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2 A history

2.1 Starting points and forerunners

The Lynds in 1920s America were the first researchers to produce a recognizable community study in the modern format, but *Middletown* was far from being the first piece of social scientific research into community matters. Close by (both geographically and in time) a distinct body of work that would later become known as the Chicago School was already taking form as the sociologists in that city followed the exhortation of Robert Park, a journalist turned sociologist, to learn about the various phenomena of urban life through street-level observation and spending time close to the people being researched. It was the antithesis of so-called ‘armchair sociology’ (Smith 1988: 102). By the end of the 1920s, a wealth of studies had already been published on gangs, tramps, migration, ethnic segregation, delinquency and the contrasting lifestyles of the inhabitants of rich and poor areas of the city. As a result, more was known about Chicago than anywhere else (Stein 1964: 13). Taken together, these reports revealed the city to be like an organism with its spatially discrete but nevertheless interconnected parts. Park and his collaborator Roderick McKenzie coined the term ‘human ecology’ to highlight the relationship of communities to their environment (Park 1952), expressing the enduring if contested idea that there is something natural about communities (Suttles 1972: ch.1). This did not mean that communities had to be accepted as they were. Dennis Smith (1988) rightly assessed the Chicago School to have advanced ‘a liberal critique of capitalism’. This is quite consistent with Park’s view of the city as a social laboratory where experiments in ways of living were taking place, out of which new forms of community could emerge.

Various research-based social interventions intended to bring about improvements in people’s welfare had prominence in Chicago from the late nineteenth century. These projects have had a lasting impact on the field of social work studies in the same way that the Chicago School has

provided a defining point of reference for sociology. That disciplinary distinction was not as evident at the time as it has later become, and the association of women with welfare projects was only part of the story; the focus on this aspect has diverted attention from the achievements of Jane Addams and other women as social theorists and methodologists as well as practical reformers (McDonald 1994: 228–33; Platt 1996: 262). This outpouring of research activity in Chicago deserves explanation. There was something about the speed with which the city had developed that facilitated scrutiny of its operation – Max Weber on a visit there in 1904 commented that it was a city whose inner workings could be observed ‘like a man whose skin has been peeled off and whose intestines are seen at work’ (Weber 1988: 286–7) – and there was a corresponding urgency about finding solutions to its many evident social problems. The rawness of these problems sat uneasily alongside the city’s growing ‘cultural confidence’ (Bulmer 1984: 14), making for a heady mix.

Chicago was also a city whose profile corresponded to the issues of theoretical debate that were being identified by early social scientists in the United States and elsewhere, particularly Germany, among whose authors Georg Simmel and his ideas on adjustment to city life had especial resonance. The development of industrial cities prompted the idea that contemporary urban life was of a different form to life in rural locations, and the recruitment to the cities of people from the countryside meant that this contrast was very real for migrants. This was famously true for the people studied in *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, whose migration had an additional cross-cultural dimension to it. The authors of this work, William Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, claimed that personal documents such as letters constituted ‘perfect’ sociological material, although the life histories that these documents made it possible to construct were not necessarily representative of wider populations (Madge 1970: 61). This issue of the typicality or atypicality of cases is one that continually resurfaces in the history of community research, not least because the vividness of material relating to individual cases makes it attractive to use precisely because its unusualness brings with it an element of surprise.

The conclusion towards which the Chicago researchers from the late nineteenth century onwards pointed was that modern cities needed to be studied because they were not only new in the form that they took, but also potentially unstable. This instability made them dangerous, both to their inhabitants through their poor living conditions and to the social

order through the more limited social support and looser social control that was thought to exist there. In this context it was understandable that urban life with its mobility and fluidity would come to be associated with an absence of community compared to the fixity and familiarity of rural communities, although in time the loss of community theme would also come to be associated with the countryside as well, as communities there saw population decline and growing urban cultural influences. Louis Wirth provided a key expression of these ideas of community taking different forms in cities and the countryside in his classic paper 'urbanism as a way of life'. In his view, cities took people away from 'natural' situations: 'Nowhere has mankind been further removed from organic nature than under the conditions of life characteristic of great cities' (1938: 1–2). This perspective paved the way for rural–urban and urban–suburban contrasts that have been significant in the history of community studies (as have later reactions to them, to be discussed below).

