Changing Agricultural Expectations:

Emergent Multifunctionality in Richland County, Wisconsin

by

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Abstract

Multifunctional agriculture represents a recognition of the diverse functions of agriculture, including commodity and non-commodity values and public and private goods. It is often positioned as a desired outcome for agricultural systems and a policy goal. Currently, there are academic and policy debates as to the extent to which transition towards multifunctional agricultural represents a fundamental shift from productivism to post-productivism or is rather the maintenance of current regimes of accumulation along a Fordist to post-Fordist trajectory. In order to understand agricultural change I assert the need to recognize the iterative interaction of *positive* and *normative* forces in the system. *Positive* forces are the material and ideational structures of *that which is*. *Normative* forces are the aspirational goals of *that which should be.* The interaction of these forces creates a *relational* space of expectations, where aspirations are imagined and negotiated through process and politics, checked by material and ideational structures. Expectations can be understood as possibilities or inevitabilities.

This investigation of *relational* space comes from ethnographic research in Richland County, Wisconsin, based around follow-up interviews done with former and current county residents who were surveyed as high school students in 1948 by sociologist William H. Sewell, regarding their occupational aspirations. My ethnography reveals differing *relational* spaces; identified as "traditional," "progressive," and "emergent multifunctionality." In the "progressive" *relational* space strong *positive* and *normative* interaction result in monofunctional or bi-functional agriculture, focused on economic and ecological functions. However, in the "progressive" space there is little focus on the social functions of agriculture due to weakness in the system of *normative* forces around social relationships. In the past social relationships were strongly embedded in and reproduced by systems of agricultural production. As production has changed social relationships have bifurcated, to the inclusion of some and the exclusion of others. I conclude that there is some evidence of the *relational* space of "emergent multifunctionality" in Richland County, Wisconsin. However, if the goal of multifunctionality is to be reached, *positive* and *normative* forces must be recognized and engaged in the economic, ecological, *and* social spheres of agriculture and rural community.

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I. Introduction

There was a brief silence in the room after I finished and then one farmer spoke up to say, "there is nothing that we can do, Sarah. We just have to accept it." I was at a meeting with two dozen dairy farmers from across the state. We were seated around a large rectangular formation of tables. The table formation created a large open space in the middle, and the long sides made it difficult to see the people sitting on your side. In the course of discussion, I had expressed my concern about the potential negative impacts on rural communities and farm families caused by the general trend in Wisconsin towards fewer and bigger farms. The farmers were polite, of course, but based on the nods and looks that I could see, there seemed to be general agreement or at least acceptance of the idea that "there is nothing we can do," it is just the way it is. This sense of inevitability over the loss of farms and the consolidation of production into fewer, larger operations, as well as a general loss of vitality in rural communities, is pervasive at many agricultural meetings, in agricultural newspapers and magazines, and even in more general public discussions.

Is it true? Is this the only agricultural outcome that we can expect? A commodity-oriented, consolidated agricultural structure seems to be widely accepted as inevitable, as something foreordained or part of a natural progression of things. Yet how inevitable is this accepted progression? And how accepted is this inevitability?

Many people act as if it is not inevitable. Farmers and consumers are working together in non-commodity, diversified, direct markets, often times as a distinct strategy to stay in farming without expanding their operation. Take the examples of the current boom in farmers and consumers coming together at farmers' markets and through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm arrangements. We also see people and communities looking for non-economic "returns" from agriculture, working to maintain rural community interactions and social life, aesthetic and cultural values of agricultural landscapes, and "ecosystem services" for improved water quality and wildlife habitat, to name a few examples.

The inevitable appears dominant on the surface. But when we look a little closer and a little longer we see multiple paths and multiple responses to the inevitable, including shifts away from the inevitable towards new forms and new ideas. Within the context of farming and agriculture there are perhaps three base scenarios that play out in response to the accepted expected: go with it and follow the dominant trend in farming; go against the dominant storyline and do the unexpected; or simply put, get the heck out of Dodge.

Take, for example, a dairy farm that would seem quite ordinary in Richland County, Wisconsin. Owned and primarily operated by a family, perhaps the farmers have one or two hired workers and they milk 100 cows. This farm family hopes and wants to continue farming and takes action to follow the dominantly accepted prescription to reach this outcome by "modernizing" their operation, investing in a new milking parlor and new animal housing. For most farm families this involves borrowing money from the bank to pay for the facility upgrades but also to increase

their cow numbers to produce more milk for the market, which circles back to help pay for the upgrades and the interest on the debt.

This prescription for the expected comes to farm families in the free, glossy agricultural magazines that arrive in the mailbox with pictures and advertisements of the latest new things and pictures of farm families standing together in their new freestall barn. It comes from dairy industry and state agency leaders proclaiming that we must have more milk to keep the cheese factories in Wisconsin at full capacity. It comes from the banks that will fund these expected expansions but perhaps not other operational strategies. It comes from the university, which sets up research dairy farms with expanded herds and new milking facilities and also sends out extension agents to convey information on how to increase "efficiency" on the farm with technologies to increase production. It comes from watching the neighbors, who are congratulated on their increased cow numbers and expanded facilities by farm organizations and agribusiness suppliers. All these things work together to embed the expected, to secure the inevitable.

But as I pointed out earlier, when confronted with or simply approached by the inevitable, there are those who take action to do what is not expected. Perhaps they set up their own "farmstead" cheese operation as an alternative to selling undifferentiated, commodity milk into the market. Farmers may change their crop and livestock management practices to organic or grass-based systems, allowing them to access niche markets with consumer price premiums. These alternative farming systems, besides a market focus, also have a different impact on the environment and the land.

Alternatively, farmers may go away from specialized production and diversify their farms to include milk, meat, eggs, and vegetables to sell directly to consumers at farmers markets or through weekly CSA boxes. In some cases this is a return to the *pluriactive* farm, a more self-sufficient farm, that had a diversity of animals and crops, perhaps dairy cows, beef cattle, pigs and chickens as well as grains and vegetables, for both household consumption and the market. This farm-level *pluriactivity* was the expected in the past. When we see it today it is a re-visiting or a rearrangement of a past inevitable.

This unexpected response to the inevitable also has its own boosters in the form of assistance from the university in planning and implementing farm systems and market access, as well as through crop and livestock research and extension. There are also farm organizations that assist and advocate for the unexpected response. Adding to this is the mainstream media's increased focus on farmers markets and CSAs, through coverage of local food initiatives, often with full-color pictures and recipe suggestions celebrating food and presenting smiling pictures of farmers and farm families standing in fields and pastures or surrounded by brightly colored vegetables.

There is also a third response to the inevitable. Instead of going with the expected or choosing the path of the unexpected in agriculture, there are many—in fact, the vast majority—who get out of farming and agriculture all together. And a large subset of this group leave their rural communities for jobs and lives in urban and suburban places. These people perhaps took their cues from watching the struggles of those who followed both the expected and unexpected farming paths,

neither of which are smooth sailing by any stretch of the imagination. And they also took their cues from co-workers at off-farm jobs or neighbors, who have weekends off and time for evening community activities, who might have more disposable income to put into house renovations, vacation trips, and/or a new car. For the non-farming community, this life of free-time and spending on material things for the family is the expected.

Keeping these different scenarios in mind, what does a farmer expect agriculture to provide for his or her family? What does the community expect agriculture to provide? And in borrowing an idea from poet and farmer Wendell Berry, how does agriculture meet "the expectations of the land"?[1] In the paragraphs above I laid out an introductory glance at different ways in which agriculture is active for families and communities and different ways in which people are active in agriculture. How do we explain and/or understand different forms and these different expectations?

What we see by examining the different forms and systems of agriculture is that there is a lot going on. There is not one way of doing things or one response to the same set of constraints and opportunities. Additionally, responses and perceptions change over time. Despite a dominant feeling of inevitability, as I witnessed first-hand in the meeting with two-dozen farmers described in the first paragraph, agriculture is diverse and serving multiple functions.

II. A Framework for an Emergent Multifunctional Agriculture

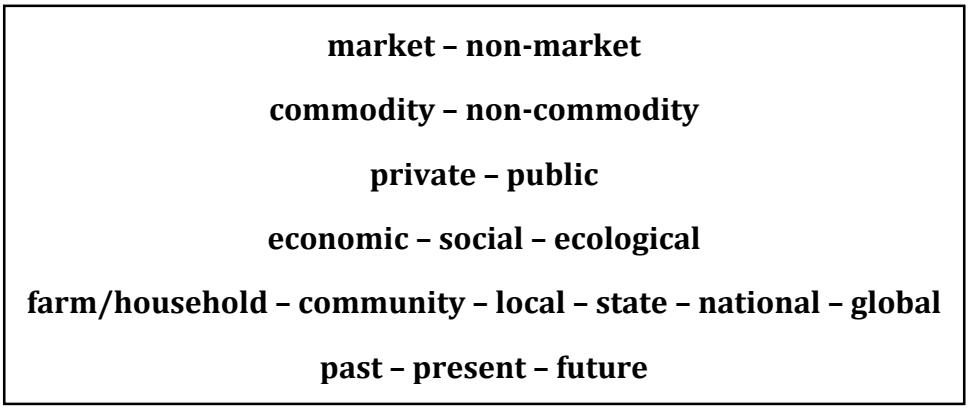
The idea of a diverse and multifunctional agricultural (MFA) has generated a healthy conversation in rural sociology circles. Put most simply, multifunctionality is seen as a recognition of both the "commodity" values of agriculture and the "non-commodity" values. MFA also recognizes the public and private goods.[2] Agriculture has the function of producing food and fiber for the economic or market interests of farmers, processors and distributers. Agriculture produces food for consumers as well. These economic and market functions can generally be viewed as private goods. But agriculture also serves "non-commodity" purposes, such as producing habitat for wildlife and aesthetic landscape views, and maintaining and improving ecosystems through the production of local water quality services and soil conservation. These can be seen as public goods. Agriculture also fulfils social functions for people and communities by supporting families on the land and facilitating community relationships, through the involvement of farm families and others tied to the agricultural economy, in local schools, churches, and organizations.

An important part of the diversity of agriculture is that the multiple functions are also operational at different spatial and temporal levels.[3] Multiple functions of agriculture may be active at the individual, household or farm level. They may also be active, and at times differently, at the community, national, or even global level.

Past, present, and future functions and how they move over time is also an important component of a consideration of multifunctional agriculture.

In order to understand agricultural systems and change, there must be consideration of the market and non-market; public and private; and social, economic, and ecological functions of agriculture, as well as spatial and temporal aspects of MFA. Figure 1 below attempts to summarize the many conceptual categories presented here. What is important to note is that these conceptual categories interact and overlap in different ways and at times create what economists call "joint" goods, depending on how the different categories are aligned, overlapped or mixed.[4] Also important for the understanding of the data and analysis that follows in this dissertation is the idea that in the absence of a multifunctional agriculture there is a monofunctional agriculture, or perhaps at least a bi-functional agriculture. The level or degree of multifunctionality can be seen in where a system or scernario sits along these different categories in Figure 1.

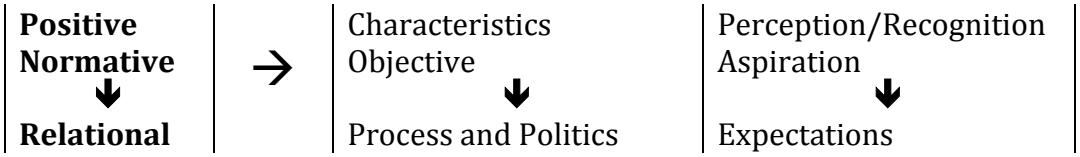
Figure 1: Conceptual categories and levels at work in multifunctional agriculture



Positive and Normative Forces Create a Relational Space

Along with these different categories listed above in Figure 1, it is important to make distinctions in how multifunctional agriculture is conceptualized as an overarching concept and system of or guide for action. It may be possible to ascribe a category or mixture of the categories listed above to a situation or system, but how does the system work and what forces create or structure a monofunctional, bi-functional, or multifunctional system? In my dissertation I propose a three-part framework to explain the dynamics of MFA. I have labeled these three parts *positive*, *normative*, and *relational*. (See Figure 2 below). The *positive* and *normative* conceptions of multifunctionality are prevalent in on-going discussions on MFA, used by scholars, explicitly and implicitly, and also used by citizens and policy makers when engaging with agricultural and rural issues. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 2001 foundational document on multifunctionality makes the distinction between multifunctionality as "a characteristic of an economic activity" (a *positive* conception) and multifunctionality as a policy objective (*normative)*.[5] These two categories provide a base for understanding the recognition of and aspirations for agricultural functions, however the interaction between the two is not discussed in the literature. An additional weakness in the MFA literature is that *normative* forces outside of distinct policy debates and instruments are not considered. I am proposing a third category for understanding multifunctional agriculture, which I am calling the *relational*. The *relational* is the space of expectations, created through the interaction of the *positive* and *normative*.

Figure 2: The interaction of *positive* and *normative* creates *relational* space



Positive Forces

In the *positive* basis of the agricultural system, the functions of agriculture are shaped by forces and existing structures, both material and ideational. Material goods and physical characteristics are outputs of these processes. For example, food and fiber are produced from agriculture. These are material, physical end products of agricultural activities. They just are. And agriculture produces landscapes that look a certain way, in response to the positive or physical aspects of soil type, geology, and topography combined with dominant crops and cropping and farm systems. This provides an aesthetic function of agriculture.

For example, in the southwest part of Wisconsin we have the ridges and valleys of the *driftless* area, so we are accustomed to seeing animals grazing in pastures. This is in contrast to what a person is used to seeing in Illinois. The topography is very flat and the soil is good for growing corn. Over the years the markets and government incentives for corn have been developed and so, when in Illinois, you see corn fields. Along with geologic and ecological materialities there are also the built infrastructure of cheese factories, grain mills, paved country roads (especially in the case of Wisconsin) and interstate highways, for example, that have grown up around the certain crops or livestock that different soils and landscapes,

as well as state and federal incentive programs have facilitated and supported. Agriculture and rural communities develop in reaction to the material constraints and opportunities of ecological and topographic systems, as well as the structures around them.

Importantly, *positive* forces can also have an ideational base, composed of the implicit and explicit perceptions and recognition of *that which is*. "Agriculture serves X function or produces X goods, it always has and it always will." This ideational base is made up in part of perceptions of what is possible, which can be seen at the core of statements like, "there is nothing that we can do about it." There is a tight link between the *positive* structure of perceptions and the creation of the inevitable. Ideational structures can become hegemonic forces and develop in to ideology.[6] Positive perceptions of *what is* can take on the rigidity of the geology and topography of the ridges and valleys, the fertility of the soil, and the seeming permanence of a bricks and mortar cheese factory.

This inclusion of the ideational factors in the *positive* differs from other discussions of these interactions. Michael Bell discusses the interaction of "material" and "ideal" as separate categories that combine and mutually constitute each other. Bell's "material" is very literally material, can be counted and mapped, and refers to general conceptions of the rural.[7] My *positive* category includes this conception of the "material" but also includes the ideational structures. Bell's "ideal" is what he calls, "the rural of associations" and does not correspond directly with the *normative* category I present here. My *normative* is about aspirations, as I discuss below.

Normative Forces

Normative forces must also be considered when looking at the agricultural system. "We" think that this or that particular function of agriculture, or some combination of functions, is important, so it should be encouraged and seen as a goal. The normative framework is aspirational and is the space of *that which should be*. If "we" think economic or commodity production functions are most important, and ecological functions like water quality achieved from wetlands are not important, 'we' will drain wetlands, decreasing the ecological function, but by doing so increase the land's potential for row crop production for the commodity market. On the flip side, "we" might think that agriculture should protect soil so "we" will implement, perhaps with government incentive programs, contour row planting to maintain hillsides to reach a goal of reduced soil erosion.

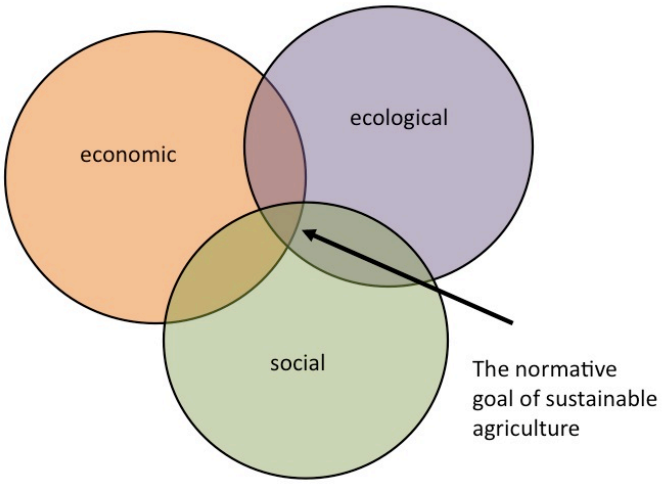


Figure 3: Functional Overlap of Sustainable Agriculture

A common *normative* aspiration is a call for "sustainable agriculture." Definitions are based on a "three-legged stool" model with the idea that agriculture *should* express ecological functions as well as economic, and social functions in some sort of balance or happy medium, as seen in Figure 3.[8] Based on this *normative* structure, we should construct policies, mechanisms, and practices to

achieve this desired goal of balance.[9] If the goal of reaching point of co-existence for all three core functions were recognized and expected, this could be seen as multifunctional agriculture.

Relational Space

Along with the *positive* and the *normative* forces acting in the agricultural system, I am proposing a third way of thinking about the functions of agriculture, a *relational* framework or understanding. The interaction of the two components, *that which is* (the *positive* component*)* and *that which should be* (the *normative* component), create and in turn are created by a *relational* space of *that which could be*. This is the space of possibilities and expectations, where aspirations are imagined and negotiated through process and politics, with a grounding in the physical and the ideas of *that which is*.[10] This *relational* space is created by a process of interaction of *normative* and *positive* forces. They interact. One is not "better" than the other. They are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

These frameworks can interact. If they do not interact and are separate and mutually exclusive, this is an important part of the story that must be considered to understand the expectations that are formed in such a system. It is possible that, if not fully negotiated or recognized, the *positive* forces can be present without input from *normative* forces, or vice versa. Understanding the *normative* and *positive* drivers of the agricultural system is key to understanding and recognizing the power, politics, and process expressed in *relational* space. The character and quality of the *relational* space exposes what is perceived as possible within the system or what is expected from the system. And expectations are directly tied to what is seen

as or actually becomes inevitable, what is seen as impossible. Using the example from my opening anecdote, to which sort of scenarios do people say, "there is nothing we can do" and to which do people see possibilities?

The Politics and Process of Multifunctionality

In this section I will overlay my conception of a *relational* space for understanding agricultural systems—the politics and process of interaction between *normative* and *positive* forces—onto the ongoing discussion and critical analysis in rural sociology and human geography circles about agricultural change and multifunctionality. Primarily this conversation concentrates on different agricultural and rural development schemes that are evolving and being defined by scholars and policy makers. Using the concept of *positive* and *normative* categories and resulting *relational* space when looking at these debates is useful in getting below the surface on what dominant structures, aspirations, and expectations are acting in the system, but also what is being created by the system. Defining some of the moving parts provides a roadmap for applied work on agricultural and rural change.

A main thread of the academic conversation identifies an ongoing, fundamental transition from "productivism" to "post-productivism" or "non-productivism."[11] "Productivism" is characterized as a primary focus on maximum food and fiber production for the market, achieved through strategies of intensification, concentration, and specialization, generally described as beginning

in the post-World War II period and lasting into at least, the mid-1980s.[12] This can be seen as a concentration on the commodity and private goods of agriculture.

"Productivism" is a *normative* aspiration for agriculture but also overlaps and interacts with a *positive* framework. Farmers, agri-business entities, and government programs set goals focused on production as the primary function of agriculture. The form of the bigger and larger farms with higher yielding crop varieties or farms specialized in dairy production producing only milk for a commodity market, for example, achieves broad acceptance and dominance. This *normative* goal of production, often wrapped up in the articulated goal in the United States of "feeding the world," becomes a *positive* force as it is cast as inevitable, as the only way, the *raison d'etre* for agriculture. The aspiration becomes a hegemonic ideational structure, becoming a *positive* force. It also becomes *positive* through the physical infrastructure and knowledge and technology that is developed and built to reach these *normative* goals. This infrastructure and these ideas act as material and ideational monuments to past *normative* structures.

Bill Friedland in his work recognizes the politics and process that this focus on production creates: "…[A]griculture is no longer a phenomenon based on rural society; it is a process of production, like all other processes of production, subject to the same rules."[13] In this thinking, production becomes the monolithic function of agriculture. Productivism becomes a force in itself. The rules of production, as described above, are intensification, concentration, and specialization. This shift described by Friedland is central to the creation of the inevitable, which positively situates production as the dominant, if not only, function of agriculture.

Scholars provide a counter-point to productivism with "post-productivism" or "non-productivism." This concept is presented in several ways: as a direct binary to productivism, as a move down a continuum, or as entrance into pockets of some other organizational state for agriculture. Wilson describes multifunctional agriculture as the end point of a post-productivist transition.[14] Post-productivism includes: a shift from quantity to quality food production, more evidence of pluriactivity in both on-farm activities, as well as off-farm employment as a source of income for the farm.[15] Post-productivism is also evidenced by changing environmental regulation and restructuring of government support for agriculture.[16]

Terry Marsden and Roberta Sonnino succinctly identify three main political or paradigmatic constructions of multifunctionality: first MFA as "palliative" to productivism, second MFA as post-productivist regulation, and finally MFA as a means of rural development, re-integrating productivist agriculture with social and ecological possibilities.[17] However, not everyone agrees that there is a transition to post-productivism actually in effect. Short recognizes "pockets of post-productivism," linked conditionally to the productivity of land, as well as consumption of agricultural products and services and land protection dynamics.[18]

A Post-Productivist or Post-Fordist Transition?

Tilzey and Potter also do not see a shift to post-productivism and charge that descriptions of a post-productivist trend are in fact conflated with a general shift

from Fordism to post-Fordism.[19] This shift "represents new forms of regulation, a new techno-economic paradigm and new forms of production."[20] Identification of this Fordist continuum presents different *positive* material and ideational structures interacting with different *normative* forces, which I describe below.

Fordism is the regime of accumulation that is based on a fundamental connection between mass consumption and mass production. "Fordism [is] defined both as an accumulation regime, a labor process and as a norm of consumption."[21] In their 1989 article specifically on "Midwestern Agriculture in U.S. Fordism," Kenney, Lobao, Curry, and Goe describe this connection and how "Fordism created an enormous consumer market" to which U.S. agriculture responded by "producing masses of commodities of uniform quality," as part of a fundamental change in the food supply and delivery system in the country. The authors also describe how, under a Fordist system, farmers became consumers of mass-produced agricultural inputs, such as petrochemicals, hybrid seeds, and machinery. In addition many farmers became consumers of processed foods, moving away from household self-sufficiency. The shift in how farmers were "integrated into wider circuits of production and consumption" had profound effects on farmers and communities and the economy as a whole.[22]

Fordism then shifts towards Post-Fordism in the 1970s and 1980s primarily characterized by a change from the farmer as producer of food for the nation to a neoliberal view of the farmer as entrepreneur, actively engaged in the global marketplace.[23] These changes also have broader social and cultural implications with "the emergence of new identities as well as the maximization of individual

choices through personal consumption, as equally significant dimensions of the shift towards post-Fordism."[24] A component of Post-Fordism is new flexibility and reduced rigidity and the "elimination of constraints to the free mobility of capital and to maximize its speed of movement.[25] Along with shifting farm and community interaction with markets, a key aspect of Fordism is the consideration of the role of the state or government in the economy and markets. In Post-Fordism the state is used by financial and business interests to exert its powers in the transnational arena, to assist in the movement of capital. Post-Fordism is characterized by changing "levels of disposable income, growing internationalization of markets, and the maintenance of some form of social wage represented a critical role for the nation state in regulating this 'accumulation regime'."[26]

Using the Fordism/Post-Fordism lens calls attention to the relationship between people and the market – both as producers and consumers, as well as how the state is involved in the system. However, Cloke and Goodwin urge caution in the application of the post-Fordist frame, urging an awareness of the specific and dynamic geographical frame of reference and "relations between production and consumption within a particular regime of accumulation," saying "we should not look to specify the ways in which rural areas are implicated in any transition towards post-Fordism, or away from Fordism. Instead, we must allow for a much more complex situation where rural changes are the results of particular combinations of political, economic, social and cultural relations, operating at various spatial scales from the local to the international."[27]

By considering the nuance of a Fordist/Post-Fordist shift as opposed to a strictly productivist/post-productivist shift the importance of the dynamics of the *normative* and *positive* conceptions of multifuctionality come into focus. Tilzey and Potter and Robinson clearly identify a shift in agriculture, but their argument is that the politics of productivism are still dominant in a Fordist and Post-Fordist model of economic regulation. The *normative* goal of agriculture's production function, situated in economic markets, is still dominant. In addition, this *normative* orientation overlaps heavily with *positive* conceptions of agriculture's functions. As Alessando Bonanno posits, productivism was supported under Fordism by the regime of accumulation and socio-political legitimization gained through policy.[28] Accumulation and productivism were linked. By using Fordism as a structuring frame the politics of legitimization is considered. This is the politics of taking *normative* conceptions of agriculture's functions and transferring them into *positive* systems, with all the material and ideational infrastructure that come with it. This is the politics of crafting the inevitable or the accepted. The politics of creating hegemonic systems. Relationships between the farmer and community and the state and the relationship between the farmer and community and the market are the key relationships to examine in understanding the processes of legitimization.

Drummon and Marsden identify an important facet of the formation of inevitability by discussing the assumption that the Fordist economic model was built on the idea of a trickle-down system. They assert that Fordism was built on the expectation that "agricultural production would automatically reproduce the socio-cultural qualities of rural space."[29] With this expectation, the post-

productivist functions or the non-productivist functions, such as non-commodity goods and public sphere aspects of agriculture, would be taken care of under Fordist economic systems. For this "trickle-down" to work, the *normative* goals of production and interaction with *positive* infrastructures and ideas would be expected to create and recreate systems of social relationships, as well as norms for these relationships.

But despite discourse and rhetoric about changing priorities, the "continuing dominance of capital accumulation and commodity relations" enforces the "structural parameters for action."[30] By using this term I refer to the perceptions that people have for what things are possible and what things are impossible within the system where they are situated. In this understanding a shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism does not create a new *relational* space, because new opportunities are not created. As Potter and Tilzey state, "a transition from one regime of accumulation to another essentially involves a reconfiguration of the internal structures of the system rather than the redefinition of the limits of that system."[31]

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Productivist v. Fordist Transition Models

I have chosen to situate my research within the discussion of the existence and nature of a productivist/post-productivist or a Fordist/Post-Fordist transition. Each of these transitions has strengths and weaknesses for understanding agricultural change. Simply thinking about productivist/post-productivism is inadequate because the social relationships embedded in production are

deemphasized. Furthermore, using concepts of "post-productivism," and "non-productivism" diminishes the importance of production, which does not cease in these new systems, as an organizing structure, as I will discuss later.

Using the Fordist/post-Fordist discussion provides an opening for consideration of the relationships between producers and consumers and also the way in which the state and market actors enact normative and positive forces towards relational space. In addition it calls attention to what spaces or "parameters for action" that may not be created. Post-Fordism may be a more effective way of conceptualizing what is going on in agriculture because it allows a look at the interaction of productivism and post-productivism under new regimes of accumulation and new modes of regulation, not as an actual fundamental shift in the politics of agriculture from the dominance of market oriented productivism.[32] However, using the concept of a transition from Fordism to post-Fordism does not fully recognize the give and take between the positive ecological forces and the way they interact with the *normative* forces of conservation to enable and maintain production for the market, as well as conservation for conservation's sake.

This academic conversation indicates that the multiple functions of agriculture are contested and they are evolving. What I find key is the issue that Drummon and Marsden highlight, that there may be a shift from productivism to post-productivism, or at least pockets of the latter, but what we need to look at is the "structural parameters for action" that the different functions or constellations of functions create and allow. In what way are *positive* and *normative* forces employed and what inevitabilities and what possibilities are created? As Drummon

and Marsden contend, the *normative* goals of accumulation have not been altered in the Fordist to post-Fordist transformation. This means that there can not be a fundamental shift to post-productivism towards multifunctionality, because the dominant norm of accumulation does not allow for the full recognition of multiple functions and outputs from agriculture.

