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MISSED OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MOUNTAINS:
THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY'S ACTION PROGRAM
IN EASTERN KENTUCKY IN THE 1960s

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By
Bradley L. Goan

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. John R. Thelin, University Research Professor
and Professor of Educational Policy Studies

Lexington, Kentucky

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ABSTRACT

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MOUNTAINS: THE UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY'S ACTION PROGRAM IN EASTERN KENTUCKY IN THE 1960s

This dissertation explores the University of Kentucky's efforts to develop and implement an "action program" in eastern Kentucky in the 1960s. By the late 1950s, Kentucky's political, business, and academic leaders had identified eastern Kentucky as the state's problem area, and they sought strategies to bring the region into the economic and cultural mainstream. This generation of post-war leaders had an uncompromising faith in the power of knowledge, technology, and planning, and University leaders saw their action program as a university-wide effort to address what most would argue was Kentucky's ugliest problem. This study begins with an examination of the rushed and disorganized Kellogg Foundation-funded Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project (EKRDP) in 1960. With the national "rediscovery" of Appalachia in the early 1960s and the passage of the Equal Opportunity Act (EOA) and the Appalachian Regional Development Act (ARDA) in 1964 and 1965, University leaders reframed their thinking about how to engage eastern Kentucky in the midst of a War on Poverty. Institutional support for the EKRDP dwindled, and administrators tried to shift the responsibility of the eastern Kentucky program to the newly developed Center for Developmental Change (CDC). However, the leadership of the CDC lacked stability, the faculty who had been the driving force behind the Center did not want to be tied down to Appalachian projects, and the changing expectations for faculty ushered in by the "Oswald Revolution" did not reward interdisciplinary work.

KEYWORDS: Appalachia, Eastern Kentucky, University of Kentucky, Action Program, War on Poverty, Eastern Kentucky Research Development Project

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on the page are mine, the fact that those words exist is the direct result of Melanie's love and her willingness to bear far more than her share of our life's responsibilities.

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Chapter 1- Introduction

Many see American history as the never-ending march toward progress. Technological innovations and intellectual achievements advance civilization, new questions and challenges emerge, and then new science and new knowledge advance society again. Success is measured in production, in urbanization, in consumption, and in the belief in new ways of thinking and living. The traditional gives way to the modern, and private enterprise, the market, and good government facilitate growth and development.

Belief in this ideology was never stronger than in the quarter-century following World War II. Careful planning, the world's most advanced science and technology, and new ways of thinking about society's thorniest problems brought the American people out of the Great Depression, vanquished two evil empires, rebuilt Europe and Japan, and created unprecedented prosperity at home. The generation of post-war leaders believed they could accomplish anything with a well-constructed plan built on knowledge and technology. They could even send a man to the moon.¹

In post-war America, the academy took its place at the center of the American faith in the relationship between knowledge creation, planning, and progress. University scientists played a fundamental role in the research that fueled the winning war effort, and in the period following World War II, a robust research economy developed with unprecedented levels of support from external sources.² The 1950s saw the development

¹ Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time: From World War II to Nixon – What Happened and Why* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1976).

² John R. Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 260-316; Roger L. Geiger, *Research and Relevant*

of what Clark Kerr called the “federal research university” which benefited from millions of dollars of federally sponsored projects, particularly in the sciences.³ During this same period, large foundations began to shift their philanthropy to the social and behavioral sciences. Basic research persisted but applied research gained in stature, and the knowledge economy that emerged provided the intellectual foundation for Cold War policies and practices designed to demonstrate American superiority, sustain prosperity at home, propagate American values abroad, and continue the march of progress.⁴

Appalachia did not fit neatly into this ideology of progress. As Ron Eller argues, by World War II, a pattern of growth without development plagued Appalachia. Natural resource extraction allowed the region to experience rapid expansions in job growth at times, but the internal capacity needed to sustain the prosperity of expansion was never developed. World War II brought a flurry of activity. With many men heading off to war and many others moving to the Midwest to work in defense plants, those who stayed behind found new opportunities for jobs. Per capita income was on the rise and full employment seemed a reality. Still, significant structural issues remained. Outside interests owned and controlled much of the region’s vast natural resources, depriving mountain communities of tax revenue and residual economic benefits. The lack of diversification exposed Appalachia to the fluctuations in national and international

Knowledge: American Research Universities Since World War II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Joshua Freeman, *American Empire: The Rise of Global Power, the Democratic Revolution at Home, 1945-2000* (New York: Penguin, 2012).

³ Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

⁴ Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, 260-316; Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge*.

markets, and many local political leaders were comfortable with the status quo as it provided them with substantial personal benefits.⁵

Immediately following the war, the boom continued, but by 1948 the coal market was entering another bust cycle, and opportunities began to dry up. Union wage agreements and mechanization exacerbated the condition of the industry, massive numbers of people moved out of the region, and joblessness and poverty spread. Mountain people became more dependent on government assistance, and the expansion of welfare programs strengthened the sometimes corrupt and always powerful political patronage system.⁶

In the mid-1950s, several Kentucky government agencies and private organizations began serious conversations about the challenges confronting eastern Kentucky. Many of the leaders of these groups came of age during the Depression and World War II. They were steeped in the American post-war faith in planning, development, and progress. Surely, they believed, thoughtful application of these principals could solve the region's ills.⁷

There was no consensus, however, on the root causes of the "eastern Kentucky problem" and how to alleviate it. Some blamed the region's geography, its relative isolation, and its patterns of industrial and transportation development. They favored physical infrastructure investments – highways, water systems, and industrial parks.

⁵ Ronald D Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 9-17; See also John Alexander Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 312-326; Harry Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands: A Biography of a Depressed Area* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1962), 219-248.

⁶ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 17-38; Caudill, *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*, 273-300.

⁷ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 40-52.

Others blamed mountain culture which, they argued, preserved anachronistic values and prevented people from pulling themselves out of poverty. This group wanted education and job training. Some advocated for “total development” – investments in both physical infrastructure and human capacity. All perspectives stressed the need for an Appalachia more integrated into the mainstream, both culturally and economically, and all suggested that the region’s problems resulted from a lack of resources, whether economic or cultural, not from structural inequalities.⁸

The Council of Southern Mountains (CSM) and its annual conference had long provided a venue for discussions among those interested in modernizing the mountains, but those conversations took on a greater sense of urgency in the 1950s. The CSM favored “cooperative community development” with broad programs of education and job training. The CSM challenged leaders to develop public-private partnerships to find collaborative solutions to the lack of human capacity in the region. Throughout the 1950s, the CSM sponsored workshops for teachers, social workers, and community leaders. They emphasized the ability of individuals to overcome social and cultural barriers, the value of volunteerism, and the importance of schools as community-building institutions. In 1956, with the backing of the CSM, Willis Weatherford, Sr., a Berea College trustee, assembled a group of interdenominational faith leaders and proposed they take collective action to assist those hurting in the region. Then, in 1958, again with the CSM’s support, Weatherford launched the Southern Appalachian Studies Project, funded in large part by a \$250,000 Ford Foundation grant, to examine the challenges facing the region. That project led to the publication of the highly influential *The*

⁸ Ibid.

Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey in 1962.⁹ The contributors to *The Southern Appalachian Region* sought to produce the “most comprehensive survey of the southern Appalachians ever undertaken” and “to find agencies to use the results of the survey in setting up constructive programs which would bring the level of Appalachian life up to national standards.”¹⁰ Relying on the culture of poverty and modernization theories, the scholars hoped to bring this “problem” region into the mainstream.

Alternatively, political and business leaders tended to favor infrastructure development. In 1956, the Kentucky Agricultural and Industrial Development Board commissioned a study to assess the condition of the state’s natural resources, focusing principally on coal and timber, with an eye toward suggestions for industrial growth. The Kentucky Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees), under the leadership of President John D. Whisman, met with regional business, government, and industry leaders as well as state development officials and policymakers to discuss cooperative long-term planning efforts. Those discussions led to the creation of the Eastern Kentucky Regional Development Council.¹¹

Following the devastating winter floods of 1957, these conversations intensified. The state commissioned the Eastern Kentucky Flood Rehabilitation Study to examine the problems caused by the floods as well as the long-term barriers to economic growth in

⁹ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 41-48; Shannon H. Wilson, *Berea College: An Illustrated History* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky), 152-53; *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey*, ed. Thomas R. Ford (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1962); Thomas Kiffmeyer, “Looking Back to the City in the Hills: The Council of the Southern Mountains and a Longer View of the War on Poverty in the Appalachian South, 1913-1970,” in *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980*, eds. Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 359-386.

¹⁰ *Southern Appalachian Region*, 5-6.

¹¹ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 46-47.

the region. The Kentucky Department of Economic Development issued its Action Plan for Eastern Kentucky, and Acting Governor Harry Lee Waterfield established the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission, pledging state support for its staffing and program development. All of the commissioners had been involved in Whisman's Eastern Kentucky Regional Development Council, and in 1958, he was named the Commission's executive director and moved the group's work from flood relief efforts to strategic area development.¹²

In September 1959, the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission released *Program 60*, its comprehensive action plan for eastern Kentucky for the next decade. The plan was wide-ranging including improvement strategies for planning and zoning, flood control, transportation, healthcare, housing, education, job training, and economic diversification. *Program 60* made clear that federal, state, and local governments, civic organizations, businesses, and private citizens all had a part to play in the region's development. Central to the plan was the concept of multi-county area development councils, comprised of key local leaders who would cooperate on both project planning and execution.¹³

By 1960, concern over the problems in Appalachia had extended well beyond the region's borders. Regional leaders, including Whisman and the Appalachian governors, had highlighted the mountain's challenges to federal policymakers, and media coverage of John Kennedy's West Virginia primary campaign planted Appalachia as a problem

¹² Ibid., 47-48.

¹³ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 46-52; Eastern Kentucky Regional Development Commission, *Program 60* (Frankfort: Eastern Kentucky Regional Development Commission, 1959).

region in the American mind.¹⁴ As Eller notes, “The rediscovery of Appalachia as a cultural and economic problem was an embarrassment and a challenge to a generation confident of its ability to shape a better world.” Hoping to bring Appalachia closer to mainstream America, policymakers and intellectuals made the region a “domestic testing ground” for economic development strategies and a “laboratory for experimentation in human behavior modification”¹⁵

In 1960, the University of Kentucky sat at the nexus of these powerful forces. The University had been created in 1865 as a land-grant institution under the Morrill Act of 1862, and for nearly 100 years it had made service to the state and its people one of its key objectives. Passage of the Hatch Act in 1887 funded the creation of agricultural experiment stations and extended the reach of the university to the far corners of the largely rural state, as did the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, which provided a funding mechanism for the Cooperative Extension Service.¹⁶

Timber baron E. O. Robinson’s creation of the E. O Robinson Mountain Fund in 1922 and the resulting gift of the Robinson Forest to the University of Kentucky in 1923 strengthened the University’s ties to the eastern part of the Commonwealth and provided an important base of operations at Quicksand. The forest, consisting of 15,000 acres of previously timbered land, located in primarily in Breathitt County and the Quicksand

¹⁴ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 53-62; Williams, *Appalachia*, 335-339.

¹⁵ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 2.

¹⁶ J. Allan Smith, *The College of Agriculture of the University of Kentucky: Early and Middle Years, 1865-1951* (Lexington: University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Cooperative Extension, 1981); Nevyle Shackelford, *Robinson Substation: A Short History* (Lexington: University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Cooperative Extension, 1970); Randy Weckman, *Robinson Station, Quicksand, Kentucky: A History* (Lexington: University of Kentucky College of Agriculture Cooperative Extension, 2001); Wayne D. Rasmussen, *Taking the University to the People: Seventy-Five Years of Cooperative Extension* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2002).

Substation offered UK experts a spot to demonstrate modern agricultural and forestry practices in keeping with the Mountain Fund's stated goal of ensuring "the betterment of the people of the mountain regions of Kentucky."¹⁷

The university's sense of mission had deep roots. When combined with the 1960s optimism and faith in progress and with the nation's newfound interest in Appalachia, the opportunities to create real change in Eastern Kentucky could not be ignored. Like most of their contemporaries, University leaders were ardent believers in the power of knowledge, technology, and planning. They understood their role as an intellectual engine. As the land-grant university in the most visible Appalachian state, they felt an extra burden to apply their knowledge to the "other America" within the borders of their Commonwealth.¹⁸ As University of Kentucky President Frank Dickey said to the meeting of The Council of Southern Mountains:

Certainly a people with resources and human capabilities to send satellites spinning around the sun or to develop weapons capable of exterminating mankind should be able to negotiate successfully the obstacles to the development of a region embracing this relatively small proportion of its total land area and population.¹⁹

¹⁷ David Barrett Gough, "The Value of the Commonwealth: An Ecocritical History of the Robinson Forest" (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 2011), 53-61; J. Allan Smith, *The College of Agriculture of the University of Kentucky*; Nevyle Shackelford, *Robinson Substation*; Randy Weckman, *Robinson Station, Quicksand, Kentucky*; Minutes of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, 13 April 1923, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

¹⁸ Michael Harrington included Appalachia as part of the "other America" in his highly influential study on poverty in the United States; see Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1962).

¹⁹ "Developing the Intellectual Resources of the Appalachian South", 17 November 1962, Address to the Council on Southern Mountains Meeting, Frank Dickey Papers, Box 24, Speeches and Papers, 1962-1963 Folder, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky.

Historiographical Context

This dissertation contributes to two historiographies, offering a focused addition to the small but rich historiography of the politics of progress in Appalachia and adding a highly contextualized Appalachian development case study to the historiography of southern higher education. Despite the enormous national attention paid to the Appalachian region in the postwar period, few historians have trained their analytical lenses on Appalachia in the years following World War II. Certainly, many historians are uncomfortable addressing the issues of the recent past, preferring to leave that work to the domain of social scientists, but the scholarship of post-1945 United States history, and post-1945 southern history in particular, shows that historians can and should apply their particular craft to the questions and issues of this period. While few scholars have tackled the questions of recent Appalachian history, fewer still have addressed the politics of progress in the region in the latter half of the twentieth century. This dissertation engages directly in that conversation.

David Whisnant offers the first comprehensive examination of development in modern Appalachia. A highly emotional work, *Modernizing the Mountaineer: People, Power, and Planning in Appalachia* is a carefully researched collection of nine loosely connected case studies. Whisnant addresses the missionary impulses that came together through the work of The Council of the Southern Mountains. He examines federal efforts in the region through the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Area Redevelopment Administration, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and the Appalachian Regional Commission, and he analyzes the alternative approaches that emerge through the

Appalachian Volunteers, the Congress for Appalachian Development, and in the response to the Kentucky River Area Development District.²⁰

Whisnant's criticism is scathing. He views all of these efforts as unsuccessful, if not outright failures. The organizations and programs failed, he argues, because they relied on the assumptions of the planners who saw Appalachian culture as backward and deviant. For these developers, Appalachia was either undeveloped or underdeveloped. They sought to bring the region into the national mainstream while ignoring the fact that its very integration into national markets as a source of natural resources and labor had caused many of its systemic challenges. Whisnant posits that the planners' approaches were culturally insensitive and, as a result, culturally destructive. At their worst, developers feigned an appreciation for mountain culture as a cover to pursue their own objectives. Clearly, planners refused to question the political, social, and economic structures in which they functioned. Rather, they embraced those structures, and those that did offer structural critiques, such as the Appalachian Volunteers, failed to make any substantial impact, in part because of the hegemonic environment in which they worked.

Some might fault David Whisnant for his passion. Writing history requires the scholar to make moral judgments and to take positions on issues, but even those who appreciate the subjective quality of the craft might find Whisnant over the top and a bit too angry at times. Some may be uncomfortable with the uneven quality of his analysis, finding certain case studies more compelling than others. Some may wish for an alternative to the types of development Whisnant describes; he offers none. However,

²⁰ David E. Whisnant, *Modernizing the Mountaineer: People, Power, and Planning in Appalachia*, rev. edition (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994).

Modernizing the Mountaineer is a powerful critique and an excellent starting point in understanding the historiography of progress in Appalachia.

In contrast to Whisnant's structural blasphemy, Michael Bradshaw worships at the altar of structures, with the political structure chief among the gods. Bradshaw's *The Appalachian Regional Commission: Twenty-Five Years of Government Policy* is an organizational history whose approach is as traditional as the ones he supports in his arguments. Bradshaw criticizes the theoretical frameworks for regional development that existed in the 1950s and early 1960s as lacking sophistication and paying far too much attention to economic analysis and far too little to political considerations. The author describes the struggle between the competing ideologies of the free market and of government intervention, and he asserts that the way to bring these ideas together is through the existing political process. For Bradshaw, the ARC model resulted from practical political forces working to bring together federal and state governments in a model unique to American public policy.²¹

Bradshaw asserts that the Commission fulfilled its legislative charge by improving physical infrastructure. Second, he argues that the basic conditions in the region improved. While he attributes much of this improvement to external economic forces, he purports that the Commission's infrastructure development allowed people to take advantage of these changes. Finally, he contends that the experiences of the ARC demonstrate that the role of a regional development commission must be reactive and pragmatic. Ultimately, Bradshaw believes the ARC points the way to new models of regional planning and development where the political process, not economics, is central

²¹ Michael Bradshaw, *The Appalachian Regional Commission: Twenty Five Years of Government Policy* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992).

to action. These models, he asserts, may offer a starting point for our approach to the newly developing challenges in all of rural America.

Like Whisnant, Bradshaw offers no alternatives to development as it has been pursued in the region. However, unlike Whisnant, Bradshaw's lack of alternatives stems from his belief that the ideal model has already been discovered. Bradshaw relies too heavily on ARC documents, his use of evidence is often difficult to follow, and he fails to contextualize the ARC in the philosophies and assumptions that undergirded its work as well as in the larger public policy landscape of its time. However, it should be Bradshaw's unfailing belief in the existing political structure that concerns historians the most.

Readers alarmed by Whisnant's anger and frustrated by Bradshaw's conservatism will take comfort in Ronald Eller's *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945*. To be sure, Eller is much closer to Whisnant than to Bradshaw, but his scholarship is more balanced than both. Eller argues that by World War II, a pattern of growth without development plagued Appalachia. Natural resource extraction allowed the region to experience rapid expansions in job growth at times, but the internal capacity needed to sustain the prosperity of expansion was never developed. In general, the region did not benefit from the expanding national business climate of the 1950s, and Eller illustrates that by the latter part of that decade, many state and local leaders began to look for solutions to the development problems they perceived. He skillfully shows how the actions of state leaders fused with the intellectual and political currents of the day to focus national attention on Appalachia through the War on Poverty.²²

²² Eller, *Uneven Ground*.

Eller asserts that the Keynesian model of government-induced growth as well the culture of poverty theory guided intellectuals and policymakers in their approach to Appalachia as a national “problem.” He also shows how these strains of thought along with the more empowering notions of some OEO programs competed within the War on Poverty. Eller posits that while most intellectuals and policymakers never acknowledged structural inequalities, some OEO administrators and many OEO staffers and volunteers did. As the OEO and the War on Poverty died on the political vine, some citizens continued to question the status quo. As Eller puts it, “the War on Poverty generated a degree of independence and assertiveness that undermined old traditions of deference to authority and laid the groundwork for collective action on a variety of labor, health and environmental issues.”²³

It is the Appalachian Regional Commission, however, that Eller asserts played the most critical role in the modernization of Appalachia, a role that extended well beyond the demise of the War on Poverty. The ARC was rooted in growth theory - the belief that government policies should maximize production and consumption and produce full employment. The resulting higher levels of productivity would produce greater social equality. Additionally, growth pole theory influenced ARC development strategies. This approach, Eller contends, assumed that urban life was the ultimate goal for all peoples and prepared individuals for a modern consumer existence either by bringing that lifestyle to them in a growth center or by forcing them to migrate to distant cities or nearby growth centers. The growth center model as well as the political realities of the federal definition of Appalachia resulted, Eller argues, in a pattern of uneven growth that

²³ Ibid, 227.

avored the northern and southern parts of the region and further increased the gap between the haves and the have-nots.²⁴

While Eller's story is broad and sweeping, Thomas Kiffmeyer focuses his lens more narrowly in *Reformers to Radicals: The Appalachian Volunteers and the War on Poverty*. Launched in 1964, the Appalachian Volunteers (AVs) spurred young optimistic Americans to action as they answered President Kennedy's call, convinced that they could effect change. Mobilized to share the prosperity of the nation with those who had been left outside its reach, anti-poverty groups such as the AVs immersed themselves in struggling communities, building and renovating substandard homes and schools and offering health information, remedial education, and job training.²⁵

Kiffmeyer argues that the AVs took as their ideal mainstream American values and looked to integrate struggling Appalachian residents within this vision of a prosperous, ever-improving nation. Rooted in the culture of poverty model that critiqued mountain values for supposedly holding the area's people back and preventing them from fully participating in the good life that modern America seemed to offer, the AVs, at least initially worked within the prevailing system. As the AVs radicalized, however, they found themselves increasingly at odds with existing power brokers including school superintendents, political leaders, and coal operators. Kiffmeyer, like Eller, demonstrates

²⁴ John Alexander Williams covers similar ground in the last chapter of his survey, *Appalachia: A History*. By his own admission, Williams draws much of his examination of postwar development in Appalachia, particularly regarding the ARC, from Eller's research (n.47, 415). In fact, Williams provides little new in terms of interpretative perspective except for his argument that federal defense contracts would have made a more suitable form of "reparations for damages done to the region through its contributions of energy and raw materials to the national economy" than have transfer payments (382).

²⁵ Thomas Kiffmeyer, *Reformers to Radicals: The Appalachian Volunteers and the War on Poverty* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008).

that monies funneled into the area, whether through the OEO or ARC, too often became tools for local elites, providing a form of patronage and ultimately protecting the status quo. Although Kiffmeyer takes as his focus a grass roots organization and relates a story that centers on the disfranchised, the voice of the poor remains obscured by the focus on change agents who too often spoke for the people they were intending to help, thus failing to let them speak for themselves.

While not part of the Appalachian historiography per se, Alice O'Connor's *Poverty Knowledge* is a necessary read for anyone asking questions about the postwar politics of progress in Appalachia. Her fascinating account traces the evolution of poverty knowledge from its modern origins in the Progressive Era through “the end of welfare as we know it” with the passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.²⁶ Appalachian scholars may find it frustrating that she mentions the region only once in her analysis, a clear weakness of a work that gives so much attention to the War on Poverty. Nonetheless, O'Connor works through the intellectual and political constructions of poverty in the twentieth century, and she examines how those constructions are applied through government policies. Her examination of poverty knowledge in the 1950s and 1960s provides a beautiful companion to Eller's analysis of the same period, and essentially the same issues, in Appalachian history.

Just as Eller continually laments the failure of intellectuals and policymakers to acknowledge structural inequalities, O'Connor levels a similar charge against the

²⁶ Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 284.

intellectuals and policymakers responsible for the production of poverty knowledge at the national level. Poverty knowledge, she asserts, is fundamentally ideological. A product of the new liberalism that emerged in the late nineteenth century, poverty knowledge provides a protection against laissez-faire industrial capitalism, but it is committed to the maintenance of a capitalist economy. O'Connor sees poverty knowledge as highly political wherein the power to create knowledge rests primarily with groups of white male social scientists who are less likely to have experienced poverty and who are in a position through their control of the poverty industry to replicate, through exclusion of practice, the social inequalities they seek to eradicate. Additionally, poverty knowledge, O'Connor posits, functions in its own market where the growth of the poverty research apparatus ties the research agenda and its findings to the needs of the funders. Finally, O'Connor argues that poverty knowledge with its increasing emphasis on "scientific" approaches loses its historical and political context.

While Whisnant, Eller, and O'Connor all offer powerful critiques of market capitalism, Richard Couto's *Making Democracy Work Better: Mediating Structures, Social Capital, and the Democratic Prospect* assumes a critique of market capitalism and moves directly to offering practical approaches to addressing the development concerns of the Appalachian region. Couto fashions his work as the competition between the democratic promise of limited government and market economies and the democratic prospect of increased social and economic equality and communal bonds. In a very real

way, the achievement of the democratic prospect represents healthy development or community progress.²⁷

Couto seeks to explain the region in terms of American social capital. American public policy, he offers, tends toward a market approach to social capital, with its central purpose being the production, reproduction, and distribution of a labor force. Rejecting social and political theorists' approaches to social capital, Couto sees social capital less as a means to defend against intrusive governments or to provide services abandoned by limited governments and more as a way to work within the context of government to mitigate the destructive elements of the market. Therefore, Couto argues in his evaluation of twenty-three community-based organizations that these mediating structures facilitate development within the context of structural inequality.

One might then see Jess Stoddart's *Challenge and Change in Appalachia: The Story of Hindman Settlement School* as a full-scale historical case study supporting Couto's perspective on Appalachian development. Stoddart provides a fairly traditional organizational history, arranged chronologically with chapters grouped according to institutional leadership. Despite her personal connections to the school (her mother and uncle were alumni), she does not shy away from healthy criticism of its people and its programs. Stoddart argues that throughout its history, Hindman Settlement School has provided projects or services that others could not or would not offer. In this way, the

²⁷ Richard A. Couto, *Making Democracy Work Better: Mediating Structures, Social Capital, and the Democratic Prospect*, with Catherine S. Guthrie (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

school has consistently served, to use Couto's term, as a mediating structure in Knott County.²⁸

Scholars who have examined the politics of progress pay little attention to higher education. This is especially true in the Appalachian historiography. Of the handful of historians who tackle the politics of progress in post-war Appalachia, only Eller discusses higher education, and he does so nominally. This dissertation corrects that oversight by providing a study of how one institution, its faculty, and its staff actively engaged in development efforts in eastern Kentucky. This study clearly connects to and builds on the foundational scholarship of Eller, Couto, and O'Connor. Eller's work is the jumping off point, and his understanding of development in the mountains undergirds this work. The subject of this study – the University of Kentucky's action program in the mountains – was the creation of the social scientists O'Conner examines and could have served as a mediating structure, as Couto describes them, had it not wholeheartedly embraced the existing power structures that functioned in the mountains.

In 1987, John Thelin called for an examination of southern higher education and state and regional economic development that goes beyond boosterism.²⁹ Nearly three decades later, this area remains largely unexplored. Only Amy Wells has contributed to the conversation with her excellent work on emerging universities in the South. Wells argues that the national model for emerging universities prevailed in the South but only after a contest between competing notions of what a southern university should be. The debate over the future shape of the southern university led to the establishment of the

²⁸ Jess Stoddart, *Challenge and Change in Appalachia: The Story of Hindman Settlement School* (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2002).

²⁹ John R. Thelin, "Southern Exposure: House Histories with Room for a View," *The Review of Higher Education* 10 (Summer 1987), 357-368.

