Community Worldview and Rural Systems: A Study of Five Communities in Iowa

Janel M. Curry

Department of Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies, Calvin College

Rural geography has gone through profound changes over the decades. Dissatisfaction with traditional emphases on population distribution, landscape features, labor markets, and economic restructuring has led to a recent focus on the construction of meanings associated with rural landscapes and social constructions of rurality. Included in this new turn is a willingness to consider the concept of worldview, or metaphysical frameworks, in geographic study. These new studies, however, often address culture and religious constructs apart from more traditional topics of rural geography. This study of five Iowa farm communities attempts to put such metaphysical frameworks in the context of their everyday settings and connect them to rural agricultural systems. Each of the five communities had a particular vision of society, challenging the monolithic assumptions about rural places. Fundamental to these communities' worldviews was their range from communitarian to individualistic. Communitarian groups tended toward more diversity in their agricultural systems, articulated alternative agricultural values and perspectives, and had smaller farms. The metaphysical community-level understandings expressed by the five groups in this study shaped spatial patterns, creating places that express the fullness of the intertwined nature of worldviews, legal constructs, relationships with nature, and ethical systems. While each community or place may have a unique configuration of these elements, the processes and forces are similar.

Key Words: rural, religion, agriculture, Midwest, farming.
study, casts culture not as a thing that each individual possesses but more as a process in which individuals as members of communities are involved. Culture then concerns the perspectival mapping of the world, identity, and meaning, and also the practice of situated acts (Crang 1997: 5). Political and social/structural embeddedness are in turn bound up with cultural practices of identity formation and the search for meaning. Economy and culture sit intertwined, unable to be separated or understood apart from each other (Crang 1997: 12), resisting the totalizing tendencies inherent in hierarchized oppositional thinking and causal explanations.

As this paper shows, meanings and materiality are linked. The most fundamental metaphysical or religious commitments, as part of an overall cultural system, express themselves in the form of a worldview. Worldview, as defined by Clifford Geertz, is a community’s picture of the way things are, their concept of nature, of self, and of society. It is a comprehensive idea of how the world is ordered. Such a worldview can function as an interpretative framework for all kinds of human actions, including the practice of social science research (Aay and Griffioen 1998: xii). David Ley has pointed out that even as dominant paradigms in geography are themselves being recognized as having all the elements of a worldview, interest in subjects once thought taboo has been revived. The religious or spiritual aspects of peoples’ reality is one such subject (Ley 1998: 23). Underlain by metaphysical belief systems, worldviews themselves influence the direction of the development of societal structures and their respective social philosophies. Elsewhere I describe such social philosophies as societal visions that give direction to groups but are underlain by metaphysical worldviews that can dramatically affect social capital formation as well (Curry-Roper 1998b).

Iain Wallace claims that, in fact, one would expect to find local differences in forms of action among relatively similar cultures but with different religious perspectives because these religious perspectives—mediated through worldviews—give rise to differing social philosophies. An example of these differences is the contrast between Catholic and Protestant social philosophies, with their differing emphases on communal versus individualistic conceptions of society. These differences find expression in attitudes toward regional disparity, healthcare policy, and other aspects of economic and social life that exist in rural areas (Wallace 1998: 46; Curry-Roper and McGuire 1993). Thus the worldview concept implies more than a perspective that arises out of metaphysical or religious beliefs. Worldviews show communities what roads to take or not to take—they offer a reliable social and cultural “map” (Griffioen 1998: 126). This map influences the direction of the development of institutional and societal structures, leading to particular spatial outcomes and historic patterns. Ultimately, these outcomes and patterns are the expression of the worldview of a community (Curry 2000). Such worldviews, and their spatial expressions, can only be understood by discerning the religious or metaphysical belief system on which they are based.

Worldviews are reflections of ultimate commitments. Philosopher Roy Clouser claims these commitments are related to what people believe to be “just there,” or what is so fundamental that it is not dependent on anything else for its existence—all else depends on it (Clouser 1991: 16–19). Such commitments and their resulting worldviews are grounded in communities and are associated with answers to fundamental questions of existence: What is the nature of humankind? What are the most fundamental problems facing society and ourselves? What is the nature of evil? On what do we place our hope for these problems’ solutions? Understandings of rural areas must be unraveled through understanding communally held worldviews that address these fundamental questions.

This study attempts to use the concept of worldview in the understanding of rural places. The method of the study combines both qualitative texts and quantitative information, a needed hybridity in understanding both worldviews and their spatial outcomes. The study also includes nature as a component of worldview, incorporating it into rural studies (Cloke 1997: 371). Finally, this study looks at worldviews that are closely related to the everyday lives of people. Winter and Short have pointed out that we know very little about the beliefs of “ordinary” people and the significance of these beliefs for everyday life. Rather, attention has been focused on the new exotic edges of religious movements (Winter and Short 1997: 635–36). Beliefs need to be placed in “normal” social and environmental settings rather than studies via social surveys of individuals or examinations of fringe movements (Gallaher 1997).

The U.S. Midwest provides a laboratory for
an exploration of the role of worldviews. The Midwest is a mosaic of ethnic/religious communities on which the prosperous agricultural economy of the region has been built. Thousands of these communities, whose study has been the focus of much research, were settled as church-centered ethnic colonies. Within the agrarian culture of the region, sociologists, rural historians, and geographers have consistently identified community-wide social patterns affecting farming (Swierenga 1997; Salamon 1992; Ostergren 1981; Rice 1977). These influences capitalization of the farm enterprise, the extent to which a farm is commercialized, land-tenure-change patterns, and farmers' risk-reduction strategies (Curry-Roper and Bowles 1991; Salamon and Davis-Brown 1986). These in turn affect the ability of communities to reproduce themselves. This study of these communities is an attempt to apply Foucault's concept of genealogy, attempting to unite erudite knowledge and local memories. By focusing on the local and discontinuous, this study attempts to reveal the multiplicity of factors behind the creation of places, while avoiding hierarchical and dualistic constructs (Sarup 1989: 64).

Much of the work in rural geography on the Midwest has fallen within the realm of the dominant paradigms of rural geography—material elements on the landscape, population studies, and restructuring. Most recently, Robert Swierenga, in his presidential address to the Agricultural History Society, called for the addition of the long-neglected religious variable in research on agriculture. Just as Iain Wallace stated that religious societal worldviews make a difference in social policy, Swierenga stated that the religious worldviews of various communities may emerge as the interpretive key to understanding rural agriculture, subsuming other variables such as class, gender, and race (Swierenga 1997: 441).

