliance under such circumstances become degeneration and ultimately, dependency.

Community and Individuality

Before further theoretical discussion proceeds, there must first be a discussion of the idea of community that underlies much of the discourse surrounding the theory and practice of community development, and what that implies. An optimistic vision that has much support is expressed by Bruyn. He differentiates future communities from those of the past, maintaining that the legacy of negative past experiences of community serve to prejudice us against the idea of community.

The emergent community is different from the community of the past because it is no longer grounded in capitalist structures. The small towns and city neighborhoods of the past were controlled by large property owners, and later shaped by local business monopolies and subsidiaries under the command of executives in distant cities.³⁴

This utopian vision lies at the heart of much of the discourse on community development. A belief in social evolution is unspoken, but evident.

Less philosophical, more practical social work oriented, writers deal with more physically precise definitions of community. Joan Kuyek in Fighting for Hope states that "Community is a word that can mean many different things. People use it to refer to the people and buildings in their immediate vicinity, or their peer group, or those people who they have interests, work, or a neighbourhood in common."³⁵

Similarly, Brian Warf in Communities and Social Policy in Canada defines

community as a "network of individuals with common needs and issues".³⁶ In his discussion, he surfaces two central characteristics of community: 1) the pattern of relationships among people and 2) the existence of needs shared by these individuals. He goes on to define more specifically the "traditional" community as one that is characterized by geographic boundaries, shared values, history, an economic base, and a governing structure.

Marcia Nozick in No Place Like Home bases her work on the premise that communities represent that place where "we live, work, belong and feel a sense of community".³⁷ Community, then, is a term that is itself defined from the bottom up, its meaning is specific to the community defining it. In so far as community can offer us a point of reference, a strong sense of self, a feeling of group identity, a support system, and a set of values and norms, it can be a point of beginning for addressing global issues of injustice, exploitation, inequality, poverty and environmental degradation.

No where are problems with these definitions in terms of internal power bases acknowledged. "Community" is a problematic concept. Virtually every political agenda claims to be in favour of it. Left and right seem to have converged, making ideological distinctions unnecessary. This shared meaning is an illusion. Thus, a theoretical and political analysis of the ideas of community underpinning community development is important. The activities being undertaken are political. Competing agendas are obscured by rhetoric.

Advocates of increased democratic participation share a belief that the institution of participatory democracy is inevitable because of an evolutionary process that has been taking us from feudalism to increasing franchises of liberal democracy and now to democratized work and social organization. Interest-group community, where one's community is composed of the like-minded, is pursued by a variety of groups. Then there is the neo-conservative definition that seeks to absolve the state of any welfare responsibilities.

In all of these variations the "community" and the "individual" are consistently placed in opposition to one another. The goal must be to define "community" so as to provide the self-definition and support that is its strength, without sacrificing liberal principles of individual rights and freedoms.

Iris Marion Young offers insight in an article entitled "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference" in which she recognizes the validity of the "dream" of community and its problematic politics; its tendency to suppress difference.

Despite our critical attention to much of the male tradition of political theory, many of us have retained uncritically an anarchist, participatory democratic communitarianism to express our vision of the ideal society...I argue...that conditions of modern urban mass society require conceiving an alternative vision of the unoppressive society.

This alternative must be a politics of difference. 38

This "politics of difference", she goes on to explain, is by definition postmodern because "the ideal of community participates in what Derrida

calls the metaphysics of presence and Adorno calls the logic of identity."³⁹ "The desire for community relies on the same desire for social wholeness and identification that underlies racism and ethnic chauvinism on the one hand and political sectarianism on the other."⁴⁰

The ideal of community, finally, totalizes and detemporalizes its conception of social life by setting up an opposition between authentic and inauthentic social relations. It also detemporalizes its understanding of social change by positing the desired society as the complete negation of existing society. It thus provides no understanding of the move from here to there that would be rooted in an understanding of the contractions and possibilities of existing society.⁴¹

Young's arguments are very important, then, in defining, what community is, or at least what it is not, and what sort of politics follow from that definition.

Young's article contains another important argument that contributes to this discussion concerning the oppositional placement of community and individual. She asserts, that, like other opposition, masculine/feminine, public/private, they share a common underlying logic. "Each entails a denial of difference and desire to bring multiplicity and heterogeneity into unity..."⁴² Other conceptions of social organization that do not embrace one or other of the polarities fails to materialize, for the rejection of individualism automatically suggests asserting community. On this basis Young criticizes Carol Gould, author of Rethinking Democracy, who formulates "a dialectical conception of community as the transcended synthesis of sociality and individuality."⁴³

Young also discusses a postmodern understanding of the constitution of

the self, which has been suggested in the discussion of literature. The quest for "community" is a desire to unite with others who understand you as well as you understand yourself. This

presupposes that a subject can know himself or herself and express that knowledge accurately and unambiguously to others. Such a concept of self-knowledge retains Cartesian understanding of subjectivity basic to the modern metaphysics of presence. The idea of the self as a unified subject of desire and need and an origin of assertion and action has been powerfully called into question by contemporary philosophers.⁴⁴

Gould, according to Young, "appeals to such an ideal of 'common subjectivity' as an alternative to the commodification of persons she finds characteristic of capitalist domination."⁴⁵ It is Young's opinion that this desire for this impossible and undesirable sense of community leads to the failure of political organizations and movements. She suggests that insistence on face-to-face interaction "wrongly identifies mediation with alienation."⁴⁶ Young does not equate alienation with bureaucratization.

While mediation may be a necessary condition for alienation, it is not sufficient. Alienation is that specific process of mediation in which the actions of some serve the ends of others without reciprocation and without being explicit, and this requires coercion and domination.

By position a society of immediate face-to-face relations as ideal, community theorists generate a dichotomy between the 'authentic' society of the future and the 'inauthentic' society we live in, which is characterized only by alienation, bureaucratization, and degradation. Such a dichotomization between the inauthentic society we have and the authentic society of community, however, detemporalizes our understanding of social change.⁴⁷

Young's criticism is a very important consideration in this discussion, in light of the material offered up by the critiques of community theorists.

Politics, concludes Young, "must be conceived as a relationship of strangers who do not understand one another in a subjective and immediate sense, relating across time and distance."⁴⁸ Where, then, does this leave the quest for a political framework of community development embodying the social goal of constructing a positive sense of self for individuals by means of community building?

Susan Brown, of York University, in The Politics of Individualism offers direction. Her ideas deal with Young's criticism of anarchist theory as male-centered. If the investigation into anarchist thinking is restricted to theory and the intelligentsia that criticism is, with the exception of the work of Emma Goldman, true. However, according to Brown, contemporary anarchism of a feminist variety IS community development activity.

The lack of current anarchist-feminist analysis is the result of several different factors: First, unlike in Goldman's time, polemical writing as a form of radical education has all but disappeared. Most anarchists, including those interested in feminism, do not write, but rather express their politics in activist-oriented ways, like organizing housing co-ops or rape crisis centres, for instance. This modern movement away from political writing, in favour of political activism, is more than a shift in emphasis. Rather, it signals a rejection of the value and legitimacy of theory itself.⁴⁹

As corporate capitalism increasingly becomes the defining discourse of both social and economic life, Brown's definition of anarchism is very important. She articulates the problems with the concept of community, as does Young, but offers definitions of individualism that make a difference in that they serve both the individual and the community.

The collectivist perspective upon which many recent critiques of

liberal individualism are based encounters serious theoretical difficulties through its acceptance of relations of domination and subordination, not only because it rejects the human individual self-determination as nonexistent - as a liberal fiction. Human liberation cannot come about through the rejection or denial of individual autonomy, but only by the affirmation of individual freedom. Domination and subordination are the ultimate products of the collectivist position. While liberalism has its own problems as a political theory, it correctly assumes that all human individuals are free to make independent judgments about their social context, and are capable of accepting, rejecting and even changing it.⁵⁰

Brown, basing her analysis on the work of C. B. Macpherson, differentiates between individualism that is a means of pursuing individual interests (instrumental individualism) and that which is valued as an end in itself (existential individualism). Her definitions of individualism are important to this discussion because of the need to come to terms with the oppositional nature of the notions of "collective" and "individual". Such definitions offer a bases on which to build organizational structure, and develop a position from which to critique. Brown is particularly important because her writing is rooted within Canadian academic thought.

The term 'instrumental' denotes a form of individualism that aims at freedom not as an end in and of itself, as in the case with existential individualism, but rather as a means to further individual interests. Instrumentalism describes an ontology where an individual uses others to further his or her own self-interest. Individuals treat one another as tools, or 'instruments'. Relationships based on instrumental individualism are most starkly revealed in the case where a person's skills and capacities are considered to be property that can be bought and sold. At the moment an individual 'sells' labour power to another, he/she loses self-determination and instead is treated as a subjectless instrument for the fulfillment of another's will. Existential individualism assumes a community where the individual freedom of

all is respected; instrumental individualism, with its property owners, pits individuals against one another in a competition that inevitably results in hierarchy and domination⁵¹.

Since freedom from dependency and increased democratic activity are primary goals of community development, instrumental individualism is not the basis on which to build, as it creates dependencies and relationships of dominance. Using Brown's ideas the optimism of Bruyn, cited earlier, seems less doomed. Her existential individualism allows for the individual in community.

While advocating an end to labour as a commodity is applicable to community development as a marginal activity, it is less useful when the aim is to move the idea from the margin to the mainstream. What is reasonable is to suggest that structures supporting the idea of cooperation over competition can be created; structures that promote community and respect the individual at the same time.

Increasingly, the community, or the region, will be facing the impact of global forces without mediation by governments. Community as the site for policy development becomes more and more important as, by default, the community becomes more powerful. A specific definition of community for the purpose of this discussion is unimportant. It is not the definition of community that is the overriding concern at this time, but interactions within and between communities however they may be defined.

Having established that culture and symbolic representation is important to the development of individuals and to the communities they make up, and having explored the dangers of restrictive expressions of community with theoretical basis that address this, Chapter 2 begins with a discussion of the development model that is based on community, CED. This chapter will discuss the ideological roots of CED activities and point out the theoretical failings that inhibit its success. Following this, a theoretical discussion will build on the poststructuralism introduced at the beginning of Chapter 1, suggesting a theoretical basis for organization.

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- 42Ibid., p. 307.
- 43Ibid., p. 307-8.
- 44Ibid., p. 310.
- 45Ibid., p. 311.
- 46Ibid., p. 313.
- 47Ibid., p. 313.
- 48Ibid., p. 317.
- 49L. Susan Brown, The Politics of Individualism: Liberalism, Liberal Feminism and Anarchism (Montreal/New York: Black Rose Books), 1993, p. 114.
- 50Ibid., p. 28.
- 51Ibid., p. 4.

Chapter 2

CED: The Concept

Community development in the sixties focused on social issues and in the seventies the focus was economic. Today it embraces both, in a philosophy that believes in the development of human capacity and in the possibility of ecologically sustainable economic activity. Locally-based development is concerned with the sustainability of the community itself, a place where labour force adjustment (out migration) is not the primary economic adjustment mechanism. Christopher Brant defines "sustainable community development" as including community economic development and "can be defined and distinguished from other types of local development processes by community participation and cooperation (the processes), and partnerships (the actions)."¹ It is a focus on increased democratic activity and cooperative strategies that differentiate community level development.

Blocking evolution in this direction is what is termed, in the literature, a "modern worldview"; widely held assumptions of what is appropriate,

what is true, and what is possible. Ideas that do not fit the dominant discourse, which is the discourse of the industrial paradigm, are edited out of the public discourse and are not visible in any policy debate. Thus the discourse of CED is marginalized. Ray Griffin and Richard Falk put it this way:

The core assumptions of the modern worldview lock us into simplistic either/ors, constricting our imaginations. As long as the individual is conceived of as poised defensively against other social atoms, and thus against society, the most critical questions facing society get posed in terms of trade-offs.²

In spite of having in common a marginal existence and similar goals CED as a movement lacks unity, direction, or even an active discourse that facilitates the sharing of information. "Community economic development is not homogeneous, but rather a heterogeneous world of practices that undertake action to give a social or regional community control over the development of a locality."³ In terms of its ideological bases it is both radical and conservative, seeking to escape the philosophies that have driven the industrial age. The merger of these separate basis for initiatives, liberal and progressive, presents confusion to individuals and groups setting out to engage in CED activity. Conflicting agendas emerge over time. "[L]iberal local initiatives are aimed solely at repairing the economic fabric of the private sector in order to create jobs".⁴ The term "community" in this context usually refers to municipal government or other administrative body. By contrast "progressive local and community initiatives offer a development model where the notions of social solidarity, individual and collective empowerment and actual control over local resources and their

development are at the heart of the desired change".⁵ In progressive terms, "community" is self defined by the group involved. This self-defined community can be in terms of a geographically marginalized area, a marginalized social group, or a group with common interests, beliefs, and history. Both of these perspectives, liberal and progressive, operate on the margins of the established economic order.

CED and Models of Economic Development

A successful synthesis of the liberal and progressive varieties of CED requires a new kind of economy, one with democratic economic institutions. Such a model of economic development is proposed by Bruyn in Beyond the Market and the State. In his model there are four areas the community development corporation can operate in "creating viable democratic institutions...controlled by community representatives and serve the local population."⁶

These four dimensions and their respective tools are: *capital*, and community financial institutions such as community local fund associations; *employment*, and self-managed enterprises such as worker co-operatives; *land*, and community land trusts; *the consumer*, and consumer corporations.⁷

Less concerned with democratic organization are long-time practitioners Lewis and Green, who advocate a strictly pragmatic approach to CED based on strategic planning. They present four options:

The Growth/Equity model...It is concerned with establishing an ownership stake in the economy in order to build an economic base. *The Loan/Technical Assistance Model* is focused on debt financing and also on training and support to small business persons. *The Employment Development Model* has a major emphasis on human resource development, training, job creation, and job placement. *The*

Planning and Advisory Service Model is primarily concerned with providing planning, advisory, and technical assistance services to a defined membership.⁸

From either perspective, a successful marginal activity or a new model for political economy, CED cannot proceed without policy support.

Community development and economic development have been separated by the professions and disciplines in theory, practice, policy and funding, duplicating the public/private split, dividing organizational structures and activities into production/consumption. The idea of 'community' has been pronounced dead, if acknowledged at all, in any literature dealing with development for some time. However, in the developing field of community economic development it is celebrated as if it has always existed, underground.

