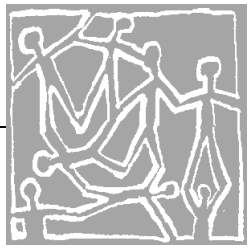
Introduction



Community is a concept, an experience, and a central part of being human. It is a subject that touches every one of us, a subject so complex and interdisciplinary that it takes a work like this to provide the depth and breadth of information that students, scholars, information specialists, and professionals in both public and private sectors need if they are to understand the nature of community fully.

We need *The Encyclopedia of Community* because we live at a time when our desire for community seems to grow in proportion to our sense that it is declining. Yet there have never been so many efforts under way to build, restore, find, and study community as there are today. Some of these efforts reflect a longing for an earlier era when, we imagine, we could find common values. Many images of community—trick-or-treating in handmade costumes, World War II victory gardens, the Queen's Jubilee street parties—are nostalgic. But there is a huge array of contemporary efforts to be explored—community health networks, online support groups, local currencies, or cohousing developments. The *Encyclopedia* is not, however, an unthinking celebration of community. Community is something we run from, as well as toward. Community has its downsides. Readers will find that the contradictions of community are examined in dozens of articles as well as later in this Introduction.

We explore hundreds of different communities, the human webs that provide essential feelings of connectedness, belonging, and meaning. Communities are indeed the core and essence of humanity, around which everything else is woven or spun. They provide emotional and practical security and a sense of continuity through shared memory. They give us a sense of purpose. They sustain us throughout our lives, in neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, and apartment buildings, as well as in more extended networks of friendship and common purpose. These human webs are generally intimate enough to allow face-to-face contact. They depend on personal knowledge and trust. They are a primary source of happiness in good times, and essential sources of support and solace during bad times.

Community is widely studied. The disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology, psychology, economics, public administration, town planning, and religious studies all examine aspects of community, and for all these disciplines, the *Encyclopedia of Community* should prove an indispensable resource. For scholars and students at the college level, the encyclopedia is a state-of-the-art review. For people outside the academic world, it is a unique resource tool. Many health professionals, government officials, social workers, and clergy are focused on community issues and community development. They will be able turn to the encyclopedia for inspiration and illumination, for stories and strategies.

The *Encyclopedia of Community* gives us, at last, a vantage point from which we can examine these vital human webs and explore a vital aspect of individual and social experience. In hundreds of entries, leading scholars address what may be the most perplexing and challenging questions facing us in the twenty-first century: How and why do humans maintain their connections to one another, to particular geographic places, and to shared social, religious, and ethnic traditions?

For most of history the community has been indispensable. Pioneers and settlers in countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, for example, spoke pridefully of themselves as individualists when they were dependent on their neighbors for every sort of survival. They could not put a roof over their heads without the cooperation of others. They could not get in their harvests without the help of others. They could not deliver their children or doctor their sick

without good relations with others. They had no savings system except investments in goodwill with others. They had no welfare or old age protection but the assistance of others. They had no public safety or defense against human enemies and natural disaster but the collaboration of others. To deprive a person of social interaction within his or her community—through banishment, shunning, or excommunication—was a fairly common, and extreme, form of punishment.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, for the first time in human history, at least some people—in the urban, developed world—could truly get along without cordial relations with their neighbors. Hospitals, trust funds, Social Security, supermarkets, contractors, banks, and the panoply of modern institutions make it possible to make money among people with whom one does not live and to secure essential services by paying fees to other strangers or specialist acquaintances who can be replaced, if necessary, by strangers.

Consequently, communities—in industrialized, Westernized nations, at any rate—become more elective than imperative. In the United States, people are no longer Italian, or Republican, or Seventh-Day Adventist because their parents were or because they have to be. They can embrace their Native American, or Norwegian, or Jewish heritage because they choose to celebrate that aspect of their repertoire of identities. Further, they can style it according to their own preferences and predilections. Contemporary Protestants, Catholics, and Jews alike customize their religions to suit themselves, and so do contemporary ethnic groups. We improvise our sexuality and abandon our old political partisan allegiances for an unprecedented independence.

But the absence of sustaining primary communities is no minor thing. Humans need to be connected, and without adequate communities we suffer from personal and social ills that include depression, poor health, and crime. At its most extreme, an absence of human ties leads to violence and extreme social disorders—one has only to think of the stereotypical description of a serial killer as a loner.

The world's most eminent living world historian, William H. McNeill, author of the National Book Award winner *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community,* concludes in the recent book *The Human Web: A Bird's Eye View of World History* (published by Norton, 2003) that our future depends on finding new kinds of communities to replace those of the past:

> Either the gap between cities and villages will somehow be bridged by renegotiating the terms of symbiosis, and/or differently constructed primary communities will arise to counteract the tangled anonymity of urban life. Religious sects and congregations are the principal candidates for this role. But communities of belief must somehow insulate themselves from unbelievers, and that introduces frictions, or active hostilities, into the cosmopolitan web. How then sustain the web and also make room for life-sustaining primary communities?
>
> Ironically, therefore, to preserve what we have, we and our successors must change our ways by learning to live simultaneously in a cosmopolitan web and in various and diverse primary communities. How to reconcile such opposites is the capital question for our time and probably will be for a long time to come. (William H. McNeill & J. R. McNeill 2003, pp. 326–327).