Winter (1991: 206) has likewise criticized sociologists who study rural places without appreciating the role of culture and ideology. He also claims that what people actually think and believe needs to be included as central concerns in fields like rural sociology. Rather than elevating the economic, Jon Miller (1993: 48) has recently argued for the "autonomy" of worldviews—religious or ideological belief—over and against socioeconomic factors, for understanding community vitality. He contends that beliefs often provide the key to understanding institutional structures and collective social action, which in turn results in measurable social consequences. While these critiques of the absence of the religious or metaphysical from the totalizing influence of the socioeconomic are legitimate, a new causal relationship should not be established. Just as the cultural and economic remain inseparable, so theory should reject one-way causal relationships between the metaphysical and the socioeconomic, in either direction. Rather, these two aspects of reality remain interwoven into a whole.

This study examined the worldviews of members of five different communities in Iowa—the Dutch Reformed town of Hull, the German Reformed-dominated town of Wellsburg, the German Mennonite town of Wayland, an Anglo and Norwegian Quaker community near Paulina, and an Anglo-Reorganized Church of the Latter Day Saints (RLDS) group from the historically RLDS community of Lamoni. These groups, representative of their communities, were used as test cases for exploring the character of community-level religious worldviews and their potential effect on land use, social capital, and agency (Figure 1). The five Iowa communities were chosen on the strength of their commitments to particular theological positions. In addition, all these communities have populations under three thousand, and are found in areas where farming is dominant in the local economy. Two German communities provide a moderate level of control for ethnicity. My hypothesis is that distinct worldviews among the members of these communities, grounded in metaphysical commitments, are associated with specific social practices and result in discernible differences among communities. I first examine their conceptualizations of society along a range of emphasis from individualistic to communal (Bellah et al. 1985). Communal, in the context of this study, is not to be confused with associational involvement. Associational involvement refers to an individual's participation in institutional or congregational activities; by contrast, communal involvement entails primary-group interaction at the level of family and friends (Roof 1979). The individualistic-communal scale addressed the question: How do I think of myself? Am I an autonomous, independent person, or do I see myself principally as part of a network of human relationships?

This range in societal conception has been linked to other elements of worldview, also addressed in this study, from the perceived rela-
Figure 1. The location of the five study sites in Iowa.

tionship between humans and nature to contrasting views about farming. This communitarian-individualistic opposition has also been associated with other contrasting values in the sociology of natural resources literature. In a historical study on New England, Cronon (1983) attempted to show the relationships among communal orientation, property rights, and the perception of the environment and use of its resources. Berkes and Feeny (1990) argued for similar connections. They questioned Hardin’s (1968) assumption of individual interest and competition in his classic work, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” arguing instead that society is grounded in cooperative, communal action. Their focus of concern was resource management and the often-overlooked informal rule-making of communities. They began with the assumption that actions are constrained by the community. They further argued that community-oriented management takes the long view and is more sustainable.

Salamon’s (1985) typography of Yankee and yeoman farmers points to other factors that may be connected to communal orientation. Among communities described as “Yankee,” she found emphasis on farms as businesses, and on geographic and economic mobility. Communities of German “yeoman” farmers emphasized continuity: efforts were made to keep the farm in the family and strong community attachment was evident. Cronon (1983) would argue that these represented differences in economic orientation: Yankee farmers, on the whole, are capitalist in orientation, and their emphasis on individual, exclusive, property rights results in the further commodification of land and its resources. Beus and Dunlap (1990) have linked many of these same elements to the two major agricultural paradigms in the literature. Conventional agriculture emphasizes farming as a business, farm specialization, world markets, the advantages of technology and science, and competition. In contrast, alternative agriculture emphasizes farming as a way of life, farm diversification, domestic markets, skepticism toward science and technology, and cooperation among farmers and between farmers and consumers. These issues—property rights, commitments to conventional agriculture, and the commodification of nature—are in turn fundamental to processes of economic restructuring.

As Swierenga (1997) has pointed out, none of these studies, or other similar ones, have directly addressed the question of the underlying worldviews or “domains of commitment” that form the basis for these differences (Murphy and Pilotta 1984: 23–24). This study addresses the question of the underlying, community-wide theological and value commitments and the interrelationships among the previously discussed components of community worldviews. By doing
so, this study attempts to reinstate what people think, believe, and value as central concerns of social scientists, recognizing the role of culture and ideology in the formation and sustenance—the vitality—of rural agricultural systems.

The identified visions of society found among the five communities presented here challenge monolithic assumptions of rural geography. Economic understanding of rural places has been based on the assumption that economies are collections of atomistic competitors formally aware of one another solely through market signals. Likewise, orthodox economists assume that relations of production either are or ought to be untouched by cultural considerations, the location and history of one's community, family and ethnic ties, and commitment to place (Granovetter 1985: 484). Giddens argues that the process of modernization has led to this disembedding of individuals from the trust of personal relations with those with whom one shares time and space. He claims this type of trust has been replaced by the rationalized organization of specialists (1990: 20–21).

Granovetter argues that this type of space-time embeddedness has not been lost. He says that personal relations and the structures of such relations continue to generate trust, which is grounded in information gained from one's past dealings with persons (1985: 490). The kind of trust and embeddedness Granovetter describes can only be based on proximity—place and community. Bennett Harrison attempts to illustrate the importance of community proximity and relationships in his work on prosperous new industrial districts (1992: 471). Harrison explains their growth by the emergence of informal ties based on trust. He describes the placement of trust not in abstract systems, as Giddens claims (1990: 114), but as based on mutuality and intimacy. This vision of society, one which can be seen as having some reality in the lives of many of the communities studied here, contrasts with the atomic model of society and the ideal of the Enlightenment "man," as opposed to a more relational model of society and reality. These two contrasting views have been described at length by philosophers of gender such as Elizabeth Wolgast (1980) and Evelyn Fox Keller (1985), and by economic geographer Trevor Barnes (1995, 1996).

The atomistic model of society has also had its impact on conceptions of agriculture. Those who support conventional agriculture production emphasize individual farm profitability. Connections of individual farm enterprise to community and environment are left out of the formula (Lyson and Welsh 1993: 424). On the other hand, proponents of sustainable agriculture articulate the same critiques of the neoclassical approach to farming as Harrison and Granovetter do of industrial economics. Sustainable agriculture supporters argue for the reality of embeddedness within the natural environment and particular social contexts, and emphasize living with nature and within a rural community (Beus and Dunlap 1990).