Community-based economic development has redefined what economic development as a concept and a practice means. And the practical effectiveness of that re-definition lies in part in two features: first, the devolution of decision-making to those who are most affected by the decisions and who must carry out the decisions and, second, the stress on a multi-functional, multi-dimensional, multi-purpose development strategy. It is this strategy that fundamentally implies the melding of social with economic goals.⁹

The question is, does "the community" in the terms needed for development and service delivery, conforming to standards we have come to expect, actually exist. Sandra Mark of West End Community Ventures (WECV) notes, "People think because a business starts in a community, it is a community business. But a community business requires a community-building process."¹⁰ After years of trial and error, Mark and WECV know that strategies for CED have to be long term and supported by

infrastructure if they are to succeed. Government policy and funding strongly determine what is possible.

For instance, past government-created infrastructures, roads and railways, is supportive of industrial capital. The fibre-optics infrastructure of the information age is privately owned and expensive, currently creating new elites and monopolies of knowledge. A second example, relevant to a bioregional focus for development in which agriculture is important, would be the fact that regulations governing the production and sale of agricultural products, and the resulting backward and forward linkages, in communities and regions, is heavily biased toward large scale operations, increasingly multinational ones.

The "community" as a viable organizational basis for political economy at this time has only potential, is indeed, in a state of becoming. Questions need to be asked concerning in who's image is it being created. What are the values being incorporated in this structural change that is already underway? If community building is left to the market, and to chance, neither social nor economic goals will be met.

The amount of rhetoric being produced around these issues is substantial and it is difficult to determine who's interests are being served by policy, language, or funding. It is so confusing that establishing where one stands, or what exactly one stands for, is not easy. Everyone talks about empowerment, participation and process, but the meanings are subject to manipulation. The lines of left and right have become entangled, broken,

and blurred. While ridding ourselves of nineteenth century paradigms is beneficial, what is needed is a reconstruction of a critical perspective, a political framework which would establish goals and process, as well as establish a place from which to critique existing practices.

Peter Boothroyd is one of the most insightful writers on CED and in The Meaning of Community Economic Development he divides current CED practices in Canada into three types, rather than simply the two polarities (progressive and liberal) of other writers in the field. The three represent an emphasis on *Economics*, on *Development*, and on *Community*. His analysis gives a more complex understanding of the political ramifications of CED.

The first approach defined by Boothroyd is "Growth Promotion", which although as old as the nation itself is a synonym for CED : "the community is seen primarily as the locality in which economic activity takes place...The goal of economic development is to promote growth in jobs, income, and business activity." ¹¹ This approach is planned, comprehensively and strategically, and is much more sophisticated than traditional smokestack chasing. It reflects North American competitive individualism; "the community's strategy is to become a more effective competitor for investment and markets in the larger economy. Other possible CED goals, such as stability, sustainability, independence, equity and quality of working life are virtually ignored."¹²

The second type is the "Structural Change Approach" which paralleled the

evolution of the planned growth approach but its goal is to "supplement or replace the goal of growth itself."¹³

In most parts of Canada, the origins of the structural change approach, like those of the growth promotion approach, can be traced back many decades. In the highly unstable period of pre-Keynesian capitalism, particularly in the first third of this century, many communities organized producer co-ops, consumer co-ops, and credit unions...These were formed to foster community growth, but they were also seen as playing an important stabilizing role.¹⁴

Strategies for capturing local control are: reducing dependence on external investment by increasing local ownership; increase local control over resource management; reduction of dependence on exports; strengthening the informal sector.¹⁵

The third approach is Communalization which goes beyond concerns with economic growth and stability to considerations of wealth and income distribution. The emphasis is on developing an economy in such a way that *community* is strengthened. Community in this approach is defined not just as a location in which economic activity takes place or as a set of relationships that can be structured for maximum collective benefit, but as a social/emotional quality whereby people feel connected with each other, are concerned with each other's well-being, and gain satisfaction from cooperating.

For advocates of *community* economic development, structural change is necessary but insufficient as a goal. A community can be stable and independent, but exploitative and lonely.¹⁶

A barrier to this sense of community, says Boothroyd, is the value of privacy which for many individuals "displaces a sense of responsibility for and commitment to the public good."¹⁷ This is reinforced by cynicism regarding political process. These are very serious barriers to a pursuit of social change via CED.

Cynicism in the general public is compounded by the dismissal in policy circles of serious discussion of community level problem solving and conflict resolution. This is perplexing because what is perceived as radical is radical in the tradition of Jeffersonian democracy, John Stewart Mill, 19th Century liberalism and most mainstream religions; in essence, the foundations of our society's democratic principles. Both sustainability and community are radical concepts because they both entail simplicity, a focus on "home". Neither concept is on the agenda of transnational-driven globalization. Yet it is because of these same global forces that effective CED is needed to counteract reduced autonomy at all levels of government and a demand for increased democracy among the citizenry.

Jane Jacobs, a heretical economist who believes the city and not the nation is the appropriate level of economic inquiry, in her latest book Systems of Survival sets out an analysis in which the left/right debate becomes irrelevant, as both can suffer from failure to recognize the disastrous effects of hybridizing values that cannot, or should not, operate together. She differentiates a "Commercial Moral Syndrome" from a "Guardian Moral Syndrome"; two sets of characteristics, one for commercial one for governmental institutions and activities. Her thesis is that there are "two contradictory ways of getting a living; therefore we have two contradictory moral syndromes, one to suit each way and its derivatives."¹⁸ Any combination of the goals and values of these two contradictory syndromes produces, in her words, "monstrous hybrids". Examples she gives are organized crime and totalitarian governments.

While the conflicting bases for activities in CED are not "Monstrous" hybrids, Jacob's analysis points to the dangers of mixing paradigms. Community economic development is the meeting of a radical tradition of community practice and political action, with capitalist enterprise and conservative values. Assuming that CED is worthy of pursuit the question is what kind of a successful model can be created from the strengths of both?

Boothroyd's analysis discussed above is not yet evident in the current widespread interest in localism. As a result of lack of systematic analysis the effort is sabotaged by a contradiction: radical goals employing mainstream processes. Globalism and localism can, indeed must, be pursued simultaneously, but not with the same assumptions or methods. Methods of the mainstream, or centre, serve to maintain the status quo. By employing those same methods, cooption of CED goals is ensured. What Canadian political economist and communications theorist Harold Innis termed a "monopoly of knowledge" is maintained; what is thought about and what terms of reference used for thinking remain unchanged. Structural change that could have occurred by the successful presentation of an alternative model is successfully prevented.

Only with resolution of the conflict inherent in locality development can the exercise bring success. Experiments have been fraught with failure, because, goals and methods conflict and because policy and infrastructure has sabotaged goals and efforts. A resolution of this conflict requires a pursuit of social change. A change toward a participatory society and

toward a policy framework that encourages CED.

A Theoretical Framework for the Politics of Community

Although the terrain of "community" and CED is fraught with difficulties, it is here that a search for new solutions to economic and social issues at the national level can begin with theoretical development. A model of development that aspires to maintain quality of life and promote social equity in a world with new political and economic realities, specifically, reduced government autonomy and fiscal restraint, can only be sought here. Reasons for this are articulated by Fairbairn:

An effective response to the critical situation created by global markets and the changing environment will, for two reasons, involve action at the level of local communities. First, global changes undermine the ability and effectiveness of central governments to respond to social-economic problems. Globalization means that local communities confront the world more and more directly, with less and less mediation or protection from higher levels of government, at least for the time being. By default, it must be the community that acts.

The second, and deeper, reason why the response must come at the community level is that globalization is a paradigm that involves reduction of the power of communities. Community power is replaced, on one hand, by concentrations of power in transnationals or powerful lobbies and, on the other hand, by consumerism, as individuals act alone in the big market and split away from their communities. Any response to globalization that stays within this paradigm of concentration and consumerism will fail to address the real problems.¹⁹

Fairbairn is concerned specifically with communities challenged by globalization. However a consideration of the entire nation as challenged by globalization begins with the same level of enquiry.

Albo and Jenson in discussing the relative autonomy of the state point out that a single thesis (staples, dependency, instrumentalism) is no longer a appropriate way to organize discussion of Canadian Political Economy and offer this advice:

Just as earlier debates about 'theory of the state' arose from and responded to the politics of nationalist and socialist projects, so future scholarship on 'the political' depends on continuing, committed opposition to the unequal social relations of the present.²⁰

Poststructuralism strives to deconstruct ideologies and systems of representation and provides a framework for examining the closure of discourses of both community and of development. Power is in naming and in reclaiming agency, therefore any discussion of development or of community is political. Without a vehicle to enter mainstream discourse in policy-making circles what goes on in this area will continue to be marginalized, the sound of one hand clapping. It is not contradictory to assert that local development must be discussed at higher levels of decision making, because it is at higher levels that policy is formulated and implemented. These decisions define what is possible at a local level. If any program is to succeed, the flow of resources and talent has to be two-directional. Development theory insists that resources and talent flow from the centre to the margin. Enthusiastic Community supporters assume there is talent and resources to draw on in the locality. The reality of living in a marginalized region or community is that talent and resources are drained away leaving little to work with.

Feminist analysis is imperative for any consideration of bottom-up

development and the state's role in it, because a feminist perspective begins with the lived experience of the individual and works up to the level of the state rather than the other way. It is the key to separating a localism that is repressive from one that embraces principles of equity and diversity. This element of subjectivity and a denial of master narratives leads to the discourse of Postmodernism.

Linda Hutcheon states in The Politics of Postmodernism:

...the postmodern's initial concern is to de-naturalize some of the dominant features of our way of life; to point out that those entities that we unthinkingly experience as 'natural (they might even include capitalism, patriarchy, liberal humanism) are in fact 'cultural'²¹

The term postmodern has its origins in architecture and art, however it has come to refer to a new paradigm, a new way of organizing individual experience. A postmodern perspective finds expressions in culture, politics and economics, all three of which figure in this discussion. A postmodern conception of the individual in community is considered within a cultural, historical, and biological context; experience is seen to be mediated by ideology, denying a singular explanation of "reality"; the belief in progress is denied; hierarchies are challenged. This is a positive take on "postmodern" which is often used as a pejorative, denoting cultural decay, a loss of absolutes, political and moral indifference. This difference of opinion of what "postmodern" means seems to have a great deal to do with whether one can be located at the "centre" or on the "margin". Community as a meaningful concept and useful organizational basis is a resident of the "margin", therefore a candidate for a positive view of the postmodern condition, and a site to redefine it into a political force for positive social change.

subaltern discourse, local knowledges. I see these tendencies as part of a challenge to existing disciplines in the human sciences to ask new sorts of questions, ones that take as their point of departure a self-reflexive recontextualization, and that abandon 'modern' positions in favor of exploring 'postmodern' positions.⁴⁹

At the same time, Poster claims not to deny the relevance of questions of class, race, and gender, but to simply add new ones. Questions that do not "totalize". For instance, "The discursive effect of the term postindustrial society is to deny the validity of positions rooted in the analysis of industrial society".⁵⁰ Poster's main point is that the social field consists not of actions but of linguistic issues manifested in knowledge, information and communication. This is a critical point when looking at economic development in the information economy. Postindustrial theorists treat information as the latest commodity, "reversing a long-standing liberal principle that, in a democracy, knowledge and information in general must be freely accessible." ⁵¹ Postindustrial theorists insisting that recent transformations

constitute a fundamental reordering of society...are vulnerable to the criticism sounded by Marxists and others, that the changes are one of degree not one of kind. Service and information workers, like factory workers, such a position would maintain, remain salaried employee, subject to the capital-labor relation.⁵²

What constitutes valuable knowledge and access to knowledge become the critical political issues.

Chris Weedon in Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory offers a good definition of Poststructuralism. Like Poster, she relies a great deal on Foucault: "Unlike humanism, which implies a conscious, knowing, unified, rational subject, poststructuralism theorizes subjectivity as a site of disunity and conflict, central to the process of political change and

Canadian context. However, as discussed in Chapter 1 with regard to Ursula Kelly's work, poststructuralism can be applied successfully to Canadian experience.

George Grant's Conservatism

A Canadian voice worthy of consideration to support a postmodern critique is that of George Grant. Of the conservative tradition represented by

Grant, Charles Taylor says:

I have found a conservative heritage which is far from moribund, and which relates directly to our present needs. It is also very much our own tradition, for it is neither mired in nostalgic Anglophilia, nor obsessed with the contemporary American fad of neo-conservatism. Populist and even radical, it has a particular Canadian tang.²⁸

Kroker begins his chapter on Grant in Technology and The Canadian Mind with a painting of Alex Colville that captures the spirit of Grant's lament. "Colville tells us...that, at the centre of the 'modern project', all is doom, futility, and anguish: waiting with no expectation of relief; and looking with no possibility of response."²⁹ Colville and Grant see modern culture as nihilistic. Grant's writings are useful in that they offer a damning critique of dependency, of "a radical colonization *from within* of the psychology of the modern self"³⁰ and an articulation of the failings of capitalist liberalism and a technological organization principle.

In his different texts, there is to be found an internally coherent and persuasive demonstration that the epistemology (positivist), political theory (liberal), public morality (instrumental activism), category of time (historical), vision of history (progressivist), aesthetics (contractarianism), social relations (competitive), value-principle (pragmatism), and psychology (nihilistic) - all of the 'foundational categories' of the modern project - are but derivative expressions of that which is most central to western experience:

the language of willing.³¹

Kroker asserts that Grant's "prejudices reflect accurately the discourse of the Tory ego in North America: lamentation not emancipation; historical fatalism not collective political struggle; contemplation not engagement; and equivocation not pragmatism."³² Geoffrey Martin, however, maintains that this prominent critique of Grant prevents us from benefiting from his scholarship. "The essence of the liberal critique is that Grant is merely a nostalgic, tiresome remnant of a traditional class that has been by-passed by progress..."³³ This critique has grown as traditional conservatism has diminished and as what Martin calls "a new kind of 'progressivism' develops. Martin maintains that Grant's scholarship is not negative or destructive but poses positive theoretical alternatives with a dominant sense of justice. Because of the evolution of Canadian conservatism into nineteenth century liberalism, what Grant named 'proper conservatism' in 1959 was by 1965 anything preventing American domination. Grant's conservatism is not incompatible with socialism. "Socialism typically meant the 'use of the government to restrain greed in the name of social good...In doing so, was it not appealing to the conservative idea of social order against the liberal idea of freedom?'"³⁴ Martin states that the influence of Leo Strauss and Jacques Ellul in Grant's later work "brought him into a full deconstruction of modernity."³⁵ Justice and modernity, to Grant, are incompatible.