WHY COMMUNITY?

Over the past century and a half, especially in the United States, there have been many expressions of concern about the breakdown of community. There have been influential books on community throughout the twentieth century, from *The Quest for Community* by the conservative political scientist Robert Nisbet (1953) to Paul Goodman's *Communitas* (first published in 1947 and reprinted in 1960), which was influential in the back-to-the-land hippie movement in the 1960s and early 1970s.

In *Community and Social Change in America* (1978), historian Thomas Bender linked this concern to such social stresses as industrialization and immigration and the social problems associated with them. Since Bender's book was published, concern about community has reached a new peak, for two reasons. First, many fear that the forces of globalization will overwhelm local communities. Local businesses are being displaced by enterprises with a global reach, such as Wal-Mart. People all over the world are more mobile, and thus less likely to know their neighbors or be involved in local organizations and local government. Second, a variety of social problems—violent crime, gangs, poor-quality schools, even lack of civility—have been connected to the breakdown of community. The communitarian movement was organized by the sociologist Amitai Etzioni (a contributor to the *Encyclopedia of Community*) to encourage adherence to social norms through the revival of community.

Influential books of the 1990s were the sociologist Ray Oldenburg's *The Great Good Place* and the writer Howard Rheingold's *The Virtual Community.* These make an interesting pair. Oldenburg explores real, phys-

ical places—bars, cafes, barbershops, beauty parlors—where people hang out. Rheingold's focus is the World Wide Web and the relationships we form and communities we find online.

In the last few years of the twentieth century, community received considerable popular attention thanks to the work of political scientist Robert Putnam, of Harvard University. Putnam's research, set out first in a journal article and then in the 2000 book *Bowling Alone*, examines the ways in which the U.S. social fabric is fraying. He warns that people are disconnected from friends, family, neighbors, and their fellow citizens, and that the United States is in danger of becoming a nation of strangers. Putnam's work has spurred considerable interest in the idea of social capital, and initiatives to renew our civic life have been taken up by the Saguaro Seminar on Civic Engagement at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, as well as by foundations, civic organizations, and governmental bodies in the United States and elsewhere, especially in the United Kingdom.

Social fragmentation has many causes, and there is considerable debate about what really causes the breakdown of community. Some claim that new but still satisfactory forms of community are replacing the old ones. Factors discussed in the encyclopedia include work patterns, family structure, age demographics, suburbanization, television and computers, and women's roles.

One of the most important facts about modern life may be that we have more connections and fewer dependencies. As a result, many people seem to think of community as an amenity, not a necessary state of being or a reciprocal commitment, and in fact the term seems to mean simply "home and comfort" to some. Ironically, some writers present community in a way that seems positively individualistic, focused purely on the benefits to the individual. These approaches present a fresh set of challenges, which the *Encyclopedia of Community* can prepare us to address. Consider the problem of community development in rural areas. Newcomers seek out bucolic, arcadian surroundings—but then want all the amenities of the cities they have left behind while being less interested in those unique characteristics of the area that make it special to natives: the public spaces that confer a unique place identity; strong ties that form overlapping, supportive social networks; and taken-for-granted relationships that cross generations. Housing developments encroach on the natural environment while urban attitudes—and rising housing prices—can make local people feel that their community is being altered in ways they cannot control. Small towns have been portrayed by novelists and social scientists as having solid, even rigid, social structures, but to some scholars they now seem amorphous and fragile.

For many, the violent events of September 11, 2001, were a powerful reminder that even in modern, individualistic societies we are still dependent on one another in times of crisis. Community was the buzzword in the months immediately after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Tony Blair, the United Kingdom's prime minister, gave what was dubbed the "power of community" speech, emphasizing the need for a just, equitable, compassionate world community, noting that "our self-interest and our mutual interests are today inextricably woven together." Since that time, world events have made a truly united global community seem increasingly remote, but it remains an important concept. And while there is little evidence that September 11 has fostered long-term social connectedness, it certainly underscored the importance of both planned and organized communities, such as the community of firefighters and rescue workers, and spontaneous communities, such as the one comprising the passengers of United Airlines flight 93, who appear to have come together to fight the hijackers of their plane.

Traditionally, human community has had a geographic base: To be a community, people have needed to be physically near one another. Today, however, many people find the strongest sense of community within groups that are not geographically based. That is possible because community is a cultural construct that can be conceived in an almost infinite variety of ways. Even hermits, we are told, like to think that they belong to the Community of Eremites. There is a dynamic relationship between the need for people to belong to community and the extraordinarily varied ways in which that need is met.

HOW TO USE THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMMUNITY

The *Encyclopedia of Community: From the Village to the Virtual World*, in four volumes, draws together the work of 399 contributors from eighteen countries. It contains a total of 1.25 million words: one million words in 500 entries; an additional 100,000 words in 266 extensive primary-text sidebars drawn from letters, diaries, society records, memoirs, novels, newspaper accounts, and community plans; and appendices of 150,000 words. Entries range in length from 500 to 6,000 words, and

there are more than 100 visuals, including photographs, tables, and charts.

