In a rusted place:

Iron, steel, and the (re)creation of home in the American Rustbelt

By

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Abstract

When a stable community is created, both structurally and culturally, by a capitalist company as a site of labor for a particular industry, what happens to the social life of that place when the mobility of capital to that place ceases? Bringing historical political economy into conversation with theories of place identity formation, I interrogate: a) what historical actors and processes constructed the structures and cultures of industrial places in the late 19th and 20th centuries, b) how residents in iron and steel communities understand the rise and fall of their economic raison d'être, and c) how and why the past shapes long-term residents' conceptions of the future of their places. Drawing from archival, ethnographic, and interview data collected across two urban and rural communities of a former Midwestern steel commodity chain, I argue that the processes of capitalism not only take place, they make place. I contend that the political ecologies and economies established during the American industrial revolution continue to structure the landscapes and lived experiences of long-term residents in Chicago's urban steel neighborhood and Wisconsin's rural iron mining belt.

This project offers three contributions to environmental and economic sociology. First, this dissertation intervenes in the familiar tale of deindustrialization by interrogating the place of *place* in the globalization story. My data demonstrate how the historical commodification of nature by industrial firms shapes infrastructures and narratives of identity today. Second, I offer a clearer theorization of the stability of place in the face of mobility by exposing how and why people stay at home in environmentally fragile and economically precarious landscapes. Finally, integrating analysis of historical and contemporary data from communities at opposite ends of a commodity chain offers insight into the source of the stories that still shape entire regions' expectations for the future.

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Dedication

To the people of Iron County and southeast Chicago

And, to Josh

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Someone has to lose, said the stranger. That's economics. The question is—who loses? That's progress.

–Winifred Holtby, *South Riding,* 1936, p. 95.

People are attached to places as they are attached to families and friends. When these loyalties come together, one then has the most tenacious cement possible for human society.

– Lewis Mumford, *The City in History,* 1961, p. 287.

1.0. Introduction

The day after the 2016 presidential election, sociologists faced an "acute existential crisis," according to then-ASA president Michele Lamont. The election of Donald Trump to the presidency propelled overwhelmingly by the 'fly-over states' of the American Rust Belt, shocked many academics. Somehow, a group of people committed to identifying social roots and consequences of inequality, cultural change, and economic crisis underestimated the systemic frustration and political foment of long-term residents in the American Rust Belt (see Appendix A). This analytical crisis wasn't for lack of existing research on the transformation of the American industrial corridors into the Rust Belt. For decades, economists have articulated the wins and losses of the off-shoring of markets and nation-wide churning of jobs (Silver and Arrighi 2003; Birch 2015), of the declines of secure employment for blue-collar workers in the industrial sector (e.g. Kalleberg 2009; Paret 2016), and of the subsequent residential outmigration and prolonged economic depression in deindustrialized places (Pierce and Schott 2012; Krinsky 2007; Bauman 2011).

However, such attention to the flows of capital away from a declining Rust Belt leaves little space for analysis of people who still call these places home. This project explores the tensions between the stability of social life and the mobility of capital in the long durée of globalization—tensions brought into public dialogue during the 2016 presidential election, but, long before, responsible for deeply shaping landscapes and experiences of place. In this dissertation, I argue that to understand the identities of people who still live in the American Rust Belt, we must grasp how the historical flows of capital shaped landscapes and, to this day, continue to constrain and enable the lived experience of place even decades after those economic connections have ceased.

This dissertation intervenes in the familiar tale of deindustrialization by interrogating the place of *place* in the globalization story. My broader research trajectory is propelled by the puzzle of the stability of "place"—both as geographical location and marker of identity—in the midst of economic and social transformation. After all, even though global economic growth requires the mobility of capitalism, working-class people typically live in stable places. Bringing historical political economy into conversation with theories of place and identity formation, I ask: when a stable community is created, both structurally and culturally, by a capitalist company as a site of labor for a particular industry, what happens to that place when that company closes?

1.1. Scope of the dissertation

Natural resource communities are exemplary cases to consider this puzzle because of tension inherent to capitalism: the politics of selling commodities requires both place and portability, both motion and moorings, both routes and roots (McMillan Lequieu 2017; Gustafson 2014; Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst 2005). The extraction, transportation, and processing of, say, iron and steel, requires the movement of people, nature, and capital across a commodity chain. At its simplest, a

commodity chain functions like an assembly line, with capitalist actors shuttling necessary components of a final product from one place to another until the product is ready to be bought by a consumer (M. Werner and Bair 2011; Collins 2005; Hopkins and Wallerstein 1987). Turning nature into natural resources requires the extraction of raw materials from specific (and typically rural) locations, where metals, minerals, or trees are found. Wealth is only gained if those natural resources are moved to urban centers of manufacturing and distribution.

For all this movement, however, natural resource commodity chains require the stabilization of labor, markets, and nature across space and time. Put otherwise, economizing the environment requires not only mobility, but moorings (Bell, Lloyd, and Vatovec 2010; Gustafson 2014). The commodification of natural resources requires the integration of specific *places* as rationalized links along a commodity chain (Bell, Lloyd, and Vatovec 2010; Gustafson 2014). Place often stands in contrast to movement—it's an internally coherent, stable geographic landscape, with unique histories, social networks, and structures (Relph 1976). The material landscapes, objects, and infrastructures of place "store-up" human activities and embody meaning over time (e.g. Gustafson, 2009; Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001; Stedman, 2003). Place can be a site of attachment as well as a landscape of injustice, a cause for affection and one where the environment of one's body is impacted by toxicity, marginalization, or exploitation (see Brulle and Pellow, 2006; Hooks and Smith, 2004; Pellow and Brehm, 2013). For good or ill, people's everyday practices and bodily experiences of place are shaped by the material flows that enter and exit that space.

After all, to enable material flows of natural resources across space and time, capitalism fundamentally requires people. People, in turn, demand some degree of stability, of rootedness in place, for the cultivation of social life, for the reproduction of labor (through families), for the creation of community, and most basically, for the fulfillment of infrastructural and bodily

necessities of daily life (Duyvendak 2011; Lewicka 2014). The repercussions of the tensions between the stability of social life and the mobility of capital are most clearly seen in laborer communities. The social worlds of capital's wage-workers *take place*—culture and structure, home and work, and past and future are rooted in a landscape where the arrivals and departures of trains and boats, the building of houses, the accumulation of wealth, and the bodily experiences of class hinge on consistent flows of capital. The mobility of natural resource products, in turn, embeds entire regions in webs of interdependence—linking stable places with other, unseen parts of the commodity chain, with companies and their inner workings, and with capitalism itself (Cardoso and Faletto 1979). This leads to the question: when a stable community is created, both structurally and culturally, by a capitalist company, what happens to the social life of that place when the mobility of capital to that place ceases?

The literature on deindustrialization answers this question only in part. The globalization of economic trade, and the consequential 'rusting' of America's industrial corridors, has motivated research from multiple theoretical perspectives (e.g. High & Lewis 2007; Broughton 2015; Kahn 1999). Ethnographies, memoirs, and journalistic reporting provide snapshots of the devastation wrought by unemployment, working-class poverty, and neighborhood disinvestment (Hochschild 2016; Dudley 1994; High 2003; Bensman and Lynch 1989). Scholars of labor and work have linked the decline of career employment for blue-collar workers in the industrial sector, the consequential rise of "precarious work" in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (e.g. Kalleberg 2009; Paret 2016). In the decades following of company closure people leave, places constrict, identities are threatened, and local power arrangements are reorganized, as Lockie et al. (2009) and Wilson(2001), among others have observed.

However, much of this research emphasizes that which *departs*, be it people, capital, security, or environmental wellbeing (Castells 1989; J. W. Moore 2014). But not everyone leaves. There are people who remain in place long after the movement of an important commodity has been stilled. These long-term residents cope with the challenges of living in a deindustrialized place articulated in the vast literature on the subject—challenges of finding work, of voting, governing, and maintaining infrastructures, of making sense of the large-scale changes they've witnessed, and of remaining at home, be it through choice or not, in a globalized world.

In post-industrial communities, long-term residents—the group central to this study—live caught between an undetermined future and a past that was, by many measures, better than the present (though certainly not entirely, nor for all). In the past, blue-collar work earned middle-class benefits, company doctors made house calls, and fields, rivers, trees, and rocks were transformed into economically productive and culturally valuable products. This past took place on a landscape where the infrastructures and cultural expectations of daily life were organized, controlled, and maintained by industrial companies with a vested interest in the local community.

With a sensitivity to these histories of social life in places once organized around the mobility of natural resources, this dissertation intervenes in the familiar tale of deindustrialization by interrogating the place of *place* in the globalization story. Bringing historical political economy into conversation with theories of place and identity formation, I ask what happens to the social life of a place formed around natural resource commodification when that mobility of capital to that place ceases? To answer this broader question, I specifically interrogate a) who were the historical actors and processes responsible for constructing persistent structures and cultures characterizing contemporary post-industrial communities, b) how long-term residents in deindustrialized

communities make sense of their communities without its economic raison d'être, and c) how and why the past continues to show up in long-term residents' conceptions of the idealized futures.

Drawing from archival, ethnographic, and interview data collected across two urban and rural communities once integral to a Midwestern steel commodity chain, I argue that the processes of capitalism not only take place, they *make* place. Theorizing place—and the lasting impacts of how capital makes place—requires an understanding of both the mechanisms of attachment to a physical place and the economic, political, social, and narrative strategies people employ to remain or return to that place. My dissertation contends that political ecologies and economies established during the American industrial revolution continue to structure the landscapes and lived experiences of long-term residents in Chicago's urban steel neighborhood and Wisconsin's rural iron mining belt. Linking historical and contemporary qualitative data, I find that even decades after the mid-20th-century collapse of the American steel industry, the material connections (and disconnections) of natural resources and political economies of land use shape residents' stories about collective identity, environmental remediation, and community development. Historical documents demonstrate how iron and steel companies transformed space into place by constructing infrastructures and ideas of belonging in worker communities. Interviewee narratives reflect both how residents experienced and are re-negotiating the structural residues of deindustrialization, and how they assign value to present and future opportunities.

In the coming pages, I explore how two formerly resource-extractive and manufacturing communities—Iron County, Wisconsin, and the southeast side of Chicago, Illinois—navigate and narrate significant, landscape-scale economic change. Before discussing the details of the research design, cases, and methods of analysis, I elaborate on the theoretical underpinnings for my research questions.

2.0. Theoretical framing

To understand the identities and structural constraints of people in deindustrialized regions today, we need to understand the actors and processes of place-making. I draw from social theory regarding a) the historical processes and actors responsible for transforming abstract space into meaningful places, b) the institutionalization of belonging in those places, and c) how the mobility and stability of place are experienced and narrated by long-term residents. These questions revolve around the concept of place**.**

2.1. Space and place: Identifying processes and actors

In the tradition of geographers, space differs from place: space refers to the abstract, place to the specific (Lefebvre 1991; Gieryn 2000; Lichter and Ziliak 2017). The concept of space centers on the social creation, regulation, and reproduction of spatial thinking across geographies. In contrast, place is that constellation "of material things that occupy a particular segment of space and have sets of meanings attached to them" by social actors (Cresswell 2008, 135). Place is where the abstract relations within and across space are experienced by people—components of the more abstract material relations of the production of space that are lived, identified, and narrated by individuals and groups. Spatial processes, such as the emergence and disintegration of commodity chains—of greatest interest to this project—take place in particular places. Every place, with its "particular locality [and] with its own unique material, symbolic and embodied qualities…is also part of a spatial system that links localities into broader social structures and practices" (Endres and Senda-Cook

2011, 260). The infrastructures, social relations, and symbolic representations of space comprise place (Lefebvre 1991), and it is to specific places people that people belong and are attached (Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005).

Place emerges from space at the intersection of structure and culture, idea and material, embodied experience and global context (Massey 1994). The transformation of space into place is not an inevitable or agentless event. The formation of place requires both *processes* and *actors*. An analytical identification of both is required to accurately understand puzzles of contemporary residential stability and people's relationships to place.

2.1.1. Place as process

According to Lefebvre (1991), the space-to-place transition is often initiated by the formation of material relations of production. For the rural and urban cases central to this study, the historical process of capital expansion was the genesis of the formation of place. When the capitalist project consolidates in a particular location, abstract space becomes recognizable and meaningful place to people looking to accumulate wealth. Yet specific places are constituted not only by the internal elements that attract people to it but by lines of connection from one location to other parts of the world (Massey 1995; Castells 1989). When those lines of connection are between nodes of a commodity chain, the process of commodification simultaneously connects and constructs a place peppered with social meaning (Urry 1999; Castells 1989). How much more so in natural resource extraction and manufacturing industries. Natural resource extraction is inherently rooted in specific places, even as the process of commodification of natural resource requires the movement of metals across space and time. Turning nature into wealth involves linking raw materials from sites where

large quantities of metal, mineral, wood, or water are found with geographically central locations for processing or distribution. The nodes of a commodity chain "configure differently in site- and time-specific forms, [and] interact with economics and politics as locally and temporally specific activities of society" (Bunker and Ciccantell 2005, 7).

Thus the process of transforming abstract space into specific place is an iterative "process that is under constant construction, reconstruction, and sometimes subject to deconstruction" (Endres and Senda-Cook 2011, 260). Yet, the process of turning space into meaningful place isn't irreversible. Symbolic meanings and economic functions of place can collapse as processes of capitalism disarticulate (M. Werner and Bair 2011), people out-migrate (Daniels and Lapping 1987), infrastructures decline (Larkin 2013), or the constellation of familiar physical and social markers of a community disintegrates (Erikson 1976). "Domicide," the death of home, can occur not only when economic crisis occurs, but in the wake of eminent domain, natural disaster, and climate change (Porteous and Smith 2001).

2.1.2. Actors of place

Any iterations of these place-making and unmaking processes reflect power dynamics and social relations between actors. Certain people make decisions about spaces that, in turn, produce localized structures and cultures that shape the everyday experience of other people who live in that place. Power is unequally distributed in places. Some actors control capital and thus claim economic power to build infrastructures, order social systems, and draw boundaries of exclusion or inclusion (Massey 2004; Kabachnik, Regulska, and Mitchneck 2010; Capoccia 2015). Places are assigned socio-cultural images based on *certain* people's "conception of time and space" (Rapport and Dawson

1998, 5). Doreen Massey (1991) explained, "different social groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to these flows and interconnections…. Different social groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated mobility: some people are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving-end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it," (p.26). It shouldn't be a surprise, then, that the material and cultural identifications of place—maps, systems, projects, infrastructures, and local histories—are uneven symbolic representations of the spatial thinking of those in power.

For instance, local histories in midwestern iron mining towns or steel mill neighborhoods typically begin with the control and use of nature, and subsequence establishment of housing, by European immigrants (e.g. Alanen 1979; Reynolds and Dawson 2011; Dudley 1994). In communities established as residential sites of labor during the American industrial revolution, the historical processes of clearing land and establishing housing were often coordinated by elites of economics and politics (e.g. Cronon 1991; Andrews 2008). Local governments and, to a greater extent, large companies rationalized and organized control over nature, articulated through the construction of housing and transportation infrastructures. In nascent industrial communities, elites of capital were also elites of government: they shaped where houses were to be located, who was permitted to live in them, and, eventually, how their values would be determined. Beyond the walls of a house, industrial elites organized road construction, zoning codification, boundary markers, and siting of train depots. This control over place, when exercised by elites of capital, I term infrastructural paternalism. Infrastructures bring into interaction people and things into complex networks upon which operate economic and social systems (Graham and Marvin 2001). Paternalism was a managerial approach which "involved providing employees with amenities not required by law or absolutely needed for operations" (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 95). Certain firms coordinated

the infrastructural development of nascent, industrial places in the decades between the 19th century American industrial revolution and the Progressive Era of the 20th century in order to solve both logistical issues of creating new sites of mass, industrial labor and also cultivate a legible, compliant, and place-based community that enabled local elites of capitalism to maintain control over their new employees' home and work (e.g. Alanen 1979; Arneson 1989; Tone 1997).

Thinking about the process and actors as integral to the transformation of space into place is vital to understanding the lasting impacts of deindustrialization for three reasons. First, conceptualizing how space becomes place grants us leverage to analyze and articulate the relationship between the "anyway differentiated mobility" of people and the flows of resources and capital across space, as Massey (1991) put it. To grasp the meanings of place, we need to be able to name the actors and trace the processes of socioeconomic change. Second, sensitivity to power calls us to attend to how the material and cultural construction of place by particular people, through specific processes, informs the daily experience of less-powerful people living in those places. In industrial America, the processes of flows and interconnection, created and ordered through the actions of elites of natural resource industries, formed the "templates of power that rationalize[d] the spaces…and the normal conduct of bodies and things within them" (Tonkiss 2006, 3). Third, conceptualizing place, and the role of infrastructures, power differentials, and material flows in forming place, sheds light into how place might (or might not) be *un*-made. As mentioned earlier, places can die, due to the cessation of capital, political change, or a natural disaster (among many other causes). In the cases central to this study, the formation of place by industrial companies and as part of a natural resource community chain spatially organized both locations to be "offered up for exploitation in the name of profit, progress, and technological advancement" (Hedges and Sacco 2014, 1). The departure of the company meant removal of the anchor economic and organizational actor. Yet, place is *co*-constituted by groups of actors with varying levels of power—by both elites

that organize the process of place-making and by those who interact with the on-the-ground structures and cultures of local sites. The departure of elites of place may not necessarily mean the out-migration of all residents; those who stay may be vital to recreating place even if they didn't have much control over its original formation.

2.2. The institutionalization of belonging, place attachment, and home

I turn now to the theories of everyday people in place—how they belong, relate to place, define home—and how those components are *institutionalized*. Conceptualizing the interface of place-making and non-elite residents of place is vital for understanding how people's conception of who they *are* in place shapes how they perceive their own identities, partake in mobility, and respond to place-based threats and opportunities (Sutter 2013; Stedman 2003a). The processes of commodity chains and elite actors making place at once enable and constrain the quotidian experiences of territorial belonging, place attachment, and the social relations of home for non-elite residents. This section seeks to merge scholarship on individual- and community-level relationship to place with the attention to "varieties of capitalism," governance, and the "institutional turn" (Tomaney 2014a).

Scholars of globalization have probed the idea of belonging in a world on the move (Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst 2005; Duyvendak 2011; Morley 2001). Belonging is formed in an intersectional context, along multiple, mutually constitutive axes of geography, locality, mobility, habitus, and social difference (Yuval-Davis 2006). Mobility and migration have challenged notions of territorial belonging (Gustafson 2014), but place remains implicated in both the formation and emotional persistence of belonging. Belonging is often attached to identities that emerge in part from practical commitments and physical involvements in an environment. As people interact with one another in "terrains of belonging," they work out their identities in embodied and necessarily

territorial spaces (Tomaney 2014b, 509). Pollini (2005) terms this "socio-territorial belonging," and an emotional process arising from mutually constitutive relationships of attachment, loyalty, solidarity, and sense of affinity. The emotional dimensions of belonging in a particular place are entangled with the politics and institutions regulating who belongs where (Tomaney 2014a).

Identities of belonging may or may not overlap people's attachment to specific places. Place attachment doesn't require political belonging but does involve elements of social patterning of behavior, sense of place, duration of residence in a community, and performance of collective narratives of place meanings (Lee and Blanchard 2012; Shaker 2013). Scholars of place and community attachment show how people may perform expressions of local belonging in ways that embed individual behavior with place-based identities (Lewicka 2011; Cross 2003). Vainikka (2012) has shown how landscapes that root people in distinct space are important mediators of collective and/or regional identities. Yet, place attachment isn't necessarily collective. An individual can live somewhere for a long time, feel attached to a place, and perform collective identities even as they unaccepted by their neighbors or disenfranchised by other mechanisms that encourage belonging.

Within the concepts of belonging and place attachment lies the complicated concept of home. The very phrase, to *be at home*, gestures towards the necessity of belonging, a physical arrival to "familiarity, order, permanency, comfort and place-bound culture" (Duyvendak 2011, 28). Home is more than a house: it is a place of tension. At once a physical location of indeterminate size and a site of cultural intimacy, a political project and a social experience, a place of stability to which one returns and "from which one ventures forth," (Tuan 1971, 189; Bachelard 1958). To be at home is, according to Heidegger (1971), to dwell: that in-situ action that renders meaningful a place and interpretable within the broader human experience of space and time. Young (1997) gestures towards Bourdieu's habitus in defining home as "attached to a particular locale as an extension and

expression of bodily routines" (p. 161). People actively "produce social reality through their mundane activities of sensemaking" based on the positions they occupy in an objective space (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013, 277). The embodied nature of home serves as a dialectic, orienting one to the very values upon which a particular place was constructed.

Who creates the values upon which a place is constructed, however? In literatures on belonging, place attachment, and home, it is assumed that all people get equal opportunities to construct their own form of interaction with a place. Yet, as earlier argued, there are always processes and actors that are involved in the formalization, institutionalization, and regulation of what it means to belong to a particular place. The very processes through which a person becomes part of a place—integrated into a socio-territorial collective—reflects and reproduces uneven power relations.

Scholarly concern about the institutionalization of belonging has centered on the idea and practice of citizenship. In the "face of transformations wrought by mass migration, insurgent territorial identities, and destabilizing material and cultural flows," Tomaney (2014) observes, "questions of political and social citizenship are the most prominent manifestations of the politics of belonging in the era of the nation-state" (p.508). In theory, citizenship is the "right to have rights": rights to property, suffrage, security, and the status and dignity that emerges from belonging to a "territorially delimited collectivity" (Somers 2008, 1; Hyde 2018, 20). A citizen is both entitled to rights and the consequential obligations of membership to place and institution. Citizens oblige their time, money, and service to the service of the collective. In exchange, citizens should be able to expect "the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society" (Marshall 1950, 151, 149).

In practice, citizenship is a complex, inconsistent, and contested site of tension between freedom and social control, exclusion and inclusion, territorial boundaries and symbolic meanings.[1] The legal bounds and fluid edges of citizenship have rarely pursued the principle of equality. Nation states and empires alike rearrange the rules of citizenship to control, limit, alienate, or render legible certain groups of people (Scott 1999). Most scholarly work on citizenship centers on these points of inequality within a nation-state and its territories and shows how citizenship is rife with contradictions of belonging, often with exceptions falling along lines of race (Steinberg 1996; Glenn 2011; Kymlicka and Norman 1994; Turner 2007). Marshall (1950) suggests that civil and political rights can be offered as an *alternative* to social rights, rather than a foundation for them. Access to rights can be made unequal, contingent upon either the priorities and power structures of a certain, political moment or some inherent quality of personhood that is variably defined. Indeed, the history of political and social citizenship is marked by struggles over the formation and revision of citizenship boundaries. The political battles over classification of individuals and groups as citizens, as well as obligations of institutions to offer rights to those citizens, are fought by those who claim the power to offer "the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and, thereby, to make and unmake groups" (Bourdieu 1991:221).

What if the institution attempting to create citizens, to make and unmake groups, is *not* the state? Since citizenship is the "right to have rights" and "a status bestowed," a non-state institution might benefit from manufacturing for certain people a sense of territorial belonging, at least in partial form. Yet explorations of non-state, institutionalization of local attachment and belonging remain comparatively rare, even though certain benefits of citizenship can thus be offered by any

[1] The citizenship clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and the 1868 Expatriation Act notes, in part, that the bonds of allegiance and the protections that extend from it were an automatic, if voluntary, outgrowth of the territory of one's birth. See Hyde (2018, p.26) for more analysis.

institution claiming enough material resources and symbolic power to establish, guard, and regulate social hierarchies. For instance, Tilly (1998:72) argued that when certain people or institutions claim control over resources, they often "set up systems of social closure, exclusion, and control." Through such control, as Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue, these powerful groups create organizational categories through which they demarcate roles, rights, and obligations in order to legitimate their preferred economic and social hierarchies.

What are the long-term consequences when belonging for some is codified by powerful, non-state actors—actors that turn space into place by constraining and enabling certain relationships between working-class people and place, including or excluding members, offering or eroding rights, and encouraging or limiting public engagement? In this dissertation, I propose a new framework for understanding the processes and actors of natural resource places in the 20th century: employers as provisioners of pseudo-citizenship rights, or what I term *institutionalized belonging*. As an offshoot of infrastructural paternalism's attempt to solve problems inherent to developing industry in relatively remote regions, certain early 20th-century industrial corporations were institutionalizing the material and cultural components of place-based belonging for employees through a system of private, highly contingent, non-income social protections. The corporate policies aimed at mitigating both the disorientation inherent to the unrestrained marketization of labor and land and the growing threat of external regulation from the state.[2] In a defensive dance with the Progressive and New Deal eras' expanding visions of what might be the government's role in citizens' quotidian lives, companies leveraged the material legacies of infrastructural paternalism to develop vocabularies of earned rights, organized security, and independent masculinity (Klein 2006; Jacoby 1998; Tone 1997;

[2] Certainly, the expansion of state-based social rights did absorb the responsibilities of workers onto the state and away from industry. Marshall (1950) quips, "the Poor Law was an aid, not a menace, to capitalism, because it relieved the industry of all social responsibility outside the contract of employment, while sharpening the edge of competition in the labour market." (p. 151).

Goldberg 2008). When the Progressive Era politicians proposed new laws regulating industrial health and safety codes, firms provided free health and dental care to workers and their families; when the New Deal administration proposed new forms of social insurance, companies offered group health and life insurance; when unions were legalized in their industries, both rural and urban companies quelled interest through clearer mechanisms for individual-level arbitration[3]. The companies in my case intentionally minimized access to, and marginalized reliance on, state supports (however few there might have been).

Each iterative and reactionary expansion of institutionalized belonging further embedded "the non-contractual foundations of society" with the economic success and contractual labor arrangements of one company (Block and Somers 2014, 108–9). Not only did workers live in a place made for capitalism and controlled by elite actors of natural resource industries, their healthcare, access to housing and food, social relations, and other forms of non-work well-being were linked inextricably with place-based employment. Companies played a vital role in the reproduction of labor, usually relegated to domestic spheres alone, according to Marx (1956). Capitalism was thus smuggled into social life by firms.

Welfare capitalism, combined with a prolonged era of mid-century, war-fueled demand for iron and steel and union-negotiated wage increases, enabled the blue-collar working class to rise together into the middle class. The very concept of class is rooted in inequalities of labor and capital—the lived realities of capitalism embodied within the contradictions between those who own the means of production and those who sell their labor (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013; Weber, n.d.;

[3] Some companies benefited from, and supported, the expansion of state-based social rights, as it did absorb the responsibilities of workers onto the state and away from industry. Marshall (1950) quips, "the Poor Law was an aid, not a menace, to capitalism, because it relieved the industry of all social responsibility outside the contract of employment, while sharpening the edge of competition in the labour market" (p. 151).

Kalleberg 2009). Put more broadly, class reflects the residue of unequal power that emerges from the ways in which different social groups claim different amounts of power in "relation to [the] flows and interconnections" of economic wealth and land ownership (Massey 1991). Across the US, mid-century, industrial workers objectively found their standard of living, wages, and credit increased to the median of American earnings (Wright 2003; Simmie and Brady 1989). Workers co-constituted their experience of class by performing what they took to be markers of middle class: families purchased on credit, men were the primary breadwinners, and the inclusion or advancement of racial minorities in workplaces was constrained by the white majority. Both objective and subjective experiences of upward mobility were enabled by the income *and* non-income benefits credited to workers belonging to particular companies.

From when industrial companies first tamed nature and organized infrastructures, to mid-20th-century offerings of subsidized health care, personal loans, stock options, and company pensions, workers experienced middle-class lifestyles in exchange for loyal, blue-collar labor. As companies expanded their power over the terms and conditions of workers' experience of both work and home, they not only transformed space into place, they constrained and enabled certain relationships between working-class people and place. Conceptualizing companies as entities manufacturing a form of institutional belonging grants new, analytical purchase into what processes and actors had a lasting impact on the landscapes and social worlds of natural resource industries.

2.3. People remaking place in place after the trauma of closure

So, when a stable community is created, both structurally and culturally, by a capitalist company as a site of labor for a particular industry, what happens to the social life of that place

when the flows and interconnections of capital dissolve? Does meaningful place revert to abstract space without the processes, actors, and forms of belonging that first made that place exist? Who remains in place in the face of the mobility of capital, and how does that residential stability inform the future of their communities?

The rise and fall of natural resource industries of the American Midwest are exemplary cases of the tensions between space and place, mobility and stability, and past and future. Following World War II, communication and transportation technologies compressed space and time, loosening the geographical boundedness of production and manufacture. Between 1950 and 1990, international trade deals, technological sophistication, labor outsourcing, and mineral accessibility fueled "systematic disinvestment in the nation's basic productive capacity" throughout the global north (Bluestone and Harrison 1982). Between 1969 and 1996, the American Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions lost 33 percent of its manufacturing jobs (Kahn 1999). Extractive industries suffered an earlier contraction, declining 42.2 percent in employment opportunities between 1950 and 1980 (Metzgar 2002). While the absolute employment rate across the US told a story of a nation-wide shift from industrial labor towards service, job churning was experienced on the ground as place-erasing trauma.

"The perennial gale of creative destruction," as Schumpeter (1943) put it, swept away familiar landscape markers, rendering economic crisis a disaster (Schumpeter 1943 [2003]). Deindustrialization was a landscape-scale crisis—slow moving and foreboding in some situations, unexpected in others, but for all workers and their families, a personal and far-reaching disaster. Company closure transformed blue-collar middle-class people into citizens of a placeless landscape, facing a "cultural trauma" of shattered values and unclear ways of being in the world (Alexander, Jacobs, and Smith 2012). Not unlike a natural disaster, the departure of the company upended

familiar physical patterns, infrastructural landmarks, and routinized, bodily experiences of place. In his classic study of a flash flood that destroyed a coal mining town in West Virginia in the 1970s, Kai Erikson observed "the classic symptoms of mourning and bereavement. People are grieving for their lost friends and lost home, but they are grieving too for their lost cultural surround; and they feel dazed at least in part because they are not sure what to do in the absence of that familiar setting. They have lost their navigational equipment, as it were, both their inner compasses and their outer maps" (p.200). In the immediate wake of the departure of the most powerful actor in their community—companies—workers faced not only the loss of jobs but the evaporation of identities once embedded in a sense of territorial belonging and security.

Thinking of closure as trauma calls for a more phenomenological approach to understanding the impacts of deindustrialization. Lacking the processes and actors of the flows of capitalism, the blue-collar middle class disintegrated. Company closure rendered familiar landscapes unrecognizable and called into question the normal—and often institutionalized—ways of belonging in a place. Health, standard of living, and employment outcomes declined. Pierce & Schott (2012) noted increased alcohol-related deaths in the decades after neoliberal trade shifts, and research ranging from Alanen's (1979) work on mining towns, to High's (2003) overview of deindustrialization across North America, to Dudley's (1994) study of manufacturing closure in Wisconsin, have observed local instances of escalated rates of suicide and depression. In her semi-autobiographical ethnography, anthropologist Christine Walley observes that within a decade of the closure of her father's Chicago steel mill (one of the central companies to my story), 800 of its 3,400 former workers had died, many after struggles with alcoholism, suicide, and other problems tied to unemployment.

The familiarity of place decreased further as depopulation and economic decline took hold in deindustrialized communities. After the closure of the anchor companies, roots turned into "routes," as peripheral businesses and social institutions consolidated, local governments struggled to maintain services with a shrinking tax based, and residents steadily out-migrated (Gustafson 2014). Over the last four decades, cities once central to the American industrial corridor, such as Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, and Pittsburgh, have each lost more than 40 percent of their populations (Hartley 2013). Even though these losses have not been uniform across neighborhoods or regions, nor irreversible in certain cases, depopulation of the Midwest fueled broader narratives of mobility. Many scholars, politicians, and writers reflected that the mass exodus of the unemployed or displaced simply reflected the nature of both American economics and personality (Fallows 1985; Cadena and Kovak 2016). In reaction to boom and bust, expansion and contraction, Americans were simply doing what they do best: chasing new economic opportunities. The flows of migration were the best response to the flows of capitalism. Blau & Duncan (1967) contended that "geographic movement is associated with superior occupational achievement, regardless of place of birth or destination." Similarly, Galbraith (1979) declared that "Migration…is the oldest action against poverty. It selects those who most want help. It is good for the country to which they go…what is the perversity in the human soul that causes people to resist so obvious a good?"

As the ceaseless fluidity of contemporary social life transformed "place attachment, on what places mean and on perceptions of who "belongs" where," (Duyvendak 2011, 15), scholars of mobility and globalization reconsidered the place of residential stability. If even half of a city out-migrated, who stayed behind in these post-industrial places? Were long-term residents who resisted 'so obvious a good' of outmigration simply too poor to pay for a move or sell a depreciated house, too socially entangled through kinship ties, or too lacking in transferable skills to find a better job

elsewhere? Or was attachment to place, as both idea and practice, all the more vital to people feeling insecure and unmoored in an unstable world?

Gustafson 2014, Savage et al. 2005, and Duyvendak 2011, among others, have observed the highly mobile middle class intentionally staying behind—selecting places as sites for performing identities based on aesthetic and ethical criteria. These new residents attach "their own biographies to their "chosen" residential location" with little sense of shared histories (Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst 2005, 29). The "rediscovery of the local" by new residents may actually reestablish the value of fixed places within disorienting processes of globalization through what Savage et al. (2005) terms "narratives of elective belonging." But what of the experiences of long-term residents—the "old bastion" of blue-collar middle class workers (as Standing (2014) summarized) who experienced iron and steel as a place-making process and set of actors, and whose sense of belonging was organized by and embedded within processes and actors of industrial capitalism?

Clearly, how people stay and the reasons they offer for their residential longevity are imbricated with class relations. While Savage's (2005) mobile in-migrants have the resources to select a particular place to live, people who never moved away from a place may have more constrained material, employment, and cultural options. Long-term residents may have less liquid capital and fewer choices, with much of personal worth sunk into house ownership, employment options reflecting limits transportation infrastructure, and land tenure shaping attachment to place (Roberts 2013). The rationales long-term residents provide to explain their residential stability also produce and reproduce meaning. Narratives of "staying put," as Roberts (2013) put it, tangle up the emotional and practical, drawing from affection for place (Jorgensen and Stedman 2001), attention to the "ghosts of place" (Bell 1997), or relational "belongin' networks" (Puckett 2000).

Both the material potential and narrative rationales for staying in place in a world that seems to reward mobility and migration draws on historical, place-based identities—identities of belonging, attachment, and home that would not be the same if the storyteller lived elsewhere. Wertsch (2004) argues that narrators select "from a 'stock of stories'" that have been fashioned and maintained over time in a specific social context (p.50). Hochschild (2016) and Cramer (2016) similarly argue that past stories of self and community are spatially relational, and continue to offer a repertoire for contemporary identities long after their genesis. Such persistence in narratives in place, and over time, at once rescues local belonging from exaggerated claims of its demise in an age of mobility and emphasizes the importance of understanding how and why people *stay* in place. Massey (1995), among others, is concerned that long-term residents tend towards a defensive nostalgia—"a deeply essentialist and internalist way of thinking about a place and its character," and encourages a thin, "invention of the coherence of a place" that disregards how its characteristics might've changed over time (pp.183–184).

Critiques of nostalgia, particularly emerging from the white working class in the American Rust Belt, too often overlook the place-making processes and actors of the industrial revolution, and the way that the past structural development, the institutionalization of belonging, and class-based experiences of company success continue to constrain and enable future options. The 'invention of the coherence of place' doesn't inherently lead to negative outcomes, nor are the 'stocks of stories' available to long-term residents reflective of their relative power or historical control of their places.

This project rejects the shorthand of nostalgia in favor of questions of identity. I probe the formation of the "deep stories," again, after Hochschild (2016)—stories that compel contemporary values, concerns, and ideal futures for a group of people. In my post-industrial cases, I focus on how history shows up in the present by considering how historical actors and processes made place for

natural resource industries, and consequentially, how long-term residents navigate their own forms of elective belonging in the midst of community change. Both identity stories and infrastructural residues of past actors and processes of place reflect how the ongoing cultural project of iron and steel not only frames the past but also constrains future expectations for long-term residents.

2.4. The place of place in deindustrialization

A central tenet of comparative historical analysis is that social objects are shaped by their genesis (Steinmetz 2017). I contend that, for communities constructed as stable nodes along an iron and steel commodity chain, natural resource industries serve as both structure and culture—long after the material flows have stopped. The processes of capitalism not only take place; they *make place*. Theorizing place—and the lasting impacts of how capital makes place—requires an understanding of both the mechanisms of attachment to a physical place and the economic, political, social, and narrative strategies people employ to remain or return to that place. In the coming pages, I explore how two formerly resource-extractive and manufacturing communities—Iron County, Wisconsin, and the southeast side of Chicago, Illinois—navigate and narrate significant, landscape-scale economic change.

I tell a chronological story that contributes four new concepts that I argue are central to a more robust, sociological conception of place. I show the processes and actors that make the structures and cultures of place. I focus on how industrial companies constructed early laborer communities in 19th-century iron and steel landscapes through *infrastructural paternalism* and the early 20th-century establishment of what I term *institutionalized belonging* by iron and steel firms to establish worker loyalty, organize industrial society, and contest emerging forms of state-based and union-

shaped national citizenship. Then, I show how workers co-constituted community and experienced *class* as a place-based and embodied phenomenon. Finally, I discuss the role of *natural resource identities* in shaping a sense of home and expectations for the future among long-term residents. To grasp the lived experiences and long-term impacts of contemporary economic change on the American working class, we must hold in tension the constellation of agentive choices, social transformation, and political economies that orient people towards home. After all, if home is only conceptualized as stable, and progress defined by mobility, how does the residentially stable, working class understand their place in a society seemingly eager to leave them behind?

3.0. Research design

3.1. Cases

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, certain midwestern industrial corporations transformed spaces into places imbued with specific meaning, reproduced through particular forms of social relations, and revolving around natural resource political economies. Sparked by the technological development of better iron ore processing machines, iron and steel intertwined the fates of remote places of resource extraction with urban centers of manufacture and distribution. For this project, I gathered data in two former nodes of the Midwestern steel commodity chain: a former steel mill neighborhood in Chicago and the remote company town of an abandoned Wisconsin iron mine (see Appendices B through F for maps and descriptive statistics). I selected these cases based on their former regional, economic relationships of the 19th and 20th century, iron ore extraction and manufacture. For analytical clarity, I focus on two companies once central to their

respective communities: in Wisconsin, Oglebay, Norton, and Company's Montreal Mine; and in Chicago, International Harvester's Wisconsin Steel Mill.

Processes of industrialization transformed spaces into places of meaning, creating both localized experiences for workers who were imported to those places, and regional relationships between raw producers (Iron County, Wisconsin) and manufacturers (Southeast Chicago) in the second half of the 20th century. In these communities, positioned at opposite ends of a natural resource commodity chain, place origins meanings derived from one industry and its relationship to the market. Industrial companies built infrastructure, imported laborers, and constructed identities for workers in both rural Montreal, Wisconsin and the southeast side of Chicago, Illinois. For communities established primarily as sites of labor, the stability of social life relied on the continued mobility of commodities. When those commodities no longer moved from sites of raw extraction, to manufacture, to the consumer, these social worlds were rendered disposable. By the second half of the 20th century, both companies and their communities faced redundancy.

In 1962, the rural mining company closed; in 1980, so did the urban steel mill. Like most communities founded for one industry, company closure brought about an absolute population decline of at least 20 percent in my cases. Iron County, Wisconsin saw a 16 percent population drop just in decade following mine closure, and Chicago's steel neighborhood experienced white flight, racial churning, and minority move-in, shifting from majority white to majority black and Latino between the 1970s and late 1990s (State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development 2015; Bensman 2005). But that meaningful bundle of processes, actors, and meanings that make up place does not disappear from a place at the same time as do the economic connections that initiated its establishment. Put otherwise, place often outlives the economic moment that granted its genesis.

