

CONSENSUS AND CONFLICT IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

By

BRENDA L. REXROAT

Bachelor of Science

Panhandle State University

Goodwell, Oklahoma

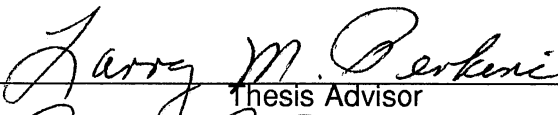
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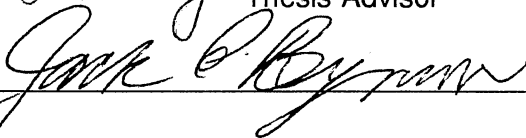
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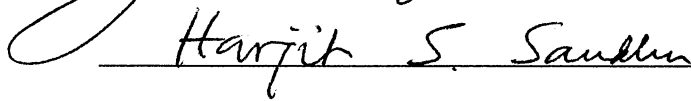
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study pertains to the intrinsic components of a rural community utilizing local history and analysis of social institutions. Each component has an important impact on the present and future development of the community.

The community chosen for this study reveals a population which has been industrious, innovative in community development, and appreciative of the good soil and available natural resources. Newcomers have stated that Bellvue, Kansas is a friendly, warm, and comfortable place to live.

In the past, much of the leadership was provided by members of families who had lived here for many years. As the community changed and developed, new leaders have emerged when problems arose. Thus, strong new leadership emerges occasionally from unexpected sources. These leaders have had to be knowledgeable, trustworthy, willing to listen, able to compromise, and be generous with their time and effort to the on-going problems.

One of the problems which is becoming common in rural societies is the outside control of resources. This prevents the community from taking control of their own destiny. Current leaders perceive this happening as a result of a recently passed state school finance bill.

A state-wide school tax levy is testing the quality of leadership, education, and family and community economics. The bill passed by the legislature in 1992 is having a

drastic effect on the present and future of this community. The people in southwest Kansas feel the bill is unfair because of an inequality in representation due to its sparse population and the self interest of the more populous eastern part of the state.

Western Kansans feel they are having to subsidize eastern cities who give large tax abatements to attract industries to their cities. Natural gas industries pay local taxes and people feel the eastern industries should have to pay their fair share of local taxes.

According to Merton (1972; 15), the problem facing east and west Kansas is one of insider - outsider ideology. Insiders have special insights into matters which may not be present to the outsider. Western Kansans know that very few eastern Kansans have been socialized or have the experience to deal with matters pertaining to rural communities. By not being socialized in a rural community they do not have the empathetic understanding to see the implications of the school finance bill on rural communities in western Kansas.

Most change occurs slowly and usually happens over several years. The effect of the changes caused by this legislation is going to be economically and politically drastic, for the population of this small and prosperous community. The effects are going to be wide-spread and on-going.

One of the effects of this legislation has been an urban-rural rift between western and eastern Kansas. Western Kansans have declined avoided large purchases from companies in eastern Kansas because of tax abatements.

A group of western Kansans and counties have formed a secession movement. Many aspects have to be considered if an area is going to consider seceding. The consequences must be studied carefully before a final decision is made. There are a number of regional residents who are serious about seceding from the state. They feel

the school finance bill is unfair and western Kansas children will suffer dramatically. The children, they feel, will not be getting a quality education because there will not be the money for programs which may be needed to enhance their education. Also, programs which are being used may have to be cut in order to stay within a budget. Not only will programs be cut, there may be several employees who will lose jobs because the budget will not sustain the employee payroll as it has in the past.

An economic boycott was instigated against the western trade centers whose legislators had voted for the school finance bill. Although it was a voluntary program, some people tried to buy at home instead of trading elsewhere. The senior citizens of the community supported the boycott. Many of them had gone previously to a nearby community to shop or buy groceries, but many began shopping in a different community in order to support the boycott.

In terms of sociological theory perspectives the economic boycott and the secession movement fit into a structure-functionalism framework. According to Merton (1968; 91), structure-functionalism defends the present order of things regardless of how moderate the change(s) might entail. The people of western Kansas are looking ahead and know that if they do not do something now, the changes are going to be devastating not only to this area, but eventually to eastern Kansas. Both movements are attempting to get the legislature and the people to listen and question the ethics and long term consequences of the school finance bill.

Not only does the economic boycott and the secession movement fit into structure-functionalism, both activities demonstrate conflict theory. There are people who support both movements but there are also those who are not taking either issue seriously. The secession movement has caused more of a conflict between people than the economic boycott. The secession movement, if passed, may be of greater change than

what the school finance bill might imply. There are questions people have which are not being answered in the secession meetings. For example, "What happens to those who are retired educators who are drawing money from the Kansas Public Employee Retirement System?" The secession movement and the economic boycott intended to get the legislature and the people to listen and question the ethics of the school finance bill.

A law suit has been filed against the State Board of Education and the State of Kansas declaring the school finance bill unconstitutional because it gives the state rather than local boards, control over moneys to be spent on schools. At the present time this law suit is pending and results are not known.

The next chapter will deal with the background of the community which consists of past and present developments. Over the last several years, the community has seen changes in economic, religious, educational, and political growth. These changes will be discussed further in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

History of the Region

The county is twenty-four square miles of flat land with the exception of the bluffs which run along the south edge of the county. The climate is semiarid. The mean temperature is fifty-six degrees Fahrenheit with the average rainfall eighteen inches. The county's population is 7,159; mean per capita personal income in 1988 was \$15,538.

The federal census showed Larimar County, a fictional name is given to the county and community and will be used hereafter, had a population of nine in 1880 with most being considered cowpunchers. The first settlers began to arrive in 1885 to face the cattlemen who were not in favor of the farmers cutting up their open range. The blizzard of 1886 saved a range war since most of the cattle were killed which left the cattlemen little if no defense against the farmsteaders.

With the coming of more people, the population rose from nine in 1880 to 1,308 in 1890. The population declined in 1900 to 422 but after the town was moved in 1909 to its present location the population increased to 1,087. Over the years, there has been a steady increase in the population. As the town proceeds to grow, there will be more changes which will take place. Some of the changes will be mentioned throughout the research. The next sections will cover the history of the community and the five social

institutions of religion, education, economics, family, and politics.

History of the Community

The Homestead Act of 1862, made it possible for a single man or woman who was the head of the family and twenty-one years of age to acquire 160 acres of public land. There was a minimal cost and they must build a home and live on the land for five years. The first permanent settler was Bob Harris who claimed land south of the present day Bellvue, fictional town site. When the county was first established, there were several towns. These towns were small but they provided the surrounding people with goods and services.

With the building of railroad lines through the county, many towns moved or became ghost towns. In 1909, Bellvue moved for a different reason. According to several people of the community, indebtedness led to the move. In 1908, with just 100 residents left, the bonds and interest fell due, instigating the move of the town to its present location (Larimar County History Book: 1982; 41).

During the boom years of 1887 and 1888, residents of the town voted bonds for sidewalks and other improvements which were never made. In all fairness, it should be noted that some genuinely enthusiastic boosters of Bellvue may have felt that the city indebtedness was justified by their belief in the future destiny as a great city, and that the bonds could be paid without trouble (Larimar County History Book: 1982; 41).

When these bonds were issued, the drought of 1889, the hard times of 1892, along with the nationwide financial panic were not foreseen by the towns people. The drought brought about the failure of crops, and if that were not enough, the banks went broke. With the hard times Bellvue dwindled to a hamlet (Larimar County History Book: 1982; 41).

There are many versions of how the town was moved and how long it took. Upon

reading and talking with people, the one story which remained constant is this: It took about three months to move the town using skids and loading houses on wagons pulled by horses. Some of the buildings had to be cut into sections in order to move them. One of the buildings cut into three sections for its move, was the hotel. The courthouse was not moved until New Bellvue was voted in as the county seat. The schoolhouse, which was made of sandstone, remained behind because it was too heavy to move.

Communities have always been a center of attraction for the sociologist whether the community be in a rural, urban, or suburban area. The sociologist examines the norms, economics, politics, and education that hold communities together, or tears communities apart. Regardless of the type of community a sociologist examines, there will be different and similar aspects.

McKenzie defines the community in ecological terms:

A community is an ecological distribution of people and services in which the spatial location of each unit is determined by its relation to all other units (Warren: 1973; 26).

Warren and Lyon (1983; 263) provide another community definition similar to the one above: One may define the geographical basis of the rural community as a rural area within which the people have a common center of interest, and a sense of common obligation and responsibilities.

The systemic model of community social organization conceptualizes the local community as a complex system of friendship and kinship networks and formal and informal associational ties rooted in family life and on-going socialization processes (Kasarda and Janowitz: 1974; 44-45). The town systemic highlights the theoretical focus on the system of social ties embedded within ecological, institutional, and normative community structure (Sampson: 1991; 44-45).

The community chosen for the study is in southwest Kansas. Two main highways run through the community, one north and south and the other east and west. This community is centered around agriculture and natural gas companies.

In order to see what is really happening in the community, one may want to follow Vidich and Bensmen (1958) in observing the social life. To determine the invisible social life of a community, one must observe organizations, and social groups, as these institutions meet the needs of the community. These activities occur in churches, private homes, and schools.

By observing the community's social life, one may notice the different types of activities which influence the community. These activities are usually broad, and people feel they are necessary for their day-to-day living. These social activities seem mundane for those who live in the community, but strangers who get involved in a social organization view it differently. They may see the organization as something new and may feel it helps them get acquainted with established members of the community.

The town of Bellvue has several community services and organizations for those who wish to become involved in the community. Some of the community services include: motels, a hospital and care home for those who may need the care, churches, city and county government, museum, swimming pool, tennis courts, golf course, library, restaurants, radio station, banks and credit unions, schools, plus the shopping area downtown. There are also businesses which are found along the main east and west highway plus those businesses along main street.

Some of the organizations include: Larimar County Extension, Larimar County Chamber of Commerce, Bellvue Civic and Study Club, Boy and Girl Scouts of America, Bellvue Lions Club, American Legion and Auxiliary, and Larimar County Historical Society. These organizations are just a few in the community.

The Larimar County Free Fair brings the community together during the middle part of August. The booths are set up in a 36,000 sq. ft. Civic Center. The people who occupy the booths are from the surrounding towns and states. A carnival company is

contracted for the three or four day event. One night there is a free, community prepared, barbecue which draws a crowd. The fair concludes on Saturday with a parade and the Old Settlers Picnic.

Another event which draws everyone in the community, and creates social solidarity is the Home Products Dinner. Usually a well-known entertaining speaker is hired for the special occasion. The dinner is held in September in the Civic Center. The Home Products Dinner is a very big event for the community because all the food which is used for the dinner comes strictly from Larimar County and is prepared and served by local organizations. Some would say, "It's home grown."

Football and basketball are focal points for community participation. A musical production is given in November and is a big event. The production is performed by the high school choral department with the high school band performing the music.

The community has always been an agricultural community. Today most of the crops include: wheat, milo, corn, popcorn, alfalfa, potatoes, and soybeans. There is a seed plant in the community which mainly handles milo; although, the plant distributes many different seeds. The popcorn plant packages and distributes popcorn to many areas. The crops of yesterday were melons, sugar beets, castor beans, and broomcorn along with those above mentioned.

When the natural gas companies appeared on the scene in the, late 1920's, residents were not very receptive to the employees. People whose families had come with the gas companies, said things were so bad they had to get their mail from nearby towns because Bellvue would not deliver it. The main reason they were treated as outsiders was because the people of the community felt like they were "rednecks" or trouble makers. Small towns create a sense of outsiders or marginal people.

Until the natural gas people proved they were not the trouble makers they had

been labeled, they were not welcomed in town. When they proved themselves by becoming involved and supporting the local churches, schools, and businesses, they became part of the community and also a viable asset to the community.

When people think of rural communities, they think of warm, human, secure, friendly places. These items, plus showing a strong togetherness, make rural communities different from other communities (Pacione: 1984; 157).

Religion

In this southwest Kansas community, there are several churches--Roman Catholic, Mennonite Brethren, Baptist, Methodist, etc. Many community activities take place within the church setting. For example, at Christmas time, each church collects food in baskets and gives the food to needy families in the community. Some churches minister through song while others minister through homiletics. They also counsel individuals and couples on matters concerning marriage, divorce, and other issues and problems parishioners experience.

Throughout the summer most of the churches have Vacation Bible School for the children of the community. Vacation Bible School teaches the children about Bible characters and in some cases will help them find a church home.

According to Warren (1973; 193), churches have two sets of diverse concepts. The first concept deals with church official doctrines and policies of the denomination. These ideologies are channeled into the local church through denominational meetings, publications, etc. The second concept is influenced by the local religious sentiments and traditions as they interact with other aspects of organized community life.

Churches are very important organizations for integrating people into the community. The churches are used for worship, bazaars, socials, camp meetings, and

community revivals. Churches tie people of a community closely together (McNall: 1983; 132).

In The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, Durkheim states that:

... a religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden--beliefs and practices which unite in a single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them (Durkheim: 1954; 62).

Durkheim believed that religion was the key to those things essential to individuals. He saw religion as one of the forces that give the individual moral motivation. Keeping a society together is a social function of religion. For Durkheim religion preserves norms and values in society.

Education

There are approximately 11,000 rural school districts which comprise about 70% of all districts in the United States (Parks, Ross, and Just: 1982; 188). There are 1.3 million students educated in small, rural, and poor schools with 75% of all school districts being small (<2,500 students) or very small (<1,000 students) (Stephens: 1989; 187).

The most common type of formal education in rural areas well into the twentieth century was the one-room school. Frontier settlers started these schools and kept them going with local resources (Sanders: 1977; 98). The school administration was simple then, the people who lived in the district employed and discharged the teacher. These people also controlled the policies for the school. As time continued, the state became more involved in school matters and parents became less involved.

According to Spears, Combs, and Bailey (1990; 29), schools currently help socialize young people in order for them to become good employees when they obtain

a job in the work force. Different individuals help in the socializing process such as guidance counselors, athletic coaches, and social studies teachers (Warren: 1973; 175).

In this southwest Kansas community, teachers and athletic coaches, who are also classroom teachers, act as important agents of socialization for the children. Many parents do not take the time to be with their children and teach them how to be responsible and respectable citizens of the community. Most of the children's parents in the community work, so often children find themselves on their own after school. Therefore, the need to become responsible and respectable members of society becomes one of the goals of the educational institution. This community as well as other communities live in what is called a "microwave generation" : the parents come home, grab something to eat, change clothes, and go in two different directions. The same is true for the children. With this happening in today's generation, the schools play a very important role in socializing children.

There were 36 districts that were organized in Larimar County before the turn of the century. One was formed in 1885, nine in 1886, fifteen in 1887, and eleven in 1888. There was one Joint District 1 organized in 1889 with Beaver County.

A county superintendent was in charge of all schools within the county. In order for the teachers to receive a pay check, they had to have all the members on the school board sign the check. This was difficult since the board members were not always available. When the consolidation began to take place, the county superintendent's job was eliminated. Instead of one person in charge of all the schools, each school had a principal.

School district consolidation has been an issue in rural communities for a number of years. A consolidated school will save money through a combination of scale economics. Better qualified teachers and administration could be hired because fewer

teachers were needed due to consolidation. Consolidation would bring about better buildings, more courses, and more up to date equipment (Sher and Tompkins: 1977;45).

Rural people are opposed to consolidation because the schools are symbols of local pride and solidarity. They are also opposed because of the functions which take place at the school. The school is a central point for social and recreational activities of the community. When consolidation takes place, the people feel a loss of pride and feel that their community will die (Rogers, Burdge, Korsching, Donnermeyer: 1988; 141-143).

According to Maxwell (1981; 21), rural schools are a primary source of pride and stability. There is an informal, familial environment which exists. Teaching the "basics" is highly successful. Older students help with the younger students, and an equal opportunity is available for each student.

The link between school and community is an important one. This is mentioned in Works and Lesser (1942), Maxwell (1981; 24), and Mclean (1981; 59):

It has become increasingly evident that the welfare of the school is inextricably linked with that of the community; the school cannot flourish if the community it serves does not. This is so, not only because the school needs the support of the community, but because the community itself exerts important educational influence (68-69).

Economics

Herbert Spencer (1926; 15) felt economics revolved around an increase in technology or being able to manipulate the natural resources; expand production and distribution of goods and services; accumulate capital and a change in the organization of labor. These processes are efforts to achieve greater levels of adaptation to the environment plus being able to meet escalating needs of humans. In other words, there is always pressure for economic reorganization.

Rural America is home to nearly one-fourth of the country's people. This area experiences lower incomes, fewer opportunities for jobs, and higher unemployment and underemployment than does its counterpart, urban America (Pulver: 1989; 1). A severe economic recession began in the 1980's which ended a period of strong rural economic growth (Brown and Deavers: 1987; 77). There are a number of influences at the international level which contributed to the slowdown of rural economy. Some of the influences include, increased foreign competition and a strong dollar but a weak world market which had a negative effect on manufacturing and agriculture. Structural changes in agriculture plus weather-related farming disasters created economic pressure on rural communities (Wilkinson: 1987; 77).

The state of Kansas estimated a total loss of \$1.6 billion in 1988-1989 to its economy due to drought (Tierney, Darling, Willard: 1989; 25).

Economic development for community development has distinctive characteristics that economic development alone might not have. Economic development for community development seeks to increase the base of resources for rural people to meet their needs; encourage the development of services, groups, and facilities that are needed for a complete local society; seeks to reduce inequality; provides for and depends upon local community action and involvement. If economic development for community development would do all this, then rural economic development could contribute directly to rural social well-being both by providing jobs and income and by encouraging community development (Wilkinson: 1991; 107).

Edward Clark (1976; 85-92) observes five possible ways to enhance rural economic growth. These five ways are partial and helpful, but none are complete.

1. Increasing resource availability refers to providing lower cost resources such as infrastructure and service and technical assistance.
2. Advanced technology refers to developing new or improved products and services through research.
3. Expanding markets refers to focusing on new sources of demand for a region's goods and services.

4. Conquering geographic space refers to determining what role spatial relationship has to regional growth.
5. Building institutions will encourage and sustain growth.

A way in which rural economic development can be successful is to identify and systematically implement options which are likely to have positive influence with minimum cost to taxpayers (Gillis: 1991; 131).

Another way to revitalize rural economy is by recognizing and adapting to new values or currency. The current currency can be defined as communication technology. The new benchmark of economic vitality is being able to move, acquire, analyze, and assimilate information (Taylor and Smith-Dickson: 1990; 183).

The key to the future of many rural communities will be their ability to broaden the economic base (Leistriz, Rathge, Ekstrom: 1989; 46). Many communities will face declining economy, a falling population and reduction in the tax base, in the absence of new or expanding sector activity which helps to offset the agriculture decline.

Programs focusing on economic development, education and technical assistance for local business operators, and alternative delivery systems for community services must receive high priority if the impacts of the farm crisis on rural communities are to be eased (Leistriz, Rathge, Ekstrom: 1989; 46).

The past year has seen great changes in the eastern European nations of our world. Because of the restructuring of these nations, there has been a growing demand for the resources produced in rural communities. It will also change world markets considerably. Hopefully, the production of goods will be needed to aid other communities economically and help those nations who are trying to become independent.

Technology

Technology provided people with alternatives which they did not have before. For example, the making of automobiles, improved refrigerators, and television gave people

a new look on life. They did not have to use the horse and buggy to go to town, they would take their automobile instead (Lauer: 1991; 168-175).

One may see these items as isolating people. They take their automobile to the grocery store and upon returning home, the person does not need to return for a few days because of prolonged storage with the new improved refrigerator. Television brings entertainment into the home so there is no need to go to the neighbors for a social visit. Even though one may see these items as isolating people, they can put the person into the community. The automobile allows people to take trips to relatives or friends homes who they have not seen for years. The refrigerator frees the person to cultivate interpersonal relationships lessening time spent shopping for groceries (Lauer: 1991; 168-175).

Four ways in which technology makes social changes.

1. Technology increases alternatives.
2. Technology alters the patterns of interaction. For example if a person becomes attached to a computer game, he/she may neglect the rest of the family.
3. Technology may create new social problems like pollution.
4. Technology has the ability to set off a chain reaction for other developments (Lauer: 1991; 168-175).

The influence of technology on agriculture has been from labor intensive to capital intensive. According to Miller (1972), farmers used to use simple tools like the harrow, spade, and fork along with horses. Now they use mechanized farm equipment. Along with mechanized equipment came improved breeding of livestock and plants. Also, people were working on scientific methods of insect control and soil replenishment (Poplin: 1972; 216-217).

With the increase of technology in agriculture, productivity has risen. The productivity increase has come from technology allowing one man to farm more acres

with less effort and time. By technology allowing one man to do more work with less effort and time, the employment of hired hands on farms decreases (Eldridge:1972; B1).

Technology in society is oriented toward maximizing returns on investments, rather than toward more socially utilitarian objectives (Mercer: 1981; 24).

Modern technology has changed the traditional conditions of natural resource use. For example, hybrid seeds, fertilizers, chemicals, pesticides, and machinery from outside the rural ecosystem have had profound environmental impacts. Many now view farming, mining, and timber production as ecologically undesirable because these industries intervene in natural systems in major ways. Many traditional rural residents cannot accept such a point of view because their jobs and their businesses have depended on natural resource extraction and use (Castle: 1991, 49).

Turning now to the information age, if rural communities do not want to be left behind by the rest of the world, they need to obtain the ability to send and receive all types of information. They also need to be aware of the need for technical information in order to participate in the information age (Taylor and Smith-Dickson: 1990; 184).

Some citizens try to ignore certain problems until they become threatening. According to Warren (1955; 361), in some communities, problems are largely ignored until the situation has become so critical as to threaten a large number of people directly. Then, action is taken, but only enough to patch things up for a while until another similar crisis comes along. Some communities, alert to problems as they arise, can confront them with action. They purposefully build the type of social situation in which wholesome community living does not produce the same problems over again.

Farms

Both farm and nonfarm people make up the rural population in the United States. Less than one-tenth of the rural population are farmers who live in the open-country (Rogers, Burdge, Korsching, Donnermeyer: 1988; 19).

Back in 1800, farmers constituted about 87% of the U.S. work force; the percentage fell to one-third by 1900. Today it is only 2%. The number of farm people in the total population continues to decrease as farmers become more productive. There were about 14 million U.S. farms in 1910-1920; this number had declined to about 3 million by 1970, and a further decrease to about 2.5 million is predicted by the year 2000 (Rogers, Burdge, Korsching, Donnermeyer: 1988; 21).

Three-fourths of the nations food and fiber is grown by the 307,000 largest U.S. farms. The average gross income of these farms in 1987 was \$355,000 with an average of \$1.2 million assets (Drabenstott: 1987; 93).

Only one percent of agriculture's net income goes to the farms which are considered small. Farm size is figured on annual sales. If the annual sale is less than \$40,000 then the farm is considered small (Drabenstott: 1987; 93).

There are four things which counties have if they are farm dependent: One, large farms. Two, fewer off-farm employment opportunities and lower off-farm income. Three, much more volatility of the total economy to the financial conditions of agriculture. Four, generally, a predominant view that agriculture is the force that drives the whole economy (Harrington: 1987; 67).

The first grain raised in the county was corn. Due to the hot winds and low moisture it was hard to grow. Under favorable conditions some corn was harvested. Wheat, barley, and oats were tried but were not dependable. The people lacked the knowledge of how to raise crops on the new land, but once the knowledge was obtained, the above crops became dependable.

Broomcorn was the main money crop in southwestern Kansas and eastern Colorado in the late 1890's and early 1900's. After 1915-1916, production of broomcorn gradually declined. Broomcorn was found to be adapted to the soil and climate where other crops were not. Broomcorn was unique due to the fact no one ever perfected a harvest machine for it. The harvester would pull or hand-top an armload, then it was evenly piled on the ground with the heads in one direction. Men would come along later

with a long-bed wagon and haul it to be seeded and bailed.

J. J. Sommons moved to the county around 1916 and proved the value of summer-fallow for wheat production in this low-rainfall area. It soon became an accepted practice and wheat became a big crop in the county.

The main type of farming in Larimar County is dryland. The reason being the water table is being depleted rapidly and is becoming a major concern for farming and townspeople alike. There has been talk of controlling the amount of water being used by the farmers and the townspeople. If something is not done soon, there could be another "Dirty Thirties." The above information was obtained from the Larimar County History Book of 1982.

The fall harvest of 1977 capped the third successive year of economic disaster for most American farmers. In August and September farmers around the United States staged a protest demonstration against the perceived unfairness of the markets and the indifference of the Washington bureaucrats (Pearson: 1980; 283).

Many angry farmers held meetings in early September. The farmers talked of a labor strike for 100% of parity. This is exactly what several of them did. They lined their tractors along the roads with signs saying, "This farm on Strike for 100% Parity." Several thousand farmers, on December 10, 1977, drove their four-wheel tractors through the streets of the National Capital for 100% parity (Pearson: 1980; 283). The demonstration was one of the largest ever experienced.

In this community, one can see the decline of the small farm due to vastly inflated operating expenses. With the inflated expenses, the farmer finds it difficult to be economically solvent regardless of his effort. Many farm owners find themselves borrowing more money in order to finance their operations. Due to the substantial amount of borrowing and the decrease of grain prices, many farmers finally resort to

bankruptcy. The decline of the small farm plagues all of America, not just this Kansas community.

Smaller farms are not the only ones facing economic problems, for the larger farms also face difficulty. One way for both groups of farmers to avert financial disaster is to put their land into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The CRP, a government program, allows farmers to plant their fields to grass, and the government pays them for not planting money crops. The farmer, however, must keep the land mowed.

Natural Gas Companies

William Stinner discovered one of the largest gas fields in Kansas in 1927 and it was named the Hugoton Gas Field. The natural gas companies of the community have greatly changed the economy. Their employers and employees came to make their homes in the community.

The first gas-related industry was the Peerless Company's carbon black plant. Another industry that has been developed from natural gas is the production of helium. By the mid-fifties, enough Liquid Petroleum (LP)-gas was produced to supply cooking, refrigeration and heating for a city of 40,000 people. Then in 1940, United Production built a plant near Rye in order to extract the carbon from the "wet" natural gas. The plant, expanded in 1943, becoming the largest such installation in the world.

Family

Families were the basic unit in economy with the head of the household the provider for his family. The family represented the source of education and protection to the family. The socialization process was the families responsibility. The families

made sure the children were well-integrated and contributed to society.

Today the family is still the basic unit in economy. However, in most families both parents must work in order to provide necessities and wants for their family. Many families today consist of one parent households. This situation can be caused by a divorce, spouse leaving spouse, or women who choose to be single parents. Because of these types of changes, the responsibility once provided for their family, has been shifted to the educational system. If the next generation is to be integrated and contributing members of society, educators must instill these characteristics and values into the children. Until the families start taking the responsibility that has shifted to the educators, there will probably be problems between families and educators.

According to Bakemeier and Garkovich:

Rural families and communities have suffered from neglect due to a narrow focus on urban America and the assumptions that the benefits of economic growth eventually trickle through society. This neglect has led to the high level of financial instability among rural families. . . If rural families are ever to achieve equity with their urban counterparts in living standards and quality of life, national policies must be consciously designed to reduce the social risks associated with rural residents (1991; 126).

The financial instability among rural families in Bellvue has come with the state wide mill levy. Property taxes will increase for some families and those families are going to have to turn inward and spend less instead of keeping up with their neighbors. When families have to start spending less, there will be less money for education, churches will receive less in offerings, and local businesses will see a decrease in purchases. With less spending, the community suffers.

Ethnic Diversity

Because a farm produces fruits, vegetables, sugar beets, and other staple crops, a large number of workers is needed (Ford: 1978; 155). Also, with the creation of

factory farms, work is diversified; as crating, packing, processing, and shipping now become necessary. This diversification in agriculture requires a labor force (Moore: 1970; 21). This labor force in time was met in this particular community through Mexican-Americans who migrated to the area. Mexican-American migrant workers leave their home communities in early spring and return in the late fall after working the fields in the West and Midwest (Ford: 1978; 155). If and when these families settle, relatives often join them. Other family members usually would not come until the first arrivals obtained a secure economic situation. Once they secure a base, they assist their relatives in securing employment and housing (Ford: 1978; 155).

According to Bean and Tienda (1987) in 1980 more than 19% of Hispanics lived in non-metropolitan settings (Gutierrez and Eckert: 1991; 247-263). As the ethnic group population increases, representation of members in position of power and authority in the community's institutional structure becomes more noticeable (Warren: 1963; 346).

No longer a silent minority, if in reality they ever were, both the rural and urban Mexican-American groupings will be heard from in the future as they struggle to improve their situation in America society (Ford: 1978; 159).

Many of the Mexican-Americans in this community came with the growth of diversified agriculture production in the area. They were hired by the farmers, as cheap labor, to work in the fields. Quite a number of those who came to the area have stayed, but many leave each fall and return in the spring to work on roguing crews that clean foreign plants from milo and corn.

At least one-fourth of the community is composed of Mexican-Americans. As the community reflects more ethnic diversity, consensual building of shared values becomes more difficult. It is foreseen that the Mexican-Americans will become more involved with community affairs. With them becoming more involved, the ethnic diversity in the

community will become more pronounced. Thus, what Warren (1973; 346) has said about ethnic groups gaining in population becomes more noticeable. This also reiterates what Ford(1978; 159) said about the minority no longer being silent but struggling to improve its situation in society.

