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Access to Global Communication for Youth in Rural Communities
and its Relationship With Out-Migration

Andrea Sharkey

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ABSTRACT

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Based on results from questionnaires completed by a sample of male and female students between the ages of 17 and 19 from 3 rural Ontario high schools (N=47), this analysis examines the effects of media and communication access and use for adolescents in rural and small town areas on their decisions of whether to live in rural or urban areas in the future. Data from this sample suggests that media and communication tools play a role in decisions about future living in two ways.: 1) through the creation and/or reinforcement of stereotypes of rural and urban living and 2) through the facilitation of rural and non-rural communication and interaction. Each of these factors can act as both mechanisms which pull youth back to rural areas and push youth towards urban areas in the future. Negative stereotypes of rural communities as being dull and uneducated coupled with positive stereotypes of cities as being exciting and opportunity-filled, can encourage youth to move to urban centres in search of the urbanized youth culture depicted in the media. Positive stereotypes of rural communities as being safe, friendly, and spacious coupled with negative stereotypes of cities as being dangerous and dirty can encourage young people to return to small towns in the future. Similarly, communication tools can be used to encourage local networks which correlates with wanting to return to rural towns or they can be used to facilitate urban support systems which correlates with decisions to live in urban regions.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Setting the Stage: Two Worlds Collide

The teenage years can often be a minefield of difficult decisions, self discovery, and exploration. It is a time when young people are leaving the world of childhood but have not quite gained access to the world of adulthood. It is a time of paradoxes where teens want to rebel against the system but be accepted by it at the same time. They want freedom from their parents' rules but are not yet ready to leave the comfort and safety of homes, and in the midst of all of this turmoil, hormones are racing and their bodies are changing (Roe, 1983:59; Löhr, 1990: 11). No matter where you travel in Canada (and perhaps the westernized world at large) young people are navigating their way through the teen years in relatively the same way. In fact, it is not until the many factors which contribute to this development process – parents, socio-economic status, school, peers, religion, environment, and media – are looked at in more detail that the many differences in how teens develop become apparent. And it is these differences which can affect some of the decisions which young people may make during this time.

At the same time as teenagers across the country are going through this period of transition, another transition is occurring simultaneously – rural Canada is undergoing change. An area which makes up about 60% of our country's landscape and is home to approximately one third of our population is facing drastic reformation (Beshiri & Bollman, 2001). Issues of changing economies and out-migration affect most of Canada's rural communities daily, and with the many uncertainties of mining, fishing, forestry and agriculture, it is no wonder that many rural areas are experiencing huge changes in their

lifestyles. When both the transition of the teen years and the transitions of rural Canada are looked at in conjunction, we are confronted with the fact that these changes are not entirely mutually exclusive of one another. Many of the experiences which shape the decisions of teenagers in rural areas are coloured by their life *in* and their negotiations *with* their rural environment. Changes in rural communities are in turn affected by the decisions ultimately made by these young people.

1.2 Defining the Problem: Heading for the Bright Lights

As young people are confronted with the realities of rural life – limited employment options, a restricted ability to continue their education at the post-secondary level, lack of diversity and entertainment – they are often drawn away from the rural regions towards the opportunities offered in an urban setting. As a result, one of the major problems facing many rural communities today is a decrease in population. While out-migration poses many problems to any community, in rural communities this can be an even more critical issue for several reasons:

1) rural regions tend to have lower populations initially, and there is little in-migration so young people leaving can have a detrimental effect on rural populations

2) when teens choose to leave, aging populations are left behind

3) if young people are not encouraged to return during their child bearing and working years, then the community will lose what it has invested in its youth.

And yes, youth out-migration is due in part to the pursuit of post-secondary education, the opportunity to travel, and the chance to experience life, but when we take into account that few of the teenagers who are leaving these rural areas return to their

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communities of origin, it becomes more serious. There are also a number of other more permanent reasons why young people would possibly choose to leave rural areas in exchange for an urban setting: lack of employment, a desire for a faster-paced lifestyle, and a lack of services, just to name a few. With this being said, however, it is a greater understanding of these issues which rural communities and the young people who live there face daily which is needed now; once we can understand these problems then we can begin to take the important steps to rural revitalization.

One way which has been used to discuss migration in the past, and which I feel will be beneficial to our discussion here, is through the terminology of push and pull factors. These terms refer to the fact that some factors involved in migration are those which may push individuals away from one region towards another while other factors act as things which pull us towards another region. For example, a lack of employment within a community would be considered a factor which pushes people towards another region. Contrarily, a community with an abundance of employment opportunities may pull people from other regions. Many of the topics which will be discussed within this research fit into this push/pull dichotomy and so in order to facilitate this discussion, these terms will be incorporated.

1.3 Research Direction: Seeing is Believing

While there are many ways to study youth out-migration and the reasons behind it, an area which I feel is particularly important to address is the influence of media on decisions to leave rural communities. Certainly it is impossible to deny the enormity of the influence media has on youth culture (whether young people choose to admit it or not); and

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this is not surprising considering the ceaseless flow of information teenagers have access to and are inundated with on a daily basis. As will become clear from the literature review in Chapter 2, young people use the media as a way of defining what is normal, replicating what is cool, and as a means of constructing and reaffirming their reality, and it is through the media that they are then able to situate themselves within their environment. Today, access to global communication tools (national newspapers, Internet, cable, and satellite TV) have offered young people ways to connect on various levels with people around the world and become part of social networks which move beyond geographic boundaries.

I would also argue that social cohesion (a sense of collectivity or community) can be another important factor with respect to media and out-migration. For example, if a young person feels a strong connection and sense of belonging with their community, it is more likely that they will want to return to their rural area when they are older in order to remain a part of the networks they feel connected to. Contrarily, a lack of cohesion towards the community or even a diffusion of this cohesion over many groups and places then can possibly result in a young person feeling only weak ties to their community making a decision to leave easier and more likely.

This can potentially encourage out-migration in two ways:

1) If the bulk of the messages the teenager receives through these global media offer urban images and lifestyles, then it becomes difficult for them to replicate these norms set out before them while living in a rural community. In this way, young people learn to feel that their rural lifestyle is less than or inadequate as compared to the city life they are being shown. Being unable to replicate what

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appear to be 'normal' teen activities such as going to the movies, shopping at the mall, or hanging out with friends at a local coffee shop leaves teens wanting more, idealizing many aspects of city life, and wanting to live closer to these opportunities that *everyone* else seem to have. As well, images of rural life being shown as dull, slow, impoverished, or uneducated, for example, can help to create and reinforce an adolescent's negative view of rural life. It is these feelings of embarrassment of their present situation and a yearning for something more which can push adolescents towards urban centres.

2) As teenagers begin to form social networks online (through chat rooms, email, MSN messenger) or begin to feel connected to various aspects of city life through their interactions with media, this can result in diffused feelings of cohesion. Teens begin to feel connected to people and groups outside the limits of their own geographic community. And while it is possible that they still feel a connection with the community members in their own town, it is also reasonable to assume that, as these feelings of cohesion and belonging shift to cover a larger area, they become diffused. Weak feelings of cohesion to many diverse groups can result in a sense of placelessness for young people as they search to find their own identity resulting in ties to no geographic location. Likewise, creating social networks within urban settings with little sense of community in their own town can also contribute the pull which rural to youth may feel from urban settings.

With this being said, however, it is also possible that the influence of global media can be tempered through the access and use of local communication tools such as

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community web sites, local television channels, and local newspapers. As well, strong ties within the community through involvement in various groups and networks of local people may also play a role in the desire for young people to continue with their rural residency in the future.

Taking all of these aspects into account, it is critical at this point to clarify my research position; it is not my belief that media alone have initiated a mass exodus of young people from rural areas. For the most part, young people are highly likely to leave their rural community after high school in order to pursue higher education of some kind, travel, or experience life in another area. It is, therefore, unrealistic in this day and age to assume that a large number of teenagers will opt to never leave their town regardless of their communication access. More specifically, some of the key questions which I will attempt to answer within this thesis are: 1) How does the access and use of communication tools and the media affect young people's decisions about where to live in the future? 2) How do communication tools and the media affect youth's feelings of cohesion? 3) What kind of affect does rural media and communication have on rural youth out-migration? 4) What types of individuals are most likely to want to move away from their rural communities? It is currently my belief that the greater use of global communication tools and media by young people will contribute to their desire to live in an urban environment and that these long-term effects can be neutralized to a large degree through the use of local communication tools and social networks.

1.4 Personal Considerations

As a young person who grew up in a small rural agricultural community in Ontario as well as someone who has left their community in order pursue post-secondary education in an urban area, it would be impossible for me to not consider my own life experiences within this project. Certainly, it has enabled me to relate to much of the literature and responses offered throughout the fieldwork (as will be outlined in Chapters 3 and 4). My experiences with global and local media, community involvement and feelings of diffused cohesion have all entered into the formulation of this thesis in some way. In addition to this, extensive first hand experience with the topic of youth out-migration and rural living as well as my work with the New Rural Economy Project[1] has shown me the importance of young people in rural regions. Not only do we offer the promise of rural regeneration but also, the promise of community vibrancy and economic stability. Essentially, were it not for these factors which have shaded my life experiences, this thesis could not have taken the form it has.

1.5 Terminology and Definitions

There are several key terms around which the ideas within this thesis have been formulated. While each of these terms has been briefly mentioned already and will be

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A 5 year research and education project created as part of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) in order to address the changing needs of rural residents. The project is involved with 32 rural communities across Canada and brings together various levels of research and government in order to aid in the revitalization of rural regions.

discussed in greater detail within Chapter 2, in order to properly introduce these important concepts which will resurface throughout the paper, I will offer a brief description here.

i. *Out-Migration*

The concept of out-migration refers to the act of moving away from the town in which the person currently lives. While it is possible to use this term with reference to a teenager's decision to leave home in order to attend school, within the context of this thesis, out-migration will not be used in such a literal manner. More specifically, out-migration will not be used to refer to anyone who is leaving home solely for the purposes of school or travel if, upon completion, they have planned to return to their original community to live once again. Here, this term will be used to refer to a person moving away from their current community of residence for a prolonged period of time with no firm plans of returning after an event is completed.

ii. *Social Cohesion*

Social cohesion can be defined as "the extent to which a group of people respond collectively to achieve their valued outcomes and to deal with the economic, social, political, or environmental stresses (positive or negative) that affect them" (Reimer, 2002). One of the potential end results of cohesive behaviours and attitudes is a sense of belonging and a general feeling of 'community'. In the past, social cohesion has often been used in reference to *geographically centred* forms of community; however, because of the changing nature of networks as media remove many of the place and space boundaries on friendship and social bonds, within the context of this thesis this term will be used to refer to any feelings of belonging and community regardless of the context or location.

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iii. Communication Tools

Communication tools refer to any aid which contributes to the transfer of information from one party to another. Due to the nature of this research project, I have limited the scope of this term slightly in that it will only be used here to refer to means of mass communication. Therefore, while a cell phone or pager may be a tool for communication, because they are not used as tools to communicate to the masses, they will not be included. In addition to this, the tools have been divided into two categories:

a) Local Media

Local tools refer specifically to local newspapers, community web sites, local radio stations, local television stations or programming, community bulletin boards, and community newsletters. These tools are used primarily for the distribution of information which relates directly to local or regional issues and events.

b) Global Media

Global tools refer to national newspapers, Internet[2], and cable or satellite television. These tools are used primarily for the purpose of distributing information of a national or international nature or for the purpose of entertainment.

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Email will be considered as a communication tool despite the fact that it could be argued that it is not meant as a means of 'mass' communication since it is often used to transfer information among a closed group of people. Email use within the context of this thesis will be considered under the categories of both local and global communication.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of some of the literature which has been written regarding youth, out-migration and media; this review offers a framework by which we can better understand some of the issues surrounding how young people use and interpret the media, the factors affecting the life decisions and paths of teens, and rural youth in general. The first section deals with youth identity formation and looks at some of the factors which affect young people as they make the transition into adulthood. The second section deals with youth out-migration in rural areas and will include a discussion of several of the potential reasons for young people to leave, the problems of out-migration for rural regions, and some of the possible benefits of out-migration for the community. The third section of the literature review will look at media and communication access for young people. This section will discuss the ways in which young people consume the media, how they see themselves and rural life within these images, and how they are using the communication tools to which they have access. The last section will discuss social cohesion with respect to its links with identity formation in young people and its connection with the media. A review of the literature available within each of these topics will be used in order to begin answering the four key questions within this thesis as presented within the introduction.

2.2 Youth Identity Formation

The formative years of our adolescence are ones of great importance in deciding who we are and who we will ultimately become as adults. Whether we decide to continue

on with our education, what type of job we seek, where we will choose to live and raise a family, and whether we think any of this is even important are all decisions that can be affected by various aspects of our childhood and adolescent experiences. While there are many ways of defining and studying identity, for purposes of clarification, I have drawn from Erik Erikson's work within this field for my discussion here. Erikson sees identity as something which is fostered through the interactivity of the individual with his or her social environment. More specifically, caretakers (parents, friends, family) and institutions act as representatives of society as they help to socialize individuals into a viable existence within society at large. In addition to this, Erikson suggests that while identity is continually being created and negotiated throughout an individual's youth, in adolescence, young people actively begin to try out different groups of friends, different lifestyles and different career plans so that by the end of the teen years, young people can enter into adulthood with a clearer sense of identity and self (Erikson, 1959; Rapaport, 1959: 14-15; Roe, 1983: 59; Löhr, 1990: 9-10; Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 14, 18; Schultze, 1991: 60). What can be so confusing for many teens during this time of personal growth are the sometimes conflicting messages they receive from parents, media, school and their peers. Especially, in as today's world becomes more complex, it grows to be equally difficult for those being socialized (teens) as it can often be for those doing the socializing (parents, friends) (Erikson, 1959:73-74; Schultze et al., 1991: 5-6). Within this line of thinking, then, a person's identity develops through their actions and interactions with others and their social world making identity something which is developed through experience rather than something a young person is born with. In accordance with Erikson's perspective, in Csikszentmihayli

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and Larson's 1984 study of teenagers, they point out that "[w]here adolescents spend their time, what they do with it, and whom they spend it with demarks a system of options, constraints, and potentialities that bear on adolescent life, shaping both the immediate reality and the future growth" (as quoted in Quaglia & Perry, 1995: 234). Numerous factors contribute to this growth. In fact, to reduce the teenage years and the changes which occur into an exact scientific equation would be not only naive but virtually impossible. Essentially "Canadian teenagers are surrounded by options" and it is for this reason that gaining a greater understanding of the various influences on youth can help us to understand how teenagers make the life decisions they do (Bibby & Posterski, 1992: 95). Some of the most important influences on young people which will be discussed here include relationships with friends and family, socio-economic status, environment, and the media.

i. Friend and Family Relationships

To begin, one of the defining factors which has been shown repeatedly to be of importance in young people's lives are relationships with other people. Whether it be friends or family, teenagers hold these connections close to heart. In fact, in one recent study, Reginald Bibby and Donald Posterski showed that 83% of those surveyed felt that friendship is 'very important' to them and that 80% place high value on 'being loved'. More specifically, when something goes wrong the two most important people or groups to be told by most teens are their friends and their family (1992: 9,11; Bibby, 2001: 13, 33, 56; Roe, 1983:60-61). Similarly, other studies have shown that one of the favourite leisure pastimes of young people is visiting with friends and family (Gordon and Caltabiano, 1996:

883-884; Quaglia & Perry, 1995: 238-239; Bibby & Posterski, 1992: 164). And it's not only a matter of who teens gain the most comfort from; these relationships have been shown to play decisive roles in the life decisions of young people. Teenagers hold the opinions of their peers close to heart and can often be influence by their friends. Whether it be by following examples set by those around them or through self-monitoring based on peers reactions to them, teens can be extremely influential over other teens (Erikson, 1959:89, 92; Bibby, 2001: 31, 56).

Parents also play important roles in the socialization and identity formation of their children. Teens trust their parent's judgement on many issues and in the same way they aspire to fit in with their friends, they often aspire to impress their parents and make them proud (Erikson, 1959: 62-63; Bibby, 2001: 31, 56; Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 15). Recent work by James Coleman supports this belief as he goes on to break down the potential influences of family background on teens' short term and long term decisions into three categories: financial capital (which will be discussed in greater detail along with socio-economic factors), human capital, and social capital. Coleman sees human capital in such elements as parents' education levels and social capital in the relationship between parents and their children (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 479). Another theorist who can contribute to this discussion is Pierre Bourdieu as he takes the critical step towards addressing the importance of acknowledging forms of capital outside that of economic capital. In his paper, *Forms of Capital*, Bourdieu discusses three forms of capital: economic, cultural, and social. This broadened look at capital gives value to such things as the investment of parents and the education system to impart knowledge to the next generation. This form of

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cultural capital cannot be transferred from one party to the next instantly but must be nurtured over time through the efforts of both parties (the giver and the receiver); value is not immediately foreseeable but is present nonetheless (Bourdieu, 1986). More directly, Bourdieu is supporting the view that the experiences, education, and socio-economic status of parents and acquaintances all play a part in fostering who young people eventually become (Bourdieu, 1986). Therefore, without role models of various backgrounds, rural youth can be limited in the forms of cultural capital that they can gain from their interactions and eventually use as their own in the future. Without seeing others who want to go on in school, young people are less likely to want this for themselves or be encouraged to do so.

