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Applied Research on Land and Water in New Mexico: A Critique

SYLVIA RODRIGUEZ

A complex, changing set of interrelated ecological, social, economic, and political factors will determine the future of the U.S. Southwest and Mexican frontier as a geopolitical region, much as such forces have shaped the area's past and present. One domain of contestation and uncertainty throughout the Southwest has been universal water scarcity and the multiple problems of water distribution and control it gives rise to. Issues of water use, allocation, and ownership today proliferate throughout the arid Southwest from individual to international levels. They are at the heart, for example, of litigation between New Mexico and El Paso; between Pueblo Indians, their non-Indian neighbors, and the state and federal governments; between *acequia* (community irrigation ditch) organizations and private resort developers; or between individual landowners or *parciantes* (water rights owners) within the same local irrigation system. In northern New Mexico, economic and demographic changes during the past thirty years have steadily intensified competitive pressures on limited water supplies, irrigated lands, and surrounding tracts of wilderness. Even casual observation reveals that a significant proportion of the weekly news stories coming out of rural New Mexican counties have to do, in one way or another, with conflict over water and land. Outside the metropolitan areas, some of the common lines of cleavage over water and land are between small farmers or ranchers and the state and federal governments or large commercial interests, between Indians and Hispanics, and between contiguous neighbors of all description.

In Santa Fe and Taos, urban growth and resort development are transforming the existing patterns of rural settlement and land-water use and ownership. Accelerating tourism development is embraced and promoted by business interests and government as a hoped-for remedy to longstanding, widespread conditions of economic under-

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development and federal dependency. A plethora of government sponsored and assisted commercial construction and development projects unfolds within this context, a phenomenon which engenders, in addition to major sociophysical impacts, a tremendous volume of bureaucratic paperwork. Some of this paperwork is produced by people whose jobs are to provide or assemble the necessary technical information, guidelines, evaluations, critiques, and rationales for large-scale projects.

This essay deals with the milieu within which some of the ostensibly more scientific examples of this paperwork are generated, and with the intellectual characteristics of that portion which falls under the general rubric of "applied research." Applied research on land and water issues in northern New Mexico has become a minor industry in recent years. It supports, through public and private channels, a small but fragmented work force of writers of planning and adjudication reports which grow in number but enjoy limited circulation disproportionate to the consequences they help to further. The intent of this essay is to characterize this literature and critique it from methodological and sociological points of view. Alternative guidelines for applied research in the region are then offered.

The following discussion identifies two major categories of applied land-water research in New Mexico and critiques some of the methodological shortcomings and conceptual biases that seem to inhere in both types as they are commonly carried out by various bureaucratic and expert practitioners. The major types of applied research considered include environmental impact and planning studies and land-water adjudication research, or research carried out to assist federal and state adjudication of land and water claims. These two types are examined in turn, drawing upon a series of case examples from Taos. With respect to the first applied research category, I will argue that most planning and environmental impact studies in the northern region are thinly disguised justification documents serving special interests. With reference to the second type, I will argue that the role of adjudication research is to justify state policy. Frequently advocated but rarely enacted liberal solutions to these problems are then considered, in order to frame a more fundamental set of questions or dilemmas which face scholars who do applied land-water as well as other social advocacy research of whatever stripe in the Rio Arriba or Upper Rio Grande Valley.

This essay is not meant to present an exhaustive or detailed review

of all applied research in the region nor even in Taos. But given the sweeping nature of my claims coupled with the impracticality of an exhaustive review of the literatures in question, I will support my position by detailed examination of several case studies, all taken from Taos, where I have conducted ethnographic fieldwork on social change and interethnic relations since 1981. I believe these case examples illustrate the major features of both applied genres as practiced in northern New Mexico, as well as the larger political and socioeconomic context of which such studies are a part. My purpose then, via consideration of the case of modern Taos, is to raise questions, promote discussion, and call for change in the way applied researchers go about their work in New Mexico.

