



# Gulf of Mexico Challenges

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*“Clearly, no type of social science and no mode of policy analysis provides a panacea for the shortcomings of the governance of our society or a ‘quick fix’ for deep troubles facing us. It is essential that we do not reproduce, on behalf of the interpretive approach, the extravagant claims of the early proponents of positivistic policy analysis” (B. Jennings in Ethics, the Social Sciences, and Policy Analysis, 1983 ).*

# Presentation Outline

- The boomtown-based model in federal assessment of energy projects and programs in the United States
- The influence of the model on socioeconomic research in the Minerals Management Service (MMS)
- A contracted research project as a catalyst for developing an alternative approach

# Evolution of SIA in the U.S.

- 19th century efforts in Europe to apply social science rationality and quantification to public decision making
- Early 20th century in the U.S. social indicators, technology assessment, and futures research as special techniques for the mechanization and objectification of expertise
- 1960s formalization of impact assessment as a public policy tool
- 1969 National Environmental Policy Act legitimized environmental impact assessment
- 1978 Council on Environmental Quality established the legal foundation for conducting social impact assessment
- 1994/2003 Interorganizational Committee on Principles and Guidelines for Social Impact Assessment

# National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)

...all agencies of the Federal Government shall – utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in decision making...

# IA and Energy Development

- 1<sup>st</sup> legal challenge - lawsuit against U.S. Bureau of Land Management claiming the EIS for the Trans-Alaska pipeline was inadequate
- Mines, dams, hydropower plants the focus of earliest EISs; many in the west on large, sparsely populated land areas, environmental impacts received most attention
- “boomtown” model developed to characterize impacts on affected communities
- 1970s federal response to energy “crisis” led to proposals for massive developments of many domestic energy sources and to efforts to assess and mitigate the effects of those proposals