3.2. Data

My dissertation uses four types of data. First, I collected several thousand historical documents from five state and regional archives. Both Chicago and Wisconsin cases provide well-documented, localized archives of company history, political efforts for economic revitalization, and laborers' oral histories and personal essays on the immediate impacts of deindustrialization. For my rural case, I gathered archival materials from the Iron County Historical Society (Hurley, Wisconsin), Ashland Historical Society (Ashland, Wisconsin), Ironwood Historical Society (Ironwood, Michigan), and the Wisconsin Historical Society (Madison, Wisconsin). For the Chicago case, I researched in the archives of the Chicago History Museum and the Southeast Chicago Historical Museum (Chicago, Illinois). Additionally, I draw from a dozen publicly available oral histories of southeast Chicago millworkers and northern Wisconsin miners conducted between 1990 and 2001 by each locations' respective historical societies. In both locations, I gathered archival data about community development and change, broadly, but also as related specifically to two companies: Iron County's Montreal Mining Company and Chicago's Wisconsin Steel mill. I analyzed company employment records, maps of railroad routes, blueprints of mine shafts and housing plans, and articles from local and state newspapers, as well as amateur photography from the early 20th century, past oral histories, autobiographical essays, and hand-written letters commemorating the 30-year anniversary of the closure of the mine. Archival documents produced by iron mining companies, policymakers, and former laborers contextualized contemporary life stories within broader, intertwined discourses of economic and environmental history. History matters in cases like Iron County and southeast Chicago because it sheds light on how industrial community construction (both materially and ideologically) shapes contemporary attitudes and choices.

Second, I interviewed ninety former millworkers, miners, and their families, both local and dispersed. In these open-form interviews, speakers can situate their personal experiences within

broader socioeconomic circumstances that characterized each era of industrial change. Interviews with elected political leaders, board members of local non-profits, and labor groups provide insight into how the reconstruction of community identity, class, and environmental health has been negotiated within broader economic patterns. These interviews took place at local museums, union meetings, community events, and home visits. In three extended field visits, occurring between August 2015 and July 2016, I conducted interview and ethnographic research on-site in northern Wisconsin, and from December 2015 until April 2017, I conducted fieldwork in southeast Chicago. In Wisconsin, I also conducted a grant-funded oral history radio project, which was broadcast on the local AM station in Hurley (see Appendix I for transcript). The oral history project provided interviews that were notably shorter than my typical interviews, averaging 10 minutes, instead of 60-90 minutes. With the exception of the oral history radio project, all interviewees' names have been changed for anonymity.

Since this project centers on how and why long-term residents make sense of economic change, 70 percent of my interviewees are long-term residents (meaning never having moved away from their birth community), and 80 percent of my interviewees are over the age of 60. 80 percent either had family members who labored in the iron mines or steel mills, or worked in those industries themselves. Analysis of the life stories of this subset of people who have experienced the height and depths of 20th century, economic change offers a rich, narrative context for explicating the lived experience of both middle-class security and precarity. Approximately half of my interviewees were between the ages of 60 and 80, and one quarter was between the ages of 46-60. The remaining quarter percentile was split between interviewees younger than 45 and older than 80. This skewed age grouping reflects both the higher average age of people who experienced industry, and of the cohort-bias inevitable within snowball sampling. To better reflect the voices of other

generations, I sought out younger cohorts through theoretical sampling and intentionally incorporated ethnographic observation across the generational divides.

Third, I engaged in a total of six months of ethnography and participant observation at community events across case locations to gain insight into how the past shapes the present and future. I walked and drove landscapes with community members, spent hours in historical societies, attended meetings for retired steelworkers in Southeast Chicago, and set up an oral history booth at the Iron County, Wisconsin county fair. The bodily work of labor and later, of remembering, memorializing, and/or moving on reiterates the link between people, place, and their locations within the constellations of economic inequality.

Finally, I supplemented this qualitative data with quantitative, historical mapping and statistical data available through county and state records offices. Quantitative data helps me pinpoint neighborhood-scale economic outcomes, residential patterns, and poverty rates across the lifespan of the anchor companies. I draw data from the US Census, the American Community Survey, and Wisconsin's Applied Population Lab, and Chicago's CityData (see Appendices E and F).

2.3. Method of Analysis

I interpreted interview data as narrative: as ways everyday residents "story" Iron County and southeast Chicago in light—and in shadow—of its original economic raison d'être. When considering the past, people do not simply recite facts or chronicle the order of events. In interviews and in documents, people story events "in a setting or scene and in the unfolding of a plot with characters who act and react in particular ways" (Peters and Franz 2012). Storytellers choose a particular beginning and ending to their story, emphasize the experiences of certain characters more than others, and leap over "manifold scales of space and time" to make legible complex relationships (Bland and Bell 2007, 262). Narratives, both individual and collective, express ideas

central to identity. These cases allow me to extend contemporary understandings of how the outsourcing forces of globalization impact those who stay behind—the stories they tell about the past, the boundaries they draw within and without their communities, and their discourses of connectedness or separateness of people, their (industrial) landscapes, and the broader economy.

I analyzed both urban and rural cases as what Charles Tilly called an encompassing comparison—comparisons that "begin with a large structure or process, select locations, and then explain similarities or differences among those locations as consequences of their relationship to the whole" (Tilly 1984). Informed by the theories and practices of commodity chain analysis, I follow the movements of materials and cultures from extraction to manufacturing, across both space and time (Marcus 1995; Hopkins and Wallerstein 1987; Collins 2005). The cases in this project consider the structures of natural resource flows across space, and time, through the process of industrialization and deindustrialization. What is gained from comparing urban and rural? Rural and urban deindustrialization is rarely analyzed in context with the another. Considering two cases, at either end of a commodity chain, allows greater leverage to analyze how, why, and with what consequences natural resource flows are experienced differently. Comparison grants this project greater extendibility to other processes of environmental and economic transformation. After all, as Bill Cronon put it, "city and country have a common history, so their stories are best told together" (Cronon 1991). Although differing dramatically in demography and rurality, both nodes on the same, regional iron and steel commodity chain experienced the transformation from an era of company-led welfare capitalism to one of market liberalization and economic insecurity.

This project analyzes information gathered across time in addition to space. In the model of McMichael's model of incorporated comparison, a form of comparison that aims to "reconstruct changing social relations *in* and *of* time and space" at an historical conjuncture, I pursued a form of historically-grounded theory development that captures contrasts and commonalities within the

process of industrialization within these cases (McMichael 1990, 395). These cases allow me not a uniform comparison, but rather an opportunity "to give substance to a historical process (a whole) through comparison of its parts" (McMichael 1990, 386). After all, as Abbott (1988) and Calhoun (1998) both articulated, comparative analysis struggles to accurately capture consistent variation across time and space, since time and space itself are hardly uniform. Actors' interests and strategies shift over time and depending on place-based contexts. By probing how industrial companies interacted with workers, the state, and unions around issues of the provision of social safety nets, I aimed to unveil both the mechanisms enabling the expansion of industrial firms' power over workers in the early 20th century and that groups' subsequent precarity.

This historical and spatial sensitivity guided my analysis of each type of data, and more broadly, the two-case design itself. With the help of several undergraduate research assistants, I transcribed interviews, processed archival documents (captured by a photograph and converted to Optical Character Recognition PDFs), and compiled quantitative data. Then, using MAXQDA, I analyzed data iteratively by developing open and focused coding schemes which were both theoretically informed and open to adjustment based on preliminary findings.

4.0. Organization of chapters

Chapter 2 offers a historical context for my cases and demonstrates how companies created *places* for capitalism. I analyze the historical roots of geographical isolation and company-centered community identity in industrial communities. In the late 19th century, both rural and urban cases experienced transformation from landscapes of minimal infrastructural development and economic connection to neighborhoods constructed for, and often by, large, industrial companies. To solve problems specific to the historical moment and landscape characteristics of industrialization, the

firms central to this study controlled landscapes and constructed the infrastructures of their new industrial sites. I argue that this historical context of spatial and infrastructural isolation during the industrial revolution is overlooked in the existing historiography of industrial development, and thus, of its decline. To grasp the long-term consequences of deindustrialization, we must grapple with the historical establishment of place-based, company power in industrial communities.

In Chapter 3, I argue that companies *institutionalized belonging* for their workers. This chapter articulates how industrial companies exacerbated worker vulnerability by entering into the early 20th century debate on the obligations and rights of citizenship through welfare capitalism. Alternatively called industrial welfare, welfare work, or fringe benefits, welfare capitalism is an umbrella term for all "services which an employer may render to his work people over and above the payment of wages" (Jacoby 1997). For my cases, welfare capitalism allowed companies to compete with, and eventually consolidate control from, the state. I leverage the analytical tools of citizenship to shed light onto how managers of companies understood themselves as not only employers but provisioners of social contracts and rights—what I term *institutionalized belonging*. Both place-based and social-citizenship forms of welfare capitalism did work for firms: as a practice, welfare capitalism enabled companies to improve profit margins by directly responding—or appearing to respond—to worker concerns; in presence, firms shaped culture and discourse about the role of capitalism in both the workplace and the home.

I end chapter 3, and the historical half of this dissertation project, by briefly contemplating the consequential vulnerability of the institutionalization of belonging. Citizenship to a place that dissolves with the next economic crisis is precarious indeed. How much more so in my cases of company paternalism in extremis. In a community constructed, in structure and culture, for capitalism and populated by wage-laborers, company-based social safety nets, protections, and

public participation institutionalizes, and thus normalizes, the entanglement of company economic success with the continuity of workers' everyday social worlds.

Chapter 4 contemplates the experiences of deindustrialization as place-based loss of *class*. Since class reflects the residue of unequal power dynamics of place, the performance of the blue-collar middle class required the processes and actors of the flows of capitalism that made originally made those places. Through the fringe benefits of institutionalized belonging, workers and their families experienced middle-class rewards for blue-collar work even as they co-constituted their communities by performing gendered, racialized, and consumptive meanings of class. Company closure rendered familiar landscapes unrecognizable and called into question the normal—and often institutionalized—ways of belonging in a place.

In Chapter 5, I theorize the stability of place in environmental and economic sociology by contemplating the place of *home* in a contemporary society that is always on the move. This chapter intervenes in the familiar tale of deindustrialization by interrogating the formation, persistence, and contemporary interpretations of identities of people who still live in places that were constructed around the mobility of capital. Certain structural and material forms of stability may permit residential persistence in the face of erratic employment. In resource-extractive and manufacturing landscapes, homeownership, low-income work, and declined housing values might materially permit—or require—long-term residency. Close-knit social worlds, narratives of choice, and physical landscapes overlap with forms of material security to serve as frameworks for residents to feel at home. To understand the identities and futures of people who still live in the American Rust Belt, we must see how the bundle of social networks, place meanings, and material ties comprise an individual's sense of home.

Finally, Chapter 6 discusses how, long after company closure, natural resources—as idea and

structure—continue to do work in post-industrial places. When the devaluation of the founding natural resource threatened the identities and structures created by natural resource capitalism, long-term residents played an important role in reproducing and reinterpreting the past. I show how long-term residents remake their place, building on the infrastructures and cultural frameworks of the past to re-envision what I term *natural resource identities*. Rural and urban cases experienced natural resources in different ways—like the extraction of iron in Wisconsin, and the use of water, air, and land in Chicago. In both locations, residents favored natural resource projects as solutions to the problems of deindustrialization—albeit with different emphases. Wisconsin residents lean into origin stories as rationales for supporting new mining. Mining is "in the blood," as much a symbolic project as a material one. But in Chicago, residents grapple with a more complex legacy of environmental injustice. While open to new industries, they seek to use post-industrial land in ways that both minimize pollution and honor industrial pasts. In both rural and urban sites, residents are expanding their natural resources identities to include use of nature for tourism—an alternative commodification of nature that promises to return symbolic—if not economic—value to their places. People are trying to reclaim their place-based identities from industrial limits by trying to bring people to them through tourism that involves nature. Considering the shifting meanings of natural resources across urban and rural locations illuminates the complexities of options facing people who stay in places long after their commodity moves on.

5.0. Contributions

This dissertation also offers several contributions. First, it provides methodological gains. Considering rural and urban as part of an encompassing comparison brings a needed, regional analysis of change to both environmental sociology *and* scholarship on deindustrialization. I'd argue that contemporary environmental, economic, and political crises demand a serious and systematic

reckoning of the fissures between cities and their ever-expanding peripheries. America's rural-urban divide has never seemed greater—as illustrated by the large geographic disparities in support for Donald Trump in the 2016 election. But, considering data from both rural and urban enabled me to see that it is not just rural people who have natural resource identities; certain urban communities may have more commonalities with rural settings than previously considered. Part of my broader research agenda is to develop better tools for analyzing the connections and fissures between these regions.

Second, this project encourages new questions about how certain segments of society cope with socio-environmental change. This study speaks to broader cases of non-mobilization or social conflict—situations where the way that working-class people related to the environment in the past might make it hard for them to adjust to new contexts, such as climate change, food insecurities, disasters, or new generations of deindustrialization.

Finally, this research trajectory probes the relationship between the historical structures of capitalism and the socio-environmental negotiations of both work and home. "To economists," Irwin (2016) wrote, "53,700 jobs churned each year is a small cost to be paid for a richer overall economy. But there's an obligation to think about individual lives. Life isn't just about money, and jobs aren't just about income. A sense of stability, of purpose, of social standing—all these things matter in ways that economic models don't do a very good job of taking into account…. Dynamism and efficiency sound a lot better to people who are confident they'll always end up being winners." This dissertation interrogates the actors and processes of place in order to illuminate how, precisely, the economy and social life overlap long after jobs end. More specifically, this research will demonstrate how the cultures and structures of natural resource capitalism constrain and enable both identity and economic futures. To understand the winners and losers of contemporary

capitalism, we must articulate what constitutes places that were constructed in the image of particular industries.

Chapter 2: Making places for capitalism: The actors and processes of the space-to-place transformation, 1875-1900

1.0. Introduction

I pull myself up to the passenger seat of a rusty Dodge truck. 29-year-old Justin shifts into low gear and points the headlights towards a four-foot path in the woods: an old railroad bed. He abruptly turns up a steep hill of ore tailings. When the truck levels we slide out and walk fifteen feet towards the fire bell perched above the company town of Montreal, Wisconsin. The silence is striking, as is the sparseness of house and road. Forty years after the last iron ore left for Chicago, Iron County, Wisconsin is perhaps more remote than it has been since the 19th century.

400 miles south and a few months later, Louisa waves her hand out of the window as she guides her car over the sidewalk and onto a gravel road. "This mill," she says, "built the steel for the John Hancock, the Sears Tower—that came out of our industry." I get out to walk under the shadow of the cement walls between which cranes dumped coal, coke, and iron pellets. I touch graffiti painted by one of the tens of thousands of people who worked here and hear the staccato of Lake Michigan smacking against the corrugated metal walls of the ore dock. But there are no workers; there is no mill. Instead, here are six hundred acres of Chicago lakeshore property sitting empty, polluted, and restricted.

Doreen Massey (1995) once argued that place is not only constituted by what is internal to it, but by its distinct lines of connection to other parts of the world. By definition, place is a landscape imbued with meaning through social relations. A place is different from another on the basis of its

relations to the outside. Herein lies the conundrum: what remains of a place without its economic raison d'être? To understand processes of displacement and decline—and the lived experiences of people who still call deindustrialized places home—we need to understand who first created these connections of capital, and to what ends. The story of Iron County, Wisconsin and southeast Chicago, Illinois begins with their connection in the late 1870s. In this chapter, using the 19th century, American steel boom and consequential in-migration of European laborers as a starting point, I unveil the processes and actors that initiated the spatial, economic, and cultural formation of place. A historical analysis of the genesis of social meaning in particular locations—both in terms of infrastructure and as an idea—can give us insight into the practical, long term implications of place, post-economic raison d'être.

This chapter offers the necessary historical context for the social, economic, and environmental changes wrought upon the cases central to my study during the American industrial revolution. I focus on the era of market expansion occurring between 1875 and the turn of the 20th century. In telling the intertwined environmental, economic, and social histories of both rural and urban sites central to this project, I draw on historical archives to understand how and why these communities were founded, and what actors were involved. To understand what remains of a place without its economic raison d'être, we have to be able to articulate the specific structural and ideological processes, as initiated and controlled by certain actors, responsible for transforming abstract space into meaningful place. I contend that the early years of American mass production of steel, industrial corporations played an important and far too undervalued role in shaping not only employment relations, but also the physical landscapes, social relations, and thus, long-term outcomes of both work and home. The companies central to this project created *place* as they transformed relatively unsettled landscapes into social worlds—worlds which reproduced both labor

and commodity-specific, political economies. As I will argue throughout this dissertation, there are lasting consequences to capitalist organizations organizing both the structure and culture of place.

My dissertation focuses on two cases of this industrial transformation in the American Midwest: a steel manufacturer in Chicago, Illinois and an iron mine in northern Wisconsin. In the late 1800s, both sites were intentionally transformed by capitalist institutions from a remote fur trading post and a marshland peripheral to the city of Chicago—respectively—into two nodes of the Midwestern iron and steel commodity chain. Certain American industrial companies connected regional commodity chains, created infrastructures, and, with their employees, co-constituted the social worlds of both work and home. Through that process, companies transformed abstract relations within and across geographies into rationalized and recognizable places of overwhelmingly European-American social life. Spatial processes, such as the emergence and disintegration of commodity chains—of greatest interest to this project—take place in particular places. The material relations of the production of space are lived and storied by particular individuals and groups. Specific actors have more power over place than others to establish the infrastructures, social relations, and symbolic representations of place (Lefebvre 1991). In my cases, companies were the actors of place.

To illuminate how companies established and consolidated their power over work and home, I consider three interlocking puzzles that emerge from my cases locations of Chicago and Wisconsin. In the following pages, I ask: 1) how did private companies gain power over extractive and manufacturing landscapes during the American industrial revolution? 2) what work did infrastructural, place-based paternalism do for companies? and, 3) how did the processes and practices of paternalism shape the structures and ideologies of worker communities? Since capitalism fundamentally depends on labor, and the reproduction and management of labor requires

some social stability and functional provisions of everyday necessities, companies used specific strategies of place-making to construct worker communities. I show that large companies gained power over their iron and steel commodity chains through monopolistic maneuvers and by taking advantage of the relative isolation of their new, industrial landscapes.

Companies invested in infrastructures, such as housing, to solve two problems: the logistical problems of creating new industry on unsettled territory, and the managerial problems of potential labor unrest. Between 1875 and 1900, both rural and urban firms in this study provided laborers free or subsidized housing, health care, garden space, entertainment, fuel, loans, and transportation infrastructures. In the process of consolidating control over both work and home, companies constructed the social and symbolic bounds of their worker communities in ways that would shape expectations of class, conceptions of worker rights, and ideas of race and gender well into the 20th century. The origin story of many industrial communities, then, is the history of company power over place.

2.0. Theoretical framing

This chapter brings two lines of scholarship into conversation with the existing knowledge about the processes of industrialization and economic change: *place* and *paternalism*. Thinking about the actors and processes of transforming abstract space into place challenges us to orient the strategies of both companies and their laborers within their environmental, as well as socioeconomic, histories. Thinking about paternalism illuminates the strategic logic industrial firms used to shape their environments, and their workers, in the image of capitalism. Although rural scholars have long linked the role of geographical remoteness with company control over landscape,

community, and work (see Harrison & Lloyd 2012; Ashwood & MacTavish 2016; Barabdiaran 2017; Deller & Schreiber 2012, few commentators contemplate the role of elites of capital in influencing the genesis of spatial, relational, and social inequalities. I will show, in the coming pages, how the industrial firms with the most to gain from the commodification of iron and steel used spatial contexts, financial power, and control over laborers' work and home to shape particular locations into places entirely oriented around continued company success.

2.1. Place: Connection and construction

In the tradition of human geographers, place differs from space; while space refers to geographical regions, place articulates a layer of social meaning: geography imbued with economic histories, social relationships, and cultural landmarks (Lefebvre 1991; Massey 1995). In the American Midwest, the external connections of iron and steel, expansions of control over landscapes, and the internal construction of laborer communities *created* places. Lines of connection create reasons for social meaning to settle upon a particular place; when those lines of connection are between nodes of a commodity chain, the processes of "flows and interconnections" of capital at once constructs a place materially and culturally, with social meaning (Massey 1994).

The establishment and regularization of these flows and interconnections, and their stable laborer communities, were hardly inevitable; the political economic thought of the 19th century viewed the unification of isolated, local markets into one, national economy as a natural result of markets' innate tendencies to expand (Gibson-Graham 1996). As Polanyi (1944) argued, the consolidation of capital was never a natural, spontaneous, or unplanned phenomenon. State actors and elites of capitalism pursued political economic agendas that would maximize profits. Attempts to free the market from constraints require legislative actions (Block and Somers 2014). In the late

19th century, the national expansion of industrial markets was enabled by a combination of technological development and relatively decentralized states willing to lease or sell underdeveloped tracts of land to powerful and capital-rich companies (Novak 2008; Manuel 2013). Throughout the first decades of the commodification of iron, companies claimed significant power to construct, control, and monopolize place. Natural resource companies, in particular, pursued profits by exploiting the "locally and temporally specific" limitations of political control over processes of labor (Bunker and Ciccantell 2005, 7). The formation of iron and steel, and the consequential development of new nodes of social life, or places, along that commodity chain reveals the power of capital at particular historical moments.

In the cases central to my project, origin stories of place, as recognizable today, were initiated in the late 19th century through the commodification of nature and people's labor. The profitable commodification of nature and labor required the simultaneous stabilization and portability of raw materials. On one hand, raw materials and the people who dug them up or process them were located in a specific place—a rural iron range or an urban steel mill site, for instance. The siting of those sites was contingent, in part, on place-specific requirements: steel mills must be located on large tracts of land, peripheral to densely populated areas and adjacent to water and rail transportation hubs (Cronon 1991; Brody 1970). Iron mine shafts were sunk where geology, land rights, and water flows were optimized (Alanen 1979; Ciccantell, Smith, and Seidman 2005; Bunker and Ciccantell 2005; Lockie et al. 2009). Once established, new industrial companies needed to consolidate power over competitors by vertically integrating their supply chains and forming powerful oligopolies to manage an unstable and increasingly competitive national market. This forward march of economic progress was, it seemed, linked with the greater spatial and temporal abstraction of commodity chains beyond the constraints of the local.

On the other hand, the actual processes of production, however, took place within very specific communities of workers. Peripheral and relatively isolated from the core centers of economic trade and population, new mill and mine towns likely seemed to iron and steel company elites like blank slates upon which industrial companies might write their preferred cultural, social, and political order. For some managers, residents and workers were best collapsed into one category and housed in locations sited near enough to allow for easy commutes and uninterrupted shifts. How did these companies organize life for day-to-day residents and workers? Through varieties of paternalism.

2.2. Paternalism in capitalism

Paternalism offered a managerial approach that allowed company management to construct and control both physical landscapes and cultural modes of social relations in these nascent communities. In its broadest sense, paternalism refers to actions interfering or limiting an individual's or group's autonomy, motivated by a "claim that the person interfered with will be better off or protected from harm" (Dworkin 2017). According to Dworkin's (2017) broad definition of paternalism, in exchange for enacting protection, the paternalistic authority—either government or company—suspend select rights of an individual or group. In the lacuna of full freedom to select options, both harmful and beneficial, the authority offers constrained alternatives that are intended to guide, shelter, or benefit the individual or group whose rights were suspended. Company-based paternalism emerged from early 19th century utopian socialist movements in England and France (Dworkin 2017; Arneson 1989; Thompson 1963). Rooted in commitment to the concept that a better version of capitalism was possible through the beneficial actions of elites, company paternalism attempted to pursue a good capitalism which would mitigate the "vagaries,

uncertainties, anxieties, stresses, and ultimately social, emotional, and material insecurity" of industrialization (D. Brown 2010, 66).

Philosophical adherents to the promise of a moral economy pursued this principle to its extreme. For instance, in the 18th and early 19th centuries, businessman-philosopher Robert Owen decried the dehumanizing impacts of industrialization on laborers. As an early textile mill manager in both Scotland and Indiana, he designed utopian-styled communities for his employees characterized by shorter workdays, educational opportunities for workers and their children, and clean and communal housing (Owen 1874). Owen's Indiana mill town succeeded for two decades before going bankrupt, but inspired other paternalistic models for that eventually would be recognized as 'company towns.' The company town of Pullman, one mile to the west of my case in Chicago, exemplified the fine line between paternalistic care and exploitation. George Pullman had built the town in 1880 for his train-manufacturing laborers, interested in testing the "theory that if the company's workers lived in a beautiful, clean, liquor- and sin-free environment, the company would prosper" (Knight 2005). His complete provision of housing, stores, transportation, and employment gained praise from social reformers, politicians, and journalists across the country. Jane Addams would later recall how Pullman was "dined and feted throughout Europe . . . as a friend and benefactor of workingmen" (Knight 2005; Alanen 1979). Even though Pullman was upheld as an exemplar of moral capitalism, in practice, paternalism constrained the freedoms of its members in troublesome ways. The Pullman Company exercised complete control over community issues that elsewhere were dealt with by an elected government; company policy forbade anyone to buy a house, labor meetings were banned, and company spies were everywhere. Frustrated by these structural elements of paternalism, as well as by across-the-board twenty to forty percent wage cuts

Pullman levied, without reducing rents and other company-town expenses, workers Pullman's employees walked off the shop floor and out of their company community in 1896.[4]

Cautioned by Pullman's ultimately unpopular experiment in creating a paternalistic total institution for employees, late 19th and early 20th-century industrial firms selected only a handful of paternalistic practices. This more pragmatic company paternalism focused on offering "services which an employer may render to his work people over and above the payment of wages" (John Commons (1903), in Jacoby 1998).[5] At its heart, this less philosophically-concerned paternalism "allowed the industrialists to address pragmatic concerns in the garb of philanthropy," (Hamilton 1989, 73)—concerns dominated, in the first decades of settlement and new industry, by the immediate needs of consolidating power over competing firms and arranging a functioning community for a large population of laborers on a formerly unsettled territory (Alanen 1979). The amenities and services of company paternalism ranged from pedestrian necessities, such as housing, food, and fuel, to public goods such as company doctors and communal garden and grazing space. Later, the logistical problems facing companies would include issues of managing labor unrest and turnover (Sinyai 1996; Reynolds 2017; Reynolds and Dawson 2011) and avoiding state or social reformer interference (Klein 2006; Cohen 2008). Thus, in the 20th century, company paternalism transformed into welfare capitalism—a more contractualized form of non-income, employment-based benefits ranging from loans and credit to insurance and representation.

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[4] As a group, Pullman workers were not unionized, but workers in neighboring industries who were engaged in sympathy strikes in support. Most significantly, the American Railway Union asked their rail workers not to service trains pulling Pullman cars. This boycott, although centered in Chicago, crippled railroad traffic nationwide and was only stopped by a federal injunction (Knight 2005).

[5] There is fascinating scholarship on the motivations, justifications, and historical contexts of paternalism in industry that space does not allow me to review. See E.P. Thompson (1963) on moral economies; Alston and Ferrie (1999) on southern American paternalism; Alanen (1979) on upper midwestern mining towns; and Joyce (1980)on the Victorian era, for starters. Most of these scholars share Arneson's (1989) view: doubtful that the "authority responsible for legislating paternalistic rules is itself motivated solely by impartial respect for principles of public morality" (p.421).

It is key to realize that throughout its history in the United States, company-based paternalism was by definition *voluntary*. When the US government increased their regulatory authority over workplace health and safety measures or unionization, companies simply shifted the definition of paternalism to involve other, complementary benefits for workers. The voluntary nature (or at least, framing) of paternalism enabled companies' unrestricted, top-down control of both work and home. Perhaps companies could voluntarily offer non-income benefits in addition to income, but workers had less autonomy to select out of participating in, or relying on, certain paternalistic benefits. Of particular focus in this chapter is what I term infrastructural paternalism—the earliest era of company investment in the landscape, articulated through the construction of housing and transportation infrastructures. Infrastructures bring into interaction people and things into complex networks upon which operate economic and social systems (Graham and Marvin 2001). When they are organized around the flows of capital, infrastructures can help certain actors cultivate legibility, compliance, and order in a place (e.g. Alanen 1979; Arneson 1989; Tone 1997). In nascent industrial communities, elites of capital were also elites of government: they rationalized and organized control over nature by organizing the processes of commodity chain function and constructing housing and transportation infrastructures. In the lacuna of a strong state or local government, company elites played a vital role in shaping where houses were to be located, who was permitted to live in them, where roads would be located, what sites would be classified as residential or industrial, and where boundaries may lie.

Infrastructural paternalism was both symptom and site of the reproduction of company power over the material and cultural formation of place. By organizing the space of social life, firms controlled "all relevant relations among members" (Kanter 1968) and defined the "set of values and priorities shared by its inhabitants" (Goldenberg and Wekerle 1972, 224). Companies adopting paternalistic strategies could and did order the racial, class, and gendered dynamics of their

communities. Local managers institutionalized bias as they controlled who lived in company-sponsored housing or benefited from company-sponsored programing. Workers were simply beneficiaries, and thus subjects, of an amoral, vertically integrated economic project designed to maximize capitalistic profits. From the origins of iron and steel commodity chain development in the American industrial revolution, the market was the central and animating character in the story of new, industrial communities.

In order to understand the long-term consequences of industrialization and deindustrialization of these landscapes, we need to grasp how the social structures of capital and labor are institutionalized in particular spatial forms. In the late 19th century, iron and steel companies created the structures and cultures of specific communities by controlling place and instituting paternalism. When American steel became a highly-profitable industry in the second half of the 19th century, paternalism solved the logistical problem of controlling and constructing place. As I turn to the empirical data for this argument, I highlight this process of power over place. I will show that the earliest forms of infrastructural paternalism required and applied on the newly settled landscapes of southeast Chicago and northern Wisconsin constructed dependence between worker and employer, and set up consequential vulnerabilities for laborer communities.

3.0. Data

To illuminate how and why companies established and consolidated power over both work and home, I bring historical evidence to bear on three puzzles: first, through what mechanisms and processes did private companies gain power over extractive and manufacturing in the late 19th century; second, why companies invested in company paternalism; and third, how companies and

workers co-constituted their paternalistic, worker communities. I first explain the national context for steel and iron, and then demonstrate how the cases central to my dissertation situate within the national boom in steel and in immigration. Then I describe how large companies created places for capitalism through monopolistic maneuvers and by taking advantage of the relative isolation of their new, industrial landscapes. Then, I turn to how both rural and urban companies central to this study used paternalistic strategies infrastructures to solve the problems of creating new industry on unsettled territory and rising social discord within their laborer population. Finally, I show how companies constructed the social and symbolic bounds of their worker communities in ways that would echo beyond the lifespan of the industry.

3.1. Places created for capitalism

In the late 1800s, an America still healing from the Civil War turned its attention to the unifying project of westward expansion, urbanization, and collective prosperity. Entrepreneurs in the American Middle West were eager to lead the charge towards a new and more profitable 20th century. The industrial revolution, and in particular, "the displacement of wood by iron for structural purposes," as one contemporary observer noted, bound together city and country across railroads, shipping routes, and immigration paths (Legler 1898). The invention of the Bessemer steel refining process in 1864 allowed steelmakers to produce vast quantities of high quality and inexpensive mass-produced steel to meet the growing demand of a young, ambitious, and always-warring nation (Annual Report 1910; Wisconsin Historical Society 1886). Although there were economic risks in investing in new technologies for a commodity with historically unstable pricing, the rewards were too tempting for established companies, entrepreneurs, and laborers alike to ignore. The Bessemer process rewarded capitalists willing to invest in places with certain landscape characteristics, and in a new form of industrial work: mass production. Not only did speculative firms need to purchase capital-intensive equipment to take advantage of the increasing demand—

and price—for steel, but managers needed to build mills near cheap and efficient transportation options and establish, house, and subdue a vast army of willing labor.

Keen to break the hold of Pittsburgh's Carnegie on the iron and steel business, Midwestern industrial firms took control over vast, previously little-developed landscapes and imported thousands of workers (Manuel 2013; Longworth 1982). Entrepreneurs eager to build large steel mills in Illinois, Ohio, and Indiana selected inexpensive and little-developed sites near transportation hubs, while the discovery of rich mining deposits brought settlement to rural regions nearby (Bluffington 1930; Casson 1907). Once a steel mill was built, and mine shaft sunk, Midwestern firms recruited experienced miners and foremen from Europe, advertised laborer positions at immigration hubs, and relied on family and ethnic networks to bring new immigrants to hiring locations in the Midwest (Magnaghi 1987; Alanen 1979). Already, the United States was already an attractive destination for immigrant laborers and their families, with 25 million immigrants arriving unhindered through Ellis and Angel Islands between the Civil War and World War I.[6] The steel and iron industries contributed significantly to midwestern population growth. Between 1860 and 1900, the population in Illinois jumped from 1.7 million to 4.8 million, and in Wisconsin, from 776,000 to 2.1 million (U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing n.d.).

The cases central to this study exemplify this context of place-based, natural resource focused, economic expansion. In northern Wisconsin and its neighboring Michigan panhandle, there had been no notable settlement before the concomitant discoveries of high quality, magnetic hematite iron, and mass-production iron processing technologies. The Penokee-Gogebic Iron

[6] While the federal government restricted the influx of Asian immigrants at the turn of the 20th century, the nation preserved de-facto, open-borders for all European immigrants until a quota system was first established post-World War I through the Emergency Immigration of 1921 ("1921 Emergency Quota Law" n.d.).

Range, discovered in the 1870s, was approximately 300 miles from Wisconsin's growing southern cities of Madison and Milwaukee and not yet accessible by train or road. Lacking a local population to extract the ore, the development of this range depended entirely on the importation of both labor and management (Magnaghi 1987, 82). When geological reports confirmed that high quality, magnetic hematite could be extracted from the Proterozoic banded iron formation arcing through the Gogebic Range[7] and directly shipped to Bessemer smelters, the Northwoods transformed from a remote outpost into a destination (*The Herald* 1886). Speculator and booster John E. Burton declared that ore from this range "is worth more to the people than to uncover the hidden gold of Capt. Kidd or to raise the sunken treasure of the Spanish Main" (Legler 1898).

And indeed, "the people" came in search of their share of the "worth." When the mines were first opened, mining companies in the Lake Superior region imported "practically all the laborers necessary to carry on the operations and to start new developments" (Dillingham et al. 1910, 402). Between 1875 and 1890, the Ojibwe were pushed off their northern Wisconsin lands as laborers immigrated first from the nearby Marquette and Menomonie mining ranges in Minnesota, and then from Poland, Italy, Finland, and, as foremen, the English-speaking miners from the Cornish copper region of England. I want to note that the racial construction of this industrial community is interesting; while older documents analyze the integration of various "races" from Europe, all immigrants were white, and most were imported from elsewhere, even though blacks were able-bodied and seeking work in the Midwest by the late 19th century. Irish and English immigrants consistently emerged as foremen and superintendents, with the non-English-speaking of European immigrants "scattered and pretty thoroughly mixed all over the range, because of their arrival in recent years in such great numbers, and because of a tendency on the part of the employers

[7] Range is a regional term for major iron deposits.

to keep their labor well mixed in order to prevent the organization of unions and any labor agitation or strikes…"(Dillingham et al. 1910).

With such an influx of immigrants, the 40-mile-long Gogebic iron deposit was soon honeycombed with small villages, or "locations," clustered around pit-mining sites and separated from neighboring locations by miles of woods (United States Work Projects Administration 1938). The one city in northern Iron County expanded from 80 residents to nearly 2,500 in 1900; by 1920, it was nearing 10,000 residents (Harrington 1898, 19). By the time the county was incorporated by the state of Wisconsin in 1883, the landscape of the nascent Iron County was permanently changed: "The forests have given way to mining camps and towns, and a most bewildering transformation has taken place. In the palmy days of gold mining…there is no record of anything so wonderful as the Gogebic" ("Mountains of Iron" 1886).

Although the population of the city of Chicago as a whole far exceeded that of the rural case in this study, the geography of what became the southeast region of the city eerily echoed the social isolation so accepted in rural settings. Before steel mills clustered along the Calumet River, this region was a marshy portage way for several native American tribes and early fur traders and a hunting ground for white elites living in a young Chicago (Sellers 2006). After the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, new industrial plants were relegated to peripheral regions, such as the Calumet landscape sited fifteen miles south of the downtown Chicago's central business district. "Chicago's other river" was a good spot for industry, linking the Great Lakes to both the Gulf of Mexico and the St. Lawrence bay, and claiming a natural port and proximity to existing rail lines, which allowed for the easy "movement of ore and limestone to the docks and furnaces" (Keating 2005, 2008; Bluffington 1930, 1:15). As soon as the Bessemer process for mass-refining steel was introduced, the Joseph H. Brown Iron and Steel Company—later Wisconsin Steel—opened the first mill along the

Calumet River, soon followed by South Works of North Chicago Rolling Mill Company in 1880 (Sellers 2001).

Within a decade, the Calumet region transformed from peripheral marshland to a valued addition to the city. The city of Chicago formally integrated the region in the 1890s, and Germans, Swedes, Slovaks, Croatians, Serbs, and Italians immigrated to the Southeast Side for work through the turn of the 20th century (Kornblum 1974; Bensman and Lynch 1989; Bensman 2005). The economic boom of the steel industry employed as many as presented themselves for work. Between 1875 and 1920, the Chicago steel industry expanded by 107 percent—nearly twice the rate of growth of the steel industry in the whole of the United States (Bluffington 1930). In 1920, the Calumet river's eight steel mills were employing 75,000 workmen, nearly half of whom were foreign-born (Bluffington 1930). Once "the spark of the steel industry was kindled," declared a midcentury advertisement for the Chicago steel industry, that spark "magnified itself into the open-hearth furnaces and roaring Bessemer converters which as night set a torch to the skies for miles around—a symbol of the industrial center that the community's early founders had hoped and planned for" (McIntyre 1951, 5).

The establishment of new, industrial commodity chains between the relatively isolated rural and urban landscapes was made possible through transportation. Railroad firms saw opportunities to increase their profits during the rush for Bessemer steel. Chicago, Illinois, was already a hub for the railroad, and railroad companies competed to provide spurs near new steel mills. A public-private coalition began the process of widening the Calumet River to receive boats of coal and ore from the northern Great Lakes (Keating 2008). Concurrently, Chicago and Northwestern, the highest earning railroad in Wisconsin in the late 19th century, laid track through Iron County and built the Ashland Ore Dock to accommodate large and heavy freighters (Marek 2015). While the absolute population

gains in Chicago far outpaced those in more rural Wisconsin (with the influx of immigrant labor for steel, in part, propelling the population of the city from 300,000 in 1870 to 2.7 million in 1920), the cases central to this study experienced common patterns of economic growth and connection across landscapes formerly unsettled.

3.2. Consolidating power through vertical integration and corporate oligopoly

In the decade after the initial establishment of iron and steel nodes of the commodity chain, industrial leaders in both rural and urban sites pursued vertical integration of the iron and steel commodity chain, and consolidation of power by creating steel monopolies or oligopolies. Steel magnates realized that incorporating raw materials into a firms' supply chain allowed that company to secure control over both supply and price. In 1892, Andrew Carnegie's steel empire initiated the trend of vertical integration of steel manufacturers into mine ownership. Capital-rich industrial barons quickly followed suit, as Inland Steel, Republic Steel, and National Steel bought Lake Superior mines with the intent to synchronize their supply chains (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 91; Alanen 1979). In the process of vertically integrating supply chains, companies were able to price out smaller investors and gain more control over the steel and iron market.

In Wisconsin, E.W. Oglebay, one of Oglebay Norton's founders, traveled to Iron County in 1885, "interested in the efforts to produce ore from the new discovery by means of a small open pit" (United States Work Projects Administration 1938, 288). He proposed that Oglebay Norton serve as an intermediary with steel companies, an ore-selling agent tasked with managing the most productive mines on behalf of steel companies. Posed thus as a key component of a vertically integrated steel process, industrialists sent representatives to the Gogebic Range in Wisconsin to

negotiate ore deliveries from Cleveland's Oglebay Norton.[8] For instance, John D. Rockefeller hired Oglebay Norton to "dig the ore out" from his Gogebic mines, and "send it to market" via their Bessemer freighters (Oglebay Norton 1979, 6).[9] Between 1893 and 1898, a series of economic crises loosened smallholder ownership on dig sites throughout the range. By 1900, Oglebay Norton managed and owned the five most promising pit and shaft mines in Iron County via its local subsidiary, the Montreal Mining Company (Harrington 1898; National Register of Historic Places 2016) and owned thirty-eight ore freighters "carrying 3.5 million tons of in one season" (Oglebay Norton 1979, 6).