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDIES

Ideally, planning and environmental impact studies involve at least secondary research and synthesis, whereas adjudication research requires primary research, usually of an archival nature. In reality, however, many environmental impact and planning studies do not involve genuine research of either kind, but instead constitute *de facto* justification documents which serve special interests. A justification document endorses a project under the pretext of objectively evaluating its probable impact. Such a report may be deliberately fraudulent, or, more often, the result of incompetence and haste. Voluminous examples of such planning and environmental impact studies fill the bureaucratic files of northern New Mexico. Sue-Ellen Jacobs (1978: 248) describes this genre in dealing with the Española Valley, and pinpoints its chief liability:

Planners in state and federal offices and theorists in private agencies and development have produced scores of reports and recommendations for economic development of the area. To date, most of these remain dust collectors. This is probably just as well since those I have seen have not been based on public participation in the planning process. When public participation has occurred it has been mainly confined to the selected few who wish to improve their own personal capital circumstance.

A large number of such reports do more than collect dust, however, and are used to justify large developments which produce sig-

nificant physical and economic impacts on substantial tracts of land and water and the people who occupy and use them. We see everywhere the creation of conservancy and sanitation districts, the construction of dams, highways, and other public works, as well as the establishment of large private enterprises carried out with various forms of state and federal assistance. Which such developments can be of major social consequence, the reports they are based on rarely, if ever, seriously attempt to assess this in advance. Despite their official labels as planning studies, their true function is to justify decisions already made, rather than to propose a range of comprehensively researched viable alternatives which also reflect the full spectrum of needs and opinions among all potentially affected sectors of the local population. Even a random look at such reports would bear this out, particularly when interpreted in light of whatever actual circumstances surrounded their individual production.

A typical feature of such reports, whether they are written by in-house bureaucrats with little or no background in impact assessment methods or by consultants who specialize in producing such documents, is their minimal attention to social impact assessment. The authors of such reports usually have minimal historical, sociological, or ethnographic knowledge of the potentially impacted communities in question. Their methodological oversights inevitably include, as Jacobs points out, a failure to solicit and incorporate broadly representative public participation in the planning-impact assessment process. The standards of evaluation to which such pseudo-research is subjected and according to which it is organized are dictated by the interests and needs of whoever employs the report writers rather than by the scientific tenets of multidisciplinary ecological impact study. The more objective and competent the study, the less useful it becomes as a justification document. To open the floodgates of full public debate and empirical evidence is to undermine a priori authoritarian claims to consensus.

THREE CASE EXAMPLES

The following case examples of planning and environment impact studies, all done in Taos County during the late 1970s and 1980s, illustrate the major features and flaws of the genre. These specific examples concern: projected urban growth and water availability in

Taos County, ski resort expansion in the Rio Hondo watershed, and proposed highway construction through the town of Taos and adjacent villages. These cases were preceded and have been followed by others which with some variation demonstrate fundamentally similar characteristics. While the reports in question are easily faulted in terms of their methodological features, it is the relationship between their intrinsic flaws and the overall social and historical context within which they are produced that reveals their true significance. Only the major defects of these particular studies will be touched on.

Case I

This case concerns a purportedly comprehensive, county-wide water planning study contracted by the Taos County Commission from a Santa Fe-based professional consultant (Wilson & Associates, Inc.) in 1978. This study was one component of a larger planning study commissioned by the county involving another consultancy firm, also in Santa Fe, which more or less concurrently produced a report on county land use and economy (Mimbres & Associates 1978). The water study was published in two parts, dealing with current water availability and quality (1978) on the one hand and future water issues (1980) on the other. The purpose of the study was to ascertain how much population and urban development the surface and ground water supply of Taos County is able or likely to sustain over the next twenty years. Notwithstanding a pervasive anti-agricultural, pro-development bias, it is the fundamental discrepancy between the water availability data presented in "Phase A," or part one, and their interpretation in "Phase B," or part two, that constitutes the most remarkable feature of this report.

In Phase A, it is indicated that there has been about a 50 percent recent overall decline in the amount of precipitation-engendered stream or surface water flow throughout the county since the 1940s. Roughly 52,000 acre feet per year (acfy) of surface water are consumed, while over 90 percent of the total demand derives from irrigation agriculture (1978: xiii). It is stated that 1,000 or more acfy of ground water in the central Taos area might be withdrawn from the aquifer at the cost of lowering water tables, drying up springs and meadows, and reducing surface flows. Withdrawal of 2,500 or more acfy would lead to a severe drop in the water table and the drying up of many existing wells (1978: xi). Estimated depletion or consump-

tion of ground water for the entire county in 1975, with a total population estimate at that time of less than 20,000 was 6,036 acf (1978: VII-17).

