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An Introduction to
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

SECOND EDITION
Perspectives on Current Issues
Paul R. Lachapelle

Overview
Community development is increasingly described and defined as a dynamic, diverse, multi-faceted, and robust discipline. In an era characterized by change, complexity, uncertainty, and controversy, the theoretical and applied perspectives of both practitioners and academics in community development have evolved dramatically in recent years. Simultaneously, contemporary community development theory and practice is both trans-disciplinary and practice, and interdisciplinary combining subjects and specialists that were once thought to be exclusive or unrelated. This chapter provides a scan of perspectives from around the globe on community development. It is presented in the form of responses on topics by each person interviewed. Note that referrals to cases are embedded within many of the responses, as opposed to providing one case at the end of the chapter.

Introduction
With many strange but fruitful community development bedfellows emerging, praxis continues to borrow from, collaborate with, and facilitate cooperative partnerships, affiliations, and relationships that increasingly prove to be synergistic and symbiotic. Academics and practitioners continue to explore theory and practice using perspectives that are both unique and unconventional in terms of how issues are defined, how opportunities are identified, and how organizations or communities demonstrate creativity or innovation to approach or address situations.

A growing body of literature is exploring the many novel and unique approaches and perspectives related to identifying and addressing community development’s current issues (Brennan and Brown, 2008; Domahidy, 2003). Community development is increasingly collaborative with active partnerships between academics and practitioners (Mizrachi et al., 2008). The field is also described as a type of social movement with an implied focus on the construction of community, collective identity, and cultural rights (Green, 2008). While there is a growing body of literature exploring and revealing detailed case studies of specific community development issues, needs, and actions, there has been little empirical study of community development praxis from the perspectives of community development academics and practitioners themselves. Moreover, there appears a blurring of these vocational lines leading to a new breed of community development “pracademic,” both academic and active practitioner (Flasner, 2009), who are discussing, designing, and implementing new and innovative praxis. Understanding these evolving perspectives can contribute to a growing body of literature, expand the current knowledge base, and provide further insights for community developers across varied contexts. The perspective of community...
developers in terms of how they perceive issues, pursue opportunities, and create innovations is essential to building more effective community development praxis.

This chapter provides perspectives on current issues from 13 community development leaders, academics, and practitioners, representing a variety of fields, experiences, and geographic locations. These community development leaders were asked to comment on and provide detailed narratives related to three questions and statements:

1. What are the most pressing issues in community development currently?
2. Share insights on potential opportunities or approaches to address these issues.
3. Provide an example of how organizations or communities have shown creativity or innovation in community development practices.

Following a case study approach (Yin, 1984) and using a qualitative method to provide rich description (Goetz, 1973), individuals were asked to provide detailed narratives based on their own interests, backgrounds, and experiences. This case study, while admittedly not representative in terms of summarizing the myriad perspectives, experiences, or spatial and temporal contexts that exist in the community development field, is an attempt to provide a brief, albeit descriptive set of diverse and unique perspectives on current issues. Below are summary statements by individuals appearing in alphabetical order. A main theme at the top of each box attempts to represent a unique or prominent perspective from the individual. The name, title, department and university or organization, and city and country are provided after each response.

**BOX 22.1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY**

From my vantage point, the most pressing issue lies at the intersection of community development and democracy. As we contemplate community development practice, it is imperative we consider how we uphold and strengthen essential democratic tenets. Additionally, we must examine how our work in community development may strengthen the system of democracy in our communities and countries. I believe there is an opportunity to reinvigorate community development practice. Showing high regard for people and the situations in which they exist and recognizing the inherent dignity of humans has the potential to impact the ways we interface with communities and citizens. It is through this perspective of integrating it into our personal behaviors and professional practice, we can help to bridge the divide between expert and local citizen.

I see the intersection of democracy and community development as one of the greatest potential opportunities to simultaneously advance community development practice and meet the needs of our citizens and communities. We must recontextualize the roles of experts and citizens in a way that allows for the kind of participatory democratic problem-solving envisioned by scholars like Boyce (2003, 2009) and Barbar (1998). In practical terms, most models of engagement have maintained the technocratic, expert-citizen dichotomy (Bridge and New, 2010). Expert knowledge is still viewed and practiced in a more technical capacity. There is little room for judgment, practical wisdom (or prudence), and the democratic participation that is necessary to solve problems that have moral, political, and ethical dimensions (Frische, 2000; Flynn, 2001, 2012). Citizens must be involved in all stages of exploring solutions, from identification of the issue to developing policies and practices to address the issue. Focusing on dignity in development is an approach that I believe is critical to ensuring social impact throughout community development practice and processes. By emphasizing dignity as a core principle of our work, we create the space for a more egalitarian approach to community development. This approach requires us suspend judgment and recognize the inherent value of each individual and their contributions, in the process of community development.