While many encyclopedias are written by a handful of nonexperts who simply assemble information from other reference works, the *Encyclopedia of Community* is the work of highly visible scholars at dozens of major institutions. The contributions here represent fresh, original thinking at the cutting edge of a variety of disciplines. Among our hundreds of authors are Ray Oldenburg, writing on bars and pubs and on "third places"; Hasia Diner (author of *Jewish Americans*), writing on the Lower East Side; Paul Duguid (coauthor of *Social Life of Information*), writing on communities of practice; Charles Durrett (coauthor of *Cohousing*), writing on cohousing; Amitai Etzioni, writing on communitarianism; Amy Jo Kim (author of *Community Building on the Web*), writing on building virtual communities; Jack Levin (author of *Will to Kill*), writing on hate; William McNeill, writing on villages and on dance and drill; George Ritzer (author of *McDonaldization of Society*), writing on McDonaldization; Dell Upton (author of *Architecture in the United States*) writing on New Urbanism, and Min Zhou (coeditor of *Contemporary Asian America: A Multidisciplinary Reader*), writing on Asian American communities.

The *Encyclopedia of Community* addresses these and many other questions:

- How have people experienced community, throughout history and around the world?
- How are communities different from other kinds of groups and associations?
- Are we really "bowling alone," or have we found new forms of community thanks to widespread mobility and the Internet?
- Have cars and television destroyed our sense of community?

In the four appendices in Volume 4, readers will find a wide variety of resources to help them find solutions to such questions as these:

- How can I build, or find, community?
- How can community help my family, my school, or my business?

We have made great efforts to ensure that our coverage of community from a theoretical perspective does not obscure the fact that community is the experience of real people. We have found a variety of ways to make real-life stories part of the encyclopedia, often by using sidebars of primary text to show the human dimension of ideas and beliefs about community. More than half the enties are accompanied by sidebars drawn from fiction and nonfiction, including excerpts from ethnographic reports (eyewitness accounts written by anthropologists). By kind permission of Frances Moore Lappé, we also present extracts from the archives of the American News Service, a project of the Center for Living Democracy, founded by Frances Moore Lappé and Paul Martin DuBois in 1995. The full archives are being made available to researchers by Berkshire Publishing Group and Ms. Lappé at www.berkshirepublishing.com/ans.

Nor have we forgotten that community features prominently in popular culture, whether popular books such as *Clan of the Cave Bear* and the Harry Potter series; well-known literary works, such as *Pride and Prejudice;* or television programs, such as *Mayberry R.F.D.* and *Ed*—not to mention films. Our Community in Popular Culture appendix includes 200 novels, 141 nonfiction books, 47 stage productions, 229 movies, 28 documentaries, 64 television programs, and 63 songs that embody some aspect of the theme of community. Scholars and practitioners will find it thought provoking, and teachers will be able to use it to encourage analysis and discussion. Besides that, it's just plain fun.

Finally, skeptics who wonder whether community is a topic large enough to merit an encyclopedia of this scale will be convinced not only by the 500 entries written by experts but also by the Master Bibliography of Community, which includes 4,800 citations to books and journal articles. The literature on community is vast because the topic is at the core of the human experience. The *Encyclopedia of Community*'s Master Bibliography is the first comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and international bibliography for the study of community, and we trust that it will be of great value to researchers.

Encyclopedias should always be organized for the convenience of the reader. We have divided the entries in the *Encyclopedia of Community* by category, based on the editors' widely varied interests and expertise, but they've been presented here in A-to-Z order. This means the reader will find Apartheid next to Appalachia, Schools next to Scientology. But we recognize that readers will want to be able to move from entry to entry, tracing an idea or exploring a particular aspect of community, so there are four navigational tools.

The first two are standard: a comprehensive topical index at the end of Volume 4 and detailed cross-referencing at the end of individual entries. We wanted to do more, though, because many readers will come to the *Encyclopedia of Community* looking for answers to specific ques-

tions. Therefore, although we chose not to include articles on community-oriented organizations (simply because it would have been impossible to decide where to draw the line), we do list a wide variety of them from around the world in the Resource Guides appendix, which is divided into twenty-one topical sections with such headings as community economics, rural studies, and volunteerism.

With the help of two leaders within the U.S. library community, Sarah Ann Long and Nancy Kranich (both past presidents of the American Library Association), we also developed a resource section specifically for librarians. Libraries have a unique role in the world because they are both knowledge centers and public places. They are more valuable now than ever, the one place in every community where everyone—no matter what their age, income, or ethnic background—is welcome. The library resource appendix is full of practical ideas for creating community, for supporting civic engagement, and for building social capital. Sections are cross-referenced to the wide range of relevant articles on these topics, providing a unique way of connecting information within the encyclopedia to many other resources, most important, those in the library.

COVERAGE

The *Encyclopedia of Community* covers hundreds of efforts to change, revitalize, and maintain communities; it presents varied and often conflicting perspectives on what community is and what it means. Its entries explore types of community (intentional communities, ethnic communities, and community colleges, for example), famous communities, issues and trends in community building, institutions that influence and sustain communities, and a wide variety of concepts and theories. Important terms such as *social capital, civic engagement, sense of community,* and *communitarianism* are explained. In terms of historical reach, the encyclopedia reaches back to the earliest days of human settlements, continues through the centuries to eighteenth-century utopian societies, covers the communes of the 1960s, and probes today's cybercommunities.