Other studies have offered support to these claims of relational involvement in the life trajectories of teenagers. Dyk and Wilson's 1999 study on Appalachian youth shows that a mother's own education expectation helps to predict the high school grades of her children. As well, a mother's actual level of education seems "to foster certain internalized values that, in turn, are acted upon in young adulthood through educational attainment" (1999: 497-498). In addition to this, the study showed that strong and dense social networks within the family and the community also helped to predict a teen's educational and job expectations. More specifically, the greater the number of close friends and family supports an individual has, the more they hope to achieve in school and the better the job they plan to get (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 498-499). While it is evident that the potential is there for rural youth to experience the positive effects of a supportive family environment, this is not always the case unfortunately. In Cobb, McIntire, and Pratt's 1989 survey of

teenagers' desires for after high school, they found that when compared to their urban counterparts, rural teenagers "felt that their parents were much more supportive of their taking full-time jobs, attending trade schools, or entering the military rather than attending college. Lower aspirations for making a lot of money, and higher aspirations of making an adequate income, having a secure job and maintaining friendships were more typical of rural than urban youth" (Quaglia & Perry, 1995: 233). While most of these options can and should be considered *different* rather than *lesser*, it is clear that the role models and relationships a young person is surrounded with can and do affect the decisions they make.

ii. Socio-Economic Status

Another factor which has been shown to play a leading role in youth identity formation is that of socio-economic status. And while it is not the final word in young people's decisions for their future, it is part of the process. If in no other way, an individual's financial situation can affect their ability to achieve an end result such as post-secondary education. In fact, some would suggest that it is socio-economic factors which ultimately perpetuate society's status quo (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988 as discussed in Dyk & Wilson, 1999). And the seeming importance of financial security with respect to their future has not gone unnoticed by teenagers. Worry about a 'lack of money' is one of the major concerns of young people in Canada. Findings from Bibby and Posternski's study as well as Bibby's later work show that teens were worrying more about money in 1992 than in the in 1984, that more teens than adults tend to say they are concerned about financial issues to a great extent, and that many say they worry on a daily basis about lack of money (1992: 88-91; Bibby, 2001: 46). Whatever the case may be, rural poverty and a

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young person's experience with it contribute strongly to drop-out behaviour and lower aspirations in youth (Lichter, Cornwell, & Eggebeen, 1993: 70-71; Quaglia & Perry, 1995: 233; Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 477, 496). More specifically:

> A family's socio-economic status (SES), for example, plays a substantial role in shaping a child's success in school and in influencing his or her occupational choices. Consequently, young people are more prepared for, often aspire to, and achieve levels of occupational status comparable to those of their parents. SES, in essence, as an important environmental condition for aspirations and achievements in the sense that children from higher SES families are socialized to value educational achievement more extensively than youngsters who are less advantaged (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 478).

The correlation between educational attainment and economic factors may be in part due to the fact that post-secondary education can be extremely expensive. Without financial aid of any kind from family members, university and college can become a difficult goal to reach since most rural teens are forced to move away from home in order to attend these institutions in the first place. Student loans and full-time employment in order to make ends meet all without the support network of their home community may prove to be too great an obstacle for many young people (Looker & Dwyer, 1998: 16).

iii. Social Environment

The social environment in which a young person develops is yet another factor which can influence a teenager's decisions. The types of resources and services a young person has access to, the demographics of the community at large, and even the occupational and educational opportunities available where they live all contribute to a teenager's identity. As Erikson mentioned earlier, schools are one of the primary means of institutional socialization within an adolescent's social environment. The educational

system provides young people with the necessary knowledge, skills, discipline, and attitudes of the existing society (Roe, 1983: 28-29; Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 15). Other studies have suggested that variables such as levels of industrialization, economic composition, and occupational structure within a community can all have an effect on the future educational and career aspirations of a young person (Dyk & Wilson, 1999; Quaglia & Perry, 1995). In addition to these types of factors, even things like a community's ability to come together as a unified front in order to help their young people through the often difficult transitions of adolescence can be important environmental factors (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 480-481; Quaglia & Perry, 1995: 433). More directly, as poverty and unemployment become more prevalent within a community, it may be difficult for youth to even see a purpose in continuing their education. If there are few opportunities for high-paying jobs, then it is less likely that a young person will aspire to get one; this may in part be due to the lack of familiarity with the existence of these types of opportunities (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 482; Quaglia & Perry, 1995: 434).

iv. Media

One of the last contributing factors to youth identity which I will discuss here is that of media. As has been suggested previously, media is an extremely pervasive force in the lives of teens across Canada and the westernized world and it certainly consumes a great deal of young people's free time. By the end of high school, the average American student will have spent as much time in front of the television as in the classroom (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 15). In fact, media is another important socialization factor which some would argue to be as important as parents, friends, and school in the formation of

teenager's identities. Media provides youth with a blueprint of society at any given time and their demonstrates their place within it. It also offers youth examples of behaviour which they are then able to emulate within various contexts (Löhr, 1990; 12-14; Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 15-16, 230; Schultze et al., 1991: 6, 11-12, 48). "Currently, the media have an ambitious effect on youth's attempts to find themselves amid a cacophony of disparate voices offering stability and hope" (Schultze et al, 1991: 6). A study by DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach in 1989 substantiates the importance of media involvement in the socialization process as they point out that the more dependent an individual is on any form of mass media, the more they will be influenced by the information available through that medium (as cited in Oskam & Hudson, 1999: 287).

In Bibby and Posterski's study, 80% of 15yr olds said they watched at least two hours of television daily and 21% said they watched more than 5 hours per day; many other studies support these findings as they suggest that watching television is one of the favourite pastimes of teenagers along with spending time with friends and family (1992: 22; Quaglia & Perry, 1999: 238-239; Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996: 883-884). Some of the possible implications of this socialization tool will be discussed further in the *media* section of the literature review.

Despite the continuous and seemingly desired exposure to media, young people consistently deny that it has any great effect on their lives and the decisions they make. Even more confusing, is the fact that "[c]onfidence in the media exceeds confidence in government, religion, and the courts. Only confidence in the police and the schools are able to match the trust placed in the media" (Bibby & Posterski, 1992: 272). Essentially, young

people spend an inordinate amount of time consuming media, believe that what the media tells them is true, and yet they still don't believe that they are influenced by what they see and hear (Bibby, 2001: 31).

Interestingly enough, however, when asked about the most important events which are affecting Canada or their favourite athletes and musicians, teens tend to regurgitate the images and facts of popular culture that the media has presented them. The issues most often covered in the news for the past year are the ones stated as most important and almost all of the most popular athletes and musicians are American – the ones most likely to receive air-time, be mentioned on the radio, or written about in the newspaper (Bibby & Posterski, 1992: 66, 274-275).

While each of these factors – relationships with friends and family, socio-economic factors, environment, and media – plays an important role in the development of an individual's identity, it is important to remember that no one factor should be given priority over another. While media influence has taken a central role within this research, it is impossible to deny the active part of each of these factors within a teen's life. Certainly, many of these aspects will be reflected in various ways throughout the survey (to be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4).

2.3 Youth Out-Migration

Out-migration is a natural part of every community's story. Changing occupations, changing lifestyles, marriage, and unemployment are just some of the many factors which can contribute to migration patterns which exist throughout Canada. Youth out-migration, specifically, is also a natural phenomenon as teens yearn to spread their wings and try new

things on their own. Whether it be to travel, to find work, to pursue post-secondary education or just to venture out on their own, adolescents have a variety of reasons for wanting to leave their home towns in search of something different; this kind of out-migration is both healthy and natural. In fact, even in rural areas where the populations are small and aging, youth out-migration can be extremely beneficial to the community in the long run, but for this to happen, it is critical that rural leavers return to their communities in the future.

Before moving into further discussion of the reasons behind rural youth migration and the potential problems, it is important to have a clearer picture of the current Canadian situation in youth migration as has been addressed in recent literature. One study by Richard Dupuy, Francine Mayer, and René Morrissette shows that from 1991 to 1996 approximately 28-32% of rural teenagers (ages 15 to 19) left their rural homes while only about 15-18% of their urban counterparts left their urban homes during this same time period. And for "all provinces except Newfoundland, the main destination of individuals who leave rural areas is an urban area inside the province of origin. In Newfoundland, the main destination is an urban area outside the province of origin" (1996: 7-8; Looker & Dwyer, 1998: 15). This study does suggest, however, that while rural areas are losing their teenagers to urban regions, they are seeing an influx of people aged 25-64 from the urban regions. This in-migration is especially evident in urban adjacent communities which can act as bedroom communities for commuters travelling to and from the city; and it is this inflow to urban adjacent communities which helps to explain the fact that, on average, rural communities are decreasing in population size while the overall rural population of Canada

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has increased (Carter & Shindruk, 1992: 9,19-20; Hay, 1992: 16; Reimer, 1992: 59; Randhawa, 1992: 103). With this being said, however, it seems that at best only about 56% of the young people who left originally are returning to their rural home towns later in life (Dupuy, Mayer, & Morrissette, 2000: 11, 19).

When we look at the types of individuals who are moving away from their rural communities, we see that he or she tends to be young, single, have a university degree and have had limited success in the local labour market. In addition to this, people whose chosen employment was in the area of agriculture, fishing, forestry, or trapping are much less likely to move away from rural areas than those people whose chosen profession was in business services. As well, those "who leave rural areas experience faster earnings growth than those who stay in rural areas" (Dupuy et al., 2000: 24-25). This apparent exodus of young educated people from rural regions is explained further in the works of Doug Knight and Toni Haas. They suggest that this outflow of youth is part of a cycle in which rural adolescents are encouraged to increase their levels of education in order to stimulate rural employment, but in fact, this increased education when combined with lagging economies, high unemployment rates and a feeling that staying rural is similar to failure results in youth out-migration (as quoted by Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 117,129; Harmon, 2000: 99; Gabriel, 2002: 211). And while others disagree as to the extent to which educational attainment is related to out-migration from rural areas, there does seem to be considerable support with respect to the economic and employment setbacks of rural regions (Orderud, 1997: 112; Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 118, 129).

Turning attention now to address some of the reasons behind youth out-migration from rural communities, there are numerous factors involved; three of the most significant factors which I will discuss here include lagging economies and high unemployment rates, the lack of services, and stereotyping. Two researchers who have done a good job of outlining some of the economic trends in rural regions are Ron Cunningham and Ray Bollman. First, they point out that while farms continue to get bigger due to advancing technology, they consistently need fewer people to aid in the daily upkeep. Second, the resource commodity prices are decreasing, and third, the service sector is a fast growing employer within rural communities (1997: 37, 41; Dasgupta, 1988: 18; Carter & Shindruk, 1992: 25; Harmon, 2000: 98; Gabriel, 2002: 209). More specifically, this means that as employment in agriculture is on the decline leaving more rural people unemployed, low paying service industry jobs are on the rise. In addition to this, "Canada has one of the highest rates [of unemployment] in the OECD, at both the national and rural levels. Thus, even though (or because) Canada is ahead of most other countries in its transition to a service economy, there is still a significant shortage of jobs accessible to rural residents" (Cunningham & Bollmand, 1997: 43, 54; Dupuy et al., 2000: 4-5; Harmon, 2000: 98; Looker & Dwyer, 1998: 15). In addition to high unemployment rates, Dupuy et al. point out that on average, men and women can expect to earn less in rural communities than the urban centres (2000: 5; Carter & Shindruk, 1992: 31; Jamieson, 2000: 213).

Lynn Jamieson puts these employment trends in perspective with her research in rural Scotland. She makes the point that for many young people it is taken for granted at a very early age that if you do well in school and want to find a 'good job' it is just expected

that you will leave the area (2000: 207-208, 213). These sentiments are echoed in the

interview of one young high-achieving individual:

> Because at sixteen you feel comfortable, well I felt comfortable
> at home with my family around me, and I thought it was a pretty
> place and all my friends were there, and I could see myself living
> there. But then as you get to maybe seventeen, eighteen, you think
> 'but there's no jobs and I don't want to end up in the textile mill or
> whatever. So then you think 'no, (Jamieson, 2000: 209).

Here it is evident that while young people may enjoy the lifestyle which can be found in

their rural communities, they also feel that in order for them to find fulfilling employment,

they will have to head to the city. Interestingly enough, as was discussed previously in the

section on identity formation, socio-economic status, family, and environment can play an

important role in a young person's life choices. This issue becomes significant to the

discussion of out-migration when we consider that the same factors which affect an

individual's life decisions can also ultimately affect their decision to leave their rural homes

(Smith, Beaulieu & Seraphine, 1995: 363). More specifically, a parent with higher

education is more likely to encourage their children to attain at least the same amount of

education if not more. And as was pointed out earlier, young, single, educated people are

the most likely to leave their rural towns for the city. In addition to this, a family's roots in

a community can also contribute to out-migration. For example, "[c]hildren of middle-class

local parents are less likely to migrate than children of middle-class non-local parents, the

overwhelming majority of whom do leave" (Jamieson, 2000: 208-209). And when

education levels are controlled for, middle-class adolescents are still more likely to migrate

than working-class adolescents (Jamieson, 2000: 208).

Another major reason for youth out-migration is the lack of services which are readily available to rural residents. Limited access to everyday businesses such as grocery stores, banks, clothing stores, and movie theatres can make life much more inconvenient for rural dwellers. This limited availability to businesses is often accompanied by school closures, limited medical facilities, and a lack of institutions of higher learning. Even services like snow plowing, garbage collection, recycling, and road upkeep can be somewhat unreliable for individuals who live in rural communities (Looker & Dwyer, 1998: 10,14,17; Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 120). Especially for the average teenager, community living without malls and movie theatres can at times seem unbearable. Even more important, however, in many teenagers' lives is the lack of colleges and universities present in rural regions. It would be unreasonable to think that each rural community should be equipped with its own post-secondary institution, but when we take into account the fact that, for the most part, many of the existing institutions are not even within commuting distance for most rural youth, it becomes a larger problem. Essentially, this deficit forces young people who wish to pursue higher education or follow certain career paths to move to an urban centre where the appropriate facilities are available (Orderud, 1997: 104-105). As well, for young people with special needs, the common lack of special schooling, rehabilitation programs, hospitals, and specialists means constant travelling to urban centres which can ultimately result in a desire to migrate from their rural homes permanently.

Often it seems that the lack of services in smaller communities is part of a vicious cycle whereby governments make cutbacks in places where they think it will affect fewer people and save the most money which reduces services to rural areas. This in turn

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contributes to out-migration which then results in further closures and further out-migration. "Many rural communities have...felt the crunch of cuts to government programs – post office closures, cuts to regional development programs, and agricultural subsidies. The future for many small towns across the country does not bode well in light of the current recession and fiscal restraint (Carter & Shindruk, 1992: 9; Harmon, 2000: 98). It is this same lack of services which when experienced in conjunction with other factors, can contribute to the out-migration of rural youth.

Stereotyping is yet another important reason which young people cite for wanting to move away from their rural communities towards an urban centre. Urban communities are not only seen as places of unlimited employment opportunities, but also as places of excitement and entertainment. Rural communities, on the other hand, are seen as places of adversity, poverty, and something to be overcome (Carter & Shindruk, 1992: 9; Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 114, 121). For many young rural inhabitants, to remain rural is seen as a personal failure which can sometimes leave them feeling trapped and 'lesser than'. In fact, a pervasive belief encountered by Lynn Jamieson in her rural research was that if one wanted to get ahead they had to get away from their rural community (2000: 205). Many people Jamieson spoke to in her research who had left their rural community spoke about those who had stayed as being "parochial" and having "narrow horizons" making them superior because they had 'gotten out' and 'better' than where they were from and the people who lived there; this sentiment of failure was then echoed by those who had remained rural as they regarded it as a consequence of not doing well in school (2000: 211-212, 215; Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 115, 117, 123). When one rural 'stayer' was asked if he

had assumed he would leave his rural town after high school he replied: "Yeah I think that's everybody's assumption. But then, getting back to when I was just leaving [school], I knew it was too late because I hadn't stuck in at school" (Jamieson, 2000: 212). It is within this framework of stereotypes which young people make their decisions about their future and can often encourage young people to leave their rural communities; this is evident from the fact that J. Roy found in his 1997 research that "even if young individuals could hold the job they desire[d] in their community, four out of ten would still be willing to move out to an urban centre" (as quoted in Dupuy et al., 2000: 2; Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 114, 125).

With all of these reasons working in conjunction to cause rural out-migration in youth, several problems can arise for the communities they leave behind. One of the first and most obvious outcomes of this type of migration is the age of the population which remains. Because of the baby boomers, it is a nation-wide phenomenon that the Canadian population is aging. While urban areas continue to be inhabited with higher numbers of working-age people, rural areas are increasingly becoming more and more inhabited with the two ends of the age spectrum: the very young and the very old. This results in communities with a highly dependant population with fewer people in their working and child bearing years between the ages of 20 and 64. And while youth out-migration alone has not caused this phenomenon, that in conjunction with higher birth rates in rural areas and the tendency for older people to migrate from farms and cities to non-farm rural regions has resulted in highly dependent populations (Carter & Shindruk, 1992: 22-23, 25).

In addition to this, when young educated people move away from their rural

communities, they leave behind a deficit of professionals and high socio-economic status

families in the area. This in turn continues the cycle whereby:

> The lowest levels of [educational] aspiration continue to be
> in rural areas, while suburban areas tend to record the highest
> educational aspiration levels...Because rural students perceive
> less support for college from their parents, teachers, and
> guidance counselors, they tend to report lower occupational
> aspirations and demonstrate less confidence in their ability to
> do college work (Smith et al., 1995: 365).

With fewer individuals with higher education present in their everyday lives either as

parents or community members, rural young people tend to have fewer opportunities to be

exposed to individuals with careers which require a college or university education. This

can ultimately contribute to a lack of drive towards higher education which does seem to

be present in urban settings (Smith et al., 1995: 64-365, 370; Dasgupta, 1988: 161-162).