In Britain where the first industrial nation was forged, the urban transformation took place sooner than in the United States and continental Europe; so did pioneering social research into life in urban communities. Among these pioneers Friedrich Engels stands out as an early illustration of the power of reporting on life as it takes place all around the attentive researcher who is minded to look behind facades. His account in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* revealed 1840s Manchester where he lived and worked to be a world of both prosperity and squalor, inextricably linked. London attracted more extensive investigation from researchers located in contrasting philosophical and political traditions who employed a variety of methods, including large-scale quantitative studies of poverty conducted over many years as well as more literary evocations (Crow 2014). At times the political purpose underlying studies of Victorian London and other cities found expression in judgemental narratives that arose from the tensions between what was discovered and what the researcher felt to be desirable. But whatever personal motivations the researchers had, they were united in believing in the value of research to reveal uncomfortable hidden realities to which complacent inactivity was not an acceptable response.

Social researchers who were also social reformers saw research as a vehicle for promoting social improvement through community development, but their choice of methods and theories used to study communities could be idiosyncratic. This criticism has been made of the extensive body of research

projects associated with Patrick Geddes and his early-twentieth-century followers, whose openness to diverse and sometimes contradictory influences led to accounts of community that were at once social, economic, geographical, biological and architectural, and also empirical and utopian, combined in something of a melange. This was compounded by the reliance on local volunteers rather than trained social scientists to undertake the surveys, with predictably uneven outcomes (Kent 1981). However well-intentioned, such research was open to criticism for its amateurism. In the disillusionment that followed the failure of such research to deliver sustained social improvement, community research took a different direction, although some elements of Geddes and his colleagues' approach survived. These include the key tenet that place, work, family and community life are all combined in reciprocal relationships (Savage and Warde 1993: 20), and the practice of seeking an overview of a district from a high vantage point, inspired by the panorama of Edinburgh gained from the Outlook Tower (Scott and Bromley 2013: 96; Crow 2000). These elements were compatible with more inductive approaches that came to the fore around the middle of the twentieth century in what may be considered a golden age for community studies, or at least community studies of a particular type.

2.2 The rise and fall of classic community studies

The third quarter of the twentieth century witnessed a remarkable profusion of detailed ethnographic studies of diverse places and the people who lived there. The way for this development had been paved by various landmark projects, including three pioneering studies conducted in rural communities in different national contexts outside of the United States and the United Kingdom: Robert Redfield's *Tepoztlán – A Mexican Village*, Conrad Arensberg and Solon Kimball's *Family and Community in Ireland* and Everett Hughes's *French Canada in Transition* (published in 1930, 1940 and 1943, respectively). The authors of the first and third of these came out of the Chicago School and their contrasting styles illustrate the breadth of that inheritance, while the second was different again, drawing inspiration from Lloyd Warner's *Yankee City* research on Newburyport in New England (Bell and Newby 1974: 42), which was more reliant on the use of quantitative methods as part of a mixed-methods approach (Warner and Lunt 1941: ch. III). Despite their differences, all of them sought to record

in detail the way of life of people in rural communities, with the anthropologist's concern to capture how core social institutions worked from the point of view of participants in those institutions. The elaboration of such internal points of view had the potential to surprise those outsiders who lazily assumed the universality of their familiar, fixed way of understanding the world.

The rural community studies of the mid-twentieth-century generation pursued a variety of themes, including the contentious one of social divisions in ostensibly contented communities. The title of E. W. Martin's (1965) study *The Shearers and the Shorn* echoes Talleyrand to make this point. Such studies served to highlight how community members are divided (often materially) despite their commonalities, and united (often symbolically) despite their inequalities (Crow and Maclean 2013). Set in Wales, Ronald Frankenberg's *Village on the Border* (published in 1957) recorded how social divisions were not only a feature of collective life, but also integral to it. In this early example of 'anthropology at home' (Jackson 1987), Frankenberg explored the position of 'strangers' through his own involvement in community life as a non-Welsh outsider. He later recounted: 'In my early days in the village I would often climb a hill and look sadly down upon the rows of houses of the housing estate and wonder what went on inside them' (1969: 16). The research progressed once Frankenberg became involved in village activities, which in turn shed light on what he called (in a phrase borrowing from Bronislaw Malinowski designed to convey the inherent strangeness of other people's cultures) 'the imponderabilia of everyday life' (1990: 177). Not least among these issues was the role that outsiders may be called upon to play in the resolution of disputes between community insiders.