The following list outlines the areas of community research that have been brought together for the first time in the *Encyclopedia of Community* and credits the editor who reviewed the entries in each category.

Community Design (Roberta Moudry)

Ways in which the planning and design of a community can affect its development, and how its physical development can affect the lives of its inhabitants.

Community Economics (Michael Shuman)

Key concepts involved in the ability of a community to allocate resources and provide goods and services to all its residents.

Human Development (Robin Jarrett)

Community contexts influencing human and family development across the life cycle from childhood to old age.

Intentional Communities (William Metcalf)

Historic and contemporary full-time, residential communities in which members have deliberately come together to live.

Internet and Communities (Barry Wellman)

Changes that have been wrought on world society and on our understanding of the nature of community with the advent of new technologies.

Rural Life (Sonya Salamon)

Distinguishing features of rural people and places, as well as contemporary issues related to rural poverty and community development.

Social Capital (Thomas Sander)

Key concepts and definitions related to the idea of social capital—that is, that social networks have value stemming from trust, reciprocity, and information flows between individuals.

Social Life (Ray Oldenburg)

Basic concepts of social structure, social organization, social institutions, social differentiation, and social processes that influence daily interactions.

Urban Studies (Dennis Judd)

Understanding urban areas and urban issues through the study of community and of neighborhoods in particular.

Historical and Contemporary Communities (David Levinson and Michael Zuckerman)

Entries on specific communities, some place-based, such as Appalachia and Silicon Valley, and others more diffuse, such as the Hutterites and the Shakers. Also provided is a selection of short case studies of influential communities such as New York City's Lower East Side and Harlem, Poland's Warsaw Ghetto, and Auroville in India.

In our Reader's Guide, we have classified these communities using a set of criteria unique to the *Encyclopedia of Community*. While the classifications do not absolutely or uniquely define the communities (some communities fit into more than one category), we feel that this system provides a useful way to explore the essence and impact of different types of human groups and networks.

Affinity Communities

Communities or categories of communities in which membership is based on common interest, such as book clubs, reading groups, and artists' colonies.

Instrumental Communities

Communities or categories of communities in which membership is based on the shared desire to achieve specific goals, whether political, economic, or other. Examples include activist communities and hospices.

Primordial Communities

Communities or categories of communities in which membership is based on ties of blood, kinship, race, ethnicity, or deeply held shared beliefs, such as Asian American communities and monastic communities.

Proximate Communities

Communities or categories of communities in which membership is based on residence in a particular place, such as shantytowns or condominiums.

Global Studies (Karen Christensen and David Levinson)

The *Encyclopedia of Community* gives considerable attention to global topics such as participatory democracy, consumerism, cultural identity, and individualism that are viewed differently and have differing impacts in various parts of the world. Throughout the encyclopedia, we show diverse political, cultural, and religious perspectives toward private obligation, civic engagement, and how best to live together. Authors come from around the world and a total of eighteen nations, and the editors have made a determined effort to go beyond the distinctly U.S. focus of much community research. One of our goals in creating this publication is to increase the internationality of community scholarship.

Early in the twentieth century, the Chinese Nationalist leader Sun Yat-sen said that the "Chinese people are like a sheet of loose sand." Discussion of community in China and elsewhere in Asia has been very much tied to the idea of a sense of community based on national identity. In contrast with Europe and the United States, a powerful, modern state has been considered essential to social cohesion, even as family ties to a home village, where ancestors are buried, continues to be central to an individual sense of identity. In fact, a 1991 report from a medical research society ascribed the long lifespan of Chinese intellectuals to the fact that they had devoted their lives to the struggle for collective interests. Among scholars in Asia today, there is considerable interest in the concept of a civil society and the maintenance of national and regional culture in the face of globalization and modernization.

Europeans tend not to use the word *community* as much as Americans, concentrating instead on concepts such as active citizenship, the third sector, and social inclusion. There is also confusion in Europe over the term *social capital*, which is sometimes used, by the World Bank and others, in the way it is used in the United States, but is used in a completely different way by the European Union. The term *community* has different resonance in different parts of Europe. In essence, according to Gabriel Chanan of the Community Development Foundation in London, the Anglo-Saxon countries and a few northern European countries, specifically Holland, Belgium, and Scandinavia—more or less historically Protestant countries—share a similar understanding of community, but that understanding is not shared by the rest of Europe. In Germany, *community* intimates Nazism to some, while in ex-Communist countries it suggests Communism. In France, it sounds statist; that is, it suggests centralized government control.

It is therefore important to recognize that when we use the word *community* in this work we often mean what is elsewhere called, variously, active citizenship, local partnership, third sector, nongovernmental organizations (the pan-European term for community and voluntary organizations, which are central to the concept of social capital in the United States), civil society, local autonomy, or social inclusion.

Biographies

In order to fully cover these themes, we have chosen to include only a very limited number of biographical entries, and, like many other publications, we have largely excluded living people. However hundreds of people, both past and present, who have been or are influential in the development of communities or our thinking about community are discussed in context in the relevant entries.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

Community is a diffuse concept, and what is meant by community varies widely from one culture to another. The word itself derives from the same Latin root as the word *common: communis,* meaning, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "fellowship, community of relations or feelings." Medieval Latin used *communis* to mean "a body of fellows or fellow-townsmen," and today community has both an abstract and a concrete meaning: in the abstract, a sense of commonality and, in the concrete, actual, specific groups of people who have certain circumstances or interests in common.

