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## Review of *Economic Adaptation: Alternatives for Nonmetropolitan Areas* by David L. Barkley

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**Economic Adaptation: Alternatives for Nonmetropolitan Areas.** David L. Barkley, ed. Boulder: Westview Press, 1993. xiv+298 pp. Tables, maps, and references. \$42.50 paper (ISBN 0-8133-8715-9).

The purpose of David L. Barkley's edited work is to examine critically the policy and practice of rural economic development in the United States during the last quarter century. To that end Barkley has brought together leading economists, regional scientists, and several sociologists to review and evaluate the current status of rural economic development.

Many of the contributors to the volume, especially Professors Lobao and Summers, allude to the significance of a globalized economy to development in non-metropolitan areas of the country. The volume shows, to paraphrase Lobao, that strategies focusing on recapitalizing rural communities do not work everywhere or for every social group. Economic development has become increasingly ephemeral, and old strategies provide only limited guidance for what may work in the future (p. x). Lobao goes on to say that the topic might be better framed in terms of international studies of change. Unfortunately, few of her fellow contributors take the profound implications of her suggestion into account.

Professor Barkley in his introduction states the rural renaissance is over and that the expectations advanced by the neoclassical political-economic paradigm remain unconfirmed. He goes on to cite such phenomena as a widening urban-rural income differential for the first time since the Depression, a non-metropolitan poverty rate exceeding the metropolitan rate at times by 50 percent, and numerous other gloomy statistics as indicators of the failure of past neoclassical economic policies.

In chapters one through four the authors review research showing the increasing gap in economic development between metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties in the United States and the mixed results for development of adding a new employer to a non-metropolitan area. Chapters five through eleven contain overviews of a variety of strategies employed to enhance rural economic development. Examples include attempts to increase export service sector employment, expand tourism and recreation industries, and attract retirees. Chapter twelve is devoted to a review of state and local policies such as tax legislation; chapter thirteen reviews the significance of telecommunications; and chapter fourteen deals with some methodological issues in fine tuning studies of local occupational and industrial structure. The concluding chapter consists of a summing up and a call for a partnership involving local, state, and federal governmental efforts to stimulate rural economic development.

Disappointing to this reviewer is what is *not* said or at best only obliquely alluded to. Certainly the editor and his colleagues have made a valuable contribution by indicating the disappointing results of applying the neoclassical economic paradigm to rural development. If, however, the contributors had incorporated research on the global economy, they might well have been less inclined to cling to the neoclassical paradigm even as they offer a variety of strategies to reduce the decline in the rural economy. As Professor Lobao suggests, the issue of rural-urban inequality—economic and otherwise—would be better comprehended under the rubric of change. The volume's value would have been enhanced by the inclusion of writings by "World System" and "Dependency" theorists dealing with the dynamics of the global economy. **Richard L. Meile**, *Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Indiana University Northwest, Gary*.