Southern Regional Education Board. More than other scholars, Wells delineates the role of philanthropic foundations in the shaping of southern universities. While her work focuses on an earlier period, her concern with the debate over regional planning efforts in the South speaks to some very important unexplored areas in the modern South, notably the linkage that Thelin desired.³⁰ This dissertation explores that linkage by examining the University of Kentucky's action program for economic and social development in eastern Kentucky.

By definition, this dissertation is an institutional history, and higher education scholars are keenly aware of the form's flaws. Often written by insiders, house histories sometimes shy away from a critical approach, and many times they fail to place their respective institutions into larger social, political, economic, cultural, and historiographical contexts. However, this dissertation follows the lead of a group of southern house histories that apply a critical eye and see the connection to social, political, economic, and cultural forces as essential to understanding the stories that should be told.³¹

At the head of the class is Thomas Dyer's *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1795-1985*. Dyer adroitly connects the University's development

³⁰ Amy E. Wells, "Contesting Ground: Howard Odum, the Southern Agrarians, and the Emerging University in the South During the 1930s," *History of Higher Education Annual* 21 (2001), 79-101; Amy Wells, "From Ideas to Institutions: Southern Scholars and Emerging Universities in the South" (Ph.D. diss., University of Kentucky, 2000).

³¹ For a discussion of the merits and shortcomings of institutional histories, see Thomas G. Dyer, "Higher Education in the South since the Civil War: Historiographical Issues and Trends," in *The Web of Southern Social Relations: Women, Family, and Education*, ed. Walter J. Fraser, Jr., R. Frank Saunders, Jr., and Jon L. Wakelyn (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985), 127-145; Roger L. Geiger, David B. Potts, and W. Bruce Leslie, "Exploring our Professional Backyards: Toward Writing Recent History of American Colleges and Universities," *History of Higher Education Annual* 20 (2000), 79-91; John R. Thelin, "Southern Exposure: House Histories with Room for a View."

to the state's social and political environment, and he roots his discussion in the historiography of American higher education and, to a lesser degree, in the historiography of the American South. While he is concerned primarily with political and administrative activities, Dyer avoids the standard organization by presidential administration as well as the house history's typical emphasis on physical plant development and its reliance on reams of statistical data. One might criticize Dyer for giving less attention to issues of student life, but in the end, his is a very well-crafted and balanced work that effectively argues that, by the mid-1980s, the University of Georgia had emerged as a true research university.³²

In certain sections of *Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University*, Paul Conkin matches Dyer's analytical acumen. Conkin reveals an institution in the midst of a century-long identity crisis, struggling to find a place in the pantheon of national private research universities. He connects Vanderbilt to Nashville, to the city's people, to the larger South, and to the Methodist Church, and he shows how these relationships impacted the institution's development. Conkin is at his best in dealing with the intellectual life of Vanderbilt and in tackling the controversial issues of athletics, development, academic freedom, women's rights, and segregation. On the other hand, Conkin struggles with managing the wealth of archival data at his disposal, and his analysis is occasionally mired in excessive detail.³³

³² Thomas G. Dyer, *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985).

³³ Paul K. Conkin, *Gone with the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985).

Robert McMath, et al's *Engineering the New South: Georgia Tech, 1885-1985* likewise attempts to set the institution in a larger context. This is particularly true as the authors make valuable connections between curricular concerns at Georgia Tech and the larger national trends in engineering education and as they explain how an emphasis on engineering education stifled the development of research and graduate education. There is little here, however, in terms of historiographical context, and that is this work's most significant shortcoming. McMath, et al argue that Georgia Tech contributed significantly to the realization of the New South ideology and to the economic development of the region after World War II. However, they offer little evidence to support that assertion. A better connection to the larger historiography, particularly the historiography of the South, might lead the authors to an understanding of how Tech does or does not play that role.³⁴

James Riley Montgomery, Stanley J. Folmsbee, and Lee Seifert Greene's *To Foster Knowledge: A History of the University of Tennessee, 1794-1970* also lacks historiographical context. The history does place the events at the university into a larger political context, particularly with regard to how the three geographic divisions in Tennessee impact support of higher education. Like Dyer and McMath, et al, Montgomery and his colleagues effectively delineate the battles between agriculturalists

³⁴ Robert C. McMath, Jr., Ronald H. Bayor, James E. Brittain, Lawrence Foster, August W. Giebelhaus, and Germaine M. Reed, *Engineering the New South: Georgia Tech, 1885-1985* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985).

and industrialists that were so critical in shaping the form of southern public universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.³⁵

Published in 1997, Peter Wallenstein's *Virginia Tech, Land-Grant University, 1872-1997: A History of a School, a State, and a Nation* shares many of the desirable characteristics of the institutional histories of the 1980s. As well as any of the other historians discussed here, Wallenstein effectively connects his subject institution to the political context of its home state. Likewise, he makes useful connections between Virginia Tech and the other public research universities in Virginia, analyzing how they interacted in addressing issues of common concern. While his organization is more traditional, Wallenstein's analysis of race and particularly of gender are refreshing when cast in the light of previous house histories.³⁶

In *A History of the University of South Carolina*, Henry Lesesne is unapologetic for his traditional house history form, but he pulls no punches in his critique of the University. He shows how segregation and resistance to civil rights consistently held back efforts to expand access and academic offerings. As well as in any other house history, Lesesne discusses the restrictions administrators placed on free speech during the 1950s and early 1960s as the university struggled with the "Negro issue," and he shows the constant tensions between the University's attempts to meet the needs of the state and its efforts at reaching for national prominence. Essentially he poses, yet does not answer, a question with huge contemporary policy implications: how does a public flagship

³⁵ James Riley Montgomery, Stanley J. Folmsbee, and Lee Seifert Greene, *To Foster Knowledge: A History of the University of Tennessee, 1794-1970* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984).

³⁶ Peter Wallenstein, *Virginia Tech, Land-Grant University, 1872-1997: A History of a School, a State, and a Nation* (Blacksburg: Pocahontas, 1997).

university in the South achieve national prominence while remaining a university *of* the state not a university simply *in* the state.³⁷

Like Lesesne, Charles Mohr and Joseph Gordon appropriately take their institution and its leaders to task in *Tulane: The Emergence of a Modern University, 1945-1980*. In the end, Mohr and Gordon suggest that Tulane has emerged as a successful modern university, but their implication is that the institution's trajectory could have been much different. Mohr and Gordon gracefully explore the intersection of Tulane's dependence on federal contracts, post-war anticommunism, and the maintenance of southern racial norms. The authors argue convincingly that a tricky triangulated system developed in the 1950s at Tulane. Heavily dependent on federal research expenditures, Tulane diverted federal attention to their segregationist ways by encouraging and fully cooperating with anticommunist investigations. With few actual communists on campus, segregationist board members were able to focus the attention on individuals or groups who sought to subvert the boundaries imposed by racial segregation.³⁸

This dissertation shares the view of several studies that state higher education and economic policies are central to notions of progress in post-World War II America. David Sansing's work on Mississippi joins Peter Wallenstein's Virginia Tech study as excellent southern examples of this relationship. David Sansing evaluates the development of Mississippi's state system of higher education. He illustrates vividly how a society and its values shape its educational institutions. This is a story of

³⁷ Henry Lesesne, *A History of the University of South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001).

³⁸ Clarence L. Mohr and Joseph E. Gordon, *Tulane: The Emergence of a Modern University, 1945-1980* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001)

persistent political interference in institutional governance, interference generally designed to maintain white, male hegemony. Although the black point of view is largely absent, Sansing does an exceptional job of delineating the socio-political context in which this system emerged and existed.³⁹

Outside the South, only a few studies have linked state higher education policies to notions of progress in post-war society, likely because it requires such complex negotiations of political, economic, cultural, and social analyses. Lois Fisher's work on Idaho and Washington moves only slightly beyond a basic narrative, but she does show how different sets of geopolitical forces in very similar states can result in very different state systems of higher education. Judith Glazer's article on Nelson Rockefeller and the development of the SUNY system in New York is very traditional in its approach but useful in showing how various groups and their agendas impact the realization of public higher education policy. Carol Everyly Floyd's work on Illinois is even more analytical in that respect by revealing the complex interplay between the executive and legislative branches of government, the state higher education coordinating body, faculty and administrators at individual institutions, public interest organizations, and individual members of the public.⁴⁰

³⁹ David G. Sansing, *Making Haste Slowly: The Troubled History of Higher Education in Mississippi* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1990); Wallenstein, *Virginia Tech, Land-Grant University, 1872-1997*.

⁴⁰ Judith S. Glazer, "Nelson Rockefeller and the Politics of Higher Education in New York State," *History of Higher Education Annual* 9 (1989), 87-114; Carol Everyly Floyd, "Centralization and Decentralization of State Decision Making for Public Universities in Illinois," *History of Higher Education Annual* 12 (1992), 101-118; Lois A. Fisher, "The Role of Politics in the Organization and Development of Public Higher Education in Idaho and Washington," *History of Higher Education Annual* 5 (1985), 111-132.

However, it is John Aubrey Douglass and Richard M. Freeland who set the standard and provide some useful models for similar work that needs to be written on the South.⁴¹ Freeland's massive volume, *Academia's Golden Age: Universities in Massachusetts, 1945-1970*, deals less with the development of a state system of higher education and more with the natural market-driven system that emerged in a state long dominated by private institutions. Freeland discusses the increasing homogeneity of institutional type as universities sought prestige through research and graduate education at the expense of undergraduate teaching and learning. He correctly argues that the move from local to national recruitment strategies increased class stratification despite administrators' pronouncements that their admissions policies were more "democratic." John Aubrey Douglass notes that the "context of policymaking – the interplay between the academy and state and local government, and ultimately the taxpayer – is historically one of the most important influences on the organization, funding, and mission of American higher education."⁴² In his study of California, Douglass carefully explicates the evolution of the state's elaborate tripartite higher education system and masterfully illuminates the intricacies of the interplay he describes. While by strict definition, they write top-down policy history, Douglass and Freeland appropriately ascribe agency to citizens, faculty members, and students. In turn, they show the social policy implications decisions have on "real" people.

⁴¹ John Aubrey Douglass, *The California Idea and American Higher Education* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); John Aubrey Douglass, "Californians and Public Higher Education: Political Culture, Educational Opportunity and State Policymaking," *History of Higher Education Annual* 16 (1996), 71-104; Richard M. Freeland, *Academia's Golden Age: Universities in Massachusetts, 1945-1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

⁴² Douglass, "Californians and Public Higher Education: Political Culture, Educational Opportunity and State Policymaking," 72.

Purpose and Organization of Study

This study examines the University of Kentucky's efforts to develop and implement an "action program" in eastern Kentucky in the 1960s. An action program is an extension of applied research, where University personnel not only create or interpret knowledge but they serve as actors in the field through consultation and direct involvement in programming. Action programs were not new to the University of Kentucky or land-grant universities generally in 1960. Cooperative Extension had been delivering forms of action programs for nearly a half century, but University leaders fashioned this action program as a university-wide effort to solve what many would argue was Kentucky's ugliest problem.⁴³

This study mostly follows a chronological narrative. Chapter 2 examines the origins of the University's action program in eastern Kentucky. This chapter addresses the conversations among a group of influential social scientists in the late 1950s who sought to create a mechanism at the University for "planned change." The realization of their vision was delayed, but their ideas would influence the University's approach to the mountains for many years. Chapter 2 also traces the efforts of the College of Agriculture to expand Extension work to specifically address the needs of eastern Kentucky. Those interests, in the context of a politically favorable environment, led to the rushed development of a successful Kellogg Foundation proposal.

Chapter 3 describes the implementation of the University's action program through a modified Extension program for eastern Kentucky and the Kellogg Foundation-supported Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Program (EKRD). While the

⁴³ Rasmussen, *Taking the University to the People*.

development of the modified Extension program was thoughtful and orderly, the development of the EKRDP was haphazard and reactive. Both were big on ideas and short on substance. The plans proved difficult to execute in concert, and neither provided the expected results.

The fourth chapter explores the changing landscape at the University and in Appalachian public policy in 1964 and 1965. During this period, the passage of the Equal Opportunity Act (EOA) and the Appalachian Regional Development Act (ARDA), the creation of the University's Center for Developmental Change (CDC), and continued concern over the EKRDP reshaped institutional leaders' thinking about the University's action program and its relation to the War on Poverty. This chapter examines the important Carnahan House Conference where the University reconfirmed its commitment to a total university action program in the region while shifting the leadership of the eastern Kentucky effort to the CDC. The chapter also explores the highly interdisciplinary Grannie's Branch proposal and its demise amid contradictory and changing policies.

Chapter 5 focuses on the University's eastern Kentucky efforts in the second half of the 1960s. University confidence in the EKRDP had steadily eroded, and a leadership change in early 1965 prompted the complete reexamination of the program. This chapter explores the scathing 1965 CDC evaluation of the EKRDP, the President's Committee on the EKRDP that sought to recast the project, and the ultimate end of the program in 1968. The fifth chapter also examines the CDC's involvement in the eastern Kentucky program after 1965. Though the University had tapped the Center to lead the eastern Kentucky effort, the CDC lacked stability, the faculty who had been the driving force behind the

Center did not want to be tied down to Appalachian projects, and the changing expectations for faculty work ushered in by the “Oswald Revolution” did not reward the interdisciplinary action necessary for the program’s success. The failed Kellogg Foundation proposal in 1966 and the departure of Edward Weidner in 1967 effectively ended any hope of a CDC-led action program in eastern Kentucky. The chapter concludes with an examination of funding for research and sponsored projects in eastern Kentucky from 1965-1970.

This dissertation addresses several key research questions in the examination of the University of Kentucky’s action program in eastern Kentucky. Why did the University pursue an action program? Who provided leadership to the effort, how did it develop, and what forms did it take? How did the action program evolve throughout the decade, and how did forces, both internal and external, shape its evolution? Ultimately, the study seeks to determine if the action program was successful in effecting systemic change in eastern Kentucky.

Chapter 2 - The Origins of the University's Action Program

The Idea of Planned Change

World War II was a watershed in American history for many reasons, not the least of which was the opportunity it provided for individuals and organizations to take stock and think intentionally about how to move forward in the context of a new world order. In the late 1940s, as an outgrowth of the Committee for Kentucky, a group of University of Kentucky faculty led by Dean Weist in the College of Commerce began regular meetings on post-war planning topics.¹ There was a growing notion on campus, as there was nationally, that social science research should have broader application. The formation of the Department of Rural Sociology emerged, in part, from these discussions as did the Bureau for School Service in the College of Education, the Bureau of Business Research in the College of Commerce, the Bureau of Government Research in the Political Science Department, the Bureau of Community Service in Sociology, and the Social Research Consultation Service, also in Sociology. During this same period, Dean

¹In 1943, following the election of a Republican governor and a Democratic legislature, Kentuckians concerned that partisanship would lead to government inertia created the Committee for Kentucky. As the war came to a close, the Committee geared up, taking stock of where the state stood and planning ways to move forward. The group began a massive public relations campaign and published a detailed study in 1949 designed to rally the state to embrace a new future. The Committee continued to function until the early 1950s, when it dissolved and donated the remains of their treasury to the University of Kentucky's Bureau of Community Service. See Harry W. Schacter, *Kentucky on the March* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949); Minutes of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, 17 March 1950, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Frank Welch and some faculty in the College of Agriculture began to rethink the form of applied research and service practiced through Cooperative Extension.²

By the late 1950s, a core group of UK faculty had coalesced around the idea that the University needed to take a more active role in “planned change.” The group included rural sociologists Thomas Ford, Lee Coleman, James Brown, and Howard Beers, A.D. Albright in the College of Education, agricultural economist Eldon Smith, and David Blythe in Civil Engineering. The entire group, except for Albright, had extensive experience in Appalachia, and most of the group had considerable international research experience as well. The faculty believed that the complicated economic, political, and social problems of the twentieth century required multidisciplinary approaches. The core group was small but incredibly influential, and their ideas would shape the University’s approach to eastern Kentucky and to rural development for many years to come.³

Thomas Ford, Lee Coleman, and Howard Beers led the earliest conversations, and in 1956, the three began to consider the need for a center for social change at the University. Beers worked throughout much of the 1950s on international development projects, first in India with the Ford Foundation, then in Indonesia with the Rockefeller Foundation and later as chief of party for a University of Kentucky contract team in

²Thomas R. Ford, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 5 November 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries; Howard W. Beers, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 18 February 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

³Ford interview; Beers interview; A. Lee Coleman, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 12 November 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

Indonesia. He wanted to ensure the University's continuation of work in this area. Ford and Coleman had a greater interest in comparative studies of Appalachian and similar regions around the globe. Ford, who did his doctoral research in the Peruvian highlands, was particularly interested in the role of mining and its impact on change. Ford and Coleman also understood the state's quickly evolving political and business climate and hoped to capitalize on the nascent interest in Appalachian development.⁴

In 1957, Coleman drafted an extensive outline for a new University center for social change and shared the document with like-minded colleagues. However, despite a warm reception from fellow faculty members, the group never pushed the concept forward, largely because they were pulled in other directions. In 1958, Beers returned overseas where he remained for most of the next eight years. Ford accepted the role as research director for the Ford Foundation's Southern Appalachian Studies Project, something that occupied his attention from 1958 through 1962, and Coleman took a leave and then returned as head of Department of Sociology and Rural Sociology. As a result, for the next few years, the University's activities toward planned change existed largely within the College of Agriculture.⁵

The College of Agriculture and Eastern Kentucky Development

Beginning in October 1959, a group of faculty and Extension administrators in the UK College of Agriculture formally met to discuss how the Extension Service might

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ford interview; Beers interview; Coleman interview; A.D. Albright, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 20 February 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

modify its programs in eastern Kentucky to meet the particular needs there. Frank Welch, Dean of the College of Agriculture, served on the Kentucky Agricultural and Industrial Development Board and followed closely the activities of the Department of Economic Development. He was also a Kellogg Foundation advisory board member in the late 1950s and encouraged the Foundation's interest in eastern Kentucky projects. Like John Whisman, Welch believed that Appalachia was an underdeveloped region where the physical and human resources had potential but had not yet been adequately tapped to serve its population. The mountains needed cooperative and strategic area development that brought together all levels of government with community leaders, that connected knowledge to practice, and that moved beyond the county boundaries that so often defined politics and policymaking in Kentucky. Welch believed the state land-grant university, through its Extension Service, could, and should, play a vital role in this process.⁶

Nonetheless, as 1959 came to a close, the College of Agriculture had not developed specific plans to seek Extension solutions to mountain problems, and Welch and his associates had no definitive programmatic intentions. Yet, on December 11, 1959, speaking before a special United States Senate hearing on unemployment in Pikeville, J. Phil Smith, mayor of Jackson and chairman of the Robinson Agricultural Substation Advisory Board, called for a "national experiment in rural development." Smith outlined in considerable detail an eight-county "total resource development program" based at the Robinson Substation in Quicksand in Breathitt County. The

⁶ Meeting minutes and notes, October 1959-August 1960, Box 233, Folder 8, James S. Brown Papers 1917-2005, 1997MS354, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington. Ford, *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey*.

program, administered by the UK College of Agriculture, would help the region overcome its dependence on coal while developing water, forest, and agricultural resources and building the manufacturing and tourism base. Smith called for federal funding for the project, and he embraced Whisman's area development model for its organization saying that "rather than consider one small county or one small trade area for resource development" the idea should "include a larger area."⁷

Welch and Smith had certainly discussed these ideas before Smith's remarks at the hearing as they were incredibly consistent with the early conversations of the group exploring future Extension work, but later correspondence reveals that Smith's public proposal took Welch off-guard. Smith had been pushing the College of Agriculture to further develop the Robinson Substation and upgrade its facilities. The slow pace of change frustrated Smith, and he seized upon the opportunity at the hearing, in the context of the larger conversations regarding eastern Kentucky development, to elevate the importance of the Substation. He forced Welch's hand, and it worked. When asked by a reporter immediately after the hearing to comment on the plan, Dean Welch and Charles Derrickson, Superintendent of the Robinson Substation, both "gave a wholehearted endorsement of the program."⁸

Though his proposal surprised Welch, Smith provided the Dean with the push he needed to act in a time of political opportunity. Other than the matter of funding – Welch favored private foundation support over federal government support because he believed

⁷ J. Phil Smith, "Remarks to the Hearing on Unemployment in Eastern Kentucky," Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁸ Frank Welch to J. Phil Smith, 10 February 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers. "National Rural Development Project Called For By Smith," *Jackson Times*, 17 December 1959, 1.

it provided him with more control – Welch agreed with most of the elements of Smith’s proposal. Welch had laid the groundwork for the Kellogg Foundation to support an eastern Kentucky program, and the political climate was ripe for exactly this type of plan. Not only did *Program 60* have broad-based public support, but the new Governor, eastern Kentuckian Bert T. Combs, had promised to make the *Program 60* goals priorities in his administration.

The Dean asked UK agricultural economists Eldon D. Smith and Robert W. Rudd to draft a proposal for submission to the Kellogg Foundation for a total resource development program in eastern Kentucky. Smith and Rudd worked from December 1959 through late January 1960 outlining a plan before Welch pulled them from the project and turned final proposal preparation over to J. Allen Smith, Director of Public Information for Agricultural Extension, and Ernest Nesius, Associate Director for Agricultural Extension. Smith and Rudd objected to the speed at which they had been asked to do their work. The idea that those preparing the final proposal might use “whatever parts of the presently developed manuscript they deem appropriate” troubled them. The document had not been “refined editorially” and their recommendations “might have been altered or modified” if given more time and study. Furthermore, they strongly asserted that planned modifications to Extension activities to support the project must be clearly articulated.⁹

Welch discussed the forthcoming proposal with Emory Morris, President of the Kellogg Foundation, at a Kellogg board meeting in late January, receiving an enthusiastic response. Welch promised delivery in early February. The haste with which Welch and

⁹ Eldon D. Smith and Robert Rudd to Frank Welch, 29 January 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

his colleagues worked is best exemplified by a series of similar letters from Welch to Governor Combs, Lieutenant Governor Wilson Wyatt, J. Phil Smith, Thomas Ballantine, the President of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, B.F. Reed, the Chairman of the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission, and Burl St. Clair, President of the Kentucky Farm Bureau. Welch provided suggested copy for the men to use in their statements of support to the Kellogg Foundation for the project. Noting that the project outline was not yet complete, Welch asked the men to “give approval to this on faith.”¹⁰

All six complied. Five prepared their letters immediately with Combs waiting four days until his staff had reviewed a request for state funding for the project. None of the six saw the actual proposal before it was mailed to the Kellogg Foundation, a fact that would create some difficulties for Welch and the project later.¹¹ John Whisman, attaching a note to Reed’s letter of support, did express some concern with the plan as he understood it. He acknowledged his positive discussions with Phil Smith regarding the use of the Robinson Substation as a hub of development activity, but he questioned how the project could work as part of the Combs’ administration’s “coordination of efforts within a total program for the region.” Fearing that a number of interests could independently pursue worthwhile but uncoordinated endeavors and thus produce little in results, Whisman asked to meet with Welch “immediately” upon the former’s return from

¹⁰ Frank Welch to Bert T. Combs, 10 February 1960; Frank Welch to Wilson Wyatt, 10 February 1960; Frank Welch to J. Phil Smith, 10 February 1960; Frank Welch to Thomas Ballantine, 10 February 1960; Frank Welch to B.F. Reed, 10 February 1960; Frank Welch to Burl St. Clair, 10 February 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

¹¹ J. Phil Smith to Emory Morris, 11 February 1960; B.F. Reed to Emory Morris, 11 February 1960; Wilson Wyatt to Emory Morris, 11 February 1960; J. Thomas Ballantine to Emory Morris, 11 February 1960; Burl St. Clair to Emory Morris, 11 February 1960; Bert T. Combs to Emory Morris, 15 February 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

a trip to Washington. He also strongly encouraged Welch to attend the March 7 meeting of the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission so the group could discuss the proposal.¹²

On February 12, with the proposal still not complete, Welch asked UK President Frank Dickey to send his letter of support to the Foundation's President in advance of the proposal. Dickey's letter emphasized that the University not only had an interest in but an obligation to pursue an action program in eastern Kentucky. While many had studied the area and much was known about the region and its people, Dickey asserted that "never has an action program been outlined and attempted" and that the University was taking the "first step in one of the most exciting and profitable projects" of which it had been a part.¹³ On February 16, only two months after Smith set the ball rolling, Welch submitted the proposal to Emory Morris at Kellogg.¹⁴

The University's proposal was not subject to a set funding cycle timeline, and the Kellogg Foundation had not provided Welch with a specific deadline. However, there are several possible explanations for Welch's interest in moving so quickly with the Kellogg proposal, though none are explicitly borne out in the documentary evidence. Phil Smith's comments at the public hearing in Pikeville certainly forced Welch's hand. Welch could have reacted less favorably to Smith's comments, but in doing so, he would

¹² John D. Whisman to Frank Welch, 12 February 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

¹³ Frank Welch to Frank Dickey, 12 February 1960; Frank Dickey to Emory Morris, 12 February 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

¹⁴ Frank Welch to Emory Morris, 16 February 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

have risked alienating a key ally. Welch also believed in the idea, and failing to fully support it from the start might have jeopardized its possible execution later. He understood that the political environment, with Combs' recent election and the Governor's full support of Whisman's ideas in *Program 60*, was ripe for moving the plan forward. The ideas undergirding an action program in eastern Kentucky had broad support, but they had not yet been dragged through the political process and picked apart. Effectively, the University could get out in front of that.

Welch may have also felt a need to get out in front of Whisman's growing influence and the possible impact of multi-county area development councils on the work and power of Extension personnel in the region. He and others at the College of Agriculture were also concerned about the involvement of Adron Doran, the President of Morehead State, in the roll-out of Whisman's area development vision. That concern was evident just a few weeks after the submission of the Kellogg proposal. Charlie Dixon and Joe Mobley from the College of Agriculture attended the Annual Conference of the Southern Mountains in Gatlinburg. They reported that "there seemed to be considerably more recognition of the importance of economic development in the Appalachian area and the factors which are involved in the problem situation." Adron Doran was the keynote speaker at the conference, and Dixon and Mobley perceived a swipe at UK when Doran suggested that a "host of state and federal agencies are all working on their individual programs independently or in conflict."¹⁵ Ernest Nesius was much stronger in his criticism, contending that Doran was doing "his level best to

¹⁵ Charlie Dixon and Joe Mobley, "Report on the Annual Conference of Council of Southern Mountains," Gatlinburg, Tennessee, 24-27 February 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

associate himself with all positive economic developments, agriculture and otherwise, insofar as what happens in Eastern Kentucky.” Nesius cited Doran’s membership on Whisman’s Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning commission and its idea of a government agency to coordinate all of the development activities in the region. Nesius proclaimed that Doran “figures this is the best way he knows to get the University out of Eastern Kentucky” and called on Welch to become more visibly involved in “climate forming” activities “in order to stave off the inroads of various groups.”¹⁶

Finally, Welch may have moved with such speed because he understood the funding realities of an action plan in eastern Kentucky. While he was confident he could depend on significant support from the Kellogg Foundation, he knew that state support in large measure was also necessary. Combs would present his first biennial budget to the Kentucky General Assembly in mid-February, and Welch needed to ensure that support for the University’s action plan was included. There was a narrow window he could not afford to miss.