Entrepreneurship development presents promising options for cultivating local economies rooted in local leadership, ideas, talent, markets, and trades (so-called economic gardening (Morgan et al., 2009) or entrepreneurship development systems (Kleinerstein and Lyons 2006)). This style of development reframes economic development as the cultivation of opportunity within a community rather than focusing on attracting economic opportunities from elsewhere. These are generalized approaches requiring an existing or low-basis public visibility, a more specific—and in my view, very promising—approach, stems from the in Australia. These ICS are catalytic economic development programs that convene potential innovators from across the country. A major part of its intention is to surface new, collaborative and countrywide entrepreneurial innovative partnerships and supply chains to the development of novel local businesses, value-added local food economy.

Thaddeus Alvar, Professor of Agricultural, Environmental and Regional Economics, Director, Center for Economic and Community Development, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA USA.

**BOX 22.2 MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES**

Although community development ought to be a practice that makes a fundamental difference in the lives of people within our most marginalized communities, much of what we actually see takes the form of alleviation undermines effectiveness in dealing with any issue. (1) Dealing with peripheral issues. The central concern of community development, however, is to alter change, challenge injustices, and help create a better world. Where that commitment is lost, addresses the central concerns of people's lives. (2) Picking easy targets. Due to our incrementalism, marginalized who can succeed, by externally defined criteria, rather than working with people in the greatest need. This lack of critical reflection: This perpetuates the myth that practices are becoming less politicized and therefore have lost many insights. Second, many examples of practice lack opportunities for local people to critically reflect on their lived experiences and then develop visions of the world they want. Local people are therefore condemned to merely approach which work with the inventors of their work, engage in dialogue about their experience, and use that as a basis for change. Such efforts often fail because they are intrinsically and inherently organized around a process that either makes the process (or the people) part of change that recognizes and addresses the social costs of the policy decisions made both at the local and national levels. Such policies can lead to the disempowerment of communities, leading to the silencing of voices that are critical to the development of effective policies.
BOX 22.3 GOVERNANCE AND POWER
The most pressing issues in community development involve governance and civic engagement, social and economic innovation, and power. Governance and civic engagement involve a better understanding of how local residents can take on ownership of decision making. There is a strong need to identify best practices in these areas. Equally important, there is a need to bridge different theoretical perspectives. Comparative national and international work will be very helpful. Social and economic innovation involves exploring new ways for social and economic/entrepreneurial development. National and international research in these areas is needed to determine best practices and opportunities for advancement. Power in a community includes both an applied and theoretical understanding of the emergence of power by grass roots and other stakeholders. We need applied research to understand why some communities can pull together residents and form strong power bases, while others fail to achieve power despite collective numbers.

Mark Brennan, Professor and UNESCO Chair in Rural Community, Leadership, and Youth Development, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, USA

BOX 22.4 HOLISTIC APPROACH
A pressing issue is ensuring that there is a holistic approach to praxis that integrates the material, political, relational, and spiritual/valued. I think that we are still caught in a situation where praxis, both theory and practice, are focused on any one of these aspects, and have a tough time putting them all together. I think that any attempt at community development that does not take all four of these into account runs the risk of missing things that are important both for the sustainability of the endeavor but also in making the most impact. In addition, there is a need for well-trained and skilled community development facilitators. The lack of facilitators who really understand the complexities of the craft and can adopt tools to context and create a growing approach for sustainability is a major problem and has been since the beginning of community development. There is also a need to ensure that metrics (monitoring, planning, and evaluation) are used in group, individual, and organizational settings in a holistic way. Metrics are crucial because of the power they hold to lead community development efforts, rather than serving as tools to advance community development efforts that are established based on local priorities and the important points of focus.

Examples of innovations include the following: (1) The Mondragón Cooperative Movement in the Basque region of Spain is a worker-owned movement that has had a huge impact on its community and beyond; (2) Mahindra is a center of learning in value-based development in India (Kurth and Wilson, 2008; www.mahindra.org.in); (3) Mosacue is based in Kenya and is a church-based group focusing on community development projects, spirituality, and sustainability (www.mosacue.org/projects_html); (4) Christian Communion for Development based in Honduras focuses on health, agriculture, and small productive projects geared toward building knowledge and organizational capacity in the context of a "politicized" approach to development (Brokken, 2008).