Urban manufacturing centers similarly experienced consolidation by vertical integration and oligopoly. In 1902, Chicago's International Harvester—a new amalgamation of three Chicago-based agricultural machinery companies, McCormick, Deering, and Plano—purchased Brown's Mill to serve as a captive source of steel bars for its reapers and tractors. "[F]earing that (Carnegie's U.S. Steel) would use its market power to raise prices artificially…Harvester organized its own steel division" (Bensman and Lynch 1989, 43). International Harvester owned all components of the steel commodity chain: iron and coal mines, Great Lakes freighters, ironworks, steel mills, and final manufacturing sites. International Harvester controlled more than 80 percent of world production in grain harvesting equipment, and, at its peak in the 1920s and 1930s, managed six major

[8] Although the firm would remain a notable presence on the Wisconsin Gogebic Range, Oglebay Norton's Montreal Mining Company remained one of the smaller operations in the Lake Superior mining district of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

[9] John D. Rockefeller bought ore lands in 1884 in the Gogebic and wrote to David Norton: "Davey, I've bought some ore land and want to dig the ore out and send it to market…I want you to sell my ore…"; Oglebay was already managing and selling ore from mines in the Upper Peninsula. By the turn of the 20th century, "the Bessemer fleet of ore carriers numbered 38 vessels, carrying 3.5 million tons of in one season. Cleveland's iron ore industry had risen from a few companies and 800 people to several hundred companies employing some 8,000 workers" (Oglebay Norton 1979, p.6). By 1901, the founders, Oglebay and Norton, were both wealthy enough to retire, but stayed on in leadership until 1924. Crispin Oglebay, the nephew, was elected president. In 1960, Oglebay Norton bought the taconite mines in Minnesota that would eventually put the company's deep shaft mines out of business (Oglebay Norton 1962).

manufacturing facilities in the Chicago area in addition to its steel mill and employing nearly 20,000 workers (Kornblum 1974).

This dramatic vertical integration of United States' iron and steel, both across and within the largest industrial companies, was completed by the turn of the 20th century. The 1893 financial panic ruined small iron and steel companies and intensified the consolidation of the largest companies. In the last decade of the 19th century, there were eleven mergers involving nearly two hundred independent companies, and by 1900, only four steel companies controlled nearly three-quarters of the Lake Superiors region's iron ore output (Reynolds and Dawson 2011).[10] Such reduced competition depressed iron ore prices. Non-Bessemer ore, "which had sold for as high as $8 a ton in Cleveland in 1880 and $5.25 in 1890, by 1898 sold for only $1.85" (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 95).[11] But, since vertically-integrated steel companies' "primary focus was on making a profit converting iron ore to steel, not mining and selling iron ore," steel firms were unconcerned by local impacts of depressed ore prices (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 93). Rather, the handful of steel and iron magnates remaining after the consolidations of the late 19th century were, according to one booster of the steel industry, "flung upon the golden thrones of an international empire of steel" (Casson 1907, 7).

Private companies gained power over extractive and manufacturing landscapes during the American industrial revolution by establishing new industrial centers on relatively isolated landscapes, vertically integrating supply chains, and consolidating company control over the national

[10] In 1901, Rockefeller sold most of his mines to Carnegie's U.S. Steel Corporation, further consolidating Carnegie's influence on steel pricing and availability. It is unclear if Rockefeller owned mineral rights to what would become the Montreal Mine, but Oglebay Norton maintained control of the Montreal until its eventual closure. See Reynolds & Dawson (2011).

[11] Similarly, employment in neighboring Michigan's iron mines decreased from 17,000 in 1892 to 3,500 in 1893 (a year later). Remaining miners experienced cuts in pay, from $2.43 per day in 1892 to $1.54 by late 1893. (Reynolds n.d.; Reynolds and Dawson 2011).

market through oligopolies. This forward march of economic progress was linked with the greater spatial and temporal abstraction of commodity chains. The actual processes of production, however, took place within local and social contexts. On the ground, managers had to control, house, communicate with, and reward hundreds of workers employed in large-scale extractive and manufacturing projects. Large-scale employment meant large-scale losses if and when workers struck, rioted, or simply quit. How did companies address issues of control over their new, immigrant populations? I turn now to the localized use of paternalism to lay claim to the final frontier of company power: the laborer.

3.3. Infrastructural paternalism: Solving logistical problems and managing laborers

Companies invested in infrastructures, such as housing, to solve two problems: the logistical problems of creating new industry on unsettled territory, and the managerial problems of potential labor unrest. First, paternalism, in its most place-based and infrastructural form, was used in the decades between the 19th century American industrial revolution the early 20th century as a strategy to address the limited infrastructural development of desirable industrial locations. As demonstrated above, both Chicago and Wisconsin experienced a lack of existing state and local infrastructure for their new, mass working class. Neither cases were incorporated into their respective city and state jurisdictions until the mid-1880s. Indeed, the application of paternalistic practices across urban, manufacturing spaces and rural extractive contexts illustrates the similarities of their needs during and immediately following the Industrial Revolution. Company investment in material structures provided these nascent villages infrastructures and work-contingent social safety nets that they otherwise would have lacked. Companies quite literally created the substance and structures of a place for the people who lived there—a capitalist town for wage-laborers.

Second, paternalism was a strategy to secure a labor force and rationalize company control over workers. Paternalism allowed firms to better control production costs by securing a flexible and easily managed mass labor force. While building housing, paying for fuel, providing doctors and police, and planning community development all required significant upfront investments for firms, such non-wage-based rewards were easily rendered inaccessible to workers by management and thus useful tools of employee control.[12] Material investments in place by companies constructed compliant workers more content with—or, less able to complain about—the inequalities and unevenness of wage labor.

In the process of coping with these troublesome side effects of rapid economic growth, however, companies sowed the seeds of classed, gendered, and racialized differences in worker communities. By linking (male) employment in iron or steel to access to non-income benefits necessary for the reproduction of labor, such as housing or health care, firms controlled class aspirations. Through exploiting gendered tendencies of early 20th-century family structures, Oglebay Norton managed labor unrest. And, by limiting racial integration, International Harvester's Wisconsin Steel maintained community stability in its close-knit, mill gate community. Certainly, employees co-constituted their communities as they imported their own expectations and preferences. But the paternalistic construction of the infrastructures of daily life cultivated not only material dependence but also a complex, symbolic interconnection between people and one company.

[12] As Carlson (2014) summarized, paternalistic western mining companies made little effort to conceal that while they "wanted to create a better life for their employees: decent housing, good schools, and a "morally uplifting" society…In return, they expected stable, hard-working employees who would eschew the evils of drink and, most important, not fall prey to the blandishments of union organizers" (p.190)

3.3.1 Wisconsin: A company town for company men

Lacking any preexisting infrastructure at the turn of the 20th century, the steel companies mining the Upper Midwest's Gogebic range embraced the formal company town concept, renting bunks to single men and small bungalows to families and allocating nearby farm and pasture spaces for subsistence agriculture (Alanen 1979). In 1907, soon after purchasing Wisconsin's Montreal Mine, Oglebay, Norton, and Company imported fifty pre-cut bungalows to a deforested field near the mine shaft. Akin to other company-funded housing schemes in the region, the Montreal's houses were well-constructed and rarely vacant, "simple, but warm and dry, and…quite an improvement on the usual ones not owned by the company" (Reynolds n.d., quoting a miner in Michigan, 1881). As their mine continued to require more laborers, however, Oglebay Norton coordinated with an industrial landscape architect, Oglebay's local representatives, the Montreal Mining Company, planned a town: "from the layout of the streets, to the shape and size of the houses, to the inclusion of a high-class recreation center" (National Register 2016; Montreal Mining Company 1922). "[O]f the 400 homes in the city, 140 neat frame buildings are owned by the company and rented to miners at a cost of $1.50 a room per month. The other homes have been built on property leased to the owners by the company" (R. Werner 1939).

Whether or not they lived in company houses, residents had to abide by the rules of their company-based city council. No taverns were permitted in the town, nor were children allowed outside after dark except to attend movies hosted at the company-run Hamilton Club recreation center (Mossey, n.d.). Miners were instructed on the direction to plant their vegetable rows and when to let their cows out to graze. Men walked home from the shaft entrance on streets paved with

tailings of iron ore and into white frame homes that were re-painted, landscaped, and redecorated "at company expense" every five years (R. Werner 1939). Even the sheets provided to miner-tenants emphasized the nature of their work: they were gray to minimize the unsightliness of the inevitable red stains from iron ore residue on miners' skin.

Since the company provided "the 1,800 residents of Montreal with a model community to live in" in an otherwise underdeveloped rural region, control over quotidian life was accepted by workers (R. Werner 1939). Many of my interviewees' stories pick up here. In the Iron County Historical Society building and around kitchen tables, interviewees described how such a paternalistic company town allowed workers and their families to experience the residential stability and resources more commonly associated with higher-class—and perhaps less remote—communities. The mining company offered benefits that felt luxurious to immigrant laborers: Christmas parties at the neighborhood schools, a free trolley to and from the local train station, healthcare, and low taxes (since the company itself paid the majority of county and state taxes). Such company care meant that laborers could and should put down roots; their economic, health, and social needs could be fulfilled within a several-mile radius of their company community.

Situating workers in a "model community" not only solved logistical problems of life in a remote region, but it also quelled labor unrest through gendered politics and close proximity. Prior to the construction of the town of Montreal, Gogebic range miners regularly walked out in protest of low pay. The immigrant community of "Red Finns" brought their "strong tradition of working-class politics back in Finland" to the iron range, coordinating small, socialist unions in strikes against the low pay, exhausting hours, and unsafe working conditions of late 19th century mine work (Liesch 2006, 79). In 1894, one such strike shut down nearly all the mines on the Gogebic range, ending

only when Michigan's governor dispatched National Guard troops to send workers home (Benzoni 1997, 143).[13]

Montreal Mining Company management also used their housing stock to suppress labor unrest. On one hand, company-controlled quarters helped the Montreal Mining Company to keep tabs on possible labor insurrections. Not only could Oglebay's Montreal Mining Company foremen arbitrarily fire workers expressing interest in organizing, but since the "Company owned the entire town, including workers' housing, labor activists could become both jobless and homeless" (Liesch 2006, 79). One interviewee mentioned that, for a period of time, the Company banned Red Finns from living in a Montreal house. On the other hand, Oglebay Norton hoped that providing housing and a planned town for their largest mine in the region might attract and maintain a "better class of workers,"—meaning married men inclined to pursue steady paychecks over strikes or violence (Oglebay Norton 1962). In these bungalows, men and their families lived next door to their bosses. As men labored, wives socialized and children attend school together with the families of foremen, constructing a community of tightly woven social networks and, consequentially, social control. Since miners were always men, and Montreal's preferred employee-resident was a married man, any labor unrest would impact the gendered family structure of the early 20th century. The Montreal Mining Company's intentional construction of a work-centered infrastructure and social world enabled the company to better resist challenges to the fundamental structure of capitalism. Any possible resistance to the status quo was "repelled, time and time again, by the power which surrounds and protects the beneficiaries of the inequalities" (Gaventa 1982; Shriver, Adams, and Messer 2014, 276).

[13] Other strikes were "short lived" because they were easily broken, according to one interviewee in Wisconsin, since "there was so many companies running at the same time" [sic].

3.3.2 Chicago: The white, mill gate neighborhood

The southeast Chicago neighborhood of South Deering was, for all intents and purposes, a company "village" for one of the first steel mills (Cohen 2008). In 1875, a row of houses—bordered on one side by the Calumet River and on the other side, the steel mill—was constructed by the mill's first owner, Joseph Brown, as worker housing. Steelworkers rented these rowhouses and walked from the village of "Irondale" to the mill. Workers also bought food on credit at a company store and attended churches warmed by coal donated by Brown himself (Bensman and Lynch 1989). When International Harvester bought Brown's mill in 1902 and built Wisconsin Steel in its stead, the company renamed Irondale as South Deering in honor of one of the other companies they had purchased. The community and steel mill remained the most isolated in the region, however, bordered by the Calumet River and with prairie stretching south until the next mill gate community (Cohen 2008; Keating 2005).

Cautioned by Pullman's troubled experiment of creating a paternalistic, total institution for employees, the mill's new management loosened their claims on Brown's company housing and stores. Wisconsin Steel focused instead on providing infrastructural goods and community development. The firm strung electric wires, laid gas lines, paved streets, groomed parkland, funded Christmas parties, and subsidized fuel for their employees and their newly established churches, schools, and clubs. Management also established community garden and livestock grazing lands in between the Wisconsin Steel mill and the rowhouses on 95th—a gesture that suggests the persistence of immigrant notions of rurality (Bensman and Lynch 1989, 39).

In exchange for this benevolence, Wisconsin Steel expected calm labor relations and constant work.[14] The company carried with it not only lessons learned from Pullman, but also the violence experienced at one of its subsidiaries, McCormick. In 1886, but Chicago police, summoned by company management, violently clashed with Knights of Labor strikers at the McCormick plant. Strikers protested this unnecessary show of police force at Chicago's Haymarket Square the following day, but the violence escalated; a bomb killed seven policemen, and police fired into the crowd and injured protesters (Kornblum 1974; Bensman 2005). McCormick was incorporated into International Harvester in 1902, a handful of years before the firm acquired Brown's mill. But the repercussions of this conflict doubtless informed the careful way that International Harvest's Wisconsin Steel interacted with workers.

The overlap of community and workplace shaped the labor dynamics of Wisconsin Steel's South Deering in ways that made it different from its steel and manufacturing neighbors. Throughout its existence, more than three-quarters of the men who worked in the Mill lived in South Deering (Cohen 2008; Bensman 2005; Bensman and Lynch 1989). Because of this overlap, Wisconsin Steel's management was still able to play a role in maintaining a cohesive worker community even without outright ownership of most of the houses. They did so by limiting who they hired.

In its earliest days, Irondale was populated by Irish, Welsh, and English, soon followed by Swedes and Germans. After 1900, new settlers arrived to the southeast Chicago region from eastern and southern Europe, and Blacks and Mexicans settled in the region after World War I. This pattern

[14] According to another oral history, the firm "was a good place to work years ago…always work, work, work, continuous. Other plants would have strikes, but never Wisconsin Steel." (Interview with Carl Koch, 1981, Southeast Chicago Historical Society, in Cohen 2008).

reflects that of Chicago as a whole—European-born immigrants comprised around 40% of the city's growing population in the late 19th century. Similar to rural industrializing communities, the steel mill communities on the Southeast Side of Chicago hosted more European immigrants than proportional for the entire city, with upwards of 70% of laborers new immigrants. Steel mill workers from the region themselves constructed or rented houses in ethnically-distinct, 'mill gate' communities—groups of residences built within walking distance of each steel mill. Every settlement claimed its own ethnic churches, clubs, and shops—most not English-speaking (Kornblum 1974). Blacks and Mexicans settled in their own neighborhoods, and they were initially employed only as strikebreakers but eventually integrated into the mill labor force. In general, however, steel mill foremen in the southeast side, Wisconsin Steel included, preferentially hired white Europeans who could communicate with their bosses and compatriots (Kornblum 1974).

Notably absent, from Wisconsin Steel's shop floor and neighborhood streets, were people of color. What was unusual was that Wisconsin Steel was the only International Harvester subsidiary and the steel mill in Chicago region to refuse full-time employment to blacks. Wisconsin Steel was the last mill in the region to hire black workers—refusing to do so until after World War II. Cohen (2008) suggests that this lack of integration was rooted in a desire for calm within the mill gate community. She explains that the company was "protective of their good relations with the communities in which they operated." While hiring blacks as lower-level workers "might've provided a cheap source of labor, that profit would have been at the cost of other workers' good will. In these "company towns," the reciprocity implicit in paternal relations gave employees real influence with employers on matters of race" (Cohen 2008, 35–36). Because white employees feared blacks as co-workers and as neighbors, managers at Wisconsin Steel plants accepted community prejudice and did not hire blacks. Wisconsin Steel's efforts to maintain control over their old guard of employees cut both ways: only white men and their families could benefit from the non-income,

paternalistic investments the firm poured into both mill and its residential community. Those workers' racialized preferences, and management's complicity with those desires, locked out entire groups from employment and integration.

In sum, in both cases, infrastructural paternalism was intended to minimize unrest and maximize profits. Both firms in this study "hoped that such amenities would undermine the attractiveness of labor activism and guarantee a more stable and tractable workforce" (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 95). In northern Wisconsin, a local newspaper acknowledged that Montreal's company town "managers are not giving the beautiful place in which to live entirely of a philanthropic motive, but consider the mutual benefits that will accrue inasmuch as a smaller turnover in labor makes for efficient operations and fewer mine accidents" (1923). Furthermore, company paternalism simply consolidated the primacy of company control over a locality and reframed employees as residents. By entangling the daily lives of workers and their families with the material investments and institutional organization of the company, firms constructed the continuity of both home and work as contingent on the company's continued benevolence. As the company provided for basic needs of life, beyond employment, only employees which fit into the shifting categories of "acceptable" workers experienced management's control as beneficence. Thus, the company town actually institutionalized inequalities based on prevailing gendered or racialized assumptions of the times. The employees who most benefited from paternalism (white men) co-constituted their communities along with their employer. That those social relations, and consequential values and biases, cultures and economies, and sentiments and resentments, were rooted and organized around place-based political economies seemed, at the time, unrelated to the lived experience of being a working family in steel and iron.

4.0. Conclusion

To understand the processes and consequences of the disconnection of these political economies, we need to understand what constitutes that place—both historical and present, material and symbolic. Place was fundamental to late 19th industrial companies and their workers in two lasting ways. First, the historical moment and environmental history of these locations allowed companies to expand and consolidate power over vast landscapes. As companies themselves conflicted and consolidated, "prices were formed less by free markets than by tests of power between great institutions" (Sinyai 1996, 95). Within relatively isolated contexts, iron and steel firms with enough capital monopolized control over entire regions by constructing laborer communities to revolve around the commodification of land and labor.

Second, by considering paternalism through the lens of place, we can understand how the company used place as a tool of spatial control. Spatial isolation enabled firms to establish a material and symbolic claim on newly industrialized locales, allowing corporations to create new, material and cultural institutions that reiterated the primacy of capitalism. By building infrastructures, paternalistic companies not only solved certain logistical issues emerging from new commodity chains, but they increased control over labor by rendering access to the physical stuff of both work and home contingent on the will of company management. By constructing self-contained, work-centered social worlds whose continued functionality required consistent, compliant, and orderly laborer-citizens, companies could attend to company-wide profit. In the process, companies constructed the terms and conditions of people belonging to a particular place.

Paternalism, however, failed to address root causes of inequalities in power and rights, nor did it allow subjects of paternalism to define which wants, needs, or moral problems their benefactor

should address. As the 20th century moved through several, concurrent depressions, the thousands of people employed in Chicago and Wisconsin's large mills and mines absorbed (with lessening contentment) the external risks of economic panics, depressions, and fluctuations in price and demand. Beyond the company, few other social safety nets existed. Progressive Era social reformers roused the American state and national labor movements to the needs of workers, large corporations faced new challenges to their power over landscapes and over laborers. The next chapter addresses the question: to what institution do workers—with their complex, non-economic needs—belong?

Chapter 3: Institutionalization of belonging: Contesting citizenship in the Progressive and New Deal Eras

1.0. Introduction

"There was a period in the industrial development of this country when employers gave little or no attention to the physical or moral welfare of their employees," opined Cyrus McCormick Jr., the early20th-century president of International Harvester, the parent company of Chicago's Wisconsin Steel Mill. This period was, in McCormick's reckoning, right before his tenure at the head of his father's company. In the last decade of the 19th century, workers were treated as disposable: foremen used the "drive system" of work intensification to increase output per hour through threats of violence. During economic depressions—such as the three, successive national recessions in the 1890s—employers fired or furloughed workers, decreased their wages, or cut their hours (Alanen 1979). At some point, however, McCormick declared that:

> "Many employers have come to realize that they owe more than the wages, and that their employees are entitled to clean, light, sanitary, and safe places in which to work, to compensation when disabled, and to provision for old age. A careful business man sees that his property is maintained in excellent condition…welfare work, so-called, is simply applying the same business principles to his employees that he applies to the rest of his business. Good welfare work, like good business, pays."

The era of company concern for worker welfare aligns with a contestation for American citizens. Between the end of the American industrial revolution and the New Deal era, a heated conflict emerged along the American Industrial corridor: to what institution do workers—with their

complex, non-economic needs—belong? The early 20th-century state and federal governments, newly sensitized to the mutual obligations of citizenship, offered state entitlements to the working class. Nascent national unions bolstered their ranks and attacked intransigent companies from within, driving a transformation in health and welfare for industrial workers. Industrial firms, resistant to regulations or interference, offered their own corporate entitlements that combated those of the state and satiate demands of the unions. This contestation of power institutionalized how workers belonged to their workplace.

I contend that the firms central to this study utilized strategies of belonging to compete with both the state and unions to consolidate control over workers and their safety nets. In reaction to efforts by the state and unions to expand workers' rights, certain early 20th century industrial firms, concerned about their potential loss of control over workers and their bottom lines if the state and unions gained power, institutionalized their own form of citizenship through "welfare work," as McCormick put it. In this chapter, I propose a new framework for understanding the contemporary vulnerability of deindustrialized regions: companies as *institutions of belonging*.

I leverage the analytical tools of citizenship to shed light onto how managers of early 20th-century companies positioned themselves as not only employers but provisioners of social contracts to their workers—contracts that mimicked the contemporary language of citizenship. In practice, however, firms, in contestation and eventual collaboration with unions and the state, institutionalized their workers as subjects belonging to the company and its capitalistic context. When manufacturing and mining industries experienced a sharp decline in the second half of the 20th century, these company-centered social worlds and safety nets disintegrated.[1] While a rich

[1] Between 1950 and 1990, the American Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions lost 33 percent of their manufacturing jobs (Kahn 1999) and 42.2 percent of its extractive employment (Metzgar 2002). Since closure, these regions have experienced prolonged economic depression, unemployment, outmigration, and political discontent.

literature exists on the 'rusting' of America's industrial corridors, what is lost in much of this scholarship is a critical analysis of the pivotal actor in that early 20th-century struggle for power: the industrial company. In general, analysis of deindustrialization focuses on either macroeconomic processes *or* individual actors. For instance, economists articulate the wins and losses of the off-shoring of markets and nation-wide churning of jobs (Silver and Arrighi 2003; Birch 2015), labor scholars point to the irreversible declines of secure employment for industrial workers en masse (e.g. Kalleberg 2009; Paret 2016), and demographers track the residential outmigration and prolonged economic depression in deindustrialized places (Pierce and Schott 2012; Krinsky 2007; Bauman 2011). On the other hand, ethnographies, memoirs, and journalistic reporting provide ground-level snapshots of the devastation wrought by unemployment, working-class poverty, and neighborhood disinvestment (Hochschild 2016; Dudley 1994; High 2003; Bensman and Lynch 1989).

Analysis of the long-term effects of deindustrialization must begin with clear conceptions of the actors and processes that originally formed the landscape of power, social welfare, and belonging in American industrial corridor. Industrial firms institutionalized belonging by intentionally and iteratively mimicking both rhetoric and practices of social protections and representation articulated by the American Progressive and New Deal state and federal administrations. Firms utilized welfare capitalism—most generally, a form of capitalism that includes social welfare policies—in the early and mid-20th century. In this chapter, I focus particularly on the rhetoric and practices of the two companies central to my study regions—International Harvester's Wisconsin Steel in Chicago, and Oglebay Norton and Company's Montreal Mine in Wisconsin. These two companies are exemplary cases of companies that institutionalized belonging for their employees. On the foundation of company-directed community development (infrastructural paternalism), both firms built a tangled network of welfare capitalist policies that situated the companies as responsible for workers' healthcare, credit, pensions, loans, and arbitration. By offering their own set of so-called rights and

ways of belonging through welfare capitalism, firms not only socially constructed non-income, structural supports for daily life, but they embedded capitalism in the function of social life in such a way that constrained future contestations between capital and its critics.

2.0. Theoretical Framing: Belonging and Citizenship

The embodied nature of place serves as a dialectic, orienting one to the very values upon which a particular place was constructed. The embodied dimensions of belonging in a particular place are entangled with both emotions and the politics: people feel accepted, secure, and like they belong as institutions declare they belong in a particular place, and define the rights and obligations of that belonging. *Who* creates the values upon which a place is constructed, however? In literatures on belonging, place attachment, and home, it is assumed that all people get equal opportunities to construct their own form of interaction with a place. Yet, as earlier argued in this dissertation, there are always processes and actors that are involved in the formalization, institutionalization, and regulation of what it means to belong to a particular place. The very processes through which a person becomes part of a place reflects and reproduces uneven power relations. This leads to another question: what are the long-term consequences when belonging for some is codified by powerful, non-state actors—actors that turn space into place by constraining and enabling certain relationships between working-class people and place, including or excluding members, offering or eroding rights, and encouraging or limiting public engagement?

I contend in this chapter that industrial companies in the early 20th century constrained and enabled their employees' experiences of belonging to a particular place. They were able to do this in part because, as Sinyai (1996) argues and my data demonstrate, northern iron and steel companies at

the turn of the 20th century "resembled governments more than business enterprises" (p. 50). In 1901, the largest of the steel companies, U.S. Steel "receives and expends more money every year than any but the very greatest of the world's national governments; its debt is larger than that of many of the lesser nations of Europe; it absolutely controls the destinies of a population nearly as large as that of Maryland or Nebraska, and indirectly influences twice that number" (Baker 1901). While the companies central to this study were smaller than the vast U.S. Steel, their workers experienced a similar scale of company control over the spaces and social contexts of both work and home. Not only did workers live in a place made for capitalism and controlled by elite actors of natural resource industries, their healthcare, access to housing and food, social relations, and other forms of non-work well-being were linked inextricably with place-based employment. Companies played a vital role in the reproduction of labor, usually relegated to domestic spheres alone, as Marx (1956) put it.

Bringing a sensitivity to the historical power of industrial companies calls for theoretical attention to how the material and cultural construction of *citizenship* is organized by particular people, through specific processes. In theory, citizenship is the "right to have rights": rights to property, suffrage, security, and the status and dignity that emerges from belonging to a "territorially delimited collectivity" (Somers 2008, 1; Hyde 2018, 20). A citizen is typically assumed to be entitled to both the rights and the consequential obligations of membership to a particular institution. In exchange for their obligations of time, money, and blood, citizens should be able to expect "the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society" (Marshall 1950, 151, 149).

In practice, citizenship is a complex, inconsistent, and contested site of tension between freedom and social control, exclusion and inclusion, territorial boundaries and symbolic meanings (Hyde 2018). Nation states and empires alike rearrange the rules of citizenship to control, limit,

alienate or render legible certain groups of people (Scott 1999). Most scholarly work on citizenship centers on these points of inequality within a nation-state and its territories and shows how citizenship is rife with contradictions of belonging, often with exceptions falling along lines of race (e.g. Steinberg 1996; Glenn 2011; Kymlicka and Norman 1994; Turner 2007). Access to rights can be made unequal, contingent upon either the priorities and power structures of a certain, political moment or some inherent quality of personhood that is variably defined. In his classic overview of citizenship, Marshall (1950) suggested that civil and political rights are too often offered as an alternative to true social rights. Indeed, the history of political and social citizenship is marked by struggles over the formation and revision of citizenship boundaries (Somers 1994a). At its heart, however, citizenship is characterized by some form of democracy—a characteristic not present in most company structures. I return to this dilemma momentarily.

Both idea and practice of citizenship, however, hinge on the institutionalization of belonging. By belonging, I mean "a socially constructed, embedded process in which people reflexively judge the suitability of a given [situation] as appropriate given their social trajectory and their positions in other fields" (Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst 2005, 12). Belonging *takes place*; Pollini (2005) terms this "socio-territorial belonging," and an emotional process arising from mutually constitutive relationships of attachment, loyalty, solidarity, and sense of affinity. Nation-states are most often identified as the main institution responsible for organizing a socio-territorial sense of belonging. Yet, the emotional dimensions of belonging in a particular place are entangled with the politics and institutions regulating who belongs where: people feel accepted, secure, and like they belong as institutions declare they belong in a particular place, and define the rights and obligations of that belonging. As people interact with one another in "terrains of belonging," they work out their identities as citizens (or not) in embodied ways and territorial spaces (Tomaney 2014b, 509). The social construction of belonging serves as a dialectic, orienting those who belong

to the very values upon which a particular territory and situation of belonging were constructed (Heidegger 1977).

What if the institution attempting to create citizens, to make and unmake groups, and to consolidate 'socio-territorial belonging' is *not* the state? Certainly, any institution claiming enough material resources and symbolic power may be able to establish, guard, and regulate the mutual obligations and rights of citizenship. Power is unequally distributed in social worlds, with some actors laying claim over the structures and cultures of others (Massey 1994). Powerful actors can codify belonging through cultures and structures that constrain and enable certain relationships between working-class people and place, include or exclude members, offer or erode rights, and encourage or limit public engagement (Kabachnik, Regulska, and Mitchneck 2010). These actors build infrastructures, order social systems, or reward certain cultural expressions; they enter into contestation with other powerful actors, consequentially expanding or contracting lines of relationship between various groups of people.

Battles over the classification of citizens are fought by those who claim the power to offer "the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and, thereby, to make and unmake groups" (Bourdieu 1991:221). Through such control, as Brubaker and Cooper (2000) argue, these powerful groups create organizational categories through which they demarcate roles, rights, and obligations in order to legitimate their preferred economic and social hierarchies. Since citizenship concerns, at its core, who belongs where, and what rights and mutual obligations might be expected between individuals and an institution, a non-state institution might benefit from manufacturing—for certain people—a sense of belonging and obligation. Even in Marshall's (1950) classic account of citizenship, the state is not the exclusive center of citizenship. He frames the political activity of trade unions as "industrial citizenship," occurring within the corpus of existing political rights and in

complement to the social rights constructed and defended by the state. As neither the state nor an individual citizen, the craft or trade union could pursue changes that might impact their immediate bodily wellbeing, financial situation, and rights to arbitration.

Taking industrial citizenship as a model, this chapter proposes considering large-scale, industrial companies as realms of, and competitors for, a form of pseudo-citizenship for their employees. With particular focus on two extremely paternalistic firms, I concur with Sinyai (1996) that certain industrial companies in the early 20th century "resembled governments more than business enterprises" (p. 50). They created and ordered the material flows of iron and steel (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1987); they constructed both the physical landscapes and cultural modes of social relations in nascent company towns (Ferrie and Alston 1999; Hautaniemi, Swedlund, and Anderton 23AD); and, as particularly evidenced in my cases, they offered welfare capitalist "services which an employer may render to his work people over and above the payment of wages" that explicitly competed with union and state policies (Jacoby 1998). In contestation with the United States government and unionization movements, these firms institutionalized structural and cultural 'terrains of belonging' for workers through a system of private, highly contingent, non-income social protections. Firms employed discourses of citizenship that echoed an emerging, normative pattern of early 20th-century politics, reacting to state and union interventions with welfare capitalist alternatives. However, these companies were hardly democratic. Workers remained subjects propped up by narratives of care and belonging (Somers 1994b).

Taking seriously early 20th-century corporations' entrance into citizenship debates gains us two insights. First, it becomes clear that any company-based institutionalization of belonging was "an inverted and rotten" form of citizenship, as labor historian Sinyai (1996) put it. "For Aristotle, Jefferson, and Tocqueville, economic activity was a means to serve nobler political goals; with the

corporation, a sort of political association was established to serve economic ends" (Sinyai 1996, 50). Thus, companies' entrance into the arena of worker care overlapped with economic aims in a way that perverted true citizenship. Each iterative and reactionary expansion of company-based belonging further smuggled capitalism into social life, embedding "the non-contractual foundations of society" with the economic success of a time-limited, capitalist company (Block and Somers 2014, 108–9). Such dependence allowed companies to maintain power over workers—and their bottom lines—in ways that exacerbated their workers' eventual economic distress upon company closure.

Second, thinking of company welfare capitalist policies as a form of citizenship created to iteratively combat regulation brings the corporation back into discussions of economic change. When a nation-state offers unequal benefits to various groups of people, scholars appropriately name injustice (c.f. Glenn 2011; Goldberg 2008; Yuval-Davis 2006). When industrial firms offer benefits contingent on "on employment and, to some extent, on the goodwill or enlightened self-interest of employers," historians of political economy too often bury the intentional decisions and discourses of companies within the inherently contradictory values of capitalism (Katz 2001, 13). This project calls for a historical sensitivity to companies as independent actors whose interactions with the state and unions, in particular, indirectly affected "the ideas, goals and capacities" of working-class communities (Skocpol 2008).

After discussing my case selection and methods, I answer two questions: 1) why corporations competed with the early 20th-century state, union, and civil society to socially produce citizens from employees, and 2) how such company-centered, social welfare increased the precarity of workers, both during and beyond the lifespan of the business.

3.0. Data

At the turn of the 20th century, three institutional actors were locked in conflict over who was to care for the new generation of industrial, mass-wage workers. The first leg of this stool was the industrial firm. Through certain mechanisms of industrialization which I will discuss shortly, "companies [became' governments," owner of vast properties, influencers of trade through monopolies and oligopolies, and controllers of the quotidian lives of their laborers (Sinyai 1996). The vast power of industrial firms, however, incited the second group—the US government—to propose vastly expanded regulatory mechanisms and social programs in support of laborers, respectively. Finally, a nascent industrial union movement offered new vocabularies for demanding certain categories of workers' rights to health, safety, and some economic security.

The steel industry was an exemplar of this tripartite power struggle. As discussed in the prior chapter, the capital-intensive, Bessemer steel refining technology introduced in American in the late 1860s rewarded the wealthiest speculators who were able to invest in new equipment, hundreds of acres of land and infrastructure, and a mass-production workforce (Manuel 2013). Firms jockeyed for position within a highly competitive and lucrative market by consolidating through oligopolies and expanding landholdings. Through consolidation and control over land, iron and steel companies at the turn of the 20th century "resembled governments more than business enterprises" (Sinyai 1996, 50). Some of those firms adopted infrastructural paternalism as a model for both solving logistical problems of setting up functional laborer communities quickly in relatively undeveloped parts of the Middle West, and to control employees' interactions on a day-to-day level. In my cases, firms enacted a particularly complicated relationship with employees—institutionalizing dependency of workers on employers for both paychecks and access to the infrastructures and non-income benefits of early paternalistic communities. The material and logistical provisions of paternalism

failed to address the deep economic and social insecurity of wage-laborers. In fact, the inherent tensions between work and home was an integral ingredient in paternalistic firms' ability to control the cost of production. Like most industrial firms, steel and iron enacted a "master-servant" relationship with workers (Brandes 1976). Even as certain companies constructed both work and home for employees, the same "managers expected employees, not the company, to absorb the loss" accrued during economic depressions—such as the three, successive national recessions in the 1890s" (Cohen 2008, 186). Even workers living in company houses were subject to being fired or furloughed, having wages decreased, or hours cut when iron and steel prices dropped (Alanen 1979).

Furthermore, employees absorbed the health and safety risks of working in these dangerous occupations. Families of employees who were injured, maimed, or killed received no recompense from the company. In rare cases when legal action was taken against the employers by employees, courts typically sided with the company (Klein 2006). For instance, when a widow of a miner in the Montreal Mine sought compensation from the Company in 1928 "on the grounds that death was the direct result of [an] accident," management responded that her husband's death in a shaft collapse was instead due to natural causes ("Perform post-mortem" 1928). "With eyes glued to the bottom line of the balance sheet, employers in the end showed more commitment to stabilizing their production than their work forces" (Cohen 2008, 186).

At the turn of the 20th century, the state offered little security for the working-class during these economically troubled times. Not until 1921 did courts hold firms legally liable for worker injuries, and presidential administrations dispatched the military to end strikes through the second World War (Tone 1997). Early 20th century jurists and politicians tended to seek to protect the freedom of the companies and minimize 'rabble-rousing' among workers. For instance, in response to the labor unrest in Chicago's Haymarket Square in 1886, the Mayor of Chicago banned meetings

and processions, and city police raided radical newspapers (Bensman 2005). Likewise, in northern Wisconsin, local police beat and ran out of town an outside union organizer from West Virginia's coal mines in order to preserve the interests of the mining company (Benzoni 1997). On a federal level, the US Attorney General utilized injunctions to end similar boycotts and sympathy strikes following the American Railway Union-sponsored railcar boycotts in support of Chicago's Pullman strike in 1893 that crippled national transportation.[2]

With neither company nor state protections, workers struggled to create private safety nets to counter the consequences of unrestrained, free contract, wage-labor. In the late 19th and early 20th century, both Chicago and Wisconsin cases developed thriving ethnicity-based mutual benefit societies and fraternities that provided a variety of healthcare and emergency financial or food support in the case of unemployment, injury, or family deaths.[3] Membership in these societies was typically limited to citizens of specific countries, creating trustworthy and formalized networks which "immigrants gave their countrymen in times of need and provided a link to the Old World while helping people adjust to the New" (Cohen 2008, 65). However, mutual aid, fraternal societies, and even the young, private insurance industry were characterized by their *ad hoc* and limited payouts—no one source of economic insurance was quite enough to support families of workers in

[2] The legality of federal injunctions against boycotts to end strikes was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1895 (and expanded to sympathy strikers in the Court's 1921 reading of the Clayton Antitrust Act (Duplex Printing Press Co. v. Deering, 254 U.S. 443).

[3] For example, in Iron County, Italian miners paid approximately 50 cents per month to their Society and received $1 per day if they were sick or incapacitated because of an accident. Upon their death, their family would receive $100-200 for funeral expenses, and society members were required to attend the funeral of their countryman in full, customary regalia (Magnaghi 1987, 65). Similarly, Wisconsin Steel workers in Chicago established a multi-ethnicity (though white ethnicity, only) Goodfellows charity club that offered temporary financial support for fellow employees (Sellers 2006). Across the Midwest, commercial life insurance was an additional safety net, with door-to-door salesmen effectively targeting industrial workers concerned with the providing for their families in worse-case scenarios. Upon the policy-holder's death, the policy's beneficiary received funds for burial and one year's salary (Klein 2006). Private groups thus assumed the responsibility for collective action and protection that, in European countries, was typically delegated to the government (Bortz n.d.).

the case of injury or death, millworkers doubled-up on forms of insurance (Bensman and Lynch 1989; Cohen 2008).

In light of the inefficacy of their small-scale solutions to the social and economic problems of industrial work, employees grew frustrated with employers. Worker violence increased to unprecedented levels in the last decade of the 19th century, and union agitators eagerly sought fertile soil amongst the new class of mass industrial workers (Brody 1970). Companies grew concerned about the increased rates of turnover and the lost profits due to shop floor mutinies. And, as this new class of wage-workers disrupted trade, angered managers, and gained naturalized citizenship and voting rights, the state grew more attentive to the lack of regulation of industrial corporations (Kornblum 1974; Klein 2006).

From this fraught historical moment emerged a compelling question: in these newly industrialized landscapes, what institution was most obligated to tend to the welfare of these mass wage-laborers? In reaction to both laborers' own attempts to mitigate their vulnerability and the early 20th-century state's emerging interest in regulation and social welfare for citizens, companies began to reimagine their approach to worker care. Companies developed a new generation of paternalism that might compete with state intrusion into capital. They proposed a doctrine of "welfare capitalism," aimed at "indoctrinat[ing] workers into accepting corporations as the central institutions of modem American life. Part of the process of integrating the lives of workers with that of the corporation involved the assumption by corporations of many functions now seen as government responsibilities" (Brandes 1976, 8). Why, how, and to what consequence companies constructed worker-citizens through welfare capitalism is the focus of this chapter.

In the coming pages, I discuss how the Progressive and New Deal federal and state administrations and unions deliberated over, rationalized, and produced their own forms of social

welfare policies and public engagement in the early 20th century. Then, I explicate how the industrial firms central to this study reacted in turn to expanding government intervention. My final section discusses unionization and anti-labor movement work.

3.1. What institution should care for workers?

In the early decades of the 20th century, the political battles over the classification of individuals as citizens, as well as what institutions should enter into contracts of mutual obligation with those citizens, were fought by those who claim the power to offer "to make and unmake groups" (Bourdieu 1991:221). This era of deliberation was instigated, in large part, by the US state and federal government's own concern about defining citizenship. As westward expansion, wars domestic and abroad, empire-building, and immigration changed the landscape of America, local and federal governments wrestled with competing visions of citizenship (Hyde 2018; Goldberg 2008). In the first four decades of the 20th century, the US government vastly expanded the categories of people it considered to be legal citizens and the ways that already-legal citizens could more fully participate and 'belong' to their nation.[4]

This shift towards government involvement succeeded first at the state level. Most Northern industrial states established some basic regulation of workplace health and safety between 1877 and 1900. These general factory acts provided guidelines for industrial firms concerning proper ventilation, safeguarding of machinery, elevators, and hoist openings, and official reporting of serious accidents. Illinois was the last to pass comparable legislation in 1909, as the state government faced resistance from some of the nation's best-organized, industrial companies, and their local

[4] Women's suffrage gained traction during the Progressive Era, as did the real opportunities for African Americans to safely and consistently participate in political life (Steinberg 1996; Glenn 2011; Kymlicka and Norman 1994).

politicians as did unionizers (Asher 1989; Jacoby 1998; Tone 1997). This legislation was straight-forward, focusing on the most blatant health and safety concerns. However, local jurisdictions often lacked capacity or will to supersede powerful employers and enforce these rules on the shop floors, and courts, fearing lack of precedent, continued to favor firms over plaintiffs in legal suits concerning workplace injury and wrongful death (Klein 2006).