The Appalachian Resource Development Project

The University of Kentucky College of Agriculture’s proposal to the Kellogg Foundation for the “Appalachian Resource Development Project” was grand in scale and, not surprisingly considering the speed at which it materialized, relatively short on details. The proposal embraced “an action-oriented program aimed at the overall economic and institutional development of an area characterized by severe conditions of

¹⁶ Ernest J. Nesius to Frank Welch, 9 March 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

unemployment, underemployment, and low incomes.”¹⁷ The plan was built on two assumptions – “that opportunities for significant improvement exist within the area” and that “given an understanding and appreciation of these opportunities, along with technical and other assistance, appropriate action will be taken by relevant agencies, groups, and individuals to realize these potentials.”¹⁸ There was no shying away from eastern Kentucky as a problem region, claiming that “it is at once a problem of education, a problem of political structure and organization, a problem of culture and interaction of people, a problem of motivation or lack of motivation, and a problem of the application of science and technology to local conditions.”¹⁹

The project faulted federal “programs of activity,” such as the Small Business Administration, the old Farm Security Program, the Farmers Home Administration, and the Rural Development Program, that made people feel good about doing “something” but that failed to address the root causes of the challenges faced in the mountains.²⁰ Principal among these causes, the College believed, was the culture of the mountain people. The Appalachian Resource Development Project promised to be different. Citing extensive experience in the region, the College believed “much could be done to alleviate these conditions through an intensive program of total resource development, including the stimulation and strengthening of motivation on the part of the people

¹⁷ “Appalachian Resource Development Project,” Proposal submitted to the Kellogg Foundation by the College of Agriculture and Home Economics, University of Kentucky, 1960, 4, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

¹⁸ Ibid., 4

¹⁹ Ibid., 7.

²⁰ Ibid., 7

themselves.”²¹ The College expected the project to be a national model for the improvement of impoverished areas with inadequate resource utilization.²²

The project targeted thirty eastern Kentucky counties where the project would put together “a package of technical and organizational skills not hitherto available.”²³ The energy of the program would be directed at the most likely opportunities for resource development and institutional change using a team of coordinated specialists under the direction of the Dean of the College of Agriculture and with the immediate supervision of a project lead located at the Robinson Substation. The project demanded much of this team of specialists. The team was expected to discover “pockets of opportunity” and guide the “whole bloc” of organizations and government agencies toward “concentrated economic or social progress.” After potential projects were identified, the specialists would present plans of action to local leaders, provide or arrange for the necessary training, and then “assume an aggressive leadership role” in working with organizations and government agencies, “the efforts of which in this area have so far been relatively ineffectual.”²⁴

An advisory committee consisting of University representatives and key local leaders would assist the specialists in the organization, execution, and evaluation of the program.²⁵ The plan recognized the areas of need for specialized assistance might change as “new vistas of opportunity emerge,” but the initial team of specialists would consist of ten staff members in the following areas: industrial development; community

²¹ Ibid., 4.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 9.

²⁴ Ibid., 9-10.

²⁵ Ibid., 9.

improvement and planning; adult career guidance and job placement; youth organization, education and vocational guidance; soil, water, and crop management; horticulture; commercial poultry and eggs; meat animal and milk production; forest management and utilization; marketing, management, and transportation.²⁶

The success of the project depended on modifications in the county Extension program. The proposal's description of the modified Extension effort seems intentionally vague, likely because it was not fully formed, but the general idea was for county agents to become conduits between the project specialists and the programs they developed and county officials and organizations. County agents, then, would work most closely with local leaders in "group decision-making" and with individuals and families in need of "direct information to meet their particular kinds of problems."²⁷

The College sought support from the Kellogg Foundation for a period of seven years, beginning on July 1, 1960 and ending on June 30, 1967. The project required additional office, laboratory, and demonstration space as well as new equipment at the Robinson Substation. According to the proposal, the College would invest \$200,000 in the first two years of the project to meet those needs. The College would also fund all of the non-personnel operating costs associated with the project. The proposal sought Kellogg's support to fund the salaries for the specialists and some secretarial staff. UK would begin to take over support of the specialists' salaries, adding one each year beginning in the third year of engagement. The University sought \$754,000 from

²⁶ Ibid., 11.

²⁷ Ibid., 14.

Kellogg while committing \$1,700,000 of institutional funds over the course of the project.²⁸

On March 24, 1960, Glenwood Creech, a UK alumnus and Vice President for Agriculture at Kellogg, notified Dean Welch that the Foundation was committed to support the Appalachian Resource Development Project as described in the proposal. Creech's letter outlined some very typical terms of support and added, "We feel that this project will be of much value to Eastern Kentucky and as a demonstration program of improvement to other areas of inadequate resource development."²⁹

At this point, the Appalachian Resource Development Project was little more than a collection of big ideas. Moving from the idea stage to project launch proved much more difficult than Welch and Dickey likely imagined. Less than one week after Kellogg's notification of support, the University requested permission to push the project start date back by six months. Citing concerns over the present housing situation at Quicksand, the need to construct office and laboratory facilities, and the time required to recruit and hire "the type of personnel that we will want identified with the program," Welch and Dickey proposed a January 1, 1961, effective date. Following an exchange of several letters and phone calls, the Foundation approved the deferred start with an expression of strong concern.³⁰

The Foundation grew more concerned when the University balked on publicity for the project. "We may have a little problem about the press release here," Welch

²⁸ Ibid., 15-17.

²⁹ Glenwood Creech to Frank Welch, 24 March 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

³⁰ Frank Dickey to Emory Morris, 30 March 1960; Frank Welch to Glenwood Creech, 31 March 1960; Glenwood Creech to Frank Welch, 5 April 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

wrote to Creech on April 9, noting that the “Governor had been told on a confidential basis that we would be given these funds but that no publicity was to be given to this.” Combs was concerned with how the announcement might impact the roll out of his larger eastern Kentucky program. Welch agreed to take the matter up with Combs, and the Foundation issued a press release on April 26.³¹

However, Combs was not satisfied with the resolution of the situation involving the press release as he made clear to Welch and Dickey at a meeting on May 13 called specifically to address the matter. In fact, there was very little regarding the project that satisfied him. The Governor believed he had been misled, though likely unintentionally, regarding the project plan, and he expressed regret at lending his support to the proposal without first seeing it. He felt very strongly that the project would compete with several state agencies charged with work in eastern Kentucky. He was especially concerned with the interference of project specialists in the activities of the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission, the Forestry Department, and the Department of Economic Development. At worst, this interference would limit the success of these agencies, but at the very least, Combs argued the duplication of effort would create confusion. Furthermore, Combs suggested that the higher grant-supported salaries paid to the project specialists might induce talented state employees to leave for positions with the University. Following up with Combs after the meeting, Welch wrote, “we think some understandings were clarified, and we would hope that all could be clarified so that we here at the University can work effectively and in full confidence with all public agencies

³¹ Glenwood Creech to Frank Welch, 5 April 1960; Frank Welch to Glenwood Creech, 9 April 1960; Kellogg Foundation, Press Release No. 238, 26 April 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

serving Eastern Kentucky.” Welch assured the Governor that the University had no intention of competing with any state or federal agencies and agreed with the need for mutual cooperation.³²

Welch attempted further damage control in the days following the meeting with the Governor. The Dean communicated with Combs, John Whisman, Robert Bell in Lieutenant Governor Wyatt’s office, Bruce Kennedy, the Commissioner for Economic Development, and Morehead State President Adron Doran who served on the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission. In each communication, Welch addressed the Governor’s concerns with the project and asked for cooperation and support in its implementation. Combs and members of his administration continued to offer public gestures of support to the Appalachian Resource Development Project, but privately they maintained their misgivings.³³ Others vocalized the same concerns. Just before the formal launch of the project, S.C. Van Curon, the influential editor of the *State Journal* in Frankfort, harshly criticized the University’s management of the project. He accused the University of building an unnecessary bureaucracy with taxpayer money, of getting around constitutional pay restrictions by hiring a consultant, and of duplicating efforts

³² Frank Welch to Bert T. Combs, 17 May 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

³³ Frank Welch to Bert T. Combs, 17 May 1960; Frank Welch to John D. Whisman, 17 May 1960; Frank Welch to Robert Bell, 17 May 1960; Frank Welch to Bruce Kennedy, 18 May 1960; Frank Welch to Adron Doran, 18 May 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers. “Federal Aides Hear Report on Future Appalachian Project,” *Jackson Times*, 23 June 1960. Nevyle Shackelford, “Dirt Turned for Eastern Kentucky Resources Plant,” *Lexington Leader*, 7 December 1960, 2.

already performed by the Eastern Kentucky Development Commission and the state Forestry Department.³⁴

Many eastern Kentuckians, fatigued by frequent surveys and studies of their region, saw the project as just another hollow attempt by academics to identify the problems of the region while providing no solutions. The *Menifee County Journal* offered a satirical portrait of experts solving problems in a conference room far from eastern Kentucky. “When things do not play out as expected, the committee of experts say in unison ‘We’ll conduct a survey!’”³⁵ Extension administrator Mike Duff shared with Dean Welch that “the term ‘survey project’ is as distasteful to some business and political leaders as the word ‘dance’ is to conservative religious leaders,” and the *Tri-City News* in Harlan County editorialized, “Why do we need other studies? Why not use the money to put into practice some of the worthwhile ideas which have been offered, rather than to spend money and effort on another survey only to have it put in a file along with its many predecessors.”³⁶

The University’s response to this concern was clear and consistent. Writing in *Kentucky Farm News*, Welch explained, “The project is an action-oriented approach to the economic problems of eastern Kentucky. It will not be a study, not a survey, but a

³⁴ S.C. Van Curon, *The State Journal*, Frankfort, 14 December 1960.

³⁵ Gilbert R. Barley, “Eastern Kentucky’s ‘Real’ Problem,” *Menifee County Journal*, 25 July 1960.

³⁶ Mike Duff to Frank Welch, 29 July 1960; Frank Welch to Margaret Freeman, 11 May 1960 Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers. Frank Welch to J. Phil Smith, 7 July 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers. “Survey to End All Surveys,” *Tri-City News*, 5 May 1960.

program designed to find and develop resources not now being fully utilized.”³⁷ Welch, Dickey and others echoed this response in every description of the project. They also made clear who was initiating the action as the *Lexington Leader* reported from a ceremony at the Robinson Substation in December 1960. “Dean Welch said this program was not a survey but a program of action which will be carried out, not by the Kellogg Foundation, as many here had believed, but by the University of Kentucky.”³⁸ In its role as the state’s land-grant university, UK intended to fulfill its responsibility to the Commonwealth through action, but exactly what that would look like was still unknown to all in 1960.

³⁷ “Welch Explains Development Project for East Kentucky,” *Kentucky Farm News*, 28 April 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

³⁸ Nevyle Shackelford, “Dirt Turned for Eastern Kentucky Resources Plant,” *Lexington Leader*, 7 December 1960, 2.

Chapter 3 - The Implementation of the University's Action Program

The University was clearly committed to pursuing an “action program” in eastern Kentucky, but there was anything but clarity in how that action would be organized. One of the greatest challenges in the implementation of the action program was the lack of coordination between two important processes - the development of a modified Extension program in eastern Kentucky and the development of the Appalachian Resource Development Project. The two were inextricably linked. In fact, the latter depended heavily on the execution of the former, and many of the same players were involved in both discussions. Nonetheless, while there was a clear recognition of their interconnectedness, the processes played out largely independently.

A Modified Extension Program in Eastern Kentucky

The small committee of faculty that began meeting in the fall of 1959 to consider a modified Extension program in eastern Kentucky realized that its work would necessarily be influenced by the Kellogg proposal. At its February 18, 1960, meeting, the first held after the ARDP idea was developed, the members noted that the “package of technical services available at Quicksand” was a “factor which enters into making the needed approach” for modified Extension.¹ Over the next month, the core committee created brief outlines for seven Extension planks to “test” with a larger group of faculty, Extension specialists, and county agents at a March 14 meeting. The committee opened the March 14 meeting opened with a discussion on the Appalachian Resource

¹ Notes on the Eastern Kentucky Program, 18 February 1960, Box 233, Folder 8, James S. Brown Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Development Project proposal followed by a conversation on the probable impact of the project on Extension and “the need for modifying our programs to fit into these proposals.”² However, despite assertions that the two plans must be linked, there was little connection between the planks the group developed and discussed and the framework for ARDP.

From the discussions with the larger test group on March 14 emerged a series of “general conclusions” around which the core group constructed the modified Extension framework. Most significantly, the group determined that Agricultural Extension would need to become more of a general Extension service, with its activities extending beyond agriculture. Extension workers would serve more as “coordinators, cooperators, stimulators, and encouragers.” Their most important job was overcoming the individualistic attitude of many in the region by teaching and implementing a “pattern of community cooperation.” The group asserted that agents would need intensive training on how to motivate people and mobilize key community leaders. They also contended that this work demanded greater skill levels than those currently expected of county agents, and if implemented, the modified program would require additional training for existing agents as well as the elimination or curtailing of some of Extension’s present activities.³

When the core committee met again on April 11, they reviewed the feedback on the seven planks and agreed to move forward with the existing set. The committee charged Ernest Nesius and the Extension Program chairmen with drafting the overall

² “Summary of Meeting – Revised Extension Program for Thirty-County Quicksand Area,” 14 March 1960, Box 233, Folder 8, James S. Brown Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

³ Ibid.

philosophy, objectives, and scope of the new program as well as revised job descriptions for the agents. The group appointed seven subcommittees, one for each of the planks, and directed them to draft the purpose and the requirements needed to accomplish each one. They also discussed the development of a program manual, and they set a timeline for training personnel in the modified method.⁴

The core committee did not meet in May. Instead, on May 23, the group led a general discussion in Quicksand on the modified program and the proposed planks with all county agents in eastern Kentucky. The committee offered seven planks: an intensive program in the basics of living; an education program on the technical services of other agencies; leadership in action and decision-making; assistance in adult career guidance; development of specialized agricultural sources of income; close cooperation with community and industrial development projects; and an educational program for youth development. The feedback from the agents prompted the core committee to recognize that the planks still needed considerable work. Consequently, at their June meeting, the core committee pushed back their training timeline, moving the target for completion of a training manual from July 1 to September 1 and moving on-campus training for agents from August 1-5 to September 20-23.⁵ Concerned with the progress and the quality of the training materials, Ernest Nesius asked UK rural sociologist James Brown to draft the training manual and to plan the first day of the September training workshop. Brown had been involved in the core group from the earliest conversations about the development of

⁴ “Summary of Meeting of Core Committee on Revised Extension Program for Thirty-County Quicksand Area,” 11 April 1960, Box 233, Folder 8, James S. Brown Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁵ “Summary of Meeting of Core Committee on Revised Extension Program for Thirty-County Quicksand Area,” 16 June 1960, Box 233, Folder 8, James S. Brown Papers.

the modified Extension program, but Nesius' move gave Brown considerably more influence in the process than he had before.⁶

In mid-September, the College of Agriculture distributed Brown's training manual to county Extension agents in eastern Kentucky to review in preparation for training later that month. While suggesting that the "the role of Extension remains basically the same in that it is educational, its basic purpose being to change attitudes, to broaden horizons, and to increase knowledge and skills," the document boldly embraced a broader view of Extension work that was "much less closely related to agriculture." The modified approach was necessary, Brown argued, because the challenges of eastern Kentucky demanded it. To tackle these challenges, Extension had "to become more closely related to the general University" and "draw upon the vast resources of knowledge and skill of a growing, developing university." Extension personnel, the guide asserted, must call on "specialists and teachers in all colleges of the University," explaining that this was "most notably true" in eastern Kentucky where "big social, economic and psychological adjustments ... involve whole persons, whole communities, whole areas, and hence the whole range of knowledge."⁷

The training guide contended that "modifying the traditional pattern" for Extension required "reorganizing and emphasizing certain ideas and principles." Brown noted that maximum results are not accomplished by a single organization but rather by relevant educational, civic, and business groups working together. The best decisions are achieved when people apply analytical and technical know-how to their own resources,

⁶ Ernest Nesius to James Brown, 29 June 1960, Box 233, Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers.

⁷ "The Modified Extension Program for Eastern Kentucky," Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

and the Extension agent is responsible for “educating people and groups to help themselves.” Additionally, the University expected Extension agents to be active leaders in their communities and to be “a person in the center” of local decision-making activities. Not surprisingly, there was a strong paternalistic bent to this document. In relationships between Extension workers and members of mountain communities, the document assumed agents would make all of the valuable contributions with their neighbors receiving much and contributing little.⁸

Brown outlined five objectives for a modified Extension program in eastern Kentucky. First, Extension would help people “face facts and situations realistically, recognizing not only their limitations but the scope and value of their inner strengths and the availability of many resources to help them.” Second, Extension educational activities would provide families and individuals with relevant programming. Third, Extension agents would maintain a leadership role within both lay and professional groups. Fourth, agents would assist in the establishment of group action, including the training of leaders, and fifth, in keeping with the College’s culture of poverty perspective, Extension should “create a progressive, hopeful attitude among the people of the area which will lead them to recognize their resources, strengths, and possibilities so that they can take their rightful place in American society.”⁹

The scope of the modified Extension program, according to manual, would be determined by the particular needs of a county, by the limitations of the agent’s knowledge and skills, by the specialists available to them, and by the limitations of the “horizons of the people with whom the agents work.” In many cases, Brown argued, the

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

ignorance of the persons with whom agents work requires the agents “to awaken or arouse” recognition and interest in the problems and opportunities. The manual stressed the role of the Extension agents as educators but reminded them that education is a part of action and that action would be achieved through the “big, rough blocks of the total program,” otherwise known as the “planks.” The modified Extension manual offered the original seven planks discussed at the May meeting in Quicksand. Only one of the seven planks dealt specifically with agriculture.¹⁰

The training guide had big ideas, it had bold pronouncements, and it had its seven planks, but it had no real specificity and no permanence. The first sentence explained, “The following pages give you a description of the thinking to date of a group of committees which have been trying to formulate suggestions for a modified Extension Program for Eastern Kentucky.” These committees had been at work, in one form or another, for almost a year. In the manual, Brown expressed that this was not “the modified program for Eastern Kentucky, but a modified program.” The program to be implemented was still being formed, and the framers called on the county agents to help shape it – “You are expected to be creative partners in the formation of the total program, and you will note that some important aspects of the program have deliberately not been worked out even in outline form, because these aspects are clearly a part of your area of experience and responsibility.”¹¹

On Tuesday, September 20, over 100 Extension agents from eastern Kentucky as well as Extension specialists and administrators based in Lexington gathered on the University’s campus to begin the process of giving greater shape to the modified

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

Extension program. For four days, they met to discuss the mountain's challenges that gave rise to this new approach and the ways they might tackle those ills. James Brown planned the first day of training and invited President Dickey to open the session. With an address titled, "The Role of the University of Kentucky as a Whole in the Eastern Kentucky Program," Dickey argued that the entire University had a responsibility to actively contribute to solutions to the region's thorniest problems. Extension, Dickey noted, was an extension of the whole University not just the College of Agriculture.¹² Brown then chaired two discussion panels. In the first, four faculty members outlined the present conditions in eastern Kentucky. Brown explained existing social and cultural structures, Warren Haynes presented on coal mining, Earl Mayhew talked about agriculture and forestry, and Paul Street discussed education. Then, in a second session, H.A. Ritchie from the United States Soil Conversation Service, John Whisman from the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission, and sociologist Howard Beers responded to the faculty panel. In preparation, Brown asked both groups to keep in mind three critical questions. First, why is a "modified program in the Extension considered wise and necessary?" Second, how can all colleges and departments within the University "cooperate with and help Eastern Kentucky's people in solving their pressing problems," and third, how can the whole of the University "best cooperate and promote the work of other agencies and organizations?"¹³ In the afternoon session, Alda Henning,

¹² Frank Dickey, "The Role of the University of Kentucky as a Whole in the Eastern Kentucky Program," Remarks given to the Orientation Session for Extension Workers on the Eastern Kentucky Program, 20 September 1960, Lexington, Kentucky, copy in Box 233, Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers.

¹³ "Program for the Orientation Session for Extension Workers on the Eastern Kentucky Program," 20-23 September 1960, Box 233, Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers; James Brown to Haynes, Earl Mayhew, and Paul Street, 23 August 1960, Box 233,

Chairman of Home Economics Extension, and S.C. Bohanan, Chairman of Agricultural Extension, presented a summary of the development of the modified program to date, including the planks, and facilitated a discussion. On Wednesday, Henning and Bohanan reviewed the previous afternoon's session and led another discussion followed by afternoon break-out groups on the seven planks. On Thursday, the groups tackled the planks with guided questions of greater specificity, and on Friday, the groups reported back to the whole body.¹⁴

While the training conference was very well planned and executed, little in the way of additional direction emerged from the discussions. The groups discussed a number of ideas, but the College of Agriculture provided Extension workers with no additional guidance, either at the conference or in the months after it, on the implementation of the modified Extension program. The county agents were largely left to their own devices with some assistance from their district leaders. This was part design – the belief that the modified program needed the agents as “creative partners” drawing on their “experience and responsibility” – and part the result of a hastily conceived and poorly developed framework for the Appalachian Resources Development Project, with which the modified Extension program was tied.¹⁵

Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers; James Brown to James Patton, John Whisman, and Howard Beers, 23 August 1960, Box 233, Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers; James Brown to H.A. Ritchie, 8 September 1960, Box 233, Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers.

¹⁴ “Program for the Orientation Session for Extension Workers on the Eastern Kentucky Program,” 20-23 September 1960, Box 233, Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers; Minutes of the Planning Committee for September Training Conference on a Modified Eastern Kentucky Extension Program, 6 August 1960, Box 233, Folder 7, James S. Brown Papers.

¹⁵ “The Modified Extension Program for Eastern Kentucky,” Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

Developing the Appalachian Resource Development Project

Regardless of the result, the planning process for the modified Extension program was orderly and thoughtful. In contrast, the planning process for the Appalachian Resource Development Project was haphazard and reactive. Immediately after receiving confirmation of Kellogg's support, Dean Welch's directed S.C. Bohanan, Chairman of Agricultural Extension Programs, to begin the search for staff specialists. Welch and Bohanan had real concerns about their ability to hire competent specialists willing to live at Quicksand in Breathitt County. They were less concerned about finding a qualified project supervisor who would be based in Lexington, intending to fill that position closer to the project launch. However, they started these searches without knowing how the program would be organized and how the reporting lines would be structured. Some interested College of Agriculture faculty quickly expressed concern. They argued that a highly skilled, and highly compensated project lead be selected first. The project lead could not only help develop the program but also hire the specialists in keeping with the supervisor's vision for the project's implementation.¹⁶

Soon Bohanan saw the challenge in moving forward in hiring without key program details worked out, noting in late April that "the question is continually arising as to the pattern to be followed in operating the program at Quicksand. Those whom we are interviewing would like to know how it is to be supervised and how each individual

¹⁶ Eldon D. Smith to Frank Welch, 11 April 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers; S.C. Bohanan to William Seay, 14 April 1960, 1962 (4), Eastern Kentucky Robinson Substation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

will fit into the total program.” He encouraged Welch to develop some definitive plans and offered his own suggestions as a starting point for discussion.¹⁷

Bohanan argued for the integration of the project staff into the “total College of Agriculture program.” He favored academic appointments for each specialist, allowing them to look to that department for subject matter and support. The specialists would report to the appropriate department chairmen. There should be regular meetings of the specialists, the department chairmen, and the Extension district leaders. These meetings would serve the purpose of coordinating the program and connecting the project’s activities with other Extension efforts across the Commonwealth. Bohanan rejected the necessity of a project lead, instead proposing that one of the specialists act as a coordinator. This coordinator would have no authority over the others, aside from the ability to call them together for meetings, to chair those meetings, and to help facilitate communication. Despite considerable disagreement among the faculty and staff, Welch had not staked out a firm position on these matters, so he followed Bohanan’s lead.¹⁸

Confusion continued, however, especially after several faculty members were asked to assist with the program planks for the modified Extension program with no understanding of how the modified program would connect to ARDP. Eldon Smith summed up the frustration, “I have been unable to obtain a clear statement from anyone regarding the purpose of the planks, by whom they are to be used, and the total administrative setting in which the program is to be implemented.” Smith, noting that he was speaking after conversations with several colleagues who shared all or part of his

¹⁷ S.C. Bohanan to Frank Welch, 25 April 1960, 1962 (4), Eastern Kentucky Robinson Substation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

¹⁸ Ibid.

perspective, raised some important questions regarding the path the project's development had taken. He asked if the basic approach outlined in the project proposal for leadership through the Dean and a project director was "being abandoned in favor of a segmented administration through usual district agents and subject matter department channels" and if so who was managing the program's redesign? Were the planks intended to establish reporting lines for the specialists? Did the many committees at work designing planks replace the advisory board originally outlined? How would specialists responsible to department heads coordinate with other specialists in a meaningful way? Were the planks to provide a framework for the specialists or were they to provide only a framework for the modified Extension program? If the specialists "require technical abilities of the order suggested by the proposal," could the University really expect a group of people lacking that technical knowledge to design a program for those specialists, and if the project is fundamentally about coordination, how can the program be executed without hiring a highly trained and exceptionally skilled leader?¹⁹

Smith's critique was right on the mark, and Welch backed off Bohanan's recommendations. Instead, he asked the well-respected rural sociologist James Brown for his ideas on the project's implementation. This move is significant in one very important way. As he had demonstrated in his work on the modified Extension program in eastern Kentucky, Brown favored broadening the conversation. In the case of ARDP, he shifted the thinking from a College of Agriculture project to a University project administered through the College of Agriculture. While that distinction was ultimately lost in the implementation of the Appalachian Resource Development Program, Brown's

¹⁹ Eldon D. Smith to Frank Welch, 4 May 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

introduction of that narrative guided the University's official philosophy toward applied knowledge and action in eastern Kentucky throughout the 1960s.