David Brokken, Associate Professor, Director, International Development Programs, School of Leadership and Development, Eastern University, St. Davids, PA, USA

BOX 22.5 CONTROL AND INEQUITIES
I see these core community development challenges. First is the long-term and continuing loss of community economic. Compared to the past, the ability of a local community or region to control its own economic, as the values people hold and their ability to realize those in everyday settings, second is the becomes a spectator spot for most and discrimination becomes less anchored in everyday reality. Finally, we must recognize that this increase is not just about power but also about recognition and recognition of the collective cultural traditions. Diversity exists across regions, but at these challenges are rooted in socioeconomic structures broken by corporate and state political power. They are difficult to alter. Over the long term, however, and we can envision approaches that (1) strengthen local control and typically moderate local leadership, and (2) expand access to resources and opportunities for the and outsider strategies that combine incremental reform with a broader restructuring of institutions.

One example of creativity and innovation in meeting the challenges involves the movement to create local production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic, and social health of communities in particular places. Local and regional food systems networks engage a wide range of community partners in projects to promote more locally based, sustainable food economies (see, for example, www.slowfood.org)

David Campbell, Community Studies Specialist, UC Cooperative Extension, Department of Human Ecology, University of California Davis, Davis, CA, USA

BOX 22.6 RURAL COMMUNITY VITALITY
While many rural communities are small but relatively vibrant, surrounding rural areas struggle with fundamental social and economic challenges. Many rural communities have an agricultural or economic base that is small and small to enhance the vitality of rural communities. First, investment is needed in basic infrastructure and services. Second, a set of economic strategies are needed to anticipate economic change and make gradual but purposeful changes in the capacity of the communities, particularly the leadership and ability to redefine the rural communities. The increase in the perception of rural communities might be due to the future. More of rural life. Finally, development is only improvement when it is in line with community values.

Considerable innovation was used in the development and implementation of the community plan for the Scenic Rim area in Queensland, Australia. The Scenic Rim is a local government area of Trans-Tasman Scenic Rim Regional Council facilitated the engagement of residents in the development innovative in that it used community-directed engagement, engagement based on natural communities and feedback.

Jim Carvey, Associate Professor of Rural Development, School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, University of Queensland, Australia
BOX 22.7 COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

From a rural and domestic perspective, the most pressing issues include community sustainability, mainly in terms of ecosystem, but other significant factors such as aging population, institutions that suffer from scarce human and financial resources, and decay of physical infrastructure. Furthermore, rural places are fragmented by the geography of the workplace that creates "bedroom communities" and government and economic development that leads to reduced economic activity, technical assistance, and social services. Community development practice is both art and science based on understanding of what people want and need in terms of personal relationships. The potential opportunities in the face of resource scarcity and loss of community and personal empowerment involve linking past and present in places with willingness and ability to discard about positive choices and outcomes for the future. Models based on Schumacher's (1999) Small is Beautiful philosophy offer an opportunity to leverage negativity into positive action because it can be adapted to values of individual self-help and local associational activities. Community development's basic paradigm of democratic action is crucial to helping smaller, localized settings.

We need to think of community development techniques that are already part of our growing list of sustainable practices to build places with a higher quality of life and more in harmony with the environment for example, building small, green businesses (entrepreneurship) that are based on local foods, expanding water conservation and reclamation, and developing alternative energy sources for local use. At the same time, we need to work with communities to enhance local government and build voluntary community associations. In the long run, devolution of government and the economy could be a blessing in disguise for communities willing to take into old values and use them to build new places. If people are opposed to big government—and many rural residents seem to be—then the task of community developers may well lie to define our art and science more effectively so that it appeals to the needs of people in smaller places who want to have more control over their destinies.

Timothy Collins, Assistant Director, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL, USA

BOX 22.8 THE SPIRITUAL DIVIDE

There is a great spiritual divide. It's more than just between fundamentalist and liberal types, there is a growing disconnect with self and self. The World Health Organization (WHO) has gathered data which indicates that suicide in the world exceed the victims of violent crime and war. People are demonizing each other with political and ideological rhetoric. In spite of this, my colleagues in other fields report that something important is happening just like the great cities that emerged almost simultaneously 3,000 years ago across the planet. We can't put our finger on the big change that's occurring but I've heard from many people that it's there. It's a different kind of Renaissance. Schumacher (1999), author of Theory U: Leading from the future as it emerges, recognized we can see the future. This future integrates conventional strategic planning with values in which people can be silent, express gratitude and find their authentic self (rather be defined by convention). I believe this is a challenge for many of us who work in sector and Cartesian rationality type organizations. I believe the global prescribing movement initiated by Peter Senge (1990), Schumacher (1999) and others is part of a change that is allowing a balance of intellect with heart. There are also growing disparities between humans and the natural world. We're consuming more than we can replace; it can't be sustainable. There are thousands of organizations that are doing alternative work such as those described in the film, Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream (http://vimeo.com/52048121). There is also a growing economic divide. The statistics indicate it's becoming more pronounced in the US—more so than all of the industrialized countries. It isn't a question of taking from the rich, but finding new ways for others to prosper.