2.4 Communication and Media

Communication technology and the media have seen some substantial changes in

the last fifty years with the advent of television, personal computers, fax machines, cellular

phones, palm pilots and the Internet (most of which can be carried around in your pocket!).

It would have been impossible to foresee how these innovations in technology could have

altered our world so greatly and to imagine that they would be a part of our everyday lives

and not part of some science fiction movie. Because of these inventions, the flow of

information has reached break neck speed as it takes merely minutes or even seconds to

find out what is happening around the world; this has given us the opportunity to feel as if

we are part of events which are happening on another continent as they take place. We are

able to communicate instantaneously with people around the globe whether they are there to receive the message or not and we can sustain long distance bonds which are sometimes based on nothing more than shared interests – free from gender, socio-economic status, educational background, race, and age. We can even receive hundreds of radio and television channels from the comfort of our living room and express our views and opinions to the world at large with only the click of a mouse. All of these factors have combined to create a generation of youth which is more informed and connected than any other generation before them (Fidler, 1997: 4, 121; Franzen, 2000: 428; Wellman, 2001: 2032; Wellman, Haase, Witte & Hampton, 3; Abbott, 1998: 85-86; Bibby & Posterski, 1992: 60-61; Reimer, 1992: 55; Schultze et al., 1991: 47; Lægran, 2002:158).

In addition to the changes these technologies have made in our personal exchange and information, they have also altered the boundaries of space and time in the business world. Not only is it easier to trade information, goods, and services over great distances, it is also possible to stay in-touch and networked from outside the city centres (Franzen, 2000: 427; Fidler, 1997: xiii; Hampton & Wellman, 2001: 3; Dryburgh, 2002: 3; Abbott, 1998: 87; Valentine & Holloway, 2001: 383; Lægran, 2002: 157). In general, it has been suggested that the communication breakthroughs of the past half century have not replaced the more traditional means of communicating such as face-to-face and telephone, but rather have allowed us to complement these existing forms. In this way, the global is made local creating what Keith Hampton and Berry Wellman term "glocalization" (2001: 11; Wellman, Haase, Witte, & Hampton, 5).

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While it may seem from this that communication technology has just fit itself neatly into our day to day lives with only the benefits of fast and abundant information to concern ourselves with, there are actually many varying perspectives on this subject. Essentially, there are two ends of the spectrum, which can be labelled as utopian and dystopian (Haase, Wellman, Witte, & Hampton, 4; Sefton-Green, 1998: 2). Simply put, utopians argue that communication technology is allowing us to communicate, engage in community, and find information in new and improved ways. In this view, the Internet and other communication tools can help to make work more cost effective and efficient which ultimately saves more time for friends and family. Also, it is possible, as was previously mentioned, to work from home and not be at the office constantly, which can again provide an individual with more family and community time (Haase et al., 2002: 4; Franzen, 2000: 428; Hampton & Wellman, 2001: 3; Valentine & Holloway, 2001:386, 390).

Dystopians, on the other hand, claim that these new technologies merely pull people away from their 'real' geographic communities and causes them to feel isolated and lonely. As people spend more and more time in front of the television or on the Internet, the less time they're spending with their family and friends in their geographic community (Haase et al., 2002: 4; Franzen, 2000: 428; Fidler, 1997: 121; Hampton & Wellman, 11).

With these views as polar opposites, many theorists tend to fall somewhere on the spectrum between these two arguments. This discussion concerning how communication technology brings us together with or pulls us away from our community and our surroundings will be expanded upon in the next section of the literature review concerning social cohesion.

i. Who's Got It – The Digital Divide in Canada

Many communication technologies have been able to infiltrate communities around the world regardless of sex, race, socio-economic status or otherwise. Newspapers, radios, and televisions are three such tools which can often surprise us in the remoteness of their reach. Cellular phones may soon make an appearance on this list as well. One technology that still seems to be discussed again and again with respect to differential use are computers and the Internet. When we are talking about differential use what we really want to discuss is the 'digital divide'. Jessie Jackson refers to the digital divide as the:

> systematic differences in computer and Internet use: between developed and less-developed countries, between people of different socioeconomic statuses (education, income, occupation, and wealth), between people at different stages in the life-course, between men and women, and between different local areas and regions (Fong, Wellman, Kew, & Wilkes, 2001: 2).

It seems that in Canada, Internet use and access is influenced by income, age, education, sex, spoken language, and region. More specifically, poor elderly women, with little education who don't speak English and live in a rural community are the least likely to use or have access to the Internet. Literacy is yet another boundary for some people; much of the material which can be found on the Internet is written for people with an average or above average reading ability which can be restricting for many Canadians. It is also important to note that a lack of technological skills and knowledge can also be a factor. For example, if people are not familiar with various kinds of software, hardware, or general Internet know-how, getting online can be an extremely daunting task. In addition to this, as web sites get larger and more complex, even the lack of high speed modems can make

surfing the web or downloading virtually inaccessible. Lastly, some people are hindered in their Internet access because of the relatively high cost which can be associated with connectivity. In fact, unless the community has free school or public access, some individuals or families are simply unable to afford the costs of either a personal PC or in-home connection (Dryburgh, 2002: 7; Fong et al., 2001).

ii. Who's Using It and How

a) Newspapers:

Current American statistics seem to show that newspaper readers tend to be "older, more educated, and more rooted in their communities than the average American" (Putnam, p.218). It also seems that this habit of reading the newspaper is something that, when started at a young age, stays with us into adulthood and leaves us with a better understanding of world issues than those people who only watch the news on television. Another interesting finding which Putnam addresses is that in 1948, the average American household read 1.3 newspapers daily and had about nine years of education. Today, schooling levels have risen by 50% but the number of newspapers read daily within the American household has dropped by 57% even though there is a high correlation between newspaper reading and education (1999: 218). Here, as with many of these statistics and studies, it is often not clear what came first, the chicken or the egg – do newspapers make people smarter, more knowledgeable, and more civically minded? Or are people who possess these traits already more interested in reading a daily paper?

Regardless of which came first, however, readers feel that newspapers are a trusted form of information and in situations where there is conflicting information about a

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product, newspapers are the most trusted form of media (Oskam & Hudson, 1999: 288, 295).

b) Internet:

The Internet is without a doubt the new sweetheart of communication theorists in the academic world. It's new, it has potential for good and bad, and most people in the developed world have access. And as with any new communications tool, there is a great interest in understanding how people are using this technology and how it will ultimately affect its users. Heather Dryburgh from Statistics Canada offers insight into some of these questions with her work with the Canadian 2000 General Social Survey which focussed on the access and use of communication technology. This study finds that approximately 53% of Canadians over the age of 15 had been online within the last year and when Canada is compared internationally, we come out with the 7th highest rate of Internet use in the world (2002: 2). Looking at how this Internet use is spread across the country, Alberta and British Columbia have the highest rates of use (about 61%) and Newfoundland and New Brunswick have the lowest rates of use (about 44%. Ontario comes it at third for use (about 54%) (Dryburgh, 2002: 6-7).

As for who's using this technology, it seems that more men than women are getting online at 50% and 56% respectively and that women tend to be relatively light users while men tend to be moderate to heavy users. It also seems that the most common age group for users is 15 to 19 year olds (Dryburgh, 2002: 7; Fong et al., 2001: 11-13, 16-17; Schmidbauer & Löhr, 1999: 146). This doesn't seem surprising when we consider that this

is the age group which has had the most life exposure to the Internet. It's literally become a part of their everyday lives and means of communication.

Not unexpectedly, in one recent survey, 42% of teenagers reported that the Internet is a source of enjoyment for them. Their computers, video games, and email were also cited as sources of pleasure. Interestingly, males tended to report higher levels of enjoyment than females with reference to Internet use but both enjoyed email (Bibby, 2001: 24, 26, 62). In addition to the age difference in use and enjoyment, there are also age differences in reasons for use. Young people tend to see the Internet as a source of entertainment, self-expression, and communication where as adults tend to see it as a tool for retrieving information (Fong et al., 2001: 16; Abbott, 1998: 85). The sheer popularity of this technology is reflected in the amount of time people are spending online. One 2001 study by A. Odlyzko suggests that, in the developed world, Internet users are online for an average of 64 minutes per day (as quoted in Wellman, 2001: 2032). Another study by Harlan Lebo reports that young people between the ages of 16-18 use the Internet for approximately 7.6 hours per week on average and 19 to 24 year olds use the Internet for approximately 9.7 hours per week on average (as quoted in Fong et al., 2001: 15). Canadians, on average, seem to be online for slightly less time; in Dryburgh's work, 61% of users spent between 1 and 7 hours per week online and 14% say they use the internet at home more than 14 hours per week. As for what people seem to be doing online, the most popular passtime is email. 85% of users are connecting to email and 39% of Canadians say they use it daily. Looking at Canadian teenagers specifically, one study showed that 27% reported using email daily (Dryburgh, 2002: 8, 18-19; Bibby, 2001: 28; Schmidbauer

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& Löhr, 1999: 164). Another interesting finding of Dryburgh's which extends the digital divide perspective is that Canadian Francophones tend to use the Internet less than Canadian Anglophones. French speaking individuals also tend to report that there is enough Internet content in their official language much less often than English speaking individuals (as quoted in Fong et al., 2001: 28).

c) Television:

Teenagers divide up their time spent outside of school in various ways. As was previously discussed, friends and family are very important to young people, but it appears that young people also find entertainment in watching TV and videos. In one study, 42% of adolescents from Maine reported watching between 1 and 5 hours of television weekly and 28% reported watching between 6 and 10 hours per week (Quaglia & Perry, 1995: 239). As well, when Reginald Bibby asked teenagers what types of things they found to be a source of enjoyment, 60% cited television and 92% of those said they watched it daily (2001: 24, 28). The television does not only provide youth with enjoyment either. One study by Oskam and Hudson argues that television is where most people received their news and information and that it was one of the most trusted mediums especially when there was conflicting information about local or state news (1999: 287, 293, 296).

iii. What's On: Representation in the Media

Many authors, including Robert Putnam, suggest that it has become more possible today for people to find information which is tailored to their specific interests. More specifically, it has been argued that "news and entertainment have become increasingly individualized. No longer must we coordinate our tastes and timing with others in order to

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enjoy the rarest culture or the most esoteric information" (1999: 216-217). While this flood of media does appear to be present, it is important to remember the source.

One study performed by Wendy Lazarus, founder of the Children's Partnership, suggests that many people feel that there is a deficit of information that really pertains to them. "We found a strong desire among people for practical, local information about their neighborhoods that seems to fly in the face of the way the Internet is moving in terms of national portals like Yahoo, Netscape and Exite" (Fong et al., 2001: 8). In addition to everything the web readily has to offer through its corporate connections, people are also interested is seeing more information about local community issues and more information which expresses some form of cultural diversity (Fong et al., 2001: 8-9). Essentially, due to the fact that much of the Internet and media at large are owned and operated by the dominant class (white, wealthy, Anglo-Saxon males) who most often put forth the dominant ideology, there tends to be a lack of potentially alternative messages being made available to the audience. Interestingly enough, some authors go so far as to say that media content cannot even be said to reflect the realities of the everyday world; what it does do is to offer broad generalizations of the current ideologies within the society at that time (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 134, 180-181; Phillip et al., 2001: 9-10).

As an important socializing factor, many of the societal values, beliefs and norms presented by the media to viewers will be learned and internalized; mass media provide teens with the fads, trends, films, clothes, music, and lifestyles which they should consume in order to fit in and stay current (Shultze, 1991: 47, 50-52; Phillps, Fish & Agg, 2001: 2). In addition to the fads and trends which are promoted within the media, another pervasive

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ideology of today which affects how youth culture is depicted is the urbanization of society (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 15; Dasgupta, 1988: 18; Lægran, 2002: 158). Within this generalized view of urbanization, both rural and urban stereotypes are present within the media, and from these stereotypes, viewers gather information about the world around them. Some of the positive stereotypes of urban centres is the pace and activity which exists there (Valentine & Holloway, 2001: 384; Lægran, 2002: 158).

Conversely, one of the negative urban stereotypes is the constant coupling of city life with danger and crime. "Although the FBI reported a decline in violent crime in many areas between 1989 and 1994, the number of crime stories on network news tripled. At the same time, there has been a considerable increase in the degree to which American citizens fear violent crime" (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 15). In addition to the news seen on television, on the Internet and in newspapers, there are also numerous crime and punishment shows and movies – both dramas and real life – currently available for audiences. As well as the abundance of criminal activity which is shown to be occurring in urban areas, cities are also portrayed as polluted and filled with traffic (Valentine & Holloway, 2001: 384).

A study of British television dramas by Phillips et al., they have argued that one of the primary images of rural life offered by the media is that of the natural landscapes, spacious areas, and agriculture. Rural areas are also seen as safe places to raise children away from the negative influences of city life (2001: 8-11; Valentine & Holloway, 2001: 386; Lægran, 2002: 158). In addition to this natural imagery, however, local residents are often depicted to be 'backwards' in they deal with many aspects of life in a non-rational

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manner. "Hence, they are portrayed performing manual productive as opposed to mental, problem solving work; inhabiting a world of non-functioning and out-dated, as opposed to expert and in vogue, commodities" (Phillip et al., 2001: 20; Valentine & Holloway, 2001: 386). Contrarily, outsiders to the rural community in question are seen as worldly, problem solvers with cultural competence and resourcefulness who struggle for acceptance from the backward locals (Phillip et al., 2001: 16-17). In general, negative rural stereotypes often show small towns to be dull, old fashioned, and backward with a lack of entertainment available (Lægran, 2002: 158).

For Canadians, there is also the problem of cultural imperialism or more specifically, Americanization. A large portion of the world's media flows from the United States which can ultimately result in the unfortunate by-product of homogeneity. This threat becomes evident when teens are polled about their favourite entertainers and athletes. For the most part, their responses tend to be overwhelmingly American suggesting that it is possible that this is the case simply because these are the personalities which are constantly represented within the media (Bibby, 2001: 108-111; Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 306-307). This perspective is reinforced in David Croteau and William Hoynes' book which points out that the media's:

> impact is most obvious when we look at the ways in which the
> mass media literally mediate our relationships with various
> social institutions. For example, we base most of our knowledge
> of government on news accounts rather than experience. Not
> only are we dependent on the media, then for what we know,
> but the media's connection to politics also affects how we relate
> to the world of politics (1997: 16).

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In light of all of this, however, or perhaps in spite of it, there is still the argument that regardless of what the media presents us with, we are an active audience who is fully capable of interpreting images and taking from it what we choose instead of what we are told to choose. As well, it has been argued that audiences may realize the falseness of the images before them but still relate to them on different levels depending on their past experiences. It is these past experiences which can also be said to affect the numerous possible interpretations of the same text (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997: 230-231; Phillip et al., 2001:6, 14).

2.5 Social Cohesion

i. Defining the Term

In order to have a useful discussion of social cohesion, it is important to first understand the term we are using. Many academics have put forth their impression of how social cohesion would best be defined, some of whom will be discussed here. Jane Jenson, in one of her recent works, points out that in the past several years, social cohesion as a concept has made leaps and bounds with regards to clarity and consensus. What has not become finalized in the past few years, however, is a working definition for social cohesion which can be agreed upon by everyone (2002: 1-2; Diaz & Gingrich, 1992: 37). As Jenson has pointed out, depending on the choice of definition, what is being measured can be altered.

Kearns and Forest have laid out five elements which can often be used to define social cohesion in various ways; they include: 1) Common values and a civic culture; 2) Social order and social control; 3) Social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities; 4)

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Social networks and social capital; and 5) Territorial belonging and identity (as quoted in

Jenson, 2002: 2). For the purpose of this discussion, however, I will be working within

the framework of number four – social networks and social capital – and using the

definition offered by the World Bank which treats social capital and social cohesion as

interchangeable:

> Social capital refers to the institutions, relationships, and norms
> that shape the quality of and quantity of a society's social interactions.
> Increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies
> to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable. Social
> capital is not just the sum of the institutions which underpin a society
> – it is the glue that holds them together (as quoted in Jenson, 2002: 4).

Paul Bernard has argued, and perhaps correctly, the current popularity and

inadvertent trendiness of social cohesion among scholars and politicians has caused some

groups to view this term as the messiah of community living. What can be glossed over in

the midst of all of this hype is the fact that community cohesion can have both positive and

negative outcomes and that a community that is too cohesive can become fragmented,

inward looking, and grounded in inequality (1999: iii, 2-3; Putnam, 1999: 21). Essentially,

this discussion of too much cohesion can be extended into Mark Granovetter's concepts of

bridging and bonding. Within this theoretical framework, bonding refers to the bonds and

networks which are formed within a community and bridging refers to the bonds we make

with individuals and groups outside of the community. For example, communities that

have town picnics for all of the people who live there are bonding and when communities

participate in the activities of the regional fair they are bridging. For communities to have

healthy levels of cohesion, it is important that they take advantage of both bonding and bridging activities (Putnam, 1999: 22-23).

In addition to realizing that cohesion can be both positive and negative in its outcomes, Bill Reimer, suggests that social cohesion is not constant within communities; it can increase and decrease over time and context (2002: 4; Mason, p.2000: 27). For example, it is possible for a community to come together for set periods of time like the Ice Storm of 1994 and then not again until another crisis occurs, or they may be extremely cohesive when it comes to zoning issues and not cohesive when dealing with matters of garbage collection. In addition to these factors, Reimer has also taken the important step towards a multifaceted look at cohesion and capital. Specifically, when looking more closely at these concepts, Bill Reimer and the New Rural Economy Project see that cohesion can be broken down into four fundamental types of relations: market, bureaucratic, associative, and communal. Within each of these categories, capital and cohesion can be created, nurtured and used, and within each of these types of relations there exists a distinct set of "norms, rules of engagement, institutions, and control mechanisms" (Reimer, 2002). And while each of these four relations can exist independently of another, they also complement each other as they contribute to a community or group's level of cohesion and capital. For example, it is possible for communities to have strong bureaucratic relations and weak communal relations, helping to demonstrate the complex nature of group cohesion (Reimer, 2002). Briefly then, these four processes of cohesion can be defined as:

Market Relations: based on the exchange of goods and services in information-rich

conditions where good negotiation skills, a knowledge of markets and prices, high levels of mobility, and access to tradeable goods and services are necessary for its creation and maintenance.