Federal reform more aggressively expanded social rights to protect workers and, in a new discourse, to cultivate workers as citizens capable of democratic engagement. In the "interests of social justice, human advance, and the great American founding principle: democracy," Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive Era administration offered the first generation of social citizenship through regulation of corporate power and certain employer-employee relations (Sinyai 1996, 88). While, as Teddy Roosevelt acknowledged, large, industrial corporations would be "a permanent fact of life, a dominant feature of our political economy now and into the future," his Progressive era administration aimed to restore a more appropriate balance of power between the state and those companies that might be tempted to view the federal government as simply a "big rival operator" (Sinyai 1996, 89, 86). Roosevelt's administration established a new federal Department of Labor and Commerce, sued corporate monopolies, and expanded the regulatory jurisdiction of the Interstate Commerce Commission to include more than railroads monopolies (Reynolds and Dawson 2011). Roosevelt regulated employer-employee relations with more delicacy than he did those between industrial firms and the government, sensitive to the entrenched American fear that regulatory mechanisms might infringe on personal liberty. Roosevelt emphasized basic social insurance that impacted either vulnerable or federal workers and their dependents—two groups who might be least offended by the "paternalism" of the federal government. The Progressive Era version of social citizenship limited child labor, restricted night work and extended hours for women, established

worker compensation for federal employees, offered healthcare for women and children, and set maximum hours and minimum wages (Klein 2006; Skocpol 1995; Valentin Filip 2015).

Even with protectionary reform and regulation, social citizenship for working men—those citizens already endowed with freedom and capacity to defend themselves from the risks of capitalism, and the primary population driving the steel and iron industries—failed to emerge from the federal government until the New Deal (Marshall 1950; Klein 2006). In the wake of the prolonged, post-war recession that had spiraled into the Great Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) was elected on a platform of renewing and expanding the role of the state envisioned during the Progressive Era. FDR's New Deal produced public work projects, deconstructed the gold standard, lifted tariffs, expanded labor regulations, and, most influential to social citizenship, offered social security to the aged and unemployed (Lanthaume 2012). In 1935, FDR signed his Social Security Act, a program that would be financed by compulsory contributions by employers and wage earners.[5] Roosevelt declared: finally, workers could be assured of a level of welfare explicitly designed to address the crises brought about by industrialization and previously unavailable to citizens:

> "The civilization of the past hundred years, with its startling industrial changes, has tended more and more to make life insecure.…This social security measure gives at least some protection to thirty millions of our citizens….[We] have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age…It is, in short, a law that will take care of human needs and at the same time provide for the United States an economic structure of vastly greater soundness." (Roosevelt 1935)

[5] The Social Security Act financed Old Age Insurance with a payroll tax assessed on employers as well as employees (Goldberg 2008).

This act addressed old-age poverty through a compulsory pension system and offered unemployment benefits, aid to dependent children, maternal and child welfare, and public health services. The Social Security Act and its subsequent amendments institutionalized the federal the social safety net that would expand to include Old Age Insurance and unemployment in the postwar era (The Living New Deal 2015; Bortz n.d.; Brents 1984). For the first time, the United States federal government offered a program designed to promote the economic and social well-being of individual workers and their families by providing protection against specific hazards of wage-labor employment.

Each generation of government-funded social care programs was criticized for both interfering too little *and* too much in the quotidian lives of industrial workers. Progressive social reformers dismissed the new social policies as insufficient to address the central insecurities of American industrial life. For instance, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) lobbied for employer liability laws that would actually expand the rights of workers to claim compensation for workplace injuries (Klein 2006). In 1906, several prominent social scientists, including Richard Ely, John Commons, and Isaac Rubinow, formed the American Association for Labor Legislation to similarly promote government intervention in dangerous work conditions and study possible expressive of full, federally-based social insurance (Steinberg 1996; Kalleberg 2009; Novak 2008). Radical unions, such as the Industrial Workers of the World, went so far as to complain that regulations and reforms simply transformed capitalism to save it (Lipset and Marks 2001).

In contrast, policymakers firm in their trust in the self-sufficiency and inherent liberty of Americans condemned the expanding "paternalistic care of the workingman" by the federal government (Sinyai 1996, 90). If "any part of our people want to be wards," Woodrow Wilson declaimed in a speech during Teddy Roosevelt's second term, "if they want to have guardians put

over them, if they want to be taken care of, if they want to be children, patronized by the government, why, I am sorry, because it will sap the manhood of America" (Sinyai 1996, 89). Government actors were consistently worried about institutionalizing dependence among its citizenry and thus emphasized the temporary nature of unemployment aid, the masculinity of Work Projects, and the limits of safety regulations (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Fox 2010; Asher 1989; Goldberg 2008). State-based welfare policies were written with work requirements and gendered and racialized version of citizenhood which lauded "manly independence and liberty of contract," and dismissed "paternalistic and demasculating" government relief and protective labor laws (Goldberg 2008, 2–3). Certain New Deal administrators framed the presentation of social security programs in ways that "overemphasized the undesirability of relief" (Cohen 2008, 271).

More broadly, these state-based offerings of social protections and industrial rights to American workers fueled a national, normative discourse on what it meant to belong to, and in, America. Without state-based regulation, Teddy Roosevelt argued "we keep countless men from being good citizens by the conditions of life with which we surround them" (in Sinyai 1996:87). The government's internally divided imaginary of the ideal American citizen—as both protected and independent—offered companies an entrée into the debate over who should care for workers. Concerned by the intrusions of state-based social provisions, industrial firms mimicked this language of qualified and contingent citizenship.

3.3. Companies React: Constructing Company-Based Citizenship Through Conflict

The firms central to this study adopted a form of institutional isomorphism, as DiMaggio and Powell (1983) would put it, to challenge the expansion of external sources of regulation or social protections into capitalism. When Teddy Roosevelt's administration proposed social insurance,

companies offered group health and life insurance; when unions started making headway in their industries, both rural and urban companies quelled interest; when voting rights expanded, firms invited greater participation from their workers. In each iteration, "welfare capitalism" expanded the reach of the company beyond the territory of its mills and mines and into the discursive repertoires of social, political, and industrial citizenship. Also known as industrial welfare or welfare work, welfare capitalism is an umbrella term for a capitalist-based social contract, comprised of company-centered social safety nets, (health insurance, pensions, maternal and child healthcare), and protections (safety regulations and gear), and values (unity, teamwork, and participation, furthered through company-wide newspapers, representation plans, and meetings) (Brandes 1976; Hamilton 1989). For companies, citizenship was a category of practice to be fit within the preexisting format of welfare capitalism. Firms mimicked the language of regulations, rights, and sense of belonging offered by the state and unions, industrial companies keen to maintain capital's autonomy and managements' local authority over labor.

Corporations immediately recoiled from the regulations and reform foisted upon them by both generations of progressive presidential administrations.[6] These legislative acts, companies feared, would infringe on the rights of firms to control their terms of employment, production, and capital investment—rights that had been little assaulted in the 19th century. In the first decade of the 20th century, a subgroup of industrial firms offered "welfare capitalism," in the hope that by directly responding to the crises of industrialization, both the state and unions would be rendered unnecessary (Jacoby 1998). Uniting Progressive Era discourses of social protection with practices

[6] There is some contention about how corporations interacted with regulation, including whether and to what extent business opposed the Social Security Act. See Brents (1984), Block (1977), Piven and Cloward (1971), and Domhoff (1987) for analyses of this liberal corporation debate.

drawn from traditional paternalism, corporations began offering their own forms of social protections for worker health, education, and safety (Alanen 1979).

The National Civic Federation (NCF), an organization founded in 1900 with the intention of arbitrating between big business and organized labor, served as the unified voice for this movement towards increased employer obligation. The NCF amicably agreed with Teddy Roosevelt that workplace reform was required to address concerns of the new, mass wage worker (National Civic Federation 1903). However, neither federally-offered social insurance nor a strict regulatory regime would solve the social crises experienced by mass, wage-laborers, they argued. Rather, employers should directly apply a "new industrial relations doctrine" which relied not on foremen authority and at-will layoffs, but rather voluntary, non-income reforms which responded to (some) worker demands and thus contested state intervention (Cohen 2008; Jacoby 1998). In addition to providing more "steady work, an equitable wage, and reasonable hours of labor," employers should select from the menu of welfare practices, ranging from providing lunch rooms, baths, ventilation, and dressing rooms at workplaces, to building gymnasiums and "suitable sanitary homes," offering employees "education advantages," like multilingual, company periodicals, "plans for saving and lending money," and compulsory or voluntary insurance and pension plans (Beeks 1904, 5–6).

Industrial firms beyond the NCF's bounds quickly adopted the discourse and practice of welfare capitalism. Within the first decade of the 20th century, one-fifth of corporations began voluntarily offering non-legislated, non-income benefits for their employees. Particularly large, industrial firms preferred welfare work—eighty percent employed more than one thousand workers in a single location[7] (Tone 1997, 53–54). In the early 20th century, all of southeast Chicago's large

[7] The average number of employees in welfare capitalist firms was 7,500, whereas the average number of employees in non-welfare capitalist industrial locations was only 26 (Tone 1997).

steel mills offered some form of non-income benefits for their employees. Most mills offered small but public contributions to organizations that already supported their workers' communities, such as the YMCA or churches. International Harvester's Wisconsin Steel took a bolder route, constructing a restaurant for employees, adopted an eight-hour day, provided time and a half for overtime work, and increased "the basic wage for labor, in 1918, [to] about two and two-thirds greater than it was in 1902" (International Harvester 1978). Likewise, during the Progressive Era, Oglebay Norton's Montreal Mining hired community police and doctors, provided educational tutoring for miners, and built a community hall, "complete with four bowling alleys, billiard tables, and a large hall in which sound motion pictures are presented once each week" (R. Werner 1939).

Why was welfare capitalism such a useful tool for large, industrial companies? Three rationales emerge from data and secondary sources. First, welfare capitalism enabled companies to adopt the normative discourses of both citizenship and the shame of accepting government aid. Company social provisions provided similar benefits as government programming but lacked the shame of accepting handouts from the government. As Gertrude Beeks, the Social Secretary of International Harvester, argued—welfare capitalism "removes from the State and municipal governments an important part of the vast burden of charitable expenditures which lies so heavily upon them and so humiliates those who are dependent on it" (1909, in Tone 1997:41). By offering their own forms of company-based health care, internal safety regulations, or seniority-based pensions, companies could thus trouble the definition of the problem propelling political and union activists while maintaining control over their expenditures and their workers.

Second, welfare capitalism was a cost-effective way to improve workplaces, rather than work processes. More timely maintenance of buildings, expanded contributory health care plans, or company newsletters and education programs might increase sentiments of loyalty amongst workers,

thus decreasing worker turnover, sick-leave, and, as I will discuss in the next section, labor unrest. Truly "improving the overall conditions of work—keeping workers on the payroll year-round whatever the job orders, granting workers the forty-hour week the consistently requested, and making the factory a decent place to work—would have cost employers far more than adopting adjunct welfare programs" (Cohen 2008, 187).

Finally, by providing company-based social safety nets for workers, these large, industrial companies hoped to limit further state regulation on business. This happened in an iterative and reactive way. When Progressive era governments grew critical of health and safety standards, Southeast Chicago mills and Wisconsin mines increased ventilation, offered safety rules, and built bathing rooms for workers. When Teddy Roosevelt's administration contemplated adopting early forms of social insurance, the mill introduced basic death, disability, and sickness insurance for all their employees in 1908 "with a view to anticipating any legislation that might be enacted in this country" (Asher 1989, 28–29).[8] When contributory social insurance programs were instituted through during the New Deal's Social Security Act, firms offered contributory, insured pensions. Each reaction to state-based expansions of social citizenship rights was framed in the same way: workers would most benefit from welfare care offered on a voluntary basis as meted out by local managers who were personally concerned with the transformation of their factories, shop floors, mills, and mines. At least, as International Harvester's Perkins argued to the US Senate Commission on Industrial Relations, local managers could do less harm to their workers than the federal government: "For every ounce of trouble brought about in industry through the selfishness and

[8] In addition, International Harvester hoped that introducing a company-based insurance plan would not only put pause to the federal government's discussions of public insurance, but also might weaken the ties of workers to their ethnically-based fraternities and mutual benefit organizations. This insurance, the company argued, when compared "to benefits, cost and regulations governing…the best of relief and fraternal organizations," offered "more to the employes [sic] than they can get elsewhere" (Cohen 2008:176).

cupidity of business men, a pound of trouble has been brought about through half-baked laws and muttonhead legislation on the part of our legislators," (Tone 1997, 51).

By the end of World War II, company-based social welfare was solidified as a viable approach to taking care of workers' non-economic needs. By 1920, mutual benefit societies had all but dissolved, as insurance needs were increasingly covered by employers. Concurrently, the National Civic Federation quietly disbanded, abused by business interests for suffering unions too willingly and by the left for building itself on the backs of large corporations. During both World Wars and the Great Depression, political actors froze state-based labor reforms and social protection projects.

As competition for social welfare decreased, Wisconsin Steel continued to expand welfare capitalist programs. The company adopted policies of free dental care for children, seniority-based pensions, short-term loans to trusted employees during periods of unemployment, and opened a company-run credit union (Cohen 2008, 244; Klein 2006). During the Great Depression, Wisconsin Steel provided seeds and cultivable land near South Deering to the employee population that lived near the mill. More than two thousand employees farmed quarter-acre plots, equipped with seed kits and fertilizer supplied by the company (Cohen 2008). In rural Wisconsin, the Montreal Mine strove to create a 'family feeling' during the most economically trying period between World War I and the start of World War II by hosting social events, such as Safety Committee Skits, to entertain, instruct, and socialize miners and their families. In 1920, four hundred children attended this biannual event (*Ironwood Daily Globe* 1928a). In 1923, the Montreal Mining Company constructed "probably the most modern dry house on the range" (*Ironwood Daily Globe* 1931), along with three new streets of worker housing. Even during the Great Depression, which all but ended mining activity on the Gogebic Range, the town of Montreal sponsored a baseball team to compete with other nearby

mining towns, built a "perfectly appointed club house," and maintained its "white painted houses—not shacks" for workers (Hanna 1932).[9]

These company-based projects offered a long-lasting, alternative vision for social welfare: an "American plan" in which hard-working individuals gained social welfare through employment, rather than national citizenship-based, public insurance (Hamilton 1989).[10] The American Plan offered social care for workers, paid for by their employers, and contingent on their continued employment. Company benefits were offered not in a spirit "of condescension, nor [with] the appearance of thrusting benefits upon subordinates" (Beeks 1904), but in one of opportunity, wherein hardworking men could cultivate the distinctive "independent spirit" of the American worker (Tone 1997, 39). In fact, industry leaders echoed politicians when they lauded the merit of relying on ones' employer, rather than on the government, as true independence. During the Great Depression, the Association of Iron and Steel Companies declaimed: "the industry takes care of its own" (Cohen 2008, 239). Let the government care for the destitute, the poor, and the needy, but "let it be said of the steel industry that none of its men was forced to call upon the public for help" as Myron Taylor, later president of U.S. Steel, elaborated in 1930 (Cohen 2008, 239). To ensure that their workers were dependent only on their employer, both U.S. Steel and International Harvester forbade employees to apply to any charitable organization or state welfare program during the Great Depression and early New Deal years as long as they were still officially employed by the firm (Cohen 2008, 239).

[9] While all mines on Lake Superior combined shipped 3 million tons, down from 50 million tons in 1920s (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 139–40)

[10]Granted, Old Age Insurance and unemployment insurance were based on employment and not on citizenship per se (Goldberg 2008).

In an era when competition with an expanding state pushed business off-balance, welfare capitalism allowed firms to remain the center of their employees' worlds. Through the ever-expanding role of the company in the non-work-related components of employees' lives, industrialists hoped that workers would willingly strike a deal: "loyalty to the boss in return for good treatment and security on the job" (Cohen 2008, 161). This vision was encapsulated in a painting hung over Cyrus McCormick Jr's desk at International Harvester while he was president during the first decade of the 20th century, illustrating two muscular arms, one labeled "Capital," the other "Labor," clasped together to lift up a globe entitled "industry" (Cohen 2008, 161).[11] In that image, the state played no role; nor did civil society and its union agitators. Rather, only employees and their employer, working with mutual intention and intertwined fates towards the successful continuation of industrial progress.[12]

3.4. Unionization and attempts at "industrial citizenship"

For industrial companies, the globe of industry would revolve only with loyal workers—workers who understood their futures, both economically and socially, as embedded in capitalism. Unionization, like state-based regulation and social reform, threatened the coherence of company-based versions of worker care. On the ground, companies were still governments, with the right to exclude any members seen as disloyal. Firms could and did fire workers who had enrolled in unions

[11] Of course, capital and labor were not equally empowered to support the world of industry. Labor loyalty required employees to fully accept the risks of wage-labor within the capitalist project even as employers themselves worked hard to minimize alternatives to company-based social safety nets.

[12] Granted, there was always some state intervention to aid industrial success: Tariffs, pro-business congress, policies that protected business interests instead of workers' rights. See the Underwood Tariff of 1913; Forney-McCumber Tariff of 1920 (Lichtenstein and Harris 1993).

or taken part in strikes. For the two steel and iron companies central to this study, the vestiges of welfare capitalism limited the establishment of industrial citizenship.

In rural mining communities, overt suppression by managers who controlled both company towns and shift schedules squelched early organizing. During the Progressive era, there were several instances when walk-offs, strikes, protests, and boycotts—often organized around ethnic and language ties—disrupted the production of steel and iron (Kornblum 1974). The immigrant community of "Red Finns" coordinated intermittent strikes against low pay, exhausting hours, and unsafe working conditions. In 1917, the International Workers of the World more formally organized iron miners in Bessemer, Michigan on brief strike for wage increases (Liesch 2006, 93). In response to each unionization attempt, mining companies quickly engaged violent policing methods, imported strikebreakers, and blacklisted union coordinators from company housing (Alanen 1979). According to archival records, between 1917 and 1936, unionization attempts in Iron County, Wisconsin, were suppressed.

In general, early unionization projects were more effective in the growing industrial city of Chicago (Bluffington 1930). Yet even though violence between workers and police at the McCormick manufacturing plant in 1893 and well as labor revolts in Pullman in 1894 occurred only three miles from the nascent steel communities, steelworkers remained unorganized well into the 20th century (Sellers 2001). The Chicago trade unions (who had been responsible for several powerful, city-wide strikes in the 19th century) were puzzled as to how to effectively cultivate membership in mass production industries. The established craft unionism, wherein workers are organized based on skill, tools used, or seniority did not apply to the industrial scale of steel manufacturing, where low-skill, mechanized tasks could be quickly learned by easily replaced

workers. Although by 1903, the Chicago Federation of Labor claimed more than half of the city's workers as members, steel was notably absent from their rosters (Klein 2006).

Industrial citizenship briefly became a reality across the US in the wake of World War I (Eidlin 2015). In an extraordinary moment of labor coordination, more than four million workers went on strike in 1919 across the United States. Keen to reclaim the power they had ceded to labor during the war, employers and their sympathetic local politicians reneged on promises of increased wages and fired workers attempting to organize strikes.[13] In September 1919, the AFL's National Committee for Organizing Steel Workers led 350,000 steelworkers in a national strike for unionization, wage increases, and the abolition of the 12-hour day (Rees 2005). The Chicago Federation of Labor organized 90,000 steelworkers in southeast Chicago alone. By January of 1920, the strike collapsed in failure, as mill owners had imported strikebreakers, jailed picketers, and framed unionizers as Russian foreigners stirring up trouble. Although union organizers had effectively captured the elusive, mass working class in steel, the lack of political protection made collective action highly risky for laborers. Consequentially, no union organizing occurred in the steel industry for the next fifteen years (Brody 1970).

The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA or Wagner Act) of 1935 changed this status quo. Enacted the same year as FDR's Social Security Act, the NLRA guaranteed the rights of certain private sector employees to organize into trade unions which could collectively bargain with employers for better terms and conditions at work, and take action including strike if negotiations were not forthcoming.[14] The Act aimed to rebalance the "inequality of bargaining power between

[13] Permits for meetings were denied, meeting halls were mysteriously unavailable, organizers were forced to leave town, and membership literature was seized (Bensman and Lynch 1989).
[14] Note that the NLRA did not cover agricultural or domestic workers, independent contractors and foremen, or employees of non-interstate, local business enterprises. Rosenthal (1951) estimated that the NLRA covered only 56 percent of the 1948 labor force.

employees who do not possess full freedom of association or actual liberty of contract and employers who are organized in the corporate or other forms of ownership association" ("National Labor Relations Act" 1935). Employers were required to recognize labor unions that a majority of their workforce joined. These unions had to be independent (not managed by the employer), and organized by representatives of members' own choosing. The NLRA envisioned a form of unionization that, unlike the craft unions of the prior century, was organized around entire industries, regardless of skill or trade (Eidlin 2015).

While this act was hailed as the 'Magna Carta' of the labor movement, workers still struggled, however, to gain on-the-ground rights to assembly, speech, and resistance. To accept unionization required management to acknowledge that the interests of employers were not shared by employees. However, in the cases central to my study, firms institutionalized belonging to maintain a sense of homogeneity of interests between workers and management. As I will demonstrate shortly, this homogeneity was perpetuated through company-based welfare strategies intended to reiterate to employees how "their own fate was intertwined with that of their employers" (Cohen 2008, 161).

3.4. Companies react: Crafting a compliant, hardly-unionized employee

Business interests were quite concerned about the progressive expansion of the rights of industrial citizenship during the first four decades of the twentieth century. In addition to more violent and suppressive tactics, industrial corporations experimented with ways in which welfare capitalism might limit both labor unrest and organizing. Even the NCF advised that, while "the employer [should not] expect welfare work to avert a strike against unjust conditions," industrial firms could respond directly to issues raised by workers and thus remove incentives for employees to strike (Beeks 1904, 5). In the cases central to this project, the Chicago and Wisconsin companies

went a step further, offering alternative worker representation plans and material leverage through the entanglement of infrastructural paternalism in order to disrupt formal unionization and union effectiveness.

In my Chicago case, Wisconsin Steel initiated an employee-run "Works Council" shortly after the nationwide steel strike of 1919 (Bensman and Lynch 1989). This council offered a controlled venue for worker complaints, promoted community gardens on company land, community baseball teams, and operated a credit union to fund members' purchase of homes. Wisconsin Steel's organization was one of the first Employee Representation Plans (ERP) in the region—an experimental form of non-union-based, participatory mechanisms which aimed at institutionalizing a "system of industrial peace" (Klein 2006, 18). Ideally, ERPs were voluntary associations, comprised of "joint committees made up of management and labor representatives [who] discussed issues brought to them by either party and made recommendations," (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 148–49). In practice, these Committees "beat back early attempts" of unionization by addressing grievances on an individual basis (Reynolds and Dawson 2011, 148–49). Wisconsin Steel's ERP seemed to do just that. When the national 1919 steel strike was issued, the fledgling Works Council asked its members to stay home rather than picket. When Harvester called its men back to work three weeks later, seventy percent of their labor force returned with enthusiasm (Cohen 2008).

Combining corporate paternalism and worker cooperation, the Wisconsin Steel Works Council became the independent, Progressive Steelworkers Union in 1937. By the early 1940s, when workers in Chicago's other major industries had endorsed the CIO unions, Wisconsin Steel employees held fast in their belief that their employer had come closer to creating "fair" places to work particularly in comparison with surrounding factories (Cohen 2008, 351). On the shop floor,

foremen loosely controlled men's time; there was no time clock to punch, nor drive-system manipulation. Progressive Steelworkers negotiated its own contracts with Harvester, brought individual cases to arbitration, and voiced opinions in promotions, job assignments, and hiring. Since Progressive was an independent union, Wisconsin Steel was not bound by industrywide labor agreements negotiated by the Steelworkers Organizing Committee, or later, the United Steelworkers. However, Harvester's Wisconsin Steel matched the wages and benefits achieved by the national unions in exchange for Progressive Steelworkers never striking. This informal deal assured continual steel supplies for Harvester's tractor manufacturing plants and consistent, paid employment for Wisconsin Steelworkers. Even though it was situated in one of the most organized steel communities in the US, Wisconsin Steel did not experience strikes for forty years (Bensman and Lynch 1989, 41). The tight overlap of home and work in Wisconsin Steel's isolated mill gate neighborhood of South Deering set the neighborhood and its' mill on a path towards a history of industrial relations that more closely paralleled the company towns emerging in the iron ore ranges of the Lake Superior Mining District (Cohen 2008).

In my rural Wisconsin case, the Montreal Mining Company's alternative forms of industrial citizenship also quelled unionism. Close quarters and company housing helped the Montreal Mine avoid labor unrest rippling through the iron ranges in the last decades of the 19th century, as workers feared eviction and blacklisting if they were caught coordinating or participating in a labor mutiny. Not only did the company provide "the 1,800 residents of Montreal with a model community to live in," and pay 95% of city taxes, but it "of the 400 homes in the city, 140 neat frame buildings are owned by the company and rented to miners at a cost of $1.50 a room per month. The other homes have been built on property leased to the owners by the company" (R. Werner 1939). Thus, "labor activists could become both jobless and homeless" (Liesch 2006, 79). Montreal Mining Company management intentionally elevated non-Finns to management positions and, for a period of time,

banned Red Finns from living in its company housing. While company-owned housing was constraining, the social organization of work also protected workers from the insecurities of periodic unemployment inherent to low-skilled, wage-labor. For example, even when the Montreal Mining Company decreased shifts, operated on a four-day schedule and eventually furloughed 70 percent of its 700-man, permanent workforce during the 1920-21 post-war iron ore price decline, the Montreal Mining company did not evict them from company housing (*Ironwood Daily Globe* 1920). Considering that in 1922, the Company rehired all employees and increased wages, the firm had a vested interest in keeping good workers close and likely granted furloughed renters or tenants grace periods between employment terms (*Ironwood Daily Globe* 1922). Workers benefited, too, from remaining on good terms with their landlords and employer.

During the New Deal, the labor force and management of Great Lakes mines alike carefully observed the halting progress of industrial citizenship in the urban steel mills. Upon the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935, Lake Superior miners immediately began petitioning management for greater safety measures and more transparent pay procedures. Mining companies responded slowly, in hopes that the Wagner Act was but temporary. According to a self-published autobiography by a former miner, one manager ended a meeting with a group of organizers brusquely: "you men are pretty bold now [with] the National Labor Relations Act to protect you, but don't forget it won't be this way for long. One day it will change and we will have the upper hand again" (Benzoni 1997, 199–200). However, the Steelworkers Organizing Committee brokered their deal in Pittsburgh in 1936. Northern mining companies "started taking a more friendly approach," slightly increasing wages, offering 'listening sessions' and Employee Representation Plans (Benzoni 1997, 155). But then news of the Memorial Day Massacre in 1937 rattled laborers at the Gogebic mines, and miners across the rural mining region immediately became "more cautious about discussing our interest in a legitimate union" (Benzoni 1997, 158).

By 1940, the Wagner Act remained in effect, and the United Steelworker organized the Gogebic range into district 36 in 1942. The Montreal Local 2573 was active by 1942 and was soon holding monthly meetings, sponsoring picnics, and raising war funds. Until the post-war era brought about disputes concerning frozen, war-time wages, the Local acted as a social group rather than a force for arbitration. Starting in wake of the post-war wage inequalities of 1946, however, Montreal Miners walked "whenever new contracts came out—maybe every two years or something," one former miner told me. Typically, companies quickly moved to negotiate, because "in the small mining towns, everybody knew each other, [managers realized] violence would only serve to destroy valuable relationships" (Benzoni 1997, 254).

The companies central to my study attempted to walk a middle line for worker participation: offering mechanisms for worker participation without embracing unionization; a way to belong to the company without actually being a citizen. When compared to the "'feudalistic state' of paternalism—the government of which, however enlightened, contains nothing of the consent of the governed," welfare capitalism was a "democracy," according to International Harvester's Cyrus McCormick (International Harvester 1978). At the same time, as Gertrude Beeks cautioned, "going too democratic is to be avoided, as employes [sic] will generally prefer to entrust the direction of welfare work to the employer" (Beeks 1904). In Chicago, an Employee Representation Plan at the most paternalistic firm in the region paved the way for a crippled union, intertwined in practice, if not on paper, with company interests (Cohen 2008; Bensman and Lynch 1989). In Wisconsin, management kept their labor force close and connected to the fate of the company in order to complicate an otherwise successful integration of their workforce into national, industrial citizenship

(Liesch 2006). Through constructing alternative ways for employees to relate to the company, management was able to further monopolize their authority over workers.[15]

4. Conclusion: Constructing worker-citizens, constructing vulnerability

Understanding early 20th century companies as governments, manufacturing highly contingent, if faulty, variations of citizenship for workers, sheds light onto the residual impacts of large-scale, industry collapse. In contestation with the United States government and unionization movements, these firms institutionalized structural and cultural 'terrains of belonging' for workers through a system of private, highly contingent, non-income social protections. In a defensive dance with the Progressive and New Deal eras' expanding visions of what might be the government's role in citizens' quotidian lives, companies leveraged the material legacies of infrastructural paternalism to develop vocabularies of earned rights, organized security, and independent masculinity. From when industrial companies first tamed nature and organized infrastructures, to mid-20th-century offerings of subsidized health care, personal loans, stock options, and company pensions, workers experienced middle-class lifestyles in exchange for loyal, blue-collar labor. As companies expanded their power over the terms and conditions of workers' experience of both work and home, they not only transformed space into place, they constrained and enabled certain relationships between working-class people and place.

The collapse of American steel and iron firms during the second half of the 20th century highlights the fragility of this arrangement. This intersection of capitalism and social life institutionalized dependence of worker-citizens on these capitalist purveyors of citizenship rights

[15] When the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947, (Taft–Hartley Act) eroded unions' power, it didn't make a difference for my cases because they had weak unions. See also Rosenthal (1951).

without considering the relative fragility of capitalism itself, setting up a "precarious relationship for the millions of workers who must depend on their employers for financial, retirement, and health security" (Tone 1997, 257). More broadly, any rights gained through the pressure from unions or state regulations of firms were only offered within the contexts of the inherent inequalities of capitalism. Provisions of pensions, seniority, health care, or wages earned by unions or instigated by the state were accessible and valid only as long as there was a firm with which to collectively bargain. No matter how powerful the union, any negotiations between union and company over worker care didn't exempt workers from "the rules of *quid pro quo* market exchange," as Block and Somers (2014) articulate—"rules that demand something of equivalent value to be exchanged for full citizenship rights. They are thus no longer rights but conditional privileges only available to those who have something to exchange that the market deems of equivalent value, usually money or labor" (p. 111).

Indeed, it is the inherent inequality of capitalism, rather than solely the actions of companies, that makes workers vulnerable. However, to this day, firms do choose to blur the lines between profit and social welfare, belonging and dependence. From the over-the-top, workplace benefits of Silicon Valley's wealthiest companies (Bowles 2017), to the infrastructural improvements expected in the next Amazon hub locations, to hidden company paternalism of large-scale farms housing immigrant laborers (Harrison and Lloyd 2012), companies continue to institutionalize belonging in ways that do contest regulation by the state, minimize resistance from organized labor, or otherwise exert control over the 'terrains of belonging' of their workers. Private, non-income social supports link the stability of social life with not only worker compliance but the continuation of the company itself. Any analysis of the effects of company closures must start with clear conceptions of the actors and processes that institutionalized belonging in the broader capitalist system. Scholarly and public concern about deindustrialized regions must take seriously the role of the company in constructing these vulnerable subjects. Thus, this project contributes to historical scholarship on industrialization

and deindustrialization by centering on firms as actors that, through conflict, shaped the ideas, goals, and capacities of other social groups.

Chapter 4: The rise and fall of the blue-collar middle class

1.0. Introduction

Richard and Phyllis, an African American couple that had recently retired to one of Chicago's suburbs, remembered the good days of wealth and prosperity with great clarity. Sitting at their elegant dining room table in a neighborhood that was "too quiet," they both complained, Richard and Phyllis described the wealth that they achieved within the first few years of their marriage. Phyllis, 60, explained that the steelworkers "had Lincoln Continentals, they had their own houses…I mean, young people with their own big houses!" Her husband, 63, smiled appreciatively. "Oh man, them guys…they had some beautiful cars, big houses and stuff, you know!" His wife smiled, "We had a Volkswagen" "And a Cadillac!" Richard interjected enthusiastically. "They had a heater down there—you could turn the heater on when the car wasn't even moving!" Both sighed. "Yeah, that was nice, we had money." Richard grew still. "That was 1974. We had money. Our block was one of the richest blocks in the whole neighborhood. Because we were steel mill workers, you know, we made the money. We got dirty, but when we put our clothes on, we were…" He shrugged and made eye contact with his wife before staring resolutely at me. "She had a mink hat with a mink coat, and a white Cadillac."

The blue-collar workers of Midwestern iron and steel could and did enter the middle class in the mid-20th century. A prolonged era of war-fueled demand for iron and steel, combined with union-negotiated wage increases and welfare capitalist benefits enabled the working class to

experience a shared sense of rising together from a lower cultural and material relational position to the coveted center of middle-class wealth and status (Strangleman 2008). But this class was intensely place-based, tangled up in the fates of one industry. The "giant machines bolted to the floors" cultivated "an aura of permanence" for the mill gate communities (Cowie and Heathcott 2003, 4). Home was built through work—company-sponsored credit unions offered loans for cars, and young people envisioned futures funded by similarly lucrative employment in their community's anchor industry. Workers co-constituted their experience of class by performing what they took to be markers of middle class: families purchased on credit, men were the primary breadwinners, and the inclusion or advancement of racial minorities in workplaces was constrained by the white majority. Need was banished, as was the shame of accepting government handouts. Through hard work, company benefits, and favorable economics, factory workers and deep shaft miners could grasp hold of "prizes of the middle class — houses, cars, college educations for their children, comfortable retirements" (Uchitelle 2008). How were both these benefits of upward mobility and the eventual closure of the anchor to which these middle-class benefits were tied experienced in worker communities?

In this chapter, I analyze the subjective experiences of class during the era of mid-century boom and bust. I contend that what scholars of the economic decline and political discontent of the industrial worker typically understand as a crisis of deindustrialization is actually a complex negotiation of disappointed class expectations in light the rapid transformation of place. I bring theories of class formation into conversation with concepts I introduced earlier regarding the processes, actors, and power dynamics of place (Kalleberg 2009; Standing 2011; Block and Somers 2014; Kalleberg, Wallace, and Althauser 1981). Specifically, this chapter grapples with the relational aspects of community change in place, over time. I analyze ethnographic, interview, and some archival data to forward laborers' experiences of class as embedded in specific interactions with

companies and with one another. I consider how the benefits of upward mobility were experienced differently within laborer communities along lines of race and gender, and how the loss of the anchor employer exacerbated certain differences while minimizing others. Within the lives of my interviewees and their parents, the scaffolding for middle-class incomes and aspirations—built by firms on welfare capitalist policies, and co-constituted by the community—collapsed while laborers and their families were still in the process of climbing it.

The chapter is organized as follows. I first show how laborers in the cases central to my study aspired to middle-class wealth and status. Both management and laborers aimed to perform markers of middle class, such as conspicuous consumption, patriarchal social organization, and place-specific racial differentiation or homogeneity. The experience of middle-class attainment for white men was unequivocally positive; however, even racial minorities and women remained fettered by biases in the workplace and the company community, although they shared some in the economic rewards of the steel and iron boom. In the second section, I turn to company closure. As a whole, my interviewees experienced closure as not only as a loss of income, capital, and credit, but as the death of a type of community characterized by predictable social safety nets, knowable gender and racial boundaries, and an upward trajectory of economic and cultural recognitions. The chapter concludes with an analysis of welfare and need.

2.0. Theoretical framing: Class and Place

"The most important model that rolled off the Detroit assembly lines in the 20th century," said Harley Shaiken, a labor economist at the University of California-Berkeley, "was the middle class for blue-collar workers" (as quoted in Uchitelle 2008). In the boom years following World War

II, the middle class expanded—wage gaps narrowed across categories of education, job experience, and occupation between 1940 to the late-1970s (Ganong et al. 2017; Gillman and Dunkerley 1988; Kalleberg 2009). Within manufacturing and extraction, specifically, entire laboring communities were climbing consistently towards incomes that, by definition, were middle class: the median range on the gradational and objective concept of income in that particular, historical moment. This ranged from $5,000-$10,000 in the 1960s to $13,000-$25,000 in the 1970s and 1980s, to $40,000-$80,000 in the early 2000s (Smeeding 2010; Simmie and Brady 1989). By the early 1960s, entry-level laborers in southeast Chicago could earn $10 an hour, while at the same time, northern Wisconsin miners earned base wages of $3.25 per hour, plus bonuses for per-ton mined (Wasik 1960; "Report of Fact-Finding Committee Appointed to Investigate and Report on the Iron Mining Industry in the Gogebic" 1961). Both wages put laborers solidly within the 1960s middle-income bracket of $5,000-$10,000 a year (U.S. Department of Labor 2006). Increased wages combined with welfare capitalist employer benefits, such as saving plans, credit, loans, retirement, and clear paths towards advancement to enable workers in mills, mines, factories, and plants to, for the first time, envision a future where their children might have more wealth than their parents. In the mid-20th century, blue-collar workers with no more than a high school education enthusiastically entered the middle-class.

The theoretical underpinnings of class are rooted in the recognition of the inherent inequality of the processes and actors of capitalism. Analysis of class formation begins with questions of relational identification, seeking to trace where individuals or groups of actors are positioned within economic processes. Who sells their labor on the market, who buys people's time, and who owns the means of production (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013; Weber, n.d.; Marx 1990)? Fundamentally, class reflects the residue of unequal power that emerges from the ways in which "different social groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to [the] flows and interconnections" of economic wealth and land ownership, as Massey (1991) put it. As

discussed in earlier chapters, certain actors claim the resources and power to control these flows and interconnections. The 'objective' measures of class—such as material standards of living or a gradational index of wealth—reflect who benefits more or less from these the movement of capital across space and time (Wright 2003, 3). Those differences in power within the processes of capitalism shape bodily routines and social interactions. In industrial America, the movement of iron and steel, created and ordered through the actions of elites of those industries, formed the "templates of power that rationalize[d] the spaces…and the normal conduct of bodies and things within them" (Tonkiss 2006, 3).

This chapter focuses on the lived experience of class with sensitivity to how the historical power of certain processes and actors inflect the place-based, subjective experiences of class performance, social differences, and economic boom and bust. Place is an undervalued component of the experience of class. Wage labor and 'going to work' occur in physical locations, particularly for the working class (Desmond 2006; Krinsky 2007). "Space, place, and the organization of social groups, united by a concern with or attachment to a particular locality (be it a factory, neighborhood or national state), can and…do play a key role in the historical processes of social class formation and organization" (Hudson and Sadler 2004, 294). And, as Wright and Rogers (2011) observe, class consciousness consistently emerges in geographically specific locations, at historical moments when the tensions between power and vulnerability are particularly evident.

For the blue-collar middle class in the 20th century, class was embodied in place—a phenomenological experience (Russo and Linkon 2005). In their bodies and minds, workers experienced the status, identity, and positioning of middle-class incomes and benefits in relationship to specific mines and mills, and in interaction with both the owners of the means of production and their fellow workers and neighbors. The performance of class was at once physically experienced

and symbolically produced: purchasing cars, planning for retirement, and setting children on the path towards a job or educational security. Local definitions of what it meant to be middle class reflected relational expectations of bodily interactions. Specifically, people in gendered and racialized bodies experienced their own barriers and benefits of living in a place where the mass working class was rising together towards greater wealth and security.