It sometimes seems that anything can be called a community. Our goal in the encyclopedia is not to eliminate some definitions and elevate others but to take the broadest possible look at the multitude of human webs —groups, networks, ties, and bonds—that we call community.

Some people imagine that community came after family, beginning when humans started living in bands. But world historians such as David Christian explain that bands, both pre-human and pre-chimpanzee, came first. Both humans and chimpanzees are, as Aristotle suggested more than 2,000 years ago, social rather than individual creatures. These earliest of communities served for defense and coordinated action against predators, made possible the intensive care needed by human infants, and also provided opportunities to exchange information—not so different, really, from some of the things that bring communities together today.

And while foraging societies spent most of the year in family groups, rules of exogamy (that is, prohibiting people from mating with close kin) exist in all human societies. Recent research suggests that given sufficient resources, foraging people routinely come together for special events (for example, the aboriginal Australian festivals called corroborees), and have done so for as long as human culture has existed, some 250,000 years.

In the distant past, a vivacious sense of community helped proto-humans survive by diffusing information and making them more effectively cooperative. While sociality is a characteristic of many (but not all) animals, community is the defining characteristic of humans alone. Only humans form social groups, or webs, that can exchange and share attitudes, ideas, beliefs, and identity. The flow of human history, in fact, depends on the ways these human webs expanded and gathered power across the millennia, thanks to competition that rewarded more effectual cooperation among ever-larger numbers of individuals.

Another important concept that has—like community—struggled for a clear, authoritative definition is culture, the core concept in the field of anthropology. The debate about what culture is went on for several decades until in the early 1950s the profession asked anthropologist Alfred Kroeber at the University of California, Berkeley, to sort it out. Kroeber wrote a reasonably terse volume listing some 250 different definitions he had culled from the literature and then added several new possibilities, finally recommending just one. The profession was duly grateful, and went on to ignore what he suggested. In his work *Social Structure* (published by Macmillan, 1949), ethnographer George Peter Murdock remarked:

> The community and the nuclear family are the only social groups that are genuinely universal. They occur in every known human society, and both are also found in germinal form on a subhuman level. Nowhere on earth do people live regularly in isolated families. Everywhere territorial propinquity, supported by divers other bonds, unites at least a few neighboring families into a larger social group all of whose members maintain face-to-face relationships with one another. (Murdock 1949, pp. 79–80)

The lesson here is that absolute definitions are not necessary; it may be the fluidity of a core concept that makes it so useful. Community may be thought of as a geographic place, shared hobbies or interests, a warm sense of togetherness, interaction in a common space such as a chat room, and so forth. The encyclopedia brings together many views of community, not eliminating any definition but providing a forum in which they can be compared and understood. Whatever definition the reader has in mind, we are confident that all major aspects of it will be covered.

THE CONTRADICTIONS OF COMMUNITY

> The proposition is that many of our social ills would vanish if we would all begin to experience one another (once again) as members of a community, a goal that can

> be facilitated by small-scale settlement patterns that encourage face-to face interactions among diverse neighbors. But what happens when one's neighbors want to party until 2 a.m., or wash their cars and play loud rap music on the village green, or let their lawns grow wild? (Dell Upton [1994], "Just Architectural Business as Usual." *Places, 13*(2), p. 66)

The problem of community is not simply its decline (if indeed it is declining). While community values are invoked to justify civility, tolerance, and the best of human nature, community is also essential to fundamentalism, violent antisocial groups, religious and racial intolerance, and other human ills. Community can both support humanistic, civil life and destroy it. Robert Bellah, coauthor of *Habits of the Heart* (published by University of California Press, 1985), put it this way: "The word 'community' leads a double life. It makes most people feel good, associated as it is with warmth, friendship, and acceptance. But among academics the word arouses suspicion. Doesn't community imply the abandonment of ethical universalism and the withdrawal into closed particularistic loyalties?" (Bellah (1995/1996, Winter, "Community Properly Understood: A Defense of 'Democratic Communitarianism' " *The Responsive Community, 6*(1). http://www.gwu.edu/~icps/bellah.html).

Humans have a fundamental need to belong, to be part of a community, while at the same time wanting to be valued as unique. Depending on the period in history and the culture, the balance may weigh more heavily to one side or another, or the conflict between the two desires may be more or less intense. There are times when this conflict is particularly poignant. One example, eloquently documented in Abraham Verghese's *My Own Country* (published by Simon & Schuster, 1994), is the early days of the AIDS epidemic in the United States, when gay men who had fled their rural small-town homes—and the families and communities that would not accept them—were forced by illness to return to these communities to die. The way their families and towns responded is a fascinating example of the challenges and complexities of community and of human relationships. There can be diametrically opposed views on something as routine as the opening of a new Starbucks cafe. One person may consider this an exciting community development, the creation of a place where community members can meet and mingle. Others see the arrival of Starbucks as a sign of the end times, when true community and friendly local faces are replaced by the standardized anonymity of a global chain.