Bureaucratic Relations: these rational/legal relationships found in state and corporate structures, for example, rely on an explicit or implicit knowledge of rights and entitlements through charters and laws. A context of legitimacy, methods of enforcement, and the cognitive ability of members to operate within set roles are all necessary for objectives, strategies and structures to be met and maintained here.

Associative Relations: rooted in shared interests, these types of relations work best when knowledge about others' interests is available, these interests merge, and there is a considerable time commitment to reaching the desired goal. Church groups, clubs, internet chat groups, and food banks are examples of associative relations.

Communal Relations: based on shared identity and usually referring to family and friendship relationships, relations entail a high level of trust and loyalty, require a long time to develop, and are relatively forgiving.

These four types of relations offer an extension to the current theories surrounding cohesion and capital since they breakdown the various ways in which people form bonds, distinguish boundaries, accomplish goals, organize their relationships and institutions, distribute resources and legitimize their actions (Reimer, 2002).

The exact wording of definitions and the cautions of over simplification aside, it has been agreed upon by most that social cohesion is an important part of community life with regards to mental health, career opportunities, social support and community involvement

(Franzen, 2000: 427). Some researchers are concerned that as society becomes more and more privatised, people become more affluent needing to share commodities less, and individuals become more able to accomplish tasks and be entertained from the privacy of their own home, social cohesion has been on a decline in recent years (Franzen, 2000: 427-428). Fidler supports this sentiment:

> Since the widespread development of superhighways and suburbs in the 1950's, people have tended to become increasing [sic] detached from their local communities as well as from their relatives and cohorts. While some have considered this a liberating experience, many more have been left with a lingering sense of personal loss and growing isolation (1997: 178).

Others would go so far as to suggest that in light of this decrease of community cohesion, it is surprising that people feel any connection to a place at all and that many of the places we occupy are seen as nothing more than temporary; without a sense of community there's no reason to call one place home over another. In support of this, research has shown that in rural communities, people who have close relatives or friends in other communities did not feel tied to the local organizations or activities (Jamieson, 2000: 203, 217; Diaz & Gingrich, 1992: 47).

ii. Social Cohesion and Identity Formation

Turning now to a discussion of how this notion of social cohesion fits into youth identity formation, it has been suggested by several academics that social capital can be just as important in a young person's development as wealth and education. More specifically, some have argued that the types of support available from extended family and community networks (communal relations) within the rural areas can provide "strength and resiliency,

especially in times of need" (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 482). In families and communities where little financial capital is available, the abundance of available cohesion can help young people to move towards the attainment of their goals (Dyk & Wilson, 1992: 482-483). One study showed that people who grew up in small town or rural areas tended to have larger social networks than their urban counterparts (Franzen, 2000: 431).

iii. Social Cohesion, Media, and Communication Technology

As is evident from the elements listed in Kearns and Forest's fifth possible definition of social cohesion – territorial belonging and identity – recent developments in media and communication technology have forced many to alter their perceptions of community as we alter the boundaries of space and time. "Community, like computers, has become networked. Although community was once synonymous with densely knit, bounded neighborhood groups, it is now seen as a less bounded social network of relationships that provide sociability support, information, and a sense of belonging" (Wellman, 2001: 2031; Mason, p.2000: 17; Sefton-Green, 1998: 8; Wellman & Gulia, 1999: 169; Valentine, 2001: 384, 386). And while at one time face-to-face interaction was the most common form of communication, today we are beginning to see community in a different and more undefined way. With this extended view of what community and social cohesion can mean, there comes an added debate about whether these new types of networks and bonds which are being created online are detracting from the geographical communities in which people live and whether these new communities can really be labelled as communities at all.

With respect to how the new online networks can affect existing local networks, there seems to be some discrepancy. Some have argued that there is a negative effect and

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that increased online involvement can detract from a person's time with surrounding members of friends and family (Nie & Erbing, 2000 as cited in Wellman, 2001: 2032). It has also been argued that people who are new to the Internet report feelings of depression, isolation, and alienation within the first 6 months of use (Kraut et al as cited in Wellman, 2001: 2032; Franzen, 2000: 428; Sefton-Green, 1998: 8). One study showed that there was a negative correlation between Internet use and the number of close friends a person reported having (Franzen, 2000: 433). T.S. Eliot argued this same point of isolation with respect to television viewing when he said, "It is a medium of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet still remain lonesome" (as quoted in Putnam, 1999: 217). When we consider that statistics show that about half of all Americans usually watch TV by themselves and that with young people between the ages of 8 and 18 less than 5% of TV viewing is with parents and more than one third is completely alone, Eliot's statement seems highly valid (Putnam, 1999: 224).

In similar fashion to Internet use, some would argue that television viewing not only makes us lonely but also limits our cohesive behaviours. Putnam provides evidence from his own work and the 1975 and 1998 DDB Needham Life Style Surveys which shows that people who say that TV is their main form of entertainment do less volunteer work, visit friends less often, care less about politics, give blood less often, make fewer long distance phone calls, send fewer greeting cards and emails, and attend fewer dinner parties and club meetings (1999: 231, 234-236). Putnam suggests that television (and some would argue Internet use as well) negates some forms of cohesion by competing for an individual's time, producing psychological effects which inhibit social participation, and depicting content

which undermines civic motivations (1999: 237). All of these factors together may suggest that some forms of media can hinder cohesion within the community.

On the other hand, some have suggested that these online communities do not take away from other forms of community but in fact complement, enhance and add to them:

> Living in a virtual world is not a substitute for life in the physical world, but it does offer opportunities for people to expand their horizons and to share experiences that might not otherwise be accessible to them. For example, in cyberspace, communities based on shared interests can involve people who live in out-of-the-way places, are confined for physical reasons to their homes or hospitals, travel frequently, and are too busy or possibly too shy to attend scheduled meetings or events in real-life venues (Fidler, 1997: 178).

From this then, not only can it allow people who may lack a sense of community to create networks, it can be argued that online communication is often used to facilitate in-person interactions and continue the interaction between encounters. As well, because individuals are able to sustain or increase contact over distance, people are able to extend their networks further and enjoy the benefits of support both locally and online (Wellman, 2001: 2032-2033; Franzen, 2000: 431; Dryburgh, 2002: 14-15, 21; Putnam, 1999: 170-172; Mason, 2000: 55; Abbott, 1998: 85; Kollock & Smith, 1999: 4; Wellman & Gulia, 1999: 181-182; Lægran, 2002: 162). I think that Michael Strangelove, an Internet theorist, argues this point quite nicely when he says, "Communication is the basis, the foundation, the radical ground and root upon which all community stands, grows, and thrives. The Internet is a community of chronic communicators" (as quoted in Putnam, 1999: 171).

The social benefits of online support systems are also important to note here. Research by Sproull and Kiesler has shown that "despite the limited social presence of

computer mediated communication, on-line relationships are often strong with frequent, supportive and companionable contact" (as quoted in Wellman, 13; Wellman & Gulia, 1999: 177-178, 186). Hiltz, Johnson, and Turoff as well as Walther support this view, suggesting that these online friendships can offer numerous services to an individual ranging from information exchange to companionship to emotional aid and providing a sense of belonging (as quoted in Wellman, 13-14; Abbott, 1998: 85). Another finding which supports the existence of non-local networks of support is that many wired Canadians have continuing email contact with individuals outside of their local community. Young, male, rural residents are the most likely to have an in-province network outside of their local community, and rural residents are more likely than urban residents to communicate with others outside of their local community than inside their local community (Dryburgh, 2002: 18). Overall, what it is important to remember within the discussion of online communities is that they are not isolated phenomenon. "The Net is only one of many ways in which the same people may interact. It is not a separate reality" (Wellman & Gulia, 1999: 170). More specifically, people often have the support available in both forms of community – local and virtual – instead of having to choose between the two (Wellman & Gulia, 1999: 174).

As to whether these online networks can be seen as true communities, many Canadians seem to think they can. In the recent Statistics Canada study, Dryburgh points out that 55.1% and 52.2% of rural and city dwellers respectively felt that they were more likely to find community on the Internet than locally. And 33% of young people aged 15-24 had made new friends on the Internet (2002: 12, 15). Andrew Mason is another

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individual who would argue that, yes, virtual communities are communities too. He points

out that "[i]t is possible for a group to constitute a community in the ordinary sense if they

share values, a way of life, identify with the group, and have some means of deciding

whether a person is a member of that community, without each needing to know the

others" (2000: 39). Chris Abbott argues that it is exactly the type of communication which

can be found in textual form on young people's web pages which suggest that youth are

looking for community on the World Wide Web. These web pages demonstrate teens'

desire to share in discussion, to be together, and to communicate with others with similar

interests (1998: 86; Wellman & Gulia, 1999: 173). In one study from McLaughlin,

Osborne and Smith, as well as a more recent study looking at current virtual communities,

it is argued that both early and current versions of Internet chat groups are kinds of

communities because they are frequent and often long term, they use particular language

and phrasing, they have 'conduct-correcting' behaviours or 'netiquette' which occurred

when necessary, they are self regulating, reciprocal and mutual in nature, and use

gatekeeping language which controls entry based on group likeness (as cited in Abbott,

1998: 88, 102-103; Wellman & Gulia, 1999: 179)

2.6 Summary of the Literature

Within this review of the relevant literature, the areas of youth identity formation,

youth out-migration, communications and media, and social cohesion were addressed.

While the information available on these topics benefits this discussion greatly and helps to

answer several of the critical questions listed in the previous chapter, there are also certain

potential shortcomings in the available material. At ths point, I will reiterate some of the

important findings within each section and point out some of the areas which this study hopes to address specifically in order to fill in some of the gaps within the existing literature.

First, from the review of some of the literature available on youth identity formation, it seems evident that new information can be useful in helping to answer some of the key questions identified in the first chapter. The literature brings to light the importance of media, communication tools, family, friends, socio-economic status, and the social environment in teenagers' lives and the influence it has over many of the short term decisions they make. Many of these short term decisions (the importance of high school grades, rural and urban perceptions, drug usage) can ultimately affect adolescents' long term decisions (where to live, whether continue on in school, what to do as a career). An adolescent's identity plays a vital role in the kinds of choices they are most likely to make in the future, and a better understanding of some of the key factors involved in this development can contribute to our knowledge about what can potentially encourage young people to remain rural later in life.

An area of the literature which is somewhat lacking, is the relative importance of each of these influencing factors in identity formation. It is for this reason that I will attempt to address this issue within my own data analysis by asking young people to rank the importance of several of the various aspects which can affect their lives.

Second, the literature concerning youth out-migration helps to answer the question of what type of individual is most likely to leave their rural community. In answer to this, it has been argued that young, single, educated people with a university degree are the most

likely to move away from rural communities (Dupuy et al., 2000). The material within this section also helps to highlight some of the important factors which can contribute to rural out-migration such as high unemployment rates, lack of services and stereotyping. This is helpful to the overall discussion because it allows us to see how media and communication can be used to contribute to or diminish these aforementioned factors.

Further analysis will be done within my research in an attempt to clarify whether other traits such as media exposure, communication use, or personal network size can also be used to identify potential rural leavers and to clarify the connection between technology and rural out-migration. In order to do this, survey questions dealing with media use and access (Internet, television, newspapers), communication networks (on-line networks), and personal resources will be analysed with respect to teens' decisions about where to live in the future and whether they would like to live in their home town later in life.

Third, the literature presented on media and communication technology contributes to the answers of several of the key questions within this thesis and generally benefits the overall discussion. The information suggests that while a digital divide does exist within rural Canada, access to media and communication tools can help to encourage in-migration to rural areas as people are able to work from outside of the urban setting. Information about who is most likely to use various technologies and how they are using them, contributes to the coming discussion on social cohesion. As well, the review of media stereotypes of rural and urban settings and the creation or reiteration of urban youth culture through the media offers a greater understanding of the some of the potential reasons for youth migration.

What this literature fails to address is the strength of the connection between access, use, and urban and rural perceptions and young people's decisions about where to live in the future. It is for this reason that this connection is one which will be studied in further detail within my research through questions dealing with teens' feelings about rural representation in the media, with what young people feel are the best and worst things about rural and urban living, and with teens' access and use of various communication tools and media (Internet, television, newspapers). These questions, when looked at in conjunction with adolescents' decisions about future living should help to clarify some of these connections. Also, while it was mentioned briefly that people desire further information about local issues, the connection between local media and communication and youth migration is another area which I will address in greater detail within this study through questions dealing with young people's use of local communication, local resources, and rural media in general.

Fourth, the review of literature on the topic of social cohesion benefits my discussion of youth out-migration and helps to answer some of the important questions which have been laid out in several ways. Not only do many of the authors reiterate the importance of social cohesion for community living and general individual happiness, but also, this literature further develops some of the ways in which media and communication tools can both contribute to and take away from these feelings of cohesion. While much of the literature presented on this topic discusses how media and communication tools can contribute to an individual's sense of community, it fails to move to the next step which is how this contributes to levels of out-migration. In order to enhance the existing literature,

further analysis of how cohesive young people feel with their communities, where their networks of support lie, and how teens use the Internet to communicate will all be addressed with respect to decisions about future living.

Turning now to the methodology and data analysis chapters of this work, the various ways in which I have hoped to expand upon the existing literature available will be clarified and tested.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

In order to look at the issue of global communication in rural areas for youth and its link to out-migration, I have taken advantage of some of the programs and research groups already in existence within this field of study. Certainly, these connections, for the most part, lie within the NRE Project. This group, as outlined earlier, performed several lengthy interviews during the summer of 2000 with knowledgeable individuals from 20 rural communities chosen randomly based on several factors including leading and lagging status, capability status, urban adjacency, and economic status[1]. Six surveys dealing with the numerous topics were administered:

→a site profile
→the voluntary sector
→impressions of the community
→the role of events as institutions
→the role of small business and entrepreneurship
→and the role of key institutions

In addition to these surveys, the NRE returned to these 20 sites during the summer of 2001 when 1995 individuals were surveyed at the household level. With this being said, my research methodology can be broken down into three major sections.

3.1 Preliminary Analysis

Within this first section, I have focussed on the 20 sites previously looked at by the NRE during the summer of 2000 and 2001 with respect to their levels of global communication access and their levels of youth out-migration. In order to assess each

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[1]

For more detailed information about the New Rural Economy's research see their website at http://nre.concordia.ca.

community's level of communication access, data collected from the summer 2000 site profiles was used. Using question #5 (specifically questions a, c, and h) of the Site Profile survey (See Appendix A) which dealt with access to communication tools within the community, an index was created using SPSS where each community received a score based on their level of access (See Appendix B). The site received 1 point for each communication tool to which they have access. In addition to this cumulative total, access for each community was analysed with respect to their balance of national/global access to communication tools (cable access, Internet, national newspapers) and local access of communication tools (local television programming, local newspaper, local radio, community internet site, community newsletter, community bulletin boards). The communities were then placed within a grid based on whether they scored high or low on both global and local access. All areas of the grid contained communities except for the quadrant with low global and low local access.

Table 1: Local and Global Media Access Within NRE Communities

Low Local/Low Global	Low Local/High Global
Hussar	Winterton
Ferintosh	Lot 16
Tumbler Ridge	Neguac
Carden	Ste-Françoise
Usborne	Spalding
Blissfield	Wood River
	Seguine
High Local/Low Global	**High Local/High Global**
	Twillingate
	Springhill
	Neguac
	Cap-a-l'aigle
	Tweed
	Mackenzie
	St. Damase
	Taschereau

In order to look at trends in youth out-migration within these 20 communities, I used Census data from the years of 1991 and 1996 to which the NRE currently has access. By subtracting the number of 13 to 19 year olds who lived in the community in 1991 from the total of 18-24 year olds who lived in the community in 1996, I was able to discern an approximate level of youth out-migration within each of the 20 sites. These figures were then divided by the community's population and multiplied by 100 to show the total percent of the population this out-migration represented.

Using the data about communication access and youth out-migration levels, case study sites were chosen. Because only 3 of the 4 quadrants were represented by the communities three communities were chosen for case study research: Tweed, ON;

Usborne, ON; and Lot 16, PEI. The local high school and/or district school board for each community was then contacted in order to gain permission to interview their students. At this point it was discovered that Lot 16 did not have nearly enough students of the desired age or grades and so the community was dropped from the study.

Because the other two sites are located in Ontario, it was decided that the replacement site for Lot 16 would be an Ontario site as well. Due to problems with school cooperation, it was decided that my own rural hometown of Chesterville, ON would be the third site in the study. Chesterville fit well within the research design already set out for several reasons.

Table 2: Case Study Community Comparison

	Tweed	**Chesterville**	**Usborne**
Population	1572	1497	1352
Economic Base	agriculture	agriculture	agriculture
Media Access	high local/high global	medium local/high global	low local/high global[2]

First, it has a similar population to the other two communities: Usborne – 1352, Tweed – 1572, Chesterville – 1497. Second, similar to the other two communities, Chesterville is an agriculturally based community. And third, when media access within each community is taken into account each community has high global or national access but their local

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While Usborne was previously listed as having low global access because of the community's lack of cable television access, it was later discovered that many community members now use satellite television instead which was not addressed in the earlier site profiles of the NRE. This finding may also affect the low global access scores of other communities listed.

access falls into the categories of low, medium, and high: Tweed – high local access, Chesterville – medium local access, Usborne – low local access.