Grant's failure was to look only to the centre for sources of opposition to the evolving dominant thought and practice that he opposed. When the margins are sought out for sources of ideas the possibility of success

increases. Grant's pessimism need not be an outcome of his critique. His thinking is applicable to this analysis because of his belief in justice, his aversion to dependency, and his respect for the primacy of nature. His critique of modernity can be added to contemporary politics of identity and of place, and to postmodern discourse, to produce a framework to critique corporate capitalism and pursue a political economy of a different order and define the values that accompany it.

The Values of Sustainability

The language of willing condemned by Grant leaves little room for a pursuit of sustainability because of its insistence on domination over nature. Culture itself has to be perceived within the natural world and not external to it. Policy must be ecologically grounded. Otherwise community development is about exploitation and the artificial constructs of commerce, thus ensuring business as usual and eventual failure. This is a consideration of development as "ecological development".

Structures that ensure sustainability can only be built on values that promote sustainability. Medard Gable articulates nine desirable values. They are listed by Milbrath: "The future world that is most attractive embodies nine qualities: It is abundant...regenerative...dependable...safe...appropriate...equitable...flexible...efficient...open-minded and locally controlled.³⁶

Murry Bookchin, anarchist theorist: "We need a 'localist morality' as well as a 'globalist' one, along with a sense or responsibility to act and think

on these two scales...We need to recreate communities as vital public spheres in which people can recover control over their destinies" He goes on to advocate politics as an educational process designed to create "real citizenship" and community.³⁷

Milbrath points out that these statements define "a high quality of life, the well-functioning ecosystem, and the good society in which quality of life might be achieved, are useful to pursue. They do not, however, specify the way that society should be structured."³⁸

Many policy disagreements are based on confusing presuppositions about values and beliefs that have not been clearly illuminated by reasoning to ground. We often dispute over instrumental values that are assumed to be fundamental values. Economic growth, for example, is clearly an instrumental value, but our public discourse often elevates it to an end value. We need to learn how to dissect policy proposals for their implicit values and examine them to see if they are the values that are really important. This examination may lead us to ask what other values in our structure are not being served by the proposed policy.³⁹

Milbrath elaborates a value structure for a sustainable society. The model is depicted as circular layers with a viable ecosystem at the centre. The core values are "a high quality of life, security, compassion, and justice." Next are the instrumental values of "freedom, equality, peace, and order" which enable the realization of the four core values. Values encouraging competition and aggressiveness do not promote structural change because they are not modifying individual selfishness in favour of compassion and empathy.

Milbrath points out that these values cannot be given a label of right or

left. These values belong to a different paradigm, what he calls the New Environmental Paradigm". The values of this paradigm need to be the basis from which to engage in locality development.

Postmodern Politics for a Planet in Crisis asserts that the current environmental crisis and an attendant crisis in political leadership results from the continued dominance of the principles of modernity that emerged in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

(T)o solve our problems we will need new public policies - not refinements of modern policies to make them work a little better, but postmodern policies that will often amount to such drastic reversals of modern policies as to be considered unthinkable by those still captivated by the modern vision of the world.⁴⁰

The book proposes that the process of modernity be reversed; "that we move instead toward local economies that are relatively self-sufficient, thereby reducing trade to the lowest level possible"⁴¹ and "that ecology becomes the primary discipline in the postmodern world".⁴² It calls for an establishment of values that do not have their basis in economics, that acknowledge the interconnectedness of all people and that have a reverence for all life. A chapter by Frances Moore Lappe concerning the political process and obstacles to the creation of a conceptual framework has as its root a set of modern assumptions.

These assumptions have made politics seem suspect, economics seem beyond human guidance on the basis of norms of fairness and empathy, and freedom seem to be little more than the freedom for unlimited accumulation.⁴³

The modern world view presents human beings as isolated and self-centered atoms who interact on the bases of absolute economic rules carrying the consequences of abdication of personal responsibility. "The

modern paradigm relieves human beings of responsibility for moral reasoning and action as it relates to the well-being of the whole."⁴⁴ Combined with a crises of faith in political leadership, Lappe asserts, we do not have the structures or the values to face looming crises.

Given crises in leadership and cynicism toward politics, the criticism that poststructuralism is a refusal of political activity needs to be addressed. Poster makes an important observation about the dangers of apoliticalism.

Many American poststructuralists, especially deconstructionists, appear to believe that a political position and a social theory are built into their interpretive strategy. If one avoids closure and totalization in one's own discourse, they contend, if one unsettles, destabilizes, and complicates the discourses of the humanities, if one resists taking a stance of binary opposition in relation to the position one is criticizing, one has thereby instantiated a nonrepressive politics. Yet such a utopian epistemological vantage point may be more difficult to sustain than deconstructionists believe. ⁴⁵

Poster is important to this discussion because it is his position that elements of poststructuralism are the beginning of a new critical analysis. Poststructuralism recognizes, according to Poster, that there is a problem with the theoretical subject, which since Descartes has been considered rational, and universal. "Claims of universality of reason may have always been epistemologically unfounded: today they are something worse than that, since reason is also the handmaid of institutions of unimaginable enormous force."⁴⁶

The place of the subject in the history of social theory may be outlined in part as follows: liberalism treats the subject as an

autonomous, rational, often presocial individual, wary of its rights in relation to other individuals; Marxism treats the subject as a collective agent in contest with other collective agents...By the late twentieth century both positions have become unconvincing. Liberalism's subject as citizen and entrepreneur and Marxisms subject as revolutionary proletariat no longer work as characters in the play of human time.⁴⁷

Poster looks to poststructuralism for a place to begin to reformulate critical theory. In The Mode of Information: Poststructuralism and Social Context he begins by surveying various views of new information technologies.

To a Marxist, new communications devices fall within the thesis of the class struggle: increased access to information occurs differentially in relation to one's position in the class structure. To Neo-marxists, electronic media reinforce the culture industry, heightening the hegemonic force of ideology. To an economist, the laws of the market determine who shall use a computer, who shall advertise on television, who shall have their songs broadcast to radio receivers. To a Weberian, electronic communications increase the differentiation of society into subsystems and promote the power of bureaucracy. To a liberal they are subject to the contest for power among pluralist factions. Even for technological determinists, nothing is new: electronic media confirm the progress of the proliferation of machines that alleviate toil and subordinate nature to the wishes of mankind. Regardless of one's theoretical perspective, the conclusion appears incontrovertible that with the introduction of electronically mediated communication nothing basic has changed.⁴⁸

Poster's valuable contribution here is his assertion that something basic has indeed changed. Patterns of communication change the subject. From this, it can be concluded that modes of communication and the social organization that grows up around them must be considered in any discussion of organizational and political strategies, for the reality within which we have to work is a new and evolving construct, a

departure, and an inappropriate site for familiar intellectual frameworks.

It is appropriate to question the merits of working within this technologically constructed reality. Why not advocate forsaking it all together? Although it is a valid criticism that accepting what is handed to you to work with is a failure to rebel against power structures, a cooption, a failure to envision alternative paradigms, it would be fairly simple to construct a model existing in isolation, and harbouring utopian aspirations that stand little chance of existing off the page. It would, in terms of this analysis, perpetuate a Cartesian duality, serve oppositional thinking, promote assignations of otherness, in effect change nothing. On the other hand, taking a previously marginal and radically-based activity like community development and remaking it in the image of corporate capitalism is not the objective either. What successful community development must seek to do is bring workable marginal ideas, with their integrity intact, to the centre, reversing the assumptions of development theory and accomplishing real social change. This optimism is not without foundation. Harold Innis' work, specifically Empire and Communications, leaves open the possibility of dramatic power shifts with the introduction of new technologies of communications. In his work can be found support for the notion of creativity flowing successfully from margin to centre.

Poster's The Mode of Information is relevant because he focuses on the point of intersection between new communication phenomena and poststructuralist theories, to explore the ramifications of that intersection as a step toward a more general discursive initiative that has variously been termed cultural studies, postmodern theory,

subaltern discourse, local knowledges. I see these tendencies as part of a challenge to existing disciplines in the human sciences to ask new sorts of questions, ones that take as their point of departure a self-reflexive recontextualization, and that abandon 'modern' positions in favor of exploring 'postmodern' positions.⁴⁹

At the same time, Poster claims not to deny the relevance of questions of class, race, and gender, but to simply add new ones. Questions that do not "totalize". For instance, "The discursive effect of the term postindustrial society is to deny the validity of positions rooted in the analysis of industrial society".⁵⁰ Poster's main point is that the social field consists not of actions but of linguistic issues manifested in knowledge, information and communication. This is a critical point when looking at economic development in the information economy. Postindustrial theorists treat information as the latest commodity, "reversing a long-standing liberal principle that, in a democracy, knowledge and information in general must be freely accessible." ⁵¹ Postindustrial theorists insisting that recent transformations

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to preserving the status quo."⁵³ "Its founding insight...is that language, far from reflecting an already given social reality, constitutes social reality for us."⁵⁴ Language, then, is the appropriate cite for political activity that seeks social change. Weedon's poststructuralism is different from Poster's in that it is feminist:

feminist poststructuralism must pay full attention to the social and institutional context of textuality in order to address the power relations of everyday life. Social meaning are produced within social institutions and practices in which individuals, who are shaped by these institutions, are agents of change, rather than its authors, change which may either serve hegemonic interests or challenge existing power relations.⁵⁵

Weedon's "feminist poststructuralism", then, adopts components of Marxist analysis, adding those strengths to the subjective focus of both poststructuralism and feminism.

In making our subjectivity the product of the society and culture within which we live, feminist poststructuralism insists that forms of subjectivity are produced historically and change with shifts in the wide range of discursive fields which constitute them. However, feminist poststructuralism goes further than this to insist that the individual is always the site of conflicting forms of subjectivity.⁵⁶

Feminist poststructuralism, then, is a mode of knowledge production which uses poststructuralist theories of language, subjectivity, social processes and institutions to understand existing power relations and to identify areas and strategies for change. Through a concept of discourse, which is seen as a structuring principle of society, in social institutions, modes of thought and individual subjectivity, feminist poststructuralism is able, in detailed, historically specific analysis, to explain the working of power on behalf of specific interests and to analyse the opportunities for resistance to it.⁵⁷

It is within this theoretical framework that a strategy for creating a successful model of localized development can be articulated. Localized

development, is a site for developing individual meaning and identifying strategies for change. It is a bases for cultural critique and political articulation that is both respectful of the individual and of community. Chapter 3 will discuss development and economic issues within the context of the theoretical background introduced so far. In doing so, more concrete links will be established with the theory, as the theoretical basis is expanded. The possibility of CED developing into a new regional development theory, and consequently development policy, will be established. In support of this idea a vehicle for political representation is introduced.

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Chapter 3

A Regionally-Based Postmodernist Political Economy

Ted Magder observes that there has yet to develop significant inquiries "into the nature of Canadian cultural production, distribution, and consumption"¹ even though

[m]ost political economists would agree that the manner in which attitudes, ideas and values are transmitted, elaborated, and consumed within the spheres of culture and communications helps generate social relations and the structures of power and conflict in Canada.²

This oversight, he suggests, is because it is assumed that analysis must focus on content rather than context. Magder asserts that culture must be examined from the perspective of political economy, but with a new thrust.

If the new political economy is to remain committed to social change, to the development of a more progressive, democratic, and egalitarian social system, we need to establish a cultural sphere radically different from the current commercialized, centralized, and undemocratic structures. A political economy of culture will help us not only to understand the current structure but also to develop a more democratic alternative. Otherwise we have not yet learned to take culture seriously enough.³

The question of how to take culture seriously can be answered by looking for a theoretical basis on which to build development policy that inherently considers culture and cultural production. That theoretical basis is to be found in the literature of postmodernism.

A political economy that is serious about positive social change cannot be centralist, because people are shaped by their immediate environment. Individuals are socially constituted. Culture, lived experience, is represented by language, which takes many forms, especially in an economy based on the exchange of information. Language, information, power, and culture are inextricably linked in the post-industrial economy. Therefore regional, local, and community are all essential to future development policy.

CED efforts have a history of being unsupported by expertise, resources, policy or structures. Because community-level development can aspire to be an alternative to top-down development only if it is supported the activity has been somewhat marginalized, and success elusive. The separation of the public/private spheres (as defined by feminist scholarship) is a consequence of industrialization and has defined communities and households as consumers and clients of social services and as recipients of the benefits of capitalist production. "Have-not" areas of the country are seen as dependent, in much the same way, on economically successful areas. By contrast, a postmodern direction recognizes complexity, a multi-directional transmission of resources and seeks to move away from dependency.

The perceived function of the micro level in development plans overlooks resources and prejudices who will benefit from the development activity. In the modern economy, family, community, and society are not economic institutions, their function is to consume. This vision has several flaws. It assumes that consumption can replace relationship in the human experience, and that human needs and economics are mutually exclusive. It also assumes that work is without intrinsic value, and that well being can be measured only in per capita income.

The subject of scale in economic analysis is dealt with by Jane Jacobs in Cities and the Wealth of Nations, in which she asserts that a more useful scale of analysis is the city, rather than the nation. John Stewart Mill in Liberty argues for local self-government both as an important institutional buffer against the abuse of power by the greater society, and as a more efficient way to manage and deliver local services. Schumacher's classic Small is Beautiful asserts that small scale is more important than ideology, suggesting that the left/right debate generates "more heat than light, as happens with all arguments which derive 'reality' from a conceptual framework, instead of deriving a conceptual framework from reality."⁴ All of these works support a more local focus for social, political, and economic organization.

In Managing Sustainable Development Carley and Christie write:

"The appropriate degree of decentralization in any situation is that point where major areas of both functional responsibility and political

participation are maximized..."⁵ It is not an either/or proposition. A bottom-up approach requires more individual responsibility, and demands more accountability, which government policy can either facilitate or reduce. A postmodern economic development strategy would encourage and support bottom-up initiative.

Russ, in From the Roots Up, calls for a redefinition of economy to encompass both the formal and informal economy and to discourage regulations and conditions that prohibit self-reliance. If policy aimed at a mix, it would integrate economic and social policy.⁶ However, he cautions that a

transfer of social obligations to the community will only succeed if enhanced informal economic activity is first supported and encouraged. Presently, there seems to be much wishful thinking among some conservative politicians that social obligations can just be thrown back upon the community without any change in economic structures.⁷

It is this caveat that underlines the need for political analysis. The neo-conservative trend dominates public discourse and the policy climate, falsely claiming to possess the only extant framework for local governance. This agenda abdicates social responsibility in favour of a Darwinian individualism.