Some progressives think community is an extension of democracy, that in community everyone is equal, everyone gets something. This is a far cry from community as traditionally experienced. Communities are often hierarchical, and their stability comes from the fact that everyone knows his or her place. A popular view among progressives, especially in the United States, is that everyone likes community:

> Community is a concept, like humanity or peace, that virtually no one has taken the trouble to quarrel with; even its worst enemies praise it. . . . In fact, however, neither our economy, nor our government, nor our educational system runs on the assumption that community has a value—a value, that is, that *counts* in any practical or powerful way. The values that are assigned to community are emotional and spiritual—"cultural"—which makes it the subject of pieties that are merely vocal. (Wendell Berry [1987], *The Landscape of Harmony.* Five Seasons Press, p. 57)

This is not, in fact, true. Many conservatives love the idea of small communities. W. H. Regnery, the wealthy, conservative businessman who funded Celo Community in North Carolina in the 1930s (as well as the right-wing publishing company with his name), believed that self-sufficient farming rather than urban public housing and industrial jobs would revive the pioneer spirit of the United States. But there have been some who see community and any communitarian tendency as a threat to capitalism, free enterprise, and individual rights. Similarly, there are many political liberals who are strongly committed to individual rights, and who have vehemently combated the rights-and-responsibilities agenda of the communitarian scholars led by Amitai Etzioni. The idea of community does presuppose that the group, people together, has a value and rights. There are times when what is good for the community as a whole is in direct conflict with what is good for a given individual. In recognizing the often harsh realities of community—lack of opportunity and privacy, pressure to conform—we have attempted to go beyond the popular views of community that see it as little more than a pleasant amenity to be sought and consumed at will.

THE STUDY OF COMMUNITY

Currently, thousands of scholars, activists, writers, government officials, students, and others around the world are studying efforts to change, revitalize, and maintain communities. There are hundreds of community studies programs and centers at colleges in the North America and Europe, and community is also covered in such diverse disciplines as sociology, anthropology, geogra-

phy, political science, history, psychology, environmental studies, economics, public health, education, management, leadership, urban and rural studies, architecture and planning, American studies, medicine, and social work.

With so many people from so many fields interested in community, it is no surprise that numerous paradigms, rationales, theories, and research methods have been applied to the study of community. Broadly speaking, these myriad approaches can be divided into two general and somewhat overlapping categories. The first, and more traditional, approach stresses the study of community and community life through description, analysis, comparison, and explanation. The second, more recent, approach is an activist one: It seeks to change communities and sees communities as a force for social change. Since the turbulent 1960s, many university community studies programs have trained young people to utilize the community as an agent of social transformation.

Numerous private and nonprofit community development organizations take the second approach, and many scholars see community as an organizing principle for social action in areas as various as economic development and environmental activism. For example, the architecture movement known as the New Urbanism aims to create developments that will encourage community life. Similarly, environmentalists are forming communities called ecovillages, where they can develop and practice sustainable living techniques in the company of like-minded people.

The study of community by social and behavioral scientists continues to be informed by the seminal work of the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936) and the French sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917). Tönnies set forth the basic dichotomy between community (gemeinschaft) and society (gesellschaft), while Durkheim articulated the basic nature of emerging urban settlements.

Until 1970, U.S. history was for all practical purposes the history of the nation as a whole. Those who studied U.S. communities were dismissed as antiquarians, chauvinists, and ancestor worshipers. Since the 1970s, there has been an abrupt about-face, and now the most admired and sophisticated work in the profession is community studies. This field has won the lion's share of prestigious prizes, and students of communities have garnered the most admiring and thoughtful reviews, the most attractive jobs, the best fellowships. The study of communities marked the new direction of the field, the "new social history," as it was called for many years. In more recent years, the same impulse flourishes in a new guise—microhistory—which seeks to tell resonant stories in a thickly described local setting.

Why this turn to community concerns? Why this allocation of attention and prestige to those who have made the turn, and why at this time? Some of it is surely the recognition that narrow professional specialization is itself a dead end. The world isn't divided as the disciplines of the university are. Religion is relevant to politics, psychology is relevant to religion, sociology to psychology, economics to sociology, and on and on. History in particular has moved forcefully from a self-imposed insularity to a dazzling—even excessive—disciplinary cosmopolitanism, in two ways, both of which have brought historians to an unprecedented concern for community.

First, historians have enlarged their horizons has been by borrowing from other disciplines. The extent of this borrowing has been almost immeasurable, and sociology, literary studies, economics, and a host of others have all had fashionable followings. But the single steadiest source of inspiration over the past three decades has been anthropology, with its abiding tradition—its veritable defining dimension—of fieldwork in a bounded community. Insofar as anthropology has helped form the paradigm for the historical turn to the social sciences, it has ineluctably afforded historians models of analysis based in small societies more than in vast national ones.

Second, historians have turned their attention from subjects (for example, the New Deal, or the Civil War) to problems. Since the 1960s, an increasing number of historians have sought not just to describe the world but also to change it. In the process, they discovered that the things they sought to change did not yield neatly to the ministrations of specialists. Like academics in other disciplines who have hoped to touch the world, historians found that they had to develop multidisciplinary means to address multidimensional problems and achieve multifaceted ends. They began thinking of new arenas in which they could collaborate with their new partners, and the community was one of the most obvious new arenas. Just as the fruit fly became part of the defining paradigm of early genetics, or the laboratory rat of behavioral psychology, the community became a conditioning focus of historical endeavor.