Besides the Mexican-American in the community, there is a Mennonite community. They have built their own school plus their own church. Mennonite children go only through the eighth grade in their own schools, but are restricted from attending high school. As one resident commented, many of these students do not go on to contribute their possible leadership skills in the larger community.

These people are not part of the larger community since they do not vote when there is an issue or election. In one sense they are part of the larger community, since some of them work for employers in town, shop in town, and many plant production seed for the seed plant. Because their beliefs are stringent, they do not participate in many of the community organizations. However, they do volunteer work such as canning meat for the hungry of the world and are very generous with their talents doing relief work after natural disasters.

Politics (Leadership)

In rural communities, situations for leadership are varied. With this in mind, a leader must become aware of the basic principles which can be used as guides to social action. Rural people are very traditional and are highly individualistic which causes them to be very cautious about accepting a leader.

Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and followers (Gardner: 1990; 1).

Five skills Gardner (1990; 119) sees as critically important for leaders are:

1. Agreement Building - The capacity to build trust is essential to the activities in which the leader may become involved.
2. Networking - Creating and recreating necessary linkages.
3. Exercising Nonjurisdictional Power - Having the knowledge to exercise other legitimate forms of power -- power of the media, public opinion, and ideas.
4. Institution Building - Leaders have a sense of where the system should be going and institutionalize the problem solving which will get the system there.
5. Flexibility - Being able to adjust to the circumstances at hand.

According to Cronin (1985), effective leaders are people concerned with more than mechanics of office. A creative leader is one who takes risk and is always asking and searching for what is right. They sense new directions, possibilities, and welcome change (Feeney: 1990; 67). Also leaders look for personnel to assist in reaching their goals.

Poplin (1972; 200-201), describes two types of leaders. One is a generalist and the other is a specialist. The generalist confines his interest to the local community. This person does not become involved in national or international issues. The specialist is just the opposite, he/she is more worldly in his/her behavior and attitude. This person becomes involved with national and international issues.

With each leader comes a new form, style, and qualities. Some leaders are quiet where others can be heard in the next county. Their strengths may come from eloquence, judgement, and courage. The kind of strength depends on the person (Gardner: 1990; 5).

Leaders should know their strengths and weaknesses. Leaders need the ability to get along with people, be enthusiastic and imaginative, have the capacity to learn new behavior, have the ability to listen, and choose qualified persons to help compensate for their weaknesses. (Feeney: 1990; 65).

Roskens (1988) states leaders are those individuals who possess a

knowledge of excellence and who inspire those with whom they live and work to pursue that same objective. Excellence here is a relative concept, a sense of what is best for an individual or a community. It is the willingness to define goals, and the courage to pursue them (Feeney: 1990; 68).

Leadership leads to goal achievement, involves interaction and influence, and it may involve changing the structure or behavior of groups and organizations in a community. Critical variables of a leader include being able to induce compliance or persuade others. The leader's influence will usually depend on the time and circumstances (Lasseby and Fernandez: 1976; 11).

A leader should keep an appropriate social distance, show no favorites, control his emotions, command respect, and be objective and fair (Gibb: 1976; 107).

In order for a rural community to survive, it must retain its leaders and develop new leadership which can understand the informational technology (Taylor and Smith Dickson: 1990; 180).

Six months participant observation and twenty-two interviews, revealed four main leaders of Larimar County. The four leaders consisted of a superintendent, banker, county commissioner, and chamber chief executive officer. Those interviewed spoke highly of these four persons, especially regarding the new school finance bill. Data revealed these four persons became involved approximately at the beginning of the controversy concerning the school finance bill. As the controversy grew, so did the involvement of these leaders.

After interviewing these four leaders, all four at some point in time had gone to Marshall to voice their concerns concerning the school finance bill. They not only voiced their concerns in Marshall but also in Bellvue. Town meetings were held to inform citizens of the community of the possible outcomes of the new school finance bill.

Those interviewed see these four persons as leaders because they have stayed involved at all times. They did not quit trying to inform people of the possible outcomes

even when people were not listening. They were able to establish trust with the community by staying informed and not quitting even after the bill was passed. These leaders at present are still abreast of the issues and are hoping the 1993 legislative session will listen to the concerns and rework the school finance formula.

In summary, one can see Larimar County has had several changes over the years. The changes which were covered dealt with the five social institutions, and how these institutions have affected past and present changes in communities. The next chapter deals with the methodology and theory used for gathering and interpreting data.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND THEORY

Methods

Qualitative research methods were used in this research study. The methods used include interviews, participant observation, and historical archival analysis. As stated earlier the names of towns, counties, and persons have been changed in order to maintain anonymity.

A short historical review was used to trace the beginning of the community, the relocation of the community, and bringing the community to the present time. By examining the history, the most important developments concerning the community are highlighted. Observations include when consolidation of schools began to take place, when the natural gas companies began to appear, how farming changed over the years, plus how the local churches came to terms with these changes.

Historical analysis contributes to the study in a number of ways. Without examining the history of the community, the reasons the community formed as it has would not be known. Without history, no one would know how the small schools of the community consolidated into the five main schools. Also, by not looking at the history of a community, one is unable to understand why things are the way they are; in other words, one would be leaving out a portion of the building blocks. Everything is built on something previously done.

The information obtained for the historical archival analysis came from audio-visual tapes of many long-time community residents. These interviews were put on tapes that had been given to the local library. Also, a history book of the community, newspapers, and oral historians provided added information.

The interview schedule focused on questions concerning social and structural community changes (See Appendix A). The key to the interviewing process was to establish trust between the interviewer and interviewee. Trust was established with those interviewed by not using their names and also by not being a stranger in the community. All those interviewed were more than happy to help in any way they could at any time.

Interviewees consisted of twenty-two residents of Bellvue with the exception of two who were outside the community. The twenty-two interviewees consisted of four main leaders. These four leaders consisted of a banker, chamber chief executive officer, county commissioner, and a superintendent of schools. The other eighteen interviewees were comprised from the five social institutions. Four were interviewed from education, five from economics, two from politics, three from religion, and four from family. All those interviewed could have been in more than one institution. The interviews lasted from an hour to an hour and a half. As was mentioned above, all interviews were recorded on tape. An index card with the five social institutions listed was used to aid with the interviews.

In order to obtain persons to interview, a method known to Kalton (1983; 35) and others as a snowball sample was used. The first person picked for this research was a person who was active in the community. This person, when interviewed, was asked for names of others whom could be contacted. Each person who was interviewed gave names of others who could be contacted. Those people receiving more than one

nomination were interviewed. After several interviews, the same names were being given. At this point, persons being interviewed were representatives from the five social institutions.

There were eight standard questions which were asked. The questions were open-ended in order to probe for more information. There were several occasions where further questions were asked. One question which sparked curiosity was asked by an interviewee, "Do you think the Governor will come to the Home Products Dinner?" [an annual event in the Bellvue community] After the question was asked, it was asked to several others. The answers were of a wide variety. Some said no, others felt that she would not be welcomed and wished they could "tar and feather her," while others hoped if she did come people would be respectful to her.

Out of twenty-two interviews there were two people who did not want to be interviewed. One person said he knew that the state-wide tax was going to hurt this area, but he really did not know anything more. The other person refused to be interviewed for fear of future court litigation aspect. Everyone else was very cooperative. At the end of each interview, the interviewees were asked if further information was needed if it would be possible to visit with them again. Each said they would be more than happy to help if further information were needed.

Another research method was six months of participant observation. A participant observer, according to Pollner and Emerson (1983; 235), is a field researcher who participates with those being studied, but at the same time undertakes research. There was no problem moving through the community freely, since the researcher was a long standing resident in the community. By not being a stranger, data was obtained that would have been hard for someone else to obtain.

There are dangers when using this method. Those who are being studied

may shift their attention to the research instead of focusing on their normal routines. Another danger is when the researcher becomes too involved in participating subjectively that detachment objectivity is lost.

There was a public meeting, concerning secession, held in Bellvue. A citizen from one of the nine counties was approached in hopes of obtaining more information. She was willing to help if more information was needed.

Two key community events occurred during the active phase of the research study. One, a Constitutional Convention was held in Bellvue September 11, 1992. The Constitution which was discussed would be used, if and when, western Kansas secedes. Second, the Home Products Dinner was also held in September in Bellvue. The researcher participated in both events.

Theory

Two theories which enhanced this study were structure-functionalism and social conflict theory. Both sociological theories were needed to explain the study results. By using only one theory, either the controversy or consensus would have been left out. By using both theories, the controversy and consensus will be covered. Both theories were complimentary of the other.

Structure-functionalism is a theoretical approach based on a view of society as complex interdependent institutions, each of which makes some contribution to the overall social stability.

Structure-functional analysis embodies certain characteristic features:

1. An emphasis on the whole system as the unit of analysis.
2. Postulation of particular functions as requisite to the maintenance of the whole system.
3. Concern to demonstrate the functional interdependence of diverse structures

within the whole system (Flanigan and Fogelman: 1965; 116).

The five social institutions (education, economics, politics, religion, family) can be seen as interdependent institutions; although, each one can be observed separately to a certain extent. Ultimately, they all hinge on one another with the economy often dictating the outcome of the other four institutions. These institutions help form a social structure for communities. In other words, the parts are observed in relation to the whole, and the whole in relation to the parts.

People of western and southwest Kansas feel with the state-wide mill levy, their social structure will dramatically change. The change will come in the form of loss of local control and autonomy. They also feel that quality education will change from excellent to mediocre.

Depending on how equality is defined, whether as a set of rights or a goal, each definition could be different. Equal or negative rights predictably lead to unequal distribution of wealth, power, and well-being. The opposite of equal or negative rights is genuine or positive rights. When admitting to certain positive rights, there may not be much difference between the two concepts (Neilson: 1985; 7). The difference between a positive and negative right or goal is the way in which one obtains equality.

A social system is always characterized by an institutionalized value system. The social system's first functional imperative is to maintain the integrity of that value system and its institutionalization. This process of maintenance means stabilization against pressure to change the value system (Parsons and Smelser: 1956; 16-17).

The value system of western and southwest Kansas has enabled the people to voice their opinion and also be able to take an active part in local government. The fear these people have is that some one (State) will dictate to them what, when, where, and how the five social institutions are to be controlled. If, and when, this happens, local control is jeopardized, creating a tyranny of the majority.

Tyranny of the majority creates an environment which causes individuals to have

no freedom of opinion, because public approval (or disapproval) overshadows individual opinion. The counter measure to the tyranny of the majority is to encourage the people to actively voice their opinion by taking an active role in government.

People of western and southwestern Kansas have taken part in voicing their opinions to the legislature. Several people went to the State Capital to give testimonies concerning the state-wide mill levy and how it would affect the southwest. (For more information concerning the state-wide mill levy see Appendix B). It would appear the testimonies given had no impact on the legislature's decision because the state-wide mill levy was voted in.

Once the state wide mill levy had passed, a few counties in southwest Kansas instigated an economic boycott and a secession movement. Both protests were instigated in hopes the legislature and others would hear their protests and check into the possible effects of the state-wide mill levy. At the time of the research study these protests had not significantly impacted the legislative consensus.

According to Buckley (1967; 9):

Any moderate changes in the elements or their interrelations away from the equilibrium position are counterbalanced by change tending to restore it.

The testimonies, economic boycott, and secession were counter measures to the ruling the legislatures made affecting the five social institutions. People of western and southwest Kansas want their social structure to stay the same with local control rather than state mandated decisions. Changes are hard for people to accept especially when they feel the security they have now will soon be gone. The testimonies in behalf of the economic boycott and secession movement are issues which gain public attention. These activities have many historical precedents.

Structure-functionalism is a conservative theory in terms of maintaining

the status quo. It defends the present order of things regardless of how moderate the change(s) might entail (Merton: 1968; 91). This is what western and southwest Kansas seem to be saying to state officials. They are trying to defend the present order of things because they have the presence of mind to look five or ten years into the future. If change(s) which they see become a reality, the results are thought to be devastating.

Some of the changes include a change from local government to state government. Consolidation of schools will mean the decline of several communities. One change which will cause hard feelings between urban and rural communities will be the issue of tax dollar allocation. Western and southwestern Kansans are paying more than their fair share and not receiving the "Bang for the Buck." In other words, they are not seeing a fair return on their tax money. These people are willing to pay their fair share of taxes, but when that change jeopardizes their community, they are willing to fight change and maintain the status quo.

Unlike structure-functionalism, social conflict theory tests society as a complex system characterized by inequality and conflict leading to social change. From a theoretical perspective social-conflict theory has contested the dominance of structure-functionalism in social research. The main features of conflict theory are:

1. They accused functionalist sociologies of disregarding conflicts of value and interest in human societies, or at best regarded these as a secondary phenomenon.
2. As an alternative to functionalism, they offered an account of both the integration of society and of social change emphasizing the role of power and coercion and the pursuit of economic and political interests in human affairs, as well as the more general role of conflict (Jary and Jary: 1991; 77).

Citizens of western and southwestern Kansas are experiencing social-conflict. The state legislature has instigated changes which affect the five social institutions. Many citizens of western and southwest Kansas are against this change. They see the change as causing inequality instead of equality. Eastern Kansas probably infer the

change as beneficial and helping the State of Kansas. They would probably view the change as equality because everyone is helping each other.

The economic boycott and secession movement has caused some conflict among citizens of southwest Kansas. There are those for the economic boycott and secession movement and others opposing the community action. Even though there is conflict concerning these issues, the interviewed citizens agree on the devastating effects of the state-wide mill levy.

Some of the interviewed citizens feel the economic boycott was a good idea as long as the businesses found vendors in the state. If the businesses were going to go out of state for vendors, then people opposed the idea. Many people sought medical attention in towns which were to be boycotted. This caused conflict with those who needed medical attention but also wanted to support the community in the economic boycott.

According to the research, the secession movement has also caused conflict among the citizens of southwest Kansas. There is a group of supporters who are willing to go all the way and form a new state. There are others who feel the secession movement should be used to get their frustration across to the rest of the state, but they are not wanting to form a new state.

As a participant observer some people would vote to secede if it comes to reality. Others want to see figures and research showing that nine southwest Kansas counties can support a new state. The people are looking ahead and knowing there are statehood issues which have not been discussed. Some of the retired educators and state employees are drawing money from the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System. These people want to know how a new state would affect their pensions. Also, those on Kansas Blue Cross-Blue Shield Health Insurance and other insurance carriers expressed concerns as to how a new state will affect their health care.

Participant observation and interviews revealed many questions such as the cost of setting up a state government, where will the capital be located, will taxes be higher than they are at the present time, and how will education be funded need to be answered before secession becomes a reality. These are questions which are not being answered. The lack of answers caused controversy between the supporters of secession and those trying to obtain answers. When questions are not being answered, particularly with this serious issue, people become very apprehensive regarding support for such a measure.

According to Simmel (1955; 65):

The group, because of its intimacy, can stand inner antagonism without breaking apart, since the strength of the synthetic forces can cope with that of their antithesis.

As a case in point, another conflict takes on the form of triangulation, with the points being the legislature, media, and citizens of southwest Kansas. This three-sided conflict was brought out at a secession meeting. The conflict oriented residents contend no one is really paying attention to anyone else but everyone wants their point heard.

The interviewed citizens feel the media and legislatures are not taking time to read letters, listen to what is being said, and print unbiased material. The media are running stories which fail to take seriously or even give attention to the true and real feelings of the people in southwestern Kansas. The media has adopted the urban philosophy rather than speaking to the rural concerns. If the people of southwest Kansas are to be heard, the media will need to start printing the rural point of view (Spokesperson: 9-11-92).

Several people when interviewed suggested the legislature and the Governor are more interested in getting re-elected than they are creating fair and equal education funded by fair and equal taxation. "The legislative leaders have totally ignored our protest vote for seceding. The Governor appears to be more interested in the Indians and

re-election than guaranteeing rural children an equal education so they can effectively compete in the fast changing world" (Spokesperson: 9-11-92).

According to Simmel (1955; 63):

The more liberalism penetrates not only economic and political conditions but also those of the family, sociabilities, the church, friendship, stratification, and general social intercourse - that is, the less these conditions are pre-determined and regulated by broad, historical norms and the more they are left to shifting forces or to an unstable equilibrium which must be attained from case to case - the more will their shape depend on continual competition.

The disadvantages of the state wide mill levy seen by the interviewees consist of the loss of local control and autonomy. The interviewees are afraid the state will be telling them, especially in school, how the subjects should be taught and what subjects should be taught. The interviews showed people do not think the state can do an adequate job in determining what rural school children need.

Another disadvantage found from the research was the idea of taxation without representation. The data revealed people are concerned about not having a political voice. The interviewees feel they are being taxed unfairly, even though the state wide mill levy was to be for equalization. One major company in Cherokee was granted a \$2 billion tax abatement for the next ten years. Those interviewed in southwest Kansas feel they are going to have to pay more taxes in order to help educate those children in Cherokee while education in Bellvue goes from excellent to mediocre.

School district consolidation has been an issue in rural communities for a number of years. A consolidated school will save money through a combination of scale economics. Better educated teachers and administration would be hired because fewer teachers are needed due to consolidation. Consolidation would bring about better buildings, more courses, and more up to date equipment (Sher and Tompkins: 1977;45).

Our position is simple--to paraphrase the words of Nathan Hale in

1776--"We know not what cause others may take, but as for us;
Give us equality or set us free" (Spokesperson: 9-11-92).

In summary, structure-functionalism and social conflict theories enhance the study. Each issue which is raised, can either be against change or for change. By the issues raised having two sides, theory flexibility was required. Thus, the use of both structure-functionalism and social conflict theory.

What is happening in western and southwestern Kansas can be understood by using C. Wright Mills', Sociological Imagination. Sociological imagination enables one to show the relation between personal problems and public issues. The citizens of western and southwestern Kansas feel and think the old accustomed ways are collapsing and the new beginnings are ambiguous. For many people in the region the concern is a personal problem.

When people cherish values and feel those values being threatened, they experience a crisis - either personal trouble or as a public issue. Values in western and southwestern Kansas are being threatened. By their values being threatened, the citizens are wondering how they, as individuals and as communities, are going to survive. The survival which is being referred to, is the extra tax burden which is being felt in western and southwestern Kansas.

The personal problem was mentioned above concerning the survival of individuals and communities. The public issue deals with the loss of local control. The citizens perceive when they lose local control, individuals along with communities will find surviving difficult; because, they will not have the freedom to handle issues like they once had since the state is in control. When and if the state mandates consolidation of school districts in western and southwestern Kansas, one will see several communities die, because the school in which children of these towns must attend are several miles away.

The citizens of western and southwestern Kansas have integrated their personal problems with the public issues. The research shows the citizens have come together for a common cause. They were brought together in two ways. The first was an economic boycott where the citizens of several counties stood together and did not buy from those areas which were boycotted. They stood together in hopes other people of Kansas would take notice and listen to what they had to say. The second way was a constitutional convention for secession. Many citizens of southwest Kansas are standing together in this movement in hopes the Governor and legislature will take them seriously and rework the school finance bill. The economic boycott and the secession movement are structural issues. According to Mills (1959; 10), in order to confront structural changes and solve them requires the consideration of political and economic issues which affect social institutions.

Using open-ended interview questions allowed for probing if necessary. By using the snowball sample, those persons who were well informed of the situation concerning the school finance bill were interviewed. Those interviewed were more than happy to tell what they knew and they were more than willing to help in any way they could. By being accepted in a non judgemental manner, the interview experience was made pleasurable and informative.

The next chapter discusses interview findings related to the school finance bill. The findings range from the beginning of the controversy over the school finance bill (1991) to the present occurrences. The chapter also deals with the five social institutions and how the school finance bill will or will not affect them.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Social Change

We should all really prefer," Karl Mannheim says, "to leave the great decisions of our time to fate. At bottom we are afraid to take the responsibility. But in the periods when change goes very deep we have no power to decide whether we wish to accept responsibility or not, to plan or not to plan (Hicks: 1946; 229).

There are two kinds of social change. One is change which alters the structure and function of society. The second is direct change caused by outsiders seeking to introduce new ideas in order to achieve goals they have defined (Rogers, Burdige, Korsching, Donnermeyer: 1988; 16-17).

Determining whether or not local action is taken and the degree of success depends on the attitudes of leaders and citizens toward community change (Ayres and Potter: 1989; 2). Change challenges our way of life plus encompassing the physical world in which we live. Change also challenges our basic values making it hard to predict what the culture of tomorrow will be (Lauer: 1991; 168-175).

Throughout the history of rural settlement there have been major and often sudden changes. This situation continues today with some rural settlement still living the traditional style while others are undergoing transformation (Brunce: 1982; 99). In rural social organizations, change has been seen with a decline in primary relationships (locality and kinship groups) and an increase in secondary relationships (government agencies and business firms). With the changes which are taking place,

rural people are becoming more formal, impersonal, and bureaucratic (Rogers, Burdge, Korsching, Donnermeyer: 1988; 16).

Decline of Rural Communities

There was an estimated migration of 500,000 people from rural to urban America during 1985-1986. During the 1980's, rural areas lost 212,000 manufacturing jobs. With the loss of jobs comes unemployment. In countries specializing in energy and mining, unemployment rose from 6-8% in 1976-1981 to 10-15% in 1982-1985 (John, Batie, Norris: 1988; 1).

As marketing, transportation, processing, and capital investment continues to increase, the agricultural dollar returning to a rural area has declined. The Great Plains rural communities have traditionally exported raw materials.

It will take a combination of favorable policies and well-organized state and local initiatives to return those resources locally long enough to assure that the profit accumulated in production and transformation circulates within the Great Plains (Flora: 1976; 163).

Industrialized agriculture will put pressure on many rural communities to become rural business centers. If they are not in a position to do this, they will have problems maintaining their viability (Knutson and Richardson: 1987; 119).

The less obvious problems are the consequences for local social institutions such as churches, business, and public service organizations. When young families leave rural areas, the membership in churches decline. The reason for the decline is young families have a high rate of church attendance. Community membership suffers because the pool of volunteers decline. Organizations which use young adults have trouble staffing programs. Fewer young adults diminish the ability to revitalize community organizations through leadership (Leistriz, Rathge, Ekstrom: 1989; 46).

A situation which is becoming common in rural societies is outside control of

resources. This prevents the community from taking control of their own destiny. Rural residents express apathy due to a sense of powerlessness (Gilg, Dillery, Furuseth, and McDonald: 1991; 13-14).

According to the research data, the powerlessness of a community may very well be felt in Larimar County if the proposed state mill levy is passed. The Governor of Kansas wanted to initiate a 45 mill levy state wide for education. The levy would have benefitted some communities while hurting others. It has been speculated the 45 mills is the first step for presenting an even higher mill levy. Newspaper articles revealed it would take at least 58 mills if not more to maintain present services to the district.

Five reasons which have been determined as why southwestern and western Kansas are opposed to the increase in mill levy.

1. Loss of local control of school and school budget.
2. Increase in property tax and decreased school budget.
3. Deterioration in economic growth in rural southwest Kansas.
4. Continued mill levy increases to fund increasing education needs plus financing a new state bureaucracy.
5. Sales and income tax increase.

(Taken from newspaper articles and interviews from citizens of western Kansas).

The feelings of western Kansas citizens along with those interviewed share the sentiments of this quote:

The universal complaint is that the law forces higher taxes on the mineral-rich, rural southwest to pay for overcrowded and under financed city schools; at the same time, it imposes spending restrictions that guarantee the consolidation or closing of dozens of small schools. And it is the death sentence for local autonomy in education (Hinson News: 6-6-92).

Even though many people in western Kansas see the state-wide mill levy as

negative, the majority of the state including the Governor, the Judge of the District Court Division Six, and Kansas National Education Association (KNEA) uphold the state-wide mill levy.

Five reasons the state-wide mill levy is being upheld.

1. Equal educational opportunity for each child.
2. Share wealth among rich and poor school districts.
3. Shifting of finance from local property levies to state sales and income taxes.
4. School taxes would be reduced and state aid increased.
5. Cut school districts property tax mill levy roughly in half, state-wide.

(Taken from several different newspapers in western Kansas). (See Appendix C for more information concerning the details of the state-wide mill levy and also which counties voted for the state-wide mill levy).

One of Bellvue's local citizens had this to say about the proposed tax:

Why should small rural communities in western Kansas pay for eastern Kansas's schools and other aspects of community life? Western Kansas expects their local industries to pay for their share of taxes, but in eastern Kansas the industries are tax-protected.

She had this to say as well:

Some of these small cities and school districts are now called rich; while Cherokee, with its wide variety of tax-protected industrial activity, is called poor (Bellvue News: 1992).

A prominent southwest Kansas attorney and former state Republican chairman wants people to secede from the state. He feels if western Kansas seceded from the state, it would show the eastern part of the state the level of protest to state tax plans plus Kansas school reform laws (Hinson News: 2-4-92).

This prominent attorney had this to say:

I think it is time to let the rest of the state, especially the urban areas, know how we feel about the tax policies that are sucking

the life blood out of us (Hinson News: 2-4-92).

If the alleged tax proposal is passed, there will be a decline in rural areas of western Kansas. People will not be able to afford the increase. The small business man will likewise not be able to afford to stay. If these people could see the results from the money they pay in taxes, they might not secede. They would consider staying if Cherokee started taxing their industries. Many of the people who were interviewed feel a sense of powerlessness. They are concerned that the state will take over their local communities and leave the communities without decision making policies concerning them.

According to Taylor and Smith-Dickson:

The decline of rural communities is directly related to the decline in the value of their economic resources. The economic decline of the Midwest was the result of the declining value of agriculture (1990; 183).

Present Occurrences

The problem concerning taxation and school finance has been building over the last two or three years if not longer. The tension which was building reached its peak when the proposed state-wide mill levy was passed June 1, 1992 and went into effect July 1, 1992. The research data suggests the tension peaked because the state-wide mill levy was an unfair tax without representation.

The State of Kansas sought a new formula for funding education. The lawmakers were being faced with how to raise the same money while shifting the tax burden from poor to wealthy districts. This plan is called a "share the wealth" plan or full state funding of local schools (Hinson News: 1-2-92). (For additional information on why the state changed the school finance law see Appendix D).

Determining school finance is complicated because it is interwoven with tax reform; in other words what affects one affects the other one. If the school raises the mill levy and it is voted in by the people, taxes will go up in that particular school

district. The Judge of the District Court Division Six outlined the parameters for school finance. (For details see Appendix E).

The first rumors of a uniform property tax was to be 58 mills. The 58 mill state-wide property tax provided the basis for determining the winners or losers of each district in the 1992 legislature. If the school district levy was over 58 mills, there would be a reduction in property taxes and those districts were winners, but if the school district levy was under 58 mills there would be an increase in property taxes and those districts were losers (Sunday Capital: 10-20-91).

If the 58 mill levy would have gone into effect, taxes would have been increased in 165 school districts out of 304 districts. The chairman of the Senate Education Committee believed the mills were too high and the legislature would not pass such an increase. The chairman of the House Tax Committee also agreed with the chairman of the Senate Education Committee. The chairman of the House Tax Committee felt there was not enough support. In order to gain the support, the levy must be lower (Hinson News: 12-31-91; 1-2-92).

Besides the legislature not supporting the 58 mills, those interviewed were not supportive. The increase was going to hurt over half of the school districts. If this levy was put to a vote, it would have been voted down. Appendix C shows the mills for the districts for the 1991-1992 school year. When one observes the table, it is easy to see which districts would have voted the 58 mill levy down.

The state-wide mill levy was proposed by the Governor of Kansas. The mill was to be at 45 which would benefit some districts while at the same time be a disaster for others (Kansas City Star: 2-12-92).

The state-wide mill levy of 45 which was proposed would allow 253 districts to receive property tax reductions and would increase property taxes in 51 districts. For

the upcoming school year 105 districts would receive less money for operation expenses. (Marshall Capital: 1-22-92).

With this mill levy the winners were those who received both property tax cuts and money to spend on education. The losers comprised two categories. The first were those who have property tax less than 45 mills and would see an increase in property tax. Secondly, those with mill levies over 45 would receive lower amounts of money to operate their schools (Marshall Capital: 1-22-92).

Residents and officials from western and southwestern Kansas school districts attacked the 45 mills for the new school formula. There were between 350 and 400 who filled the Manner Conference "Centre" at the Kansas Expocentre to show their disapproval of the school finance bill (Marshall Capital: 2-14-92). There were approximately 150 residents from Bellvue who went to oppose the new school finance bill. Several of those who went gave testimonies telling how it would affect western Kansas and particularly southwestern Kansas.

Newspaper accounts and interviews indicated the proposed school aid plan robbed them of local control and their quality of education would be driven to mediocrity. Those school districts which are above the mineral-rich Hugoton gas field in southwest Kansas plus the wealthiest county in the state were opposed, because they felt that their wealth was going to finance a deluxe school system (Marshall Capital: 2-14-92). The money was leaving the wealthy districts never to return; in other words, they were not going to get the, "bang for the buck."

The reason the Governor proposed the state-wide mill levy of 45 was because she had promised to cut property taxes. The state-wide 45 mill levy would allow her to carry out her promise for at least one year in 253 out of 304 school districts (Torrington Telegram: 3-10-92).