Lyson and Welsh make similar connections among agricultural system, social context and nature. They found that the range of crops grown in a county is an indicator that can distinguish conventional agricultural systems from sustainable agricultural systems that are more oriented toward the inherent link between production, society, and the environment (Lyson and Welsh 1993: 433). They claim that counties having farmers who structure their operations to remain flexible and better able to grow a variety of crops as markets dictate do not conform to the organizational assumptions of the neoclassical economic paradigm (Lyson and Welsh 1993: 433).

Granovetter would connect such trends to social embeddedness. He argues that we should expect more pressure for vertical integration in a market where such social embeddedness is missing. On the other hand, where a stable network of social relations exists, the pressures for vertical integration should be less (Granovetter 1985: 503). This may explain the easy entrance of the integrated poultry and hog businesses into the southern U.S. as well as resistance to them in the Midwest. The work of Walter Goldschmidt (1978) certainly points in this direction. Lyson and Welsh were not able to connect farm systems with actual metaphysical worldviews. This study begins to draw those connections.

### Methodology

The methodology employed in this research attempted to overcome the weaknesses of standardized surveys, such as the lack of demonstrable causality (Herod 1993: 306) and the choice of the individual as the unit of analysis (Wuthnow 1981: 24). Communities—not farms—have social boundaries (Salamon 1989: 263). Furthermore, meanings that are simply taken for...
granted are the most powerful and can only take on such power within the context of a group that shares a common life to some extent (Wuthnow 1981: 29). Such meanings and experiences provide a basis for comparison (Luloff 1990: 216).

Information and data on worldviews were collected by three different methods. First, two discussion groups were organized (one of each gender) within each of the five communities. Comprised of farmers and spouses, these groups were drawn from the churches that dominate the rural communities of the study. In the group discussions, participants were asked to respond to a series of narratives set in farming contexts that presented situations and/or dilemmas relating to the study variables. Content analysis was used to analyze the transcripts arising out of the discussion groups. Validation of the analysis was based on the work of two independent raters and on the isolation of themes to be used in the content analysis by means of a test group of farmers and the two raters. Second, participants within each discussion group were asked to fill out a short questionnaire with general population information on themselves and their farms plus a second questionnaire that asked them to rank the strength of their agreement or disagreement with thirty value statements that discriminated among the relevant variables. Besides supplementing the content analysis, this data was used to verify the validity of the content analysis. For example, the correlation between the group content analysis scores and the compiled group scores from the questionnaire on individual property rights was very strong. These individual questionnaires also allowed for the testing of differences due to age, educational level, and gender among the total sample. This was necessary to distinguish these factors from group worldview perspectives. Finally, four individuals or couples were interviewed from each community. These persons were selected to represent different age groups and farming types. The interviews included questions on the history of each farm and on what the subjects considered to be an ideal farm. The core of the questions were grounded in the sociology of religion literature. Yinger proposes that the core experience from which religion springs has two aspects: the observation that evil is a fundamental fact of existence, and a belief that humans can, despite all, ultimately be saved from evil (Yinger 1969: 89). Thus, rather than focusing on church attendance or other measures of religiosity, questions focused on what an individual sees as the most fundamental problems facing society and on how those problems can be solved—the human condition and its solution (Yinger 1969: 90–91). In this context, the questions focused on the most basic problems facing agriculture, society, and the local community, and their solutions. In addition, questions explored how religious beliefs affected lives and farm practices, and the subjects’ perceived relationship with nature. Analysis of the data by gender, education, and age showed that individuals were more like others from their community than they were like those of the same gender, or similar education or age from other communities. After initial analysis, the individual attitudinal questionnaires were collapsed into group scores for each question. These group scores were not based on a mean score, but rather on the level of agreement among the members of the group. The scores were used along with the content analysis measures to rank communities along a series of scales for each variable. Women’s and men’s groups were combined in the final scaling, based on the analysis of the questionnaire, which showed little difference between men and women, and the analysis of content of discussion groups of women and men, which resulted in similar rankings among communities. Several descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients were used to analyze the data. The population was broken down by ethnicity, religion, and gender to look for differences in communal orientation and in strength of relationship between communal orientation and the other variables.

If worldviews have any meaning, it is through their connection to patterns on the landscape. To assess these outcomes, agricultural census data were used. At the county level, the typical level of aggregation, community-level patterns are not discernible, but the State of Iowa collected agricultural statistics, aggregated at the township level from 1917 to 1980. This level of aggregation allowed for a comparison of farm systems for representative townships for each community over ten-year intervals from 1920 to 1980.

The Communities

The Hull (Dutch Reformed) and Paullina (Anglo-Norwegian Quaker) groups are both lo-
located in the open country of northwest Iowa. The farms of the Dutch Reformed community of Hull have extensive areas of corn and beans, as well as livestock. Some farms maintain hay, pasture, and a variety of livestock, including sheep, cattle, hogs, and dairy cows. Hull, and most of Sioux County, Iowa, were settled after 1869 (Nieuwenhuis 1983: 61), and the colonists were largely descended from persons who left the state Reformed Church in the Netherlands due to its perceived doctrinal and moral laxity (Yoder 1993: 50).

The Quaker settlement of Paullina, like Hull, is a corn-beans cash-grain area with trees enclosing farmsteads. The fertile, rolling land sits on recently glaciated terrain. The region was settled largely in the 1880s, similar to the Dutch Reformed region (Fink 1986: 6). The Quaker community near Paullina was, from its outset, a blend of Norwegian and British-American ethnicity. Arriving largely in the 1880s, many came via other Quaker settlements in Iowa (Tjossem 1984: 46–48).

The German Mennonite community of Wayland, in southeast Iowa, is part of an older, glaciated area with rolling hills and flat uplands. The more rolling nature of the landscape is reflected in the corn, beans, hay, and pasture mix of farmlands in the sample from this community. Mixed farms dominated in this area, including hogs, cattle, and turkeys. Wayland was settled beginning in the 1840s by a group of Mennonites of German and Swiss origins (Wayland 1980: 236). These Mennonites, many of whom came to Iowa via Ohio or Ontario, left Europe in order to avoid the military service, which they opposed on order of conscience (Sugar Creek Mennonite Church 1971: 10; 1986: 33–35).