There were developments internal to the discipline of history that encouraged this change in focus. History relies on primary sources, so it mattered mightily that the primary sources on the nation seemed very nearly exhausted while those on the mill town, the reform school, the insane asylum, the ethnic enclave, and hundreds of other communities were virtually untapped. And

historians' shift in interest reflected a shift in the interest of the American public as a whole: For historians—as for the general public—the national perspective was losing appeal; historians were intrigued by larger or smaller frameworks. In the age of the Internet and the global economy, in a time of cheap travel and with the emergence of English as the language of the world, many began thinking in terms of world history, Atlantic history, and other transnational frameworks. In an age when the immensity of things discouraged people, many others began to care more about groupings closer to home, where they felt they could still matter. When university scholars turned to the study of communities, they could scarcely help noticing that communities had been central to human existence all along. In a similar way, developments in other fields are bringing scholarly subjects closer to people's real-life experience and providing guidance on how to deal with pressing social challenges.

Family

We are familiar with what has become a common political adage, that it takes a village to raise a child, meaning that child rearing should be a community effort. In intentional communities, child rearing has often been considered of particular importance, and in some communities child rearing is deliberately taken over by the community as a whole.

Recently, urban sociology researchers have concentrated on low-resourced, inner-city neighborhoods, and have demonstrated that these contexts have a negative "community effect" on youth. This urban research highlights the question of what to do when collective child-rearing customs become (or are) problematic. Youth function as do the canaries in the mine shaft (or, as sociologist Ralph Brown suggests, canaries in the gemeinschaft): How youth fare developmentally is an indicator of a community's well-being.

Social Capital

Social capital shows that in every act of giving or reciprocity, there is an act of short-term altruism and long-term self-interest (since these networks, norms, and behaviors ultimately improve the community, which means a better life for the giver). The term *social capital* also stands in strong contrast to the warmer, looser, fuzzy *sense of community* popular in everyday parlance. *Social capital* clearly appeals to hard-nosed economists, but some wonder whether the phenomena of human networks and reciprocity should be reduced to transaction-based economic terms.

Technology

Technology has made possible the formation of new communities that are very different from earlier communities—but one has to remember that simply calling something a community does not mean that it provides its members with the same benefits that earlier, less technological forms of community have provided. In *Bowling Alone,* Robert Putnam provides useful observations about the fact that even if users of a chatroom call something a community it doesn't mean that they can easily mobilize other members of the chatroom, or get social support, or job leads from their fellow community members. Other scholars have pointed out that technology often reinforces our existing ways of relating to one another rather than creating new ways.

Nevertheless, the notion of virtual communities has excited the world of community scholarship, and the worlds of learning, information management, and scholarship generally. John Seely Brown, Director of the Xerox Palo Alto Business Center, and Paul Duguid (an *Encyclopedia of Community* contributor) write about the community-forming character of the Internet and in the *Social Life of Information* about how communities form around fields of knowledge and their key documents.

Business

The study of community has also been of much interest in the business world. Perhaps the key work remains that of German social theorist Max Weber (1864–1920), who set forth the basic model of the modern bureaucracy. In the twentieth century, much effort has been devoted to applying the findings of social and behavioral research to corporations. The goal is to use empirical research to help build and maintain more effective work units and foster communication between people at different levels, and the word *community* is used, in a variety of ways, throughout the literature on corporate human resources and organizational development. In the *Encyclopedia of Community,* we have expanded this focus by giving a great deal attention to community economics as well, and to social capital in the workplace.

COMMUNITY IN PRIVATE LIFE

Many, perhaps most, of the entries in the *Encyclopedia of Community* have something to say about the impact

of community in our daily lives. For the many readers who not only are trying to understand human ties in an academic way but also are curious about how to experience, personally, a richer sense of community, the encyclopedia provides many perspectives and possible solutions, from cohousing to intentional communities.

The communities in which we live have direct impact on our private lives in several ways. First, communities provide us with a sense of identity. This can be something as basic as what we call roots—which, naturally, extend beyond family to place and culture—to the idea of a hometown. There are many people today who simply have no single place they think of as home, whose family ties are weaker than anything imaginable to our ancestors, and who, not surprisingly, spend time trying to create new communities to fill that void. But the majority of people in the world continue to be rooted in ways that are hard for mobile, urbanized, individualistic Westernized people to imagine; as a result, both the experience of and ideas about community vary enormously from country to country.

Second, communities frequently provide us with a sense of meaning and purpose. This is certainly true of religious communities, in which shared meaning (specific spiritual or theological beliefs) might be described as the primary unifier. But the need to find a sense of meaning and purpose is at the core of human groups as diverse as social activists and Trekkies—and the encyclopedia explores the shared meanings that link people in communities.

Third, communities provide conviviality. At its most basic community is, as the popular television program *Cheers* put it, the place "where everybody knows your name." Ray Oldenburg called such spots "third places" (third, because they are neither the workplace nor the home); they are all the places where people hang out, exchange news, and connect. The encyclopedia touches on this theme in a number of articles, but conviviality—the pleasures of community—is a topic that merits further exploration.