The citizens of western Kansas lobbied and went to the Capital to voice their disapproval; consequently, the school finance bill was not passed. Another thing which may have helped was the senior citizens of Larimar County wrote approximately 2,100 letters in two days (Spokesperson for the senior citizens: 1992). Senior citizens were not the only ones writing letters. There were many other citizens in western Kansas and particularly in southwestern Kansas who also made their disapproval heard.

The state-wide mill levy which finally passed was 32 mills. The school finance bill passed after four and a half hours of debate, as opponents fought a losing battle. The House approved it, 91-34 and the Senate also approved with a 22-18 vote.

School Finance Bill #2892 was passed. This school finance bill is referred to as a three legged stool with the seat being school finance. The legs are property tax, income tax, and sales tax. These three legs are used to help finance the schools within the state.

The new school finance bill will lower property taxes in 294 school districts out of 304. The citizens making up the other 10 school districts are very concerned about the economic effect of the state-wide 32 mills.

As mentioned earlier, taxation starts a rippling effect. When taxes increase, the increase is felt throughout every aspect of community life. Businesses, as well as private citizens, are affected adversely. Increased taxation affects the spending policies of families. More money must be spent on necessities and less on recreation and other luxuries. Since the regional economy has been sluggish, reflecting national trends, several businesses have already failed in small towns.

According to a local teacher, if taxes are at a maximum, property owners may not be willing to vote for the increases necessary for school improvements or increased teachers salaries. Thus, educational quality and quality educational programs may diminish or disappear. Minority groups feel some programs benefitting their

youngsters will be the first programs eliminated. With the increasing tax measure, there could easily be less money for educating college age children. This is unfortunate as it could easily affect their earning powers when they join the work force.

The research data showed, schools and property owners are not the only ones being hurt. Senior citizens are also being hurt. Higher taxes would be devastating for them. People who have invested their money to help pay for living expenses are now going to receive lower income. It also causes them to be either indifferent or negative about the needs of schools, community services, roads and streets, and other community problems.

According to an automobile dealer, there is no way to gauge the far-reaching rippling effect of this tax on the citizens of western Kansas. Those interviewed are frustrated and believe they are being asked to help fund the education of children in eastern Kansas because large companies are not paying their fair share of taxes since tax advantages are granted them.

Since population is sparse and representatives are few in western Kansas, those interviewed believe this tax is discriminating. Hopefully, the school tax issue will be settled fairly, by the courts.

According to a county commissioner:

Communities like Bellvue, I feel, are several steps ahead of the thought process of the other communities across the state of Kansas because many of them are going to see property tax relief. They are not going to see property tax reduction, they are going to see property tax relief. But in real reality, what this school finance bill is is a tax shift. A burden of the tax shift it is not a total tax relief package. . . Since Bellvue was one of those communities whose mill levy was lower than most of the 304 school districts in the State of Kansas we can see the future since it is going to cost us almost from the beginning. We can see the devastating effects that it is going to cause in the future. Other communities are looking at it as only property tax relief today. In four to five years from now there will probably be a short fall of a half million dollars. For many people there will be a short fall before we ever get through the first year. The second year there

will be a tremendous short fall and that money is going to have to come from somewhere. So that 32 mills is either going to have to skyrocket in order to stay up with the cost of education or they are going to have to raise sales tax again which is not a very popular idea. Urban communities such as Keenesburg and Cherokee compete with other cities in other states businesses and they do not want that sales tax up there.

As one can see the new school finance bill is something which will be around for some time. It will be the talk in the local coffee shops whether or not it is good or bad. It is an issue which will be discussed for quite some time.

Tax and Authority Shift

The new school finance bill was to be a tax relief package but in reality was a tax shift. The legislature and Governor has provided the State of Kansas with a tax increase in order to finance schools through a tax shift with additional new taxes.

By itself, this shift in power is not the source of western resentment. The fear is that the majority may use its power to dominate the minority. The changes in state law have been designed to raid the western economy and subsidize growth - more jobs, bigger industries, lower taxes and better schools - in the metropolitan area (Hinson News: 7-19-92).

The shift of taxes is from the big business to the small taxpayers. Those who will reap the benefit from the shift are those communities who have the big businesses which use tax abatements. Tax abatements are used to get big business into a community. The business is then exempt from taxes which is now forcing the mineral-rich southwest Kansas to pay. (For information concerning exemptions see Appendix F).

The shift will also include a shift from local school board taxing authority to the state. The dollars which were locally controlled will now be controlled by the state. Since the state holds the purse strings, the mandates will be more enforced.

The sparsely populated western Kansas has a lot to do with the shift in power or authority. Population in rural western Kansas has been losing tens of thousands of people in the decade leading to the 1990 census. The decline of rural, western Kansas

people is mostly the younger generation who have left farm country for cities or metropolitan areas. Many possibly have gone to other states. "The shifting populations have meant a loss of rural power and greater sway for cities and suburbs at the State-House" (Hinson News: 7-18-92). The Kansas Statistical Abstracts indicated (1990-1991; 20-23), the population in southwest Kansas has slowly increased since 1950 in most counties. Larimar county went from 5,961 in 1970 to 7,159 in 1990. (For further information concerning population shift see Appendix G).

Two state senators and four members of the House of Representatives in western Kansas will be lost when legislative districts are reappointed (Hinson News: 7-18-92). The people in western Kansas feel that when they lose representation, they have lost their voice in the political arena. "Although the fundamental issue in reapportionment is equal representation for all citizens, the protest today is that the new order is as skewed for the east as it once had been for the west" (Hinson News: 7-18-92). (To see the before and after changes of the legislative districts, see Appendix H).

Rural Versus Urban

The school finance bill has brought the rural Vs. urban issue to a head. Two theorists which discuss the issue of rural Vs. urban are Ferdinand Toennies and Emile Durkheim. Toennies discusses the differences using gemeinschaft and gesellschaft, and Durkheim uses mechanical and organic solidarity to discuss the differences.

Toennies gemeinschaft refers to people in rural areas who are strongly bound together by kinship, neighborhood and friendship. Gesellschaft refers to people who are motivated by self-interest rather than the well being of everyone; in other words, city dwellers (Nash: 1980; 13-17).

Durkheims mechanical solidarity is parallel to Toennies gemeinschaft.

Mechanical solidarity is social bonds, based on shared moral sentiments. He feels with this type of solidarity, the people feel they belong together. Organic solidarity is parallel to Toennies gesellschaft. Organic solidarity is based on specialization with differences arising from people who no longer conform to one another (Nash: 1980;14-17).

This school finance bill has caused a definite rift between rural and urban Kansas and between western and eastern Kansas. Counties in mineral-rich western Kansas feel they are paying for tax advantages given to large companies in heavily industrialized eastern Kansas towns and are disgruntled enough to talk of secession. Bellvue is experiencing the growth of cities which erodes traditional social relations in favor of temporary and impersonal ties of businesses. This is seen by many people in western Kansas as a tax shift.

The state representative for the district where Bellvue is located feels that it is very much a rural Vs. urban issue. He said:

The old school finance formula worked fine as long as the urban areas received the benefits but the last two or three years the benefits have started going out to the rural areas and the urban areas saw their benefits decrease and the rural area benefits increased and so all of a sudden it was not fair.

Several people of Bellvue whom I interviewed alluded to the fact that Bellvue and other communities of western Kansas do not have advantages like a larger community has and also cannot receive the benefits of a large community. A few of the things which western Kansas does not have are four lane highways, the large shopping malls, power in population, cultural events, major airports, and four year colleges.

Another fact alluded to was the 32 mills would escalate for western Kansas every year while cities in eastern Kansas continue to reap the benefits of giving tax breaks. The tax breaks are given to large companies in order to entice them to bring their

companies to eastern cities. In short the shift from a gemeinschaft to a gesellschaft community can be observed.

Loss of Local Control

When asking the question, "What's the biggest concern: taxation without representation or loss of local control?", the answers received were not clear cut. The majority answered loss of local control with several answering the two are one and the same and equally important.

According to a State Representative, the loss of local control stems back to when we went away from one legislator per county and when the Supreme and Warren Court decided to go with the one man one vote in both houses. He felt that this is when we lost our ability to speak for ourselves. He states:

We became a minority when they began to expand our districts and included four or five districts and had to compete with Cherokee that has 13 or 14 representatives.

(For information on votes in the legislature see Appendix I).

The majority of those interviewed felt that the state should not be able to say you have something we want and we are going to take it away from you. The fear is that some one else (State) will be telling them what , when, where, and how to spend their money. Once the state gets the dollars into the treasury, they will be able to dictate to everyone which makes local control very minimal.

A superintendent comments after spending time at the state capital:

If you talk to key people or organizations at the state capital the concept of local control is a myth, they view it as a myth. From a stand point of a rural area I think we realize that there is such a thing as local control and it can be defined in different ways. One way is the fact you and I can sit down and we can talk to the county commissioners and maybe have some impact.

The Chamber Chief Executive Officer (CEO) felt that at the current time taxation

without representation was a big concern. He states:

It is taxation without representation and the problem comes from the fact that as the population shrinks, we are representatives of a broader area. The delegations of Cherokee, Marshall, and Waterford can come together to have enough votes in the House of Representatives to out vote or vote in something and we cannot do anything about it. As Cherokee gets bigger and we have less, there is more area which means we have less representation. People feel slighted. They pay in taxes and are not getting any representation.

Many of those interviewed felt taxation without representation and loss of local control are one and the same or at least equally important. People in western Kansas or at least southwestern Kansas have always had local control and representation for their tax base. With this new school finance bill they feel they have lost local control and with the loss have also lost representation. Many feel that one is making the other happen..

A local minister had this to say:

We have representation but we have a limited number of representatives for this population being so thin. . . We are represented but there is a large loss of money, it is not the fact that we are not represented but instead there is a high volume of money leaving and very little returning. The alternative to having more representatives than we do and the senators in the state legislature is to have developed smart ways of providing our issues which the regional identity does.

He goes on to say:

Who is going to make the decisions? There will be less and less people making decisions and the people are going to have less and less understanding of indigenous problems in any of the areas.

A local banker has this to say concerning loss of local control and representation.

I feel that the people in the local county are smarter than anybody else can be. So whether it be loss of local control or taxation without representation it is the same thing. If you have the power to tax another entity and get taxes into your coffers, it builds greed. When we start building greed, then it undercuts our values.

Consolidation of Schools

The research indicated the implied threat of the school finance bill on some school districts, may cause them to relocate somewhere else unless the courts find the school finance bill unconstitutional. The school districts which may be in danger are the smaller ones. This is unfortunate because smaller schools are of community interest and they provide quality education for their students.

I asked a Representative if there had been any talk of consolidation. He answered by saying, "Yes." He then went on to say:

If you look back at the history, part of this problem has been brought about when some districts consolidated or unified and some districts did not. In southwest Kansas we consolidated in the 40-50's and then we unified which was more consolidation in the 60's. We have really concentrated our educational facilities as much as they can be concentrated.

If one would observe a Kansas State map, especially west and southwest Kansas, one would be able to see the problem of consolidating. A problem which would have to be dealt with would be distance; in other words, busing students to new locations. There is a state law which prohibits any child riding the bus longer than an hour. If consolidation were to take place, there would be children riding longer than an hour.

Consolidation will bring about loss of a community focus and vitality. According to Rogers, Burdge, Horsching, Donnermeyer: Most rural people view their schools as symbols of local pride and solidarity, hate to lose them, and feel the loss will result in a dying community (1988; 141).

Not only will consolidation of schools destroy towns and communities, but it will also destroy those who live in rural areas. As more people go to the cities, the more voice the urban people receive and the less voice the rural people will receive. The urban people will have total control. It is like a puppet on a string, the rural areas are

the puppet and the urban areas hold and control the strings.

Tyranny of the Majority

The social observer Alexis de Tocqueville left France in 1831 for a nine month travel in America. While in America he made several observations, one being the creation of an egalitarian society (Heffner: 1984; 9-11). The goal of being equal is being able to say I am as good as you and you are as good as me. Even though everyone is to be equal, it does not usually work that way. Instead equality gives rise to individualism (self-sufficiency) or conformity (tyranny of the majority).

Tyranny of the majority creates an environment which causes individuals to have no freedom of opinion, because public approval (or disapproval) overshadows individual opinion. The counter measure to the tyranny of the majority is to encourage the people to actively voice their opinion by taking an active and educated role in government.

Tyranny of the majority accurately describes what has happened to western Kansas concerning the above mentioned issues. Sparse population in western Kansas has made it a minority when considering the rest of the state, based solely on population density. The population in western Kansas is sparse compared to eastern Kansas. With eastern Kansas having a greater number of people, they receive benefits which western Kansas does not receive. (Appendix G shows the population of the different areas in Kansas plus population of counties).

One of the benefits is tax abatements. Eastern Kansas has culture, art, and tourist attractions where western Kansas does not. The cities give tax abatements to get the business in their community. Unless one is raised in a place like western Kansas, he/she is not going to like it because to him/her there is nothing to do. He/she can not walk a block or two to a shopping mall. Western Kansas can not afford to have huge

amounts of tax abatements because there are not enough people to pay for the service.

Another benefit is representation. Western Kansas is not well represented in the legislature like eastern Kansas; so consequently, western Kansas does not have much voice. Western Kansas tried to fight the new school finance bill but there were too many for the school finance bill and no one was paying attention to what western Kansas was saying. Representatives of eastern Kansas were not paying attention to what the future might hold for them five or ten years in the future. Since the majority ruled in favor of the school finance bill, it was passed.

When eastern Kansas became the majority, western Kansas stood to lose and be a minority. Rural western Kansas also stood to lose their local control. School Boards no longer have control over what they do because their actions are mandated from the state. Rural areas may also lose their schools and communities if the rumor to consolidate schools and counties becomes a reality. If consolidation happens, more people will leave rural areas for the cities in order to be close to where their children go to school. When and if this happens, western Kansas will lose more voice in the legislature. There will be nothing left, western Kansas will be a puppet on a string.

These conditions lead directly into the next section of the report. The next section deals with political-economic action. This action includes two main issues, boycott and secession.

Political and Economic Action

The state-wide mill levy acted as a catalyst pulling citizens of southwest Kansas together. These people have always known that they have not had much voice politically and/or economically. The citizens came together in hopes of making a statement both politically and economically. They feel that decisions which they should be making are

being made by the government both federal and state. This results in loss of control locally and also dissatisfaction with the inequity between urban and rural decisions.

With the citizens feeling the way they do, they decided to make a statement to the rest of the state. There are two ways to make a statement, one is by hurting someone's pocketbook, and the second way is to use violence. Violence is not the style of southwest Kansas, so they went after others pocketbooks. The way they did this was to instigate an economic boycott or what some call selective purchasing from counties which were in favor of the school bill.

Another way they made a statement to the rest of the state was with the secession movement. This movement involves nine southwest counties and it still is very active to date. Both of these issues will be discussed further in the next two sections.

Boycott or Selective Purchasing

The Larimar County Commissioners showed their disappointment concerning the new school finance bill. Their resolution reads:

As a result of the school finance bill passed by the State of Kansas May 5, 1992, the Larimar County Commissioners passed a resolution and will no longer buy equipment from those areas represented by Senators and Representatives who voted to kill southwest Kansas. If possible all contracts pending in these areas will be cancelled immediately. . . We also urge all counties, cities, schools, businesses, and residents concerned with the unfair tax and representation of southwest Kansas to follow in this movement. Without your support we will lose our communities and schools (Bellvue News: 5-13-92).

The counties which are involved in the economic boycott are Drew, Edwards, and Larimar. The towns which the boycott will affect are Cherokee, Hinson, Kimper, Middleton, and Torrington. If need be those three counties will use their tax money and buy out of state.

The majority of the people interviewed felt the boycott was an attention getter

with a degree of effectiveness. When getting someone's attention in this fashion, there will be innocent people or businesses who will get hurt. On the other side, the school finance bill hurts a lot of people as well. There are also those people who get caught in the middle. For example, there were probably some people in Torrington who voted against the school finance plan, but since the representative for that area voted for it, Torrington was boycotted.

A county commissioner said:

Many companies and people who have been boycotted understand our situation and are supportive because they understand that in order for them to stay in business the local governmental control is necessary for them to stay in business. If not everything becomes centralized then basically they are going to lose a lot of business in the end.

A couple of people wished that the boycott could have been done before the school finance bill was passed. They feel that things might have been done differently concerning the legislators. The reason the boycott was not used earlier was no one knew who would vote for or against the school finance bill. Once the school finance bill was passed and it was evident who voted for and against the new school finance bill the economic boycott was put into effect. People began to spend their dollars where people appreciated them.

There were two people who felt the boycott was an attempt to show loss of local control. They felt someone was telling them how much they can spend. The key issue is taxation without representation, but also the fact of losing local control is a serious issue as well. The people of the community feel that they want to exist, and have a right to exist. If other areas are not willing to support southwest Kansas, then southwest Kansas will not support those other areas.

Another question dealing with the boycott was "Is the community taking it seriously?" This question was not clear cut. Some people who were interviewed

believed the community had taken the boycott seriously. Other people disagreed.

One interviewee felt the boycott was done out of frustration. This person felt the county commissioners made a hasty decision and was not in favor of the boycott decision. In this person's view, the county commissioners did not consult the community and they had no right to suggest the boycott without the support of the community. As one reads this paragraph, this person was not in favor of the boycott and feels the community is not serious about adhering to the decision.

Another interviewee when asked the question was of the opinion that most people were not going to take it overly serious. A common example used was Walmart. The towns which are supporting the boycott and have a Walmart, are not actually hurting those Walmarts in towns who are not supportive of the boycott. Walmart is still going to get the money regardless of where it is located. To go along with this, this person felt that southwest Kansas was going to have a minimal financial impact on the state anyway.

The majority of those interviewed felt the majority of people have taken the boycott very seriously. Even though there are still things which must be purchased outside this area, people feel like they have an alternative and will use alternatives if the need warrants. Although the majority of people have taken the boycott seriously, the businesses of the community have actually stuck with the boycott. Reason being is if people have a doctor's appointment in the restricted areas, they are still going to go. When they go, they may pick up merchandise there which they need, especially if it is cheaper.

The Chamber CEO sums the interviews rather well.

I do not know if the local citizens have been as enthusiastic about the boycott as much as the government and the business people. A lot of businesses have looked for suppliers outside of the Cherokee area. Torrington and Middleton rely on us because we spend a lot of money there. . Keeping people here is good but the cost of getting it here and not being able to order as much ends up in the Walmart

syndrome. Local merchants can not afford to order large quantities like Walmart. We have a Catch 22. In order for people to buy here the prices have to go down and sometimes the businessman can lower prices and sometimes he can not. The other side of that is that the mark-up can not be what it used to be when you own a small business. The mark-up for a small business could have been 40% at one time. In order to compete with any of them the mark-up may only be 20%, which means more merchants will make less per item but they can order more items. The small merchant can not particularly do that.

Secession

The winds of secession are gusting across southwestern Kansas spreading a prairie fire of anti-government discontent that threatens the status quo in this 131-year-old state. It is a wildfire that has leaped across state lines, fueling similar discussions in neighboring states (Glenwood Morning News: 4-26-1992).

The secession movement is in a form of "Silent Rage," which means people are unhappy, but a movement in which the people are not picketing or one does not hear or read about it everyday. Even though there is a "Silent Rage," the talk of secession by western Kansas has historical precedent. (For more information see Appendix J).

The school property tax first prompted the talk of twenty-nine southwest Kansas counties seceding. Out of those twenty-nine counties, twenty-four sent representatives to the meeting held in Torrington. The complaints centered around rural areas shouldering an unfair share of the state school funding plan, and the state Capital would not take the concerns of western Kansas seriously (Cherokee Eagle: 3-18-92). According to a southwest Kansas attorney, "If all twenty-nine counties were to secede, they would take with them \$72 million in severance tax dollars on oil and gas alone" (Cherokee Eagle: 3-18-92).

Since May 22, 1992, secessionists have been meeting in small groups, discussing the formation of a new state. Commissioners in nine counties were directed to pursue secession after non-binding opinion polls were passed in April of 1992. The

nine counties which voted in favor includes Edwards, Adams, Drew, Owen, Larimar, Brentwood, Medford, Scott, and Franklin (Torrington Telegram: 7-15-92).

People who form the different committees concerning secession are creating a working government. They feel if nothing else comes of the movement except some responsibility out of the state government, then they have been successful (Torrington Telegram: 7-31 92).

The research committee estimated the total revenue generated from the nine counties by using figures from 1989, 1990, and part of 1991. (See Appendix K concerning nine southwest counties compared to the rest of the state, unfair issues, secession explained, and questions and answers concerning secession).

After observing the interviews concerning the secession issue, the answer to, "What are your feelings concerning secession?" was mixed. Most people interviewed were pessimistic. The feelings received from the people interviewed, was secession was a smoke screen and an attention getter. The majority of people were frustrated with the new school finance bill, but they were not sure that seceding is the answer.

If the secessionists want to form a 51st state, they have to get permission from both the Congress and their state legislatures because secession is forbidden in the U.S. Constitution. Some feel that the Courts will not approve. If this is the case, then the secessionists are prepared to secede from the United States and form a new nation. They would apply to the United Nations for independent nation status.

Six months of observation and analysis suggests the frustration is real. When people take this kind of measure and are this upset and frustrated, there has to be something in what they are trying to say. One does not find people boycotting and talking of secession if things are alright.

The secession movement has a life of its own and is very much alive. In

September, 1992, a constitutional convention was held in which the constitution for the new state was presented.

One of the interviewees sums the way most people feel about secession.

I think that it was strictly an attention getter. I believe it is an impossibility to secede from the state. I think it is impossible for most of us to realize how much seceding would cost. Cost is a major issue in the whole thing. The bottom line is that we still have the natural gas and oil out here. If we refuse to give it to them they can bring in the state militia to take it from us.

Deviance

Deviance can be defined as, "Any social behavior that departs from that regarded as normal or socially acceptable within a society or social context" (Jary and Jary: 1991; 120).

The unequal distribution of power in a society, can be considered deviant by the conflict theorists (Bussis, Gelles, Levine: 1991; 155). Social-conflict theory explains the unequal distribution of power in three ways.

1. The norms of a society reflect the interests of the rich and wealthy. If the wealthy are threatened, by those taking property or advocating equal society, those people may be called "political radicals" (Quinney: 1977; 3).
2. The powerful can resist deviant labels, if their behavior is called into question (Quinney: 1977; 3).
3. The widespread belief is even though laws and norms are obscured, it is natural and good. According to Quinney (1977: 5), unequal application of the law may be unjust given the fact laws themselves may be inherently unfair.

Southwest Kansas has been seen as deviant by the rest of the state. By boycotting or selective purchasing and secession, they have gone beyond what is considered the norm for their particular society. What is a norm for one society may not be for another.

Southwest Kansas is boycotting and talking secession because they feel the new

school finance bill is not for excellence in education but for mediocrity. The eastern part of the state is taking the money from the western part and the money is redistributed to the school districts which need the money.

Southwest Kansas has no problem helping the poorer school districts. The problem comes when everyone is to be taxed equally and then some of the larger cities give huge amounts of tax abatements. With the tax abatements those businesses do not have to pay taxes on their property.

Many of those interviewed felt they were helping pay for teachers salaries, luxury school buildings, plus the education of the students. They do not feel that their tax dollars should go to help those cities with the tax abatements. They feel their tax dollars should stay where they are in order to maintain the quality education they already provide.

The research indicated the boycott and secession were attention getters, but they also were a statement about inequality. Because of these two issues people probably consider southwestern and western Kansas deviant. There were a few people from Washington D.C. here for one of the secession meetings. One man was surprised because people were not picketing or writing graffiti everywhere. Instead, he saw people doing their normal routines. Thus, it has been called the, "Silent Rage" of southwest Kansas.

Effects Concerning the Five Social Institutions

This section will tell how those interviewed feel the new school finance bill affects the five social institutions (education, economy, politics, religion, and family). Each institution will be discussed separately in order to give a clearer meaning concerning the effects.

Education

A local superintendent had this to say about the effects on education.

There are some merits to the school finance bill that was passed. The main one being accountability for the expenditures for education and the accountability for the students that are turned out. Schools are going to change and I have mixed feelings whether that is good or bad. I think that it is good that we have to have more accountability but in order to make that happen there is going to have to be a mandate to make that happen.

With the change in schools comes more decline in the quality of schools. The decline will come in rural areas where people can not afford more taxation to maintain their quality schools. This is sad for two reasons, one being that when schools decline or close, the community around that school also declines; the second reason, is that education is heading towards mediocrity rather than towards excellence because of the new school finance bill in southwest Kansas.

According to one of the local teachers, the schools in this district will not be able to spend the number of dollars per student they once did. The cut in spending means a reduction of programs, a cut in programs, or making financial changes in order to stay within compliance of the state law.

On the opposite side of the teacher is a local banker. He states:

There is a good place for athletics and a good place for other things but we have allowed our teachers to be pressed into entertaining our children. So now we are not willing to give up those things for education so taxation is a big burden for them and everyone else. Education becomes the culprit. I would guess we would give up education for cheaper tax dollars. Higher taxes has the impact to force us into a position where we are going to be prepared to sacrifice education.

If people are willing to see the mill levy increase, then education will be alright.

Research indicated people do not believe the quality of education can be measured by tax dollars. This is the philosophy of the legislature, quality education can be measured in

dollars. One can throw money at education to try to solve the problem, but the money will not solve the problem.

Regardless of the school district, each has different needs and knows what is best for their students. If the district needs more money for whatever reason, the people should have the option to raise additional money. If teachers salaries need to be raised in order to attract quality teachers, then the school board should be allowed to let this happen, because the people at the local level best know and understand what is needed for their schools, not the state.

Economy

A local teacher states:

It definitely is going to hurt us out here. We have been somewhat exempt from the problems of economics in terms of the economy slow down because of our diverse economy - agriculture, gas and oil, and some manufacturing.

Even though there is a diverse economy in Larimar County, the industries will not be able to pick up the extra tax burden which will be placed on them.

According to a local superintendent, the economy could be very disastrous because this area is exporting dollars to other coffers in the east. He can see main street getting smaller and smaller due to the lack of money. When people are laid off, lose their job and move, the money which had previously been spent in their hometown is now being spent somewhere else. This is a problem because every dollar generated locally from pay rolls generates four to seven times that amount in the community. When the money is not there for generation, the community will suffer.

The more taxes people have to pay the less money they have to spend elsewhere. Taxation will tend to reduce productivity and efficiency. People begin to ask why should they be efficient and productive when they do not see any results of the tax dollars paid to

the state. If people would see results, they would be more productive and efficient.

Politics

A local banker states:

By definition politics is self serving for the politician. They try to do less taxation to appease their people but they spend their money approvingly because they spend money that gets the approval of the people so they do not have themselves to blame. People do not like taxes but spending they love. Fortunately the Kansas constitution requires a balanced budget but in the process that pits community against community when political power feels they can raid another area which is exactly what has happened on this tax. Bristol has been able to abate its taxes on its own assets and fund their education with our dollars. All of a sudden their political power has come into play by saying we are going to expropriate your assets against your will.

The political aspect has taken the educational issue away and turned it into a political playground. The real educational issue will be lost within the politics.

A local superintendent has this to say concerning the political perspective.

I think we will have diminished political clout in part because of the state control of the tax dollar and with control of dollars you also have political control. I think we will have diminished input into what the future may bring.

This quote expresses the way the majority of the people in western and southwestern Kansas feel.

Religion

When asked how the tax would affect religion, most of those interviewed said they did not know. The ones who answered the question had varied answers. Those answers will be given below.

A local minister states:

When the economy is unsettled, people are a little more careful and give less, especially when they are not sure what is going to

happen and what their taxes are going to be. The potential of giving to the churches can level out or drop, because people would be more conservative in their giving since they are not sure where their taxes are going, or what their income is going to be. When people are unsure and do not know they just do not give as readily.

The stress of meeting daily obligations especially for young couples is tremendous. Bills have to be paid which means giving less and usually it is to the church. Regardless of how much one may want to give to the church, church donations are lowered first.

A local banker states:

People are too tired to go to church on Sunday mornings because they are too busy trying to make ends meet and pay taxes. They would rather have Sunday as a way to relax rather than feed their spiritual side which we really need to do but we do not have time to do any more.

According to a county commissioner, there will be more private schools started because parents will not be able to afford the public school. Parents want their children to have a quality education and the private school has quality education. Under the new school finance bill the public schools will be mediocre not quality.

All of the "I do not know" answers, leads back to what Leistriz, Rathge, and Ekstrom (1989; 46) have stated.

Perhaps the less obvious are the consequences for local churches, businesses, and public service organizations. For example, young families show higher rates of church attendance. A decline in the number of young farm families; therefore, is likely to result in losses in local church membership.

Family

In order to have a product to work with, the family structure must become stronger. When you lower the standard of living by removing part of their income by taxation it can have a very devastating effect on those families who do not have a strong

family structure. Families in order to make it financially, are going to have to turn inward and spend less instead of trying to keep up with their neighbors.

