

Re(de)fining the Rust Belt: Assessing Regional Divergence in the Postindustrial Mid-
Monongahela River Valley

by

Maura C. Kay

Bachelor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, 2018

Submitted to the Faculty of

The University of Pittsburgh in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Philosophy

University of Pittsburgh

2018

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

Thesis Presented
by

Maura Kay

Defended on

July 25, 2018

before

Dr. Carolyn Carson, Senior Lecturer, Urban Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh

Dr. William Chase, Professor of History, Department of History, University of Pittsburgh

Dr. Allen Dieterich-Ward, Associate Professor of History at Shippensburg University

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Michael Glass, Lecturer II, Urban Studies Program, University of

Pittsburgh

Copyright © by Maura C. Kay

2018

Re(de)fining the Rust Belt: Assessing Regional Divergence in the Postindustrial Mid-
Monongahela River Valley

Maura C. Kay, BPhil

University of Pittsburgh, 2018

The postindustrial narrative is neither pure tragedy nor comedy, but instead a bitter irony. Municipalities that once doled out shining steel rusted over in the twenty-first century. The Monongahela River Valley, colloquially known as the Mon Valley, is a microcosm of deindustrialization's impact. Home to municipalities with shared histories of manufacturing, the Mon Valley provides a case for determining the role the direction of economic development in the postindustrial period. Why do the conditions of the built environment vary so much between towns with shared experiences? I evaluate the economic status and development projects of fifteen small to mid-size municipalities of the Mid Monongahela Valley (MMV), in order to identify variables of success. Using a mixed methods approach consisting of content analysis, descriptive statistical analysis, and case studies grounded in interviews, I consider what makes economic development projects successful in MMV municipalities. Not only does the Mon Valley depict the physical implications of deindustrialization, but also embodies the capitalistic concept of uneven development. Doctrines of political economy help explore the relationship between former industrial spaces and the production of space. Due to MMV's peripheral connections to Pittsburgh, I also explore the relationship between political economy and regionalism. Previous literature links the condition of lower valley towns to Pittsburgh's renaissance, but many questions remain about the spatio-temporal relationship of the MMV. The elasticity of Pittsburgh's metropolitan umbrella is contested by disaggregate narratives of the MMV. I find that the MMV's regional identification is fluid and interacts with postindustrial political economy. While there is evidence of divergence in the MMV today, the next steps of economic development remains in question.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	XI
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.0 THE MMV DEFINED AND JUSTIFIED	9
2.1 DEFINITION	10
2.2 JUSTIFICATION	17
2.2.1 Population Size	17
2.2.2 Main Streets.....	19
2.2.3 Political Relevance	20
2.2.4 Regional Relationships, Proximity to Pittsburgh.....	21
2.3 MID MON VALLEY MUNICIPALITIES	23
2.3.1 Brownsville Borough, Fayette County	25
2.3.2 California Borough, Fayette County.....	28
2.3.3 Fayette City Borough, Fayette County	29
2.3.4 Charleroi Borough, Washington County.....	30
2.3.5 City of Monessen, Westmoreland County	34
2.3.6 Donora Borough.....	40
2.3.7 Monongahela City, Washington County	42
2.3.8 New Eagle Borough.....	44

2.3.9	West Elizabeth Borough.....	45
3.0	POLITICAL ECONOMY APPROACHES TO DEINDUSTRIALIZATION.....	47
3.1	DEFINING POLITICAL ECONOMY.....	48
3.2	THE GEOGRAPHY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY	51
3.3	THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE.....	55
3.4	UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT	58
3.5	CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY	61
3.6	POSTINDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM	64
3.7	THE POLITICS OF THE POSTINDUSTRIAL MMV.....	67
3.8	FROM POLITICAL ECONOMY TO REGIONALISM	68
4.0	REGIONALISM IN THE MMV	71
4.1	HISTORY OF REGIONALISM.....	72
4.2	REGIONAL ECONOMICS	75
4.3	REGIONAL IDENTITY.....	77
4.4	REGIONAL POLITICS	82
4.5	THE FUTURE OF REGIONALISM IN THE MMV	86
4.6	REGIONAL COMPETITION	88
5.0	METHODOLOGY.....	93
5.1	CONTENT ANALYSIS	94
5.2	DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS.....	96
5.3	CASE STUDIES.....	102
6.0	ANALYSIS	112
6.1	NARRATIVE OF THE MMV.....	113

6.2	DIVERGENCE	115
6.2.1	Median Household Income.....	116
6.2.2	Poverty Rate	119
6.2.3	Vacancy Rate.....	121
6.2.4	Entrepreneurship.....	122
6.2.5	Sectoral Splits.....	123
6.2.6	Population Loss	126
6.3	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....	127
7.0	CASE STUDIES.....	129
7.1	MONONGAHELA	129
7.1.1	Monongahela Main Street Program.....	132
7.1.2	Aquatorium	136
7.1.3	Relationship to the region	140
7.1.4	Economic development strategies.....	142
7.2	BROWNSVILLE CASE STUDY.....	147
7.2.1	Snowden Square.....	154
7.2.2	Economic Development Strategies	156
7.3	CASE COMPARISONS.....	158
8.0	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	161
8.1	RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED.....	163
8.2	POLITICAL ECONOMY REVISITED.....	164
8.3	REGIONALISM REVISITED.....	165
8.4	RECOMMENDATIONS	166

8.4.1	A regional strategic plan	167
8.4.2	Continually call back to lessons from the past but do not stay in the past 168	
8.4.3	Become in-tune with Pittsburgh, but do not attempt to become Pittsburgh	169
8.4.4	Diversify	170
8.5	CONCLUDING THOUGHTS.....	170
9.0	BIBLIOGRAPHY	172

LIST OF FIGURES:

Figure 2.1 Monongahela River Towns Map of the Middle Monongahela..... 10

Figure 2.2: Population Change in the MMV 1940-2010 (US Census 2010) 13

Figure 2.3: Education Levels Across the MMV(US Census 2010) 14

Figure 2.4: Summary Population Table (US Census 2010)18

Figure 2.5: Market Street in Brownsville (Author 2017) 27

Figure 2.6: Wood St between 3rd and 2nd St in California (Author 2017) 29

Figure 2.7: Wide Sidewalks and Street Signage Charleroi (Author 2017) 32

Figure 2.8: Charleroi's Coyle Theater on decaying on McKean Ave (Author 2017)..... 33

Figure 2.9: View of the Monessen Works from the Monongahela River (Historic Structures
1995)..... 35

Figure 2.10: View of the eternal flame of the Monessen Works from Donner Ave, Monessen
(Author 2017)..... 36

Figure 2.11: Mural facing a series of vacant lots on Donner Ave, Monessen (Author 2017)..... 37

Figure 2.12: Former pharmacy at Fifth and Donner Ave, Monessen (Author 2017) 38

Figure 2.13: The Donora Smog Museum situated at the center of main street (Author 2017).... 40

Figure 2.14: Monongahela's Aquatorium (Author 2017)..... 43

Figure 6.1: Mid Mon Valley Archival Appearances (Mon Valley Independent Archives 2015).....	112
Figure 6.2: Median Household Income Across the MMV (US Census 2010).....	116
Figure 6.3 MHI over Deindustrialization (US Censuses 1980, 1990, 2000).....	116
Figure 6.4 Poverty Rate Across MMV Municipalities (US Census 2010).....	119
Figure 6.5: Stata generated regression test of poverty and manufacturing establishments (Author 2018)	120
Figure 6.6: State generated multiple regressions test between vacancy, poverty, and population loss (US Census 2010).....	121
Figure 6.7: Manufacturing labor and establishments in MMV Municipalities	123
Figure 7.1: Devore’s Hardware in Monongahela (Author 2018)	130
Figure 7.2: The Finishing Touch Building ,MMSP Headquarters (Author 2018).....	132
Figure 7.3: MMSP SWOT Analysis 2018 (MMSP meeting May 10, 2018).....	133
Figure 7.4: Aquatorium Monongahela River view (Author 2017).....	136
Figure 7.5: Railroad St. in 2017 (Design Center Pittsburgh 2017).....	137
Figure 7.6: Rendering of Railroad St. Improvement District (Design Center Pittsburgh 2017).	138
Figure 7.7: Brownsville's built environment speaks of its historical relevance through a mural (Author 2017).....	148
Figure 7.8: From outside the Flatiron Building 1930 Market St, Brownsville (Monongahela Railway Company Photographs).....	150
Figure 7.9: The Neck of Market St. following deindustrialization (Author 2017).....	151
Figure 7.10: Snowden Square (Author 2017).....	154

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The contents below would have never had made it page let alone completion without the guidance of thesis advisor Dr. Michael Glass. Similarly, themes would have lacked contextualization without the input of MMV stakeholders, especially my community gatekeeper Terry Necciai and the University Center for Social and Urban Research. Special thanks is due to Holly Hickling for the pointers in conducting community based research as well as statistical analysis. Jordana Rosenfeld also deserves special thanks for her outstandingly helpful copy-editing job. I'd also like to thank my family for taking genuine interest in the project and encouraging me to finish strong. Another thank you to Sinjon Bartel for always offering a set of ears when I needed to unpack my observations. And, of course, thank you to my committee for both their excellent academic example and time.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

*“Now Main Street's whitewashed windows and vacant stores /
Seems like there ain't nobody wants to come down here no more /
They're closing down the textile mill across the railroad tracks /
Foreman says these jobs are going boys and they ain't coming back /
To your hometown” – Bruce Springsteen, “My Hometown”*

North American deindustrialization is no longer in its opening act. As Bruce Springsteen captures, vacancy and ‘ruination porn’, structural unemployment, and population loss define popular images of deindustrialization in the American Rust Belt. In their essential 1982 text *The Deindustrialization of America*, Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison dissect many of the conditions Springsteen laments as variables for defining the changing economy. Nearly four decades later, a canon of economic and geographic literature continues to build upon Bluestone and Harrison’s definition of deindustrialization as “the widespread, systemic disinvestment in the nation’s basic productive capital” (Bluestone and Harrison 1982, 6). Noticeably, this definition lacks a temporal component or reference to a specific geography. While broad language continues to characterize the Rust Belt, I am interested in investigating the direction of economic development in places like “My Hometown” following the onset of deindustrialization.

The closing line of Springsteen's "My Hometown" reminds listeners why his tune sounds familiar as, "this is your hometown" (Springsteen 1984). The term Rust Belt captures the shared nature of deindustrialization through a regional lens. Spanning from the American Northeast through the Midwest, the Rust Belt broadly refers to a series of states that industrialized through the nineteenth century and deindustrialized by the end of twentieth century (Connolly 2010, 1). Subsequently, throughout the twentieth century, the Rust Belt experienced both urban decline in terms of population and simultaneous economic decay. Given its personification of deindustrialization, the Rust Belt remains the subject of assessments of economic development and recipes for regional revitalization (Walters 1995; Grogan and Proscio 2000). However, previous case studies reveal that the moniker Rust Belt is a blanket term that only implies shared experiences with deindustrialization, failing to capture the varying coping mechanisms of the postindustrial period (Wilson 2007, Safford 2009). Despite deindustrialization's long reign, spaces structured around industrial production still struggle to find their place in the twenty-first century economy, raising many questions at the intersection of academia and community development.

Why do deindustrialized places matter? Given their struggle to keep up economically, why not simply leave them for dead? While I did encounter social Darwinists who support the death of postindustrial places on the basis of economic preference, deindustrialization's revelations about capitalism remain relevant. Bluestone and Harrison's lack of temporal attachment to their definition of deindustrialization may be intentional as Jackle and Wilson argue deindustrialization is a process rather than a moment, "Deindustrialization is a fundamental struggle between capital and community. Industrial dereliction and devastated communities attest to the dominance of capital" (Jackle and Wilson 1992, 78). Such a long-fought battle for

capital and influence over space does not stop and start with the Rust Belt. It is visible in Gold Rush ghost towns, the Asian Tigers, and even Silicon Valley. These spaces embody Karl Marx's understanding of capitalism as an economic system consisting of winners and losers (Marx 1932). As I explore in Chapter Three, processes understood by political economy, uneven development, and the production of space further compound the condition of postindustrial places in capitalist competition. Such theories help explain the "Catch 22" of postindustrial places that were destroyed due to big industrial capital but also are desperate for economic development. Schumpeterian reinvention acknowledges that decline is a natural process for the economy, but that creation is born out of destruction. Thus, the economic development strategies of places in the Rust Belt inform larger tactics for combating the ills of capitalism. But within the industrial heritage of places "stomped and thrown into the scrapheap of capitalism" may lay the key to strengthening identity and self-worth (Muller 2014). Considering deindustrialization a market response shifts blame away from specific geographers and to the larger structures of political economy. Giving up on the Rust Belt today may mean abandonment of Silicon Valley tomorrow as capital can reposition itself at a faster rate than people, especially in terms of labor demands versus supply.

Why do regions matter? Regions are fluid rather than finite, they can dissipate if not nurtured. As a result of the loss of industrial connectivity, fragmentation is already a characteristic of the Rust Belt, meaning the loss of regional cohesion may cause municipalities to fall further behind and become isolated. Furthermore, the loss of regions also reinforces individualism in deindustrialized municipalities, rather than resource sharing. Increasing insularity and fragmentation sees a continuation of past trends in the MMV rather than attitudes towards economic restructuring. As seen through the examples of the Asian Tigers and Silicon

Valley, the new knowledge-based economy operates at the regional level. Regions were too co-opted by capitalism, meaning economic development at the regional scale would involve identity reclamation following deindustrialization. Within regional connectivity lies the potential for effective economic restructuring, if municipalities are willing to cooperate.

Do deindustrialized places need to change? Why not just shrink or stagnate? Deindustrialized places are vulnerable to dependence on the past or to “lock-in” to community assets and attitudes around industrial identity (Dosi 1988; Arthur 1989, Birch et al 2008). While the direction of change is less clear, deindustrialization provides an opportunity for change in order to avoid “lock-in”. The onset of post-industrialism provides a path to the “unlocking” of the Rust Belt through the rise of alternative economic sectors. Evaluating the sectoral trends of municipalities will speak to micro level movements under the macro Rust Belt label. Education, recreation, technology, and medicine are standout sectors in the post-industrial economy of twenty-first century America (Pine 2011). Arguably, a new industrial revolution developed alongside deindustrialization, galvanized in a knowledge-based economy and driven by creativity. Many municipalities of the Rust Belt are already playing catch up within the twenty-first century economy in this postindustrial era. David Giffels defines post-industrialism as a, “rangy and encompassing and provocative adjective: a genre of music, a manner of dress, a style of art, a sociological term, a well-worn neologism, the end of the American century, an entire lifestyle” (Giffels 2014, 23). In this sense, post-industrial un-locking provides deindustrialized places a level of autonomy and self-destiny not afforded in the industrial era. I argue the associations between economy and style should not be overlooked or underappreciated, especially in places with greater connection to the past than present. Balancing the past and present in the

postindustrial era would see postindustrial places avoid lock-in without abandoning historic connections.

Areas within the Rust Belt share many common features, including legacies of industrial economic growth and the consequences of deindustrialization. The patterns of economic collapse and subsequent disinvestment experienced across the former industrial hubs of the Northeast and Midwest, are well-catalogued, and research at this broad regional scale continues to reveal shared desires for shrinking footprints (Rhodes and Russo 2013) and courting of the creative class (Florida 2004). However, within the defined Rust Belt there remains much variation. This even occurs in areas within the Rust Belt that have their own regional identity, such as the Mid-Monongahela Valley (MMV) in Southwestern Pennsylvania. I argue that macro-scale analysis does not capture the variation found within this space. Given their common histories and regional identification, I examine the points of divergence in the economic development trajectories of municipalities in the MMV. Similar to the use of the term Rust Belt, a “Mon Valley” narrative continues to drape itself across all municipalities despite marked differences. I focus on the MMV to explore how regional narratives and local variation compete in postindustrial built environments. Thus, I argue that following deindustrialization, MMV municipalities experienced a divergence in economic development conditions that colloquial narratives have yet to recognize. I seek to disaggregate previous understanding of the Mon Valley by assessing the variables of success in economic development.

In the MMV, success is relative. It is the relativity and connectivity of relationships, however, that speak to postindustrial developments. In order to isolate variables of success, I assess how well municipalities escape the cloud of industrial lock-in. Deindustrialization is a critical process for the MMV that challenges both economic development projects as well as

regional relationships and thus is worth investigating closely. My primary thesis is that economic divergence is occurring between MMV municipalities following deindustrialization. In order to test the veracity of such assertions, I investigate the following questions:

Research Questions

1. Are MMV municipalities diverging?
 - a. If so, are there evident variables of success?
2. Is regionalism strengthened or weakened between MMV municipalities in the postindustrial period?
3. What mode of economic restructuring is most beneficial to the MMV?

In order to isolate variables of success in postindustrial economies of the MMV, I conduct an economic ethnographic evaluation of the deindustrialized MMV. In this context, I define success as desirable in terms of quality of life. In the next chapter, I will begin by building upon the brief explanation of deindustrialization offered above and delve deeper into post-industrial literature. I evaluate the geography of the MMV and offer a general history of the area, including a review of MMV specific literature. I conclude Chapter Two with brief synopses of the major MMV municipalities under investigation, including discussion of their independent experiences with deindustrialization. Next, I justify my choice of the MMV as well as define space both geographically and culturally.

After establishing the geography of the study, Chapter Three assesses theories of political economy and deindustrialization's spatial implications. I begin by reviewing Karl Marx's perspectives of the capitalist imperative. I then discuss the Marxist canon of political geography, tracing the school of thought through deindustrialization and introducing theorists such as David

Harvey, Henri Lefebvre, Neil Smith, Edward Soja, and Ernest Mandel. Additionally, Marx provides a foundation for two of the primary theories of political economy relevant to the MMV, uneven geographies and the production of space. Chapter Four acknowledges political economy's impression on regionalism. Similar to the handling of political economy, the regionalism chapter begins by tracing the roots of regionalism through deindustrialization. I scrutinize use of the term region and consider the MMV relative to the Rust Belt, the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Region, and between its own municipalities. Much of the chapter is devoted to comparing previous assessments of regionalism to the condition of the MMV.

In Chapter Five I discuss my mixed methods approach to answering the research questions. I review the past uses and relevance of content review, descriptive statistics analysis, and case studies as related to studies of deindustrialized places. I justify both the selections for case studies and six chosen variables of success: population change, sectoral shifts, vacancy rate, poverty rate, median household income, and entrepreneurship presence. I outline the means in which I conducted my interviews, as they inform all other methods. In Chapter Six I unpack the findings of the previously stated methods. I analyze archival and interview findings about the identity of the MMV today. I conduct a series of regression tests in order to understand the relationships between variables and which municipalities are correlate with success.

Chapter Six also frames the findings of the previous chapters in two specific municipalities, Monongahela and Brownsville. Theses extended case studies give more substance to quantitative findings and further discuss interview evidence. Within each case study, I review the stakeholders and community resources, both in the built and natural environment. Each case study also features an in-depth look into the process and economic implications of a major community development project. Derived from the stakeholders,

projects, and interview information, I compile a list of the economic development approaches utilized by each of the municipalities. I use the case study framework to compare and contrast the strategies of the chosen municipalities as well as offer comment on their potential regional relationship. While Monongahela's entertainment-based diverse economy correlates with success, the municipality is not a flawless example. In contrast, Brownsville's interest in heritage tourism suggests positive future directions. Finally, Chapter Seven consists of my discussion of both the previous findings and next steps of MMV municipalities. My key findings involve the complicated paths of divergence and difficulty the entire MMV faces in economic restructuring. Thus, my recommendations involve both regional political economy interests, such as establishing more formal regional planning, learning from the past in building for the future, being in dialogue with Pittsburgh without replicating its process exactly, and broadly diversifying. I comment on implications and next steps, for both my investigation and postindustrial spaces. I conclude by revisiting the ideas introduced in this chapter including the necessity of change and why such places matter and maybe even another Springsteen song.

2.0 THE MMV DEFINED AND JUSTIFIED

“Why would anyone want to write about a river that is only 128 miles long, that has a name that is difficult to pronounce and even more difficult to spell, that flows through a valley lines with economically depressed communities? (Parker 1999, 1).

Just as Arthur Parker, a lifelong Monongahela Valley resident and advocate, begins his tour down the Monongahela River by questioning the region’s relevance, I too will address my decision to investigate the MMV as well as present the history and foundations of its municipalities. Presently, the narrative of the MMV follows that of the Rust Belt at large: the industrial revolution increased demand and output beginning in the 19th century, however the rise of globalization changed the competitive geographies of factories in the middle of the 20th century causing the MMV to rust over (Freeman 2018). I argue that such a broad categorization no longer captures the range of conditions and directions of MMV municipalities in the postindustrial economy. In order to assess this hypothesized divergence, I will explore industry’s historic impact on the MMV municipalities. Industry did not just populate the waterfront of the valley from the late nineteenth through the twentieth century, but also defined the culture and narrative of the MMV itself.

2.1 DEFINITION

Before justifying the MMV as an informative site of deindustrialization, I first define the specific portion of the Valley under investigation. Maps of both the past and present refers to the Monongahela River Valley in thirds. First, the lower Monongahela follows the river's source through the state of West Virginia. From there, the Mid Monongahela Valley (MMV) is approximately bookended by Lock & Dams Three and Four. Finally, the Upper Mon sees the tortuous valley merge with the Allegheny River to form the Ohio River. As seen in Figure 2.1, many MMV municipalities are concentrated around a severe bend in the Monongahela River. Upon conferring with residents of the MMV, I adjusted this scope to instead capture their categorization of the MMV from West Elizabeth further south through Brownsville.

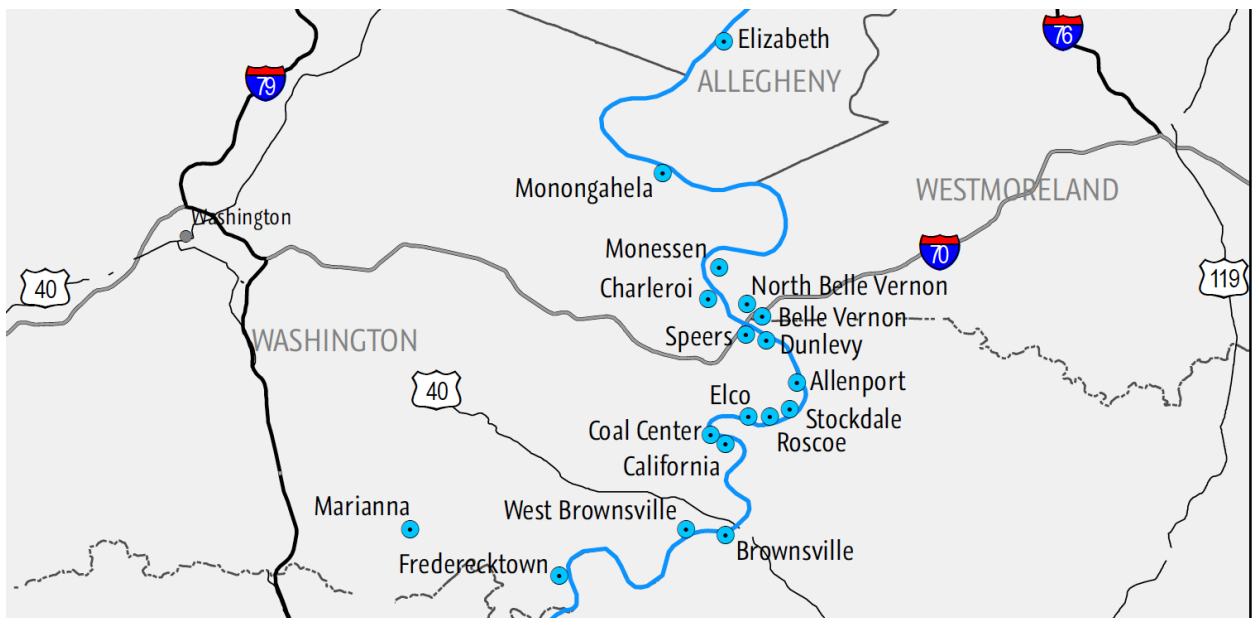


Figure 2.1: Monongahela River Towns Map of the Middle Monongahela (MRT 2018).

I will limit my case explorations to the Mid Mon Valley for numerous reasons, beyond its fulfillment of Goldilocks syndrome. The MMV hosts fifteen municipalities across four counties. A previous University of Pittsburgh Center for Urban and Social Research (UCSUR) study delineates municipalities “on or near the Monongahela River” (UCSUR 2005) as part of the Monongahela River Valley. This same study also began to illuminate the presence of disparities between municipalities in the upper Mon Valley in a way that has not yet been done for the Mid Mon Valley. Given this study’s focus on deindustrialization, I excluded from discussion municipalities that are situated off the Monongahela River or were overwhelmingly rural. Additionally, in order to allow for historic comparisons, I will exclude municipalities incorporated after as well as small municipalities that lack commercial corridors, given the relevance of business in this investigation.

Industrialization sparks the Mon Valley’s coming of age story. Ironic in retrospect, the Industrial Revolution presented a potential end to resource scarcity (Klein and Kantor 1976). Instead, an uneven market economy expanded across regions. Shipbuilding colonial settlements evolved into industrial centers as a consequence of market demand. During the age of the first industrial revolution, the Monongahela River served as a gateway to the American west (Muller 2001, 38). Expansion coincided with the growing demand of iron and steel materials for the Civil War (Muller 2001, 39). In addition to its militaristic uses, iron and steel laid the railroads and built the skylines of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, strengthening the tie between these industries and patriotism. Scottish industrialist Andrew Carnegie’s decision to set up shop on the Monongahela River would solidify the region’s image as an industrial powerhouse. Carnegie’s rags to riches story further confirmed to new immigrants that hard industrial labor was in the American spirit and the way to class mobility. The adoption of the Bessmer system as

well as the vertical integration across the steel producing industry in the early twentieth century accelerated the Monongahela River Valley's industrial image and regional connectivity. By vertically integrating the production processes, Carnegie not only owned all phases of production, from extraction to refinement, but effectively bossed most of the labor, whether directly or indirectly, in the MMV. Land, especially waterfront property, of the Mon Valley became a component of the production process and boasted the pollution to prove it.

The industrial age of the MMV need not be romanticized. The economy operated in boom bust cycles, working conditions were unsafe, prejudice legal, and resources scarce (Freeman 2018). But the MMV experienced its hay day as a result of increased production from World War II and during the post war boom. Starting in the mid twentieth-century, however, the economy of the MMV would slow. Global competition, including steel dumping of cheaper products and labor challenged the supremacy of U.S. Steel. Literature offers conflicting dates and catalysts of deindustrialization. By 1988, however, a Mon Valley Regional report referred to the primacy of steel in the past tense (Mon Valley R/DUAT 1988).

With the closure of industrial spaces, so followed the loss of population across the MMV. The MMV saw population and production begin to trend downwards starting in the 1950's. On average, MMV municipalities lost 27.48% of their populations between 1970 and 2010 (US Census).

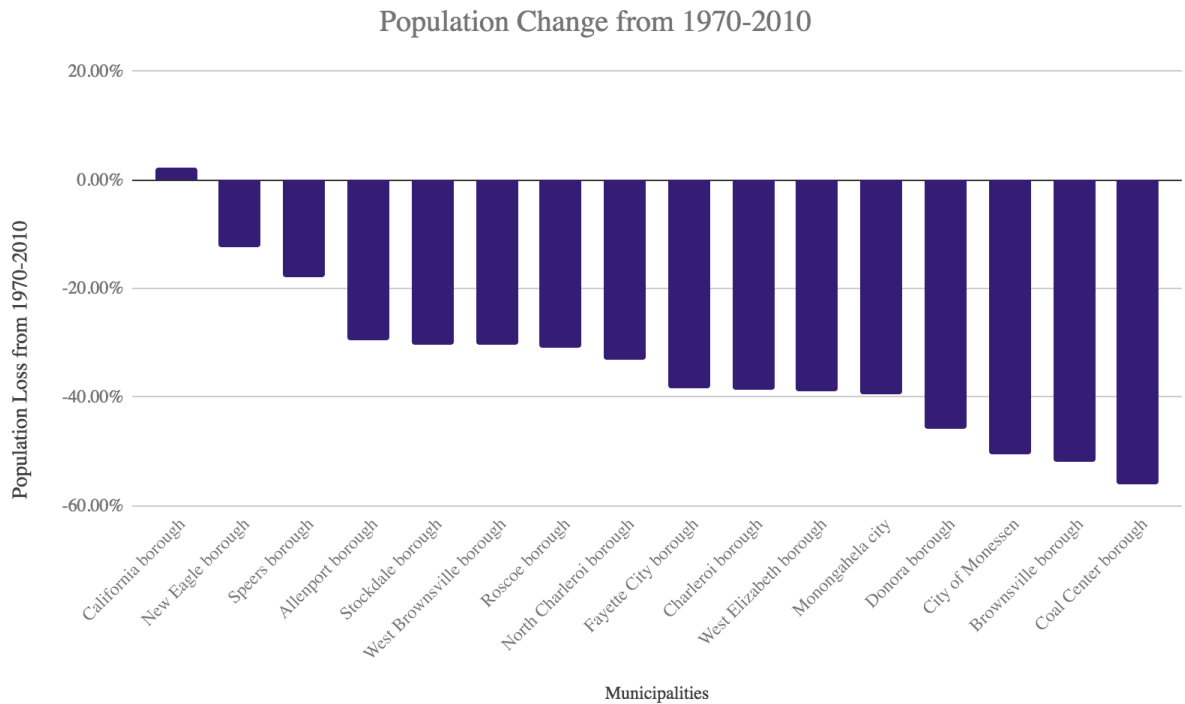


Figure 2.2: Population Change in the MMV 1940-2010 (US Census 2010)

Figure 2.2 captures a shared general trend across the MMV with a few noticeable exceptions. Monessen, the steel town of the bunch, fell from the furthest height. The largest MMV municipality in terms of population, Monessen was already trending downward before the closure of its steel mill in 1986, bringing its total loss from 1970 to 2010 to over 50% of its population (Lubove 1996). California, the only municipality to experience overall growth from 1940 to 2010 can attribute its population gains due to the expansion of its state university, California University of Pennsylvania.

Memory of spaces prior to deindustrialization makes the Mon Valley a nostalgic region. Even the demographics trends of the region speaks to the past, “Newly released U.S. Census Bureau data confirm what has been evident in the Mid-Mon Valley: It's growing smaller, older and poorer. And the decline might be advancing faster than imagined. The total population for municipalities in the Mon River corridor spanning Brownsville to Elizabeth dropped six times as

much as the 1.4 percent population loss for the Pittsburgh metro area from 1990 through 2009” (Grata 2011). Not only does this indicate the MMV is still finding its place in the present, but, given the substantial difference with Pittsburgh, suggests regional divergence in development.

To add insult to injury, the new economy centered around highly skilled labor, from the F.I.R.E. (finance, insurance, and real estate) industries in the late twentieth century to contemporary tech firms, does not match the remaining labor of the MMV, creating structural unemployment. Structural unemployment refers to the mismatch between the working skills of a population and the available jobs in the market. A lack of education is a regular contributor to structural employment. Though improved over time, high school is the highest level of education for a preponderance of MMV residents. Thus, imbedded in population decline is also a brain drain trend, where higher educated residents leave the area; John Hoerr argues and counts himself among these postindustrial migrants (Hoerr 1989).