Brown called the project an "exciting, challenging opportunity," but he noted that "our pressing need at the moment is planning." In keeping with the work he had been performing on the modified Extension program, Brown saw ARDP as a total university program and suggested a university-wide committee to plan for the program and to produce a sourcebook for use in policymaking and execution. He stressed the importance of evaluation, and somewhat amazingly, he seems to be the first to finally suggest the need to coordinate the ongoing efforts of the modified Extension with those of ADRP, especially with regard to training county agents to prepare for the reality of executing both in concert.²⁰ Welch responded simply, "I think this is a good idea. Would you suggest some names so we can get started?"²¹

Brown did, and on August 2, Welch invited thirty-one faculty and staff members from across the University to participate in the Appalachian Resource Development Project planning committee. The program launch was five months away, and Welch correctly noted that "much needs to be done in terms of formulating the administrative and operational framework, preparing for specific projects and programs of activities, and selecting the appropriate personnel for the program." Following Brown's lead, he explicitly expressed for the first time that the project would be "formulated in such a way

²⁰ James Brown to Frank Welch, Viola Henning, S.C. Bohanan, and Lee Coleman, 15 July 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

²¹ Frank Welch to William Seay, S.C. Bohanan, and Stanley Wall, 27 July 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

as to involve the total resources of the University.” Calling the first meeting of the group for August 13, he named S.C. Bohanan its chair.²²

At the committee’s first meeting, Bohanan asked Brown to discuss the project’s concept and its essential elements. Brown first emphasized that this was a “total university effort,” necessarily administered through Extension because of its presence in every Kentucky county. However, the emphasis was on the entire institution, and there was an opportunity for colleges and departments to contribute in multiple ways. Brown further noted that the program was designed to serve a specific and well-defined area with the intention of being a model for not just Appalachia but other depressed areas. The program was to be dynamic, continually evolving, and the “resource to be developed is ‘people.’” Like others before him, he stressed this was “an education action program” with work “in the most strategic areas.” After some discussion, the group agreed “that these concepts outlined by Dr. Brown were acceptable and should serve as guides for further development of the program.” An executive committee of the group, with representatives from across campus was formed, and they agreed to meet in one week’s time.²³

The primary purpose of the executive committee meeting on August 22 was to consider the specialist positions needed for the project and to make any “desired

²² James Brown to Frank Welch, 1 August 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers; Frank Welch to S.C. Bohanan, et al, 2 August 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

²³ Minutes, ARDP Project Committee, 13 August 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

recommendations or changes.”²⁴ The project proposal had little specificity, but it had been very specific on the areas of expertise required for the specialist positions, the majority of them being in agricultural fields. Given the broader, university-wide approach endorsed at the previous meeting, the committee now seemed willing to consider different specialty areas. However, S. C. Bohanan, the committee chair, remained wedded to his original intentions for the program’s organization. Bohanan, Chair of Agricultural Extension Program, was reluctant to move away from the project’s agricultural focus, and he continued to believe the specialists should report to their respective academic departments in the College of Agriculture, not through the Extension administration or to the Dean’s office.

In a September 12 letter to Welch, copied to the project’s executive committee, Brown made clear his concerns with Bohanan’s position. Calling the project, “the greatest opportunity we at the University of Kentucky have ever had to help the people of eastern Kentucky,” he implored Welch to give his “strength, direction, support, and decision.” Asking Welch to, at the very least attend the meetings of the executive committee, Brown went further and urged the Dean to become the chairman of the group. Brown questioned the balance of agricultural and non-agricultural specialists. While the group agreed that “people developing” was the most important emphasis, they decided more than half of the specialist would focus on agriculture. “I do want to be on record,” he wrote, “as opposing the present composition of the list of specialists. I (and, I am sure, some other members of the Executive Committee) think the list should be revised again much more carefully.” The discussions regarding the revised model for Extension

²⁴ Minutes, ARDP Project Executive Committee, 22 August 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

for eastern Kentucky moved away from agriculture, and Brown wondered how that would mesh with the Appalachian Resource Development Project which he saw as agriculturally heavy. Brown dismissed concerns that the Kellogg Foundation would object to substantive changes to the program and encouraged the involvement of the Foundation's Glenwood Creech in the discussions. Additionally, he questioned the influence of the lay advisory committee, chaired by banker and Jackson mayor J. Phil Smith, "We have a far greater obligation to the people of Eastern Kentucky than to the power structures, which often are handicaps and among the greatest detriments to progress in the area." Responding to apparent concerns of committee members that College of Agriculture politics made it difficult to drop agricultural specialties, Brown said, "I don't know much about this, but it is a poor basis for spending this much money on an experimental program, and I cannot believe that you would seriously entertain such limitations."²⁵

Welch did not respond to Brown, prompting a handwritten, private follow-up two days later.

For several weeks, as you know, I have been trying to see you about the Eastern Kentucky project. After the Executive Committee meeting last Friday, I have repeatedly tried to see you...In my opinion, the project as originally conceived and submitted to the Kellogg Foundation was not carefully enough thought out – though considering the little time spent on it and the limited knowledge of eastern Kentucky of those formulating it, it wasn't too bad. Your assurance that changes could be made was most important to me, just as I was and am, distressed that you have apparently decided no changes can be made."²⁶

²⁵ James S. Brown to Frank Welch, 12 September 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

²⁶ James Brown to Frank Welch, 14 September 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

Brown provided Welch with a list of scholars with considerable knowledge of eastern Kentucky and suggested the Dean consult with them so that his “decisions will be informed and realistic.”²⁷

There is no record of a formal response from Welch or a consultation with the eastern Kentucky scholars Brown recommended Welch involve. The Appalachian Resource Development Project’s executive committee moved forward with the elements that most concerned Brown, and when the project launched at the beginning of 1961, plans called for more than half of its specialists to serve in agricultural fields. The executive committee, with Bohanan as its chair, continued to function as a permanent advisory board. However, though not the reality of the project, Brown’s narrative of a total university program continued to rule the day. At the groundbreaking for the project’s new building at the Robinson Substation, President Dickey remarked that the University was created for this sort of activity and that only the University with the support of all of its resources across the colleges and departments could put together this type of program.²⁸ A few weeks later in an announcement to the University community, Dickey noted that the project was “far broader than agriculture and home economics. It will offer all colleges, departments, and divisions of the University an opportunity to contribute to the effort.” He went on to say, “We believe that this is somewhat unique and a very intensive approach to serving our major underdeveloped area of the State represents a challenging opportunity to the entire University.”²⁹

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Nevyle Shackelford, “Dirt Turned for Eastern Kentucky Resources Plant,” *Lexington Leader*, 7 December 1960, 2.

²⁹ Frank Dickey, “Eastern Kentucky Program Launched,” n.d., Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

Launching the Appalachian Resource Development Project

The Appalachian Resource Development Project launched on January 1, 1961. The program employed only three staff specialists, and no project lead had been identified. For several months, the specialists had no clear reporting lines and no office space, and the modified Extension program designed to support their efforts was still little more than a shell. The University's total action program in eastern Kentucky was off to an inauspicious start.

In a January 1961 letter to Glenwood Creech at the Kellogg Foundation, Dean Welch shared the tremendous difficulty the University had in finding qualified professionals for the ARDP specialist posts. The project required a high level of technical expertise, and few possessed the adequate skill sets. Some qualified applicants "lacked the dedicated interest and the personality to fit into the Eastern Kentucky situation." He did not acknowledge that some of those willing to tackle those challenges and move to Quicksand may have been concerned at the lack of order to the project. Welch voiced his concerns at staffing the needs of the project in the first year and requested permission from the foundation to use some of the funds allocated for permanent personnel for temporary consultants instead.³⁰ The Foundation approved the request.³¹

Housing for ARDP specialists was a significant concern for University administrators as they believed that the lack of adequate housing for specialists and their

³⁰ Frank Welch to Glenwood Creech, 7 January 1961, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

³¹ Glenwood Creech to Frank Welch, 13 January 1961, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

families was a barrier to staff recruitment. While Dean Welch and President Dickey noted this concern to Kellogg officials in asking for the deferment for the project start date, the University did not begin to pursue a housing solution until five months later. In September 1960, the University submitted a proposal to the Robinson Mountain Fund for financial support to build ten residences at a total cost of \$160,000. The proposal noted that the Kellogg Foundation had not made funds available for this purpose nor had the University secured state appropriations for residential construction.³² The Robinson Fund declined to support the proposal.

Writing to Phil Smith in March 1961, acting Dean William Seay – Welch left the University early in 1961 for a post at the USDA - noted that the project could not “achieve maximum teamwork and coordination until the specialists are housed at Jackson or Quicksand.”³³ The University once again approached the Robinson Mountain Fund in June 1961, with a more modest proposal. Dean Seay requested \$50,000 from the Mountain Fund in gifts and \$15,000 in low-interest loans. The monies would be used for site development (\$1,500), to build four residences (\$15,000 each), and to install a new well system at the Substation (\$3,500). The Robinson Fund approved the proposal, construction began on June 19, and the work was complete in early September.

³² “Proposal to Robinson Mountain Foundation for Housing for Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project Workers,” 8 September 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers. The Robinson Mountain Fund was established in 1922 with a gift from timber baron E.O. Robinson. The Mountain Fund supported projects “for the betterment of the mountain people of Kentucky,” gave the University the Robinson Forest in 1923, and provided occasional funds to the University for eastern Kentucky projects. See David Barrett Gough, “The Value of the Commonwealth: An Ecocritical History of the Robinson Forest” (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 2011); Minutes of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, 13 April 1923, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

³³ William Seay to J. Phil Smith, 22 March 1961, Correspondence 1961-62, “S” Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

Thanking Ross Sloniker, Chairman of the Robinson Mountain Fund, Seay explained, “This will enable us to overcome one of the major problems associated with the launching and execution of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Program.”³⁴

While administrators found the recruitment of specialists difficult, they also struggled with what to do regarding the project’s leadership. As early as April 1960, several influential faculty members began to mention Mike Duff as a possible director for the project. Duff was an eastern Kentucky native, a University of Kentucky graduate, and a former UK Extension agent who had just returned to Kentucky after completing his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin to assume a role in Extension administration. James Brown and Ralph Ramsey called Duff “imaginative, creative, hard-working, and responsible.” He is “action-oriented,” they wrote, and believed in “change of the right sort.” Brown and Ramsey argued that Duff spoke in words “that Mountain people will understand and respond to,” and that he had the respect of the county Extension agents in eastern Kentucky.³⁵

Duff had been an early supporter of the project, he had sought out information regarding the original proposal, and he wrote to Welch in March 1960 to endorse the program, noting that it was “properly oriented in total concept and tailor-made to the

³⁴ William Seay to Ross Sloniker, 3 July 1961, 1962 (4), Eastern Kentucky Robinson Substation Folder, William A. Seay Papers; “Plan and Proposal for Construction of Residences and Development of New Water System at Robinson Agricultural Experiment Station,” 1962 (4), Eastern Kentucky Robinson Substation Folder, William A. Seay Papers; William Seay to Louise West, 5 June 1961, 1962 (4), Eastern Kentucky Robinson Substation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

³⁵ James S. Brown and Ralph Ramsey to Frank Welch, 4 August 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Kellogg Foundation Folder, William A. Seay Papers; S.C. Bohanan to William Seay, 14 April 1960, 1962 (4), Eastern Kentucky Robinson Substation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

situation.”³⁶ He offered his full support. Duff was not involved in the discussions regarding the project in the spring and summer of 1960, though he was active in the development of the modified Extension program and he was part of the general advisory committee Welch called at Brown’s suggestion in August of that year. More than anyone else, Duff sought opportunities to positively promote ARDP in the region before its launch. Throughout the fall, Duff spoke to several civic groups, outlining the program and how it might benefit the people of eastern Kentucky.

On October 28, Duff forwarded Dean Welch a copy of a speech he had given in Hazel Green at a meeting of the Kentucky Regional Group of the Council of the Southern Mountains. Duff’s speech outlined the eastern Kentucky program in keeping with the Kellogg proposal and the conversations in the advisory committee meetings. Welch replied, “This is an invigorating, stimulating program. Where and how would you like to fit it into our Eastern Kentucky Development Program?”³⁷ Duff responded, “The speech is about the Eastern Kentucky Development Program as I understand it.” He proceeded to argue that the application of “the ideas of this speech is a matter that your project director and the specialists will have to decide,” but “I feel the chances of success are greater than I dared dream before.”³⁸ The exchange was bizarre, but it shows both the

³⁶ Mike Duff to Frank Welch, 19 March 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

³⁷ Mike Duff, “Iron Shoes and Work Clothes to Fit Us for the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Programs,” speech given to the Kentucky Regional Group of the Council on the Southern Mountains (Hazel Green, KY), 15 October 1960, copy in Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers; Frank Welch to Mike Duff, 28 October 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

³⁸ Mike Duff to Frank Welch, 2 November 1960, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

general confusion that still reigned over the program as well as Duff's interest in taking a leadership role.

Others, especially S.C. Bohanan, opposed the idea of Duff as the project director. Having consulted with Duff's Ph.D. advisor at the University of Wisconsin, Bohanan wrote to William Seay that he agreed with the advisor's opinion that "Mike would make an excellent specialist" but he doubted "making him a leader of any kind." Duff, Bohanan argued, was "too busy to stop and think."³⁹ Of course, Bohanan had opposed a project director from the start, and he argued against other names brought forward as well.

Ultimately, Welch sided with Bohanan, and in early 1961, the Dean named R. Keith Kelley as ARDP Chairman. Kelley was a District Leader in Extension, a position he would continue to hold. He was based on-campus in Lexington, and he would continue to work primarily from his University office. The three existing ARDP specialists, and those to follow, had appointments with their respective departments at the University, so Kelley had no line authority over the team at Quicksand. His task was to organize the team's meetings, monitor workflows, facilitate communication, and serve as a contact person to those outside the project.

In his 1961 annual report, Kelley noted that "considerable time, during the first year of operation was devoted to development of operational and procedural policies designed to carry out the basic purpose of the project," but the program was fully staffed with 13 specialists by August 15, and "during the year, practically all colleges and departments of the University have been called upon for consultant and program

³⁹ S.C. Bohanan to William Seay, 14 April 1960, 1962 (4), Eastern Kentucky Robinson Substation Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

assistance.”⁴⁰ The modified approach to Extension had been adopted, and county Extension agents were “providing leadership at the county level in the development and execution of programs and projects involving the use of the specialist team.”⁴¹ Four residences had been built at Quicksand and one remodeled, and plans were complete to construct a new office and laboratory building in 1962, paid for through University funds. Kelley mentioned the ongoing professional development for the project specialists, including visits from Theodore Schultz from the University of Chicago and Rupert Vance from the University of North Carolina. Kelley listed few accomplishments in 1961 – and all were tasks that seemed appropriate for traditional Extension not a new program with broader goals - but he stressed that planning for several upcoming initiatives was underway, and he explained the project’s emphasis was on the future.

Kelley’s public perspective on the project was bright, but the real picture was not so rosy. From the earliest days of the project, Deans Welch and Seay had struggled to gain the full support of Phil Smith, Jackson’s mayor and chair of the local advisory board. Writing to J.B. Clarke, another member of the advisory board, Welch said of Smith, “Phil called me the other day threatening to resign from the committee, which is the second or third time he has done so. Frankly I do not know what is discouraging Phil. We have tried to work closely with him to keep him informed about our plans.”⁴² Likely, Welch was clearly aware of why Smith was disgruntled. Smith had favored an eight-county program with a focus on the area immediately surrounding Quicksand. He had

⁴⁰ “Annual Report of the Appalachian Resource Development Project,” 1961, University of Kentucky, Lexington, 1-2, copy in Mike Duff Papers, Special Collection Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁴¹ Ibid., 2.

⁴² Welch to J.B. Clarke, 30 December 1960, in Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

very publically backed Charles Derrickson, the Robinson Substation Superintendent to serve as the project chair. He recommended some possible specialists who ultimately were not hired, and the University did not follow his plans for the construction of new facilities at Quicksand. Frequently, Smith questioned Kelley's competency, even at luncheon talks he gave to civic organizations, and he expressed concern with the irregularity of Kelley's visits to Quicksand, once prompting Dean Seay to reply, "We are trying for maximum teamwork and cooperation under present circumstances.... Mr. Kelley is staying in close touch personally with each specialist."⁴³

Within the University, there was concern that faculty and staff did not understand the university-wide nature of the project and the expectation that they would participate. In early March, Dean Seay asked President Dickey to take a very public position on the importance of involvement in the project. President Dickey agreed to more aggressively promote the concept to the University, including highlighting it in the next staff bulletin.⁴⁴

Within ARDP itself, specialists expressed a multitude of concerns. Some wondered what exactly they were expected to do in their new roles. Some questioned the support of the Extension administration. Some were frustrated with the administrative structure, or lack thereof. Still, others cited communications failures among the specialist team and also with county agents. Dean Seay wrote to all members of the ARDP staff in

⁴³ Art Gallaher, Jr., "The Eastern Kentucky Resources Development Project: A Confidential Evaluation," Summer 1965, Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John D. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); William Seay to J. Phil Smith, 22 March 1961, Correspondence 1961-62, "S" Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

⁴⁴ William Seay to Frank Dickey, 3 March 1961, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers; Frank Dickey to William Seay, 11 March 1961, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

December 1961. He called their work a “very difficult and challenging assignment” and praised their “real progress in establishing a solid base upon which we can build and execute an effective program of service to the people of Eastern Kentucky.” Addressing directly the concern over Kelley’s scarcity at the Substation, Seay designated specialist George Armstrong as a “coordinator, an equal working among equals” who would chair meetings and manage workflow in Kelley’s absence.⁴⁵

The Beers Evaluation

In 1962, the University renamed the Appalachian Resource Development Project. Its new name was the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project (EKRD), but a more specific name did not allay Dean Seay’s concerns. When Seay heard that former UK faculty member and developmental change expert Howard Beers was returning to the United States temporarily from his work in Indonesia, Seay negotiated a consulting contract with Beers. The contract called for Beers to provide in-service training to staff that included “a world-wide perspective on community and area development,” ideas and suggestions for individual projects, assistance with evaluation techniques, and discussions of “solutions to major problems confronting the staff.” Beers was also to evaluate the project’s first eighteen months of operation and provide counsel and advice to the project chairman and other personnel.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Seay to All Members of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project Staff, 16 December 1961, Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

⁴⁶ “A Proposal for the Use of Dr. Howard Beers as a Consultant to the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” Summer 1962, copy in Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers.

Beers spent most of July and some of August 1962 learning about EKRDP and assessing its progress. At the outset of his report, he stressed the importance of the project's university-wide approach, and he noted the increased realism among eastern Kentucky leaders regarding the challenges of the region. He was impressed with the "quality and quantity of group thinking" behind the modified Extension approach and saw the EKRDP as a "broadening and deepening rather than a complete reformation of Extension."⁴⁷ Some had heard of the "Quicksand Project" or the "Kellogg Project, but Beers found little knowledge of the EKRDP throughout eastern Kentucky, even among local leaders. He observed in the project what he deemed three false dichotomies – human resource development vs. physical resource development; economic development, centering on income vs. social development, centering on quality of life; and research vs. action. Beers supported a total resource development approach. He suggested there need not be tension between these seemingly competing objectives, and that EKRDP initiatives could adequately pursue them all if properly planned and executed.⁴⁸

Among the EKRDP specialists, Beers observed a "feeling of isolation within the Extension service." Some felt "suspended" or "set apart" from the regular Extension office, and Beers suggested that may be connected to the widely-held view of the Quicksand specialists as a team, a group that worked together on common projects. However, this definition of team was not the project's intent, and Beers correctly questioned whether the group did or should function as a team. Some members of the EKRDP group told Beers they doubted the support of the Extension administration to the

⁴⁷ Howard W. Beers, "Notes on the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project," 22 August 1962, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John Oswald Papers 1963-1968, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

modified approach and to the EKRDP. As for the work at Quicksand, Beers queried if the right mix of specialists had been achieved, noting the strong human resource orientation of the project but its heavy agricultural staffing. He also questioned how county agents really fit into the modified approach.⁴⁹

While it was too soon for an overall evaluation of the entire project, Beers found the lack of any evaluation activity alarming. “To set the stage for evaluation,” he commented, “the goals of each activity should be made as clear as possible at the outset and this has not yet been done.” Evaluation planning, Beers cautioned, must “begin now without further delay.”⁵⁰

With a more concerned tone, Beers pointed to several “points of strain.” He observed internal tensions around some team members’ lack of Extension experience, and he warned non-native staffers to pay particular attention to their “fotched-on” tendencies.⁵¹ Beers noted a real struggle, both within the EKRDP staff and among eastern Kentucky Extension agents, between the area and the county approaches. He

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ The expression “fotched-on,” frequently used in turn-of-the century fictional mountain accounts, denotes the intervention of an outside reformer. The term has been most often used to describe female reformers who flocked to the mountains in the early twentieth century out of a desire to uplift the mountain people while also putting their newly acquired college degrees to good use. David Whisnant has written extensively and very critically about fotched-on women, arguing that their efforts were laced with a sense of cultural superiority, which in the end led them to do more harm than good. See David E. Whisnant, *All That Is Native & Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983). Many have taken issue with Whisnant’s interpretation, arguing that the relationship between mountain reformers and clients was more complicated than he acknowledges. See Melanie Beals Goan, *Mary Breckinridge: The Frontier Nursing Service and Rural Health in Appalachia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); P. David Searles, *A College for Appalachia: Alice Lloyd on Caney Creek* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995).

raised and then confirmed the commonly held belief of district leaders, state extension specialists, and county agents that the EKRDP staff had a poor working relationship with almost everyone, including each other, and he surmised that some of that was owing to the lack of clarity in how the EKRDP fit in the hierarchy of relationships to other Extension entities, University colleges and departments, government entities, and community groups.⁵²

In his final analysis, Beers provided a “list of considerations” of “primary importance to consider.” EKRDP, he asserted, was important and deserved continued support. The project’s separate identity provided it with “freedom for exploration without undue restraints from tradition and orthodox Extension structures” but the nature and extent of that separate identity must be reviewed periodically. Future staff must have the skills and experiences to carry out modified Extension work in “its overall breadth,” and careful efforts to facilitate the relationships of existing staff were essential. Finally, Beers argued that the “EKRDP’s aspiration to serve as overall extension representing the whole University is yet incompletely fulfilled and will require continuing effort and broadened backing for achievement.” Reorganization within only the College of Agriculture would not be enough to insure the long-time success of EKRDP.⁵³

Beers’ evaluation had little impact on the operation of the EKRDP. Project documents over the next two years show a business as usual approach. Kelley’s 1962 and 1963 annual reports as well as a March 1964 article in *Extension Service Review* use almost identical language in praising the project’s philosophy, enumerating lists of activities which mirrored traditional Extension work, and reminding the reader that the

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

problems in eastern Kentucky were complex and difficult to solve.⁵⁴ As the 1963 report cautioned, “even after three years of operation, evaluation and reporting on the project must be largely limited to a look at encouraging trends and promising movements.”⁵⁵

Though the modified Extension Program and the EKRDP were the only eastern Kentucky action programs of considerable scale funded by the University during this period, the University did envision another major initiative. Early in 1961, the University submitted a substantial proposal, involving several UK colleges, to the Ford Foundation for an action program to “improve the communication skills of public school students in depressed coal mining areas.” The Ford Foundation applauded the proposal but denied funding the work. The Foundation did not believe the program was “capable of widespread adoption in other school districts facing similar problems.” Essentially, the Foundation did not believe the work in the coal fields would translate to urban or other rural school districts.⁵⁶

While its flagship action program continued to spin its wheels, the University of Kentucky remained committed to an action orientation toward eastern Kentucky. However, 1964 would bring considerable changes to the national perception of Appalachia, to Appalachian public policy, and to the University’s intentions for its action

⁵⁴ “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1962, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Mike Duff Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1963, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting Folder, John Oswald Collection (Reports from Colleges), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; R.K. Kelley, “Extension in a Depressed Region,” in *Extension Service Review*, United States Department of Agriculture, March 1964, 40-42.

⁵⁵ “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1963, 2.

⁵⁶ Alvin C. Eurich to Frank Dickey, 10 April 1961, Box 10, File 130, Frank Dickey Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

program. UK had been engaged in the opening salvos of the fight but a national War on Poverty was about to launch, drawing even more attention to the role the University would play in the battle.

Chapter 4 - The University of Kentucky and the War on Poverty

1964 and 1965 were pivotal years for the University of Kentucky's action program in eastern Kentucky. With the passage of the Equal Opportunity Act (EOA) and the Appalachian Regional Development Act (ARDA), the University hoped to join the War on Poverty in the mountains with the support of free-flowing federal dollars. New University President John W. Oswald and his Executive Vice President A.D. Albright, increasingly disillusioned with the EKRDP and its leadership, sought to shift many of the University's Appalachian efforts to the new Center for Developmental Change (CDC). In the end, however, the flurry of activity resulted in little substantive change to the University's action program in the mountains.

The Creation of the Center for Developmental Change

In 1962, as Thomas Ford wrapped up his commitments to the Ford Foundation's Southern Appalachian Studies Project, he and Lee Coleman reenergized the conversations regarding a center for social change at the University of Kentucky. In October of that year, Coleman drafted a proposal for the Center for Applied Social Science, sometimes referred to as the Social Science Research and Training Center. A.D. Albright, a member of the core group of faculty in the 1950s concerned with social

change, supported the idea and encouraged further discussion.¹ As Howard Beers noted, “Albright was a convener. He set the stage for the development of the CDC.”²

Early in 1963, Albright approved funding for three faculty positions with joint appointments in a yet unnamed and undeveloped center. The faculty members were to devote half-time to the respective department and half-time “to this developing idea.”³ Only one of the positions was filled that year, with anthropologist Art Gallaher, Jr. joining the faculty in the early summer.⁴

Throughout the spring, summer, and early fall of 1963, a group of faculty, many of whom were among that core group from nearly a decade earlier, met weekly to discuss “directed change” or “social and cultural change.” The group included James Brown, Eldon Smith, Malcolm Jewell, Thomas Ford, J.J. Mangalum, Lee Coleman, and Art Gallaher, Jr.⁵ In October 1963, Albright secured Oswald’s approval for a more formal Faculty Seminar on Developmental Change. The Faculty Seminar expanded the conversations to a larger group of faculty, sponsored prominent outside speakers, and published a volume based on the guest lectures and the subsequent related discussions.⁶

¹ A. Lee Coleman, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 12 November 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

² Howard W. Beers, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 18 February 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

³ Art Gallaher, Jr., interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 24 December 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ *Perspectives in Developmental Change*, ed. Art Gallaher, Jr. (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968); Coleman interview; Gallaher interview; Thomas R. Ford, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 5 November 1984, Charles T. Wethington

Albright also funded a trip by Malcolm Jewell and Lee Coleman to the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, to consult with Rupert Vance and his colleagues there.⁷ Upon their return, Coleman drafted yet another proposal, this time for a Center for Developmental Change (CDC), and with Albright and Oswald's blessings, the Board of Trustees authorized its creation on January 17, 1964.⁸

The founders of the Center appreciated the oddity of its name. As Thomas Ford noted, "We used the term 'developmental change' instead of 'planned change' because 'planned' sounded socialist and development was considered good."⁹ Lee Coleman explained that there was considerable conversation over several meetings around the name and the terms used to frame discussion. Because they wanted to reinforce the interdisciplinary nature of the work, they steered clear of "sociology" or "social science." They discussed "social change," but that seemed "too restrictive in a way," according to Coleman. The term "developmental change" first appeared in July 1963. The concept of development was much in vogue at the time, a favored catch-phrase with foundations. The group, reported Coleman, "sort of suddenly came onto, invented, the name developmental change. We wanted to give it a direction, not just change, but change toward development. I'm not sure we had ever heard the term...It caused some puzzlement as to what it meant."¹⁰

University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

⁷ Coleman interview; Ford interview; Beers interview.