With my dissertation, I intend to describe and analyze the different qualities of *relational* space created over time through the interaction of *normative* and *positive* forces in the agricultural system in Richland County, Wisconsin. This description and analysis will engage with the ongoing debate on the shift from productivism to post-productivism or alternatively a shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism and what it means with regards to the achievement of a multifunctional agriculture.

Traditional, Progressive, and Emergent Multifunctional Space

In the following chapters I will introduce my case of Richland County, Wisconsin and investigate multifunctional agriculture. I have broken the empirical data and information into three chapters, each building on the other in order, providing specific examples from Richland County, Wisconsin. The first empirical chapter investigates the economic sphere of agriculture and production. The second empirical chapter then looks at how the economic and the ecological functions of agriculture interact. And finally I discuss social interactions that indicate rejection of both expected and unexpected agricultural interactions with the market and the

land. This third empirical chapter also includes consideration of the social spaces strengthened and weakened around agricultural production, as well as moves towards post-productivism and post-Fordism. In these three chapters, I illustrate the *relational* space created through the interaction of *normative* and *positive* forces in the context of Richland County from the 1940s to today.

My research in Richland County uncovers three distinct forms of *relational* space, which are created by understanding different interactions of *positive* and *normative* forces in the agricultural systems. The first is a "traditional" space, in which *positive* and *normative* forces do not fully interact, creating a tendency for "inevitable" outcomes. A second "progressive" space also creates inevitability, but in this scenario, *positive* and *normative* forces interact, creating a tight loop that does not fully draw in multiple functions of agriculture, therefore not creating a full iterative process. And finally the third space observed in my case is an "emergent multifunctional" space, in which *positive* and *normative* are iterative in a co-creative cycle (see figure below).

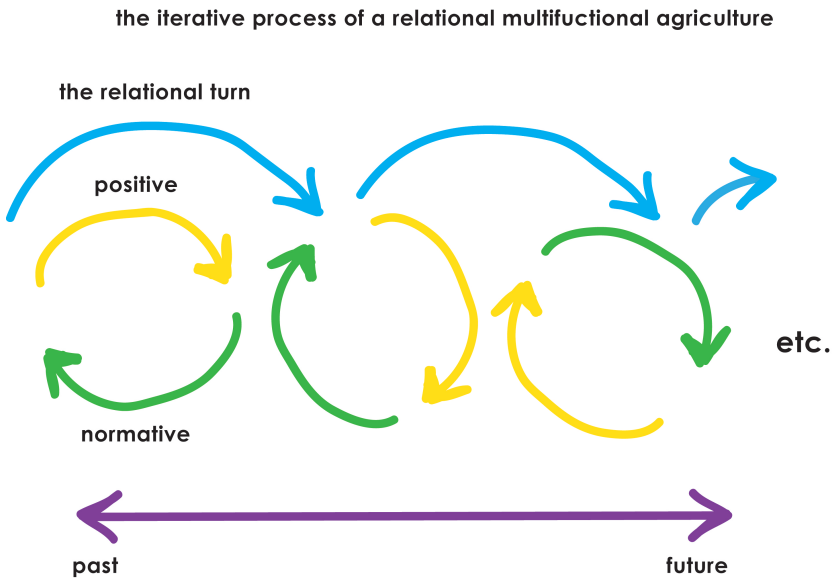


Figure 4: the Creation of Relational Space

Understanding these three types of *relational* space and what expectations are created and what inevitabilities cast, I see an interesting historical trajectory. Past agricultural systems embodied many multifunctional qualities, followed by a period of more monofunctional agriculture, and now an emergent multifunctionality that is still unfolding.

Figure 5: Movement from Multi- to Monofunctional Agriculture and Back

Expectations and the Creation of Inevitability

In order to answer these questions about the *relational* space of multifunctional agriculture and the dynamics of any transformation from productivism to post-productivism or Fordism to post-Fordism, I propose the use of the lens of expectations. Understanding the construction of expectations of families, communities, and the land allows us to understand the ways in which *positive* and *normative* conceptions of MFA interact and what "parameters for action" are available and employed. Bathelemy and Nieddu in their article on multifunctionality point out that economic measures may be taken to promote non-market goods, such as food quality. This may create opportunities for value-added or more competitive positions in the marketplace. In this example non-market functions for agriculture are asserted by the community. "The community helps farmers to have practices that are consistent with society's expectations."[33] Institutional measures, regulations, and incentives send signals to farmers about which practices and methods are desired and which functions should or should not be priorities.

The formation of feelings of inevitability are the expectation that there is nothing that can be done or changed. This leads to the acceptance of "it's just the way it is." This idea becomes a *positive* force in sorting through the multiple functions of agriculture, when it may just be a feeling of powerlessness in face of *normative* views for agriculture. I also focus on expectations because expectations provide a focal point that demands consideration of the interaction of past, present, and future.[34]

As Jay MacLeod describes in his book *Ain't No Makin' It*, "expectations are tempered by perceived capabilities and available opportunities. Aspirations are one's preferences relatively unsullied by anticipated constraints; expectations take these constraints squarely into account."[35] And expectations operate at different scales, individual or household, community, and beyond.[36] Aspirations are a *normative* conception and constraints represent the *positive*. The interaction of these two gives us the *relational* space of expectations. Inevitability is the expectation that things either are the way they are because that is the way they are or that things should be different but they can not be changed.

Expectations are also being discussed and worked out in more general sociological texts that seek to examine theories/models of action. Alberto Melucci, in his book *Nomads of the Present*, explains that individuals construct their goals and make choices and decisions within a perceived environment. Expectations, which are socially constructed, enable actors to relate to their external world … [and] "write their own script."[37] The ideational forces impacting and shaping expectations are important and structural. Ideology and concepts of hegemony are included in this area because they allow people to imagine, "what is possible?" and for that matter what is impossible.[38]

Articles by Emirbayer and Emirbayer and Mische call for a relational sociology and remind us of Bourdieu's work: "social actors develop a set of preconscious expectations about the future that are typically inarticulate, naturalized, and taken for granted but nevertheless strategically mobilized in accordance with the contingencies of particular empirical situations." "Memory-

sustained anticipation" and "situational contingencies" are key to the development of expectations.[39] Emirbayer, in his 1997 article "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology," provides a useful literature review on the iterative, co-creative process of structure and agency. Emirbayer brings in the pragmatists in his theory. Dewey wrote, "the individual . . . take[s] into account all of those interests [that are implicated in a given situation] and then make[s] out a plan of action which will rationally deal with those interests."[40]

As Emirbayer uses structure and agency, I am using *positive* and *normative* in my call for a *relational* framework for understanding ongoing changes in agriculture. The idea of *positive* forces maps well with structure, both material and ideational structures. However, it is important to note that *normative* forces do not map exactly with agency. As I have explained, *normative* forces are aspirational, not agency in itself. But I contend that the iterative interaction of the *normative* and *positive* forces of the *relational* space does have similarities described by Emirbayer and Mische in their works. The *relational* space is the place of expectations, where aspirations are considered within the context of "anticipated constraints."

Going back to the basic table presented above (Table 1), I present a 3-part framework for the consideration of multifunctionality. In this framework, we consider the perceptions and structures, the *positive* notions of agriculture's multiple functions, and how they do or do not interact with the aspirational or *normative* notions. Consideration of these interactions and overlaps creates an expectant or *relational* space for action in and around agriculture.

III. The Sewell Survey and My Ethnographic Method

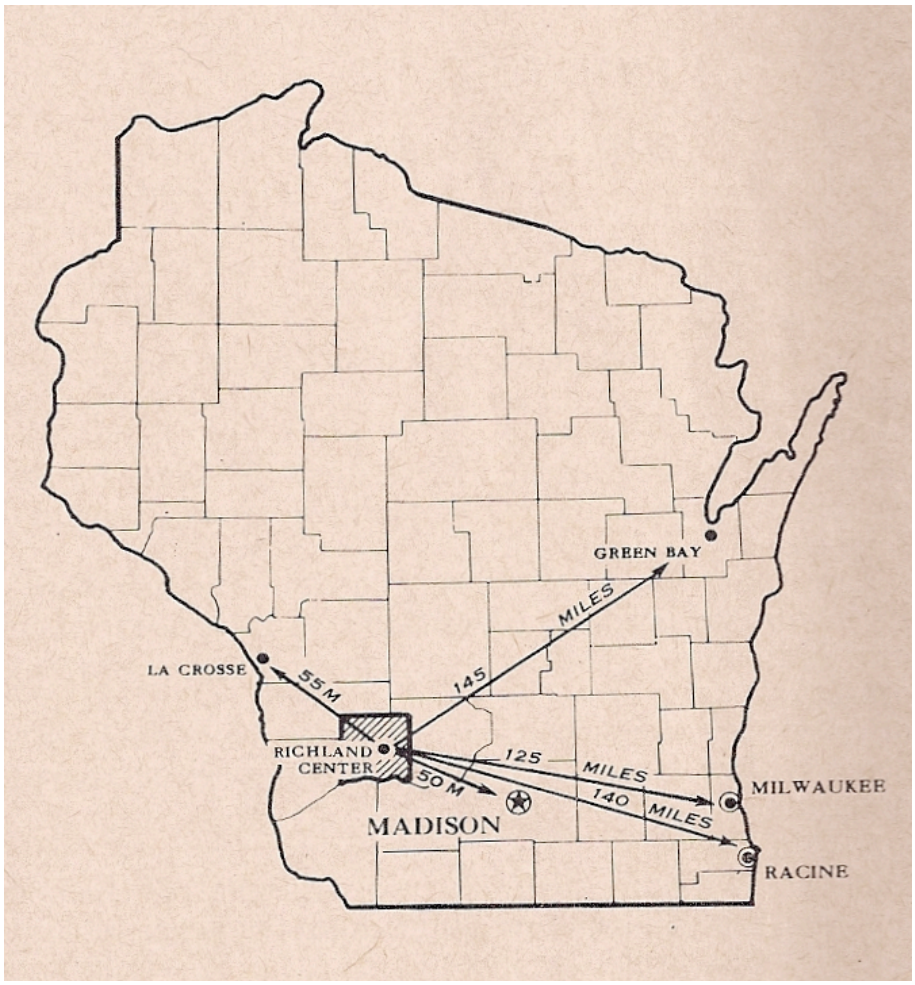


Figure 6: Map of Wisconsin

My work to better understand the *normative* and *positive* forces and resulting *relational* space is based on an ethnography of agricultural expectations in Richland County, Wisconsin. Richland County is located in the southwestern part of Wisconsin, almost forming a perfect square, except for the undulating southern border formed by the Wisconsin River. The county seat, Richland Center, is 50 miles from Wisconsin's capital, Madison and 55 miles to the southeast from the

Mississippi River town of La Crosse. Richland County was and is a predominantly rural county with agriculture historically as a strong base for the economy and livelihood.

The Sewell Survey in Richland County, Wisconsin

My ethonographic work uses as a launching pad a set of 25 semi-structured interviews with respondents to the 1948 survey *The Occupational Plans of Wisconsin Youth*, which was administered by William Sewell to high school juniors and seniors in three Wisconsin counties, Trempeleau, Jefferson, and Richland (See Appendix A for the full survey). I chose to focus on Richland County for my work because of the prominence of its past and present dairy industry and because other researchers at UW-Madsion had specifically surveyed farmers in the county, looking at economic patterns in agricultural communities.[41]

In Richland County the Sewell survey was given in all high schools in the county at the time: Richland Center, Lone Rock, West Lima, Ithaca, Viola, and Cazenovia. The survey focused on rural high school students' educational and occupational aspirations, parents' attitudes towards higher education and their own occupation, as well as a scale measurement of the socio-economic position of respondents. This survey was part of initial work to look at equity between rural and urban youth in access and aspirations for education and work on the development of socio-economic scales that Sewell was engaged in at the time.[42] In the pages that follow I will provide a brief summary of some of the results of the Sewell survey.

When asked, if farming considered a good occupation by her peers when they were graduating from high school, a female Sewell respondent, who had farmed off and on throughout her life responded,

> "Well, I guess that was about what everybody did, it seemed like, in the Valley there. All the boys went on to be farmers, especially in my grade and his grade. Depending upon if there was room for them on the farm. If there were other brothers then they had to move on."

Fifty-three percent of male respondents said they had thought about farming as an occupation.[43] However, interest and aspiration towards farming appears largely tied to father's occupation, as seen in Figures 1, 2, and 3 below. Seventy-seven of the Richland County male respondents (35%) said they planned on being a farmer. But as we see in Figure 2 only 13% of boys from non-farm families planned on being farmers, compared to 56% of those from farm families.

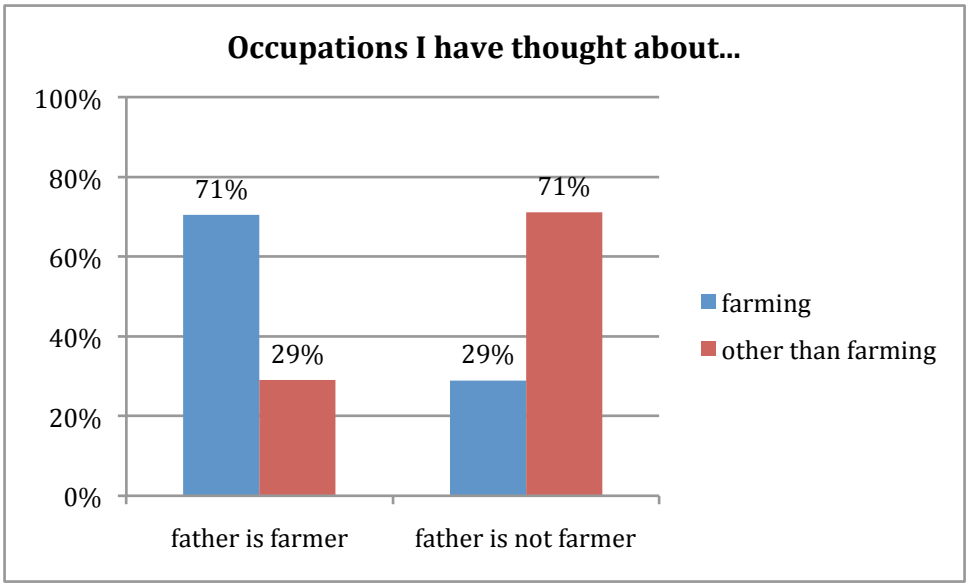


Figure 7: Occupations I have thought about

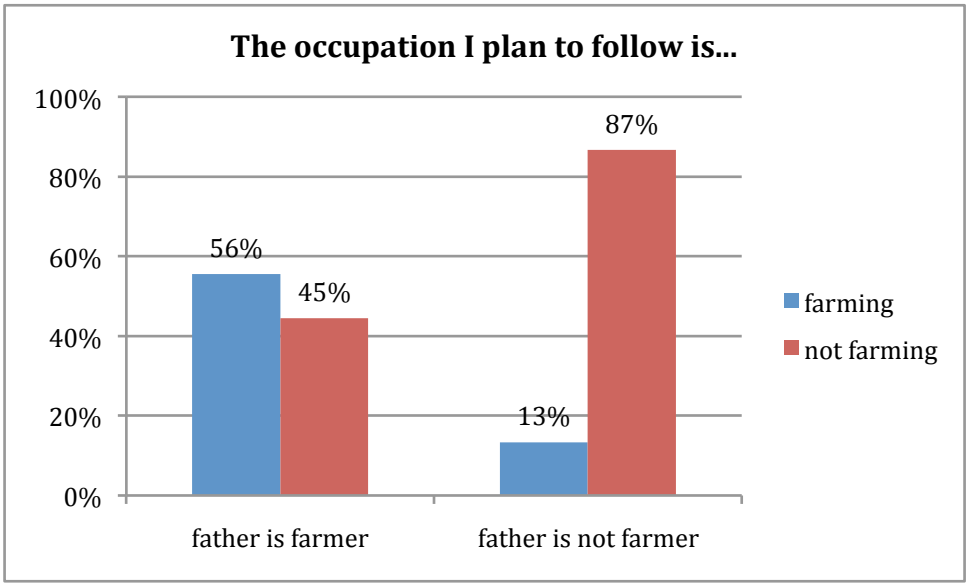


Figure 8: Occupations I plan to follow

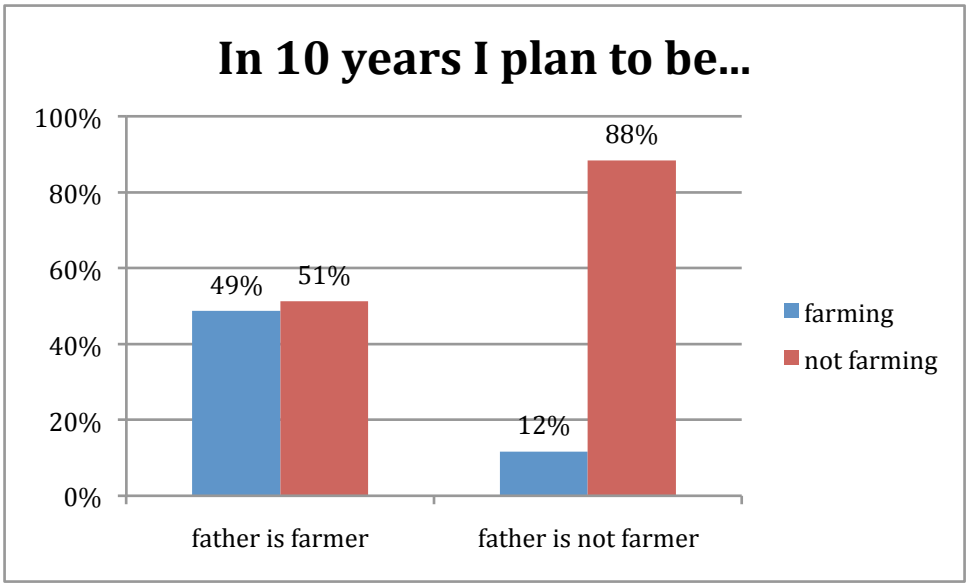


Figure 9: In 10 years I plan to be...

Students were also asked several questions about what their parents thought of their occupational plans. For boys from farm families that planned to farm, 71% reported that their fathers approved of this plan. For boys from non-farm families this approval was only 58%. It should be noted that there was little disapproval; the remaining percentage was primarily in the "doesn't say much either way" and "I don't know how he feels" categories. Mothers were reportedly also approving of plans to farm. Sixty-two percent of boys from farm families said their mother approved of their plans to farm. Fifty-five percent of boys from non-farm families stated that their mother approved of their plans to farm.

Sons from farm families projected that their father found his occupation to be satisfactory. Eighty-eight percent of the boys from farm families answered in the survey that their father found his occupation either "completely satisfactory" or "fairly satisfactory." Only 2% of the farm boys said their father considered his

occupation to be "not very good" and none said it was considered "poor." For non-farm boys, 75% said their fathers considered their occupation completely or fairly satisfactory. And 5% thought their father considered his job "not very good" or "poor."

Method

This summary of the Sewell survey results shows the jumping off point for my research on changing agricultural expectations. I was able to study this historical data and plan and implement a follow-up in the 21st century. The hard-copies of the Sewell surveys from Richland County were stored in boxes in the University of Wisconisn – Madison archives. I was alerted to their existence by a chance encounter with Taissa Hauser, at the American Sociological Association annual meeting in San Francisco in 2004, before I was officially enrolled as a graduate student in the Sociology program in Madison. Tess Hauser has worked over the years with her husband Robert Hauser, a student of Sewell's, on the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study (WLS), an impressive survey launched in 1957 by William Sewell and others to survey all Wisconsin high-school seniors, originally designed as an educational attainment study. The 1948 Sewell survey can be seen as a precursor to the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study.[44]

The WLS provided essential support for my research. The 1948 survey data had not been coded. The WLS allowed several of their student employees to spend countless hours entering the 1948 survey data into an Access database, which I was able to summarize and analyze by export into SPSS and STATA.

Sewell's 1948 survey of Richland County high school students, from the six high schools in the county, shows that of the 462 students surveyed 267 (58%) listed their father's occupation as farmer. In the rural high schools, this percentage was as high as 70-83%. Seventy percent of the Richland County Sewell respondents list both grandfathers as farmers and 92% list at least one grandfather as farmer.

In order to initiate interviews, I sent letters to 30 Sewell respondents describing my project and asking if they would be willing to do an interview. The original 30 people targeted were a mix of people representing categories I established by looking at the original survey: individuals that came from farm families and those who did not, as well as those who did and did not indicate an interest in being a farmer in their 1948 survey. I did not have the full sample to select from because many of the Sewell respondents have already passed away. Additionally I did not contact people for interviews who were living out of state. The original 30 individuals contacted were selected based on their location and who could be tracked down through internet and telephone book searches. I did travel outside of Richland County for 5 interviews. From these initial inquiries I received 5 rejections and 5 returned in the mail that I could not track down with subsequent research.[45] I found three additional interview subjects as a result of referrals from those who granted interviews based on the original mailings.

In the very initial stage of my research I was able to attend the 55th Richland Center high school reunion of one of the classes surveyed by Sewell. At this event I was able to stand up and introduce myself and after the official program I was able to speak informally with a number of Sewell respondents and take contact

information, some basic background information, and willingness to be contacted for an interview. Follow-up with these contacts yielded 2 interviews.

In addition to the Sewell respondent, I conducted interviews with 8 community members who were knowledgeable of agriculture, land use, and the community over time. I also had the opportunity to interview 5 young people in the county who had ties to agriculture. All interviews, except one, were recorded, with the subject's consent, and all were transcribed. The interview data are combined with participant observation of agricultural and community events in Richland County. During my time researching Richland County (starting in the fall of 2005, with the majority of interviews carried out from 2006 - 2009) I attended a number of community events including: dairy breakfasts, farm tours, farm organization meetings, county fairs, Outstanding Young Farmer banquets and programs, county land use meetings, land and cattle auctions, and political events. I've walked in the rural cemeteries looking at the gravestones, scoured the archives of the very ample and well-organized county historical society, joined the local grocery co-operative, subscribed to the weekly local newspaper, eaten in many of the local restaurants, shopped at the dairy supply and hardware store for supplies for my own farm, peaked in the windows of old cheese factories, and met with the manager of one of the large cheese factories. I also drove many many hours and miles around the winding roads and up and down the hills of Richland County attempting to follow Bill Sewell's footsteps and leave some of my own.

This work and research in the county is complemented by my active participation in state-wide agricultural debates and movements. It is essential to

point out and emphasize that three years into my ethnographic research I met and married a dairy farmer. Although not in Richland County, this new position, actively involved on a working, multi-generation dairy farm, has provided me with a different perspective and different access to the general subject, and granted unique insight to the changes in agriculture and rural community. I also have personally become involved in farm organizations and dairy policy, actively involved in the Wisconsin Farmers Union (including National Farmers Union policy development), the Wisconsin group Family Farm Defenders, and as an elected member of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, the governing body over Wisconsin dairy check-off dollars. These connections have allowed for my personal participation in local, state, and even national meetings on agricultural policy and rural development. I was intentionally clear during my interviews with Sewell respondents and others in Richland County about my background and current involvement in farm and rural issues. The fact that I was married to a dairy farmer caused many of my interview subjects to ask me questions about my farm and how we farmed and how we were working through the transfer of operations from one generation to the next. In my research I came across people who knew me and/or my husband and his family, through dairy farming and cooperative circles. At one event I attended, which I detail in Chapter IV, I even came unexpectedly face-to-face with our family's loan officer from the Farm Credit agency which serves Richland County and the county I live in, I think causing some confusion for him about what I was doing in that context. Additionally I talked with people who, upon hearing my last name, asked if I was related to John or Dave Lloyd from Cambria, my grandfather and his brother,

respectively, both dairy farmers and active in farm organizations and local government over the years in south-central Wisconsin.

During my fieldwork and now as I write this dissertation I am very conscious of the opportunities and challenges that this familiarity brings to my research and findings. Because of my closeness to the subject I acknowledge fully my emotional engagement with the subject and pledge that I was "anything but a non-intervening observer." It is not my intention here with my dissertation to wrestle with the important and healthy methodological debate in the literature about the nature and place of the researcher in ethnography, represented by works such as of Abbott's call for a "lyrical sociology" and Burowoy's "extended case method." However, I do wish to acknowledge my positionality and embrace the reflexive nature of my work in what Heley discusses as "propinquity," referring to close kinship and similarity, and "proximity," referring to nearness in Cartesian space-time.[46]

Both Abbott and Burawoy challenge social scientists to question their drive for "positive" science. Burawoy recognizes the "inescapable context effects stemming from the indissoluble connection between interviewer and respondent, and from the embeddedness of the interview in a wider field of social relations." He calls on us to "formulate an alternative model of science that takes context as its point of departure, that thematizes our presence in the world we study"[47]. Abbott. argues "that lyrical sociology is passionately engaged in its topic, that its authors take up emotional stances both toward topic (feeling) and audience (tone). Here, lyrical sociology seems to come closer to the new ethnography, with its concern for the subjectivity of authors. But while the new ethnography is open to a wide variety

of subjectivities being mainly concerned with the acknowledgment of subjectivity rather than its content I shall argue that the lyrical feeling and tone embody a specific emotional relation toward both audience and material."[48]

With this in mind, the following three empirical chapters of my dissertation represent my examination of the economic, ecological, and social spheres of multifunctionality in Richland County, Wisconsin, using my proposed three-part framework of *positive, normative,* and *relational,* for understanding the parameters for action towards a multifunctional agriculture.

IV. Dual Inevitabilities in Response to the Market and Economic Production

It was a warm, slightly hazy morning, as I wound my way through the hills and valleys of the Driftless region, trying not to drive off the road while checking my backroads *Wisconsin Gazetter* map, hoping I was still headed towards that auction. The previous week I had been leafing through one of the weekly farm newspapers and noticed that there was a herd-dispersal auction being held at a dairy farm in eastern Richland County. I carefully read the text trying to see if there were any clues to the story behind the dispersal. Herd dispersals and farm auction notices are a little like obituaries, sometime they let you know a little about the circumstances of the situation, satisfying your curiosity, with tidbits like, "The Jones are retiring after 50 years dairy farming" or "due to a farm accident." But most often they don't give you any clues about the back-story.

This notice in the paper simply said "large dairy dispersal auction" in Richland County. I looked closer and saw that there was a Dutch name listed as the farm family dispersing the herd. Intrigued, I wondered if this was the Dutch farm that had come up in some of my earlier interviews. I marked my calendar and headed over to Richland County on that humid August day in 2009 to see what it was all about.[49]

Following my map carefully to navigate the last set of turns to get to the farm, I knew I was almost there. Cars and pick-up trucks, many with cattle trailers, lined

both sides of the road. It looked like a big turn out for the auction. After the last vehicle I pulled off on to the shoulder, careful not to make the mistake of getting too far off the road and into the ditch, taking my place in the row. I walked slowly towards the farm driveway, noting the trucks or trailers that gave me a clue as to how far away people were coming for the auction. I saw some trucks that had their origin painted on the driver-side door. Some were from more than 100 miles away and many from places in the surrounding counties, as well as close by in Richland County. I started walking towards the small crowd gathered around the tractors and water tanks that would be up for auction, along with the cows. I stopped to take a picture of the sign that announced the name of the farm, one of these nice, colorful, with the name of the family in big, artistic letters. I had just snapped the picture when a voice from behind said to me,

> "Do you want to wait and I can go get my truck so you can take a picture of me backing over the sign?"

I let out a nervous laugh. I turned and recognized that this was one of the people that I had interviewed many months earlier, who had first told me about this Dutch farm in Richland County. He of course said he was kidding but then lowered his voice and said, "I can't believe, well I guess I can believe, this place is already up for auction."