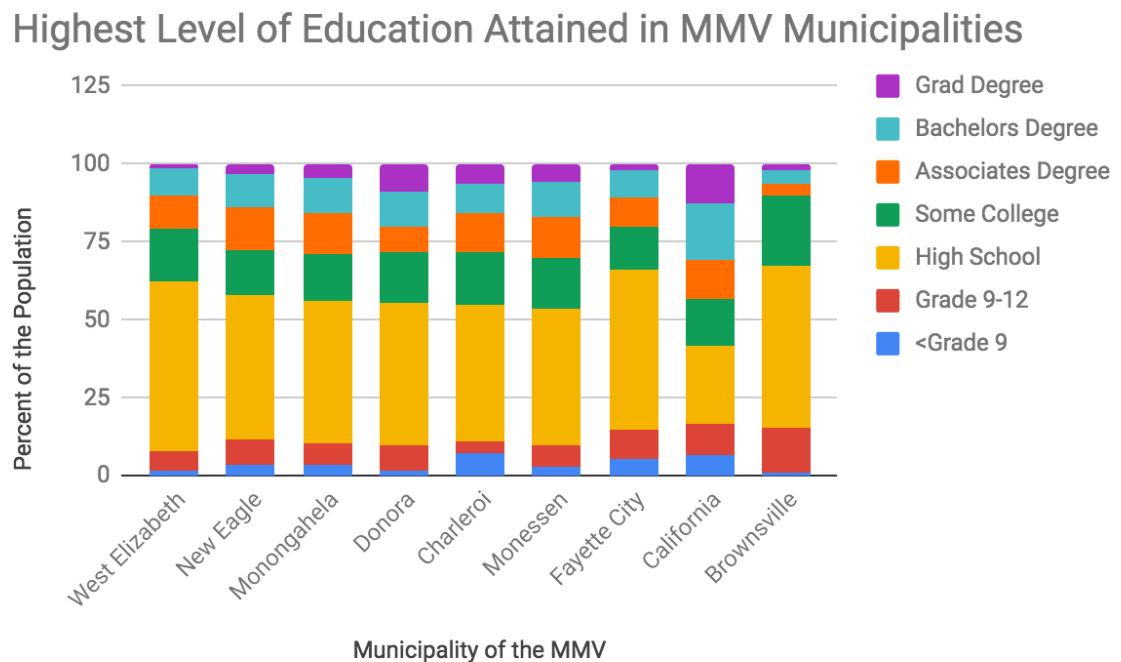


Figure 2.3: Highest Level of Education Attained in MMV Municipalities (US Census 2010)

The post-war period brought a series of push and pull factors that spurred shrinkage. Increased suburbanization and the tract housing boom coupled with the benefits of the GI Bill offered alluring new property to young people, compared to the aging housing of small industrial towns. Massive malls overshadowed main streets. But perhaps most of all, a new increasing global economy arrived. Just as the durable capital of the MMV aged and needed updating, international firms undercut the production of the giants of the industry. Rothwell and Zegveld's sailing ship effect, in which companies become too comfortable in their economic advantage and slow investment in durable capital, explains the fall of MMV and the steel town economy: "it illustrates how established companies can become locked into existing technological trajectories. Rather than capitalize on the possibilities offered by the emergence of a superior new substitute technology, they vigorously defend their position through the accelerated improvement of old technology" (Rothwell and Zegveld 1985, 41). From this perspective, the MMV reflected U.S. Steel's tactic of diverting capital from reinvesting in durable goods. In evaluating present economic development policy, I look for signs of municipal lock-in.

Difficulty with change is a persistent theme across the MMV. The introduction of vertical integration, or Carnegie's acquisition of all the components of production, linked municipalities together by way of industry. Thus, spaces began to resemble their function, "The Monongahela and Ohio valleys functioned as giant assembly lines of steel. Regardless of the enormity of each station on the line-consisting of entire mills and their dependent towns – one could not be closed without shuttering others to which it was linked" (Patrick 2006, 59). Both narrative and physical commonalities contribute to regionalism, as will be explored in Chapter 4. The interdependence of mill and mining towns resulted in industrial corridors spanning the length of river valleys like that of the Monongahela (Dieterich-Ward 2016). Such an image still occupies discussions of the

MMV and larger Rust Belt. While the MMV shares historic trends, such as population loss and education level, other variables suggest divergence in regards to postindustrial economic development patterns.

With time, representations of the industrial past will change as they move from lived experiences to historic re-tellings in the MMV. However, such change still threatens the perpetuation of false narratives of general rust. As seen in New England industrial valleys, places with stronger connections to the past than the present become “imagined places” as opposed to “geographic entities that define themselves” (Conforti 2001, 12). The imagining of place disregards the actual history of regions, making spaces susceptible to losing their authenticity. Thus, throughout my review and analysis of the economic development processes occurring in the MMV, I will continually check the authenticity of suggestions and projects, gathered from feelings of residents.

Despite historic similarities and regional identities, clues of divergences in the destiny of Rust Belt metropolitan areas emerge in the postindustrial period. A 1998 U.S. Census Bureau report entitled “Rust Belt Rebounds” highlights the positive changes in many midwestern municipalities, including Pittsburgh, in terms of population growth and unemployment rates (Census Brief 1998). Such trends were not seen nor predicted to shift upriver. Instead, the report insisted on the reliable resurgence of manufacturing, just in different industries than steel, iron, and coal, for places like the MMV. I revisit the role of manufacturing in postindustrial MMV in Chapter Six.

2.2 JUSTIFICATION OF THE MMV

Fortunately, given shared experiences with capital, similar histories and demographics, MMV municipalities provide a natural experimental design set-up. In addition to the natural experiential design, I chose to investigate the MMV based upon its size, the prevalence of main streets, political relevance, and regional connections.

2.2.1 Population Size

Distinction between city captains of industry and municipal suppliers, though complicated, is a long-standing characteristic of the Rust Belt. In the postindustrial period, differentiation does not designate condition as much as it does brand recognition: for every Detroit and Pittsburgh, there are several satellite cities struggling with the same processes (O'Hara 2010, 21). Taken in aggregate, the quantity of small municipalities struggling with economic change surpasses that of the poster cities of the Rust Belt. In a new climate, bigger cities are better equipped to rebrand, while smaller spaces continue to suffer the consequences of a lack of economic diversification (Connolly 2010, 2). The finite nature of resources means, "The story of deindustrialization and post-industrialism in satellite cities is far more complex and problematic" (O'Hara 2010, 45). The reality of limited resources means that municipalities of the MMV face many conflicts in terms of capitalist competition, inciting the importance of political economy further. A capitalistic system relegates regionalism to a cost benefit analysis. The MMV's increasingly small size allows for a raw understanding of greater trends of deindustrialization.

MMV Population Change By Municipality Over Time

	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
West Elizabeth	1297	1137	921	848	808	634	565	518
New Eagle	1936	2316	2670	2497	2617	2294	2234	2184
Monogahela	8825	8922	8388	7113	5950	4939	4749	4300
Donora	13180	12186	11131	8825	7524	5933	5626	4781
Monessen	20257	17896	18424	15216	11928	9811	8665	7720
Charleroi	10784	9872	8148	6723	5717	5178	4852	4120
Fayette	1598	1404	1159	968	788	721	617	596
California	2614	2831	5078	6635	5703	5723	5250	6795
Brownsville	8015	7643	6055	4856	4043	3182	2850	2331

Figure 2.4: Summary Population Table (US Census 2010)

The small size also allowed me, as an outsider, to become familiar with the ecosystems of municipalities by witnessing stakeholder interactions and monitoring local community Facebook pages. While it is still admittedly difficult to gather a full sense of place without living in a given community, the size of municipalities assisted in the acquainting process. The small size also offered a challenge, however, as the same faces and names seemed to dominate conversations and organizations. I addressed this challenge by re-working my methodology to include both formal stakeholders and residents without community organization connections alike, as their evaluation of community processes is just as valid.

2.2.2 Main Streets

In conducting site observations, main streets are admittedly romantic remaining portions of the MMV. Each MMV municipality under investigation is home to an identifiable main street proximate its former industrial sites, though of varying size and condition. Main streets incubate the feel or ambiance of a place, especially when they are the primary game in town (Francaviglia 65). That being said, they cradle visible images of economic divergence across the MMV region. Main street is as much an imagined concept as a real place, “In a perceptual/geographic sense, Main Street is both mundane (topographic) and paradoxically ‘utopian’ in the two seemingly contradictory meaning of utopian: it is both an imaginary place (literally no place), and also ideal (or perfect) place” (Francaviglia 66). Images of main street both influence the MMV narrative as well as actual economic prospects.

Both physical and psychological consequences accompany derelict or vacant main streets. Both residents and visitors alike suffer in the shadow of an empty main street, “Vacant storefronts speak not only of reduced business, but imply a decline in community viability. The derelict business thoroughfare, often highly visible, signals to people that an entire area is decaying. Both shoppers and potential residents are discouraged from buying or renting” (Jackle and Wilson 1992, 179). Such conditions are not limited to the municipal level. Regions manifest themselves on main street and are also classified through condition, regional identities present and perpetuated by main street designs (Francaviglia 127). The conditions of main streets thus may contribute to the narrative of the MMV that I seek to unpack.

Not only does main street maintenance stave off negative economic consequences, but also bodes well for economic restructuring. Previous research suggests that deliberate focus on

small and medium sized business set successfully restructured European Rust Belt communities apart (Birch et al 2010, 39). The benefits of entrepreneurialism holds in America as well. In discussing the rural brain drain, Patrick and Kefalas plea for small-towns to move away from agricultural and manufacturing based economies to focus on micro-economies (Carr and Kefalas 2009, 145). Such a demand is founded as localized economies that feature third places performed better across several social welfare indicators (Mossberger 2006, et al). Meanwhile, malls that once posed the greatest threat to main streets are now shuttering (e.g. Century III Mall) or struggling with high vacancy rates (Monroeville). As new urbanism design and shopping outlets decline encourage the return to the main street model, I am interested in assessing the prospects of main streets and entrepreneurship in the postindustrial period.

2.2.3 Political Relevance

The MMV is Trump country. In 2016, Washington County voted for Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton by a margin of 25%. Westmoreland County saw nearly double the support for Trump than it did Clinton, with approximately 64% versus 32.78% voting disparity. Similarly, 64.33% of Fayette County voters opted for Trump over 33.38% for Clinton (Pennsylvania Department of State 2018). Crosscutting three Southwestern Pennsylvanian counties, (Washington, Westmoreland, and Fayette), the nations' eyes were on the MMV both during the 2016 general election and the 2017 special election for Pennsylvania's 18th district. The MMV is home to an increasingly rare breed of voter: those who do not vote along party lines. Leading up to the 2016 general election, candidate Donald Trump visited the MMV on two occasions, targeting "Forgotten Man" voters with rhetoric that challenged the permanence of post-industrialism (Trump Monessen Speech 2016). The legacy of the 'Forgotten Man' lives on in

local folk hero Joe Magarac, who embodies the essence of the Mon Valley blue collar worker between his unapologetic attitude and brash speech. A local newspaper captures the meaningful nature of these visits, as lifelong democrat and supporter of Hillary Clinton embracing Trump's visit as "You have to support the area" (Criado 2016). Purple states and their regions are increasingly relevant in a divided America given their voter makeup and economic conditions; "politicians fight for the votes of salt-of-the-earth blue-collar types in contested purple states such as Iowa, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, where the manufacturing sector is the canary in the coal mine, warning the nation that economic downturns and unemployment are heading their way soon" (Carr and Kefalas 2009, 68). Purple states' status as battlegrounds does not appear to be fading ahead of the next election cycle. Politics play an important role in community and economic development, as they both decide the leaders who can advocate for public funds but also the extent to which citizens believe such development should occur on the public dime. Despite the dominance of Conservative Christian and Libertarian political parties, demands of elected officials for public works investment, especially infrastructure, remained regular components of council meetings.

2.2.4 Regional Relationships, Proximity to Pittsburgh

As Chapter Four addresses, the MMV is a region within a region. In addition to site observation and political relevance, I am drawn to investigating the economic standing of the MMV given Pittsburgh's recent resurgence. I question how far Pittsburgh's influence drifts up the Monongahela River. A metropolitan regional model is not unfamiliar to postindustrial Pittsburgh. Previous literature traces the linkages of smaller industrial centers such as Steubenville, Ohio to Pittsburgh (Dieterich-Ward 2010). Historically, MMV municipalities

interacted with Pittsburgh intimately, as the Bessemer system turned the Monongahela River Valley into a relay of steel and iron production. However, deindustrialization changed the nature of interregional relationships:

“By the 1990s, brownfields and tired mill towns were strewn the length of the lower Monongahela Valley. However, a new landscape is slowly and unevenly emerging on the ruins of the older industrial one. The success of advanced technology and service industries in the Pittsburgh metropolitan region is slowly reaching down into the Mon Valley and spreading upriver, while the rejuvenation of the valley’s ecology is opening up recreational opportunities” (Muller 2006, 36).

Such optimism in economic development balances with neoliberalism’s rise alongside deindustrialization. The emergence of Spatial-Keynesianism, sees places mimic the market by engaging in competition (Martin 1989). Consequentially, the rise of neoliberalism could see MMV municipalities compete with rather than associate with Pittsburgh. Uncovering such a relationship would reveal the MMV’s allegiance to capitalism, despite past economic abuses. Though replicated throughout the MMV, the natural topography and settlement patterns remain desirable even after decades of deindustrialization. Though the Monongahela River is a visible shared regional resource, the relationship between its usage and the identities of bordering municipalities is less clear.

2.3 MID MON VALLEY MUNICIPALITIES

The greater Monongahela River Valley became a regular place of study following deindustrialization. The National Parks Service conducted one such strength-based reconnaissance survey in 1991 in order to catalogue the cultural resources of the region. Findings and recommendations on themes defining cultural regions differed per county. Washington County, home to New Eagle, Monongahela, Donora, and Charleroi, and California themes include transportation, and conservation of natural resources. Westmoreland County municipality Monessen themes include aluminum development, the French and Indian war, coal mining, coke production, steelmaking, ironmaking, and glassmaking. Fayette County, home to Fayette City and Brownsville, shares similar themes to Westmoreland county, including the French and Indian war, transportation, architecture, coal mining, coke production, ironmaking, steelmaking, glassmaking, and distilling and brewing (NPS 1991,14). Themes of heavy industry also defined Allegheny County, the flagship of the region but is supplemented by other themes such as “American ways of life” and social movements. The sharp contrast between the natural environment of Washington County and industrial history of Westmoreland and Fayette counties suggests differing assets and future identities. No natural or recreational space was identified in the middle portion of the valley. Given that the National Park Service authored the report, recommendations include incorporating parks and trails into the MMV through rail to trail projects, increased river access, and designating the Monongahela a scenic river. The report identifies that spaces previously linked to the steel, coke, and aluminum industries need to be addressed, but does not go into specifics, citing the need for future study (NPS 1991, 59).

Another reconnaissance survey, conducted by the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania in 1991, sought to tell the industrial history of the greater Mon Valley. Overall, the

Mon Valley was labeled “the regional processing center”. The regional processing center designation explains how the relationships between industries, such as steel, coke and coal, manifested between towns through the built environment. Pre-steel industries, such as glass and boat-building are included in this process as precursors. The survey suggests that “industrial culture” is an additional output of the regional processing center. Industrial culture is defined as, “a shared acceptance that industry is an integral part of the region’s life, and a belief that, within limits variously defined and expressed, the goals of industry are worthy pursuits for the community because of the economic benefits for the region as a whole” (HSWP 1991, 4). Another primary theme, “cyclical nature of industrialization” is potentially challenging the definition of industrial culture, suggests the study. This survey breaks its assessments of the greater valley into “districts”, defining the Mid-Mon District as spanning between Elizabeth and Brownsville (HSWP 1991, 107).

The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania Survey identifies Fayette City, Donora (then Colombia), and Brownsville as early industrial towns (HSWP 1991, 109-110), given that their original structure reflects the presence of medium to large scale industry. Certain themes hold across the MMV, including technology and innovation, management and organization, labor and labor movements, community structure, immigration and migration, according to the survey. The cyclical nature of industrialization also makes the list, and is connected to the built environment. The survey sites that the differing types and periods of architecture present across MMV municipalities present glimpses of the ebbs and flows of the economy. While Brownsville maintains its civil-war era neck, Monongahela’s built environment features four different architectural periods. Another theme listed that transcends all MMV municipalities is capital investment. This captures both public investment, from county economic development agencies,

as well as private sector influences such as the loss of independent banks. Less accountability rests with capital's role in the formation of place.

Past studies illuminate the multifaceted personalities of MMV municipalities that are not captured through broad trends of deindustrialization. Understanding the past experiences of MMV municipalities is the first step to evaluating their present and potentially future identities. Next, I will introduce each of the MMV municipalities, highlighting their industrial connections.

2.3.1 Brownsville Borough, Fayette County

2010 Population: 2,331

While arguably all the municipalities of Mid Mon Valley are more comfortable with their past identities than their present selves, Brownsville's history remains at the center of its future. Brownsville inspired an instance of regional generalization when Dr. Robert Strauss of the Heinz School of Public Policy & Management at Carnegie Mellon University stated, "It's an unhappy situation, but it's replicated all over the valley" (*Tribune Review* 2007). Brownsville peaked, in terms of status and economic relevance, especially early, holding the charming role of gateway to the west when the west was still shallow. Its age and position near a dam made it a center of trade and boat building in the early days of America. Geographically, Brownsville is Fayette County's lowland, and erosion limits its riverfront built environment. Such staggering topography resulted in an elevated business district, with residential space even further up the hill. A tributary of the Mon, Redstone Creek, allowed for river craft construction just above the Borough.

Founded in 1759, Brownsville hosts national historic relevance, from playing host to the spark of the Whiskey Rebellion to producing a vessel in which Lewis and Clark would go west (“Brownsville: Celebrating our History”). Early prominence would ironically stunt the Borough’s growth. Skepticism towards innovation ultimately limited railroad access to the region, making Brownsville adapt to industrialization, particularly in relative terms. Brownville’s ghost of the past continued to haunt it throughout the twentieth century as it was, “Doomed to be a lesser town because of its location, which had been so important in its early days. It was too remote from any population center to grow beyond certain limits” (Parker 1999, 102). Led by the Hillmans, a prominent Pittsburgh family, coal mining became the most relied upon industry.

In terms of labor, a coal miners’ strike in 1933, following a pro-labor speech by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, brought the National Guard to Brownsville. Miners and their wives alike, numbering some 4,000 picketed, shutting down the mines in the process. As of 2014, manufacturing is not among the top five labor sectors in Brownsville (PADCED 2014). Just 2,331 people are Brownsville residents, with a medium age of 40.91 – nearly five years older than the national average. For a majority of residents, high school is their highest educational attainment. (U.S. Census 2010).

Brownsville’s Main Street, Market Street, does not appear recently abandoned. Wood-based high-density architecture sits just above the river, relicts of a past economy. The bend in the Monongahela lends itself to a natural kink along main street, increasing visibility throughout the corridor. A point of river access, including a small wharf, allows Brownsville to engage the aquatic economy. Construction is present along nearly every block of Market Street, but with continued high vacancies (U.S. Census 2010), Brownsville’s economic gains appear to be humble.



Figure 2.4: Market Street in Brownsville (Author 2017).

Though recent investment in Brownsville shows encouraging signs for the future. As seen in Figure 2.4, Brownsville’s commercial core is experiencing both rehabilitation and new construction. The former Hillman Barge Company reopened under Wilhem & Kruse Inc., locally headquartered down the river in Rankin, Pa. Economic development appears to be highly valued by residents, meaning that the reopening the boat yard is changing the entire mood of Brownsville to one of optimism: “Today, Brownsville is rising from the ashes” (Vivian 2004, 7). Brownsville shows signs in energizing the historic tourism sector, engaging already present resources.

2.3.2 California Borough, Fayette County

2010 Population: 6,795

Of the MMV towns, California is likely the most precisely planned. In 1849, a non-denomination, dry-town centered around the boat-building industry sprang up within one of the Monongahela's curves or "banana" regions. Despite securing its industry, previously plans became secondary after founders established an academy that is now California University of Pennsylvania (HSWP 1991, 110). Given this legacy, California continues to claim to be the cultural center of the MMV ("About California, Pa"). The only MMV municipality to see a net population gain over the last eighty years, California opted for high-road restructuring. However, like other municipalities, the original primary industries of California were boatbuilding and coal mining (Vivian 2004, 7). California University of Pennsylvania, though established in 1852, experienced an enrollment surge in the last decade of the twentieth century.

Geographically, California is cradled by the tortuous Mon, nesting itself in a dramatic arch-like bend in the river. To this day, the natural environment is as much of draw as the built environment. In addition to the river access, California is home to green spaces such as California Union Memorial Park and river trails. In a nod to its namesake, mining was the principal industry of California, though the spoils were coal instead of gold ("California"). Both population and labor statistics clearly reflect the present, even prevalence, of California University of Pennsylvania. California boasts both the youngest and best educated populace in the Mid Mon Valley, coveted statistics in the figures featured earlier in this chapter (U.S. Census 2010).

California's commercial corridor spans more than one street, hinting at its larger carrying capacity. As it stands now, the intersection of Third Street and Wood Street marks the center of

downtown based on density. As the seen in Figure 2.5, vacancy forbids a contiguous streetscape.



Figure 2.5: Wood St between Third and Second Street in California (Author 2017).

Also, it is visible that there is not a uniform facade style in the business district, instead a variety of decades and architectural styles tell California’s story of growth. Interestingly, very little of the emerging college town economy is present along Third Street. Modestly, one pizza shop and one beer disturber service the entire town. I encountered more funeral homes than bars in my visits. The built environment of California has yet to betray its rural origins.

2.3.3 Fayette City Borough, Fayette County

2010 Population: 596

Fayette City is one of the smallest municipalities of the Mon Valley in both geographic size and population. Geographically, it marks the border of Fayette and Washington Counties. Just .25 square miles in size, a quarter of the municipality is water. Speculators deemed Fayette City an early industrial town as, due to founder Colonel Edward Cook, the town already had a glass factory and union church by 1820 (HSWP 1991, 109). With a population over 2,000 in early twentieth-century, Fayette City's is now home to 585 residents. Between 1970 and 1990, Fayette City lost 26% of its population. The predominant residential age group is senior citizens, and the median age is 47.07 years old, a decade older than the average American (U.S. Census 2010).

Topographically, Fayette City is partially built into a hill. Like urban centers many times its size, Fayette City is bound by two primary roads, each going in a single direction. Commercial space is distributed across both main arteries, though municipal as well as religious space is prevalent. Fayette City is well above the MMV vacancy average of 19% at 27% but possesses a low population of people experiencing poverty at 6% (U.S. Census 2010).

2.3.4 Charleroi Borough, Washington County

2010 Population: 4,120

The anomaly of the MMV, according the HSWP 1991 report, Charleroi was to plate glass what supply is to demand. Industrialized in 1890, Charleroi is named after a Belgian sister city of the same name that specialized in exporting plate glass. While Belgian investors sought a plan in Pittsburgh, they accepted a new custom plant in Charleroi when offered instead (HSWP 1991,

111). Though developed quickly, Charleroi differentiated itself by becoming home to skilled labor.

Though hardly elite, glass towns are home to a distinct aesthetic. Charleroi can afford a different style as, comparatively, it less intrinsically tied to the vertically integrated eastern side of the Mon. It is suggested that Charleroi's position across the river allowed it to disassociate itself from Monessen and company during the early days of deindustrialization. Parker finds that, "It suffered less than Monessen during the steel recession because it is the retail center for the Mid-Mon area. Charleroi's downtown looks brighter and more prosperous than most Mon Valley communities, and it should benefit from the increased activity across the river (Parker 1999, 120). Though on the surface a classic company town case, the importance of retail adds an interesting caveat to Charleroi's story.

When the founding company of Charleroi, Charleroi Plate Glass, lost promise in the 1890's recession, so too did Charleroi's prospects as a one company town. Macbeth Glass soon followed, ushering in the short-lived oil-lamp and longtime Pyrex eras of production in Charleroi. Commercialism in Charleroi emphasized both manufacturing and retail sales. Still, Charleroi retains some classical company town elements visible in the built environment. Small, narrow lots encouraged density that exists to this day as Charleroi largely escaped practices of urban renewal (Templeton 2004). Additionally, as opposed to the stepped hills of Brownsville, Charleroi saw homes built into hillsides.

Currently, in terms of the age and education of residents, Charleroi does not look vastly different from Brownsville or Fayette City. In terms of sectors, however, retail is prominent in Charleroi. Charleroi is a standout in terms of the attention distinctly placed upon its main street. It is still event, though mildly, that Charleroi was the shopping district of the MMV. Not only do

the sheer quantity of store fronts and size of blocks hint at such a position of privilege, but the very size of sidewalks and uniform signage memorialized this role in the built environment.



Figure 2.6: Wide Sidewalks and Street Signage along McKean Ave in Charleroi (Author 2017)

Though less bustling than its former self, McKean Ave in Charleroi still retains an air of a business district. As in Figure 2.6, empty signs and their accompanying storefronts are distributed throughout the ten-block business district, balanced by many long time businesses like Zelenski's Wedding and Prom Shoppe. The single direction of traffic, wide sidewalks, and clear signage make McKean pedestrian friendly.

The old Coyle theater is one of the most memorable buildings on main street. The 1,000 seat theater shuttered in 1999, following a final showing of *Titanic* (*Observer-Reporter* 2017).

The deteriorating building is now owned by the Mon Valley Alliance. However, its future is uncertain both in terms of the investment necessary as well as the condition of the building.



Figure 2.7: Charleroi's Coyle Theater decaying on McKean Ave (Author 2017).

Given the intensity of the Charleroi main street, it is said to be in a century's long feud with Monongahela City for supremacy in the MMV. Charleroi expresses interest in retaining such a role through its programming. The Greater Charleroi Community Development Corporation, part of the Mon Valley Initiative coalition, and TEAM Charleroi, a community group, merged in 2012 to address commercial, industrial, and residential development in Charleroi (TEAM Charleroi).

2.3.5 City of Monessen, Westmoreland County

2010 Population: 7,720

Monessen developed as a prime breeding ground for a company town before the first component of the first factory arrived. As industrialization began to spread through the valley in the late nineteenth century, in 1894 a group of Pittsburgh investors purchased a farm located 30 miles down the Monongahela River from Pittsburgh: “They correctly anticipated the expansion of industry up the river, and by the early twentieth century their venture had become the city of Monessen (Essen on the Mon), home to the largest tin plate mill in the nation, a foundry and machine firm, steel hoop plant, rod and wire mill, tube works, and a fully integrated steel works employing 3,500 workers in 1916. Monessen held regional prominence, “With more than 18,000 inhabitants, Monessen surpassed New Kensington and the county seat of Greensburg as the largest city in Westmoreland County” (Muller 2001, 6). In terms of industrialization, Monessen shares much in common with Charleroi. Instead of Belgium investors, Germans speculated and purchased the land from Pittsburgh capitalists and rather than glass, Monessen became a steel town.



Figure 2.8: View of the Monessen Works from the Monongahela River (Historic Structures 1995)

Originally the Pittsburgh Steel Company and later the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, operated within Monessen Works for nearly the entire twentieth century, from 1901-1986 (Parker 1999, 115) (Hoerr 1988). Over that period, Monessen was among the most diverse MMV municipalities due to strings of mill-inspired immigration. By the time the Monessen Works Steel Plant shuttered in 1986, it was down to 800 employees (Hoerr 1988). Monessen remains the Mid-Mon's largest city in population. A mile of waterfront property along the Mon once devoted to steel production, leaves a large, brown shoe to fill today. Parker considers this site a "graveyard" in 1995, particularly the upriver portion (Parker 1999, 116). That same year,

however, Koppers acquired a portion of the old steel plant and reopened it for production (Parker 1999, 116). While the pipedream of the return of industry dominates current dialogue about economic development in the region, Monessen is the only municipality along the entire Mon to see this become a reality. Despite the resurgence of old industry, economic development remains a continued challenge for Monessen. While literature remains overwhelmingly general in its approach towards the condition of the MMV, Monessen's condition is particularly unfavorable. The eternal flame of steel looms over the town, a reminder of the past rather than necessary restructuring.



Figure 2.9: View of the eternal flame of the Monessen Works from Donner Ave, Monessen (Author 2017)

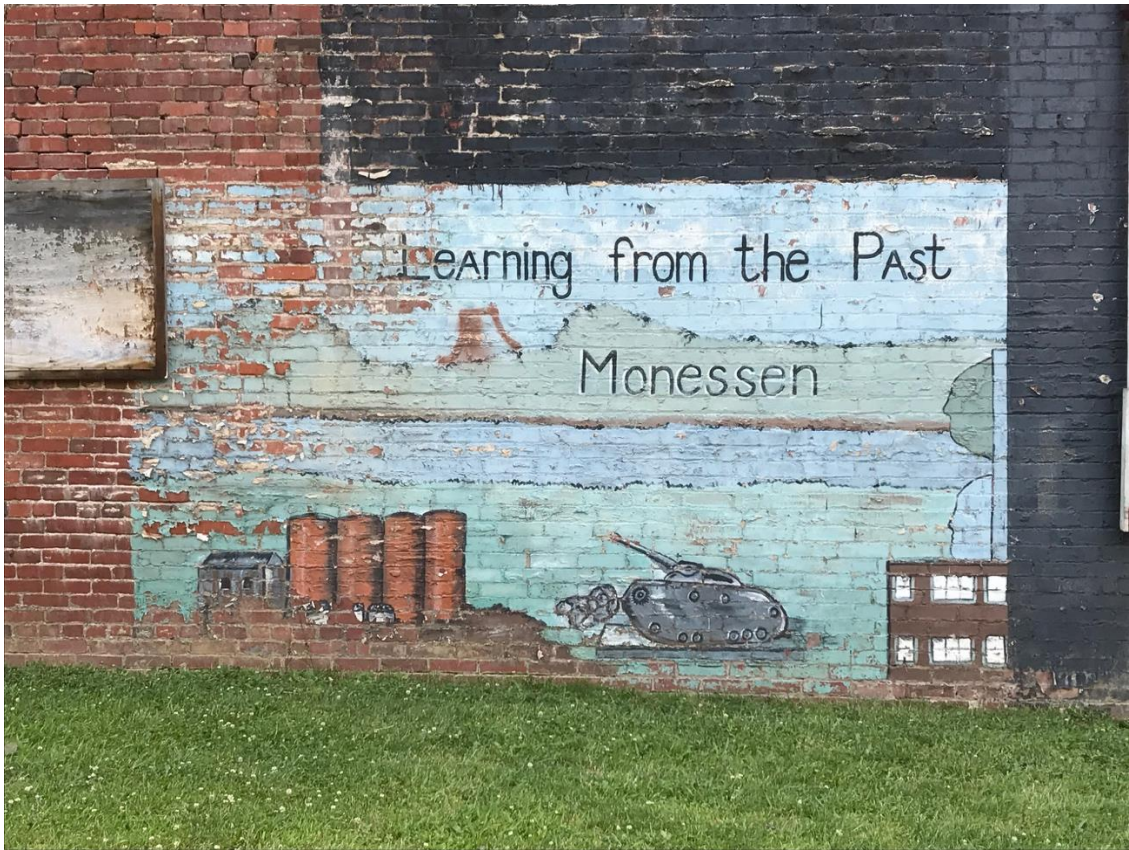


Figure 2.10: Mural facing a series of vacant lots on Donner Ave, Monessen (Author 2017)

Despite holding on to heavy industry unlike so many of its counterparts, Monessen sees new investment with the help of the Monessen Community Development Corporation, a member of MVI coalition. Education and job training sectors are of particular focus, seen through a film and cosmetology school. Still, Monessen's main street exhibits shrinking pains through vacant buildings and lots. A Foodland sits directly downtown, however, in the shadow of the ominous eternal flame, preventing Monessen from achieving grocery desert status. Monessen exemplifies how impressions of the built environment can shape larger community narratives. Industrial ruination's onset and a larger landmass and business district makes Monessen typify the Rust Belt.