⁸ Minutes of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, 17 January 1964, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; Ford interview.

⁹ Ford interview.

¹⁰ Coleman interview.

While the Board of Trustees authorized the creation of the Center in January 1964, there was no additional recurring funding for the CDC until the 1965-66 academic year. Albright, however, did make provisions for a small operating budget in 1964-65. As he was the only faculty member with distribution of effort assigned to the CDC, Art Gallaher, Jr. became its interim director on July 1, 1964. During the 1964-65 academic year, the Faculty Seminar continued to meet, and the CDC searched for its first full-time director.¹¹ The search resulted in the selection of Edward Weidner, a highly regarded expert in international development and Director of the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii. Weidner's work officially began in July 1965, but he continued to split time between the University of Hawaii and the University of Kentucky for much of the 1965-66 academic year.¹²

Evolving Appalachian Public Policy

Coverage of John Kennedy's West Virginia Democratic Primary campaign in 1960 brought renewed national attention to Appalachia, and on the eve of the May 10 primary, Kennedy promised a special program of aid for the Mountain State if he was nominated and elected. Just ten days later, Governor Millard Tawes of Maryland convened the first Conference of Appalachian Governors in Annapolis to discuss the challenges facing the region. The group met again in Lexington in October 1960 and approved the "Declaration for Action Regarding the Appalachian Region." The document called for a voluntary association of states to push for a special regional program of development, and as Ron Eller notes, the resolution "bore the distinct mark of

¹¹ Coleman interview.

¹² Coleman interview; Gallaher interview; Ford interview.

John Whisman.”¹³ The declaration drew heavily from Kentucky’s *Program 60*, characterizing Appalachia as underdeveloped rather than depressed. Casting the region as underdeveloped allowed the governors to push the federal policy discussions beyond relief and toward the use of government funds for comprehensive development.¹⁴

Following Kennedy’s election in November 1960, he made good on his promise to West Virginians, and the Task Force on Area Redevelopment was one of twenty-nine teams assembled to prepare the President-elect’s legislative agenda. The Task Force called for the passage of legislation, similar to that which had been vetoed previously by President Eisenhower, establishing total resource development programs in depressed areas. The new Congress’s Senate Bill 1 contained the core recommendations of the Task Force, including a national system of development commissions with an Appalachian regional commission to serve as a pilot. However, the development commissions failed to make the final version of the Area Redevelopment Act that became law on May 1, 1961, and the new law made no provisions for specific Appalachian projects or funding. Instead, the Area Redevelopment Act authorized the Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA), and in early May 1961, President Kennedy met with the Conference of

¹³ Ronald D Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 56. For a thorough discussion of the evolution of federal Appalachian public policy in the early 1960s, see Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 53-89; John Alexander Williams, *Appalachia: A History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 334-342; James P. Ziliak, “The Appalachian Regional Development Act and Economic Change,” in *Appalachian Legacy: Economic Opportunity After the War on Poverty*, ed. James P. Ziliak (Washington: Brookings Institution, 2012), 19-43.

¹⁴ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 56-57; Williams, *Appalachia*, 335-339.

Appalachian Governors to discuss specific regional opportunities within the new agency. No specific federal action grew out of that meeting, however.¹⁵

For the next two years, the Conference of Appalachian Governors continued to meet, developing plans for an Appalachian highway program, education and job training, and natural resources development. However, they became increasingly frustrated with the lack of federal response to their policy proposals, the ineffectiveness of the ARA to provide federal aid to the mountains, and the President's unwillingness to create a joint state-federal Appalachian regional commission.¹⁶ Yet, in January 1963, Kennedy read Dwight MacDonal's *New Yorker* review of recent poverty studies, including Harrington's *The Other America*, prompting him to direct Walter Heller, chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, to identify anti-poverty strategies that might be used in his 1964 re-election campaign. When back-to-back floods ravaged parts of Appalachia in March 1963, Heller and Ed McDermott, chair of the Office of Emergency Planning encouraged Kennedy to consider an Appalachian anti-poverty program. Kennedy agreed and invited the Appalachian governors to attend an April 9 cabinet meeting scheduled to review the ARA.¹⁷ At that meeting, Kennedy announced his plans to include more Appalachian programs in the ARA budget and to fast-track existing ARA programs in the region, to establish a joint federal-state committee on Appalachia charged with crafting a

¹⁵ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 58-60; Williams, *Appalachia*, 338-340; Thomas Kiffmeyer, *Reformers to Radicals: The Appalachian Volunteers and the War on Poverty* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 47.

¹⁶ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 59-61; Williams, *Appalachia*, 339-342.

¹⁷ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 69-71.

comprehensive economic development program, and to create an Appalachian development institute for research and training.¹⁸

President Kennedy appointed Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. to chair the President's Appalachian Regional Commission (PARC) with John L. Sweeney as executive director and John Whisman as executive secretary and states representative. Roosevelt tapped University of Pittsburgh economist Benjamin Chinitz and a task force of leading academics to analyze the conditions in the region. Chinitz and his team argued a history of resource extraction left the region without the core infrastructure to support economic development. Federal, state, and local governments had not been able to tackle the mountain's problems alone, but working together, Chinitz argued, these governments could accomplish the type of development the region needed.¹⁹ It was at this point, through PARC, as Eller argues, that "academic theories about the process of development came together with the professional interests of federal agency personnel and state political leadership to provide a common agenda for the region."²⁰ On November 15, President Kennedy phoned newly elected Kentucky governor Edward Breathitt, expressing his excitement about the PARC's work and his plans to schedule a visit to the mountains where he would announce his commitment to a program for Appalachian development soon after his return from a trip to Texas.²¹

Following President Kennedy's assassination, President Johnson told the Appalachian Governors and the PARC leadership he intended to follow through on

¹⁸ Ibid., 71-72.

¹⁹ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 72-75; Williams, *Appalachia*, 340-342; Kiffmeyer, *Reformers to Radicals*, 38-41.

²⁰ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 74.

²¹ Ibid., 75.

Kennedy's commitments, including a program for Appalachian development. As the PARC continued to work on a plan for the mountains, Johnson was developing a broader anti-poverty program. In December 1963, he announced to reporters that anti-poverty legislation would be a priority in the next legislative session, and in his January State of the Union address, he famously declared an unconditional "war on poverty." As Johnson's War on Poverty began to take shape in the winter of 1964, Sweeney, Whisman, and several Johnson advisors were concerned that the PARC plan would appear to replicate the larger poverty program. For this reason, the PARC put a greater emphasis on physical infrastructure projects than they did human development programs. The advocates for the Appalachian program remained committed to total resource development, but the human development programs, they reasoned, could also be coordinated through the national poverty initiatives.²²

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. presented the PARC plan to President Johnson in early April. PARC recommended a major Appalachian highway system, regional airports, flood control projects, sewage facilities, agricultural programs, tourism development, coal utilization research, and funds for vocational schools, health care facilities, and housing. PARC expected the Equal Opportunity Act (EOA), the major piece of pending national anti-poverty legislation, would support job training, literacy projects, secondary education, health care and nutrition programs, but the PARC plan advocated for additional funds for these programs in Appalachia. Roosevelt proposed the formation of

²² President's Appalachian Regional Commission, *Appalachia: A Report by the President's Appalachian Regional Commission* (Washington D.C., 1964); Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 76-78; Williams, *Appalachia*, 342-343; Kiffmeyer, *Reformers to Radicals*, 48.

an independent Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to coordinate federal, state, local, and private development efforts in the region.²³

On April 24, 1964, Johnson made his famous visit to eastern Kentucky and Tom Fletcher's porch. The following day, he met with the Appalachian governors and pledged his support for the Appalachian plan. On April 28, the administration introduced the Appalachian Regional Development Act (ARDA) to Congress, but for many months, the legislation was bogged down amid election year politics and fights over the EOA. Congress passed the EOA in early August 1964 and Johnson signed it into law. The Senate passed the ARDA in late September, but Congress adjourned before the House took action on the bill. Reintroduced to the new Congress in January 1965, ARDA passed the Senate on February 1 and the House on March 3. President Johnson signed the measure into law on March 9, 1965.²⁴

The University of Kentucky Joins the War on Poverty

By late 1963, new University of Kentucky President John W. Oswald and members of his leadership team began to reevaluate the University's eastern Kentucky program in light of the discussions in Washington. At the same time, they were growing increasingly watchful of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project. According to Lewis Cochran, Oswald had concerns with Dean Seay and his leadership

²³ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 78-80; President's Appalachian Regional Commission, *Appalachia*.

²⁴ Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 81-85; Kiffmeyer, *Reformers to Radicals*, 48-49.

from early in his UK tenure.²⁵ Then, in a January 1964 letter sent to Dean Seay and copied to Oswald, Glenwood Creech of the Kellogg Foundation expressed dissatisfaction with the EKRDP. First, the Foundation slapped Seay on the hand for permitting expenditures for administration and supervision costs that were not budgeted and not “consistent with the conditions of our letter of commitment.” More significantly, the Foundation questioned the overall effectiveness of the project, noting that the EKRDP had not “developed and demonstrated a method or methods whereby a university can mobilize and use its resources effectively in conjunction with other educational and service institutions in a state in attacking problems of a severely depressed area.” Creech closed the letter with the admonishment, “We trust that in the next four years of this project, the University of Kentucky will be successful in developing guidelines for the formulation of educational programs for low income areas.”²⁶

Oswald and other members of his senior team paid little attention to the EKRDP in the first half of 1964. Already concerned with the EKRDP’s operation, Oswald devoted his eastern Kentucky energies to the development of new strategies in the context of the EOA and ARDA. However, he recognized that he had to place the EKRDP into the larger institutional plan. In early August 1964, he discussed the EKRDP with Dean Seay and asked him to prepare a brief document on the program. On August 12, Seay provided Oswald with “The Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project – Its Accomplishments, Its Plans, and Its Prospects for the Future.” It is highly unlikely the

²⁵ Lewis Cochran, interview by Terry Birdwhistell, 5 March 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

²⁶ Glenwood Creech to William Seay, 7 January 1964, Box 1, Appalachia Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (President’s Office Papers 1968-69, I:2a:1:5), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

document did anything to change Oswald's perception of the program. As Chair of the EKRDP, R.K. Kelley most certainly authored the document, and it bears his imprint in language and style. As in all of his materials regarding the project, Kelley quickly reminded readers of the "complex and deep-rooted problems" in the region and the inability to evaluate the program's accomplishments in just three and a half years. He identified fifteen accomplishments but none included the slightest amount of specificity. Accomplishment number eleven – "Identified some new research needs" – is illustrative of the list. The same is true of the eight plans he cites for the project, many of which seem particularly troubling for a program nearly four years old. Examples include "develop a better understanding of the philosophies and concepts of the project" and "clarify roles and relationships between project specialists, Lexington-based specialists, and area agents."²⁷

While Oswald may have pushed the EKRDP to the margins for much of 1964, thinking about and planning for the University's approach to eastern Kentucky required much of Oswald and the University's time and energy in 1964. In February, Oswald corresponded with West Virginia University President Paul Miller to learn more about the West Virginia Center for Appalachian Studies and Development. WVU established the Center in February 1963, under the direction of Ernest Nesius, then Director of Cooperative Extension and Vice President for Appalachian Development. Previously Nesius served at UK as Associate Director of Agricultural Extension and was one of the

²⁷ William Seay to John Oswald, 12 August 1964, Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges); "The Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project – Its Accomplishments, Its Plans, and Its Prospects for the Future," Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges).

lead authors of both the Kellogg Foundation grant proposal and the framework for the modified Extension program in eastern Kentucky. The West Virginia Center was drawing a lot of attention from Washington policymakers and University administrators, and Oswald was seeking new ideas.²⁸

At the same time, John Whisman was working to involve the University in the larger framework for Appalachian development he sought to create. Throughout 1964 and 1965, Whisman served dual roles. He was the executive secretary and states representative to the President's Appalachian Regional Commission, but he was also director of Kentucky's Area Programs Office, Governor Breathitt's point person on eastern Kentucky projects. In April 1964, Whisman invited agencies and organizations doing research on eastern Kentucky to a conversation about their work. At that meeting, attended by UK rural sociologist James Brown, Whisman asked each participant to provide an accounting of the work being conducted on and in the mountains. He intended for the Area Programs Office to serve as a clearinghouse for information about the region. Brown provided Whisman with a list of the work on eastern Kentucky in progress or recently completed by the University's faculty in sociology and rural sociology, but he also encouraged the University's senior leadership to collect this information from across the campus.²⁹ In May, President Oswald called for "an

²⁸ Paul Miller to John Oswald, 2 March 1964, Box 2, Appalachia Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (President's Office Papers 1963-67, I:1b:12:5), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; West Virginia University, *1963-64 Catalog* (Morgantown: The University, 1963), accessed at <https://archive.org/details/und6364we>.

²⁹ James Brown to John Whisman, 8 April 1964, Box 1, Appalachia Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (President's Office Papers 1968-69, I:2a:1:5); James Brown to John Oswald, A.D. Albright, A.D. Kirwan, William Seay, and M.M White, 15 April 1964, Box 1, Appalachia Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (President's Office Papers 1968-69, I:2a:1:5).

inventory of all University of Kentucky research or service projects that are concerned with Eastern Kentucky and/or Appalachia.”³⁰

On May 13, Whisman convened a group to discuss the possibility of the establishment of an Appalachian Regional Development Institute. Whisman chaired the gathering of academic leaders from across Appalachia. The meeting included UK representatives President Oswald, Dean A.D. Kirwan of the Graduate School, Dean Seay, and Lee Coleman. Whisman provided an update on Appalachian public policy and pending legislation. He noted that the PARC had presented a report to the President leading to the creation of a “full scale regional development program,” one that will “involve the coordinated efforts of local, state, and federal governments as well as private interests.” The expectation of a permanent Appalachian program and a regional commission to administer it, Whisman noted, gave greater “significance to the establishment of a means to stimulate and coordinate the region’s capability for research, technical assistance, and training in relation to the development process – the purposes of the proposed Appalachian Institute.” The Institute was not envisioned as a new facility charged with conducting its own research but as an organizational device to connect and enhance existing work and to help stimulate new activities “related to the priority objectives of the regional development program.” While the prospect of an Institute was received favorably by University officials, the project never moved beyond the idea stage.³¹

³⁰ A.D. Kirwan to All Teaching and Research Faculty, 20 May 1964, Box 2, Appalachia Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (President’s Office Papers 1963-67, I:1b:12:5).

³¹ John Whisman to Participants for Discussion Concerning a Proposal for Establishment of an Appalachian Region Development Institute, n.d., Box 1, Appalachia

In July, Whisman sent eastern Kentucky leaders, including Oswald, Seay, and EKRDG chairman R.K. Kelley, a document titled “Comments and Outlines on Appalachian and Economic Opportunities Programs, assuming their enactment by Congress.” Whisman noted Governor Breathitt had authorized the Area Programs Office to conduct the overall administration of these programs in Kentucky. As he had done in *Program 60* four years earlier, Whisman echoed his belief in strong state coordination of all development programs in the region as well as the importance of local leadership in local action programs. This structure, facilitating new opportunities, would provide both greater capacity and greater flexibility for programs in the mountains, but no group could, or should, go it completely alone. Whisman then outlined the specific programmatic opportunities available in both the OEA and ARDA.³²

Just a few days later, in a speech in Ashland, Kentucky, Governor Breathitt delivered the same message. Speaking to a group assembled to discuss eastern Kentucky development, he said that with the passage of the OEA and ARDA, “Eastern Kentucky can expect to have the tools it needs, for the first time, to meet its critical problems, to build an economy of growth in the place of decline, and to create a climate of fair opportunity for its people.” Breathitt outlined the role of the Area Programs Office, he cited the need for cooperation and coordination, and he pledged to local leaders the resources and support of state officials and state institutions “to serve you and to serve the anticipated new programs.” Unknowingly highlighting a significant blind spot of the

Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (President’s Office Papers 1968-69, I:2a:1:5); John Oswald to Whisman, 7 May 1964, Box 1, Appalachia Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (President’s Office Papers 1968-69, I:2a:1:5).

³² John Whisman to Eastern Kentucky Area Leaders, 31 July 1964, Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

OEA, ARDA, and the structures created to implement them, Breathitt told the audience, “You will get new programs, but the leadership will stay the same. The challenge will rest upon all of us, and most especially upon you who lead in your own communities.”³³

Two weeks later, Whisman, in his role as Area Programs Director, convened business, academic, and political leaders from across the Commonwealth for another discussion on the implementation of the EOA and ARDA. At that meeting, the Area Programs Office announced the creation of fourteen program and project teams to develop suggestions in their fields and to provide technical assistance to others for the same purpose. The nine teams most closely associated with EOA programs – data, community and area development, youth activities and adult work and education, rural area programs, enterprise development, area health programs, conservation projects, community facilities, and forestry – began their work immediately. Another five teams most closely associated with ARDA programs – highways and transportation, water resource development, recreation and tourism, coal and power, and housing – would start later. All the teams would work with the Kentucky Development Committee, and the Area Programs Office would liaison between the teams as well as maintain a central database of team activities.³⁴

The University of Kentucky was well-represented in the composition of the teams. James Brown served on data team, R.K. Kelley and William Schneider, Director of Extension, served on the community and area development team, and Dean Seay and

³³ Governor Edward T. Breathitt, Untitled Speech, 3 August 1964, Ashland, Kentucky, copy in Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges).

³⁴ “Program and Project Agency Teams for Appalachia and Economic Opportunity Program Actions in Kentucky,” Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges).

Schneider served on the rural area programs team. William Willard, Dean of the College of Medicine, Howard Bost, Assistant Vice President for Program and Policy Planning in the Medical School, and Robert Johnson, Director of State and Local Services for the Medical School, served on the area health program team, and R.K. Kelley was the Area Program Office liaison to the forestry team. On the back of his notes from the meeting, Oswald sketched out the timeline for the University's War on Poverty plan. From August through November, the University would "go for projects" with the intent of having projects that "eat up" eastern Kentucky. Oswald hoped to leverage opportunities in the Appalachian bill for the 49 counties covered under that legislation while relying on EOA opportunities in the rest of the state. He appreciated the urgency in the process, noting that "Whisman is disappointed if we can't consult with him before autumn," and he recognized the unique position of the University with the "sympathies of Washington D.C. for Ky because of eastern Ky."³⁵

Federal officials also rallied university leaders around the prospect of new opportunities in the War on Poverty legislation. On August 13, President Oswald joined other state university presidents at the White House for a meeting with President Johnson. Johnson invited the academic leaders to Washington to discuss the role of state universities in social change. In his remarks, Johnson asserted that

The increasingly productive capacity of our society makes it clearly possible to provide the resources for a better life for our people, for an attack on the problems of poverty, transportation, health, education, housing, recreation, natural resources conservation and utilization, agriculture, employment and economic growth, enlargement of cultural and recreational opportunities.³⁶

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ "Notes on President Johnson's Meeting with University Presidents," 13 August 1964, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

Johnson cited the need for state and local solutions to these thorny problems because that is “where the people are.” Regional and national action may be necessary at times, but he explained it should be complimentary and never disruptive. Solutions required long-range planning, and long-range planning, the President argued, needed an “impartial rally point.” The state university, he contended, should serve that function and be the “intellectual center for social, cultural, and economic planning, and for mobilization of the many special efforts of private and public agencies.”³⁷

Carnahan House Conference

Following passage of the EOA in early August and the meetings that followed at home and in Washington, Oswald knew he should act quickly. To this end, he invited a select group of faculty and staff to a Conference on University Planning for Development Programs at the Carnahan House on September 4. In his invitation, Oswald outlined the objectives for the conference. The President wrote that the University’s programs in eastern Kentucky “unquestionably will expand even more significantly.” He asked the invitees to “determine what steps might be appropriately taken at this time on the all-University level.”³⁸ Specifically, he raised three questions. What, if any, coordinating mechanism should be established for the eastern Kentucky program, what role should the new community colleges play in the program, and what should the University’s primary

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Oswald to Selected Faculty and Staff, 20 August 1964, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

responsibilities be in relation to the new federal legislation? On the final question, he proposed four alternatives. The University could serve as a knowledge center only, as a training center for teachers, community planners, and other actors in programming, as a direct operator in community development, or all of the above. “It is essential,” Oswald concluded, “that at this point in its history the University of Kentucky assume an aggressive leadership role toward ascertaining the solution of the most serious problems of our Commonwealth.”³⁹

In preparation for the conference, participants received several documents to review. The authorship of these documents is unclear, but there is no doubt the documents helped to frame the discussions at the Carnahan House Conference. The participants received a brief description of the EKRDP that outlined its basic assumptions, overarching philosophy, and an explanation of the Kellogg Foundation’s involvement.⁴⁰ They received an overview of the EOA and the ARDA, with particular information on Title II of the EOA, that which covered “Urban and Rural Community Action Programs.” Over \$5 million was expected to be available in Kentucky for community action programs, and Section 213 of Title II specifically authorized and encouraged educational institutions to seek funds for that purpose.⁴¹

The participants received a set of suggestions that offered several basic principles for future University work in eastern Kentucky. The document asserted that the University had a key role to play as a “development knowledge center” for all state,

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ “Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges).

⁴¹ “The University’s Opportunities and Responsibilities in Present and Proposed Development Programs,” Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges).

federal, and private entities concerned with development in the mountains. The author(s) recognized the development orientation of Kentucky's state government and the need for the University to be a partner in that. The document identified development as "basically a series of complicated, interrelated, and interdisciplinary problems," some of which could only be addressed within a University framework. Specific among those were research and training needs. The document called for the better coordination of campus-based and field-based projects, and the author(s) encouraged the use of the community colleges and the Quicksand Substation as "Adult Education and Development Centers."⁴²

Finally, the participants received a document that tried to tie everything together. The document reviewed the "many developments that have occurred and are continuing to occur since decisions were made to intensify our efforts in eastern Kentucky with EKRDP." The author(s) outlined the political importance of eastern Kentucky in Johnson's War on Poverty and the implications of that for the University, noting that "within the above fast moving, complicated, and oftentimes quite confused situation, we are attempting to conduct a program of service for the region." The document asserted that the times "demand that we continuously evaluate the ever changing situation in terms of our roles, responsibilities, organizational structure, operational procedures and relationships with other agencies and programs." The challenges and solutions existed on several levels. There was the national, the regional (Appalachia), the sub-regional (eastern Kentucky), the area (several counties), the county, and the neighborhood or community. The document concluded with four questions, not dissimilar to those posed

⁴² "Some General Suggestions for Maximizing the University's Contributions to Eastern Kentucky," Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges).

by Oswald. What is the University's proper role at each level? How should the University organize itself to fill that role? What resources are necessary to support that organization, and how can those resources best be allocated?⁴³

As Oswald opened the conference on September 4, he restated the guiding questions from his invitation and reminded the attendees of the "obligations of the University to provide aggressive leadership in instructional, research, and service programs, which are basic to rapid and purposeful development of the State's human and natural resources."⁴⁴ He also stressed the urgency of the situation, noting that numerous proposals and requests for funding were already emerging from other institutions and organizations in response to the OEA and ARDA.

Following Oswald's remarks, the group shifted to a discussion of the new Center for Developmental Change (CDC). A.D. Albright argued that the CDC should play a key role in the future execution of the University's eastern Kentucky program. He explained that the CDC had three primary objectives. The Center was to conduct research on developmental change, provide training for change agents, and serve as a knowledge center on matters "pertinent to how change is effected, planned, and evaluated."⁴⁵

R.K. Kelley shared background information on the EKRDP as well as an update on the progress of the project. He reminded the group that the program was designed to utilize the total resources of the University, and he stressed there was room for

⁴³ "The Eastern Kentucky Situation and our Present and Future Commitments, Programs, Problems, and Needs," Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges).

⁴⁴ "Report on the Conference on University Planning for Development Programs," by A.D. Albright, chairman, and R.K. Kelley, secretary, 4 September 1964, Carnahan House, Lexington, KY, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁴⁵ Ibid.

improvement to that end. He then outlined the same vague accomplishments he had presented in previous EKRDP reports and in his recent correspondence with President Oswald.⁴⁶ Albright tasked Robert Johnson from the Medical School with explaining the intricacies of the EOA and ARDA. Johnson focused particularly on what the legislation required of the University and what special funding opportunities they provided the institution.⁴⁷

John Whisman was the only participant at the conference not employed by the University. He closed the afternoon discussions with his concept of the role of the University in development programs. He reminded the group that the EOA and ARDA were intuitive ideas developed in a political atmosphere. Successful implementation, he argued, required the kind of knowledge and assistance that could only be provided by institutions of higher learning, working not just on campus but at the county and area levels. Whisman asserted that the University should guide change rather than assist society in adjusting to change, and he echoed Albright's endorsement of the CDC as an important tool in the University's contributions to mountain development.⁴⁸

As the Conference moved to a working dinner and evening discussions, Oswald charged the group with giving particular attention to the "University's primary responsibilities in the new Economic Opportunity and Appalachian Programs and ways whereby the University's efforts in these and related programs might be coordinated for maximum effectiveness." Those conversations resulted in a set of guiding principles, for which "there appeared to be general consensus." The Conference committed the

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

University's research, training, and service resources to the development efforts in the state, with special attention given to eastern Kentucky. The University would use an extension service pattern as a model for the creation of approaches designed to "extend the full resources of the University to the total society." The Conference called for the evolution of the Extension office so that county agents could function more in a role of generalists linking to the total resources of the University. This was, of course, one of the objectives of the modified Extension program for eastern Kentucky adopted four years earlier, but its success had been limited. The Conference agreed that the Center for Developmental Change must play a lead role in the eastern Kentucky effort and that the institution had to do a better job to ensure the "full utilization of the University's resources" in the EKRDP. The community colleges needed to serve as adult education and development centers and as the "core unit for the creation and implementation" of area and community development programs. As a research university, the institution should make "every effort" to ensure sound research undergirded the training and service while at the same time recognizing "that in a dynamic society such as ours, some action programs must begin to move forward with limited research knowledge to guide them." The Conference committed the University to "direct action programs" but regardless of the scope of those programs, the institution also had to play a major role in development of the region by "serving as a knowledge center for other agencies and institutions concerned with development." Finally, the Conference agreed that the University needed a mechanism to coordinate the institution's efforts in development.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Ibid.