Figure 10: The Heijman Dairy Farm

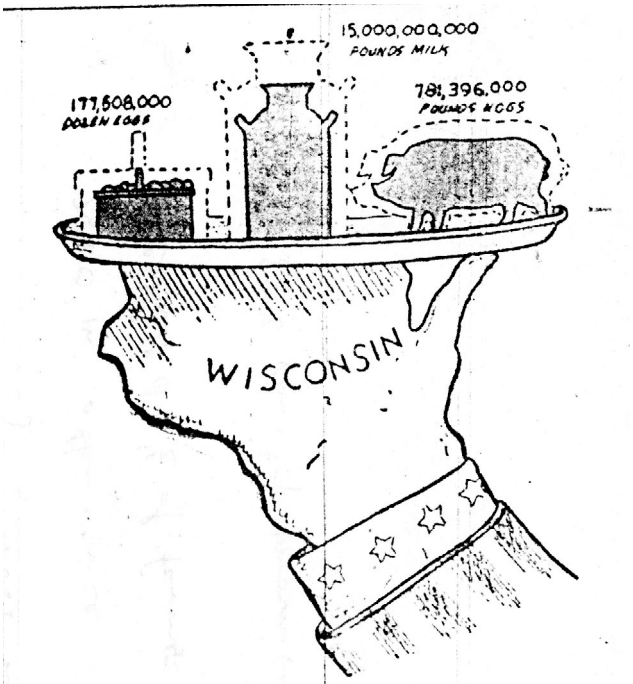
The opportunity during my research to experience some of the specific details in the Heijman dairy dispersal and foreclosure provided me with a unique opportunity to understand agricultural change in Richland County. In this chapter I will present a sketch of the market and the economic sphere of agriculture in Richland County, Wisconsin. First I present a historical background on the *positive* and *normative* push for productivism, including a discussion of the "ideology of productivism" and the creation of the ideal of the valorous and worthy farmer. From this *positive* and *normative* interaction comes two types of *relational* space, which translate into two "styles of farming" or expectations of farming, which I am calling "traditional" and "progressive."

I then present three examples of how the *normative and positive* interaction "hits the ground" in Richland County. First I present crop and dairy production patterns and the *positive* and *normative* interaction seen in historical trends. Then I examine the overall expectations of farming as an occupation and evolving normative goals of material well-being for farmers, farm families and rural communities. Finally I fill in the story of the farm auction introduced above within the context of the discussion of the productivist/post-productivist or Fordist/post-Fordist shift. And finally I will summarize the *positive* and *normative* interactions seen in these examples and what differences we see in the *relational* space for action between the two farming styles within the economic sphere or agriculture in Richland County.

Positive and Normative Forces of Productivism

It is easy to see the prominence of the economic and market functions of agriculture. The tangible, *positive*, physical products or outputs that are produced through agricultural enterprise for economic markets, such as milk, crops, livestock, etc., are front and center. At the farm level the tangible or *positive* aspects of farming also include existing physical structures, for example farm buildings and equipment and also historical farming systems that get developed on a particular farm all there with the goal of production. Beyond the farm level you have the built infrastructure at the community, state, national, and even global levels, including state highways and county roads and even rail and shipping infrastructure for

international trade. Specific to dairy, and prominent in Wisconsin, there are dairy processing facilities, such as cheese and butter factories, and the existing dairy service industry, trade routes and shipping industries, which have all been built up around these specific products of agriculture. All of this built infrastructure present a very clear *positive* or material base for the economic and market functions of production agriculture.



The dairy farmers of Wisconsin are being asked to increase their milk production in 1942 over this year by an average of 400 pounds a cow—The hog production of the state is to be stepped-up by adding one sow for every four or five farms producing pork—And the hens of the state are expected to lay 11 dozen eggs for every 10 dozen they produced this year.

Farmers should keep in mind and attend the meetings to be held in each Richland county school house on Friday evening, Oct. 24th.

It is also very evident that there are strong *normative* elements working in this economic sphere. Primarily the aspirational goals of efficiency of production and increases in volume of production, primarily achieved through technology, are put forward as the leading goals of agriculture endeavors. The drive towards efficiency is often framed in the idea of increasing production, to feed the world.[50] Profitability is also a normative goal in the mix. Historically and still in the present in Wisconsin the road to profitability is assumed to be through technology and producing more through efficiencies and expansion.[51]

The Sewell respondents and their families in Richland County, as well as farm families across the United States, were encouraged and at times implored to

participate in achieving these normative goals for agriculture. The Sewell respondents were born in the early 1930s and their families lived in the wake of the Great Depression and the dynamics of the U.S. entry into World War II. These times were the beginning of big increases in agricultural productivity with assistance from science and technology.[52] In 1950 over 64 percent of Richland County farmers reported having a tractor.[53] During the 1940s farmers were asked to increase production to meet needs for food and fiber for the war effort and then for food aid for U.S. allies. As the agricultural sectors of allies came back online after the war, U.S. farm policy was centered around price supports, to maintain and increase production levels, even in times of surplus.[54]

The Richland County newspaper, *The Republican Observer*, featured the figure above on its front page on October 23, 1941, depicting the increase in production of milk, pigs, and eggs that Wisconsin farmers were expected to fulfill. The caption read,

> "The dairy farmers of Wisconsin are being asked to increase their milk production in 1942 over this year by an average of 400 pounds a cow. The hog production of the state is to be stepped-up by adding one sow for every four or five farms producing pork. And the hens of the state are expected to lay 11 dozen eggs for every 10 dozen they produced this year. Farmers should keep in mind and attend the meetings to be held in each Richland county school house on Friday evening, October 24th."[55]

These sorts of calls to action and duty remind us of the Victory Garden campaigns and call for national patriotism to be part of the war effort with production of agricultural goods and also self-sufficiency, so that all resources possible could go to the war effort.[56] Farmers played an essential role in the feeding of the country in both World Wars. During World War I, farmers were enlisted in the War effort with slogans like "If You Can't Fight, Farm: Food Will Win the War!" and "Plow to the Fence for National Defense".[57] They were also called on to join the WWII effort, to "Get your farm in the fight!"[58] Feeding the nation and feeding U.S. allies was a driving force to push for and take care of surplus production.

This evolved over the years into the idea that U.S. agriculture was tasked to "feed the world." This is positioned as the valorous task of the American farmer that still is strong, and perhaps getting stronger today.[59] At a 2005 Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin convention, which I attended as part of my research, the Executive Director of the organization, Shelly Mayer, gave a keynote banquet speech where she ended the talk saying "I'm so glad God has chosen me to be the 2% of Americans feeding the world."[60] The strong *normative* goals of production begin to take on a *positive* ideational structure as the primary expectation of agriculture.

"The Ideology of Productivism"

The interaction of the *positive* products and production infrastructure and the *normative* goals of technological advance towards increased production interact

to create a productivist ideology that is still strong today. Fred Buttel describes the productivist ideology as the idea that "increased production is intrinsically socially desirable, and that all parties benefit from increased output." The 'productivist coalition' that he describes of "farm commodity groups, land-grant administrators, agribusiness firms, and federal agricultural agencies" developed a shared sense of purpose over time.[61]

Wilson in his 2007 book on a "transition theory" for multifunctionality lists the productivst ideology as one of the seven dimensions of productivist agriculture. His explanation mirrors Buttel's but also highlights tones of the centrality of agriculture in the rural space and the idea that farmers are the best keepers of the landscape. These aspects can be summarized as more of an agrarian ideology.[62] The productivist and agrarian ideology become strong guiding ideas and take on *positive* weight as ideational structures in agricultural, including in the specific place of Richland County, Wisconsin.

The Valorous and Worthy Farmer

Along with an ideology of productivism, there is also the development of the what one can call "the valorous farmer," which takes a place in the ideational landscape and has ties to the agrarian ideal mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The farmer seen as the primary keeper of the land through production. Farmers and agriculture hold a special place in United States society. Looking back to very beginnings of the country Thomas Jefferson envisioned land ownership and the working of the soil as the very foundation of democracy. Jefferson espoused a strong agrarian ideology, which is evident in his *Notes on Virginia*[63]:

> "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people…Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example."

Farmers were seen as virtuous and above corruption because of their hard work and connection to the land. One thinks of the painting "Our Good Earth" by John Steuart Curry with the burly farmer in overalls standing in the amber-waves-of-grain field with a young boy and a young girl by his side.[64] These images of the farmer are pervasive in the popular mythos of the country and become part of the *positive* and *normative* interaction.

During the ongoing debate during the formation of New Deal and postwar agricultural policy, the farmer was invoked as a worthy recipient of a minimum level of "real income". The following quote from a report by the federal Committee on Parity Concepts illustrates this point:

> "Today there is a solid core of agreement throughout the nation that it is unjust and unfair to the farmer if he, who toils at least as hard as do the heavy workers in industries, is left without a minimum of real income and means of livelihood because of market events beyond his control or foreknowledge. Particularly in view of the increasing legal protection of more extensive rights of organized labor, legislators have tried to establish a balance between the improved share of the industrial worker and the share of the farmer in the nation's output of goods and services."[65]

This small snapshots of historical discourse on the productive function of agriculture geared towards the market illustrates the frames of "feeding the world" as well as that of the valorous and the worthy farmer.[66]

Traditional and Progressive Inevitabilities

This *normative* and *positive* interaction creates a *relational* base for economic expectations of agriculture. In the pages that follow, I will show that in reaction to this *relational* space, two distinct "styles of farming" emerge, which I am calling "traditional" and "progressive." Although the reactions or styles are different, both can be viewed as taking on an inevitable attitude towards the productivist expectations of agriculture. "Traditional" farmers definitely see themselves as producers but the changes in agriculture over time, bringing more technology and

science and bringing farmers further in to markets as both producer and consumer, are often viewed with skepticism and unease.[67] They see and participate in what is happening but also see value and importance in older systems of agriculture that featured a more self-sufficient, *pluriactive* farm, which I will discuss below. They do not like all the aspects of the new trends in farming but they are resigned to the changes, seeing them as inevitable. Like the discussion I started my dissertation with, these farmers would say, "there is nothing we can do." We just have to accept it.

"Progressive" farmers also see themselves as producers and recognize the changes in the agricultural markets and economy. They embrace the tools of modernity of technology and science and use them to increase their production and yields. The changes in farming systems and the overall farm economy are also seen as inevitable, "there is nothing we can do." We need to embrace it and do all we can to "feed the world." Production is overwhelmingly our purpose.[68]

My interviews with the 1948 Sewell respondents and other people in the community overwhelmingly called my attention to a fundamental shift from the typical self-provisioning or *pluriactive* farms, producing many crops and types of produce and outputs, with a focus on self-sufficiency, to a more specialized, market-based model geared towards commodity markets. Another key part of this transition is the increasing prevalence of off-farm work as part of the household and community economy.[69] A Sewell respondent who had grown up on a farm, moving into town his last years of high school explained,

> "We had everything on the farm. Everything we needed pretty much. We had dairy cows, raised sheep and pigs, a big garden, had chickens for meat and eggs. We grew sorghum and then cooked that into syrup for sweetener."

All of the people I interviewed talked about the shift from *pluriactive* to a more specialized farm and household economy in one way or the other both with regards of what goods were or were not sold into the market but also the increase in farm families having someone work off-farm for additional income and benefits. One man, who had grown up on a dairy farm but had not farmed in his adult life, described this change succinctly, saying "farming went from something from within to something from without."

This man, like many of his classmates, had been involved in the Korean War after high school graduation and came back after the war and was faced with a decision about what to do. Growing up and while in high school, he fondly described that his family's farm was largely self-sufficient, with multiple types of animals and crops, primarily supporting the family's needs with some sale of products into the market. As he explained it, the farm didn't necessarily provide a lot of cash income, but it did provide food, fiber, activity, and a livelihood for the family.

When surveyed by Bill Sewell in 1948, he had not indicated an interest in farming, listing "forest ranger," "salesman," and "aviator" as jobs he had thought about, with "salesman" as the job he would like to be doing in 10 years. During our interview he described how when he got back from the service, the farm was

becoming more specialized in its animals and crops and the family participated more in the market for their lives and livelihood. This change, which he described as fundamental, from "within" to "without", was in part the reason that he remembered for choosing not to farm and move away to seek another life and livelihood, not in sales but in a health related profession.

A female Sewell respondent, who had married her high school boyfriend explained the importance of gardening, preserving and foraging in her family's wellbeing,

> "[Gardening was absolutely a major subsistence thing. And] of course during the war it was really part of it. And we canned everything in sight. We picked berries. We nutted. We did everything so that we would have things. And my mother was a really stickler about having good meals. Even though you couldn't buy much because we didn't have money, but we always had good meals."

Another couple, who were not part of Sewell's survey, but are both native to Richland County dairy farms and are still dairy farming, explained the change this way,

> "Think of these large families in the past in these rural areas. Milk and the tobacco raised them. I had 11 brothers and sisters and I think about it, my mother and father raised us on less than 200

> acres. … there just wasn't hardly anything that you bought in the store, sugar and salt only."

Pluriactive farms that provided a high degree of self-sufficiency were the standard in the 1940s and 50s. As the years after WWII went by more and more farm families sent someone off the farm to work, for income and later for health insurance coverage. In Richland County many families had someone working at the Badger Army Ammunition Plant just south of Baraboo. Others reported that their fathers or they themselves even traveled to Madison to work in plants like the large Oscar Meyer plant.

Normative Aspirations for Material Well-being for Farm Families

> "The objective of agriculture is to provide consumers with high quality food and fiber at reasonable prices, improve the productivity of basic land resource, and contribute to higher levels of human nutrition and of living. The reward for these contributions must be an income that will provide the opportunity for a constantly rising level of living for farm people fairly related to that of other large productive groups of the nation."[70]

This broad statement of purpose was issued by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson as a "General Statement on Agriculture" in 1953. In the pages that follow I will concentrate on the normative "reward" that Benson lays out for

farmers. What could farmers expect agriculture to provide for them? An "opportunity for a constantly rising level of living for farm people" has clear ties to production and economic markets, because it involves having access to money to be able to purchase or obtain material goods not provided directly by the farm.

Sewell included a number of questions in his survey regarding asking how the survey respondents saw themselves and their families in relation to others. The Sewell respondents were also asked how their family's income and social status compared to others in the community. On the question of how family income compared there was almost "no difference" between the perception of farm and non-farm boys. Around 60% felt they were "just average" and just over 30% thought their families income was "higher than average." Regarding social standing in the community, 71% of farm boys thought their family was "just average" compared to 64% for non-farm boys. Twenty-eight percent of farm boys thought they were above or in the highest of the community social status compared to 35% of non-farm boys.

The Sewell survey also included a section to report what sort of creature comforts the students had at home. In 1948 these were questions on: how many rooms in the house, if the house had running water, electricity, a refrigerator, "a power washing machine," a radio, telephone and "a car (other than truck)." Based on the survey results, in 1948 there were still 19% of the Sewell respondents that did not have running water and 31% without a telephone in their homes. Students were asked a general question on their subjective feeling on overall comforts at home.

"AS FAR AS CONVENIENCES, COMFORTS, AND GENERAL APPEARANCES ARE CONCERNED, I CONSIDER MY HOME TO BE:
( ) one of the best in the community.
( ) better than most.
( ) about average.
( ) not as good as most.
( ) one of the worst."

Having both running water and a telephone in the house was significant to subjective feelings of household conveniences and comforts.[71] When comparing students who listed their fathers as farmers and those who did not, there was not a significant difference in the subjective rating of conveniences and comforts.

The USDA also measured conveniences and comforts historically. Based on the percentage of farms with electricity, telephones, automobiles, and average value of products sold or traded in the year preceding the census, a "level of living index" was established that compares Richland County and U.S. counties in general (see graph below).[72] The 1950 average level of living of farm families in Richland County was 25% above 1930 level of living measurements. Between 1940-1950 the level of living index increased 32 points.

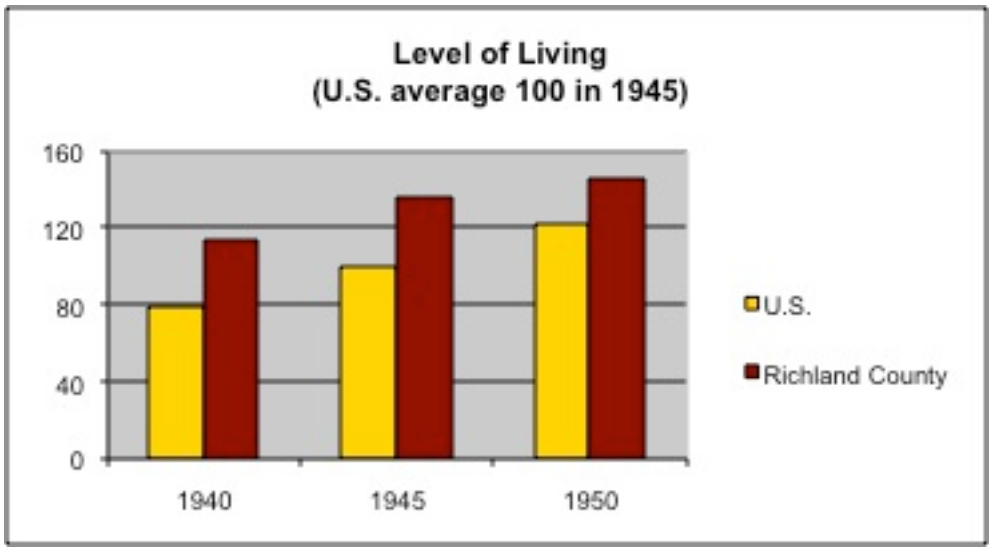


Figure 13: Level of Living Measures

The 1954 USDA publication that has provided these data lists factors involved in this improvement as efficiency improvements in production through changing farming methods, greater use of machinery, and increase in electrification. This combined with higher farm product prices and resulting increased farm income made it possible for farm families to obtain things that "contribute to a higher level of living." It also lists the farm expenditures. The table below provides a summary of the facilities and equipment and expenditures on Richland County farms in 1950 according to the USDA.[73]

Facilities and Equipment on Richland County Farms in 1950	farms reporting as a % of all farms
telephone	51.8
electricity	89.4
elec. from a power line	88.7
electric water pump	61.3
electric hot water heater	20.6
home freezer	11.8
electric washing machine	83.8
electric chick broder	25.1
electric power feed grinder	1.7

milking machine	56.5
grain combine	2.8
corn picker	5.2
pickup hay baler	4.1
upright silo	57.3
pit or trench silo	2.4
motor trucks	26
tractors	64.4
automobiles	82

Figure 14: Facilities and Equipment 1950

I had the chance to interview a married couple, both of whom had been surveyed in the Sewell research. They had both grown up on farms and after high school the man had worked at a business directly tied to agriculture and supplying and servicing farms. They saw a change over time at the household level, in the expectations for a household standard of living. The woman saw that as members of the farm household were pulled away from the daily routines of farm production, this is "where a lot of the trouble started." She speculated that when farming got economically difficult many women started working off-farm and this change in position for farm families created relationship and economic differences. Her husband chimed in, "people's wants now is more than their needs." A discussion ensued between us about how families had increasing expectations for their material situation. Reminiscing about the past, the husband started by saying "We had what we needed and that was all." His wife continued his thought:

> "and my folks and his folks, neither one, they didn't have a lot either, but I mean we didn't think we were that bad off. You know. I guess our folks didn't either. They just realized that was the way it was." … "We both was probably hard up as hens' teeth, but I

> think that makes you stick together, you know I think that helps. When we got married you sure didn't have much. But then you just didn't think you were that hard up. You know. That's why, sometimes I wonder if the younger kids of today that start out with everything, if that is the problem of divorce, you know. I don't know."

She went on to explain about a young couple they knew that had recently received many large presents for their engagement, like a washer and dryer and other things for their home. The two expressed the idea that this next generation is used to having all the material comforts and this creates difficulties for couples and families to reach these economic and material expectations for standard of living.

Another couple that I interviewed, who were younger than the Sewell respondents, but closely tied to agriculture, talked about rising expectations for material comforts:

> "Sure [expectations are] much higher today. The only time you ever went to town was on Wednesdays when they had free movies and she didn't even do that because she lived further out. . . . But think about it now all the families that have two cars, maybe a snowmobile and a motorcycle. You know how we went to church? We couldn't all fit in one car we had a horse and buggy. We had chickens and dad would take the eggs to town and buy the staples

> that we needed. Everything else was raised on the farm and preserved. . . . Our demands have increased and prices have gone up. You can see why you have one working off the farm and for insurance and of course that changes family life."

Farmers and farm families, along with being drawn into consumer markets and switching from a farm household system that was more self-sufficient, also saw how non-farm families had more time off in evenings and weekends for social life and activities having to do with the consumption and enjoyment of material goods. This will be considered later in this document as I discuss changing social relationships around agricultural production.

In the interviews with the Sewell respondents, they remembered clearly what their fathers thought about their plans to farm. One man I interviewed said of his father's reaction:

> "He always told me, he said, you'll never get rich farming but it's a wonderful way to raise your family, because you can work with them. When I came out of the service and I told him I was going to go farming, why he just shook his head and said, well don't ever plan on getting rich, and he was right on."

As farmers moved increasingly into a new role as both producer and consumer as part of a Fordist economic system there was rising expectations and

new strategies to gain the material things for an adequate "level of living" and also to match what non-farm families and friends could obtain. When I asked Sewell respondents what advice they would give to someone who was interested in farming. There was not an automatic answer. Many of them pointed out the difficulties but what was consistent was that there was a great love and appreciation for farming and a great longing for what was. One Sewell respondent who had farmed and later transferred his farm to his son talked about it this way,

> "I don't regret that I farmed but I probably wouldn't go back into it. I got a grandson, he'd give his right arm if he could have this farm that I used to have over here." . . . "Here's a 12 year old boy, nothing to do. He has a 4-wheeler. He comes over to grandpas house about 5 times a day, nothing to do. I really feel sorry for him. Here he is, he lives on a farm but he can't do any of the things that I could do when I was a kid or when I lived over there. I worked 20 years to pay for all that stuff over there and now it's going to rot down. My son had big ideas. You're never going to get rich farming quick. He bought too many pieces of machinery, shiny paint you know will kill you farming. Got in debt so deep. He couldn't get out. He finally found himself in life, he went back to school [and got out of farming and now he makes big bucks working in insurance.]"

Another man, who had farmed all his life replied, when asked if he liked farming when he was "in the thick of it," "Oh, I don't know, I never knew anything else."

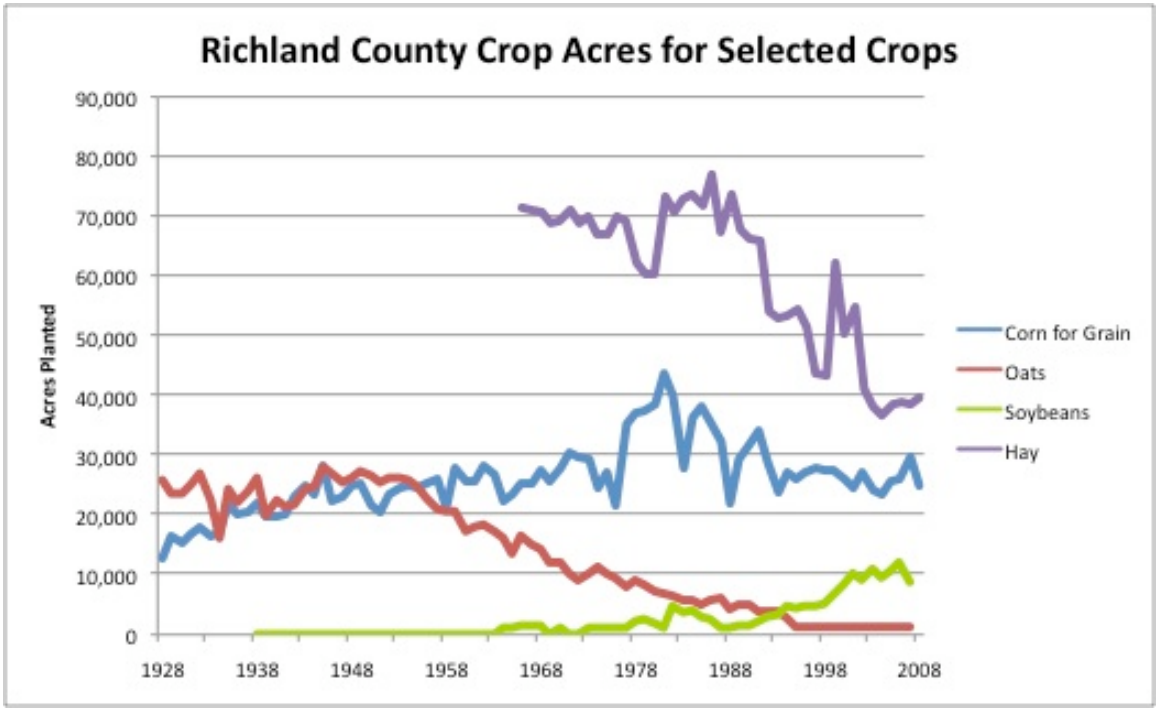
The Farmer as Producer and Consumer

Farming was moving from something from "within to without" and along with *normative* messages on family "level of living" there was also *normative* forces around farming practices. What I hear most often to indicate these norms is discussion of "progressive" farmers and also the "good" farmer. The "progressive" farmer maps with what I introduced in my theoretical framework on differing relational space. Mary Neth, in her book *Preserving the Family Farm*, explains that, "'progressive' farming meant that farmers would adopt the scientific methods new technology, and consumer goods developed and recommended by experts." The goal of this progress was to increase agricultural production for commercial markets. Efficiency is measured production metrics; higher crop yields per acre, more milk per cow, the replacement of human labor with technology, for example.[74]

Mary Neth describes this in the first half of the 20th century, but this label is still relevant and common today. One of the "trade" magazines that many dairy farmers get in the mail today for free is called "Progressive Dairyman." In newspaper articles and public speeches you will often hear this code word used for someone who is "modern" and using technology towards "maximizing efficiency." In Wisconsin there is an annual state-wide fair centered around agricultural

production. From 1952 through 2002 it was known as *Farm Progress Days*, but has recently been re-named *Farm Technology Days.*[75]

So how does the *relational* space look "on the ground," as it were? To understand the *relational* space of *positive* and *normative* interaction in the economic sphere of agriculture there is no better place to look than crops. Crops are a very clear, quantifiable, material output or function of agriculture. The two figures below show clearly changes in the main crops being planted in Richland County and their yields.[76] The mix of crops is definitely a positive reaction to the physicalities of the soil, the topography of the land (which will be discussed further in the next chapter) but also markets, prices paid, and input costs.



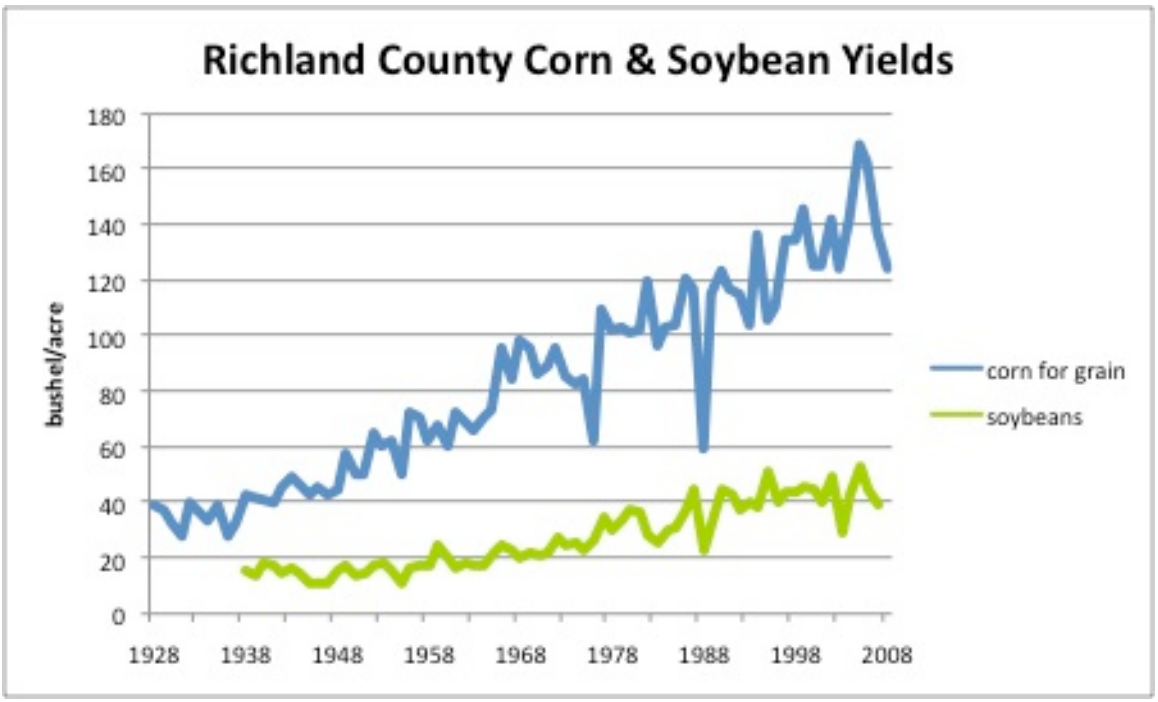
When I go and do presentations to people that perhaps do not think as much as I do on *relational* agricultural space or those who have no connection with agriculture, I usually show them a graph from their country or area showing the

historic production and yields of different crops. I ask them to use their sociological imagination and guess what some of the driving factors are that would create cropping patterns like these. Perhaps the change that is most obvious is the quick drop off in the number of oat acres planted, right around the time the Sewell respondents were being surveyed in 1948. Sometimes I need to give the audience a hint, "Who eats oats?" This shift away from oats is clearly a response to a very significant change taking place in agriculture with the shift from horse-powered agriculture to tractor-powered agriculture. For all the interviews I did in Richland County with people that were involved in agriculture in this time, this was a fundamental change that they clearly articulated. Views were mixed: one man described how much he loved coming into the barn and seeing the horses there and he loved working with them, while two of the other people I interviewed said "good riddance." They did not miss those "hay burners" and all that it took to feed and care for them. Plus they liked driving the tractors and new implements. The drop off in hay acres is due to more row crop acres but also because of the decline in animal agriculture in the area.