Here is what a local teacher has to say:

We will probably see some change there in that what we have expected schools to do for years and years and what we have been doing for our students, some parts of those responsibilities are going back to the family. We are no longer going to be able to offer the little extras that we are doing because we have to live within this new budget. I think families are going to be held more accountable. I can see the day and age when we ask the family for volunteers or support help because we can not hire the personnel to do the things we do. More and more of the responsibility has been laid on education and those are the things that we are going to have to cut back on because we can no longer afford to do them.

Economics is the umbrella which the other four social institutions are under.

Economics determine what happens whether good or bad to the other four institutions.

Each can be talked about separately, but each is still controlled by economics.

When we go beyond what taxation was designed to do, we start to undercut these institutions with the exception of politics. Each of these institutions needs to be under control of the individual.

Effects of Taxation on the Community

When observing the answers to the question, "How do you see the new tax affecting the community?," the answers were somewhat varied. The next few paragraphs will be dealing with those varied answers. Answers starting with the rise in mill levy and ending with long term effects will be discussed next.

Depending on who was interviewed made a difference on how they answered the question. According to a county commissioner, the 32 mills will not change very much because the general mills are already at 31.7. What will be devastating concerning the 32 mills, is it is a misconception. Every district will have a levy of 32 mills but they are

allowed a local option budget. The district can go 10% above the levy. In Larimar County in order to provide the same services, programs, the cost of increased growth of enrollment, and cost of living, the school board will probably use the local option budget. The first year there is no citizen input. The year after it must be voted on.

An effect which concerns a local teacher is southwest Kansas will be sending the state a large sum of money but we will receive little in return. The money which is sent to the state will go to fund education in cities where there are huge tax abatements. People of southwest Kansas are upset by this because their taxes are going up in hopes of keeping the same amount of money for their schools that they had last year.

Several people from the economic development committee made this observation: When taxes are increased, there is a decrease in available spending. A business person, trying to make a profit, pays more in expenses, has less profit, and has difficulty staying in business. When taxes go up, people have less money to spend, businesses receive less money and, ultimately, may go out of business.

Also, when taxes increase and spending decreases, the schools are hurt. People do not vote in new programs or maintain buildings, retain quality personnel for the school because they can hardly afford what they have to pay already. Ultimately, the schools may lose opportunities for quality growth and development. This leads into the loss of local control and the school boards loss of control.

A local superintendent states:

The way that the tax would affect the community, for example, would be that dollars that have been traditionally locally controlled will now be state wide controlled. Mandates from the state will be enforced more now that the purse strings are held by the state. Also we have a situation in which we have county government and as I see it, the school district will lose some control through the board of education and it will eventually precipitate in the county government.

A local car dealer feels the loss of control leads to a deterioration of education.

Because Bellvue is a remote rural community, it is hard to get quality teachers. Extra money has been paid for well qualified teachers to come to Bellvue. When a community has lost control of their school, they have lost the incentive to obtain or receive quality teachers.

Another issue that concerns people is the gas and oil industry. Some of the interviewees were afraid the oil and gas companies would leave. If they would leave, it would force the property owners to pick up the reduction in taxes. Many people feel they can not afford to pay any more taxes.

A local banker makes a statement concerning the long term effect.

In the long term we will not know why it is that way but we will wonder why is it so difficult to get qualified teachers, and why is this and why is that. We turn around and do not see what we have done is fundamentally under cut our own autonomy by giving up local control.

One can see the key effect on the community will be the loss of local control. The community will no longer be able to do the things it once did because they will have to follow state mandates. Anything the community may want to do will have to be approved by the state.

What George Orwell wrote in his book, 1984, **BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU** applies to southwestern Kansas. The significance of what George Orwell wrote, is a foreshadowing of what is to come in Kansas. Several interviewees and newspapers mentioned southwestern and western Kansans have become tired of being the step sister to the rest of the state. The rest of the state takes and takes but does not offer anything in return.

The people of western and southwestern Kansas perceive that with the state-wide mill levy, they will lose local control along with autonomy. They will no longer be able to go ahead and do certain things without state approval. For example, the local

appraiser's office is controlled by mandates from the state to a great extent. The directives issued to them increase costs substantially but in no way increases efficiency. Once a month there is an appraiser from the state who audits all work of the local appraiser. The state-wide mill levy created more paper work in the appraiser's office and also brought the office closer to complete control by the state.

This effect is not only being felt by the local appraiser's office but also local school boards feel the constraint. Local school boards have no control over what is or is not spent for education. Before anything is passed by the local school boards, it must be state approved. The local school boards, before July 1, could control the mills the school asked for; but now, the state controls the mills and local school boards have no say in the matter.

The feeling of "Big Brother is Watching You," is being felt by everyone not just businesses or schools. Everyone feels the state has a firm grasp of their pocketbooks. Research indicated people are frustrated with this, and until something is done the feelings of frustration will be present.

Summary

Effective decisions in a rural community may be made by volunteer leaders or local officials. The rate society is changing and the complexity of rural issues, place more responsibility of decision making on these leaders. Attitudes concerning change will determine if there is support for change or resistance to change. Twenty-two interviews and six months in the community showed resistance to change accompanied with certain issues of conflict. The resistance to change fits well with the structure-functionalism perspective. Both structure-functionalism and social conflict theory were used to help explain the social change issue.

Resistance in western and southwestern Kansas began with the talk of a state-wide mill levy (1991). This levy was to create equality for everyone, but instead it created inequality between rural and urban school districts. This change was caused by outsiders who sought to introduce new ideas in order to achieve defined goals (Rogers, Burdge, Korsching, Donnermeyer: 1988; 16-17).

The outsiders include the Governor, the Judge of the District Court Division Six, KNEA, and urban areas. The insiders are rural communities in western Kansas. The people in these rural communities oppose the increase in mill levy, because they will stand to lose local control of schools. Also, their property, sales, and income tax will increase in order to fund a new state bureaucracy. The research interviews and observation alludes to the state-wide mill levy being an unfair tax without representation.

People know that taxation starts a rippling effect; in other words, when taxes increase, the increase is felt throughout every aspect of community life. With the state-wide mill levy being a way to finance schools, property owners may not be willing to vote for the increases necessary for school improvements or increased teachers salaries if taxes are at a maximum. Thus, educational quality and quality of educational programs may diminish or disappear.

There is no way to gauge the far-reaching effect of this tax on the citizens of western Kansas. Those interviewed are frustrated and believe they are being asked to help fund the education of children in eastern Kansas because large companies are not paying their fair share of taxes since tax advantages are granted them.

The school finance bill was to be a tax relief package but instead it is a tax shift. Many communities will see property tax relief or reduction but where they see relief and reduction, others see a tax burden. The research data shows the shift is from urban

areas to rural communities. The communities which are going to be hit the worst are those in southwest Kansas. These communities are above the rich Hugoton gas field.

Those interviewed perceive the school finance bill will lead to tyranny of the majority. It creates an environment which cause individuals to have no freedom of opinion, because public approval (or disapproval) overshadows individual opinion.

According to the research, some of the county commissioners in southwest Kansas instigated an economic boycott in order to resist the tyranny of the majority and change. The boycott was against those representatives who voted for the new school finance bill. Businesses and the senior citizens of Bellvue adhered to the boycott. Businesses began to look for suppliers closer to home and the senior citizens started shopping in towns whose representatives had voted against the new bill. The average citizen on the street did not try as hard to adhere to the boycott as did the businesses and senior citizens.

Another attempt to resist change is the secession movement. A Hugoton lawyer started the movement, and the movement is alive and well. There are research committees for different areas of the movement. There is a committee for finance, state symbols, constitutional regulations, and a committee for public relations. At the secession meetings, the different committees reported on their findings. The last meeting was a constitutional convention where the grievances were given. The motion was made and seconded to send the petition, concerning the issue of becoming the 51st state, to the courts and see what the 1993 session of the legislature would do.

Those interviewed have mixed impressions about seceding. Some perceive it is just an attention getter and others feel very strongly and support the movement. Secession shows how frustrated southwest Kansans are. Most people want something done, but they are not sure that seceding is the answer.

The reason for boycotting and the secession movement goes back to the equality

idea. Southwest Kansans understand that the new school finance bill is not equality for better education. Instead the bill brings about mediocrity. The eastern school districts are benefitting where the school districts in western Kansas are not benefitting. The boycott and secession movements are an outcry of inequality.

The five social institutions (education, economics, politics, religion, family) were examined as components of community organization. Twenty-two in depth interviews and six months of participant observations were used to gather data from community residents. The residents may have been active in one or more of each of the social institutions. The center piece of the community study was the state mandated school mill levy. This mill levy gave high priority to the economic institution as it directly related to the educational and political institutions. Not all community life is centered around the economic institution. In the case of the school mill levy, it would appear to make the case for the observation

The next chapter concludes the research. Besides concluding the research, possible future outcomes and the effects this may or may not have on the community will be discussed.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

American society has undergone many transformational changes in the last 20 to 30 years. With the changes rural communities are finding it harder to maintain their identities. Citizens of rural communities have had to learn how to tolerate being affected by change outside their control. Along with learning how to tolerate change, rural people have had to be change agents. In order to tolerate or effect change, people need to learn how to effectively communicate with state and federal officials.

Even though Bellvue continues to change and prosper, the changes over the years were not forced upon the people. On July 1st, 1992, a new school finance bill went into effect. The bill put the entire state of Kansas under a state-wide mill levy. The bill was to create equality, but instead created inequality. Citizens of Bellvue and surrounding communities are resisting the change. These people felt they were being forced to conform to what they perceive as educational inequality and unfair taxation.

The inequality is being felt in western and particularly southwestern Kansas. The inequality concerns the school districts of these areas. These school districts do not have the student population like the districts in eastern Kansas. Because of the limited student population, students do not have the wide variety of classes to choose from, and these school districts do not have the budget to hire the teachers it would take to offer a wide variety of classes. Students in western and southwestern Kansas are also deprived of cultural events.

The key issues which concern the citizens of western and southwestern Kansas are the loss of local control and taxation without representation. When one talks to several segments of citizens, there are two definite opinions. Those who support the secession movement perceive the key issue to be taxation without representation. On the other hand, the educators perceive the key issue to be loss of local control. In reality, both issues are equally important. When local control is lost, there is taxation without representation. When there is taxation without representation, there is no local control.

As a means of protest, southwest Kansas commissioners implemented an economic boycott against those counties whose representatives voted for the school finance bill. The boycott was taken very seriously by the senior citizens and the businessmen of Bellvue. When it was possible, the senior citizens shopped at participating towns. Likewise, the businessmen began to find suppliers closer to Bellvue. The first big statement came when the county commissioners cancelled a large order from a tractor company. Towns who were not participating in the boycott, hoped the boycott would soon be over since they were losing business and money.

A former southwest Kansas attorney started a movement toward seceding. This issue was to get the attention of the Governor, legislature, and people of eastern Kansas. The secession movement is saying that citizens of southwest Kansas are tired of their tax dollars being confiscated. The tax dollars are taken from southwest Kansas and redistributed to school districts which need the money. The issue which was not discussed was the southwestern school districts are funding the eastern school districts because of the tax abatements which were granted to the companies located in the eastern towns. The secession movement to date is still being supported.

On September 11, 1992, a Constitutional Convention was held in Bellvue. Supporters of the secession movement passed a motion to send a petition to the

legislatures. The legislatures then have the option of accepting or not accepting the petition. If the petition is accepted, hopefully something will be done concerning the school finance bill. If it is not accepted, the secession movement will be voted on again to see if secession is the route people want to take.

Many interviewees felt the economic boycott and secession movement were attention getters. Both issues did receive attention but they also have sent a message of unhappiness and frustration to the rest of the state. They have also sent a message that southwest Kansans are tired of getting treated like the step sister. Southwest Kansans feel eastern Kansans will take and take from them but will not return anything as far as helping or benefitting southwest Kansas. By instigating both political actions, southwest Kansas is trying to maintain their local control. Southwest Kansans feel if they lose their local control they will also lose their autonomy.

The citizens of southwest Kansas are unhappy and frustrated because the security they once knew is in jeopardy. The security is part of the local structure. The security came with local people taking care of local matters and concerns. Now, the state is going to control what the local citizens had previously controlled. The citizens feel like they are puppets on a string with the puppet master being the state.

Study Limitations

Starting to research this topic shortly after it became a public issue was a definite advantage for the researcher. The enhancement came from starting approximately at the beginning, and following the first hand effects of the issue. Being able to interview people shortly before and after the school finance bill was passed made the impressions first hand and vivid in the minds of the respondents. In other words, people were not having to recall something which happened several years ago. The very

nature of this research also enhanced the study. The research was conducted using a live issue unlike issues which have already drawn closure and become historical. The consensus and controversy are still alive at the present writing of this report. Many research students do not have the opportunity to step in and do research over a topic which will continue after they have brought their study to a close.

One of the weaknesses of the study is not being able to draw closure. The controversy over the new school finance bill will not be settled for some time. In order for something to be done, the courts must find the bill unconstitutional. For the courts to make a decision will take time. When and if the bill is found unconstitutional, the legislature must try to find a bill which will be a compromise between eastern and western Kansas. If the bill is not found unconstitutional, the courts and legislature may be dealing with support for the secession movement in southwest Kansas.

A second weakness was not using questionnaires. By using questionnaires a broader area would have been reached. A questionnaire would have allowed for a broader insight into the impressions of more people. Questionnaires could have been sent to communities whose representatives had voted for the school finance bill. By sending a mailed questionnaires to these communities, different impressions of what the effects of the school finance bill would entail could have been gathered. This information may have put a different slant on the information which was gathered. Not interviewing people of eastern Kansas could be considered a weakness. By not sending questionnaires or conducting interviews in eastern Kansas, one would not be able to see if citizens of eastern Kansas agree or disagree with what is happening to western Kansas.

Another weakness would be biased information from newspaper writers and those interviewed. The information gathered is biased either towards eastern or western Kansas. Western Kansans are biased because they perceive the school finance bill is

hurting them more than the east. The writers of newspaper articles are biased towards the eastern half of the state and do not take the western part of the state seriously. It is hard not to get biased information especially on this type of issue. As a writer, one must try to remain unbiased and write the information in an unbiased way as much as possible.

There were no problems using the three research methods. If the study were done again, questionnaires sent to several eastern and western towns would enhance the study. The questionnaires would allow the researcher to gather a broader data base from which to work. Not only does the questionnaire allow for broader data, but also the information gathered would hopefully contain both sides of the issue. By having both sides of the issue, the researcher would be able to write the research in an unbiased manner.

As stated before, the issue will not have closure for several years. Due to this, further study can be conducted. One would want to stay abreast of what the secession supporters are doing. Also, one would want to stay informed of what the courts and legislature are doing concerning the school finance bill. When and if there is an unconstitutional ruling, interviews should be conducted in order to obtain first hand impressions of the ruling. If there is no unconstitutional ruling, again interviews should be used to obtain first hand impressions.

The courts will have an impact on the future of the state of Kansas. If the courts do not find the school finance bill unconstitutional, some citizens of southwest Kansas may take the matter into their own hands. The citizens are those who support the secession movement. If southwest Kansas is allowed to secede, Kansas will see a dramatic change.

The change will come in the form of a new statehood. With this, comes a new state

in the United States, a new state government, plus a state capital building. The money from the mineral-rich counties of southwestern Kansas will not be used to fund eastern education; but instead, will fund the new state and the educational system in the new state.

According to the research data, the concern of many people of southwest Kansas concerning the secession movement is if the committees for secession thoroughly researched the consequences of secession. Even if they have, what concerns people are the unplanned surprises which may appear and were not figured into the future financial costs. Would the state have enough money to cover the situation and sustain a state, if and when, things appear which were not planned?

Some interviewees felt this is not a way to eliminate what they perceive as taxation without representation. These people perceive a new state would be more costly in the long run than remaining part of the state. Also, the fact of facing the unknown and the drastic change which would occur, makes people ill at ease, because they are unsure what lies ahead. This statement is better understood when observing what Lauer (1991; 168-175) has said, change challenges our way of life plus encompassing the physical world in which we live. Change also challenges our basic values which makes it hard to predict what the culture of tomorrow will be.

Another issue, found in the research, which concerns citizens of southwest Kansas, if the bill is not found unconstitutional, is the loss of local control. The research also indicates southwest Kansas citizens are afraid they will lose all city and county local control. Along with the loss of control will be the consolidation of school districts. When consolidation begins to happen, there will be towns in southwestern and western Kansas which may become ghost towns.

These and other issues remain to be solved. Until the courts make a decision,

citizens of western and southwestern Kansas have to hope and continue with the happenings of everyday life. There is nothing they can do until the courts make a decision. The only thing they can do is voice their frustration concerning the issue, and educate other citizens of Kansas on the way southwestern and western Kansas is being treated. By educating more people, they hope more people will become aware of the situation and stand up for what they know is right. Also, they may stand up for equality and quality education.

Nine southwest Kansas counties are challenging the school finance bill. These counties have sued the state hoping the courts will find the new school finance bill unconstitutional. (For more information see appendix L). Appendix M summarizes, in a five-part series, the differences between eastern and western Kansas. The appendices which follow have been typed verbatim from newspaper articles; references included.

Regardless of the outcome of this issue, it has been an educational and rewarding research. Understanding the issues, and various aspects of it, has been revealing as to the different views and effects which influence the manner in which people accept or resist social change.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. How do you see the proposed tax effecting the community? Why?
2. How do you foresee the tax effecting the five social institutions? (education, .politics, economics, religion, family) Why?
3. Are you for or against the tax issue? Why?
4. What's the biggest concern, concerning the tax issue? Taxation without representation or loss of local control? Why?
5. Is the boycott an attention getter or something more?
6. How serious is the community about the boycott?
7. What is your feeling towards the secession movement? Why?
8. Who do you see as the leader(s) of the community?

APPENDIX B

STATE MILL LEVY

State Mill Levy

School finance plans from past to present have raised controversial issues of equity and local control. Reformers have stated they wanted equal educational opportunity for all children or at least assure an equal chance. But equity has a wide variety of definitions (Tompkins: 1977; 129).

One definition of equity requires the exact amount of dollars to be spent on each child. This definition has not been well accepted. The argument against this definition states that secondary education, and vocational and occupational programs, along with programs for physically handicapped children require more resources than does elementary education (Tompkins: 1977; 130).

Another definition of equity is the equalization of tax - paying ability. This view works under the assumption if taxpayers in District A levy 25 mills and taxpayers in District B levy the same, then taxpayers would see equal effort to raise equal dollars (Tompkins: 1977; 130).

The above definitions are being used in Kansas to receive money for education. The state wide mill levy was set at 32 mills for the entire state but along with that the state will spend \$3,600 per child. The legislature saw this as equality because the taxpayers in a district in western Kansas and a taxpayer in an eastern Kansas district are helping pay for every child's education.

The problem with their equality is that not everyone is paying their fair share of taxes. Many large companies in eastern Kansas have been granted tax abatements. One

company in particular was granted a \$2 billion tax abatement for the next ten years. This inequity causes a burden on other taxpayers to compensate for the abatement. When the mills of 58, 45, and 32 were mentioned throughout the research, these different mills mean how much tax the state could have taken from each school district.

The state-wide mill levy or school finance bill was supposed to reduce property taxes. According to interviewees, some peoples property tax will be reduced while others will increase. The school finance bill will increase sales and income tax. Stated in several newspapers was the idea that people would rather pay more sales tax than more property tax. Sales tax is distributed over purchases made at random and is not felt in the pocketbook like an increase in property tax.

An example, of how mill levies are figured uses this formula ($20/1,000 \times \$10,000$). One mill is one one thousandth of a penny thus the 20 mills divided by 1,000. The \$10,000 is the property value per pupil. If the guaranteed minimum were \$500 per pupil and the required rate of mills were 20, a district with property values per pupil of \$10,000 could raise \$200 per pupil and the state aid would be \$300 per pupil.

Kansas started at 32 mills with each district having a local option budget. The local option budget allows the district to go above the 32 mills. The school mill levy in Grant County has been raised 2 mills for the school year 1992-1993. For the school year 1992-1993, the additional mills were not voted on by the people. The following year additional mills must be voted on by the local citizens.

APPENDIX C

DETAILS OF SCHOOL FINANCE

School bill: the details

TOPEKA (AP) - Here are the major provisions in the school finance bill sent last night to Gov. Joan Finney:

Distribution of Money

- School districts' base budgets for 1992-1993 and until the Legislature changes them are set at \$3,600 times the number of students in the district.

- Districts receive increased funding to pay the added costs of transportation, vocational education, bilingual education and at-risk students, based on "weighting" factors that recognize those programs cost more per pupil.

- Districts with fewer than 1,900 students will receive special extra funding in recognition that have high teacher-pupil ratios costs more money.

- Districts that experienced enrollment growth forcing construction of new buildings would receive a weighted increase for the number of new pupils that would attend school in the new building.

- Local school boards could raise their budgets by as much as 25 percent above the base budget set by the state if their per-pupil expenditures were cut 15 percent or more below their spending levels of this school year. They could not raise their budgets more than 10 percent above this year's spending.

- If the Legislature increases the per-pupil base budget in future years, districts that had increased their budgets above the base would have to

lower that enhancement by a percentage equal to the base increase.

Funding Package

- A 32-mill property tax will be levied in every school district in 1992-1993, with the levy increasing to 33 mills in 1993-1994 and to 35 in 1994-1995 and remain at 35 in 1995-1996. The money goes to the state and is included in funding distributed to school districts. Only 10 districts have mill levies below 32 and will see their levies increase.

- The state sales tax is increased from 4.25 percent to 4.9 percent, generating \$151.6 million new revenue.

- Individual income tax rates will increase to 6.45 percent on the top bracket for married couples and to \$7.75 on the top bracket for single taxpayers, meaning higher taxes mostly for those with taxable incomes above \$50,000. The increases gain \$120.4 million.

- Coporation income taxes are increased to get \$7 million new revenue.

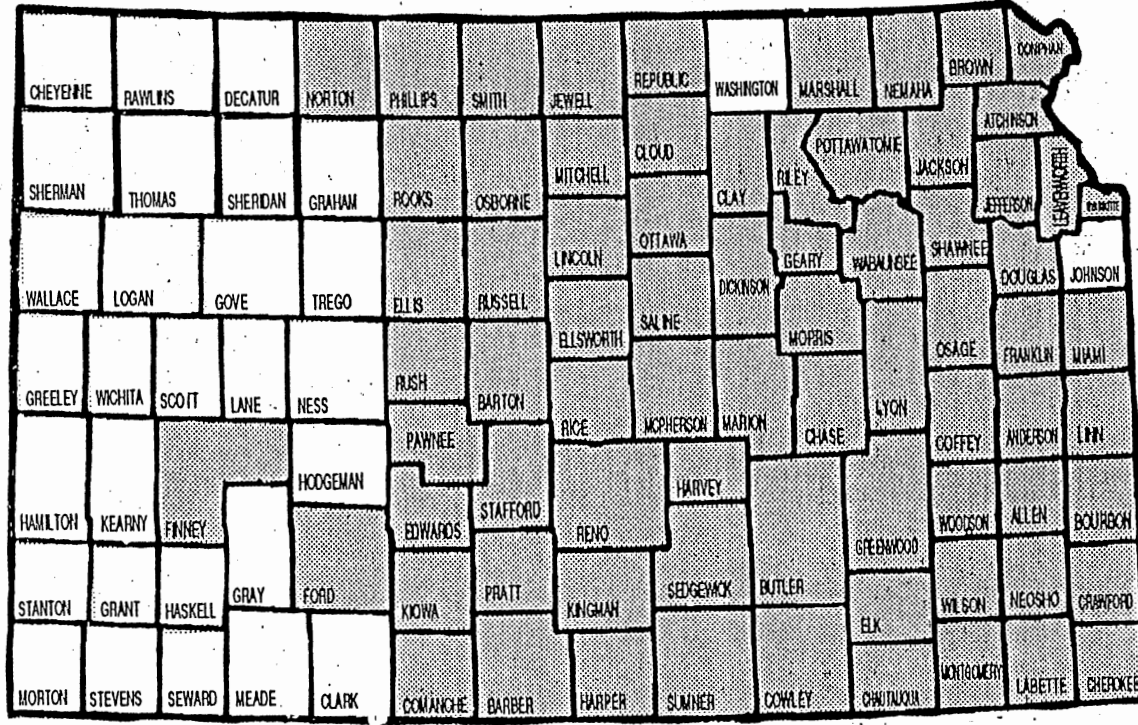
- Sales tax exemptions are removed on six items. Labor and services used in original construction and utilities used in manufacturing will be taxed at a 2.5 percent rate. Two types of long distance calls, hotel-motel bills and trade fixtures, which are such things as counters, furnishings and fixtures in commercial buildings, will be taxed at 4.9 percent.


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
- \$40 million will be taken from
the state general fund.

Garden City Telegram
Wednesday March 6, 1992

KANSAS LEGISLATIVE VOTE ON SCHOOL FINANCE BILL



 VOTED YES TO INCREASE YOUR PROPERTY TAXES AND LOWER THEIRS.

 VOTED NO TO INCREASE YOUR PROPERTY TAXES.