Because these three communities are similar (population size, economic base, access to global media and communication) it will be easier to look at the differences in media and communication technology access levels (high, medium, and low) as an influencing factor in youth out-migration.

3.2 Community Case Studies

Within this stage, I visited the local high school for each of the 3 communities. Fifteen students between the ages of 17 and 19 from grades 11, 12 and OAC were asked to complete a questionnaire. This age group and academic level were chosen because they were just about to leave high school and were on the verge of deciding whether to continue with post-secondary education of some kind, leave the community for other reasons, or remain in town. As well, because most of these students were 18 years of age or older the need for parental consent was avoided.

Due to the fact that high schools in rural areas often pull in students from several surrounding communities, each school used bus schedules to identify students from the desired community to complete the survey as opposed to an entire class.

Table 3: Participant Breakdown by Site

Site	Total N	Male	Female
Usborne	17	4	13
Tweed	15	6	9
Chesterville	15	6	9

In total 47 students participated – 17 from Usborne and 15 from both Tweed and

Chesterville. Thirty-one females and 16 males completed the questionnaire. All

interviews took place during the month of April, 2002.

The questionnaire took approximately 30 minutes for the students to complete. 45

minutes of their time was requested in order to ensure extra time for questions and

debriefing. The questionnaire has four main sections (See Appendix C):

→Use Versus Access
→Social Cohesion
→Community Involvement
→Future Plans

3.3 Analysis of Data

The data gathered from the questionnaires was entered and coded into SPSS and

several indexes have been created in order to better study the data available. The indexes

cover four main areas: family exposure, communicating exposure, media exposure, overall

rural exposure, and feelings of cohesion (Buckner's Index).

Family Exposure: This index takes into account where the parents were born and the

number of a youth's family members who live in urban or rural setting. An 'urban family'

index, a 'rural family' index, a 'total family exposure' index, and a 'percentage of total

family that's rural' index were created. The family exposure indexes are helpful in

answering questions surrounding feelings of cohesion and networks of support. As well,

they contribute to the discussion of how identity formation and family influence can

potentially affect a young person's decision about where to live in the future and what

type of person is most likely to leave their rural community.

Communicating Exposure: This index takes into account the origin of a teen's resource network supports, where the people they meet on the Internet are from, and where the people they email are from. An 'urban communicating' index, a 'rural communicating' index, a 'total communicating' index, and a 'percentage of total communicating that's rural' index were created. The communicating indexes also help to answer questions about feelings of cohesion and networks of support by providing a clearer picture of where a young person's friends and support systems are located. As well, they help to understand the connection between communication and out-migration. This index also provides information about what type of individual is most likely to move away from their rural hometown.

Media Exposure: This index takes into account the number of television show's they watch that have urban and rural content, the percentage of the total television viewing that has rural or urban content, and the number of local and global/national newspapers they read. An 'urban media' index, a 'rural media' index, a 'total media' index, and a 'percentage of the total media that's rural' index were created. The media indexes are important because in addition to offering a clearer picture of the type of people tend to be leavers, they also help to answer questions about how media and out-migration may be related. As well, they help to answer questions about the affects of rural and urban media on adolescents' decisions about where to live in the future.

Rural Exposure Index: This index included all of the rural exposure experienced by a teen from family, communicating, and media. A 'percentage of the total exposure that's rural' index was also created. The rural exposure index was created to help in understanding the

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connection between rural and local influence in a young person's life and their decisions about future living.

Buckner's Index: This index looks at the reported levels of community cohesion that teenagers feel. The same set of questions dealing with neighbourhood cohesion which were developed within J.C. Buckner's work were used within this questionnaire and the responses were combined to create an index score for each individual (Buckner, 1988). The Buckner's index helps to answer questions about how feelings of social cohesion are connected to rural youth out-migration and whether these beliefs are traits common to rural out-migrators.

In addition to these indices, a travel index which looks at how widely teens have travelled was created which helps to address the question about what type of person is most likely to move away from their rural community. An index which looks at where friends met on the Internet are from, and a rural resources index which deals with where a teen's support network lives were also created. Each of these was created to contribute to the conversation about how feelings of cohesion are connected to decisions about where to live in the future (See Appendix D for more details).

It was also necessary to recode some of the data. Two of the most significant areas of recoding dealt with parents salaries and television content. Because it was felt that young people would both not be aware of what their parents made and perhaps not feel comfortable answering this line of questioning, I decided to ask people what their parents occupation was instead. In order to find out what the average household income was, a rough indicator needed to be created. In order to match salaries to occupations the

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Ontario Wage Survey which is a product of Human Resources Development Canada was used. The average salary for the occupation was taken and I did not use age specific averages because while most parents would place in the top age bracket listed, it is possible that some of them have just started this career recently. I realize that this method of salary division has some setbacks, however, because I used the same criteria for all questionnaires, I feel that the potential problems will be minimal when viewed as a group and not as information about an individual in and of itself.

The second area of recoding dealt with dividing television shows listed by students into rural, urban, and undefined with respect to content. Any shows which I was not familiar with I looked up on the Internet on TVTome.com (See Appendix E). Summaries, frequencies, and cross-tabulations were then run using the indices and other data from the survey.

Chapter 4 – Data Analysis

4.1 Data Overview

The following section is a result of the statistical analysis of all 47 surveys gathered from the three sites. The material presented offers an illustration of rural youth in Ontario, and while the small sample size prevents this analysis from being statistically significant, it provides valuable information on several different levels: 1) community and rural living; 2) media use and exposure; 3) social networks and levels of cohesion; 4) community level breakdowns; and 5) overall trends in media, social cohesion and future living.

4.2 Teens, Community, and Country

In order to gain a perspective on the information to come, it is important to have a clearer understanding of what young people feel about their communities, where they would like to live in the future, and their impressions of rural and urban living.

Table 4: Youth's Plans to Leave Their Community

Response	Male (N=16)	Female (N=31)
Yes	81%	71%
Maybe	19%	26%
No	0%	3%

From Table 4 we can see that most respondents, 100% of males and 97% of females, say they either plan to leave or might leave their community in the future for one reason or another. Only one female respondent said that she did not plan on leaving the community.

As was discussed in Chapter 2, young people moving away from their home town can be a common and natural part of the growth process. It is for this reason that the

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following questions become more important: "Do you plan to come back and live in this community again someday?" and "Where would you like to live in the future?". These two questions are able to take into account both a young person's desire to return to their home town later in life and their desire to live in a small town or rural area which may not be the same as their original community.

Table 5: Youth's Plans to Return to Their Community in the Future

Response	Male (N=13)	Female (N=23)
Yes	0%	9%
Maybe	63%	35%
No	19%	16%

When asked about returning to the community in the future, most respondents felt that it was a possibility but were not sure one way or the other (63% of all males and 35% of all females). Only 9% of females and none of the males were certain that they would return to live in their home town in the future. These results do not represent 100% of the sample because only the people who said that they were definitely planning on leaving were asked to respond to this question. Those who replied 'maybe' and 'no' were not asked to answer the question.

While this gives us an impression of how young people feel about returning to their own community, it is also important to consider that some teens like what rural and small towns have to offer but would prefer to stay away from home. When asked about future living, respondents had the opportunity to choose one of 6 options which ranged from living in an isolated area, away from others to living in a large city (by Canadian standards)

with a population over 500,000 (See Appendix A, Question 27 for more details). These answers were then recoded into rural and urban options.

Table 6: Youth's Plans to Live in a Rural or Urban Setting in the Future

Locale	Male (N=16)	Female (N=31)
Rural	50%	65%
Urban	50%	35%

From this, it seems that males were divided in their decisions about future living. Female respondents, on the other hand, more commonly said that they would prefer to live in a rural area (65%) over an urban one (35%). It becomes evident from these three questions that the reasons for leaving rural communities are more complex than simply a dislike of small town life. The fact that many respondents felt that it was a possibility that they would return to live in their rural community again in the future, and the fact that many respondents who said they planned to leave their own community would like to live in a rural or small town environment in the future both suggest that youth are not turning away from rural life for good. This can be seen as a positive indicator that youth are open to being encouraged to live rurally later.

Finally, teens were asked what they felt were the best and worst things about living in both rural communities and urban communities.

Table 7: What Teens Cited as The Best and Worst Things About Rural Areas
(N=47)

Best Things About Rural Areas	Worst Things About Rural Areas
know lots of people (60%)	lack of entertainment (62%)
peaceful and quiet (38%)	long distances to everything (62%)
lots of space (26%)	less privacy/gossip (53%)

One thing which can be noted about the factors which young people state as the best and worst things about rural areas is that often the things they love the most are the things they hate. For example, teens enjoy the fact that they can walk down the street and know everyone, but with that comes the gossip and the lack of privacy. Adolescents also say they like the peace and quiet but then say they want fun and entertainment. Last, young people stated that they liked the large amounts of space available to them in the country but they also stated that they hated having to travel long distances to everything. Perhaps these contradictions are all just part of the teen years.

Table 8: What Teens Cited as the Best and Worst Things About Urban Areas
(N=47)

Best Things About Urban Areas	Worst Things About Urban Areas
always lots to do and places to go (53%)	pollution (45%)
more stores (34%)	noise (38%)
everything is in close proximity (34%)	crime (36%)

With respect to city living, teens surveyed were asked what they thought would be the 3

best and worst things about living in an urban area. Teens seem to feel that cities are the

answer to their problems with rural when it comes to entertainment and proximity but they

also feel that urban centres are too dirty, loud, and dangerous. Interestingly enough, crime

rates have actually decreased in the past decade while media imagery of city violence and

crime has increased. It is possible then that crime being listed as one of the worst things

about urban living may be connected to media representation of city living.

4.3 Teens and the Media

Young people's use of the media is a topic which has become well studied in the

past few years. In the next chapter, the extensive research on this issue will be used to

compare the information that has been gathered within this study to see how this group of

teens compares with the rest of Canada. This section, however, will be used to investigate

what are some of the types of media and communication tools being used by young people

and how they are using them. In addition to this, this section will also address the amount

of rural media to which these adolescents are exposed and how they feel about the

material.

Within this survey, three types of media have been addressed specifically –

Internet, newspapers, and television.

Table 9: Number of Times Logged On to the Internet Daily

	0	1-2	3-6	7-9	10-15	16-20	21+
Male (N=16)	0	2	6	6	1	1	0
Female (N=31)	1	6	8	6	5	3	2

Starting with Internet use, about 30% of the sample population log onto the Internet somewhere between 3-6 times daily. For girls, logging on 3-6 was the most common response with 26% of the females choosing this answer. Boys were split between 3-6 times and 7-9 times as their most popular responses (38% each).

Table 10: Amount of Time Spent Per Day on the Internet

	1-15min	16-30min	31min -1hr	1-2hrs	2-4hrs	4+hrs
Male (N=16)	4	5	4	2	1	0
Female (N=31)	10	4	10	4	2	1

When asked how long they tended to spend on the Internet, it seems that between 31minutes to 1 hour was the most common amount of time. When we look at the male and female responses separately, however, it seems that for boys, 16-30 minutes is the most common response, whereas girls are split between relatively short periods of time on line and relatively long periods of time (1-15 minutes and 31 minutes-1 hour).

Table 11: Activities Teens Perform On-Line

On-line Activity (N=47)
Email (87%)
Entertainment (23%)
Surfing (15%)
Instant Messaging (15%)
Chat rooms (14%)
Learning for a school related project (12%)
News (10%)
Looking for work (6%)
Shopping on-line (2%)

As for what teens are doing on-line, Table 11 shows that 3 of the top 5 activities which teens participate in on-line are for social purposes – email, instant messaging, and taking part in chat rooms. This lends support to the perspective that the Internet is a social tool for the social being.

Table 12: Internet Friends and Where They Are From

	Made a Friend on the Internet (%)	Rural Internet Friends (%)	Urban Internet Friends (%)
Male Respondents	25% (N=16)	35% (N=9)	65% (N=9)
Female Respondents	35% (N=31)	50% (N=24)	50% (N=24)
Total	32% (N=47)	45% (N=33)	33% (N=33)

When asked about meeting people online and creating new friendships, 32% of the teenagers surveyed said that they had made friendships with others they had met online. Again this table points to the extremely social nature of the Internet and the potential for network and resource enhancement especially with those living in urban region which may be less accessible in person. Girls had a slightly higher rate of creating online friendships with 35% of all females saying they had met people online and 25% of boys saying that they had met someone on the web.

Table 13: Number of Newspapers Read for at Least 15 Minutes

	0	1	2	3	4	5	Teen Readership (N=47)
National	20	12	9	3	2	1	57%
Local	7	10	22	8	0	0	85%
No Paper	-	-	-	-	-	-	9%

Looking now at young people's consumption of newspapers (print and on-line papers were not differentiated), it seems that more young people are reading local papers than global or national papers. This table also points out that more than half of all teens read at least one global newspaper as well. These relatively high rates of readership in teens at the local level suggest that young people do care what is happening in their own community and may offer a potential arena for informing young people of the benefits of their town and what it can offer them in the future. Further discussion of local media's potential will be discussed in the next chapter.

Finally now, turning to television, it seems that young men are watching more shows than young women. This is not to be confused with the overall time spent watching television since it was impossible to measure this accurately based on the information obtained. Teenage boys watch an average of 13 shows per week and girls watch an average of 11 shows. Teenage boys are also watching more local television with 63% of all males saying that they did watch local or regional television. 52% of all females said that they watched local or regional television.

Knowing how many communication tools young people are making use of is extremely important, but it is also very important to have an understanding of what this access and use exposes teens to and how they feel about what they are receiving. For example, one aspect of exposure which has been addressed within this study is the rural content. One interesting finding is that adolescent boys watch about 6% more television with rural content (See Appendix B for a complete listing of shows and rural/urban ratings). Approximately 16% of all of the television watched by young men has some rural content but only 10% of all girls' television viewing has rural content. And when newspapers and television viewing are taken into account, it still seems that on average, male teenagers are consuming more rural media than young women. In fact, 41.7% of all television and newspapers watched and read by men are of rural content. Only 23% of all television and newspapers watched and read by females contain rural content. As for what teens think about the representation of rural areas in the media, it's not good. Most people responded negatively to questions concerning the portrayal of rural life in the media (See Appendix A, first five statements in Question 20 for more details). More

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specifically, when an index was created where on a scale from 0 to 5 where 0 was very unsatisfied with the media's rural representation and 5 was very satisfied with rural representation in the media, both males and females rated less than 1 on average (0.75 and 0.68 respectively).

4.4 Social Networks and Feelings of Cohesion

The issue of social cohesion has been another major area of study within this research. After all, as was discussed in Chapter 2 and will be expanded upon in Chapter 5, a young person's ties with other people and their surroundings can have significant implications for their future decisions. What is interesting within this section is that often factors which researchers have shown to affect the lives of young people are not necessarily the same things that adolescents themselves think affect them and their life choices. This becomes evident when teenagers were asked to list in order seven factors which they thought had the most effect on their lives. The order most commonly chosen by teens was:

Table 14: How Teens Rank Factors Which Affect Their Lives
(N=47)

Ranking	Life Influence	% of Teens Who Put Them in This Order
1	Parents	45%
2	Brothers and Sisters	36%
3	Friends, Boyfriend, Girlfriend	25%
4	School	40%
5	Media	23%
6	Amount of Money a Person Has	23%
7	Religion	51%

What young people do recognize it seems is the importance of family and friends for helping them along. Interestingly enough, however, is the relatively low placement of media as an influencing factor in young people's lives especially when many of the factors which teens list as the best and worst things about rural and urban living are representations which exist within the media. For example, while crime is listed as one of the worst things about city life, it can most likely be said that few or none of the members of this sample have been a victim of urban violence or crime. Where then does this dangerous imagery derive from? The media perhaps.

This brings us now to a brief discussion of resource networks which young people can depend on in times of need. Boys have an average of 10 resources they use in times of need and girls have an average of 9. When the location of each of these sources of support is analysed, it becomes evident that while females seem to have slightly fewer

resources in their network than males they tend to have about the same number of local

sources available to them (approximately 3 local resources on average) and the same

number of sources coming from another rural region (approximately 2 rural resources on

average).

Expanding on this breakdown of rural and urban networks when several variables

of family exposure are taken into account (See Chapter 3 for further detail), it becomes

clear that both male and female respondents have a significant rural influence in their

family lives. About 75% of all family exposure for teen girls has a rural connection and

63% of all teen boys' family exposure has a rural connection. And when this networking

concept is expanded to include not only their listed network members but also who teens

email and chat with on the Internet, it seems that 63% of all young girls' communicating is

done on a rural level and 64% of all young boys' communicating is done on a rural level.

The importance of this rural connectivity as well as many other data findings presented

here will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

It is also useful to touch upon community involvement at this point in our analysis

of cohesion and networking. On average, teens are involved with about 2 organizations

within their community and their school. When sex is taken into account, however, a

larger discrepancy becomes evident. Girls tend to be involved in about 7 activities or

organizations while boys tend to be involved in about 2.

Finally, teenage respondents were asked how cohesive they felt with their

community. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the Buckner's Community

Cohesion Scale was used to test teens' perceived levels of cohesion with their home

towns. On average, boys tended to feel slightly more cohesive with their communities than females holding average scores of 11 and 10 respectively. Using another index, possible scores ranged from 0 to 18 with 18 being the most cohesive and 0 being the least.

4.5 Community Breakdowns

i. Teens, Community and Country

The real question at this point is how all of this breaks down at the community level.