The Monessen Heritage Museum appropriately sits on Donner Avenue next to the old

Isaly's building, occupied since 1984 by the Pasta Shoppe Italian deli and restaurant. Across the street, however, at the corner of Fifth and Donner Avenues is a dramatic reminder of the damage disinvestment can bring.



Figure 2.11: Former pharmacy at the corner of Fifth and Donner Ave, Monessen (Author 2017)

Supposedly because of its location, Monessen claims to be the heart of the Mon Valley ("City of Monessen"). One bold pronouncement even that claimed Monessen was the hardest hit along all of the Mon Valley towns (Vivian 2004, 8). The prevalence of images of industrial

decline, such as the pharmacy in Figure 2.11 as well as the remaining steel mill may contribute to such a visual observation.

2.3.6 Donora Borough

2010 Population: 4,781

As a company town, Donora blossomed around the American Steel Wire Company, one of U.S. Steel's later acquisitions. Controversially, American Steel & Wire even produced some workers' homes, a practice debated by industrialists of the day. Home to seven manufacturers at its height, Donora developed an industrial park along its slab on the Mon. U.S. Steel also managed a Zinc plant in Donora that brought unfortunate notoriety to the borough. In 1948, Donora became home of one the United States' worst air pollution disasters when heavy smog occupied the air for over a day. The incident was responsible for twenty deaths and caused many more to flee the area (Parker 1999, 120). The event contributed to the formation of the Allegheny Conference as well as the Clean Air Act. Both the wire and zinc plants were closed by the 1966, taking 8,000 jobs with them. While the industrial park has been rebuilt, the space still operates at a deficit of 6,000 jobs (HSWP 1991, 114). In Donora, the built environment retains its company town design, with reminders of its industrial era sprinkled through the built environment. The Donora Smog Museum occupies a storefront at the center of town, representing the complicated legacy of industrialism.



Figure 2.12: The Donora Smog Museum situated at the center of main street (Author 2017)

Interestingly, the reconnaissance survey of 1991 defends Donora despite admitting the less than optimal condition of the built environment, “Most of the physical fabric of the town, however, remained frozen, much as in ghost towns, as the population drastically declined. Donora, as such, was the first steel mill town to experience the de-industrialization and provided a model of how a community can pull itself back up by the bootstraps” (HSWP 1991, 114). Donora’s early deindustrialization aligns with the trend of neoliberalism in America that made “bootstrap pulling” a popular narrative. However, such a mindset resulted in insular economic

development given the limited public resources available. Such a trend of counting on private saviors may be changing. Recently, faced with further economic challenges in running their municipality, Donora's administration, following Pittsburgh's footsteps, filed for state assistance in managing and monitoring its budget in order to prevent bankruptcy.

Donora's main street is nestled in its hills, further away from the Mon as compared to most of its neighbors. Still most of the existing built environment remains. When Parker reviewed the borough before the new millennium, he found the economic atmosphere positive: "The park, still prospering, has kept Donora from dying. It holds a variety of small manufacturers, business service firms, and warehouses. Today the small downtown area is neat and clean and businesses seem to be surviving. Donora is more fortunate than some towns in the Valley" (Parker 1999, 120). Since then, the business district experienced further decline and a slew of retirement sales. Today, the small businesses strictly serve the community, with the exception of the historical spaces, particularly the smog museum. Donora's industrial legacy is integrated into the built environment.

2.3.7 Monongahela City, Washington County

2010 Population: 4,300

Unlike some of its neighboring localities, the City of Monongahela, colloquially Mon City, is not a mill town by birth. To the contrary, Mon City was founded in 1769 and from early on was home to a diversified economy, with no single industry dominating its banks of the Monongahela. The prevalence of trading inspired the rise of boat-building industry in the city (Parker 1999, 124). However, small industry occupied the waterfront throughout

industrialization, where the innovation of carborundum emerged. The city even resembled a municipal size speakeasy during the Whiskey Rebellion (Parker 1999, 123). Such notorious activity set a trading precedent that persisted through the economic development of the area. Still, Monongahela claims status as a bedroom community for steel workers, though questions if it is a part of the Rust Belt. Rather than highlight any industrial ruination, Monongahela continues to value its history through its active Historical Society that maintains a museum on main street; events such as historic reenactments, remind of Mon City's more rambunctious days.

Mon City did see investment during the industrial fall-out period, starting in the late 1960's. For instance, in honor of the City's bicentennial celebration in 1969, an Aquatorium became a focal point along the waterfront (Parker 1999, 126).



Figure 2.13: Monongahela's Aquatorium (Author 2017)

In addition to investment along the waterfront, Mon City retains the conditions of main street resilience. It is in the minority of MMV communities that is not a grocery desert, though the Foodland present on main street is considered a community weakness. Many of the community events in Monongahela are sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the Monongahela Main Street Program. Despite Charleroi's larger commercial district, Monongahela is the only MMV municipality that is home to a Main Street Program. The Monongahela Main Street Program is the second smallest in the state as is still in its infancy but displays a commitment to its historically diversified economy through promoting entrepreneurship.

2.3.8 New Eagle Borough

2010 Population: 2,184

The boundary between sister cities Monongahela and New Eagle is difficult to discern in terms of the built environment. That is likely because New Eagle became incorporated and splintered from Monongahela in 1912. More than any other set of Mon Valley municipalities, these two appear most similar upon initial observation. Investigation of the historical economics of the region reveals the relationship much less resembles partnership and instead sees New Eagle reliant on Mon City's resources. However, it was New Eagle that was home to a small steel mill, rather than Monongahela, in the mid-twentieth century, a fact that is now celebrated by Monongahela stakeholders for preventing more economic hardship.

Though New Eagle was a center of commerce and recreation during the last century. The home page of its website tells of what was once there: “a local hospital, a riverside beach, and the only indoor swimming pool for miles around. It also had a roller rink, airstrip, polo field, street car park, two elegant hotels, a glass factory, a number of stores and businesses, and for a short time – a steel mill” (“New Eagle Borough”). Needless to say, no such resources, besides a few small businesses, remain after deindustrialization.

2.3.9 West Elizabeth Borough

2010 Population: 518

A pre-revolutionary settlement sealed Elizabeth’s fate as ship boat-building hub (Parker 132). The shallow nature of the Mon as well as the Embargo Act contributed to Elizabeth’s identity change in the nineteenth century: the borough took on construction of the new innovation of the steamboat (Parker 1999, 134). Such an advancement in technology helped usher in economic development in the valley and beyond. West Elizabeth emerged across the river to supplement Elizabeth proper as a transportation hub. Transportation remains important to West Elizabeth, as ship building, railroads, and roads translate to industry there.

Today, West Elizabeth resembles a highway town, and with an entrance through an underpass, this seems to be a role that it plays well. West Elizabeth is fending relatively well compared to its neighbors in terms of small businesses, though it is also the closest to Pittsburgh. However, with a poverty rate of 29.6%, well above the MMV average of 22.5%, economic success does not appear to be evenly shared (UCSUR 2015). West Elizabeth possessed the

highest percentage of mobile homes, boats, and RVs given its overall housing total in Allegheny County, according to a 2005 UCSUR report (UCSUR 2005). Presently, there is a sign of investment, however, as the old Elizabeth grade school is undergoing transformation into commercial space.

I will revisit the relative conditions of these towns following an evaluation of the presence of political economy and regionalism across the MMV, as well as reviewing my methodology. Of the MMV cohort, Monongahela and Brownsville will serve as my case studies in which I evaluate individual community development projects and groups, as seen in Chapter Seven. Next, however, I will rehearse the economic processes that had an impact on the MMV during deindustrialization and how that informs regional divergences.

3.0 POLITICAL ECONOMY APPROACHES TO DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

Political economy traces its own development through the history of industrialization. Built upon Marx's understanding of class and labor relations, modern political economists assess the spatial implications of such relationships on the built environment (Massey 1978, Harvey 1989, Lefebvre 1991, Smith 2010). The retellings of the industrial fall of the MMV also are often presented through the lens of labor (Hoerr 1988, Parker 2010). Both perspectives, theoretical and historical, speak to the winners and losers dichotomy facilitated by industrial capitalism. After reviewing fundamental tenets of political economy as established by Karl Marx and developed by David Harvey, I focus my review of political economy on two related processes most relevant to the MMV. First, Neil Smith's concept of uneven development exemplifies the consequence of capital at the regional scale. Then, Henri Lefebvre's production of space speaks to capitalism's impact on the very essence of space and warns of rebranding. Together, these theories explain the relationship between the present economic condition and political position of regionalism in the MMV. While these concepts have each amassed their own entire canons of literature following in the political economy tradition, I limit my scope to the concepts as they involve industrial capital and substantiate deindustrialization and its resulting narrative. Admittedly, conflict exists between some of the political economists cited below. However, the concepts of political cited were specially chosen due to their relevance in the landscape of the MMV, where industry trumps standard political positions. Thus, this chapter will consider the political

positionality and perspective of the MMV to balance the fullness of the term political economy within geography. Ultimately, the relationships generated by political economy help explain the presence of regionalism in the MMV.

3.1 DEFINING POLITICAL ECONOMY

Political economy explains both the underlying process and residual effects of industrial capitalism on the geography of the MMV. John Stuart Mill defines political economy as “The science which traces the laws of such of the phenomena of society as arise from the combined operations of mankind for the production of wealth, in so far as those phenomena are not modified by the pursuit of any other object” (Mill 1836, 54). Political economy approaches examine the linkages between the political and economic realms and are frequently used to critique the structures that underpin society. Nelson explains the core interest of political economy: “the form and substance of its impact [the economy] are partially reflected in the political arena” (Nelson 1995, 103). Here, the use of “form” and “substance” allude to the spatial manifestation of political economy. Within the built environment, form refers to the shape of the built environment, while substance captures the function of such places. Approaches in political economy can be used in different geographic contexts to explain the changes created by the capitalist system. The premise of political economy is based upon the neoclassical economic assumption that “considers mankind as occupied solely in acquiring and consuming wealth” (Mill 1836, 53). Contemporary literature considers the intersectionality imbedded in the process of wealth acquisition. Persson and Tabellini (1994) use political economy to recognize the

interplay between political, social, and economic processes within the spaces of deindustrialized geographies.

Using a Marxist lens helps to unpack the relevance of political economy in postindustrial places like the MMV. Marx's *Capital* is in itself a critique of the "vulgar political economies" of Adam Smith (Marx 1932). Marx finds space, or more often land, just as susceptible to the whims of capitalism as labor. Marx's wage relation, profit motive, and relative roles of local and central state contribute to the production of space. Industrialization sparked many battles over the quality of life, according to Marx, starting with the struggle of making a living. Industrialization's impact on labor spurred discontentment rather than relief, as "Jobs became more specialized and less satisfying. Few people worked on a whole product from beginning to end, and fewer still felt any personal attachment to or pride in the product of their labor" (Klein and Kantor 55, 1976). A lack of fulfillment from Fordist practices contributed to Marx's wage relation, which he defines as follows: "Wages are determined through the antagonistic struggle between capitalist and worker" (Marx 1975, 235), where the former seeks to mute wages as much as possible while the latter seeks to maximize their wage. Such a struggle long characterized industrial workplaces and was replayed through the broader Mon Valley, most famously with the 1892 Pinkerton Rebellion in Homestead. Class struggle over the wage relation began over the length of shifts and living conditions in the MMV. Low steel wages produced "squalid living conditions" and "working conditions which tended to brutalize the body and soul" (Hoerr 1988, 49). The necessity of unions emerged just as much out of bargaining for a fair wage as for improved conditions in the built environment. Labor unions gave strength to the collective bargaining efforts of many MMV workers through the mid twentieth-century, especially seen through mandatory cost of living adjustments (COLA), though Hoerr is clear to

distinguish COLA as well as supplemental unemployment benefits (SUB) not as wages but fringe benefits (Hoerr 1988, 77). Such negotiation marks a new condition of wage relations developed after Marx's time.

Despite positive gains for labor in regards to wage relations during the middle of the twentieth century, profit motives still challenged the quality of life for many MMV municipalities. Marx considers profit motive the underlying inspiration that spurs tension between capitalists and laborers. Profit mindedness seeks maximum labor at a minimum cost, similar to the wage relation. Also, profit motivations produce secondary costs within the MMV built environment as, "Everything that has made this area ideal for the building up of our steel civilization is balanced by factors that make it unfit for urban living. Only the most ingenious city planner and the most far-seeing civic pride, combined with the capacity to forego immediate profit and to build for the future, could have made this scenic marvel into a city for homes" (Hoerr 1988, 166). Thus, not only does tension exist between labor and capital, but also between the built environment and profit motive.

The state's conception of the causes of social ills rounds out the third necessary theory underlying Marx's idea of political economy. Marx harshly criticizes the state's lack of self-awareness as to the causes of inequality. He also finds the responsive measures taken inadequate, "In the end, every state seeks the cause of its ills in accidental or intentional defects of administration and therefore seeks the remedy in laying down rules for administration" (Marx 1844, 153). Marx would thus suggest that achieving economic change in the MMV will not occur by way of policy or top-down measures. He would also likely defend the MMV from criticism of its insufficiency in garnering investment, instead challenging capital's rule over the value of place and workers.

Marx similarly berates bourgeois political parties for placing the source of all ills within the jurisdiction of their opponents (Marx 1844). Marx is not an anarchist, however, as he criticizes the form of the state rather than its existence altogether. Marx's wariness over monopolies and the size of industry suggests that small business and self-employment offer alternatives to or at least easements of the wage relation. Just as local government possesses a higher capacity for participation, small business, compared to large industry, suggests a more favorable wage relation for workers, especially in the post-Reagan era of weakened unions.

3.2 THE GEOGRAPHY OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

A century after Marx, David Harvey illustrated how capital surpluses find their way into the built environment through the secondary circuit of capital (Harvey 1978). Here, from the perspective of big capital, accumulation and investment in durable capital are in tension with one another. Harvey similarly blames capital for developing the winner versus loser dichotomy upon the back of wage relations in the free market, arguing, "capital unleashes the powers of 'creative destruction' upon the land. Some factions benefit from creativity, while others suffer the brunt of the destruction. Invariably, this involves a class disparity" (Harvey 2014, 155). Harvey confirms what Marx argued, that economic change brings spatial implications that challenge the identity of spaces. Deindustrialization's prompting of MMV municipalities to shift away from primary industries provides experimental grounds upon which to investigate the remnants of creativity. (I describe sectoral shifts across the MMV in order to explore class disparity in Chapters Six and Seven.) Harvey's circuits of capital coupled with his spatial perspectives of political economy support the theories that space is a component of the production process and the winners and

losers dichotomy of development results in uneven geographies. Harvey not only situates his discussion of political economy within the built environment, but especially considers deindustrializing places, “We know, for example, that capitalism is wrought with internal contradictions that, for example, collide to form an unevenly developed socioeconomic landscape” (Harvey 1985, Smith 1990, 1996 in Hackworth 2018, 68). *Uneven Geographies and the Production of Space* constitute the eleventh of David Harvey’s *Seventeen Contradictions of Capitalism*.

Groundwork in geographic theory is necessary as, “the work of Harvey and Smith provides a particularly useful schema for understanding the connection between political restructuring and physical landscape change” (Hackworth 2018, 79). I will further explore this relationship in assessing changes in political agendas and consequent economic development in the MMV. When considered through a spatial lens, political economy is a component of economic geography. Economic geography explains the intimate relationship between modes of production and space, laying the groundwork for theories of political economy. Doreen Massey defines economic geography as “the spatial organization of the relations of production (defined in the widest sense of that term)” (Massey 1978, 18). Space not only facilitate economies, but also participates in their organization and operation.

Space remains an active factor in playing out political economy, as economic geography can reinforce defining communities relative to the business cycle. Just as capitalism constructs space, space is essential to capitalism. The MMV is rife with examples of such a phenomenon, from the presence of brownfields along the river front to the location of railroads, to the very placement of towns. Perhaps space’s impact on the construction of capitalism is most evident within the business districts of MMV municipalities. The range of conditions of such main

streets and strip malls suggests that there is no singular way in which space constructs transactions. However, capitalism's hold over the MMV is still strong, as evident through the now empty storefronts that persist. In Monongahela, the long terms of vacancy within main street buildings is chalked up to their small size and rent that does not reflect market value (MMMP, MCC). Industrial heritage nonprofit Rivers of Steel's new arts initiative that sponsors pop-up film and photo displays within empty storefronts throughout the Mon Valley is an example of using placemaking. Placemaking is a creative process with the intention of reimagining the usage of spaces, identifying that space (and regions for that matter) can be constructed but also fluid. In the case of pop-up displays, placemaking also maintains a degree of authenticity by recalling history and engaging the community through the airing of Super 8 film while encouraging upgrades through digitalization. The program uses the MMV's own history to illuminate the present conditions of political economy.

Economic geography in a capitalistic landscape first sees the circuits of capital dynamically influence the conditions of the built environment over time. However, the consequences of economics on geography are less discernable, even within the most victimized communities:

“Most Americans readily accept capitalism as a driving force for change, but few tend to think critically of capitalism's impact on landscapes. Nowhere is dereliction more vivid than in old industrial areas, which are so clearly creatures of capital once at work, where underutilized and abandoned buildings stand as somber reminders of past prosperity now elusive” (Jackle and Wilson 1992, 57).

The MMV exemplifies a space that experienced the spoils and ills of capitalism in its past-its-prime landscape implied by Jackle and Wilson (1992) and the loaded nature of postindustrial spaces, the history of which looms on lots. Through the narrative of the MMV, such an image

extends to classify the region. Regionalism's own ties with capitalistic production complicate its role in revitalization. Processes of decay are components of the greater circuits of capital, however, and thus ought to be accounted for and expected under capitalistic economies. Space again indicates the loss of market value: "Dereliction comes at the end of a cycle of birth and decline. It more than symbolizes transition. It symbolizes failure. Dereliction communicates curtailed and quality of life is diminished. Decay is etched into the everyday local fabric that dominates thinking" (Jackle and Wilson 1992, 9). Here, places like the MMV take on negative identities broadly as communities become defined by their decline.

The cyclic death and life of industrial spaces, or the decline of the MMV, is predicted in Schumpeter's theory of the creative destruction of capitalism, where emergent economies require the destruction of old ones (Schumpeter 1942). Schumpeter's theory is built upon the predicted tension between small business entrepreneurs and farmers versus large corporations as well as the highly educated versus the working class. Such a system fits in nicely with Raymond William's (1983) model of the clash between residual and emergent cultures for hegemonic status. Ernest Mandel applies such roles directly to advances in industrial capital: "In capitalist society the productivity of labor is constantly changing. Generally speaking, there are always three types of enterprises (or industrial services): those which are technologically right at the social average; those which are backwards, obsolete, on the downgrade, below the social average; and those which are technologically advanced and above average in productivity" (Mandel 1970, 35). Over the past century, industry of the MMV resembled each of these classifications, suggesting that such labels are fluid. However, while Pittsburgh attempts to lead regional interest in advancing productivity, the MMV remains in the downgraded category. Uneven development and the dereliction of space explain both the processes that led to

deindustrialization as well as provide suggestions on how MMV municipalities can restructure to avoid repeating such a fate.

3.3 THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE

Wage relation, profit motivation, and governmental policies all manipulate the built environment, integrating it into the production process. While Marx uses political economy to argue that workers are treated as low level commodities through capitalism (Marx 1844), his successors apply a similar theory to the geography upon and through which production takes place. While uneven development relates to the production upon space, Marxist sociologist Henri Lefebvre considers the implications of integrating space into the capitalistic production process. Lefebvre defines capitalism as an umbrella term made up of many components, “diverse breeds of capital ... overlapping markets – commodities, labor, knowledge, capital itself, land – are what together constitute capitalism” (Lefebvre 1991, 10). For Lefebvre, space is a social product. In postmodern tradition, Lefebvre considers spatial perceptions through three components. First, spatial practice outlines the function of a space or region of interest. An active condition, the Mon Valley struggles with actualizing this component due to high unemployment. Next, representations of space refer to actual depictions of a place, from maps to photographs. Finally, representational space refers to space that is true to its function. In this case, the MMV still represents the past both in physical condition and through narrative.

Lefebvre suggests that just as physical space was used in the production process of industrial capitalism, space, as a mentality, can be produced. The production of space applies to both developed and undeveloped land (Lefebvre 1991, 15). Such a thought processes explains

the generalizations and overly broad language incorrectly used to define the MMV. For example, nuanced differences in postindustrial conditions and sectoral breakdowns are not captured when judging spaces by the capital interest generated. Rather, both lived and heard experience of deindustrialization were coopted by language of the 'Rust Belt'. Though the Mon Valley's representation of space and representative space both reflect the past rather than present realities, the Mon Valley cannot simply reproduce its space sans any one industry. Instead, residual effects of industrial sites have an impact on future redevelopment. McCrone argues old industrial sites are not "a satisfactory environment for modern growth industries" (McCrone 1969). With a *laisse faire* spirit, McCrone believes that industry's, or for that matter capital's, inability to develop naturally in these regions indicates that it will not in the future. Such a stark reality suggests a necessary change. However, such sentiment is similarly shared by Marxist Harvey. He believes that capital chases capital, manifesting in the built environment in "advanced regions" (Harvey 2014, 150).

Lefebvre criticizes scholars' affinity for dialogue that ignores "the yawning gap that separates this linguistic mental space from that social space wherein language becomes practice" (Lefebvre 5). Lefebvre celebrates the study of space for providing a platform upon which to understand regionalism, as opposed to falling into fragmentation (Lefebvre 1991, 9). Geographer Soja builds on Lefebvre's sociological perspectives of the production of space by framing such a process in the postindustrial period. The process that Soja outlines implies the onset of spatialization, a term coined by Lefebvre to explain the role of space in capitalist accumulation. Lefebvre builds upon Marxist understanding of the circuits of capital by introducing spatialization. Though Marx himself intended to use volumes two and three of *Capital* to discuss

the geographic impact, especially on a global stage, such sections remained unwritten at the time of his death. Lefebvre picks up the relay baton with spatialization.

Not all means of change are positive for deindustrialized economies. Processes of reproduction versus restructuring mark differing destinations for MMV municipalities in rebuilding their economies. Writing on the precipice of industrial collapse, Lefebvre is concerned that attention towards the “programmed consumption” of individuals has taken attention away from the impact of industry on the economy and labor (Lefebvre 1991, 89). In this way the production of space makes landscapes even more uneven, with postindustrial spaces left to rebrand themselves. However, rebranding space is a dangerous undertaking with high stakes such as inauthenticity, and gentrification as consequences of missteps.

Marx warned that spatial reproduction shares the shortcomings of production given that it does not condemn commercialization (Marx 1932). Reproduction sees space produced over again in order to meet present prescribed demands. Reproduction often comes at the expense of authenticity: “Here, the Marxist emphasis on production rethought as reproduction of the conditions of production, with recurrence intercepted by creativity or “becoming” – “is not the fabric of the imaginary woven from threads of remembrance and therefore reoccurrence?” (Lefebvre 1968, 18; Peet 101). In other words, the Mon Valley would mold itself into another derivation of its productive past by disregarding context. Steel, coke, or glass would simply be replaced with other low skill industries. Additionally, by reproducing space, the Mon Valley would fall back into the same hole that it has spent the better part of the last half century attempting to climb out of. This pathway would see the MMV remain relatively low on the regional totem pole. Reproduction occurs at the urban scale while production is present at the

regional scale (Castells in Mandel 1976), meaning that the greater portion of the MMV would remain stagnate without more serious economic restructuring.

Economic restructuring, as opposed to reproduction, reimagines the potential of space as well as its occupants. In the tradition of Lefebvre, such a process identifies spaces as constructed by the social and economic conditions of history. In a postmodern balance between preservation and progress, restructuring seeks new goals by building on available resources. Restructuring is strength based while reproduction chases the coattails of the market. Restructuring is closely tied to educational attainment and opportunity, and relies on development to be driven from within a community rather than swayed by outside influences, an admittedly large task. Restructuring, more than reproduction, secures the autonomy of a space to decide its own destiny.

3.4 UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

Uneven development is as essential to capitalism as labor or raw goods. Neil Smith, Edward Soja, and Ernest Mandel present uneven development as an intended consequence of capitalism. Smith challenges previous presentations of uneven development as a temporary symptom of capitalism, instead describing it as, “a function of the contemporary universality of capitalism” (Smith 2010, 134). This definition implies that uneven development remains a contemporary inevitability of capitalism. Smith even uses language relating to a market in explaining the developmental phenomena, “uneven development is both the product and the geographical premise of capitalist development” (Smith 2010, 206). While Smith accepts that processes of uneven development may precede capitalism, capitalism changes the nature of economic geographies by making spaces compete with one another. Whereas uneven development is often

founded in geologic advantages, capitalism reestablishes focal points based on transportation routes and market pressures (Smith 2010, 137-8). Under capitalism, uneven development establishes winners and losers, with the “deterioration of old centres and rise of new centres of production” (Marx 1932, 353). Thus, uneven development sees some spaces economically favored over others for their value or production potential.

Spurred by different spatial conceptions feeding different human uses, capital affects both the places it chooses to invest in and those it ignores. Assessing the Rust Belt post facto reveals the degree to which capital affects municipalities, even beyond the built environment:

“The lopsided development that goes along with such frenzied capital investment almost invariably leaves its mark abject poverty counterpoised to extravagant wealth, a despoiled environment, and crime rates that eclipse those in the deindustrialization regions from which capital fleeing” (Bluestone & Harrison 1982).

The opportunity costs of uneven development are paid by places left behind. In order to visualize, and at times juxtapose, uneven development, Bluestone and Harrison (1982) as well as Smith (2010) recommend studying uneven geographies and deindustrialization at a regional scale. As explored in the coming chapter, the tradition of uneven development works against regionalism as MMV municipalities compete for limited resources. The postindustrial period coinciding with the rise of neoliberalism meant competition characterized both the public and private sectors.

Soja also addresses the primary question of the relationship between uneven geographies and capitalism, “Regional underdevelopment is an integral part of extended or expanded reproduction, creating large reservoirs of labor and complementary markets capable of responding to the spasmodic and contradictory flow of capitalistic productivity” (Soja 1989,

105). Keeping with the reservoir analogy, Soja finds, “when the [markets] dry up in one area, they are created in another” (Soja 1989, 106). The commodification of space means that it, too, is tied into the race for achievable growth between capitalistic players (Soja 1989, 105). Soja finds advanced capitalism demands super-profits, causing the see-saw of uneven development to tilt even more severely. Hinting at Lefebvre’s theory of spatialization, a discussion of which is forthcoming, Soja explores a geographic transfer of value in the Marxist tradition (Soja 1989, 113). In addition to use and exchange values that Marx assigns to goods in *Capital*, the transfer of value sees commodities add or subtract value from each other. Applied to the MMV, this explains why brownfields exist, when industry transfers its ills to the land.

In the context of the Mon Valley, a question arises from this conclusion. How has capitalism survived deindustrialization? Why do residents of unequal spaces continue to uphold the hegemonic economic structure despite its abuse? Soja explains these phenomena by again invoking the concept of advanced capitalism. First, space becomes commodified and understood by its production or use value, “Under advanced capitalism the organization of spaces becomes predominately related to the reproduction of these dominant system of social relations” (Soja 1989, 91). Then, there is the buy-in by residents of such spaces (Soja 1989, 91). Soja hypothesizes that such buy-in may now manifest in the sectoral shifts of postindustrial places, “uneven regional development has always been an important foundation for the generation and extraction of superprofits and continues to be so even in an age when the primary source of superprofitability may have shifted to sectorally uneven development” (Soja 1989, 168). So the same hegemonic relationships exist within new sought after economy as well. A potential response to these conditions is visible in sectoral shifts, which are explored in Chapters Six and Seven.

Mandel concurs with Smith and Soja's conclusions about the relationship between uneven geographies and capitalism but adds a regional component to his analysis, "the unequal development between regions and nations is the very essence of capitalism, on the same level as the exploitation of labour by capital" (Mandel 1976, 43). This regional implication suggests that positive national trends do not distribute evenly across all geographies. Instead, disinvestment in geography may operate independently from positive-swings in the market, despite suffering under negative ones. Soja derives from Mandel that uneven development is not only an inevitability of capitalism, but, that consequences are not only limited to a municipality's geography but are felt regionally, "the key point is that capitalism – or if one prefers, the normal activity of profit-seeking capitalists – intrinsically builds upon regional or spatial inequalities as a necessary means for its continued survival" (Soja 1989, 107). In other words, winners are built on the backs of losers. Mandel similarly finds that capitalism's unquenchable thirst drives inequality further through the desire for super profits for the technologically advanced (Mandel 1976, 67). Such a statement resonates with Mill's definition of political economy, implying it is through the intersection of such functions that uneven geographies desired by capitalism are allowed to arise. Thus, given the inevitable pattern of uneven development, space is subjected to capitalistic whims but is also disposable upon collapse.

3.5 CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Community alliances can realign, emphasizing individualistic interest, following changes in the business cycle. Economic geography encourages a competitive edge to individualism that paves the path of deindustrialization, "Competitive individualism breeds loneliness and

alienation in self-absorption. Americans have been taught to 'do your own thing' and 'look out for yourself.' Cooperative effort and mutual interdependence in human relationships are devalued" (Mandel 1970, 40). In terms of economic geography, even regional relationships are assessed based on value. In the MMV, however, tension between individual and community interest spurred the decay of unions, alongside deindustrialization. Again, such a process appears predictive when considering large trends, involving immigration in this case. Powell suggests that the mix of immigrants that settled in this region, as opposed to more homogenous corners of the country, encouraged individualism to supersede the dynamic needs of the community (Powell 2007, 47). While deindustrialization took a lot from places like the MMV, it also left a residual economy, individualist tendencies, and a negative narrative. Regionalism, as will be explored in the next chapter, combats individualistic outlooks.

Establishing the presence of political economy in the industrial age contextualizes its role in deindustrialization. The nineteenth century Mon Valley was home to both the excesses and deficiencies of capitalism. The Homestead Strike began a national example of labor uprising while Andrew Carnegie's Bessemer system and Henry Clay Frick's coke works accelerated the rate of capital accumulation. In a vicious cycle, increased demand and thus further exploitation of land was driven by westward expansion, or the desire to plunder vaster geographies. As the former beneficiary of the spoils of industrial capital, the Rust Belt's decline adheres to predictable circuits of capital. The effects of deindustrialization were not restrained behind the factory gates; stagnation as well as structural unemployment does not exist in a vacuum. The means of production, both in terms of labor and durable capital, require restructuring in order to be accepted back into the circuits of capital.

The tragedy of deindustrialization is found in a town's reliance on industry but industry's ability to exist outside towns. Doreen Massey argues that industrialization created impersonal factories lining river banks, and that these sites of production held little care for their home towns, "Wages and skills remain low, and it is not even necessarily the case that much new employment will result – one of the major characteristics of such factories is that they have few local links and stimulate little locally in terms of associated production" (Massey 1978, S53). While the narrative of the MMV more closely links towns to their outputs and blue-collar ethic, the connotation of deflated conditions of wages and quality of life also affixed itself to the term MMV. Deindustrialization once again prompts the tension between local and global interests, earlier introduced by Marxist thought through discussions of imperialism.

Speaking to the vertical integration of the Mon Valley, this process makes spaces with singular dominant industries even more susceptible to obsolesce: "very frequently this will mean locations in areas where there are workers with little previous experience of waged work, there may be areas suffering from the collapse of a previously-dominant industrial sector" (Massey 1978, S53). The experienced workers that Massey believes can withstand such a fallout represent an elite knowledge-based class, like the theorists cited within this chapter, rather than the education levels expressed in the MMV. Low education levels and the prevalence of structural unemployment, implies that MMV municipalities were unprepared for the professionalization of labor as processes of deindustrialization began. Nelson identifies system dynamics, the driving force of Harvey's circuits of capital, as a primary characteristic of the professionalization of labor (Nelson 1995, 75).