District Name	District		Levies			Total
	General	Mill Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other		
Burlington	9.12	4.00	1.29	1.13	15.54	
Moscow Pub. Schools	17.77	3.65	0.00	0.91	22.33	
Hugoton Pub. Schools	18.36	0.00	0.00	0.45	18.81	
Rolla	22.26	3.00	0.00	1.28	26.54	
Kaw Valley	23.94	2.40	3.92	0.00	30.26	
Holcomb	27.26	4.00	4.26	3.45	38.97	
Deerfield	29.67	3.96	10.40	1.98	46.01	
Lakin	29.84	3.00	0.00	1.69	34.53	
Satanta	30.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	31.00	
Ulysses	31.19	2.50	0.00	3.11	36.80	
Stanton County	34.90	1.97	0.00	0.98	37.85	
North Jackson	36.56	3.60	6.06	0.00	46.22	
Cherryvale	36.72	0.00	10.31	0.91	47.94	
Prairie View	37.14	2.00	2.91	1.00	43.05	
Bucklin	37.27	3.97	2.58	2.01	45.83	
West Elk	37.30	0.00	3.96	0.00	41.26	
Chautaugua Co Com	37.31	0.00	3.91	0.98	42.20	
Riverton	37.95	3.96	14.90	0.00	56.81	
Shawnee Mission	37.95	4.00	1.60	2.04	45.59	
Neodesha	38.27	0.00	22.15	0.00	60.42	
Uniontown	38.29	0.00	4.61	0.00	42.90	
Valley Falls	38.50	3.98	0.00	1.99	44.47	
Girard	38.57	4.00	3.57	1.00	47.14	
Victoria	38.65	1.49	0.00	0.99	41.13	
Altodna-Midway	39.00	3.94	0.00	0.00	42.94	
Macksville	39.19	3.99	0.00	0.85	44.03	
Canton-Galva	39.43	5.55	0.00	0.01	44.99	
Wathena	39.51	0.00	0.00	1.58	41.09	
Troy Public School	39.70	3.99	8.71	1.01	53.41	
Sublette	39.83	4.00	0.00	2.79	46.62	
Elkhart	39.89	4.83	0.00	1.97	46.69	
Central Heights	39.92	3.92	4.80	0.00	48.64	
B & B	39.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	39.97	
Nemaha Valley School	39.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	39.99	
Frontenac Pub School	40.10	4.00	0.00	2.71	46.81	
Syracuse	40.14	4.00	0.00	0.00	44.14	

District Name	General	Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other	Total
Ell-Saline	40.98	3.92	14.96	1.96	61.82
Osage City	41.76	4.00	5.21	0.68	51.65
Southeast of Saline	42.11	3.97	14.73	0.00	60.81
Smoky Hill	42.17	4.00	0.00	1.00	47.17
Logan	42.66	4.00	0.00	2.00	48.66
Mayetta	42.99	4.00	0.00	0.00	46.99
Palco	43.17	4.00	0.00	1.02	48.19
Kismet-Plains	43.21	3.00	0.00	1.06	47.27
Baxter Springs	43.28	3.49	7.86	0.00	54.63
Woodson	43.38	3.49	0.00	0.00	46.87
Greeley County	43.42	4.00	6.41	0.00	53.83
Ingalls	44.30	5.08	4.41	1.73	55.52
Otis-Bison	44.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	44.59
Lyndon	44.83	4.00	4.92	0.00	53.75
Oswego	45.01	3.96	0.00	1.98	50.95
Pleasanton	45.05	3.53	0.00	0.00	48.58
Leroy-Gridley	45.30	4.00	0.00	0.00	49.30
Chase	45.85	2.17	0.00	0.00	48.02
Euddra	46.18	3.42	1.28	0.00	50.88
Lebo-Waverly	46.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	46.50
Ellis	46.59	3.99	5.91	3.19	59.68
Cimarron-Ensign	46.60	3.93	0.00	0.00	50.53
Twin Valley	46.60	3.88	9.25	0.00	59.73
Marmaton Valley	46.90	3.95	0.00	0.00	50.85
Leon	47.24	1.98	3.40	1.98	54.60
Centre	47.33	1.99	0.00	0.00	49.32
Plainville	47.51	3.99	0.00	1.13	52.63
Jefferson Co North	47.67	0.00	17.81	0.00	65.48
Meade	47.72	1.47	0.00	1.00	50.19
Ellinwood Pub School	47.78	3.89	0.00	0.00	51.67
Greensburg	47.83	4.00	0.00	2.00	53.83
Caney Valley	47.86	0.00	0.00	1.10	48.96
Morris County	47.88	4.00	6.88	0.00	58.76
Colby Public Schools	47.96	4.00	0.00	0.81	52.77
Galena	47.96	3.96	0.00	0.00	51.92
Vermillion	47.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	47.98
Barber County North	48.34	4.00	0.00	1.11	53.45
Circle	48.42	3.98	0.00	0.00	52.40
Southern Cloud	48.80	3.69	0.00	0.00	52.49
Eastern Heights	48.82	4.10	0.00	0.00	52.92
North Ottawa County	48.95	4.60	0.00	0.00	53.55
Sterling	49.18	3.93	0.00	1.97	55.08
Northeast	49.27	4.00	9.55	0.00	62.82
Stockton	49.27	0.00	0.00	0.99	50.26

District Name	General	Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other	Total
Elwood	49.42	4.01	8.72	1.21	63.36
Ashland	49.48	4.00	0.00	1.18	54.66
North Central	49.66	4.00	0.00	0.00	53.66
Wakeeney	49.77	4.00	0.00	1.99	55.76
Chase County	49.94	0.00	1.41	0.00	51.35
Crest	50.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.17
Oberlin	50.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.27
Wamego	50.33	4.00	30.17	0.00	84.50
Sedgwick Pub Schools	50.40	4.00	0.00	3.60	58.00
Hill City	50.41	2.92	0.00	0.05	53.38
South Barber	50.55	3.84	2.67	1.00	58.06
Paradise	50.65	3.98	0.00	1.99	56.62
Fairfield	50.73	3.99	0.00	0.00	54.72
Dexter	50.88	3.00	11.67	1.00	66.55
St. John-Hudson	50.93	3.93	0.00	1.94	56.80
Nes Tres La Go	50.96	2.99	0.00	1.00	54.95
Piper-Kansas City	51.04	4.00	9.13	0.00	64.17
Hoisington	51.05	0.00	13.83	0.00	64.88
Mulvane	51.06	0.00	9.66	1.25	61.97
Republican Valley	51.20	4.00	0.00	0.00	55.20
Lewis	51.24	3.99	0.00	0.00	55.23
St. Francis Com School	51.25	4.00	0.00	0.93	56.18
LaCrosse	51.25	4.00	0.00	0.00	55.25
Clay Center	51.31	4.00	7.58	0.00	62.89
Marion	51.35	4.01	0.00	0.00	55.36
Commanche County	51.38	3.86	0.00	0.93	56.17
Haviland Public Schools	51.71	3.49	0.00	0.82	56.02
Burlingame Pub Schools	51.75	3.59	0.00	0.00	55.34
Marais Des Cygnes Valley	52.19	4.00	0.00	1.00	57.19
Lansing	52.46	0.00	14.27	0.00	66.73
Inman	52.50	3.61	12.24	0.69	69.04
Attica	52.60	4.00	0.00	0.00	56.60
Pike Valley	52.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	52.61
Cedar Vale	52.62	3.99	7.28	0.00	63.89
Lincoln	52.67	4.03	0.00	0.00	56.70
Jayhawk	52.72	4.00	0.00	2.00	58.72
Skyline Schools	52.78	4.00	0.98	0.00	57.76
Dighton	52.85	4.00	7.81	1.00	65.66
Elk Valley	53.27	3.22	0.00	0.00	56.49
Columbus	53.36	3.55	9.41	0.00	66.32
Jefferson West	53.48	3.75	1.82	0.00	59.05
Garnett	54.25	4.01	16.04	0.00	74.30
Oxford	54.29	3.97	0.00	0.00	58.26
Highland	54.31	0.00	13.50	0.00	67.81

District Name	General	Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other	Total
Haven Public Schools	54.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	54.34
Cunningham	54.36	2.99	0.00	0.00	57.35
Junction City	54.41	3.99	0.00	0.00	58.40
Minneola	54.53	2.96	0.00	1.09	58.58
Spearville-Windthorst	54.63	4.16	0.00	1.82	60.61
Blue Valley	54.80	2.04	4.81	2.00	63.65
Durham-Hillsboro-Lehigh	54.97	4.35	0.00	0.00	59.32
North Lyon County	55.10	3.96	0.00	0.00	59.06
Marysville	55.21	3.99	5.94	0.00	65.14
Douglas Public Schools	55.21	4.00	0.00	0.87	60.08
Hoxie Community Schools	55.25	3.93	2.74	0.00	61.92
Chetopa	55.40	4.00	5.49	0.00	64.89
Jewell	55.48	1.65	0.00	0.00	57.13
Riley County	55.49	4.00	10.99	0.00	70.48
Washington Schools	55.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	55.84
Beloit	55.88	4.31	6.79	0.00	66.98
Goodland	55.96	4.00	0.00	0.00	59.96
Little River	56.00	4.12	12.24	0.69	73.05
Jetmore	56.10	4.04	9.24	1.06	70.44
West Franklin	56.10	3.97	0.00	0.80	60.87
Osborne County	56.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	56.16
Cherokee	56.20	3.97	0.00	0.00	60.17
Hamilton	56.40	0.50	0.00	0.00	56.90
McLouth	56.54	3.11	8.91	0.78	69.34
Cheney	56.63	3.72	6.90	0.62	67.87
Sabetha	56.72	3.73	17.39	0.00	77.84
Scott County	56.72	2.00	4.31	0.00	63.03
Ottawa	56.92	4.00	7.82	3.18	71.92
Ness City	56.94	4.00	5.81	1.85	68.60
Pretty Prairie	57.10	4.00	4.86	0.00	65.96
Silver Lake	57.14	3.91	3.91	0.00	64.96
Solomon	57.19	3.97	0.00	1.01	62.17
Kansas City	57.27	0.97	1.16	6.14	65.54
Osawatomie	57.29	3.96	17.90	0.00	79.15
Southern Lyon County	57.45	4.00	0.00	0.00	61.45
Easton	57.47	2.78	0.31	0.00	60.56
Midway Schools	57.59	0.00	6.02	0.00	63.61
Brown County	57.71	3.98	18.41	0.00	80.10
Claffin	57.87	4.00	0.00	0.00	61.87
Louisburg	57.98	3.97	15.38	0.00	77.33
Norton Community Sch	57.99	4.00	0.00	1.00	62.99
Holton	58.63	4.00	5.37	0.00	68.00
Labette County	58.64	4.00	2.96	0.00	65.60
Flinthills	59.36	3.98	10.09	0.00	73.43

District Name	General	Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other	Total
Burrton	59.47	4.00	7.52	0.00	70.99
Central	59.53	0.00	3.63	1.05	64.21
Ft. Larned	59.56	3.99	0.00	0.00	63.55
Eureka	59.58	4.00	25.79	1.99	91.36
Perry Public Schools	59.68	3.85	5.67	0.00	69.20
Golden Plains	59.81	4.00	6.72	0.00	70.53
Erie-St Paul	59.96	4.00	0.00	0.00	63.96
Cheylin	59.97	0.00	0.00	1.05	61.02
Valley Heights	60.06	3.00	0.00	0.00	63.06
Kingman	60.35	0.00	5.52	1.77	67.64
Alma	60.39	3.98	0.00	0.00	64.37
Humbolt	60.43	3.48	7.61	1.07	72.59
Clearwater	60.54	2.19	6.54	1.22	70.49
Barnes	60.70	4.00	0.00	0.00	64.70
Quinter Public Schools	60.73	0.00	12.19	0.00	72.92
Wallace County Schools	60.77	3.97	0.00	0.00	64.74
Liberal	60.80	4.06	6.97	0.00	71.83
Maize	60.97	4.00	9.33	0.90	75.20
Axtell	61.06	4.02	0.00	0.00	65.08
Sylvan Grove	61.16	4.03	0.00	0.00	65.19
Grainfield	61.27	3.47	0.00	0.00	64.74
Desoto	61.29	3.97	0.00	1.99	67.25
Anthony-Harper	61.42	3.90	0.00	0.00	65.32
Lyons	61.54	4.00	0.00	4.33	69.87
Weskan	61.55	4.30	0.00	0.00	65.85
Pratt	61.60	3.02	5.23	0.00	69.85
Oskaloosa Public Schools	61.65	3.98	2.32	1.00	68.95
Blue Valley	62.00	4.00	12.38	2.27	80.65
Auburn Washburn	62.30	3.02	16.73	0.00	82.05
Hiawatha	62.68	3.93	14.52	0.00	81.13
Santa Fe Trail	62.93	3.37	0.00	0.00	66.30
Atchison Public Schools	63.00	3.73	5.18	3.36	75.27
South Haven	63.01	3.95	6.03	0.00	72.99
Independence	63.17	2.99	4.96	2.78	73.90
Oakley	63.23	4.00	0.00	1.24	68.47
Grinnell Public Schools	63.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	63.35
Bazine	63.35	1.00	5.69	0.00	70.04
Nickerson	63.42	3.97	5.93	0.41	73.73
Fredonia	63.42	4.01	7.10	0.00	74.53
Rural Vista	63.82	4.02	0.00	2.01	69.85
Moundridge	63.84	4.06	5.46	2.05	75.41
Atchison Co Com Schools	63.99	0.00	6.39	0.00	70.38
Wabaunsee East	64.03	0.99	0.00	0.00	65.02
Coffeyville	64.06	3.99	1.00	3.99	73.04

District Name	General	Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other	Total
Madison-Virgil	64.08	0.00	12.89	1.00	77.97
Chapman	64.33	3.96	0.00	0.00	68.29
Brewster	64.43	4.44	3.60	1.11	73.58
Pittsburg	64.44	3.30	6.29	0.00	74.03
Remington-Whitewater	64.45	4.00	0.00	0.00	68.45
Hanston	64.51	4.00	7.15	0.00	75.66
Mullinville	64.90	3.95	0.00	0.00	68.85
El Dorado	64.93	4.34	0.00	0.00	69.27
Herndon	65.28	0.00	0.00	0.00	65.28
Belleville	65.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	65.35
Stafford	65.68	3.80	0.00	2.00	71.48
Shawnee Heights	65.87	4.00	8.42	0.73	79.02
Garden City	65.94	3.94	10.53	0.00	80.41
Phillipsburg	65.97	4.00	0.00	0.00	69.97
Peabody-Burns	66.26	4.00	4.22	1.53	76.01
Triplains	66.48	2.01	0.00	0.42	68.91
Great Bend	66.56	1.25	4.05	0.00	71.86
Basehor-Linwood	66.93	3.99	2.09	0.00	73.01
Emporia	67.11	4.00	0.00	4.28	75.39
Lindsborg	67.11	3.99	8.03	0.00	79.13
Goessel	67.17	4.43	0.00	0.91	72.51
Argonia Public Schools	67.35	3.00	0.00	0.00	70.35
Wellsville	67.45	3.98	8.91	0.92	81.26
Waconda	67.59	4.24	0.00	0.00	71.83
Tonganoxie	67.64	4.00	8.05	1.50	81.19
Buhler	67.96	4.00	7.00	0.00	78.96
Fowler	67.99	3.62	0.00	0.91	72.52
Abilene	68.13	3.29	7.21	2.05	80.68
Belle Plaine	68.21	3.99	13.98	1.99	88.17
Leoti	68.51	3.02	0.00	0.00	71.53
Baldwin City	68.55	3.38	4.03	0.91	76.87
Ft. Scott	68.56	4.00	4.58	0.00	77.14
Hesston	68.84	3.99	10.06	2.88	85.77
Caldwell	68.97	4.00	0.00	0.87	73.84
Russell County	69.11	3.79	0.00	0.00	72.90
Gardner-Edgerton-Antioch	69.26	4.00	13.76	0.65	87.67
Turner-Kansas City	69.30	0.00	7.26	1.37	77.93
Conway Springs	69.45	3.98	0.00	2.14	75.57
Lawrence	69.48	3.97	3.17	0.42	77.04
West Graham-Morland	69.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	69.73
Ellsworth	69.81	4.00	8.85	0.00	82.66
Halstead	70.01	4.00	4.34	2.00	80.35
Arkansas City	70.89	3.99	9.44	3.08	87.40
Atwood	70.98	1.19	0.00	0.00	72.17

District Name	General	Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other	Total
White Rock	70.99	4.00	0.00	0.00	74.99
Iola	71.03	3.48	13.19	0.00	87.70
West Smith County	71.16	4.04	0.00	0.50	75.70
Herington	71.22	3.99	6.57	3.77	85.55
Northern Valley	71.56	3.99	0.00	0.00	75.55
Kinsley-Offerle	71.62	3.38	0.00	0.00	75.00
Cuba	71.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	71.62
Onaga-Havensville-Wheato	71.66	4.00	0.00	0.00	75.66
Montezuma	71.69	4.64	0.00	2.51	78.84
Leavenworth	72.49	1.99	5.41	0.00	79.89
Healy Public Schools	72.59	4.00	18.29	1.00	95.88
Seaman	72.68	4.00	0.00	0.00	76.68
Udall	72.72	3.98	7.24	1.99	85.93
West Slowdown Valley Sch	72.81	3.56	0.00	0.00	76.37
Mankato	72.86	4.57	0.00	0.00	77.43
Lorraine	73.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	73.40
Smith Center	73.70	4.15	0.00	0.22	78.07
Concordia	73.79	4.47	0.00	0.00	78.26
McPherson	74.08	4.07	6.06	2.21	86.42
Manhattan	74.17	2.73	5.29	0.64	82.83
Valley Center Public Schoo	74.24	0.00	14.02	4.08	92.34
Paola	74.51	3.96	22.06	1.98	102.51
Westmoreland	74.52	1.25	32.69	0.00	108.46
Derby	74.58	5.58	3.97	4.30	88.43
Wellington	74.80	4.00	0.00	3.88	82.68
Bonner Springs	75.05	3.99	16.80	0.00	95.84
Chanute Public Schools	75.11	1.88	19.15	3.26	99.40
Dodge City	75.27	2.19	3.12	0.00	80.58
Renwick	75.32	3.89	0.00	6.47	85.68
Pawnee Heights	75.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.40
Salina	75.96	3.99	3.03	0.40	83.38
Haysville	76.54	4.00	3.51	2.00	86.05
Winfield	76.76	3.99	9.77	5.22	95.74
Augusta	77.76	4.00	1.56	0.00	83.32
Andover	78.26	2.50	8.07	0.00	88.83
Hays	78.78	3.99	5.59	1.66	90.02
Goodard	79.32	2.94	9.79	1.94	93.99
Newton	80.18	3.99	0.00	3.75	87.92
Spring Hill	80.33	3.97	5.75	1.56	91.61
Rose Hill Public Schools	80.47	3.98	6.67	1.91	93.03
Hutchinson Public Schools	80.69	4.00	5.10	3.33	93.12
Copeland	82.14	4.79	0.00	1.93	88.86
Prairie Heights	83.56	4.00	0.00	0.00	87.56
Topeka Public Schools	83.78	4.00	0.40	0.03	88.21

District Name	General	Capital Outlay	Bond Interest	Other	Total
Wichita	85.47	3.11	1.43	0.19	90.20
Olathe	93.68	4.00	11.70	3.52	112.90
Parsons	97.69	0.00	0.00	3.97	101.66
State Totals	17,279.73	955.90	1,217.01	247.39	19,700.03

APPENDIX D

WHY THE CHANGE OF SCHOOL FINANCE

Why state changed school finance law

By John Marshall

Harris News Service

The complications that forced change in state school finance law had roots in two developments: Federal tax cuts in 1988 and statewide property reappraisal in 1989.

Until this year the wealth of a school district - property values plus 24 percent of taxable income - was crucial to its allotment of state aid. Districts high in wealth per pupil received less aid than poorer districts.

On a state average, property values for years had comprised about 75 percent of district wealth. Taxable income was at 25 percent.

Agriculture and vast oil and gas industries had propelled parts of southwest Kansas to the front lines of the state economy. Nearly half the school districts in far southwest Kansas were so wealthy, by government standards, that they qualified for no state aid at all. Because property values were high, low taxes could raise a lot of school money in a handful of districts.

But almost overnight, federal tax cuts exposed more income to state taxation. Kansas property reappraisal (1989) skewed the traditional formula even further. Suddenly, taxable income comprised an average 56 percent of school district wealth and property values, only 44 percent.

Against a finance formula that penalized higher income regions, scores of districts across Kansas faced dramatic losses in state aid without

revision of the formula.

In 1990, lawmakers failed to find \$8 million for a bi-partisan reform. The school finance law was suspended with the promise of new legislation the next year.

In 1991, the price had risen to \$138 million. The Legislature passed a sales and income tax increase to finance protection for disadvantaged districts. The governor vetoed the measure. The House failed to override.

In the following months, dozens of school districts sued the state, claiming the law no longer provided equal financing or educational opportunities in school districts in regional wealth could no longer be bridged with infusions of state aid, an amount approaching \$900 million and rising. As a result, they claimed, students, taxpayers and school districts were unconstitutionally disadvantaged.

A state judge implied strongly that the school funding law would not survive this court test. He invited the Legislature and the governor to modify the law and suspended the lawsuit.

Last May, after months of debate, the Legislature and governor approved new legislation. The law pooled all revenues, including local taxes, into a central education fund; it set a statewide uniform property tax and local spending limits, allowing some variation for exceptional costs.

In effect, the law abolished most school taxing authority for local boards and declared local wealth a state resource to be shared among rich and poor communities.

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Eleven school districts, nine in southwest Kansas, have challenged the law, claiming a constitutional right to local control, including the power to set taxes and manage budgets.

Hutchinson News
September 30, 1992

APPENDIX E

PARAMETER OF THE SCHOOL FINANCE

THE SCHOOL FINANCE PARAMETERS OUTLINED BY JUDGE BULLOCK

As the Legislature discusses and debates school finance, lawmakers are working within key parameters outlined by Judge Terry Bullock.

One key parameter is that providing for public education is a statewide responsibility, resting with the Legislature. Among other parameters are some key phrases the judge used:

"If the duty (for equal educational opportunity) is owed to every child, each child has a claim to receive that educational opportunity which is neither greater nor less than that of any other child..."

"This legislative duty is not to districts, not to schools, not to towns or cities, not to personal constituents - but to each schoolchild of Kansas, equally."

"Does this mean 100% state 'financing' is required for public schools? The clear and simple answer is 'yes.' The reasons are two: a) that is what the constitution says; and b) that is what we have always had - for so-called local school districts are legally only political subdivisions of the state, exercising such of the state's taxing authority as the legislature delegates to them in partial fulfillment of the legislature's obligation to finance the educational interests of the state. Thus, money raised by school districts through 'local' taxation is still state money. It just hasn't been thought of that way."

"Section 6(b) of Article 6 requires the legislature to provide 'suitable financing.'... In addition to equality of educational opportunity, there is another constitutional requirement and that relates to the duty of the legislature to furnish enough total dollars so that the educational opportunities afforded every child are also suitable."

"... no questions of minimal adequacy (suitability) exists to be presented at this time. The Court notes, however, for general edification that such a day has come in other states..."

The Southwester
February, 1992

APPENDIX F

PROPERTY TAX

Boeing asks for tax abatement

By Eugene Shore

Boeing in Wichita last week asked for \$2 billion in Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) may be exempt from property tax for 10 years.

The Barkis plan for school finance calls for 29 mills of property tax to be distributed at \$3,625 per student. Using this formula, the dollars Boeing and Wichita would be exempt from paying would educate 4,800 students per year for 10 years.

Under the former school finance plan, abated taxes raised their own local property taxes. Under the Barkis plan they raise our property taxes statewide. Property tax abatements are a major reason for conflict in school finance. Sedgwick and Wyandotte Counties have 80 percent of the abated taxes in Kansas.

They gave their tax base away and want the state to bail them out. That is having your cake and eating it too. People who work in plants built with IRB's still have children to educate.

Ulysses News
Wednesday March 18, 1992

Put statewide-mill-levy genie back into its bottle

From what I've read, some big-city editors think we western Kansans are a bunch of John Birchers and are quite ignorant. Really, we are "birch john" members; we use only wooden toilet seats.

Regarding ignorance, most of our local governments do not believe in giving big industries tax exemptions. They believe a company that takes something out of the community should put something into the community, over and above the payroll expense. Our businesses and citizens pay taxes on all the property we own. To me, that sounds a lot smarter than some of our eastern neighbors.

If Sedgwick County, for example, had all the businesses within its borders on the tax rolls, one company could provide more than sufficient extra funds to let the county have the schools it needs. A recent \$2 billion industrial-revenue-bond issue (valuation not to be on the tax roll for 10 years) at 30 percent classification, would be an amount equal to 37 percent of Sedgwick County's total current tax base. That's \$76 million the little guy wouldn't have to pay! But that was before the statewide mill levy, that little bit of genius our legislators invented.

With a stroke of the pen, Sedgwick County and six other counties in eastern Kansas shifted their burdens onto the rest of us.

It's dangerous for any community to turn its taxing authority over to the state, and it's equally dangerous to give the state responsibility for educating

our children. To betray those basic principles in order to raid the tax base of other communities, in the name of "equal educational opportunity," is worst of all. It is deliberate deceit of citizens across the state.

At a time when we're all sick of politics and politicians, this shameful trick is especially divisive and alarming. Who wouldn't agree that western Kansans are justified in wanting to secede from a state that robs from many counties, to give to a few whose wealth is obvious - if only they had the gumption to tax it?

More responsible, farsighted methods are available to finance education. The statewide mill levy is a genie that needs to be put back into the bottle - quickly, before it destroys all of us and our state, as well. It's a pity some legislators were in such a hurry to get out of session that they couldn't see the obvious.

MARRY JOSSERAND
Meade

Concannon launches another battle

Hugoton attorney calls
for repeal of tax
exemptions

By John Marshall
Harris News Service

TOPEKA - Don Concannon, the Hugoton lawyer who started the southwest Kansas secession movement, has launched another missile in the region's war on state tax policy.

He called for repeal of all state tax exemptions and a new state intangibles levy to tax those - including himself - who are "taking advantage" of the system.

"I'm not talking less taxation, I'm talking fair taxation. Why do we have all these exemptions, including those for farmers?"

Analysis

That talk is bound to raise eyebrows even in Concannon's own back yard, where farmers and ranchers share in hundreds of millions of dollars in statewide tax breaks for agriculture. And it comes only days before a Sept. 11 convention at Ulysses, where delegates from nine counties are expected to vote on moving ahead with secession from Kansas.

Concannon, a Hugoton lawyer and former (1968-1970) state Republican chairman, launched the secession movement last February when he denounced a proposed state

school-finance formula as a raid on the pocketbooks of southwest Kansans.

As a modified version of that formula headed toward legislative approval last spring, southwest citizens mobilized. They voted to start the process of secession in Grant, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Kiowa, Meade, Morton, Stanton and Stevens counties.

Resentment in the rural, mineral-rich southwest has simmered for decades. Massive school consolidations in 1963, legislative reapportionment in 1966, court unification in 1974 - all were viewed as attacks on the sovereignty of rural communities.

The state severance taxes on oil and natural gas have fueled resentment since their enactment in 1983. Last year more than 30 percent of the state's \$89 million in severance taxes were collected in Stevens County (\$17 million) and Grant County (\$11 million).

The school-finance formula, by which wealthier school districts must help finance education in poor communities, was the catalyst that converted resentment to real anger.

Example: preliminary estimates at the state Department of Education show that the Moscow School District may levy nearly \$2.9 million in local property taxes. But the new financing law demands more than a third of it - an estimated \$861,000 - be sent to Topeka for distribution to other school districts.

"But the argument isn't just about

Continued from page 1

money. It's also about the number of courses being taught and the quality of courses offered. That must figure in the whole picture of education in Kansas." Concannon said.

"Are we short of dollars or are we being shorted on education? We must be able to offer the same courses with the same quality so our children can compete with students from urban areas."

Parallel to his argument for equality in curricula and faculty is Concannon's demand for fair taxation: All wealth - not simply property values and taxable income - should figure into any community's ability to pay for schools.

That means repealing the protection of business inventories, farm equipment and livestock from property taxes; it means eliminating tax exemptions for the sale of livestock, farm machinery and all utilities. It means a state tax on intangible savings and investment income. It includes eliminating tax abatements as a lure for new business or a treat for existing factories.

"The argument isn't less taxation, it's equal taxation. Let's put all the sources of wealth in the pot," Concannon said. "We've created so many exemptions and protections that there isn't anything left to tax except real estate.

But repeal of the exemption on livestock sales, for example, would mean \$215 million in new cattle taxes.

"There isn't a farmer anywhere who would complain if everybody were

taxed equally," he said. "I'm not trying to be popular, I'm trying to be fair."

A proposed statewide intangibles tax, now on a shelf in the House Tax Committee, should become law, Concannon said. That measure would replace current local-option intangibles taxes with a single 4 percent tax. It would exempt the first \$10,000 of investment earnings. Revenues from the tax were estimated at \$35.5 million.

Concannon offered a personal example of what he called a skewed system. He said he had sold a farm - irrigated cropland - for \$500,000 to a man who made a 20 percent down payment.

"That man put \$100,000 down but pays taxes on \$500,000 in intangibles and don't pay a dime in school taxes."

"I am not paying my fair share. I'm taking advantage of the very system I'm complaining about."

Hutchinson News
September 5, 1992

Shore, studies taxation issues

This summer I am serving on a special committee on assessment and taxation. The special committee consists of both Senators and Representatives whose charge is to study issues which take more time than is available during the regular session in January.

The subjects to study are determined by the legislative co-ordinating council which is chaired this year by speaker Marvin Barkis. The significance of the chairman is that this is the same legislator who carried the servance tax bill, and who pushed the school finance bill last secession.

Hopes that tax relief may be in the making were dashed after the last meeting. Instead it is clear that Barkis and his gang of Eastern Kansas bandits plan to conduct further raids on Western Kansas if his party maintains the majority and he is re-elected speaker. Tax committee held hearings on tax abatements. The only conferees allowed to testify were those who were dedicated to tax abatements for large cities for economic development. These are cities who are large enough to hire full time people to research and take advantage of any and all tax advantages. Few small or rural communities can take full advantage of many breaks simply because of the time and money it takes to research and apply for the benefits. The real issue is that with a statewide mill levy for school finance, tax abatements given to Wichita, Kansas City, or Topeka paid for statewide. I insisted we have further hearings and invite conferees

who represented communities which do not grant abatements including IRB's and allow them to tell their story. I was successful and further hearings will be held.

The tax committee also held hearings on taxes on motor vehicles. The claim is that taxes on motor vehicles are the highest in the U.S. In reality some counties are much higher than other because the tax is in direct proportion to your county mill levy. The extremes are Stevens Co. and Neosho Co.. The tax on the same car would be 5 times as much in Neosho as in Stevens. The proposal is to average the rate so all counties are the same, (where have we heard that before?). Since this is a county tax other taxpayers in the county would have to make up the difference or receive the break. In the 124th district the lowest increase would be Stanton with 25% increase up to Stevens with a 255% increase. I have kept this idea from getting out of committee for 2 years. Hopefully we can be successful again.

The legislative education planning committee has also came up with some gems. A major concern to me is a plan to place every county in a community college district. This plan would raise our taxes from 9 to 16 mills in District 124.

The pattern is clear. Take from those who have and give to those who have not. Their perception is that S.W. Kansas is wealthy and Barkis and Finney plan to equalize what we have worked for with the rest of the state. Folks, they call it socialism. It has

Cont,

failed everywhere else in the world, but Gov. Finney and speaker Barkis think it looks so fair because everyone would have an equal chance. What they don't understand is people in S.W. Kansas has to wonder what will be next. We desperately need statewide leadership in Kansas. We now have selfish leaders bent on destroying the few for the benefit of the urban majority.