Another rural study to break new ground was Alwyn Rees's *Life in a Welsh Countryside*, a book that gives a strong sense of place and people through its inclusion of photographs, maps, figures and diagrams. These include a representation of the network of kinship ties between households in which the connecting lines are so dense that the local expression of these resembling 'a pig's entrails' (1951: 75–6) makes immediate sense. Nigel Rapport later found this idea echoed in his own fieldwork in Cumbria, where the local expression had it that 'Kick one person from Wanet and next day seven people will be limping' (1993: 43), and a similar expression is reported for Swansea (Rosser and Harris 1965: 5). The use of visual methods and social network analysis in Rees's study may be rudimentary by

today's standards, but the important thing to note is the fact that they are there at all; they serve as a corrective against those myopic narratives of methodological innovation that neglect this history. It is telling, however, that the network map of kinship ties stops at the parish boundaries and gives an impression of the community as a self-contained unit. In practice, local autonomy was fast being eroded, as Rees's reference to 'the impact of modern industrial and urban civilisation' (1951: 164) conceded.

This theme of the encroachment of the wider society into rural community life was central to Arthur Vidich and Joseph Bensman's *Small Town in Mass Society*, a study of a rural community in upstate New York. One of the purposes of community studies is to act as 'gauges of change' (Hughes 1971: 76), and the study of 'Springdale' (Vidich and Bensman's pseudonym for the community they were studying) was undertaken mindful of agriculture's declining proportion of the workforce and the rise of urban influences on rural communities. The resultant book, first published in 1958, has been much-discussed because of the hostile reception it received, including the townspeople hanging effigies of the researchers. The project's impact has been enduring because the ethics of gaining access to a community by promising something more positive than it is actually possible to deliver has ongoing relevance (Crow 2013). Also of enduring significance for the practice of community studies is the way in which Vidich and Bensman sought out as key respondents 'individuals who are socially marginal in the society being studied' (2000: 354). People working in professions such as journalism and teaching will typically be less-firmly incorporated into mainstream local culture and less persuaded by widely held beliefs about its superiority over other ways of life. By adopting their more critical stance on Springdale's view of itself, and treating local beliefs as 'myths', the book's authors were set on a collision course with their hosts, a problem compounded by Vidich and Bensman's (1971) subsequent characterization of the townspeople as 'sensitive'. Any future research in the town was rendered impossible.

The same theme of the incorporation of people and places into the wider society was pursued as well in research into suburbia. J. R. Seeley and his colleagues' *Crestwood Heights* presents it as a depiction of community life, but it is a community that exists only because of its relationship to 'Big City' (in fact Toronto, Canada). The relationship was treated as psychologically important, with the city providing a point of comparison that allowed the residents of Crestwood Heights to feel superior. In this respect

there was a parallel with the prevailing belief in Springdale of the town being a desirable place to live, but the grounding of such beliefs could not be the same since Crestwood Heights as a new community lacked history. Its functioning as a community had instead to be attributed to 'the relationships that exist between people – relationships revealed in the functioning of the institutions which they have created: family, school, church, community center, club, association, summer camp'. Suburban developments brought together populations of strangers, and constituted something of an 'experiment' (1963: 4, 431). In the case of Crestwood Heights, not only did residents arrive not knowing their new neighbours, they also were aware that their new location was impermanent because of the periodic geographical mobility that accompanied their middle-class lifestyles. Suburbanization might be expected to bring with it anonymization and fragmentation rather than the successful creation of communities, and the discovery to the contrary in this and other studies of suburbia (such as Herbert Gans's (1967) *The Levittowners* and Suzanne Keller's (2003) report on Twin Rivers, New Jersey) posed a fundamental challenge to theories of community reliant on the idea that geographical location has a determining influence on social life.