3.6 POSTINDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM

Capitalism encourages the continuation of uneven development and the production of space, meaning the MMV must take careful steps to assure its present economic development strategies do not echo the old. But diagnosing the reason for economic change is necessary in order for recovery. Economist Peter Hall (1988) hypothesized that technologically inspired economic changes, like those undergone through deindustrialization, were not one-off events but components of larger long-term trends. His findings resembled the structure of Raymond William's dominant and emerging cultures, where new technology becomes the norm, subsequently catalyzing spatial changes. To add insult to injury, the new knowledge-based economy is often defined as one of information and communication technology (ICT), despite the MMV's furthering fragmentation.

The nature of political economy means that economic changes will not leave the built environment unscathed. Deindustrialization is linked closely with the shrinking cities phenomena. As previously established, labor losses and consequent disinvestment prompted both populations and built environments to shrink. Commercial districts, such as MMV main streets, were also victim of disinvestment. It is worth noting that in the MMV shrinkage does not equate to condensing. Instead, lost teeth in the form of vacant lots actually distanced spaces. To address these conditions, densification and adjustment to a smaller footprint are recommended tactics for spaces that underwent deindustrialization (Turok 2015). In assessing "Redundant and Marginalized Spaces", Nate Turok reminds readers that decline is an international phenomenon, making revitalization even more competitive.

However, nested in discussions of the new economy and technological advancement lies entrepreneurialism. Though small businesses experienced the domino effect as a consequence of

deindustrialization, entrepreneurialism weathered the new economy. Entrepreneurship is now an umbrella term that covers old fashioned main street economic development and ever-evolving start-up culture. It is not only a harmonious way to for an aged built environment to provide for a new economy, but is also realistic. Supporting small firm connectivity would give places like the MMV more control over capital investment as well as avoid reproducing larger firm reliance. The flexibility of entrepreneurs decreases the risk of uneven development, through it still maintains competition between spaces. However, spaces need not be produced for the sake of big firms nor bend to the will of any one employer with an economy based on a pool of small firms.

As much as entrepreneurialism is a potential fit for a restructured postindustrial economy, not all components of the new economy would be beneficial for the MMV to pursue. It is difficult to ignore the connection between the rise of consumption culture and the fate of deindustrialized spaces. Such a prospect is frightening as it would mean that, after undergoing turbulent circuits of capital, places like the MMV would once again be deemed disposable and left for dead. However, Neil Smith's rent gap suggests that the deflation of prices will attract investors past a tipping point (Smith 2010). Such is the case in many of the municipalities of the MMV, suggesting that not all hope is lost and that there are economic development projects to consider.

Though capitalism guarantees spaces like the Rust Belt will emerge within the market, it also suggests postindustrial spaces are not forever relegated to lesser economic viability. Spaces are dynamic as, "the pattern of spatial inequality may change as a result of the changes in the requirements of the production process itself, in other words because of changes in the locational demands of profitable economic activity" (Massey 1978). Further complicating restructuring processes, desirable economic conditions are also changing. Massey emphasizes that both sectors

and spaces are dynamic entities. Still, she challenges the notion that regional problems are the fault of the region rather than inflicted by and consequential of the circuits of capital. Considering the position of regional economies in larger systems reveals a shared sentiment regarding industrial fallout. Birch reminds the condition of the Rust Belt was not the result of implosion but instead by the directions of the larger economy. Fault is not limited to a specific region's geography:

“the problems of OIRs (Older Industrial Regions) are not necessarily the result of internal deficits in productivity or competitiveness as prevailing policy discourse imply, but reflect the structural basis of their economies in terms of historical over-reliance on a narrow group of heavy industries, only partly replaced in recent decades by routine services and foreign-owned manufacturing plants” (Birch 2010, 36).

Just as vertical integration tied the region together in production, deindustrialization unwove interdependence. Industry's domino effect reveals regional economies remain at the mercy of outside forces (Birch 2010, 54). Despite shared responsibility in spurring deindustrialization, deindustrialized communities are left to pick up their own pieces and move onward into an ever-dynamic economy. Under these conditions, the MMV must continually ask itself what economy it wants to catch up to. In order to avoid repeating mistakes of the past, the MMV's regional relationships must transcend capital interest.

However, Birch (2010) also offers an answer to the question of the shape of the future. He affirms the large influence of small firms, upholding the “greatness of the small” mantra of the last decades of the twentieth-century. Though long standing, such an economic development strategy remains unevenly applied across the MMV. While some municipalities wait for an anchor to return to their brownfields, others are filling up their main streets. Take the cases of

Charleroi and California. Charleroi's "anchor" World Kitchen, a glass plant responsible for famed Pyrex glass, employs 320 union employees. California University of Pennsylvania, California's anchor institution employs approximately 1,000. Despite California's greater size, over 100 more small businesses exist in Charleroi. Overall, Charleroi is home to a healthier economy and less poverty (PDCED).

In order for economic development to not come at the expense of identity, the MMV must consider its symbolic economy. Coined by Sharon Zukin (1995), symbolic economy is a brand that bridges the past and future of a place for commodification purposes. The symbolic economy can manifest in three ways: preservation and marketing of authentic "place-myths", cultural and institutional investments (including the erection of monuments), and through speculators or "place entrepreneurs" (Zukin 1995). Much like Safford's comparison of Youngstown and Allenton, Johansson and Karlsson hypothesize that economic renewal is measured by qualitative connections and organization (Johansson and Karlsson 2001, 18). Given the smallness of MMV municipalities following deindustrialization, emphasis on engagement and interpersonal interaction is a positive sign, though the regional extent of such relationships remains in question.

3.7 THE POLITICS OF THE POSTINDUSTRIAL MMV

Just as the collapse of the MMV was inevitable according to theorists, Soja predicts that Rust Belt economic woes spurred the politically revanchist Forgotten Man: "The spatial problematic and its socio-political ramifications on the regional and international scales hinge upon the importance assigned to geographically uneven development in the genesis and

transformation of capitalism” (Soja 1989, 104). Neoliberalism’s shift away from championing workers rights and movement towards a bootstraps mentality saw the economic importance of and assistance available to the Rust Belt fade.

Additional changes occurring under postindustrial capitalism involve the spatial division of labor. Soja (1989) again suggests that sectors hold the key to restructuring through the intensification and extensification, or widening, of labor divisions. As seen with deindustrialization, divisions of labor consist of both physical and social components. Greater spatial division of labor sees links to sectoral and regional decline (Massey 1978). Interestingly, such trends appear to broadly share the partisan divides sharpening across the United States, especially in the largely purple Rust Belt. The relationship between class position and political affiliations has a storied history in the United States. Industrialism is partial responsible for forming these relationships as seen in Alger Hiss’s assessment of the 1929-1939 period, “In Europe the workers are socialist, and the bourgeois are conservatives; in America, the middle class are conservatives, the workers are democrats, and the bourgeoisie are communist” (Hiss 1948). The rise of fiscal conservatism during the period of deindustrialization marks another potential variable that could spur divergence in places according to public assistance, tax rates, and projects within municipalities.

3.8 FROM POLITICAL ECONOMY TO REGIONALISM

Evaluating the canon of political economy provides the theoretical foundation necessary to consider the challenges of postindustrial economies, both within independent municipalities but

also relative to each other. Based on these theoretical foundations, I assert that the MMV's collapse was an inevitable condition of capitalism. Postindustrial uneven development is a continuation of capitalism's impact, as MMV municipalities diverge and compete at the regional rather than national scale. Due to the production of space, much of the MMV continues to resemble and remain imagined as its former self, despite a loss in use value. Despite the need to Unlike Zukin's symbolic economy, the authenticity of place is easily expendable during the reproduction process.

Given the replication of Marxist political economy over both time and space, the narrative of deindustrialization became reinforced across the geographic MMV region. However, the tensions between labor and capital as well as industrialism and the built environment left the MMV a loser in the fight for limited resources. Exploring both the theoretical tenants and historical application of political economy reveals that capitalism possesses the capacity to shape a region's identity. In the next chapter, I will explore regionalism in both physical and cultural frameworks within the context of the MMV. Using theories of political economy, I seek to uncover deindustrialization's impact on the interregional relationships between municipalities. When considered together, political economy and regionalism may offer insight as to strategies that help and hurt economic development across the MMV.

In summation, the cycles and circuits of capital predicted deindustrialization and its impact on the built environment. Uneven development and the production of space are both symptoms of economic geography and foundational in explaining the divergent paths of MMV municipalities in postindustrial economy. The contradictions of capitalism outlive industry in the MMV and continue to influence postindustrial economics and politics. Additionally, considering the position of labor is necessary in order to gauge the relationships between industry and the

built environment. Given political economy's impact on the booms and busts of twentieth century industrialism, it is necessary to view the present geography of the MMV as a result of the political and economic implications of previous decades.

4.0 REGIONALISM IN THE MMV

Spatializing political economy, especially in the case of the MMV, suggests regionalism's relevance in postindustrial economic evaluations. The concept of regionalism captures both tangible and intangible linkages. Pride of place or identity-based connection derive from shared social, economic, or political experiences, feeds intangible regional associations. Physical regionalism, however, derives from shared topographies, histories, or likenesses in the built environment. Intangible connectivity is less obligatory than tangible changes to the built environment that do not allow for opting out of the identity. Regionalism possesses a rich literary history in the context of the United States, having been labeled both panacea and false promise (Isserman 1995; Markusen 1995).

Banes and Ledebur classify regions as dynamic, interwoven and interdependent entities made of both cities and suburbs (Banes and Ledebur 1998, 40). They argue that city and suburb are themselves governmental classifications of the political economies of space. Speaking from the humanities perspective, Arthur Limerick argues the strength of intangible regionalism can even shape narratives around physical space: "While geography plays a role in their definition, regions are much more the creations of human thought and behavior than they are the product of nature" (Limerick 2012). Social capital's control over regional relationships does not stop with social or political relationships, but also involves economic interactions. Borje Johansson analogizes that

regionalism is to economics what networking is to business (Johansson 1991). Regionalism and deindustrialization possess a symbiotic relationship. Given the implications of political economy, the MMV can be understood both as a natural region, carved out by topography, and a result of economic, social, and political function over time. Its economic organization was an integral component of its development, however, as, “Mill towns had been created for the single purpose of producing steel, but around that function the workers had created an encompassing social system” (Lubove 8, 1996). Thus, the MMV is a complicated case in which multiple definitions of regionalism apply. Regionalism is an answer to the physical and financial ills of uneven geographies and the production of space in the MMV. After reviewing the historic usage of regionalism in literature, I will unpack its analytical application within the MMV and in connection to political economy.

4.1 HISTORY OF REGIONALISM

Regionalism has long been linked to industrial decline, since architect Clarence Stein referred to industrial cities as dinosaurs on the verge of the consumer revolution (Fishman 2001, 16). The early regionalists, including Stein and Lewis Mumford, predicted the regional city would rise from the ashes of dinosaur cities. Regionalism became a useful frame through which to view the built environment during the Progressive era, with the birth of formal urban planning and acceleration of industrialization. Most of the ink spilled on regionalism covers the relationship between urban centers and their suburbs. That is not to say post-war regionalists always endorsed sprawl. To the contrary, regionalists favor city-county consolidation, for the

sake of encouraging comprehensive planning while discouraging intraregional competition (Feiock 2004). In the context of familiar geographies of the MMV, Glass (2011) argues that peripheral locals prevented the early twentieth-century consolidation of Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh due to varying visions and a lack of a regional identification. Additionally, Glass (2018) considers issues of regional consolidation at the national level. Regionalists of the 1960's continued in the tradition of the Progressive Era, under the Good Government platform. Political economists returned to Marx and discussions of uneven development, and discussing the geographic impacts of labor disputes became vogue once again (Markusen 1995). From there, regionalism was not immune to the neoliberalism of the 1980s, but with the Sun Belt boom at the expense of the Rust Belt, it began to become attached to economics, namely deindustrialization. A 1998 definition by Peet describes regionalism in academic terms as an analytical framework rather than a communal sense of density, away from community recognition, as a “chronological discipline focused on causal relations between the assemblages of phenomena which lend individuality to particular places” (Peet 1998, 16). The temporal nature of Peet's definition is especially relevant in the MMV, as it accounts for the span of the industrial boom and bust cycle. During the same decade, Isserman (1995) and Markusen (1995) criticized regional science's stagnation as a discipline, challenging it to continue to continue to mature along with changing landscapes and regain its community ties. Markusen suggests continued study of sense of place as well as experimental methodology as potential next steps for regionalism at the turn of the last millennium (Markusen 1995). Since then, regionalism expanded its geographies to both address and cope with globalization. Contemporary regional writing sees architect Peter Calthorpe incorporate sustainability into a regional frame. New-regionalism is primarily concerned with scale, from constructing at a human scale to operating

within the global economy. Calthorpe (2001) recommends designing regions like a neighborhood, by upholding human scale. Through its history regionalism remains tied to political economy.

Individually, MMV communities include compact built environments, especially in their business districts. However, they remain reliant on cars for their connectivity. Given its position parallel to the Monongahela River, Route 837 would likely constitute an MMV corridor according to Calthorpe and Fulton (2001). Corridors maintain natural and man-made components as they, “are the skeletal structure of regional form and its connections” (Calthorpe and Fulton 2001, 57). Other routes, such as toll road 43 and the Mon-Fayette Expressway seek to connect the region as whole to surrounding counties and beyond. The notorious Mon-Fayette Expressway, now in its fourteenth year of planning, is both a top-down and bottom-up project, according to interviews. In the spirit of new-regionalism, it is worth clarifying the distinction between regionalization and regionalism, which informs my methodology. Regionalization is a top down expansion of policy implementation across a large geographic area. Regionalism involves the bottom-up acceptance of similarities between communities (Keating 2004). New-regionalism, a condition of globalization, assesses regional connectivity as situated within an international frame. Smart-growth similarly challenges the MMV’s position relative to Pittsburgh. Though the riverfront municipalities would stand to benefit from smart-growth policy that favors infill and brownfield development over those of green fields, it would require the recognition of regional connectivity, rather than municipalities’ emphasizing their independence. Though the MMV is still experiencing growth pains, the new-regionalist principles of holistic planning and creating a sense of place respond to the uneven development and production of space previously imposed.

A shared experience with political economy, particularly involving the behavior of capital, is an integral component of regionalism's presence in the MMV. Industrial histories of the MMV are both tangible and intangible, evident in the built environment and narratives of space alike. The concept of regionalism, rather than urbanism, addresses the paradoxical differences of similar spaces. While regionalism was once present across the MVV in the private sector, today it is the public sector that seeks to reconnect municipalities. I hypothesize that the recognition of the influence of regionalism is a component of the divergence that occurred in the successful economic development in the MMV. Regionalism manifests across the MVV politically, economically, and socially. As I will explore, regional economics, identity, politics, and competition invoke ideas of political economy such as uneven geographies and the production of space.

4.2 REGIONAL ECONOMICS

A regional frame puts the postindustrial history of the MMV into its correct political and economic perspective. Regionalism provide the capacity to understand how disparate places such as Appalachia and Silicon Valley are linked by a set of broader policies and macroeconomic principles (Eller 2013). Peet suggests that the organization of production, class, structure, and labor all contribute to a shared conception of a region (Peet 1998, 150). Such commonalities can shape the authentic sense of place, as well as the built environment, from the type of employers to shared third spaces. Keating and Loughlin more closely tie regional economics with places like the MMV, defining economic regions, "according to economic characteristics or criteria such as industrialized/deindustrialized, urban/rural; or sectoral: steel producing, ship-building,

tourist-oriented” (Keating and Loughlin 2004, 2). Though deindustrialization has occupied a lot of discussion to this point, I will later deploy case studies in order to assess the sector identification.

There are three different definitions of regionalism that can apply to the MMV. First, a region weds the MMV municipalities together. Beyond that, a larger region considers the length of the Monongahela River Valley, spanning two states and three counties. A third consideration of region positions the Mon Valley within Pittsburgh’s Metropolitan Statistical Area. While my primary interest is in exploring the relationship between MMV municipalities, within this chapter I will explore all three conceptions of regionalism and how they interact.

Regionalism’s function reflects economic conditions. Due to losses in industrial linkages, regional relationships shifted in a postindustrial landscape. Reverse vertical integration began as deindustrialization commenced; just as product was once barged or piped up and down the Mon, pink slips floated their way up the river (Patrick 2000, 14). The river valley’s resemblance to industrial processes backfired: “The Monongahela and Ohio valleys functioned as giant assembly lines of steel. Regardless of the enormity of each station on the line—consisting of entire mills and their dependent towns – one could not be closed without shuttering others to which it was linked” (Muller 2006, 59). Economic linkages were not limited to the manufacturing sector alone.

Steady development of brownfields within communities deepened the discouragement of Mon Valley residents and incubated further deterioration (Muller 2006, 83). Place-based assessments of deindustrialization further reveal political economy’s impact of regional relationships. Though a place-based consideration, people suffer the consequences of systems beyond their reach as, “Today, obsolescence is primarily functional, induced by the marketplace.

Most apparent physical deterioration results not from long use, but from abuse” (Jackle and Wilson 1992, 19). As discussed in the last chapter, the dissolving of unions and rise of individualism further challenges the existence of shared regional identity.

Friedmann suggests that postindustrial places must find an entry point into information-age industrialization (Friedman 1991, 193). Specifically, he cites using research and development to either upgrade existing industry or incubate new ideas. The MMV is home to one state university, providing a starting point for such an approach. Given the present pace of technological investment and distribution of existing capital, the MMV is not likely to become the next Silicon Valley. However, due its past experiences and vulnerability under big capital, it should not want to. In Chapter Six, I explore the impact of small capital, or entrepreneurship on the postindustrial MMV.

4.3 REGIONAL IDENTITY

National business trends reflect regions in aggregate and vice versa. Thus, the Rust Belt, and its MVV sub-region, represents decline in the manufacturing sector across the country. The metropolitan region serves as the primary platform for visualizing economic transitions by better exemplifying trends than national calculations (Banes and Ledebur 1998). Banes and Ledebur (1998) argue that regional economics inform national economics. Fluidity and harmony between markets strengthen regional connectivity. A core feature of regionalism is positionality as, “an essential characteristic of the economic region is that it is an open system, inextricably linked to other economic regions, and thus its welfare is interdependent with other economic regions”

(Banes and Ledebur 1998, 89). With an intentionally low barrier to entry and an emphasis on connectivity, regionalism can be a collective good (Banes and Ledebur 1998, 92).

Beyond describing economic regions as interdependent and open, Banes and Ledebur (1998) relate economic regions to business cycles, a fitting analogy given the history of the MMV. As seen through the production of spaces, investment can decide the function of space as well as the relationships between spaces under capitalism. Banes and Ledebur find that cities and suburbs of a shared region organize much like vertical integration, “the coherence of economic regions produces city and suburban economic performances that are interdependent” (Banes and Ledebur 1998, 40). However, Banes and Ledebur stress that, like in the production processes, these relationships are made in economic interest and should be mutually beneficial, or the opposite of uneven development. Like Peet’s definition of regionalism that accounts for time as a factor in regional identity, dynamism becomes a necessary component of interregional relationships. Such a caveat supports the MMV’s status as a region even through deindustrialization.

The economic divergence of the MMV is not mutually exclusive with practices of regionalism. Complementary to my argument, Banes and Ledebur reject neoclassical economics’ assumption that, “there are uniform regional responses to federal macroeconomic policies” (Banes and Ledebur 1998, 49). Instead, there is a storied relationship between industry and specific economic regions. As examined in the last chapter, Marxist political economy is intimately related to the economic cycle of industrial decline. As seen in the MMV, “Business cycles have been the nemesis of industrial economics. Karl Marx predicted the ultimate collapse of capitalism through successive and increasingly severe cycles of boom and bust” (Banes and Ledebur 1998, 40). Here, theories of political economy are conferred upon a regional scale in order to understand economic divergence.

Regionalism is not a new concept in the Mon Valley. The very nature of the term Mon Valley engages both the region's natural and built environment. History is rich with commonalities, while the future presents possibilities for divergence, "All the towns along the banks of the river in the Mon Valley are unique, different, like individuals, but groups of towns are tied together too, in a sense, because of the way they developed" (Parker 1999, 102). As seen in the previous chapter, the usage of the term Mon Valley is a gesture of unity within the region. While shared festivals or pageantry may seem like a drop in the bucket in terms of de-rusting the MMV, Peet stresses the social component of regionalism. Peet uses a Foucauldian reading of regional identity, arguing that "the social activities in a region take place as continuous 'discourse' rooted in shared material-situations, with cultures having both limiting and active capabilities" (Peet 1997, 149). Peet equates regionalism with continuity. Thus, despite the period of industrial fallout and mass exodus seen in the 1980s through the 1990s, a historic and anachronistic regionalism still bound the MMV.

Based on existing literature, the MMV may become another case of regional path dependency without economic restructuring. The phenomena of lock-in investigates the difficulty that regions experience in recovering from economic shocks. Geographer Ron Martin argues that problematic lock-ins occur when an industrial economy continually attempts to reproduce itself into a former self without evolving (Martin 2010). The lock-in serves as an indicator of regional path dependency theory, which suggests that both the tangible and intangible impacts of lock-ins on regionalism make it difficult for spaces to reimagine themselves following the departure of industry. Resilience combats the effects of lock-ins. As opposed to "bouncing back", Cowell argues that healthy regions, like bodies, adapt to stresses and shocks (Cowell 2012).

Regionalism doubled as a sign of industrial operations and a coping mechanism in the post-industrial period. For instance, since the 1980s, many nonprofit organizations regionalized across the valley, including Chambers of Commerce and Community Development Corporations. What differentiates industrial and postindustrial regionalism, however, are their private versus public approaches. In the age of industry, the private sector supported regionalism by way of integrated economies, whereas the regionalization of public sector services appeared to be born out of desperation. As wages plummeted and deindustrialization set in during the 1980's, *And The Wolf Finally Came*, as John Hoerr titled his anthology of industry and labor in the Monongahela River Valley, the possibility of extinction loomed large for MMV municipalities (Hoerr 1989, 575). As much as regional consolidation maintains an air of defeatism, the alternative, fragmentation, appears an even greater threat to small, resource limited municipalities. Hoerr and my interviewees alike believe that fragmentation is already present across the Mon Valley. Furthermore, in terms of the public shift towards regional frames, policy solutions are increasingly found at the regional scale, though the trend is slow moving overall (Miller 2002, 4). Consolidation between former mill towns and the suburbs beyond river fronts that received some of the towns' population loss spurred regional tension. Hoerr uses West Elizabeth as an example, suggesting it combine with Duquesne and Clairton, two depressed steel communities further down the Monongahela River (Hoerr 1989, 575). Hoerr found cultural anthropologies, down to rivaling football teams, as the primary inhibitor to the formal pursuit of municipal merges. More broadly, Norris (2001) finds that the desire for autonomy in operation is the primary preventer of regional governance. This sees municipalities unwilling to give up their independent public services as well as localized approach to governance in favor of regional planning.

As seen with brownfields in the built environment, vestiges of the industrial economy continue to haunt the MMV in the postindustrial era. The boom and bust cycle of social and economic well-being, incubated by the manufacturing economy, further compounds the challenge of promoting regionalism:

“The political and social fragmentation of the valley mill towns, so helpful in enabling the old U.S. Steel Corporation to organize and control its great assembly line, has turned into a life-threatening liability. The political and social barriers to consolidation are awesome: the undesirability of merging better-off communities with worse-off towns, the resistance of political office-holders, and latent racism in the mainly white neighborhoods, to name a few” (Hoerr 576).

Hesitancy towards consolidations perpetuates the resource shortages of the MMV. Instead of uniting under regionalism, fragmentation under neoliberalism sees municipalities left to compete with one another. Establishing binary winner versus loser framework over simplifies the economic development of “various economic ‘belts’”, especially given the emergence of neoliberalism alongside deindustrialization (Weinstein and Gross 1988, 18). Potential competition for labor or investment would privilege individual identities over the regional.

Given capital’s ability to manipulate and produce space, as seen through political economy and regionalism, new approaches draw attention to reintroducing the human element behind such influences. New regionalism concerns the actors that make up the backbone of socioeconomic conditions and their impact on regional conditions (Amin 1999). Thus, for my case studies, I identify and interview MMV stakeholders in order to understand circuits of investment in and across MMV municipalities. Here, place and people-based approaches work in harmony in order to present a fuller picture of regional connectivity.

Regional identity and social capital, and their relationship, cannot be over emphasized. But even Friedman, who suggests that “a successful transition, therefore, requires that regions peripheralized by changes in economic relations regains its place among the concert of regions by becoming more closely integrated with the emerging world system”, worries about the potential loss of identity that accompanies transition (Friedmann 1991, 169). Thus, the MMV must integrate its identity directly into space in order to simultaneously assure the survival of regional identity and that space remains out of the production cycle. In order to do so, the identity must be forged beyond any one municipality and economic restructuring rather than reproduction should be opted for.

4.4 REGIONAL POLITICS

While Keating and Loughlin restrict their definition of political regions as formal regional governing bodies, I argue there are less formal political currents shared throughout the MMV that are worth recognizing. Friedmann (2010) more generally stresses the necessity of a participatory planning process, arguing that it provides a more appropriate framework for gathering consensus considering resources and in the theme of strength building tactics. Glass (2018) argues that top down versus bottom up approaches by local stakeholders are responsible for the shape of regional governance, compared to the more utilitarian public choice method of regional organization. As the long-time primary forum for codification, politics provide a platform from which to address regional relationships.

Regionalism’s hand in economic development is not new in the MMV. Upon the onset on deindustrialization, economic development strategies for lower Mon Valley towns prioritized

regional interest, citing the dangers of “tremendous governmental fragmentation in the Mon Valley” (Mon Valley R/DUAT 1988). Now, decades later, some municipalities finally appear to be thinking regionally. McKeesport, in the lower portion of the valley, former home to the National Tube Works and once among the largest Mon Valley cities, historically resisted regionalism. This attitude shifted by the late 1980’s, with local political leadership admitting that they can no longer practice isolationism, despite hesitance towards emerging economic trends (Hoerr 1988, 576). McKeesport has yet to take interest in sector-based rebranding, with additional industry or a dog track leading suggestions for brownfield reuse. The establishment of such a position traces back to industrial interest: “For forty years, the bureaucratic structure of the steel industry precluded innovation in product entrepreneurialism or industrial relations. This inertia in industry was mirrored by the lack of political innovation in the mill towns” (Hoerr 1988, 577). There is promise that such an apolitical position is beginning to change. Within the last year, McKeesport was granted one of the bids to home marijuana growing facilities, a decidedly political industry. Despite its exponential decline, McKeesport remains a linking point between Pittsburgh and the MMV.

The Mon Valley Initiative (MVI) is a primary example of where regionalism meets reclaimed political economy in action. As an umbrella Community Development Corporation, MVI services upper and mid Mon Valley municipalities, building the capacity of communities by serving as a real estate developer, financial advisor, and more. Individual municipal CDCs of the MMV can be formally affiliated with the MVI coalition, which presently include the Greater Charleroi CDC and the Monessen CDC. The MVI also helped launch the Brownsville Area Redevelopment Coalition, formalizing a neighborhood group into a CDC. While municipalities host Chambers of Commerce and their respective counties engage in economic development

projects, MVI seeks to smooth uneven geographies by engaging in both soft skill and brick and mortar development. Such a dual interest stands in direct contrast to the interests that drove the very establishment of many MVV municipalities. A supporting argument for why MMV municipalities have been unable to coalesce around their shared experience of capital abuse points to the declining role of activism. The Valley has strayed far from its Homestead Strike days. This is not to say there is a lack of activism in the Valley, but rather that it is under resourced.

Regional discussion of the MMV would not be complete without evaluating its relationship with Pittsburgh. “Hell with the lid off,” or in a more relative frame, “The Paris of Appalachia,” Pittsburgh wore a singular, albeit dirty, steel hat following industrialization in the mid nineteenth century. While Pittsburgh enjoys its status as the darling of Rust Belt cities in the postindustrial period (at least in Richard Florida's eyes), the Steel City's experience represents only one of the three paths identified by scholars. Pittsburgh's emphasis on innovation and technology, crucial tenants of the knowledge-based economy, is typical of the “high-road” approach to industrial fallout (Kochan, Katz, McKersie 1986). Additional approaches to economic development see a rallying around an attempt to incubate more dynamic economies, making up something of a middle-road (Piore and Sabel 1984). The “low-road”, however, keeps spaces and their occupants at lowest rung of production, leaving laborers with limited skills and even less bargaining power (Bluestone and Harrison 1982). In these spaces, decline is an accepted state. In assessing processes of competition between places, Edward J. Malecki finds structural mismatches between postindustrial economies and desirable “intelligent places” (Malecki 2004). Malecki (2004), finds that the low-road becomes a default path for postindustrial economies experience lock-in. Upon observation, the middle and low-road

approaches appear to better describe the economies of the MMV. Upon face value, the recent rebranding of Pittsburgh's economy as "meds and eds" driven seems a positive sign for its neighbors down river. However, in studying Pittsburgh's postindustrial Renaissances, Patrick Vitale (2015) finds that economic development can reproduce processes of uneven development, making regions simultaneously experience investment and disinvestment.

However, previous European cases suggest economic misalignment can contribute to the tension between Pittsburgh and the MMV, "where advances in technology, information technology and the mobility of capita seem to have removed the traditional development bottlenecks, economic inequalities not only persist, but grow in certain areas" (Rodriquez-Pose 1998, 457). Such economic tensions can fuel disharmony and fragmentation, challengers of regionalism. European cases serve as good examples for the MMV as to the role of regionalism in deindustrialization. European regions also see variations in their recoveries (Birch 2010). In comparative analysis of old industrial regions (OIRs) of Western Europe, Birch finds that the United Kingdom's ability to unlock itself from manufacturing sectors lead to an increase in GDP across OIRs. Contrastingly, French, Spanish, and German OIRs retained more manufacturing employment. Birch credits the UK's market-oriented approach for its increased capital generated, though it should also be noted the UK diversified its labor (Birch 2010, 50). Still, this case exhibits the financial incentives of unlocking from previous sectoral labels. Interestingly, the same study found no relationship between better economic performance and the presence of a devolution inspired regional government. Study of the variant conditions of the European OIRs reveals a relationship between categories of regions and social conditions (Rodriquez-Pose 1998). Such a premise challenges the idea that regionalism is either present or not. For instance, the MMV resembles both industrial declining and peripheral regional categorization in lacking

dynamisms. Reasoning for this lack of dynamic economies can be traced back to space, where brownfields are less flexible in redevelopment and not as competitive in free market as new builds (Quevit 1994). The European cases correlate market-oriented approaches to the regions that saw the most relative success in the case of economic development. Such findings appear contrary to Marx's warning of reproducing space established in the last chapter, though it should be noted that the European cases saw small capital investments.

4.5 THE FUTURE OF REGIONALISM IN THE MMV

As much as regionalism in the MMV requires an evaluation of the past, it is also relates to the future directions and associations of cities. Frugg and Baron (2008) identify four potential city futures for the twenty-first century: the global city, the tourist city, the middle-class city, or the regional city. Global city or tourist city goals remain well out of reach for the MMV, given declining populations and a lack of resources. The middle-class city, however, is an aspiration image of the MMV: "This is a city focused on its residents not on outsiders, on its city services not on marketing ability or financial sector, and on its ability to be the home not simply of the rich and poor but of those in between" (Frugg and Baron 2008, 185). However, such a status seems better suited for cities with newly restructured economies that seek to remain inclusive. Still, the middle-class city strategy of incentivizing small business development remains relevant. While the MMV can learn lessons from and look fondly at the middle-class city, the regional city model is the Goldilocks fit for the MMV. The regional city model accepts that cities exists in dialogue with their regions and are not insular entities. However, such a strategy is economically counter-intuitive based on neoclassical economic assumptions of self-

interest. For instance, by neoclassical economic logic, “there is little incentive for the region’s localities to work collectively on the issues of economic growth, environmental quality, or social services. On the contrary, each locality has an incentive to act in a narrowly self-interested manner” (Frugg and Baron 2008, 206). Presently, such an attitude remains throughout the MMV, but manifests in some municipalities more than others.