The RLDS founded the community of Lamoni, which lies along the Iowa-Missouri border. It is located on one of the poorest soils in Iowa, a clay that stretches from Missouri into Iowa. Like other communities on rolling hills, the farms have corn, beans, hay, and pasture acreage, but also a larger proportion of nonagricultural rural lands. Cattle dominate in this region, though hogs were also found on the farms of the sample. This region has experienced extreme concentrations of land ownership in the past twenty-five years.

The settlement of the town and surrounding community was organized by a joint stock company associated with the RLDS (Launius 1986). The RLDS is a sect organized out of several lesser Mormon factions that remained in the Midwest after Brigham Young took the largest group to Utah. Though the RLDS has its roots in the Mormon tradition, the group has historically identified more closely with mainline Christianity and thus is clearly differentiated from the Mormon culture and religion that developed in Utah.

Wellsburg (German Reformed), Iowa is in the north central part of the state on the rich soil of the recently glaciated flatlands. It is also part of the corn-bean cash-grain region of Iowa. The area was first settled in the 1850s and 1860s by people from East Friesland, the border area between Holland and Germany (History, nd: 36–37). Many of the immigrants came via other East Friesland settlements around Freeport, Illinois. The Grundy County region of Iowa remains one of the largest contiguous settlements of East Friesens, stretching from Illinois through Iowa to South Dakota. German was spoken in the church services in the town of Wellsburg up until the Second World War. The majority of the immigrants from East Friesland to the U.S. were from regions dominated by the Reformed tradition of Christianity. The larger German Reformed community once had two private institutions of higher education—ethnic expressions of the German Reformed community within the larger Dutch-dominated Reformed denominational structures.

Visions of Society

Content analysis, value questionnaires, and individual interviews were used to identify the Hull (Dutch Reformed), Wayland (German Mennonite), and Lamoni (RLDS) communities as having communal visions of society in comparison to the other two communities in this study (Figure 2). Each study group responded to a story that presented a situation in which a farmer was faced with selling his farm due to development pressures. He knew, however, that if he did so, the whole community would follow because he was the largest farmer and rented the acreages of others, which helped sustain the community. His turmoil over the decision focuses on the knowledge that, as the largest landowner, he will affect the entire community with his decision. The responses to this narrative ranged from a very individualistic perspective to the recognition of embeddedness in community structures. Examples of the two extremes are il-
illustrated by the following two comments: "He's going to eventually sell and move on, do whatever he wants with it," and "Is it the right decision for all people in the community who are looking up to you?"

The Hull (Dutch Reformed) group response to the narrative focused on the community as a whole. Participants spoke of the desire of people in Hull to stay in the community. They spoke critically about the heirs of this farmer, who would probably value money over the preservation of the community. Discussants also referred to the respect this farmer surely must have enjoyed in the community for putting the community's needs first. Similarly, the Lamoni (RLDS) and Wayland (Mennonite) groups mentioned this man's role as a community leader and the need to see oneself as part of a larger communal whole.

In contrast to these communal groups, the more individualistic groups' response to the narrative focused on the continuation of the farm itself and on a minor part of the story—the condemnation of a piece of land for a road. Very little was said about the relationship between this farmer's choices and the community, though this was clearly his dilemma. The participants' comments centered on the impact of development upon the sustenance of family farm units that had been passed down for generations, rather than on the sustenance of the community as a whole.

Similar perspectives arose from the interviews with four individuals/couples from each group. When asked to address the most basic problem facing their communities, participants from Wellsburg and Paullina focused on lack of participation of young people in the church, lack of activism in the community, and the need for jobs for young people. The participants from Lamoni, Wayland, and Hull talked of the need to maintain a sense of community, to include those that were not like themselves, and for the church to reach out to the community.

The responses take on a pattern. In the individualistic communities, the problems and solutions lay in getting others more involved and more committed, and attracting businesses that provide jobs. Among the communal groups, the problems and solutions are related to their own willingness to reach out to others and serve others. Responses to the most basic problems facing agriculture followed suit. The individualistic groups identified problems of low prices, costs of labor, and reduced profit margins. Reasons for this reduced profitability ranged from government regulation to corporate farming. The more communal groups also identified low profit margin as a problem, but made connections to the larger community. Low hog prices were connected to low teacher salaries, church funds, and effects on local businesses. Overall, comments reflected much more a sense of how local community structure tied to agriculture, small businesses, churches, and schools.

Communal Visions

The origins of the communal visions of the Hull (Dutch Reformed), Wayland (Mennonites), and Lamoni (RLDS) communities are diverse. The Dutch Reformed community of Hull was originally settled by immigrants from the Netherlands who emphasized separation for the preservation of purity (Bratt 1984: 29). These Secederds wanted to create a religious ethnic island where their followers could practice their religion (Aay 1995: 62). John Calvin, the primary source of Reformed theology and tradition, emphasized bringing all things, secular and sacred, into proper order (Gingerich 1985: 265).
This meant building a society where particular rules governing the conduct of life could be obeyed literally, such as keeping the Sabbath (Bjorklund 1964: 228). Later immigrants to Hull were influenced by Abraham Kuyper, a late-nineteenth-century Reformed thinker in the Netherlands. Kuyper believed that Christians and non-Christians understood the world in radically different ways (Stob 1983: 253). This idea led to Kuyper's call for the development of independent Christian centers of higher education. In addition, Christian schools, labor associations, and agriculture societies have developed out of this vision (Stob 1983: 256; Paterson 1987). This emphasis on separation is reflected in the landscape of Dutch communities. Van Den Ban found that Dutch farmers were reluctant to leave their community and more willing to pay a considerably higher price for a nearby farm than other farmers (Van Den Ban 1960: 314). The Reformed communal vision has lead to economically varied and institutionally rich communities motivated by the desire to build a society that lives under the laws of God and institutions founded on Christian principles, but not controlled by the church. As a result of this worldview, the Dutch Reformed settlement region, of which Hull is part, continues to expand its borders and influence.

The communal vision of Hull (Dutch Reformed) specifically incorporates nature. Many Christian traditions put an emphasis on Christ as the personal savior of individual humans and heaven as their ultimate destiny. Such a perspective often precludes these traditions from integrating the earth and the natural environment into their worldview as anything other than a backdrop on which human history takes place (Curry-Roper 1990). In contrast, a Reformed Calvinistic perspective was evident in the Hull group. Members emphasized the relationship between obedience to God's laws (as expressed in the Ten Commandments) and material blessings, or financial success. Furthermore, these participants expressed the belief that disobedience had a direct effect upon nature. One individual told about the absence of birds during the 1980s, which he attributed to the state of society rather than to direct human actions, such as pesticide use. Living out the communal vision according to the laws of God included the stewardly treatment of nature.