Gans had already grappled with the issue of the relationship of community to place, both theoretically (1962a) and in his account of the dense patterns of social relationships found among Italian Americans in a slum area of Boston, Massachusetts, prior to its demolition. His book's title, *The Urban Villagers* (Gans 1962b), conveyed the paradoxical nature of the phenomenon, at least from the point of view that associated urban life with atrophied forms of community. In the UK various studies were arriving at similar conclusions, the most widely read of these being Michael Young and Peter Willmott's (1957) *Family and Kinship in East London*, which discovered the very opposite of urban anonymity and social fracture at the heart of this global city. Colin Rosser and Christopher Harris (1965) painted a similar picture for urban life in Swansea in *The Family and Social Change*, even as its population became more mobile, both socially and geographically. It fell to Ray Pahl to pull all of these strands together and draw the inevitable conclusion to which they and his own research on commuters who lived in rural settings north of London (Pahl 1965) pointed that 'any attempt to tie particular patterns of social relationships to specific geographical milieux is a singularly fruitless exercise' (1968: 293). If the classic occupational community, that of Yorkshire coalminers as

studied by Norman Dennis and his colleagues (1969) in *Coal Is Our Life*, had to be interpreted as 'the town that is a village' (Frankenberg 1969: ch.5), then it was clear that the time had come to abandon the idea, embodied in a 'rural-urban continuum', of there being a deterministic relationship between the size and density of settlement patterns and distinct types of urban and rural community relationships.

Some researchers in the field of community drew even more radical conclusions than Pahl. Margaret Stacey's first study of Banbury, a market town in the English midlands, had taken the Lynds' *Middletown* as a point of reference (Stacey 1960: v) and she was engaged in working on a restudy when she concluded that 'it is doubtful that the concept "community" refers to a useful abstraction' (1969: 134). Coming at the end of a decade which had seen the publication of numerous influential community studies, including her own, this statement represented a serious loss of faith in the wider project of capturing the social world through this genre of research. Her concerns were both theoretical and methodological. She argued that 'community' was difficult if not impossible to isolate in research into how societies work, and proposed instead using the concept of 'local social system' as the basis for developing testable hypotheses. This strategy offered a way out of the problem of community studies being unable to progress beyond individual insights into a coherent incremental body of knowledge. For the field to develop through accumulating knowledge, some way of comparing studies would be required; as she expressed it, 'A highly idiosyncratic non-replicable study may be seminal, but cannot be used comparatively' (1969: 138). The Banbury restudy was eventually published (Stacey et al. 1975), but it was one of the last community studies conceived in what can be called, following Jennifer Platt (1971: ch.3), the 'old tradition'. It would be superseded after a hiatus by a rejuvenated form in which confidence about the value of 'community' as a focus of inquiry had returned, along with revised methodological practices that could meet the criticisms of community studies as insufficiently theoretically informed and overly concerned with small-scale, local issues in a way that left the impact of larger social and economic forces unaddressed.

The work of the Institute of Community Studies ICS embodies in miniature this phase of the genre's evolution, in which remarkable success was followed by doubt and reassessment. Founded in 1953 by the social entrepreneur Michael Young (Briggs 2001: 6), the ICS is most famous for his and his colleague Peter Willmott's best-selling *Family and Kinship in*

East London (Young and Willmott 1957), which reported on the continuing importance of community ties in the age of the welfare state. Further studies by numerous ICS authors followed, covering a range of topics (including widowhood, mental illness, medical services, education and social mobility, youth and urban planning) that arguably matched the breadth of scope of the early Chicago School, all emphasizing the importance of community context, although not all of them involved fieldwork in East London. These projects were deliberately framed as social research with a purpose, to promote social awareness and social change; that is, they embodied an ethos of engagement with the wider public as well as policy makers. Platt's (1971) evaluation of this body of work was that engagement with diverse audiences came at a cost: opportunities for methodological innovation were not always taken up, and in presentation there was a tendency towards an 'impressionistic' style, a word also used in Richard Titmuss's foreword to the first edition of *Family and Kinship* (perhaps explaining why the foreword did not appear in subsequent editions). Put another way, questions were being raised about the rigour of the ICS's way of working.