Richland county's cropping pattern is similar to counties around it: as you move east away from the driftless and the steep hills and narrow valleys, you will see more corn and soybeans. This is due to the existence of more flat land, easily worked with evolving large-scale equipment. The switch to tractors was driven by desires to produce more and to gain efficiencies in the cropping systems. But certainly there were normative signals to be modern and also to "keep up with the Jones."

One of the men I interviewed talked about how his family was one of the last in the area to get their own machinery, before that they had shared amongst relatives and neighbors and still organized threshing crews that traveled with the one piece of shared equipment from farm to farm. He remarked that clearly they were seen as "backward" for not investing in their own equipment and still using the older threshing machines.

The graph above shows the impressive increase in crop yields for corn and soybeans in Richland County. Corn yields have quadrupled and soybean yields have nearly tripled from 1928 to 2008. The acres planted did not decrease, so these increased yields meant great increases in overall production. The gains in yield were brought on by scientific and technological changes but also as a reaction to available markets, as well as federal crop subsidy programs that diminished risk for farmers growing certain crops and not others. For example there are little if no federal crop subsidies available for hay crops but ample support for corn, soybeans, and other row crops.[77]



These great changes were part of the Fordist/Post-Fordist trajectory that was generally impacting agriculture across the U.S. All of the men that I spoke with in my interviews who had grown up on farms discussed the fundamental change that came on their farms with the arrival of the tractor, for example. Again, some said, "good riddance" to the hay-burners. But this change is important because of what it means for the position of farmers in the production and consumption circuits of the economy. By the 1960s tractors had completely replaced draft horses on U.S. farms.[78] As author Jean-Pierre Berlan describes it "the key here is that the tractor, and power farming more generally, simultaneously made capital accumulation necessary and possible: necessary by subverting the simple exchange circuit into a capitalist one; possible by creating economies of scale."[79] The "co-development of tractors, hybrid seeds, mono-cropping and chemical fertilizers radically intensified agricultural production and integrated the farm economy into

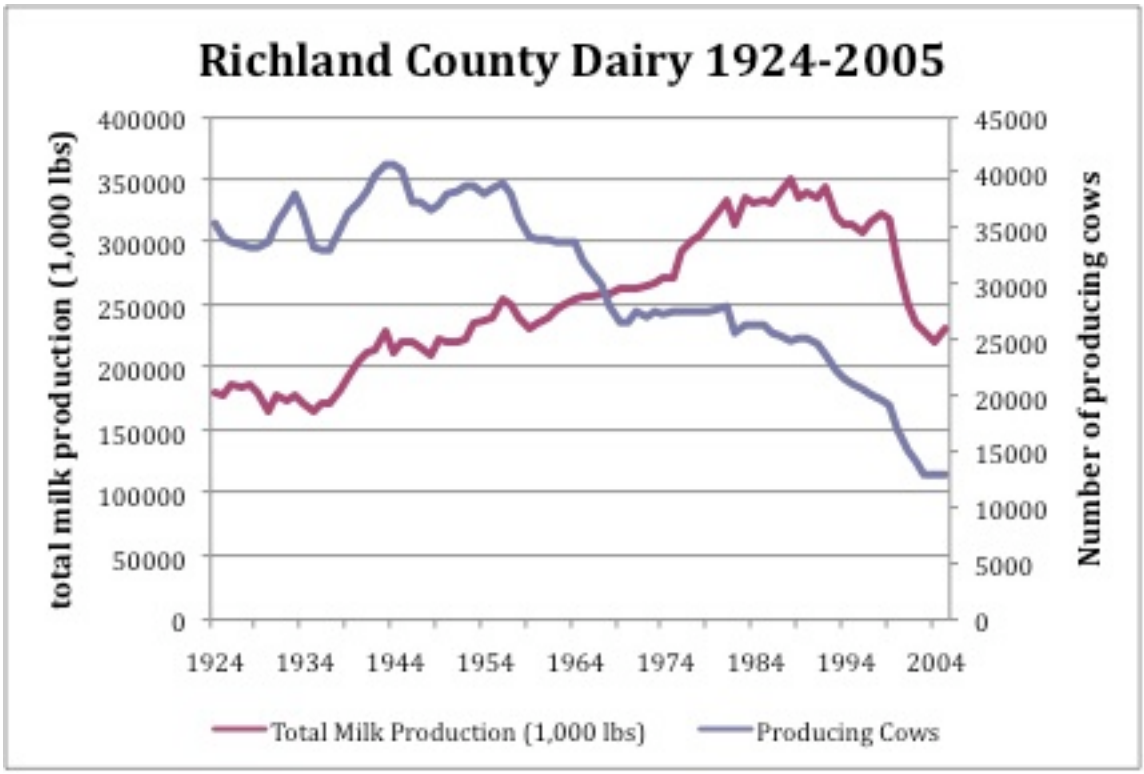
the larger Fordist economy."[80] These changes were borne out in the marketplace but the state had a major role to play in the advancement of these technologies and the push for increased production volumes and improved yields.[81]

The *positive* aspects of the infrastructure for dairy processing were also important for what kind of agriculture went on in the county. In 1934 Richland County had 74 cheese factories and other dairy processing plants. In 1950, it was estimated that the average distance between a farmer in Richland County and the closest dairy processing plant was just 6 miles.[82] In 2007, the number of dairy plants in the county was down to just 4, all located in the city of Richland Center.[83]

This drastic change in the organization of dairy processing from many, smaller distributed plants to just a few large plants did not mean that Richland County had reduced its dairy production. In fact the opposite. Richland County is home to two of the largest dairy processing plants in the state, one owned by the Foremost Farms Cooperative and the other by Schreiber Foods, recently purchased from Dean Foods. The other two plants in the county are also considered large in processing volume. This shift in the number of plants and the size of the plants secured Richland County's status as a dairy county, but shifted the spaces and places of production.

There has been a similar shift in the dairy farm structure in the county. In the 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture there were 184 dairy farms counted in Richland County. This was down from 242 in the 2002 Census of Agriculture, with an average herd size of 70 cows.[84] According to the 1950 census there were 2328 dairy farms in Richland County. In 1952 96% of dairy farms in Richland County had

30 cows or fewer. with 40 percent of the total number of farms with 15 cows or fewer. [85]



Dairy production in Richland County rose steadily from the mid-1930s onward, peaking in 1988 with over 351 million pounds of milk produced that year. Milk production has tapered off, back down to levels seen in the late 1950s, to just under 240.5 million pounds in 2007. The number of cows, however, has decreased continually since the mid-1950s. In 2007, there were a reported 13,900 milking cows in the county. This is almost three times fewer than the peak of cows in the county in 1944.

The great production increases, despite the decreasing numbers of cows, came from the impressive increase in the milk production per cow, from around 6,000 pounds of milk per cow per year in the post-WWII period up to 17,300 pounds annually in 2007.[86] The increases in production per cow have been seen

across the dairy industry, achieved in part by breeding work, introduction of a "scientific" feed ration, as well as an increased prevalence of milking three times a day, instead of two. In addition some farmers are using recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) to increase production per cow.

Production Gained and Lost - The Case of the Heijman Dairy Foreclosure

I had been traveling around and interviewing the Sewell respondents and hearing about the changes they had experienced in their lifetime, without an exception they described a general shift to fewer and larger farms. Those who came from farm families described the shift from more self-sufficient pluriactive farms to farms more connected with outside markets, specializing in just a few products, like milk or crops to sell to the market. While farms became less diversified in their activities, the household and local economics became more diverse in that it became more common for farm families to send someone off-farm for household income and health insurance coverage. Also community economies became more diverse and less dependent on agriculture as a leading industry.

There was mixed feelings about what this meant, many taking the inevitable tact of, there is nothing we can do about it. There was a general acceptance of the shift but not necessarily something they met with open arms. I also took the opportunity to talk with several key people in the county that had connections with the community. I spoke with one couple who were farmers in the county for many generations back. They first informed me of the interesting development on one of

the dairy farms in their area of the county. They clearly stated that they were concerned about the trend that this development represented. They told me about a Dutch family that was operating a 600-cow dairy in the county and how that family had been actively encouraged with tax breaks, favorable government loans, and logistical assistance to come to Wisconsin to set up a larger dairy farm. In the case of this farm there was a consulting service that was actively advertising for Dutch farmers to come to the Midwest to farm. Wisconsin delegations went to the Netherlands to meet with potential immigrant farmers and then interested farmers were offered assistance. An article in one of the weekly agricultural newspapers ran a special feature on this Dutch farm in connection with an open house on the farm. The Dutch farmers reportedly toured the Midwest looking at farms and were helped with meetings with the state Department of Agriculture and banks and chose Richland County "because of its beauty."[87]

Wisconsin State Commerce Department press releases list the Heijman dairy as one of the many dairies that received assistance in the form of low interest loans. In this case $156,000 in Federal Community Development Block Grant – Economic Development loans were made available through the vehicle of the Richland County Revolving loan fund to the farm to buy cows.[88] This program was set up as part of a state wide Milk Volume Production (MVP) program within the "Dairy 2020" initiative in the State Department of Commerce. This program was set up to expand the overall volume of milk production in the state to make sure that the cheese processors had their plants full.[89] The CDBG-ED money was accessed in the name of job creation, presumably with the argument that more cows would lead to more

jobs on the farm. The County government was "encouraged" by state Commerce Department officials to make the loan. Several of the people in the county that I interviewed, including a dairy farmer, expressed their concern during the process of the money being used to assist the development of this larger dairy farm. The average farm size in Richland County in 2007 was X. A 600-cow dairy farm was on the higher end of the size scale in the county at that time.

As the story was told to me by people in the community, the Heijman family had suffered under the loan payments for their new farm and the onset of the low milk prices that hit everyone for most of 2009. The pain of these low prices caught many people off-guard because of record high prices in 2007 and 2008. Input prices remained high so it was even harder to make things work. And farms that were more heavily leveraged with debt had difficulties making loan payments.[90]

So as the story goes, the Heijmans were struggling as all dairy farmers were in 2009 in this extended milk price trough and so one day in August the bank holding the loan on the farm was contacted with a message, "I'm on the plane back to the Netherlands. The farm is yours." Apparently the hired farm manager had also decided to leave in that same week and according to the auctioneer, who gave some introductory words just prior to the cattle sale part of the auction, the "great bunch or hardworking guys" who were working on the farm took up the task and kept the animals fed and milked despite the uncertainly of ownership and who was running the farm. The auctioneer took the time to have some of the workers come forward and identify themselves with a wave of the hand. Sheepishly a small group of 4 or 5 Hispanic men waved their hands just to the right and left of the auctioneer's podium.

He said "these are a great bunch of guys and after today they are going to be out of work, so if you need some good workers make sure you connect with them."[91] I did not speak to these workers at the auction but I could assume that they were from Mexico or Central America. Immigrant workers make up an estimated 40 percent of dairy workers in Wisconsin, with higher percentages seen on the larger farms.[92] There was some shuffling and murmuring in the crowd, but I did not see anyone approach the workers immediately after this announcement. The auctioneer quickly moved on to selling the cows, bringing them in one after the other, in quick succession, into the sale ring put up under the auction tent. Hay bales were set up in a semi-circle around the sale ring. I stayed for an hour to observe the auction. Wisconsin farm writer John Oncken devoted his regular column to the event, reporting that the auction went on for six hours, moving 460 cows through the sales ring, "a cow sold every 45 seconds," fetching an average price of $1248, with the top cow garnering $2450.[93]

The auction took place in late August. I watched the papers and called folks I knew in Richland County occasionally to find out what was going to happen with the property. The auction was just for some of the equipment and the dairy animals. In late 2009 I saw the foreclosure notice for the actual farm property in the weekly newspaper:

> "Please Take Notice that by virtue of a Judgment of Foreclosure entered in the above-entitled action on January 3, 2010, the undersigned, Sheriff of Richland County, Wisconsin, will sell at

public auction at the East steps of the Richland County Courthouse…"[94]

I had arrived at the courthouse on that bright and brisk January day in 2010 expecting a teaming mass of people, like some movie scene perhaps, gathered at the east steps of the courthouse (pictured above). Perhaps a group of farmers there to express their opinion on the matter of the foreclosure and to take their opportunity to bid on these buildings and land. But just like the picture of the sunny, peaceful courthouse steps I took an hour or so prior to the auction, imagine a handful of people milling quietly about. At the allotted time a representative of the Sheriff's office came out. Said some official things and read the things he had to read. The Sheriff's representative explained that the financial institution holding the loan was bidding the amount that it currently held in debt on the property vacated by the

Dutch farmer. There was some quiet murmuring amongst the few that were there about how that was way higher than anything they could ever think about. There would be no bargain procurement on this day for local farms hoping to get a hold of some more land and dairy facilities. And it is this moment also that my closeness to the situation perhaps got in the way of my research. It is essential that I point this out. Because the representative from the financial lender that was there doing the silent non-bidding was indeed the same man that handles the farm loans on the farm my husband and I "belong" to, with his family. So my arrival on the scene was conspicuous to the others gathered because there were so few of us and I was the one the local people did not know. But also because the man from the bank and I did know each other and perhaps he was wondering why he hadn't been consulted from our end of things if I was going to be coming over here bidding a 6-figure sum on this property in Richland County.

As an epilogue to this saga of the Dutch farmer's coming and going, the herd dispersal and the bank holding on to the property, I have been told that a local family, that had themselves expanded their dairy herd on one farm and purchased the former Heijman farm and have started another dairy herd there. So this is the site of expanded production for the market but now done by a face familiar and with historical ties to the area.

The Heijman dairy farm story illustrates the productivist dominance in agriculture in Richland County.[95] It also shows the role that the state played in pushing for this expanded farm, through favorable loans. It is perhaps the most extreme example of following the inevitable of the productivist path for purely

economic and market functions. Thinking back to the theoretical conversation on productivism and Fordism in the earlier chapter, the Heijman dairy farm represents an example is productivist, because of the underlying idea that more milk is always better, however the connections to the global markets and involvement by the state in incentivizing the development shows clear movement along the Fordist/post-Fordist trajectory. In this example a foreign farmer gets incentives to come in and set up a large-for-the-area farm, using primarily immigrant workers, to produce commodity products for the global market.

In this case the milk production from this farm was going to the Foremost Farms cheese factory in Richland Center, which primarily makes mozzarella cheese for the frozen pizza factories in the state. In further evidence of this production system connected outside of the local, in 2010 mulitnational Kraft Foods, which owned several frozen pizza factories in the state that were sourcing cheese form Foremost Farms sold these plants to Nestle in a corporate board room deal.[96] When the financial numbers of that set-up don't work it is simply a matter of leaving the keys to bank and going back home. We are not just talking about the circulation of agricultural products for the markets, here we have an example of the global flow of commodities, farmers, and farm workers.

In this chapter I have laid out the interaction of *positive* and *normative* forces in the economic sphere of agriculture and the resulting *relational* space productivism. In Richland County I see evidence of two qualities of *relational* space, that of the *traditional* farmer and the *progressive* farmer. Both are producers and

engaged in ideational structures of productivism, but what distinguishes them is their interaction with the market. The *progressive* farmer embraces the post-Fordist regime of accumulation and engages with the new role of farmer as producer and consumer interacting with new material aspirations for both farm and farm household. Both of these categories of farmer view the market and productivism as inevitable. In the next chapter I will explore economic and ecological interactions of conservation actions and agricultural production.

V. Meeting the Expectations of the Land: The Inevitability of Nature

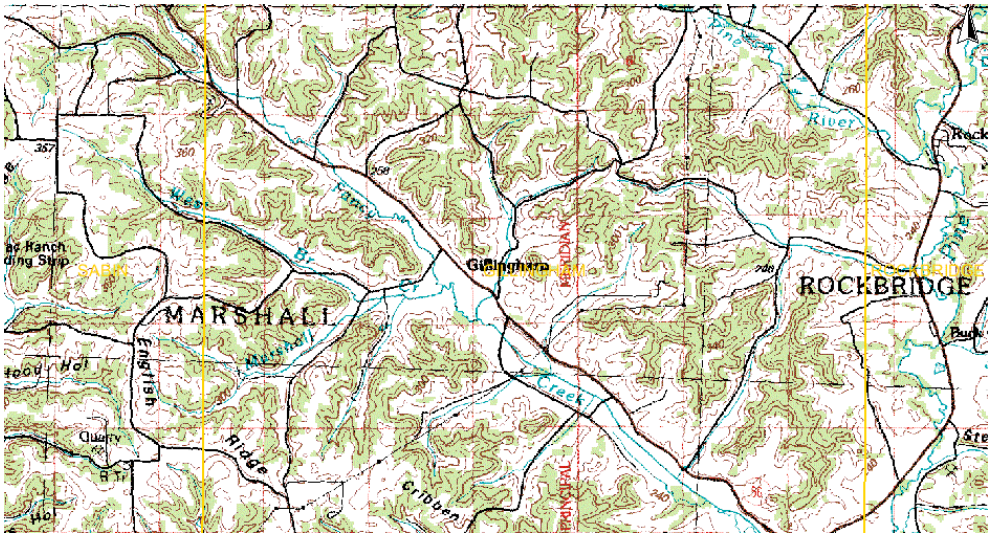


Figure 1: Topography of the Driftless in Richland County

Looking at a topographical map of Richland County it is easy to see that in the "Driftless" region of southwestern Wisconsin there is no direct route from point A to point B. It is called the "Driftless" because during the last glacial period, which lasted about 100,000 years, ending 10,000 years ago the ice sheets did not reach down to cover this part of the state, leaving a striking topography of deep hills and winding valleys.[97] It is not entirely true, that you can't get from A to B. You can get there as the crow flies. Or as one former resident described, you can get there as the pheasant runs.

One of the Sewell respondents that I interviewed told the story of his job in the late-1940s and early-1950s, driving the milk truck up and down and around the winding roads of Richland County. He picked up milk in cans from 18 different farms in his small area of the county and brought their milk to the local cheese

factory to be processed and shipped off to market. The truck could hold 135-140 cans, with each can holding 10 gallons of milk. Many farmers kept the milk cool in the cans before the milk truck came by setting them in the many natural cool-water springs coming out of the hillsides in the area. While winding around the roads this man recounted the story of a special interaction with nature that he had from his time driving the milk route. Throughout the interview he described how much he appreciated the wildlife and nature of the area. There was a period of weeks when he repeatedly came across a male pheasant on the side of the road and enjoyed its colorful beauty. He laughed and shook his head recalling that he would drive the milk truck many winding miles through the valleys to get to the next farm. Amazingly on several occasions that same pheasant took a short cut through the woods, up and over the hills, to meet him on the other side. He explained:

> "Two or three weeks there was a rooster pheasant that came out along the ditch on the road. I would stop. As long as I stayed in the truck he'd come right up. I got my camera once and he came up close to the truck. I could see him in the rearview mirror. But as I moved to take the picture he ran off. So then I had to go up to the next farm. He would cut across or something and he would show up on the side of the road a bit further along my route. He'd hang around the truck, while I'd load the milk up."

Positive Ecological Drivers in the Driftless Region

The mosaic of fields, pastures and wooded areas as well as the dynamic topography in Richland County provide wildlife habitat and aesthetic beauty. The appreciation of nature and wildlife as well as the beautiful but challenging topography was a point of discussion in all the interviews I did in Richland County. In the northern part of the county, near the town of West Lima the uplands reach elevations of 1291 feet. Near the county seat, Richland Center, in the center of the county the ridge tops are at 1100 to 1160 feet with the valleys dropping about 300 to 400 feet below. The valleys, which feature steep escarpments at the edge of the uplands, are usually one-fourth to one and one-fourth miles in width, becoming deeper and wider near the Wisconsin River, which is the southern border of the county.[98]

This inevitable topography presents a clear physical or positive influence on agriculture in the area. Several of the Sewell respondents I interviewed described having the "misfortune" of a "two-storey" farm. One man who had farmed for many years and run an off-farm business before retiring remembered,

> "I hated the ridge road with a passion. I told my dad one day, I want to farm but I'm not going farm a two-storey farm."

The first time I heard the term "two-storey" farm, I needed an explanation. The "1st floor" was the tillable, often narrow valley bottoms and the "2nd floor" was the narrow, but tillable ridge top. The steep slopes in between were primarily

wooded. As people tried to push the system and graze or crop the hillsides, to increase their production and work to increase farm incomes, erosion became a major problem. Another Sewell respondent who had farmed growing up described it like this, "This was hard farming. We had 2 ridges on our farm. It was not easy."

The land is an inevitable force. In his memoir, *Nothing But Conservation* County Agricultural Extension Agent Roy Dingle's recounts an important conversation that he had with an area farmer when discussing a color coded map that he showed to farmers to help them understand the federal conservation programs around the "land capability" classification that came down from the federal government at that time. Dingle quotes a farmer, who said to him,

> "Young feller, that's a might pretty picture you've got there, but it ain't no use. Why we've knowed about that dirt stuff since I was a little kid. All you need to know about the dirt of Richland County is totaled up in this: if you're going to buy land in Richland County, go to the crick, face downstream, and buy the land on the right."

Dingle muses that the farmer was right, "the siltcap over Richland county drifted in like snow over the hills, and for some reason, always drifted deepest on the right side facing downstream." Dingle goes on to point out however that this man's maxim only held true in valleys. If you were on the ridges, which accounts for one-third of the County's cropland, it didn't work. Here there was another

geological inevitability, "it was extremely simple – buy west. The silt cap was deepest on the west, thinnest on the east side of the county."[99]

The overarching point here is that geology and the resulting topography matter. Farmers interact with this physical and material reality in their involvement with the different functions of agriculture. In Richland County it is very easy to see the strong *positive* or material force of the topography of the land and how it pushes systems of agriculture. What is done in reaction to this *positive* force reveals several different *normative* drivers, which I will describe and discuss in the pages that follow.

In the preceding chapter, with the example of the Heijman dairy farm, I described the *relational* space formed around farming and agriculture as a result of very monolithic productivism in a Post-Fordist system. A foreign farmer with primarily foreign workers comes in, with the assistance of local and federal government programs, to milk cows and ship milk into the commodity market, with the use of modern equipment and technology. Expanding the view to include ecological functions shows that there are different parameters for action, which differ depending on the *normative* forces interacting with the material or *positive* reality.

The topography of Richland County varies across the county, but in many places the Driftless characteristics of steep hillsides and valleys creates a very strong *positive* or material driver of agricultural systems. Farmers must react to the reality of slope and the hydro-geological systems. The reaction to this *positive* topography and the difficulty with erosion is the implementation of conservation

measures. But there are important distinctions about what sort of *relational* space is created when considering both the economy and the ecology, dependent on the normative drivers in this interaction.

Adding this layer of the *normative* interaction with the ecological space uncovers a new set of relationships to assess and interpret. This includes a look at what a productivist/post-productivist versus a Fordist/Post-Fordist shift can indicate about what parameters for action are "available" in the system of economic and ecological relationships. Examining the productivist/post-productivist shift exposes normative drivers and the resulting relational space. Analysis of the Fordist/Post-Fordist trajectory calls for careful consideration of the interaction of production and consumption, both in relation to markets and relation to the role of the state in creating private and public goods.

The Interaction of the Normative Drivers of Production and Conservation

As I have described above, in reaction to the *positive* forces of topography, farmers and decision makers implemented conservation programs and practices. Important distinctions can be made in the reactions to the inevitability of topography and to the inevitability of nature. The *traditional* farmer pragmatically implements conservation measures both because they care about the land, conservation for conservation's sake and because they know that if they don't do it they will lose soil fertility and thus production. The *progressive* farmer is also interested in conservation for both the sake of conservation and production. However this farmer interacts with the inevitability of geology but sees the natural

world as something that can be conquered. And this is done with the tools of modernity, science and technology.[100]

In Richland County, as well as across Wisconsin and the United States this interaction between production and conservation norms was mediated by the state. Farmers, often with the help of local government agency workers, directed by federal soil conservation programs, came out to the farms and helped farmers mark out contour strips and waterways. This work aimed to reach the crops up the hillside as far a possible, but at the same time reduce erosion, to protect soil and also stream water quality. Efforts to implement conservation practices on the farm was seen by many as self-evident or "common sense." One Sewell respondent and lifetime farmer remembered the Extension agent's help with the project,

> "I remember when the man from the county came. He laid out the strips and we just followed along with the plow where he walked. You had to agree to do it. They didn't force anybody to do anything. It was common sense because dirt was going down the creek. And after that, it didn't."

Like the quotes above the put the material and physical nature of the soil systems in an essential light, "look downstream and by to the right" and the "common sense" of soil conservation practices. Another Sewell respondent simply responded, "My dad was a good farmer," when asked if

his family used strip cropping or contour planting to reduce soil erosion. Nothing about how it came about, it just was, the inevitable, the expected.

These remembrances correspond with Extension Agent Roy Dingle's account. According to Dingle, farmers received $5/acre for setting up strips. He notes,

> "It should be all too plain from this description of establishing a strip cropping system that it had to be something the farmer wanted a whole lot more than five bucks per acre, or he wouldn't do it. … Our good cooperators did all this for conservation's sake. Nobody would do it for five bucks an acre. You can't buy conservation at any price."[101]

Local actions and expectations were intertwined and pushed and pulled by larger systems and politics coming from "above" or outside the local area. Federal soil conservation and agricultural policy exerted strong positive structures down to the county and individual farm level, including in Richland County. For the Sewell respondents, their youth and high school years were times of change in how the federal government institutionalized conservation down to the farm level, including program like Dingle described, with specific monetary incentives to cover the costs of certain farming practices. *Normative* goals for conservation were being built into *positive* structures of physical and material infrastructure of incentive payments and

actual physical bodies put out on the land to make conservation practices happen, like the extension agent that came out to the farms to lay out the contour rows.

The 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act established the Soil Erosion Service (SES) in the Department of Interior to work on erosion issues and also provide employment for demonstration projects through the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). By 1935 it is estimated that 11,000 CCC workers and another 5,000 other workers from the relief rolls were employed in these efforts. These policy and programmatic efforts were spurred by the Dust Bowl and growing concern for soil fertility and the future of agricultural productivity in the country, as well as the economic concerns of the Great Depression. Soil conservation efforts were transferred to the Department of Agriculture through the Soil Conservation Act of 1935, which took the SES and combined it with USDA programs into the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). In 1936 the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act continuted a system of price supports and made soil conservation a major function of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA).[102] These foundations of the federal soil conservation system, negotiated through the New Deal era, are still at the core of agricultural policy today in this country, now under the name of the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

These federal programs mandated and funded soil conservation down to the local level. One Sewell respondent who had grown up farming and went on to work in agriculture in the financial agricultural lending side of things remembered his families interaction with the federal soil conservation programs,

> "[We didn't do strip cropping] at that time, my brother did, then got contouring and was very interested in it. The programs were there from Soil Conservation Service. The articles were always in the newspapers and came from the high school and through the homemakers [clubs]. … They did take advantage of the Civilian Conservation Corps the CCC and they built some small dams. 1934, '35, '36, '37 I can remember. My dad was conservation minded at that time. He avoided farming up and down the hill."