Table 15: Community Comparison: Local Access and Future Plans

	Tweed (N=15)	Chesterville (N=15)	Usborne (N=17)
Local Media Access	High	Medium	Low
Plan to Leave Town	93%	80%	53%
Plan to Return Later (Maybe or Yes)	80%	67%	29%
Live Rurally Later	43%	60%	71%

As one can see from the table above, Tweed has high local media access, Chesterville has medium local access and Usborne has low local access. From the table we can also see that Tweed with its high local access has the highest number of young people who say they want to leave the community but the lowest number who want to live in a rural town in the future. Usborne however, with its low local access has the fewest number of people who want to leave and the highest number of people who want to live in a rural town in the future. Chesterville with its medium access falls continually in the middle

From this it would appear that local media actually has a negative effect on decisions to stay rural, but if we look at the third line of the table we can see that while Tweed has a

number of people who say they want to leave, they also have the highest number of people who say they'd like to return to their home town to live in the future, and Usborne with its low levels of local media has the smallest number of people who say they'd like to return to their home town. This seems to suggest then that local media, while not necessarily a factor in causing people to live in a rural area generally, can encourage people to want to return to their home town which is very important and will be expanded upon in the next chapter.

ii. Teens and the Media

Table 16: Community Comparisons: Media and Communication Use

	Tweed (N=15)	Chesterville (N=15)	Usborne (N=17)
# of Times/Wk Logging on to Internet	3-6 (35%)	1-2 (27%) 3-6 (27%) 7-9 (27%)	3-6 (47%)
Time/Day on Internet	1-15min (27%) 16-30min (27%) 31min-1hr (27%)	1-15min (40%)	31min-1hr (29%)
# of Television Shows Watched/Wk	12	16	10
% of Rural Content Shows	14%	11%	11%
% of Urban Content Shows	51%	48%	42%
# of Local Newspapers Read	2	2	2
# of Urban Newspapers Read	1	2	0.7
% of Media Exposure That's Rural	26%	28%	33%
Score on Rural Representation Index (0-5)	0.9	0.8	0.5

While this table holds a lot of information, some of the more interesting data becomes apparent when considered in conjunction with the previous table dealing with decisions about future living. First, Tweed has the lowest level of respondents who say

they would like to live in a rural area in the future which when combined with the fact that teens in Tweed have lowest percentage of rural media exposure and watch the highest amount of urban content television, it is possible that the negative imagery of rural life can be considered a contributor to their future plans for urban living. Usborne teens, on the other hand, had the highest rate of rural living in the future and their teens watch the least amount of urban centred shows and have the highest rural media exposure rate of the three communities.

iii. Social Networks and Feelings of Cohesion

Table 17: Community Comparisons: Cohesion and Networks

	Tweed (N=15)	Chesterville (N=15)	Usborne (N=17)
Buckner's Index Score (0-18)	9.60	10.40	10.35
% of Family Exposure That's Rural	54%	80%	78%
% of Communicatin g That's Rural	69%	71%	51%
% of Overall Exposure That's Rural	46%	46%	46%

If we turn our attention to networking and perceived cohesion within each of the communities, it seems that all fare relatively well on the Buckner's index. Overall, Chesterville youth have quite high levels of rural family exposure and rural communicating

compared to the other two sights. When these two exposure factors are looked at in conjunction with media exposure, however, all three communities fare equally with respect to overall rural exposure.

4.6 Overall Trends

i. Media and Communication Tools

Several trends and relationships have arisen from this study with respect to communication tools and the media.

Table 18: Gamma Values Between Levels of Television Viewing, Organizational Involvement and Resource Levels (N=47)

	# of Organizations an Teens is Involved With	# of Resources a Teen Has
# of Television Shows Watched/Wk	$\gamma = -0.30*$	$\gamma = -0.02$

*p<0.05

One such finding shown in Table 18, is that the number of television shows an individual watches is negatively correlated with the total number of organizations that he or she is involved with. More specifically this means the more television shows a young person watches on a regular basis, the less likely they are to be involved with a high number of organizations at the school or community level. There is also a slight negative relationship between the number of TV programs a teen watches and the number of resources they cite as having in their network of support. Therefore, as the number of shows increases, the number of resources decreases.

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Table 19: Gamma Values Between Television Viewing, Rural Television Viewing and Perceptions of Rural Representation in the Media (N=47)

	Television Viewing	Rural Television Viewing
Rural Representation Index Score	$\gamma=-0.03$	$\gamma=0.30$

*p<0.05

Another finding which is quite interesting is that perceived rural representation in the media and the total amount of television watched with rural content are positively correlated. This means, for example, that the higher the percentage of rural content in a young person's overall TV viewing, the higher the score on the rural representation in the media scale. The more programs an individual watches, however, the lower the score tends to be.

Table 20: Gamma Values Between Internet Access at Home and Gender, and Internet Logons Per Day, Time Spent on the Internet Daily, and Friendships Created Online (N=47)

	# of Internet Logons/Day	Time/Day on Internet	Internet Friendships
Home Access to Internet	$\gamma=-0.46$	$\gamma=0.39$	
Gender	$\gamma=0.08$	$\gamma=0.06$	$\gamma=-0.25$

*p<0.05

With respect to the Internet, there seems to be evidence that when young people have Internet access at home, they tend to log on fewer times in a week but spend more time each day on line. There is also a small positive gamma between sex and the number of times logged onto the Internet and sex and the amount of time spent online . It seems that boys tend to log on more and spend more time online than girls do. As well, there

seems to be a relationship between sex and making friends online. Girls more frequently create friendships on the web than boys.

ii. Social Cohesion

The trends which are present with regards to social cohesion seem less clear than those in the other areas. In addition, many of the findings here seem to suggest contradictory information to what would have been expected which will be discussed in greater detail within the next chapter.

Table 21: Gamma Values Between Community Cohesion and Rural and Urban Exposure (N=47)

	Perceived Community Cohesion
Rural Communicating	$\gamma = -0.28$
Urban Communicating	$\gamma = 0.27*$
Rural Family Exposure	$\gamma = 0.25$
Urban Family Exposure	$\gamma = -0.13$
Rural Media Exposure	$\gamma = 0.18$
Urban Media Exposure	$\gamma = -0.29$
Total Rural Exposure	$\gamma = 0.02$

*$p < 0.05$

One surprising finding is that feelings of cohesion as rated on Buckner's scale seem to show that there is a negative relationship between the amount of communicating at the rural level that young people do and their levels of perceived community cohesion. This finding suggests that the more communicating young people do with local and other rural and small town people, the less cohesive they tend to see their community. This is

reflected by the positive gamma between urban communicating and Buckner's index ratings which suggests that the more communicating people do with others from urban settings, the more cohesive they feel their own community is. There is a small positive gamma, however, between rural family exposure and perceived community cohesion. It appears that the higher the percentage of family members who come from rural or small town areas the more cohesive young people feel their community is. Again this is reflected by the fact that there is a negative relationship between urban family exposure and scores of cohesion on Buckner's scale.

Rural media exposure is yet another factor which positively affects feelings of cohesion within a community. There is an even stronger negative gamma between urban media and cohesion to support this. Overall, rural exposure does seem to be slightly positively correlated to feelings of cohesion. When the total exposure from family, communicating, and the media are taken into account, the greater the levels of rural exposure, the more cohesive teens feel their community is.

iii. Future Living

It seems from the analysis that where young people would like to live in the future is connected to several different factors.

Table 22: Gamma Values Between Returning to Your Community in the Future and Organizational Involvement, Networks, and Family History (N=47)

	Planning to Return to Their Community in the Future
Participation in Community Organizations	$\gamma = 0.23$
Participation in School Organizations	$\gamma = -0.09$
Size of Rural Network	$\gamma = -0.28$
Size of Urban Network	$\gamma = -0.26$
Overall Size of Network	$\gamma = -0.34$
Mother With Local Birth Place	$\gamma = -0.39$
Father With Local Birth Place	$\gamma = -0.34*$

$*p < 0.05$

For one, it seems that there is a positive relationship between community organizational involvement for a teen and their decision to return to their home town in the future. There is a small negative gamma between a young person's school involvement in organizations and their decision to return to the community. This suggests then that the more involved a person is at the community level the more likely it is that they will want to return, but the more involved they are in school life, the less likely they are to return.

Another interesting finding is that there is a negative relationship between the number of community network resources a teen has in their community and their likelihood of returning to live in their home community. There is also a negative relationship between city resources and the decision to return to live in their home

community one day, and the total number of resources available to young people from any location and the decision to return to live in their home community one day. This means that, overall, the larger the network of support a young person has to rely on, the less likely they are to anticipate returning to their home town in the future.

There is also a relationship between mothers' and fathers' place of birth and a young person's decision to return to live in their community later in life. Essentially, this means that if the mother and father were born in another community and then moved to the community in which they now live, there is less of a chance that the young person will move back to the community at a later time.

Another important aspect of this discussion, however, is not necessarily whether the teenager will eventually return to the same community, but will they choose to live in any rural community or small town at any time.

Table 23: Gamma Values Between Plans to Live in a Rural or Small Town Area in the Future and Parental Earnings and Exposure (N=47)

	Plan to Live Rurally In the Future
Parental Earnings	$\gamma = -0.10$
Total Communicating that's Rural	$\gamma = 0.24$
Total Media that's Rural	$\gamma = -0.05$
Total Media that's Urban	$\gamma = 0.32^*$
# of Rural Family Members	$\gamma = 0.52^*\dagger$
Overall Rural Exposure	$\gamma = 0.47^*\dagger$

$^*p<0.05$; $\dagger\chi 2<0.05$

It seems that the earning power of parents negatively affects their child's decision to live rurally in the future. More specifically, the more the parents earn, the more likely the teen is to report wanting to live in an urban setting in the future. High levels of rural communicating, contrarily, do seem to be positively correlated with future living. Therefore, the more people that a young person communicates with from a rural or small town area, the more likely they are to choose that lifestyle in the future.

As for media access, it seems that the higher the intake of rural shows, the less likely for an individual to want to live in a rural or small town area. This is supported by the fact that there is a positive relationship between the urban intake of television programming and a desire to live in rural and small town areas in the future.

From the findings presented in the last few tables then, it would seem that youth from higher earning families who are more involved at school and who have larger networks of support, tend to choose to either leave their communities or not live rurally in the future. One could be concerned that this data may be pointing to a potential drain in the rural areas of the types of young people we might want to stay. Two findings which are more positive, however, in this discussion of youth out-migration are that rural family and rural exposure matter. As is shown in Table 23, two of the strongest indicators of future living, are family and total rural exposure. There is a positive relationship between the number of rural family members one has and the decision to live in the country in the future. The more rural relatives a teen has and knows, the more likely it is that they will live in a rural area in the future. And perhaps most importantly, it seems that the more

rural exposure that teenagers have, the more likely they are to choose rural living in the future. Both of these findings are significant at the 0.05 level for gamma and chi square tests.

Before turning our attention to further discussion of these findings in the next chapter, it is important to reiterate that because of the small sample size many of these findings cannot be considered significant at the 0.05 level and so should be regarded as potential indicators and building blocks to future research and not hard facts in and of themselves. This data represents youth from the three case study communities, but as will be shown in the next chapter, many similarities can be drawn between this sample and other larger study samples of Canadian teenagers.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

5.1 Three Communities in the Bigger Picture

In this chapter, some of the implications of the findings presented in the data analysis chapter will be discussed in further detail. But before expanding upon such issues, it is beneficial to know how this data fits into the larger scope of data which has been amassed over the past several years. Furthermore, the more congruent this data is with other studies of similar reach, the more comfortable one can be in generalizing to other rural teenage populations in Ontario and Canada. With this in mind, it seems that one can be fairly confident of the generalizability of this work on several levels.

Beginning with out-migration data, in a study by Dianne Looker and Peter Dwyer, they claimed that 71% of rural youth leave their homes (1998: 15). Within this survey, 71% of females and 81% of all males said that they plan to leave home. Granted Looker and Dwyer's study deals with cases of actual out-migration, but from the numbers shown within this research it would be fair to say that these young people's responses are right on track.

Looking at how these young people compare to Canadians who were surveyed in the Canadian 2000 General Social Survey, it seems that these teens are slightly more "wired" than the national average. In Heather Dryburgh's summary of this survey, she points out that 90% of all teens report using the Internet (2002: 7). In this study 100% of the teens surveyed reported using the Internet. Email use, however, is very close to the national average cited in this survey. In the GSS, about 84% of Internet users said they used email; in this study, 87% of all teens said they used email (2002: 8). As well, it seems that the adolescents surveyed here are similar to other Canadian teens when it comes to online friendships. 33% of young people surveyed in the GSS

between the ages of 15 and 24 reportedly had made new friends online; 32% of the teens in this study had made online friendships. This number is, however, considerably higher than the rural average of 14.7% who had made online friendships according to the StatsCan survey (2002: 12). The teens in this study are also similar to Canadians in other studies in their television viewing patterns. 1-2 hours of television watching daily is both this study's most common answer (35%) and the most common answer for Canadian adults (42%) in Bibby and Posterski's 1992 survey (1992: 274).

Teens' views on influencing factors in their lives are also very similar to those of other Canadian youth. When data from this study is compared to data from Reginald Bibby's recent longitudinal study of over 3500 Canadian teens, several similarities can be drawn from the responses. For example, in the data which looks at perceived sources of influence in young people's lives, factors such as parents and friends rate higher as sources of influence than factors such as school, media, and religion (Bibby, 2001: 31). These traits fall in much the same way in the young people's responses to Question 24 of this questionnaire which asks teenagers about factors which have the most effect on their lives (See Appendix A, Question 24 and Chapter 4 for more details). In addition to this, it seems that the teenagers in this study are very typical in their views of rural and urban living. In a study by David Hajesz and Shirley Dawe, teens from Newfoundland talked about some of the positive attributes of rural communities being the quality of life, the feelings of safety, and the natural recreational benefits (1997: 120). In Looker and Dwyer's study, young people talked about the strong community ties of rural areas (1998: 15). All of these benefits were listed by the teens within this study as the best things about rural communities (See Appendix A, Question 28-31 and Chapter 4 for more details). Lack of

employment, lack of excitement, lack of recreational facilities, and the negative stereotypes of rurality were listed in the Hagesz and Dawe study as some of the disadvantages of rural communities (1997: 117, 120). All of these sentiments were echoed by young people from the communities in this survey. As for some of the benefits of urban areas, excitement, more people, more anonymity, more employment opportunities, and lots of things to do were cited in both this survey and Hagesz and Dawe's (1997: 121-122). Last of all, crime and insecurity were seen as some of the disadvantages to city life by the respondents of this survey and others (Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 121-122; Looker & Dwyer, 1998: 15).

5.2 Pushing Away from the Rural Life

There are many factors which have been shown, both in this study and others, to be involved in young people's decisions of where to live in the future; it is because of this, that I have decided to compare push and pull effects as was introduced in earlier chapters. In this case, however, it will be used with respect to the factors which push and pull people to and from rural regions. To begin, some of the things which can be considered factors which are pushing people away from rural areas are actually the same factors which can be considered to be pulling people towards urban communities. Some examples of these types of factors are high numbers of network supports living in urban areas and positive aspects of city life. In both of these examples, city life is pulling young people away because it offers something that their present communities do not.

In the first case, urban contacts which a young person considers to be part of their network of support can make leaving a small town for a much larger urban centre a more palatable option. As discussed by Hajesz and Dawe, for some young people who may be more

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isolated from urban centres, cities can be a foreign and intimidating option (1997: 127). With family and friends there to make the transition easier, however, city living could become an option that others would not consider were the network not in place.

In the second case, many of the positive characteristics which young people list for urban areas can be seen as things that are missing from their own lives in a small town. These positive factors can be seen as going hand in hand with the negative characteristics which young people cite in reference to rural areas. When the negative aspects of rural life are considered in conjunction with the positive aspects of urban life, then young people can be simultaneously pushed away from their rural environment and pulled towards an urban one. For example, a lack of employment options in a rural community coupled with the seemingly endless employment options of urban centres can help teens make a decision as to their future path.

Another factor which has been demonstrated to push rural teens away from their home communities is the birth place of their parents. More specifically, parents being born elsewhere and moving to the rural community in question as opposed to having been born and raised in the same rural town for their entire lives is connected to teens not choosing to live in their own rural community in the future. This may be a matter of learning by example. It is possible that this connection is present because young people who have parents who have lived in the same community all their lives may not see moving to another community to start their lives over as a readily available option. In addition to this, if a parent has been living in the same community all their lives, it is much more likely that the young person has a large local network of family members. A parent who has moved from another community, however, will likely have family and friends in other locations and therefore the child will as well. Essentially, a non-local parent

may have a more widespread network to offer their child than a locally born parent which in turn can be an encouraging push away from the community. Contrarily, a local parent may consciously or subconsciously discourage their child from leaving the community.

One of the more interesting and possibly puzzling factors which can be seen as pushing adolescents away from their communities is a high intake of television with rural content. It is possible that this negative connection between rural TV and rural living can be explained with the media's portrayal of rural life. As was discussed in Chapter 2, rural individuals are often portrayed as parochial, uneducated, and uncultured compared to their urban counterparts; it is these types of images which reinforce the negative stereotypes of rural living and encourage young people to be embarrassed about anything that suggests to others that they are 'rural' (Hajesz & Dawe, 1997: 117; Jamieson, 2000: 211-215). It would make sense then that the more rural images a young person sees on television, the more negative stereotypes about themselves they are confronted with, and the more encouraged they may feel to prefer an urban lifestyle in the future.