Sustainable development is a process. It is through an emphasis on process; mediation, consensus, and community building, that sustainable development must be pursued. This involves the pursuit of a different kind of democracy, one promoting maximum participation. "Only with a deep democratic renewal can we...begin to conceive of meeting the

unprecedented threats to our society and our planet."⁸

Contrary to widely held perceptions, social cooperation and equity are not mutually exclusive to individual liberty. Gould in Rethinking Democracy redefines freedom as the equal right to self-development, requiring democratic participation in social and economic, as well as political life. Such cooperation of individuals, she asserts, requires that each act as his own agent. In order for an individual to be able to act as his own agent he must have a certain amount of autonomy.

To this can be added the need for public involvement in debate about policy and issues. This is not so easy. Public "apathy" seems at an all time high. In Renfrew County, for instance, a recent meeting held to discuss the fate of Ontario's health care system brought out twelve people. But as an editorial in the local paper⁹ suggested, this quite possibly has less to do with apathy than with the belief that people, either individually or collectively, are powerless.

Nancy Fraser, in an article titled "Rethinking the public sphere: a contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy" offers insight into the creation of an active public discourse. She asserts that the left-wing tradition has failed to distinguish
between the apparatuses of the state...and public areas of citizen discourse and association...All too often it was assumed in this tradition that to subject the economy to the control of the socialist state was to subject it to the control of the socialist citizenry.¹⁰

A second theoretical difficulty pointed out by Fraser is the use of "public" and "private" in feminist discourse. The "'public sphere' in this usage

combines at least three analytically distinct things: the state, the official economy of paid employment, and areas of public discourse."¹¹ Her analysis is based on Habermas, for whom a "public sphere" is discursive interaction. Habermas's concept is separate from both the state and economic institutions. "[T]he public sphere connoted an ideal of unrestricted rational discussion of public matters."¹² Class struggle developed, according to Habermas, competing interest groups fragmented public opinion, making private issues state issues, and the ideal was never realized. Fraser adds a revisionist critique to Habermas, criticizing the ideal vision of the liberal public sphere, which was based on exclusions not access. She establishes that there were many competing "publics". Thus, the exclusions and conflicts that Habermas viewed as accidental in the revisionists' view become constitutive. The result is a gestalt switch that alters the very meaning of the public sphere. We can no longer assume that the bourgeois conception of the public sphere was simply an unrealized utopian ideal; it was also a masculinist ideological notion that functioned to legitimate an emergent form of class rule.¹³

What indeed occurred in the "public sphere" of Habermas was the establishment of hegemonic control in place of other forms of domination. Rather than dismissing the concept designed by Habermas, Fraser instead seeks to recreate it to serve what she terms "postliberal" democracy. Liberal democracy is problematic because it seeks to "insulate political process from what are considered to be non-political or pre-political processes...the economy, the family, and informal everyday life."¹⁴ She seeks to use "postmodern cultural theory to extend and to radicalize our vision of democracy."¹⁵ Her postmodern reconstruction is to accept the reality of power differentials and work to identify and mitigate the worst

of them.

Fraser's analyses is important in demonstrating that the different kind of democracy required for the successful pursuit of CED requires the reinventing of a "public sphere" that is separate from economics and from state apparatuses, but reconnected to the "private sphere" of feminist discourse that liberal democracy has edited out of political life.

Suzanne MacKenzie asserts that when the recession of the 70's and 80's became economic restructuring social organization based on the public/private split of full employment of men and a dual role of women began to change. Employment generating institutions began disappearing. "Restructuring, in the 'deindustrializing' areas of the periphery, is experienced both as decreasing availability and reliability of wage employment and as a search for compensating survival strategies."¹⁶ MacKenzie says the investigation of this systemic change has been hindered by the models that inform regional theory. Core-periphery analysis sees the periphery as dependent on the core in economic, cultural, technological and social terms. Secondly, home and community are seen as dependent in the same way on the public sector.

As the jobs which men used to do disappear...the strategies that women have always used to gain resources for households...become increasingly central to household survival. For a growing proportion of the population, conditions for a traditional industrial gender division of labour have virtually disappeared. Women are increasingly active in the small business sector...It is not that women 'invade' traditional preserves of middle-class male power, but that these preserves become less relevant to people's daily lives and incrementally less powerful, while the previously invisible and devalued networks women have developed become more central.¹⁷

MacKenzie's work states that as an area becomes deindustrialized, the surviving economy is based on what, under industrial capitalism is known as woman's sphere. If this is an indication of post-industrial economic organization, policy needs to change drastically. Many things that have been devalued have to be revalued; nurturance, relationship, cooperation. These are all components of "community".

One of the most important observations in MacKenzie's work is an answer to those who would accuse this call for a reduction in scale of being a nostalgic wish to return to an idyllic preindustrial past that may or may not have existed:

The strategies discussed above may appear, in some respects, to be a return to preindustrial self-sufficiency and the development of more localized economies. In as much as many resource based areas have never wholly lost their preindustrial character, 'traditional' modes of survival are integrated into postindustrial strategies. But the emerging 'mixture' is not a retreat into the past. It is an alteration of the conditions of life and work, one which may prove more responsive and resilient than the volatile and apparently transient prosperity based on resource extraction by profit motivated corporations. Whatever their futures, these strategies place a new emphasis upon locality, and perhaps most especially upon the formerly neglected spaces of peripheral places.¹⁸

So, this evolving economy is a forced revaluation of that which has been devalued under industrial capitalism; the private sphere (in feminist terms), home, and community. Feminist analysis here is imperative, both for the success of this value change, and to protect hard won rights of women from being eroded. In the face of this breakdown of the public/private split, policy continues to assume the division just as it

assumes the flow of creativity and innovation from centre to margin.

"Toward a New Debate" by John Gaventa sees restructuring as a new opportunity for coalition building in which the link between economy and community can be rebuilt through education in economic literacy. An important element in the process of creating a more democratic economic policy introduced by Gaventa is that such activity is political in nature. To deny this is to invite co-option. This opinion is a minority in the literature. This may be explained by the fact that his work is in the most depressed and marginal areas in the U.S. Consequently, he harbours few utopian ideals. An important assertion he makes is his belief that horizontal links and broad structures can be created that are locally based and yet are in touch with national goals. These new connections would be two directional.¹⁹

A Canadian author, Peter Boothroyd of UBC, writing for the Devolution Task Force, Indian and Northern Affairs, asserts that a top-down approach to institution building developed along with the growth of the welfare state, which is "not just troubled but doomed".²⁰ While he is writing within the context of Native communities he asserts that the same strategies apply to all communities. "Community development is a necessary condition for improving quality of life in all societies at any time. It is an increasingly urgent necessity for all at this time of global ecological crises and consequent decline of the welfare states..."²¹

Boothroyd lists as desiderata for bottom-up governance and regional

institution-building, values of mutual respect, effective and culturally appropriate checks and balances, reinforced by formal education, and continuous participatory planning and evaluation.²² This bottom-up social organization has to be actively pursued by policy. It is unlikely to spontaneously emerge.

Peter Park, writing about participatory research, talks of the need to end silence that is "the expression of perverted social, economic and political structures, which can be transformed"²³. Participatory research "is a process which supports the voices from the margins in speaking, analyzing, building alliances, and taking action."²⁴ This perspective is a celebration of marginality, not a denigration of it. It is also not necessarily in opposition to mainstream approaches but is a needed compliment.

This approach, based on locality and a celebration of marginality is a search for new models. It is also a reaction to structural change. This does not extend to policy circles where globalization is embraced as the only agenda, where the relationship with industry, as described in the work of Grace Skogstad of U of T, has been a clientist one.

Authors writing in the spirit of this new localism have in common a perspective in which economic, social, and political change grow out of a change in values. This is not the promotion of isolation, nor a nostalgic longing for a pre-industrial era. It is a postmodern vision for the future, a search for organizational structures that promote equity, diversity, and

sustainability.

The absence of a political framework for community-level development threatens to destroy what an emerging localism has to offer by utilizing an unworkable combination of radical goals and mainstream process, or postmodern goals within a modernist framework. The likely result of this is cooption by a right of centre agenda which will serve to limit both the community and the individual in favour of capital. New forms of social organization that come from this will not embrace equity or a positive individualism.

Postmodernists seek to replace the elitism of modernism with more democratic forms. Three facets of modernism that are rejected by postmodernism are the sovereign rational subject, theory of truth, and the idea of progress.²⁵ No discourse has privilege, the ideology of progress is suspect, and knowledge is a cultural construct. Modernism, on the other hand, is the search for the underlying order, the master narrative.

Sheila Dow, addressing postmodernism from the perspective of economics, says that if a postmodern economic framework were articulated it would attempt to address the reductionism of economic man and introduce diversity of information. A postmodern economics, says Dow "would use some of the advances made in modernist economics, albeit embedding them in a historical and cultural context, with an openness to other disciplines which might contribute to understanding."²⁶ Daly and Cobb assert that the discipline of economics is at a crises. There is

recognition that society is more than a sum of its parts.

[C]ommunity is...the feature of reality that has been most consistently abstracted from in modern economics. The need is not for one more theorem squeezed out of the premises of methodological individualism by a more powerful mathematical press, but for a new premise that reinstates the critical aspect of reality that has been abstracted from, namely, community.²⁷

Given the regional nature of Canada's experience, the next place to look for ideas and solutions is within regional development theory and practice.

Regional Development Theory

Regional development theory and practice is a field that in the past has worked against community development. As McKenzie pointed out, it has assumed a unidirectional flow of resources and information from the center to the margin, denying that valuable ideas and resources exist in the margins. If regional theory were to accept a two-directional relationship it would have a great deal to offer the future of the field of community-level development. Bottom-up theorists so far have offered critique but have not been in a position to formulate or implement alternatives. That could change, and with it political bases for action.

Stewart Perry in Communities On The Way puts failed and mistaken development strategies into four groups. Economic triage prioritizes areas and involves relocation. The business based approach equates economic development with business development and involves communities competing for industry with incentives. As this is a zero sum game, the overall benefit is zero, and the cost to the community often

great. The "big-bang theory" of super industry which leads to too much change too quickly with the cost of new services outweighing the new tax base. It also creates new dependencies and displaces people and land. The "high-tech gamble" is high risk and makes the assumption that manufacturing is the economic future. "All these strategic illusions are based upon the preconception that vigorous growth of new or expanded businesses is the immediate solution to a lagging economy".²⁸ Perry goes on to add that "all the misconceptions about economic development founder by ignoring the importance and the reality of community."²⁹

These misconceptions are predicated on the assumption that economic development is an increase in GNP and increased median income. It "doesn't grasp the inner reality of economic development, which involves a social, psychological, and cultural dimension as well as an economic one."³⁰ Perry asserts that poverty is less a lack of money than it is a lack of human capacity.

Janine Brodie, in the Political Economy of Canadian Regionalism says that the study of regionalism has been limited to demonstrating that people in different parts of the country either think differently about politics or have different economic opportunities. These studies of regional differences begin with predefined geographic units and measure differences in the location of attitudes or things.³¹

This, says Brodie, does not explain why regional differences exist, and persist, or what exactly a region is, outside of a centrally defined geographical area. These basis for regional study produce theories of regional self-balance which explain regional disparity in terms of

inadequacies found within the regions. This discourse which is dominant in mainstream political economy serves to depoliticize regions and communities.

Brodie suggests a different approach to regional study, a relational approach, de-emphasizing fixed geographical boundaries and economic indicators.

Regions are the product of historical experience, human organization, and social interaction. From a relational perspective, regions are, in a very real sense, political creations -the products of social alliances and conflicts. Second, this perspective encourages us to think about regions not as being fixed but, instead, as fluid phenomena that change as their interrelationships change. Third, it enables us to study regionalism both at a given moment in time and across time.³²

This relational approach, or theories of regional imbalance, is supported by early Canadian political economists like Harold Innis and Vernon Fowke, by a current generation of political economists (See New Political Economy) and some neo-Marxists.³³ Theories of regional imbalance are not accepted by mainstream economists.

Innis's staples theory, the metropolitan-hinterland thesis, third world dependency models, and some Marxist applications in radical geography all posit that regions are defined as an effect of their relationship with other regions, but each identifies different linkages as being responsible for uneven development.³⁴

On a micro level the work of Sociologist Ralph Matthews on regional theory reaches many of the same conclusions as the community theorist, Perry, cited earlier. He maintains that the viability of a community is not just economic, but social and political. Matthews criticizes regional development in Canada from the thirties, which was when the federal

government first addressed the problem of regional disparity, through the DREE (Department of Regional Economic Expansion) program. He traces the progressive change in values underlying these programs to increasingly favouring urban growth and industrial development. Since DREE there have been several programs, none of which were in place long enough to have much of an impact, and in the mid eighties, it was evident that the federal government was moving away from a commitment to regional development. The future is unlikely to produce new federally-inspired regional development plans because of the constraints of global economic concerns that would consider this type of activity a subsidy.

Even if this were not the case, the reality is that planners, the architects of regional development schemes, have lacked a concept of local political and economic control. Clyde Weaver states that "Planning doctrine became an extension of the ideology of multinational capitalism."³⁵ He argues in Regional Development and the Local Community that because of a growing gap between corporate and community interests, regional grass-roots planning is a "viable alternative to arbitrary corporate-bureaucratic control" and that "regional planning should be one of the central strategies of democratic action."³⁶

Bottom-up development theorists have been criticized for offering little in the way of concrete alternatives to what they critique. The thinking of Peter Boothroyd is vital to explaining why this has been the case. He offers optimism for a change in the future.

Assuming continuing decline of the welfare state and the renewal of community, regional theory will have to change its critical stance

into one of planning support, just as it so changed in the 1930's. Only now the support will be for community leaders rather than welfare state technocrats.³⁷

He asserts that regional theory is at a turning point, that it "will increasingly be challenged to become relevant to the issues posed by the renewal of communities as potent political units, and by their need to federate."³⁸

The bottom-up theorists of the 1970's and early 1980's, then had to be critics in the same sense that the early, pre-welfare state theorists were critics. In both cases, the theorists could only paint utopian pictures of how urbanization or rural development should be managed because they were unconnected to the relevant locus of power: the state in the case of the pre-welfare theorists, the community or region of communities in the case of the early bottom-up theorists.³⁹

He proposes that "Critical regional development theory will be supplanted by bottom-up regional theory generated and used at the community level"⁴⁰ The reason for this change is the decline of the welfare state and a rapid expansion of bottom-up activities. It is his belief that "regional theory could assist communities and their regional development of regional associations by studying the dynamics which encourage or hinder the formation and operations of such associations."⁴¹ The theory, at this point, has to catch up to the practice.