The SCS gave technical assistance and aid to local soil conservation districts to develop and implement plans. Amendments in 1936 to the Act authorized the Agricultural Conservation Program, allowing for federal payments to land owners to cover part of the costs of soil-conserving practices. It also permitted the government to limit the acreage planted in certain soil-depleting crops.[103]

These federal efforts for soil conservation have deep roots, especially in western Wisconsin, where we saw the first national model for soil conservation practices in Coon Valley. The first Director of the Soil Erosion Service, which later became the Social Conservation Service, H. H. Bennett declared the Coon Valley project, just north of Richland County, "Project Number 1" in the nation, for addressing the major soil erosion and flooding problems that were plaguing many parts of the country, especially in areas like the Driftless region, with challenging topography. This Coon Valley project was important because it represented a new strategy for addressing conservation issues on the land, which trickled out around

Wisconsin and across the United States. It was also a early practical application for the ideas of pioneering conservation thinkers, such as Aldo Leopold, who was assigned to the Coon Valley project to assess wildlife considerations of erosion control.[104]

The politics of these governmental programs, as negotiated at the federal level, are of course rich. The conflict and politics between *normative* conservation goals and production goals clash at many points.[105] With regard to the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, Charles Hardin points out in his 1952 book on the politics of soil conservation, "it was obvious that the conservation provisions of the 1936 Act were really aimed at income support and production control."[106]

Richland County Extension Agent Roy Dingle remembers conservation for conservation's sake, however production was a strong *normative* driver. One Sewell respondent I interviewed described his reasoning for putting in a waterway in a field. He received payment from NRCS to cover the costs of establishing a waterway to reduce soil erosion, but he also got better cropland out of the deal saying,

> "well it was to my advantage to straighten it out and then I had two nice fields on each side. So even if I hadn't gotten any payment from the government it was money well spent."

As Dingle describes it was commitment to conservation that drove adoption. But production goals were also aided by implementing conservation practices.

Thompson, in his book *The Spirit of the Soil*, concludes that historically farmer's stewardship was based in a production ethic. This means farmers have duties to nature but these duties are subservient to the goal of production.[107]

Framing the Need for Conservation

Patriotism and local cooperative pride were employed to encourage adoption of conservation measures. In the early 1950s there were several organized watershed projects in Richland County that officially brought together landowners to engage in coordinated efforts to reduce soil erosion and flooding. In a special expanded issue in the local newspaper in September 1958, congratulations were offered to all the participants in the efforts in the Mill Creek Watershed. Local businesses, many directly tied to agricultural production, took out ads in the paper proclaiming,

> "Each Generation Must Preserve Our Soil Resources. They have seen their responsibility and they have met it fully."

Richland Co-operative Creamery's ad announced,

> "It has taken real co-operation, and here at the Richland Co-operative Creamery we know something about that!"

The Farmers and Merchants Bank's advertisement read,

> "Success Has Come from Local Leadership, Local Interest, and Local Participation."

And the ad from Richland County Bank had alarming pictures of deep gullies caused by flooding and erosion with a quote attributed to Patrick Henry,

> "He is the Greatest Patriot Who Stops the Most Gullies."[108]

In other displays of the centrality of conservation and soil in production, below is a scan of the small icon which is included on the front cover of the 1949 Richland County Soil Map, issued by the United States Natural Resource Conservation Services.[109]

Aldo Leopold saw conservation as more than the normative instrument employed to achieve increased production. However he asserted that government measures to reach conservation goals through programs like the Soil Conservation

District did not apply strong enough goals for conservation over production. As Leopold wrote in his essay "The Ecological Conscience;"

> "We asked the farmer to do what he conveniently could to save his soil, and he has done just that, and only that. The farmer who clears the woods off a 75 percent slope, turns his cows into the clearing, and dumps its rainfall, rocks, and soil into the community creek, is still (if otherwise decent) a respected member of society. … The [Soil Conservation] District is a beautiful piece of social machinery, but it is coughing along on two cylinders because we have been too timid, and too anxious for quick success, to tell the farmer the true magnitude of his obligations. Obligations have no meaning without conscience, and the problem we face is the extension of the social conscience from people to land."[110]

In his essay, "The Farmer as Conservationist" Leopold writes,

> "When land does well for its owner, and the owner does well by his land; when both end up better by reason of their partnership, we have conservation. When one or the other grows poorer, we do not." … "It is customary to fudge the record by regarding the loss of flora and fauna as inevitable, and hence leaving them out of the account. The fertile productive farm is regarded as a success

> though it has lost most of its native plants and animals. Conservation protests this biased accounting."[111]

Federal, state and local governments created programs and initiatives over the years, using both conservation and production practices through mandates and incentives to encourage and facilitate conservation practices on the landscape in Richland County. Despite concerns about too much or too little conservation, these projects have had real results on the ground over time. The 1954 Census reported that 967 farms, or 46.7% of those reporting harvested cropland, had some cropland with grain or row crops planted on the contour. The acreage of this cropland amounted to 27,991 acres of 22.0 percent of the total cropland acreage harvested in 1954. The percentage of farms reporting contour planting is greater than the percentage of cropland acreage on which this practice is used. This is because usually only part of a field is planted on the contour. Statewide, only 5.4% of the total cropland harvested was farmed on the contour in 1954. This method of planting was reported by 10.9% of the state's farmers.[112]

The watershed projects being congratulated for its patriotism and cooperation in the 1958 newspaper represented a complex set of projects with many components involving cooperation from local people, local officials, as well as state and federal agencies. The picture below is from 1955 and shows the Board of

Directors of the Mill Creek Watershed Association, made up of farmer and land owner "cooperators" at a regular meeting in which the details and plans for the cooperative project were discussed and negotiated.[113]

In several cases, including the Mill Creek Watershed project in Richland County land owners signed over easements to the federal government to allow hydrological infrastructure to be built on their land, such as dams and farm ponds. For example, the table below shows a list of the conservation practices engaged and planned for the Mill Creek Watershed. This was published in the newspaper with

the tag line, “Makes for Fish and Game Opportunities,” indicating the promise of hunting and fishing benefits from land conservation.

Conservation Practice	Unit	Done Before 1954	Done Since 1954	5 Yr. Goals Under Project	% of Total Job Done
Contour Strip Cropping	Ac.	5114	1475	1500	63
Pasture Renovation	Ac.	198	121	500	7
Wildlife Area Improvement	Ac.	34	61	75	20
Terraces	Mi.	2	3	8	4
Diversions	Mi.	3	3	8	11
Waterways and Outlets	Mi.	-	1	2.5	3
Farm Ponds	No.	-	6	25	6
Tiling	Ac.	60	-	50	7
Open Ditch Drainage	Ac.	-	10	150	7
Streambank Protection	Mi.	-	3	5	6
Tree Planting	Ac.	14	18	75	9
Timber Management	Ac.	-	146	300	3
Woodland Protection	Ac.	418	558	1000	19

These efforts are primarily discussed in the context of production, so it is interesting to me that in the newspaper they were mainly pegged to wildlife and recreation outcomes. As I discussed before, all the Sewell respondents that I interviewed expressed appreciation and interest for the beauty of the land and the natural values of area. Although pheasants are not a native species, the story I opened with, of the pheasant following the milk truck route, shows an appreciation for these natural values. The milk truck driver had also told me the story of how they had fished near his farm in the stream. The fish were eaten by the family for food, but he also described how it provided hours and hours of entertainment growing up.

During one of my interviews I drove around the countryside with a native Richland County person, very knowledgeable about agriculture in the county. He

narrated the view and the farms that we passed. At one point he pointed to a stream that was meandering across a field and said,

> "This is the West Branch of the Pine. Class 1 trout stream. Yep, that's where I used to fish as a kid. But local people don't really fish trout anymore."

Conservation for the function of preserving wildlife habitat is another output of agriculture. For local people this could be seen as a non-productive output. When the out-of-towners come in to use the fresh waters and take advantage of the Class 1 trout stream then it perhaps is not a non- or post-productive function of agriculture, depending on if they are paying for the access or have purchased land to be able to gain access to the fishing resources. The benefits of wildlife and recreation functions of agriculture are an evolving picture.

Relationships Between Farmers, Conservation and the State

Above I have discussed more generally the politics of production versus conservation as the dominant *normative* driver. But there was also politics in the relationships between the local farmers and communities and the federal and state programs. Lynne Heasley in her book, *A Thousand Pieces of Paradise*, writes about the politics and process of watershed management in the Kickapoo watershed. The majority of the Kickapoo watershed is in the county to the north and west of

Richland County, but the northwest part of Richland County is included in this watershed. Two of the Sewell respondents I interviewed grew up in this watershed and flooding and measures to reduce flooding were a topic of conversation during my interviews with them. One man told of losing a number of cows during his high school years due to major flood event. This had quite an impact on his family and their farm.

Heasley succinctly summarizes the negotiations between federal and local actors and farmers, "conservation districts solidified a convergence of federal, state, and local governments on the farm. Farmers themselves could not always keep track of the confusing mix of programs, rules, and agendas, that increasingly influenced their farm systems".[114] "SCS invented what they called the "Land Capability Concept". Class I was "perfect" Class II good, some mild limitations, slope, cold, wet, needing some drainage. Class III still cropland but issues. Class IV, seriously limited. "More than half of Richland County's cropland was in this class. The slope of it was 10 to 20%, about as steep as one would want to go harvesting and tending crops." Class V and Class VI (slopes in 20-30% range)."[115]

"By incorporating a formal scientific rationale for a conservation plan, agencies further reduced the latitude a farmer had in managing his land. Yet more and more, farmers agreed to carry out such plans. By 194 30,000 WI land owners had developed conservation plans."[116] And as Dingle notes in his memoir on Richland County conservation, along with potential for alienation between farmers and conservation, there were also different drivers of the programs and how the actual work of conservation, on the ground, was recognized. "It was interesting and

painful that politicians, particularly Congressmen and Senators, gave ASCS credit for all soil conservation. We did the work. ASCS wrote the checks. ASCS got the credit. Money talks. Money wins votes. We were only trying to protect our nation's soil. The politicians didn't know that we existed."[117]

Sometimes land management practices done in the name of production and conservation went too far for some. One Sewell respondent, who expressed a great appreciation for nature and natural processes, told many stories of the great adventures he and his siblings had in the outdoors on the farm while growing up.

> "I remember when they came and drained some of the marsh to straighten the waterway, but also to create tillable fields in the valley. We had always gone fishing as kids, you could practically just get in the water and grab the trout, which was great fun for us kids. Well after the men from the government came and fixed the area we didn't have any trout in that stream anymore."

By adding the government program to invoke conservation, with shared or intertwined production and consumption normative drivers, landowners may have lost some closeness to the land that they knew and loved. The self-evident, pragmatic reaction to the physical realities of the topography, became complicated by the maze of federal programs that tried to incentivize that which for many was automatic. Dirt went down the hill before, afterwards it didn't.

While some government programs and initiatives attempted to have production along side conservation, to varying levels of success, other programs took land out of production. In these cases there are people that had concerns because of the normative goal of production. A Sewell respondent explained his view on conservation and government programs,

> "I think the land will still be farmed regardless of who gets it. Unless. The government, you know the government came in a few years ago with this CRP. The CRP at that time was probably a good thing. Today it isn't. The way things have gone. They need a lot of this land. If the guys would use it right. They took out a lot of land that is erodible. If they would go in and farm it right it would be a good thing. But one thing I don't agree with it at all. The government has paid people a lot of money to put some of this beautiful land in trees. Trees are fine. But they don't feed people. I'm afraid they are going to have to do something on the CRP to get more corn and wheat. They say your wheat is really short now. Even your food wheat. Your other countries. You can't feed the world. It bothers me."

There has been much work done on trying to understand farmers' and landowners' tendencies to adopt new technologies and new practices around conservation and their general attitudes towards conservation.[118] I have only

scratched the surface here with my research in Richland County, in an attempt to show the normative drivers of ecological activities in agriculture. Conservation adoption is not the focus of this dissertation. However to understand the interaction between production and conservation it is essential to look at the way that these two normative drivers interact with the market and economic output from agricultural systems.

Just looking at production and conservation as the *normative* drivers of conservation practices in the ecological sphere of agriculture does not provide sufficient depth to understand the nuance of what is going on in the system. In the previous chapter we discussed the singular push towards production for economic goals and how this had changed in a shift from Fordist to post-Fordist systems. In Fordism there was a push for increased production using technology and scientific knowledge. This push delivered both material equipment like tractors and improved mechanical systems for production, as well as increases in the use of synthetic inputs like fertilizers and herbicides to assist in increasing crop yields and animal outputs. This technology and scientific knowledge was also used for new conservation practices to increase or at least maintain production. In the Post-Fordist shift we see production geared increasingly towards global markets, no longer embedded in the local place. Another important shift in the Post-Fordist system is the relationships between producers and consumers. In Richland County this can clearly be seen in shifts to differentiated markets and movement towards direct markets but also new forms of value through new patterns of consumption of agricultural outputs.

Normative Social Forces on Farming Practices and Conservation

Farming was moving from something from "within to without" and along with *normative* messages on family "level of living" there was also *normative* forces around conservation and ecological practices on the farm. What I hear most often to indicate these norms is discussion of "progressive" farmers, as discussed in the previous chapters and also the "good" farmer. The "progressive" farmer was a farmer adopting the latest methods of modernity and increasingly buying inputs to boost production and yield.[119] Today if you go to agri-business meetings you hear about the "progressive" farmer.

Another code word that comes up often is the "good farmer." This is more about use of conservation practices and community involvement. When I first started my interviews I was struck by how often it was used. I would ask, "did your father use conservation practices, like strip cropping?" The answer from more than one respondent was simply, "yes, he was a good farmer." In one interview concerns on the over-spreading of manure was raised by the man I was talking to. He contrasted these manure handling practices with another farmer down the road who he described as a "good farmer." I asked for a further definition of what a "good farmer" was,

> "Well his farming practices. He was recognized as an Outstanding Young Farmer. And when I look at his family's participation in

> community activities. They are involved in 4H and other activities. They are in everything. … They are hard workers. [It's about] how they get along with people and how they partake in the community. They supported the kids in the schools and the moms that volunteer. They are active in their church."

Above I discussed the definition of the "good farmer." One of the people I interviewed included in his definition recognition as an "Outstanding Young Farmer." One example from Richland County that clearly illustrates *normative* forces on farming practices and also uncovers shifts in social interaction, which I will introduce here and address more fully in the next chapter, is the annual recognition of the county's "Outstanding Young Farmer" (OYF). Many counties have this program and the county winner is entered into a state-wide competition for the state title, which can go on to a national competition.

OYF seems to be a combination of recognition for being both the "progressive" and the "good" farmer. During my research I followed the OYF process specifically as a window into changing social interactions in the rural farm community. I attended two Richland county OYF recognition ceremonies, both preceded by a dinner at the school cafeteria. I also searched the historical archives in the county and was able to read newspaper accounts and organizational planning meeting minutes from this OYF competition dating back to its inception in the county in 1959. Winners are described as, "progressive farmers" and looking at the winners over time, progressive-ness is highly correlated with expansion and

commodity production. Winners are also recognized for their adoption of conservation practices as well as civic engagement. For example the two families recognized in 1966 were described in the local newspaper as follows;

> The Kaderavek family has a 240 acre farm in the town of Henrieta. "followed a strict conservation plan, built up a dairy herd which will average nearly 435 pounds of butterfat this year, and been active in 4-H work, the Tri-state Breeders' Organization, Civil Defense, The Richland Hospital fund drive, and the ACS. Mr. Kaderavek is chairman of the town of Henrietta and a member of the County Board of Supervisors.
>
> The Halink family owns 110 acres and rent 330 acres in the town of Dayton. "They have built an outstanding herd of cattle, increasing the number of milk cows from 20 to 55, and at the same time increasing the production from 385 pounds of butterfat to 518 pounds and 14,670 pounds of milk. Their conservation farm plan includes contour strips, terraces, woodlot management with 10,000 transplants, renovations, and surface drainages. Mr. Halink has been active in the Holstein Friesian association, a Tri-State delegate, and an ASC committeeman. The Halinks are members of St. Luke's Church at Boaz."[120]

In 1976 through a series of meetings and committees, "a point system that gives weights to farming ability, community contributions, improvement practices, and size of enterprise" was established to guide selection of the outstanding farmers. The points were laid out like this: [121]

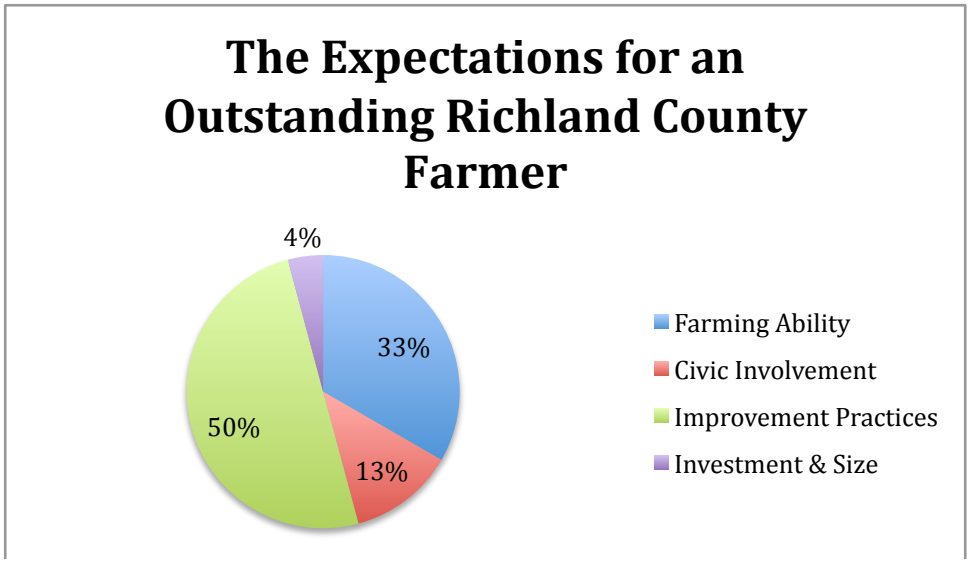
Farming ability - 200 points total
- efficiency (75 points)
- neatness (50 points)
- knowledge of farming operations (75 points)

Community contributions and leadership activities - 75 points total
- livestock and related organizations (50 points)
- church, civic, and volunteer organizations (15 points)
- governmental participation on town, county or federal levels (10 points)

Improvement practices - 300 points total
- soil conservation plans and practices (75 points)
- building conditions (50 points)
- crop practice and soil testing (75 points)
- livestock practices and testing program (100 points)

Investment and size of enterprise - 25 points total
- number of acres ("the tillable acres, number of acres of corn, small grains, and hay for the year, and the
- number of different species of livestock with mention if any of the livestock is purebred").

Based on a plain read of this scoring system the expectations of the community for farmers is 50% based on your soil conservation practices and how you keep and monitor your buildings, crops, and livestock.



Thirteen percent civic engagement, 33% your farming ability and how neat you keep the place, and just 4% about your investment and size of operation. At this point I have not seen an update on this matrix and if these are still the criteria that are used. The Outstanding Young Farmer program continues. The 1990 award winner was described in the paper as follows:

> Burkhamers "have very strong credentials. 1) raising their rolling herd average from 12,000lbs. to over 20,000 lbs. of milk per animal; 2) lowering their somatic cell count from nearly 500,000 to less than 100,000; 3) moving from 42 cows to over 60 cows; 4) moving from conventional feeding to a Total Mixed Ration; 5) moving from a rental situation to purchasing a farm."

Although this summary for the 1990 winner does not mention conservation practices, this focus was still highly evident in other articles about the contest and at the two events that I attended during my research.[122]

Richland County presents a clear example of the *relational* interaction of *positive* and *normative* economic and ecological forces in agriculture. Richland County's remarkable topography makes the positive forces very evident. There is a dance or negotiation to meet ecological soil conservation functions and production functions, but also wildlife habitat, and recreation, simultaneously. Conservation for the sake of production but also conservation for the sake of conservation alone. Through the cooperative watershed programs people came together because they

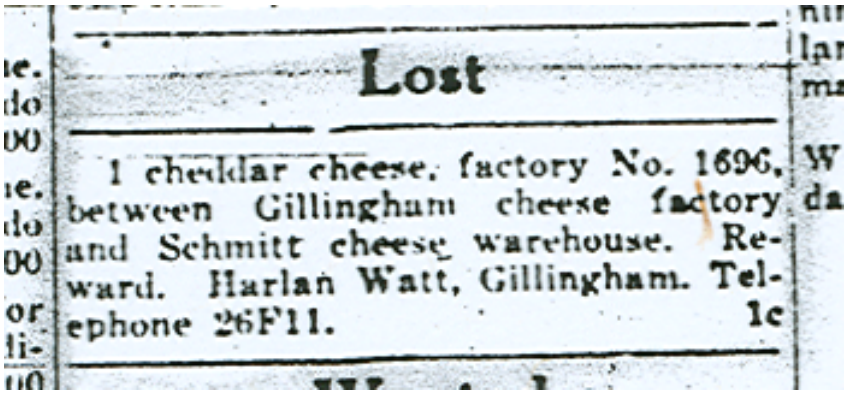
needed to do something to conserve the productive capacity of their land. Along with production these efforts also were recognized as maintaining and creating wildlife benefits, a non-productive function of agriculture.

In this chapter I specifically explored the ecological and economic interaction of production and conservation. The ecological foundations of agriculture are tied to the positive geological facts. However, the negotiation of conservation politics and process highlight the *normative* drivers in the system. The 20th century history of conservation in Richland County shows the multiple functions, including; production functions for economic reasons, ecological functions such as erosion control for soil conservation and water quality, as well as wildlife habitat protection and improvement, aesthetic values, and others, which interact to form a mosaic of multifunctional agriculture.

VI. Lost Cheese: Agricultural reproduction of social space

> "I liked it when we shipped our milk to the small cheese factory down the road, instead of the big one in town, because you could go in, have a piece of cheese and chat."

This was the response from one of the Sewell respondents when asked to describe what changes he noticed in agriculture over the years. This man had stayed on his family's farm after high school and took it over fully as his parents passed away and siblings moved away. He milked cows until the 1970s. Over the years he had purchased additional farmland near his farm, as it had become available, and now did cash cropping for the commodity market. In the earlier chapter on economics and production I presented quantitative changes in agricultural production in Richland County. As in most places in Wisconsin, cheese processing over the last fifty plus years has shifted from distributed production in many small factories out in the countryside with some larger scale production in city centers, to increased but more concentrated production at a handful of larger factories located in population centers. This change was a change of logistics, venue and scale and it also has implications for social relationships in rural communities, as is revealed by the Sewell respondent's subtle statement about his preference for the cheese and chat that could be experienced at the small factories.



Lost

1 cheddar cheese, factory No. 1696, between Gillingham cheese factory and Schmitt cheese warehouse. Reward. Harlan Watt, Gillingham. Telephone 26F11. 1c

Whenever I drive on State Highway 58 between Richland Center and the small town of Gillingham I find myself scanning the ditches along the side of the road, thinking about the lost cheese announced above in the April 15, 1948 Richland County *Republican Observer*. Of course I have a smile on my face, delighting in the notion of actually finding the cheese. Wouldn't it be amazing to find the large barrel, or at least a remnant of the barrel, of cheddar cheese that was lost all those years ago?[123]

I happened upon the ad in the classified section of the paper completely by accident when scanning the old Richland County newspapers. Although it was a small ad, it jumped off the page, "Lost: 1 cheddar cheese. Factory No. 1696. Between the Gillingham cheese factory and Schmitt cheese warehouse. Reward…." However, read quickly, many people think it says, "Lost: 1 cheddar cheese factory." The Gillingham cheese factory finally closed its doors in the 1970s. So perhaps reading the 1948 advertisement as a "lost cheese factory," rather than a "lost cheese" is prescient.

In the previous chapters I laid out the economic and ecological interactions of *positive* and *normative* space towards a *relational* understanding of the multiple functions of agriculture. In this chapter I add the social sphere to the picture and describe the *positive* and *normative* interactions of the economic, ecological, and

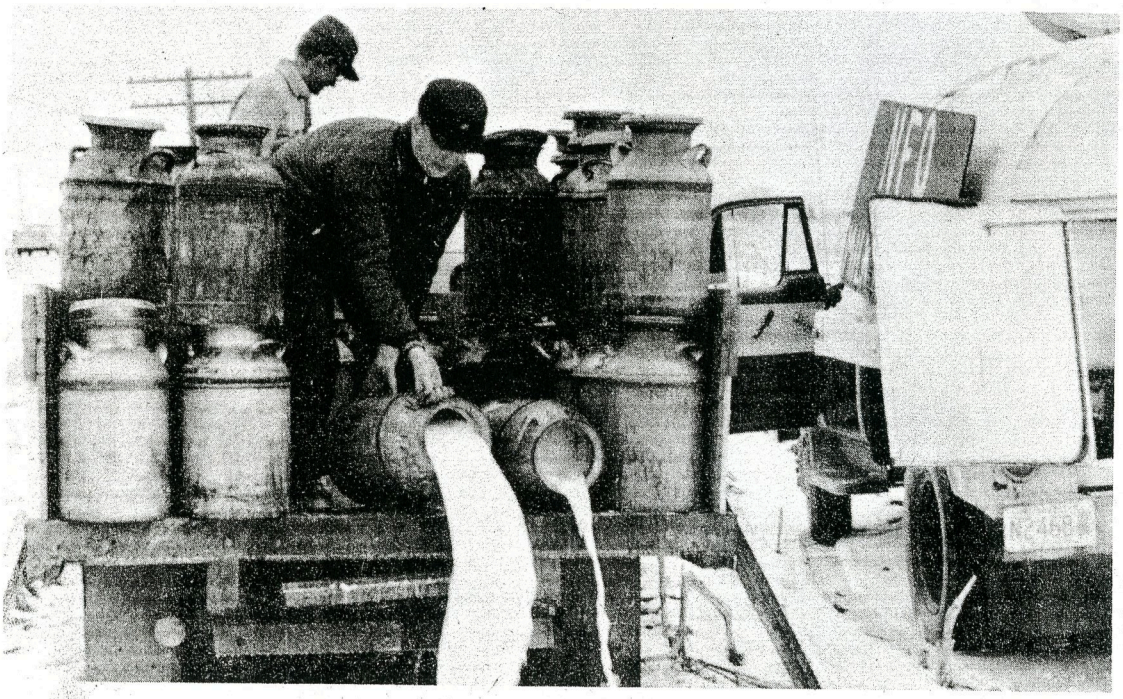
social relationships. The fundamental changes described below had implications for household and family social life, as well as the social life of neighborhoods and communities. The changing structures of production and the different levels of economic interactions with the market changed the familiar space and pace of family and community life and created new relationships between producers and consumers and between people and the land.

In this chapter I will discuss how the shifting *positive* and *normative* interaction and resulting *relational* space of agricultural production impacted social spaces in Richland County. I examine the assumption that "agricultural production would automatically reproduce the socio-cultural qualities of rural space."[124]

Rejecting the Inevitability of the Market

In the previous chapters I have primarily presented the inevitabilities that have developed around economic production, as well as the inevitability of nature. Richland County's agricultural history also presents clear examples of rejection of this inevitability and action around possibilities. These possibilities are centered around both productivism and post-productivism. In the example described below, farmers in Richland County expressed normative goals for agriculture in the economic or market sphere by demanding more control in the market and a better price for their goods. This is a different aspiration from the dominant norm of "feeding the world" through increased production and efficiency laid out in the earlier of this chapter.

The quote from the 1950 Senate hearing that I quoted earlier about demands for parity for farmer incomes shows recognition that "market events" may be beyond the control of farmers and must be remedied, "Today there is a solid core of agreement throughout the nation that it is unjust and unfair to the farmer if he, who toils at least as hard as do the heavy workers in industries, is left without a minimum of real income and means of livelihood because of market events beyond his control or fore-knowledge."



80,000 pounds of milk were dumped.

Richland County was a hotbed in Wisconsin in the 1960s of a very clear demand by farmers for more control of the marketplace and price with push-back against a strict monoculture of the productivist ideology. The local chapter of the National Farmers Organization (NFO) engaged in a number of milk dumping actions in March 1967 using social movement action to demand a just price for their milk. Participating farmers came together and withheld their milk from the processors, demanding a better price and dumped their milk. The March 30, 1967 Richland Observer newspaper reported that a week earlier "there was nearly a quarter of a million pounds of milk dumped." And that "It was apparent from the reactions of both the members and sympathizers dumping the milk and the large number of spectators who assembled that considerable feeling and favor had been worked up for the holding activity." Lines of trucks reportedly lined up and paraded through town before heading out to a planned dump site. Participating farmers and small children carried signs which read;

"Are the Cooperatives Helping the Farmer?"

"Why dump it on the market? Join the Party. NFO."

"Help prepare a future for me in farming. Join NFO"

"All the Way, Dump Every Day."[125]

A Sewell respondent I interviewed remembered vividly the milk dumping and felt the action was an important activity for the farmers to come together.