* * *

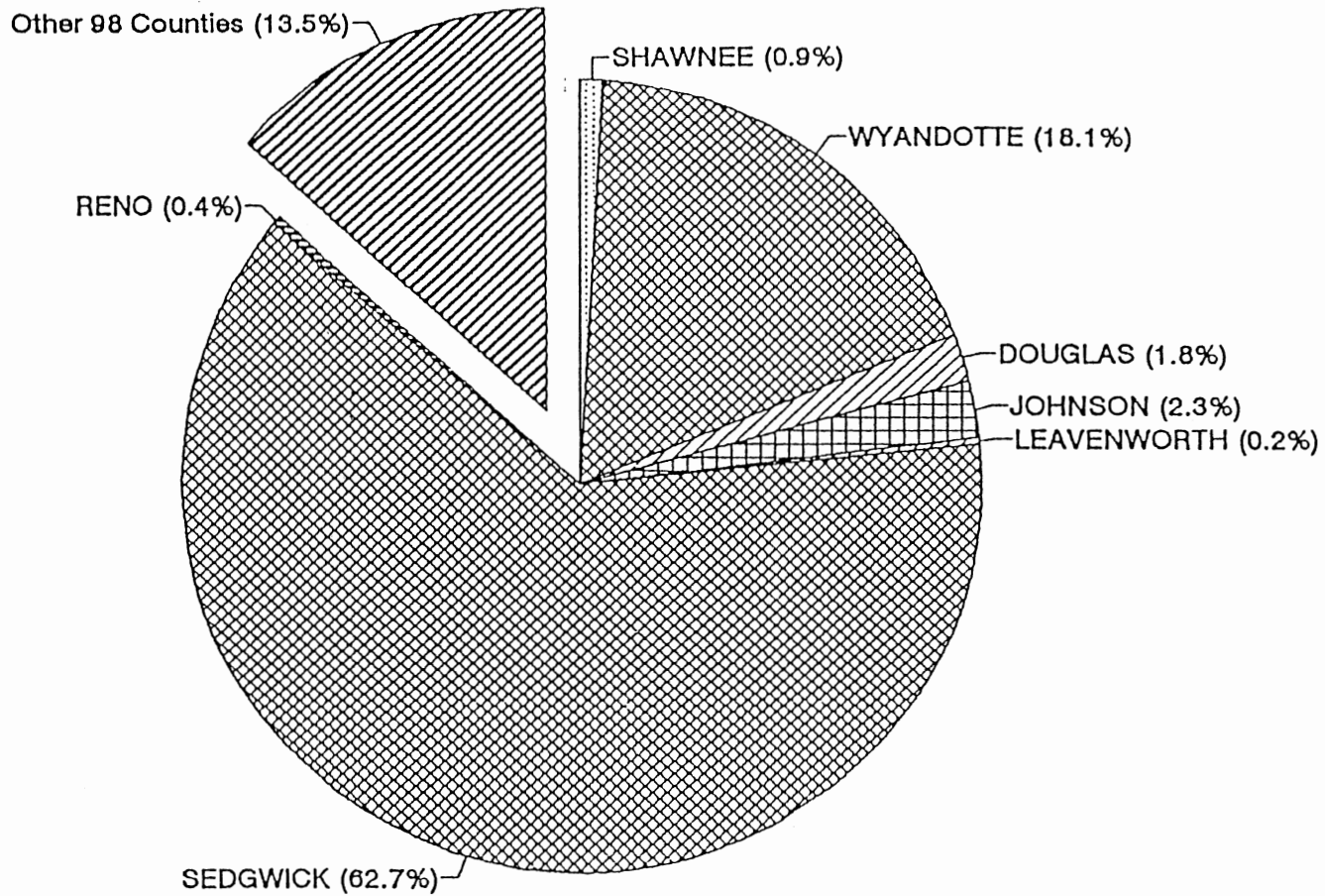
There has never been any country at every moment so virtuous and so wise that it has not sometimes needed to be saved from itself.

Havelock Ellis

Ulysses News
September 9,1992

Exempted Property Distribution

Big 7 Account for 87% of Exemptions



Per Capita School Property Tax Burden (State Average is \$297)

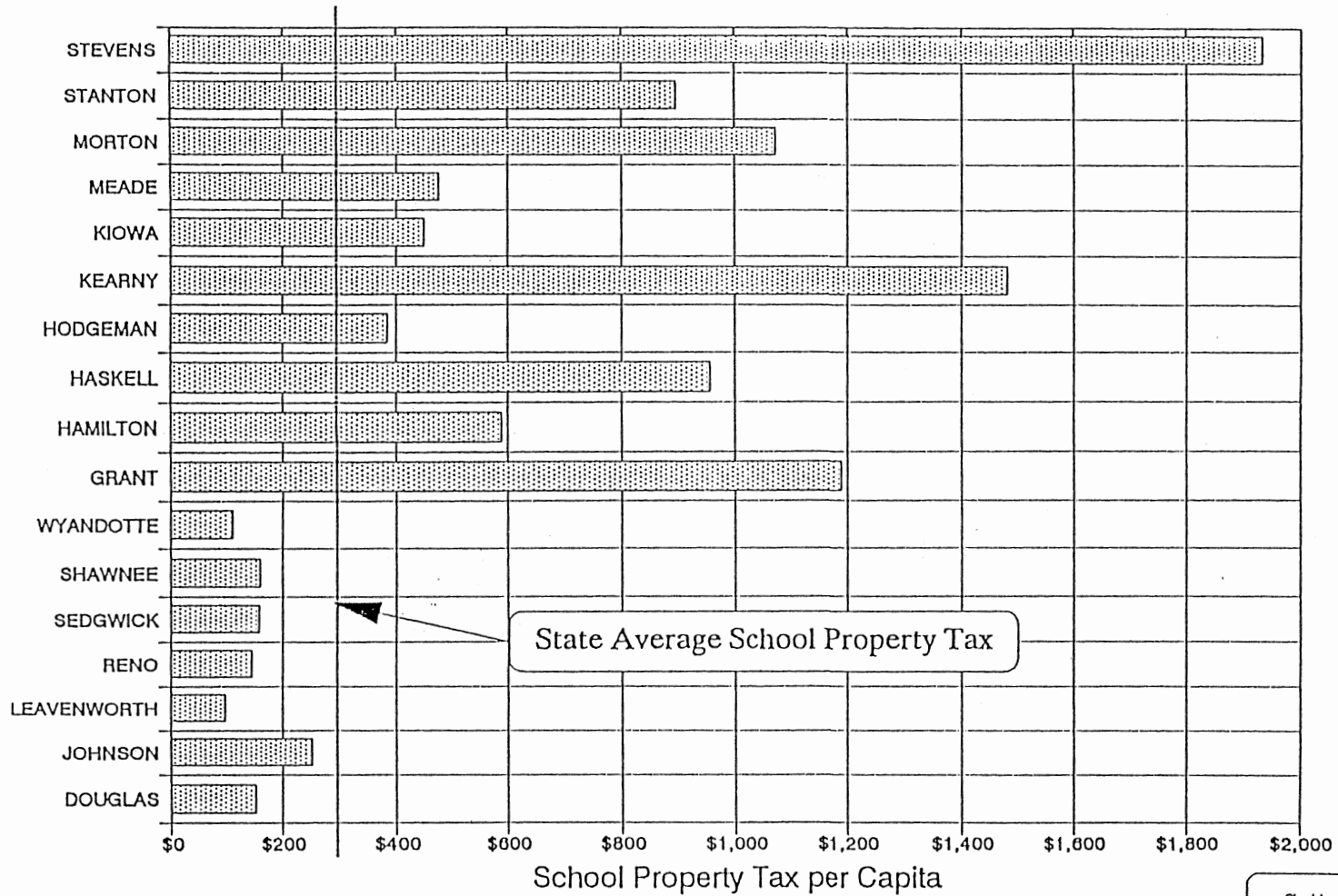


Chart by
Farar Software

APPENDIX G

POPULATION OF KANSAS

POPULATION OF KANSAS COUNTIES, 1890-1990

County	1890*	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Allen	13,509	19,507	27,640	23,509	21,391	19,874	18,187	16,369	15,043	15,654	14,638
Anderson	14,203	13,938	13,829	12,986	13,355	11,658	10,267	9,035	8,501	8,749	7,803
Atchison	26,758	28,606	28,107	23,411	23,945	22,222	21,496	20,898	19,165	18,397	16,932
Barber	7,973	6,594	9,916	9,739	10,178	9,073	8,521	8,713	7,016	6,548	5,874
Barton	13,172	13,784	17,876	18,422	19,776	25,010	29,909	32,368	30,663	31,343	29,382
Bourbon	28,575	24,712	24,007	23,198	22,386	20,944	19,153	16,090	15,215	15,969	14,966
Brown	20,319	22,369	21,314	20,949	20,553	17,395	14,651	13,229	11,685	11,955	11,128
Butler	24,055	23,363	23,059	43,842	35,904	32,013	31,001	38,395	38,658	44,782	50,580
Chase	8,233	8,246	7,527	7,144	6,952	6,345	4,831	3,921	3,408	3,309	3,021
Chautauqua	12,297	11,804	11,429	11,598	10,352	9,233	7,376	5,956	4,642	5,016	4,407
Cherokee	27,770	42,694	38,162	33,609	31,457	29,817	25,144	22,279	21,549	22,304	21,374
Cheyenne	4,401	2,640	4,248	5,587	6,948	6,221	5,668	4,708	4,256	3,678	3,243
Clark	2,357	1,701	4,093	4,989	4,796	4,081	3,946	3,396	2,896	2,599	2,418
Clay	16,146	15,833	15,251	14,365	14,556	13,281	11,697	10,675	9,890	9,802	9,158
Cloud	19,295	18,071	18,388	17,714	18,006	17,247	16,104	14,407	13,466	12,494	11,023
Coffey	15,856	16,643	15,205	14,254	13,653	12,278	10,408	8,403	7,397	9,370	8,404
Comanche	2,549	1,619	3,281	5,302	5,238	4,412	3,888	3,271	2,702	2,554	2,313
Cowley	34,478	30,156	31,790	35,155	40,903	38,139	36,905	37,861	35,012	36,824	36,915
Crawford	30,286	38,809	51,178	61,800	49,329	44,191	40,231	37,032	37,850	37,916	35,568
Decatur	8,414	9,234	8,976	8,121	8,866	7,434	6,185	5,778	4,988	4,509	4,021
Dickinson	22,273	21,816	24,361	25,777	25,870	22,929	21,190	21,572	19,993	20,175	18,958
Doniphan	13,535	15,079	14,422	13,438	14,063	12,936	10,499	9,574	9,107	9,268	8,134
Douglas	23,961	25,096	24,724	23,998	25,143	25,171	34,086	43,720	57,932	67,640	81,798
Edwards	3,600	3,682	7,033	7,057	7,295	6,377	5,936	5,118	4,581	4,271	3,787
Elk	12,216	11,443	10,128	9,034	9,210	8,180	6,679	5,048	3,858	3,918	3,327
Ellis	7,942	8,626	12,170	14,138	15,907	17,508	19,043	21,270	24,730	26,098	26,004
Ellsworth	9,272	9,626	10,444	10,379	10,132	9,855	8,465	7,677	6,146	6,640	6,586
Finney	4,231	3,469	6,908	7,674	11,014	10,092	15,092	16,093	19,029	23,825	33,070
Ford	5,308	5,497	11,393	14,273	20,647	17,254	19,670	20,938	22,587	24,315	27,463
Franklin	20,279	21,354	20,884	21,946	22,024	20,889	19,928	19,548	20,007	22,062	21,994
Geary	10,423	10,744	12,681	13,452	14,366	15,222	21,671	28,779	28,111	29,852	30,453
Gove	2,994	2,441	6,044	4,748	5,643	4,793	4,447	4,107	3,940	3,726	3,231
Graham	5,029	5,173	8,700	7,624	7,772	6,071	5,020	5,586	4,751	3,995	3,543
Grant	1,308	422	1,087	1,087	3,092	1,946	4,638	5,269	5,961	6,977	7,159
Gray	2,415	1,264	3,121	4,711	6,211	4,773	4,894	4,380	4,516	5,138	5,396
Greeley	1,264	493	1,335	1,028	1,712	1,638	2,010	2,087	1,819	1,845	1,774
Greenwood	16,309	16,196	16,060	14,715	19,235	16,495	13,574	11,253	9,141	8,764	7,847
Hamilton	2,027	1,426	3,360	2,586	3,328	2,645	3,696	3,144	2,747	2,514	2,388
Harper	13,266	10,310	14,748	13,656	12,823	12,068	10,263	9,541	7,871	7,778	7,124
Harvey	17,601	17,591	19,200	20,744	22,120	21,712	21,698	25,865	27,236	30,531	31,028
Haskell	1,077	457	993	1,455	2,805	2,088	2,606	2,990	3,672	3,814	3,886

POPULATION OF KANSAS COUNTIES, 1890-1990 (Continued)

County	1890*	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Hodgeman	2,395	2,032	2,930	3,734	4,157	3,535	3,310	3,115	2,662	2,269	2,177
Jackson	14,626	17,117	16,861	15,495	14,776	13,382	11,098	10,309	10,342	11,644	11,525
Jefferson	16,620	17,533	15,826	14,750	14,129	12,718	11,084	11,252	11,945	15,207	15,905
Jewell	19,349	19,420	18,148	16,240	14,462	11,970	9,698	7,217	6,099	5,241	4,251
Johnson	17,385	18,104	18,288	18,314	27,179	33,327	62,783	143,792	220,073	270,269	355,054
Kearny	1,571	1,107	3,206	2,617	3,196	2,525	3,492	3,108	3,047	3,435	4,027
Kingman	11,823	10,663	13,386	12,119	11,674	12,001	10,324	9,958	8,886	8,960	8,292
Kiowa	2,873	2,365	6,174	6,164	6,035	5,112	4,743	4,626	4,088	4,046	3,660
Labette	27,586	27,387	31,423	34,047	31,346	30,352	29,285	26,805	25,775	25,682	23,693
Lane	2,060	1,563	2,603	2,848	3,372	2,821	2,808	3,060	2,707	2,472	2,375
Leavenworth	38,485	40,940	41,207	38,402	42,673	41,112	42,361	48,524	53,340	54,809	64,371
Lincoln	9,709	9,886	10,142	9,894	9,707	8,338	6,643	5,556	4,582	4,145	3,653
Linn	17,215	16,689	14,735	13,815	13,534	11,969	10,053	8,274	7,770	8,234	8,254
Logan	3,384	1,962	4,240	3,223	4,145	3,688	4,206	4,036	3,814	3,478	3,081
Lyon	23,196	25,074	24,927	26,154	29,240	26,424	26,576	26,928	32,071	35,108	34,732
McPherson	21,614	21,421	21,521	21,845	23,588	24,152	23,670	24,285	24,778	26,855	27,268
Marion	20,539	20,676	22,415	22,923	20,739	18,951	16,307	15,143	13,935	13,522	12,888
Marshall	23,912	24,355	23,880	22,730	23,056	20,986	17,926	15,598	13,139	12,787	11,705
Meade	2,542	1,581	5,055	5,542	6,858	5,522	5,710	5,505	4,912	4,788	4,247
Miami	19,614	21,641	20,030	19,809	21,243	19,489	19,698	19,884	19,254	21,618	23,466
Mitchell	15,037	14,647	14,089	13,886	12,774	11,339	10,320	8,866	8,010	8,117	7,203
Montgomery	23,104	29,039	49,474	49,645	51,411	49,729	46,487	45,007	39,949	42,281	38,816
Morris	11,381	11,967	12,397	12,005	11,859	10,363	8,485	7,392	6,432	6,419	6,198
Morton	724	304	1,333	3,177	4,092	2,186	2,610	3,354	3,576	3,454	3,480
Nemaha	19,249	20,376	19,072	18,487	18,342	16,761	14,341	12,897	11,825	11,211	10,446
Neosho	18,561	19,254	23,754	24,000	22,665	22,210	20,348	19,455	18,812	18,967	17,035
Ness	4,944	4,535	5,883	7,490	8,358	6,864	6,322	5,470	4,791	4,498	4,033
Norton	10,617	11,325	11,614	11,423	11,701	9,831	8,808	8,035	7,279	6,689	5,947
Osage	25,062	23,659	19,905	18,621	17,538	15,118	12,811	12,886	13,352	15,319	15,248
Osborne	12,083	11,844	12,827	12,441	11,568	9,835	8,558	7,506	6,416	5,959	4,867
Ottawa	12,581	11,182	11,811	10,714	9,819	9,224	7,265	6,779	6,183	5,971	5,634
Pawnee	5,204	5,084	8,859	9,323	10,510	10,300	11,041	10,254	8,484	8,065	7,555
Phillips	13,661	14,442	14,150	12,505	12,159	10,435	9,273	8,709	7,888	7,406	6,590
Pottawatomie	17,722	18,470	17,522	16,154	15,862	14,015	12,344	11,957	11,755	14,782	16,128
Pratt	8,118	7,085	11,156	12,909	13,312	12,348	12,156	12,122	10,056	10,275	9,702
Rawlins	6,756	5,241	6,380	6,799	7,362	6,618	5,728	5,279	4,393	4,105	3,404
Reno	27,079	29,027	37,853	44,423	47,785	52,165	54,058	59,055	60,765	64,983	62,389
Republic	19,002	18,248	17,447	15,855	14,745	13,124	11,478	9,768	8,498	7,569	6,482
Rice	14,451	14,745	15,106	14,832	13,800	17,213	15,635	13,909	12,320	11,900	10,610
Riley	13,183	13,828	15,783	20,650	19,882	20,617	33,405	41,914	56,788	63,505	67,139
Rooks	8,018	7,960	11,282	9,966	9,534	8,497	9,043	9,734	7,628	7,006	6,039

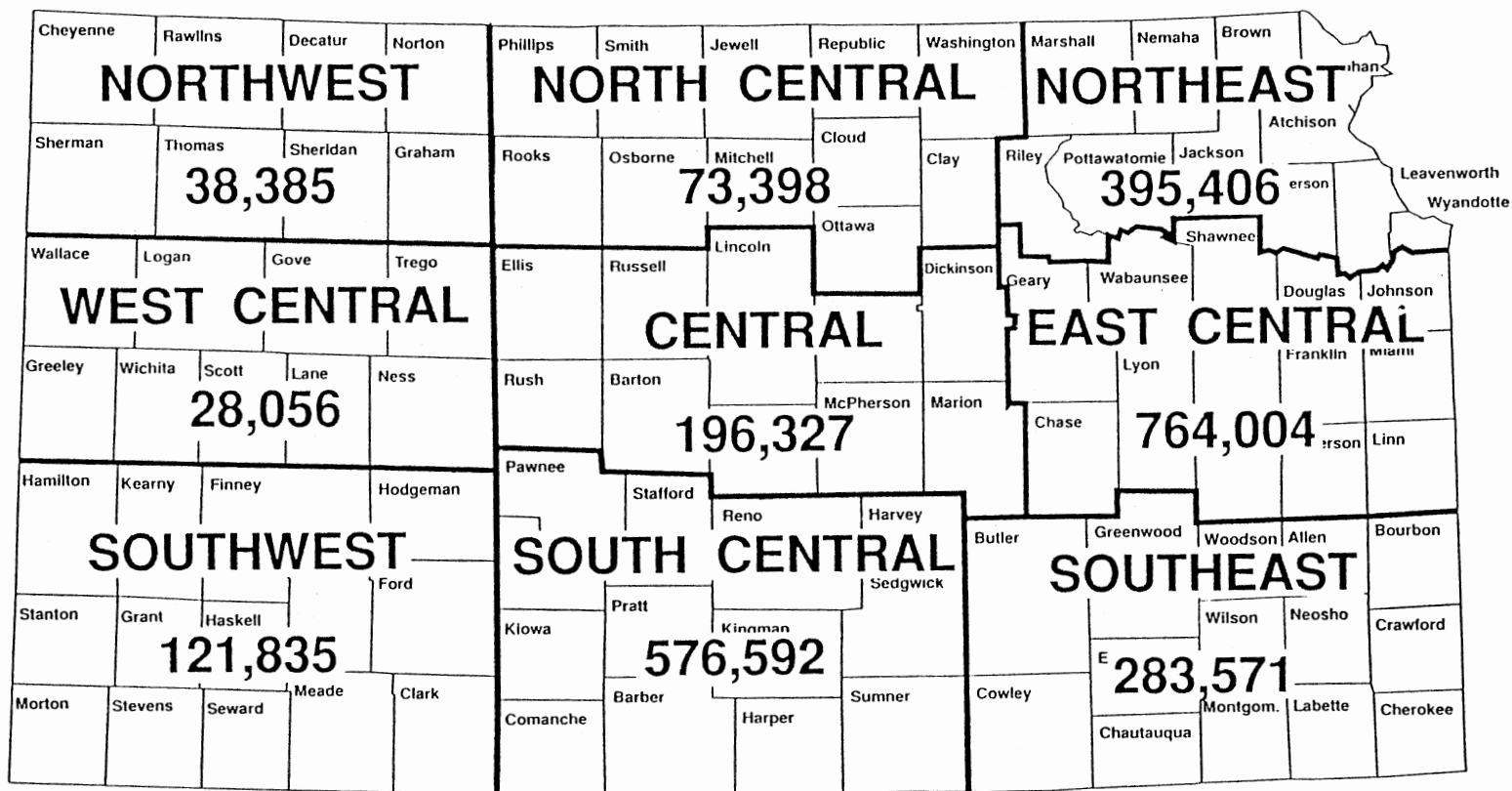
POPULATION OF KANSAS COUNTIES, 1890-1990 (Concluded)

County	1890*	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Rush	5,204	6,134	7,826	8,360	9,093	8,285	7,231	6,160	5,117	4,516	3,842
Russell	7,333	8,489	10,800	10,748	11,045	13,464	13,406	11,348	9,428	8,868	7,835
Saline	17,442	17,076	20,338	25,103	29,337	29,535	33,409	54,715	46,592	48,905	49,301
Scott	1,262	1,098	3,047	3,121	3,976	3,773	4,921	5,228	5,606	5,782	5,289
Sedgwick	43,626	44,037	73,095	92,234	136,330	143,311	222,290	343,231	350,694	367,088	403,662
Seward	1,503	822	4,091	6,220	8,075	6,540	9,972	15,930	15,744	17,071	18,743
Shawnee	49,172	53,727	61,874	69,159	85,200	91,247	105,418	141,286	155,322	154,916	160,976
Sheridan	3,733	3,819	5,651	5,484	6,038	5,312	4,607	4,267	3,859	3,544	3,043
Sherman	5,261	3,341	4,549	5,592	7,400	6,421	7,373	6,682	7,792	7,759	6,926
Smith	15,613	16,384	15,365	14,985	13,545	10,582	8,846	7,776	6,757	5,947	5,078
Stafford	8,520	9,829	12,510	11,559	10,460	10,487	8,816	7,451	5,943	5,694	5,365
Stanton	1,031	327	1,034	908	2,152	1,443	2,263	2,108	2,287	2,339	2,333
Stevens	1,418	620	2,453	3,943	4,655	3,193	4,516	4,400	4,198	4,736	5,048
Sumner	30,271	25,631	30,654	29,213	28,960	26,163	23,646	25,316	23,553	24,928	25,841
Thomas	5,538	4,112	5,455	5,517	7,334	6,425	7,572	7,358	7,501	8,451	8,258
Trego	2,535	2,722	5,398	5,880	6,470	5,822	5,868	5,473	4,436	4,165	3,694
Wabaunsee	11,720	12,813	12,721	11,424	10,830	9,219	7,212	6,648	6,397	6,867	6,603
Wallace	2,468	1,178	2,759	2,424	2,882	2,216	2,508	2,069	2,215	2,045	1,821
Washington	22,894	21,963	20,229	17,984	17,112	15,921	12,977	10,739	9,249	8,543	7,073
Wichita	1,827	1,197	2,006	1,856	2,579	2,185	2,640	2,765	3,274	3,041	2,758
Wilson	15,286	15,621	19,810	21,157	18,646	17,723	14,815	13,077	11,317	12,128	10,289
Woodson	9,021	10,022	9,450	8,984	8,526	8,014	6,711	5,423	4,789	4,600	4,116
Wyandotte	54,407	73,227	100,068	122,218	141,211	145,071	165,318	185,495	186,845	172,335	161,993
Kansas	1,428,108	1,470,495	1,690,949	1,769,257	1,880,999	1,801,028	1,905,299	2,178,611	2,249,071	2,364,236	2,477,574

*In 1890, Garfield County had a population of 881 which has been included in Finney County for that year. There was also a total of 1,012 Indians which were enumerated in the state total but not in county data.

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930*, Vol. 1; *Census of Population, 1960: Number of Inhabitants*, Final Report; *1980 Census of Population*, Vol. 1, Chapter A, Part 18; *1990 Census of Population*, STF1-A.

Population of Kansas, by Region, 1990

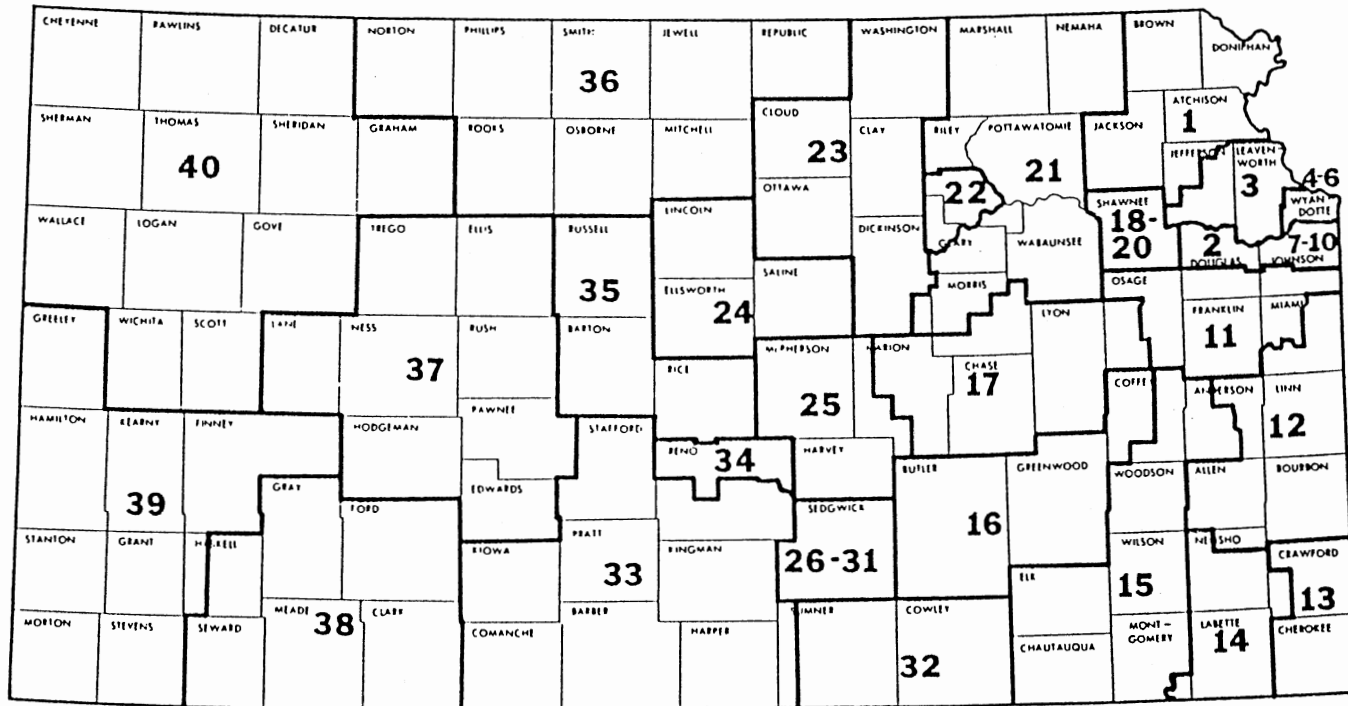


Source: Institute for Public Policy and Business Research, 1991.

APPENDIX H

LEGISLATIVE MAPS

SENATE DISTRICT MAP
 (Prepared by the Institute for Public Policy from Legislative Research Department data.)