The Dutch Reformed residents of Hull also expressed a very Calvinistic interpretation of the future—the concept of the continuity between their present material existence and some future perfected state that will be established when Christ returns. Members of the group expressed the belief that Christ will one day restore nature as well as humans to their pre-Edenic state. As one individual stated, there is a connection between this life and the life hereafter... we've begun our eternal life... the opening chapter... what we do now has a direct link to our enjoyment of life eternal. The whole thing of stewardship, is certainly part of now and a part of eternity. The comparison between the seed and the fullgrown tree and our body and our resurrection body—there's a connection, but still, you wouldn't believe that a huge oak tree could come from a little tiny acorn. And I don't think you can even begin to fathom what the life hereafter will be, if you think of our cells, now, as the seed.

The essence of Anabaptism (Mennonite), a movement that began during the Reformation period, is the submission of individual goals to the collective system (Redekop 1993: 440–41). Mennonites, such as those in Wayland, have traditionally withdrawn from society into the security of the community where life could more easily be modeled after Christ. This withdrawal is based on the idea that believers are to live in the present in a manner that closely follows the teachings of Jesus, in anticipation of a perfected future kingdom that is to come when Christ returns. This alternative way of living serves as an example to the rest of the world of how to live: in nonconformity to the world and with an ethic of love that forbids military service, the use of violence, and any personal litigation or use of the judicial system (Nafziger 1965: 188). Many Mennonites still do not participate in the political process. Mennonite nonconformity has historically led to conflicts between the believers and whatever political system they have encountered. They have thus been a peripatetic people, looking for places where they can peacefully live out their lives in conformity to the teachings of Jesus. The Mennonite communal vision emphasizes personal piety and simplicity of life. Mennonite communal vision emphasizes service and compassion rather than institutional structure and economic growth, and is consistent with a suspicion of institutional structures, the accumulation of wealth, and formal education. Communal life is centered...
on a community of believers living together in peace.

This ethic of nonconformity and withdrawal is evident in agricultural association membership levels among the Mennonite community of Wayland, which were the lowest of all groups (Figure 3). This lack of participation in larger associations does not extend to the local level. The strength of Wayland's farm economy has arisen out of cooperative action in the development of turkey production, which continues to be important for many area farms. Turkeys were first introduced in the early 1930s, the result of cooperation among local hatcheries, growers, truckers, processors, and feed suppliers. More than three-quarters of a million turkeys were marketed by 1979 within a five-mile radius of Wayland (Wayland 1980: 283–84).

The Mennonites, true to their long communal history, less establishment-oriented perspective, and detachment from the political-economic status quo (Rushby and Thrush 1979: 23), did not show strong support for individual property rights. In contrast to the other groups, Mennonites see wealth as a threat to the Christian life, so the accumulation of property is not typically seen as God's blessing, but as an indication that one is becoming too worldly or comfortable with the status quo (Nafziger 1965: 192). For example, one of the Mennonite participants expressed concern that as they became more wealthy, they would be less willing to sacrifice as their ancestors did when they left all behind in order to remain obedient to Christ. Mennonite history demands a certain tentativeness about ownership since history shows that the political situation could change, requiring the community to move to another country in order to maintain the practice of nonviolence. A group of participants initiated a discussion over the possibility of turning over all ownership of land to the church and just having the right of usage for one's lifetime, ensuring the passage of farms on to the next generation. This kind of discussion was possible in this community because of the Mennonite suspicion of wealth and their strong communal worldview.

Surprisingly, the Mennonite group expressed a utilitarian view of humans' relationship to nature. For example, several participants expressed skepticism over whether species could ever become endangered. Mennonite suspicion of wealth did temper this utilitarian perspective, however. Although the Mennonites saw the natural environment as basically for human use, they did not put economic growth above the good of the environment. Two Mennonite scholars confirm the possibility of this utilitarian viewpoint among Mennonites. Redekop (1986: 395) and Klassen (1995: 6–7) both state that there is no reference to the preservation of the earth in Mennonite theology, though practice has tended in that direction. Most Mennonite theology has been concerned with church-state issues, due to Mennonite pacifism, leaving the topic of nature in need of further exploration. Thus, while Mennonites are known for their compassion for the underclass, such compassion has not been typically extended to nature. Genzinger, in a recent work, found that much early Mennonite literature, when it referred to nature, saw “creation” as an example of the process of suffering. Only through suffering, which involves the process of giving up one's own identity, could people or nature be useful to the creator (Genzinger 1995: 68). In other instances, nature is seen as God's agent to chastize humanity (Genzinger 1995: 225). Like this study, Genzinger found no clear theology of creation among Mennonites, but rather a pragmatic and utilitarian conception of nature (1995: 248).

The Lamoni (RLDS) communal perspective

![Figure 3. Average number of memberships in farm organizations per person among the five study groups.](image-url)
focused on the desire to bring their vision of Zion, a perfect community, into being. The concept of Zion is central to the fabric of RLDS belief. The vision includes the Saints becoming more than a collection of individuals, but a “people” (Higdon 1980: 272). The establishment of a concrete place was initially important for the development of this collectivity and for millennial hope. Zion had to be established before the Second Coming of Christ could take place. And in fact, it was to serve as God’s resting place on earth and the seat of God’s government for the thousand-year reign of peace and rest after God’s coming (Higdon 1980: 274). Yet the first major leader of the RLDS, Joseph Smith III, tempered this “Zion-building” emphasis with a more spiritual interpretation. He emphasized the initiation of this future kingdom through personal righteousness and moral perfection (Launius 1986: 315). The establishment of Lamoni was a compromise between these two impulses. It was not a full-fledged communal experiment but a joint-stock company that made land available to Latter Day Saints (Launius 1984: 329). Settlement began in the summer of 1871. The sect’s only institution of higher education, Graceland College, was established in 1896 and remains an important part of Lamoni’s economic and cultural existence (Launius 1986: 329).