Class is not just about embodied, lived experiences, but also the stories people tell about the meaning of those experiences. Anthropologist Sherry Ortner (2003) understands class as an opportunity for people to "simultaneously self-protect and self-define" through relational narratives that draw lines of difference or similarity with other people. Class is a "symbolic boundary," as Lamont and Molnar (2002) describe, a "conceptual distinction…made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices and even, time and space…. [Symbolic boundaries] also separate people into groups and generate feelings of similarity and group membership" (p. 168)." Symbolic boundaries, and the stories that everyday people tell about them can have deep and lasting consequences for communities. On one hand, they can calcify otherness by enabling groups and individuals to normalize, rationalize, or otherwise re-enforce "forms of social differences manifested in unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources (material and non-material) and social opportunities" (Lamont and Molnar 2002, 168). On the other hand, to perform class, people also need to "same": to find resonance, recognition, and solidarity with other members of a symbolic group in order for self-perceptions to have social currency (Lamont 2016; Brubaker and Cooper 2000). Definitions of what it means to be part of a particular class require shared, "coherent narratives about individual and collective history, stories that are coordinated with one another and that are organized around the category of social class" (Steinmetz 1992, 489). In Wisconsin and Chicago, class was the credit laborers and their families lived on, both at a company credit union and

in their neighbors' eyes. Being middle class was a group identity, formed and performed within the organizational structures of single-industry, community-wide employment.

How do people whose upward mobility was halted during the era of deindustrialization conceptualize class without work? As articulated in the previous chapter, the non-income benefits offered in the early 20th century, and consolidated as material goods through homeownership, fringe benefits, and middle-class incomes by the mid-century, enabled the performance of residential stability, upward mobility, and conspicuous consumption often assumed as the middle-class. At the same time, however, workers themselves co-constituted their communities through symbolic and social boundary making by practicing gendered and racial segregation (e.g. Pope 2016; Uchitelle 2008). When the stuff of class was stripped away in the wake of mass company closure, former workers attempt to redraw symbolic boundaries, recreate embodied experiences, or re-narrate their relationship with the processes and actors that took meaning away from their place. Indeed, class is a shared narrative (Steinmetz 1992), and the continued or negotiated performance of middle-class markers is a form of collective justification. People central to this study carefully used discourses of welfare, getting help, and navigating change in ways that allowed narrators to admit the realities and significance of the economic change while yet holding fast to non-economic, moral or ideological statements of worth.

Thus, this chapter emphasizes the lived experience of closure, through the lens of the changing performances of gendered, racialized, and consumptive middle-class status. Contemplating the rise and fall of the blue-collar middle class through the narratives created by workers themselves, rather than the objective or exogenous categories of income or occupation, can help us better understand contemporary conflicts over identity and belonging in post-industrial regions.

3.0. Data

In both Chicago and Wisconsin, the expansion of the blue-collar middle class meant the pursuit of certain social organizations: men at work, women at home, and entire communities rising together towards greater economic worth through income, credit, and conspicuous consumption. The drumbeat of national, industrial progress convinced 20th-century immigrant workers that, as a class and as Americans, iron and steelworkers were contributing to something bigger than themselves; their metals supported trains, scaffolded skyscrapers, and punctured their enemy's warships. Good wages and ready employment permitted steel and ironworkers to identify as members of the rising middle class through performing consumption and drawing boundaries around gendered expectations and racial belongingness.

3.1. The good life: Chicago

The 1940s-1970s were the height of regional wealth for the southeast Chicago steel neighborhoods. The post-war Midwestern iron and steel trade was so economically efficient and profitable that Chicago threatened Pittsburgh's strong steel market and emerged as the national hub for steel manufacturing. For the most part, the Chicago steel region became a bastion of unionization. United Steelworkers (USW) negotiated nearly all regional steel mills' wages, benefits packages, and safety regulations. Unionization, for many interviewees, was directly linked to their increased quality of life and ability to perform middle class. Oliver, who worked as a union representative at Republic Steel, explained that "Before the union…whatever the supervisor said, you could not say anything…whether it was safe, whether it was dirty, or what. You just went out and did the job. If you didn't do the job, you were sent home." He shrugged, "Before the union,

there was no vacation. If you were a good employee, maybe they give you a day off. So, when the union comes in," Oliver continued proudly, "the union implement safety and health, wages and insurance benefits, [and] unemployment benefits."[1]

Welfare capitalist policies, combined with union-negotiated wage increases and clear paths towards advancement made iron and steel jobs desirable. The steel companies themselves laid out the steps required for people to access such economic stability. "You know how kids in high school have college fairs?" Louisa, of Polish descent, asked me as we rumbled through US Steel's former neighborhood in southeast Chicago. "We used to have Mill Fairs. I mean, all the mills would come to your high school to recruit for jobs." Louisa's father, a well-respected union leader, encouraged her to go "to the mill straight out of high school. Seventeen years old, and I went to work at Chicago Steel and Wire." She chuckled softly as she turned the car towards the open fields where steel mills used to stand. "The money was good. I'll never forget: I got my first paycheck—we'd get paid every week—and my first paycheck was, like, $270 bucks. This was 1977—I was like, oh my god, I'm loaded! Because it was good money!"

Once employed, most laborers could follow a clear path to advancement. Upon gaining formal "skilled laborer" status and reaching seniority (typically at 15 years), steelworkers could take vacations, receive better rates from company credit unions, claim better shifts, and gain pay raises. For the first time, entire families could access key performative aspects of class mobility, such as homeownership, new cars, educational options, pensions, and other traditional "prizes of the middle class" (Uchitelle 2008). Richard and Phyllis took out loans from their steel mills' credit union to buy

[1] As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Wisconsin Steel was exempt from negotiations with USW since workers were represented by an independent union, the Progressive Steelworkers. However, Harvester's Wisconsin Steel matched the wages, benefits, and safety measures achieved by USW in exchange for a strike-free forty years (Bensman and Lynch 1989, 41).

their cars and they put money down on a house in a neighborhood a mile from the steel mill. Richard explained that because he "stayed at that mill, I made big money, I had nice houses, and I had real nice cars, man. I mean, we went to church in nice clothes, I mean…my kids, they in handmade clothes, every day. I had my children's clothes *made*."

Residents expressed a shared sense of community-wide success, of rising together to bring an entire neighborhood to a new era of wealth and middle-class status (Walley 2013). How high certain people could climb remained contingent on how their employers and coworkers co-constituted the symbolic and social boundaries of class.

3.2. Performing Gender: Chicago

In Chicago, masculinity and industrial work were deeply intertwined. In her semi-autobiographical book work on Chicago steel, Walley (2013) stated, "it was my father's paycheck from the mills that was his source of manhood and self-respect." The ability of a man to support his family through hard work emerged in resistance to the introduction of women into the mills during and immediately following World War II. The steel mill was firmly a man's world. "I didn't see any women come in there until about 1970," said Duncan in an oral history from 2001. Hesitantly, he explained that the new women workers weren't treated "respectfully, because—you know, the old cliché from like—we're going back to 1912—that old system was still there, you see?" Duncan seemed to stumble, trying to explain an ideology that even fifteen years ago was inappropriate. The view was, he said, that "'a woman's supposed to be at home cooking and holding a baby.' And they didn't respect her on the job because they didn't think she even belonged there." With more resentment, Orwell said in his oral history, "when women came in, that was a big, radical change.

When we first got in [the mills], they had like three. And then they had about twenty-something…they would come in and take [men's'] jobs."

Steel millwork physically demanding manual labor, but, unlike more 'feminine' jobs, it paid very well and offered health care and overtime. As a single mother, Rachel was desperate for the good pay offered by the mill. Citing her four uncles and father who worked in the mills in the 60s, Rachel aggressively petitioned the human resources manager at Acme Steel to hire her on the factory floor instead of for office work. "At that time, I was tiny—petite! You tell someone you are a heavy equipment operator and they're like 'yeah right, she's full of it.'" Rachel, a 61-year-old, white, retired steelworker snorted. She leaned back in her chair and proudly declared, "but, once they saw me at the machines, it blew their minds that, 'oh wow, women can actually do the job!'"[2] As one of the first women working at Acme Steel, Rachel experienced a few harrowing stories of harassment but mostly focused on the hard work of gaining respect through talent, commitment, and the protection and support of her foreman, Jerry.

3.3. Doing Race: Chicago

Jerry, an African American man who moved from Tennessee to Chicago in 1965, worked at Acme Steel for nearly 35 years. He was Rachel's boss and a respected figure in her story. Jerry explained to me that when he "first went to the mill in the '60s, on the ovens, there were no white guys working on the ovens, you know that?" He mildly explained that Blacks and Latinos were assigned to the ovens and other tough positions ("Hoo! Dirty and hot!" he exclaimed, wiping his

[2] Rachel was hired in the 1970s, in an era when women were more accepted, but still notable minorities, in the mills. Jerry, one of her foremen at Acme Steel, recalled that when he first "went in at '65, and there wasn't no ladies. No. They came in '75."

brow to emphasize the point), while white men were placed on jobs that were cleaner and easier, like carpenter or machinist. This charge was repeated across multiple accounts. Kornblum (1974) noted that since the first decades of steel mill work, white English-speakers were prioritized by managers for management roles; Poles, Italians, and Slovaks battled for clean, safe, and skilled mid-level jobs. As Mexicans and African Americans arrived in Chicago in the 1920s, they were given brutal, "laborer" tasks. Similarly, in a 2001 oral history at the Southeast Chicago Historical Society, Alfred described "the definite ethnic problem with Hispanics and Black people," he observed, "in the early days of the steel industry." He continued, "they were always channeled into either labor gang, coke plant, yard department or such. And as years went on, little by little, those things changed [with] more civil rights. [But] we never had a Black man in the boiler shop until probably…in the '70's, you know." Kornblum (1974) contended that these patterns of company-supported inequality shaped race relations through the second half of the 20th century

Company management purposively used ethnic differentiation to maintain greater leverage over workers. Perpetuating difference had the very real effect of limiting collective action, a consequence that was, doubtless, in the best interest of the company (Kornblum 1974; Walley 2013). By reiterating and sanctioning boundaries along with racial, ethnic, and language markers, collective bargaining was effectively stunted. Osborne's experience of union membership shifted the social boundaries of work experience in the steel mills. Osborne, an African American worker laid off from Acme Steel said in his oral history, "when we first started, it was the Hispanics and the Black on the lower part of the pecking order, you know. We had to band together to enforce some kind of situation change, you know…when we did that, it was by the vote. When I started in '64, we had White leadership. And after that, then the Blacks started getting involved in the union." Racial integration and collaboration, though stunted at times by national organizations (the AFL was notoriously racialized through the mid-20th century, unions did offer some space for racial

integration. Chris, the adult daughter of a Polish, Chicago steelworker, explained to me that "union politics brought together racial tensions and coalitions; while the mills were all about racial divisions, [unions] were a place for inter-racial network building." And indeed, flipping through 1960s newsletters of US Steel Works and the Progressive Steelworkers Union, the company-wide organization at Wisconsin Steel, readers can see photos of African American leadership standing shoulder-to-shoulder with men from Mexico, Poland, Italy, and the Baltics. Union leadership, however, remained entirely male.

Financial capital and seniority at work enabled systematic housing segregation. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 1, Wisconsin Steel attempted to maintain control over their old guard of employees by refusing, until after World War II, to hire blacks. Since more than three-quarters men who worked in the Mill lived in South Deering, Wisconsin Steel's management was able to control the racial constitution of the neighborhood by refraining from integrating the workplace until the 1950s (Bensman and Lynch 1989). Beyond the edges of the 'company town' of South Deering, informal segregation remained status quo long after housing and schooling integration was required by the City of Chicago (Cohen 2008). In fact, white-led riots, threats, and harassment tainted the early years of certain minority housing development projects on the southeast side (American Friends Service Committee 1959). The East Side and Hegewisch neighborhoods were white; South Chicago was black.

Indeed, there remain long-term impacts from this informal segregation: the earliest beneficiaries of non-income, paternalistic investments from employers, and eventual middle-class status were white men and their families. The symbols of being middle class were first available to men who had been working in better-paid jobs the longest: white men were among the first to purchase houses and cars, save money to send children to college, and invest in community, social

infrastructures, such as churches or local groups. These elements of class were eventually available to African Americans and Mexicans. Over 35 years, Jessie did work his way out of the ovens and up to the role of foreman. He bought a house in South Chicago, where he still lives. "I been here for a long, long time. I love Chicago. I always have lived on this side, in this area. South Chicago." If home was a safe space for him to own a house and live a middle-class life, though, his work was frustrating. Union representatives never achieved real change, he argued, and he explained with a sigh of acceptance that "no superintendents, no assistant superintendents were black. They all were white…. Superintendent put that guy up, he's the front man, and he calls the shots. You know they call the shots." He looked at me (a white researcher) with a mix of gentleness and resignation, "You all call the shots."

3.4. The good life: Wisconsin

"When we first talked about getting married," Sharon said, glancing at her husband Hans, they'd assumed that, "he'd be in the mine…and we'd have it on easy street." They both smiled with self-consciousness; although ultimately disappointed, this expectation was viable until the early 1960s. After World War II, the Lake Superior mining ranges supplied 81 percent of all domestic output (Chicago Park District 2014; Dunn 2012). Until closure, the Montreal Mine was the most prolific iron mine in Wisconsin and one of the deepest iron mines in the world at 4,335 vertical feet (Schultz 1986:52). Mining was so constant in northern Wisconsin that 62-year-old Gerald recalled how "the ore trains just ran and ran and ran, and they would run throughout the night." In this rural Wisconsin iron mining community, outfitted with company houses and welfare capitalism, upward mobility and consistent employment felt assured for blue-collar workers and their families.

Through the World War II era, Montreal Mine employed 600 men, while the town housed 1,800 (R. Werner 1939). Laborers and their families felt like they were middle class, even though their income was lower than their steel mill working compatriots. "It was the best of times!" Wayne, 69, reminisced. "Montreal was a mining town. They owned all the houses, [though] my dad built his own house there. But they sponsored our little leagues, they built our baseball fields…the mine did everything for us, a lot of things for us. We had to work, and do a lot of it. But they built a clubhouse for us, where we could play basketball, bowling…" There was enough income for families to afford the conspicuous consumption of the middle-class on their own terms. 67-year-old Bill, of Finnish descent, exclaimed, "believe me, I'll brag the mines up to the end because I know how good they were for the area. I had the best life in the world, then, because we were able to afford a new car, and my mother was able to get some appliances in the house."

3.5. Performing Gender: Wisconsin

Mining labor, and consequentially, a middle-class lifestyle for miners' families, required a certain form of gender performance. Mining jobs were only worked by men; women stayed at home or, in a few rare cases, worked outside of the home. Among older men and women I spoke to, the ideal of the male breadwinner remained potent. Wayne, 69, of Italian stock, declared the Montreal Mine era as "great times." He defined 'great' in terms of both family and work. "My dad worked hard, my mom was able to stay home, raise myself and my three sisters. We all got education, we had 100% health care—they had a clinic [with] two doctors there. Dad made a good living." He paused for emphasis and declared, "We lived the dream, there, one person working."

That one person working was a man, doing hard labor in dangerous situations. Stories of the mining work itself were threaded through with stories of heroic masculinity. Paul waxed poetic

about his near-death experiences of fires and floods at the lowest levels of the mine, while Bob reflected on the courage it took to go deep into the dark of a shaft mine. As he pulled out a photo of himself with a respirator on, Paul proudly explained, "I was in mine rescue. [In the Vietnam war] I fought fire on a ship." One time, he explained, he was fighting an underground mine fire for two hours without success, and realized that the above-ground crew had misplaced the hoses. "They had two big hoses shooting at a wall! So, we went up. There was this wise guy from Washington. I said, you guys should be down there, see that you've been shooting water at a wall." Sinking back into that situation, he grumbled that while he labored for, "three bucks an hour with three kids and a wife at home, [versus] you guys up here, with a white shirt and tie…don't you tell me nothing!"

In Wisconsin, in particular, there was a sense of scrappy, pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps, masculinity that seemed integral to their family's rise into middle class and security. Even historical documents emphasize the masculinity of the era. "These were men" of the frontier mining the iron in the Lake Superior district, declared Harry S. Taylor, head of Oglebay Norton and Co. in the 1950s, "used to weighing the risks, willing to pay the price; if they lost there'd be no whimpering; if they won they'd press their advantage…. It's no wonder they built America" (Oglebay Norton and Company 1980).

3.5. Doing Race: Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, racialized edges of class boundaries were demarcated by silence rather institutionalized segregation or glass ceilings, as in Chicago. "The old dirty secret of Hurley is that there aren't any Indians in Hurley," Thomas, an older man at a class reunion event in Wisconsin told me. He continued, "even during the wars, every able-bodied persons are working in the mine night

and day—there weren't any Indians working in the mine. They said it's against their religion." He leaned in towards me and whispered, "It was against the union rules. The owners and the unions colluded so you can't find written documents about it." His friend and former classmate, Phil agreed to this bold statement, and expanded further. "They all lived on their reservations and they are provided for, so, they didn't look for outside employment. They could've left if they wanted to." Thomas inclined his head slightly and quickly attempted to qualify what his friend had told me, "Many of them went…West. They didn't come to this area. I mean it wasn't…" Thomas looked pointedly at his friend, "when I was a kid, [it wasn't] active antagonism. It's just…they weren't mentioned. Right?" Phil shrugged in agreement as Thomas continued, "It's just like they weren't there. They're only 30 miles away but they weren't mentioned! They weren't part of the program here. So, it's not like it was some kind of active nastiness."

Thomas and Phil's interpretations of exclusion of Ojibwe tribe members from the mine were impossible to triangulate. However, Luke, a well-respected lawyer in Hurley, echoed Thomas's observation—and offered a different explanation—in a separate conversation. "When I was growing up, we never saw Native Americans on the range," Thomas admitted. "The community here must've been hostile—at best, indifferent. Perhaps there was some kind of unholy alliance between the mining companies and the unions, to keep Native Americans out?" He shrugged when I pushed him on this point. He then contrasted the experience of Native Americans to "the other groups—all the European groups, whether they were Irish or Jewish or Italian or Cornish or Slavic—were all pretty well integrated. The *white* groups."

The company, firmly committed to resisting unionization, had a vested interest in muting otherness and manufacturing sameness, and they did so by intentionally increasing the density of acquaintanceship (Freudenburg 1986). Within the mine, ethnic differences were squashed, according

to Paul, a former miner. "They put a Finlander with a Pollack, pretty soon, the Polish is talking Finn and the Finn is understanding Polish. That's why they did it. Then, you had partners, and the partners got to know each other, and got [to be] friends." Within the company town, economic sameness was also a goal. Maureen, 54, who grew up in a Montreal company house, recalled that "so many people were on the same economic level. You were either in the little houses or the big houses." An undated, nostalgic essay tucked into the records housed in the Iron County Historical Society, a mid-century Montreal resident offered an even more romantic, if unverifiable, description of a united community. This town was "a place where everyone lived with dignity and pride regardless of their occupations with the mining company and irrespective of living in a company house or one of their own. A dimension of high standards were [sic] set for the town infrastructure, housing and quality of life. There was no such place as "the other side of the tracks" or "a bad part of town." Everyone was "somebody" in my town" (Penrose 1995).

Such nostalgic recollections of equality likely overlooked the inherent divisions between laborer and management. "Montreal (both town and company) had their little gimmick," said Dick. "They'd put on a picnic in Upson Park. They'd have it all set up so there was games for the kids, and there was anything the miners wanted to drink, they had music and stuff. They put on an all-day affair. You might have been on strike or…they tried to keep harmony, anyway, on some level." Dick's friend Pat agreed. Although after the Wagner Act was adopted, the company could no longer legally fire nor evict unionizers, "there was a conflict, when you were on a long strike, because these miners lived in company homes." Put more simply, Maureen snidely remarked, "if you lived in a company home, I don't expect you'll be too good of a union man."

Furthermore, when entire communities are gaining economic wealth at a similar rate, not being 'part of the program,' as Thomas put it, is othering. Like in Chicago, middle-class status was

gained by racial and gender categories which were already privileged. Such institutionalized avoidance of difference not only minimized discord in small mining communities, but it also could be understood in light of the shaky boundaries of the middle class. Difference between people agitates a 'fear of falling,' as the daughter of a former Chicago steelworker told me—falling from the20th-century narratives of progress, family, neighborhood, and success. Indeed, the idea of what a middle-class family should look like in the first three-quarters of the 20th century is intertwined with questions of what it *should not look like*. Women in the mill in southeast Chicago, or working outside of the home in northern Wisconsin, made certain social arrangements of middle-class less recognizable, as did African Americans moving into South Deering, Illinois or the (unrealized) concept of Native Americans integrating into Wisconsin mining life.

3.6. The lived experiences of company closure

Beginning in the 1960s, the industries central to this study experienced a series of macro-economic shocks, technological and transportation improvements, and a new wave of free market policies. To maintain profit margins, employers sought greater 'flexibility' in their relations with their workers and began dismantling the career class of male proletarians in mining, transportation, and manufacturing, "leading to increased job displacement, reduced job security and bargaining power for workers, and downward pressure on benefits and wages" (Mansfield and Mutz 2013, 7).[3] Between 1969 and 1996, the American Midwest and Mid-Atlantic regions lost 33 percent of their

[3] At the aggregate scale, the first two decades of outsourcing, relocations, and downsizing were characterized by job "churning"—job loss didn't significantly change national employment levels, just locations. Between 1965 and 2000, U.S. manufacturing consistently employed approximately 18 million workers (see Pierce and Schott 2016). "In a sense," argued Fallows (1985), "the difference is merely symbolic: nearly 70 percent of employed Americans work in service industries, and services have employed more people than manufacturing for at least a hundred years." But unemployment, class, and community all are experienced on the local level. In the former American industrial corridor, stretching from New York to Wisconsin, the economic landscape permanently shifted.

manufacturing jobs (Kahn 1999). Extractive industries declined 42.2 percent in employment opportunities between 1950 and 1980 (Metzgar 2002). 1985, there were five million unionized factory workers in the US. By 2002, there were only 3 million (Metzgar 2002). United Steelworkers lost 105,000 members between 1979 and 1983 and disbanded 1,097 at the same time (High and Lewis 2007).

By the end of the late 1980s, the post-War era marked by "homogeneity, standardization, and the economies and organizations of scale," had given way to a new generation of insecure work and workers, characterized by "diversity, differentiation, and fragmentation"(Hall and Jacques 1991). In the late 20th-century, income inequality in America was steadily increasing. According to Simmie and Brady (1989), the proportion of income received by the richest 20 percent increased from 40 percent to 43 percent between 1967 and 1989. At the same time, the proportion of workers in the middle range of income declined. The US Census Bureau determined that middle-class families with total family incomes between $15,000 and $35,000 declined from 51 percent in 1973 to 44 percent in 1982 (Simmie and Brady 1989). Those Americans who remained in the middle-class income categories were increasingly likely to work in lower-wage, service jobs.

The working-aged people in my cases experienced a dramatic shift from career employment with benefits to "so-called "flexible" labor contracts; temporary jobs; labor as casuals, part-timers, or intermittently for labor brokers," reliance on money wages without benefits, and marginalization from state attention (Standing 2014). Because of the private benefits model constructed by industrial firms in the early 20th century, closure meant not only unemployment for tens of thousands of workers, but the termination of healthcare, credit, pensions, loans, infrastructure, and social organization. With income loss, the performative elements of middle-class life shifted as women entered the workplace and racial minority/majority dynamics altered. I turn next to an analysis of

how workers themselves understood the consequences of closure on their experience of place-based class.

3.6.1. Closure: Chicago

"Closed all of them mills down at one time." Jerry looked at me with wide eyes and threw up his hands. "Chicago was run by all of them steel mills, and they shut 'em all down! All of them. No steel mills…In '65 when I moved here, there was 20 thousand people working in that mill. Nothing there now. Nobody making no money because what could they do?" Between 1970s-1980s, the US steel industry faced a confluence of decline in demand, drop in the price of steel, and the rise of international competition. One after another, all the steel mills in the Chicago region closed. By the early 2000s, none were functional, and only two of the mills' buildings were still standing.

The first mill to close, International Harvester's Wisconsin Steel, became the legal and symbolic paradigm of the collapse of both Chicago's steel industry and communities (T. Brown 2008). Until 1977, International Harvester was both owner and primary customer of Wisconsin Steel. In the final years of its ownership of the mill, Harvester intentionally disinvested in the upkeep of the plant and in pension payments for employees. Within a year of the company-based, Progressive Steelworkers Union signing an agreement with Harvester releasing the company from all non-pension contractual benefits, Harvester sold the mill to Envirodyne Industries in 1977 (Bensman and Lynch 1989). On March 27, 1980, Envirodyne declared bankruptcy and locked the Wisconsin Steel gates behind 3,330 steelworkers without warning (Sellers 2006; Longworth 1982). Workers were stymied for months by confusing communication from the company, complicated

legal processes of bankruptcy, and troublesome procedures required to access state-based welfare or unemployment benefits.

The local daily newspaper, the Daily Calumet, tracked the drama. In the months following closure, Wisconsin Steel failed to issue final paychecks to workers, and those which had been issued were not honored by local bankers until "bankruptcy hearings decide the deposition of the mill assets they would not value the checks" (Giocondo 1980). By the end of the year, "the jobless" was feeling "bitterness over the eight-month deception of announcements made practically every month that Wisconsin Steel would reopen within the following month" (Wasik 1980). In late 1980, Wisconsin Steelworkers organized a class action lawsuit to reclaim final pay and some portion of their pension benefits for 2,500 workers. Lawyers put the value of lost pay, pension, and benefits at $40 million. After a decade, a suit between International Harvester and the federal government compelled the company to pay workers $14.8 million in pension claims (Longworth 1995). The suit was settled in 1995, with workers receiving one-tenth of their due in the form of Envirodyne stocks.

As the remaining eight mills in the region closed, newly unemployed workers struggled to decipher the next steps. Interviewees pointed to the invisible hand of capitalism through global competition and technological change. In his 2001 oral history, Jose echoed articulated the local consequences of comparative advantage. "They're killed, all. They told us, 'We cannot afford to pay you what you want. We get this steel that we get in here from Japan and other countries, cheaper.' So that's what killed us. The country, they shouldn't allow the imports and then we'll be okay. But this way, it's terrible." Other interviewees were critical of the firms who went bankrupt or more clearly disinvested in mill infrastructure to save money. Oliver explained, "if a company shuts and they're not a [bankrupt] company, they could pay the benefits. They might offer you a package. But

the company went bankrupt…. There was no money there available for the package, so you lost your insurance and a [portion of] your pension…. So yes, everybody lost out big."

For the large majority of the tens of thousands of steelworkers, no low-skill, replacement jobs could or would provide satisfactory benefits or pay. A handful of workers had achieved certification in welding, electrical work, or large machinery operation while at the mill and were better equipped to find similar, high paying work within a two-hour commute. On the last day before his mill closed in Chicago, Oliver reflected, it was "very sad because they felt like they lost like a member of the family. Some of them were crying, you know. It's very sad and personal, because if you feel you can't get another job, then you say, 'What am I going to do to support my family?' It's a very sad situation." As another Chicagoan commented to me, "the most unnerving part is when they took all our health insurance away. And so, if my wife wasn't working, I would have had no insurance." Oliver continued, "When you are used to working in the steel industry, it's kind of hard to go out and get a job elsewhere. Especially if you are fifties or older and if you are not a go-getter, your life is going to be miserable because nobody is going to offer you a job. Making decent wages, having insurance for your family…a lot of the people that I know are in really bad situations, two or three of them committed suicide." He rubbed his forehead slowly and leaned forward over the desk in the old union hall, where he was once a union representative. "I felt so bad that I could not help them. I could not find a job for them."

Richard was one of the former workers who struggled to find a new job.[4] "We went from $70,000 a year to $7,000—what a shock!" Richard threw up his hands. "There weren't no jobs,

[4] Similarly, Scott, a former union leader in Chicago, told me, "People aren't getting jobs as good as they used to have, even if they do get a job." Ruth, a former machine operator at a Chicago steel mill, said to me, "Since [closure] I've done petty jobs. They cut my pension, 500 dollars. But I can still work with it. It's workable. In fact, I know some people with the pension I'm getting, they survived on that kind of money."

wasn't nobody working for a long time and…I had to sit out there in my backyard with my son on my lap, just looking at the sky for long periods of time, just looking at that sky, wondering what happened to all that money and all that stuff I did." Richard continued, "I think my way out of things. And to think my way out of the US Steel thing was hard…it drove me to drinking." Phyllis, Richard's wife, nodded slowly. The emotions of this episode of their lives showed raw on her face, even decades after the fact. She avoided eye contact with me and looked stonily at the table. She glanced at Richard and shared, "Yeah, and it lasted so long because he didn't get another job until the Post Office in '88." In that four-year interim, Phyllis became pregnant with their fifth child and the steel mill's credit union reclaimed the cars they had purchased on loan through them. Phyllis told me, "They came and took those, and we were back to riding the bus and the train everywhere we went. And we were cutting back for what we had to get for the kids and you know, how to make a meal out of nothing, and all of that stuff." In the years between closure and Richard's next job, Phyllis picked up work when she could. Richard smiled, "she made more money than me. Yeah, so it wasn't too bad in that respect. In the end we came out alright."

In the years following closure, women in the workplace shifted from being an interruption of middle-class performance to a necessity. One Chicagoan commented, "the most unnerving part is when they took all our health insurance away. And so, if my wife wasn't working, I would have had no insurance." Between the late 1960s and 1980s, the number of married women joining their husbands in the work force increased from 33 percent to 54 percent (Simmie and Brady 1989, 57; Russo and Linkon 2005). This reorganization of gender roles was the harbinger of the decline and fall of the blue-collar middle class.

3.6.2. Closure: Wisconsin

"We were the first ones that got laid off, and then the mine went until 1962, and then everybody [got laid off]." Explained Paul, a sharp-witted 84-year-old veteran of the Montreal Mine. He paused, searching for words. "They're just, "you're done." He continued, "that was the first time ever…you know something's going on." His wife nodded and interjected. "Yes, I don't know if it was because they started to import, or if the mine was depleted." Her voice trailed off towards a question mark. Paul responded, "No, I think there's still a lot of ore down there."

Certainly, like most of the major mining operations along the Michigan-Wisconsin border in the mid-20th century, the Montreal mine stopped production long before the ore was depleted (Freudenburg, Frickel, and Gramling 1995, 369). There are myriad reasons for closure (including price-cost squeeze, competition, disinvestment, etc.). Two themes emerged in interviews and historical archives as key for how contemporary residents understand their opportunities today. First, since 1939, Oglebay, Norton and Co., owner of the Montreal Mining Company, had been investing in exploration of low-grade mineral extraction, rationalizing that "the high costs (and unpredictable payoff) of domestic underground exploration" forced "iron and steel producers began to seek alternative sources of high-grade ore through overseas exploration and research into converting low-grade ores like taconite…into more useful materials" ("Oglebay Norton Company History" 1997). Much of the company's investment was directed towards Minnesota, where geologists were developing a more economically efficient process of open-pit iron ore mining that involves the pulverization and separation of low-quality, iron ore from taconite rock (Liesch 2006; Iron Mining Association of Minnesota 2014; Manuel 2013). By 1960—two years prior to the closure of the Montreal Mine—Oglebay had opened a large taconite mine in Eveleth, Minnesota. "That was really death to the direct shipment lines," said Todd, a mechanical engineer of Italian descent who

recently returned to the Northwoods to retire near family. "The blast furnaces all of a sudden were designed to handle these uniform pellets, which melted better and took less energy. And of course, the mines were getting deeper and deeper here." The irony wasn't lost on him; at nearly a mile deep, the Montreal Mine still is of the deepest iron ore mine in the world only because deep shaft iron ore mines are technologically defunct.[5]

Second, many interviewees perceptively articulated how specific mechanisms of what is now considered neoliberalism—namely technological improvements, foreign competition, and company mismanagement—played a role in making their central industries obsolete. Wayne grimaced knowingly at me. "We're in a world-wide market now. A lot of these trade agreements, they talked about free trade. Well, free trade is not fair trade. They talk [free trade] up, and they do them, and more people lose their jobs. What are you going to do? All the big players moved." A poem written by Holly Fellman, (1964), a high schooler from Iron County whose family moved to Illinois shortly after the Montreal Mine closed, articulates the on-the-ground recognition of the broader forces driving capitalism away from iron ore extraction in Wisconsin:

> Thirteen million tons lost forever, buried an' a-rustin'
> "Why," we asked, "this waste o' sweat an ore?"
> "Your ways are old and costly," said them
> Big city boys with th' trim coats an' shiny shoes.
> "There are new cheaper mines far away in
> Southern lands—we cannot buy from you!"

In fact, when the mining companies failed to reclaim their "a-rustin'" machinery from the quickly-flooding mines, it became clear to Iron County residents that the closure was permanent. Oglebay, Norton and Co. sold their company houses to private residents, schools consolidated, and

[5] High quality ore extracted from that mine could not be processed in regional smelters. In fact, the geology that attracted early immigrant miners to the region exempted the range from this new wave of strip mining, as the Gogebic's "iron ores tend to lie in irregular, isolated bodies located several hundred to several thousand feet under the surface" (Rucker 1992). It was a confluence of technological development for the purpose of economic efficiency which ended mining in this region.

stores closed. Miners searched desperately for work, and wives left behind began while their husbands combed the nearby cities and mines for work labored in low-wage, temporary jobs, ranging from selling tickets at the local ski hill to sewing gloves in a Michigan factory to cutting tree boughs and weaving wreaths for Christmas. In the decades following closure, rural women working outside the home shifted from being an anomaly of middle-class performance to a means to maintain some social safety net. Several rural interviewees noted how the traditional, paternalistic family model relied too much on the security of employment to be perpetuated in a new, precarious context, as limiting the economic earning power of a household to one source of income put that household in a more vulnerable location. Sherry, of Finnish origins, said, "I don't think the wives ever had a job out of the home." She frowned in light of our recent conversation about the mine's final closure. Clearly, "that was a problem."

Like in Chicago, the lower paid, alternative jobs particularly pinched older workers who received neither welfare capitalist nor welfare state aid. Carl's father "was working at the mine when it closed—Montreal—and he wasn't eligible for social security, or anything else." Carl's face was sober in reflections. The pensions were slow in coming, and mere pittances at $25 per month. "He wasn't 60 yet, but he was close. He couldn't find jobs around here, so he moved to Grants, New Mexico to work in the uranium mines down there, and he worked down there for a couple of years. But then my grandmother, his mother, was ill, and he moved back in '64. After that, he just got minimal jobs around here. He was too old to get a good job. So, towards the end of their life was…so much less income than they had. They were hurting that way. My mother had to go to work and she worked until she was 87." Carl paused and added, "*that* was the result of the mine."

3.7. The blue-collar middle class in need

"I hope you don't think we're asking something for nothing," said unemployed Wisconsin Steelworker Raul in a 1982 newspaper article. "We tried to preserve our jobs. Now that that's gone by the wayside, we're just trying to get what's coming to us as taxpayers and citizens" (Longworth 1982). When a single company is so integral to the middle-class performance, job loss is more than income loss or status decline. Without the company that *made place,* the social worlds of everyday people—their culture and structure, home and work, and past and future—were rooted in a landscape lacking the flows of capital, the accumulation of wealth, and the relational, embodied experiences of upward mobility. Closure meant the cessation of non-income healthcare benefits, subsidized housing, loans for vehicles, pensions, and credit that enabled symbolic relations of security, performance, and community order. Within a handful of years, blue-collar, middle-class workers experienced crises of class "ambiguity" (Hout 2008) and "status inconsistency" (Hodge and Treiman 1968). Workers had to navigate the world as people downgraded, accessing aid once reserved for the poorest of their community.

Richard and Phyllis, who had volunteered at their church's food bank for years, became recipients of that food. "The church saved us, really," Richard sighed. For those workers not connected with a church, the Progressive Steelworkers Union of the bankrupt Wisconsin Steel created a "Save our Jobs" fund that purchased and distributed food to former workers' families (Wasik 1980; Lumpkin 1999). In the decade following closure, the Save Our Jobs committee, formerly of Wisconsin Steel, met with steelworkers who were unclear how to "get aid such as unemployment benefits, food stamps or temporary family medical insurance," in addition to covering the fees for legal action against Envirodyne (Giocondo 1980). Getting those benefits often

required a public admittance of loss, however. In Chicago, I walked the remains of the US Steel South Works plant with Jesus and Marcos, two former laborers. Still spry in their mid-60s, the men climbed into the massive cement walls that once held acres of ore and coal. As they climbed through weeds and picked taconite pellets from the ground, they reminisced about their experiences running huge cranes and avoiding danger. However, after I turned off the recorder, Jesus turned to me soberly as he remembered the pain of the mills closing. He recalled some of his friends, so suddenly stripped of their masculine livelihoods, were so ashamed of their loss that they sent their wives to pick up welfare checks, food stamps, and charity baskets.

In Wisconsin, Wayne explained his support for a controversial proposal to open a new iron mine in the same region where his dad worked, Wayne longed for middle-class freedom. "I was for it for freedom for our people here. If a family has a good job, that's freedom—they can educate their kids, they can go on their vacations. They're going to have to work hard…like I told all these politicians and all these writers—we're not looking for handouts here, all we want is a good job. Nobody's asking for a handout." He explained that his grandfather, the first miner in the family, was "very proud." After the mine closed, "my grandma said they're not taking welfare—they'll eat the bark off a tree first." But in such a remote community, many community members were forced to accept some form of non-profit and government support. Charity foodbanks opened up in local churches and helped distribute government-sponsored, temporary food aid, or "commodities." Accepting this food aid was a sour point in several interviewees' stories, however. "Our kids still remember, every time we all get together, 'remember when we had to drink that dried milk.' They hated that. Of all the things we had to cut back on, that was the thing that sticks with them, having to drink powdered milk." Sharon pressed her lips together and made eye contact with Wayne in a shared moment of sorrow. Melanie, a woman in her fifties who would've been the age of Sharon and Wayne's kids, told me over coffee that though her dad worked in the mine, the only thing she

remembered of that era were the commodities. "I mean I don't want to seem as poor, but you know… [I remember] going to get the commodities of cheese, and that Spam." She groaned, "I mean spam almost every meal. Mom did her best to do with what she could and what we had."

In both rural and urban settings, interviewees resisted stories of 'seeming poor,' to paraphrase Melanie. If class is formed not only by income levels, but, as I argued at the start of this chapter, also by company entitlements and relational performances, doing class after one loses a job requires a new type of relational work.[6] Doubtless, these narratives derive in part from conservative and often racialized discourses of welfare dependency (though this was never explicitly named by interviewees). But recall, too, that companies intentionally constructed non-income, welfare capitalist benefits as an alternative to the "humiliation" of dependency upon "charitable expenditures…of the State and municipal governments" (Beeks, 1909, in Tone 1997:41). Avoiding dependency on state-based welfare systems reiterates patterns of reliance on employment—on the very structures of capitalism that allowed the rise and fall of the blue-collar middle class.

The resistance of laborers towards appearing lower class reflects a broader pattern that, as Walley (2013) observed, "all the "classes" to which we belong are never static, and our own positions are under constant negotiation…our status and position in relation to others are never truly assured" (p. 24) For workers in my cases, class was never a position in the world they could take for granted. It remains, even to this day, "a constant question: something we might hope to change, be desperate to maintain, or resign ourselves to perpetuating" (Walley 2013, 24).

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[6] As the rules of the game have changed, so have the boundary markers of class and status. Most Americans still consider themselves middle class (Sosnaud et al. 2013). A 2005 New York Times survey found that only 1 percent of respondents considered themselves to be "upper class" and only 7 percent considered themselves part of the "lower class." The remainder said that they were either "middle class" or "working class" (Smeeding 2010). When asked, only a few of my interviewees stated that they considered themselves or their 'people' working class. In fact, former millworkers and miners and their families leaned into a narrative of commonality with their middle-class peers by continuing discourses of self-reliance, freedom, and citizenship so vital to that middle-class identity performance.

4.0. Conclusion

I contend that what scholars of the economic decline and political discontent of the industrial worker typically understand as a crisis of deindustrialization is actually a complex negotiation of disappointed class expectations in light the rapid transformation of place. Class reflects the residue of unequal power that emerges from the ways in which "different social groups, and different individuals, are placed in very distinct ways in relation to [the] flows and interconnections" of economic wealth and land ownership, as Massey (1991) put it. Lacking the processes and actors of the flows of capitalism, the blue-collar middle class disintegrated.

As we face a revival of discourse centering on the relative deprivation of former generations, it bodes well for us to further interrogate the economic structures and cultural narratives that constructed (and destroyed) the mid-20th century, industrial, middle-class ideal. I join others (e.g. Katz 2001; Tone 1997) in arguing that 20th-century workers' security, so often aligned with middle-class status, was merely precarity propped up by paternalism, and it's consequential racialized and gendered orders. It was through industrial welfare that workers and their families experienced the logics of capitalism and the practice of class. At the same time, however, laborers co-constituted their communities and constantly performed and, in the process, reproduced local meanings of class. That's why I echo Russo and Linkon's (2005) suggestion that understanding working-class interests in contemporary contexts requires greater sensitivity to phenomenological, and place-bound, experiences of class. Company closure rendered familiar landscapes unrecognizable and called into question the normal—and often institutionalized—ways of belonging in a place.

