



Our similarities help power our nation's strength

Posted: Tuesday, June 28, 2017

“When asked about their personal situations, rural residents described financial experiences that largely mirror those of urban respondents,” Jose A. Delreal and Scott Clement noted in their Sunday piece about a recent Washington Post-Kaiser Family Foundation survey. “The share of people who report experiencing severe economic hardship is roughly equal in urban and rural America.”

Even though the main thrust of the article was obviously an attempt to highlight differences that exist in how people from rural communities see the world as opposed to their urban counterparts, my main take-away was how similar we are in many important respects.

Yes, people who live in rural areas may be more religious, but they also tend to be more xenophobic. Conversely, those who live in urban areas tend to be more appreciative of diversity, but they also tend to be more condescending toward those with conservative values.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that our current challenges are more economic than cultural. This is the reality behind most societal problems and movements.

When things are going well – when good-paying jobs are plentiful and financial prospects are good – there is much less unrest and violence in both our small towns and large cities.

But when the economy turns south, as it inevitably does in a free market system, ultimately it tends to affect everyone more or less equally, although the immediate effects are not distributed evenly nor does the impact propagate through the country at the same rate.

And we often have a distorted sense of what's really happening simply because the national media tend to focus more on what is going on in urban areas because of convenience and heightened population density.

Still, at the end of the day it's our similarities that make our nation strong and resilient.

Aaron W. Hughey
Bowling Green

www.bgdailynews.com