Thus the RLDS tradition has modified the traditional Mormon belief in Zion, making it a symbol of millennial hope rather than a concrete place (Spencer 1980; Lindgren 1980). This contrast was well understood by RLDS participants, one of whom stated that while, at one time, he believed that one had to be at a particular gathering place to go to heaven, he now believes that it “begins within us, and where we are, that is where we are to function, rather than all clamoring to this one special spot.” In spite of this change in interpretation, the vision of Zion remains strong in RLDS society. One participant left a university academic position in 1978 to return to the area as part of this vision. He says:

My grandfather was walking—back in the 1930s—across the field to help my uncle and as he crossed over the hill just south of where our silos now are, the fear of the Lord was impressed upon him that it was his job, as a stewardship, to build up this area as an outpost of Zion. They (he and his sons) put it all together to form a group and it got to be three thousand acres. The idea of building this up as an outpost—our idea of Zion—was not something in the heavens, but the place of a Zionic condition, where people treat one another equitably and fairly and you work together in peace and harmony.

This vision was also evident during the farm crisis in the 1980s. At that time, the church had a Bishop in Lamoni who was concerned over the financial condition of a local bank. He took some of the regional church funds and invested them in the bank to shore it up. His argument was that these were “storehouse resources” that could legitimately be used to try to build Zion, so it was a proper use of the money. The bank survived so the funds were safe, but the Bishop was removed from office.

The zionic emphasis in the RLDS tradition continues to include concrete connections between society and nature. One RLDS participant expressed the typical emotion within which this ethic of stewardship is grounded:

As a whole, most people are coming to realize that even though we have ownership of land because we have paid some money for it, for the time that we’re on it, that it’s not completely ours to do with only as we want to. In the end it’s God’s, and we need to look after it the best we can . . . it bothers me sometimes to have all these lines of things put into the earth. You have water lines, you have electricity lines . . . I don’t like them all up above you either, but in Des Moines where there used to be some really nice fields, it’s just paved over with concrete. And it’ll never again see the light of day. I groan, I feel the earth groan; I groan with it, for being covered so . . . and you know that it’ll never be free again.

The RLDS statement of faith includes a strong emphasis on stewardship of resources (RLDS 1970: para. 10). Humans are seen to suffer, not because of a lack of resources, but rather because humans fail to see the sacredness of God’s creation and manage it for purposes beyond personal self-interest. God is considered the owner of all, while humans are the mere tenants or trustees of resources (RLDS 1970: 154). This appreciation of God’s creation is tempered by a conception of stewardship, which continues to emphasize beneficial human use of resources (Arrington 1951: 345–46).

Each of these traditions, whether trying to build a society on Christian institutions, or withdraw from the general society to live out the Kingdom of God, or bring in the millennium through the building of Zion, is built on a
communal vision of life that is quite radically different from mainstream American society. Decisions within these communities are affected by these most basic worldviews.

**Individualistic Visions**

The individualistic vision of society expressed in this study was one where people first saw issues as individuals. This perspective correlated with higher levels of involvement in farm organizations (Figures 2 and 3). Both the Paullina (Quaker), and Wellsburg (German Reformed) groups exhibited these traits. The Quaker group had a strong individualistic orientation, yet extremely high levels of farm-association involvement. Several members of the Quaker group belonged to more than ten farm organizations, including coop boards. The German Reformed group likewise exhibited high levels of membership in farm organizations. This connection between individualism and associational membership illustrates that communal outlook is different from cooperative action. Bellah and associates (1985: 206) have said as much, pointing out that even political activists sometimes conceive of “community” as a voluntary association of individuals.

What accounts for the intensity of the Quaker involvement along with their individualism? Steere identifies Quakers as rugged individualists (1984: 3), their individualism founded in the Quaker doctrine of the Inner Light. From the very beginning, Quakerism has focused on the mystical witness of the Inner Light to the individual (Steere 1984: 16). The Inner Light can be reached by concentrating attention inwardly, which is where the soul encounters the divine and divine direction (Brinton 1953: 79–80). Historically, individuals’ experience of the Inner Light led them to protest against injustices such as slaveholding and the use of arms (Blanshard 1959: 36–37). The Inner Light is thus the unerring guide to truth, for an individual’s speech and action (Comfort 1959: 52–53). Though not everyone chooses to call upon this power, Quakers believe it is available to all, thus reflecting a belief in the essential goodness of humans. And since humans are seen as basically good, Quakers believe that some level of perfection of society is possible. In addition, the universality of their concept of grace means that this perfection can be extended to society and the world as a whole, leading to an intense desire to try to improve society (Comfort 1959: 55–58).

Thus the Quaker worldview is one of great optimism, activism, and belief in the forward march of progress of society (Peaslee 1959). The activist perceives the here and now of the world as the main arena of God’s redemptive activity, and humankind as the primary agent of establishing God’s kingdom on earth (Roozen et al. 1984). Quakers have thus been very active in working for peace and justice through government agencies and international organizations (Cadbury 1953: 18–19).

The high level of associational involvement and its relationship to a Quaker worldview were evident in the comments of the Quaker participants. They expressed concern over population growth, the need to feed the world, and the need for social change. And the burden of those changes fell on themselves, undergirded by a strong sense of purpose and progress. As one participant stated, “I’m gonna hafta get to work . . . and as the light is . . . the goodness comes—and it will if you keep working and believing.”

A tremendous amount of hope is also put in education as a force in social change. In fact, their commitment to education for their own children has created problems for the group. A significant number of people within the Quaker group send their children to a Quaker residential high school about six hours away. These, and many of the other young adults, continue on to college, often to state universities or liberal arts colleges. If they return to the community, it is often with a non-Quaker spouse. So the number of people involved in the weekly “Meeting” is diminishing. And in spite of all the community involvement, the town of Paullina itself struggles with providing opportunities for nonfarm families. The school population continues to decline even after consolidation with an adjacent school district.

The Quaker conception of the relationship with nature arises out of this religiously based worldview. More than any other group, they expressed the most coequal view, which was characterized by nature being seen as an ecological system of interrelated life forms that does best if left alone. One participant stated that “as soon as we quit messing with it, it will come back.” Likewise, several participants said they did not kill spiders, but picked them up and put them outside. This reverence for life is consistent with their noncombatant stand. Their progressive
sense of human history was held in juxtaposition, however, putting great faith in technology and science to solve society's problems. So while life was respected, the increasing technological advancements of agriculture were accepted. One Quaker farmer foresaw this as aiding in the solving of world hunger while another brightly conceived of a future where sows were no longer needed—machines could take their place in the nurturing of young piglets.