Jocelyn Cornwell's (1984) return to Bethnal Green highlighted the way in which the public celebration of 'community' was one side of a coin which could lead to the less attractive reverse side of private narratives (in which violence and snobbery also figured) being overlooked. Only by penetrating behind the public face of community myths of positive togetherness could a more balanced assessment of the traditional working-class community be gained. Geoff Payne's question about community studies which *Family and Kinship* epitomized, why do they 'seem so full of such nice people?' (1996: 18, emphasis in original), is answered partly by the failure to penetrate behind myths, and partly by selectivity (conscious or otherwise) in decisions about which members of communities to consult. When researchers at the Young Foundation (which the ICS became) undertook a restudy of *Family and Kinship*, other charges would be levelled at their book (Dench, Gavron and Young 2006), but not ones of looking at things through rose-tinted spectacles or of failure to speak to 'missing' sections of the study population. This was a key point of criticism of mid-century community studies: that they were vulnerable to being partial in their coverage. In some, women's voices went unheard, or were misheard, and misrepresented, by male researchers; the best-known community studies were among these (Frankenberg 1976). Similar points were made about

how in other studies different groups' voices came to be marginalized. These criticisms required researchers to pay attention to the lessons this entailed for the research methods employed and to the operationalization of the term 'community' using researchers' chosen tools.

2.3 Reconsideration and renewal

Rethinking the way in which community was researched necessarily entailed theoretical debate about the concept of community. A key reference point that had been published in German in 1887 but was not available in an English translation until 1955 was *Community and Association* by Ferdinand Tönnies. The reduction of the distinction between two antipathetic types of social arrangements, *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, to a contrast between small rural and large urban settlements lost much of the subtlety of what Tönnies had to say about the erosion by social and economic forces of the enduring connections to and consequent intimate knowledge of others that came from living in close-knit social worlds (Lee and Newby 1983: Part 2). Industrializing and urbanizing societies were becoming less 'organic' and more 'mechanical' (Tönnies 1955: 39), and as a result communities' religious, work, family and cultural traditions were transformed. Interestingly, Tönnies' contemporary Emile Durkheim borrowed and reworked the concepts of mechanical and organic solidarity, and through his account of social change challenged the notion that the conditions of modern social life ruled out the intense social bonds that Tönnies treated as beleaguered (Crow 2005). By the early 1970s the ensuing debate was focussing on whether using the concept of community implied acceptance of Tönnies's nostalgia that appealed to readers who longed to see 'a return to an earlier stage in the development of societies where life was simpler' (Elias 1974: xi). This debate has continued down to the present, for example in the work of Zygmunt Bauman (2001).

The renewed attention being paid to the theory of community had powerful consequences. Engagement with theoretical ideas was necessary because community studies were being characterized by critics as descriptive, capable of portraying communities but not explaining them. It was partly as a response to this criticism that Stacey looked to theory to help frame an approach that would get beyond fact-finding about social problems and capture a fuller understanding of the dynamics of ordinary life including everyday routines as well as

the pursuit of power and status (Savage 2010: 151). Meanwhile, critics of the tendency to romanticize community relationships that characterized the work of the ICS arrived by a different route at the same conclusion, that communities were about competition and conflict as well as co-operation, and these phenomena needed in particular to be explained as something other than expressions of exceptional, aberrant social forces. Supporters of this line of reasoning could refer to John Rex and Robert Moore's path-breaking *Race, Community and Conflict* as an example of the sort of research results that could be achieved by dropping the assumption that communities were consensual and adopting instead a conflict perspective. By the 1960s immigration from overseas into cities like Birmingham was resulting in intense competition over resources such as housing, and the Sparkbrook study drew successfully on the Chicago School's model of differentiated urban zones, occupied by subcommunities brought together around ethnic and racial identities. Spatial segregation along ethnic lines meant that there were 'three Sparkbrooks' (1967: ch.II), not one. Here, and elsewhere, research was highlighting that an administrative boundary could contain more than one community.

First published in 1965, Norbert Elias and John Scotson's (1994) study of the 'Winston Parva' neighbourhood of Leicester offered a different explanation of the same scenario, a bounded geographical area split into a hierarchy of residential groups whose members related to others with a combination of stereotype-based discrimination and fear. A shared identity was strikingly absent in both Sparkbrook and Winston Parva. Across the Atlantic, Gerald Suttles (1968) was retracing themes of the Chicago School in the area of that city where Addams had been active in seeking to combat social problems three quarters of a century earlier. This slum neighbourhood was characterized by a pattern of separation between different racial and ethnic groups, which, despite being marked by conflict, was orderly. Suttles found solidarity between ethnic group members, and separate, 'provincial' cultures which were reproduced through social processes such as gossip (which Elias and Scotson had also highlighted in their study) to sustain a 'moral order'. Despite expectations to the contrary held by outsider observers, slum areas were characterized by social order, just not the type that was usually associated with that term. Alice Goffman's study of Philadelphia as home to 'a community on the run' (2014: xii) is a recent expression of this tradition of research finding shared identity and

norms of behaviour and even solidarity among a disadvantaged group frequently subject to misunderstanding by outsiders.