Fragmented government and complicated redevelopment processes at the local level often accompany the postindustrial period (Stone et al 2005, 29). Just as in education, the regionality of economic development is not recognized as the reward of property taxes that remain tied to singular spaces. Frugg and Baron (2008) argue that a lack of cooperation regionally is not an inevitability, but a consequence of present home rule policy (Frugg and Baron 2008, 207). Regional cooperation could be incentivized, but that decision remains at the discretion of states, who would stand to lose their parochial rule. However, Frugg and Baron found that self-interest in economic betterment prevailed, even in the case of joint economic development strategies, as “municipalities were not inclined to engage in cooperative efforts if they perceived that the other municipality was getting more out of the arrangement, even if they stood to benefit too” (Frugg and Baron 2008, 209). Such negotiations may be better situated within the political realm. Frugg and Baron float the idea of developing regional legislatures solely concerned with cooperative ventures, though recognizing that the body would consist of many representatives with little individual efficacy. In a more relaxed way, regional citizenship could attain similar objectives of promoting cooperation. While such an identity may seem difficult to obtain between municipalities that rival each other down to the high school football team, such citizenship would be based on differences rather than similarities (Frugg and Baron 2008, 225). Therefore, regional fragmentation is established by federalism and upheld by

capitalism. Like most changes necessary in the MMV, establishing regional cooperation will require moving emphasis away from individualism in favor of collective interest.

4.6 REGIONAL COMPETITION

What sets the small municipalities of the MMV apart from those of other industrial river valleys attempting to find their place in a new economy? While the answer remains largely to be seen, under present economic conditions, tourists, residents, and investors alike can be convinced of regional superiority through competition. Regions compete for limited resources much like other geographies, “the question of whether regions exploit regions must therefore be answered affirmatively, but this affirmation can make theoretical and political sense only when regions are seen as social processes hierarchically structured by the fundamental relations of production” (Soja 1989, 117). Free-market competition is complicated by the depressed economic conditions of concentrated disinvestment in communities. Malecki (2004) argues that as a result of a postindustrial competitive disadvantage, regions can lose their economic edge and “go out of business”. Competition does not just occur at the interregional level, but also beyond. For the MMV, that means not only are municipalities pitted against each other but they are also ultimately left to challenge the relatively well-resourced Pittsburgh. The rat race continues as, “all places are in trouble, but some are in more trouble than others” (Malecki 2004, 1106). Such desperate conditions create a race to the bottom at the expense of regions. Additionally, competition encourages the expansion of spaces of production (Jessop and Sum 2000). Again, the authenticity of places or regions are at the mercy of economic competition and profit

motivation. Mimicking new productive spaces, from convention centers to river frontages, further challenges the overall well-being of regions (Harvey 1989).

Given the gaps still left from the loss of industry and consequent uneven development across the region, MMV municipalities cannot compete on equal ground. Uneven geography is present in regionalism as, “the fact that places compete does not mean that they compete equally. Because the playing field is uneven, the dynamics of competition are fraught with negative rather than positive connotations, particularly for disadvantaged places” (Malecki 2004). In other words, not only is equal competition impossible based on the economic conditions of places in the MMV, but requires paying into the same system that contributed to its industrial decline. Consequently, the “tradition of viewing cities as individual competitors in an open market, responsible for their own improvement and development, has encouraged the assumption that cities themselves are to blame for their failures” (Connolly 2010, 8). Connolly (2010) gives the example of how vying for a position of primacy in the Midwest through competition for institutional bids distracted Chicago and St. Louis while the condition of public housing and transportation worsened in each city. Addressing the needs of local populations, specifically vulnerable populations, became a secondary priority to market competition.

Smaller postindustrial towns already face challenges in remaking themselves given limited resources and the sway of economic demand towards highly skilled labor (Connolly 2010). Such challenges are enhanced further when framed as a competition. Connolly offers an important clarification that smaller cities do not hold the luxury of asking “what to do but whether they can do what is necessary” (Connolly 2010, 7). In order to maintain high road approaches to economic development however, and thus avoid the continual ill-effects of a low-wage centric spaces, Malecki (2004) suggests parsing out data at the regional level for use as

rankings or indexes. Additionally, entrepreneurialism became favorable over managerialism following the 1980's, where chasing smokestacks has been replaced with courting startups (Harvey 1989). Still, the decline in union membership and bargaining strength, illustrated in the last chapter, suggests that regional competition will continue to pose the harshest challenge for workers. While regionalism might not be the panacea of resource provision, much like industrialization, collective efforts may encourage the pulling of resources, capturing what would have otherwise been expenditures in the competition process. However, like any investment, a merger in economic development strategies is a risk for the individual position of municipalities. If all MMV municipalities fared the same economically and did not diverge in the postindustrial period, this risk would be minimal. As I will explore through case studies, there is a sliding scale of regional interest in the MMV.

Thus, distrust of regionalism arises out of the market mindset that continues to rule MMV municipalities. In this way, the MMV is a victim of abuse that still fondly defends its abuser's practices against its own interest. Despite fear that regional associations will lower the economic prospects of individual municipalities, the alternative of uneven development is hardly preferable. Such a phenomenon is particularly pertinent in old industrial centers as the processes of production have come to define their space. The company town model, exemplified in the MMV through Donora, is the embodiment of capital's impression of geographies. The impact of capitalism on regional identity is profound across the MMV. The question remains whether a regional label helps or hurts economic development today across deindustrialized communities.

But won't the capitalistic rat race that previously plagued the MMV continue between small businesses? As opposed to the all-eggs-in-one-basket mentality of big capital, as seen during industrialization, an economy made up of a collection of small firms can remain heterogenous

(Bergman et al 7). The Main Street Program uses physical space and businesses to encourage new entrepreneurs to open up shop through clustering. While capital still chases capital, as found by Harvey, this way the surpluses remain in the community. Uneven geographies and the production of space are challenged through both the physical and fiscal interest of small capital, “small and locally-based businesses may have more of a stake in the well-being of the region than large multinationals which can withdraw their capital more easily” (Keating 2004, 34).

Grabher (1991) affirms that deindustrialization shook up the very structure of industrial organization. As hierarchies dissolved, vertically integrated large firms no longer possessed a hold on the market (Grabher 1991, 61). Postindustrial Italy saw success when community development dissociated from the condition of business, pulling space out of the business cycle (Garofoli 1991). Garofoli frames “territory” as outside the market, as a space where the market meets (Garofoli 1991, 123). Lefebvre would likely support such a future, but points out that the pollutants of the past production of space remain.

The Italian case still begs the question of what elements of economic development uphold the autonomy of territory by not reproducing space. In exploring this dilemma, Grabher offers the localized definition of community development found in Coffey and Polese (1984):

- 1) The emergence of local entrepreneurship
- 2) The expansion of local firms beyond the region (both with exports and with direct investment in other regions)
- 3) The maintenance of loyal enterprises under local control
- 4) The achievement of an economic structure with control functions and business services under local control.

The silver lining of deindustrialization means a smaller, potential healthier platform is available from which to reimagine the MMV economy. As seen in the Italian example, development does not necessarily need to be competitive with Pittsburgh. Modernist designs of

center and periphery are dissolving as, “New patterns of regional development have caused, for example, a ‘breakdown’ of the dualistic paradigm, with the opposition of center and periphery” (Garofoli 1991, 120). Breaking free of the business cycle as well regional subordination provides a self-securing future. A history of regional competition perpetuates the challenges of political economy, reminding of the pervasive influence of uneven geographies and expanding the production of space. Thus, the need for restructuring is not only necessary in the realm of political economy, but also could also positively leverage regionalism in the MMV.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

The previous chapters reviewed the common historical and theoretical precedents of economic development in the MMV. From here on, interest shifts to uncovering any trends in divergence. In order to evaluate the narrative shift and divergent paths of economic development in the MMV region, I employ a mixed methods approach of content analysis, descriptive quantitative analysis, and interview-generated case studies. The conditionality of economic development is in part due to its various inputs, meaning no singular measure can illuminate the dynamic system. Utilizing a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods is an increasingly popular tool in ethnographic research (Schensul et al 2012). Writing for human geographers conducting field work, Schensul et al argue that mixed methods can provide a more holistic view the people and places that serve as the subject of research. Together, content analysis, descriptive quantitative analysis, and case studies, provide a vivid visual of the trends and tactics of MMV municipalities in the post-industrial age.

As a disclaimer, I was not immune to falling into the smog-like trap that hovers over ethnographic research. In my attempt to attain information about economic development processes in the MMV, I immediately gravitated to the elites and experts in the region. In an effort to uphold the holistic representation that a mixed methodology affords, I consulted

community members who may not regularly appear around the round table of decision making but are the primary recipients and ultimate deciders of the success of economic development projects. In retrospect, I would have approached residents earlier in the process, developing a more lasting relationship, as I was reliant on gatekeepers across each municipality. Still, MMV municipalities were generally welcoming to my mixed methodologies.

Content analysis and interviews inform variables from which I conduct descriptive statistical analysis. Given the differing data sources and actors consulted, I did not anticipate that the components or examples of success within the MMV would be agreed upon. In this way, my methodology is democratic, leaving room for checks and balances. I revisit the role of opposing perspectives after explaining each component of my methodology. A mixed method approach gets to the very core of political economy and geography by giving context and space to all measurements. Implementing content analysis, case studies, and descriptive quantitative analysis will help identify the point of divergence seen across the economic development of MMV municipalities.

5.1 CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis refers to research extracted from existing publications, such as reports or historic documents. Dandaneau details the deindustrialization of Flint, Michigan, through factory reports (Dandaneau 1996). Wilson similarly uses content analysis in order to unpack and contrast rhetorical narratives of globalization in the Rust Belt cities of Indianapolis and Cleveland (Wilson 2007). Previous literature uses content analysis to evaluate the presence of regionalism

internationally. Rune Dahl Fitjar considers content analysis a bridge between qualitative and quantitative data, where narrative information is made quantifiable (Fitjar 2005). In order to understand how narratives of regionalism manifests in the Mon Valley, I review its historical depiction. The purpose of using content analysis is to give weight to the historical legacy and human impact in economic development. A foundational tool for social scientists, conducting content analysis is an admission that data on the topic in question already exists and historic grounding is relevant to the argument. Content analysis and case studies were previously paired in order to evaluate differential re-growth strategies in the Rust Belt (Wilson and Wouters 2003). In my review of the historic MMV, content analysis illuminates economic development precedent, providing context to the holistic approach.

In order to understand the path of the narrative of deindustrialization, I review archival newspapers in order to investigate the prevalence of regional identification. Wilson and Wouters (2003) include a newspaper review in their content analysis, though more randomly selected across three cities. My review of newspapers is targeted due to its interest in world choice over time. *The Mon Valley Independent*, a regional newspaper founded in 2015, acquired the archives of since shuttered community papers. Originally, the *Monessen Valley Independent*, *The Mon Valley Independent* intentionally expanded to serve a regional audience following the closure of many smaller municipal newspapers. The archives thus include many smaller publications including the, *Charleroi Mail* (1905-1906), *Charleroi Daily Mail* (1908-1960), *Mon Valley Advertiser* (1970-2013), *Mon Valley Report* (1970), *Monessen Independent* (1902), *Monessen Daily Independent* (1902-2003), and *Monessen Valley Independent* (1926-2015). Using the archives, I examined the prevalence of the use of term Mon Valley in articles from 1950 to present. I took note of events that included Mon Valley in their title or qualifier, such as the Miss

Mon Valley Beauty Contest for example. I then investigated these specific programs to reveal their associated years and contiguousness. After starting with the Mon Valley Independent archives, I expanded by search to the microfilm section of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Here, I flagged important dates within MMV history (recorded in chart: Donora smog, Monessen Works closure, etc) in order to see how MMV occurrences appeared before a larger regional Pittsburgh audience. Archival research not only informs the historic pressures of economic development in the MMV, but also presents the prevailing narrative, such as the regional identity, of the day. Content analysis findings are consolidated and discussed in the analysis chapter, followed by case studies.

5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Given the holistic nature of my mixed methods approach, each method is not confined to its respective sections. Instead, content analysis and interviews inform and define variables of success. To complement trend-seeking content analysis and interviews, I use descriptive statistical analysis in order to evaluate quantitative trends between MMV municipalities. Descriptive statistical analysis refers to a means of aggregating data in order to assess trends. In the field of urban studies, descriptive statistical analysis is used to evaluate trends in transportation, housing, and economic development (McGrew and Monroe 2000). In this case, I perform regression analyzes in order to test the relationships between variables. Of course, I must clarify that this is a test for correlation rather than causation. Such is not to our detriment,

however, as the interest of the investigation is to evaluate the relationship between select variables and economic vitality.

The groundwork for historic context and change over time derives from the U.S. Census. I began by reviewing census information from 1950 to present in order to summarize the demographic and labor trends of the MMV through deindustrialization. The State of Pennsylvania's Economic and Community Development Office served as my primary resource for such data, as it standardizes statistics, despite the MMV ranging three counties. These findings are presented in a summary table, organized by municipality. Such a display serves as a point of reference throughout the piece as well as lends itself to comparative analysis. Similar trends suggest the basis for a regional relationship. Content analysis, especially in a historically rich region, also lent itself to reviewing literature from and about the region. Broad trends of industrial decline are vividly seen in U.S. Steel's executive reports from 1970 to 1990. While a condition of the entire Mon Valley, such reports narrow the time frame and suggest the crucial variables of population and labor in evaluating the wherewithal of MMV municipalities. John Hoerr's *And the Wolf Finally Came Rust Belt* anthology presents a narrative image of the rise and fall of the steel industry. Not only does Hoerr's summarize U.S. Steel employment reports, but also the back-room labor negotiations and industry forecasts. There is no shortage of such historical anthologies of the Mon Valley and Pittsburgh region at large, indicating how narratives were able to solidify over time.

The steps towards identifying variables and conducting descriptive analysis are less straight forward than that of content analysis and interviews. From ground-level observation, I hypothesized that there was a variable present that could be linked to a regional rift in the MMV. However, identifying and naming that variable proved incredibly difficult. My first instinct,

given the established industrial collapse of the region, was to refer to the variable that I was after as resilience. I spent the better part of a month reviewing how similarly structured research studies applied variables like resilience (Falk 2012),(Colwell 2014). Though a popular interest of academics, resilience is often widely defined and applied. Given severity of deindustrialization across the Valley, and the implied “bounce back” that resilience connotes, I concluded that resilience did not capture the idea of divergence that I sought, implying MMV resilience would be misleading. I believe it would be difficult to argue any of the municipalities in question are undergoing true resilience, especially in the shadow of Pittsburgh. That being said, it is clear that resilience is an eventual goal of the MMV. Thus, a resiliency criterion would likely cast all MMV municipalities as similarly subordinate to larger rust belt cities, perpetuating the very process I seek to untangle. While initially I set out to pursue resilience as a measure of differentiated spaces, the relative nature of such a measure fell prey to the winner/loser division that plagues political economy.

Beyond resiliency, livability indexes were another potential variable that could capture the essence of MMV municipalities. Perhaps due to exposure to how top livability rankings are worn as badges of honor by cities, I imagine a livability index to be a comprehensive way of assets mapping in communities. However, upon further inspection of existing indexes, it became clear that such a variable would not speak to the specific desires of economic vitality in the MMV. As a reflection on the conditions for residency, livability does not speak to the success of attraction generating projects such as the entertainment economy. Upon researching its uses in scholarly work, livability indexes have been criticized as shoddy tools that aggregate places beyond recognition, or the opposite of a holistic approach (Okulicz-Kozaryn 2013). Thus, I decided to avoid a variable that would not support my methodological strategy.

In goldilocks fashion, while resiliency was too broad of a measure and livability did not capture enough as a variable, success was just right. The variable success is not without its own host of complications, however. Perhaps most obviously, success can be subjective and difficult to define. Unlike the broad nature of the other potential variables however, I embrace this measure as scalable and thus not punishing small municipalities for their size. Success's scalability can continue down to the individual project level as well, making it more cooperative with case studies. Unlike resilience, success is not a measure against the past, instead it is an evaluation of the present. Also, unlike more stuffy variables, I hypothesized that success would be easier for interviewees and residents alike to speak to rather than more relative labels. Unlike measures, such as livability rankings, that pit places against each other, the success of one project or municipality need not necessitated the failure of another. In fact, my interest in regionalism boils down to municipality's interest in a successful valley beyond their individual borders.

I define success as desirable; a place is successful if it is intentional and widely attractive in its development. Variables of success represent the opposite of deindustrialization. Thus, I ultimately adopted many of Bluestone and Harrison (1982) indicators for deindustrialized places: total population, unemployment, poverty, vacant homes, per capita income, percent of families in national middle income bracket, median household owner's value. In order to uncover the success of each MVV municipality, I documented six variables from 1980 to present: population change, sectoral shifts, poverty rate, vacancy rate, median area incomes, and entrepreneurship. Data for the variables population change, poverty rate, vacancy rate, sectoral shifts, were gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (PDCED). Using the PDCED portal, I calculated the rate of entrepreneurship as well as the sectoral breakdowns of each municipality. Finally, median area income as well as

other historical benchmark data was gathered directly from each state census since 1970. Together these variables not only speak to the postindustrial economic positions of municipalities, but also may hint at regional divergences in the quest for success.

My first two measures, population change and sectoral shift, outline the condition of the residents of the MMV across history. Population change refers to the net growth or loss of the population over the sample interval. Growth in population indicates desirability, and consequently success of a space. I measured the population change by again turning to the U.S. Census and calculating percent lost by each municipality each decade since 1970. Sectoral shifts consider the movement of workers from one workforce sector, such as industrial manufacturing, to another, like food service. Exploring changes across sectors is crucial in postindustrial landscapes, as they reveal what type of employment came to define municipalities in the wake of the manufacturing fall out. While I anticipated that the census would satiate questions of sector shift, the PDCED offered a refined portal for census information about employment sectors. As it is managed by the state, the portal provides an attractive, standardized snap shot of each municipality. Powered by GIS Planning, the site's intended audiences are businesses potentially seeking to invest in Pennsylvania. Ironically, one of the primary features of the portal is to compare municipalities both within the state and across the nation, inspiring further competition between places. I crosschecked all the information gathered from the portal with the census to make sure, however. Thus, within the variable sectoral shift, I recorded percentage breakdowns of sectors in each municipality in order to run a regression both within each municipality and across the MMV. In assessing sectors, I am most interested in the rise and fall of manufacturing, as a potential sign of lock-in. I look at population change and sectoral shifts as a possible duality, where decreases in specific sectors may inform population change in that region.

The next two variables, poverty and vacancy rates, speak to economic hardships consequent of deindustrialization. Poverty remains a residual variable of deindustrialization, meaning its presence is a clue to how successful economic development occurs in municipalities since widescale industrial collapse. I explore the relationship between poverty and sectoral data, especially in terms of manufacturing, in order to evaluate if any municipalities are experiencing lock-in. Success is not achievable with a high poverty rate given the implication of inequity. The poverty rate also captures the reach of economic development projects in a community. As related to residential properties, vacancy rate relates to population loss. Also residual of deindustrialization, vacancy tests the shrinking cities hypothesis rather than that of lock-in. A successful place, by virtue of its desirability, would express a low vacancy rate. While I do not anticipate vacancy or poverty to be positive in wider scopes, differentiation may indicate economic divergence given their connection to post industrialism.

The final two contributing variables of success round out the narrative of the MMV. Median household income (MHI) and entrepreneurship provide comparisons in the form of rates. Though calculating changes in median household income over time can look dramatic given inflation, the rate of increases displays the relative movement of economic development across the MMV. Additionally, MHI is a contributor to many other variables, but most explicitly addresses political economy and labor, necessary frames in the MMV. Though sectoral data relates to MHI, both variables are enhanced by entrepreneurship. Variable entrepreneurship captures the percentage of the total workforce of a municipality that are self-employed. Entrepreneurship embodies small capital as opposed to the large industry that once characterized the narrative of the MMV. The presence of entrepreneurship thus not only positive because of its economic development connotations, but also its symbolic departure from the past.

Using these six variables, I conducted a series of regressions test to test their relationships and if there has truly been a divergence in the success of economic development in MMV municipalities. The social science friendly program STATA translated my Excel organized data into quantitative relationships. While I tested every variable against the other, one variable in particular expressed strong relationships with most others. In the next section, I will present my findings, by each variable, in order to understand MMV municipalities in relation to one another. I will also further connect the various methodologies, as data analysis is enhanced by the explanations and answers that do not neatly fit in variable form. From there, my case studies will include an even closer look and comparison between Monongahela and Brownsville results.

5.3 CASE STUDIES

I employ case studies, and subsequently interviews, in order to provide an in-depth look at two self-selected municipalities. Case studies allow a more intimate look at the dynamics and bureaucratic processes of the municipalities in question as well as the journey of economic development to date. The use of case studies not only provides more space for geographic analysis, but is a more fitting method for considering the adoption of different economies in the wake of the industrial fallout. Given there are 15 MMV municipalities, case studies allow a sharper focus upon the systems behind economic development. In my preparatory research, I found case studies were previously used very effectively in analyzes of the Rust Belt (Hagedorn and Macon 1988; Mitra and Frick 2011; Hackworth 2018). Hagedorn and Macon (1988), base their case study in Milwaukee and utilize interviews of former gang members in order to uncover

the motivations of the rust belt underclasses. Using case studies, Mitra and Frick (2011) evaluate the condition of social reproduction in two rust belt towns, appropriately coded as Steeltown and Milltown, that sought to improve their education systems. Hackworth uses various blocks within Detroit for his case study to challenge the broad use of deindustrialization as the explanation of extreme land abandonment.

Previous case studies critique the ‘winner versus loser’ notion of rust belt resilience. Safford compares Allentown and Youngstown in his own attempt to isolate variables of success. Instead of place-based variables, he considered the person-based variable of organizations. Safford introduced a concept map that illuminated the organizational connectivity of community development players in Youngstown versus Allentown (Safford 2009). From the illustrations of the web of connections, Safford draws conclusions about Allentown’s greater capacity for cooperation. Ultimately, he finds the single most important organization to respond to the steel crisis, the Lehigh Valley Partnership, was formed after consulting the leaders of the Allegheny Conference. Such consolidation bound Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton together in development, in the regional tradition, unlike the splintered Youngstown (Safford 2009, 128-9). Like Safford, my case studies consider the role of regionalism in the new economies of the MMV.

Additionally, Karen Tumber uses a series of abbreviated case studies in order to illuminate common as well as compounding challenges that impact the similar landscapes of small Midwestern towns in *Small, Gritty, and Green*. Tumber also prefers a person-versus place-based analysis in order to capture tensions of labor. While the MVV case resembles that of Tumber, I maintain a place-based approach, as the variables of success used weigh heavier on the conditions of place rather than people. A place-based approach is especially valuable when the

condition of the land itself is dynamic, such as when environmental degradation takes hold (Henley-Shepard et al 2015). This extends to regional framework; Liga Baltina uses a place-based approaches to reveal arguments that the resources of municipalities should be considered when planning at the regional level (Baltina 2014). Upholding an overall place-based approach incorporates theories of uneven geographies and the production of space. The impact of capital on space is still tangible and able to be captured, compared to tracking down people after the mass exodus of deindustrialization. Furthermore, after establishing the consequences of previous productions of space and Marx's warning of reproducing space, unpacking economic development practices of the present may predict those of the future for the MMV. Whereas many MMV residents seem to have made the transition to technology, given the amount of Facebook groups across the municipalities, the built environment's position in the twenty-first century is in question.

While the role of individual MMV residents cannot be underscored, a people-based perspective is present in both interviews and demographic analysis in the descriptive statistics section. Case studies show the representation of place from the perspective of spaces themselves, as to not project their condition through a blurred lens. Until the period of deindustrialization, space's impact on political economy was underscored (Soja 1989). Case studies are tools for checking uneven geographies. I similarly compare MMV municipalities through case studies. Of the 15 municipalities, I will examine two in depth. I chose Brownsville and Monongahela as case study models for a number of reasons. Based upon ground level observations from main street occupancy to waterfront development, these two municipalities appear to have taken very different, but substantial, paths in their postindustrial periods. Rather than focus on a municipality that lacks any major economic development projects over the postindustrial period

and thus remains stagnate occurring the descriptive statistical analysis, I opted to investigate municipalities with capacities and seeming desire for economic restructuring. By focusing on two major public space projects, I hope to identify points of divergence during the economic development process. I consider the specific economic redevelopment agencies, and their relationships and resources in order to frame the stakeholders of each municipality. After evaluating the general histories and bureaucracies, I will investigate large economic development projects in each municipality, namely Monongahela's Riverfront Aquatorium and Amphitheater project and Brownsville's Snowden Square Historic Downtown Preservation and Revitalization Project. Given the nature of the economic development projects in these municipalities, I evaluate the success of new experience-based development versus historic preservation in context. However both remain in ongoing development, especially in terms of connectivity and river access. Thus, I not only evaluate the success of such projects to date, but comment on their future directions.

The example case studies stress the role of individuals and community organizations in differentiating spaces. Thus, I developed working relationships with Monongahela Main Street Program and the Brownsville Redevelopment Committee in order to become more intimately aware of their brand of community development as well as their goals of their respective communities. While I will avoid passing judgment of right versus wrong in community development, I will evaluate the capacity of such organizations through realistic lens. Case studies illuminate not only projects that came to fruition but also projects that fell through the cracks or are seemingly at a standstill.

Considering people, space, and capital together is essential in order to provide a holistic image of the driving factors of economic development as well as the context and constraints of

such actions. By focusing a variety of methods on each of the three respectively, however, I hope to draw out the commonalities and distinctions between municipalities. I will analyze my findings in a forthcoming case study section that compares and contrasts both the economic development capacity present and projects undertaken in Monongahela and Brownsville. Tracing their relative conditions across decades of deindustrialization will illuminate points of divergence and variables of success.

Evaluating the success of the economic development strategies of two municipalities is also contingent on the perspective of both municipal and regional stakeholders. As much as the purpose of conducting content analysis is to establish historic trends, interviews illuminate the present climate of economic development in the MMV. Don Taylor champions a people-based approach in his use of broadcast interviews to evaluate the small business economies of developing countries (Taylor 1964). Whereas Nathan Berg argues that location is at the crux of entrepreneurial success in interviewing 49 entrepreneurs in the Dallas-Fort-Worth metropolitan area (Berg 2014). Interviews serve as a means to understand the complex feelings and perspectives surrounding economic development by tapping into existing human capital. Interviews can illuminate what is not neatly summed up in historic trends or regression analysis. Thus, interviews enhance a mixed methods approach by giving a voice and stage to the uniquely human elements and receptions of economic development. Especially in the field of urban and regional planning, interviews can combat the ‘rationality’ of orthodoxy. Like content analysis, interviews are a mainstay of social science research, especially at the community level. Similar to newspaper articles, interviews also hint at the narratives upheld in places like the MMV through the tone of interviewees. For instance, throughout and following the 2016 election cycle the narrative of the white blue-collar swing voter, so dubbed the “Forgotten Man”, was

perpetuated through a series of intimate ethnographies that could not stay on the shelves of bookstores (Vance 2016; Isenberg 2016; Russell Hochschild 2016). Tumber's *Small, Gritty, and Green* relies on interviews to carry the exploration of the book. Most memorably, Parker's *Monongahela: River of Sweat, River of Dreams*, is an interview driven tour down the Monongahela by boat. As interviews have previously captured both the perspectives on the economic development as well as the popular narratives of the Rust Belt, they earned their place at the table.

The procedural steps for conducting interviews are few but crucial. I began with preliminary research on the processes of economic development in the MMV. I soon learned that redevelopment processes in the MMV differ severely from those up the river in the City of Pittsburgh. Ground-level observation as well as municipal websites made clear the important role of counties and chambers of commerce in the economic development of the MMV. From here, I drafted approximately a dozen open-ended questions that could apply to a variety of stakeholders. As I intended to interview stakeholders in a variety of roles in communities, I kept a semi-structured interview approach, allowing asides and tangents for context. After refining my questions, I then began drafting short lists of interviewees. However, no formal interviews preceded IRB approval (IRB: PRO18020017). Interviews occurred in person, in the MMV.

In addition to contextualizing variables, conducting qualitative interviews speaks to the primary actors and networks surrounding, in this case, economic development in the Mon Valley (Schoenberger 1991, 181). However, Schoenberger argues that qualitative interviews derive from the tradition of inductive reasoning in political economy (Schoenberger 1991, 181). She finds that interviews are most effective at capturing attitudes during tumultuous periods, especially brought on of technological change. Released in 1991, Schoenberger is responding to

the same deindustrialization that devastated the Mon Valley. I find such an argument remains relevant today as technology continues to change and the Mon Valley seeks to find its place in the twenty-first century.

To understand the present state of development in the MMV, I was interested in talking to both members of the public and private sector. Terry Necciai of the Monongahela Main Street Program was my first contact and gatekeeper to municipal level economic development. Fortunately, Necciai previously worked in other MMV municipalities and had contracts for both case studies. After attending Monongahela Main Street Program meetings, I became acquainted with entrepreneurs in Monongahela and beyond. From the second smallest Main Street Program in the state, I scaled up to regional level by meeting with the recently regionalized Chamber of Commerce. The Mon Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce was an early stop given it is made up of small business persons interested in investment. Though varying in levels of professionalism, all entities share in common their group status. With Terry's help, I heard from approximately fifty MMV residents and stakeholders.

Conducting semi-structured interviews allowed me to establish the major stakeholders in community and economic development across all eleven MMV municipalities. Such a method is not only imperative for amplifying the image of present development in municipalities, but aggregating interviews indicates regional linkages. Like Safford, I map the relationship between organizations, especially regional councils of government (COGs), for my case studies. Using my case studies, I apply a systems approach in understanding the relationship between organization in the wider regional frame. By visually organizing the available resources, the conditions for successful economic development are better laid out. I anticipated that the denser and more integrated the connections, the more successful economic development projects would

be seen in the municipality. However, such relationships are reliant on regional ties and inter-municipal support, which I evaluate through content analysis. Again, comparing the municipal to the regional could better reveal uneven geographies.

As I conducted formal interviews with the main planners and funders of economic development projects, I realized that the residential recipient's voice was not being represented. In other words, since my interviews involved authorities in economic development or those with stakes in the success of projects, I had no unbiased perception of economic development projects. Researchers are in a position of power, not just to lead questions (Schoenberger 1991) but also to lead the direction of the project by defining the community (Glass 2018). Thus, I began to attend more causal community events, quizzing residents on their perceptions of change in their municipalities and across the valley. I did not utilize the formal interview questions for these discussions. While still asking permission for recording, these conversations reflected focus groups more than targeted interviews. I intentionally did not want to run through my laundry list of questions for a number of reasons. First, as an outsider in the community, residents need not share their experience, time, or opinions with me. Thus, any information community members were willing to share was welcome. Second, as I anticipated a variety of experiences among residents, I did not believe any standardized series of questions would capture the essence of their MMV experience. On top of this, open conversations allowed residents to express their own narratives of the MMV. Third, I did not want the residential perspective to be subsumed by the other variables. Instead, the destination of these perspectives would be to inform or challenge the coded variables. I did not want to assume that residential perspective would be consistent with prior findings, thus the mixed methodology.