The Wellsburg (German Reformed) group shared the individualism and high levels of associational membership of the Quaker group. Characterized as broadly evangelical, the German Reformed have been influenced by German Pietism rather than strict Calvinism. In contrast to all other groups, they fell clearly within the dominant social paradigm of society, reflecting such values as individualism, materialism, support for limited government, and belief in progress (Dunlap and Van Liere 1984: 1013). This collection of values is often associated with the American Evangelical subculture. Similar to other East Friesen communities, participants drew social boundaries around each farm unit. Cooperation was not ordinarily expected to extend beyond these boundaries, even to related households (Rogers and Salamon 1983: 542).

Societal Vision on the Landscape

I compared township-level farm data from representative townships of each of the communities in this study to discern difference in outcomes on the landscape that might be tied to their differing worldviews. While acreages of different kinds of crops are similar among similar physiographic landscape types, the diversity and number of animals per acre shows a distinct difference between individualistic and communally oriented groups (Figure 4). The Wayland (Mennonite) (excluding turkey production) and Hull (Dutch Reformed) townships fell clearly at the more diverse end of the continuum and Wellsburg (German Reformed) and Paullina (Quaker) at the less diverse end. These differences could not be explained by land resource difference since Paullina (Quaker) and Hull (Dutch Reformed) are nearby communities in northwest Iowa. The Lamoni (RLDS) township showed the least diversity of all representative townships. Their placement reflects the poor nature of the soils and the resulting high level of set-aside acreage as well as the general abandonment of intensive farming in favor of large-scale grazing. More research is needed to discern the reasons for this pattern. Does it reflect the embeddedness of social relations and result in less vertical integration, or is it the consequence of farm intensification necessitated by the desire of so many to stay and share in the local communal vision? Or does this trend merely reflect advantageous locations of the communities relative to livestock processors?
Agricultural visions arise out of societal visions. A communal worldview was closely tied to an alternative agriculture paradigm, with its emphasis on farm diversity, community life, farming as a way of life, and local markets. Hull (Dutch Reformed), Wayland (Mennonite), and Lamoni (RLDS) groups showed the strongest support for this perspective. The Dutch Reformed expressed a strong commitment to family farms as well as suspicion of technology as the solution to problems. In addition, comments supported an alternative perspective, from concern over pesticides, to farming as a way of life, to nonmonetary values associated with farming. The Wayland (German Mennonite) and Lamoni (RLDS) groups also expressed alternative agriculture attitudes. They viewed agriculture as a way of life, emphasizing domestic markets and farm diversification. These were also the only two groups in the study that had members who subscribed to The New Farm magazine, an alternative agriculture publication.

Why the communitarian/alternative-agriculture connection? What seems to be key among all the groups that had these characteristics is their emphasis on the commitment of one's whole life to a religious worldview. They all had a nondualistic perspective, and one necessitating a certain level of "separateness" from society as a whole. For example, in a study in Wisconsin, Van Den Ban noted that a Calvinistic farmer saw himself as the steward of God on the farm the Lord had given him. Thus even the decision to adopt a new farm practice was sacred (Van Den Ban 1960: 316). These three communal/alternative-agriculture communities therefore see connections between their religious life and all other aspects of life—put differently, all of life is religion.

The Paullina (Quaker) and Wellsburg (German Reformed) groups showed support for the conventional agricultural paradigm, with its emphasis on farm specialization, global markets, farming as a business, and competition. The German Reformed were the most highly committed in this direction. Though less strongly committed in this direction, the Quaker group showed especially strong support for the belief that problems could be solved by applying more and better technology, a conventional view.

Evidence of such societal visions can also be discerned on the landscape by analyzing farm size trends among the three communities settled after the Homestead Act. These farms would have begun operation at a size of near one hundred and sixty acres in the last century and would have shared a similar land resource base (Figure 5). The Hull (Dutch Reformed) representative township has historically had smaller farms than either the Wellsburg (German Reformed) or Paullina (Quaker) townships. While the 1960s and 1970s brought dramatic changes in farm size to the Midwest, the representative Dutch Reformed township near Hull defied the trend toward extensive expansion of farm holdings. Its largest increase in farm size was in the 1960s—twenty-seven percent—only to slow in the 1970s to ten percent, leaving it with the smallest farms of all townships in my study (Iowa State Assessor 1917–1980). Between 1982 and 1992, the county in which Hull is located, Sioux County, experienced farm size increases at the relatively low rate of about ten percent (U.S. Department of Commerce 1984, 1994). Likewise, Sioux County saw the lowest decreases in farm population of all the study areas during the 1980s (19 percent) ("Iowa Farm Population Drop" 1992). The area is known for its intense competition for land and expanding Dutch settlement boundaries, both results of the desire of many to stay in the community (Curry-Roper 1998a). The physical landscape, with its dense
settlement pattern, is the visible reflection of this underlying worldview.

Wellsburg (German Reformed) and Paullina (Quaker) have both experienced increasing farm size and associated decreasing farm population. The Wellsburg representative township experienced a tremendous increase in farm size in the 1970s (55 percent). While having the smallest farms of all the study areas in 1970, the township's average farm size rose to third from the top in one decade, to 305 acres (Iowa State Assessor). This high level of growth continued at the county level from 1982 to 1992, with growth of 33 percent (U.S. Department of Commerce 1984, 1994). Consistent with farm size change is the change in farm population. Grundy County (largely German Reformed) saw the largest drop in farm population between 1980 and 1990 of all the study counties—42 percent (“Iowa Farm Population Drop” 1992). The difficulty is that their individualistic, farm-unit-oriented cultural worldview has not encouraged the type of social embeddedness that is necessary to counter the pressures in these directions.

Paullina (Quaker) has experienced similar pressures. Farm sizes among Quaker farmers have always been larger than their surrounding German Lutheran and Dutch neighbors. The Quaker representative township experienced similar growth in farm size during the 1970s as the Wellsburg German Reformed area, going from 189 acres in 1960 to 261 in 1970 and 310 in 1980. Outside the Lamoni (RLDS) region, with its poor soils and abandoned farms, the Quaker community had the largest farm size of all areas studied.