Perhaps two of the more discouraging factors which act to push young people away from their rural areas are high levels of community involvement and high family incomes. I say this is discouraging because this means the highly involved, well-off young people are choosing not to return to their communities or even rural areas later in life. Again, it is important to remember that without longitudinal data, it is impossible to know whether young people who say they would prefer to live in the city later in life actually will. These findings are, however, supported by a number of other researchers which have been discussed earlier such as Jamieson and Dyk and Wilson.

This can potentially be explained by the fact that perhaps young people who are more actively involved in all aspects of community and school life are also prone to doing better at school. Higher grades can often result in the pursuit of higher education and perhaps a career that could not be fulfilled as easily at the rural level. Similarly, parents with higher incomes may also have higher educations than those individuals who make less. More educated parents tend to encourage their children to further their education as well which again may lead their children to be more easily employed outside a rural setting (Dyk & Wilson, 1999: 478). In addition to this, parents with more money can not only encourage their children to continue further education but also they can help to pay for it.

5.3 Rurality Pulls Back

After looking at several of the elements which are involved in potentially pushing young people away from rural areas, it is welcome to see several of the factors which can contribute to pulling teens back to rural areas. One such element is high community involvement. As was mentioned previously, it seems that school involvement can push people away from their communities but community involvement without school involvement can help to pull people to the rural regions. It is possible that young people who are involved at the community level but not at school are somehow embedded into the community at a deeper level than those who just enjoy being involved in many activities regardless of where or when. Perhaps, this has something to do with personality types as well, but further research is necessary to understand the differentiation between the types of involvement.

Two other factors which not surprisingly contribute to choosing to live in a rural area in the future are high levels of communication with others from rural areas and a high number of

rural family members. This seems to be the equalizing pull factor to the previously mentioned push of urban support networks. These pull factors can also be tied into the push factor of non-local parents. More specifically, a neutralizing factor to many urban supports and networks is rural family and friends that a young person can use as role-models of rural living. If young people are relating primarily to others from urban areas, then they may not be aware of the rural lifestyle options which are available to them. Therefore, the more people they can talk to with similar lives and the more family members they have who live in a similar way, the more appealing this option for future living seems.

Another element which seems to be involved in pulling youth back to rural regions is a sense of cohesion within their community. Interestingly enough, feelings of cohesion are not related to moving back to your original community but they are related to deciding to live in any small town or rural community in the future. This may be a matter of idealizing the rural lifestyle and the sense of community that many of the teens reported as a positive characteristic of rural towns. The young person may feel that they are part of their community at this time and would like to have that sense of being a part of a community in the future but are not steadfast that it be in the same town or with the same networks.

Looking at the antithesis of two of the factors which can act as pushing elements, negative traits of urban areas and positive traits of rural areas can act as pull mechanisms. When teens cite violence, insecurity and lack of space as negative characteristics of cities, they often come together with the sentiments that rural life offers safety, a sense of belonging, and plenty of natural space. Therefore, in the same way that negative aspects of rural life coupled with positive aspects of city life can push young people away from rural areas, positive factors about rural towns

coupled with negative factors of cities can pull people back to rural life. Another element which ties in with this positive/negative dichotomy is the connection between high levels of urban content television and the pull to living in rural and small town areas in the future. After seeing that rural television seems to push people away from rural areas, this is an interesting juxtaposition.

It seems extremely plausible that, in the same way media has a way of stereotyping the rural, it has the same tendency of stereotyping the urban. At the same time that cities are often shown to be places of endless excitement and opportunity, they are also often depicted as violent, drug filled, and extremely fast paced and cut-throat. It's not only television and film that does this; most newspapers of an urban or national nature seem to dedicate a considerable amount of their space to news about crime and punishment. This kind of urban imagery, when seen in large doses, can act as a deterrent for future urban living.

Perhaps the factor that ties everything together is the connection between overall rural exposure in a young person's life and wanting to live in a rural or small town in the future. Essentially, the more rural family, communication, and media an individual has in their life as a complete package, the more likely they are to choose this type of lifestyle later. When we consider that young people, as was discussed in Chapter 2, are influenced in part by their environment, their friends and family, and the media, it makes sense that when all of these factors tie into a young person's 'ruralness' in some way, this can be a powerful force which can ultimately pull young adults back to rural life down the line. More specifically, when confronted with numerous rural role models, a young person is confronted with more lifestyle options than they may have originally thought possible.

5.4 The Role of Media and Communication Technology in All of This

If this whole discussion began with the question of how does the media affect rural youth out-migration, then what can be said in response to that now? Because I originally argued that media and communication technology can contribute to out-migration in two ways, I will address each claim separately.

First, it was argued that the media's representation of urban as exciting and 'normal' and its representation of rural as dull and impoverished would reinforce a negative rural image and pull teens towards the cities in their search for entertainment and opportunity. It seems that based on the responses that teens have given within this study with regards to their impressions of the positive and negative aspects of rural and urban life, stereotypes of each are alive and well. Whether these stereotypes were created by the media or whether the media simply repeats and reinforces them is a question which has been argued in other research without resolve and could be an entirely different thesis question to tackle. What can be argued here, however, is that there is a connection between teens' attitudes of rural and urban, and the media. When we take into consideration the fact that young people are not satisfied with the rural content which is available to them in the media, it becomes more apparent that rural youth feel under-represented or misrepresented by the media. Whether children are born with the innate desires to shop in malls, go to movies, and have hangout spots as they reach puberty or whether this is fed to youth as 'normal' consumptive teen behaviour is not something I can prove here, but it would be reasonable to argue that the media does help to define youth culture which can often be difficult to achieve from rural regions.

The second way in which I argued that media could affect rural youth out-migration was through the diffusion or refocusing of networks and feelings of cohesion. I feel that this has been supported more empirically with the data available. To begin, higher numbers of urban supports are correlated with the desire to live in an urban setting in the future. Also, the more rural communicating a person does and the more rural family members a person has, the more likely they are to choose to live in a rural or small town later in life. All of these factors suggest that where a young person has their networks of support and where the people they feel connected to live is the type of lifestyle they will choose in the future. As has been previously mentioned within this chapter, it seems that the more role-models a young person has in any given setting, the more likely they seem to ultimately opt for that living environment. Online – through email, chat rooms, or instant messenger –, by phone, in person, or by post, whatever the means of communicating with other people, young people use whatever means necessary to communicate with the people who are most important to them. Whether one could argue that a diffusion of cohesion is occurring is difficult to say within the confines of the information available here. It is possible to argue at this point, however, that a shift in a young person's networks and feelings of cohesion can affect future decisions about where to live.

Therefore, with this being said, I would continue to argue that media and communication tools affect rural youth's decisions about where to live in the future in two possible ways:

1. By creating and/or reinforcing a youth culture that is difficult to achieve from rural areas while at the same time often portraying rurality based on negative stereotypes, and

2. By facilitating the urban networking patterns of rural youth.

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5.5 What Does this Mean for Rural Canada?

Certainly, while one could argue for a change in the media's portrayal of rural life and youth culture, it would be unrealistic to suggest that communication tools be removed from rural areas in order to inhibit any non-rural communication of youth. What it is important to do here is to address some of the potential areas for revitalization or change which could benefit rural areas and further encourage young people to return to rural and small town regions later in life. One suggestion would be to get young people involved at the community level creating media for the rural teen audience, by the rural teens. Not only will this increase community capital as it trains young people in skills which will be beneficial to them and the community in the future, but also teens will be contributing to a presently dismal array of rural media. At the same time, this can potentially improve rural youth's perception of rurality in the media and give researchers and community leaders a better understanding of rural youth in general and what they feel they are missing in current popular media specifically. As well, this gets teens involved in a community-based organization, creates community cohesion, and provides valuable skills.

Another suggestion which has been written about by such researchers as Hajesz and Dawe is to encourage entrepreneurship within the rural areas (1997: 124), getting young people to start thinking about investing the skills that they've gotten from the community back into the community. It has been suggested that often the educational curriculum in schools has been urbanized over the years to meet the needs which cities place on their workers and inhabitants (1997: 117). While altering the curriculum to not meet urban needs would only put rural youth at a disadvantage, it is possible to use these same skills to the advantage of the community. By encouraging business mindedness and creativity at the community level, young people may be

encouraged to see the potential in their own town which in turn benefits the community. Even demonstrating the possibility of using technology to perform the same job as in an urban area from the comfort of their rural home, gets young people thinking about the other options and possibilities which are open to them. Even community initiatives like the creation of a skateboard park or snack venue give teens a place to call their own and gives them an opportunity to replicate the urban youth culture of teen hangouts without having to travel a substantial distance to do so.

Any such changes which get young people involved at the community level and thinking about the future opportunities available from within rural communities can be beneficial to all parties involved. Well educated, creative, and entrepreneurial youth can create well educated, interesting, and successful rural communities in the future.

In addition to this, while it seems that regional television viewing is not positively correlated with living in rural areas in the future, local newspapers are. What this may be picking up is that regional networks have regional news but all of the other programming is syndicated from other networks (often American). Therefore, while teens may be spending time watching a regional network, the bulk of the programming is anything but rural. As for communities that have local programming consisting of text messages which scroll down to report local events, these can be useful and informative tools but cannot be confused for television programming which is going to be watched for any length of time by teen viewers. Young people reading local newspapers, on the other hand, is correlated with both wanting to return to the same community later and wanting to live in any rural area or small town in the future. It is with this in mind that I would put forth the importance of local media within the community. What needs to be clarified here, however, is the difference between access and use. More specifically, just because a

community may possess these local communication tools and media does not mean that teenagers are taking advantage of them or receiving any of the benefits from their presence. Therefore, I suggest it is important to embed local media into the curriculum of rural schools. Not only is this a way for schools to become less urbanized in their methods, but also it informs teens of their community. It can be something as simple as weekly reading assignments which involve the local paper; or one could move one step beyond this to have young people participating in the production of these media. Having youth involved in the local media that they are then forced to use in school provides them with valuable skills (similar to the creation of rural teen television programming), pride in the community, a deeper knowledge of their town and their surroundings, and a sense of community. All of these benefits can then be returned to the community in the future when they return. Local radio, community websites, and community newsletters are some other examples of media which can be incorporated into this program of community involvement and awareness.

In each of these suggestions, the primary focus can be brought down to the importance of getting youth involved in their communities, giving them a voice, and providing them with skills which can benefit both them and the communities where they live.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion

6.1 Summary

In conclusion, it seems that the media and communication technologies do play a role in rural youth out-migration. Whether it be through the creation and/or reproduction of negative rural stereotypes and urbanized youth culture or whether it be through the facilitation of non-rural communication and interaction, both the media and communication tools are involved in young people's decisions about future living. Looking specifically at the factors which tend to push teens away from living in rural areas in the future, we can see that the media take part in several different ways. By glorifying some aspects of city life, while at the same time promoting negative rural stereotypes, the media can aid in the process of encouraging young people to choose urban regions. The continuous regeneration of the feeling that to be rural is to be 'lesser than' through the media gradually reinforces the urban cultural ideology. As well, communication tools such as the Internet which have become more readily available in rural areas make it easier for teens to foster and sustain support networks at a greater distance and with individuals or groups in urban areas.

On the other hand, these same factors, which contribute to pushing youth away from their rural homes, can also help to pull teens back to the rural regions in the future. In the same way that the media's negative portrayal of rural life can be a push factor, their often over-representation of urban violence and crime can act as a pull factor towards the perceived safety and security of rural communities. As well, the same communication tools which facilitate urban communication for teens can also be used to facilitate local and rural communication. For

example, teenagers may use the Internet to keep in contact with friends from cities but they may just as likely use the Internet to continue contact with their other local and rural friends from school.

The dichotomous role of the media and communication technology within the issue of rural youth out-migration is a complex one. In actuality, it is able to both facilitate and hinder a young person's desire to live in a rural community in the future. While this relationship is still somewhat nebulous, however, it seems that the promotion of local media is more clearly defined. Getting rural youth actively involved in the consumption and creation of their own local rural media is both a means to get young people thinking about their communities and developing valuable skills which can create future community capital.

6.2 Future Directions and Questions

While I feel that this research has been able to provide more information, and perhaps another perspective, on the complex issue of rural youth out-migration, it has also left us with more questions and areas for future research. One necessary area of research is longitudinal analysis. In order to truly understand the importance of the media and communication tools in the decisions of young people, it is important to find out what young people are actually doing in the future, not just what they say they would like to do. Unfortunately, within the parameters of this thesis there was neither the time nor the money available for such an endeavour, but certainly, this would be a valuable project in the future. It would also be valuable to consider the implementation of some of the media involvement projects at the school and community level. This, in conjunction with a longitudinal study of both active and inactive sites, would be extremely interesting.

One of the questions which has arisen from this study which would benefit from further research deals with the direction of the influence. More specifically, it is not clear whether media and communication tools are at the root of out-migration or whether it has to do with something else entirely and young people simply use the media as an outlet for their pre-determined path to urban living. In addition to this, after further study, I think that this is a valuable area for policy implementation at the municipal, provincial and federal levels. Many of the projects for revitalization which have been suggested here can be costly endeavours if the proper infrastructure is not currently in place at the community level. It is for this reason that funding from various governmental sources as well as community level sources will be necessary if changes and improvements are to be made. All in all, both future research and current action are important if rural areas want to keep the young resources they have and encourage other young adults to consider the benefits of rural living in the future.

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Appendix A – Site Communication Inventory

	Yes/No/ #	Comments
Communication Inventory		
Cable TV (is local programming in the form of "text" messages only, or actual programs as well)		
Cable TV Provider (who is the cable provider, name the company)		
Internet (which companies provide Internet (ISPs), list community website address)		
Speed of Internet Access (indicate which forms are available: Vibe, DSL modem, cable, other)		
Public Internet Access Terminals		
Local Newspaper (frequency)		
Regional Newspaper		
National Newspaper		
Community Newsletters (how many, how frequent, only include church bulletins if they carry more than church news)		
Local Radio Station		
# of Radio Stations available in the site (use your radio dial)		

Community Bulletin Boards (how many can you find, usually in stores or post offices, comment on what they are used for - mostly local notices, personal notices, regional notices, government notices, etc)		

Appendix B – Communication Infrastructure

Site	Communication Infrastructure	Media Total (poss. total = 12)	Local Media Total (poss. total = 9)	Global Media Total (poss. total = 3)
Winterton	cable, local TV (text), Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community bulletin boards, local website	7	4 (44.4%)	3 (100%)
Twillingate	cable, local TV (text & prog), Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards	10	7 (77.8%)	3 (100%)
Lot 16	cable, Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper	4	1 (11.1%)	3 (100%)
Springhill	cable, local TV (prog), Internet, local newspaper, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community bulletin boards, local website	9	6 (66.7%)	3 (100%)
Neguac	cable, local TV (text & prog), Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, community bulletin boards,	9	6 (66.7%)	3 (100%)
Ste. Francoise	cable, Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards, local website	8	5 (55.6%)	3 (100%)
Cap-a-l'aigle	cable, local TV (prog), Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards, local website	11	7 (77.8%)	3 (100%)

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Tweed	cable, local TV (text & prog), Internet, local newspaper, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, community bulletin boards, local website	11	8 (88.9%)	3 (100%)
Spalding	cable, Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards, local website	8	5 (55.6%)	3 (100%)
Wood River	cable, Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards, local website	8	5 (55.6%)	3 (100%)
Hussar	regional newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards	4	4 (44.4%)	0 (0%)
Ferintosh	Internet, regional newspaper, community newsletter, community bulletin boards,	4	3 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)
Tumbler Ridge	cable, local TV (text), Internet, local newspaper, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community bulletin boards, local website	8	5 (55.6%)	3 (100%)
Mackenzie	cable, local TV (text), Internet, local newspaper, national newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards, local website	9	6 (66.7%)	3 (100%)
Carden	Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, community bulletin boards	5	3 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)
Usborne	Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community bulletin boards	4	2 (22.2%)	2 (66.7%)

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Seguin	cable, local TV (text), Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, local radio, community bulletin boards, local website	8	5 (55.6%)	3 (100%)
Blissfield	Internet, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, community bulletin boards, local website	6	4 (44.4%)	2 (66.7%)
St. Damase	cable, local TV (prog), Internet, local newspaper, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, community bulletin boards	9	6 (66.7%)	3 (100%)
Taschereau	cable, local TV (text & prog), Internet, local newspaper, national newspaper, regional newspaper, community newsletter, local radio, community bulletin boards	11	8 (88.9%)	3 (100%)

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Communications Infrastructure	Local Media	Global Media
Taschereau - 11	Tweed - 8	Spalding - 3
Cap-a-l'aigle - 11	Taschereau - 8	Tashereau - 3
Tweed - 11	Twillingate - 7	St. Damase - 3
Twillingate - 10	Cap-a-l'aigle - 7	Seguin - 3
Springhill - 9	Neguac - 6	Mackenzie - 3
Neguac - 9	Mackenzie - 6	Tumbler Ridge - 3
Mackenzie - 9	St. Damase - 6	Wood River - 3
St. Damase - 9	Springhill - 6	Springhill - 3
Spalding - 8	Seguine - 5	Tweed - 3
Wood River - 8	Tumbler Ridge - 5	Cap-a-l'aigle - 3
Tumbler Ridge - 8	Spalding - 5	Winterton - 3
Ste-Francoise - 8	Wood River - 5	Lot 16 - 3
Seguin - 8	Ste-Francoise - 5	Twillingate - 3
Winterton - 7	Blissfield - 4	Neguac - 3
Blissfield - 6	Hussar - 4	Ste-Francoise - 3
Carden - 5	Winterton - 4	Blissfield - 2
Usborne - 4	Ferintosh - 3	Usborne - 2
Ferintosh - 4	Carden - 3	Carden - 2
Hussar - 4	Usborne - 2	Ferintosh - 1
Lot 16 - 4	Lot 16 - 1	Hussar - 0

**High Local Media = the community possesses at least 66.7% of the possible local media options
**Low Local Media = the community possesses less than 66.7% of the possible local media options (namely they have 55.4% and below)
**High Global Media = 100% of the possible global media is present in the community
**Low Global Media = less than 100% of the possible global media is present in the community

Winterton = low local/high global
Twillingate = high local/high global
Lot 16 = low local/high global
Springhill = high local/high global
Neguac = high local/high global
Ste-Francoise = low local/high global
Cap-a-l'aigle = high local/high global
Tweed = high local/high global
Spalding = low local/high global

Wood River = low local/high global
Hussar = low local/low global
Ferintosh = low local/low global
Tumbler Ridge = low local/low global
Mackenzie = high local/high global
Carden = low local/low global
Usborne = low local/ low global
Seguine = low local/high global
Blissfield = low local/low global

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Questionnaire

Concordia University
Usborne, Ontario
April, 2002

Strict confidentiality will be maintained in this survey. Your responses will not be seen by anyone other than myself, and they will be used for the purposes of my master's thesis only. No names will be released or used in any publication at any time, and any information used in future publications will be presented in the form of summaries not individual responses. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to.