The Conference took these principles and, recognizing “that neither present nor potential resources would permit a comprehensive project for all of East Kentucky” and understanding “that we need to learn more about how to mobilize and utilize the appropriate resources of the University in a unified effort,” the group proposed a pilot project to serve a four-to-six county area. They suggested the project be centered around an eastern Kentucky community college with the full utilization of university resources both in the field and on campus. The pilot project should work in “full accord with other state and federal agency programs” and be designed “to qualify for Economic Opportunity and Appalachian funds.” Furthermore, the Conference determined that the pilot had to “combine action, service, research, demonstrations, and training into a total program.” Oswald accepted the recommendations and charged the Center for Developmental Change with the leadership of two task forces for the pilot project. One group was to develop the proposal and the other was to coordinate resources on campus.⁵⁰

The Carnahan House Conference was significant in several ways. The University recommitted to a total university action program for eastern Kentucky. In response to Oswald’s original questions, the answer was clear that the University should be a knowledge center, a training center, *and* a direct operator in development in the region. Likewise, the Conference endorsed the modified Extension program that had been piloted in eastern Kentucky with the advent of the EKRDP. The University committed to partner with federal, state, and local officials through the pursuit of involvement in OEO and ARDA programs, and the Conference introduced the community college as a preferred

⁵⁰ Ibid.

point of service for mountain programming. Finally, the University tapped the Center for Developmental Change to lead the eastern Kentucky effort.

Despite the sense of urgency coming out of the Carnahan House Conference, the University was slow to organize. As the EOA became codified in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO), other institutions and organizations got a jump start on UK in the War on Poverty funding bonanza. Only R.K. Kelley had significant contact with OEO staffers before late November, something Oswald encouraged despite his misgivings with Kelley.⁵¹

The state of the CDC may have also contributed to the University's lethargy. While Oswald and Albright had clearly tapped the CDC to lead the eastern Kentucky effort, the Center still had no permanent director. Only one faculty member, Art Gallaher, Jr., had an official assignment in the Center. In November 1964, Oswald assigned Frank Santopolo, a rural sociologist who had been active with the CDC, as a special assistant to coordinate eastern Kentucky projects.⁵²

Santopolo's first report to the administration regarding the University's War on Poverty progress was sobering. While he did note that various faculty and staff members had been working with lay groups and local leaders to stimulate community participation in anti-poverty programs, none of those efforts had been coordinated by the University, and the University had no official presence. He offered four reasons for why more direct involvement had been "circumvented." First, the University was late to the game. Many

⁵¹ R.K. Kelley to John Oswald, 16 October 1964, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); Frank Santopolo to A.D. Albright, 4 January 1965, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); Kiffmeyer, *Reformers to Radicals*, 45-92; Eller, *Uneven Ground*, 90-128.

⁵² Santopolo to Albright, 4 January 1965.

other institutions and agencies began planning in June, a full six months before the University even named a point person. Next, Santopolo argued that the suggestion of local initiation of activity in the Title II language and a lack of understanding of how the University fit in that context had stifled the development of ideas. Third, OEO staffers, unhappy with John Whisman, had bypassed Kentucky, and the University of Kentucky specifically, because Whisman was viewed as a UK man. Finally, Santopolo asserted that R.K. Kelley's association with Whisman had marked him a Whisman man and thereby had "contaminated" the University since Kelley had been the principal OEO contact until November.⁵³

Santopolo elaborated on the Kelley-Whisman concern. He contended that OEO staff in Washington consulted with journalist John Ed Pearce on all actions in Kentucky. "The word now is that one must see Pearce for OEO favors," Santopolo wrote. Pearce had been linked to the Council of the Southern Mountains' Charles Drake, OEO administrator Dick Boone, Harry Caudill, and Tom Gish, all of whom had been publically critical of Whisman. Caudill and Gish, according to Santopolo, had also been critical of the EKRDP and Kelley. Santopolo feared Pearce might try to uncover "what is wrong between OEO and the University of Kentucky." Santopolo warned Albright, "We may be reminded that the University of Kentucky has not submitted any projects. We have not expressed any interest." Yet despite these concerns and the knowledge that OEO was working with Drake and the Council on training programs better suited for the

⁵³ Ibid.

University, Santopolo suggested the University “remain silent on our plans...as it does take a little time to mobilize the troops.”⁵⁴

It is not entirely clear what plans the University had. A well-conceived project by Lyman Ginger in the College of Education for an experimental program for elementary teacher education in Appalachia and in depressed areas of Louisville did not receive external funding.⁵⁵ Paul Street, also in the College of Education, did receive a nearly \$700,000 contract for a three-year OEO evaluation project in Knox County. This was not a project of which Street conceived or pursued. Instead, the OEO contacted UK about evaluating the program because someone on Sargent Shriver’s staff – Shriver was head of the OEO - learned about the Center for Developmental Change and thought the two sounded like good fits.⁵⁶ Oswald and Santopolo did pursue a consortium of Appalachian colleges in Kentucky, so like-minded institutions could cooperatively pursue projects and funding through OEO and ARDA programs or with the support of foundations. The group of college presidents from eastern Kentucky met twice at UK, on March 16 and May 26, before the effort fizzled.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Ibid.; Santopolo did not mention, and possibly may not have known, that Pearce served on the Appalachian Volunteers Board. The Appalachian Volunteer was an OEO-funded project through the Council on Southern Mountains; see Kiffmeyer, *Reformers to Radicals*, 85.

⁵⁵ “Proposed Experimental Elementary Teacher Education Program for Teachers in Economically Depressed Areas,” Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); Lyman Ginger to John Oswald, 27 January 1965, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁵⁶ A.D. Albright to Lyman Ginger, n.d., Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁵⁷ John Oswald to Presidents of Kentucky Colleges, 31 March 1965; Troy Eslinger to Frank Santopolo, 5 April 1965; Mahlon Miller to Frank Santopolo, 8 April 1965; Will Hayes to John Oswald, 6 April 1965; Adron Doran to John Oswald, 14 April 1965; Robert Martin to John Oswald, 14 April 1965; Frank Santopolo to Representatives

Grannie's Branch Project

As federal and state policymakers and University officials sorted out the changing Appalachian public policy landscape, a handful of University of Kentucky faculty hoped to be among the first to access War on Poverty funding. A group led by David Blythe in Civil Engineering put together a massive university-wide "research and action" project "for improving the general conditions of the people of Grannie's Branch."⁵⁸ Grannie's Branch was an isolated community about fifteen miles from Manchester in Clay County. The project involved twelve departments in eight colleges. Grannie's Branch was a total development project with both human resource and physical infrastructure development programs. The project spanned five years at a total cost of \$2,225,254. While the total estimated cost was approximately \$200,000 less than the EKRDP, Grannie's Branch was two years shorter and, consequently, more costly on an annual basis.⁵⁹

On March 27, 1964, David Blythe, joined by Kurt Deuschle and Rena Gazaway from Community Medicine, presented the Grannie's Branch proposal to President Oswald and Dean Kirwan. Oswald commended the proposal, saying it was the type of work in which the University should be involved, and he recommended the committee continue to refine the plan for submission to "John Whisman, Sargent Shriver, and other appropriate agencies." According to Blythe, Oswald also asked Dean Kirwan to facilitate

from Kentucky Colleges, 7 May 1965, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁵⁸ "Grannie's Branch Project," Box 213, Folder 10, James S. Brown Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

a meeting between representatives of the Grannie's Branch group and the Center for Developmental Change "to ensure all University groups are accurately informed."⁶⁰

Either Blythe misunderstood the President's intent to involve the Center for Developmental Change or Oswald and/or Kirwan changed their minds about how to move forward, but in May, Kirwan directed the CDC to review the Grannie's Branch Project. J.J. Mangalum chaired the review committee that included James Brown from Agriculture, Walter Hargreaves from Commerce, Marion Pearsall from Medicine, and Paul Street from Education. Writing to the committee, Mangalum noted that "GBP is an interesting project. It has some characteristics that ought to make us feel excited about it. It could be interdisciplinary, and development change seems to be a major focus of the project. The design could be more elegant, I guess – but let us talk about it after you have had a chance to review it individually." He scheduled a meeting to discuss the proposal on June 5.⁶¹

On June 16, Blythe reported back to the Grannie's Branch Group that he had twice met with Kirwan regarding the proposal. The second meeting included Mangalum who said he expected the CDC to complete its review by August 1. In the meantime, Kirwan directed individual faculty to seek funding for "initial phase studies" from the Faculty Research Fund, reserving external funding requests until the University approved the project.⁶²

⁶⁰ David Blythe to Grannie's Branch Group, 6 April 1964, Box 213, Folder 10, James S. Brown Papers.

⁶¹ J.J. Mangalum to James Brown, Walter Hargreaves, Marion Pearsall, and Paul Street, 21 May 1964, Box 213, Folder 10, James S. Brown Papers.

⁶² David Blythe to Grannie's Branch Group, 16 June 1964, Box 213, Folder 10, James S. Brown Papers.

The CDC review committee submitted its report on Grannie's Branch to Dean Kirwan and Professor Blythe in late July. The report, Mangalum wrote "is in general terms because of the Committee's unanimous judgment that it is somewhat premature for a review committee such as the present one to go over the GDP statement in detail." The committee believed it had raised enough questions, however, to allow the project team to proceed with improvements. While the committee applauded the project's concern "with the kinds of problems represented by the existence of neighborhoods and communities like Grannie's Branch in eastern Kentucky," the CDC questioned the project's overall research design and cautioned the faculty involved in being aware of the limits of the University as an institution of higher learning. "Whereas there is little learning without action," Mangalum wrote in the report, "the University should get involved in action programs only in so far as such programs are in the interest of the University's aims." More significantly, the review committee believed the University "should not get involved in tasks more suited to welfare agencies, private or state or federal."

The Grannie's Branch Group did not respond in writing to the review, but they did schedule a meeting with Dean Kirwan on September 14, 1964. The meeting never took place, and the Grannie's Branch Project was dead. Grannie's Branch was a casualty of the Carnahan House plan that sought to focus the University's eastern Kentucky energies on a pilot project in four to six counties, but it was also a casualty of the growing power of the CDC in the University's eastern Kentucky program. Grannie's Branch is significant in other ways as well. While UK paid lip service to a total university action program in eastern Kentucky, the EKRDP and the modified Extension Program never really provided that. Grannie's Branch was the first true effort at interdisciplinary action

programming in the mountains, and despite the CDC's misgivings, the project provided for the type of work that was consistent with both the EKRDP's stated goals and the Carnahan House Conference principles. Grannie's Branch was more focused and better conceived, but there was no more "welfare" work in Grannie's Branch than in the EKRDP or in the plans emerging from the Carnahan House Conference. This tension between research and action would be a theme with the CDC for several years to come.

Chapter 5 - The Slow Death of the University's Action Program

The Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project

The University had effectively pushed the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project to the margins in 1964 as the leadership sought other action approaches in eastern Kentucky in the context of the War on Poverty. Nonetheless, at the close of that year, the EKRDP remained the University's only action program in the mountains. The University was committed to the project through December 31, 1967, and President Oswald and his senior team recognized that the EKRDP necessarily would play a part in the larger University effort in Appalachia. Over the next eighteen months, amid leadership changes at the EKRDP, a scathing CDC evaluation of the project, and a site visit from top Kellogg officials, Oswald sought to recast the program and focus it using the Carnahan House Conference principles. Ultimately, the new vision for the project failed, and the EKRDP lived out its final days much in the same way as it had before.

In December 1964, EKRDP chairman R.K. Kelley resigned from the University, effective in February 1965, to take a post with the U.S. Agency for International Development in Tanzania. At the time of Kelley's resignation, A.D. Albright forwarded Oswald a copy of Howard Beers' 1962 evaluation of the project with the handwritten note, "It is as germane today as it was then, maybe more so. Keith Kelley is leaving and his replacement will determine heavily what transpires henceforth in this project."¹ In early January, Dean Seay wrote Oswald to inform him of some "irregularities" at the

¹ A.D. Albright to John Oswald, n.d., Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Robinson Substation and within the EKRDP, prompting Oswald to instruct Albright to “be sure to tell Bill Seay that we do not want him to replace Kelley without a full discussion with you and me re: organization of EDRDP.”² Albright wrote to Seay three days later with those instructions as well as a reminder that Kelley’s resignation focused “attention not only upon his replacement but also upon the evaluation of EKRDP, the development planning for Eastern Kentucky under the Economic Opportunity provisions and the pending Appalachian proposal, and the organizational relationships of these University programs.”³

Oswald and Albright wanted to make certain the future of the EKRDP was considered in the context of development planning for eastern Kentucky in a War on Poverty, but they also wanted to be sure the program functioned effectively within the organizational changes planned for all of Extension. In May 1965, the University announced the reorganization of the Cooperative Extension Service using an area model. This model created sixteen areas “as homogeneous as possible in terms of the interests, customs, and traditions of the people, characteristics of the soil, kinds of agriculture, and opportunities for commodity, social, and economic development.”⁴ The area model was very similar to the modified Extension program developed in eastern Kentucky in

² William Seay to John Oswald, 11 January 1965, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation ’63-67 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968). Oswald’s instructions to Albright were in a handwritten note at the bottom of Seay’s letter.

³ A.D. Albright to William Seay, 14 January 1965, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation ’63-67 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁴ “On Beginning a Second Century: Report of the Faculty and Staff of the College of Agriculture and Home Economics,” May 1965, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Box 4, College of Agriculture and Home Economics Committee Folder, John Oswald Collection (Reports from Colleges), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

conjunction with the EKRDP though the new areas were smaller than the 30-county region in the eastern Kentucky modification. Area specialists developed programs and supported county agents and when necessary bridged the agents with campus-based specialists. In some cases, the staffing patterns and needs of particular areas resulted in the area becoming the principal unit of local programming instead of the county. Central to the new structure was the idea of a broader Extension, connecting agents not only with faculty and staff in the College of Agriculture but with experts across the entire University.⁵

In June, Dean Seay appointed Mike Duff as the new EKRDP project chair. As part of the larger Extension reorganization along the area model, Duff was also named Chairman of Development Programs, a position on the same level as the Extension chairs in Agriculture, 4-H, and Home Economics, reporting to the Associate Director of Extension. Duff had been a campus-based agricultural specialist. He wanted to lead the EKRDP from its inception in 1960, but despite strong support from faculty and Extension agents, he was passed over for the post. In this new position, Duff had no responsibility for any county agents, as Kelley had, but he added the responsibility for the programming of all of the resource development specialists across the state.⁶

⁵ Ibid.; Untitled document, n.d., Box 4, College of Agriculture and Home Economics Committee Folder, John Oswald Collection (Reports from Colleges).

⁶ “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1965, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Mike Duff Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington;

The Gallaher Evaluation

While Seay conferred with Oswald and Albright on the selection of the next EKRDP chair, the President and Vice President did not include the Dean in their plans to evaluate the project. During the winter of 1965, Albright asked Art Gallaher, Jr., in his role with the CDC, to conduct a “quiet” but extensive evaluation of the EKRDP.⁷ In the period between Kelley’s departure and Duff’s appointment, Gallaher and anthropology graduate student Ron Butler reviewed project documents and interviewed community leaders, former and current EKRDP specialists, and former and current Extension staff. Gallaher submitted his confidential evaluation to Oswald and Albright in early June. Gallaher’s evaluation was thorough and scathing. He echoed many of the concerns raised by Howard Beers in his 1962 evaluation of the project, but Gallaher’s findings went much further, both in the depth of his analysis and in the level of his criticism.⁸

Gallaher’s evaluation painted a portrait of total dysfunction, and the dysfunction began in the conception of the project. Gallaher argued that the EKRDP was “hastily conceived and poorly planned.”⁹ He asserted that the idea for the project emerged from a conjunction of three roles played by Frank Welch. Welch was concerned about the inadequacy of traditional Extension to address the particular challenges in eastern Kentucky and in underdeveloped regions generally. He was influenced by his relationship with Jackson mayor Phil Smith and Smith’s desire to raise the status of the

⁷ Art Gallaher, Jr., interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 24 December 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

⁸ Art Gallaher, Jr., “The Eastern Kentucky Resources Development Project: A Confidential Evaluation,” Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

Quicksand Substation, and Welch wanted to make a splash with his contacts at the Kellogg Foundation, where the Dean served on the Agricultural Advisory Board. Gallaher noted that Welch asked for a proposal from faculty in the College of Agriculture in less than one month's time, and the evaluator asserted that two major problems emerged even as the project was being developed. Welch's ideas for the program grew out of Smith's intent to bolster the Quicksand Substation, but the scope of the project was much too large – thirty counties instead of the eight Smith proposed. Additionally, there was no agreement among the project's framers over the proper balance between Cooperative Extension and University-wide involvement.¹⁰

As Gallaher astutely observed, “Welch emphasized the innovative possibilities inherent in the proposal, though he never spelled out the nature of innovation nor the mechanics to achieve results.”¹¹ Gallaher argued that Welch and others used the action orientation of the program as a rationale for not building evaluation into the project even as many faculty members consulted on the matter strongly advised the incorporation of evaluation techniques. Gallaher asserted that Welch made damaging compromises with more conservative department heads in the College that gave the project “strong agricultural and Extension overtones.” The department heads, Gallaher contended, saw the EKRDP as an opportunity to strengthen personnel and programs in their own departments.¹²

According to Gallaher, Welch offered no organizational alternative to College of Agriculture management of the EKRDP. Within the College, two organizational options

¹⁰ Ibid., 1-3.

¹¹ Ibid., 3.

¹² Ibid., 6.

were considered. The project could report through Extension or directly to the Dean. Gallaher noted that Welch chose the latter but then complicated matters by deciding project specialists would have Extension appointments.¹³ Gallaher also argued that Welch never “came to grips with the mechanics of total University involvement.” Half of the ten members of the advisory committee charged with connecting the EKRDP to the larger University were from the College of Agriculture, and the committee “never properly functioned.”¹⁴

Gallaher asserted that the “innovative potential” of the EKRDP “has been restricted because of the traditional Extension environs in which it is housed.” R.K. Kelley was a respected district leader in Extension, said Gallaher, but “he did not have the imagination nor the administrative ability to obtain maximum advantage from the project.”¹⁵ Gallaher argued that the Kellogg Foundation interpreted Kelley’s appointment to mean that the University did not prioritize the project as highly as the institution suggested. Gallaher also noted that Kelley was given part-time responsibilities as an Extension district manager with two assistants to help with Extension responsibilities. With Kelley in a district leadership role, the evaluator contended, the EKRDP and Extension were drawn even more closely together.¹⁶ Additionally, Gallaher’s evaluation demonstrated that there was no formal program to recruit top-level specialists with unique skill sets. Most hires were made through the personal networks of Kelley or others in the Extension community. Gallaher wrote, “It is generally true that the specialists hired have not had the outstanding qualifications or training that would

¹³ Ibid., 6-7.

¹⁴ Ibid., 6.

¹⁵ Ibid., 9.

¹⁶ Ibid.

lead an observer to expect imaginative output,” and the specialists reported to Gallaher that they received little orientation to the project philosophy or the area of activity. They were also left to their own devices in securing basic information on the region.¹⁷ To complicate matters even more, Kelley’s office was not in Quicksand, and staff meetings were facilitated by a project coordinator with no defined responsibilities, rights, or obligations.¹⁸ Furthermore, Gallaher discovered evidence of interference in the project by Dean Seay though the level of interference was not what Kelley and other EKRDP staffers believed. Most significantly, Gallaher suggested, Seay discouraged the creation of a new advisory committee as a way of increasing total University participation in the project, “explaining that things were alright as they were.”¹⁹

In Gallaher’s interviews, he discovered that project staff talked of program emphases rather than of specific goals. There was little focus, there existed no measurable criteria for evaluation of the program’s success, and no one could “translate accomplishments other than at a broad, imprecise level of generalization.”²⁰ Gallaher observed that “each specialist goes his own way, and for all practical purposes functions as a separate entity. The project personnel do not constitute a team, and it is significant that in four years there have been no attempts by specialists to collaborate in the design and execution of development efforts.”²¹ Despite these shortcomings, however, Gallaher argued that the EKRDP was effective in collaborating with federal and state agencies and

¹⁷ Ibid., 11.

¹⁸ Ibid., 11-12.

¹⁹ Ibid., 15.

²⁰ Ibid., 16.

²¹ Ibid., 17.

in disseminating information about those agencies' programs to the people with whom the specialists worked.²²

Gallaher, like Beers before him, found considerable strain among the EKRDP specialists. Though many supported Kelley generally, the specialists found him “autocratic in program judgments” and not as receptive to the ideas of others as he believed himself to be.²³ Specialists also struggled with the poor definition of authority in the absence of the director and with the undefined role of the coordinator who was to play some role of authority in the director's absence. The specialists wanted more definition in their own roles, and they wanted more recognition for their accomplishments. Gallaher noted that specialists resented the requirement that they live in Quicksand, and they felt isolated from the University. “They want very much for this to be a total University effort, to feel they are part of a larger task force,” the evaluator wrote. “They feel physically and intellectually isolated, and unanimously denounce the present department affiliation arrangement as a solution to the problem.”²⁴

Gallaher asserted that most of the objectives of the project resulted in “conspicuous failures.” The EKRDP was not a total university effort, it did not identify pockets of opportunity, it did not create innovative solutions to basic problems in a chronically depressed area, and it did not become a model to be emulated by others. The evaluator suggested that the idea of an action-oriented program on this scale was impossible given the resources. Gallaher recommended a clean break with Extension and the College of Agriculture in pursuit of a project designed to “understand the

²² Ibid., 16-18.

²³ Ibid., 23

²⁴ Ibid., 24.

development process in chronically depressed areas....Surely, one of the main lessons to be learned from the EKRDP experience is that we do not yet know the kinds of questions that should be asked.”²⁵ Gallaher proposed the new project “should be incorporated into some presently undefined total university effort to understand the development process. The latter might well be under the aegis of the Center for Developmental Change.”²⁶ Additionally, he recommended full disclosure with the Kellogg Foundation. “The explanation,” he wrote, “should be thorough, honest, positive, and accompanied by a well thought-through proposal for funds adequate to shift the project to a new direction.”²⁷

Gallaher’s evaluation is noteworthy because of its depth and quality, but also because of what it says about the ongoing conflict within the University between action and research. At the Carnahan House Conference, the University recommitted to a total university action program for eastern Kentucky, but certain representatives of the CDC, the entity now charged with leading that effort, consistently demonstrated a preference for research over action. That was true with the Grannie’s Branch proposal and with Gallaher’s suggestions for the future of the EKRDP.

Oswald and Albright did not offer a written response to the evaluation, but as they considered its findings, they shared the document with key members of their senior staff for feedback. Provost Lewis Cochran was the first to receive a copy. Calling the evaluation a “truly remarkable piece of work,” Cochran saw “no reason to disagree with any of his findings.” Cochran questioned “whether the University has the competent manpower at this particular time to really operate successfully a broad program such as

²⁵ Ibid., 30.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 31.

was proposed to Kellogg originally.” He suggested withdrawing from Kellogg support to protect the University’s future interests with the Foundation.²⁸

Oswald shared the document with Glenwood Creech, UK’s Vice President for University Relations, in August. Creech had served as Kellogg’s Director of Agriculture at the time of the proposal. He had been the University’s principal point person at the Foundation on the project and had recommended its approval to the Kellogg Board. Not surprisingly, he offered a very detailed response to the evaluation. Creech believed the review was “both sound and fair,” but he questioned why the College of Agriculture, especially the Dean, was not involved in the process. Creech explained that the Kellogg Foundation recognized the weaknesses of the original proposal, but they also appreciated the magnitude of the challenges in Appalachia. Pleased that the University wanted to commit its resources to those problems and confident in the institution’s leadership, the Foundation agreed to support the project. However, Creech said the Foundation considered removing its support when Welch, Nesius, and Dickey, those most invested in the project, all left the University. Then the Foundation “couldn’t believe it” when the University assigned the director of the project to half-time responsibility as a district leader and appointed a specialist staff lacking the high level of competence the Foundation expected.²⁹

Creech was “very disappointed” with how the project was administered and “on several occasions suggested to Dean Seay, Mr. Schneider [Associate Director of Extension], and Mr. Kelley that the progress should be carefully evaluated and

²⁸ Lewis Cochran to John Oswald, 7 June 1965, Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

²⁹ Glenwood Creech to John Oswald, 23 August 1965, Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

consideration should be given to restructuring its organization and redefining its objectives.” Creech noted that no action was ever taken along those lines. He also explained his concern over the University’s stewardship of Foundation funds. “As a matter of fact,” Creech wrote, “the financial reporting reflected manipulations which bordered on dishonesty. I never did report this as I didn’t have adequate facts to support any charges. There were two times, however, that I seriously considered sending in an auditor.” Only hope, Creech explained, kept him from intervening.³⁰

Creech reminded Oswald that a Kellogg team was scheduled for a site visit in October and that the University needed to have plan developed for the future of the project at the time of that visit. Creech suggested one of three options. The University could continue the program as it existed. They could explain that the institution’s experiences allowed for the identification of new opportunities and new approaches with even greater promise and pursue Kellogg support for a new plan, or they could acknowledge that the University was not able to accomplish the objectives of the project and accept no more funds committed to it. Creech noted that he favored one of the first two options.³¹

Creech also made the following recommendations regarding the path forward. He encouraged the President to assemble “some of the best brains on campus” to redefine the project, ensuring “University-wide involvement in an active and effective manner.” Creech volunteered to serve as part of that group, and he asserted that the committee

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

should complete its report before the Kellogg visit in October. He also believed that any future work must be “submitted to periodic evaluations of progress.”³²

Creech sent a copy of the evaluation to Dean Seay, who was not aware of the document’s existence. Seay was outraged that he did not know of the evaluation and that he had not received a copy after its completion. Calling the document unusable, Seay argued that the evaluation was “laden with rumors, personality naming, and gaps in information.” He took exception to the evaluator’s assessment of his views and those of others without speaking to them. Seay was offended by the “dual connotation that the College of Agriculture and Home Economics is just for farm people and the Cooperative Extension Service is outmoded and traditional.” Noting that the College of Agriculture serves the “total society” better than any other college, the Dean asserted that “we have been and can continue to involve the total resources of the University in the EKRD Project better than any other branch of the University.” Conceding that the report was justified in its statements regarding the project’s early organization, Seay added, “We think our reorganization under the new project director is administratively sound.” Strongly recommending that the EKRDP remain in the College of Agriculture, Seay acknowledged past mistakes, but asked Oswald to “at least give us a chance to see what we can accomplish during the next year under ‘new management.’” Reminding Oswald that the EKRDP and the modified Extension program in eastern Kentucky “paved the way” for a total reorganization of Cooperative Extension around an area model, Seay

³² Ibid.

suggested that “it seems hardly fair to remove our model in this critical stage of reorganization.”³³

The Ad Hoc Committee on the EKRDP

Oswald met with Albright and Creech on September 17, and they decided on the composition of an ad hoc committee to “consider the past accomplishments and future direction of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project.” In keeping with the Carnahan House Conference principles, the CDC was well represented on the committee. Oswald tapped Edward Weidner, the new CDC Director, as chair of the group, and Thomas Ford and Frank Santopolo were both members. They were joined by Albright, Creech, Seay, Duff, and Henry Campbell, the Director of Prestonsburg Community College. Campbell’s appointment reflected the decision made at the Carnahan House Conference to use community colleges as points of service for eastern Kentucky initiatives.³⁴

Oswald charged the group with the consideration of four questions. What has the EKRDP accomplished to date, what has the University learned from the project, what directions should the program take in the future, and how should the next iteration of the project be organized and operated? Oswald asked the group to complete a report by October 20 in advance of the October 27-28 site visit by Emory Morris, President of the

³³ William Seay to John Oswald, 16 September 1965, Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

³⁴ The September 17 meeting is referenced in handwritten notes on Oswald’s copy of Creech’s August 23 memo; John Oswald to Edward Weidner, A.D. Albright, Henry Campbell, Glenwood Creech, Mike Duff, Thomas Ford, Frank Santopolo, and William Seay, 20 September 1965, Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

Kellogg Foundation. Oswald expected the October 20 report to concentrate on the first two questions while addressing the last two questions in more general terms. The committee's final report, in the form of a new proposal to the Kellogg Foundation, would emphasize the third and fourth questions. Oswald provided a February 1, 1966, deadline for the final report.³⁵

Having reviewed the Gallaher evaluation and Creech, Cochran, and Seay's reactions, Ed Weidner worked quickly to outline his ideas for the EKRDP moving forward. It is curious that Weidner prepared such a thorough plan so quickly and before consulting with his committee, but in his brief tenure at the University, Weidner established himself as someone who was quick to action.³⁶ Weidner also took very seriously the CDC's role to lead the eastern Kentucky effort, and this was his first opportunity to assert that leadership. In his memo to Oswald, Weidner sought to "sketch out the framework of a radically new University approach to eastern Kentucky, and indeed, eventually to the entire state of Kentucky."³⁷

Weidner noted that the EKRDP had some "bright elements." The project provided the model for an area approach to Extension. Specialists, generally tied to the campus, had been deployed in the field, and some effective patterns of cooperation were established with local, state, and national agencies. While most of his colleagues argued

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Edward Weidner to John Oswald, 23 September 1965, Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); Art Gallaher, Jr., interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 24 December 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection; Thomas R. Ford, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 5 November 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection; A.D. Albright, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 20 February 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection.