As Glass clarifies, partnership and community are not one and the same (Glass 2018, 328). So as to avoid being perceived as an invader and instead express genuine interest in the area, I aligned my further study of the community with the needs of the Monongahela Main Street Program in order to compile data that would be mutually beneficial. I went business to business through the 52 buildings of historic downtown Monongahela, gathering information on the times of services offered, length of tenure, as well as connection to neighboring businesses. Again, I used a standardized set of questions broken down into three sections: business contact and history, compliance, and connection to community. Such findings are heavily referenced in the case study evaluation.

Thus concludes the qualitative components of the mixed methods analysis. Though Schoenberger identifies the tension between qualitative and quantitative methods, (Schoenberger 1991, 181), investigation into the relationship between political economy and regionalism necessitates utilizing both. Such a tension defines much of the history of the urban studies discipline, however, dating back to Jane Jacob's famous critique of the disharmony between the statistical status of Boston's North End versus the orthodox planner's perspective (Jacobs 1961). I argue that such tactics are not mutually exclusive. Effective uses of interviews can contextualize and strengthen the relationships of quantitative metrics like descriptive statistical analysis (Schoenberger 1991, 181). Previous qualitative data informs quantitative analysis in the next methodological strategy.

In conclusion, I use content analysis, case studies, and descriptive statistical analysis to identify the divergence in economic development homogeneity across the MMV region. A mixed methods strategy allows for the exploration of both the pervasive narrative and industrial fallout that defined the region. Taking a place-based approach lends itself to discussion of

uneven geographies and the production of space. Content analysis threads the narrative of the Mon Valley in order to understand if regionalism is friend or foe. Case studies showcase not only the present differences along main streets of the MMV, but the differing strategies and capacities of their economic development stakeholders. Talking with stakeholders of varying jurisdictions as well as recipients of such development frames successful economic development in the context of the MMV. Descriptive statistical analysis identifies variables of success, suggesting spaces of divergence. Ultimately, in order to capture a full, dynamic image of the MMV, many variables must inform each other. The outlined methods provide the framework for the proceeding chapters. The next chapter will consist of an examination of the mixed methods listed above in the context of the MMV. Then, the cases of Monongahela and Brownsville will further expand the content analysis, interviews, and descriptive statistical analysis.

6.0 ANALYSIS

Throughout this assessment, I use the term MMV to define the region of the Monongahela River under investigation. While I previously defined the MMV geographically, in this chapter I consider this term in regards to regional identity and political economy. Given my interest in testing the existence of MMV regional identity, I evaluate my hypotheses about the MMV using both qualitative and quantitative methods. First, using content review substantiated by interviews, I investigate if conceptions of regionalism strengthened or weakened over the postindustrial period. From there, I assess if economic divergence is occurring between municipalities of the MMV. Using this foundation, I investigate variables of success in economic divergence. Also related to discussions of political economy, I investigate the onset of lock-in by evaluating the sectoral splits of MMV municipalities, especially considering manufacturing and its relationships with variables of success. Finally, I attempt to understand what instances of economic restructuring are most promising to the MMV and the Valley at large. Ultimately, these analytical methods help unpack the present conditions of regionalism and political economy in the postindustrial MMV.

6.1 NARRATIVE OF THE MMV

Evaluating the narrative of the MMV confirmed its dynamic and complicated identity throughout history. Different sources offer different portrayals of the term. Content review of municipal newspapers saw that the most regular usage of term occurs at the local level. The available archival newspapers covered a variety of MMV municipalities and collectively dated back to 1902. Queries for the term MMV, made in five-year increments, sees a steady increase in its presence through the first half of the twentieth century, especially excellerating after World War II.

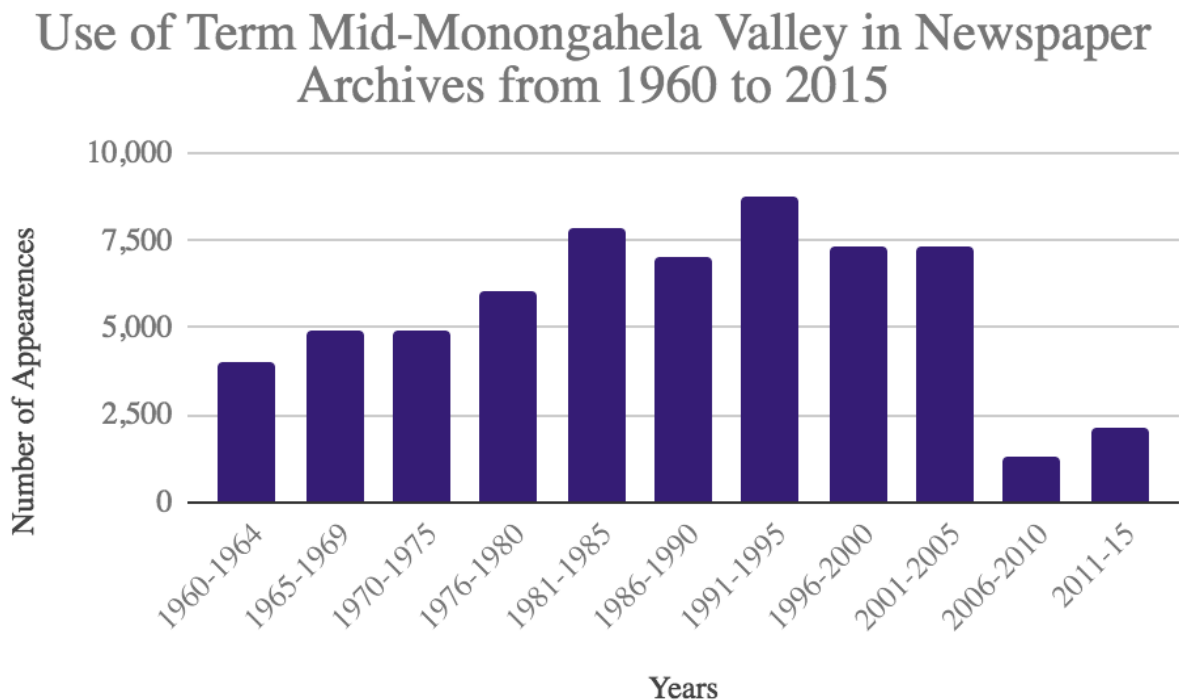


Figure 6.1: Mid Mon Valley Archival Appearances (Mon Valley Independent Archives 2015)

As seen in Figure 6.1, use of the term MMV increases during the beginning of the postindustrial period, from 1976 onward. The five-year period during which the term peaks, 1991 to 1995, follows the closure of the Monessen Works in 1986 and captures the onset of full deindustrialization in the MMV. Since the mid-2000's, the term appears less frequently, partially due to the drop in the number of publications in the MMV. While each of the major MMV municipalities once boasted a local publication, numbering half a dozen in total, only one remained by the first years of the twenty-first century. *The Monessen Independent*, now *The Mon Valley Independent*, did not begin as a regional publication. By process of elimination it evolved from community serving to regional serving during the 2011 to 2015 period. The term appeared to hit its nadir from 2006 to 2010, meekly rebounding during the most recent five-year period. Recent appearances of the term frequently accompany coverage of organizations, community events, athletics, and zoning ordinances. In addition to these topics, historic uses focused more on business and economic relationships. Thus, use of the term MMV in local print media is related to deindustrialization itself. The rise in regional recovery interest, from the emergence of the Mon Valley Independent newspaper to the consolidation of resources like Chambers of Commerce, brought regionalism itself into the news, meaning regional identity was not simply used to denote the subject in a headline, but was the news itself.

Evaluating larger regional newspapers offered a different perspective. The term MMV appeared sparsely in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and *Tribune Review* archives. It was unclear whether the MMV was lumped into more general uses of the term Mon Valley or received less coverage due to its shrinking position in the larger regional frame. This did reveal the self-conferred nature of the term MMV, meaning it was not projected upon the region from down river.

Perspectives gathered from interviews further substantiate the complicated usage of the term MMV. While interviewees recognized the term MMV, it was overwhelmingly viewed as formal and even institutional. Once I mistakenly used the term “The Mid Mon” in reference to the region and was corrected. A member of the MMSP cited that the term ‘The Mid Mon’ was used in a failed marketing scheme to Pittsburgh, inviting visitors to “come on down river”, which residents rebuked given the Mon runs upward to Monongahela. Instead of MMV or the Mid Mon, most respondents admitted to using the term Mon Valley in their own identification of the region. As seen in Glass’s evaluation of the Power of 32, regional identification and stakeholder interaction can contribute to the fluidity of regional labels (Glass 2014). Such findings imply that despite being tied to postindustrialization and internally generated, the MMV’s identity is not upheld as different from the wider Mon Valley. While community meetings featured regular reference to other proximate MMV municipalities (for the purpose of examples or criticism), Braddock, Clairton, McKeesport, and Fredericksburg were also regularly referenced. Though useful for geographic delineations, the MMV appears to be just that, lacking cultural connectivity. Municipal identities trump regionality in the MMV. Surprisingly, some Monongahela interviewees, unlike residents of other municipalities, denied any Rust Belt affiliation. As individual municipalities attempt to restructure independently, an overly broad narrative about the Mon Valley remains draped over the MMV.

6.2 DIVERGENCE

Given the term MMV’s lack of independent identity from the broader Mon Valley, it is even more important to investigate potential economic divergences not otherwise captured by

broad language. Variables of economic positionality including median household income, poverty rate, vacancy rate, population change, entrepreneurship, and median home value enlighten if divergences are statistically significant. Framing these statistics as they changed over time indicates the rate and time period of divergences, allowing further investigation into policies or projects that may correlate with such change.

6.2.1 Median Household Income

Economic divergence is first seen through the spread of Median Household Income in the MMV. Figure 6.2 displays the Median Household Income available from the 2010 U.S. Census. The range sees top earner Speers (51,053) more than double that of Brownsville (22,617). There is a large numeric gap in the graph between Coal Center (31,458) and New Eagle (37,031), of which the average of group falls between.

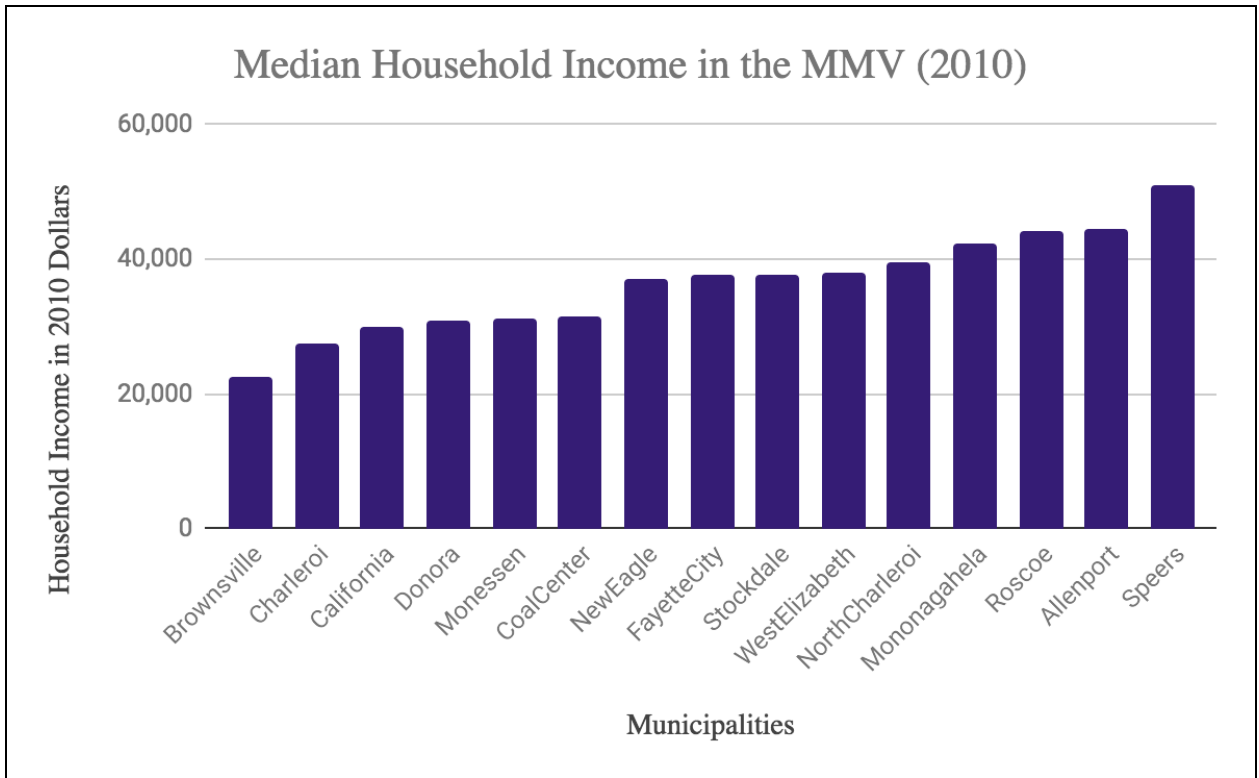


Figure 6.2: Median Household Income Across the MMV (US Census 2010)

Such a sharp gap, or clue of divergence, was not always the case. The ranking lacks any drastic shifts, as the range between the MMV is more constrained in the twentieth-century. Unfortunately, the available state census reports only captured the incomes of places with at least 2,000 people, excluding smaller municipalities.

Median Household Income in the MMV from 1980 to 2000

	1980	1990	2000
Brownsville	9,539	11,791	18,559
Charleroi	13,071	15,789	23,593

California	14,121	16,811	24,628
Donora	12,174	16,620	27,939
Monessen	15,628	18,131	26,686
Coal Center	x	x	23,125
New Eagle	16,828	x	30,494
Fayette City	x	16,256	29,375
Stockdale	x	x	30,000
West Elizabeth	x	x	26,339
North Charleroi	x	x	29,135
Monongahela	14,421	18,849	29,060
Roscoe	x	x	31,094
Allenport	x	x	28,462
Speers	x	x	40,500
Average	13,683.14	16,321	27,932.6

Figure 6.3 MHI over Deindustrialization (US Censuses 1980, 1990, 2000).

While the majority of municipalities retain their position either above or below the average of the group over the four-decade period, there are observable differences in the rate of change experienced. Even in accounting for inflation, the percentage increase in the median

household income in MMV municipalities is a nine-percentage point spread. Surprisingly, it was Brownsville that underwent the severest change, at a 33% increase, while Monongahela only saw a 24% increase over the same period despite retaining a higher position. Assessing changes in income tells a different story than any yet before: that municipalities were not evenly situated even before industrial collapse and wealth historically distinguished between the bunch.

6.2.2 Poverty Rate

Investigating the interaction between poverty rate and the other variables also speaks to long-held advantages that are brushed over in broad dialogue. A higher poverty rate relates to a higher a vacancy rate and population loss. Expectedly, it is also related to lower median household income and median home values.

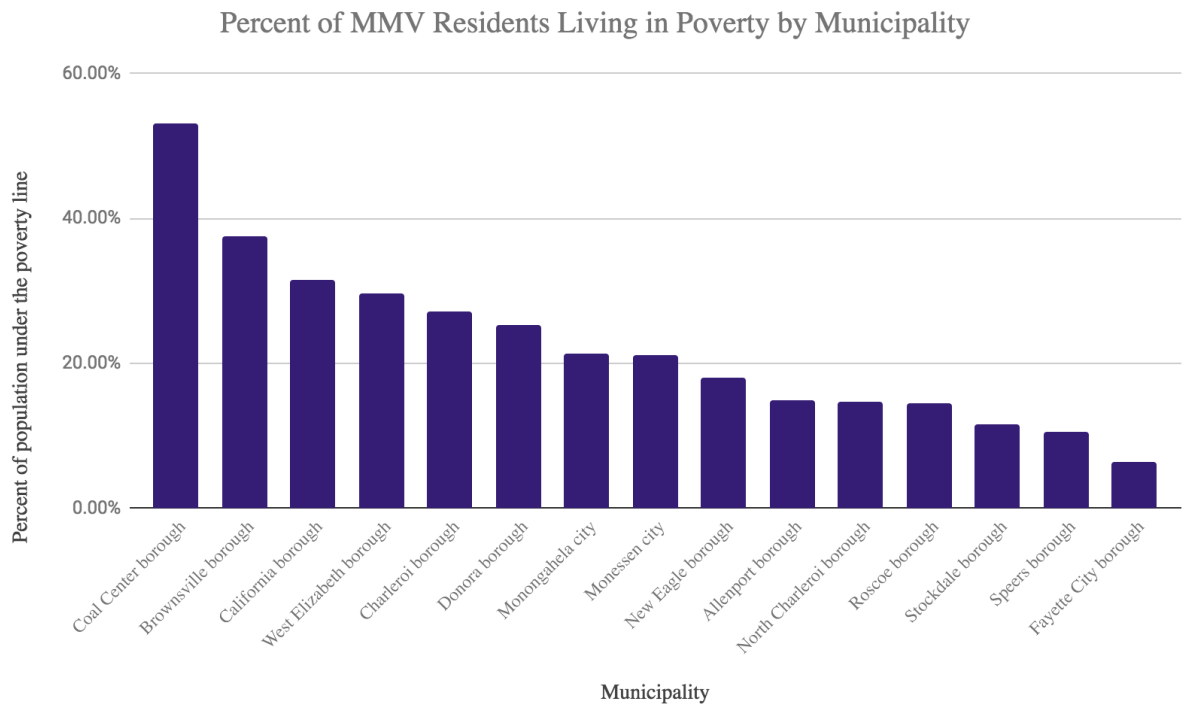


Figure 6.4 Poverty Rate Across MMV Municipalities (US Census 2010)

Of all the variables, including sectoral data, poverty and sector manufacturing boast the most curious relationship. As seen in Figure 6.4, Coal Center and Brownsville, two municipalities where manufacturing maintains a physical presence in the built environment are home to the highest poverty rates. Using poverty as the independent variable reveals a strong relationship between a high poverty rate and the physical presence of manufacturing establishments in a municipality. As seen in Figure 6.5, as the poverty rate increases (meaning a municipality is less successful) it is home to more manufacturing establishments. Such a trend suggests the negative implications of lock-in.

STATA Regressions of Poverty and Manufacturing

```

-----
poverty |   Coef.  Std. Err.   t   P>|t|   [95% Conf. Interval]
-----+-----
manufactu |  2.04731   .7985643   2.56  0.024   .3221172   3.772504
_cons |  14.42436  4.109947   3.51  0.004   5.545356  23.30336

```

Figure 6.5: Stata generated regression test of poverty and manufacturing establishments (Author 2018)

However, an almost opposite relationship exists between the poverty rate and percentage of the workforce in the manufacturing field. As the poverty rate increases in a municipality, fewer residents are employed as manufactures. Here, the ill effects of deindustrialization seem to linger over municipalities with more intense manufacturing affiliations.

6.2.3 Vacancy Rate

Vacancy and the next variable, entrepreneurship, are expectedly related in the MMV. A higher vacancy rate correlates with fewer entrepreneurs. However, vacancy lacks a significant relationship with median household income and, surprisingly, median home value. Similar to population change, the ubiquity of vacancy remains a symptom of deindustrialization rather than economic development attempts in the decades since. Whereas the MMV appears to be diverging through the two previous two variables, vacancy sees more clustering around the median. While Monongahela ranks well in most other categories, its vacancy rate is just below the 19% average at 18.3%, same with poverty rate at 21.3% compared to 22.5% across the MMV. Brownsville is similarly situated in terms of the vacancy average, but possess an exceptionally high poverty rate at 37.6%.

6.2.4 Entrepreneurship

Of the six variables tested, entrepreneurship is the independent variable with the most interactions. In other words, entrepreneurship is related to many other variables. Here, entrepreneurship refers to the percentage of the total workforce that are self-employed. As entrepreneurs make up a larger portion of a municipality's workforce, the vacancy rate goes down while less population is lost.

Entrepreneurship's Interactions with Other Variables Across the MMV

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
vacant	-0.2133** (0.0513)	-0.2148** (0.0695)	-0.2331* (0.0767)
poverty		0.0026 (0.0574)	-0.0042 (0.0608)
poploss			-0.0292 (0.0168)
_cons	9.7379** (1.4469)	9.7076** (1.5095)	9.4065** (1.4032)
R2_A	0.46	0.41	0.41
R ²	0.50	0.50	0.54

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$ Figure 6.6: Stata generated multiple regressions test between vacancy, poverty, and population loss (US Census 2010)

Entrepreneurship does not appear to alleviate poverty, however. When tested together, higher entrepreneurship is related to higher poverty rate, but when held for other variables this relationship becomes statistically insignificant. Ultimately, I consider entrepreneurship the closest to a variable of success, but admit that further research is necessary to more tightly connect the dots.

6.2.5 Sectoral Splits

Investigating the persistent presence of manufacturing across MMV municipalities can help explain the onset of lock-in and its potential role in divergence in the MMV. I look at two components of manufacturing, both the presence of manufacturing establishments in municipalities as well as the percentage of the workforce that are employed in the manufacturing field. When it comes to evaluating the sectoral movements of the economy in the MMV, the manufacturing sector paints a stark image. Manufacturing's historical importance in the region, coupled with its present dynamics speaks again to the historical differences of MMV municipalities. As visible in Figure 6.7, there exists a mismatch in most municipalities between the percent of residents employed in manufacturing and the percent of total establishments devoted to manufacturing. This is starkest in Coal Center, where none of the population is employed in manufacturing despite it making up 12.5% of the economy.

	Percent employed in manufacturing	Percent of total establishments that are manufacturing
Stockdale	4.3	0
West Elizabeth	3.85	4.76
Monongahela	7.2	2.17
New Eagle	10.6	4.55
Speers	7.6	4.23
Charleroi	10.9	1.65
Allenport	8.6	0
Roscoe	8.6	5.26
California	2.8	3.25
Donora	5.6	7.52
Monessen	8.9	2.28
Fayette City	4.6	0
Brownsville	4.3	2.9
North Charleroi	12.3	8
Coal Center	0	12.5

Figure 6.7: Manufacturing labor and establishments in MMV Municipalities

Other than the small municipalities of Fayette City, Stockdale and Allenport, that are not home to any manufacturing centers, Monongahela possesses the smallest percentage of manufacturing establishes out of its total economic makeup at 2.17%. Monongahela’s low manufacturing rate is not offset by any one sector. Instead, the majority of establishments are

split between a series of sectors including retail (22%), service (18%), health (16%), and FIRE, or finance, insurance, and real estate, (12%).

As previously stated, manufacturing and poverty possess a complicated relationship. The presence of manufacturing establishments in a MMV municipality is correlated with a higher poverty rate, whereas the presence of manufacturing employment in municipalities is correlated with a lower poverty rate. Regression tests revealed that the presence of manufacturing did not have a negative impact on MMV municipalities, the influence of lock-in. However, manufacturing correlates with a lower poverty rate and less vacancy in the MMV, two persistent problems shared despite economic divergence. This suggests that manufacturing remains a cure for MMV municipalities, despite the decades since the onset of deindustrialization.

Sectoral splits contribute to economic restructuring, though restructuring possesses a high bar for change: “Restructuring, in the broadest sense, conveys the notion of a ‘brake’, if not a break, in secular trends, and a shift towards a significantly different order and configuration of social, economic and political life” (Soja 1989, 159). The persistence of a Mon Valley narrative suggests that full restructuring has yet to occur across the region, given the need for social, economic, and political elements to change. However, sectorial data challenges the actuality of grouping all MMV municipalities so closely.

While sectoral shift data does not reveal a distinct variable of success, it does reveal that a lock-in position is negative to the economic well-being of MMV municipalities and should be avoided. This finding is useful as it pinpoints where assistance can be given, as sectors are a more approachable level to begin restructuring, compared to at a regional scale. Keating finds that, internationally, Keynesian economic policy presently favors assisting sectors over regions (Keating 2004, 21). While regions are a level of restructuring worth aspiring to, especially in the

case of the MMV, sectoral evaluation provides a more reasonable starting point. So what sectors should MMV municipalities tend towards? While statistical data is conflicting, interviewees firmly suggested that general economic diversification is the method of least resistance and most success. Monongahela touts its long-time economic diversification for its relative success. Municipal and regional stakeholders from beyond the borders of Monongahela affirmed this position, citing interest in providing more opportunities for communities, especially through its schools.

6.2.6 Population Loss

The last but certainly not least important variable, population loss, is essential to consider in any postindustrial setting that experienced an exodus following industrial decline. Decades removed from the loss of industry, there is no strong evidence of a relationship between population loss and present economic conditions. Much like vacancy rate, population loss is shared and appropriately defines a characteristic. However, many interviewees felt confident about MMV population gains in the next census. Ultimately, once the still residual effects of deindustrialization wear away, population gain will likely emerge as the ultimate variable of success for MMV municipalities.

6.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Existing literature confirms the sway that entrepreneurship and small business have on small town economies. Louis Lopilato II's finds that successful main streets of small towns, defined as populated by less than 35,000 people which captures all MMV municipalities, address fear, income, mix of stores, public private partnership, and ambiance. Lopilato finds that main streets cannot succeed where visitors and residents alike do not feel safe on the street. Unfortunately, high vacancy rate can also contribute to associative fear, creating a cycle disinvestment difficult to break. Interestingly and optimistically for the MMV, Lopilato does not find a relationship between existing high income levels and successful main streets. Instead, he finds that revitalization programs, no matter the income of the town, provide the stronger correlation between main street success. Lopilato notes the composition of successful small town main street themselves. He recommends that variety of independent stores surround larger anchor stores. Additionally, he finds positive reception and relative success in cases of clustering, where related businesses compliment each other rather than compete. Finally, Lopilato uses ambiance in the same way I do authenticity, to describe what makes spaces unique.

Lopilato's findings are consistent with occurrences in the MMV. Monongahela's entrepreneurial spirit is visible both on a paper and in the built environment. As discussed in the next chapter, this is achieved through both the geographic clustering of its main street as well as organizational support offered through the MMSP and CDC. The element necessary to this type of community development that is not captured by regression analyze, however, is authenticity. Other municipalities in the MMV, despite planning with the region in mind, failed to value the symbolic spaces of its own community. For instance, Homestead's Waterfront project achieves postmodern "simulate-in comforting and safe, if vapid and sterile, ways-the feel of a traditional

old main street” (Cowie and Healthcott 2003, 2). Though the Waterfront encouraged commercial development that engaged multiple sectors, development centered around chain and big box development rather than entrepreneurship. In order for the entrepreneurial benefits to transcend municipalities in the MMV, such community wealth building must be just that, involved in the community.

The above findings indicate that some shared characteristics of deindustrialization (vacancy, poverty, and population loss) remain shared throughout the MMV. However, Median Household Income reveals that there is a historic schism in the well-being of MMV municipalities though divergences are expanding with time. Sectoral data warns of the threat and mismatch of lock-in, where the presence of manufacturing facilitates is the opposite of a variable of success. Finally, the percentage of entrepreneurs within a municipality correlates with a more diversified economy.

The MMV lacks a regional identity despite discontentment with larger regional narratives. The term MMV emerged in postindustrial dialogue but has since fallen out of favor by residents. A complicated relationship exists between municipalities as residual deindustrialized statuses perpetuate a tiered system of competition. Of the descriptive variables assessed, entrepreneurship best categorized postindustrial success. Evaluating sectors showed that specialization in one category was not correlated with economic advantage, but diversification is preferable.

7.0 CASE STUDIES

“The beauty, sublimity and grandeur of creation is nowhere more eloquently displayed than in the Monongahela Valley. Its rocked ribbed mountains filled with untold wealth ready for the developing hand of capital and skilled labor; its valleys clothed in primitive verdure; its everyflowing streams belching forth uncontaminated water quenching the dry land and verifying all animated matter” (VanVoorhis 1908).

7.1 MONONGAHELA

Monongahela identifies itself as the current capital of the post-industrial Mid Monongahela Valley. While relative superiority was not always the case, Monongahela’s postindustrial pride emanates from its organizations as well as its business district. The city of just 4,300 people boasts 275 businesses, the most of any of the neighbors in the MMV (PDCED). Monongahela’s ascendance through economic divergence is not simply a rag to riches tale. Instead, it illuminates the difficulty of onboarding fully into the new economy. Monongahela’s leadership position in the MMV cohort also complicates its perspective on regionalism and

competition. The growing or shrinking pains of Monongahela, depending on levels of optimism, reveal that not all negative economic forces are external.

What variables set Monongahela apart? There is hardly a neon arrow within the built environment that identifies Monongahela as distinct from its neighbors. The municipality follows historic population loss trends, losing 39.5% of its population between 1970 and 2010 while the MMV average loss is 27.48% (UCSUR 2015). In terms of other indicators of economic well-being, Monongahela ranks in the middle of the MMV in its percent of total vacant housing units and poverty levels. When it comes to economics and small business, however, Monongahela stands out in its percent of entrepreneurs in the work force at 9.2% (UCSUR 2015). Monongahela's manicured built environment partially inspired this study, as site observation of the commercial corridor differed from other MMV municipalities.

Monongahela's affiliation with small business provides a distinguishing point within the MMV. Like many other towns, small business was integral to its development. Monongahela's first entrepreneurs set up shop on Main Street between 1808 and 1810. There was much interaction between entrepreneurs and the budding glass industry, including investment as well as the production of complimentary goods such as tin (Centennial). Small business continues to dominate the built environment of Monongahela as 191 of its 275 business establishments employ one to four workers (PDCED). However, Monongahela diverges from its neighbors in that small business carries significant economic weight throughout the industrial period and into post industrialism. Such a labor breakdown appears consistent with the Marxist warning against big capital.

While a few vacancies are scattered throughout West Main Street today, many of the small businesses of Monongahela serve long tenures in their buildings. Devore's Hardware store,

for instance, is one of the first businesses encountered when coming into downtown Monongahela from the north. On its fifth generation of operation, it maintains a position of authority along main street where other municipalities lost such features to chain store competition.



Figure 7.1: Devore's Hardware in Monongahela (Author 2018)

7.1.1 Monongahela Main Street Program

Monongahela is the only MMV municipality that is home to a formal Main Street Program. The second smallest Main Street Program in Pennsylvania, the organization is still in its infancy after starting in 2016. The board consists of a dozen members, mostly made up of lifetime Mon Valley residents, many of whom are small business owners. As of May 2018, the members assessed the Monongahela Main Street Program (MMSP) as halfway through a lifecycle analysis as an organization. At 30 months old, the MMSP is operating with a \$2,200 budget. Locally, the MMSP works in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and Monongahela Area Redevelopment Council on community planning, events and fundraisers, as well as facade improvement and redevelopment projects. In the age of layered organizations, the MMSP look to the Pennsylvania Downtown Center (PDC) as regional organizer though are unafraid to act independently, such as when the PDC sent a proposed historic preservation bill on which the board did not vote.

Located in the old The Finishing Touch flooring company, the MMSP and Monongahela Chamber of Commerce's own space is an upcoming development project along West Main Street. The Finishing Touch building is a double lot located at the heart of the business district, making it both desirable and critical. Sketches of the reuse of the building feature internal divisions, making room for a series of small businesses to occupy the space. So far, a baker and dark room are prospective tenants.