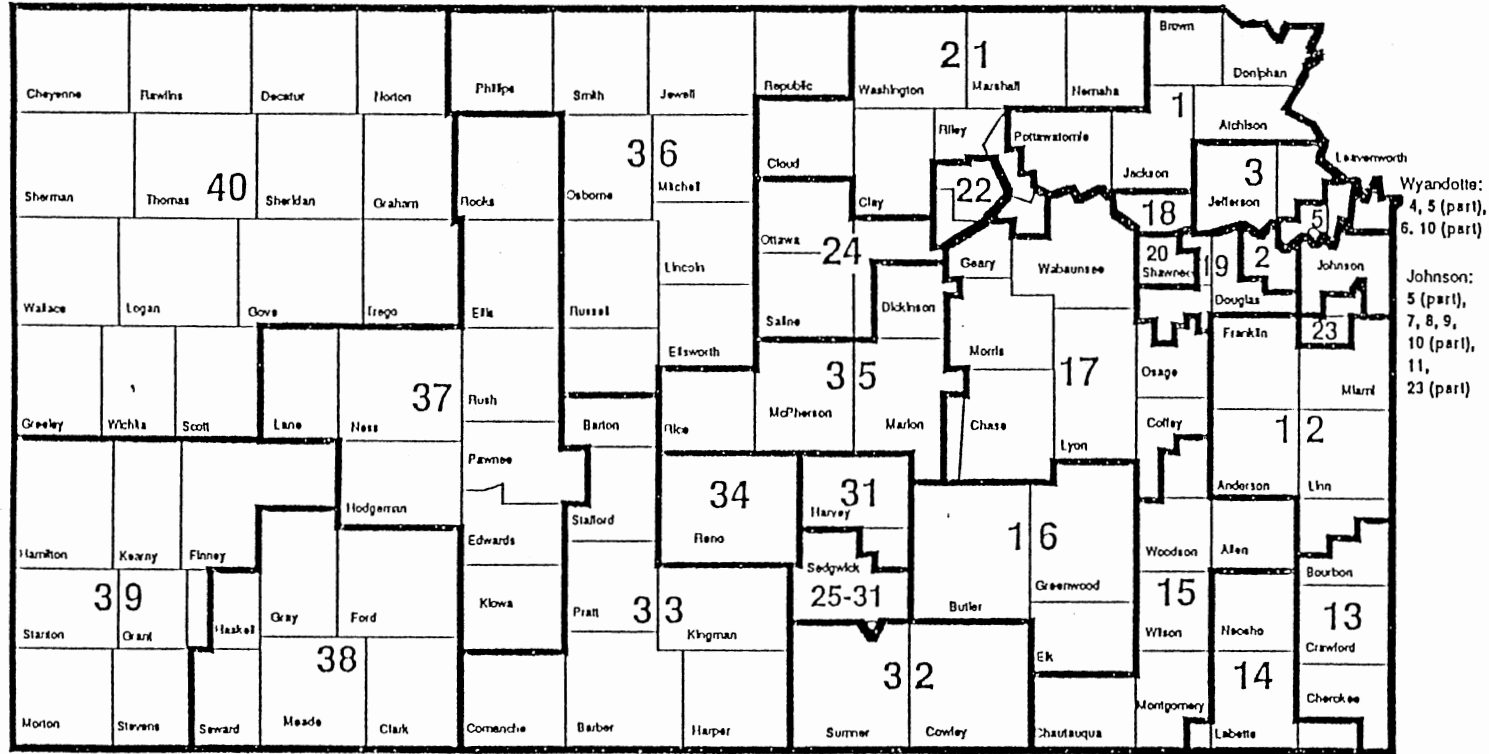


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January 31, 1991

Kansas Senate Districts

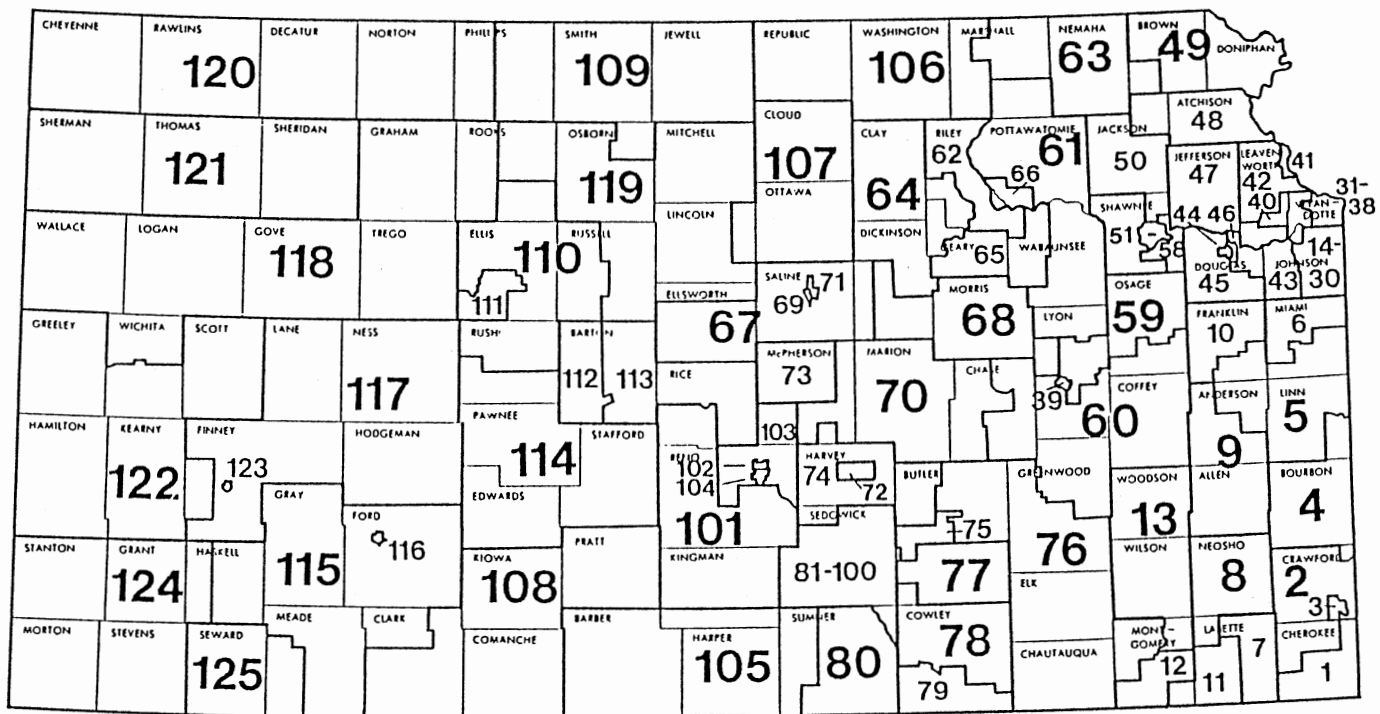
1992 Legislative Session, House Bill 3083



Produced by: Kansas Secretary of State
 BILL GRAVES
 2nd Floor, Capitol
 Topeka, Kansas 66612
 (913) 296-1864

revised 6/16/92 rjl

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT MAP
 (Prepared by the Institute for Public Policy from Legislative Research Department data.)

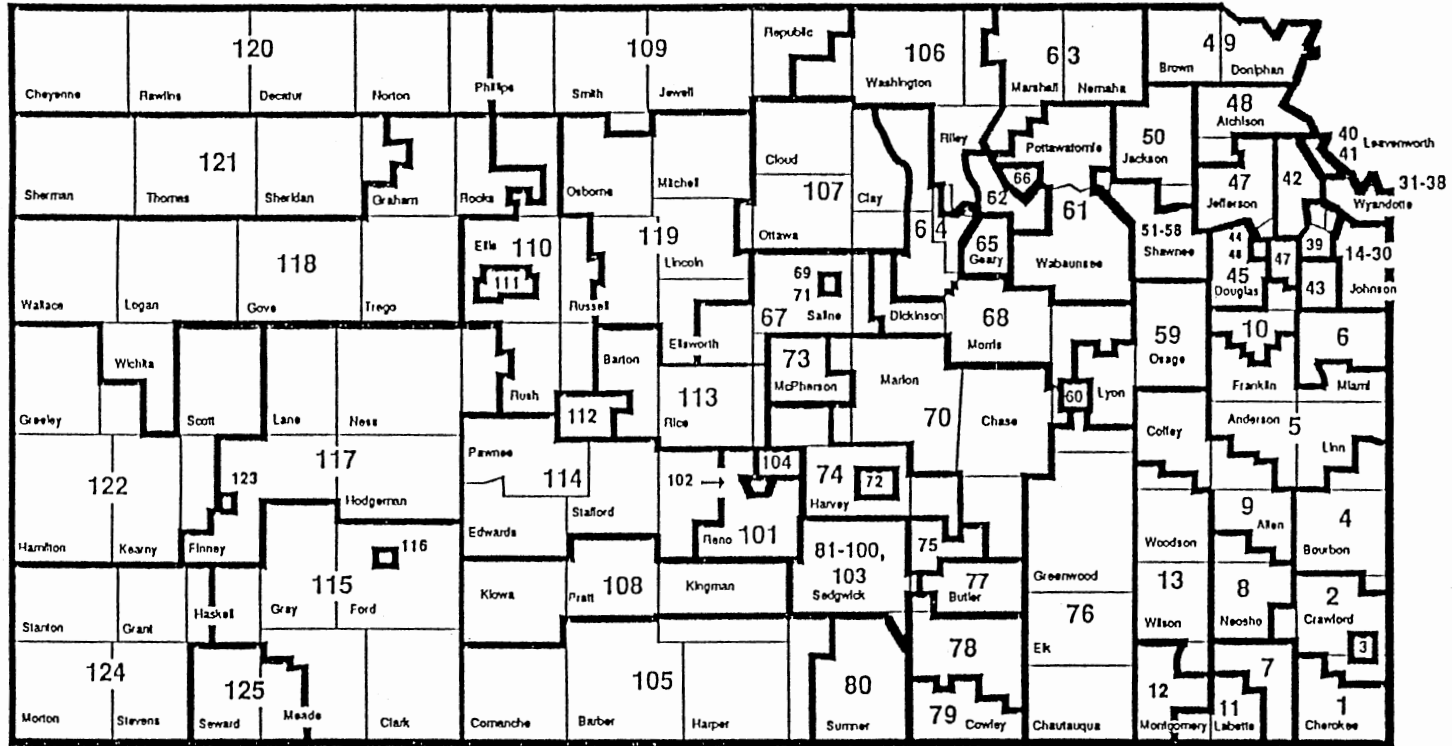


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January 31, 1991

Kansas House Districts

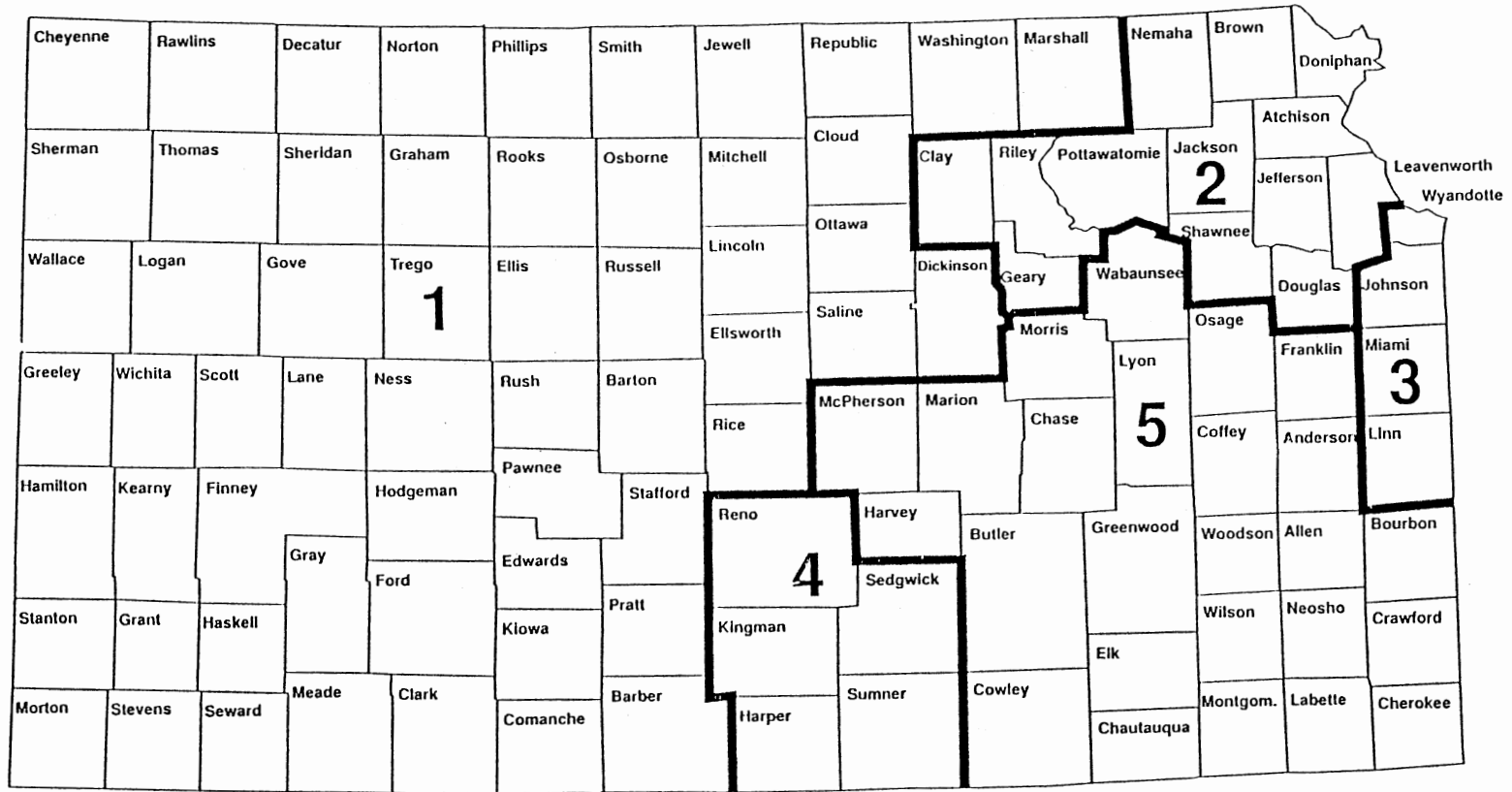
1992 Legislative Session, House Bill 3083



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 (913) 296-1864

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U.S. Congressional Districts

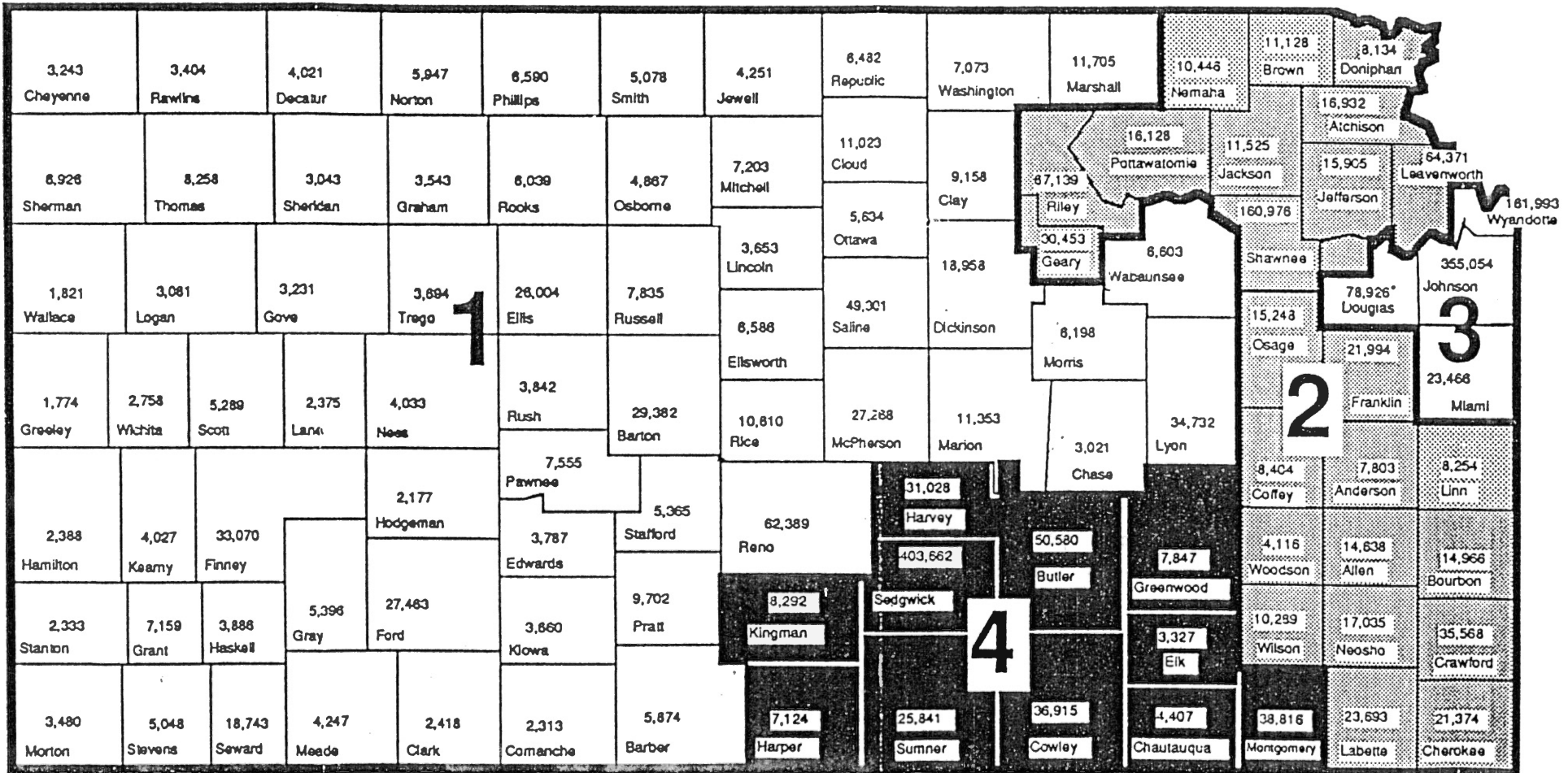


Source: Kansas Secretary of State, *Kansas Directory*, 1991.

KANSAS CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

United States District Court Case 92-4097-R

Population figures are from the 1990 U.S. Census.



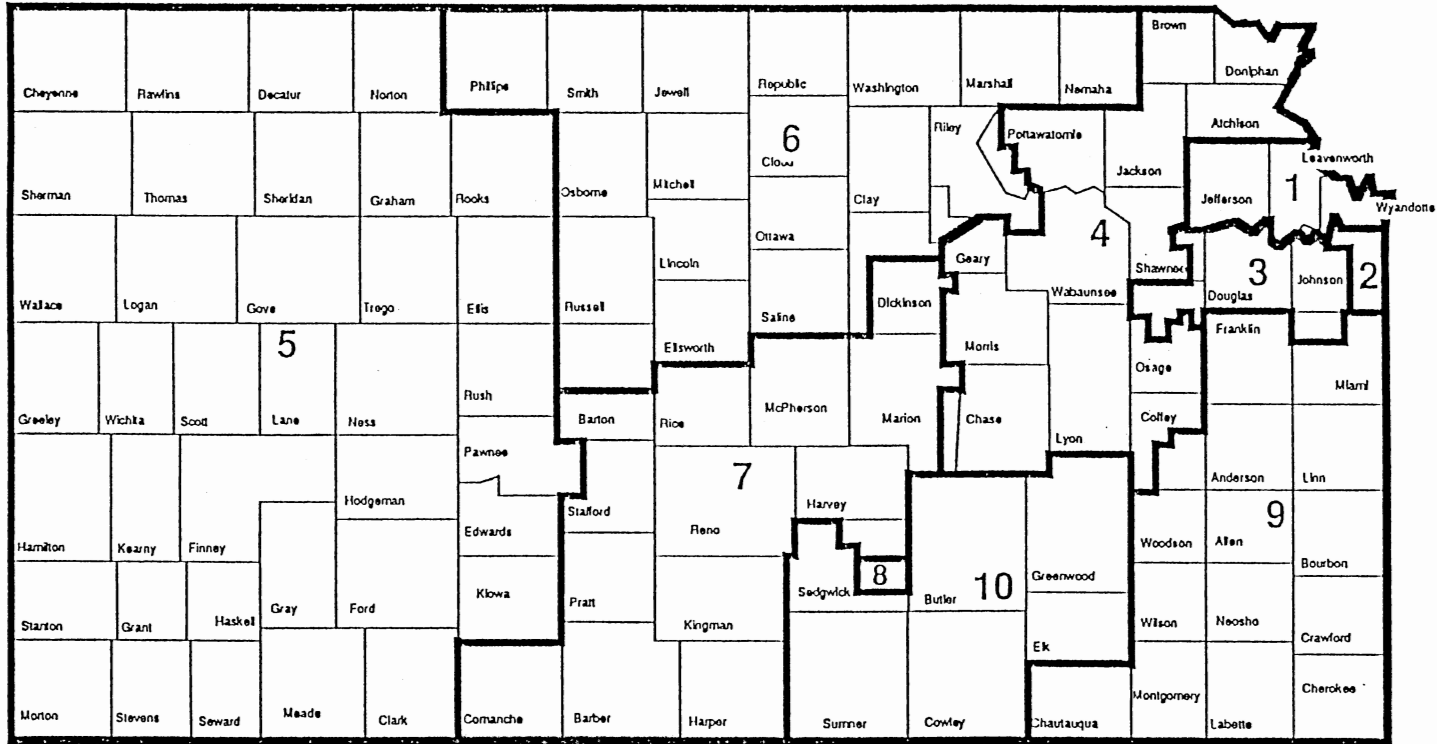
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 Kansas Secretary of State
BILL GRAVES
 2nd Floor, Capitol
 Topeka, Kansas 66612
 (913) 296 - 1864

Final 1990 State Population: 2,477,574
 Ideal size for 4 Districts: 619,394

Deviation From Ideal Size
 1st District: 619,370 -24 (0.00%)
 2nd District: 619,391 -3 (0.00%)
 3rd District: 619,439 45 (0.01%)
 4th District: 619,394 -20 (0.00%)

Kansas State Board of Education Districts

1992 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 809



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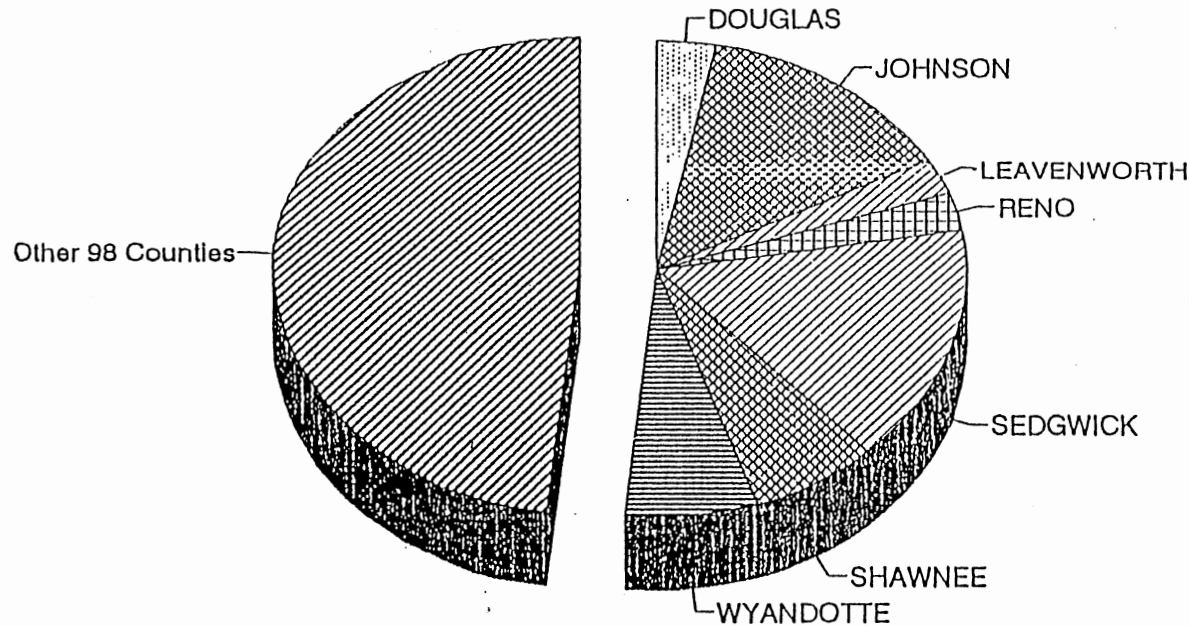
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APPENDIX I

LEGISLATIVE POWER

Legislative Power Distribution The 'One Man One Vote' System

Chart by
Form Software



These Seven Counties have more votes in the Kansas Legislature than the other 98 counties combined!

SCHOOL FINANCE TRIVIA

1. 38 of the 39 School Dist. in these 7 counties will see School Finance Property Tax Reductions.
2. 80% of the School Dist. in these 7 counties are in the upper 25% of the School Finance Windfall.
3. These 7 counties have exempted over \$4.1 Billion from the tax rolls. (The total valuation of the remaining 98 counties is \$7.7 Billion.)
4. These 7 counties account for 87% of the property currently exempted in the entire state. (Sedgwick county alone, exempts nearly 63% of the property exempted in all of Kansas!)

APPENDIX J

HISTORICAL PRECEDENT

Idea of Kansas secession has historical precedent

Secession impossible? Possible maybe - but only by taking up arms, you say. Not necessarily so. It has been done and without taking up arms.

Until 1861 West Virginia was a part of Virginia. During the Civil War, Virginia joined the Confederate States, but the people in the western counties remained loyal to the Union and formed their own government. West Virginia became a separate state in 1863.

The Allegheny Mountains separated Virginia's western settlers. People in the west developed a social and economic life quite different from that of the eastern settlements.

Settlers in the west began to demand their own government as early as 1776 when they sent petitions to the Continental Congress. The Revolutionary War halted their attempt. The Western settlers contributed their full share of men and supplies to the war.

During the 1800's, the difference between eastern and western Virginia became even greater. Trade in the east moved to the Atlantic Ocean, and commerce in the west used waterways that flowed toward the Mississippi River.

The land-owning, slaveholding aristocracy of eastern Virginia represented the larger part of the population. The easterners controlled state affairs. They opposed public improvements that the western farmers and industrialist wanted.

Bitter disputes developed over slavery, taxation, use of public money, education and other issues.

Virginia had to choose sides when Confederate troops fired on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861. On April 17, a state convention voted for secession.

Because a majority of the western counties supported the Union, these counties declared their independence and formed a government they called the Restored Government of Virginia.

Virginia asked West Virginia to reunite with it after the war ended in 1865, but West Virginia refused to do so. Virginia then insisted that West Virginia pay part of the state's debt upon separation.

Legal battles continued over this issue until 1915, when the Supreme Court ruled that West Virginia owed Virginia \$12,393,929.50. West Virginia made its final payment on the debt in 1929.

West Virginia today shows signs of economic growth. The new jobs created by the growth of manufacturing, coal production and tourism helped West Virginia reverse its population decline. The state's population increased by 12 percent between 1980 and 1990.

Is secession of western Kansas an impossibility? No! Do western Kansans have a pioneering spirit to succeed as a government all its own? Yes! We are of strong enduring pioneer stock.

We believe in the best school system our tax dollars can afford for our children. We believe in local government control of tax dollars. We also believe in fair and equal taxation.

We believe in our local hospital,

Cont,

care home, health center, volunteer EMS, and fire department.

We believe in our beautiful flatlands, our wide open spaces and clean air. We believe in our cattle-related industries. We believe in our green fields of corn, milo and other diversified crops.

We believe in our natural resources of gas and oil, and we believe the governing of our resources should be a responsible privilege of each local taxpayer.

Do we believe in western Kansas as it is and think a state called West Kansas could survive and prosper? It is a decision we may have to make.

Betty Barr
Chairman, Wichita County
Commissioner
Marienthal

Hutchinson News

APPENDIX K

SECESSION MOVEMENT EXPLAINED

Secession movement explained

As the Sept. 11, date for the big "51st State" Constitutional Convention draws near, some folks are wondering "why?" Why would so few people go to so much trouble and expense just to prove a point?

Are the 36,000 people of the nine county-area that voted last April to secede mostly just a bunch of redneck rebels? On the contrary, they appear to be a very calm and collected group - not at all the types who stage sit-ins, burn buildings, rob, loot or in any other way violate the law. They are predominately churchgoers and very good neighbors.

About 90 percent of their children go on to further training after high school. Their high school drop-out rate is about one percent as opposed to a national rate of over four percent. Their composite ACT scores are significantly higher than the national and state averages. About 77 percent of Southwest Kansas high school grads take the ACT as opposed to 31 percent nationwide.

So maybe they are led by a bunch of ignorant militants who just go in search of a cause? A survey of committee chairmen of the big "51st State" Committee reveals that they average four years of college. They are professionals, main-street business people, farmers and tradesman. Not one of them fits the profile of a radical.

What then makes them want to secede from the rest of Kansas? To put it bluntly, they don't like a raw deal! Unjust taxation isn't just a burr under

a saddle, it's a violation of Constitutional principle.

They see themselves as honest, morally upright, thrifty, law-abiding citizens who are suddenly told that they are no longer capable of running their own affairs - in this case, the education of their kids. It'll be done FOR them and TO them by the mother of all wisdom from the sacred chambers of the little Kingdom on the KAW-TOPEKA the Capitol of which is an enchanted place that is actually a fiefdom of Big Business.

Once-upon-a-time, we are told, all polarities were between rural vs. urban interests. But it was impossible to eliminate all fair-minded and reasonable people from cities. How then could people be polarized and controlled? Very simply, by money!

An out-of-town lawyer flies in, tells City Council "You give my client, Company X, x-years' freedom from property tax and we'll bring a multi-million-dollar payroll to your city."

Sounds too good to be true! "But what about more roads, schools, etc., for all these new job-holders? How can we afford it?" ask the councilmen.

"Easy!" says the lawyer. "The state of Kansas is obligated to furnish those! With all those people seeking jobs in your city, you'll soon have control of the votes in the Capitol. You'll be able to say how the state spends its money. Of course - if you don't like our offer, we can go next-door to Missouri, Oklahoma or even Tennessee. You can

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have three hours to think about it." The briefcase snaps shut and the lawyer heads for the door. His case has been made and he knows what the answer will be. How could anyone refuse?

So a deal is struck. Big business has just bought another city council - and with it, another city. Along with it, eventually, will come all the taxpayers of the state. For their laws and daily orders come from the state government, whose crow-princess is out waving her magic wand over her new appointees-trying to make them shine, perhaps.

If this sounds like a modern-day version of "Robin Hood," we must admit there are enough robbery and intrigue to meet the requirements.

But will the taxpayers roll over and play dead? Will they cough up all the money the state deems necessary to provide a basic education to its children - even though it can't define what that may be?

Will they soon be willing to consolidate their courthouses into larger and "more efficient units" because the state thinks they should? And will they be willing to have toxic-waste dumps that someone in the Capitol thinks are a "good investment for the state" because big biz is willing to pay Kansas to take poisons off the premises? And in the future when the cities' water supply won't stretch any farther, who will be able to say "No" to the command: "ration your water. We need it. It's for the greater good!"

Impossible scenario? No, stick around, it ain't over till it's over.

Those secessionists out west are mostly descendents of early-day settlers who were possessed of a rigid determination to overcome all obstacles - weather, climate, bandits and just plain bad luck, to mention a few. Could be that some of the settlers' genes rubbed off on these descendents, they seem to be a determined lot!

One thing is on their side. They KNOW they are right and that EVENTUALLY many will see the light and be attracted to the cause.

Perhaps some day even the enchanted elite that control the palace on the Kaw will admit that one should never bite a bobcat on just any old part of his anatomy, for the outcome, at best, is uncertain!