Another Sewell respondent, who was dairy farming with her husband at the time and participated in the milk holding action explained,

> "It felt really good to be part of the NFO action. I was glad that we participated. We were trying to do something. And its funny, I remember that before we took the milk to be dumped I would skim the cream off and we made it into butter for our family. It seemed like such a waste of that good cream, so we used it for ourselves."

The milk dumping was a clear and bold action in reaction to the dominance of the market. However, the majority of Richland County farmers did not participate in these actions. One Sewell respondent remembered the milk dumping by NFO and described his reason for not participating as,

> "No I didn't join the NFO. I just thought it was too big a deal for any one organization to fight. You can get 10, 15, 20 farmers in this area to dump their milk, but what is that compared to the whole country. Unless you can get everyone to dump, what little they're going to dump isn't going to make a big difference in the market."

This quote shows the strength of the inevitable, dampening people's willingness to try something new or different, not expecting that agriculture could

provide them with more than just production with prices dictated by the market. This is similar to the response I got from the farmers in the meeting I described in my opening page, "there is nothing we can do Sarah, we just have to accept it." A *traditional* expectation of agriculture. We don't necessarily like it, but it is inevitable.

Rejecting Market Inevitability and Embracing Ecological Opportunities

During my research I spoke with several organic producers in Richland County, one of whom was active in CROPP. He and his wife described reasons for their shift was because of their commitment to ecological concerns but importantly a key driver in their shift from "conventional" agriculture was a realization that the input costs and equipment costs were just too great in the standard productivist strain and the pursuit of increased production volumes.

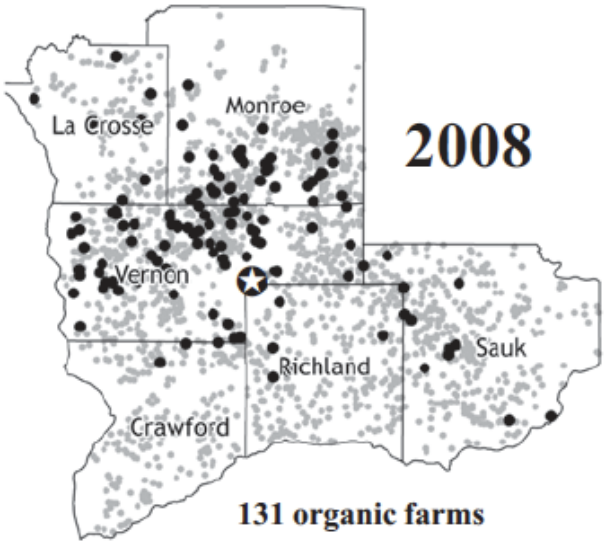
The man joked how he got all the glossy farm and dairy magazines in the mail every month had such great promises, "by the time I got to the end of the magazine I would have doubled my production, just by reading the magazine." They were interested in an alternative and shifted their dairy operation to organic over time and now had stopped dairy farming and were cropping and grazing beef cows in a certified organic system.

Organic Valley represents a clear example of action within both the economic ecological sphere of agriculture. Organic agriculture in the United States represents the change in agricultural management practices to fulfill the standards of the state

regulated certification and labeling program. Implementing organic practices and pursuing organic certification can be considered in the following ways, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive;

- a marketing strategy to obtain a higher price to support the business of farming, but also to support the families doing the farming,
- a way of connecting with the consumption demands of consumers, increasingly concerned about the ecological impact of agriculture – often these are urban, wealthier consumers.

In the first consideration organic agriculture is a reaction within the productionist scheme is to reject the idea that more alone is always better and move towards a strategy of producing a differentiated product for a higher price in the marketplace. Organic producers, especially those formed into cooperatives or business structures where they control or own the decision making could be likened to the Richland County farmers who held their milk in the 1960s, demanding a higher price. However these farmers are holding their milk and putting it on the market with a new designation and obtaining a higher price from consumers. This action takes place in the market. And in the case of the United States and other countries, this is regulated by the state.



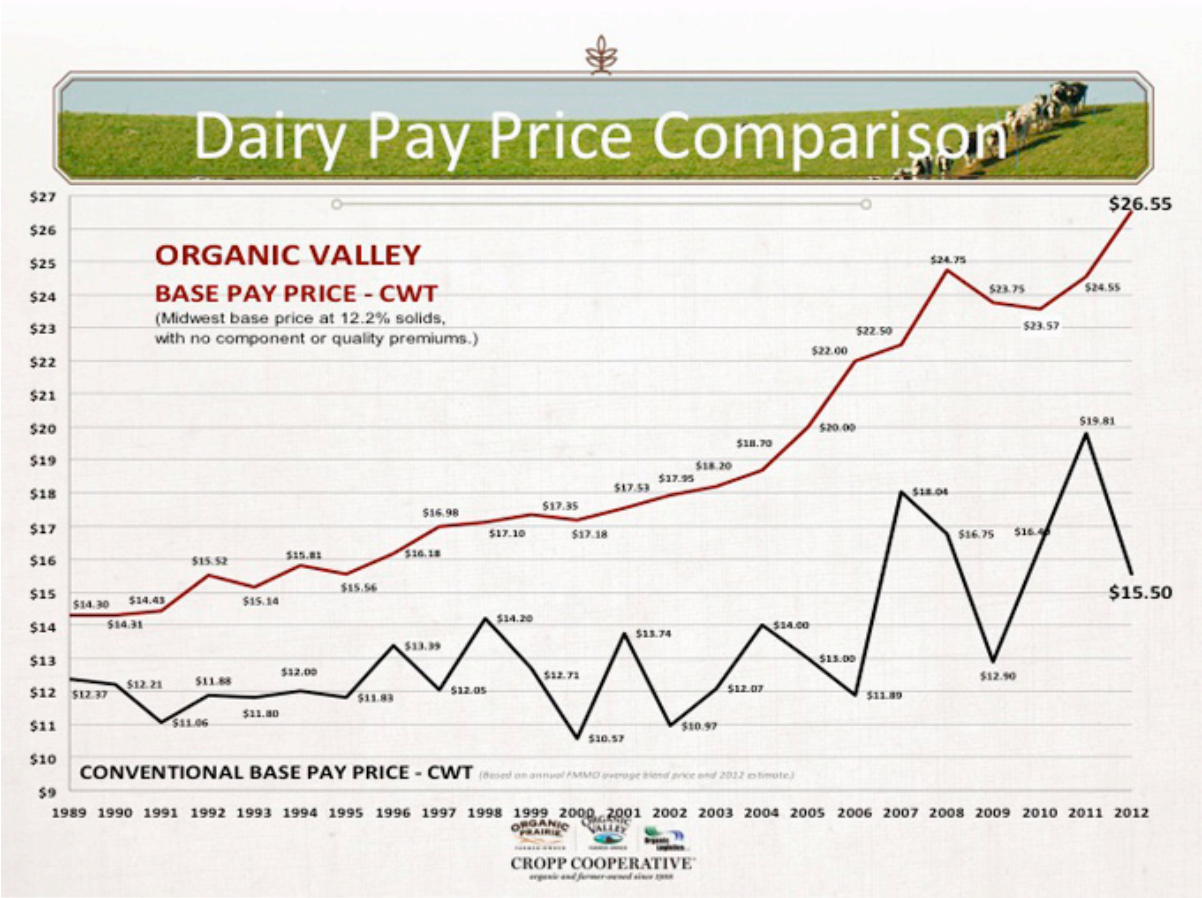
The meteoric rise of the Coulee Region Organic Produce Pool (CROPP) cooperative (later renamed the Cooperative Regions of Organic Produce Pools), also known by its brand name of Organic Valley, is a clear example of a rejection of the

inevitable of producing commodity milk for an uncertain and unknown market. Certified organic dairy farmers in the pool have changed their land, cropping, and animal care systems to meet organic standards in order to demand a higher price in the market.

Organic Valley was founded in 1988 in the neighboring county to the northwest of Richland and there are some farmers in the Richland County that belong to the cooperative. In 1998 there were 5 organic dairy farms in the mulit-county area shown in the map above, increasing to 131 by 2008 (the black dots are organic dairy farms and the grey dots represent conventional dairy farms).[126]

According to publications by Organic Valley the cooperative "engages multiple goals that address fair, farmer-determined food prices; good tasting, nutritious food; ecological and economic sustainability; healthy livelihoods and communities; cooperative principles; and respect for biological and human diversity."[127] Interestingly NFO was involved from the inception of CROPP, providing some of the initial marketing and logistical support to get the venture off the ground.[128]

Certified organic production, with the idea of being able to seek and obtain a premium in the marketplace has many nuances to it. Many farmers, as the family I described in the paragraph above, are committed to the ecological principals of no synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, as well as no antibiotic use in animals. But it is also about being a price maker in the market, instead of a price taker.[129] Obtaining a higher price in the marketplace from consumers has been clearly realized with the cooperative structure of CROPP, active in the area (see graph below).[130]



Organic Valley is an example of farmers taking action within the *normative* guidance of the *ecological conscience* to create farm systems that recognize and honor the ecological dynamics of agriculture, what some would call post-productivist forms of agriculture. However the Organic Valley example can also be considered along the Fordist/Post-Fordist trajectory. Just like the 1960s milk dumping, it can be viewed as a rejection of the productivist market ideology. It can also be considered a rejection of the Fordist drive for modernist uses of technology, primarily with the rejection of rBGH and synthetic chemicals and pesticides. But at the same time this example is clearly linked into new forms and new markets and relationships between consumption and production. Consumers are demanding a certified organic product that meets their ecological norms, positioning Organic

Valley in the Post-Fordist category, with a key aspect being changing producer-consumer relationships. And organic producer in Richland County talked specifically about his family's reasoning for transitioning their farm to certified organic production,

> "First they came along with the rBGH and I didn't think that was good for the cows, but also we don't need more milk on the market. And we saw when we shifted our herd to a grass-based system our production went way down, from like 25,000 [pound per year per cow] to like 14,000. And that was shocking, even to us. But actually we were making money, probably more than when we were up in production with the conventional system because we had saved so much on our inputs. We didn't have the fuel costs like we used to. We didn't have the vet bills. Our cows were healthier. We didn't have all the other input costs, fertilizers and feed additives."

This savings on input costs for grass-based dairy systems is well documented in Wisconsin and in the United States, showing that despite reduced production, grass-based dairies are making more money per cow and per pound of milk sold.[131] However it takes them out of their position as consumer, to the same degree as perhaps the "progressive" farmer whose system requires the purchase of more outside inputs, along the Fordist and post-Fordist scheme.

But what is perhaps more interesting to talk about is why there are not more Organic Valley farms in Richland County. As is shown in the map above, there are only a handful of certified Organic Valley farms in Richland County, in contrast to the high concentration in the counties to the northwest. The majority of the county has very similar topography to Vernon and Crawford counties to the northwest, where the large concentration of Organic Valley farms are located. If the positive driver of topography was pushing this reaction then we would expect to see a similar density of farms that had made the transition to organic production. Based on my research I have two explanations for why we do not see more Organic Valley farms in Richland County. These have to do with the relational space that has been created. One is the social norms on how one should farm and the second has to do with existing processing infrastructure.

Organic agriculture is viewed with skepticism and sometimes outright hostility by many conventional farmers. Going to meetings statewide you often here complaints that organic farmers are some how saying that their products are better than conventional. Also some farmers express disdain for consumers that are willing to pay more for the products labeled organic, feeling that these consumers are ignorant or being duped. In speaking with farmers in Richland County who had gone organic, there was distinct social ostracism felt and experienced because of their farm system and management choices.

A couple that had obtained organic certification for their farm described how the people in the area viewed them,

> "Oh they thought we were totally crazy. But who knows, they probably always thought we were crazy. But our son is active in agriculture activities at the high school and I know he has suffered some headaches from people giving him grief about the way that we farm."

Research on Salomon adoption of "sustainable" agricultural systems can be impacted by attitudes at the household level and also at the community level.[132] Farm families may disagree about farm system changes and overall philosophies of farming. Also these disagreements may take place at the community level. I asked the Sewell respondents what they thought about the rise of Organic Valley and what it meant for the area. The majority either said, they didn't know too much about it or expressed a "to each his own" attitude. One man said, "myself, I don't see much advantage in organic, but if a person thinks that way, fine."

Another Sewell respondent expressed the following sentiment when asked about his view on the rise of Organic Valley in the area,

> "Oh I think it has changed things some. You see our son is monkeying with that organic stuff. I don't believe in it. Because to me most of it looks like neglect. When you have weeds growing up in the corn field. And your probably producing half a crop. To me it is neglect. That is just my feeling."

This is similar to the concern that the other Sewell respondent expressed about CRP land taking land out of production and that this production was needed to feed a hungry world. Of course there is resistance to this singular form, that we see in efforts of farmers to organize themselves and demand higher prices in the market. There is also resistance in the form of people wanted to back their trucks over symbolic signs of detached production, in the story of the auction in the last chapter.

A second explanation for why there are not more Organic Valley farms in Richland County I attribute to the strength of the built dairy processing infrastructure in the county. Additional research would be needed to fully understand this dynamic, but Richland County boasts considerable dairy processing and distribution infrastructure, now entirely centered in the county seat, Richland Center. These active sites of production over the years created stable conventional markets for dairy farmers to ship their milk and also active recruitment by these processing plants for farmers' milk. I postulate that the strength of this conventional dairy market reduced farmers' interest in transitioning to organic production.

Agricultural Production and the Creation of Socio-Cultural Space

Regardless of what type of system of dairy production, organic or conventional, the physical or positive reality of the need to milk cows everyday, at

least two times a day, created social space for dairy farmers and rural residents. It is of course very important to note, that while playing cards with neighbors because you couldn't be too far away from your cows may sound like a pleasant affliction to some, the regimen and responsibilities of farming, especially dairy farming in a rural area, also created spaces of social isolation and negative feelings of being tied down. This duality must not be ignored or the romantic pictures of happy neighbors smiling around the card table be given too prominent a place. Richland County residents, whom I talked to, also expressed sentiments of isolation and being stuck on the farm along with the positive social spaces that were created by the production routines.

As I mentioned earlier in the introduction, many people did not stay in the rural areas and instead left agriculture and community and sought life and livelihood in urban areas. Another respondent tells of how she and her new husband left the area for his job in Milwaukee. When asked if they wanted to farm when they graduated from high school, she emphatically responded, "No!" They both came from farm families but did not want to farm. She explained that they did not want to work as hard as they saw their parents working, for such a small payback. When asked if she liked living in the city she said, she didn't, "Oh I don't know, you are just kind of lost [there]." This couple ended up returning to farm soon after leaving, due to the unexpected illness of his father. They farmed the rest of their lives and had no regrets, according to the woman.

The nature of dairy farming enforced certain social relations with neighbors and businesses. The need to milk the cows every day and in most cases, twice a day,

kept dairy farm families close to home. Smaller cheese processing plants created more opportunities for informal conversation and interaction. The process of getting the milk from the farm to the cheese plant also created certain social relationships. One of the 1948 Sewell respondents, whom I interviewed, drove the milk truck for several years after high school. He described his route, naming all the different families at the eighteen farms he stopped at every-other day. I asked if he knew them, "oh sure, I knew them all. And sometimes I was probably the first one to know what was going on at the different farms. Good and bad."

I remember my drive back home from this interview and thinking about the role of the milk man as a "social actor" and how the change in the scale of the milk route and dairy processing changed the social space available in the countryside in Richland County. I was quick to see this as a loss in closer contacts with nearby neighbors as the number of farms decreased and the farms that were milking cows and producing dairy for the market declined. That same milk man perhaps spanned a much larger territory and perhaps only stopped at 8 farms, fundamentally changing the space.

However, this does not mean that there is not social space there. The milk man that picks up the milk from our farm, starts his route in the wee-hours of the morning and travels across 3 or 4 counties every day, picking up milk and taking it to the large processing plants. He is an important social actor. He brings with him news from the other farms and issues and ideas that are floating around among the other milk men that are also out there talking with farmers. When my husband and I were preparing for our wedding, Nels' brother and neighbor friends held a small

bachelor party for him with a handful of guests, including the milkman. As I was new to the farm scene at that point I remember that I was struck by this idea of the milkman coming to the bachelor party. Now it seems perfectly natural that he would be included in this social activity.

As the interaction with the market changed and the scale of production and processing changed over time the qualities of social interactions changed. They were not completely absent, just different. Just as the woman who started out in the city of Milwaukee felt lost there, the sites of social and economic interaction were being lost in rural Richland County. It is important to point out that the changes I am describing, that have been described in the rural sociological literature, a shift to market production, off-farm work, and decreased numbers of farms and farm families are not devoid of social relationships. But the social relationships created by and connected to these new forms of organization are located differently. One Sewell respondent, who was not farming, but worked in the dairy industry providing services for dairy farms, described a sense of loss in community vibrancy, but he was quick to point out that the farmers that got bigger had a lot of outlets for meetings, in farm organizations and at agri-business sponsored meetings.

Above I have described the *normative* signals that families engage with in forming their expectations of what agriculture can provide for them as well as what the community and the wider consumer expects in the way of farming practices and conservation. As with the "cheese and chat" that I opened the chapter with, the shift in the structure of dairy processing from more, smaller cheese factories to fewer,

larger plants was tied in with changing social relationships between farm families and between farm families and non-farm families.

A Sewell respondent remembered how her husband's family, who operated a small rural cheese factory socialized with the farmers who supplied milk to the plant as well as neighbors. She described how everyone had dairy cows that needed to be milked, which kept them close to home,

> "His mother and dad played cards with all these people, because nobody went anywhere. So they knew each other because he took their milk and because they were friends. If someone went to town, then they checked and made sure if someone need to get something or to go along."

A woman who farmed off and on in her life remembered socializing with neighboring farm families, also noting that farming time rhythms, as well as farm income, kept people close by and also reinforced self-provisioning on the farm,

> "We'd sit out in the yard in the summertime and visit. There wasn't any going to town or going to the movie, you know. Them days you didn't get to town to buy candy or any thing. I was a firm believer in making everything from scratch. I've always been that way. I enjoy cooking and baking and gardening."

Harvest time was also an important time for socializing around the activities of agricultural production. Many of the Sewell respondents and other Richland County residents with farm backgrounds talked about "threshing" crews and remembered the important social interaction of those times,

> "It was always fun because they had people in that whole area, you know when threshing came you would have people from all over that would come and you would have to go out in the garden and pick all those vegetables and get them all ready, and make pie and make bread. … The threshing crews all liked to come to my grandmother's house because they knew they were going to get the best meal, so we were probably feeding 20 people, plus all the people that were helping. Many of the wives would come over too."

A man active in agriculture that grew up in the late 1950s and 60s also remembered fondly the threshing crew that brought together the extended family, sharing equipment.

> "The biggest piece of machinery I remember him having was a threshing machine. What we did, when I was a kid, 8 or 9 years old, the threshing machine that he bought we went from farm to farm and threshed their oats and their kids would be with our kids. It was a family ordeal and then at noon whatever farm they were at they would put the dinner on. … [But then most people bought

> combines and] then you didn't thresh oats. I would probably say about when I went to high school, late 60s. We were threshing when a lot of people had combines. We were old school and it was an enjoyable thing. So we hung on to it."

But as farms became fewer and as individual farmers bought their own equipment, some of this social interaction around production activities declined,

> "Neighbors still will help neighbors but not like they used to, they used to all know, at least in this area, a circle around them where they threshed and filled silo and stuff like that. They knew each other. Right now, a lot of them know each other, the big farmers that get together at these meetings. But a lot of the ones that's older and aren't going to modernize, they are pretty much unknown."

In the previous chapter I shared the details of how farmers were recognized as "Outstanding" based on farming practices, the use of conservation practices, and civic engagement. As I read through newspaper articles and meeting minutes back to 1959 from the Outstanding Young Farmer group, there were many details that indicate that for decades the organizational and recognition meetings and picnics included singing and skits, "kids tap dancing" and more. The minutes from 1963 record that 84 people attended the August 4th picnic that year. The summer picnic

was traditionally hosted by one of the families at their farm and the recognition dinner was hosted by the Jay-Cees and the Chamber of Commerce in town at a restaurant and the program was sponsored by a range of agriculture related businesses; supply and processing co-ops, banks, etc. The organization of farmers had small membership dues (as low as 50 cents some years or later in the 1990s individual farms were listed as sponsors of the awards dinner and recognition at the $25 level.)

By 1991 the minutes reveal a slow down in the strength of this site of agricultural social interaction and a shift to running the organization with funds from agri-business sponsors.

- "Due to lack of interest, no summer meeting was held for 1991"
- "We had no summer meeting this year due to lack of response" [1992]
- "Due to busy schedules no winter meeting was held in 1994. No summer meetings 93 & 94"
- "Need for dues was discussed and was rejected as not necessary"… "It was discussed at having a summer activity at a park instead of at a farm. Everyone has too much going on." [1995]

This example of the definition of an "outstanding" farmer laid out in the scoring metric of the OYF, presented above, shows clearly the mix of expectations that are put on farmers from the larger community for their civic involvement and farming practices for both production and conservation. However, the OYF story also shows the fading of social organization of farmers, centered around production.

Social relationships around agricultural production did not cease entirely. They became more segmented by production type and organized along different categories and in response to different structures. I attended several meetings that were set up for information but also for socializing on some of the larger dairy farms

in the county. In some way these were designed to inform the non-farm public about how a larger-scale dairy operates and to assure them that there was little environmental risk. Participants were given tours of the farm and fed. There were speakers and activities geared around understanding the use of technology to boost production and there was information given about all the environmental safeguards that were in place.[133]

But some Richland County residents expressed concerns about social issues around the increasing use of immigrant labor on the larger farms. One Sewell respondent who had dairy farmed up through the 1980s said,

> "You pay the price when you go into these things. I don't know what the answer is. I've never really wanted a set up like that even when I was young. I don't know why? I don't know if it was the money or the debt load? I don't want 20 Mexicans around doing my work. I don't know if you ever saw a Hispanic in Richland Center until all these parlors went in. Now the town is full of them. They probably are all right. I'm not saying. I realize that the guys can't hire anybody else to do it. The white people won't work."

This Sewell respondent refers to the arrival of Mexican workers in connection with the milking parlor systems that have been installed on many farms, especially farms that have expanded to larger herd sizes. Milking parlors speed up the milking process and often are tied to increasing the number of milkings from two to three

times-a-day. This general expansion of dairy farms is tied in to a Post-Fordist system of production for commodity global markets. These changing dairy farm systems require more hired labor. Increasingly in Wisconsin farmers have begun to hire more immigrant workers to meet their labor needs.

The increase of immigrant labor on Wisconsin dairy farms has been documented across the state; a 2009 study estimates that 40% of the dairy workforce was comprised of immigrant workers from Mexico and Central America. The arrival of these workers and their families has created new areas of demographic diversity in many rural communities. This new diversity engenders opportunities for new social interactions and relationships but also can be the source of tensions around community "belonging" and how community resources are used.[134]

New Social Spaces of Post-Productivism and Post-Fordism

In additional to the new social spaces created with the increase in immigrant workers on dairy farms, other changes in production systems create different opportunities and tensions. A shift towards organic production also signals a change in social groupings. Including Organic Valley producers in Richland County there were 7 organic-certified farms in Richland County in 2011, a mix of dairy, beef, vegetables, and diversified farms, for a total of 1237 acres.[135] As was discussed earlier, Organic Valley dairy production and marketing represents farmers operating in post-productivist space focusing on the ecological functions of agriculture, but also forming new markets, with differentiated products for

consumers putting it more in the post-Fordist trajectory. Selling products that make ecological claims through secondary and direct markets represents the development of new consumer and producer relationships. But along with the potential opportunity for new social spaces and new social diversity, there is also push-back regarding concern or skepticism over the shift to organic agriculture as a production practice.

The expanded farms hiring immigrant workers and the organic farms using different production practices can both be viewed in the productive functions of agriculture. But there are also new functions being recognized in the countryside. This comes in the way of tourism, second home development, recreation, including hunting, and other economic activities that have to do with the maintenance of working agricultural lands and/or the preservation of open space.

During my research I observed these new functions. Richland County has a number of bed & breakfast and tourism initiatives and festivals that are advertised to local and non-local people to bring people to spend money enjoying the aesthetics of the land. In addition there is no shortage of residential development and hunting cabins out in the agricultural areas of the county. The agro-tourism and recreation activities as well as the second home development can be seen as post-productivist but also could be looked at as "consumption of the countryside," as Marsden and Sonnino describe.[136]

Cloke and Goodwin highlight "the commodification of rural areas, whereby rural environments are being exploited to match the demands of contemporary consumption. Commodification includes profiting from new forms of organizing

recreation, leisure and tourism, which can be sold in a more privatized 'pay-as-you-enter' type of rural environment. It includes the development of particular styles of living through special niches in the rural housing market (such as service class or retirement development). It even includes a reorganization of labor requirements, both to service these other commodities, and indeed to maintain the backdrop of a manicured rural landscape which is the necessary context for those commodities."[137] In an earlier piece Marsden describes this trend as conservation for private consumption.[138]

This issue became very apparent to me as I drove around the countryside of Richland County on my many research trips. Less than a mile down the road from the Heijman dairy, which I discussed in the previous chapter, there is a subdivision of a dozen or so houses. When I asked people I interviewed about who lived in these houses and the other subdivisions or individual new or renovated houses (or even old barns turned into houses), it was primarily people from outside the area or people that had returned to the area after going elsewhere, often to the city to make a living, who were coming to rural Richland County to enjoy a second home or a new phase in their lives, enjoying the things that are beautiful and fine about working agricultural landscapes. These new houses built by Richland County natives that had returned or new people in old houses or barns met the norms of city people in regards to size of the house and size of the yard. Many of them provided ample space for large driveways and garages for parking recreational vehicles and other things. Another Sewell respondent noted the difference in these new residence compared to local residents who farmed,

> "You drive out through the countryside. I can tell the people living in those houses, don't make their money there. There's no machinery. There's no animals. And if it's 6pm in the evening there's a car parked right by the steps to the house. [They] jump out, up the steps, and turn on the TV."

A women I interviewed described it like this,

> "We certainly don't have neighborhoods like we used to. When we were growing up it was the little rural schools that were your community. We didn't go outside of the school circle until you went to high school. And certainly our church was another important part of our social life." … "The school consolidated in 1963. You can look back and everyone used to go to the basketball games, that was the social event. But now how many from Lone Rock go to those games, unless you have someone in your family playing. I do see that the grade school is trying to connect families more and many of these are new families, new to the area. I think that is fantastic"

Another woman, a Sewell respondent who's husband had hunted quite a bit and so did her sons, discussed the difference in land use for hunting and recreation,

> "The guys who live next door aren't neighborly. They have no trespassing signs everywhere, that's not neighborly anymore, you don't dare step on their property. It used to be the old farmers it was a handshake and you took their word for it. But now this younger generation, they are all for themselves. That's not right. But they'll learn, like the rest of us did."

Things have definitely changes, as far as the social spaces that were created around production. There are fewer 4H clubs and FFA groups and fewer children showing cattle or sheep or pigs at the fair. But these social forms still do persist and those who are active are committed to them. Changes in production and changes to post-production also create new spaces and places for social relationships.

I observed another set of agricultural activities while doing my research also seem to straddle the productivist/post-productivist and Fordist/post-Fordist categories in different ways. Richland County, like many counties in Wisconsin, is the site of new markets as part of local and regional food system development. This takes the form of new differentiated markets for agricultural products, such as certified organic products, as well as new venues and logistics for economic activities, such as farmers markets, where farmers can sell directly to consumers. Also Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) enterprises, in which a consumer "subscribes" to a weekly box of vegetables and produce and pays the farmer in advance of the season, would also fall into this category of new venues and logistics.

Richland Center has two farmers market days with anywhere from 3 to 15 vendors depending on the season and the day. I observed many producer – consumer social interactions during the many visits I made to the market. One market vendor, who grew a mix of vegetables to sell at the market described her experience,

> "This isn't always the busiest market, but it is a good one for us. One thing I really like is all the people that I get to meet from the area. I don't think I'd be able to meet them if I wasn't here at the market and they weren't buying my veggies."

Richland County also has several farms that are operating on a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model, in which consumers "subscribe" to the farm for a weekly box of vegetables and other produce. Consumers basically pay in advance for their produce (or perhaps in a couple installments). This up front cash infusion takes some of the risk away from the farmer. This set up also lends itself to close ties between the consumers and producers. Richland Center also has a small grocery cooperative right down town. During my time researching in Richland County I became a member of the cooperative, to enjoy the benefits of membership while shopping there, but also to observe the people working, shopping and eating there, as well as to see the different farms that were supplying the cooperative with produce. All these new forms of producer and consumer relationships have their own social spaces.