Yet in Phase B, which presents conclusions intended to provide the basis for county planning policy, it is estimated that the county hydrological system (including surface and ground water) physically contains sufficient water to support a population of 275,000 (1980: III-9). Neither the formulaic nor empirical basis for this calculation is made clear. Although it can be said that the water study is of higher overall quality than the other Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) described below, the logical gap between the estimate it makes and the supportive data it allegedly presents is staggering.

Case II

This concerns two Environmental Impact Statements for the expansion of a noted ski resort at the head of the Rio Hondo watershed, some twelve miles north of the town of Taos. Both EISs were published in 1981. The first was a thirty-year master plan for resort development at the head of Hondo or Twining Canyon, prepared by Forest Service personnel, whose agency controls most of the federal land the ski trail system occupies (USFS 1981). The second was prepared more or less simultaneously for the EPA, by the same consultant who did the aforementioned county water study (USEPA 1981). This EIS specified alternative plans to expand the inadequate and defective Twining sewage treatment plant in operation since the 1960s. Both EISs have since been implemented. The context within which these EISs were produced involved intense local controversy over the matter of ongoing sewage pollution of the Rio Hondo by the continuously expanding ski resort, in violation of both state and federal clean water standards (see Rodríguez 1987a, 1987b). The Rio Hondo supplies three longstanding downstream communities and the lands of two adjacent settlements within the watershed with surface water. Despite the climate of controversy and the expressed preference of many downstream residents, neither EIS officially formulated a stabilized no-growth option that simultaneously addressed existing conditions or problems in need of solution. In other words, correction of pollution and other problems resulting from uncontrolled development in the ecologically fragile upper watershed were linked only to options involving further resort expansion.

Social impact assessment, a legally required component of the EIS process, was shirked in that the researchers made no attempt to collect data on downstream domestic use of the river, or on recent (that is concurrent with resort expansion) changes in patterns of land and water ownership and use throughout the Hondo watershed. In neither case would the EIS writers agree to conduct an opinion survey of the three predominantly Hispanic downstream villages despite local grassroots pressure to do so. Indeed, the authors of both reports asserted that social impact research involving such procedures was methodologically impossible. Written public commentary was solicited only after the pre-selected sets of proposed action alternatives had been published in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The written responses were then simply published in appendicular form in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), which otherwise remained textually identical to the DEIS. Thus the final document was in no way a revision.

Case III

This case involved the New Mexico State Highway Department's unsuccessful plan to construct a by-pass or "traffic relief route" west of the town of Taos in 1986. This issue represents the revival of a controversy recurrent since the 1950s, when politicians and local business interests first planned a north-south by-pass cutting between the town plaza and Taos Pueblo. The 1986 furor took shape after outgoing Governor Anaya decided downtown Taos took too long to drive through and, in response to relentless pressure from local businessmen, decreed a new major highway should be constructed through or near the town as soon as possible. A hasty DEIS was prepared in two months' time by an NMSHD staff member with a B.A. in biology. The report made no effort to measure or address potential socioeconomic impacts, other than to say the project would create jobs. It proposed the construction of a four-lane highway through or between two or even three longstanding Hispanic communities in the lower Taos watershed, including a major portion of the remaining agricultural greenbelt area immediately west of the town. Required "study factors" such as land use, stream modification, demographic relocation, community impact, economic consequences, and historical and cultural impacts were scarcely men-

tioned in the forty-two page report. Only major construction alternatives, all bisecting the greenbelt but commercially favorable to Taos's single largest metropolitan landowner, were posited as options for solving the town's traffic congestion problem. The project died not because the EIS was inept but because its time had still not come. It was an election year, and well-organized, vocal community opposition caused one politician after another, including Governor Anaya, to reverse or retreat from endorsement of the project.

Even though the above examples typify the majority of EISs in the Rio Arriba region, there nevertheless *is* such a thing as genuine environmental impact research, of which Jacobs' work on the El Llano Unit of the San Juan-Chama Project in 1975 represents a rare example. That work combined community participation with scholarly competence, blending together to develop a full picture of the potential impact of a proposed dam and new diversionary canal system on the acequias and the Hispanic community of Española (1975; 1978).