Chapter 5: The question of home: Why and how do people stay in deindustrialized places?

1.0. Introduction

"The mines kept everything so beautiful." Jill laughed and shook her head. She leaned towards me, clutching her coffee mug, and traced a little map on the massive green table where we sat. "The engine house was not far from where I lived and I'd go roller skating down there—the floors in there were marble, and the big turbines were just clean, and they had big potted fern plants sitting on pedestals in different places. It's hard to imagine that a mine could be that way." Jill's voice falters as we look out the window on this Friday afternoon. Down the hill from the old Courthouse, the main street of Hurley, Wisconsin is quiet. Since the closure of its last iron mine, the Montreal Mine, in 1962, Iron County experienced symptoms of boom-bust cycles familiar to scholars of resource extraction: an accelerated pace of population change, economic depression, and unemployment. The top third of the long and narrow county felt the impact of this closure most immediately. The population of Iron County peaked in 1920, at 10,261 residents. By 2018, the county had 5,700 residents, four schools, and two gas stations scattered across 758 square miles (U.S. Census Bureau 2015b).

In Chicago, there was already a demographic shift underway when the first steel mill shuttered—whites were moving into the suburbs, and Latinos and Blacks were buying their emptied houses and commuting to jobs. Thus, net outmigration following company closure was relatively

low. In South Deering specifically, the neighborhood adjacent to Wisconsin Steel, only a total of three thousand residents out-migrated between 1960 and 2000 (College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs 2010). But the impacts were felt immediately. "The Wisconsin Steel thing was a huge setback for the community, which it hasn't really recovered from," Jamie recalled. "I remember as a kid, when I was in high school, traveling along 106th Street to get to St. Francis DeSales by bus—there was always the men getting off every morning and afternoon, on and off, the hard hats, everything, because the place was just pumping with jobs! And then suddenly, it was nothing. I mean it was vacant." Jamie rubbed his chin and gazed out of the historical society windows towards the vast, grassy fields stretching towards the lake.

Across the United States, many communities once central to domestic steel and iron industries lost between 20 and 40 percent of their populations between the 1970s and 2000s (Hartley 2013). Mass closures of blue-collar industries, ranging from appliance manufacturing to auto making, transformed roots into "routes," (Gustafson 2014; Broughton 2015; Dudley 1994). Scholars tracked the socioeconomic consequences of these closures: typically with five years of company closure, residents were in the midst of out-migrating, peripheral businesses and social institutions had consolidated, and local governments were struggling to maintain services with a shrinking tax base (Wilson 2004; Lockie et al. 2009). Within a decade, demographers observe high rates of poverty, unemployment, and alcohol-related deaths (Pierce and Schott 2016).

My dissertation cases are exemplars of these general patterns. In both locations, the unemployment rate is twelve percent, thirty percent of residents are over the age of sixty-five, and the price of listed houses are between thirty and fifty percent lower than the county or city average.[1]

[1] The median home value in Wisconsin is $186,400. Wisconsin home values have gone up 6.5 percent over the past year. The median price of homes currently listed in Wisconsin is $209,900 while the median price of homes that sold is $178,400. The median price of homes currently listed in Iron County is $165,000—this number includes the southern

In Chicago, twenty-one percent of the former steel mill neighborhood live below the poverty line; in Wisconsin, fourteen percent of the mining county are in poverty (U.S. Census 2000; Vukmirovich 2018). Economic decline is linked to spatial and demographic shifts. Currently, the southeast side of Chicago is the least populated ward of the city; and there are the only two incorporated towns in Wisconsin's Iron County. In Wisconsin, between 1970 and 2000, the net population of Iron County declined by 24 percent. The population churning, and resulting minority move-in, in the former steel mill neighborhoods in Chicago didn't stem the net population loss of twenty-one percent during the same time frame.

Most studies contemplating the repercussions of the 'rusting' of America's industrial corridor focus on these numbers—the outward flows of people following the crisis of mass closure. In pursuit of conceptualizing modernity's "space of flows" as Castells (1989) put it, we too often overlook the people and places who stay in deindustrialized zones long after the company closes. These numbers of loss do not speak to how and why people still call deindustrialized places home. After all, only rarely do entire communities lose the entirety of their population. Based on demographic, employment, and homeownership data, I conservatively estimate that at least 30 percent of former iron and steel workers (and their families and neighbors) still live in my case communities. Approximately 65 percent of my interviewees were long-term residents.

This chapter considers the post-closure era, with a particular focus on long-term residents. I explore how long-term residents make sense of the economic, social, and environmental transformations wrought by capitalism on their home communities during and after processes of

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half of the county which was not impacted by the iron mine closure. In Montreal and Hurley, the two incorporated towns impacted by iron mine closure, the median price of homes currently listed on Zillow is $50,000 and $90,000, respectively. The median home value in Chicago is $228,900. The median price of homes currently listed in Chicago is $330,000 while the median price of homes that sold is $262,400. The median price of homes currently listed in South Deering is $82,450, and the median home value in South Chicago is $107,500. Data gathered from Zillow.com in April 2019.

deindustrialization. I ask how former iron and steelworkers who have lived in the same place for a long time materially stay in place, and what rationales they provide for why they stay in their communities. I intervene in scholarship on deindustrialization by theorizing the lasting effects of the construction of *home* in landscapes once defined by natural resources. Too often, scholars of economic change often gloss the concept of 'staying at home,' particularly in economically depressed or environmentally fragile locations, as immobility—with those staying put feeling stuck, left-behind, or helplessly battered by the "creative destruction" of capitalism (Schumpeter 1943). I counter that, to understand the identities and futures of people who still live in the American Rust Belt, we must grasp how the bundle of social networks, place meanings, and material ties comprise an individual's sense of home. Building on the chronological data presented thus far, this chapter shows how the historical circulation of iron and steel and actions of companies inflects contemporary residents' structural limitations and their ideological justifications of their residential stability. Specifically, I address two questions. First, how do people stay in deindustrialized regions? And second, how do people rationalize their residential stability?

2.0. Theory

Although the social construction of landscapes, identities, and economies have been well-theorized (e.g. Greider and Garkovich 1994; Stedman 2003), scholars have rarely made the move to probe specific mechanisms that make a place home, over time and in the face of external changes. The challenge is, indeed, daunting: few other social constructions involve such a confluence of intimate expectations and interpersonal social structures. Most fundamentally, home is a physical *place*: a particular constellation "of material things that occupy a particular segment of space and have

sets of meanings attached to them" (Cresswell 2008, 135). Such constellations of meanings are established through the presence, activities, and relationships of members. The very phrase, to *be at home*, gestures towards the necessity of embodiment, a physical arrival to "familiarity, order, permanency, comfort and place-bound culture" (Duyvendak 2011, 28). This personal, intimate, and physical place derives and embodies meaning from embodied people.

At the same time, home is a center of significance that makes mobility possible and meaningful, a place "to which one withdraws and from which one ventures forth," (Tuan 1971, 189). "Like breathing in and out, most life forms need a home and horizons of reach outward from that home. The lived reciprocity of rest and movement, territory and range, security and adventure" characterize what it means to be human, according to Buttimer, (1980, p. 170). Even in colloquial terms, home is considered a center of meaning—an unmovable, geographical place upon which changes are unavoidably wrought. When a disaster, economic depression, or depopulation alters the relational and physical contours of communities, what home means and what it means to stay at home also changes (e.g. Bryant et al., 2011; Erikson, 1976; Salamon, 2003).

I aim to shed light on what it means, materially and symbolically, for post-industrial residents to remain *at home*, with or without jobs. I define home as a center of significance, a source of negotiated stability in the face of change. Home is where material embeddedness, socially constructed identities, and familiar, embodied experiences coalesce in a meaningful manner. Deindustrialization is an exemplary case of the discovery of the importance of home in the face of its possible loss. As discussed throughout this project, the industrial development and crisis of iron and steel communities in the American Midwest exemplify a central irony of capitalism: social life generally occurs in a particular place, while the commodification, transportation, and sale of a place-based resource requires the movement of a metal, mineral, or fuel across space and time. The

movement of these commodities requires the stabilization of labor—the formation of a *home*. When those commodities no longer move across space and time, these stable, social worlds are rendered vulnerable, marginal, and less desirable locations in which to live.

2.1. Stability and immobility

Before continuing, it would be worthwhile to distinguish between *immobility* and *stability*. Scholars of migration and globalization tend to conflate mobility with progress and stability as regressive (see (Duyvendak 2011; Gustafson 2014; Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst 2005; Blau and Duncan 1967). For instance, to many contemporary observers, the mobility of the newly-unemployed away from deindustrializing towns and cities simply reflected the forward momentum of capitalism. In reaction to boom and bust, expansion and contraction, Americans were simply doing what they do best: returning to the road in pursuit of new economic opportunities. In a 1985 Atlantic Monthly essay, Fallows contended: "If there is one widely accepted symbol of today's changing economy, the 1980s version of the allegorical Joad family hitting the road during the Depression is the proud steelworker who gets laid off in Youngstown…" (Fallows 1985, 57). Better jobs could be found in other places, scholars declared, if only people moved to find them. Galbraith (1979) argued that "Migration…is the oldest action against poverty. It selects those who most want help. It is good for the country to which they go…what is the perversity in the human soul that causes people to resist so obvious a good?" The flows of migration were the best response to the flows of capitalism.

What, then, of the people who didn't move? Were they immobile—facing a lack of options or some other 'perversity in the human soul'? Perhaps long-term residents who resisted 'so obvious

a good' of outmigration were truly too poor to pay for a move or sell a depreciated house, too socially entangled through kinship ties, or too lacking in transferable skills to find a better job elsewhere. And indeed, feminist geographers have pointed out that for some, home can seem like a trap to be escaped, the embodiment of powerless immobility that reiterates their position in unequal social structures (e.g. Rose 1993; Young 1997). In contrast, *stability* suggests that some people make critical choices to remain in place and at home. Certain strategies may be intended—or at least later rationalized as intentional—to establish a form of stability. Persistence in a particular place might emerge from active, relational positioning with people and places, incorporate attachment for landscapes (Jorgensen and Stedman 2001), rest on family networks (Salamon 2003), or hinge on collective memories of the "ghosts of place" that enliven these spaces with purpose (Bell 1997). Roberts (2013) observed rural residents framing actions to perpetuate land tenure, negotiate resources, or maintain social links as "self-positioning strategies," strategies which involved critical choices, "including those that appear to be inaction" (p. 408). A person's conceptions of what it means to remain at home, and whether or not they feel stable or immobile, may indeed shape how they respond to threats and opportunities.

In light of the mobility of iron and steel, theorizing home requires an understanding of both the mechanisms of attachment to a physical place and the economic, political, social, and narrative strategies people employ to remain or return to that place. Home is a center of rootedness *and* a site of constant negotiation. Indeed, while the concept of home draws from place attachment, community attachment, and other similar concepts of rootedness, it takes seriously the ideological negotiation and material creativity required by residents to stay at home in the midst of instability. Such negotiation requires that the ideas of past, present, and future homes interplay with the economic means and political arrangements that enable and circumvent the expression of those ideas. This raises the question: If the movement of capital once fundamental to the economic

sustainability of Iron County or southeast Chicago no longer exists, how and why do people who lived in that place as laborers for one industry stay at home?

3.0. Data

3.1. How people stay: Employment

To respond to these questions, I first probe what is structurally and materially required for a person to remain "at home" in the decades following mill and mine closure. I found that how people stayed in my case communities centered on employment options. The employment histories my interviewees shared reflected other scholarship on the changing nature of work in the late 20th century (e.g. Kalleberg, 2009; Paret, 2016). In both cases, interviewees with the longest residencies initially strung together seasonal or 'flexible' jobs—jobs that are typically short-term and low-skilled, lacking benefits, competitive pay, or mechanisms for advancement—and commuted, then they sought retraining, changed occupations, or entered self-employment. Commuting to jobs outside of their economically depressed region offered workers access to skilled and often better-paid jobs. To limit commutes and increase the stability of their income, former steel and ironworkers often sought alternative occupations by enrolling in industrial retraining programs or seeking steady, local in maintenance, education, or public service. In a pattern familiar still today, interviewees—both unemployed men and their wives—stitched together all three strategies to bridge seasons of unemployment or underemployment, or supplement underpaid, long-term jobs.

In the immediate aftermath of mine closure, Wisconsin miners had to look beyond their geographically remote community for salaried work. "Nothing was any good," stated 80-year-old

Paul matter-of-factly. "What are they going to do? You go to the city and look for work, or pick up something here or there…. It was tough, real tough." Several hundred former Montreal miners took a two-hour bus to the Keweenaw Peninsula region of northern Michigan to work double-shifts as diggers, machinists, or smelters at a large copper mine. "It was fortunate," said John, aged 67, "that there was a mine over in Michigan called White Pine." Opened in 1952, this copper mine grew enough by the 1970s to hire several hundred miners, smelters, and machinists from Wisconsin. By 1975, White Pine ran daily busses from Hurley, Wisconsin, to the Keweenaw Peninsula region of northern Michigan, for two shifts a day, to transport experienced miners to their massive, underground operation (La Rocque 1967). Those not hired by White Pine commuted to factory work in Milwaukee, Kenosha, Minneapolis, or other urban areas three to eight hours away. Mary, age 58, told me that her father and four of his fellow miners took the family car to look for work. "Sometimes you know, it was just for a couple of days. But they were in Minnesota, Illinois, and Detroit, Michigan looking for work. They went to Missouri. And whatever they could get they would mail it home. Whoever could get a job, they would pool their money…A lot of families were split that way. The wife stayed here, but then the husband, the miner was out looking for work."

The tiring commutes and multi-day absences were highly gendered, with women rendered immobile while the men sought economic opportunities. These years were remembered with some bitterness by former workers and their families, but all admitted that gendered distance options allowed some residential stability for children in Iron County—at least, initially. If miners found permanent that included non-income benefits for their families, such as healthcare or housing, they sent for their families to join them in their new city or state. In the decade immediately following the closure of the iron mines, 16.6 percent of the population permanently out-migrated. Even residents who weathered the initial shock of iron mine closure faced struggles. In the 1990s, the Michigan copper mine closed as well, and a few hundred Iron County miners were once again left to search

for work. Patrick attended a year-long training program in auto mechanics once he lost his job in Michigan. The training program took place in a city three hours from his home. His kids were in high school and it was important for him to stay in his hometown. Once he graduated from the training program, Patrick told me, "I did get a job…here for exactly one half of what I was making [at the mine]." He laughed, "When raising a family! It was a shock to the system."

Any interviewees who stayed in Iron County, Wisconsin, recounted how, to this day, they manage to make ends meet, be it through a family business, a lifetime of public service, healthcare work, multiple part-time jobs, or seasonal work. In Wisconsin, women, including Patrick's wife, found seasonal work to fill the gaps in income—weaving evergreen branches into wreaths, selling tickets at the local ski hill, or working at a local glove factory. Leah, a middle-aged woman also in Wisconsin, told me, "We have people who will do lawn care in the summer; in the fall they'll go work at the cranberry bogs; when that season is over then they go to work at the ski hills; when that is over they'll go on to Michigan and they'll plant trees out there at the tree farm. And that's how they make their living: they just go from seasonal job to seasonal job." In an attempt to counteract this employment insecurity, the county established an Industrial Park, but the handful of companies there employ fewer than twenty workers. Mark grumbled, "you get a little bit here, a little bit there. Then they'll close, or they stay open…for the cheap labor, [paying] $8, 9, 10 an hour." Otherwise, as one Wisconsin long-timer told me, "you either work in the woods or do odd jobs here and there." Some job security is possible, according to Nan, a retired high school math teacher and her husband William, a construction entrepreneur. William firmly asserted, "There are opportunities here. I've done very well, and my wife has too. I'm self-employed. That's the only way I'll ever be, but there's no guaranteed check on Friday. There's some people who stay here, but they've got to think a little out of the box." "And that's the key," agreed Nan.

Even in a large city like Chicago, I heard similar stories of former steelworkers and their wives who stitched together short-term and seasonal work, commutes, and long-term positions. When Richard lost his steel mill job, he struggled to find alternative employment for four years. He quickly credited his wife's income for putting food on the table while he submitted applications for city maintenance jobs. But he recalled that "every time we'd fill out an application, they'd say we were overqualified!" In the meantime, he attempted a few entrepreneurial ventures in the steel neighborhoods—from odd jobs in carpentry to selling food to other steelworkers. He took unemployment and accepted food from the church food bank that his family had been donating to for years before closure. Four years after his mill closed, Richard finally found work as a janitor at a post office twelve miles north, in downtown Chicago—a job that he held until he retired last year. That job "was the only thing that saved" him and his family.

I heard versions of Richard's story echoed across interviews. Paul works still as a janitor at a local park building. Marcos became a fireman, and later a fire chief and local politician. His friend Jesus opened an art studio. Marcos, in his early 60s, proudly described, "I mean, after the painting, [then Jesus] started sculpturing wood. After the wood, he started sculpting stone." Rachel strung together an equally interesting set of alternative jobs— "as a custodian at a church, for a couple of years. I worked as a waitress immediately. I got unemployment, for a year and a half." Later, she hired out her skills as a heavy machine operator, running front end loaders for her church. As she grew older, she became certified as a home care nurse and bought the gear to be a clown for children's parties. Emmanuel, now in his 50s, lost his steel mill job only shortly after he had earned industrial electrician training "on the mill's dime," he said with a smile of relief. Since closure, he has been commuting one hour each way, six days a week, to the western suburbs for work as an electrician in another large, industrial firm.

Jobs were the most basic requirement for residential stability. Employment, however insecure or inconvenient, allowed certain people to make ends meet on a day to day basis. Recalling the trials of finding and keeping jobs, particularly in the shadow of lost, highly-paid iron and steel work, brought some interviewees to tears. But even with lower incomes and fewer opportunities, most of these interviewees had stayed in their community since company closure. A second, vital component of how they stayed is home ownership.

3.2. How people stay: Homeownership

Homeownership both enabled and constrained the menu of options available to miners and steelworkers in Wisconsin and Chicago. On one hand, owning a home quite literally roots your wealth in place. In places wracked by economic depression, selling one's rapidly-devalued house may be unattractive or unaffordable. Owning a depreciating house may be less financially risky than moving and renting or buying in a more economically thriving location (Long 1988; Smeeding 2010; Lichter and Brown 2011). On the other hand, homeownership may be a source of stability and equity.

In the most material sense, homeownership ties up capital. During the economically stable era of full employment and easy access to credit, laborers in both Chicago and Wisconsin bought houses. Nearly all of my interviewees in Wisconsin lived in houses they owned. In Iron County, approximately 80 percent of full-time, occupied housing units (contrasted with vacation homes) have been owner-occupied since the mid-1990s. Currently, fifty percent of Iron County homeowners live in rent- and mortgage-free homes, in contrast to the national average of only thirty-five percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a). Leah, in Wisconsin, told me, "People say, 'why

don't you move?' Well, like most families, most of our wealth is tied up into our primary residences." Moving requires liquid capital—typically gained by selling one's house. Tony, who was in high school when the mine closed, recalled that "my folks were talking about moving. Now, looking back, we didn't have the money to pick up roots and move." At the same time, however, already low housing prices remained grim after the mines closed, declining at a faster rate than Wisconsin as a whole on average (U.S. Census Bureau 2000; Bogin, Doerner, and Larson 2016).[2] The most immediate problem was finding a buyer for a house in a deindustrializing community. Ron, a retiree of Finnish descent, recalled that "The governor at the time [of the mine closure] said, 'Well, the people would just have to move and reestablish themselves. Sell their homes.' The problem is, who you are you going sell your home to? Your neighbor had one for sale!"

In the past five decades since the Montreal Mine shut its doors, this over-abundance of cheap housing combined with a lack of economic stimulation seems to have frozen the housing market. In Montreal and Hurley, the two incorporated towns impacted by iron mine closure, the price of homes listed range from $40,000 to more than $100,000. Leah has been anecdotally tracking housing sales in her neighborhood for years. "According to the 2010 census, we've lost 14 percent of our population, so what do you think that's done to housing?" she queried. "You can buy a decent house here for less than the cost of a new car. So, it's really depressed, and houses are on the market for a long time. I don't have any data to back this up claim up, but I'm very involved in my community. And I ask people, 'Hey, you're showing your house. Had any bites?' And no one ever, since [a proposed mining company] left—they haven't had a single bite on their house since then."

[2] In 1960, Wisconsin's statewide median home value was $62,100; (1970) $66,400, (1980) $96,200, (1990) $79,900, (2000) $112,200. To adjust for inflation, the 1940 to 1990 median home values were adjusted to 2000 dollars using the appropriate CPI-U-RS adjustment factor. (U.S. Census Bureau 2000)

Home purchases have indeed been low in Leah's particularly rural part of Iron County, Wisconsin. In the only two incorporated towns in the county (Montreal and Hurley) low property values continue to attract two groups of people—second homeowners and retirees. Of the approximately 3,000 full-time, occupied housing units in Iron County, approximately 600 residents moved into their housing unit between 1990 and 1999, and nearly 1,000 moved in between 2000 and 2009 (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). Housing units that are not occupied full-time—typically, a shorthand for second or seasonal homeownership—comprise 51 percent of Iron County's total, livable housing. This is compared to a meager 12 percent across the United States, even though the rate reflects seasonal home ownership patterns in the Northwoods region more broadly.[3] Dennis explained that in the 1980s, he bought his aunt's house when she passed away. Even though he no longer lives in Wisconsin, "we still retain a house in Montreal. Our son's relatives are up here, so we come up."

At the same time, however, the average age of the county is rising slightly faster than might be explained by aging-up, suggesting that newly retired children of baby boomers are coming home to Iron County. Half of my interviewees specifically discussed their family or friends who were returning or retiring "back home," with or without employment. Since the 1970s, housing developers have played a small but important role in constructing new residential options for these two groups of people. Between 1990 and 2000, the population of Iron County increased by 11 percent, or 700 residents, and nearly 1200 new housing units were constructed (Forstall 1995; U.S. Census Bureau 2009). This increased pace of new housing move-ins promises to continue: in the 5-year span of 2010-2015 alone, an additional 500 people moved into new units (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a).

[3] Bayfield and Ashland Counties, to the west of Iron County, claimed 47 percent and 30 percent vacant housing, respectively. Gogebic County, Michigan, to the east, has 37 percent vacant housing. (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a).

Similar themes of homeownership, decline in values, and population churning emerged from the steel neighborhoods of southeast Chicago. In this region, between 60 and 70 percent of houses are owner-occupied—a proportional range that hasn't changed since the 1970s. This contrasts with the rate of owner-occupied housing in the city of Chicago, which has held steady at 30-40 percent during the same time span. When the mills closed, many residents simply stayed in hopes that some change would improve the economic outcomes for their neighborhoods. In Chicago, Paul told me, "There was nowhere for me to go. I had the house paid, I couldn't go, at the time, anywhere. So, we just stayed, waiting for, you know. And," he added, with a sigh, "I didn't want to leave the neighborhood because I knew the neighborhood." In the decade following Wisconsin Steel's closure, however, as one steel mill after another also closed, the market price for houses in the region plummeted. Housing prices in South Deering and the surrounding neighborhoods declined by 9% between 1980 and 1981 (Bogin, Doerner, and Larson 2016). Prices stabilized between 1989 and 2000, with price fluctuations mirroring state averages.[4] The 2008 economic crisis depressed prices on the southeast side more dramatically than elsewhere in the state, however, and the annual change of housing prices in the negative double digits for three consecutive years (Bogin, Doerner, and Larson 2016). Economic crisis, both local and national, has had lasting impacts on the housing stock in the community: nearly half the houses sold in South Deering in 2015 were bought for less than $20,000 (Real Estate Center 2019).

Richard and Phyllis explicitly stated that they would've liked to leave their neighborhood in the 1980s. However, they were "trying to pay off our house, you know. And raising our children." At first, their neighbors were also "in the same predicament. Because most of them were US

[4] In 1960, Illinois's statewide median home value was $72,400; (1970) $76,000, (1980) $104,500, (1990) $103,400, (2000) $130,800. To adjust for inflation, the 1940 to 1990 median home values were adjusted to 2000 dollars using the appropriate CPI-U-RS adjustment factor. (U.S. Census Bureau 2000). See also zip-code data sets prepared by the Federal Housing Finance Agency's Bogin et al. (2016).

Steelworkers, and they had Lincoln Continentals, they had their own houses—I mean, young people with their own big houses and…maybe two or three kids, maybe more and," Phyllis threw up her hands and snapped her fingers, "it just went, just like that." Within a decade, the couple watched their neighborhood change from one they knew well, like Paul did, to one completely unfamiliar. At first, when the steelworkers in "nice houses, all that" began to out-migrate or change occupation, their neighborhood was populated more by "people that was our age, it was an older group. All of them had really good jobs—they were police officers, teachers. One was a principal of a [school]." Phyllis continued, "At first…the whole neighborhood was…Polish and Hispanic and Black. And all this went away, to just about a few whites, and they all went [east]. And then the Hispanics, they all moved over across 115th Street, and…" she paused and sighed, "then, it was a lot of blacks that didn't have jobs that were moving to the one-room units next door to us." They described a rise in heavy drug use and violence once "the transients," as Richard called them, began to "come and go, come and go all the time, come and go!" In sum, homeowners who desired to move found that selling their house in an economically depressed region led to more financial losses—losses that would be exacerbated when they relocated to a more economically prosperous region.

Low home values make houses hard to sell, but easy to purchase. A net depopulation rate of twenty percent or less is low, relative to forty percent declines in some Rust Belt cities (Hartley 2013). In addition to long-term residents staying place, one reason for low net population decline has been a combination of white flight and minority move-in. Between the closure of the mills and present day, the racial composition of southeast Chicago has transformed. Most dramatically, in the neighborhood nearest to Wisconsin Steel, in 1960, 65 percent of the 18,000 residents were white. When the mill closed in 1980, whites made up 20 percent of the population, with 54 percent black residents and 24 percent Latino. In 2010, only 4.8 percent of the 15,109 residents are white, with 60 percent African American and 30 percent Latino. Nearby steel neighborhoods experienced similar

transformations of racial demographics, with, approximately 25 percent of the larger community area white, 40 percent black, and 35 percent Hispanic (Bensman 2005; College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs 2010).

The lived experienced of this demographic shift seemed to be dependent on neighborhood, personal experience, and interpretations of broader, socioeconomic changes. Richard and Phyllis, African Americans, were disappointed in the transformation of their neighborhood from a stable, middle-class community to one populated by jobless 'transients,' Yet, as long as they could continue mortgage and utility payments, Robert and Pauline appreciated that they had a home in a neighborhood where their social networks were dense; where they could go to their church's food pantry and leave children with family for care. Jamie, a white man of Polish descent, similarly appreciated the dense social networks of his community but downplayed the effects of this change in his neighborhood. Jamie fondly recalled that in the 1980s, "We had the Kings on one side, we had the Browns across the street, we had the Washingtons next to them, we had the Ducrees on this side. All black families, really great people who I won't forget, and a number of them have died off, as well, because I was there long enough to know them. And they came to my dad's funeral, my mom's funeral. *That's* a community." I asked him if he knew many whites who left as part of the broader trend of racial churning occurring at that time. He shrugged and pointed the declined socioeconomic status of whites in his neighborhood at the time. "But the White Flight—not so much in South Chicago. I mean, who the heck wanted to go and get another mortgage?"

Considering *how* people stayed in place answers more than just the material questions of residential persistence. On one hand, it sheds light on *who* stayed. As we see, those who stay are, at minimum, people who are able to find and keep work and housing. Jamie's comment reiterates the trouble with homeownership: given the material investment of buying a house, and the challenges of

recouping that investment through selling and relocating, there is actually some financial wisdom in staying in your house following industrial closure. For long-term residents who owned a house through all these community-wide changes, homeownership was not just a cause for immobility—it provided some material stability during and beyond the season when other socioeconomic structures were crumbling.[5]

On the other hand, seriously considering the mechanisms enabling residential stability—or immobility—demands more than purely structural explanations for why people stay. Certainly, the structural components of how people stay in place play are implicated in the rationales people give for why they stay in place. Houses inform people's experiences of home; commuting routes reflect infrastructural possibilities; employment mirror social relations. What non-economic justifications do they give for not joining their neighbors in out-migrating? *Why* did people stay long-term in their houses and low-paid jobs? Or, more precisely, how do long-term residents make sense of their stability to an outsider? These puzzling questions drive the second half of this chapter. I turn first to how residents framed stories as choice, then discuss examples of social networks and landscape factors emerging as non-economic reasons people give to stay in place.

3.3. Why people stay: Narratives of choice

First, I found that long-term residents were consistently eager to frame some components of their residential stability as a *choice,* rather than *a problem*. In Wisconsin, Charles, a former iron miner, told me that when his cohort lost their jobs at the mine, "a lot of them went to the Texas mines and

[5] The proportion of owner-occupied houses remained steady in both communities long beyond the final gasps of economic thriving and population churning.

all over. I says, I am not going to leave here. That's when [I got] my antiques store going, and I took a job roofing." Cheryl, the wife of another former miner, popped her head into the room where Charles and I were chatting. She paused, listening, and then interrupted forcefully: "But we're here because we want to be here, and that's the bottom line." Charles laughed, "I wasn't going to move…there's only one place in the world!" Cheryl grinned and added, "We're a hidden secret. A well-hidden secret! People don't live here unless they want to," Cheryl finished, "We've made the choice to stick it out."

Jamie framed his and his family's choice as "stubbornness." Jamie has lived in his current Chicago neighborhood most of his life. "It's a good place because—as smelly as it can be, as awful as the mills were—it's the people. And in my case, it's a lot of memories, having been here for a long time." He drew an invisible map on the table. "Going to Buscha's house, my grandmother's house…" He laughed, pulling himself from his memories. "But, we're dying off. I mean, Polish people and other ethnics, we're stubborn people. We don't move. We die." He mused, "These were stubborn people who walked to work, their fathers walked to work. It's an odd thing…they built their churches and they wanted to die in their churches."

We could question how much *choice* Cheryl, Charles, Jamie, and other residentially stable people, actually have. The lines are blurry between the agentive, reflexive stability explained by stubbornness, affection, and memory, and forced immobility due to homeownership, debt, or social networks. Stories of longevity are complex, at once pointing to dire circumstances that inhibited moving or inflect critical choices to stay in place, even if those actions that "appear to be inaction" with agency (Roberts 2013). Whether or not people "really" had a choice has to be understood within the context of *how they make sense* of their deindustrialized home today. Indeed, choice is a powerful counter-narrative to the prevailing tale of the tragedies of deindustrialization, forced

outmigration, and community devastation. Furthermore, our conceptions of what it means to be at home, and whether or not we feel like we have a choice to stable or are forced into immobility, shapes how we respond to threats and opportunities. For instance, in a brief sidebar on the frustrations of local politics, Jamie shrugged, "It's discouraging. I mean where am I going to go? I'm a lifer. I got the plot paid in full at Holy Cross Cemetery." But as he shared about his family connections to the area, Jamie's own interpretation of why he lives in a particular place seemed to inform his sense of political efficacy. He explained that, as a long-term resident, he hoped to "put up the good fight here is a good idea…And, to make sure that I never miss an election—since 1975!"

3.4. Why people stay: Social networks

Another justification for residential stability offered by long-term residents was relational—the social networks which had been created around particular social structures and objects. Even though the mines and mills have been long closed, and many people have left, the "density of acquaintanceship" (Freudenburg 1986) or "belongin' networks" (Puckett 2000) remains remarkably active and coherent. In Wisconsin, to this day, interviewees categorize themselves by high school graduating class, kinship lines, and childhood village. These connections are reiterated through memorializing activities, like an annual Heritage Festival which includes parades, the county fair, and an all-class reunion for the high school. Hundreds of former residents return to the county for these events, carrying with them their latest copy of the local newspaper, the Iron County Miner, and staying overnight with family or friends. Interviewees still refer to themselves by graduating class cohorts ("Tom graduated one year above me, in '58") and family networks ("Did you know that Bill's wife's cousin is related to me through my husband?"). Cheryl taught high school English for

decades; Paul coordinates all the funeral formalities for veterans in the region; Laura volunteers at the historical society; her sister runs a furniture store and has a radio show each morning.

In Chicago, greater population density means that social networks are anchored in specific contexts of collective memories, such as work or union groups. For instance, I interviewed Jerry at the local retired steelworkers meeting in Southeast Chicago, where he was always warmly greeted by dozens of former coworkers (including Richard and Phyllis). Nearly sixty retired US Steelworkers members attend these monthly meetings, even if they have moved to suburbs or other parts of the city. Jerry was one of the locals, though. He told me, "Yeah, I been here for a long, long time. I love Chicago. I always have lived on this side, in this area. South Chicago." He smiled as he continued, "I know a lot of people over there. It's where I came from…most of them [are] still there, you know. They didn't move out." Even once Richard and Phyllis had paid off their house, they remained in their neighborhood for another fifteen years. Upon Richard's retirement from his post office maintenance position, they moved to their quiet suburban neighborhood one hour's drive south of their former steel community. However, they regularly return to that region to meet with old friends and complained frequently to me about their new location.

3.5. Why people stay: Embodied attachment to landscape

These social networks and narratives of choice hang upon landscapes in two overlapping ways. First, in both rural and urban locations, many interviewees shared sentiments of place attachment with me. They appreciated the natural beauty of their home community as a viable and obvious rationale for staying in place. The natural landscape itself was at once a way for people to interact with their homes and a character in the stories residents shared. From the driver's seat of his

truck, Justin, age 29, pointed out his favorite four-wheeling and snowmobiling paths in Iron County, Wisconsin. He cheerfully shared his favorite fishing stories from the nearby reservoir lakes and suggested the best way to access Lake Superior. A recent retiree, who purchased a Montreal house upon returning to the county, explicitly pointed to the draw of nature: "I couldn't wait to get back here. I love this area; I love the lake. The whole time I lived in the city, I missed it."

In Chicago, most interviewees happily pointed out their stunning view of downtown Chicago from the "the Last Four Miles," as Tom, a community activist dubbed it— "the couple miles out here on the south end of the lakefront." Former steel mill properties are largely emptied of buildings and grown up with prairie grass, giving this lightly-populated ward an unexpected feeling of rurality. The steel mill grasslands line the edge of Lake Michigan and the Calumet River. On a walk across one of those abandoned mill sites, Marcos swept his hand towards the shimmering blue Lake Michigan and reminisced, "what I used to love in the summertime was the view of the lake. That lake was beautiful!" Marcos paused, silently considering the water as it slapped against the old steel mill's dock. "my native friends who were once here [told me] it's sacred. The lake is very sacred. The land is very sacred."

What my interviewees experienced, however, was beyond simple affection for landscape. Landscapes of home are not just sites to interact with nature, nor are long-term residents naïve actors. Motlotch, Freudenburg, and Paulsen (2000) suggested that "any stroke of social practice, including one that directly shapes a material object, shores some things up and undermines others." In Wisconsin and Chicago, landscapes were records of social practice and material sites of past action. Fields and lakes were physical locations of embodied meaning, storing up human activities, slowing down social relationships, and preserving historical moments for groups and individuals (Motlotch, Freudenburg, and Paulsen 2000, 793; Middleton and Brown 2011; Lewicka 2008).

Interviewees often laced up their boots or started their car engines when I visited, ready to drive me up to the last remaining mine shaft, walk with across the land of a former steel mill, or reverently retrieve a dusty helmet from their garage which still stains fingers with iron oxide.

When alerted to my interest in mining, nearly all Wisconsin interviewees suggested a drive through the last remaining markers of mining. Justin took me to a pile of iron ore tailings and a tree-filled fan house; Ron pointed out the last mine head frame, and several people drove me through the matching white houses of Montreal. Sixty years after closure, the company town of Montreal is not too dissimilar to its historical version. For even when the Montreal Mining Company sold the company homes in the 1960s, private owners maintained their houses' white exteriors. As decades passed, residents—original and new—seemed to have adopted the identification of Montreal as a place made for mining. Montreal's mining legacy was formalized in 1980 when the newly formed Iron County Historical Society successfully nominated the company location to the National Register of Historic Places (Rucker 1992). Perhaps consequentially, median home values are higher in Montreal ($78,800) than in Hurley ($59,600) (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a).[6] To my interviewees, the visible remnants of their industrial pasts are vital to their collective histories and sense of choice. Montreal's matching white houses remain the "area's testament to the Company Town Concept," as do the mountains of iron ore tailings skirting the central roadway, the Iron Nugget restaurant in neighboring Hurley, the county's Li*fe* slogan, and the mining equipment scattered and signed throughout the region (*Iron County Miner* 1993; Bluhm 1986)

Close-knit family and friend networks overlap with natural and industrial landscapes to serve as a source of negotiated stability in the face of change. The exceptions may prove the point: In

[6] Additionally, the rate of mortgaged houses has increased from 59 percent to 67 percent in the past decade, even though the last new house was built between 2000 and 2009, suggesting that new homeowners are purchasing Montreal's houses (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a, 2009).

Wisconsin, the White Pine copper mine in Michigan that employed so many Montreal miners lacked both the social networks and the physical landscapes that enabled a collective, "common-sense mentality" of belonging (Middleton and Brown 2011, 43). Although White Pine had a company town founded in 1953, Iron Countians did not transfer loyalty or residence to Michigan. Perhaps the cramped housing, barren landscapes, and lack of community amenities dissuaded them to move (Alanen 1979). My interviewees summarized that White Pine, as with other commuter jobs, served as employment only. Job-seekers "had to go there because that's where they work was," according to John. Laura grew up in Montreal and was a child when her father shifted from unemployment at Montreal Mine to White Pine. She told me, "White Pine is another world; I have never been there." The mining labor and subsequent closure of White Pine's commuter jobs failed to claim the same hold on the social imagination of residents in Iron County as their eponymous ore mining.

In Chicago, residents directed my attention not to the visible vestiges of steelworks, but to the invisible. Retired steelworkers would point at prairie fields or vacant lots and explain in detail what was there. Formal preservation of steel buildings and artifacts has been fraught with logistical and political issues, and nearly all of the eight steel mills have been demolished. Yet former, industrial landscapes remain potent in people's imaginations. Marcos drove me and his friend Jesus to the vacant, six hundred acres where US Steel, one of the largest mills in the region, used to stand. Getting out of the car, Jesus swept his hand across the field of grass and rubble. "This used to be a parking lot," Jesus said. "One of the things you remember, living here when the steel mills were here, was how many people worked here. There was no parking. When the mills shifted, it was amazing how many cars were out here, parked at the steel mill." He gestured to the prairie and young trees before us. "You don't see that anymore. One of the first things that I noticed after the mill closed, was how fast Mother Nature takes over. Because where the parking lots used to be, there was solid asphalt. It's amazing. Within two, three years, first the weeds started

growing through. Next thing you know, little trees started growing. Then before you know it, it's a full-fledged urban forest …on asphalt."

When describing their past, people do not simply recite facts or chronicle the order of events. People story events "in a setting or scene and in the unfolding of a plot with characters who act and react in particular ways" (Peters and Franz 2012). Storytellers choose a particular beginning and ending to their story, interpret certain actions in unexpected ways, and leap over "manifold scales of space and time" to make legible complex relationships (Bland and Bell 2007, 262). Storytellers will craft justifications of their actions in terms that resist other stories or minimize traditionally accepted values (Boltanski and Thevenot 1999). Relational and physical elements of a social world can also hold sway in the rationales people provide for actions and beliefs (Bell and Osti 2010; Lamont and Molnar 2002; Stedman 2003b).

4.0. Conclusion

This chapter theorizes the stability of "home" in a contemporary society that is always on the move. By considering how long-term residents understood the economic, social, and environmental transformations of their home communities after company closure, we can better understand how and why people might defy the wisdom of migration to stay in place in environmentally fragile and economically precarious landscapes. Certain structural and material forms of stability may permit residential persistence in the face of erratic employment. In resource-extractive and manufacturing landscapes, homeownership, low-income work, and declined housing values might materially permit—or require—long-term residency. At the same time, however, community attachment scholars have shown that people who live in a place the longest are the most

attached to that place, due in large part to the in-situ accessibility of familiar social networks, landscapes, and memories (e.g. Lewicka 2014; Roberts 2013). Networks of social bonds once created around social structures and objects permit "a given person to locate himself or herself within the framework that lent the group coherence, irrespective of whether that group is present or currently active" (Halbwachs 1980). Close-knit social worlds, both current and past, often overlap with forms of material security and serve as frameworks for residents to feel at home. Both networks and physical places carry meaning far beyond the lifespan of natural resource economies, as "ghosts" and memories remain active without the addition of new economies over time (Bell, 1997).