³⁷ Edward Weidner to John Oswald, 23 September 1965.

that the EKRDP was too big, Weidner asserted that “what seems to be wrong with EKRDP is that it was conceived in too narrow terms.” He did not blame the University, the College, or the Dean for the project’s failures. Instead, he argued that the project had a “limited but positive pay-off and now has pointed the way to a major break-through for marshaling university efforts in stimulating developmental change.”³⁸

Weidner recommended the University inform the Kellogg Foundation that the it had determined a more radical and experimental approach was required in the mountains. The objective of the new undertaking would be “the first major innovation in the approach of a university in stimulating developmental change in its state, an approach requiring involvement of all parts of the university.”³⁹ The experiment would operate in two of the new sixteen Extension areas, but Extension would not serve as the central administrative unit for the project. The University would launch development programs relying on the resources of “any and all professional fields or disciplines at UK and any and all university operations (training, technical assistance, research, service, etc.).” Weidner envisioned something beyond a university-wide Extension. The program would include “all operations as they relate to developmental change.”⁴⁰ Weidner expected the Kellogg Foundation to fund training at UK and in the field, technical assistance from UK specialist teams, community and adult education, and regular evaluation of the action program. The University and other external partners would fund applied and basic research, faculty and curriculum development, and exchange arrangements for persons from other states and countries to “learn from Kentucky’s bold experiment.” A new

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid. The emphasis is Weidner’s.

⁴⁰ Ibid. The emphasis is Weidner’s.

public relations program targeting national, state, and local decision-makers as well as national and state media was central to the design.⁴¹

In Weidner's plan, the CDC would lead the effort and the director of the project would report to the head of the CDC. Each college, school, and department within the University would be responsible for its own involvement through "joint undertakings" with the CDC, and operations would be decentralized as much as possible. Additionally, project personnel would hold joint appointments in their respective departments and in the CDC. The President would appoint an all-university advisory board with the CDC director as chair and with representation from every college. The community colleges in the two areas would be "intimately involved." Weidner reasoned that in his plan the College of Agriculture would not feel that anything had been "taken away" from them because they would be engaged in a substantially larger project with other colleges. Weidner suggested that the remaining EKRDP budget, whether funds from the Foundation or from the University, be moved to this new project and that the University explore a new five-year program involving substantial contributions from both sources. He expected the Foundation's contribution might be triple that of the original grant. Weidner assured the President that "the committee you have just appointed of which I will be chairman will be responsible for working out the details of the new approach and the new proposal to Kellogg" with a target date of April 1, 1966.⁴²

Weidner's plan was big and bold and fraught with complications. Oswald did not formally respond to Weidner's suggestions. Most likely, the President expected the committee would exercise its due diligence and reframe the proposal into something

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

more manageable. However, Weidner's memo to the President highlighted the fact that his approach was very different than that of many involved in the CDC at that time. Weidner's proposal stood in stark contrast to the Grannie's Branch evaluation or Gallaher's evaluation of the EKRDP. Weidner embraced the basic principle of the Carnahan House Conference, that the institution should pursue an all-university effort of research, training, *and* action, and then he expanded that idea well beyond what anyone had imagined.

While the Ad Hoc Committee on the EKRDP worked toward a new Kellogg proposal, its immediate concern was the Kellogg site visit in October 1965. Weidner charged Mike Duff and Frank Santopolo with planning the visit and preparing documents for Kellogg officials that presented the program in the best possible light. Duff and Santopolo intended to tightly control the visit without the impression they had done so. They carefully selected those with whom Kellogg officials met and, when possible, briefed them on the appropriate talking points.⁴³

Kellogg Foundation President Emory Morris and Director of Agriculture Russell Mawby arrived in Lexington on Tuesday evening, October 26. Over the next three days, the pair traveled with University officials to Irvine, Campton, Quicksand, Hazard, Prestonsburg, Hyden, London, Corbin, and Renfro Valley. They met with EKRDP specialists, community leaders who worked closely with the EKRDP, and business owners who had benefited from the EKRDP's assistance. While the visit focused Morris and Mawby on EKRDP successes, Duff and Santopolo were careful to include a few

⁴³ Mike Duff and Frank Santopolo to Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on EKRDP, 5 October 1965, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

stops, such as a tour of two dilapidated coal camps, where it was apparent that opportunities for more work remained. Additionally, University officials noted that Oswald had created a special task force to translate the lessons learned from administering the program into recommendations for the project's future.⁴⁴

Morris and Mawby came away from the visit with a very favorable impression of the University's work through the EKRDP, and they looked forward to the University's suggestions for future plans. Weidner did not participate in the visit. He was in Hawaii where he continued to wrap up some matters with his former employer, the East-West Center. Interestingly, however, the Kellogg officials believed that Albright chaired the President's ad hoc committee on the future of the EKRDP, and none of the post-visit correspondence with Morris or Mawby references Weidner. Whether this was a misunderstanding University officials chose not to correct or an intentional misrepresentation of the situation is not clear.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid.; Russell Mawby, "Field Trip Report, Kentucky," 26-29 October 1965, Russell Mawby Collection, Johnson Center Philanthropy Collection, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, Michigan, accessed at <http://cdm16015.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p188901coll6/id/301/rec/1>; "Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project," 1965, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Mike Duff Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁴⁵ Russell Mawby, "Field Trip Report, Kentucky," 26-29 October 1965; Emory Morris to Glenwood Creech, 1 November 1965, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); Russell Mawby to Glenwood Creech, 4 November 1965, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); Russell Mawby to John Oswald, 4 November 1965, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

The 1966 Kellogg Foundation Proposal

The ad hoc committee worked through the winter and spring, missing both Oswald's February 1 and Weidner's April 1 deadlines for a new Kellogg proposal. On May 31, Weidner submitted the final report of the EKRDP committee along with a proposal for submission to the Kellogg Foundation for the "Redirected Continuance of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project." Oswald's margin notes on Weidner's memo directed his assistant to "draft a letter to Ed [Weidner] thanking him and committee for a great job" and "to send proposal to Kellogg."⁴⁶ On June 24, Oswald wrote to Kellogg's Russell Mawby that "this proposal has substantial merit in emphasizing the importance of the development of local initiative and support for continuing change. In this regard, it breaks new ground in a rather dramatic fashion." However, according to margin notes on Oswald's copy of the letter, the proposal had not arrived at the Foundation by June 28, prompting the President's assistant to note, "I called her [Mrs. Sherman at the Foundation] to say it would be mailed under separate cover in a day or so." For reasons that are unclear, the University did not submit the proposal to the Foundation for nearly two more months, sending it on August 20.⁴⁷

The Kellogg proposal carried forward many of the ideas Weidner shared with Oswald earlier that fall, with significant space devoted to outlining a larger organization pattern for developmental change. "In order to carry out its mission of facilitating

⁴⁶ Edward Weidner to John Oswald, 31 May 1966, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁴⁷ John Oswald to Russell Mawby, 24 June 1966, Box 6, Kellogg Foundation Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); "Prospectus: Redirected Continuance of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project," 20 August 1966, copy in Box 6, Kellogg Foundation Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

University contributions to developmental change,” the CDC would develop a field organization to complement and work with the community colleges and the Extension Service. Piggybacking on Extension’s new area approach, the CDC would designate an area chairman in each of the state’s sixteen areas. Generally, the chairman would be the director of the community college or the area Extension director. All of the University’s development work in that area would run through the chairman for coordination, “eliminating undesirable conflict and overlap, and more important, promoting effective joint efforts.” The area chairman would be responsible to the CDC project director in these matters. Additionally, each major project would have a campus advisory committee within CDC consisting of all of the colleges involved. Each project would also have an advisory board in the field consisting of the community college director, the area Extension director, the project’s field director, and three lay people (the chairman of the community college advisory board, the chairman of the area Extension council, and the chairman of the area development council). The University believed this elaborate and exceedingly heavy structure was necessary because developmental change required local institutions to “carry on the continuing burdens of leadership in development.” With this new approach, the University sought to “help local citizens in a given geographical area introduce, build, and maintain informal or formal institutions for the implementation of a major developmental program.” As new institutional frameworks were built, the University reasoned, existing institutions would be made stronger.⁴⁸

Within this context, the University proposed a six-year experimental project in institution-building centered around Prestonsburg. Henry Campbell, Director of

⁴⁸ “Prospectus: Redirected Continuance of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 20 August 1966.

Prestonsburg Community College, would serve as the area chairman and direct the project personnel in the field. The CDC would maintain responsibility for project coordination in Lexington with a designated project director and advisory board. The project would focus on five areas – health, housing, tourism, wood utilization, and municipal services – and five colleges would be actively involved – Arts and Sciences, Architecture, Agriculture, Business and Economics, and Medicine – though all colleges were expected to participate. The University requested \$743,000 over the six-year period from the Kellogg Foundation to cover program expenses less overhead and evaluation costs. The University would contribute \$348,000, including costs associated with transferred personnel.⁴⁹

Though terribly cumbersome in its organization, the experimental project in the new Kellogg proposal fulfilled the vision of the Carnahan House Conference pilot project. The conference participants proposed a project to serve a four-to-six county area. The participants suggested the project be centered around an eastern Kentucky community college with the full utilization of university resources both in the field and on campus. The conference attendees desired a project that worked closely with local, state, and federal agencies, and the Conference determined that the pilot had to combine action, research, and training. The Kellogg proposal met all of these requirements.⁵⁰

However, the vision of the Carnahan House Conference pilot project would never be realized. The Kellogg Foundation opted not to fund the proposal, and the EKRDP

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ “Report on the Conference on University Planning for Development Programs,” by A.D. Albright, chairman, and R.K. Kelley, secretary, 4 September 1964, Carnahan House, Lexington, KY, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

continued to function under the terms of the original design, with the slight modifications made to its organization in 1965 after Kelley's resignation, until the grant expired at the end of 1967. The University carried a shell of the project through 1969 when all of the EKRDP's operations merged back into the Extension Service.⁵¹ Not coincidentally, in that same year, the College of Agriculture abandoned the area Extension model, returning to the county agent model statewide. This included the dismantling of the modified Extension program developed in eastern Kentucky in 1960.⁵²

The Final Years of the EKRDP

Mike Duff's first annual report as the EKRDP chair was incredibly transparent, making clear that, as both Beers and Gallaher had observed, the project specialists did not work together, they had rocky relationships with county agents and federal, state, and local agencies, and they felt isolated. In an effort to improve the situation, Duff facilitated staff meetings every two weeks, and specialists gave reports of their activities

⁵¹ "Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project," 1965, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Mike Duff Papers; "Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project," 1966, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Mike Duff Papers; "Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project," 1967, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Mike Duff Papers; "Eight-Year Summary Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project," 1968, University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Mike Duff Papers; Mike Duff to Charles Barnhart and John Ragland, 2 December 1969, Mike Duff Papers; Mike Duff, interview by Muriel Duff, 1 October 1985, University of Kentucky Extension Service Oral History Project, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries.

⁵² Glenwood Creech to Otis Singletary, 25 September 1969, Singletary Presidential Papers, Permanent Series, Box 17, Folder 1, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; Charles Barnhart to College of Agriculture Faculty and Staff, n.d., Singletary Presidential Papers, Permanent Series, Box 17, Folder 1; O.T. Dorton to Otis Singletary, 17 November 1969, Singletary Presidential Papers, Permanent Series, Box 17, Folder 1; Charles Barnhart to O.T. Dorton, 5 December 1969, Singletary Presidential Papers, Permanent Series, Box 17, Folder 1.

and plans. There were briefings on new laws, programs, and policies, and possible programming strategies were discussed and critically evaluated collectively. For the first time in 1965, “each staff member was aware of the activities of the other staff members and, thus, was able to explain such activities, to make proper cross-references, and even to complement the activities of his fellow workers.” Duff explained that specialists had the opportunity to exchange ideas on how to more fully involve the total University, but “because of the heavy teaching and research load of University staff members, it was frequently impossible to get the assistance of some staff members in the field action programs.”⁵³

In 1966, Duff reported on the considerable turnover at the EKRDP, with six specialists leaving. Four vacant positions remained at year’s end.⁵⁴ He commented on modest improvements in University participation in the project, citing programming partnerships with the College of Law and the community colleges. Most significantly, Duff noted the increasing “public affairs” role required of specialists in the wake of the Great Society programs. Serving as a “technical knowledge distribution center” for those in a “quest for knowledge and methodology related to the development of poor people”

⁵³ “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1965.

⁵⁴ “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1966; Duff would later report that of nineteen candidates seriously considered for specialists post during his EKRDP tenure, thirteen withdrew after visiting the area. See Mike Duff to Charles Barnhart and John Ragland, 2 December 1969, Mike Duff Papers.

became the “day-to-day expectation” for the specialists at Quicksand.⁵⁵ Duff’s 1967 annual report focused almost exclusively on the continuation of this role.⁵⁶

Kellogg Foundation support for the EKRDP ended on December 31, 1967. Early in 1968, Duff released an “Eight-Year Summary Report” and cited thirty-one project accomplishments. Many, like a greenhouse project, a feeder pigs program, the development of an apple orchard, and fertilizer demonstrations, fell within the purview of traditional agricultural Extension. Many others lacked specificity with the real role of the EKRDP remaining unknown. Examples included “Traditionally independent personnel of various agencies worked together very effectively on task forces,” and “Contract agreements between the Cooperative Extension Service and other agencies and groups were successful.” Still others likely owed more to state government’s development efforts than to the EKRDP, such as increased participation of Chambers of Commerce, garden clubs, and various civic groups in development activity, an explicit goal of Kentucky’s area programs model.⁵⁷

Under Mike Duff’s leadership, the EKRDP sought greater University participation, but it achieved only nominal success. The project found a niche as an effective interpreter of OEO and ARC policies for local agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals, but poorly planned and lacking definition from the beginning, without effective leadership for the first half of its existence, and too closely

⁵⁵ “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1966.

⁵⁶ “Annual Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1967.

⁵⁷ “Eight-Year Summary Report of the Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project,” 1968; John Whisman to Eastern Kentucky Area Leaders, 31 July 1964, Box 4, Eastern Kentucky Meeting Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (Reports from Colleges), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

tied to traditional Extension, the project never fulfilled its promise as a total resource development agent in the mountains.

The Center for Developmental Change

President John Oswald tapped the Center for Developmental Change to lead the University of Kentucky's eastern Kentucky effort in 1964, and the CDC performed that role, at least formally, for the next eight years. As the first permanent Director of the Center for Developmental Change (CDC), Edward Weidner embraced the University's action orientation in eastern Kentucky, but he was in the minority among his CDC colleagues. Two sets of competing interests informed the CDC's work during its leadership of the eastern Kentucky effort. One was the tension between research and action, first clearly evident in the Grannie's Branch evaluation in 1964, and the other was the competition between a domestic emphasis, focused primarily on Appalachia, and international work. These strains occurred in the context of dramatically changing institutional expectations of faculty, University financial difficulties, and leadership challenges within the Center.

Understanding the CDC's challenges in the mid-to-late 1960s requires an understanding of the larger institutional changes taking place at the University during that period. John Oswald came to the University of Kentucky as President in 1963, having served previously as a faculty member and administrator at the University of California. At Berkeley, Oswald chaired the plant pathology department and then served as Special Assistant to the President and Vice President during the time when the University became, as Roger Geiger called it, "the paragon of academic distinction among public

institutions – the epitome of what American research institutions aspire to be.”⁵⁸ Oswald was also a chief advisor to Clark Kerr in the development of the Master Plan which became a national model for the governance of state systems of higher education.⁵⁹ While Oswald had no false hopes of turning the University of Kentucky into the University of California, he did intend to modernize the institution. To that end, he implemented rotating department chairmen, fixed terms for deans, merit evaluations linked to compensation, and clear expectations regarding faculty distribution of effort. Oswald expected faculty members to spend significant time conducting research and instructing and advising graduate students.⁶⁰ These changing expectations for faculty had a tremendous impact on their involvement in interdisciplinary work, such as that pursued by the CDC. Department chairs conducted the merit evaluations and based the reviews on faculty members’ productivity within their respective academic departments. As A.D. Albright commented, “We didn’t pay enough attention to how you reward faculty who move outside their own department to carry on work...if it cannot be accommodated in

⁵⁸ Roger L. Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge: American Research Universities since World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 82. For a more detailed discussion of the University of California’s research prominence, see Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge*, 73-82; and Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 286-290.

⁵⁹ Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge*, 82, 264; Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, 288-290.

⁶⁰ Lewis Cochran, interview by Terry Birdwhistell, 5 March 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries; Art Gallaher, Jr., interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 24 December 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries; A.D. Albright, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 20 February 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries; Carl B. Cone, *The University of Kentucky: A Pictorial History* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1989), 149.

the performance review, they will say, ‘so what.’”⁶¹ Likewise, with its greater emphasis on research, the changing review process devalued the involvement of faculty in action programs like those the CDC was charged with implementing in eastern Kentucky.

Edward Weidner came to the University of Kentucky with much fanfare. A political scientist and a well-regarded expert in international affairs, Weidner served as Director of the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii when Oswald offered him the first permanent directorship of the CDC.⁶² According to Art Gallaher Jr., Weidner was “a cosmopolite. He was part of the larger change that was taking place in higher education...wherever he was, things were happening.”⁶³

Weidner wanted to involve the University’s colleges in the Center’s activities as he outlined in the 1966 Kellogg Foundation proposal. Ultimately, Weidner hoped the CDC would become the off-campus arm of the central administration with coordinating authority for all extension and service activities.⁶⁴ In the summer and fall of 1966, Weidner and Art Gallaher, Jr., who served as Weidner’s Deputy Director, visited faculty members across campus to solicit their involvement in the CDC, but few expressed any

⁶¹ A.D. Albright interview.

⁶² Thomas R. Ford, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 5 November 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries. A. Lee Coleman, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 12 November 1984, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries. Howard W. Beers, interview by Grace M. Zilverberg, 18 February 1985, Charles T. Wethington University of Kentucky Oral History Collection, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky Libraries. A.D. Albright interview; Art Gallaher, Jr. interview.

⁶³ Gallaher interview.

⁶⁴ Gallaher interview; Beers interview; Albright interview.

interest, frequently questioning the value of interdisciplinary work and action activities in the new merit evaluation system.⁶⁵

Weidner's eagerness to own all of the University's action programs created rifts with many of the faculty associated with the CDC, a group that already leaned toward research over action. According to Gallaher, Weidner's willingness to pull "peripheral activities" into the Center "disaffected" several of the original core group of CDC faculty, and many outside the CDC saw his actions as a "power grab."⁶⁶ Albright noted that Weidner was more concerned with nurturing his own ideas than the ideas of others. Additionally, a trust gap began to develop. As Albright explained, "I came to have a question, along the latter months, of whether or not, when he told me something, that was the way it was....had he told me all of it, or part of it, had he flavored it."⁶⁷

CDC faculty members were also concerned that if they devoted too much energy to Appalachia, they would "be captured by the region." As Gallaher reasoned, the faculty had a "very strong feeling that we needed to get underway something that would assert the independence of this place [the CDC] from Appalachia. The notion of international was very much a part of the picture."⁶⁸ Howard Beers recognized the disconnect between the faculty's disinterest in Appalachian projects and the institutional expectations, especially in light of the War on Poverty. "We had this fascinating area over here of Appalachia we were supposed to be interested in.... you made brownie points for being interested in Appalachia."⁶⁹ Even Albright, who with Oswald was most

⁶⁵ Gallaher interview; Beers interview; Albright interview.

⁶⁶ Gallaher interview.

⁶⁷ Albright interview.

⁶⁸ Gallaher interview.

⁶⁹ Beers interview.

responsible for putting the CDC at the center of the eastern Kentucky effort, commented, “Some of us thought we needed to get beyond the connection with Appalachia, or eastern Kentucky.”⁷⁰

As early as March 1966, Weidner began to question the University’s support for interdisciplinary action programs. Writing to Raymond Bard, Assistant Vice President for Research, Weidner expressed his frustrations and indicated his departure might be imminent. He explained that he had been approached regarding the post of High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and that he would examine his options. He added that he remained optimistic “that this and other opportunities need not be explored fully. My wife and I are hopeful we can realize our desire to contribute to the University.”⁷¹ Weidner passed on that position, but in October, the University of Wisconsin appointed him the first Chancellor of the new Green Bay campus, a post he held for twenty years. At Green Bay, Weidner strived to make the whole campus an interdisciplinary action tool, creating what he dubbed the “communiiversity.”⁷²

Discouraged by the Weidner experience, brief though it was, the CDC faculty sought a director more interested in international activities than Appalachian projects and more interested in research than action. In the fall of 1967, they encouraged Albright to appoint Howard Beers as the Center’s new director, and Albright agreed.⁷³ Beers had returned to the states in February 1966 when the United States Government pulled the Indonesian team he led out of the country for security reasons. Weidner offered Beers a

⁷⁰ Albright interview.

⁷¹ Edward Weidner to Raymond Bard, 10 March 1966, Box 3A, Developmental Change Center 1963-66 Folder, John D. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁷² Beers interview; Edward Weidner’s UW-Green Bay biography, accessed at <http://www.uwgb.edu/chancellor/history/weidner.asp>

⁷³ Ford interview; Albright interview.

research professorship in the CDC, about which Beers commented, “I was moving into the unknown territory of the CDC. I was curious to know what the meaning of the Center for Development Change might be and the concepts and ideas around that.” Despite some misgivings, Beers joined the CDC faculty upon his return in 1966.⁷⁴

Beers initially declined the directorship. He had a great commitment to interdisciplinary work in the social sciences, but he did not have the ambition for an administrative role. Having served as an administrator overseas for a number of years, he hoped to return full-time to research and writing.⁷⁵ Beers said Albright’s offer “confounded” him, and he expressed concern that the notion of the Center was “pretty vague.” The expectations for the CDC were not clear to Beers, and he believed different people had very different ideas about the Center’s purpose. Additionally, Beers did not have any interest in working with Oswald, remarking that his work with an Indonesian dictator was safer than working with the UK President.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, Beers eventually relented to pressure from Albright and the CDC faculty and accepted the post. He was never comfortable with the role, believing it was best filled by a younger, more assertive figure. Beers served for seven years, publically discussing his imminent resignation for six of them.⁷⁷

As he had done with Weidner, Art Gallaher, Jr. accompanied Beers as he met with faculty across campus seeking their support for the Center. The reception was even less enthusiastic the second time. With the “Oswald Revolution” firmly in place, faculty members feared getting “buried by multidisciplinary enterprises.” Additionally, Beers

⁷⁴ Beers interview.

⁷⁵ Ford interview; Beers interview.

⁷⁶ Beers interview.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

had to smooth over Weidner's reputational problems and address the fact that the Center had not received the amount of outside funding the University had anticipated.

Essentially, as Gallaher argued, Beers "had to preside over a de-escalation of expectations."⁷⁸

Unlike Weidner, Beers had no interest in leading the eastern Kentucky effort or a broader University action program in development like the plan Weidner outlined in the 1966 Kellogg proposal. He was more interested in managing the University's international training programs and facilitating research. In fact, the 1968-69 CDC annual report noted that "the Center has decided to focus its efforts in six program areas and to adopt a more active policy in developing research proposals in those areas." Those areas were: 1) industrialization as a developmental strategy in modernization; 2) developmental demography; 3) institution building in developing areas; 4) communication in developmental change; 5) application of social sciences to developmental policy planning; and 6) voluntary associations in developmental change. While some domestic programs were mentioned in the report, the document had a strong international flavor, and there were no specific references to eastern Kentucky or Appalachian programs.⁷⁹

Beers assumed the directorship of the CDC just as the climate for developmental change was shifting. The 1950s and 1960s had been fertile ground for international development programs. The "Appalachian problem" provided an impetus for action in

⁷⁸ Gallaher interview.