Stewart Perry states "There are already encouraging signs of new thinking with regard to such basic tools as development indicators."⁴² Community development corporations and their efforts have been studied systematically in the United States, and lessons from their can be applied to the Canadian experience. For instance, the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation developed a formula for assessing government

expenditure on CED projects. The value of corporate taxes, personal taxes, and federal savings on welfare program costs are compared against total federal support of the CED to give a percentage return on investment. This kind of evaluation produces hard numbers that are difficult to argue with. If a favourable return on investment can be shown, it doesn't even consider further positive social ripple effects.⁴³ Systematic analysis from the U.S. show that CED does work, that combining social goals with economic goals pays off economically and socially.

Three major policy conclusions can be drawn...Systematic venture development in depressed areas can be successful. It is not necessary to concentrate resources in so-called growth areas or centers. An it is not necessary to move people out of depressed communities in order to find them jobs. ⁴⁴

The caveat from Perry is that success depends on the development being "carried out under local direction, according to local priorities, and by mobilizing local resources first."⁴⁵ The relationship between centre and margin has prescribed boundaries.

The appropriate role of the core area vis-vis peripheral development is in offering the three kinds of imports that the periphery will need from time to time - namely, ideas or knowledge about various aspects of the development process, consultants or staff resources, and technical support and capital.⁴⁶

Successful CED is a process that requires support in the building of institutions. Seidman points out that debate over the role of government in the economy produces three public policy views: laissez faire capitalism, a state planned economy, and the welfare state.

All three views of public policy ignore the existence of a third set of economic institutions that can compensate for market failures without a planned economy or wholesale government regulation. Self-managed economic enterprises that are responsive to their stakeholders provide a way to address the social costs of economic change in a nonbureaucratic, democratic fashion. An economy

centered on democratic enterprise begs a new role for government. Instead of laissez faire, close regulation of economic activity, or central planning, government functions as a facilitator and supporter of a self-managed economy.⁴⁷

Seidman lists five public-sector strategies that can provide the support necessary for successful locally developed economic activity: organizational support, technical assistance, project financing, tax incentives, and an improved legal environment.⁴⁸ However, in order for any of these strategies to be implemented in policy, political pressure must demand it. Unfortunately no one is making these demands. On the contrary, there is a good deal of literature asserting that social movements and political parties are, indeed, mutually exclusive.⁴⁹

Alan Whitehorn, in Canadian Socialism: Essays on the CCF-NDP states: "In part the NDP was formed with urban, labour-oriented Ontario in mind..."⁵⁰ and with the hope of improving representation in Quebec. "In policy...the CCF stressed the need for a strong federal government and central planning at the expense of provincial powers and jurisdiction..."⁵¹ If wage work is no longer a certainty in the new economy and social organization has changed as a result, it is appropriate for the NDP to alter its assumptions and strategies if it wishes to serve the cause of social equity.

A New Voice for the Left

In view of the all-too-obvious limits to Canada's national autonomy, it might be expected that Canadian social democrats would have a

sophisticated understanding of the problems of interdependence and a realistic strategy for advancing social democratic ideas in a world of decreasing sovereignty. Instead, they appear to be mired in policy positions that are frequently *depassé* in the context of interdependent economic and political realities.⁵²

Neither the left nor the right in Canada has offered a framework that serves the goals of community development, reducing dependency and fostering self-reliance. Both ends of the continuum have viewed the formal economy as the framework in which to work. Both see labour as a commodity, the household and community as consumers; relationships are based on contracts and competition. Development has been defined by both sides as organization according to the industrial model. Because this focus has a negative impact on social organization and political participation, it is, therefore, wrong to suggest that all tendencies toward decentralization are by nature right-wing. Embracing locally focused development could serve to create a healthy public life in which democracy is expanded and social equity pursued.

The right of centre agenda is driven by the agenda of corporate capital and is an abandonment of community, not a return to some mythical family-centered era. The left in Canada has historically defined public ownership as government ownership. This adherence to a top-down structure has left a vacuum that is being capitalized on by a neo-conservative agenda, an agenda which at the same time has disavowed any meaningful definition of community in favour of renewed social Darwinism. The post-Keynesian era so far seems in favour of slash-and-burn policies with no clear vision of an alternative. The neo-conservative agenda, according to

Savoie "eschews consensus", in favour of "management". The legacy of Regan, Thatcher, and Mulroney is a business-management model bias in government.⁵³ Although this managerial model talks a great deal about "empowerment", it is centralist in nature. As social equity and consensus are cornerstones of community building these principles cry out for representation at the level of policy-making. A representation that is not the traditional top-down approach of the Canadian Left, but a redefined left-of-centre position that maintains the same goals but operates in the postmodern social reality; decentralist and globally integrated.

A problem arises in putting a political face on our postmodern condition because "the focus of ideological analysis has shifted from the broadly defined hierarchies of Marx's class analysis to the more intricate modes of hegemonic determination."⁵⁴ Rowe bases his analysis on Lyotard who "understands the specific features of postindustrial economies in terms of systems of exchange that are themselves genres of discourse".⁵⁵ The "economic genre of capital" is concerned with the "suppression of heterogeneity.

The fact is that we have hardly begun to theorize the ways postindustrial economies have transformed the elementary terms of class, production, consumption, and the commodity, among many other crucial categories for any social theory. In these postmodern economies, the means of production are no longer primarily material but discursive. ⁵⁶

Rowe concurs with the assertion earlier in this paper that private and public spheres merge in the postmodern economy. "I am suggesting the postmodern economies transgress the customary boundaries between production and consumption, the 'factory' and the 'market', economic and

social spheres."⁵⁷

This blurring of boundaries "which seem to be robbing all meaning from collective action, are leading to a generalized retreat from the political."⁵⁸ Laclau, writing about representation critiques the assertion that a postmodern turning away from totalities is in essence a denial of meaning. "To assert...that something is meaningless is to assert a very classical conception of meaning, adding only that it is absent."⁵⁹ His discussion shows what is key is the process of representation, not the fact of representation. "What we are witnessing in our contemporary experience is the end of modernity as a horizon but not necessarily of the particular objectives and demands that have conformed to its contents."⁶⁰ This "crises of the horizon" "far from leading to a generalized implosion of the social and to a retreat from participating in public spheres - created instead for the first time the possibility of a radically political conception of society."⁶¹ The postmodern influence, then, liberates politics, it does not eliminate it. This liberation can only take place if "community" is reconstructed so as politics, the business of democratic activity, is made possible.

"The collapse of community in modern society has posed serious difficulties for the healthy functioning of public life and politics."⁶² John Friedmann in Planning in the Public Domain talks about the recovery of political community as a guiding vision. This vision is a shift "of power accumulation in society from the vertical, which connects the domain of the corporate economy to the state, to the horizontal, which relates civil

society to political community...."⁶³ He supports the idea that growing crises makes an opportunity for broadly based social movement based on equity, enhanced critical thinking, delinking from dominant market system, self-reliance, and territorial sovereignty.⁶⁴ He writes:

We have been seduced into becoming secret accomplices in our own evisceration as active citizens. Two centuries after the battle cries of Liberty, Fraternity, and Justice, we remain as obedient as ever to a corporate state that is largely deaf to the genuine needs of people. And we have forfeited our identity as 'producers' who are collectively responsible for our lives.⁶⁵

The objective of recapturing political community according to Friedmann is an active public life, reversing the colonization of capitalism.

Harold Chorney states in Imperialism, Nationalism and Canada that the radical tradition in Canada has been restricted to economic analysis:

[T]here has been little attention paid to the politics of everyday experience...The approach has been and continues to be highly economistic, in that what is seen as essential are the economic concreta of the situation.⁶⁶

Support for a political position favouring bottom-up strategies that incorporate both economic and social goals and that maintain a commitment to social equity is imperative to preventing deterioration of quality of life in Canada. The question of course, is what would such a political position entail.

Social Democracy Defined

Ed Broadbent writes in the introduction to Debating Canada's Future: Views From the Left:

It is clear that the next general line of expansion of the capacity of

men and women to control their destiny (required by both socialism and democracy) should include an effective say - direct, or indirect through delegation - in the remaining key prerogative of management: control of major new investment decisions.⁶⁷

A starting point for this new direction can be found in Milner and Milne's distinction between democratic socialism and social democracy.

Democratic Socialism sees government ownership of industry as the means of establishing an equitable distribution of wealth. Democratic socialists oppose such things as consumption taxes and end up in opposition to environmentally friendly policy because of negative impact on existing jobs. Full employment is viewed as a right with no corresponding responsibilities. The legacy of Marxism is oppositional thinking. Cooperation is seen a cooptation.

Social Democracy, on the other hand, is more concerned with democratic structures and procedures that promote equity. "Because of its concern that individual choices complement rather than contradict policy decisions, social democratic political economy accepts the need for a profound political consensus underlying policy".⁶⁸ A difficulty here, however, is that this consensus is based on continued economic growth, without which "political support for redistribution will be eroded."⁶⁹ The market economy in the worldview of a social democrat is not an evil, but a useful tool. So, the capitalistic focus of CED is not a violation of Canadian socialist principles, unless it enters the realm of expensive necessities like health care and education. Milner and Milne state that the Canadian Left has avoided any serious debate about socialism and the differences between democratic socialism and social democracy.

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Another problem is that left-wing economists support subsidies for both cooperative and private industry. This protects enterprise that maybe should not continue and which is dysfunctional in the current global economic climate. With regard to the previous discussion in this paper about the importance of regional cultural activity, it can be added that the leftist cultural nationalist position has produced a central Canadian bias, so as regional activity appears to be in opposition to national goals. Both nationalism and vehicles for the pursuit of social equity can be redefined while maintaining their spirit and purpose.

The Third Sector

Jack Quarter, in Canada's Social Economy, discusses the third sector of the economy, which is made of mutual-interest associations, co-operatives and non-profit groups. This largely ignored sector of the economy accounts for nearly one-third of Canada's national income and employs more people than "all levels of government."⁷⁰ Quarter traces the demise of co-cooperativism within the Canadian left; a split occurring with the CCF's Regina Manifesto in 1933 which defined social ownership as government ownership. Canada's co-operatives have their roots in "rural traditions of mutual aid"⁷¹. Canada's social economy, this third sector, has developed independently of political affiliation. Because it has developed quietly and unaided, the success of Canada's third sector is a well kept secret, and as such it is shut out of the discourse on economic development.

Quarter defines "social ownership" as independent of government and as an extension of democracy into the domain of the economy, a theme pursued by Carol Gould in Rethinking Democracy and by Griffin and Falk in Postmodern Politics for a Planet in Crisis. This apolitical approach to community development is pervasive in the literature and in practice, and is a serious flaw in the movement. It does not allow for a way to successfully compete for resources and capital or to apply pressure on policy makers and public officials to support this alternative vision of economic organization. Without an infrastructure, created by government policy, that is supportive of community-level development, its success is unlikely. Furthermore, an aversion of the political process is not a suitable atmosphere in which to recapture political community, a prerequisite for increased democratic activity.

An Innisian Analysis

Political economist and communication theorist Harold Innis has a place in this discussion because it was his intention to seek the middle ground, the place conducive to a stable society.

Innis always eschewed the dramatic polarities of tragedy and utopia, or, what is the same, the veneration of either 'margin' or 'centre', in favour of focussing his efforts on the development of a strategy of survival, first for Canada and then for western civilization as a whole. He was a writer who translated the Canadian preference for 'staying alive' into a general therapeutic for the arc of contemporary societies.⁷²

To continue Innis' argument, Canada is in the position to define a

ecologically sustainable, decentralized, model of development by virtue of our position both outside and inside of the multinational technological corporate culture. Innis pleads for balance and is "the mediation in the Canadian mind of the perspectives of technological dependency (Grant) and technological humanism (McLuhan). Innis stands midway between the tragic perspective of George Grant and the utopian imagination of Marshall McLuhan."⁷³

Innis's logic is that of a tension between centre and margin, time and space. It is what Kroker refers to as a dialectic, and Vincent de Norcia suggests is, instead, an oscillation because there is no synthesis. Innis was concerned with the stability of society "Innis, like Grant, always invoked a sense of historical remembrance. As the necessary counterpoint to the nihilism of the modern century."⁷⁴ Innis' insistence on balancing what he termed 'space' and 'time' is a balancing of "community" and "politics"; decentralization and centralization. Canada's dependency, asserted Innis, was facilitated by government economic planning expressing a "spatial" bias; centralized control facilitated by technologies.

For Innis, the significance of government intervention in economic planning lay directly in its spatial bias: the Canadian state was a (political) corrective to the 'time bias' of the landscape; it facilitated the development of 'transportation' (Canadian Pacific Railway and the CNR) and 'utilities' (Ontario Hydro) as a way of 'offsetting' the bias inherent, both in a dependent economy and in a 'discontinuous' landscape.⁷⁵

Innis' communication theory demonstrates how empire (first British then American) and technology have conspired to eliminate contact among people on a local basis.

Innis' aversion to centralized authority concurs with poststructuralism. He recognized that scholarship was not produced in a historical and cultural vacuum but reflects the hopes and aspirations of national cultures. American and British scholarship was based, he thought, on a conceit: it pretended to discover Universal Truth, to proclaim Universal Laws and to describe a Universal Man. Upon inspection it appeared, however, its Universal Man resembled a type found around Cambridge, Massachusetts, or Cambridge, England; its Universal Laws resembled those felt to be useful by Congress and Parliament; and its Universal Truth bore English and American accents.⁷⁶

Using Innisian analysis, a critique of political economy from the perspective of localized development and organization, becomes a critique of dependence on corporate capitalism. This is a departure from the two dominant historical positions of critique, nationalism and continentalism. Such a position is an attack on hegemony; it is in opposition to global capitalism. It therefore cannot escape being political. Heather Menzies writes in FastForward:

struggling to preserve democratic choice and diversity in the design and application of technology, to thus ensure that the post-industrial information society is inclusive and broadly participative, means struggling to preserve some way of knowing, some medium giving tongue to some message that is outside the techno-economic mind-set.⁷⁷

Harold Innis, although a staunch nationalist, was opposed to monopoly and centralized bureaucratic control based on economism. Any analysis based on Innis has an integrated, interdisciplinary, cause and effect focus that demonstrates both the inadequacies of specialization and the existence of bias. His work provides an analysis that gives optimism to contemplation of current economic, political, and social crises: he advocated balance,

distrusted specialization, had an aversion to monopoly, recognized the existence of bias and understood the concept of limits. He asserted that structure dictates values and that a value system biasing either "time" or "space" is flawed in terms of durability and in terms of providing sufficient quality of life for the members of that society. The bias of economic structure displays a space bias that is not sustainable. In the Innisian tradition, what is being called for is a "A Plea for Time".

