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Families in Troubled Times: Adapting to Change in Rural America.
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BOOKNOTES

Rand D. Conger and Glen H. Elder, *Families in Troubled Times: Adapting to Change in Rural America*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter, 1994. \$46.95 hardcover; \$23.95 papercover.

The economic upheavals of the 1980s had a pervasive impact on the lives of ordinary people in many parts of the country. Middle class flight and cutbacks in federal programs had negative consequences for inner city dwellers; the decline of traditional industries generated high levels of unemployment among blue collar workers; and in many rural areas, falling land and commodity prices hurt farming families that had worked the land for generations.

Concerned about the impact of deteriorating economic conditions on rural families, a group of sociologists at Iowa State University began in the mid-1980s to undertake research into the way economic decline affected family relationships and individual coping behavior. Their study, known as the Iowa Youth and Families Project, generated a wealth of information which will be of value to social scientists interested in knowing how families cope with the stresses induced by economic hardship. The project was based on theoretical perspectives drawn from life course studies and family sociology, and it utilized sophisticated research methodologies. Interviews were conducted with 451 families in the state. In addition to the interviews, video tapes and a variety of instruments and measurement scales were employed. Although the study identified significant differences in coping behavior between different families, it revealed that economic distress can have serious consequences on family relationships and especially the behavior of children. The authors conclude that in addition to economic support, counseling services are needed to assist rural families to cope with the economic crisis.

William G. Flannagan. *Contemporary Urban Sociology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993. \$49.95 hardcover, \$14.95 papercover.

Urban sociology is a well established field within sociology. Urban sociologists have collected vast amounts of statistical data