

# The Antecedents of Social Disruption: Occupational and Domestic Demands among Transient Marcellus Workers

## Abstract

“Boomtowns” are emerging from the rapid influx of gas companies and transient workers in Pennsylvania’s Marcellus Shale region (Brasier et al. forthcoming). Energy workers are often blamed for social disruptions within boomtowns; however, this population faces challenges when managing occupational demands and family conflicts, especially within rural host-communities unable to meet their needs. This study utilizes social disruption literature and research on offshore oil and gas workers to ground this study’s investigation. The central research question is: *how do occupational demands and family conflicts among transient, male gas workers contribute to social disruption within host-communities?* To this point, social disruption researchers focus on existing community residents, and largely overlook energy workers. Investigating energy workers presents an opportunity to understand the root of social disruption; therefore, the purpose of this in-depth qualitative analysis of fifty transient men working in Bradford County, Pennsylvania is to understand how gas workers manage occupational demands and family conflicts, and the implications of these management techniques on host-communities. Findings from this study will provide policymakers and community service agencies information to identify the antecedents of social disruption and mitigate negative impacts from large-scale energy development.