Innis's legacy provides a view of Canadian Economic development that has never been accepted by the nation builders and the myth makers. Innis saw Canada as the creation of private enterprise (CPR) and federal tariff and railway rate policy. His staple approach denies the stages theory of export-led development (of agriculture to trade in staples to a manufacturing economy) and leads instead to the staples trap, a perpetuation of regional disparity and marginality.

His margin-hinterland analysis places Canada on the margin of western civilization, as a producer of raw materials for centre countries, the by-product of empires that control the price system, trade, investment, and monetary policy . Second order centres are created to facilitate foreign interests and in turn perpetuate hinterlands within Canada. Innis saw the social inequities that resulted from the rigidities of Canada's regional economy based on corporate concentration and centralized policy, and recognized that the benefits of capitalism were threatened by the development of monopolies.

Innis's political economy in his later work was redefined as power in social terms, giving precedence to no particular factor, neither economics nor technology.⁵⁵ "Innis rejected Marxism. Canadian socialism, statism and market theory."⁵⁶ Economic analysis whether based on the mode of production as in Marxist theory, or on markets as in Capitalist theory, Innis asserted, fails in its narrowness.

He developed the Cyclical model of culture based on communication technology. He linked knowledge with power, and the maintenance of power with a monopoly of knowledge. Communications medium facilitate either a monopoly of, or a diffusion of, knowledge; both reflecting and changing the power structure. To Innis "There is no Hegelian dialectic; Innisian cyclonics oscillate without resolution".⁵⁷ Innis' own brand of determinism, that structure determines values and values, by being biased, cry out to be challenged by alternative views from the margins, suggests that marginal classes, hinterland regions and knowledge itself has the potential to transcend bias and resist the dominant monopoly of knowledge.⁵⁸ This is not a deterministic, closed model, but an open and dynamic one, and one that lends legitimacy to the notion that previously marginalized CED can evolve into a national strategy for development .

Innis favoured the group over the individual, and systems and technology that favoured balance. This sentiment is displayed in the appearance of material favouring a democratic renewal that promotes individual participation, responsibility, efficacy, legitimacy for policy and regulation, equity, and autonomy.

From the work of Innis we learn of the importance of values. We learn that it is important to look for bias and consider its effect. His view of economics is important to this analysis in examining the co-option of community-level development by supply-side economics and right of centre ideology. Innis's critique offers a framework to discuss structures, values, the evaluation of bias, and the concept of rootedness (time). Leslie Armour in The Idea of Canada and the Crisis of Community says that "Innis best illustrates the attempt to find a new base. He wanted knowledge of values...Innis came to think that our values were apt to be chosen for us in the course of other choices."⁵⁹

The assumptions of modernity have denigrated community, the local, "home", and restricts our ability to develop new models that would give us the tools to face global ecological, political, and social crises. "[T]he problem of values is then not how to choose amongst propositions but how to envision social structures within which one or another range of values might arise."⁶⁰

Daniel Kemmis in Community and the Politics of Place talks about the individual liberty/planning and regulation dichotomy. Cooperation, he asserts is a third, largely ignored alternative. Although his discussion is in a U.S. context it is instructive for Canada as well. Community and economic development is easily blocked because of opposing interests who can find no middle ground, leading to frustration and a climate that blocks new initiatives. The anglo-saxon legal tradition does not allow for direct dealing between individuals in conflict. The result is polarization in

public pursuits. By depending on "due process", says Kemmis, we block each other. Values are considered private; public decisions are assumed to be on objective, rational criteria and not on values. He asserts that to accomplish anything, shared communal values are a prerequisite. Common ground can be cultivated if policy and structure permit it.

So, in order to build a model for community development and resource management there has to be both systemic and value change; the local and the regional, "home" and community, must be revalued. Policy has to be structured so as not to inhibit development at this level in favour of the global and the national. There must be education that promotes critical thinking, cooperation, participatory research, a development of institutions favourable to these values.

In discussing the history of regional planning, Donald Savoie in New Brunswick in The Year 2000 says:

there is no panacea for development. If federal government funding alone would solve the region's economic woes, we would undoubtedly have made more progress than we actually did. Second, there is now a realization in New Brunswick, as in the other provinces, that self-sustaining economic development cannot be imported.⁷⁸

Savoie observes that a post-keynesian philosophy will redefine the role of government just as the Keynesian philosophy did in the post-war era.⁷⁹ He recognizes that globalization is forcing this redefinition, and asserts that free trade has established the private sector as the engine of growth for the future.

In order to pursue social equity "the private sector" can include increased social ownership, building on Canada's tradition of a non-partisan third sector, and on a new radical definition of social ownership as cooperative ownership. This ownership pattern would reclaim a pursuit of the common good. It is the opinion of Ursula Franklin that "Technology has changed this notion about the obligations of governments to citizens."⁸⁰

Transportation and distribution systems "link the so-called private spheres of industry and commerce to the public spheres of local and central governments."⁸¹

The public infrastructures that made the development and spread of technology possible have become more and more frequently roads to divisible benefits. Thus the public purse has provided the wherewithal from which the private sector derives the divisible benefits, while at the same time the realm from which the indivisible benefits are derived has deteriorated and often remains unprotected.⁸²

The existing economy is one in which there is wealth creation without job creation. Continuation of this trend will produce greater numbers of marginalized individuals. Deficit cutting assures that income redistribution to the marginalized will be reduced. "The curse of high and growing joblessness in the face of a multitude of unmet needs is, of course, a long standing problem for the third world".⁸³ As Canada continues to pursue a development strategy based solely on a formal economy, increasing negative social linkages can be expected. The values under which the global agenda operates, cripple community and hinder development, yet at the same time economic and social change forced by restructuring produce an opportunity to create different ways of doing things and different ways of thinking.

Management frameworks forged in the international arena reduce local autonomy and are expensive in both monetary and social terms, as they focus on maximum short-term yield. The strategies needed for successful CED are long term. Change will not be pursued unless support for CED becomes a political issue, and failure to act becomes a political liability. Social ownership is part of the newly defined political position and to further explore the feasibility of this idea the following chapter will look at Canada's (English Canada's) early experience with cooperativism. By doing so reasons for success and for failure can be identified, and used in designing future ventures that are successful.

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Chapter 4

Co-operation and CED

Bruyn, in Beyond the Market and the State, using Karl Polanyi's The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time as a bases for analysis, states that "If the oppressive conditions of feudalism led to a quest for freedom and individuality, the conditions of capitalism led to a quest for community and social justice."¹ His conclusion is that Capitalism combined with structures of accountability and democratization will create social responsibility. Community economic development, operationalized in terms of community development corporations, according to Bruyn, alters Polanyi's three key economic institutions: land, labour and capital. A community development corporation is, then, a new incarnation of the cooperative spirit.

The Canadian left, as already noted, has equated public ownership with state ownership and has failed to develop a concept of public ownership based on community and social ownership. While such a tradition exists in Canada, it has been simply left out of the discourse of economic development. Rediscovering this history is a place to begin to build a

cooperativism for the future.

Nor is the left alone in its failure to recognize the value of community cooperation. Industrialization and the values it has fostered has also down played cooperation. Ursula Franklin points out that ""Robert Owen's road of cooperation and profit-sharing was not taken."2 To sum up the values she quotes Lewis Mumford who in 1944 wrote in *The Condition of Man* :

Between the 13th and the 19th century, one may sum up the changes in the moral climate by saying that the seven deadly sins became the seven cardinal virtues. Avarice ceased to be a sin. The minute attention to the care of worldly goods, the hoarding of pennies, the unwillingness to spend one's surplus on others, all these habits were useful for capital saving. Greed, gluttony, avarice, envy, and luxury were constant incentives to industry.³

It is the opinion of many writers on cooperation that empathy and compassion are just as fundamental to human nature as aggression and competition. It is simply that these are not the values being promoted by social structures. There is an assumption that Thomas Hobbes was correct in his assertion that "cooperation could not develop without a central authority".⁴ Robert Axelrod in the *Evolution of Cooperation* observes that cooperation emerges and develops gradually and is based on reciprocity. However, Hobbes assertion of life as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" in the absence of central authority proves accurate "when the pursuit of self-interest by each leads to a poor outcome for all."⁵ Axelrod discusses the "Prisoner's Dilemma" game to illustrate when cooperation is likely.

In the Prisoner's Dilemma game, there are two players. Each must make the choice without knowing what the other will do. No matter

what the other does, defection yields a higher payoff than cooperation. The dilemma is that if both defect, both do worse than if both had cooperated.⁶

This demonstrates that as long as there is no incentive and no ongoing relationship cooperation is not assured. Axelrod's conclusion is that "under suitable conditions, cooperation can indeed emerge in a world of egoists without central authority."⁷ The key is on-going interaction. The importance of local-level development and organization, then, cannot be over emphasized. "The evolution of cooperation requires that individuals have a sufficiently large chance to meet again so that they have a stake in their future interaction."⁸

History of Co-operatives in Canada

The co-operative movement in Canada emerged in the wake of the first industrial Revolution "a pragmatic response by groups simultaneously threatened and given new opportunities by the economic and social changes of the age."⁹ This was a time not unlike the present in which technological change was providing opportunities for some and marginalizing others. The motivation was mutual economic gain. In the beginning the organizations held great promise, but repeatedly failed.

These organizations had short lives, victims of inadequate management, transient patterns of work, the hostility of wholesalers, and labor disruptions. Labor leaders were more concerned about wages, hours, and politics than they were about ownership.¹⁰

There were several reasons that can be suggested for failed co-operative efforts. The above reference to lack of interest by labour in the issue of ownership is one. Another is the scattered efforts without coordination,

support or cooperation among co-operatives. The same mistakes were repeated over and over without any effort to systematically analyze failures.

there was an array of co-operative enterprises emerging out of local situations, immigration patterns, and group interests. Co-operative initiatives were nearly always subordinate to some other program of economic interest or social activism.¹¹

The early part of the twentieth century brought increased activity in consumer cooperatives. However these stores "were victims of bad management, inexperienced directors, vacillating economic conditions, antagonistic wholesalers, and transient members."¹² Worker co-ops met a similar fate with "managerial problems, undercapitalization, competition, and workplace tension".¹³ It was at this time that the "co-operative commonwealth" concept was developed within the Canadian co-operative movement, a notion existing in co-operative, anarchist, and socialist thought outside Canada since the later 19th century.

This concept envisioned the creation of a society in which all basic economic institutions would be co-operative, with a rough equality in incomes and living standards, and production determined by use, not profit. But there was a question whether the basis of equality- and therefore the fundamental co-operative institutions-would be consumer, banking, or producer co-operatives.¹⁴

The English Canadian co-operative movement became divided into three strategies. The first was locally focused, opposed to centralized institutions; the second wanted large-scale, centralized organizations; and the third involved political activism and reform. The parallels with the movement of community economic development are numerous.

It is interesting that conventional wisdom sees co-operativism and social

democracy as connected. The reality is that while "most social democrats supported co-operatives, only a few co-operators - most of them on the Prairies - supported social democracy."¹⁵ Co-operators were first and foremost capitalists seeking to maximize profit. Pursuing political goals was seen as failure to serve pragmatic concerns. Efforts by the CCF in Saskatchewan to promote co-operative initiatives was seen as coercive, and rebuffed. For those in the movement who saw co-operative organization as the means for social reform, social changes proved "The quest for an alternative to capitalism and state socialism seemed out of place and beyond belief."¹⁶

The Canadian co-operative movement lost much of its ideological edge in the late 1940's and the 1950's. The agrarians and Marxists were out, utopians and social democrats were declining, the religious activists lost their momentum, and the 'co-operative sector' provided direction without passion. As Canadian society became less ideological and more materialistic, the Canadian co-operative movement became more cautious and less controversial.¹⁷

The CED movement has much to learn from the difficulties of the co-operative movement. Even more than that, recent social, economic, and political changes provide the impetus to resurrect co-operativism as the basis for successful CED. The globalization currently being experienced is a pendulum swing in a two century long oscillation between freer trade and protectionism. Market driven change further marginalizes those who are already short on autonomy.

It is globalization that creates the need, which in turn creates and sustains co-operatives - the need to combine the capital and spending power of many, in order to survive or shape social-economic change. Communities learn to co-operate precisely because they are challenged by the forces of the international market.

Co-operative activity, then, is a means for the margins to interact with the centre; a way to participate in the economy that otherwise would be denied them.

In the midst of the social turmoil of the nineteenth century arose the first modern co-operatives, which were both a reaction against the negative effects of the international market economy and a means for modernization and adaptation to that economy. Their purpose was to reassert community, to reassert human needs, against the impersonal, international, and corrosive side effects of the self-regulating market.¹⁸

The early part of this century saw the rise of many reform movements of which cooperativism was one. While its roots were in the nineteenth century, by 1900 the movement had four established characteristics: "one man, one vote"; "neutrality in religious, racial, and political matters"; "the idea that investments should receive a low, fixed return rather than speculative profit"; and "the idea that surplus earnings should be distributed on the basis of participation".¹⁹ It was also based on principles of moral social reform.

They believed, in fact, that co-operation was vital in the essentially moral struggles they saw in the world around them. In particular, they hoped co-operation would help overcome the separation of religion from business life, the decline of the family as an institution, the alienation of man from nature, and the dwindling sense of community. In their desire to offset these threats to the moral order and to present a new holistic view of man, the co-operators were influenced by the cresting social gospel, in both its Protestant and Catholic manifestations. They were also influenced by a cooperative concern for moral questions that went back to such nineteenth-century leaders as Robert Owen, Edward Vansittart Neale, J.G. Holyoake, and Frederick Raiffeisen."²⁰

Here too, are parallels with contemporary community development

practice and theory. While nineteenth-century theorists are absent from the discourse, a new-age incarnation of similar ideas is prominent.