The MIT Community Innovations Lab (http://web.mit.edu/colorlab/) is one venue where people are involved in communities across the world to creatively address complex issues. The Grammen Bank (www.grammeninfo.org) is a for-profit entity that provides modest loans to those with low incomes. This approach toward

BOX 22.9 DEFINING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

From the standpoint of the field of community development, the most pressing issues may be agreement on community development body of knowledge, because of its multidisciplinary nature, there are many names, impressions, community betterment, community innovation, community engagement, community development, and community development, for the Community Development Field Practice, community and social work. Box 22.9 has the tendency to become everything to everybody. This dynamic makes a lovely frame. That may be the beauty of community development; it's a field that times for the changing. As a practice, a pressing issue in community development is the tension in the field (and certainly at the junction). I am concerned about the tendency toward specialization (focusing experts, achievement gap experts, environmental experts, for example) even as completely denies multi-understanding that community development works well when citizens (and practitioners) are able to cross and seek opportunities together. I'm concerned that we confuse in our own power the ability to better map, interpret, and apply social analysis (or). This organization has grown in the mid-1980s as a cross-disciplinary collaboration of community leaders especially for kids of color. Today, it stands as a beacon of innovative collaboration and continues to serve as catalyst for group action and citizen involvement in the everyday conditions of Minnesota's most populous city and county.

Jane Leonard, community development consultant and president of the Community Development Society, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

BOX 22.10 EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT

I think evaluation/measurement, volunteer leadership and funding are core issues that are linked together. There is a difference with forward momentum. I need to think we have to bring communities back to thinking about their core recognition, effective models of evaluation metrics (collection and analysis) that communities could compare

Ron Hustead, Professor, Department of Community and Leadership Development University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, USA

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**BOX 22.11 FINANCING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

A key issue is maintaining a vibrant and supported financial existence. For example, in the Irish case, there has been serious attention paid to funding for the community and voluntary sector. Most of the funding for community development has come from the central state or from European institutions. With the downturn in the economy, estimates suggest that funding for the community and voluntary sectors over the 2008-2012 period was cut by 35%. At the same time, various projects have been and are being subsumed into larger local structures. Employment and career pathways, therefore, remain a worry and an unclear aspect for existing and new entrants. A further problem concerns the independence and autonomy of the community and voluntary sector. The structures of governance have changed in Ireland in the last number of years. The central government announced in 2015 that local government (city and county levels), which was previously not a major stakeholder, will play an increasingly executive role in the future direction and oversight of programmes and initiatives at local community level. The increased involvement of local government within local community development could potentially provide a long-term future for community development. While a lead agency therefore could be a potential strength and perhaps in the form of service contracts. While a lead agency therefore could be a potential strength and perhaps in the form of service contracts.

**BOX 22.13 TOKENISTIC APPROACHES**

Trying to make community development processes fit into external, imposed timelines can lead to tokenistic approaches. Often governments and organizations value a community development approach and want to incorporate it into work they are doing with communities, however, they fail to appreciate the time that genuine community development really takes. It is not a genuine community development approach if it is 'completed' by a funding deadline or by fiscal year-end, instead of when the process really reaches a level of mutual understanding, commitment to change and sustainable relationships. Community development processes are not always genuine, and do not always include everyone. They are often simply worked with the people who do show up—and they are not usually people from marginalized groups.

The Municipality of the County of Kings (Nova Scotia, Canada) used a community-based process to develop the Action Plan for Ending Racism and Discrimination (the first municipality in Nova Scotia to do so), and then hired a community development team to implement the plan for five years. What's innovative is that process: it is open to (and seeking) community ideas and innovations and engagement, and is keeping the process transparent by regularly and publicly reporting on progress—new ideas and strategies, which it is embracing.
Conclusion

The responses offered here suggest both a diversity of perspectives as well as symmetry among the individuals. It should be noted that there was considerable overlap between some respondents in their full narratives; however, each response was edited for brevity with a focus on a prominent perspective. Nevertheless, several notable themes have emerged across all the narratives.