My argument is not that full public participation in social impact assessment is more democratic than the kind where public input is avoided, but that it is essential to thorough research. Apart from the other kinds of methodological incompetence they reveal, it is the systematic omission of this dimension from most planning and impact studies in northern New Mexico that betrays them for what they are. But while public participation is an essential feature of adequate social impact assessment and can also serve as a potential means of community empowerment, fundamental problems exist with respect to how people's available choices are structured, and precisely whose interests are served by which strategies. There also remains the problem of how and why even the best social impact research legitimizes and thereby perpetuates the very structures of inequality it purportedly seeks to mitigate.

ADJUDICATION RESEARCH

The next category of applied research is the archival and other investigation done for purposes of litigation over Indian and other land and water rights claims. It is useful to distinguish between

research done by professional consultants who derive most of their income from this activity and work done by university or otherwise independently employed researchers who occasionally provide expert testimony based on their own research. The salient difference between these two modes has to do with the degree to which the work in question is conceived, executed, and evaluated according to the specific requirements of litigation as opposed to academic sets of disciplinary norms, theories, and priorities. In either case, however, adjudication scholarship differs from most environmental impact study in that it does constitute original, primarily archival, research. New knowledge is produced, and although it typically addresses a different set of questions and priorities than much academic research, it can nevertheless be of substantial scholarly interest by virtue of the data it amasses as well as for its ideological character.

One of the most important differences between basic and legal research modes is the fact that litigation-oriented research, such as that performed for water rights adjudications, is not designed to test hypotheses or discover new connections, but to determine facts and establish a line of argument in order to support a particular legal outcome. It is frequently limited to a single mode of inquiry, such as archival documentation of dates and details of title transfer, and it usually does not attempt to interpret these findings in light of other lines of evidence or investigation, such as different kinds of contemporary sources, archaeological data, oral history, ethnography, and others. A disinterested synthesis of multiple sources of information might lead to unexpected questions and new speculation rather than to the evidentiary certitude required by legal argument. This is not to deny that archival documentation of land and water rights transfers is an essential component of a full analytic understanding of the social, economic, cultural, and political history of a given community or the region as a whole. But these archival data alone are not sufficient to arrive at such an understanding, which by definition must be holistic and necessarily draw upon the full array of other available (e.g., ethnography, oral history, opinion survey) materials in order to construct a complete picture of a living community and its likely response to a substantial, externally imposed change.

This is not to imply that a single scholar can conduct primary research in all of these areas, but rather that findings in any discipline should be interpreted in light of considerations from other fields. Land-water claims scholarship for the most part does not contex-

tualize its archival findings in this way, nor does it attempt to relate them to questions of comparison, theory, or methodology. Its purpose is altogether different. Indeed, most of it is never even published, except as expert testimony contained in depositions, exhibits, and court transcripts. Just as so much planning and environmental research omits broad citizen input and participation, so does adjudication research exclude ethnography and oral history. One might argue that this is all fine and good because different forms of scholarship serve different needs in different settings, and there is little use in evaluating the adequacy of one type according to the canons of the other, especially inasmuch as legalistic scholarship serves legalistic ends very well, whereas most academic discourse would not.

Whither Applied Research?

But what are the ends of legalistic decision making? Adjudication scholarship is used to inform and justify often far-reaching decisions about the ownership and disposition of locally precious tracts of land and water. These decisions can and frequently do affect the socioeconomic condition not only of individuals but of whole populations. It is therefore most unfortunate that they are based on such narrow and purposively skewed bodies of data.

Two aspects of this skewing are considered here. The first pertains to the role state (i.e., government) policy plays in sustaining the minority status of Indians and Hispanics; the second to its ideological dimension. Federal policy underwrites in multiple ways the dependent status and social segregation of Indian populations in the Southwest, just as it helps to promote the economic exploitability of Hispanics. The historical and material basis for these processes involved massive land appropriation from Mexicans, the freezing of territorial enclavement for reservation Indians, and the creation of an international border. Indian and Hispanic land claims and water rights adjudication cases constitute a contemporary part of this legacy, as does much immigration law. The point here is not that all land-water litigation works against all Indians or Hispanics, but instead that, by definition, it functions to maintain the status quo, and to divide the interests of these two (or, in fact, plural) groups. So from the systemic point of view, the skewing of research is not in the least unfortunate, but a neatly adaptive epiphenomenon.