The Canadian movement did not take place in isolation, but was heavily influenced by the international activity. Indeed many of its leaders were immigrants experienced in cooperative activities elsewhere. This influence, however, was not always helpful, as the international movement did not have clear goals and was divided by ideology. The Canadian movement shunned ideology and was interested only in finding practical solutions to needs.

The Canadian co-operators were part of a general nineteenth- and twentieth-century reaction against indulgent individualism, classical economic theory, and Social Darwinism...they envisioned an order in which consumers and workers would have a voice at least equal to that of management, and each of the three would be more powerful than capital.²¹

Because of these radical democratic goals, cooperativism and socialism have been linked in popular perception. However, the reality is that Canadian cooperativism and Canadian socialism developed independently of each other, with the cooperative movement rejecting overtures from the fledgling CCF to support their efforts. "This separatism, in retrospect, was ironic because many uninformed Canadians thought the two movements were closely intertwined and that notion definitely restricted development of the co-operative cause."²² A federal profile was never established and in spite of large scale activity and some success, the whole concept has been marginalized and its profile reduced in Canadian history.

...co-operativism's distrust of state action differentiated it from socialism. Both ideologies were collectivist in approach; both opposed capitalism, at least in its most developed forms; and both advocated the principles of production for use and fair treatment for labour. Though in the short term the two were not incompatible, their approaches were quite different and they did not coalesce...both movements generally proceeded along separate paths in the early years of the century, and, by the twenties, when some socialists became very interested, they found most Canadian co-operators jealously protective of their political neutrality.²³

This apolitical stance did not succeed in distancing co-operativists from the radical nature of their activities and principles. Rather, it blocked avenues to gain structural support, to develop coherent goals, and inhibited stability of a political framework. Participation within existing political frameworks was mistakenly assumed to be the only option. While there were individuals who advocated the reform of the process itself, their opinions were not endorsed by the movement as a whole. The experiences of the progressive movement reinforced the idea that political action was not a productive activity.

In Stephen Yeo's New Views of Co-Operation a discussion of the difference between cooperativism and labour politics in Britain sheds some light on the differences between Canadian social democracy and cooperativism. In his definitions labour is collective, co-operativism is associative. Paddy Maguire maintains that the political neutrality position that was inherited from the nineteenth century was misinterpreted.

There was a famous phrase within the movement, taken from William Maxwell of the Scottish Co-operative Wholesale Society, that the ambition of Co-operators was 'to bring co-operation into politics and not politics into co-operation.' This would have been radical indeed, and has been a political line with such a small 'p'

that it has been almost completely buried. The main inheritance from the nineteenth-century co-operative movement was (could have been) a living critique of dominant forms of Politics from a working-class point of view, through the federated practice of Co-operation. During the nineteenth century 'political neutrality' was not what many co-operative politicians in the twentieth century have supposed it to be. They have argued against it from within the Co-operative Party, Labour Party, or Communist Party as if it was neutrality from all forms of politics, rather than the critique of their own party forms which was latent (occasionally manifest) within it. 'Political neutrality' was not invented by the Rochdale Pioneers so that they might be left alone to become respectable grocers. It was worked out, in part during the Congresses of 1829-33, as a critique, by working people, of reformism. It was a critique of those who thought either that suffrage reform would solve working-class problems in capitalism, or that instant Community (based upon anti-religious conformity) was the answer (enunciated by prophets like Owen), which would transcend the messy business of producing and consuming necessities.²⁴

The separation of politics and cooperative activity remains entrenched.

The attitude of contemporary CED activists are heard in George Holyoake's words, spoken sometime between 1909 and 1918:

Cooperation supplements political economy by organizing the fair distribution of wealth. It touches no man's fortune; it seeks no plunder, it causes no disturbance in society, it gives no trouble to statesmen, it enters into no secret associations. It contemplates no violence, it subverts no order, it envies no dignity, it asks no favor, it keeps no terms with the idle, and it will break no faith with the industrious: it means self-help, self-dependence, and such share of the common competence as labour shall earn or thought can win, and this it intends to have."²⁵

All noble thoughts, but the reality is that such activity is subversive and any success is unlikely to be tolerated, and certainly will not be encouraged. Socialists and revolutionaries ignored cooperativism, but the government did not. For example, in Britain, at the height of consumer

cooperative activity in the early part of the century the government was discussing legislation to limit its activity. The success of co-operativism prompted private retailers to lobby against it. The government feared loss of revenue as co-operative enterprises were non-taxable and the upper classes feared the working class solidarity it promoted. Food shortages became a big issue during the war and links to unions grew. The co-ops were none-profit and were the grocers of the working class. Labour unrest of 1919-20 prompted the government to seek legislation that would prevent co-ops from feeding strikers. The government sought to control cooperatives by taxing them the same as for profit enterprises. The political response that this attack necessitated split the movement with individuals siding either for or against the labour party because they had no vehicle of their own.²⁶ Neil Killingback insists that concerns about the dangers of co-operativism continued in the inter-war period and capitalist definitions of economic activity were imposed, ending any further development. Co-operative societies, asserts Killingback "did not decline spontaneously because they were inherently less efficient than capitalist forms".²⁷ Rather, "Mutual trading...was acceptable only when it operated on a small scale at the margins of the economy."²⁸ The lesson is that politics will always be brought into cooperativism, the activity is political because it is about power. Denying its political nature predestines defeat.

Yet advocates of contemporary cooperativism retain the same stance.

Brett Fairbairn in Co-operatives & Community Development states:

This book is an argument that there is one general kind of co-op niche and that economic theory, history, marketing, and institutional

structure all suggest the same answer. Cooperatives were created because of needs that were left unmet both by the centralized state, and by the market. These unmet needs gave them their niche, and similar needs will give them their niche in the future. The role for the successful co-operatives in the twenty-first century will be related somehow to the reasons that cooperatives arose in the first place.²⁹

Rather than supplement political economy, CED should be considered as a alternative organizing principle of political economy. For as a supplement, it will be continually blocked and thwarted by systemic rigidities, vested interests, and monopolies of knowledge.

Co-operative Organization and CED

Levi and Litwin posit a theoretical model relating community development and cooperative organization in which "community and cooperatives...are seen as complementary components of a participatory development process."³⁰ Together, the community and the co-operative, are complimentary because in interacting they overcome community development's dilemma between process orientation and task accomplishment, and cooperation's dilemma between structural change and service delivery.³¹ Participation and goal orientation are both maximized by the combination.

The only Community Development project in Canada that has produced a political analysis is Co-op Atlantic. The analysis produced by this organization shows the convergence of cooperativism and CED as a new basis for political economy. The governing assembly of Co-op Atlantic recently adopted a far-reaching program of development to be built upon local councils of co-operating co-ops...An explicit aim of this program is to strengthen local economies, especially by linking local

co-ops in a mutually supportive system which in turn is linked to the co-op system throughout the region. This mechanism is expected to help local co-ops, their communities, and the regional co-op system respond effectively to the new trends and conditions of a global economy. The initiative stresses...a particular social structure (the cooperative organization) and its democratic ideology as a tool for building local economies. The individual localities are the community base for the co-op councils, but the structures through which a locality exercises its interests are the local co-ops which individually or collectively in the council pursue a variety of social as well as economic objectives.³²

Resulting from a 1990 initiative in CED the organization has come to include a mission

to develop new co-operatives in all sectors of economic life and generally to strengthen the co-operative network 'to counter the erosion of our democratic society.' This initiative stands as the only, or at least the most significant Canadian CED initiative to be adopted in the course of a systematic economic and political analysis, rather than simply as an ad hoc effort in community-based economic development.³³ (76)

This direction began when the board members of Co-op Atlantic commissioned a study on the effects of free trade on the co-op system.

Out of their discussions and the study evolved a broad perspective on the current state of the Canadian political economy. The Canadian welfare state was seen as a dependency pattern which had actually undermined the self-reliance of co-operatives and their self-help philosophy...However, this welfare state was itself being undermined by national and global economic processes that were likely to leave vulnerable all but the most privileged. The co-ops themselves would suffer and eventually even disappear in competition with the multinational corporate system.³⁴

Resolutions opposing free trade and the GST were passed. In 1991 a resolution was to be presented at the annual general meeting: Resolution 11 "A Proposal for Renewal".

This resolution outlined a series of economic threats: globalization;

the North American free trade treaties; corporate mergers leading to multinational control of the whole process of production, distribution, and sale of goods and services; government decisions for privatization, tax policies, and deregulation; and the high interest rates set by the Bank of Canada.

All these were seen as posing a severe challenge to the co-op movement, based as it is on local economies and local democracy. The analysis placed considerable emphasis upon the problem of dependency in the Atlantic Region. All this led, the committee argued, toward the need for a new effort specifically to promote the co-operative approach to the Canadian economy, at least in the Atlantic region at first.³⁵

Criticism received by the general membership represents the historical apolitical stance of co-operativists. The committee's ideas were seen as too academic, not "appropriate for a grassroots discussion process", too political, accused of being 'thinly disguised Marxism'³⁶. The position expressed by some members was "that Co-op Atlantic should not accept a mandate to 'solve the problems of the world economy'".³⁷

However, resolution 11 was passed and their mission statement came to include the goal to 'extend co-operative values to all parts and sectors of our society and economy through the creation of an interdependent network of co-operative enterprises whose operations gain their vitality and business strength through the innovative application of co-operative values and principles.'³⁸

The fact that this resolution was passed by the general membership shows a departure from the historical norm of apoliticism, and optimism that such a departure is the beginning of a trend. "The context for the action included, nationwide, a rapid growth over the 1980's of emerging co-ops, especially worker co-ops, and a rebuilding of regional and national co-operative federations in that same period."³⁹

Co-op Atlantic adopted six objectives and strategies that would facilitate the realization of the new orientation:

1. Promoting integrated co-op development;
2. Facilitating new and growing co-ops;
3. Emphasizing capital formation;
4. Strengthening stakeholder control;
5. Taking responsibility for environmental impacts;
6. Promoting co-operativism internally.⁴⁰

However, Perry and Lewis point out several reasons not to be optimistic about Co-op Atlantic's aspirations. One is the lack of participatory democratic structures within cooperativism, a necessary development if the analysis is to become reality.

a structure for worker participation and voting in the consumer and producer co-ops of the Atlantic region seems a long way off. The notion of a 'stakeholder co-op' in which employees, consumers, and producers are all voting members has not been popular in the co-op world in Canada or abroad...a change in the internal culture to emphasize empowerment and participation at all levels is required before any structural changes can take place.⁴¹

Another problem is that availability of start-up capital is no guarantee of co-op formation, funds are currently underutilized; "beginning co-ops need assistance far beyond capital...only aggressive efforts to help groups develop their co-ops will ever make heavy demands upon any available capital."⁴² Education in co-op principles is necessary. This is being tackled by the francophone sector of Co-op Atlantic who are taking their message into schools. On the other hand, expansion of larger existing co-ops cannot be served by available financial resources.

Another difficulty in CED and co-operatives, point out Perry and Lewis, is the absence of decision-making mechanisms for grassroots organizations,

a challenge to "practitioners and government policy-makers alike."⁴³ This is a deficiency from which amelioration can be sought through the field of conflict resolution, which will be discussed later.

The very important conclusion of Perry and Lewis underlines the need for supportive infrastructure and policy from government.

Looking at all these potential challenges leads to the conclusion that the ambitious renewal initiative undertaken by Co-op Atlantic currently lacks a strategic infrastructure of essential supportive activities. These will be crucial in order to deal with what the local councils need and, indeed, with what Co-op Atlantic itself will need for survival. The continuing lack of a support system could, in the end, be very dangerous, for it could lead to a pattern of local failures or inaction, and discredit the very daring and idealistic aims of Resolution 11.⁴⁴

Conflict Resolution and Organization

As well as supportive government policy, cooperative organizations must possess the means, intellectually and organizationally to deal with conflict. If conflict is not addressed efforts fail. Political realism, or power politics, long-time accepted mode of behaviour in our social, political, and economic organizations, explains conflict as the failure to exercise sufficient power. Idealists, on the other hand, had a

belief system based on a desire for cooperative relationships, but no theory that could explain conflict, still less justify alternative policies.

The result has been an alarming void: power politics has failed domestically and internationally, but no alternative has been articulated and applied as policy. This is the bankrupt state of civilization at the end of the twentieth century.⁴⁵

John Burton in "Conflict resolution as a political philosophy" asserts that

this void is finally being addressed within the academic discipline of conflict resolution, informed by behavioral theory which defines "justice, the social good, and democracy" as relating to "conditions that satisfy human needs of identity, recognition, and autonomy, all of which imply equity."⁴⁶ He goes on to say that rather than institutions socializing individuals to accommodate the institutions "the institutions must accommodate in a continuing way to certain inherent and universal human needs."⁴⁷

The emerging field of conflict resolution is crucial to the vision of localized development. Many failed CED projects are the result of an inability to creatively deal with conflict. The absence of a hierarchical top-down big stick approach leaves participants without a mechanism to deal with conflict. So rather than abandon the idea of small scale local development as dysfunctional, finding a different way of dealing with conflict is an option. This field of inquiry also bridges the gap between theory and practice. It provides ideas with strategies and organization principles to carry them through. Conflict resolution theory and the values on which it is based, "harmony ideology",⁴⁸ is an important component in seeking strategies to combat the inadequacies, often enumerated in the literature, of a bottom up approach to development and economic organization.

There is a good deal of literature on management and organizational development that, although aimed at community defined by corporate enterprise, deserves attention for its applicability to differently

motivated organizations. As pointed out earlier, a failure of cooperativism was bad management and organization deficiencies. Therefore, successful CED requires an understanding of good organizational principles. Peter Senge, author of The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization says there are common factors found in teams within organizations that work "extraordinarily". A community development group could be compared to a corporate "team". The common factors articulated by Senge are that "[t]hey had a vision. They wanted to create something bigger than themselves. They cared for one another. They focused on how all their jobs fit together."⁴⁹ In essence, a team is a "community". He emphasizes that teams are not born, they develop. They are what he terms a "learning organization". He goes on to say "We're developing the capacity of a community of people. We're creating an organization in which you cannot *not* learn because learning is so insinuated into the fabric of its life."⁵⁰ So, to promote community on a geographic or social scale, community on an organizational scale might be a good place to start. The best learning to start with is training in conflict resolution principles and strategies.

