

moving is 0.24: it is raised if the household head is employed, or of higher education, while it declines with increasing age and total income. The only more complex interaction which has to be added is that between labour force status, income and mobility. Among the many other results, it is summarised that better educated persons tend to have higher income in employment which produces higher transfer income upon retirement, all of which encourages the residential stability of married couple households.

The analysis of the residential mobility of older women who live alone also finds that the level of income is of critical importance and leads Stapleton into a fascinating discussion about the income-paths of older people as they or their spouses cease employment or are widowed. Among the situations which are considered is the extent to which labour force participation covaries with income, the possibility of cohort distinctions between the three age groups and, more interpretatively, the implications for widows' incomes of the tendency for men to marry women of lower educational attainment. The article concludes with clear methodological recommendations; that further understanding of the residential decision processes of aged households will require separate analyses by household type, and that many of the most interesting questions can only be tackled by longitudinal studies.

It is an ambitious and original application of a powerful analytical procedure. Not all the immense difficulties associated with writing a clear interpretation of a host of numerical results have been surmounted but, apart from some unfortunate typographical errors in the setting out of the models and the labelling of variables, Clare Stapleton Concord has written clearly for a non-statistical readership. The paper is packed with findings and intelligent speculation and should raise the sights of all interested in understanding the highly variable mobility behaviour of older people.

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Geographical and environmental factors **Tony Warnes**

G. D. Rowles, Geographical dimensions of social support in rural Appalachia. In Rowles, G. D. and Otha, R. J. (eds), *Aging and Milieu: Environmental Perspectives on Growing Old*. Academic Press, 1983, 111-30.

This article discusses a participant-observation study of 15 elderly residents of a declining northern Appalachian mountain town. The

town's population has declined to approximately 800, of whom one-fifth are of pensionable age. Rowles's objective is to describe and analyse the social support networks in rural areas and to explore the paradox that, relative to urban areas, they tend to return low 'objective' indicators of the quality of life, such as income, health, housing quality and access to means of transport. On the other hand it is often the case that on subjective measures of life satisfaction rural scores exceed those of urban areas. This inversion can be understood partly by examining both the role of distance or relative location and the subjective meanings that long term residents attach to familiar locations. The study was conceived and presented explicitly within the perspective of humanistic social geography. This promotes the elaboration of many concepts and terms to describe the intangible and subjective facets of places and locations. Non-participants in this recent enthusiasm within human geography may find some parts of Rowles's argument unpersuasive, but overall the author has written a clear account of an original and interesting piece of 'experiential' field-research.

Within the town formal support for the elderly is provided primarily through the church, a senior centre, social service programmes and a rural health clinic. Rowles argues that of far greater importance are the informal support networks involving family members, neighbours and peers. Even though the children of his panel were widely scattered, only 24 of the 60 living within 25 miles, they were the primary source of everyday practical assistance and social support.

The diversity and effectiveness of the mutual support networks among the town's elderly population are vividly described. The importance of frequent telephone calls, particularly those exchanged by elderly women, is made clear and the extent of interaction with middle-aged 'caretakers' is documented. Stress is placed on the implicit and affirmative forms of support which derive from long-term residence in the town and a relatively stable group of age-peers. Even if there is relatively little or no interaction with many members of the town's elderly population, they 'provide a sense of belonging by virtue of their existence'.

From the information collected in detailed diaries of personal contacts, a substantial section of the paper is devoted to a set of generalisations about the areal concentration or dispersal of different kinds of personal support. It is argued, for example, that different types and intensities of both explicit and implicit support are derived from different spatial zones; from the home, the surveillance zone, the vicinity, the spatial extent of the community, the sub-region, the region and the nation. The discussion of these ideas concerning the 'socio-spatial

support system' is illuminated by reference to the individual circumstances of the respondents. The paper concludes with an evaluation of the typicality of the results and a brief applied discussion. It is argued that a more detailed understanding of extant support systems will assist in the design of service delivery models that will supplement rather than supplant existing support.

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