Figure 7.2: The Finishing Touch Building ,MMSP Headquarters (Author 2018)

While construction is just getting underway, undertaking such a project sees the MMSP and other area organizations taking the large next step to physical community development. The MMSP is experiencing growing pains much like the municipality itself. Recently, the board analyzed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to their community and organization through a SWOT analysis. SWOT is an acronym that stands for strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats. It is a methodology that businesses and nonprofits alike use to establish their goal setting agenda. Recorded below is their assessment of Monongahela's potential, as of May 2018:

Monongahela SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical Layout 2. Access to town from routes 70 and 43 3. Chamber of Commerce 4. Strong history of citizens 5. Public Works 6. Historic architecture 7. Low cost of living 8. Small town benefits 9. Diverse economy/population 10. Strong downtown and housing -livability 11. Strong community support 12. River recreation, roads – river 13. Central location to Washington, Pittsburgh, Greensburg 14. Low crime 15. Multiple organizations working to betterment of community 16. Cemetery and other tourist attractions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of cooperation with and between organizations and communications 2. Store fronts too small for retail 3. Transportation infrastructure 4. Other communities not progressing – regional progress 5. Flooding of River 6. Lack of parking 7. Small minded thinking in people living here – perceptions from the region 8. Nothing to welcome new residents and business owners with 9. Lack of vision 10. Lack of hotels – lack of transient accommodations 11. Decline of single family ownership 12. Abandoned housing 13. Housing opportunities / ownership for young people 14. Lack of recreation for teens 15. Litter and maintenance 16. Need more restaurant options – lack of upscale restaurants 17. Lack of variety of businesses 18. Foodland
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pigeon Creek Corridor 2. River Hill owned by Conservatory 3. Aquatorium 4. Update zoning in business community 5. Upscale restaurant 6. Bike trails – political support 7. Business incubator 8. Marketing to Pittsburgh 9. Kids on Bikes 10. Affordable business opportunities (less financial output) 11. Connection project between Aquatorium and Business District 12. Abandoned rail beds 13. More river events 14. River 15. Hills a natural acoustic phenomena 16. Riverfront - Industrial Building Converted to Riverfront Opportunities/Hotel 17. River Access 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Single family declining ownership of homes 2. Tourist traps 3. General Valley Community Weakness that spreads 4. Population Declining Slowly 5. Kids on Bikes 6. Stagnant Houses 7. Divisive and cliquish people 8. Washington tourism does not extend to Monongahela 9. Attractions in this area have limited operating hours 10. Disenfranchised communities 11. Need more community involvement – same people involved 12. Population shift 13. Business owners retiring – who is going to replace? 14. Lack of money for owners to invest/maintain buildings 15. Negative people complaining about town

Figure 7.3: MMSP SWOT Analysis 2018 (MMSP meeting May 10, 2018)

The SWOT analysis features a mix of economic development factors, with particular focus on the business district and recreational resources. Several established strengths are related to small business such as the (3) Chamber of Commerce, (8) small town benefits, (9) diverse economy, and (10) strong downtown. The weaknesses category identifies where small business need community improvement, such as in the case of the (17) lack of variety of businesses, like (16) upscale restaurants.

The opportunities category redirects political economy away from the influence of outside capital and towards the power of local business and natural resources. Ten of the 17 opportunities are tied to the recreation, most of which involve the natural environment. Five more deal with small business and its extension to feed into the promised recreation economy. While the opportunities category speaks to furthering business opportunities, it includes no mention of manufacturing. The MMSP is a major proponent of public private partnerships, considering them the primary means of achieving development in Washington County.

Interestingly, historic preservation and industrial heritage tourism is absent from the opportunities of the SWOT analysis, as well as much of the major economic development projects in Monongahela to date. Instead, in terms of weaknesses, tourism is both a (2) threat and a lost point of connection between Washington County and the municipality. The MMSP considers the Main Street Program a preservation technique but opt for a consensus based rather than forceful approach. Given its colonial founding, Monongahela could consider several periods in its preservation. Presently, Monongahela's historical connections, such as to the Whiskey Rebellion, are not visible in the daily built environment. MMSP members recognize, though Washington County sees success in tapping into historical tourism, Monongahela does not feel

tied to any particular point in history. While the MMSP interest in preserving historic architecture is seen in their façade program, they also encourage the creative reuse of such structures. One of the members is currently refurbishing an old gas station with the hope of it becoming a bike shop. Monongahela neither intends to root itself in history nor to change drastically.

Balancing preservation and economic advancement is thus a constant challenge that the MMSP faces. MMSP executive director Terry Neccai's labor of love is the monthly community events calendar. While one side of the calendar highlights the nearly one hundred monthly events in the community, the other side contains a history lesson about Monongahela traditions, people, and places. The calendar is an example of the present and past working in unison to authentically define the community for the future. Another balance between past and present, as well as suggestions for the future, is the forthcoming Flimtique event sponsored by Rivers of Steel. During this event, Carnegie Mellon students will present installation art alongside a 13 block flea market. Many of the events featured occur in the same few public places, the library, Chess Park, and the Aquatorium.

7.1.2 The Aquatorium

In terms of the MMV, Monongahela is home to early attempts to recognize the experience-based or entertainment economy in place of large scale manufacturing. The Monongahela Aquatorium blends the natural and built environments to provide a public space on a former brownfield site. Completed in 1969, the Aquatorium persisted through the darkest days of deindustrialization while other large riverfront lots rusted over.



Figure 7.4: View of the Monongahela River from the Aquatorium (Author 2017)

Unrivaled in scale by any other riverfront project across the MMV, the Aquatorium is an anchor and distinguishing aspect for Monongahela. Completed during the golden era of large scale entertainment space development, or the war of the convention centers, the Aquatorium followed a similar logic of promoting domino growth that inspired the development of convention center and aquariums across other rust belt cities. The Aquatorium boasts a variety of programming for all ages, from kid friendly fishing derbies to beer-fests and summer concert series that frequently feature Bruce Springsteen tribute bands for everyone in between. The

Aquatorium is itself active and remains well maintained decades after opening. But the Aquatorium is not a historic preservation project. To the contrary, it is a brownfield reclaimed project for public space and entertainment. In shifting the audience and usage of brownfield space, Monongahela avoided lock-in and began the restructuring process earlier than many of its neighbors. The Aquatorium is no white knight, however. Similar to the absence of connectivity between the Waterfront brownfield development and Homestead's Eight Avenue Main Street, down river, there is frustration in Monongahela about the lack of connectivity between the Aquatorium plaza entrance and West Main Street businesses.

In 2017, the Design Center of Pittsburgh created a plan for the Aquatorium enhancement project centered around connectivity to West Main Street. Much focus surrounds Railroad St, an alley that runs parallel to West Main Street in front of the Aquatorium. At present, Railroad St. primarily features the back of businesses and, as its namesake implies, railroad tracks.



Figure 7.5: Railroad St. in 2017 (Design Center Pittsburgh 2017)

Renderings of this improvement district focus on the potential of small business pop-ups to enhance the space during events. A farmers and makers market as well as bistro dining would improve flow and traffic in this connective artery. Another rendering includes food trucks in place of pop-up tents.



Figure 7.6: Rendering of Railroad St. Improvement District (Design Center Pittsburgh 2017)

It is worth noting that a farmer's market and pop-up vendors already exist in Monongahela's Chess Park, West Main Street's sidewalk, and even the Diecken's pharmacy parking lot to set up shop. This plan concentrates small businesses further. Entrepreneurship is both a blend of and means of connectivity for the experience based Aquatorium and service and retail centric West Main Street.

7.1.3 Relationship to the region

Monongahela differentiates itself from the region in both its past and present economic conditions. Despite undergoing similar population losses, Monongahela dissociates itself from the label of the Rust Belt. Instead, it remembers itself as a bedroom community of other towns while still maintaining a base at home. As a self-identified leader in the region, Monongahela prefers to lead rather than blend in with its neighbors. Interestingly, Monongahela considers Charleroi its most similar neighbor and thus competitor, especially when it comes to their business districts. MMSP members recognize a century-long rivalry between Charleroi and Monongahela that most recently materialized in the form of Charleroi copying Monongahela's main street planters. Monongahela's serious interest in small business is apparent in such a comparison as Charleroi was once the shopping district of the MMV.

Despite recognizing the rivalries that result from the competitions between spaces, there is a lack of recognition that capitalism is the culprit in both internal and external issues of political economy in Monongahela. As previously cited, Jackle and Wilson (1982) predict such a response, especially in vulnerable spaces such as the MMV. Similar to the dichotomy of defining regionalism both physically and intangibly, interviews cited both place and people-based difference between MMV municipalities. Interviewees regularly spoke of the shortcomings of neighboring municipalities in critical or pitying tones. Additionally, though I did ask about regional positionality and competition, I wish I included a question that directly asked about comfortability with uneven geographies in order to understand if pride emendates not just from insular success but from the struggle of comparable places. Monongahela appears to accept to capitalism's framework of winners and losers, as long as it is the winner.

Revisionist history also appears to be a coping mechanism of post industrialism, as exemplified by Monongahela. While some Monongahela stakeholders exclude it from the confines of the Rust Belt, other interviewees disagreed. However, there is a community narrative surrounding Monongahela's early supremacy due its position at a railroad junction. Such a standard provides a position of supremacy worth returning to.

Beyond the veil of revisionist history, the betweenness of place theory exemplifies the trouble Monongahela faces in deciding its regional relationships. This theory acknowledges the tension between individual and communal interests. The residual nature of postindustrial competition and desperate desire for development further complicates the ability of places to act collectively. As seen in the SWOT analysis, area weaknesses include (3) "Other communities not progressing – regional progress" while a threat to Monongahela is (4) "General Valley Community Weakness that spreads". While regional connectivity to (13) Washington, Greensburg, and Pittsburgh and the major highway systems are strengths or opportunities. Like a student looking to receive a grade boost on a group project, Monongahela is choosey in its alliances.

Monongahela's present position challenges the broad MMV narrative, though assessing the persistence of divergent paths is difficult given the lack of master planning across the MMV. As a jack of all trades, master of none case, Monongahela spurs more entrepreneurial investment than formal industrial municipalities, though it has yet to transition or specialize fully into the new economy. While Monongahela tends to its own needs before looking beyond its borders, a regional approach could address immediate problems such connectivity and economic generation. The dangers of avoiding regional planning altogether are seen in the preliminary plans for bringing bike infrastructure to Monongahela.

7.1.4 Economic development strategies

While Monongahela's divergence from other municipalities accompanied diversification, it continues to build upon its progress through a series of economic development strategies. As informed by the MMSP, hesitancy towards change as well as community group feuds slows and restricts development, but the following are common themes voiced in community meetings. The following development strategies are responsible for Mon City's success:

1) Diversification

Recognized by both census data and community stakeholders, Monongahela's long-time economic development strategy is maintaining a diversified economy that is not reliant on a single industry. This is visible in the sectorial breakdown. Unlike some of its neighbors that are looking to industrial heritage tourism, Monongahela shows no signs of specializing in any one economy or development strategy. Instead, diversification remains focal to the Design Center Aquatorium Connectivity plan.

2) The Experience Economy

While Monongahela is home to antique shops and its largest bi-annual event is a flea market, the events calendar and Aquatorium suggest the presence of the experience economy as well. Rather than accumulating material items, Joseph Pine (2011) suggests the rising creative class prefers to express its economic preferences in an age of extreme commodification and use its

disposable income on experiences, such as entertainment and recreation. Monongahela continues to struggle to be fully competitive in the new economy, as seen through its continued population loss and lack of outside capital investment. However, the experience economy is a means of recognizing the unevenness of competition and maintaining authenticity nonetheless. While Monongahela is already home to events linked to the experience economy, the MMSP appears reluctant of restructuring as an experience economy given the tourist implications.

3) Small Business

While not at full capacity, West Main Street is the crux to Monongahela's redevelopment strategies. Retaining the integrity of the main street as a viable place for neighborhood serving and visitor generating business, sees a mix of neighborhood serving businesses alongside specialty stores. The presence of third spaces, from Little City Coffee to the classic deli counter in the hardware store to Chess Park also make commercial corridor a space for socializing in otherwise low-density communities.

4) Connectivity

Internal

In terms of connectivity, there is room for improvement in Monongahela. The Aquatorium Connectivity Plan exemplifies the need for economic development strategies to be in dialogue with each other, in order to be mutually beneficial. For Monongahela the challenge of internal connectivity arises with community group infighting. Connectivity is not only

achieved through strengthening the relationship between economic development projects, but also their logistical connections. Multimodal infrastructure improvements would get more residents and visitors out of their cars and onto the streets. Just as in many urban locales, bike ridership is a regular topic in community meetings in Monongahela. At present, no formal bike infrastructure exists in the Monongahela. The MMSP SWOT analysis finds “kids on bikes” both a threat and opportunity for the community. Area state representative Bud Cook suggests a bike trail connecting the hinterlands of Monongahela (incidentally near his own home) to the river front. Meanwhile, both down and up river, the Monongahela River is home to successful trails routes that run parallel to the river. Such a venture in the MMV would be regional in nature and thus require cooperation across many governing bodies as well as private interests.

External

In the regional tradition, infrastructure is a perpetual talking point of improvement, both in terms of quality and affordability. While MMSP claims (2) connectivity to routes 70 (Washington/Greensburg) and 43 (Pittsburgh/Morgantown) as a prime strength of their community, these options are limited to car commuters. Additionally, Route 43 is Toll road, with both an entrance and exit fee for users. Personally, poor regional infrastructure systems and storm water management made field research a challenge depending on the time or weather of the day.

Though the MMV is home to its own public transit authority, the Mid-Mon Valley Transit Authority, a round trip ticket from Monongahela to Downtown Pittsburgh and back is \$8. Each trip takes approximately an hour. A series of the fleet are called ‘commuters’ recognizing both the migration into the South Hills and City of Pittsburgh for work as well as the movement of students from down river to California University. Buses only run every two hours on

Saturday and every four hours on Sunday. While the MMVT public transit fills a necessary hole for commuters outside of the range of the Pittsburgh Port Authority, it remains community serving rather than visitor friendly. The 1988 deindustrialization response plan responded to the length of car-centric connectivity by proposing a commuter rail to promote connectivity through the valley (Mon Valley R/DUAT 1988, 51). This creative response could blend the needs of commuters with the interests of outsiders. Poor and outdated infrastructure is also a challenge to regional development. In the approximately 32 miles of the MMV I am investigating, there are only four bridges. This leaves smaller municipalities cut off from neighbors across river. In order ease issues in connectivity, the river could provide recreational connectivity. Like the creative visioning of commuter rail, the 1988 report supported engaging the rivers to promote connectivity: “people must regain access to their river” (Mon Valley R/DUAT 1988, 34), including physical and visual access.

5) Millennialization

Stakeholders expressed an interest in attracting millennials and young families to Monongahela, using available affordable housing as bait. So far, success appears limited, with a member of the MMSP repeatedly cursing the need for granite countertops as the reasoning for a lack of progress. Interestingly, Monongahela is now looking to Braddock as a model of attracting young talent in the arts from Pittsburgh. I would be remiss not to mention the absence in Monongahela of buzz words like equitable, sustainable, or smart that make frequent appearances in present urban planning dialogue. And Richard Florida’s now classic creative class measure of the presence of LBGT couples would be even difficult to collect given the controversy that a drag queen performance brought to the religious community.

The Monongahela case is not an overwhelming success story for economic recovery and restructuring in the MMV. Monongahela did not undergo full restructuring, instead maintaining a diversified economy with particular emphasis on small business. Monongahela's strategy of economic diversification is long-held and thus does not represent full on-boarding into the new economy. Interviews and community discussions alike hinted at the slow speed of change, the battle of personalities in local bureaucracy, and long-time community feuds. One particularly concerning conversation over the kids on bike "threat" resulted in one participant reminding that the same debate had been occurring since the 1970's, with no changes since. Such a perspective is a negative sign, suggesting larger structural changes would be even more difficult to achieve.

While a diversified economy provides relative success in the MMV, Monongahela is still losing population, following greater population trends seen throughout the MMV. Thus, the stagnation of the betweenness of place effect leaves Monongahela's next move in question. While a diverse economy keeps Monongahela afloat, a lack of a diverse population (age, race, length of tenure) or a diversity of thoughts keeps it from flowing forward. In terms of identification, public forums for the community offer a choice between a Republican or Libertarian oriented Facebook pages, and though there are nearly a dozen churches, they are all limited to Christian denominations. A common refrain in clarifying credentials around town is "she/he did not even grow up here". Insularity, however preferable, only further restrains already limited capital. It may also restrain creativity, by repeating the same discussions. Some economic development strategies appear to be in conflict with present public opinion. The litmus test of long-time residential legitimacy challenges the ability to attract a new populace without prior affiliation with the area. Additionally, insular development would limit the success of a rails to trails project by inhibiting it from linking into an existing network. While the era of hyper-

gentrification in major international metropolises see residents threatened by changing built environments, the case of the MMV see longtime residents averse to change threatening the continued existence of the built environment. I would not go so far as to say the MMV is resigned to its victimhood, but, it fears the change necessary to truly diversify.

7.2 BROWNSVILLE CASE STUDY

In the nineteenth century, Brownsville residents looked down the river at Pittsburgh, bragging that it would never gain much traction due to its proximity to Brownsville (Parker 1999, 97). The next two centuries would instead result in tragedy for the Borough. Ironically, both booms and busts in Brownsville involved transportation access. An early boom in Brownsville accompanied the completion of the national road in 1815 (Parker 1999, 99). After another boom following gaining access to the railroad, “Brownsville was doomed to be a lesser town because of its location, which had been so important in its early days” (Parker 1999, 102). As Pittsburgh became the industrial hub of the region, Brownsville could no longer compete and began to stagnate as a consequence of uneven development. Brownsville was simply too far away and difficult to access from Pittsburgh to ride its coattails or associate as a suburb. But when industry slowed and closed down river, the consequences were still felt in Brownsville. Between 1970 and 1990, Brownsville Borough lost 35% of its population (Fayette County Socioeconomic Report). Though population was projected to rise 3,328 in 2010 and 3,460 by 2020 (Fayette County Socioeconomic Report), in reality it was 2,331 in 2010 and shows no signs

of exponential growth by 2020. Parker admits that even relative to the MMV, Brownsville was a losing municipality over the period of deindustrialization (Parker 1999, 101).

The geography of Brownsville is intimately related to its economic well-being. Brownsville differs from the built environment tradition of the MMV: instead of hosting industrial sites alongside the river, Brownsville's rail line runs alongside the Monongahela River. Thus, the emphasized role of rail is present within Brownsville's built environment. Immediately beyond the tracks, Brownsville's commercial corridor begins. Brownsville's commercial corridor is not linear, instead following the bend in the river. While that classic element of MMV main streets exist at Water Street and 2nd Street, Brownsville Avenue sees some municipal services clustered in their own circuit. The distinct shape of the commercial corridor lends to its reference as "the neck" (Guidelines 2012).

Brownsville's neck underwent a severe period of stagnation for two decades due to property mismanagement. Throughout the 1990's and into the 2000's, Monroeville developer Ernest Liggett reneged on his promise to bring business to the Borough and consequently left 100 already blighted properties to decay (Action 2007). To deal with further decline, the Brownsville Area Redevelopment Corporation (BARC) became Brownsville's Community Development Corporation in 1989 with the foundational help of the MVI. BARC offices are housed within the historic Flatiron Building in an attempt to connect the northern and downtown business districts of Brownsville ("About Us" BARC). However, BARC itself struggled with leadership, firing their chief after only 9 weeks in 2014 (Napsha 2014). BARC is among the newest CDC's in the MVV. Thus, many of BARC's accomplishments and programming to date may appear like mere catch up to Monongahela. However, less capacity means that though BARC established both a flower planter program and concert series, they are now maintained

and operated by the Brownsville Area School District Garden Club and Alumni Association respectively. Despite leadership setbacks, development is occurring Brownsville. In 2015, BARC received over \$750,000 in funding and \$692,279 in tax credits for the Brownsville Senior Housing Project at 5 Market St. Each time I return to Brownville there seems to be more scaffolding along Market Street. Still, as experienced across the Rust Belt, the extent of loss makes recovery a long process as the built environment remains resource strapped.

BARC's mission primarily involves building (or re-building) upon Brownsville's heritage and using historic preservation to spur economic development. Brownsville officially became a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places in 1993. The built environment of Brownsville recognizes this designation both through the preservation of the historic commerical coridor as well as through community art and space.



Figure 7.7: Brownsville's built environment speaks of its historical relevance through a mural (Author 2017)

Vacant lots are interrupted by historic plaques or murals, such as the one in Figure 7.7, that celebrate Brownsville's laundry list of innovations and achievements.

Since then, historic preservation and design guidance serve as outlines for both public and private development. As Brownsville lacks a community master plan, the design guidelines best reflect its stakeholders shared vision of Brownsville. However, it is important to clarify that the report is top-down in nature, funded by the National Road Heritage Corridor, Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, and the Redevelopment Authority of the County of Fayette, and generated from T&B Planning Inc. The Brownsville Borough Commercial Historic District Design Guidelines of the 2012 report suggest maintaining the strong rhythm of the neck through gridded streetscape. Brownsville itself is not a perfect grid; the natural orientation of the river translated to a built environment made up of tightly packed buildings of like facades that occupy Market Street and Brownsville Avenue. These buildings are described as hugging the street due to shallow setbacks (Guidelines 2012, 7). Such buildings not only guide visitors through Brownsville but make up the backbone of the historic district. While the report admits its recommendations lack enforceable authority and are mere suggestions, it takes a strong stance on the restoring storefronts to public status to create inviting streets and sidewalks.

Despite its location in the middle of the neck, Dunlaps Creek is Brownsville's strong edge, in light of its community and historical value. The 2012 guidelines considers it a "Special Treatment Area" given both its status as a natural feature as well as its proximate location to many of the historic landmarks of Brownsville, including the first cast iron bridge to cross it. While the opportunities surrounding Dunlap's Creek are apparent due to its historic significance, the Riverside Wharf Park, the pedestrian ramp down to the wharf, and central park are identified as the top three enhancement opportunities, ahead of Dunlap's Creek (Guidelines 2012, 18). In

terms of maintain authenticity, this is positive sign that the municipality recognizes the potential of existing resources instead of attempting to start anew.

Historic preservation is an attractive method of economic development that could capitalize on Brownsville’s past prominence, given that the history of Brownsville is etched in its built environment. By 1925, after two decades of rail road connectivity, Brownsville’s commercial corridor was home to more than 200 businesses (Guidelines 2012, 4).



Figure 7.8: From outside the Flatiron Building 1930 Market St, Brownsville (Monongahela Railway Company Photographs).

The Flatiron Building, finished in 1835, is the crown jewel of the historic district. Today, 51 buildings remain in the Historic District as demolition and vacant lots dominated the built environment of the last few decades of the twentieth century. The Flatiron Building’s prominent

in the neck continues as home to the Flatiron Heritage Center and the Frank L. Melega Art Museum. Ironically, even the Flatiron Building is surrounded by vacancy. Figure 7.9 revisits the same portion of the neck seen in Figure 7.8, though no businesses remain.



Figure 7.9: The Neck of Market St. following deindustrialization (Author 2017)

Remaining businesses are neighborhood serving in nature, with the 108 year old Fiddle's Confectionary tucked between the neck and the wharf. In terms of community strengths,

Brownsville is home to a feature not common across the MMV despite their shared natural landscapes, access to the Monongahela River. Such status is coveted in other municipalities as riverfront revitalization is a focus of several MMV counties.

Unfortunately, Brownsville lags in its entrepreneurial presence. Only 3.7% of its workforce are entrepreneurs, behind the 5.68% MMV average. Brownsville does not possess a Main Street Program, though its Chamber of Commerce is over 60 years old (Laurel Highlands). Brownsville's lack of small businesses along Market St. is not desirable. BARC's redevelopment of several commercial buildings struggle to field tenants, aside from pharmacies. Again, Brownsville's location inhibits development due to its distance and lack of connectivity to both Pittsburgh and Morgantown. Brownsville also experienced more intense population loss than in Monongahela. Thus, community development in Brownsville diverged from Monongahela's small business path following deindustrialization. Instead, Brownsville opted for historic preservation and heritage tourism-based development. Even Brownsville's new community development projects, such as Snowden Square, are grounded in community history.

Given the stop and start nature of outside-led development over the past decades, Brownsville residents appear less motivated and feel they possess less political efficacy than Monongahela. In this way, Brownsville residents possess veto power on investment while Monongahela residents possess more resources to actually outline and spur investment. Though Monongahela too believes it is included from greater county visioning given the greenfield aimed development presently occurring in Washington County, Brownsville appears to receive attention from Fayette County. However, it is more unique in its status a former industrial river towns in the county, meaning its process for rehabilitation is less streamlined.

7.2.1 Snowden Square

With the help of the Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Technical Assistance Program, Brownsville stakeholders drafted “Downtown Revitalization: Actions and Strategies for Snowdown Square and Brownsville, Pa” in 2012 to address vacant lots in the neck. This plan formalizes the long-term interest in turning a derelict block on Market St into Snowden Square, public space that provides community amenities and entertainment space. Impressively, a Students in Action team from Brownsville Area High School spearheaded much of the private fundraising. Public funds, including a \$175,000 2014 state grants also supported the project. Calling the project Operation Falcon Revitalization, Snowden Square contains an amphitheater, walking path, and public space amenities (Students in Action 2017). The official ribbon cutting on Cast Iron Amphitheater occurred in spring 2017 and was inaugurated with renditions of the *Star-Spangled Banner* and *My Hometown*.



Figure 7.10: Snowden Square (Author 2017)

While the Aquatorium was a reactive project that sought to fill a hole on the riverfront, Snowden Square created a point of positive development in downtown Brownsville. The green space activates once vacant land as well as provides a third place along Market Street. The background of Figure 7.10 pictures development occurring in the shadow of Snowden Square. Such a project marks a departure from decades of stalled and difficult development prospects for Brownsville. The community-minded nature of Snowden Square is a far cry from other major redevelopment projects proposed in Brownsville and likely also explains the speed of its creation.

Previously, Pittsburgh broker CB Richard Ellis proposed the construction of a velodrome, or indoor bicycling arena on what is now Snowden Square. National competitions would occur in the velodrome, bringing accompanying parking lots and hotels at the expense of historic and civic structures such as the library, post office, and police station. The velodrome's lack

connection to the area translated to a lessen community support and doubts about its popularity, causing the project to unravel, much to the chagrin of Liggert and other local investors (Acton 2007). Brownsville valued its authenticity above the interest of capital, having previously learned its lesson through deindustrialization. This failed development reminds of the vulnerability of large capital as well as Glass's (2018) idea of the supremacy of the benefits of citizens in economic development projects. In terms of regional identity, Brownsville has additional options for identification beyond many of its neighborhoods in the MMV. Fayette County's integrality to the Laurel Highlands means Brownsville could attempt to tie into the destination and outdoor economies of the mountainous region. While it has not yet materialized, the lack of cohesion in the MMV leaves this option available. Brownville's economic strategies differ from those of Monongahela, due to both the time period it underwent deindustrialization and the available resources.

7.2.2 Economic Development Strategies

1) Historic Preservation

Instead of continually readjusting in an attempt to make the built environment economically favorable to present demands, historic preservation recognizes value in existing structures and styles. Brownsville's celebration of its historic contributions preserved not only its 'neck' but also its authenticity. The economic implications of historic preservation are not just imagined, but can also impact outside investment in a community. Rivers of Steel successfully uses historic preservation of the built environment to generate heritage tourism.

Heritage tourism blends historic preservation and economic development by reimagining former industrial spaces for education purposes.

2) *Natural Attractions*

Brownsville's access to the Monongahela River and Dunlap Creek are integral to the community and thus the business district. After its importance was highlighted in the 2012 Guidelines, Dunlap's Creek framed the development of Snowden Square. Also, the proximity between Brownsville's wharf and commercial corridor suggests the potential for using the wharf as a strong edge. This is presently seen on South Water Street, which boasts more businesses than Market Street.

3) *Public Space*

Given that Snowden Square is barely one year old, it is difficult to assess the potential economic generation it may bring and whether that will come in the form of permanent brick and mortar components of the community or temporary pop-ups. However, the creation of a third place along Market Street is placemaking and thus brings with it the potential to consider other such spaces reimagined. Brownsville must approach historic preservation centric economic development with caution, however. It must aim to be Zukin's symbolic place rather than Conforti's imagined place.

7.3 CASE COMPARISONS

While not quite a dichotomy of winner and loser (yet at least), Monongahela and Brownsville reveal the challenges of restructuring at divergent points of postindustrial recovery. Cases Snowden Square and the Aquatorium, though similar in their motive to expand public space in the MMV (and their affinity for Bruce Springsteen music), exemplify the divergent paths of municipalities like Monongahela and Brownsville. Monongahela's Aquatorium was a county funded, top-down plan installed just as deindustrialization unfolding. The Aquatorium intended to bring an entertainment economy linked to natural features to the MMV. Snowden Square, however, was a bottom-up, community-led plan to bring usable public space to downtown with limited resources. Though situated along main street and a block away from the wharf, Snowden Square is most closely linked to historic features of Brownsville, such as Dunlap Creek and the Cast Iron Bridge. While the velodrome may provide a more apt comparison to the Aquatorium, Brownsville's experience with deindustrialization serves as a cautionary tale wary of the return of big capital.

Monongahela is experiencing more economic vitality than Brownsville in terms of small business, though unlike during the industrial period, it need not be a winners and losers relationship given the different offerings. While Monongahela presently is better organized with more community resources, it has historically been better situated economically than Brownsville. Given Brownsville's emphasis on authenticity and historic preservation, it can learn from the example of the MMSP in assessing the community in an attempt to generate successful entrepreneurial development. Monongahela is a living example, as it plans to attempt the clustering technique on its 300 block of West Main Street.

Monongahela and Brownsville are not simply foils, however. Their settlement histories and roles during industrialization differed, as well as their economic development strategies following deindustrialization. Amazingly, both municipalities possess similar vacancy rates, Monongahela at 18.3% and Brownsville at 18.6%, a surprising comparison not obvious from site observation. As a result of their relative superiority in other capacities, Monongahela stakeholders expressed concern for Brownsville's survival. The persistence of shared characteristics indicates that the MMV continues to face large challenges in attempting to replace capital following deindustrialization.

Monongahela and Brownsville also operate differently in terms of their regional relationships. Whereas MARC helped establish the MVI, the MVI brought BARC to life. While both places experience a degree of county redevelopment projects, Monongahela relies on direct private investment from the market while Brownsville is a Blueprint Community. A Blueprint Community is program of FHLBank of Pittsburgh that "creates momentum for revitalizing older communities and neighborhoods" to incentivize development and public private partnerships ("Blueprint Communities"). Despite both deindustrializing earlier than some of the other municipalities, economic restructuring is occurring at different paces in Monongahela and Brownsville. Again, outside capital does not gravitate to the MMV, but instead must be lured there. Ultimately this means that Brownsville and Monongahela are still closer in their economic positionality than Monongahela and Pittsburgh.

Despite experiencing the same stumbling blocks in economic development, Monongahela and Brownsville remain insular in their strategies. However, while the MVI restructures its municipal affiliations, there is another nonprofit organization that could foster regionalism as well as the interests of Monongahela and Brownsville. Both Monongahela and Brownsville are

already members of the Mon River Towns. This alliance, based out of Uniontown, sees regional connectivity and cross-municipal promotion for recreational activities through the MMV up the valley into West Virginia towns. The Mon River Towns program, sponsored by the National Road Heritage Corridor, highlights area river and trail recreation as well Mon Valley towns themselves. The promotion is anti-competitive, instead highlighting the connectivity of certain trails and shared resources. Given both municipalities, as well as additional greater Mon Valley municipalities, have attempted to use river recreation to spur economic development for some time to little avail (UCSUR 2015), the Mon River Towns affiliation may strengthen fragmented programming and create a better flow between municipalities. Enhancing connectivity between municipalities could support both recreational and historical economies.

The post-industrial connotation of the term MMV found in the last chapter reveals that regional identity is fluid while the cases of Monongahela and Brownsville reveal that statistical similarities can go without recognition. Practices of insularity rather than regional connectivity continue in the tradition of big capital, making economic development a competition rather than a cluster. Given their differing levels of means and contexts, Monongahela and Brownsville are on different economic development paths according to their major projects, the Aquatorium and Snowden Square.