To understand the identities and futures of people who still live in the American Rust Belt, we must grapple with the negotiations of the social networks, place meanings, and material ties that comprise an individual's sense of home. After all, if home is conceptualized as stable, and economic productivity defined by the mobility of capital, long-term residents must make sense of their options, their social worlds, and their places when the economic raison d'être of their home community moves on without them. By probing the stories—and silences—of identity and place among blue-collar laborers in two formerly-connected industrial communities, this chapter illuminates the relationships between the individual and social structure, stability and mobility, and work and home.

Chapter 6: Natural resource identities and the (re)creation of place

1.0. Introduction

"Will this neighborhood come back to what it was? It's not going to happen." Jamie was firm in his assessment, leaning back in his chair at the Southeast Chicago Historical Museum. "I mean, there's not going be one place where 18,000 people are working like there was with US Steel South and the industry and the ancillary industries that were created and stayed here for thirty and forty and fifty years. That's not coming back. So, something has to take its place. This can't just be a bedroom community, with all this land. So, what takes its place? It can't all be dumps, it can't all be hilltops or something, it has to be *something*."

When a place is made, both structurally and culturally, by a capitalist company as a site of labor for a particular industry, what happens to the social life of that place when the mobility of capital to that place ceases? Decades after closure, people still live in these places; they are negotiating the definition of home in specific, geographical places; they are grappling with their individual and collective identities in a landscape that looks very different than it once did, and they are thinking about the best future for their places.

In this final chapter, I discuss one of the central arguments of my dissertation: how the historical circulation of natural resources shapes identities and economic options in the contemporary American Rust Belt. In both the mining county near Lake Superior, and the steel mill neighborhood in Chicago, I find that the two communities central to my study formed for iron and

steel continue, even after deindustrialization, to center their identities, economic prospects, and relationships to place around that natural resource. Indeed, even long after the closure of iron and steel industries, the historical construction of material flows of nature across space and time continues to inform the cultures, structures, and thus, futures, of post-industrial landscapes.

I make this argument by highlighting how people make and remake the values and identities of a place within the residual boundaries of historical structures and cultures. The historical making of place by companies, through the commodification of nature, shaped the contours of contemporary "deep stories" of meaning and value, as Hochschild (2016) put it. I show how, even though now-defunct companies once claimed power over the contours and definitions of place, everyday people are reimagining what their home communities should be about in new and creative ways. At the same time, however, the structures of deindustrialization act upon the community, regardless of the identity work of the people who live there. The structural vestiges of industrial infrastructures, environmental decline, and social marginalization can and do limit alternative models of what a place can be about.

I turn to the analysis of how residents interpret future options; I argue that the action and story of staying put reproduces a particular kind of relationship to place—one centered around natural resources. Natural resources are usually defined as material elements of the environment that are, through human interaction, transformed into wealth. Often, we think of natural resources as raw materials, located in rural regions—metals and minerals, trees and water, animals and plants. This chapter troubles that definition in two ways. First, I show how natural resources are not only commodified in rural regions, but also nature that is *used* in urban settings. Second, I argue that natural resources are more than material; they create what I term natural resource identities—identities emerging from the tension between the physical movement and use of nature for the

production of wealth, and people's place-based experiences of progress, health, and community. Interviewee narratives reflect both how residents define and negotiate the structural residues of deindustrialization, and how they assign value to present and future opportunities. Natural resource identities reflect how, precisely, the past circulation of iron and steel described in the first five chapters of this dissertation created cultures and structures that, in turn, reproduce the centrality of natural resources to particular places. I conclude this epilogue chapter with a brief overview of the dissertation project and its contributions.

2.0. Theory

As I've demonstrated in the earlier chapters of this dissertation, for these cases, the actions taken by companies to move iron—to link nodes of a commodity chain—constructed entire landscapes. If companies played a vital role in making place, how do people re-make place once that company, and its capitalistic processes, leaves? The process of transforming abstract space into specific place is iterative, constantly "under constant construction, reconstruction, and sometimes subject to deconstruction" (Endres and Senda-Cook 2011, 260). The processes and actors responsible for turning space into meaningful place aren't permanent, nor is a particular power order of place calcified. Symbolic meanings and economic functions of place can collapse as processes of capitalism disarticulate (M. Werner and Bair 2011), people out-migrate (Daniels and Lapping 1987), infrastructures decline (Larkin 2013), or the constellation of familiar physical and social markers of a community disintegrates (Erikson 1976). Lacking the original actors and processes that made that place, other people—everyday people—inflect the meaning of their places in new and personal ways. People in deindustrialized landscapes don't make identity claims without context, but rather

they inhabit a place rich with historical residues of processes, bodily actions, and historical moments that integrated workers' lived experiences with the use of nature for the production of wealth.

The movement of iron from rural to urban created more than jobs; it constructed an industrial model of place, with landscapes and bodies organized around the control of nature for capitalism. Even long after the flows of commodities stopped—even in the face of double-digit unemployment and poverty rates, depressed property values, and increased employment vulnerability—long-term residents remake their places within extant historical structures and cultures. In the remaining pages of this dissertation, I focus on the narrative work of long-term residents as place-makers, and on the very real, infrastructural residues of deindustrialization which these residents are narrating. After all, individual and group identities hang upon particular people's narration and memory of historical processes, structures, and meanings. Moltlotch, Freudenberg, and Paulsen (2000) argued that the residentially stable tend to be the tradition-keepers and story-tellers, perpetuating identities of place through action and story. For long-term residents, Lewicka (2011, 2008) found that, regardless of economic reasons, those who stay in place the longest tend to be more *attached* to place. In turn, residential stability may require and enable an elective "rediscovery of the local" by long-term residents—a way to reestablish the value of fixed places within disorienting globalization processes (Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst 2005). In the process of interpreting the past, long-term residents are sorting through options for the future *in place*—through the lens of natural resource identities. As Bell and Osti (2010) point out, maintaining stability requires its own forms of activeness, agency, and political savvy. Through story, long-term residents are remaking place and co-constituting their community's past and future as they live long-term in post-industrial neighborhoods.

Massey (1995), among others, is concerned that long-term residents tend towards a defensive nostalgia—"a deeply essentialist and internalist way of thinking about a place and its character," and encourages a thin, "invention of the coherence of a place" that disregards how its characteristics might've changed over time (pp.183–184). Critiques of nostalgia, particularly of the white working class in the American Rust Belt, overlook the place-making processes and actors of the industrial revolution, and the way that the past structural development, the institutionalization of belonging, and the working-class experience of company success continue to constrain and enable particular future options. The 'invention of the coherence of place' doesn't necessarily lead to defensive localism or negative outcomes, nor are the 'stocks of stories' available to long-term residents reflective of their historical, cultural priorities or material control of place. This project rejects the shorthand of nostalgia in favor of questions of identity. I probe the formation of the "deep stories," again, after Hochschild (2016)—stories that compel contemporary values, concerns, and ideal futures for a group of people.

At the same time that people are recreating their places, they are doing so within the vestiges of infrastructural pasts. Infrastructures are an amalgam of technical, administrative, financial, and symbolic techniques which mediate the exchange of commodities over distance (Graham & Marvin 1996, 2001; Lefebvre 1991). Industrial infrastructures and its technologies emerged in tandem with the ideals of modern society: of citizenship, wealth, other characteristics of modernity. The industrial revolution promised, with each episodic introduction of technologies, a final and irreparable conclusion to the "inherited evils" and "passive survivals" of the feudal peasantry, according to Marx (1990, p.91). Interviewees frequently brought up the limits and promises of residual infrastructures from their regions' industrial era. Infrastructures left behind by steel and iron seemed to represent to long-term residents "the possibility of being modern, of having a future, or the foreclosing of that possibility and a resulting experience of abjection," according to Larkin (2013).

Infrastructures are "embodiments of objective historical forces… simultaneously enter[ing] into our unconscious and hold[ing] sway over the imagination. They form us as subjects not just on a technopolitical level but also through this mobilization of affect and the senses of desire, pride, and frustration, which can be deeply political and personal feelings mobilized by technologies" (Larkin 2013, 7). Infrastructure decline can mean not only material loss but symbolic disconnection and de-modernization.

This chapter draws on interviewee narratives surrounding the infrastructures and identities of their post-industrial places. In each interview, I asked people what future they imagined for their communities. Again, and again, I found that natural resource pasts shape possible futures. Rather than resent the natural resource industry that caused the boom and bust of their local economy, residents often viewed a new generation of that same industry as the best use of urban brownfields or rural mining sites. These sentiments were bolstered by physical experiences and structural residues forged in the industrial era. In Iron County, Wisconsin, these natural resource identities were linked with company paternalism, the movement of trains, and the continual lifting of iron from invisible places underground. In Chicago, identities centered around the flows of iron into ports, and the smoke, sounds, and community dynamics of a growing industry. I contend that the cultures and structures of industrial natural resources encourage the reproduction of a limited menu of options for the future.

I begin this chapter by discussing how and why, in response to persistent problems of deindustrialization, long-term residents are negotiating their natural resource identities in light of past and present structural and cultural challenges. Then, I turn to how residents are considering futures that include not only new generations of extraction and manufacture but also tourism. I conclude by overviewing the key contributions of the entire dissertation.

3.0. Data

The data I present in this chapter challenge us to expand our understanding of natural resources beyond the geographical bounds of rurality. Rural and urban cases experienced natural resources in different ways—like the extraction of iron in Wisconsin, and the use of water, air, and land in Chicago. In both locations, residents favored natural resource projects as solutions to the problems of deindustrialization—albeit with different emphases. Wisconsin residents lean into origin stories as rationales for supporting new mining. Mining is "in the blood," as much a symbolic project as a material one. But in Chicago, residents grapple with a more complex legacy of environmental injustice. While they are open to new industries, they seek to use post-industrial land in ways that both minimize harm and honor industrial pasts. Even with these distinctions, I found it fascinating that, in both rural and urban sites, residents are expanding their natural resources identities to include use of nature for tourism—an alternative commodification of nature that promises to return symbolic—if not economic—value to their places.

3.1. Making place in Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, it's been six decades since mine closure, and the county remains in the grips of an economic crisis. Non-natural resource industries have failed to meaningfully contribute to the county's economy. Many interviewees point to the decline of infrastructures following deindustrialization—with rail pulled up and only two, two-lane highways spanning the county—as a significant limit to major economic redevelopment efforts. These structural disconnections of deindustrialization seem, to many residents, as intertwined with cultural invisibility. Jack, a

community development leader, told me over the phone: "I've been screwing around with this industrial development for fifty years, and it hasn't been easy. We didn't get help when they pulled the rail out. We sure haven't had any help from the state…" He paused and then suggested an explanation for being ignored: "If you're down in Green Bay, they call themselves Northeastern Wisconsin. Now we're 220 miles north of Green Bay…. If they're northeastern Wisconsin, are we in the state?"

So, when a large company proposed to open a $1.5 billion, 4-mile strip mine to extract taconite iron in this region (see map in Appendix G), many residents of Iron County were delighted at a possible, and very familiar, solution to their structural and cultural problems. James told me that this hope for a return back to the county's roots is what got him "involved heavily" in pro-mine activism on behalf of the Gogebic Taconite (GTac) mine project. "I testified all over the state. And my basic story was, I mean, the only reason you have from Mellen, Wisconsin to Wakefield, Michigan was what's below our feet. That's the only reason we're here—the reason why we have these towns where they're at is because of our natural resources." In 2013, sympathetic Wisconsin state legislators seemed to agree with James' assessment, passing a law to relax mining regulations and enable the proposed mine "to create badly needed jobs" in the county with one of the highest unemployment rates in the state (Verburg 2014). Incumbent Iron County leadership supported the state's relaxed mining policy proposals and passed their own, local resolutions to lower bureaucratic barriers for new mining industry.

Since this would be the first major mine—and largest employer—in the county since 1962, residents were hopeful that a new mine might bring general economic thriving again. "I was kind of excited about the mine situation out of between Upson and Mellen," said Lewis, aged 69. "I thought, huh, that'd be pretty good…get things moving again. More stores, more things to do, more

family-type things, property values may move up." One county organization echoed Lewis's hope by optimistically predicting that if the new mine proposal passed in the state legislature, the region might well "see the same economic benefits and revitalization of northern Wisconsin jobs and industry as it was in 1885, thanks to new and more advanced mining technologies" ("Mining" 2015).

The new mine was not unanimously supported, however. Leaders of nearby Ashland County and the Bad River Ojibwe Tribe voiced concerns about likely water pollution from any new mining, arguing that it was time northern Wisconsin "moved on" from its obsession with this derelict and environmentally damaging industry. A leader in the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa pointed out that although his tribe had a 60 percent unemployment rate, "we would rather have clean water than jobs" (Wenzel 2011). Some Iron County residents were similarly suspicious about the new mine's impacts on their county, although environmental concerns were ranked relatively low. In a letter to the editor of one of the local newspapers, Anthony Stella critiqued how "Iron County has already spent over $130,000 in legal fees to create zoning laws that would bring GTac to the table," with little contractual obligation of the company to actually move forward with the mine (Stella 2015). Furthermore, a combination of the company's 'spin' regarding new jobs, and the demographic realities of the region, left a bad taste in the mouths of many residents. The company promised to hire 700 employees to operate the mine, even though most of these jobs would require technical skill or training exceeding that of working-age Iron Countians. Supporting industries would bring an estimated 1,500 new jobs, but they would be disappointingly "dispersed across a 12-county region," according to one report (Wenzel 2011). And yet, even if those businesses were located in Iron County, few laborers would be prepared to take advantage of new employment opportunities. Only 45 percent of the 5,900 residents are between the ages of 18 and 65. In fact, only 50 percent of the population is currently employed in some form, due largely to the advanced average age of the county (U.S. Census Bureau 2015b).

In 2014, the mining company withdrew its application for the taconite mine, formally pointing to the unfeasibility of remediating the abundance of wetlands in the mine site in accordance to EPA's regulations (Verburg 2014). I conducted interviews in Iron County in the two years following, and the loss was still fresh on people's minds. James was devastated and angry; Jack was exasperated. Sherry and her husband Gary were confused. "It boggles my mind that they would put all that money in there, never thinking that they weren't going to open a mine," Sherry told me. At first, she was "happy that we were going to have some industry and hopefully [they] were going to employ some people from here." She paused and looked at her husband before continuing, "I don't understand that whole way of doing things. These days, companies seem like they have money to throw away to do those kinds of things." Gary frowned and said, "Yeah, when GTac came in here, you know, they thought that they could come in here and walk all over everybody. So, that didn't happen, that's why they pulled out." I confirmed with this couple that GTac left without paying several million dollars of owed lease money to the county (Stella 2015; Kittle 2014). Sherry and her husband Gary simultaneously agreed. Gary continued, his voice getting harder with each word. "The guy behind it all, Cline, he's a billionaire! And they couldn't pay! And you know, when they come out with that, that they're behind on their payments, something is going on. It wasn't very nice. Then and there, I thought that GTac was…. I didn't think too much of them, then."

Since GTac withdrew its proposal, corporate owners of mineral rights in Iron County's Gogebic Range have been courting investors for other mining projects (Fennell 2013). Many of my interviewees remain hesitantly hopeful that this possible future may yet come to pass. Although many of my interviewees admitted that the mine might've failed to generate meaningful or lasting linkages into the local economy, they leveraged the controversy to express their hope that such a charismatic and large-scale rural development project might return a forgotten corner of the rural Rust Belt to some economic significance. For families with relatives elsewhere, the possible return of

capital to Iron County seemed to promise an in-migration of loved ones. Laura told me that two of her cousins were "hoping that mining would open back up in Iron County" so they can "come home" from Alaskan oil fields, Missouri mines, or cross-country trucking routes. Similarly, Cheryl told me that her "children would love to come back. My sons are skiers and they'd give anything to come back. But they can't—they have jobs, and there's nothing here for them."

In a county whose motto is "live li*fe"*—emphasis on the chemical abbreviation for iron—, a potential return of the founding natural resource industry brought the first hope in sixty years that this forgotten corner of the rural Rust Belt might again thrive. For Jack, James, and William, returning to large-scale, natural resource extraction would've solved not only economic inequalities resulting from deindustrialization, but also the cultural invisibility—and threats to individual and collective identities—caused by losing their single industry. Considering the drama of this potential mine within the broader context of natural resource identities allows us greater insight into what drives discourse about economic development. The past has not been forgotten in that "active process of disposal" often instigated by a better and brighter future (Middleton and Brown 2011, 43). But William argued that one of the best qualities of iron is its permanency. "What's there is going to be there. It's been there millions of years. It could be five hundred years from now or twenty years from now…. I wasn't going to gain from it—I'm sixty-seven years old. But I look at the community, I look at the young people losing out. I wanted good jobs for our people here. So yeah, it was a disappointment. But we've had a lot of disappointments. You roll up your sleeves and you go on in life."

3.2. Claiming space in Chicago

Like in Wisconsin, the decline of industrial transportation infrastructures is also limiting new economic opportunities. "El" light train lines skirt the region, with the Metra train stopping in only one (predominately white) neighborhood. Bus lines have decreased, with some bus stops more than a mile from residential areas, and route 90 lifts drivers over the old steel neighborhoods. Although the city of Chicago extended Lake Shore Drive south by two miles to allow for redevelopment at the former US Steel Site in 2013, the mobility of people and capital has generally hidden this community (N. Moore 2019). Julie, a volunteer at the historical museum, told me in disgust: "People say to me, 'you live on the southeast side of Chicago? That's the lake!'"

Unlike Wisconsin, the region has been approached by dozens of interested businesses since the 1980s. Proposals have ranged from an airport to a scrap metal dump to most recently, a casino (Ruthhart 2018). Companies are interested in taking advantage of the least populated region of the city—for instance, eighty percent of South Deering remains zoned industrial, natural wetlands, or parks (Real Estate Center 2019). But the emphasis here is on *proposals*. Regardless of multiple generations of reports by Southeast Chicago Development Commission, Calumet Area Industrial Commission, and City of Chicago Department of Economic Development[1], few new projects have actually taken root in "Chicago's underbelly for grimy but necessary industries: steel, landfills and factories" (Slife 2011). One local stated in the Chicago Tribune the dominant perspective I heard among interviewees: "I think most people are hopeful about what potentially can happen--but hopeful as well as being on the lookout to see what's going to happen," (Ahmed 2007).

[1] See, for instance, reports from Chicago Park District (2014); Mayor Daley and Berg (2003); Mayor Daley and Hill (1999); City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development (2005); The Southeast Chicago Development Commission and Calumet Area Industrial Commission (n.d.); and Mayor Washington, Mier, and Lachman 1985

Infrastructure decline isn't the only constraint to new projects in this region. The south of Chicago has a long history of environmental health issues (Pellow 2004). During the height of steel, constant air and noise pollution were simply part of everyday life, visible residues of economic wellbeing. "Smoke means jobs," one newspaper quipped (Ahmed 2007). Jesus told me, "we lived the mill. I mean, everything that we did, we grew up around the mill. Everything was based around what happened to the steel mills. I remember my father, when he would hear the ore boats in the thing, he would always say, "That's the sound of money." The ore boats were coming in or when the mill was blasting. So, we grew up, literally, right in front of the mill." As he stopped to run his fingers through old taconite pellets littering the ground of the former steel mill site we were walking through, he said, "one of the things that we all remember here—I know Marcos will remember—is when they would throw the graphite in the air." Marcos laughed abruptly and shook his head. Jesus continued, "We were actually exposed to the graphite, thinking that it was sparkly, silver rain, and we would play in it!"

Today, the community continues to face environmental challenges. Thousands of acres of un-remediated brownfields limit non-industrial investment. The 10th ward is peppered with a superfund site, multiple brownfields, and polluted air and waterways that deter even some industrial investors. Several storage and handling facilities for pet coke—a fine, black dust byproduct of oil refining—are sited near the Calumet River and, until a very recent intervention by the EPA, this form of air pollution was a common complaint (Puente 2014; Hawthorne 2017). This corridor between the Calumet River and Lake Michigan has long been the dumping ground for much of the city's industrial and sanitation waste (see Appendix H). Furthermore, unlike the more northern Chicago River, the Calumet River is a working river zoned for heavy industry and flowing with wastes from both defunct and active industrial projects. Tom, one of the proponents of the Calumet National Heritage Area designation, told me, "For the longest time, the City Department of

Planning and Development (ignored us). Just because it's on a map downtown somewhere that it's industrial, they thought that's all we are. It's just the attitude, you know? We've had a succession of mayors who really didn't consider this as…prime territory over here. Of course, we don't compete with Wrigleyville or even Bucktown…. Much more attention up there, a bit more money up there, more activity and stuff like that. So, we've always been the poor stepchild down here, you might say, and the dumping ground."

However, it's important to note that even with pollutants—or perhaps because of the pollutants—this urban region does have a natural resource identity. The process of manufacturing steel constructed this neighborhood around the flows of iron, even as it extracted environmental goods from land, water, and air. For my Chicago interviewees, negotiating a natural resource identity means reclaiming neighborhood land from abandonment and exploitation. Where outsiders see empty brownfields, Louisa, a community leader, sees 600 acres of lakefront property on the former US Steel site. "You can see the skyline from the northeastern tip of it! But it's been vacant 20 years. I don't get why somebody hasn't scooped it up!" A few years ago, she told me, a condo developer was interested. "McCaffery, who was a big developer, bought 12 percent of the stock in this property and he wanted to redevelop it, but it was dreams of grandeur." She opened a small building across the road from the mill land and pointed to a dusty, room-sized model of a condo development. "Here's the development that he envisioned. This space out here, it's bigger than downtown! And to be honest with you, it's a great dream. But I want to get you to think about something. How many people in this neighborhood think can afford to shop at a Whole Foods? Or live here?" The development project was scrapped last year, with only a model and lost TIF[2] money to show for it.

[2] Tax Increment Financing is a special funding tool used by the City of Chicago to promote public and private investment across the city. Funds are used to build and repair roads and infrastructure, clean polluted land and put vacant properties back to productive use, usually in conjunction with private development projects. Funds are generated by growth in the Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) of properties within a designated district over a period of 23

"I've only been a [community leader] for fourteen months," Louisa continued, "And before the developer left, I sent him [ideas from constituents]. A guy wanted to build an ice hockey rink that could be used for a venue, for concerts. Didn't want it. Sent him a brewery, a restaurant. Didn't want it. It was *his* vision or no vision." I asked her, later, if locals were still upset about the mills closing. She laughed cynically and said, "Nope. At the city and McCaffrey, yes."

If a heavily-funded, private condo development failed, then, perhaps a new generation of industry could revitalize the wasted resource of land. In an oral history collected in the early 2000s, a high school history teacher asked a former steelworker: "Okay. What do you think should be done with the land where US Steel was once located?" He answered with a laugh, "Put a little steel mill up there." More recently, an interviewee, Bill, explained that his vision "would be to clean up some of the brownfield areas and get them back into productive use, or if it's going to be an open space, get it open so that it's clean enough to use by community people for recreation purposes or birdwatching or whatever. It would be to get more, clean, sustainable industry into the area. It would be to get more jobs so that we can get more young people into those positions, especially in the manufacturing jobs."

Jamie also embraced the idea of a new industry, but he had much lower expectations. "This can't just be a bedroom community, with all this land. So, what takes its place? It can't all be dumps, it can't all be hilltops or something, it has to be *something*." He paused and ran through the list of former mill sites, "[McCaffrey's] Lakeside plan, which is the old roughly 572 acres of South Works, has once again fallen through. The old Acme Steel [plant] has been demolished. Or pieces are still

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years. When an area is declared a TIF district, the amount of property tax the area generates is set as a base EAV amount. As property values increase, all property tax growth above that amount can be used to fund redevelopment projects within the district. The increase, or increment, can be used to pay back bonds issued to pay upfront costs, or can be used on a pay-as-you-go basis for individual projects (City of Chicago 2019).

standing, but a mighty wind will blow some of the stuff down." He brightened as he recalled that "there are a few little companies in the property at Wisconsin Steel now. I don't know what they do. I know they're industrial." More than a year after Jamie and I talked, another former steel mill site found an industrial purpose—NorthPoint Development broke ground at the old Republic Steel mill site for an industrial building complex with room for "up to 10 manufacturing, assembly, and distribution-type tenants." The development will receive nearly $52 million of the 10th ward's precious Tax Increment Financing assistance (The Associated Press 2019).

These urban interviewees hope that bringing peripheral landscapes back into productive use will solve infrastructural, environmental, and employment problems. But, like in Wisconsin, that solution hasn't yet come—the structural and cultural residues of this neighborhood's industrial past are constraining possible futures. In fact, for both sites, the marginalization of these post-industrial landscapes has continued unabated by governmental intervention or new industrial projects.

3.3. Tourism

Both Chicago and Wisconsin residents are redefining what nature is for by pursuing an alternative strategy: bringing people to them through natural resource tourism. Following the "lost economy of mining," explained Pete in Wisconsin, the Chamber of Commerce turned to other natural resources because, "economies are built around resources, and so that's what we're trying to do. We like to say, T and T—timber and tourism! Recreation's important to us…timber's really important. Those are our resources." Timber, a private industry, impacts few residents in the county since companies import most of their workers for seasonal harvests. Iron County's *other* resource is outdoor recreation. Using funding from the state's "Rails to Trails" program, the county paved abandoned railroad beds with iron ore tailings. Leah told me, "the reason we have such a great trail

system here is the [railroad] tracks used to come up here, and we've used those as snowmobile trails. We have a great, extensive snowmobile trail system up here. We have the best snowmobiling in the Midwest! We have our annual snowfall is 200 inches." Each winter, skiers, and snowmobilers enjoy the trails, and each summer, hikers, and four-wheelers take to the paths.

In Southeast Chicago, community leaders also have goals to turn their landscapes into tourist hotspots. In the past decade, the neighborhood built a BMX cycling path and developed nine public parks on brownfield prairies. Several nonprofits have been petitioning the US government to formally designate the region a "national heritage area" in recognition of both its industrial and environmental legacies. Tom, a non-profit organizer, is involved in this effort. "Friends of the Parks…say they want to see…the lakefront all unspoiled and unbuilt. So that may occur here on the south end of the lake, too, which would give us a nice strip of lakefront property. And then, Lake Calumet and the bike paths, the marshes, the parklands, the bike park, and all these things." He argued, "We no longer have to just look at ourselves as a polluted end of the line for everything that the city wants to get rid of. [We want] to rebrand ourselves, to be the playground of the city instead."

Tourism is a new way to use nature without extracting or exporting it. But, as a service industry, tourism is a poor substitute for the economic boom that brought laborers to the mines—and mills—in the first place. The limits to the tourism strategy didn't slip past my interviewees. When I asked Dolly, in Wisconsin, about it, she shrugged. "Tourism is good, but not for me, or for the other neighbors, unless they work at the grocery store, or have a bar, or have another deal for tourists." Even for those businesses, tourists don't spend much money. For instance, in Wisconsin, all-inclusive ski resorts remove external costs for room and board. Increasingly, visitors are purchasing low-value, second homes in the Northwoods to serve as winter or summer vacation

houses. After the initial purchase of the house, however, the economic impact of seasonal residents is difficult to measure and even harder to conceptualize.[3] In Chicago, bicycling, birdwatching, and educational activities are essentially non-profit, free activities (Ahmed 2007).

But tourism offers a new way for long-term residents themselves to interact with their environment and remake place in a meaningful way. Tourism uses the resources available to long-term residents productively without requiring large-scale infrastructural development or waiting to win the "new company" jackpot. Wayne, in Wisconsin, admitted, "well you have got to still keep on building tourism. I was on the chamber of commerce, but we're competing against a lot of other places, too. I mean, we're not Florida here. You've got to keep on building tourism, and then look at your natural resources, and try and develop those, all within a safe way that you save the environment. You know, you have to have a great environment if we're going to have tourism." Jimmy, aged 68 and also in Wisconsin agreed: "the only thing we have here is what God gave us: our natural resources. We're not going to get any big manufacturers…we're on the end of the road—you've got Lake Superior and Canada. We're only going to have more people up here, and more jobs, as we develop our natural resources. We have our timber, lumber, our ski hills, and tourists, the lakes and the streams." In Chicago, a local environmental leader echoed similar sentiments in a short press release to a city newspaper: "here on the Southeast Side of Chicago, all we get is more industry. So, what we're hoping is that by preserving these ecological gems that eventually they become our assets. Perhaps we could do eco-tourism here, bring people from outside of the community to our community. Currently, we don't have any kind of attractions" (Slife 2011).

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[3] Currently, housing units that are not occupied full-time comprise 51 percent of Iron County's total, livable housing, compared to a meager 12 percent across the United States (U.S. Census Bureau 2015a). Interestingly, none of my interviewees were concerned that the proposed strip mine would negatively impact tourism. This might be due to the distance between the proposed mine and the Lake Superior tourism belt, but such lack of concern may also reflect the ambiguity of tourism within Iron County's economic hierarchy.

Yet, while out-of-towners might not spend much money, their visits to the woods and prairies of the industrial past add *symbolic* value. In Chicago, Jesus, a former steelworker turned artist, drove me and his friend Marcos to Steelworker's Park—a new park sited on the abandoned US Steel site referred to by Louisa. With pride, Jesus pointed out his sculpture of a steelworker family at the entrance of the park and gestured towards the space beyond it where community events are hosted. Jesus, Marcos, and their fathers all worked in this mill. "Mostly [the mill] is gone, except for the mighty ore walls," Jesus said. Marcos and Jesus laughed about the time the city of Chicago tried and failed, to knock down the walls with wrecking balls. They implied, the walls still stand here, and so do we. Jesus paused and looked dramatically between his artwork and the walls. "Being an artist and a sculptor, I see the ore walls in a completely different form." Marcos curiously asked, "What do you see?" Jesus grinned, "I see them as a kind of a Mount Rushmore."

Tourism, like new industry, is still a young and economically limited idea, but it's an idea does work: a use of nature that attempts to ensure that the places where people still live remain valuable. These visions for the future aren't just tales of nostalgia; these are ways that people are re-negotiating their natural resource identities in light of the very real and structural constraints of living in a deindustrialized place.

4.0. Conclusion and contributions

In this chapter, I've shown, long after company closure, natural resources—as idea and infrastructure—continue to do work in post-industrial places. Long-term residents remake their place, building on the infrastructures and cultural frameworks of the past, and re-envisioning their place's natural resource identities. When the devaluation of the founding natural resource threatened

the identities and structures created by natural resource capitalism, long-term residents played an important role in reproducing and reinterpreting the past. But they also expanded their definitions of nature to include not only new generations of familiar industry but also productive (if less lucrative) uses of post-industrial landscapes. Considering the shifting meanings of natural resources illuminates the complexities of options facing people who stay in places after their commodity moves on.

More broadly, this project demonstrates how the cultures and structures of natural resource identities can enable and constrain community development. On one hand, tapping into origin stories enables long-term residents to reclaim control over the meanings of their home communities, even in the face of significant change—to salvage their natural resource identities from the dustbin of history. Even though companies claimed power over the definitions of place, everyday people can alter and remake places in their own ways. On the other hand, such ideological commitment to an industrial model of place may cultivate a false hope in a new generation of mining or manufacturing work—a cultural acceptance of capitalism that might render invisible other possible futures. At the same time, the structures of deindustrialization act upon the community, regardless of the identity work of the people who live there. The structural vestiges of infrastructural limitations, environmental decline, and social marginalization can and do limit alternative models of what a place can be about. I saw this particularly in Chicago—where, even with high rates of population churning as new residents migrated into steel neighborhoods after closure, the future of this urban region remains embedded in industrial pasts.

Thus, to understand the processes and consequences of the disconnection of these political economies, we need to understand what constitutes that place—both historical and present, material and symbolic. This has been the project of this dissertation.

In the first two empirical chapters of this dissertation, my data demonstrated how and with what consequences the historical commodification of nature by industrial firms shapes both contemporary physical landscapes and narratives of meaning, value, and belonging for long-term residents. I began by showing how the social worlds of capital's wage-workers *make place*—culture and structure, home and work, and past and future are rooted in a landscape where the arrivals and departures of trains and boats, the building of houses, the accumulation of wealth, and the bodily experiences of class hinge on consistent flows of capital. This mobility of natural resource products, in turn, embedded entire regions in webs of interdependence—webs linking stable places with other, unseen parts of the commodity chain, with companies and their inner workings, and with capitalism itself (Cardoso and Faletto 1979). Thus industrial companies constructed early laborer communities in 19th-century iron and steel landscapes through *infrastructural paternalism* to establish worker loyalty and organize industrial society.

In the cases central to my study, capitalist firms also exercised nearly complete control over access to rights and rewards in both workplace and employees' social worlds in order to contest emerging forms of state-based and union-shaped national citizenship. These patterns of companies offering welfare to their workers in ways that compete with external institutions are not just historical. Indeed, the American welfare state as we know it today was constructed not on the backbone of government subsidies but through the delivery of social-benefit programs available to employees of certain corporations.

Then, I showed how workers co-constituted community and experienced the rise and loss of *class* as a place-based and embodied phenomenon. Through the fringe benefits of welfare capitalism established in the early 20th century, workers and their families experienced middle-class rewards for blue-collar work even as they co-constituted their communities by performing gendered, racialized,

and consumptive meanings of class. Company closure rendered familiar landscapes unrecognizable and called into question the normal—and often institutionalized—ways of belonging in a place. Discussing closure within the context of what was gained and lost by mid-century workers offered a clearer picture of the impacts of deindustrialization in place. Since class reflects the residue of unequal power dynamics of place, the performance of class required the processes and actors of the flows of capitalism that made originally made those places.

The fifth chapter theorizes the stability of place in environmental and economic sociology by contemplating the place of *home* in a contemporary society that is always on the move. This chapter intervenes in the familiar tale of the forced outmigration post-company closure by interrogating the formation, persistence, and contemporary interpretations of identities of long-term residents. Certain structural and material forms of stability may permit residential persistence in the face of erratic employment. In resource-extractive and manufacturing landscapes, homeownership, low-income work, and declined housing values both enable and constrain long-term residency. Close-knit social worlds, narratives of choice, and physical places, both current and past, often overlap with forms of material security to serve as frameworks for residents to feel at home. To understand the identities and futures of people who still live in the American Rust Belt, we must hold in tension the constellation of agentive choices, social transformation, and political economies that orient people towards home. After all, if home is only conceptualized as stable, and progress defined by mobility, how does the residentially stable, working class understand their place in a society seemingly eager to leave them behind?

Finally, I discuss the role of *natural resource identities* in shaping a sense of home and expectations for the future among long-term residents. Analysis of both historical and contemporary data offers the source of the "deep stories" for two post-industrial communities that seem to be

shaping entire regions' expectations for the future, this project highlights the material basis for the narrative of relative deprivation echoing across public discourse today. Things *did* use to be better.

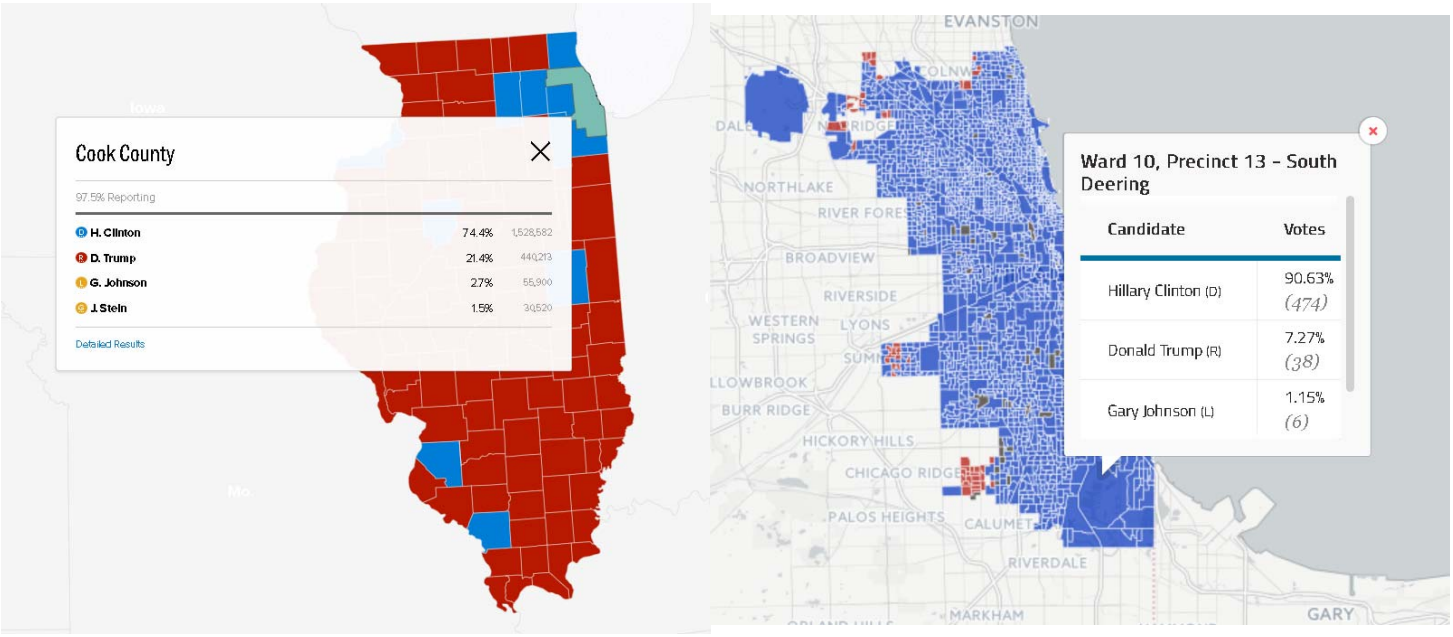
"No matter how stern and unrelenting one's inner voices may turn out to be," Erikson (1976) observed, "they rarely outlast the community structures that molded them and gave them tone" (p.209). Contemporary critiques of nostalgia of the white working class in the American Rust Belt (e.g. Paret 2016; Hochschild 2016; Vance 2016) tend to overlook the way that theses historical components of structural development, the institutionalization of belonging, and working-class experience of company success might constrain and enable particular future options. Long-term residents of both rural and urban cases are still are grappling with the limitations of living in a deindustrialized community. People who lived through the highs and lows of industrial work had to find new definitions of value and "orders of worth" after their anchor company closed, to expand Boltanski & Thevenot's (1999) classic line of thought. Landscape-scale economic change, through the collapse of a regional commodity chain in the late 20th century required residents to redefine what is valuable about their place and its people. Buried beneath talk of new mines or industrial mills is an eagerness to see the material and symbolic weight of global capital flows return to a forgotten place, thus returning that place to regional importance and permitting those at home to remain where they desire to be. By expanding their conceptions of natural resources beyond that which is *extracted*, removed, and sold on the market, long-term residents challenge us to take seriously the complexity of working-class people's relationship with both the economy and the environment.

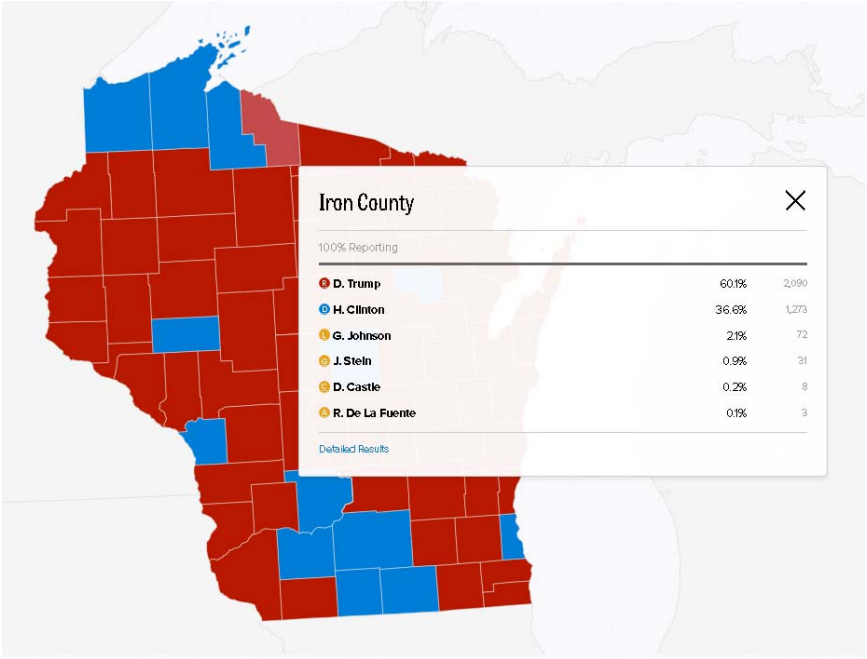
In sum, thinking historically about the sentiments found in the American Rust Belt helps us "outsiders"—and "coastal elites"—grapple with the contemporary disconnect between different regions and cultures in the US. Certainly, the 2016 election reminded us that marginalized places still hold political power. But more broadly, certain Americans assume that deindustrialized, 'flyover'

places in middle America are emptied out, and thus politically impotent, or are at least peripheral to contemporary culture. I contend that, not just as scholars, but as citizens trying to live well in our country, we need to hear the stories and create more accurate knowledge about the values of these overlooked, rural and urban regions.