The smaller farm size in Hull (Dutch Reformed) township illustrates the desire of people to choose a particular place to live. This reality contrasts with many theoretical traditions in the discipline that see geography as “the mythic isotropic plain of regional science, upon which self-willed individuals make rational and frictionless moves” (Blomley 1992: 246). Blomley argues that these abstract concepts of geography as space do not mesh with the actual practices of people who do not want to move in space, but want to be able to choose particular places (Blomley 1992: 247–48).

Such commitments to particular places, as hinted at in the Dutch Reformed data, may also reveal the concrete nature of the relationship that can exist between place and ethics. Keith Basso found that among the Apache, places and their names remind the people of associated stories, which in turn have morals. Seeing these places daily reminds Apache of the placenames, the stories, and the morals, creating an ethical system that physically surrounds them. The placenames are used in conversations to gently make points of morality. The path to wisdom in the culture is tied to one’s ability to use placenames and their associations in making ethical judgments (Basso 1996). The absence of the places would lead to the demise of an ethical system. Perhaps in a similar, but less concrete way, the nature of the physical landscapes of these Iowa communities becomes part of the ethical system of boundaries. The absence or presence of wild birds tells of obedience or disobedience; the density of the farmsteads tells of commitment to community; the prosperity of the town and local institutions is the measure of the coherence of people, worldview, and nature: the measure of the health of a place.

Conclusions

This study attempted to illustrate that community worldviews frame individual actions but also affect institutional and societal life as well as the material landscape. In the absence of the latter, studies of metaphysical worldviews remain somewhat disconnected from economic forces and rather become studies on sacred space and experiences (Weightman 1996). Trevor Barnes has rightly pointed out the need for the incorporation of culture, identity, and trust into traditional geographic theories, in turn balancing their tendency to elevate the economic above all else (Barnes 1995). Gilbert and Akor illustrated this fact in a study comparing the struc-
ture of the dairy farm systems of California and Wisconsin. They found that Wisconsin dairy farms had not followed the capitalist-industrial trends of California. The paradoxical truth they discovered was that each system—whether the capitalist-industrial of California or the family farms of Wisconsin—persisted and grew under different circumstances. These conditions included those internal to each agriculture system, such as metaphysical worldviews (Gilbert and Akor 1988).

In the past, metaphysical beliefs have been seen as an impediment to progress. Such cultural elements have been brought into economic analysis when it is obvious that the economic analysis cannot explain reality (Peet 1997: 37). Lack of integration has stifled further theoretical development. Furthermore, scholars like Andrew Sayer claim that the study of such cultural elements are attempts to avoid more controversial issues related to economic social inequality (1994). In taking this position, Sayer subjugates the cultural and assigns it to the role of being an impediment to progress, reinforcing oppositional thinking. An alternative exists that neither isolates the metaphysical from issues of global restructuring and social inequality nor ignores the cultural. Peet argues that Foucauldian discourse theory leads to a view that religious discourse may be read as both an ideological justification for power and an existential quest for meaning. Thus it may excise power but also inform economic and political practice (Peet 1997: 45). Worldviews may provide insight into understanding the frameworks that have created present social systems or provide for new possibilities.

Walzer, a proponent of social capital and civil society, expressed a traditional view of metaphysical worldviews—as an impediment to social change. His vision of a healthy civil society is based on a picture of people freely associating and communicating with one another, not for the sake of any particular family, tribe, nation, or religion, but for the sake of sociability itself (Walzer 1991: 298). The implication was that this associational involvement would move people beyond their parochial religious worldviews to some positive social end. Yet of the communities studied here, the communal groups had the fewest associational ties, and yet exhibited the least individualistic characteristics, questioned the status quo, and saw structure and agency as intertwined wholes. They were the groups that actively drew on alternative cultural networks. Merry (1998) offers some insights that may form an explanation and an alternative viewpoint to those similar to Walzer's. She argued that alternative institutions, like those associated with the communal groups in the study presented here, interact with status-quo structures in a dialectical way such that both the alternative system and the status-quo order are vulnerable to incremental reformulations (Merry 1988: 884). In this way, communitarian groups are likely to interject communitarian elements into society as long as they are not totally marginal or separated from that society. The impacts of communitarian organizations, such as those I identified in this study, may be greater than both marginal collectives and individualistic activism (Merry 1988: 884). The great amount of associational involvement done by individuals, even those with strong civic values, may be less likely to create social change, instead reinforcing status-quo perspectives rather than revitalizing society, as Walzer envisioned. “Communities of commitment” (using Bellah's words), with their respective societal visions out of which associational activity arises, might be the place where we begin the search for understanding society and place.

The metaphysical community-level understandings expressed by the members of five communities in this study in turn shape spatial patterns, creating places that express the fullness of the intertwined nature of community worldviews, legal constructs, relationships with nature, and ethical systems. The totality of this cultural order includes the products that form the physical landscape, the interaction between belief and these material expressions, as well as the speech of local memory. In the process of the speaking, meaning and presence are captured (Sarup 1989: 38–39). This is the scale where fundamental theoretical understandings can be fleshed out (Stewart 1996: 4). While each place may have a unique configuration of these elements, the processes and forces are similar. We need not give up on the search for theory that can help us understand the processes at work. It is not necessary to abandon the search for generalizations or the theories of political economy to incorporate the concept of metaphysical worldviews into theory (Buroway 1991). Discerning the forces that create places, however, will require that we begin to stretch our understanding of the processes involved in the formation of
community-wide worldviews, that we become more aware of the strong, mutually formative relationship of people and places, that we create ways of describing relationships that are more than cause-and-effect (McTaggart 1993: 312–13), and that we begin to understand how ethical value systems are intertwined with physical place. We need more theories, not assertions, on how the local has its own epistemology (Stewart 1996: 5). We need to look beyond our individualistic imaginations (Barnes 1996; Curry-Roper and McGuire 1993).

Acknowledgments

This research was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Center for Global and Regional Environmental Change at the University of Iowa, the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University, and the Anne U. White Fund of the Association of American Geographers. The author would like to thank Paul Cloke and Darrell Napton for their helpful suggestions.

Note

1. Church and community historical records referenced below were found in the following locations: “The History of Pleasant Prairie Classis [regional denominational body], 1892–1942 and Pleasant Prairie Academy, 1893–1943,” in the archives of the Reformed Church in America, New Brunswick Seminary, New Brunswick, NJ; Sugar Creek histories in the Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, IA; and Wayland: The First Century 1880–1980, in the Wayland, IA city office.

References


Correspondence: Department of Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies, Calvin College, 3201 Burton Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546, email jcurry@calvin.edu.