Section 1: Personal Information

1. Sex: (Please circle your answer)

M   F

2. Age: _____

3. Grade: _____

Section 2: Use Versus Access of Communication Tools

4. Do you use the Internet? (Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

5. If yes, where do you use the Internet? (Please circle all that apply)

a) in your home

b) at school

c) at a public place (community centre, library)

d) at a friend's home

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e) at work

f) other   Please specify: _____

6. **Do you have high speed access (ie high speed Bell Sympatico, cable, digital)?   (Please circle your answer)**

   Yes   No

7. **In the past 7 days, approximately how many times did you log onto the Internet?**

   a) 0   b) 1-2   c) 3-6   d) 7-9   e) 10-15   f)16-20   g) 21+

8. **On average, approximately how much time per day do you spend on the Internet? (Please circle your answer)**

   a) 1min - 15min   b)16min - 30min   c)31min - 1hr   d)1hr - 2hrs   e)2hrs - 4hrs   f) 4+ hrs

9. **What do you use the Internet for? (Please circle all that apply)**

   a) email

   b) chat rooms

   c) news

   d) entertainment reasons (watching videos, listening to music, playing a game)

   e) making on-line purchases

   f) learning (for school-related work or research)

   g) searching for work

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h) surfing the web (not looking at anything specific, just checking out various sites)

i) other Please specify: _____

10. If you used the Internet for email, who did you email? (Please circle all that apply)

a) friends/family in your town. How many friends or family? _____

b) friends/family outside of your town. How many friends or family? _____

c) other Please specify: _____

11. Have you ever met someone through the Internet and become friends with them or had a relationship with them? (Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

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12. If you answered "yes" to Question #11, where did/do these people live? (If you have met more than 3 people through the Internet, just choose your 3 closest to talk about here) (Please circle your answer for each person)

First Person You Met:

a) your town

b) a nearby town (in the same region)

c) the same province but they don't live nearby

d) in Canada but not the same province

e) from another country (please specify) _____

Second Person You Met:

a) your town

b) a nearby town (in the same region)

c) the same province but they don't live nearby

d) in Canada but not the same province

e) from another country (please specify) _____

Third Person You Met:

a) your town

b) a nearby town (in the same region)

c) the same province but they don't live nearby

d) in Canada but not the same province

e) from another country (please specify) _____

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13. Are the people you met on the Internet from a city or a rural area? (Please circle your answer for each person)

First Person You Met:

a) isolated area (not close to any other homes)

b) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) close to a city

c) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) which is more isolated

d) a mid-sized city (ie. Kitchener, London; 20,000-400,000 people)

e) a large city (ie. Toronto, Montreal; 500,000+ people)

f) don't know

Second Person You Met:

a) isolated area (not close to any other homes)

b) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) close to a city

c) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) which is more isolated

d) a mid-sized city (ie. Kitchener, London; 20,000-400,000 people)

e) a large city (ie. Toronto, Montreal; 500,000+ people)

f) don't know

Third Person You Met:

a) isolated area (not close to any other homes)

b) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) close to a city

c) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) which is more isolated

d) a mid-sized city (ie. Kitchener, London; 20,000-400,000 people)

e) a large city (ie. Toronto, Montreal; 500,000+ people)

f) don't know

14. Do you have cable or satellite TV in your home? (Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

15. On average, how many hours per day do you usually spend watching television? (Please circle your answer)

a) Less than 1hr   b)1-2 hrs   c)2-3hrs   d)3-4hrs   e)4-5hrs   f)5-6hrs   g)6-7hrs   h)7+hrs

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16. What television shows do you watch during a normal week. This would include entire shows that you watch when they are actually on, that you watch with your parents, relatives, or friends (even if you don't really want to), or that you tape and watch later. For music stations, news stations and sport stations that you just tune into regardless of the show, just name the station. If you only tune into those stations to watch a specific show, however, please name the show. (ie. if I tune into Much Music just to watch videos I'd write Much Music, but if I only tune into Much Music to see Much on Demand I'd write Much on Demand)

Monday _____

_____

Tuesday _____

_____

Wednesday _____

_____

Thursday _____

_____

Friday _____

_____

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Saturday _____

Sunday _____

17. Do you watch any programming on local or regional stations? Local and regional stations refer to television stations from your town or the surrounding area – ie. CFPL from London. (Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

18. If you answered yes to the previous question, on average, how many hours per day do you spend watching your local or regional station? (Please circle your answer)

a) Less than 1hr   b) 1-2 hrs   c) 2-3hrs   d) 3-4hrs   e) 4-5hrs   f) 5-6hrs   g) 6-7hrs   h) 7+hrs

19. In the last month, what newspapers have you read for at least 15 minutes at a time? (List all that apply – include local, regional, national and international papers either in hard copy or online)

_____

_____

_____

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20. Please read each statement and circle the answer that best describes how you feel.

1=Strongly Agree   2=Agree   3=Neutral   4=Disagree   5=Strongly Disagree

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The teenagers in the shows I see on TV have lives that are a lot like mine	1	2	3	4	5
I feel like the media does a good job of representing rural lifestyles	1	2	3	4	5
Sometimes I think the media glamourizes city life	1	2	3	4	5
The media has lots of information and entertainment about rural life	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that the media shows rural to be negative	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, I am very attracted to living in Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
I feel like I belong in Usborne.	1	2	3	4	5
I visit with my friends in their homes	1	2	3	4	5
The friendships and associations I have with other people in Usborne mean a lot to me.	1	2	3	4	5
Given the opportunity, I would like to move out of Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
If the people in Usborne were planning something, I'd think of it as something "we" were doing rather than something "they" were doing	1	2	3	4	5

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If I needed advice about something I could go to someone in Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
I think I agree with most people in Usborne about what is important in life	1	2	3	4	5
I believe my friends in Usborne would help me in an emergency	1	2	3	4	5
I feel loyal to the people in Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
I borrow things and exchange favours with my friends from Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
I would be willing to work together with others on something to improve Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
If I can I will remain a resident of Usborne for a number of years	1	2	3	4	5
I like to think of myself as similar to people who live in Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
I rarely have friends from Usborne over to my house to visit	1	2	3	4	5
I don't stop and talk with people in Usborne	1	2	3	4	5
Living in Usborne gives me a sense of community.	1	2	3	4	5
A feeling of camaraderie runs between me and the other people in Usborne	1	2	3	4	5

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Section 4: Community Involvement

21. Are you involved with any clubs, groups, or teams at school? (Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

If yes, which ones?

Name of Club, Group, or Team	Position (member, president, secretary, etc)	Average # of hours of involvement per week

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22. Are you involved with any groups within your town which are different from those you are involved in at school?
(Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

If yes, which ones?

Name of Club, Group, or Team	Position (member, president, secretary, etc)	Average # of hours of involvement per week

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23. People, groups, and media can give you advice, let you know how to get something done, just listen, or help you out when you need them. In the past month, which of these types of resources have you used? Where were they located? Put a check mark in the column beside each resource you've used in the past month, then choose a number to show where that resource is located for you and write it in the *Where Resource is Located* column.

Check Each Potential Resource that You Have Used in the Past Month (✓)	Potential Resources	Where Resource is Located 1=in your town 2=a small town or rural area 3=a city 4=outside of any town (home which is isolated from others) 5=don't know
	boyfriend/girlfriend	
	parent	
	other relative(s)	
	friends	
	best friend	
	neighbour	
	co-workers	
	your boss or manager	
	teachers	
	principal	
	vice principal	

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guidance counsellor		
doctor or other health professional		
minister or other religious leader		
local government representatives		
provincial government representatives		
federal government representatives		
community or volunteer group (please specify) _____ _____ _____		
religious group		
community newspaper	(no location needed)	
regional newspaper	(no location needed)	
national newspaper	(no location needed)	
radio	(no location needed)	

		(no location needed)
	books	
	magazines	(no location needed)
	Internet	(no location needed)

24. What factors have the most effect on your life and who you are? Using each number only once, number these items from 1 to 7 from the factor with the most effect to the factor with the least effect (1 would have the most effect and 7 would have the least effect).

\#_____ school

\#_____ brothers, sisters, family

\#_____ media (ie. television, magazines, Internet)

\#_____ amount of money I have

\#_____ parents

\#_____ friends/boyfriend/girlfriend

\#_____ religion

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Section 5: Future Plans

25. Do you plan to leave this community? (Please circle your answer)

    Yes   No   Maybe

26. If you answered yes to Question #25, do you plan to come back and live in this community again someday? (Please circle your answer)

    Yes   No   Maybe

27. Where would you like to live in the future? (Please circle your answer)

a) isolated area (not close to any other homes)

b) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) close to a city

c) a small town or rural area (0 -10,000 people) which is more isolated

d) a mid-sized city (ie. Kitchener, London; 20,000-400,000 people)

e) a large city (ie. Toronto, Montreal; 500,000+ people)

f) other   Please Specify: _____

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28. What are the 3 best things about living in a small town or rural area?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

29. What are the 3 worst things about living in a small town or rural area?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

30. What do you think would be the 3 best things about living in a city?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

31. What do you think would be the 3 worst things about living in a city?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Section 6: Family History and Details

32. Were your parents born in this town? (Please circle your answer)

Mother:	Yes	No	Don't Know
Father:	Yes	No	Don't Know

33. If yes, did they ever leave and then come back? (Please circle your answer)

Mother:	Yes	No	Don't Know
Father:	Yes	No	Don't Know

34. What do your parents do for a living?

Mother: _____

Father: _____

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35. Have you always lived in this town? (Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

36. If you answered no to Question #35, what year did you move here? _____

37. How many members of your family live in: (Include all people who you consider to be part of your family)

a) your town? _____

b) a city? _____

c) a small town or rural area but not yours? _____

38. Have you travelled anywhere and stayed for at least 2 or 3 days? (Please circle your answer)

Yes   No

39. If you answered yes to Question #38, to where did you travel? (Please circle all that apply)

a) within the same province

b) within Canada but a different province or territory

c) outside of Canada but the same continent

d) a different continent

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Thank you for your time and participation.

Appendix D – Indexes Created

*recode places travelled to 1, 3, 6, 10 so that I'll know where they've gone when I compute for index higher number = further travelled
*.
RECODE
 q39a
 (1=1) (2=3) (3=6) (4=10) (88=0) INTO n1sttrav .
VARIABLE LABELS n1sttrav 'new first place travelled'.
EXECUTE .

*index for travel where score for each place travelled to is added together
used recoded travel variables: n1sttrav, n2ndtrav, n3rdtrav, n4rttrav
*.
COMPUTE travind = n1sttrav + n2ndtrav + n3rdtrav + n4rttrav .
VARIABLE LABELS travind 'index for travel' .
EXECUTE .

*recode for rural/urban index where 1 is rural influence and 0 is urban influence
*.
RECODE
 q13a q13b q13c
 (1 thru 3=1) (4 thru 5=0) INTO rinetfr1 rinetfr2 rinetfr3 .
VARIABLE LABELS rinetfr1 'recode for rural/urban index' /rinetfr2 'recode for'+
 ' rural/urban index' /rinetfr3 'recode for rural/urban index'.
EXECUTE .

*index of friends met on the internet from rural areas
*.
COMPUTE intfrndx = rinetfr1 + rinetfr2 + rinetfr3 .
EXECUTE .

*Index of # of rural resources
*.
COMPUTE rresindx = q23b + q23c + q23e .
VARIABLE LABELS rresindx 'rural resource index' .
EXECUTE .

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*index for rural media exposure: local television watched + # of rural TV shows + # of local nwspapers
*
COMPUTE rmexindx = q16a1 + rrecltv + q19a .
VARIABLE LABELS rmexindx 'index of rural media exposure' .
EXECUTE .

*index fro urban media exposure: # of urban TV shows + # of global nwspapers
*
COMPUTE umexindx = q16a2 + q19b .
EXECUTE .

*total media exposure index
*
COMPUTE tmexindx = umexindx + rmexindx .
VARIABLE LABELS tmexindx 'total media exposure index' .
EXECUTE .

*index for rural communicating exposure: # of rural resources + # of rural people met on Inet + # of rural people emailed
*
COMPUTE rcomindx = q10a2 + rinetfr1 + rinetfr2 + rinetfr3 + rresindx .
VARIABLE LABELS rcomindx 'index for rural communicating exposure' .
EXECUTE .

*index of urban inet friends for urban communicating index
*
COMPUTE uintfrin = uinetfr1 + uinetfr2 + uinetfr3 .
VARIABLE LABELS uintfrin 'urban internet friend index' .
EXECUTE .

*index for urban communicating exposure: # of urban resources + # of urban people met on Inet + # of urban people emailed
*
COMPUTE ucomindx = uintfrin + q10b2 + q23d .
VARIABLE LABELS ucomindx 'index for urban communicating ' .
EXECUTE .

*index for total communicating exposure
*
COMPUTE tcomindx = ucomindx + rcomindx .
VARIABLE LABELS tcomindx 'total commucating exposure index' .
EXECUTE .

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*index for rural family exposure: always lived in community + parents born in community + # of family small towns or rural areas
*.

COMPUTE rfamind = rmnfamex +rrffamex +rrfamexp + q37a + q37c .
VARIABLE LABELS rfamind 'index for rural family exposure' .
EXECUTE .

*index for urban family exposure: mother not born in town + father not born in town + parents left + # of family in city
*.

COMPUTE ufamind = rfbrn + rmbrn + rflfamex + rmlfamex + q37b .
EXECUTE .

*index for total family exposure
*.

COMPUTE tfamind = ufamind + rfamind .
VARIABLE LABELS tfamind 'total family exposure index' .
EXECUTE .

*% of total family exposure that's rural
*.

COMPUTE rfamprct = (rfamind * 100) / tfamind .
EXECUTE .

*% of total media exposure that's rural
*.

COMPUTE rmedprct = (rmexindx * 100) / tmexindx .
VARIABLE LABELS rmedprct "% of total media exposure that's rural" .
EXECUTE .

*% of total communcating that's rural
*

COMPUTE rcompcnt = (rcomindx * 100) / tcomindx .
VARIABLE LABELS rcompcnt "% of total communicating that's rural" .
EXECUTE .

*total exposure
*.

COMPUTE texp = tfamind + tcomindx + tmexindx .
VARIABLE LABELS texp 'total exposure' .
EXECUTE .

```
*index for total rural exposure
*.
COMPUTE trurexp = rmexindx + rcomindx + rfamind .
VARIABLE LABELS trurexp "total exposure that's rural" .
EXECUTE .

*% of total exposure that's rural
*.
COMPUTE rexprcnt = (trurexp * 100) / texp .
VARIABLE LABELS rexprcnt "% of total exposure that's rural" .
EXECUTE .
```

Appendix E – Rural and Urban Content in Television Programs Watched by Teens

Rural	Urban	Undefined
Simpsons	Much Music	Hockey Central
CMT	Friends	Whose Line is It
Dawson's Creek	Sopranos	Raw is War
Smalleville	Angel	News
Gilmore Girls	That 70's Show	Sportsdesk
No Boundaries	Drew Carey	Movie networks
	7th Heaven	Ripley's Believe it Or Not
	Who's the Boss	CMN
	Family Ties	MSNBC
	Will and Grace	TSN
	Malcolm in the Middle	Larry King Live
	Boston Public	CNN's Crossfire
	Third Watch	Jeopardy
	3rd Rock From the Sun	60 Minutes
	Just Shoot Me	Jerry Springer
	Passions	BBC
	Young and the Restless	Trading Spaces
	Frasier	Survivor
	Everybody Loves Raymond	The Bachelor
	Days of Our Lives	National Geographic
	Alley McBeal	Cartoons
	Crossing Jordan	YTV
	CSI	TBS
	Much More Music	Andromeda

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	Buffy the Vampire Slayer	Naked Chef
	The Agency	Biography (A&E)
	Seinfeld	Fear Factor
	ER	Discovery Connection (Disc)
	X-Files	Tech TV
	The Practice	The Score
	City Guy	Smackdown
	Sabrina	Sportsnet
	Becker	BET
	Rap City	TLC
	Operation (TLC)	Hockey
	Tom Green	
	King of the Hill	
	Futurama	
	Charmed	
	NYPD Blue	
	Once and Again	
	Law and Order	
	Trauma: Life in the ER	
	SNL	
	That 80's Show	
	Alias	
	Raising Dad	
	Reba	
	Spin City	
	Mad TV	

	The Amazing Race	
	West Wing	
	Fresh Prince of Bellair	
	Rosie O'Donnell Show	
	Real World	
	My Wife and Kids	
	First Wave	
	Edge TV	
	Roseanne	
	Judging Amy	
	The Guardian	
	Mutant-X	