8.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There is no magic savior for the MMV. While previous projects from waterfront developments to the notorious Mon Valley Expressway were billed as lifelines for communities in need, the multitude of variables surrounding community and economic development suggests a laundry list of potential problems, let alone fixes. As explored, though deindustrialization is a process, waiting for a return to big capital would only send the MMV around the Ferris wheel of investment once again. Findings involving entrepreneurship suggest that small capital is a variable of success following deindustrialization. Thus, I analyze a series of economic development intensive variables in order to understand the extent to which different problems are shared across the MMV. I conclude this chapter with a few small recommendations gathered from my own observations of stakeholders in action, but am in no ways proposing that any solutions offered will serve as panaceas.

Perhaps something I neglected to consider at the beginning of my investigation is the sliding scale of promise when it comes to institutional and nonprofit support in economic development. Interviewees repeatedly suggested their distrust and disagreement with public agencies from their county executives to their town councils and mayors. Such distrust did not hold across nonprofit organizations such as community development corporations, chambers of commerce,

or even regional bodies such as the MVI and Rivers of Steel. Given their intersection of political economy and regionalism as well as the availability of resources, the two later bodies, MVI and Rivers of Steel, provide the most promise for the MMV in the future, if they make it that far up the river. It appears both organizations, based in Homestead and Rankin respectively, appear to be focused on the lower valley, especially municipalities proximate to Pittsburgh. As these municipalities possess their own laundry lists of needs, it appears the MMV will retain secondary billing for the time being. Though even small projects cannot be discounted for the seeds they sow in the MMV. The MMSP plans to use Rivers of Steel's Filmtique program as a launching point of a month-long community engagement and educational series on film and photography. If MVI can similarly serve as an initial project in community placemaking and even development projects, the capacity of the MMV would grow exponentially.

After evaluating the postindustrial position of the MMV, it is clear that political economy and regionalism are themselves relevant points of development for the MMV. The betweenness of place theory captures not only the stages of economic restructuring faced across the MMV, but also the tensions between conflicting desires for insularity and connectivity, for economic opportunity and authenticity, and a return to past. The Monongahela and Brownsville cases exemplify the divergence in economic development tactics despite similar postindustrial conditions. While the tactics appear to vary in the economic development generated, they are both authentic to the particular place. However, what does this mean in terms of the original research questions?

8.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED

1) *Are MMV municipalities diverging? If so, are there evident variables of success?*

Divergence is not a new phenomenon in the MMV. Evaluation of many variables of success sees a definitive split between the relatively better-versus worse-off municipalities. However municipalities appear to be responding to the ills of deindustrialization at different rates, suggesting differing capacities. Such a finding is still relevant to outsiders who refer to the condition of MMV municipalities generally. The second comment of this initial question speaks to the nature of present divergence in the MMV. Variable entrepreneurship correlated strongest with positive conditions, indicating that MMV's with higher rates of entrepreneurs in their workforce are more economically successful.

2) *Is regionalism strengthened or weakened between MMV municipalities in the postindustrial period?*

While the term MMV relates to the process of deindustrialization, such a trend does not speak to the condition of a regional identity. Interviews reveal the geographic connotations of the term MMV rather than a unique cultural identity differentiated from the greater Mon Valley. Neoliberalism's rise alongside deindustrialization left MMV municipalities to compete for already limited resources during industrial fallout. As a whole MMV municipalities, despite their degree of divergence, still struggle to attract outside capital investment. Economic restructuring would allow the MMV to re-establish its regional identity. However, such idealism remains far off as long as municipalities like Monongahela feel threatened that their relative gains could be lost due to regional weakness.

3) *What mode of economic restructuring is most beneficial to the MMV?*

The easy answer to this question is neither lock-in nor avoiding change altogether. Learning from the entrepreneurship findings, the MMV should literally start small. Main Street development served Monongahela well and is sought after to transform Brownsville. Though resource limited, MMV municipalities can build community wealth by starting along main street, assisting existing businesses and attempting to fill vacancies. Beyond that, the case studies reveal that the full economic consequences of new development approaches such as entertainment and industrial heritage tourism remain to be seen but their respect for place is positive sign.

8.2 POLITICAL ECONOMY REVISITED

It would be overzealous to say that the worst effects of deindustrialization are behind the MMV. The knowledge-based race for innovation occurring in places experiencing the positive benefits of uneven development presently means the MMV will continue to fall behind in the meantime. Even Monongahela, the relative success story, remains disconnected from the creative economy. Given the MMV is still coping with the ills of prior uneven development, competition in the free market is hardly fair. Alternative means of building non-monetary capital, such as social capital and community wealth building, are thus essential in the MMV. Focusing on small business and carving out experience or historic destinations would allow the MMV to retain autonomy as the economy changes. Other MMV municipalities should actively work to diversify their economies and thus audiences. Diversification ought to be opted for not just for the potential benefits as seen in Monongahela, but in order to avoid the ill effects of lock-in.

Most MMV municipalities deserve praise for retaining authenticity in their pursuit of economic development. I believe that such a feat would be more difficult in the presence of large capital. As seen in the velodrome example in Brownville, rather than building upon and enhancing assets celebrated by the community (such as Dunlap's Creek), outside capital threatens to rewrite a place's history for an outside audience. Achieving a balance between the past and futures of MMV communities will likely remain an ongoing challenge, but one that can be addressed through community dialogue and asset mapping.

8.3 REGIONALISM REVISITED

Much like with political economy, competition is a restraint holding back regional relationships in the MMV. However, the interrelationships of MMV municipalities are much more complicated than I initially imagined. The stigma of the Mon Valley and Rust Belt sees not only disinterest in forming alliances forming, but downright fear. Monongahela is a critical point in the MMV from which regionality can be strengthened or unwoven. Given its present status and resources as well as geographic location, Monongahela can regulate connectivity to upper valley and Pittsburgh. Monongahela appears to forget the advantages of past connectivity, and today considers the influence of other neighboring municipalities a threat. Thus, the regionality of the MMV depends on future dynamics and evolving economies. Restructuring to an experience economy presents an opportunity to return to the days of municipalities providing complimentary goods and being vertically integrated, dampening the competition that derived during deindustrialization. As on main street, clustering could occur in the experience economy.

Issues of regionalism and political economy are even more interwoven in the MMV than I anticipated. For instance, lock-in is both a consequence of uneven development and splinters regional identification in the MMV. Whereas Monessen looks to the eternal flame of its lasting Steel Mill with pride, California University attempts to answer the calls of the new economy. A call for an experience-based economy does not mean the MMV need be the next Great Canyon. Instead, providing regional recreational and entertainment outlets to-scale would be an opportunity for the MMV. In this way, the MMV could use a restructured economy to reinforce regional connectivity. The MMSP program is wisely considering the negative implication of tourism and loss of authenticity ahead of actual restructuring. While such a turn of fate remains a long-term transition for other municipalities, stakeholder discussion is necessary for maintaining autonomy and self-density in the absence of a master plan.

8.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a few previously acknowledged fallacies that surround recommendations for the MMV. The first is the promise of steel's return. A 1988 plan for regional development denied steel's potential for revival and recommended that communities should redirect their energy and resources to other means of economic development (Mon Valley R/DUAT 1988). Despite the potential onset of trade wars, steel's return remains unlikely within the valley. The return of steel would not simply see the lights turned back on in factories, but enormous start-up costs. Another fallacy that should be addressed is that of a white knight arriving in place of U.S. Steel. While

the arrival of big business is a possibility, the white knight nature of the fallacy is in that it would help an existing municipality (Mon Valley R/DUAT 1988). Instead, it would develop control over a town, directly and indirectly challenging authenticity. In squashing these fallacies, the 1988 report suggests affirming that towns are autonomous and control their own destiny, or authenticity for that matter.

My recommendations do not derive from any planned pursuits of the stakeholders whom I interviewed. Instead, they reflect means to further build capacity in the region or points that I found to be stumbling blocks for municipalities. As Glass (2018) pontificates, the most worthwhile strategies centralize the needs of citizens and consider the ground-level benefits. Thus, I offer suggestions that balance the available resources, concerns of political economy, and benefits to citizens.

8.4.1 A regional strategic plan

While such a suggestion may seem out of step given that the prior chapters found the MMV lacks a cohesive regional identity, a regional strategic plan would help avoid further infighting by allowing a platform for formal dialogue among municipalities. Here pervasive contradictions of place could be addressed in order to reach the balance between past and present so necessary in postindustrial places. Few master plans exist across the MMV, so this is an instance where pulling resources utilitarianly would buck uneven geography. A regional strategic plan would provide an appropriate platform from which to address the need for better transportation linkages throughout and beyond the MMV.

While still operating within the system and thus not a racial suggestion in terms of political economy, the recognition of commonalities and shared resources between MMV municipalities would challenge capitalism's winners versus loser's dichotomy. Such a plan could also recognize the shared challenge of courting private investment and thus strategize how best to lead with public resources. More racial processes of regional planning may see wealth distribution between municipalities and the creation of more public services, however the present political perspectives of the valley, seen earlier in election data, make this a long-term vision.

8.4.2 Continually call back to lessons from the past but embrace the future

At this stage in the postindustrial drama, the MMV remains vulnerable to repeating past mistakes or falling for a recovery fallacy. However, learning from the past is not the same thing as remaining in the past. To the contrary, the MMV's hardships with uneven development, the production of space, and loss of connectivity are the tenets upon which a new economy can be built. Lessons from the past can fuel forward movement. As many stakeholders whom I encountered are Mon Valley lifers, there was often an air of romanticism when addressing the past. De-romanticizing the past and grounding it instead in the harsh labor conditions and battles for better labor that categorized the boom and bust cycles of industry could re-center focus on quality of life gains.

Restructuring, rather than reproducing past economic orders must remain the focus of the future, as learned from the past. This does not stop at pursuing sectoral diversification, versus the single industry focus of earlier, but also expanding into new industries and education levels. The MMV can look upon the greater Mon Valley's rich labor history to assure restructuring remains

in line with labor supplies and the authenticity of place, no easy task. Here, restructuring could benefit citizens by promoting labor and unionization, encouraging a higher quality of life.

8.4.3 Become in-tune with Pittsburgh, but do not attempt to become Pittsburgh

Sometimes being in the MMV felt like being hundreds of miles from Pittsburgh, other times I was asked to speak on behalf of the entire city of Pittsburgh about a particular subject. In time in the MMV, it became clear that there is no channel for dialogue between the MMV and Pittsburgh. While the MMV should not look wholly to Pittsburgh as a case study for itself, they should be invited to the table for economic development summits. Interestingly, when I attended the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group Conference May of 2018, Brownsville's needs were mentioned by several panelists during one session, though no representatives from Brownsville were present to discuss about such needs.

On the other side of this relationship, the MMV must acknowledge Pittsburgh as part of its region and not as 'the other' or a competitor as language often suggested. Political and demographic differences between Washington, Westmoreland, and Fayette Counties and Pittsburgh's Allegheny County may already test regional relationships, so shared positive economic development interests that shake deindustrialization's strangle hold must be affirmed.

8.4.4 Diversify

Beyond economic development strategies and sectors, the MMV must diversify in demographics and thought as a matter of survival. However, incentivizing economic development implications should encourage a diversity of small capital rather than follow one direction of large capital. Diversification also curbs the ill effects of competition and may even encourage regional relationships in the competitive market. Diversification is as much a survival strategy as an economic development boost. While an influx of residents would curb deindustrialization's key feature of population loss, a diversification of ideas encourage new creative strategies, avoiding repeating the same battles of the 1970s.

8.5 CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Recalling my first visit to the MMV, which was inspired by my access to a car and freshly printed driver's license, I am reminded of the small-town romance that seemed to meet me along each main street. Many years and even more words later, spending time studying the MMV in actuality resulted a de-romanticized view of the lengths to which the MMV needs to go to restructure. While my initial hunch that the postindustrial period brought a divergence in economic strategy that impacts regional identification was confirmed in terms of select variables, such as entrepreneurship, the narrative of the MMV remains complicated. With the above recommendations in mind, economic development depends on the recognition of processes of

uneven geography and the production of space within a regional frame. Dependency on outside or big capital continues to threaten the MMV in terms of lock-in as well as reproduction. Instead, if the MMV can balance the community assets that residents value with those that will attract visitors, it can restructure as a region. Main Street remains a stronghold in this process, as both the geographic figure head of economic development and space where a narrative can be told. In order to reach a point of restructuring, however, the MMV cannot given into the nostalgia that hangs heavy over its spaces and residents alike. Otherwise, “well time slips away” when caught up in the glory days.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- “About California, Pa.” 2018. *California, Pa.* <http://californiapa15419.com/>
- Acton, Robin. 2007. “Saving Brownsville: Is its history key to future?” *Tribune Review*.
- Arthur, W Brian. 1989. “Competing Technologies, Increasing Returns, and Lock-in by Historic Events.” *The Economic Journal*. Vol 99: 394. 116-13.
- Baltina, Liga. 2014. “A place-based approach in EU regional development and its application in Latvia.” *Baltic Journal of European Studies*. Vol 4: 1. 34-53.
- Banes, William R. and Larry C. Ledebur. 1998. *The New Regional Economies: The U.S. Common Market and the Global Economy*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publishing.
- Berg, Nathan. 2014. Success from satisficing and imitation: entrepreneurs’ location choice and implications of heuristics for local economic development. *Journal of Business Research*. Vol 67,8. 1700-9.
- Bergman, Edwar. Gunter Maier, and Franz Todtling. 1991. “Introduction.” *Regions Reconsidered*. Ed. Edward Bergman, Gunther Maier, and Franz Todtling. New York, New York: Mansell Publishing.
- Birch, Kean, Danny Mackinnon and Andrew Cumbers. 2010. “Industrial Regions in Europe: A Comparative Assessment of Economic Performance.” *Regional Studies*. Vol 44, 1. 33-53.
- Bluestone, B. and Harrison, B., 1982. *The deindustrialization of America: Plant closings, Community abandonment, and the dismantling of basic industry*. Basic Books.
- “Blueprint Communities.” FHL Bank Pittsburgh.
- “Brownsville: Celebrating our History.” 2015. Borough of Brownsville.
- Brownsville Borough Commercial Historic District Design Guidelines. 2012. T&B Planning, Inc.

- Calthorpe, Peter and William Fulton. 2001. *The Regional City*. Washington D.C: Island Press.
- Carr, Partrick J. and Maria Kefalas. 2009. *Hollowing out the middle: the rural brain drain and what it means for American*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Centennial Anniversary of the Founding of Monongahela City, Pa: celebrated November 15th, 1892. 1895. Historic Pittsburgh Book Collection.
- “City of Monessen” <https://www.cityofmonessen.com/>
- Coffey, William and Mario Polese. 1984. “The concept of local development: A stages model of endogenous regional growth.” *Papers of the Regional Science Association*. Vol 55: 1. P. 1-12.
- Conforti, Josph. 2001. *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press
- Connolly, James J. 2010. “Can They Do it? The Capacity of Small Rust-Belt Cities to Reinvent Themselves in a Global Economy.” *After the Factory: Reinventing America’s Industrial Small Cities*. Ed James J Connolly. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.
- Cowell, Margret. 2012. “Bounce back or move on: Regional resilience and economic development planning.” *Cities*. Vol 30. 212-222.
- Cowell, Margret. 2014. *Dealing with deindustrialization: Adapative resilience in American midwestern regions*. New York, New York: Routledge.
- Cowie, Jefferson and Joseph Heathcott. 2003. *The Meaning of Deindustrialization*. Digital Commons. Cornell University ILR School.
- Criado, Justin. 2016. “Opinions vary on Trump’s visit.” *Mon Valley Independent*.
- Dandaneau, Steven P. 1996. *A town abandoned: Flint, Michigan confronts deindustrialization*. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Daniels, Thomas L. 1989. “Small Town Economic Development: Growth or Survival.” *Journal of Planning Literature*.
- Dieterich-Ward, Allen. 2016. *Beyond Rust: Metropolitan Pittsburgh and the fate of industrial America*. Philadelphia, Pa: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Dieterich-Ward, Allen. 2014. *Transcript of Interview with Augie Carlino and Dr. Ted Muller*.
- Dieterich-Ward, Allen. 2010. “From Satellite City to Burb of the ‘Burgh: Deindustrialization and

- Community Identity in Steubenville, Ohio.” *After the Factory: Reinventing America’s Industrial Small Cities*. Ed James J Connolly. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.
- Dosi, Giovanni. 1988. Technical change and economic theory. Vol 6:6. New York, New York: Pinter Publishers.
- “Downtown Revitalization: Actions and Strategies for Snowdon Square and Brownsville, PA.” 2012. Sustainable Communities in Appalachia Technical Assistance Program.
- U.S. Department of Commerce. 1998. *Census Brief: “Rust Belt” Rebounds*.
- Falk, J.D. 2012. *Beneath the Rust: Post-industrial urban American economic resilience*.
- Fayette County Planning Department. *Fayette County Comprehensive Plan*.
- Feiock, R.C. ed., 2004. *Metropolitan governance: Conflict, competition, and cooperation*. Georgetown University Press.
- Fishman, Robert. 2001 “Foreword.” *The Regional City*. Washington D.C: Island Press.
- Fitjar, Rune Dahl. 2005. “Measuring regionalism: Content analysis and the case of Rogaland in Norway.” *Regional & Federal Studies*. Vol 15: 1. 59-7.
- Florida, Richard. 2004. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York, New York: Basic Books.
- Francaviglia, Richard V. 1996. *Main Street Revisited: Time, Space, and Image Building in Small-Town America*. Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press. Ed. Wayne Franklin.
- Freeman, Joshua B. 2018. *Behemoth: A History of the Factory and the Making of the Modern World*.
- Friedman, John. 1991. “The Industrial Transition: A Comprehensive Approach to Regional Development.” *Regions Reconsidered*. Ed. Edward Bergman, Gunther Maier, and Franz Todtling. New York, New York: Mansell Publishing.
- Frug, Gerald E. and David J. Barron. 2008. *The Middle-Class City*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Frug, Gerald E. and David J. Barron. 2013. *City Bound: How States Stifle Urban Innovation*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Garofoli, Gioacchino. 1991. “Local Networks, Innovation and Policy in Italian Industrial Districts” *Regions Reconsidered*. Ed. Edward Bergman, Gunther Maier, and Franz Todtling. New York, New York: Mansell Publishing.
- Giffels, David. 2014. *The Hard Way on Purpose*. New York, New York: Scribner.

- Glass, Michael R. 2011. "Metropolitan Reform in Allegheny County: The Local Failure of National Urban Reform Advocacy, 1920-1929." *Journal of Urban History*. Vol 37: No 1. 90-116
- Glass, Michael R. 2017. Navigating the regionalism-public choice divide in regional studies. *Regional Studies*. Vol. 52, Issue 8. 1150-1161.
- Glass, Michael R. 2018. "Understanding the 24 Hour City: Engagment, Positionality, and the Coproduction of Knowledge." *The Professional Geographer*. 70:2. 327-332.
- Glass, Michael R. 2018. North American Regionalism. *Handbook on the Geographies of Regions and Territories*. Ed. Harrison, J., Paasi, A. & Jones. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing. 468-478
- Glisson, L. S. 1984. *Main Street: Open for business*. Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- Grabher, Gernot. 1991 "Rebuilding Cathedrals in the Desert: New Patterns of Cooperation. between Large and Small Firms in the Coal, Iron, and Steel Complex of the German Ruhr Area." *Regions Reconsidered*. Ed. Edward Bergman, Gunther Maier, and Franz Todtling. New York, New York: Mansell Publishing.
- Grata, Joe. 2011. "Mon Valley population becoming smaller, older and poorer." *Tribune Review*.
- Grogan, Paul and Tony Proscio. 2000. *Comeback Cities*. Cumnor Hill, Oxford: Westview Press.
- Hackworth, J. 2018. "Race and the production of extreme land abandonment in the American Rust belt." *International Journal of Urbna and Regional Research*. Vol 42: 1, 51-73.
- Hagedorn, J.M and Macon. 1988. *People and folks: Gangs, crime, and the underclass in a rust belt city*. Chicago, IL: Lake View Press.
- Hall, Peter. 1988. "Regions in the Transition to the Information Economy." *America's New Market*.
- Harvey, David. 1978. "The urban process under capitalism: a framework for analysis." *International journal of urban and regional research*, 2(1-3), 101-131.
- Harvey, David. 1985. *Consciousness and the Urban Experience: Studies in the history and theory of capitalist urbanization*. Vol 1. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Harvey, David. 1989. "From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation in urban governance in late capitalism." *Human Geography*. 71:1. 3-17.
- Harvey, David. 2014. *Seventeen Contradictions and the End of Capitalism*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

- Henly-Shepard, Sarah, Cheryl Anderson, Kimberly Burnnet, Linda J Cox, John N. Kittinger, and Maka'ala Ka'aumoana. 2015. "Quantifying households social resilience: A place-based approach in a rapidly transforming community." *Natural Hazards*. Vol 75: 1. 343-63.
- Hiss, Alger. 1948. "Hearings Regarding Communist Espionage in the United States Government."
- Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. 1991. *Historic Site Survey of the Greater Monongahela River Valley*. Ed. William Keyes.
- Hoerr, John. 1988. *And the Wolf Finally Came: The Decline and Fall of the American Steel Industry*. Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Isenberg, Nancy. 2016. *White Trash: The 400 Year Untold History of Class in America*. New York, New York: Penguin Books.
- Isserman, Andrew M. 1995. "The History, Status, and Future of regional Science: An American Perspective." *International Regional Science Review*. Vol 17: 3. 249-296.
- Jackle, John A and David Wilson. 1992. *Derelict landscapes: The wasting of American's built environment*. Savage, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Johansson, B., 1991. "Economic networks and self-organization." *Theories of endogenous regional growth: lessons for regional policies*. Ed. Borje Johansson, Charlie Karlson, and Rodger Stough. Berlin, Germany: Springer. 17-34.
- Johansson, Borje and Charlie Karlsson. 2001. "Geographic Transaction Costs and Specialisation Opportunities of Small and Medium-Sized Regions: Scale Economies and Market Extension." *Theories of endogenous regional growth : lessons for regional policies*. Ed. Borje Johansson, Charlie Karlson, and Rodger Stough. Berlin, Germany: Springer.
- Keating, Michael. 2004. "The Political Economy of Regionalism." *The Political Economy of Regionalism*. Ed. Michael Keating and John Loughlin. Oxon, Oxford: Routledge.
- Keating, Michael and John Loughlin. 2004. "Introduction." *The Political Economy of Regionalism*. Ed. Michael Keating and John Loughlin. Oxon, Oxford: Routledge.
- Klein, Maury and Harvey A. Kantor. 1976. *Prisoners of Progress: American Industrial Cities 1950-1920*. New York, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co, Inc.
- Laurel Highlands Website. 2018. "Greater Brownsville Area Chamber of Commerce." Accessed 1 June 2018.
- Lefebvre, Henri. 1968. *La vie quotidienne dans le monde moderne*. FeniXX.

- Lefebvre, Henri. 1991. *The production of space*. Vol. 142. Blackwell: Oxford Trans. Donald Nicholson Smith.
- Lopilato, Louis. 2003. *Main Street: Some Lessons in Revitalization*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Lubove, Roy. 1996. *Twentieth-Century Pittsburgh: The Post Steel Era*. Vol 2. Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- McGrew, J. Chapman and Charles B. Monroe. 2000. *An introduction to statistical problem solving in geography*. 2nd ed. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Mitra, Dana L. and William C. Frick. 2011. *Civic capacity in education reform efforts: Emerging and established regimes in rust belt cities*. *Education Policy*. Vol 25. Issue 5. 810-43.
- Malecki, Edward. 2004. "Jockeying for Position: What it Means and why It Matters to Regional Development When Places and Compete." *Regional Studies*. Vol 38, Issue 9. 1101-1120.
- Mill, John Stewart. 1984 (1836). "On the definition and method of political economy." *The Philosophy of Economics: An Anthology*. Second Edition. Ed. Daniel M. Hausman. Cambridge University Press.
- Markusen, Ann R. 1979. "Regionalism and the Capitalist State: The Case of the United States." Working Paper No. 305. Forthcoming in *Kapitalistate*, Vol. 7, Winter 1979.
- Markusen, Ann. 1995. "Growing Pains: Thoughts on Theory, Method, and Politics for a Regional Science of the Future." *International Regional Science Review*.
- Martin, Ron. 2010. "Roepke Lecture in Economic Geography-Rethinking Regional Path Dependence: Beyond Lock-in to Evaluation." *Economic Geography*.
- Marx, Karl. 1844. Critical Notes on the Article 'The King of Prussia and Social Reform, By a Prussian.' *The Portable Karl Marx*. Ed. Eugene Kamenka. New York, New York: Penguin Books. 1983.
- Marx, Karl. 1932. *Capital*. New York, New York: The Modern Library.
- Massey, Doreen. 1978. "In What Sense a Regional Problem?" *Regional Studies*. 13:2.
- Miller, David. 2002. "Fiscal regionalism levels playing field." *American City & County*. 8. Business Insights: Global
- "Monongahela Railway Company Photographs." 1905-1975. *Historic Pittsburgh*.
- "Mon Valley Alliance opens doors to deteriorating Coyle Theater in Charleroi." 2017. *Observer Report*.

The Mon Valley Independent Archives.

Mon Valley Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team. 1988. *Remaking the Monongahela River Valley*. Mon Valley American Institute of Architects.

Mossberger, Karen, Caroline Tolbert, and Michelle Gilbert. 2006. "Race, Place, and Information Technology." *Urban Affairs Review*. Vol 41:5. 583-620.

Muller, Edward. 2001. "River City." *Devastation and renewal : an environmental history of Pittsburgh and its region*. Ed. Joel A. Tarr. Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Muller, Edward. 2001. "Industrial Suburb and the Growth of Metropolitan Pittsburgh, 1870-1920." *Journal of Historical Geography*. Vol 27:1. 59-73.

Muller, Edward. 2006. "Downtown Pittsburgh: Renaissance and Revival." *Pittsburgh and the Appalachians: cultural and natural resources in a postindustrial age*. Ed. Joseph Scarpaci and Kevin Patrick. Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Muller, Ted. 2014. *Transcript of Interview with Augie Carlino and Dr. Ted Muller*. Provided by Dr. Allen Dieterich-Ward.

Napsha, Joe. 2014. "State grants offer boost to downtown Brownsville." *Tribune Review*.

National Park Service. 1991. *Reconnaissance Survey: Brownsville/Monongahela Valley*.

Nelson, J. I. (1995). *Post-industrial capitalism*. Sage.

New Eagle Borough. 2018. Accessed 7 June 2018 <http://neweagleboro.org/>.

Norris, Donald F. 2001. "Prospects for Regional Governance Under the New Regionalism: Economic Imperatives Versus Political Impediments." *Journal of Urban Affairs*. Vol 23:5. 557-571.

O'hara, S. Paul. 2001. "Model Cities, Mill Towns, and Industrial Peripheries: Small Cities in Twentieth-Century America." *After the Factory: Reinventing America's Industrial Small Cities*. Ed James J Connolly. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

Okulicz-kozaryn, A. 2013. "City life: Rankings (livability) versus perceptions (satisfaction)." *Social Indicators Research*. 110:2, 433-451.

Patrick, Kevin. 2006. "Joe Magarac and the Spirit of Pittsburgh." *Pittsburgh and the Appalachians: cultural and natural resources in a postindustrial age*. Ed. Joseph Scarpaci and Kevin Patrick. Pittsburgh, Pa: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Parker, Arthur. 1999. *The Monongahela: River of Dreams, River of Sweat*. University Park, Pa:

- The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Peet, Richard. 1977. *Radical Geography: Alternative Viewpoints on Contemporary Social Issues*. Chicago, IL: Maaroufa Press.
- Peet, Richard. 1998. *Modern geographic thought*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. 2014. Business Reports. Accessed on 5 July 2018. <http://pasitesearch.com/business.aspx>
- Pennsylvania Department of State. 2018. "2016 Presidential Election." Accessed 4 May 2018. <https://www.electionreturns.pa.gov/>
- Persson, Torsten and Guido Enrico Tabellini. 1994. *Monetary and Fiscal Policy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Pine, Joseph. 2011. *The experience economy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.
- Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Archives*. Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Microfilm Services.
- Powell, Douglas R. 2007. *Critical Regionalism*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Templeton, David. 2004. "Charleroi's Story is History town Built for Glass Factory Could be Large Historic District" *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: Region Edition*. Pittsburgh, Pa: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.
- Rhodes, James and John Russo. 2013. "Shrinking 'Smart'? Urban redevelopment and shrinkage in Youngstown, Ohio." *Urban Geography*. 34:3/ 304-26.
- Rothwell, R and W. Zegveld. 1985. *Reindustrialization and Technology*. M.E. Sharp. Armonk, New York.
- Russel Hochschild, Arlie. 2016. *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*. The New Press.
- Safford, Sean. 2009. *Why the Garden Club Couldn't Save Youngstown: The Transformation of The Rust Belt*. Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Schensul, Stephen L., Schensul, Jean J., and LeCompte, Margaret D.. 2012. *Initiating Ethnographic Research : A Mixed Methods Approach*. California: AltaMira Press. Accessed February 26, 2018. ProQuest Ebook Central.
- Schoenberger, Erica. 1991. "The corporate interview as a research method in economic geography." *The Professional Geographer*. 43:2. 180-9.

- Schumpeter, Joseph. 1942. Creative destruction. *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*, 825. New York, New York: 1st Harper Perennial Modern Thought ed.
- Selin, Steven. 2017. "Elaborating the Role of Backbone Leadership Organizations in Sustainable Tourism Development: The Monongahela River Valley Coalition." *Sustainability*. Vol 9, Issue 1.
- Smith, Neil, 1996. "Spaces of vulnerability: the space of flows and the politics of scale." *Critique of anthropology*. 16:1. 63-77.
- Smith, Neil. 2010. *Uneven Development: Nature, capital, and the production of space*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
- Soja, Edward. 1989. *Postmodern geographies: The reassertion of space in critical social theory*. Verso.
- Springsteen, Bruce. 1984. "My Hometown." *Born in the U.S.A.* Columbia Records.
- Stone, Clarence N, Robert P. Stoker, John Betancur, Susan E. Clarke, Marilyn Dantico, Martin Horak, and Karen Mossberger et al. 2005. *Urban neighborhood in the new era: Revitalization politics in the postindustrial city*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Students in Action. 2017. "Operation Flacon Revitalization Blog".
- Taylor, Don. 1964. *Development means people: a series of broadcast interviews on economic development*. New York, New York: Pergamon Press.
- Tumber, Karen. *Small, Gritty, and Green*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Turok, Ivan. 2015. "Redundant and marginalized spaces." *Cities and Economic Change*. 74-93.
- University Center for Social and Urban Research. 2005. "Housing & Socio-Demographic Trends" *Allegheny Places: The Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan*.
- Vance, J.D. 2016. *Hillbilly Elegy*. New York, New York: Harper.
- VanVoorhis, Van. 1908. "Historical Sketch of Monongahela City." *Historical Magazine of Monongahela's Old Home Coming Week*. Pittsburgh, Pa: Historic Pittsburgh Book Collection, University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Vitale, Patrick. 2015. "Decline is Renewal." *Journal of Urban History*. Vol 41, Issue 1.
- Walters, Jonathon. 1995. *The formula for fixing a state*. Vol 9. Washington: Tribune Content Agency.

- Wilson, David. 2007. City transformation and the global trope: Indianapolis and Cleveland. *Globalizations*. Vol 4:1. 29-44.
- Wilson, David and J Wouters. 2003. "Spatiality and growth discourse: The restructuring of America's Rust Belt Cities." *Journal of Urban Affairs*. 25:2. 123-138.
- Weinstein, Bernard L. and Harold T. Gross. 1988. "The Rise and Fall of Sun, Rust, and Frost Belts." *Economic Development Quarterly*. 2:1. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Zukin, Sharon. 1995. *The Culture of Cities*. Cambridge, Ma: Blackwell.