Things appear mixed on the persistence of the "old" social spaces that were created around "traditional" production. Social spaces of "progressive" agriculture are available but perhaps not open for all and may create new dynamics that seem problematic to some. New residents who have moved in for the "consumption" of the countryside may not have the same schedules and expectations for social life that the farming community once had or might expect. But at the same time the new residents and the returned residents offer new opportunities for social space. As one woman put it, when describing how some people who had grown up in the area, moved away to go to college or right after high school and were not returning older and with some savings from their "city jobs,"

> "Well I say, this is what we have to hope for in our rural communities, that some of our people go off and make their fortunes and that they return to be active in the community. They do so much when they are here in the community, that is what we can hope for."

New residents and returned residents provide new energy for communities and recognition of different functions for agriculture and the land, such as recreation, aesthetic views, and wildlife create specific opportunities in rural areas. Earlier in this chapter I shared quotes from some of my interviews, in which people lamented the changing or loss of neighborhoods and the fact that the people earning their income in town were perhaps back at their homes after work, tucked in front

of the television by six o'clock. Along with this there is also some resistance to developing new economic ventures around multiple functions of agriculture. I spoke often during my research to a man who is native Richland County and has been involved in revitalization efforts in downtown Richland Center and in the county as a whole. He talked about the idea for capitalizing on the beautiful views of the county for bicyclists,

> "I think it is a great idea. It makes prefect sense. We have beautiful views here and ridges and valleys and the bicycling community loves it. There have been some efforts to develop some rides and some tourist activity around it. It is amazing to me how reluctant people are to try to develop these sorts of things, which seem so obvious. I think they think, well I would never want to go on a bike ride, so why would anyone else?"

Richland County is full of interesting stories and histories that convey the richness of the dynamics at play. One of the Sewell respondents surprised me greatly when he was describing how he had grown up on a farm and moved away to the city after high school. He told me how he would have liked to farm but there were a lot of different reasons and family dynamics that kept him from doing that. At one point he had come back and went in to farming with a sister and her husband, but that had not worked out very well. Eventually he had obtained a piece of land and lived there with his wife, near the Wisconsin River. He then talked about

how he had purchased some more property, and he said it kind of nonchalantly. I asked him if he was farming that land and he said, no it has some Native American burial mounds on it.[139] Interesting, I thought. He got up and beckoned me over to a map that hung in a frame that was a hand drawn map of the burial grounds. He asked if I wanted to go see them. We hopped in his truck and drove over the field and got out to look at them. He then pointed out the buffalo herd just on the other side of the fence. These weren't his, he laughed when I looked with a big question mark. This was a Ho-Chunk buffalo herd here.

He then took me across the highway to, what looked like, a large hill or small bluff. Then he told me the surprising story that this was in fact a very scared site for many people. We got out of the truck and began to climb up the slope, which was not too hard to do. We got to the top and he told me that this was know as the pregnant woman mound. He pointed to the east and showed me how the hill had a round bump at one point and two more oblong rises a bit east but to the north and south of the main bump. The bump was the pregnant woman's belly and the oblong rises were her knees. The hill was a pregnant woman and on the spring equinox the sun rose exactly in between her legs, as if she was giving birth to the sun.

This man assured me that he had always been a practical man and that he "never really believed in these things." After he had purchased the land on occasion he would hear about or see that there were people walking around on the hill and even small groups of people gathered. Over the years many, what he called, "new age" people would come, some from as far away as England, would come to have small ceremonies on the pregnant woman mound. At first he was a bit irked by the

people coming and trespassing on his property. But he did talk to them and one woman in particular left a lasting impression. After she had been there for a ceremony she had died suddenly in a car accident, as he tells the story, and a friend had returned with some of her remains and asked permission to leave them on the pregnant woman mound. He agreed and somehow from then on was more open to the travelers coming to appreciate and take energy from this important site. In the past years he has now set up a regular event or tour of the site for local people and people from afar. As I have been thinking about the productivist/post-productivist transition, perhaps this is a very true example of a post-productivist function in the agricultural land and detached from the economic regime of accumulation.[140]

I have shared many quotes and anecdotes about the social spaces around the economy and ecology of Richland County. In thinking about my research it is clear that there is not one trajectory happening with regard to production and post-production, Fordsim and post-Fordism. There are pockets of both and mixtures. Some social space continues around production and other withers. New spaces are created around new forms of production and also around post-productive interactions. This is the emergent multifunctionality which I use in my title. There is an increased diversity of the parameters for action, not completely dominated by productive functions. As Mormont describes, rural areas are no longer "one single space, but a multiplicity of social spaces for one and the same geographical area, each of them having its own logic, its own institutions, as well as its own network of actors, which are specific and not local."[141] By examining the dynamics and

evolution of the social space over time the *normative* forces and *positive* infrastructure and ideas around productivism have been dominant in re-creating the rural social space. However new "progressive" forms of productivism, centered around widening markets and extra-local connections along the lines of a post-Fordist economy and regime of accumulation have created a strengthening of social spaces for "progressive" farmers and a weakening for those I am calling "traditional." For new residents, not connected to the farm and agricultural production, these social spaces around production are not accessible or difficult to access at the same time that the farm community does not necessarily have access to new social spaces forming around post-productivist activities.

Conclusion

Poet and farmer Wendell Berry defines sustainable agriculture as an agriculture that does not "deplete soils or people" and meets "the expectations of the land."[142] In my ethnographic research in Richland County, Wisconsin, following in the footsteps of William Sewell I observed an emergent multifunctional agriculture. My access to the 1948 Sewell survey of *The Occupational Plans of Wisconsin Youth* and ability to follow-up with a small subset of the original survey respondents has opened the doorway to understanding the historical trends and future trajectories of agricultural change in this area.

I have laid out a framework for understanding the interaction of *positive* and *normative* forces around the multiple functions of agriculture, including market and non-market, public and private, and social, economic, and ecological functions. The academic literature and policy debates may recognize *positive* and *normative* aspects of multifunctional agriculture, however the interaction of the two is rarely considered. I introduce in my dissertation that the interaction of *positive* and *normative* forces creates a *relational* space, which must be considered to better understand agricultural change. *Relational* space is the space of expectations, where aspirations and goals are checked or "tempered" against physical and material infrastructure as well as ideational structures. Expectations lay out what action can be taken within the agricultural and community system, in response to perceived possibilities or inevitabilities.

In my dissertation I engaged with the rural sociological literature on multifunctional agriculture and ongoing debates about the nature of agriculture and rural community change. One part of the academic and policy debate is centered around whether or not there is ongoing transition in agriculture from productivism to post-productivism or if similar regimes of accumulation are still persistent and any transition is better seen as a shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism. This debate is relevant to my consideration of the interaction of the *positive* and *normative* forces and resulting *relational* space because both the discussion of a shift from productivism to post-productivism and a shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism provide a useful lens for understanding agricultureal expectations.

Using the conception of a Fordist/Post-Fordist transition more clearly uncovers the *normative* and *positive* forces and resulting *relational* space geared towards new and global markets, including what this means for shifting producer and consumer roles and relationships. In addition, using the lens of a productivist/post-productivist shift proves useful because of the way in which rural social space has historically been shaped by *positive* systems and structures of production and how new forms of production, as well as post-productive activities in the rural space, change social interactions.

I presented three empirical chapters in my dissertation based on my Richland County research. The first presented the *positive* and *normative* interaction around economic production for the market. In Richland County I see evidence of two qualities of *relational* space, that of the "traditional" farmer and the "progressive" farmer. Both are producers and engaged in the *positive* ideational

structures and *normative* goals of productivism, but what distinguishes them is their interaction with the market. The *progressive* farmer embraces the post-Fordist regime of accumulation geared towards global markets and engages with the new role of farmer as producer and consumer interacting with new material aspirations for both farm and farm household. In contrast the "traditional" farmer participates in production but does not enthusiastically embrace and celebrate this new position. Both of these categories of farmer view the market and productivism as inevitable.

In agriculture there is also another strong inevitability, that of the inevitability of nature and the natural world. In my second empirical chapter I investigated the interactions of *positive* and *normative* forces around economic and ecological functions of agriculture. It is quite obvious that climate, natural processes, topography and geology are very strong *positive* forces impacting agriculture and farming. And in Richland County, Wisconsin the "driftless" topography is a very material force impacting farming decision making and practices. Along with the *positive* forces of nature you also have *normative* forces around conservation and what human relationships with the land and nature should be. There is strong interaction between the *relational* space of productivism and the *relational* space created around the ecological functions of agriculture in relationship to nature and the land. My ethnography of Richland County reveled two different reactions to the inevitability of nature and the land. Both "progressive" and "traditional" farmers, recognize the inevitability of topography. However their reaction to the inevitability of nature differs.

"Traditional" farmers may tend to take a passive approach to natural forces and create farming practices that do not push the systems or recognize some of the natural and scientifically understood systems. "Progressive" farmers embrace a more singular push towards production for economic goals and norms within a shifting Fordist/post-Fordist systems. These systems push for increased production using technology and scientific knowledge. Technology and scientific knowledge for new conservation practices geared towards production are also part of the Fordist/Post-Fordist continuum. In the Post-Fordist shift we see production geared increasingly towards global markets, no longer embedded in the local place.

In my third empirical chapter, entitled *Lost Cheese*, I described the rejection of dominant agricultural functions, as well as concerns over new forms of farming systems, both large-scale concentrated agriculture and organic production. Adopton and rejection of different agricultural systems create different and changing social space for farmers and rural communities. For both "traditional" and "progressive" farmers social interaction for farm families and farm communities has been structured around agricultural production. As the scale of production has changed and as things have shifted, both along the productivist/post-productivist and Fordist/post-Fordist continua, social space has changed and in some cases withered. As the agricultural economy moved along the Fordist/post-Fordist trajectory, there was a split between what I am calling "traditional" farmers and "progressive" farmers. Both these types of farmers are producers. However, as stated above, their response to the *relational* space of interacting *normative* and *positive* forces around production has resulted in differing constructions of the

inevitability of the system. "Progressive" farmers more fully adopt and embrace science and technology in the pursuit of increased production and also becoming more engaged with global markets in a Fordist/post-Fordist regime of accumulation. Although much overlap still remains, I present evidence that this split among farmers has in some cases led to a split in the social spaces active for farmers and the farm community. At the same time there are "pockets of post-productivism" that have structured new and emerging social spaces for communities and also specifically for farmers and rural residents. Additionally post-Fordist structures have created new and emerging social spaces for some farmers and consumers.

As these new spaces emerge there is push back to people and initiatives that seem to reject the inevitability of the market and productivism and the inevitability of nature. In one Richland County example above this takes the form of not joining farmer movements, like NFO milk dumping because of perceptions that it is impossible to overcome market forces. It also comes in the form of rejection or skepticism to new market forms and new farming practices, like organic production or putting land aside in Conservation Reserve Programs, for example. These practices go against the dominant *relational* space of productivism framed around the primacy of the goal of "feeding the world." But there is also rejection of this productivist dominance, in the form of people wanting to back over the signs of farms representing detached production, such as the case of the Heijman dairy foreclosure, which I outline in my first empirical chapter.

Mary Neth in her excellent book *Preserving the Family Farm* concludes, "From the past, before agriculture became 'modern," comes the visions that farm people had of integrating work and living, ways farm women sought to connect the needs of families, communities, and farms, and practices by which rural people together built flexible and adaptive human connections – visions that perhaps can provide clues about how to create another "new agriculture," one that can meet the needs of communities and the land more than simply the needs of production."[143]

My conclusion from this Richland County case is similar. I observe many diverse *normative* forces that push and pull the economic and ecological functions of agriculture, primarily around production and conservation. We set up specific programs and we declare production goals and allocate money at the state and federal level to achieve them. But what I did not see is similar initiatives and infrastructure intentionally being developed and deployed to reach aspirational goals for social relationships, the "vision" that Neth writes about. The *normative* forces of social space are often underarticulated or even mute and the *positive* structures of social space, such as sites of social interaction like clubs, organizations and meeting places are in part evolving and in part withering at this time.

By examining the dynamics and evolution of the social space over time the *normative* forces and *positive* infrastructure and ideas around productivism have been dominant in re-creating the rural social space. In Richland County this is evidenced by the ebb and flow of organizations promoting agricultural production and conservation and also by social interaction of rural neighbors. New "progressive" forms of productivism, centered around widening markets and extra-

local connections along the lines of a post-Fordist economy and regime of accumulation have created a strengthening of social spaces for "progressive" farmers and a weakening for those I am calling "traditional." For new residents, not connected to the farm and agricultural production, these social spaces around production are not accessible or difficult to access at the same time that the farm community does not necessarily have access to new social spaces forming around post-productivist activities.

During my research I specifically kept my eye out for these kinds of visions around *normative* and *positive* forces impacting and creating social space. There were some, like the schools that are working to connect local families that may not have other social institutions to connect with in the area. Or even the productivst "progressive" farmers who host open houses on their farms to bring in both country and city folks. Here are examples of action around social space.

I figured I would see a vision for *relational* social space in comprehensive planning done in the county. All municipalities in Wisconsin were required to complete a "comprehensive plan" as part of "Smart-growth" legislation passed at the state level. I thought for sure would contain specific benchmarks and recommendations for social space in the county.[144] In the 214 page document there is little if any specific mention of social relationships.

Just after the title page the poem copied below, which is unattributed, is printed. The poem covers a wide range of values around farming and natural resources of the County. And like the Outstanding Young Farmer metric I presented in Chapter V, it is a great find to understand what some of the *normative* and *positive*

forces are in the county and what the expectations are for residents. The poem is telling because except for some discussion of the crowd and the church and ready volunteers there is not much articulated around social life here either. The structures of agricultural production and land use and natural resources are clear.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
(25 years from now, what will we see)
We would like to keep our farming
To think of losing it is most alarming
We have our shopping malls, stores, and shops;
But what would they do without our farmers and their crops?
We see hayfields, grain, cattle grazing and corn so tall;
Let's take care of it, we have it all!
We'd like to see a few old barns, especially the "round";
They are few and far between I found.
We like our lakes and streams, a place to relax and rest;
Will these natural beauties always be here? We hope for the best.
Rural life is great; it's hard to beat;
Let's try to keep our countryside nice and neat.
We love our hills and trees which provide lumber and logs;
Our swamp lands, wildlife, and Hub City bogs.
Hunting is a privilege we enjoy, hunting squirrel, raccoon, coyote, and deer;
We must save our environment or lose hunting we fear.
We have our Natural Bridge, Elephant Rock, Steamboat Rock, parks, scenic roads, and many natural sights to see;
Would we like to travel and see none of these, not even a tree?
Houses placed in the country is not all bad;
Refusing people dreams of their home is sad.
As our county grows we need a place for people to live;
We must find land for the purpose to give.
Small city and rural life is great; if you need help for an event oncoming;
Many a volunteer come running.
Of our country churches we are so proud;
In years to come will they still bring a crowd?
Friendly and helpful neighbors is a treat to behold;
Many friendships and memories from this unfold.
The City Auditorium has served so many of us in so many ways;
We hope in the near future we can again go there to see our musicals, entertainments, and plays.
Our orchards are an asset for us all;
Where we all go for apples, grapes, pumpkins, cider, etc. in the fall.
The bicycle trails are a delight for bikers to ride;
For a time of relaxation and to enjoy the countryside.
The Court House has had a face lift and we even restored the clock;
It's now a beautiful work of art on the city block.
This is just a few of the many things our county has to share;
Let's all join in to keep them there.

There is evidence of an emergent multifunctionality with pockets of post-productivism in Richland County. The landscape of social life reproduced around

production is shifting. In some areas social life around production persists and is growing, however social interactions are also inhibited by new forms of agricultural production. There are new social relationships being developed and emerging around post-productive activities. These new forms of relationships are in many cases relatively new and there are some gaps in the social spaces here. If we expect agriculture to not deplete people and the land we need to intentionally study and engage with the *positive* and *normative* forces, their interaction, and resulting *relational* space. If we do this, like the gains in production, yield, and efficiency and like the soil erosion improvements that were achieved with local, state and federal programs and initiatives, we will see a vibrant social life around all these activities in the future.

Endnotes

[1] Jackson, et al. (1984, *x*)

[2] Barthelemy & Nieddu (2004) and OECD (2001) and Van Huylenbroeck and Durand (2004).

[3] Van der Ploeg, Laurent, Blondeau, and Bonnafous (2009).

[4] Van Huylenbroeck and Durand (2004, 1-16) in their introductory chapter to their edited volume on multifunctionality, "Multifunctionality and rural development: a general framework" lay out some of the basic terms and conceptual categories presented in Figure 1 and how they interact. Also Renting et al. (2009) present a literature review of the "state-of-the-art" for four conceptual categories which they define; market regulation approaches, land-use approaches, actor-oriented approaches, and public regulation approaches.

[5] OECD (2001, 9). See Morgan, Marsden, Miele, Morley (2010) and Marsden and Sonnino (2008) for more details on the academic and policy discourse.

[6] See discussion of ideology from Wright on Therborn in endnote 37 below. For a discussion of the way in which hegemony is part of the structuration of space Laitin's (1986) work on the cultural and political mobilizations of the Yoruba people in colonial Africa provides a very interesting case of how hegemonic cultural systems become the core of ideology and become "common sense" but can ultimately be challenged by alternative symbolic sub-systems.

[7] Michael Bell (2012) discusses he *Material – Ideal – Practical* interaction as a core framework for his *An Invitation to Environmental Sociology*. Bell also discusses the interaction of the "material" and the "ideal" in his discussions of "first rural" and "second rural" (2007) and also in Bell, Lloyd and Vatovec (2010).

[8] John Ikerd is perhaps the most evangelical about the "three-legged stool" or "triple bottom line" of sustainable agriculture (2005 and 2011). Ikerd speaks at many sustainable agriculture conferences and at universities big and small.

[9] Geoff Wilson (2007, 227-240) specifically asserts a normative framework for multifunctionality in his examination of rural transition from production to non-production functions of agriculture towards an end point of multifunctionality. He discusses his idea of weak, moderate, and strong multifunctionality. Weak being strong emphasis on productivism, integration in global markets, a disembeddedness. Wilson cites Pretty's (2002, 36) descriptions of the changes that went on from Green Revolution in Indonesian rice production, "in the blink of an eye, rice modernization during the 1960s and 1970s shattered…social and ecological relationship by substituting pesticides for predators, fertilizers for cattle and traditional land management, and tractors for local labour groups." The problem I think I have with Wilson's conception is that the strong multifunctionality seems very normative towards abandoning productivism and even agriculture all together. Additionally the construct of "weak, moderate, strong" are value based worse to better. But I am using normative as what drives people's or communities' actions. People may have the normative principle that production is best. So we

need to understand that this is what is driving their action and reaction to the positive/actual (structure and ideas).

[10] Emirbayer (1997,310) in his call for a relational sociology writes "Such a point of view—as it pertains to both action and order—does resolve many problems concerning the normative implications of relational reasoning, while also remaining well within a transactional frame of reference. What it does not adequately address, however, is the question of whether the relevant standards of normative judgment are to be substantive or merely procedural: Does the idea of free and open communication in transactional processes mean nothing other than a formal method of intelligent reasoning, or does it lead to a view of moral character and collective social arrangements that is more contentful? This is a question that relational thinkers continue to be troubled by (to the extent that they address it at all), and that they have not yet—and may never—satisfactorily resolve." … "One of the most serious shortcomings of relational sociology to date is its relative neglect of normative concerns, despite the profound interpenetration (in true transactionalist fashion) of all questions of "is" and "ought" in social-scientific analysis.]

[11] Wilson (2007), Wilson (2008), Cloke and Goodwin (1992) and Marsden et al. (1993), and Holmes (2006).

[12] Bowler (1985).

[13] Friedland (1982, 594).

[14] Wilson (2001).

[15] Burton and Wilson in their 2006 article "Injecting social psychology theory into conceptualisations of agricultural agency: Towards a post-productivist farmer self-

identity?" in the Journal of Rural Studies do issue a cautionary note on the problem of presenting this shift from productivism to post-productivism as a binary.

[16] Ilberry and Bowler (1998) and Evans, Morris, and Winter (2002).

[17] Marsden and Sonnino (2008).

[18] Short (2008).

[19] Tilzey and Potter (2008).

[20] Robinson (2008, 7).

[21] Marsden (1992, 211).

[22] Kenney, Lobao, Curry, and Goe (1989).

[23] Tilzey and Potter 2008.

[24] Hall (1996, 224).

[25] Bonanno, A et al. 1994. (quotes from p. 17 and 1 respectively)

[26] Marsden 1992. p. 210

[27] Cloke and Goodwin 1992. p. 322-324.

[28] Bonanno (1991).

[29] Gray (2000) in Tilzey and Potter (2008).

[30] Potter and Tilzey (2005, 583) summarize Drummon and Marsden in their 1999 book *The Condition of Sustainability*, identifying the "parameters for action" as being an important component of understanding changes in agricultural systems and interaction with the market. Hinrich and Welsh (2003) also takes a looks at the structural barriers to farmer's choices to adopt sustainable practices.

[31] Potter and Tilzey (2005, 583).

[32] Tilzey and Potter (2008).

[33] Barthelemy-Nieddu (2004, 15) as well as the Van Huylenbroeck and Durand (2004) use the concept of "expectations" quite a bit in setting up their frameworks for agricultural multifunctionality.

[34] Brown and Michael (2003, 4).

[35] MacLeod (2009, 62).

[36] MacLeod (2009) calls on Henry A. Giroux's theories of how structural determinants work differently at different levels. The anticipated constraints at the community or the individual level are not anticipated in the same way. Grioux looks carefully at the ideology, culture, and consciousness to understand the formation of social life.

[37] Alberto Melucci (1989, 32).

[38] In Erik Wright (2007) discusses Therborn's take on ideology, "To the extent that the social system generates a pattern of "affirmations and sanctions" (to use Therborn's expression) consistent with the beliefs in a given ideology, that ideology will be strengthened. Ideology contributes to social reproduction, then, when beliefs that contribute to social stability are affirmed in the daily practices of people. Of the various aspects of ideology and belief formation that bear on the problem of social reproduction and potential challenges to structures of power and privilege, perhaps the most important are beliefs about *what is possible*." (footnote 20) "Footnote 20 Therborn identifies three core questions for which ideology gives people answers: What is good? What exists? What is possible? The first of these defines the normative dimension of beliefs. The second centers on descriptions and

explanations about how the social world works. And the third concerns what alternatives are imaginable."

[39] Emirbayer and Mische (1998, 978 – 979).

[40] Emirbayer and Mische (1998, 970) discuss Hans Joas' take on patterns of interaction, "For Joas (1996, p. 160), action is not simply contingent upon the situation, but more essentially, "the situation is constitutive of action" (original emphasis), providing not merely "means" and "conditions" for preestablished ends but also the structured habitual patterns of response that become the basis for the reflective and creative engagement of actors with their changing environments."

[41] see Jackson-Smith and Gillespie (2005), Foltz, Jackson-Smith and Chen (2002) and Foltz and Zeuli (2005). Hinrichs and Welsh (2003) also cite some overarching industrialization in dairy on the national scale. Gilbert and Akor (1988) provide an interesting comparison between Wisconsin dairy farm structure and California. They found that despite some convergence, Wisconsin was marked at that time by a resilience of family farms, while California was increasingly shifting to a capitalist structure for dairy farms. Similar comparisons were offered again in 2010 by Brian W. Gould at UW-Madison and found that Wisconsin dairy farms were more resilient than California and western dairies because Wisconsin farmers on the whole were less likely to by buying feed, because they were growing and harvesting their own, and also were less dependent on hired labor, so had smaller capital outlays. Another useful work, which gives a broad picture on changes in Wisconsin dairy as a system is Jackson-Smith and Barham (2000).

[42] Sewell (1943) and Bright (1950).

[43] I report only male respondents here because there were only 2 female respondent that indicated that they had thought about farming as an occupation, with a third that said "farmer's wife". There were 222 male and 240 female respondents in Richland County. Twenty-six of the female respondents reported that they had thought about being a housewife, but the survey did not ask specifically if they thought this would be on a farm.

[44] The Wisconsin Longitudinal Survey has an extensive website which has information about the survey and all publications and work that has come from it.

[45] I contacted Sewell respondents first by letter and ask if they would be willing to take part in an interview at their home or a place of their choosing. I did not receive explanations for why some people declined the interview.

[46] Heley (2011, 222).

[47] Burawoy (1998, 7).

[48] Abbot (2007, 92).

[49] This herd dispersal and subsequent foreclosure received a fair amount of press in the statewide papers, as well as the local paper. The Country Today ran several articles, with headlines like, "Herd Sold After Dairy Farm Abandoned" (9/9/09) and "Farm Abandonment Irks County Officials" (10/7/09).

[50] A good sociological work that gives the broad view of agricultural change in the United States is Lobao and Meyer (2001). And of course Buttel has numerous works that provide a very good analysis. To understand the historical arc of U.S. federal farm policy Cochrane (1979), Cochrane and Ryan (1976), and Benedict (1953) are must reads.

[51] Another good source for a general overview of changes in agriculture in the 20th Century see Dimitri et al. (2005).

[52] Rasmussen (1962) and Clark (1994).

[53] Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service (1954).

[54] Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry (1999).

[55] Richland Republican Observer, October 23, 1941. Page A1

[56] The push and pull of production incentives and supply management create a complicated picture in this time. Cochrane and Ryan (1976, 24-35) provides a good summary of the post-WWII agricultural adjustments that were made to rein in the great jumps in production that were realized during the wartime. In addition there are many excellent sources of information on federal agricultural policy over time, Winder (2009) and Wilcox (1948), as well as Saloutos (1982) and Baker (1951).

[57] Saloutos (1982, 3).

[58] To see images used in these efforts check http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org

[59] Borlaug (2009 and 2000) was extremely prolific on this subject of feeding the world with the aid of science and technology. He is considered one of the "fathers" of the green revolution that led to the export and adoption of new science and technology around the globe to increase production. Borlaug received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on these issues in 1970. Borlaug's work and the idea of the Green Revolution was about getting the technology and science out in the world for farmers everywhere to use to increase their yields, efficiencies, and overall production. The responsibility of the U.S. farmer for feeding the world started with calls to feed U.S. allies after the World Wars and has been a consistent frame. It

seems to be making a resurgence in the 21st century with some farm groups and agribusiness companies and alliances putting out initiatives to urge farmers to take on this role. The organization Farmers Feeding the World (see full website link in Bibliography) is set up primarily to spread the frame of U.S. farmers feeding the world. Also Phillip McMichael (2000, 26) writes about "Monsanto corporation's home page has proclaimed: "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? 10 billion by 2030." I have also personally seen the "think tank" The Center For Food Integrity head, Charles Arnot out on the speaking circuit about the moral imperative of U.S. farmers feeding the world. He has been a keynote speaker at a number of Wisconsin agriculture and specifically dairy conferences. I attended the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Dairy Business Association at which he spoke, with his message of feeding the world. Social Networking pages for different agriculture and agribusiness interest groups are filled with "Feed the World" rhetoric. For example, at 12:26 CST on March 19, 2012 the American Agri-Women status on their Facebook page read, "Thought on Agriculture research: Today's 2 million U.S. farmers feed 300 million people worldwide- compared to 50 years ago, when 30 million farmers fed 180 million. Continual advancements in agricultural science and technology have enabled this growth. Through research, agriculture will continue to be able to feed more people on fewer acres while providing a safe, wholesome, abundant and nutritious food supply and protecting our natural resources for future generations."

[60] Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin annual meeting March 2005. Alliant Energy Center

[61] Buttel in his (1993, 7) article "Ideology and Agricultural Technology in the Late Twentieth Century" states, "Productionist ideology was particularly efficacious in providing a shared sense of purpose among the public agricultural research community, agroindustry, major farm organizations, and federal agricultural policy makers. Second, productionism was typically promulgated through a characteristic 'magic bullet' symbolization – of charts of data showing increased yields and output, and the declining share of consumer paychecks going to food expenditures on one hand juxtaposed with particular 'big hit' technologies (e.g. hybrid corn, green revolution wheat and rice varieties, DDT, artificial insemination) on the other." See also Buttel (2005, 276–277).

[62] Wilson (2007, 87-90).

[63] Thomas Jefferson is quoted in Jaffa (1961, 57).

