

Place, Collective Action and Social Resilience in Forest-dependent Communities in Transition

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A single industry community's loss of its economic base forces the community through a threshold and into an existential crisis of place. The system of community members, local government and other community institutions are forced into new regimes as each cope with the losses of income and social stability. Place has been identified as an underexplored facet of sociology and social resilience. Community survival is threatened and resident's relationship and use of place are thrown into sharp relief. This situation may be thought to produce local collective actions as residents seek to redress the loss of the mill. However, this does not always occur. Drawing on theories of place and collective action situated in a resilience framework, this research uses interview data from two British Columbia communities, adaptation to mill-closure. Key findings suggest that people's attachment to place and use of place-based institutions play major roles in how communities adapt to challenge: 1) strong place attachment acts as a social counter-incentive to permanent economic out-migration; 2) the existence and use of place-services and programs facilitates near-term community stability allowing for longer term reorganisation to develop; 3) cultural relationships with social, economic and environmental elements of place are temporally complex and may both constrain and enable community resilience, and 4) the existence and extent of closure related collective action is mediated in part by these social relationships to place.