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## Qualifying the Boom-Bust Paradigm: An Examination of the Off-Shore Oil and Gas Industry

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### ABSTRACT

The oil industry is seen as being similar to other mining activities in having a cycle of expansion and subsequent contraction. Previous literature suggests this cycle leads to boomtown communities. Furthermore, the oil and gas industry is often seen as having primarily negative social effects on the communities it invades. The present research takes an in-depth look at the small South Louisiana community of St. Mary Parish; an area with economic roots in such extraction enterprises as lumber, fishing and later, oil. Positive attributes of the presence of the oil and gas industry are identified, namely sustainability and increased life chances of local residents. Due to methodological limitations previous research might have been unable to holistically view the off-shore oil industries impacts on communities. This paper concludes that the paradigmatic usage of the NEPA boomtown model is inapt for the study of the Gulf off-shore oil industry.

### KEYWORDS

Social Change, Boom-Town Model, Social Impact Assessment, Oil and Gas, Qualitative Research

### Cite this paper

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