Water Rights Adjudication

The major example I cite to support the above claim concerns the federal-state water rights adjudication process itself. Frances Levine's article elsewhere in this issue of *Journal of the Southwest* reinforces this argument by showing how differential state and federal policies can divide competing interests both within and between ethnic groups. Water rights adjudication in Taos began in the 1960s with the hydrographic survey and in the late 1980s proceeded toward litigation while Pueblo, state, federal, and (non-Indian) acequia lawyers amassed their documentation, a process which will generate hundreds of volumes of special reports, transcripts, and depositions. Most of this material will never be published, although it will constitute the evidentiary basis for momentous legal decisions about the future allocation of all surface and ground water in the Taos basin. It will be subject neither to scholarly nor to local review. Levine notes that the state seems to be becoming "more of a perceived than a real threat" as communities grow more aware and assertive in the adjudication process. But the perception that it is the state, at both state and federal levels, which instigates and perpetuates the process of dividing the water and dividing community interests over the waters, is indeed precisely correct. A recent development in the process underscores the point and illustrates its complexity.

In response to recent acceleration of the adjudication, the acequia associations in the Taos Valley have organized in order to facilitate cooperative and effective utilization of their limited legal services counsel. They have sought grant monies and hired younger men from the communities to act as liaison-organizers and to help collect and document priority usages in the Taos basin. Apprehension about the outcome of the adjudication is pervasive among all acequia users, who fear not only massive water loss but the kind of disastrous explosion of intercommunity mistrust that has followed upon the Aamodt case in the Pojoaque valley.

In early 1990, representatives of Taos Pueblo and the Taos Valley Acequia Association agreed that they wished to suspend the march toward litigation in order to try to negotiate a face-to-face, out-of-court agreement over water rights and the future disposition of surface waters. Both parties state they wish to avoid litigation. On February 5 Taos Pueblo filed a motion in U.S. District Court to suspend adjudication for twelve months in order to pursue negotiations with

the acequias and the State Engineer's Office. At the time approval for such negotiations previously sought from the Department of the Interior was still pending. The Pueblo lawyers argued that simultaneous preparation to litigate would undermine efforts to negotiate a settlement. In other words, the Pueblo and acequias could not simultaneously and in good faith pursue the contradictory goals of litigation and negotiation. A hearing was held on March 16 at which numerous Pueblo officials were present, along with their lawyers, acequia representatives and their lawyers, as well as lawyers for the state of New Mexico and the federal government. Only the latter two, or attorneys representing the State Engineer's Office and the Department of Justice respectively, opposed the motion. The presiding judge's Special Master for the case stated he would not allow a blanket suspension of the adjudication but instead would permit a series of graduated deadlines for various components of the discovery procedure which each side must marshal in order to achieve the "necessary adversarial tension" for adjudication to occur (Transcript of Proceedings: pp. 12; 59). His order was filed April 3 (CV. N. 7896 & No. 7939, pursuant to Fed R. CV. P. 53). Just prior to the hearing the Department of the Interior established a new policy which states that disputes over Indian water rights should be resolved through negotiated settlements rather than litigation, and adopted criteria and procedures for negotiations over water claims (*Indian Law Support Center Reporter*).

While neither the state nor federal representatives argue against the desirability of a negotiated settlement between the Pueblo and the acequias and the Department of the Interior now has a policy endorsing it, none has moved actively to facilitate the process, and both agencies remain committed de facto to the path of litigation. The Special Master's ruling does not explicitly obstruct the prospect for negotiation but it does nothing to further it either. During the hearing the Department of Justice lawyer claimed the Department of the Interior has already decided to disallow negotiation if litigation is suspended (Transcript: 29), an interpretation disputed by the Pueblo attorney (Transcript: 34). Such a position would be illogical, but bureaucratically possible nonetheless. In the final analysis, if the Pueblo and Taos Valley acequias do manage to achieve a negotiated settlement it will be in spite of state and federal procedures and attorneys rather than because of them.

