

A RESEARCH PROJECT: *(Re)constructing West Virginia*

Anthropological research based in Huntington begins summer 2009

Would you like to participate?

Do you wonder about the future of West Virginia?

If you are interested in participating in a study of community identity and planning, I am asking for your some of your time. Your participation would involve one or more conversations (generally from one to two hours each) which may take place where you choose. You may wish to have more involvement in the project beyond these initial conversations after you learn more about the project. I will work with your schedule.

Cultural anthropologists are interested in understanding and documenting people's experiences and perceptions in the course of everyday life. If you find that you enjoy working with me, I would like to learn more from you. This may involve spending more time talking with, working with, and being with you over the course of your day.

The purpose of this research is to better understand changes in the way communities and individuals construct meaningful identity in light of broad changes in the economy intensified by global economic restructuring and deindustrialization.

Like Michigan communities where I have most recently worked, in the shadow of Detroit manufacturing, many parts of West Virginia are faced with increasing uncertainty and instability within the context of ongoing deindustrialization. This research aims to understand how communities react to finding themselves adrift in a competitive, globalizing world in which they are required to aggressively attract both physical and social capital in order to succeed. **What strategies will these communities follow to recovery, if any?** Despite a recent history of often bleak economic conditions, Tri-State communities are perfect places to conduct research on new forms of work, entrepreneurship, community building, and the marketing of place according to emerging cultural and economic models

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