Appendices

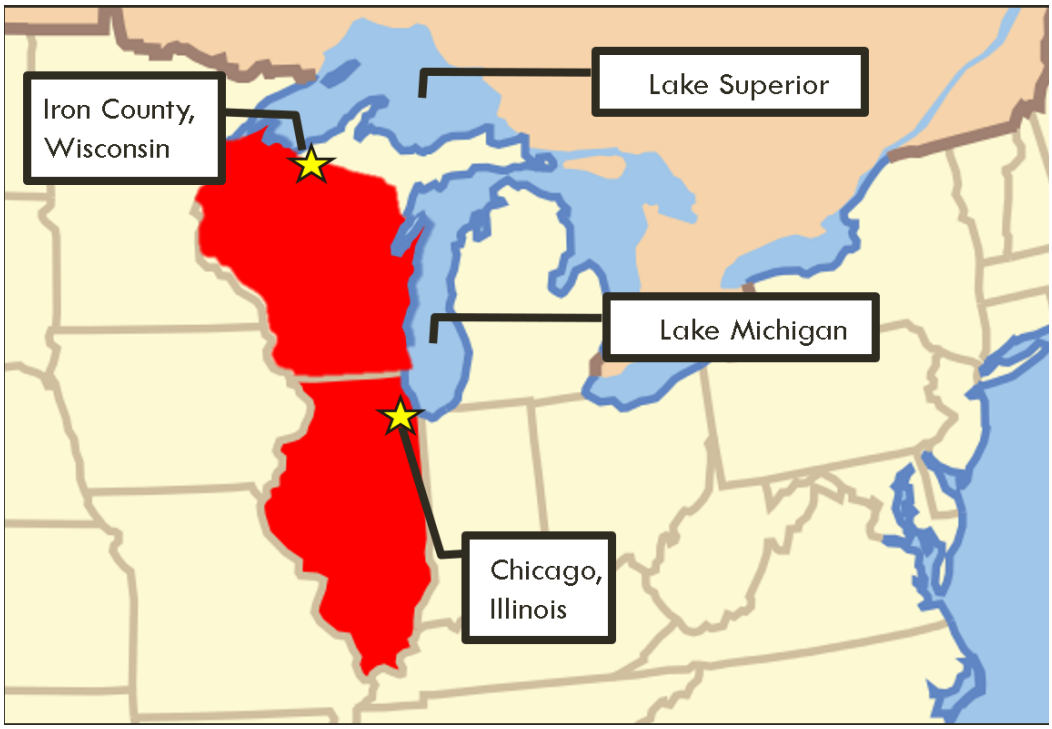
Appendix A: Voting patterns in Chicago and Wisconsin cases



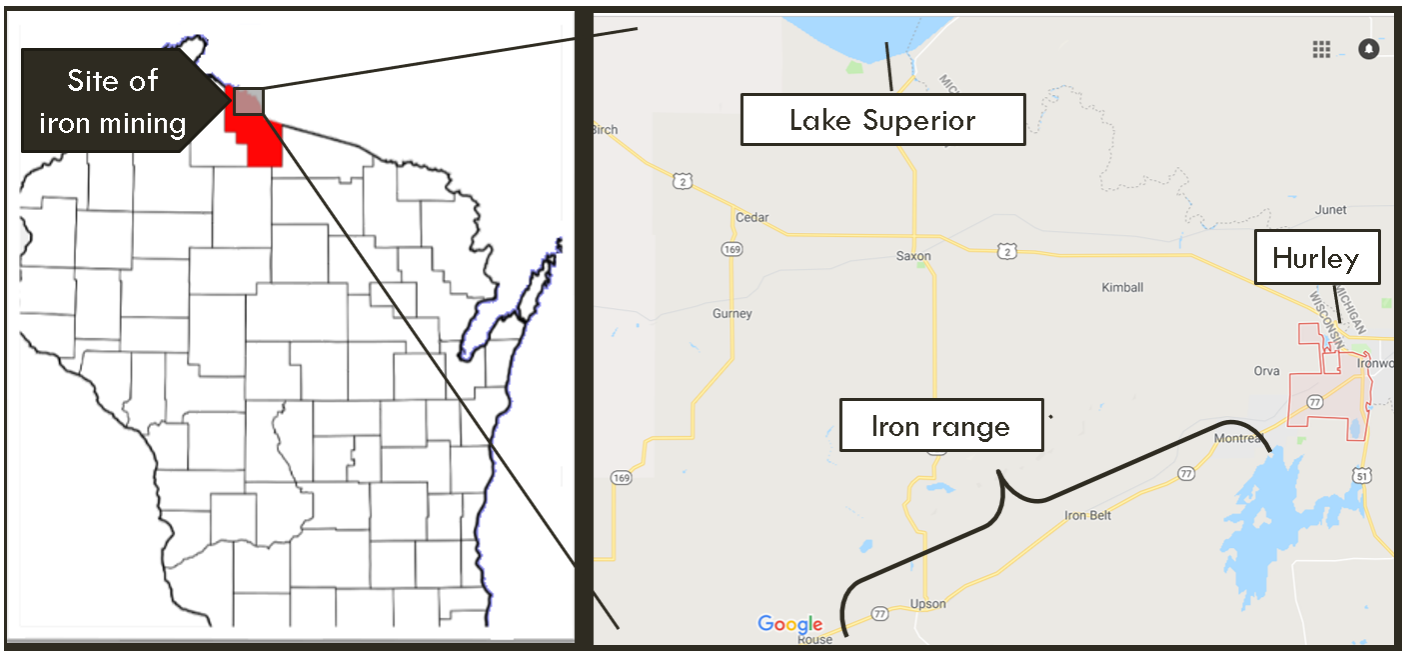


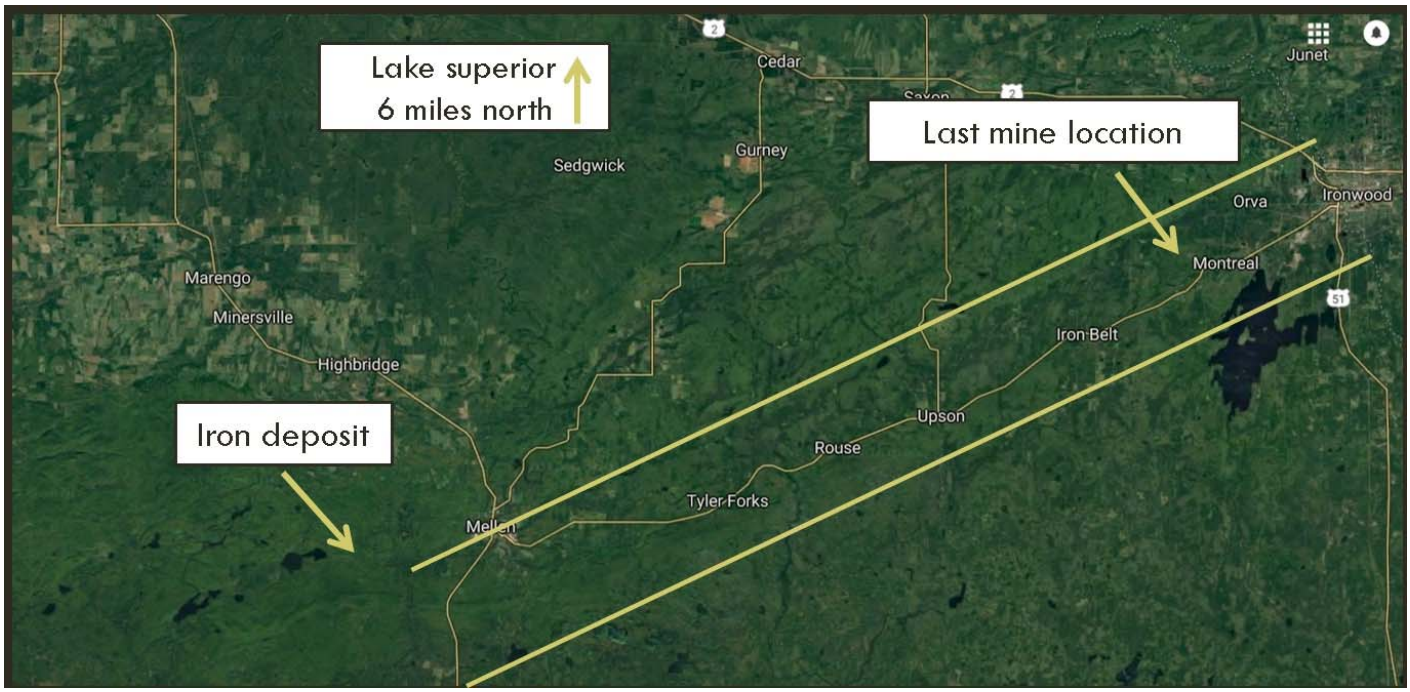
Retrieved December 21, 2016, from http://www.politico.com/2016-election/results

Appendix B: Dissertation Site location

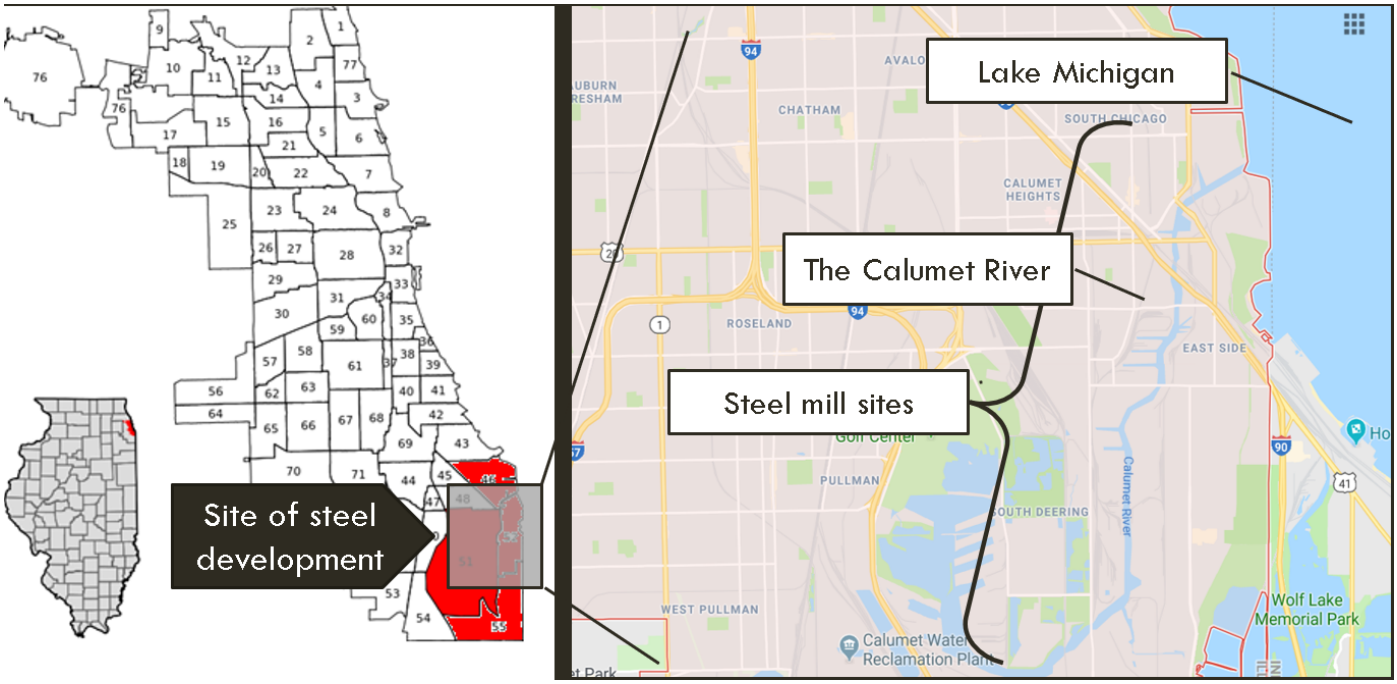


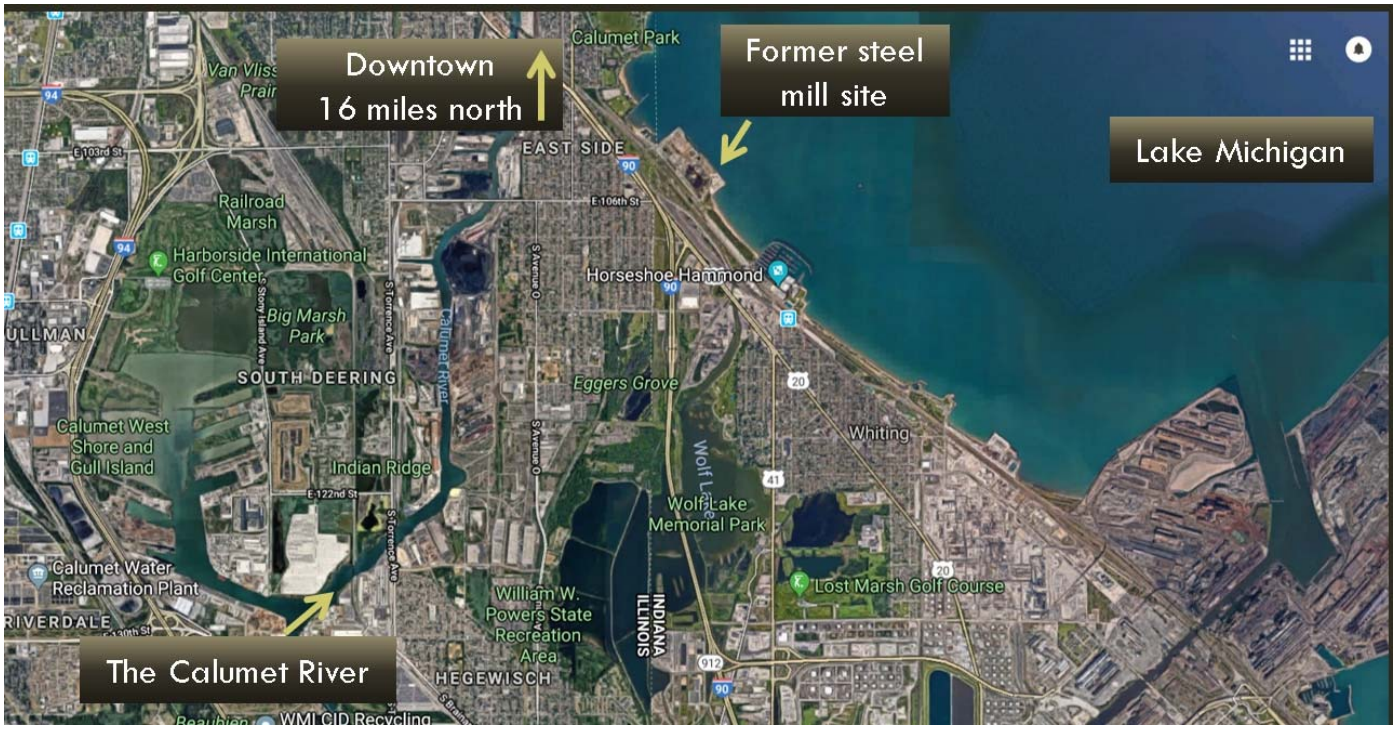
Appendix C: Wisconsin case site



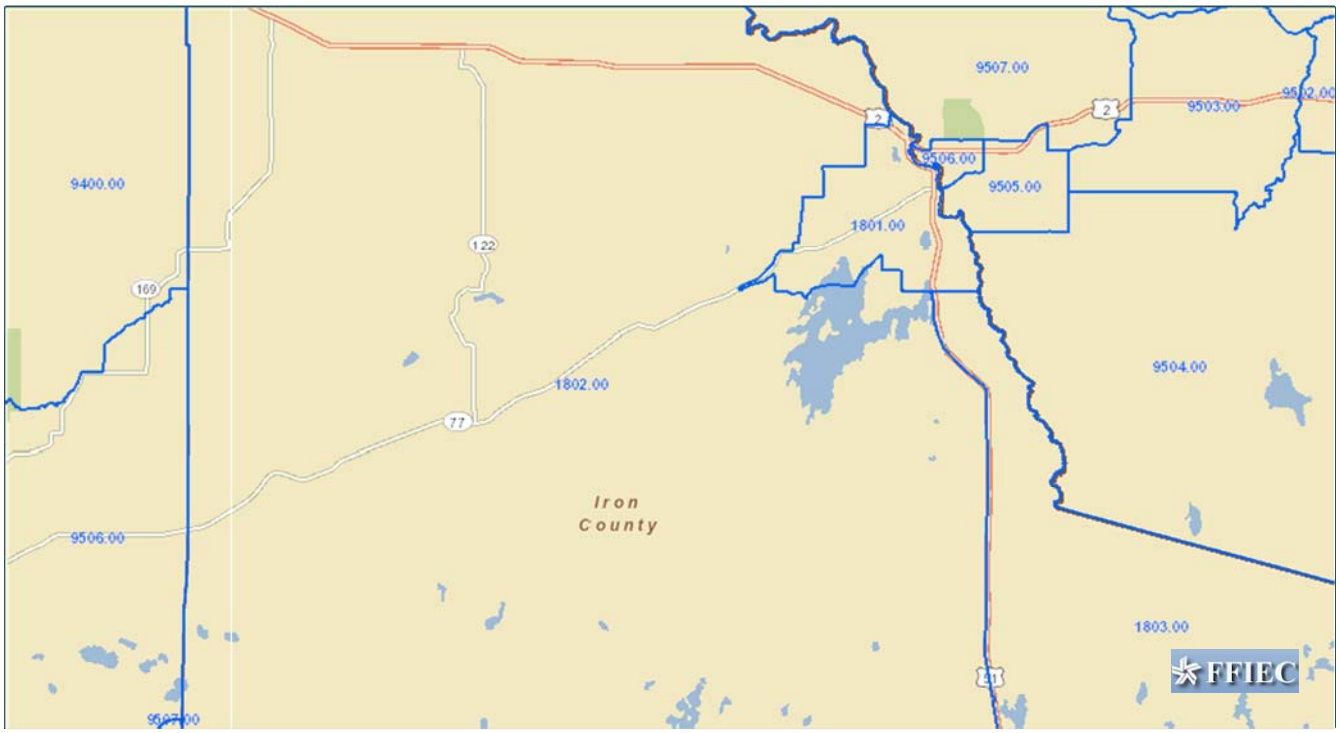


Appendix D: Chicago case site





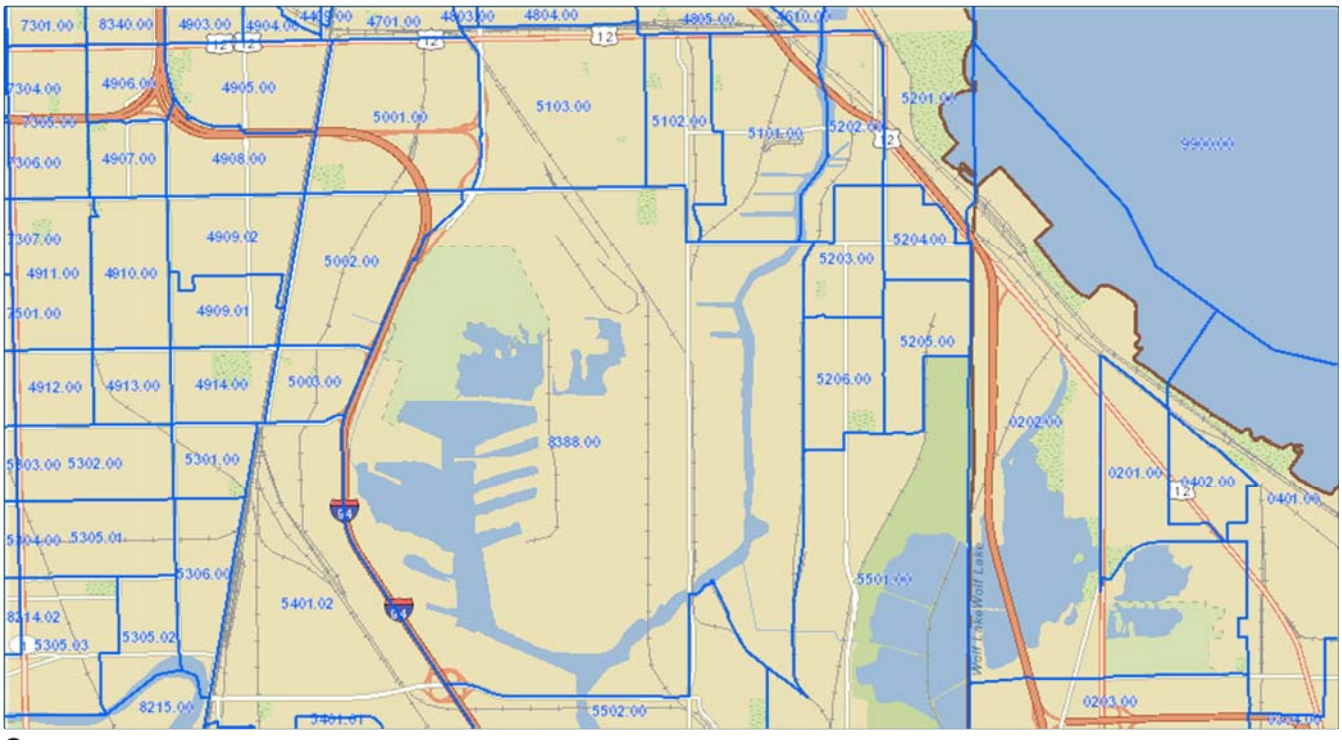
Appendix E: Wisconsin census information



Tract code: 1802	
Tract Income Level	Middle
Underserved or Distressed Tract	Yes*
2018 FFIEC Estimated MSA/MD/non-MSA/MD Median Family Income	$67,800
2018 Estimated Tract Median Family Income	$66,085
2010 Tract Median Family Income	$59,375
Tract Median Family Income %	97.47
Tract Population	1466
Tract Minority %	2.66
Tract Minority Population	39
Owner-Occupied Units	644
1- to 4- Family Units	1306

Tract code: 1801	
Tract Income Level	Moderate
Underserved or Distressed Tract	No
2018 FFIEC Estimated MSA/MD/non-MSA/MD Median Family Income	$67,800
2018 Estimated Tract Median Family Income	$52,172
2010 Tract Median Family Income	$46,875
Tract Median Family Income %	76.95
Tract Population	2441
Tract Minority %	4.92
Tract Minority Population	120
Owner-Occupied Units	866
1- to 4- Family Units	1469

Appendix F: Chicago census information



Tract code: 8388 (South Deering)	
Tract Income Level	Low
Underserved or Distressed Tract	No
2018 FFIEC Estimated MSA/MD/non-MSA/MD Median Family Income	$82,400
2018 Estimated Tract Median Family Income	$21,795
2010 Tract Median Family Income	$19,933
Tract Median Family Income %	26.45
Tract Population	3525
Tract Minority %	95.26
Tract Minority Population	3358
Owner-Occupied Units	365
1- to 4- Family Units	1098

Tract code: 5101	
Tract Income Level	Moderate
Underserved or Distressed Tract	No
2018 FFIEC Estimated MSA/MD/non-MSA/MD Median Family Income	$82,400
2018 Estimated Tract Median Family Income	$43,936
2010 Tract Median Family Income	$40,179
Tract Median Family Income %	53.32
Tract Population	3165
Tract Minority %	92.73
Tract Minority Population	2935
Owner-Occupied Units	595
1- to 4- Family Units	1163

Tract code: 5202	
Tract Income Level	Low
Underserved or Distressed Tract	No
2018 FFIEC Estimated MSA/MD/non-MSA/MD Median Family Income	$82,400
2018 Estimated Tract Median Family Income	$38,992
2010 Tract Median Family Income	$35,659
Tract Median Family Income %	47.32
Tract Population	4120
Tract Minority %	90.05
Tract Minority Population	3710
Owner-Occupied Units	405
1- to 4- Family Units	1232

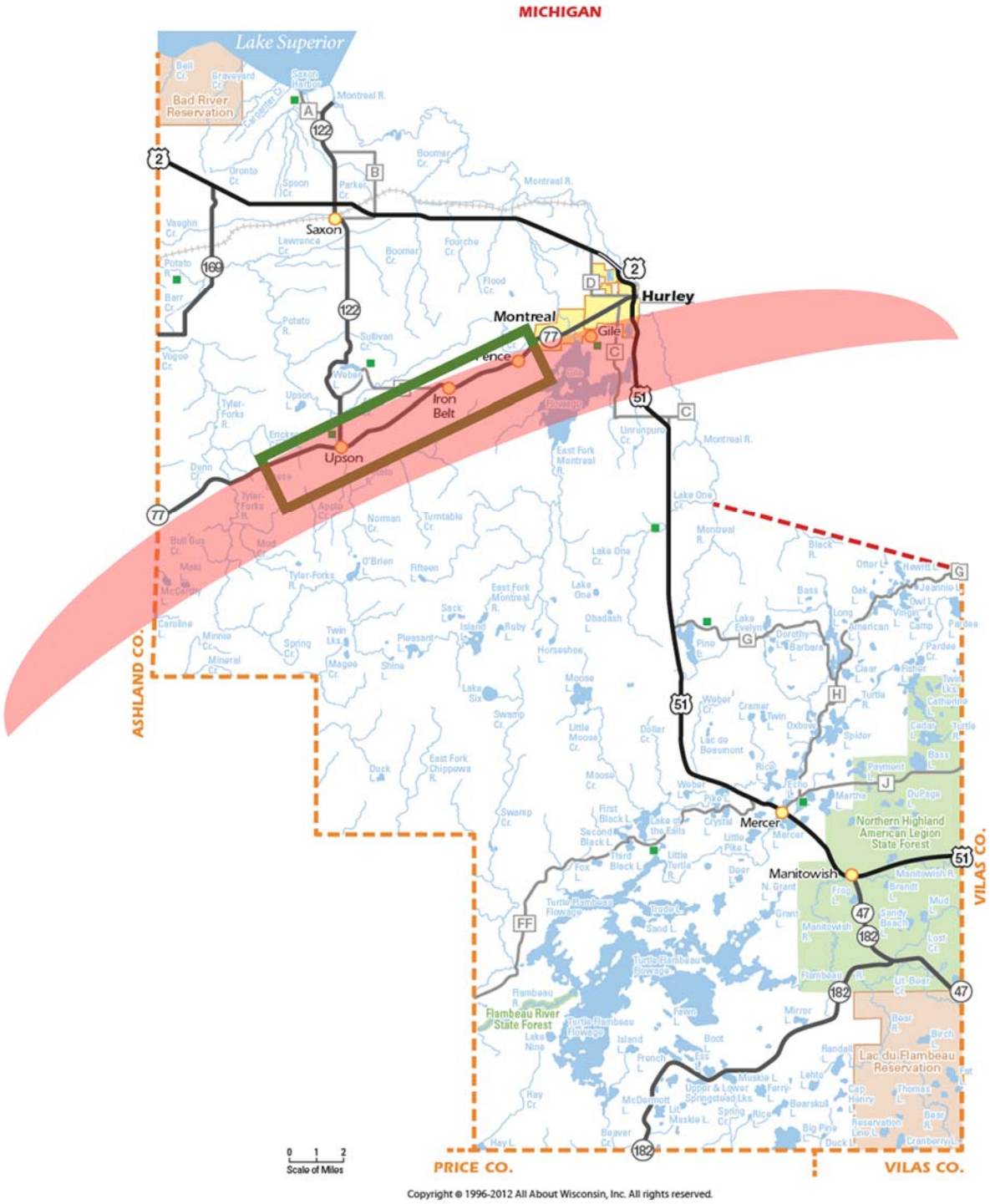
Tract code: 5201	
Tract Income Level	Moderate
Underserved or Distressed Tract	No
2018 FFIEC Estimated MSA/MD/non-MSA/MD Median Family Income	$82,400
2018 Estimated Tract Median Family Income	$46,531
2010 Tract Median Family Income	$42,554
Tract Median Family Income %	56.47
Tract Population	2151
Tract Minority %	92.61
Tract Minority Population	1992
Owner-Occupied Units	323
1- to 4- Family Units	685

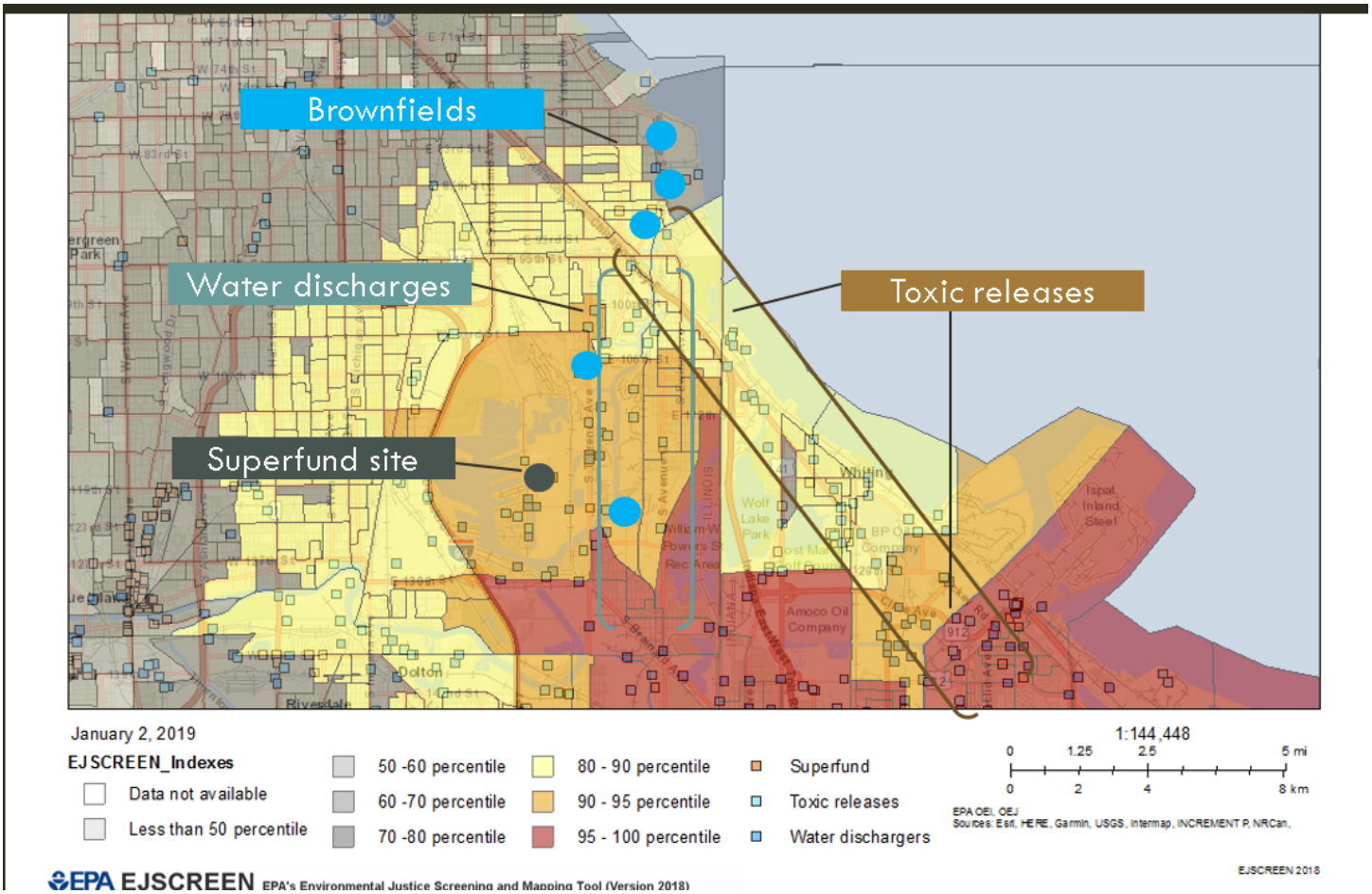
Tract code: 5204	
Tract Income Level	Moderate
Underserved or Distressed Tract	No
2018 FFIEC Estimated MSA/MD/non-MSA/MD Median Family Income	$82,400
2018 Estimated Tract Median Family Income	$53,659
2010 Tract Median Family Income	$49,071
Tract Median Family Income %	65.12
Tract Population	4223
Tract Minority %	85.34
Tract Minority Population	3604
Owner-Occupied Units	905
1- to 4- Family Units	1381

Appendix G: Descriptive statistics on both cases

Iron Co, Wisconsin			Southeast Chicago (South Deering)	
1962 (last closure) population:	7,800		1980 (first closure) population:	19,400
2010 population:	5,900		2010 population:	15,300
Net outmigration rate:	24%		Net outmigration rate:	21%
Poverty rate:	14%		Poverty rate:	24%
Older than 65 years old:	30%		Older than 65 years old:	30%
Unemployment rate:	12%		Unemployment rate:	12%

Appendix H: Iron County towns, Gogebic Range (arc), proposed mine (box)




Brownfields
Water discharges
Toxic releases
Superfund site
January 2, 2019
EJSCREEN_Indexes
Data not available
Less than 50 percentile
50 -60 percentile
60 -70 percentile
70 -80 percentile
80 - 90 percentile
90 - 95 percentile
95 - 100 percentile
Superfund
Toxic releases
Water dischargers
1:144,448
0 1.25 2.5 5 mi
0 2 4 8 km
EPA OEI, OEJ
Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan,
EJSCREEN 2018
EPA EJSCREEN EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (Version 2018)

Appendix J: Wisconsin podcast transcript

Funded by a Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Endowment mini-grant and in coordination with the Iron County Historical Society, the Iron County Development Association, the Iron County Extension office, and WJMS AM, a northern Wisconsin and Michigan radio station, I collaboratively created a publicly accessible oral history podcast. This podcast was broadcast on WJMS AM in April 2017. Audio and transcription are available at edgeeffects.net/iron-county.

It's no surprise that Iron County, Wisconsin is famous for its iron. In the first half of the 20th century, more than 300 million tons of ore left the Gogebic Range, for steel mills across the country.

As with so much of American industry, between 1962 and 1990, the iron and copper mining companies that employed thousands in both Wisconsin and the upper peninsula of Michigan, closed.

As iron left Iron county, work became hard to come by and many people moved away.

BUT many stayed, and every year, hundreds of people return to Iron County for reunions and Heritage Festival events. So even though there have been economic hardships in this region, people are proud to call it home.

I'm Amanda McMillan Lequieu. I'm a Ph.D. student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and I have been studying Iron County as part of my dissertation. This past summer, I set out on a project to gather stories of iron county—from the memories of what it once was, to the hard times as the mines closed, and to its possible future. At the Heritage Festival in July and August 2016, I talked with more than thirty long term residents and out of town visitors. I set up an oral history booth with a microphone and recorder at open houses, class reunions, and the County Fair.

I first asked folks to tell me their earliest memories, to help me picture what this region was like when iron mining was at its peak.

At the Iron County Historical Society Open House, I spoke with Gardy LaMarsh, Hurley class of 1972. He currently teaches Naval Science at a magnet school in St. Paul, but he comes back as often as possible to visit friends and family in the region. He remembers a Hurley that looked—and sounded—very different than what we see today.

Gardy: I grew up on Fourth Avenue and also on Maple streets. Those are the two houses we lived in. Lived just a block from the railroad tracks on Fourth Avenue, so my earliest recollections were of the ore trains going through. My brother and I used to sit on the little hillside, looking down on the trains, watching them go through and that was uh, constant all day long. The ore trains just uh, ran and ran and ran, and they would run throughout the night. and after a while, we…you know, it's just part of growing up, we didn't really notice them so much, unless you happened to stuck behind one, you know, trying to get home from lunch, from school, or trying to get back to school, you get stuck

behind one. Teachers knew that if you were late coming back from lunch, you're probably stuck behind the train that is two hundred cars long. (laughs) So we were forgiven.

The 50s and 60s were a really good time for this area. Other folks told me about the dress shops, shoe stores, bars, and restaurants lining Silver Street; about cruising Hurley and Ironwood with high school friends on a Friday night; and about cooking up favorite traditional Polish, Italian, Cornish, or Finish foods with grandparents.

In all these stories, things changed when the mines closed. Ron Maki's experience summed up many of the changes people of iron county felt in the 1960s.

Ron: In 1962 the Montreal mine closed. and the governor at the time said "Well the people would just have to move and reestablish themselves. Sell their homes and…" Well, problem is, who you going to sell your home to? your neighbor had one for sell. But what happened, many of them moved to Kenosha. American motors, hired everyone from the Montreal mine because they had a record of thirty years…

Like so many men who lost their mining jobs, Ron's dad commuted five hours south to Kenosha during the work week.

Ron: Work in Kenosha was altogether different, doing the same thing over and over, they weren't used to that. Even though they worked underground in the mine. they did different things. They didn't, I think he was, 48 or so, it's hard to readjust.

As many families decided to move in search of work, folks back in Hurley had to readjust, too. Hurley today is so different from Hurley several decades ago. *Let's hear again from Gardy:*

Gardy: I walk the streets now and they are quiet. When I was a kid, there were kids everywhere. We had the largest graduating classes from Hurley in the late 60s and through about the mid-70s. and the classes would've been even larger had the mines not closed in the late 50s or early 60s. So many of our friends moved away. You know, I went to Saint Mary School. I think the folks that went to South side and Montreal and Saxon and Upson and all these other places would tell you the same thing, that classmates just started moving away and classes grew smaller and smaller.

I heard a similar story when I stopped by Sharon's Cafe to visit with Melanie Ellerson and her friend Sherry. These women were classmates in Montreal when the mine shut down. This is Melanie:

Melanie: So, Sherry and I were talking I said I remember going to Montreal school and little by little we were losing classmates. Because they were all moving away and um, our class size got down to really small and it was all because of the mine.

Melanie's entire family felt the repercussions of her dad losing his mining job.

Melanie: My dad really struggled to find work after that. I mean he tried everything from selling vacuum cleaners to insurance to… you know just to help (?). My brother has to leave home when they were 18 and one brother went off to college. He was lucky enough to do that, so. But he would send home money, to take care of the rest of us. Yea, it was rough times, definitely.

Melanie's family made it through, though Melanie did move away to find work. But last year, Melanie and her husband returned to Gile to move into her parents' house. She is part of a growing trend of recent retirees who are coming back to live in Iron County.

For a county that has faced a lot of economic hardships, it has a hold on so many people's hearts. And though natives of Iron County have dispersed across the country, there's still something special about this place, even just to visit.

At the all-class reunion, Bill Richie put it like this:

Bill: If you know anything about mallard duck, where the young ones are fledged, where they learn to fly, they come back to the same place. That's pretty much in analogy, this is where we learned to fly so to speak. and we wanted to come back to visit. Anyway, that's the analogy I would use. Just home, this is home.

During the Iron County Heritage Festival, I ended all my conversations with one question: what do you dream for Iron County? Here's Joan Thomson Voveda:

Joan: I would hope for some economic development, so young people will see the need that they can come back, they can have jobs. Because it's a beautiful area and it's such a good area to raise kids and be here, like a lot of recreation. I would hope that they have enough autonomy to draw young people and a young family so they would come and stay. So, you always hope, this is like a jewel up here

Almost everyone shared Joan's desire to see more economic activity in Iron County. But still, so many people are proud to call this place home. At the County Fair, I watched two local business owners compete to buy a pie for $700, all to support the 4-H clubs; at the all-class reunion, so many out-of-towners told me that they still subscribe to the Daily Globe and Miner newspapers; at the Historical Museum, dozens of visitors shared stories of Montreal, Saxon, Iron Belt, and Hurley.

Here's Bill Richie again:

Bill: The enormous amount of pride in this community. and if this surprise, if you've been around the United States around at all, how many states you can go to? You need people. "Where are you from?" "Well, I'm from a little place in Wisconsin called Hurley" "Oh, Hurley, really!" It's amazing.

Beyond the numbers and economic challenges, it's clear to me that Iron County's future is in its people.

From the University of Wisconsin-Madison, this is Amanda McMillan Lequieu

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