Ulysses News
August 19, 1992

Questions and answers

Some people wonder why southwest Kansans favor seceding from Kansas, starting over with a new state.

Wherever people gather, questions pop up, showing that they're thinking more about government and what it should or shouldn't do. Current questions and answers heard are given here.

Q. Why are people in nine counties so angry at the State?

A. They don't like taxation without either a voice in how it is formulated or how it is spent. That's contrary to our form of government, our principles and sense of fairness.

Q. If taxes are spent for education, isn't that a good cause?

A. No one argues that; the cause is good. The method is wrong. We all want equal educational opportunities for all, but the new School Finance Plan does not even define what a basic education should be, has no guidelines for administering a basic program nor for allowing an individual district to enhance a basic program as it sees fit.

Q. Won't education be more nearly equal if the state oversees the entire program K through 12?

A. No. Once local controls are removed, the State can go on a binge of setting guidelines and controls for every facet of education, inventing all kinds of programs that may be against wishes of local districts. There's no limit to the amount of money it will require.

Q. Why is a statewide mill levy so bad for funding education?

A. It's the foot-in-the-door. When the State finds itself short of revenue,

all it must do is raise the mill levy. This sets a precedent for an upward spiral, as we see in Federal agencies all the time.

Q. Won't everyone be taxed for the money to run the education program?

A. No. That's the problem. Kansas' property is not all on the tax rolls. Some municipalities have given certain large tax abatements to businesses. The seven largest counties, Douglas, Reno, Johnson, Leavenworth, Sedgewick, Shawnee and Wyandotte have tax abatements totalling over \$4 BILLION. That was BEFORE Wichita's latest gift to Boeing a \$2 billion revenue bond issue that will put more tax-free property in that city. The other 98 counties of Kansas have only \$7.7 billion of assessed valuation. So seven counties have an amount exempted from taxes that equal almost half the total assessed valuation for all of Kansas - under \$15 billion.

Q. With so much of their property exempted, how have those counties financed their school before?

A. With huge mill levies on property not exempted, as homeowners, farmers and small businesses in those counties can attest.

Q. Did no one ever complain?

A. Plenty, but not until they got organized did anyone listen. When they finally got very angry, their politicians got inventive and came up with the current School Finance Plan that shifts local taxing authority for education to the State. From that point, all the State has to do is RAISE THE MILL LEVY each time it runs out of

Cont,

money for the program it decides is necessary.

Q. Have taxes been lowered in those seven counties?

A. Yes indeed! Their burden has been spread out over the rest of our state.

Q. How could this have been avoided?

A. The legislature could have passed a law to stop tax abatements to all but non-profit entities.

Q. Why didn't that happen?

A. It would not be a "politically correct" thing to do.

Q. So they passed the school taxes on to someone who couldn't fight back, and that started the secession movement?

A. Started it, yes. But it's not that simple.

Q. If you succeed in starting a NEW state, how will it be any different from the present one?

A. If you want that explained, you should come to Ulysses on Sept. 11, to the Constitutional Convention. You would be surprised at some of the answers that have been uncovered.

Thus the secession-minded roll along with plans to take steps to separate from the rest of Kansas and big business influence that carries more weight than citizens in 98 of the 105 counties.

The Big 51st State Committee
HCR 2 Box 18
Meade, Kansas 67864

Ulysses News
August 26, 1992

STATE REVENUES BY COUNTY

COUNTY	POPULATION	INCOME TAX	SALES TAX	MOTOR VEHICLE	MINERAL TAX	OTHER	TOTALS	PER CAPITA
	1990	1989	1990	1990	90/91			
GRANT	7,159	2,005,652	1,974,427	491,779	10,740,804			
HASKELL	3,886	1,475,580	390,555	304,399	4,231,841			
HODGEMAN	2,177	464,935	201,274	297,820	596,038			
KEARNEY	4,027	1,099,635	352,638	227,946	6,496,772			
KIOWA	3,668	902,356	621,679	348,905	1,568,447			
MEADE	4,247	1,014,260	543,589	357,336	1,437,256			
MORTON	3,488	1,108,210	660,791	297,262	5,581,820			
STANTON	2,333	882,968	335,520	251,648	2,003,816			
STEVENS	5,048	1,583,668	931,265	248,313	15,844,843			
TOTALS	36,033	10,537,264	6,011,738	2,825,408	48,501,637	9,571,108	77,447,155	2,150
KANSAS	2,376,875						5,204,600,000	2,190

Issues Unfair to Southwest Kansas.

The statewide, 32-mill school finance property tax and its pooling of tax money for redistribution will drastically increase property taxes this year in the mineral-rich counties, such as those over the Hugoton Gas Field, and send much of the tax money east.

Counties such as Sedgwick and Wyandotte have granted 10-year exemptions to millions of dollars worth of commercial real estate, in the name of economic development. Those counties therefore are not contributing their fair share to the state wide property tax for schools, while their schools are subsidized by counties such as Stevens and Morton.

Kansas school finance law computes "district wealth" by the valuation of its taxable property, while ignoring intangible wealth, such as stocks, bonds, bank deposits and other cash investments. Some southwest Kansans want this formula changed to include intangible wealth. They want a statewide intangibles tax to help supply revenue for schools. This would reduce the reliance on property tax and come a step closer to fairly taxing the true wealth of the state.

They despise the severance tax on gas and oil, but some of them half-jokingly say they would be willing to live with it if eastern Kansas were taxed on the basis of its yearly rainfall - an important natural resource that is nearly absent in southwest Kansas. This is in response to the viewpoint that southwest Kansas' gas and oil is a natural resource that should be taxed

to benefit the whole state.

They would like to see one of the two houses in the Kansas Legislature composed of equal representation from each county in the state, instead of basing legislative-district boundaries on population density. The present system allows the urban areas to dominate the rural counties, they said. They note that the U.S. Senate has two senators from each state, regardless of state population.

The 1992 school finance law sought to provide equal opportunity for a basic education for all Kansas students - without ever adequately defining the term "basic education." Stevens and Morton counties saw tax increases, and cuts in state aid, while their schools offered only a fraction of the courses routinely offered in many large, urban schools. They say those districts saw tax cuts and state aid increases.

Garden City Telegram
June 29, 1992

APPENDIX L

SCHOOL LAWSUIT

9 SW Kansas school boards to test new law

By Chris Koger

The Hutchinson News

Nine school districts in southwest Kansas that say the state is taking away local control from school boards plan to file a lawsuit today challenging the new school-finance formula.

Kansans for Local Control, a coalition representing the nine districts, states in the lawsuit that the formula is unconstitutional and that the management of school systems by local school districts has been an integral part of Kansas life and education.

Sam Forrer, a Ulysses bank president and chairman of the coalition, said the group, like many southwest Kansans, is concerned about the ramifications of the school-finance law passed by the Legislature.

"I am not a school-board member, but I closely followed the development of the law and became concerned with the manner it was devised and designed," Forrer said. "So I, along with many other southwest Kansans, began discussing a way to participate in the law while it was being developed."

He said Kansans for Local Control formed shortly after the law was put into effect July 1. The new law set a basic budget for each school district of \$3,600 per pupil and statewide property-tax levy of 32 mills during the current school year. This takes power away from local school districts as outlined in the Kansas Constitution, Forrer said.

"The most talked-about topic among

our folks here is that we were under the assumption there would be equity among the school districts," he said. "Of course, it ended up with gross inequalities. Local control is more effective than state control. This lawsuit is directed at the basic things the law has thrust upon the citizens of Kansas."

Allen Popkin, a St. Louis attorney who is representing the group in their lawsuit against the state and the state board of education, said most districts involved in the lawsuit are getting less for their money.

In a statement released Monday, Popkin said some districts were levying a 9 mill tax and spending between \$10,000 - \$11,000 per pupil. After the legislation, however, the mill levy would be 32 and the per pupil expenditure would be \$3,600.

"While that, on its face, is unfair, it's only a small part of the unfairness in this legislation," Popkin said. "There's something much more fundamental in what is wrong with this legislation."

He said Kansas school districts had operated in the same way, with more local control, for 130 years. The constitution gave districts the power to tax and spend within its own district, with state board of education taking a supervisory role.

"It flies in the face of those constitutional commands and takes the local autonomy away from school districts that the constitution demanded. Now it's a statewide function," he said. "It's against the

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constitution intended."

Popkin said students will ultimately suffer from the new school-finance formula.

"It's not because the Legislature is evil or didn't try to do the right thing, but the effects are not good for students," he said.

Forrer said that the group's reasons for the lawsuit are similar to those that have started a secession movement in southwest Kansas, but Kansans for Local Control are not tied to the secessionists. Eight out of the nine districts named in the lawsuit are in counties involved in secession proceedings.

"This organization is not actively involved in that, but I must say that I believe the grievances that have motivated those who are investigating secession include some of the ones we address in the lawsuit," he said.

Popkin said the lawsuit may be consolidated with a similar one involving the Blue Valley and Burlington districts. The lawsuit is pending in Shawnee County District Court.

Hutchinson News
September 15, 1992

Southwest districts file school lawsuit

*Petition seeks fair taxes,
local control*

By Lew Ferguson

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA - Nine school districts in southwest Kansas have sued the state, seeking to have the 1992 school finance law struck down on grounds it removes local control, promotes unfair taxation and denies children in sparsely populated areas an equal education.

"The act is unconstitutional in that it contravenes and destroys the concept of local control of local schools," says the petition filed yesterday. "School districts are no longer able to design their own budgets, levy their own taxes, collect their own taxes and manage their own systems."

The lawsuit says Kansas has had local control of public education for more than 100 years and cites a 1966 amendment to the Constitution which says schools "shall be maintained, developed and operated by locally elected boards." The new law is illegal because the state now dictates how much local boards can raise and spend, the petition adds.

It also contends lack of a uniform property appraisal system results in unequal taxation; exemption of property from the tax rolls, specifically citing Wichita and Kansas City, Ks., and lack of adequate spending authority, denying equal education to students in rural areas, also make the law unconstitutional.

It is the third lawsuit brought within the past month challenging the new law, which took effect July 1. The Blue Valley and Burlington school districts also have asked the courts to strike it down.

The law, which sets a 32-mill statewide property tax to help pay for elementary and secondary education and dictates how much the state's 304 school districts can spend, was enacted in response to a state district court ruling nearly one year ago.

The new lawsuit, filed in district court here, is being brought by the school districts of Elkhart, Holcomb, Hugoton, Johnson-Stanton County, Lakin, Moscow, Rolla, Satanta and Ulysses.

It names as defendants the state and its 10-member board of education. No individual defendants are named in the lawsuit. It names Robert J. Frederick of Lakin as state counsel.

Plaintiffs are the school boards, two parents in each of the nine school districts and their children, who are students in the districts.

It seeks to have the school finance law declared invalid, and to have the state pay for costs of the lawsuit and attorneys fees. It seeks no damages.

All three lawsuits are in protest of the new school finance law, which besides the statewide mill levy set per-pupil expenditures at \$3,600 plus extra spending authority for such things as transportation.

School mill levies in the nine districts who brought Tuesday's lawsuit averaged 28.9 mill last year. They

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will rise to an average of 36.36 this year, including local option levies seven of the nine districts plan to impose - an average increase of about 7.5 mills.

Proposed 1992-1993 budgets submitted to the state Department of Education show two of the nine districts, Elkhart and Johnson, will receive \$1.03 million in state aid in 1992-1993 to supplement their local mill levies.

The other seven districts will have to remit \$6.11 million to the state in excess revenue the 32-mill levy collects in their districts, their budgets show.

Garden City Telegram
Wednesday, September 16, 1992

APPENDIX M

FIVE-PART SUMMARY

Kansans of High Plains borne of hard times

Editor's note: This is the first installment of a five-part series that examines the differences between Eastern and Western Kansas.

By John Marshall

Harris News Service

SUBLETTE - Between Satanta and Sublette U.S. 56 is a dead-level nine miles, so straight and true that each town can be seen from the other. Over the flat, shimmering road, each place is marked by an elevator at the horizon, a white post at the end of a long rifle.

Part 1

It is here, on the vast southwest High Plains, that the metaphor known as Kansas is reinforced to the extreme. It is in the sun that gathers force moments after dawn, the wind that carries heat or dust over the dry wash of the Cimarron, and over land as open to the sky as any sea.

It is here that the Kansas map was finished a quarter-century after statehood, as counties organized and people filtered off the Santa Fe Trail to hunker on the parched tableland. There were no wells, no farmsteads, no trees, no town. The settlers of the 1880's arrived to confront loneliness, a scenic monotony, the vast brooding solitudes. They were left to themselves and the elements. Only the strongest were not driven away, or mad.

The feeling survives today. A sense of separation is reinforced by the great

distance in geography - and politics - between the southwest and its state capital far to the northeast. The suspicion here - indifferent, inefficient and insatiable - is out to control the state, leaving rural communities to spin in frustration.

This resentment has roots in a sweat-stained history. At the Grant County Museum in Ulysses, photographs of early harvests show men standing in wheat that comes barely to their knees. The sparse plants seen more an accident than a crop. But the faces of the men are determined. They carry the ache of possibility, not despair. The early decades were hard and dry. A good year might bring 12 inches of rain.

But by 1888, Grant County was organized; 2,000 people lived in Ulysses and supported a business district that included 12 restaurants, four hotels (one with 36 rooms), six gambling parlors and a dozen saloons.

It was faith, not money, that carried the first generation of the southwest. The discoveries of oil, gas and water were far in the future. The railroads would arrive later.

The settlers were moved by self-reliance and independence, traits at the base of a Protestant ethic, a belief that man is accountable directly to God for his conscience and his acts. Left to nature and the elements, men and women accepted responsibility for their lives. No space of geography so invited this ethic than the free, fertile and open prairie. If people worked hard and took care of their families, the

Cont,

effort would be rewarded by fortune, or God.

Religion was strong, but it was another 30 years before fortune surfaced in the southwest. In 1920, Hugoton gas field, then the largest in the world, was discovered beneath the Kansas High Plains and northwest Oklahoma. Development was slow. Producers were busy tapping the first Kansas oil patch in southeast Kansas. Gas would wait.

In 1930, the first gas well in Grant County was drilled southwest of Ulysses. By the end of the decade, there were many more wells, and byproducts had become a second industry. In 1936, the state's first carbon-black plant was opened at Hickok east of Ulysses. Demand for carbon black, made from the incomplete burning of natural gas, included the manufacture of Polaroid film, chocolate candy, house paint, explosives, eye makeup, plastics and pantyhose.

By agriculture would benefit most from the Hugoton discovery. For years, farmers and ranchers had known of the Ogallala aquifer, a vast sea of fresh water beneath the entire region. The trouble was how to bring it to the surface. With natural gas, they had found a cheap and plentiful fuel for pumps to make rain on the dust-choked southwest.

Irrigation would transform the flat and arid fields into a vast quiltland of corn and maize, wheat and soybeans. Cattle feeders and meatpackers moved to be near the source of feed. Oil and gas, farming and agribusiness brought

to the region a wealth that had been unthinkable a generation earlier.

Men and women had plowed deep, worked hard and were rewarded for their faith and independence. They were responsible for the improvement, and they had passed the ethic to their children, who embraced it with as much conviction as their elders.

Next: "You lose; we don't care"

Hutchinson News
September 9, 1992

Looking west: 'You lose and we don't care'

Editor's note: This is the second installment of a five-part series that examines the differences between Eastern and Western Kansas.

By John Marshall

Harris News Service

ULYSSES - When the convention broke for lunch Keith Allen headed for the south door and went outside for a cigarette. It was a gray day. A half-dozen people were smoking. They talked in short bursts against the hard and chilly wind.

Part 2

"The people in there are upset," Keith said, nodding toward the building. "They believe the state is trying to end a way of life out here."

On that second Friday in September, more than 170 people from a dozen counties - most in southwest Kansas - came to the Grant County Fairgrounds community center for a convention of anger and frustration. The meeting, officially, was to set procedure for the secession of nine southwest counties from the state; this will begin with a petition to the 1993 Kansas Legislature.

Long-simmering frustrations had come to a head. Scores of delegates and sympathizers believe government in Topeka - 350 miles to the northeast and more distant than the capitols of Colorado, New Mexico and Oklahoma

- has wronged this region for 30 years. And the state's new school finance law, which demands that pockets of southwest wealth now be shared with the state's poorer communities, has become the catalyst for rebellion.

But bitterness running through much of rural Kansas, and now boiling in the southwest, is built as much on emotion as economics.

The school funding law, for example, was passed by the Legislature on the grounds that it was equitable for an entire state; the economies of select, fortunate communities should be shared for the greater good of education in all school districts. The courts reinforced this argument with the view that disparities in regional wealth had widened the gap between who pays and who benefits in local education.

This argument gathered force with statistics. Raw numbers showed how the central pooling and redistribution of local wealth would mean \$300 million in statewide property tax cuts. Early printouts showed that taxes would increase in only ten of the state's 304 school districts. Eight of them were in the mineral-rich and agriculturally-abundant southwest.

Given those cold statistics, lawmakers could hardly reject the idea and explain in an election year why they failed to cut local property levies. The southwest was outnumbered from the beginning. Only two of the state's 40 senators, and seven of the 125-member House, are from the southwest.

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The protest here is seen by many non-residents as rather selfish: Taxes may have increased in a handful of school districts, but the money is to reinforce a statewide mission of equal education opportunity for all youngsters.

But in this remote region, emotions flow as deep and wide as the freshwater sea beneath it and whether passion counts for much in a cold world of court rulings and computer printouts really doesn't matter. The widespread belief here is that most of Kansas cares less than a whit whether the southwest lives or blows away, so long as the money keeps flowing to Topeka.

"The urban attitude towards us is, we win and you lose and we don't care," Keith Allen said.

There is history behind this feeling of abuse. Massive school consolidations in 1963, legislative reapportionment three years later and court unification in 1972 were all viewed as attacks on the sovereignty of rural communities. In 1983, enactment of the state's first mineral severance taxes was denounced as a cold-blooded plunder of resources exclusive to the region and its people.

Southwest critics say the new school finance law forces even higher taxes on the region to pay for over-crowded and under-taxed urban school districts; at the same time it imposes spending restrictions that threaten to consolidate or close dozens of small schools. And many believe it is a death sentence for local autonomy in education.

Allen is an articulate 36-year-old farmer, husband and father who farms

1,500 acres - wheat, soybeans and corn- south of Sublette. He is chairman of the Haskell County Strategic Planning Committee, a panel to set the community agenda on issues such as education, health care - and "quality of life," he says.

"How can we have a future if the state takes away our representation (loss of seats in reapportionment) and then our resources?" he asks. "We once had a way to pay for our schools, and it costs more here if our children are to compete with those in urban areas. We have a good life here and Topeka is trying to finish it."

Next: A difference in Dodge

Hutchinson News
September 30, 1992

'It's not . . . us against them'; Secession one of many ideas

By John Marshall

Harris News Service

DODGE CITY - Secession is not an issue in these parts, Don Smith was saying, "The problem here is lethargy," he said, "and the suspicion that comes when you tell people their taxes are going to be reduced. They have a difficult time accepting that."

Smith, 67, is a no-nonsense, blunt-talking Dodge City Democrat, a lawyer, a retired district judge, an alumnus of the 82nd Airborne, a legislator whose two terms in the Kansas House of Representatives are separated by 30 years and a man who believes the secessionist talk in the southwest is mostly malarkey.

Part 3

"Some people have no social conscience beyond their own property line," Smith said. "The community is larger than that."

Citizens of nine southwest counties, in a protest of the state's new school finance law, voted in elections last spring to begin the process of secession from Kansas. At a Grant County convention Sept. 11, delegates from six of the nine counties voted to petition the Kansas Legislature for permission to become the country's 51st state.

But beneath this movement and the publicity that surrounds it, is the counterbalance of skepticism. For

example, none of the region's 15 candidates for the Legislature - incumbents or challengers - openly supports the idea of secession, and it has rarely been a subject at area political forums. Nearly all except Smith have shied away from the issue.

People are upset, he said, but there is no single source for the resentment. "It's an accumulation of events - school consolidation, reappointment, court unification, severance taxes, the feeling that people are losing local control.

"But I also see a loss of social conscience. Doesn't the government have a responsibility to take care of the poor, or to provide for better schools in communities that can't afford them? Shouldn't those areas with plenty of money help those who have no money? It's selfish to say we want to leave the community instead of helping it."

Smith's critique points to the conflicting opinions even within the region about the role and reach of state government.

Lyle Butler, manager of the Dodge City Chamber of Commerce, said property taxes in the Dodge City School district will be cut in half, to 39 mills, and state aid will increase by about \$1.8 million.

"The new law is a mechanism in which the cost of education is to be spread more fairly across the state. It also may be seen as helping finance education more equitably in southwest Kansas." Butler said.

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The strongest criticism in secessionist counties southwest of Dodge City is reserved almost unanimously for the Wichita school district, seen as a crowded and inefficient octopus, its tentacles sucking at the tax base of rural communities.

"It is difficult for the people of Stevens County to see their taxes . . . doubled to subsidize Wichita schools," said Don Concannon, the Hugoton attorney who launched the secession movement last February. "At the same time," he said "Sedgwick County has exempted \$2.9 billion from tax rolls - ten times the entire valuation of Stevens County."

Rarely discussed, however, is the \$14 million tax cut and \$13 million in budget increases for the area's three largest school districts at Dodge City, Liberal, and Garden City.

"It is not a matter of us against the rest of the state, but of us working together to enhance the economic viability of the region," said Butler. "We are concerned about such issues as water and conservation, corporate farming, taxes, education reform."

"There is no consensus on school finance. Here there are some very different views, but at least we can understand and discuss those differences."

Next: Who pays and who benefits

Hutchinson News
October 1, 1992

Some rebel counties benefit from change

Secessionists barking up wrong tree?

Editor's note: This is the fourth installment of a five-part series that examines the differences between Eastern and Western Kansas.

By John Marshall
Harris News Service

HUGOTON - As the state's new school funding law headed toward legislative approval in Topeka last spring, citizens in southwest Kansas mobilized.

Part 4

To protest what they viewed as one more government assault on their region, citizens voted to start the process of secession from Kansas in Grant, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearny, Kiowa, Meade, Morton, Stanton and Stevens Counties.

"We're not going to get any relief," said Don Concannon, the Hugonton attorney and former state Republican chairman who launched the secession movement in Stevens County last February. "The Legislature will never address our concerns over unfair taxation because they don't have to. We don't have the votes. But secession is a solution; we're willing to become a new state. Will the Legislature let us?"

The school funding law, he said, is a "pork barrel of gigantic proportions.

It transfers funds from sparsely settled rural regions to cities with the big votes."

The legislation slashed school taxes statewide by more than \$300 million, paid for the property tax cuts with \$389 million in sales and income taxes and state revenue transfers. Taxes were reduced - in some cases dramatically - in all but ten of the state's 304 school districts. Of the ten facing increases, eight were in mineral-rich southwest Kansas.

And the school funding law comes nine years after enactment of the state's first severance taxes on oil and gas, viewed as yet another raid on the region.

Of \$89 million collected in severance taxes last year, nearly \$52 million came from the nine counties that voted to secede; more than \$28 million came from Grant and Stevens Counties alone.

But beneath the passionate issue of secession, and what is seen here as taxation without representation, are the raw data from area schools, including 17 school districts in the nine counties that petitioned for secession.

The budget documents, submitted last month to the Kansas Department of Education, show that total school taxes - the uniform statewide levy plans local options for debt, capital outlay and extra spending - will hit hard in some of those districts.

But not all will be hurt. In fact, there are benefits in several counties that moved to secede.

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These records show that the debate over who pays and who benefits may not be a matter of rural wealth subsidizing urban schools in eastern Kansas, but of helping poorer districts in the same region. For example, the largest southwestern school districts - none within secessionist counties - will receive enormous tax cuts combined with huge spending and state aid increases.

In the 17 school districts of the secessionist counties, taxes will increase a net \$4.5 million - from \$39.1 million collected last year to an estimated \$43.6 million in this school year.

A breakdown shows that within those 17 school districts, taxes will increase \$7.6 million for six school districts, but be reduced by \$3.1 million in 11 others.

A further look points to Stevens County. Here, taxes in the Moscow and Hugoton school districts alone are up \$4.5 million.

Given that tax hike in Stevens county, the balance for school districts in the eight other secessionist counties is a wash - \$3.1 million in tax increases over four districts and an equal amount in tax cuts for 11 others. None of the districts has been forced to cut spending.

And in three neighboring southwest counties that did not vote for secession, school taxes will be cut nearly in half, from a combined \$31 million last year to \$16.9 million. Here's how:

Tax collections in Seward County's Liberal School district will be cut

from \$8.1 million to \$4.8 million; in the Garden City School District in Finney County, taxes will drop from \$13.2 million to \$7.4 million; in Ford County, taxes for the Dodge City schools will be cut from \$9.7 million to \$4.7 million.

"Yes, the law does provide relief for some school districts in the area," said Steve Morris, a Hugoton area farmer and state senate candidate in the 39th district that includes five secessionist counties.

"But the feeling is that it's only a matter of time before property taxes climb even higher, and we lose what's left of local control of schools," Morris said.

Morris, a Republican, is challenging incumbent Sen. Leroy Hayden, D-Satanta, and ardent critic of the new funding law.

"You can do a lot of things with numbers. And some districts do benefit here," said Hayden. "But we are losing control over what goes on in the process of education. We much educate everyone who comes into the public schools. We need quality control over what comes out, and we are losing that."

Next: Equal academics?

Hutchinson News
October 2, 1992

Local autonomy is a sought-after way of life

Editor's note: This is the final installment of a five-part series that examines the differences between Eastern and Western Kansas.

By John Marshall

Harris News Service

HUGOTON - In an odd sense, the prosperity of southwest Kansas has become the source of its pain.

Part 5

The region is now known as much for its wealth as its intimidating geography and sparse populations. The treasure of the oil and gas fields and the vast Ogallala underground reservoir have been married in countless economic ventures. The value of land soared, and so did income. This was hard-earned, the people insist, and it came independent of the government and - until now - in spite of its intrusions.

But in the last decade, thousands of people - many of them from Hispanic or southeast Asian heritage - moved to the region's larger cities to work at meat plants, feed yards, ranchers and other businesses stimulated by the area's economic expansion. Demand for public services, including schools, nearly doubled overnight.

The schools presented special problems. Bi-lingual, and in some cases tri-lingual, teachers were needed. The logistics of busing have always been a strain in rural areas, and swollen enrollments in the cities

added to the burden. New equipment, expanded facilities, more highly trained faculty and the associated costs of utilities, insurance and pension funds, increased the cost of schools in southwest Kansas.

But there were contrasts in the region. Wealth was not distributed evenly and was centered in more sparsely populated areas. To attract the best faculty, small schools wanted to offer higher pay. So did the large schools. In general, taxes were higher and wealth lower in the larger districts of Ford, Finney and Seward Counties, but the burden was eased somewhat by infusions of state aid.

In the wealthier but far more rural districts of, say, Stevens and Grant Counties, low taxes raised so much money that little if any state aid was needed. Few patrons objected. The high expense was affordable, and it was for better schools.

But a court hinted strongly that the disparities here, and across Kansas, were illegal. Great differences in ability to pay meant differences in opportunity to learn; in some areas, children and taxpayers were thought to be unconstitutionally disadvantaged. The Legislature and the governor ordered a uniform state property tax and local spending limits with exceptions for such factors as busing costs and the higher expense of running small schools.

This new law is now under court challenge by 11 school districts - nine of them in southwest Kansas - who argue that the plan destroys local

Cont,

control of schools. The state Constitution may force wealthier districts to share expenses with poor communities, say critics, but the law does not allow the state to usurp local control of education.

Don Concannon, the Hugoton attorney whose criticism of the new law has brought state attention to the southwest, admits that some rural regions enjoy greater wealth. But they do not necessarily enjoy equal education opportunity, he says.

The Moscow School District, one of the state's wealthiest, offers nine courses in the mathematics curriculum; the Shawnee Mission School District in Johnson County, also wealthy, offers 31 mathematics courses.

Moscow schools offer four courses in foreign languages - Spanish I, French I and two years of Latin. The Shawnee Mission schools offer 42, including at least four years each in Chinese, Japanese, Arabic and Russian.

"All people want to talk about is the money end of this dispute. No one has evaluated the issue of equality in what's being offered in schools across the state," said Concannon's son Chris, who is also an attorney in Hugoton.

"We need more focus on the issue of equality in staff and curricula, the higher costs of providing equality in rural Kansas education. Local boards need the freedom to do that if taxpayers want that for their children, if they want their students to compete with kids in all other districts."

"Why should we finance Chinese

and Arabic in urban schools, when the law restricts us so we can't offer more in our own schools?" asked Don Concannon. "I believe in a basic curriculum for Kansas. But beyond that, the options should be local. They should not be subsidized by one part of the state."

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VITA

Brenda L. Rexroat

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: CONSENSUS AND CONFLICT IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

Major Field: Sociology

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Ulysses, Kansas, December 11, 1967, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ramon Rexroat.

Education: Graduated from Ulysses High School, Ulysses, Kansas, in May 1986; attended Panhandle State University, Goodwell, Oklahoma, and received Bachelor of Science in May 1990; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1992.