⁷⁹ "Senate Advisory Committee on the Center for Developmental Change, 1968-69 Annual Report," University of Kentucky, Lexington, copy in Box 2, Center for Developmental Change 1968-69 Folder, John Oswald Papers (President's Office Papers 1968-69, I:2a:1:5), Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

eastern Kentucky in the 1960s, and the pursuit of War on Poverty funding accelerated that interest in the middle part of the decade. But by the end of decade, the landscape for higher education generally and development programs specifically was beginning to change. In Washington, President Nixon scaled back domestic development support after 1969, especially those programs supported through the OEO, and Vietnam and the increasing concern that the nation has been dragged into a quagmire pulled interest away from international development programs. Funding from foundations for development programs also became tighter as those organizations reevaluated their program emphases.⁸⁰ The Commonwealth of Kentucky, flush with resources throughout much of the 1960s, now faced very difficult financial choices. These financial difficulties extended to the University and as A.D. Albright explained, when funding is a challenge, the non-traditional enterprises of an institution “tend to fall by the wayside, especially if they had not proven themselves.”⁸¹ At UK, enthusiasm for developmental programs waned across the campus as faculty focused on research in their respective departments and administrators and students turned to other matters. According to Thomas Ford, Otis Singletary, who became the institution’s president in 1969, “was not much interested in international or national development,” and UK students “didn’t want to help people, they just wanted to bring about a revolution.”⁸²

⁸⁰ Annelise Orleck, “The War on Poverty and American Politics since the 1960s” in *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980*, eds. Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 447-461; Gallaher interview; Albright interview.

⁸¹ Albright interview.

⁸² Ford interview.

As Howard Beers asserted, the University still “pulled out” the CDC “from time to time when it was necessary and expedient.”⁸³ In fact, the University’s last major public advocacy for action programs came in 1967. The winter 1967 volume of *The Kentucky Alumnus* featured the university’s role in developmental change. In a section titled, “The University as a Center of Change,” Albright and Gallaher penned an article making the case for the University as a knowledge center, a training center, and a direct operator in development, and Beers’ piece in the same section explained that the CDC was the tool used to facilitate these roles. In the section “Domestic Change,” Frank Santopolo outlined the action program in eastern Kentucky, and G.W. Schneider discussed the Extension Service. In “International Change,” Willis Griffin and W. H. Jansen elaborated on the University’s international programs.⁸⁴ Speaking to a group of fellow presidents in Chicago in March 1967, Oswald used the opportunity to discuss the centrality of developmental change, and specifically the CDC, in UK’s service function, and the 1967 University of Kentucky Research Foundation Annual Report highlighted the role of the CDC in a “trend toward interdisciplinary approaches to the solution of the problems facing American society,” adding that “the University’s efforts in this area augur well for success.”⁸⁵ After this flurry of marketing activity, there is no evidence in

⁸³ Beers interview.

⁸⁴ A.D. Albright and Art Gallaher, Jr., “The University as a Center of National Life,” *The Kentucky Alumnus*, Winter 1967, 3-5; Howard W. Beers, “The University Focus on Change,” *The Kentucky Alumnus*, Winter 1967, 5-7; Frank A. Santopolo, “The University Spurs Commonwealth Development,” *The Kentucky Alumnus*, Winter 1967, 8-9; G.W. Schneider, “The University Goes to the People,” *The Kentucky Alumnus*, Winter 1967, 11-13; Willis Griffin, “The University Goes to Foreign Lands,” *The Kentucky Alumnus*, Winter 1967, 14-17; W.H. Jansen, “The University in Developing People,” *The Kentucky Alumnus*, Winter 1967, 18-21.

⁸⁵ John Oswald, “The Service Function of the University,” 6 March 1967, remarks delivered in Chicago, Illinois, Box 13A, Speeches and Papers ’66-67 Folder, John D.

the documentary record that UK returned publicly to this theme, and by 1970, the ideals of total resource development, developmental change, and action programs as they had been envisioned at the University in the early and mid-1960s were effectively dead.

In 1970, Howard Beers prepared two documents to help educate the campus community on the work of the Center for Developmental Change. A January 1970 prospectus outlined the CDC's history, its organization, its staffing, and its roster of projects – past and present. An October 1970 plan suggested future directions for the Center. Both emphasized research and international training programs though they did give a nod to the handful of eastern Kentucky studies the CDC had supported, most notably the significant evaluation of OEO programs in Knox County. However, there was no suggestion of a coordinated action program in eastern Kentucky.⁸⁶

In 1971, in the midst of growing campus criticism regarding the work of the Center, Beers requested an external review of the CDC, and William Dennen, Dean of the Graduate School, appointed an ad hoc committee of faculty to carry out the task. The ad hoc committee surveyed and interviewed University faculty and staff, including lengthy sessions with Albright, Vice President for Academic Affairs Lewis Cochran, Beers, Gallaher, Santopolo, and Edward Weidner. The committee's 1972 report argued that the CDC had been of benefit to the University, particularly as an "active extramural fund-getter" and in its support of the University's development team in Thailand, the Peace Corps training program, and the Knox County OEO evaluation. The report

Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968); "University of Kentucky Research Foundation Annual Report 1967," University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁸⁶ "Center for Developmental Change Prospectus," 1 January 1970, copy in Box 3, Folder 45, Otis Singletary Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; "The Future Program and Organization of the Center for Developmental Change," October 1970, copy in Box 3, Folder 45, Otis Singletary Papers.

criticized the University for failing to adequately support the Center and for providing “precious little in the way of rewards for interested faculty members to associate themselves with CDC.” The committee faulted the CDC for objectives that were “vague and difficult to comprehend,” for a “top-heavy and cumbersome” administrative structure, and for the uncertain “pertinency of its activities.” Again, there was no mention of the CDC’s expected leadership role in the eastern Kentucky action effort. The evaluation recommended that the CDC continue as an operating unit, that its primary goal be “research in the theory and practice of planned change,” and that its relationship to the administrative structure be “clarified and changed to make it more effective.”⁸⁷

As the ad hoc committee was preparing its evaluation in the spring of 1972, the CDC was preparing a proposal for “A Program for Improving the Quality of Life in Appalachia” to submit to federal agencies and foundations for funding. The proposal grew out of conversations in 1971 among “a small ad hoc group of engineers, biologists, social scientists, and others at the University who sense both an urgency and an opportunity for a new convergence of ‘mountain’ research.”⁸⁸ In a letter to the entire faculty, Lewis Cochran called for a survey of Appalachian research. He suggested a four-pronged approach that involved updating the inventory of present resources, appraising the current systems of resource extraction, illuminating the resulting environmental, ecological, economic, and social problems, and forming alternatives to align resource utilization and conservation with human needs. Cochran requested faculty

⁸⁷ “Report of the Ad Hoc Evaluation Committee for the Center for Developmental Change,” May 1972, Box 3, Folder 44, Otis Singletary Papers.

⁸⁸ Lewis Cochran to Faculty, 11 November 1971, Box 3, Folder 7, Otis Singletary Series Permanent Collection, Special Colleges Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

members submit their “project objectives, sources and types of data, proposed procedures and anticipated results” by December 15.⁸⁹

The CDC proposal, informed by the faculty survey, included twenty-five separate research projects in five broad areas: meeting basic human needs, meeting industrial and commercial requirements, improving community services, conserving natural resources, and cultural heritage. The projects in the plan required an estimated support of \$2,039,600, with \$1,436,338 of direct cost and \$603,262 of indirect cost. The CDC described the program as a “multi-project interdisciplinary research undertaking of the University of Kentucky to identify and compare alternative prospective systems for improving the quality of life in Appalachia by utilization, conservation, and restoration of natural and institutional resources.” Unlike the EKRDP, Grannie’s Branch, and the 1966 Kellogg proposal, this program would not lead to the “adoption of specific policies but rather for the utilization of information in making choices among alternatives.” A clear shift from the University’s action approach in eastern Kentucky in the 1960s, this was a pure research program.⁹⁰ However, despite conversations and proposal submissions to the Appalachian Regional Commission, several federal and state government agencies, and foundations, only a handful of the projects received any funding.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Ibid. Cochran appointed a committee to assist with the faculty survey. Committee members included Howard Beers (Director, Center for Developmental Change), Samuel Conti (Director, School of Biological Sciences), Ottfried Hahn (Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering), James McDonald (Director, Kentucky Research Foundation), and George Wilber (Director, Social Welfare Research Institute)

⁹⁰ Center for Developmental Change, “A Program for Improving the Quality of Life in Appalachia,” April 1972, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

⁹¹ Beers interview. Ford interview.

Research Funding and Sponsored Projects

To fully appreciate the University's eastern Kentucky efforts in the 1960s, one should examine the amount of outside funding devoted to projects in the region. At the Carnahan House Conference, Oswald charged the CDC, in its leadership of the eastern Kentucky effort, to seek extramural funding for eastern Kentucky projects.⁹² Like most institutions, the University of Kentucky experienced incredible growth in the post-war period, not only in external funding but also in the institutional apparatus required to support extramural activities. In 1946, the University received \$1,929 through its research foundation, covering two scholarship funds, two endowments, and no contracts or grants. In 1955, UK received \$207,511 through the research foundation, supporting 32 scholarship funds, four endowments, and 29 contracts and grants. By 1962, the support had risen to \$2,027,825, responsible for 77 scholarship funds, 12 endowments, 128 grants and contracts, and 23 specials projects.⁹³

By 1965, with Oswald's focus on faculty research and a continued increase in available external funds, the University received over \$4 million in outside support for research and sponsored projects. As Table 5.1 shows, that support more than tripled over the next four years, with funding nearing \$15 million in 1969. However, despite the University's stated focus on eastern Kentucky development and additional funds available through OEO and ARDA programs, eastern Kentucky projects never accounted

⁹² "Report on the Conference on University Planning for Development Programs," by A.D. Albright, chairman, and R.K. Kelley, secretary, 4 September 1964, Carnahan House, Lexington, KY, Box 3A, Economic Opportunity 1964-66 Folder, John W. Oswald Papers (From 9-1-1963 to 9-1-1968).

⁹³ "Annual Report of the Kentucky Research Foundation, 1962," University of Kentucky, Lexington. For a thorough discussion of the post-war increases in research funding at universities, see Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, 260-316; Geiger, *Research and Relevant Knowledge*.

for more than three percent of either the total funded projects at the University or the total amount of support.

Table 5.1 – Extramural Funding at the University of Kentucky

Year	Total University		Eastern Kentucky Projects	
	Number of Projects	Total Amount of Funding	Number of Projects	Total Amount of Funding
1964-65	179	\$4,297,025	1	\$68,935
1965-66	n/a	\$9,400,000	n/a	n/a
1966-67	391	\$11,175,332	10	\$325,517
1967-68	398	\$12,416,921	2	\$5,860
1968-69	414	\$14,700,000	10	\$106,643
1969-70	441	\$14,308,885	12	\$266,567

Source: University of Kentucky Research Foundation Annual Reports, 1965-1970⁹⁴

Of the thirty-five eastern Kentucky projects funded during this period, eighteen supported education programs, and six supported medical research or healthcare programs. The largest externally-funded eastern Kentucky project was Paul Street’s Knox County OEO evaluation. Street and his team received nearly \$700,000 over three years. Other significant projects with funding in excess of \$50,000 included two Head Start contracts, two Upward Bound contracts, a study of the impact of modernizing school systems on student performance, and a study of eastern Kentucky outmigration. Eastern Kentucky projects did receive the vast majority of the University’s OEO funding

⁹⁴ The 1966 University of Kentucky Research Foundation Annual Report does not include the total number of projects, the total amount of external support or project descriptions. The \$9,400,000 for total funding in 1965-66 comes from the 1967 University of Kentucky Research Foundation Annual Report.

during this period with \$857,289 out of \$1,087,606 in OEO support going to five mountain projects.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ The five projects were the OEO evaluation in Knox County, two Head Start contracts, and two Upward Bound contracts. “Annual Report of the Kentucky Research Foundation, 1965,” University of Kentucky, Lexington; “Annual Report of the Kentucky Research Foundation, 1966,” University of Kentucky, Lexington; “Annual Report of the Kentucky Research Foundation, 1967,” University of Kentucky, Lexington; “Annual Report of the Kentucky Research Foundation, 1968,” University of Kentucky, Lexington; “Annual Report of the Kentucky Research Foundation, 1969,” University of Kentucky, Lexington; “Annual Report of the Kentucky Research Foundation, 1970,” University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

In January 2015, UK President Eli Capilouto announced that a set of stories, “Rooted in Our Communities: The University of Kentucky in Appalachia,” would examine the ways the institution was active in the mountains. The stories, he said, “bring to life the significant challenges and even more promising opportunities that exist not only in Eastern Kentucky, but throughout our Commonwealth in areas such as health care, energy and conservation, education and economic development.”¹ The President discussed the depth of the region’s problems, the fact that there is no “silver bullet” solution, and that tackling the situation “takes an array of disciplines.” But he expressed optimism, “We can do it like no other place can. We’re part of being the best hope for the Commonwealth. We in Kentucky have the opportunity to unlock so many mysteries that not only inform our state and improve our conditions but I think serve as examples across the United States, across the globe.”²

This announcement easily could have been made in the 1960s. The ideas, even the language, mirror those of the EKRDP, the Grannie’s Branch Project, the Carnahan House Conference discussions, and the 1966 Kellogg proposal. Capilouto sounded a note not dissimilar to that of his predecessor, Lee Todd, whose interest in addressing “the Kentucky uglies,” many found in eastern Kentucky, was a guiding theme of his ten-year

¹ Eli Capilouto, “Rooted in our Communities: The University for Kentucky,” blog post accessed at <http://uknow.uky.edu/content/rooted-our-communities-university-kentucky>

² Eli Capilouto, “Rooted in our Communities: The University for Kentucky,” video accessed at <http://uknow.uky.edu/content/rooted-our-communities-university-kentucky>

UK presidency beginning in 2001.³ Likewise, the announcement could have followed the University's establishment of the Robinson Trust quasi-endowment in 1992 to fund projects for "the betterment of the people of eastern Kentucky." The University formed the quasi-endowment with revenue from mining in the Robinson Forest, and the fund supported programs across eight broad research and action areas, including the still extant Robinson Scholars Program.⁴

The juxtaposition of challenges and opportunities has always been part of the narrative of Appalachian development. The fact that the language remains the same today as it was in the 1960s and at every step in between is a reflection of the persistence of the challenges in the region and the inability of individuals and institutions to adequately address them. The University of Kentucky's action program in eastern Kentucky in the 1960s was a pioneering effort, a bold step to use its position as the Commonwealth's land-grant institution to effect positive change in one of the nation's most blighted regions. Without a doubt, the eastern Kentucky effort improved individual lives, but like every University project in the mountains that followed over the next fifty-five years, the 1960s action program failed to substantially change the region. Eli Capilouto's call to action in 2015 is the same as Frank Dickey's in 1960.

The Eastern Kentucky Resource Development Project (EKRD) was the flagship of the University of Kentucky's action program in the mountains in the 1960s, but the

³ See Lee Todd describe the University's approach to "the Kentucky uglies" in a video produced by the University of Kentucky Public Relations Office, accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UeAVgofBkg>

⁴ Minutes of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, 7 April 1992, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; Minutes of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, 15 August 1995; Minutes of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, 15 August 2000.

EKRDP was flawed from the start. The College of Agriculture drafted the proposal that gave birth to the project far too quickly and in the process angered Governor Combs and key members of his administration. The development and implementation of the project were equally haphazard. The project planners never fully fleshed out the program, they never clearly defined the roles of the EKRDP specialists and how other Extension agents were to interact with the project, they never adequately linked the EKRDP to the new modified Extension program in eastern Kentucky on which the project relied, and they failed to set up any accountability standards or evaluation mechanisms within the program. While James Brown's leadership and influence led to the adoption of a "total university" approach, Dean Welch deferred too many decisions to conservative Extension administrators and College of Agriculture department heads seeking to shore up their fiefdoms. The result was a project tied too closely to both the College of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension to be able to pursue the broader work involving the whole of the University necessary to tackle the enormity of the challenges in the region.

The War on Poverty and the passage of the Equal Opportunity Act and the Appalachian Regional Development Act marked a significant shift in the University's action program in eastern Kentucky. New University President John Oswald had grown increasingly concerned with the EKRDP and began to transition the leadership of the eastern Kentucky effort to the new Center for Developmental Change (CDC). At the Carnahan House Conference in September 1964, UK recommitted to a total university action program for eastern Kentucky and pledged to partner with federal, state, and local officials in the War on Poverty, especially in Appalachia. The Conference introduced the community college as a preferred point of service for mountain programming and

directed the Center for Developmental Change to lead the eastern Kentucky effort. Yet despite the urgency that emerged from the Carnahan House Conference, the University was slow and ineffective in organizing its War on Poverty efforts and struggled in pursuit of OEO and ARDA funds.

Following Art Gallaher's scathing CDC evaluation of the EKRDP in the summer of 1965, President Oswald created an ad hoc committee on the EKRDP, led by Edward Weidner, the Director of the CDC. Weidner and his team sought to recast the EKRDP in a new proposal to the Kellogg Foundation in 1966. In the proposal, the University outlined a statewide organization for developmental change and, within that context, sought funding for a six-year experimental project in institution-building in and around Prestonsburg in eastern Kentucky. The proposal followed the vision of the pilot project endorsed by the Carnahan House Conference, but the Kellogg Foundation chose not to fund the project. In its final years, the EKRDP found a niche as an effective interpreter of OEO and ARC policies, but it never fulfilled its promise as a total resource development agent in the mountains.

As the first permanent Director of the CDC, Edward Weidner embraced the University's action orientation in eastern Kentucky as well as the Center's leadership role in the effort. However, his view was not shared by most of his CDC colleagues who feared they might get buried by an overemphasis on Appalachian concerns and who favored research over action programs. The "Oswald Revolution" handicapped Weidner and his successor, Howard Beers, in their recruitment of faculty to participate in CDC activities. Oswald's expectations for research productivity that was tied to performance reviews within a faculty member's respective department disincentivized both

interdisciplinary and action-oriented pursuits. Furthermore, political and financial support for developmental change efforts contracted during the late 1960s. Ultimately, the CDC had little impact on the University's eastern Kentucky efforts or on remedying Appalachia's challenges.

It is easy to look at the University of Kentucky's Appalachian story in the 1960s and see missed opportunities. Sure, the intent was well-meaning, even noble, but the University bungled the effort from the very beginning. This is a story of a plan built on the misguided culture of poverty theory, a belief that the people of Appalachia did not exhibit the values and habits necessary to succeed in a modern, commercial society. The University's efforts were further underscored by an idealistic view that if they simply pointed enough attention to the problem, if they simply committed all the energy and ideas that a robust research institution had to offer, they could create "a progressive, hopeful attitude among the people of the area" that would allow residents "to take their rightful place in American society."⁵ This is the Kentucky embodiment of what Alice O'Connor describes in *Poverty Knowledge* where white male social scientists construct poverty in ways that perpetuate their own professional importance and maintain market capitalism.⁶ The problems facing Appalachia and other areas plagued by extractive economies and outside ownership were far from simple and culture of poverty theories

⁵Quote comes from early discussions of the modified Extension program, but repeatedly, those involved in EKRDP reiterated this objective of "developing people." "The Modified Extension Program for Eastern Kentucky," Correspondence 1961-62 (2), Eastern Kentucky Folder, William A. Seay Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Kentucky.

⁶ Alice O'Connor, *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

led university representatives to miss the structural causes of poverty that scholars would start to emphasize in the following decade.

The 1970s, marked by growing controversy over American involvement in Vietnam and increasing economic hardships at home, led the federal government to curtail its War on Poverty. More and more, concerns over deeply rooted inequality would be voiced at the grassroots level. The field of Appalachian Studies emerged in the second half of the 1970s, attracting new voices and facilitating new conversations.⁷ Harry Caudill had been the first to argue that Appalachia's poverty stemmed from a greedy coal industry that had sucked the profits out of the region leaving its land and people destroyed. Increasingly other Appalachian scholars joined in this critique, emphasizing the structural causes of poverty.⁸

At the first Appalachian Studies Association Conference in 1978, John Gaventa gave the keynote address, which he titled, "Which Side Are You On?: Appalachian Inequality in the Appalachian Studies Industry." He took traditional Appalachian scholarship to task, equating it with the exploitative coal industry and charging it with

⁷ Logan Brown, et. al., "Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going? A History of the Appalachian Studies Association, *Appalachian Journal* 31: 1 (fall 2003): 30-92. Early gatherings of Appalachian Studies were marked by tension between "radicals," who were more concerned with "race, poverty, [and] economic subjugation" and "more conservative academic participants" (32-33). Many viewed Berea College particularly for cultivating outdated culture of poverty theories.

⁸ For early examples of this structural critique see David S. Wall, "Central Appalachia: A Peripheral Region within an Advanced Capitalist Society." *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare* 4 (November 1976): 232-47; Helen Matthews Lewis, Linda Johnson, and Donald Askins, *Colonialism in Modern America: The Appalachian Case* (Boone, NC: The Appalachian Consortium Press, 1978); and John Gaventa, *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980).

being “part of the problem.”⁹ But while individual scholars have taken on “the powers that be,” universities rely heavily on the financial support and prestige that come from being associated with corporate, political, and community leaders. Universities reinforce the existing power structures that hold mountain communities hostage.

Proponents of planned change committed university energy and resources to addressing a wide range of economic, social, and political weaknesses that kept Appalachia from realizing its potential. While their language and stated goals emphasized sweeping change, the results were much, much more modest. It would be inaccurate to suggest that the programs introduced through modified extension, the EKRDP, and the CDC had no impact, but these programs did not serve as panaceas; they treated the symptoms but not the deeper illness.

The story of the University of Kentucky’s action program in eastern Kentucky in the 1960s is a story of poor planning in an age of planning, of turf wars, and of administrative and leadership failures. This is a story of political concessions and miscalculations. This is a story shaped by the interconnection of federal, state, local, and institutional policies. This is a story of changing and sometimes conflicting priorities in a dynamic decade and of the struggle between research and service at an evolving land-grant research university.

However, this is not a story where the actors critique the existing power structures. It is not a story where the characters question the goal. While there was no consensus on what development or developmental change really meant at the University in the 1960s, the institution assumed developing the underdeveloped and bringing eastern

⁹ Brown, “Where Have We Been?” 37.

Kentucky into the mainstream culture of consumption and growth would solve all ills. While many of the faculty affiliated with the CDC questioned existing power structures in their international work, they never did so in Appalachia, and every University of Kentucky action program in the region since has shared this flawed perspective.

History can tell us a great deal about the present, and it can inform the future. The University of Kentucky's experience in the mountains in the 1960s begs the question posed by geographer Amanda Fickey, "How do you define development in eastern Kentucky?"¹⁰ Likewise, the experience implores us to explore, as Ron Eller has suggested, an alternative understanding of "the good life."¹¹ At the very least, the experience encourages us to create the mediating structures that Richard Couto describes, organizations and programs that promote the democratic prospect of equality and communal bonds in the context of a market economy that has failed many of the region's people.¹²

Scholars have discussed at length the creation of Appalachia. They have explored the rediscovery of the region, and we see again and again America turn its sights to the mountains and the troublesome pockets of poverty that remain there today. We fought a War on Poverty, and we continue to look for solutions through Promise Zones. Yet, the missed opportunities in the mountains come from the failure, in the 1960s and in the

¹⁰ Amanda Fickey, "How Do You Define Development in Eastern Kentucky," *The Times-Tribune*, 25 March 2014.

¹¹ Ronald Eller, "Seeking the Good Life in America: Lessons from the Appalachian Past," 12 April 2012, University of Kentucky College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor Lecture, Lexington, Kentucky. An audio podcast of the lecture can be accessed at <https://appalachiancenter.as.uky.edu/tag/ron-eller>.

¹² Richard A. Couto, *Making Democracy Work Better: Mediating Structures, Social Capital, and the Democratic Prospect*, with Catherine S. Guthrie (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

2010s, to look beyond the symptoms of mountain poverty and to ask tough questions about its deeper rooted causes.

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Professional Experience

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2006 to 2010	Director of Admissions Transylvania University
2001 to 2006	Director, Robinson Scholars Program University of Kentucky
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1997 to 1999	Admissions Counselor University of Kentucky

Scholastic and Professional Honors

2014	KYACAC Outstanding Supervisor Award
2006	NASPA Gold Award for Enrollment Management, Orientation, First Year, Other Year, and Related Programs and Services
2006	NACADA Outstanding Institutional Advising Award
2002	KASCAC James “Les” Grigsby Service Award
2001	KASCAC President’s Award
1999	KACRAO Outstanding Presenter Award
1995	University of Tennessee, Knoxville Chancellor’s Citation for Extraordinary Campus Leadership and Service
1995	University of Tennessee, Knoxville Chancellor’s Citation for Extraordinary Academic Achievement

1994 Phi Beta Kappa
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Peer-Reviewed Presentations

- September 2013 “Leading Through Presidential Transition”
National Association of College Admissions Counseling
2013 Annual Conference
Toronto, Canada
- July 2013 “Taking the Long View: Successful Strategies for Strategic
Enrollment Planning”
Noel-Levitz National Conference of Student Recruitment,
Marketing, and Retention
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- March 2010 “Student Search Trends: What Are Other Colleges Doing?”
Kentucky Association of College Admission Counseling
2010 Annual Conference
Louisville, Kentucky
- March 2010 “Separating Fact From Fiction: What Do You Know About
Independent Colleges?”
Kentucky Association of College Admission Counseling
2010 Annual Conference
Louisville, Kentucky
- November 2008 “First Generation College Students”
American Marketing Association
Symposium for the Marketing of Higher Education
Chicago, Illinois
- July 2008 “First Generation College Students”
Noel-Levitz National Conference of Student Recruitment,
Marketing, and Retention
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- March 2008 “Balancing Work and Life”
Kentucky Association of Secondary and College Admission
Counselors
2008 Annual Conference
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- April 2005 “Advising Appalachian Students”
National Academic Advising Association
2005 Region III Conference
Louisville, Kentucky
- October 2004 “Advising Rural Students: Overcoming Barriers to Achieve
Success”
National Academic Advising Association
2004 Annual Conference
Cincinnati, Ohio
- May 2004 “Rural College Student Success: What Role Do You Play?”
Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
2004 Faculty Development Conference
Lexington, Kentucky
- September 2001 “Off the Beaten Path: The Challenges and Opportunities of Rural
Student Recruitment”
National Association for College Admission Counseling
2001 Annual Conference
San Antonio, Texas
- March 2001 “How to Avoid Overnight Nightmares: Keys to Successful
Overnight Visits”
Kentucky Association of Secondary and College Admission
Counselors
2001 Annual Conference
Owensboro, Kentucky
- March 2000 “Using Alumni in Student Recruitment”
Kentucky Association of Secondary and College Admission
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2000 Annual Conference
Erlanger, Kentucky
- October 1999 “Using Alumni in Student Recruitment”
Kentucky Association of College Registrars and Admissions
Officers
1999 Annual Conference
Lake Barkley, Kentucky
- March 1999 “Appalachian Student Recruitment: What Do You Know, What
Should You Know?”
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