The ideological dimension of the skew of legalistic land-water

research is even more insidiously pervasive than the role of the state. This is because it carries the very aura of legitimacy and functions to reproduce itself and the system it belongs to by forcing all participants to conform to its own narrowly defined canons of evidence and performance. Thus one cannot enter the game, much less hope to win, without playing according to its rules. The unspoken and indeed often vehemently denied political infrastructure of these rules constitutes a massive system of domination and hegemony.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Where does all this lead us? On the one hand, we can argue that the possibility exists to instigate desirable change from within the system, and accordingly advocate essentially liberal reforms such as increased citizen participation and genuinely interdisciplinary research. This dual approach seems to have been the basis for the interdisciplinary field of land grant studies established in the late 1960s, which constituted New Mexico's own peculiar version or analogue of contemporaneous Chicano revisionist scholarship (Knowlton 1976). On the other hand, one can conclude that the system is inherently corrupt and cooptive and changeable only through external assault. Working within the system generally occurs along a liberal-conservative continuum, with one extreme intent on preserving the status quo, while the other pushes to liberalize or improve the system. Liberals seek to preserve the system through accommodation or minor adjustment to change, whereas conservatives seek to negate the existence or power of change altogether (such patterns are discernible for example in different responses to national American crises like the Depression or the Civil Rights Movement).

But despite their differences, both liberals and conservatives share a commitment to maintaining the extant sociopolitical system. Thus the good liberal applied scholar will function as a broker and try to mediate some kind of working linkage between the state and the underdog community, always operating on the premise that domination, assimilation, and increased capitalist development of the former by the latter are inevitable in one form or another and therefore the best one can do is to try, in a socioculturally informed and sensitive way, to humanize and soften the harsh blow of the inevitable.

What makes applied—and indeed most—scholarship on New Mexico and the Southwest of particular interest are the ways in

which hegemony or “the inevitable” has been mediated and modified by Anglo Indianist and other cultural conservationists, whose presence and growth in the region coincide with federal control over the public domain on the one hand and expansion of the tourism industry on the other (see Rodríguez 1989). A striking feature of adjudication scholarship is its inherently partisan nature, although there is patterned variation in terms of whom it may favor. In any case, more often than not the broker-researcher depends upon “the establishment” rather than “the community” or “people” for his/her livelihood and affirmation as an expert. In spite of individual sympathies, the ultimate alignment of the scholar-researcher with the prevailing if not the immediate social order is an unspoken given in most situations, although this is neither explicitly acknowledged nor logically inevitable.

Liberal measures are much easier to imagine and to realize than truly radical ones. They might include community participation, interdisciplinary methods, and a self-reflexive ethic for applied researchers. There is perhaps nothing inherently liberal about grassroots community involvement, which can take conservative and presumably radical forms as well, although in New Mexico the former is more common. As successful strategies resulting in a community victory like the case of Española or others, grassroots mobilizations tend to be crisis-based and short-lived. They are by definition experiences of empowerment through collective struggle, often surprising episodic phenomena which subside into inspiring or bitter memories, or which under certain circumstances can spawn new broker elites, as for example in the liberal cooptation of successful protest leadership.

Applied research by definition is partisan, usually on the side of power, although this is not always the case, as Jacobs and other anthropologists have shown. The contracted, instrumental nature of applied land and water research precludes its scientific disinterest. The step toward multimethodological, interdisciplinary research nevertheless represents a step toward inquiry for the sake of understanding rather than to serve crude, short-term interests—although uninformed by reflexiveness, it by no means guarantees independence from such interests. Reflexiveness should become an explicit component of all applied research on land and water in New Mexico, such that the very political matrix of this research should be described explicitly in every applied report. This would call on individual researchers to acknowledge and analyze their own long- and short-term roles in perpetuating and benefiting from the pervasive struc-

tures of inequality which so often occasion their research. This level of awareness and public accountability *might* help to pull the wheels of community involvement and participatory decision making away from the old, deeply grooved paths of elitism and special interest. But even together these measures cannot ensure departure from the status quo, as long as they continue to serve the pre-ordained workings of capital and the state.

A truly radical solution, which would instigate practical change at the roots of the problem rather than accommodate to existing power relations, is indeed hard even to imagine. But until researchers acknowledge the need to commit themselves actively to seek a radical alternative, they will continue to succumb to the machinery of class and regional ethnic-racial stratification, whether intentionally or not. Unless researchers take up the radical project, their applied work will always remain fundamentally reactive, at best reformist, and however well intentioned, ultimately dependent upon and subservient to the prevailing system of inequality and exploitation. ❖

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