First, there appears to be a strong emphasis on people-to-people relationships. Many of the respondents noted the positive outcomes and creative energy that results from personal interaction. Constructive relationships lead to a sense of optimism as well as productive collective action. A unique spiritual awakening is said to be emerging that is intimately linked to the health of our relationships and the corresponding positive influences on governance structures and democratic practices. As Ostrom (1997: 3) notes, “person-to-person, citizen-to-citizen relationships are what life in democratic societies is all about.”

Second, beneficial relationships can produce powerful outcomes with positive unintended consequences. Indeed, there is a perceivable force that comes from collaboration and collective action resulting in positive change. This change can result when communities have ownership over a situation. Ownership of a community change process confronts issues of power and empowerment and ensures that all citizens can influence decisions of process and outcome (Lachapelle, 2008). The application of ownership influences how we define and measure a given situation, how we view opportunities, and how we take collective action. When ownership is lacking, tokenism ensues with “citizens acting only in a consultative role but without some form of delegated power” (Arnstine, 1969: 217). The result is often marginalised populations experiencing gross inequities and lacking genuine opportunities for engagement. The increasing focus on technical solutions and the reliance on “expert advice” can lead to “little confidence ... in the skills, intelligence, and experience of ordinary people” (Scott, 1998: 346). Powerful alliances formed through community development efforts can bring about holistic approaches, build trust, promote civic engagement, enhance leadership, and lead to plans and actions that are more socially and politically acceptable. Moreover, positive community development outcomes and consequences can lead to a propensity to collaborate in the future. Seen as a type of social contract, this behavior can reinforce the notion of reciprocal altruism whereby an individual assists in a present effort with the expectation for support in the future (Trivers, 1971). Ostrom and others (1999) highlight many examples of successful long-term self-organized processes and initiatives focused on building friendship and goodwill with radical reciprocal benefits. The power of the collaborative community development efforts that seek out and use diverse perspectives can lead to many positive outcomes.

Last, there seems to be a genuine need for innovation and creativity in community development. Creative ways of financing community development, engaging stakeholders, and building community leadership can lead to opportunities for mutual learning and empathy. Diets et al. (2003: 1907) report that the key components of successful collaborative processes include “dialogue among interested parties, officials, and scientists; complex, redundant, and layered institutions; a mix of institutional types; and designs that facilitate experimentation, learning, and change.” Moreover, innovation and creativity, when explicitly sought and applied can produce more vibrant, vital and resilient communities that are responsive to myriad needs and issues.

These narratives provide a concise but detailed examination of unique perspectives involving community development’s current issues. Further analysis of a range of perspectives will only expand the knowledge base and, with it, bring more effective community development outcomes and impacts.

Keywords

Community innovation, democracy, devolution, empowerment, engagement, entrepreneurship, evaluation, governance, leadership, local government, ownership, practical, reciprocal altruism, rural communities, sustainability, volunteering.

Review Questions

1. What principal themes emerge from the respondent?
2. Identify commonalities between the different perspectives as well as those that are unique and original.
3. How does creativity relate to innovation within and between the different community development perspectives?
4. What is reciprocal altruism in a community development context? Provide examples.
5. What current issues does your own community face?

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Connections

Watch a series of podcasts on community planning and development tools at The Community Planning Toolkit sponsored by the UK’s National Lottery Fund at: www.communityplanningtoolkit.org/podcasts/toolkit/how-to

Explore a variety of approaches and mini-cases at the following sites: Orton Family Foundation’s Heart & Soul community projects at: www.orton.org/projects/current Community and Economic Development programs of the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development at: www.nrcrev.usda.gov/SP_EconDevHome.html

23 Community-Based Energy

Rhonda Phillips

Overview

There are numerous ongoing and emerging issues in community development—one of the most pressing is that of “clean” energy. This chapter explores approaches to community-based energy systems, alternative energy sources, and ideas that communities are using to help become more resilient and sustainable. An overview of energy systems that are innovative and community-based organizations. Community development concludes with cases on community-based energy cooperatives and organizations.

Introduction

Energy is a basic need in the sense that modern society cannot be supported or maintained without readily, affordable, and equitable sources. Traditional electric grid connected and centralized systems are the norm; at the same time, some communities and even entire countries are exploring and implementing alternatives that reduce vulnerability and increase sustainability (Kahn et al., 2007a). These traditional systems may be very efficient or there may be high costs involved, particularly on the environmental front, such as loss of biodiversity and emission of greenhouse gases (Kahn et al., 2007a). Interest continues to soar in “alternative” sources such as solar, biocells, hydro, and wind powered. Part of the reason is that communities can help build sustainability into their planning and development by having affordable and reliable locally based energy systems.

In some cases, production of community-based energy may lead to creation of economic opportunity in local economies. For example, biocell production can lead to improvements in sustainabil-