As previous thinking about the relationship of community to space was criticized and the association of community with consensus was challenged by researchers whose work highlighted conflict, community studies went out of fashion for a time. Awareness that local distinctiveness was being eroded by large-scale secular forces such as bureaucratization led some commentators to suggest that the phenomenon of community was in the process of being eclipsed (Stein 1964). For others the very concept of 'community' was an object of attack for glossing over and thereby concealing the presence of inequalities of social class, gender, and race and ethnicity. Graham Day's useful account of community studies up to this point treats the 1960s as a decade in which a crisis point was reached from which it was difficult for the genre to recover (2006: ch.2). It is certainly true that few community studies were published in the 1970s, although pointers to themes that would figure prominently in the rejuvenation of the field that was to come can be detected among those few that were (Bulmer 1985: 431). There is a political edge to Ken Coates and Richard Silburn's (1973) study of poverty and housing decay set in the context of inner-city Nottingham, while Ken Pryce's (1979) *Endless Pressure* explored ethnic minority alienation in another British inner-city context, Bristol. In Australia, the gap between suburban promise and reality was the setting for Lois Bryson and Faith Thompson's (1972) analysis of the reproduction of class inequalities, while in the United States Albert Hunter's (1974) work in Chicago emphasized the importance of community symbols. All of these studies in their different ways made the case for holding on to a focus on community phenomena which continued to have real significance in ordinary people's everyday lives. Arguably this was not despite the growing significance of wider influences on communities, but because of them. People looked to 'community' as a source of support and of meaning precisely as community boundaries were being traversed as never before.

Since 1980, criticisms of community studies as backward-looking nostalgic celebrations of disappearing ways of life have been met by numerous studies of contemporary community which are anything but nostalgic. As Robert Burgess has noted, 'The ethnographer no longer focuses merely on the exotic and the obscure in societies other than our own' (2001: 38), but is increasingly found investigating familiar phenomena closer to home. In anthropology, Anthony Cohen has highlighted the importance of

communities' symbolic boundaries in the context of it becoming ever more apparent that complete self-containment for communities is impossible in the modern world. Cohen's (1987) own work on *Whalsay* in Shetland is part of a much broader body of research in relatively remote locations (Cohen 1982, 1986), but similar themes about the constructed and negotiated character of boundaries also emerge from research conducted in the heart of great cities. Here long-established themes of spatial boundaries of inclusion and exclusion that can be traced back to the Chicago School continue to generate 'turf wars' (Modan 2007). In some exclusive contexts boundaries are managed through the device of 'gated communities' (Low 2003), in others there are more subtle mechanisms by which the desire to live among 'people like us' is pursued (Butler with Robson 2003; Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst 2005). These and other studies such as Keller's (2003) research into a suburban development reveal that the pursuit of the dream of community often involves geographical mobility.

The growth of people's spatial movement anticipated in Colin Rosser and Christopher Harris's (1965: ch.1) notion of 'the mobile society' is a prominent theme of recent restudies. Janet Foster's (1999) *Docklands* involves a return to the east end of London, and stands out as a study of 'worlds in collision' as people, ideas and practices from around the globe are brought together in new configurations. Other studies of this area also highlight the movement of people and its effect of 'changing places' (Mumford and Power 2003: ch.10), including what some see as the loss of the 'brief golden age' (Dench, Gavron and Young 2006: 20) that had been celebrated in Young and Willmott's original research. Restudies of classic community studies do not have to be conducted in exactly the same way and with precisely the same conceptual frameworks as the originals in order to illuminate the process of social change; rather, they are stronger for looking at old themes afresh (Charles and Crow 2012; Hammersley 2016). These themes of the erosion of isolation, the significance of geographical mobility, and the lessons to be learned about communities through restudies have influenced the selection of exemplars of recent community studies, which will be focused on in the next chapter. These exemplars have been selected to convey the vitality of community research as researchers have responded imaginatively to the critique of 'the old tradition' in order to better capture how as some forms of community decline, others emerge.