[64] "Our Good Earth" by John Steuart Curry

[65] Committee on Parity Concepts (1950, 127).

[66] I use the sociological concept of frame here from Snow and Benford (1992, 133-155), who describe a frame as "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one's present or past environments." See also Mooney and Hunt (1996) for their discussion specific to agriculture.

[67] I recognize that the use of the word "traditional" may have negative connotations for some. The use of this word is not meant to denote "backwardness" or characterize farmers as "laggards," as can be done with farmers who do not adopt

new technologies. The use of this word is more in line with Van der Ploeg's (2010) farming styles, which he defines as "a specific pattern for tying together land, labour, cattle, machines, networks, knowledge, expectations and activities; this is done in a goal oriented, knowledgeable and coherent way."

[68] Neth (1995, 97) and see also Bryant (1999) for discussion of the "progressive farmer."

[69] See Meares (1997), Vogt et al. (2001) and Adam (1988) for some literature that looks at the dynamics of off-farm work for farm households, especially for women in the household.

[70] Cochrane and Ryan (1976, 89).

[71] Interestingly, of the 49 respondents who answered the question on running water, 18% of those that said they didn't have running water, still said that the overall comfort of their home was "better than most" and 69% found their comfort to be "about average."

[72] On page 6 of Cowhig's (1962) piece for USDA, "*Farm operator level-of-living indexes for counties of the United States, 1950 and 1959."* he differentiates the concept of "level of living" from "standard of living" as the former referring to "the actual living conditions of a population" versus the latter which "relates to the living conditions aspired to and which are regarded as proper or desirable." He cites the 1954 United Nations "Report on International Definition and Measurement of Standards and Levels of Living" as well as the 1961 United Nations "Report on International Definition and Measurement of Standards and Levels of Living. An

Interim Guide." Level of living could be considered an objective measurement and standard of living a normative measure.

[73] The Level of Living numbers are reported in Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reorting Service (1954). The concept of using Level of Living to measure rural family wellbeing is found in Sharp (1963). The Sewell scale in Richland County survey originates out of the work presented in his 1943 Rural Sociology article. Another source on this type of work is Hagood (1943). For an interesting discussion of differences between the "Sewell" scale and the "Hagood" index see, Ruttan (1954) and Ross, Bluestone and Hines (1979). I attribute the difference in the percentage of Sewell respondents reporting a telephone to the USDA statistics reported in 1950 to internal household demographics.

[74] Neth (1995, 97) and see also Bryant (1999) for discussion of the "progressive farmer."

[75] Farm Technology Days (2012), founded in 1952, "Henry Ahlgren, chair of the Farm and Home Week Committee, envisioned a larger off-campus (UW-Madison) event to where both exhibitors and farmers participate and learn about the latest technologies." The name was changed from Progress to Technology because of other national shows using the word Progress.

[76] This figure shows the available information from the USDA Census of Agriculture for the acres planted I have shown corn for grain, oats, soybeans, and hay. Other crops tracked for the time frame in the graph by the USDA from the area are corn for silage, wheat, barley, and tobacco. There are also production and yields available for

years in the 1970s though 1990s for snap beans, peas, and sweet corn, all for the canning industry.

[77] Cochrane (1979), Cochrane and Ryan (1976) and Winder (2009) provide good background on this.

[78] Kenney and co-authors (1989, 139) state that the arrival of the tractor by 1960s completely replaced draft horses. See also Williams (1987, 119).

[79] Berlan (1991,123).

[80] Friedland et al. (1991, 179).

[81] Kenney et al. (1989, 137) details the AAA and the New Deal. This provides a good look at the role of the state in providing important stimulus and all farmers to consume (also see Salotous 1982, Skocpol and Finegold 1982 and Cochrane 1979). It is important to note that the CCC was an important underpinning of the entire price support system, as well as the importance of the Rural Electrification Administration for providing the infrastructure necessary to integrate farmers into the Fordist consumption patterns and ethic (Selznick 1954).

[82] Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service (1954, 50). This was the estimated average for the 7 county area of SW Wisconsin, including Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Lafayette, Richland, Sauk, and Vernon counties.

[83] Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection.

[84] USDA Census of Agriculture 2007, searchable database. This number is from the number of farms reporting sales of dairy products in the Census, using the NAICS code, 11212 for dairy and milk production.

[85] Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service (1954).

[86] NASS (2009).

[87] The farm was featured in a July 19, 2007 Agri-view piece, one of the main weekly agricultural newspapers, "Heijmans Family Dairy Welcomes Visitors to the Farm to Tour the Facilities." By Crystal McNett, reporting on an open house the farm was having to showcase its new facilities.

[88] The Wisconsin Department of Commerce (2007).

[89] The Dairy "20/20" program has recently been reworked to be the "30x20" program with a new goal is for Wisconsin to produced 30 billion pounds of milk by the year 2020. Currently the state produced around 25 billion pounds of milk, which is primarily processed into cheese. This new goal was announced with a proclamation from Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker dated March 13, 2012 as reported in an article by Jan Sherpal in the March 16, 2012 edition of The Wisconsin State Farmer weekly newspaper.

[90] Cropp (2010, 17).

[91] For a fleeting moment I have to admit the thought crossed my mind, "oh God, is he going to start auctioning off the workers." Of course he did no such thing, but he was prepping the crowd for the beginning of the cattle auction and how things were going to go and then he added the aside about the workers.

[92] The use of immigrant dairy workers, primarily from Mexico, has been rising, with the average farm in Wisconsin first hiring an immigrant worker in 2000. For more details on this issue see the briefings prepared by the UW Program on Agricultural Technology Studies by Harrision, Lloyd and O'Kane (2009) and also Harrison and Lloyd (2011). and Harrison and Lloyd (draft manuscript).

[93] John Oncken (2009) wrote the story "Cross Country: Dairy farm's demise draws huge auction crowd, prices." 8/20/09 for the *The Capital Times*.

[94] Legal Notices, Richland Observer, February 25, 2010, p. 4B.

[95] It should be noted that the fact that the Heijman dairy received preferable financial loans through the federal CDBG money to buy more cows to expand their herd is not unique. In Wisconsin there was more than $3 million in loans made available to farmer, including, the Heijman dairy.

[96] Originally Kraft was trying to maneuver a sale of the pizza business to Nestle and with the proceeds a hostile take over of Cadbury chocolates. According to reports large-scale investor and Kraft share holder Warren Buffet rejected the deal for Cadbury's and in the end Nestle purchased the frozen pizza business for $3.7 billion from Kraft. (See Nicholson 2010 for a news story on some of the specifics of this deal.) These sorts of shareholder negotiations in far off board rooms is a very clear example of detached production away from the rural landscape.

[97] The Wikipedia entry for "Wisconsin Glaciation" gives a summary of the timing of these glacial events, or lack their of
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisconsin_glaciation

[98] Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service (1946, 9).

[99] Dingle (u.d., 179-180).

[100] Buttel (1993).

[101] Dingle (u.d., 169-170).

[102] Benedict (1953, 316-352). See also Morgan (1965) for detailed coverage of the political intricacies of soil conservation policy and programs of the 1930s.

[103] Congressional Quarterly Service (1963).

[104] Morgan (1965), Meine (1988) and Anderson (2002).

[105] For a complete account of this political history of soil conservation in the United States, along with Morgan (1965) and Benedict (1953), see also Salatous (1982), Batie (1985) and also Hardin (1952).

[106] Hardin (1952, 133).

[107] Thompson (1995).

[108] *The Richland Democrat*, special expanded issue September 4, 1958

[109] Robinson and Klingelhoets (1959).

[110] Leopold (1949, 209).

[111] Leopold (1999, 161-162).

[112] Wisconsin Crop and Livestock Reporting Service (1955, 25).

[113] This photo appeared in the Richland Center newspaper, entitled "Board of Directors, Mill Creek Watershed Association holding a meeting at the Harris lumber company in Boaz, WI. L to R George Smart, Levi Walter, Dennis Young, Foster Patch, Roy Dingle, SCS Work Unit Conservationist, Gerald Fulton, Roy Nicholson, Henry Slaney, Frank Harris, and Paul Hendricks. WI-17-10 March 1955 Photo: E.W. Cole"

[114] Heasley (2005, 42).

[115] Dingle (u.d., 178).

[116] Heasley (2005, 42).

[117] Dingle (u.d., 174)

[118] There is of course a rich rural sociological literature on farmer adoption of new technology and specifically conservation technology, see Roling and Wagemakers (1998) and Nowak (1983).

[119] See Neth (1995, 97) and Bryant (1999) for discussion of the "progressive farmer."

[120] Richland Observer, Jan 27, 1966

[121] Listed in Undated Newspaper article in the Richland County Historical Archives, binder, "Outstanding Young Farmer" MSS3245. Most likely from 1976. The metrics at the state level have shifted somewhat. A 2011 article on the internet on the OYF program states, "The OYF award is based on 50 percent progress in agricultural career, 25 percent soil and water conservation and 25 percent contributions to community, state or nation." http://www.wisconsinfarmreport.com/News-2434-Candidates-Announced-for-Outstanding-Young-Farmer.html (Accessed June 6, 2012)

[122] Richland County Historical Archives binder, "Outstanding Young Farmer" MSS3245. I attended two OYF banquets during my research. The expectation of conservation practices were stated clearly in the presentations and speaches during the awards.

[123] I asked all my interview subjects as well as people I talked to connected to agriculture in Richland County about the lost cheese. No one would confess to losing the cheese, although several had driven cheese trucks to and from the Gillingham Cheese factory back in the 1940s and 1950s. They laughed when they

saw the ad and described how cheese at that time most often was packed in barrels, probably weighing anywhere from 50 to 80 pounds.

[124] Gray (2000) in Tilzey and Potter (2008).

[125] The Richland Observer newspaper included large photo spreads and articles in the March 23 and 30, 1967 papers. 3 interview subjects described the milk dumping. One Sewell respondent, who I interviewed, described her participation in the dumping.

[126] Barham (2010, 46) provides some detail as to how during a reduction in demand for organic milk brought on by a recession in the general economy, Organic Valley enforced an "old-school system" of supply management with its cooperative producers and avoided a further erosion of prices paid to its farmers. A more general look at Organic Dairy Farms in Wisconsin can be found, Barham, Brock, and Foltz (2006).

[127] Organic Valley's website http://www.organicvalley.coop/about-us/overview/our-history/ See also Stevenson (2009).

[128] Powell and Lawless (2003).

[129] Cranfield, Henson and Holliday (2010).

[130] Organic Valley (CROPP) website shows the pay prices of organic milk compared to "conventional" milk over time. http://www.farmers.coop/producer-pools/dairy-pool/pay-price/dairy-pay-price-comparison-chart/

[131] Kriegl and McNair (2005).

[132] Salamon, Farnsworth and Bullock (1998, 96-99) details some of the findings from research on barriers to adoption of sustainable agricultural practices. These barriers come from different ideas within families and within communities.

[133] I attended two farm info sessions, one put on by the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Towns Association. The other put on by a local agricultural booster club.

[134] For more information on the trends in the use of immigrant labor on dairy farms see Harrison, Lloyd, and O'Kane (2009) and also more specifically on farmer perceptions of their labor needs and the use of immigrant labor see Harrison and Lloyd (draft manuscript).

[135] Wisconsin Department of Trade and Consumer Protection (2011).

[136] Marsden and Sonnino (2008).

[137] Cloke and Goodwin (1992, 329).

[138] Marsden et al. (1993) cites Goodman and Wilkenson (1992, 220) about the issue of conservation for private consumption.

[139] For information on Native America burial mounds in Wisconsin see Birmingham (2000).

[140] However what is interesting to consider and I do not fully take up in this dissertation is that the man who preserved these Native American burial mounds and sacred spaces needed the regime of accumulation available by going off-farm and make money so that he could come back and use that money to take the land off the market, so that the post-productivist or non-productivist values of the land could be appreciated and preserved.

[141] Mormont (1990) in Marsden (1998, 218). Also Marsden quotes Hall (1996) on new collective identities and new movements, which Hall calls "new times."

[142] Jackson, Berry and Colman (1984, *x*).

[143] Neth (1995, 273).

[144] The Richland County Comprehensive Plan was completed based on the specifications mandated in the state "Smart Growth" law and officially adopted July 2007. I received a copy of the 214 page document as a .pdf from the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, which is involved in planning and land use considerations as part of a multi-county consortium. According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, a "Comprehensive plan" by law must cover the areas of: "Issues and Opportunities, Housing, Transportation, Utilities and Community Facilities, Agricultural, Natural and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Intergovernmental Cooperation, Land Use, and Implementation" http://www.doa.state.wi.us/category.asp?linkcatid=743&linkid=128&locid=9

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY

THE OCCUPATIONAL PLANS OF WISCONSIN YOUTH

Dear Student:

This survey is an attempt to get a better picture of the problems you young people face in choosing your life's occupation, and the attitudes you have towards these problems. By carefully filling out this questionnaire you will help us to gain a better understanding of how these problems look from where you stand. This information will be of great value **in** developing counseling programs for high school youth. For this reason we are anxious to have you answer the questions on this form to the best of your ability.

PLEASE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS:

1. Read each item carefully, Answer to the best of your knowledge.
2. Be sure to answer each question. Where there are brackets, fill in an "X". Be sure that your "X" is squarely in the proper bracket before your choice. Where only a space is left, enter the word or figures called for. If you cannot answer the question, write "I do not know."
3. There are several questions which refer to your parents. If for any Reason you are not living with your parents, answer for the person who acts as your parent or guardian.
4. If you have any comment to make, if you did not understand any item, if your attitudes differ from those given, or if you have problems which we failed to mention, 'write about them. on the margin close to the items near them in meaning.

I. ABOUT MYSELF

1. MY NAME IS:

2. MY AGE (to nearest birthday) IS: ____

3. MY SEX IS: ( ) male ( ) female

4. I AM A: ( ) junior ( ) senior

5. I MAKE MY REGULAR HOME WITH:
   ( ) my own parents.
   ( ) a parent and a step-parent.
   ( ) one parent only.
   ( ) my grandparents.
   ( ) an uncle or aunt,

( ) other (specify)_____

6 MY CHURCH PREFERENCE IS:_____
Member: ( ) yes ( ) no

7. THE NAME OF MY HIGH SCHOOL IS: _____

8. THE NUMBER OF YEARS I HAVE ATTENDED THIS HIGH SCHOOL IS:____
9. THE KINDS OF EXTRA CURRICULA ACTIVITIES IN WHICH I PARTICIPATE ARE: (Check the ones in which you participate regularly, and add to the list if necessary.)

( ) athletics.	( ) annual.
( ) band orchestra.	( ) student government.
( ) chorus-vocal.	( ) hobby club.
( ) dramatics.	( ) other_____
( ) debates.	( ) _____
( ) 4-H or FFA.	( ) _____
( ) school paper.	( ) _____

10. COMPARED TO MOST STUDENTS IN MY SCHOOL, THE NUMBER UP ACTIVITIES I AM IN IS:
( )more than average.
( )about average.
( )Less than average,

11. COMPARED TO MOST STUDENTS IN MY HIGH SCHOOL, MY LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES ARE:
( )greater than average.
( )about average,
( )less than average,

12. IN PROVIDING RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES, I WOULD RATE MY COMMUNITY AS:
( ) definitely superior.
( ) above average.
( ) average.
( ) below average.
( ) considerably inferior.

13. I live:
( )on a farm.
( )in the open country but not on a farm.
( )in a village under 2,500.
( )in a town of 2,500-10,000.
( )in a city over 10,000.

14. IF I HAD THE CHOICE TO MAKE, I WOULD PREFER TO LIVE
( ) on a farm,
( ) in the open country but not on a farm.
( ) in a village under 2,500,
( ) in a town of 2,500-10,000.
( ) in a city of 10,000-100,000.
( ) in a city over 100,000.

15. AS TO WORKING WHILE I AM IN HIGH SCHOOL:

( )I have a fairly regular job outside my family and home.
( )I sometimes work outside my family and home.
( )I do not work outside my family and home.

16. THE KIND OF J0BS WHICH I HAVE HAD IN THE LAST TWO YEARS ARE: (Indicate type of work done.)

1._____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

II. ABOUT MY CHOICE OF A LIFE'S OCCUPATION

1. THE OCCUPATIONS WHICH I HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT GOING INTO ARE:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

2. THE OCCUPATION THAT I PLAN TO FOLLOW IS; (Indicate particular type of job.)

_____

3. IN REGARD TO. MY CHOICE OF MY OCCUPATION:
( )I feel sure that my mind is made up.
( )I'm not too sure, but I think my mind **is made** up.
( )I'm not sure that my mind is made up.

4. IN REGARD TO MY CHOICE OF AN OCCUPATION:
( ) I have given the matter a great deal of thought.
( ) I have given the matter some thought.
( ) I have given the matter little thought.

5. AS TO MY KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORK I INTEND TO ENTER:
( ) I have good knowledge because I have worked at it,
( ) I have good knowledge because I have relatives or friends who work at it.
( ) I have a general knowledge, but don't know much about the details of it.
( ) I don't know much about it yet, but will find out by experience on the job,
( ) I don't know much about it yet, but will find out when I go on to school.
( ) I don't know because I haven't made a choice yet.

6. FOR THE OCCUPATION I HAVE CHOSEN I THINK MY ABILITY IS:
( ) very much above average.
( ) somewhat above average.
( ) just average.

( ) somewhat below average,
( ) very much below average,
( ) I don't know because I have not yet made a choice.

7. COMPARED TO MY FRIENDS, I THINK, MY CHANCES FOR GETTING AHEAD IN THE OCCUPATION OF MY CHOICE ARE
( ) very much above average,
( ) somewhat above average.
( ) just average.
( ) somewhat below average,
( ) very much below average.

8. IN THE OCCUPATION I HAVE CHOSEN I CAN EXPECT HELP IN GETTING STARTED:
( ) from my father or mother who is in this type of work.
( ) from relatives who are in this type of work.
( ) from friends who are in this type of work,
( ) from no one.
( ) I don't know because I have not made my choice yet.

9. IN REACHING OR TRYING TO REACH MY DECISION ABOUT MY LIFE'S OCCUPATION, I HAVE BEEN INFLUENCED BY THE FOLLOWING` PERSONS: (Place a check before each person in the list who has influenced you and double check the person who influenced you most. Do not check "myself" unless no one else has influenced you.)

( ) my father.
( ) my mother.
( ) an older brother.
( ) an older sister.
( ) an aunt or uncle.
( )a grandparent
( )a teacher
( )a minister
( )a boy friend.
( )a girl friend.
( )I have made the decision by myself.
( )other specify _____

10. AS TO THE OCCUPATION I HAVE CHOSEN, MY FATHER:
( ) approves of my choice.
( ) doesn't say much either way.
( ) disapproves of my choice.
( ) I don't know how he feels.
( ) I haven't made a choice yet.

11. AS TO FOLLOWING HIS OCCUPATION, (FOR BOYS ONLY) MY FATHER HAS:
( ) tried to encourage me.
( ) neither tried to encourage or discourage me.
( ) tried to discourage me.

12. AS TO THE OCCUPATION I HAVE CHOSEN, MY MOTHER:
( ) approves of my choice.

( ) doesn't say much either way.
( ) disapproves of my choice.
( ) I don't know how she feels.
( ) I haven't made a choice yet.

13. IN CHOOSING AN OCCUPATION, I WOULD RATE THE FACTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER OF IMPORTANCE:
(In the space in front of the fact you feel is most important place the number "1". In the space before the second most important fact place the number "2". Continue in this way until all the facts have been numbered from "1" to "9".)
( )the opportunity for employment.
( )the social standing of the job in the community.
( )the working hours.
( )the kind of people you meet.
( )the good you can do.
( )the opportunity for advancement.
( )the chance to be one's own boss.
( )the financial reward.
( )the education it takes.

14. AS FOR PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:
( )my school has given me adequate information.
( ) my school has not given me adequate information.

15. AS TO THE COURSES I HAVE HAD IN HIGH SCHOOL:
( ) none of them will help me in my occupation.
( )some of them will help me in my occupation.
( ) all of them will help me in my occupation.

16. AS TO MY TEACHERS:
( )all of them have taken an interest in my future,
( )some of them have taken an interest in my future.
( )none of them have taken an interest in my future.

17. IF I WERE ABSOLUTELY FREE TO GO INTO ANY KIND OF WORK I WANTED, MY CHOICE WOULD BE:_____

18. THE TYPE OF WORK I WOULD LIKE TO BE DOING 10 YEARS FROM NOW IS:_____

19. I THINK THE IDEAL AGE FOR A GIRL TO MARRY IS: ____
I THINK THE IDEAL AGE FOR A ROY TO MARRY IS: ____

21. AS TO WORKING OUTSIDE THE HOME I THINK A MARRIED WOMAN SHOULD:
( )work for awhile after marriage, but not indefinitely
( )work when it helps the family to have some of the nicer things;
( )work where her work is personally satisfying to her,
( )work only when absolutely necessary to keep the family going.
( )never work.

III. ABOUT MY PARENTS

1. MY PARENTS ARE:
( ) both living together.
( ) both dead.

( ) father is dead.
( ) mother is dead.
( ) divorced.
( ) separated.

2. MY MOTHER:
( ) has no job outside the home.
( ) has a part-time job outside the home.
( ) has a full-time job outside the home.

3. MY FATHER'S OCCUPATION IS: (or was, if dead or retired) (Specify the kind of work he does and not where he works.)_____

IF FATHER IS A FARMER
MY FATHER IS: owner ( ) renter ( ) laborer.

THE NUMBER OF ACRES MY FATHER OPERATES **IS:**_____

4. MY FATHER CONSIDERS HIS OCCUPATION TO BE:
( ) completely satisfactory.
( ) fairly satisfactory.
( ) good enough.
( ) not very good.
( ) very poor.

5. MY MOTHER CONSIDERS MY FATHER'S OCCUPATION TO BE:
( ) completely satisfactory.
( ) fairly satisfactory
( ) good enough.
( ) not very good.
( ) very poor.

6. THE OCCUPATION OF MY FATHER'S FATHER WAS: _____

7. TEE OCCUPATION OF MY MOTHER'S FATHER WAS: _____

8. THE COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF MY FATHER WAS: _____

9. THE COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF MY MOTHER WAS: _____

10. THE COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF MY FATHER'S FATHER: _____

11. THE COUNTRY OF BIRTH OF MY MOTHER'S FATHER: _____

12. MY FATHER'S EDUCATION CONSISTED OF:
( ) less than 8 grades.
( ) 8 grades.
( ) 9 - 11 grades.
( ) 12 grades.
( ) some college.
( ) college degree.

13. MY MOTHER'S EDUCATION CONSISTED OF:
( ) less than 8 grades.

( ) 8 grades.
( ) 9 - 11 grades.
( ) 12 grades.
( ) some college.
( ) college degree.

14. I THINK THAT MY FATHER'S EDUCATION IS:
( ) completely satisfactory.
( ) fairly satisfactory.
( ) good enough.
( ) not very good.
( ) very poor.

15. MY FATHER THINKS THAT THE EDUCATION HE OBTAINED IS:
( ) completely satisfactory.
( ) fairly satisfactory.
( ) good enough.
( ) not very good.
( ) very poor.

16. IN COMPARISON TO THE INCOME OF THE PARENTS OF OTHER STUDENTS IN THE HIGH SCHOOL, THE INCOME OF MY PARENTS IS:
( ) one of the highest incomes.
( ) higher than average.
( ) just average.
( ) less than average.
( ) one of the lowest incomes.

17. MY PARENTS ARE CONSIDERED BY MOST PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY TO BE:
( ) very important people.
( ) rather important people.
( ) Just average people.
( ) of less than average importance.
( ) not at all important.

IV. ABOUT ME AND MY PARENTS

1. AS FAR AS MY FATHER AND I ARE CONCERNED:
( ) we always agree.
( ) we usually agree.
( ) we agree and disagree about equally.
( ) we seldom agree.
( ) we never agree.

2. AS FAR AS MY MOTHER AND I ARE CONCERNED:
( ) we always agree.
( ) we usually agree.

( ) we agree and disagree about equally.
( ) we seldom agree.
( ) we never agree.

3. AS TO CONTINUING MY EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL MY FATHER:
( ) has strongly encouraged me to continue.
( ) has given me some encouragement to continue.
( ) has never said much about it.
( ) feels that I would be better off going to work after high school.
( ) feels that I should quit high school and go to work.

4. AS TO CONTINUING MY EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL MY MOTHER:
( ) has strongly encouraged me to continue.
( ) has given me some encouragement to continue.
( ) has never said much about it.
( ) feels that I would be better off going to work after high school.
( ) feels that I should quit high school and go to work.

5. AS TO ANY FURTHER HELP FROM MY FOLKS IN GETTING A START OR IN CONTINUING MY SCHOOLING AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, MY PARENTS WILL BE:
( ) financially able to help me a great deal.
( ) financially able to give me some help.
( ) financially able to give me no help.

6. AS TO FURTHER HELP FROM MY PARENTS AFTER I FINISH HIGH SCHOOL, MY PARENTS WOULD BE:
( ) willing to help me a great deal.
( ) willing to give me some help.
( ) **willing to give** me no help.

7. FOR GIRLS ONLY
AS TO TAKING CARE OF A FAMILY AND KEEPING HOUSE, MY MOTHER HAS ENCOURAGED ME TO THINK THAT IT IS:
( ) more worthwhile than any other kind of work.
( ) just as worthwhile as any other kind of work.
( ) less worthwhile than other kinds of work.
( ) she has never said much about it either way.

V. ABOUT MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

(Write "0" if your answer is "none".)
1. THE NUMBER OF OLDER BROTHERS I HAVE IS:_____

2. THE NUMBER OF YOUNGER BROTHERS I HAVE IS:_____

3. THE NUMBER OF OLDER SISTERS I HAVE IS:_____

4. THE NUMBER OF YOUNGER SISTERS I HAVE IS:_____

5. THE NUMBER OF MY OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS THAT GRADUATED PROM HIGH SCHOOL IS:_____

6. THE NUMBER THAT QUIT SCHOOL BEFORE GRADUATING PROM HIGH SCHOOL

IS:_____

7. THE NUMBER THAT HAVE ATTENDED OR ARE ATTENDING COLLEGE IS:_____

8. BELOW IS THE NAME, SEX, OCCUPATION AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE OF EACH OF MY OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS: (Start with the oldest brother or sister and include all older brothers and sisters. If in school, put "student." If older sister is married and not working outside the home, put "housewife.")

	NAME	MALE OR FEMALE	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF RESIDENCE
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

9. COMPARED TO MY OLDER BROTHERS AND SISTERS, MY PARENTS HAVE GIVEN ME:

( ) more opportunities.
( ) about the same opportunities.
( ) less opportunities.

VI.ABOUT MY HOUSE

1. OUR HOME IS: ( )owned ( ) rented.

2. THE NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO LIVE AT OUR HOUSE IS:_____

3. THE NUMBER OF ROOMS IN OUR HOUSE IS:_____
(Do not include basements, bathrooms, porches, closets, halls.)

4. THE CONSTRUCTION OF OUR HOUSE IS:
( ) brick.
( ) unpainted frame.
( ) painted frame.
( ) other (specify) _____

5. THE LIGHTING IN OUR HOUSE IS:
( ) oil lamps.
( ) electric.
( ) gas, mantle, or pressure lamps.
( ) other or none.

6. THE KIND OF REFRIGERATOR WE HAVE IS:
   ( ) ice.
   ( ) mechanical (gas or electric).
   ( ) other or none.

7. WE HAVE A DEEP FREEZE LOCKER AT OUR HOME: ( ) yes ( ) no.

8. WE HAVE RUNNING WATER IN OUR HOUSE: ( ) yes ( ) no.

9. WE TAKE A DAILY NEWSPAPER: ( ) yes ( ) no.

10. WE HAVE A POWER WASHING MACHINE: ( ) yes ( ) no.

11. WE HAVE A RADIO: ( ) yes ( ) no.

12, WE HAVE A TELEPHONE: ( ) yes ( ) no.

13. WE HAVE A CAR (other than truck): ( ) yes ( ) no.

14. AS FAR AS CONVENIENCES, COMFORTS, AND GENERAL APPEARANCES ARE CONCERNED,
    CONSIDER MY HOME TO BE:
    ( ) one of the best in the community.
    ( ) better than most.
    ( ) about average.
    ( ) not as good as most.
    ( ) one of the worst.

(GO BACK AND CHECK TO SEE IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED EVERY QUESTION.)

THANK YOU.