Finally, civility—how we behave toward strangers in the public sphere—is an important feature of community. A particularly diffuse concept, civility is beginning to get attention from civic leaders, scholars, and even political pundits. Civility extends to how we treat public property and facilities, how we park, and how we address and interact with those who are not part of our community. Increased travel and tourism, which brings strangers into even remote small towns, mean that we continually come into contact with people we will never see again. All cultures have had social norms for dealing with strangers, and many cultures have had strong requirements for hospitality. But what we see today in many places is a breakdown of basic civility. As a result, civic and school leaders, among others, are pressing for more attention to this aspect of living together.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

An encyclopedia creates a community—a virtual think tank—of scholars. Although our mission was not to produce findings, the process of putting together the *Encyclopedia of Community* broadened our horizons and increased our understanding of our human community. As the encyclopedia is used by students, scholars, and professionals throughout the world, we expect it to generate further research, international collaborations, and the testing of ideas and theories.

During the eighteen months it took to create the encyclopedia, we made a variety of observations that may be of interest to readers. First, the thorough research and countless case studies our contributors supplied have confirmed the importance of community in our lives. Community, we discovered, is related to family and friendship, but it has dimensions of its own that are vital to individual health and to the health of societies.

We found that much of the study of community has often been remote from the daily lives and concerns of the people studied. It needs to be broadened to address a number of pressing topics in definitive ways. These include child rearing, social support and inclusion, face-to-face communities after urbanization, the survival of traditional communities, and bridging or integration between different communities.

We also hope that gender will be examined more closely. It is striking that the best-known writers on community are, even today, men. While we have many women contributors, there is a preponderance of men, especially in public policy and economics. This is true in other emerging fields, usually because male scholars are in a position to take more career risks with new topics. Community is a human story, a human need, and we look forward to seeing more work done to bring gendered perspectives into every area of community studies.

Some topics that we wanted to include had not yet been studied broadly enough in terms of their relationship to community. These include sex and sexuality (that is, intimate relationships in community context) and shared work (both historically and in modern times, in the workplace and among neighbors and friends).

Environmentalists often propose that living in small

communities—with local food and energy supplies and little dependence on cars—is the key to solving global environmental problems. While there are many efforts in this direction, from mass transit systems to community supported agriculture, we need a deeper understanding of the challenges involved in using community to solve environmental problems. The relationship between community and consumerism needs further attention, and we also need more study, especially internationally, of the connection between community and modernity. Comprehensive, cross-cultural coverage of these topics will be of great value.

We would also like to see more knowledge drawn from archaeology and evolutionary history. Why has community been around for so many millennia, and how has our need for community evolved as the species (and, later, various cultures) evolved? In prehistoric days, living in community increased each individual's chances of survival, because together they could protect one another and work together to develop and manage a consistent food supply. More research into the sociobiology of community would be invaluable, as there are likely to be considerable debates over whether we are hard-wired to cooperate and what the implications and consequences are if it turns out we are.

We expect to see continued and increasing interest in the effects of development on community, in rich and poor nations, in urban, rural, and suburban areas. In Westernized countries, newer suburban subdivisions lack shared public space, yet without vibrant public spaces the community identity of a town erodes. What will that mean for the future of the suburban subdivisions? We are learning that for small towns as much as for big cities, it is important to preserve mixed socioeconomic classes, mixed uses of space, and public spaces in general. As in a city, the combination of commercial and residential activities in a small town makes it resilient by providing a more textured, vital life. Despite having been liberated from place, people in the twenty-first century still long for some idealized place to live equivalent to an agrarian community, a place where they can be known and nurtured, a place to which they can be attached and where one can sustain a coherent identity.

It is striking that humans are inclined to value something more when it becomes elusive, hard to obtain, perhaps even less essential. Cervantes wrote *Don Quixote,* his satire of chivalry, when chivalry was waning. Max Weber describes the Protestant ethic as the Protestant ethic ceases to make a difference in the economy or even to differentiate between Protestants and Catholics. Similarly, if the community is now coming into view as never before, the implication may be that community is not rising in cultural centrality and power, but declining.

Elective identity has increasingly become a human aspiration. It is at once our glory and our agony. Immigrants came to the New World, for example, to be free to make something more of themselves than they thought they could at home. Pioneers went west for the same reason. With globalization and Americanization, the idea of elective identity is reaching many other parts of the globe.

But as the historian Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) saw so long ago, our freedom doesn't fulfill us. We yearn to belong, to be anchored, to be embedded, to be in a place and to have a place. We will always crave community and the sense of belonging it confers, even while we see its dangers (community can, in the extreme, lead to ethnic cleansing, to the Ku Klux Klan). Community remains a figment of our fondest imaginings as well as a necessity of our existence whose claims on us we ceaselessly struggle to defeat. The *Encyclopedia of Community* captures the fullness of our deep and contradictory responses to community.

To conclude, consider two types of social capital: bonding and bridging. Bonding social capital creates stronger ties within a group; bridging social capital builds stronger ties between groups—across social class or ethnic lines, for example. In publishing, we can compare bonding knowledge and bridging knowledge. Most academic books and journals, and most encyclopedias, increase bonding knowledge—the knowledge developed within a particular discipline, by people who already know one another. Interdisciplinary efforts like this, however, are designed to create bridging knowledge, something bigger than the sum of its parts. This is where a major encyclopedia can play a role that simply isn't possible for smaller, specialized publications. This is the mission encyclopedias must embrace in the future.

—The Editors

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