Much rhetoric about community, as has already been discussed, promotes values that are not widely accepted or even desirable, such as homogeneity and primacy of the group. There are two assumptions that need to be made when attempting to develop culturally appropriate and desirable models of both community development, and conflict resolution. We live in a heterogeneous society with a belief in the primacy of the individual. Attempting to institute models drawn from another place or

time that do not begin with these assumptions is to predestine failure.

Precapitalist legal informalism is embedded in and contingent upon a social structure in which: relationships are multiplex and continuous, the supporters of one disputant are bound to the other by crosscutting ties, there is little residential mobility, and reputation in the face-to-face community is highly valued and easily lost in the absence of privacy.⁵¹

A community, in North American culture, is a collection of individuals free to practice "avoidance" and "withdrawal" when faced with conflict. This makes community projects particularly difficult because they are largely voluntary. If conflict develops, the effort is abandoned. Therefore, we must create organizational conflict resolution mechanisms that fit North American society. Due to a scarcity of intimacy and interdependence in our communities it would seem to indicate that a formalized structure for conflict resolution process is required. The question arises as to what values can unite a diverse society. The North American model of conflict resolution would suggest the values of mutual respect and "neutrality". These values have to be taught. Like cooperativism, education is a primary activity.

The position of neutrality leads to criticism about a lack of absolutes, the assertion that this postmodern community is anarchy. John Kekes in The Morality of Pluralism discusses this criticism, the thesis that our society is disintegrating.

We are continually challenged both externally by alien moralities and internally by noxious left- and right-wing extremism, cynicism, a spreading failure of nerve, and the terrible simplicities of fundamentalists of various persuasions. In the face of these challenges, we need to be able to justify our moral values if we are

to have an acceptable way of living together.⁵²

Moral conflicts he asserts "are indeed prevalent, but they betoken change, not disintegration. We are witnessing the new struggling to be born, not the death throes of the old."⁵³ Defenders of the disintegration thesis, says Kekes, are monistic. "Monism is the view that there is one and only one reasonable system of values."⁵⁴ All institutions and structures are created to ensure the survival of these values. Supporters of this position fear relativism, an absence of objective values and morality.

Kekes proposes a pluralist rather than a relativist moral vision:

'Principles are not less sacred because their duration cannot be guaranteed. Indeed, the very desire for guarantees that our values are eternal and secure in some objective heaven is perhaps only a craving for the certainties of childhood or the absolute values of our primitive past.' ⁵⁵

The difference between pluralism and relativism according to his argument is the existence of both primary and secondary values in the former. "Pluralists assert and relativists of all stripes deny that there are objective considerations by which conflicts among values could be reasonably settled."⁵⁶ He cites Clifford Geertz Local Knowledge in support of a central pluralistic idea: "as we increase our possibilities through moral imagination so we increase our freedom of thought and action and thus allow the plurality of values to play their deep creative role in human life."⁵⁷

Thus, the principle of "neutrality" in conflict resolution theory is a creative force and a necessary value in a pluralistic society. The

acquisition of the ability to experience "neutrality" is a basic skill that needs to be developed by anyone working in community development.

Stephen Covey writing in The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People talks about "Synergistic Communication"⁵⁸ and the creativity that is released when it is accomplished within a group. It is this creative impulse that goes beyond compromise and creates "win/win" situations. Covey points out that "Buddhism calls this the 'middle way'. Middle in this sense does not mean compromise; it means higher, like the apex of the triangle."⁵⁹

Many people have not really experienced even a moderate degree of synergy in their family life or in other interactions. They've been trained and scripted into defensive and protective communications or into believing that life or other people can't be trusted.⁶⁰

Covey also makes the important point that "The essence of synergy is to value differences."⁶¹ From such values can be created healthy interdependence, the basis for successful community, and for successful organization of community development projects. The adversarial process cannot be forsaken all together because there are instances where it is appropriate and necessary, however, it should not be the course of first resort, because it does not create synergistic processes.

Designing a community development plan is a process of negotiation among a group of people with ideas, and then between the group initiating the plan and the community. The project is doomed to failure unless it is in the best interests of the community as a whole and the creativity of the group has been maximized. The culturally conditioned approach is positional bargaining, based on win/lose thinking, first by members of the

group interacting with each other and secondly by the group with other positions. Power struggles erupt.

Behind "positions" are interests, the most powerful of which are basic human needs: security, economic well-being, a sense of belonging, recognition, and control over one's life.⁶² These are also the primary interests of building community. "As fundamental as they are, basic human needs are easy to overlook. In many negotiations, we tend to think that the only interest involved is money."⁶³ This has also been true of community development projects.

Fisher and Ury identify four major obstacles that inhibit the inventing of options: (1) premature judgment hindering imagination; (2) searching for the single answer leading to premature closure; (3) the assumption of a fixed pie viewing options as useless; and (4) thinking that 'solving their problem is their problem' leading to one-sided solutions.⁶⁴ "The key to wise decision-making...lies in selecting from a great number and variety of options."⁶⁵ Options, they elaborate, can be multiplied by utilizing four types of thinking: 1. focusing on a particular problem; 2. descriptive analysis; 3. considering what "ought" to be done; 4. devising "specific and feasible suggestions for action".⁶⁶

How then, can members of an organization in a community best facilitate effective conflict resolution based on the principles of neutrality and respect for individuality that promotes "Synergistic communication" and creativity. Van Slyck and Stern in their study of educational settings

state "...the evidence suggests that the acquisition and use of dispute resolution concepts and skills are the necessary components of achieving an impact."⁶⁷ The acquisition of skills by individuals in an organization or a community provides the tools necessary for successful conflict resolution, and therefore, for successful community projects. It is, then, a process of education rather than management, in support of the "personal growth" ideology as defined by Harrington and Merry in their definition of three "ideological projects" of community dispute resolution.⁶⁸

Deborah Kolb discovered "most conflict resolution activities in organizations take place outside formal channels."⁶⁹ Mediation works best when skills are widely dispersed because this role in organizations is not often valued or recognized. The legitimacy of the mediator is bound to his or her other connections and roles. A designated mediator would likely be ineffective because the role of "mediator" is itself without prestige or legitimacy. These conclusions would suggest that a group of people with a goal and an organization should embark on conflict resolution skills training as a prerequisite to the planning process. The project would then integrate conflict resolution techniques with policy development. By this process of education the group would develop a relationship, become capable of producing synergistic energy. They would, in effect, become a community.

The organization, or team, could then be in a position to collectively examine the larger community, determining what the situation is, how

people feel about the direction, what people want to do, and what can realistically be done. Options could be generated without premature commitment. This process could produce a development plan, like a negotiated agreement, that would be "fair, wise, efficient, and stable".⁷⁰

Ben Hoffman, in Conflict Power Persuasion: Negotiating Effectively, establishes seven elements of negotiation that can be applied to test the viability of a community development plan: *alternatives (BATNA)*, Does the community have better alternatives to what your plan offers?; *Interests*, Are the interests of the community served by your plan? who's interests will it conflict with?; *Objective Criteria (Legitimacy)*; Is your plan reasonable in terms of criteria the community will use to judge it?; *Options*, Has your plan been finalized only after considering all options?; *Communication*, Do you have the skills and the structures to communicate constructively with members of the community?; *Relationship*, Are the individuals involved worthy of respect and trust from the community?; *Commitment*, Is it possible for members of the community to support your endeavour?

Formal institution of dispute resolution processes is required for larger issues such as environmental disagreements and jurisdictional complications. The problem with institutionalizing dispute settlement systems is discussed by Brock and Cormick who point out that:

However unsatisfactory existing administrative and legal systems may be, they are familiar and there are those who have a strong vested interest in maintaining and replicating them. To change to a negotiation-based process requires an unusual confluence of circumstances.⁷¹

Based on a study of four cases Brock and Cormick set out eleven criteria that are necessary for the design and implementation of negotiation-based dispute settlement:

1. "sufficient disenchantment with the status quo to force otherwise disparate interests to consider the need for new approaches."
2. "both the direct and indirect interests must concur in the design and development of the new process."
3. "the interests must be represented by key leadership figures who can effectively and realistically represent their constituents and who can vouch for any system that is agreed upon."
4. "development takes time and requires flexibility."
5. "there is a need for a strong champion, with the stature to bring together the key actors and represent the effort to legislative and other affected interests...a strong and effective mediator can make a critical difference in negotiating a consensus"
6. "the process by which the dispute settlement system is developed should be dominated by principals...the system must be designed by those who will be using it if they are to have a commitment to making it successful."
7. the boundaries of the range of issues and parties to be addressed by the system must be adequately and sufficiently defined..."
8. "the process that is designed must recognize what is required to foster and conduct negotiations."
9. "the initial experience in implementing a new system will be critical."
10. "those considering the development systems should resist the temptation to import dispute settlement systems that have been successful elsewhere...or to use theory off the shelf."
11. "failed efforts can lay the substantive and relational groundwork for future success."⁷²

Their conclusion is that:

although we have identified factors that contribute to the institutionalization of negotiation and mediation, the confluence of such factors seems far less likely than many proponents may have realized. The lesson of our cases is that the institutionalized use of mediation and negotiation is a potentially beneficial public policy tool, but one not easily implemented.⁷³

The combining of policy development and conflict resolution studies is an important evolutionary step toward workable community development strategies. Such a development, however, is unlikely without a political framework that supports it.

Conflict resolution theory and practice has much to offer the development of organizational frameworks for community-level development: the necessity of a detached neutral stance; the principle of voluntary association (the process needs to be more beneficial to individuals than practicing aversion or withdrawal); the promotion of responsibility, ownership and empowerment inherent in finding solutions to one's own problems in a cooperative way; the basing of all activities on "principled negotiation" rather than positional bargaining releases creativity and promotes equity.

Seeking conflict resolution education for members of organizations would discourage the acceptability of hidden agendas and zero-sum thinking in intra-group activity. This education could serve to counter what Avery et. al. lists as attitudes that hamper consensus building and marginalize participants.

Attitudes which hamper consensus:

- Competition. When "in a group, competition is evidenced when members try to achieve their own goals at the expense of other members." It fosters distrust and inequality.
- Lack of interest in others. They think an individual's responsibility is confined to their own contribution of skills and ideas, and feel no responsibility toward solving anyone else's problems.

- Owning Ideas. Criticism and changes are personal affront.
- Suppressing Feeling and Conflict. "people are taught that conflict is dangerous and socially unacceptable."
- Relying on Authority. "Consensus decision making requires a high level of involvement and responsibility from all participants."
- Social Prejudices Reflected in Group Dynamics.⁷⁴

Of problems listed in the literature on community and bottom-up development, and found in the experiences of the early cooperative movement, the theory and practice of conflict resolution offers many insights, and very possibly, solutions. It may be possible to create economic development organizations that are based on what Ben Hoffman terms "win-win competitiveness" achieved with "new skills, new tools, new systems, and process".⁷⁵ The tools he identifies are conflict analysis, the skills are for conflict resolution, and the systems are for conflict prevention. This is a process based on consensus, rather than adversarial behaviour. The test for a project, an agreement, or a behaviour would be that it is "fair, wise, efficient, and stable". An education process needs to be integrated into developing organizations to give individuals the skills and process to pursue goals. It must be a "learning organization". The institution of a principled, negotiation-based planning process would be a radical planning process in political terms, and a productive one at the organizational level. The field of conflict resolution holds promise in terms of dealing with some of the difficulties faced in creating more democratic economic institutions.

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Conclusion

This project began as an interest in localized economic development that valued people, that was small scale, and that did not divide life into productive and non-productive activities as defined by the industrial paradigm. This search revealed a growing body of literature on community economic development. Initially it seemed that a marginal perspective would be maintained, the question being how to make individual CED efforts more successful. However, as my reading of the literature and personal experience grew, this notion of alternative marginal endeavours as viable options began to appear to be hopelessly naive, because the issues involved are about power. Power is political and leads to conflict. Conflict in CED enterprises leads to failure. Rather than abandon the idea and fall back on critiques that have lost much of their relevance, it seemed more productive to seek out alternative theoretical ideas that offered optimism.

Recognizing the existence of bias on my part about the idea of community, and basic values that I thought ought to be, I sought a better understanding of the roots of my own values in an examination of maritime writing.

Here I discovered a place to stand from which to view the ideals, and critique the illusions, of community theorists. Yet, from this "realist" perspective, community and economic development based on the idea of community, is not to be cast aside as misguided, or to be considered by definition to be right-wing. On the contrary, global realities dictate the urgency of this consideration of community as an organizing principle.

The search then turned to values and assumptions on which to base community and CED that accounts for what the marginal literature fails to acknowledge; the need for policy and infrastructure support, the lack of consideration of equity, and the existence of conflict. The answer seemed to be to develop a theoretical basis, a critical stance and philosophical basis, for the activity, thus moving the discourse of CED from the margins to the mainstream. Of the theorists writing in this field, Peter Boothroyd shows the most promise. It is his assertion that community development theory could eclipse regional planning theory in the future. This possibility offers a post-Keynesian political economy that values social equity and offers resistance to the dictates of global monopoly capital.

CED is a new incarnation of co-operativism. The pressures from international forces that are producing it are similar to those that spawned earlier co-operativism. CED is struggling with many of the same failings; lack of a national focus, lack of coordination, and widely varying ideological positions. The apolitical stance of co-operativism did not succeed in distancing it from the radical nature of its activities, and it is linked with Canadian socialism in popular perception and marginalized in

Canadian history and economics. Given that these flaws are repeated in the CED movement, its fate will be similar, at best. At worst the discourse will continue to be co-opted by a right-of-centre agenda which is simply anti-government and decentralist. CED, based on interest group activity, neo-conservative philosophy, and restrictive definitions of community poses serious problems for social equity.

A new co-operativism, based on the community development corporation, can evolve into a critique of the political process in its dominant form, power politics, and promote a decision-making process that seeks consensus. The theory discussed offers a basis for the creation of values that promote cooperative behaviour between individuals and between communities. Ownership becomes an issue, in a way that traditional left-of-centre positions have not represented in their adversarial top-down strategies. If CED activity remains a marginal activity, it is destined to fail more often than it succeeds because policy and infrastructure do not support it. It will be a loss if it is dismissed in policy circles as irrelevant, because of its potential as a post-Keynesian approach to national development that values social equity and is not mired in neo-conservatism.

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