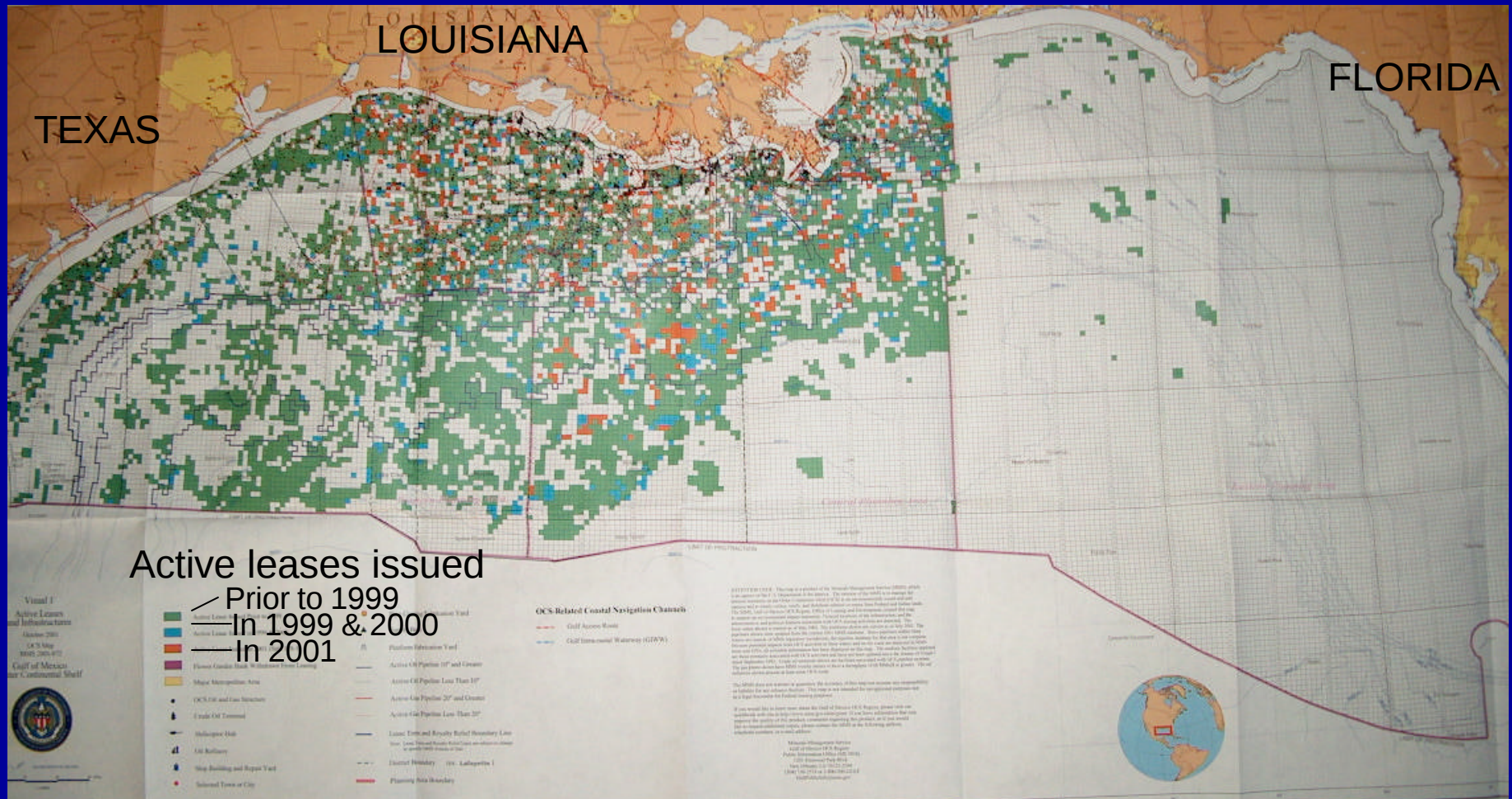
# Four sources of impact

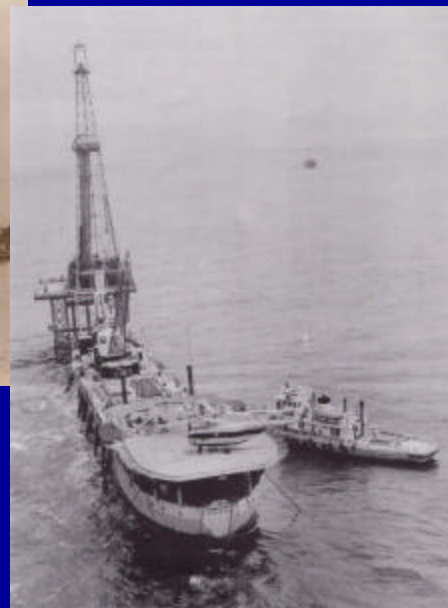
- (1) national and regional economic inputs
- (2) physical and biological impacts of new facility sitings and new sources of pollution, including oil spills
- (3) boomtown effects from new labor demand
- (4) public perceptions and fears about these proposals

# Evolution of MMS

- 1950s Tidelands cases established federal ownership of U.S. outer continental shelf (OCS)
- OCS lands with potential for oil and gas identified in the Gulf of Mexico, off the coasts of California and Alaska, on the east coast
- Federal oversight managed by BLM and U.S. Geological Survey
- 1980s oil price collapsed
- 1983 Minerals Management Service (MMS) created to manage petroleum resources on the OCS; expanded studies program

# Active GOM Leases October 2001





# Expansion of Studies

- Baseline history – attempt to contextualize effects of the oil industry within other societal changes
- Family study – attempt to address onshore social impacts in a more holistic way
- History study – attempt to gather historical data needed to understand impacts

# Evolution of Family Study

- Community-University-Agency
- Broaden definition of “offshore worker”
- Locate workers in families in communities
- Evaluate impacts by sector



# Study Design

Between 1999 and 2001

- 2 ethnographers, 10 months in communities
- 14 local schoolteachers
- 8 ethnographers for concentrated site visits
- interviews with workers, family members, community leaders; focus groups with youth, spouses, workers
- local review and comment on findings



# Key Findings from Past Studies

- Intermittent Husband Syndrome
- Family structure determines success in adapting to work schedules
- Increase in crime and suicide rates linked to cycles
- Effect on educational attainment

Note: No differentiation by sector or job type

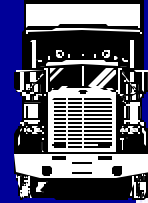
Families not considered in community context



## onshore

### Fabrication

- engineer
- draftsman
- crane operator
- machinist
- welder
- rigger
- fitter
- tacker/helper



### Trucking Company

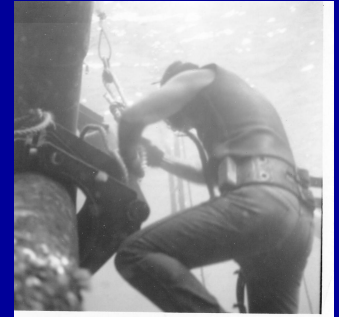
- dispatcher
- owner/operator
- driver

## offshore



### Offshore Vessel Company

- port captain
- captain
- mate
- engineer
- deckhand



### Rig

- company man
- toolpusher
- driller
- crane operator
- derrickman
- motorman
- rigger
- roughneck
- roustabout
- shaker

### Other Rig Positions

- mud engineer
- wireline operator
- fishing tool operator
- snubber
- completion specialist
- galleyhand
- rig mechanic
- medic
- electrician
- linen hand
- welder
- cook



### Platform

- foreman/field supervisor
- lead operator
- second level operator
- first level operator
- roustabout

### Other Platform Positions

- electrician
- mechanic
- instrumentation technician
- computer technician

### Diving/ Underwater Construction Company

- divers
- ROV//AUV technicians
- diver-tenders
- tenders

# Occupational Timeline



Hired as roustabout

Promoted to roughneck

Began shrimping with uncle

Hired as motoman

Promoted to driller

1953

1958

1962

1970

1982

Laid off

Dad's friend called



Laid off

# Sources of Impacts on Workers/Families

societal expectations



industry restructuring

satisfaction

non-OCS opportunities

work schedules

cycles

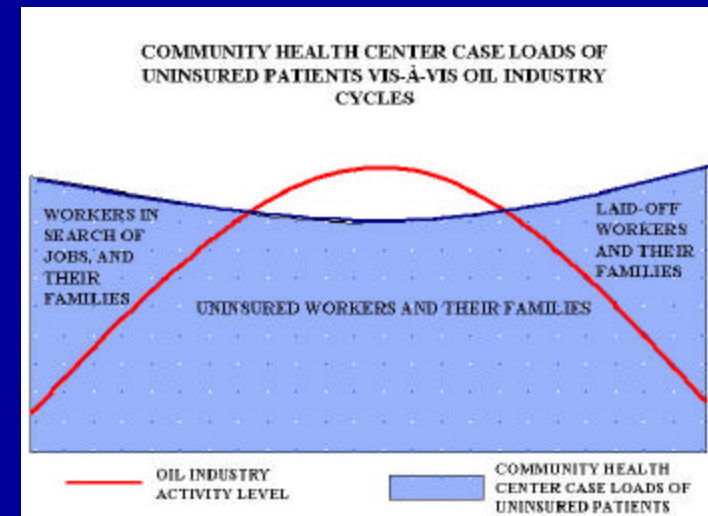
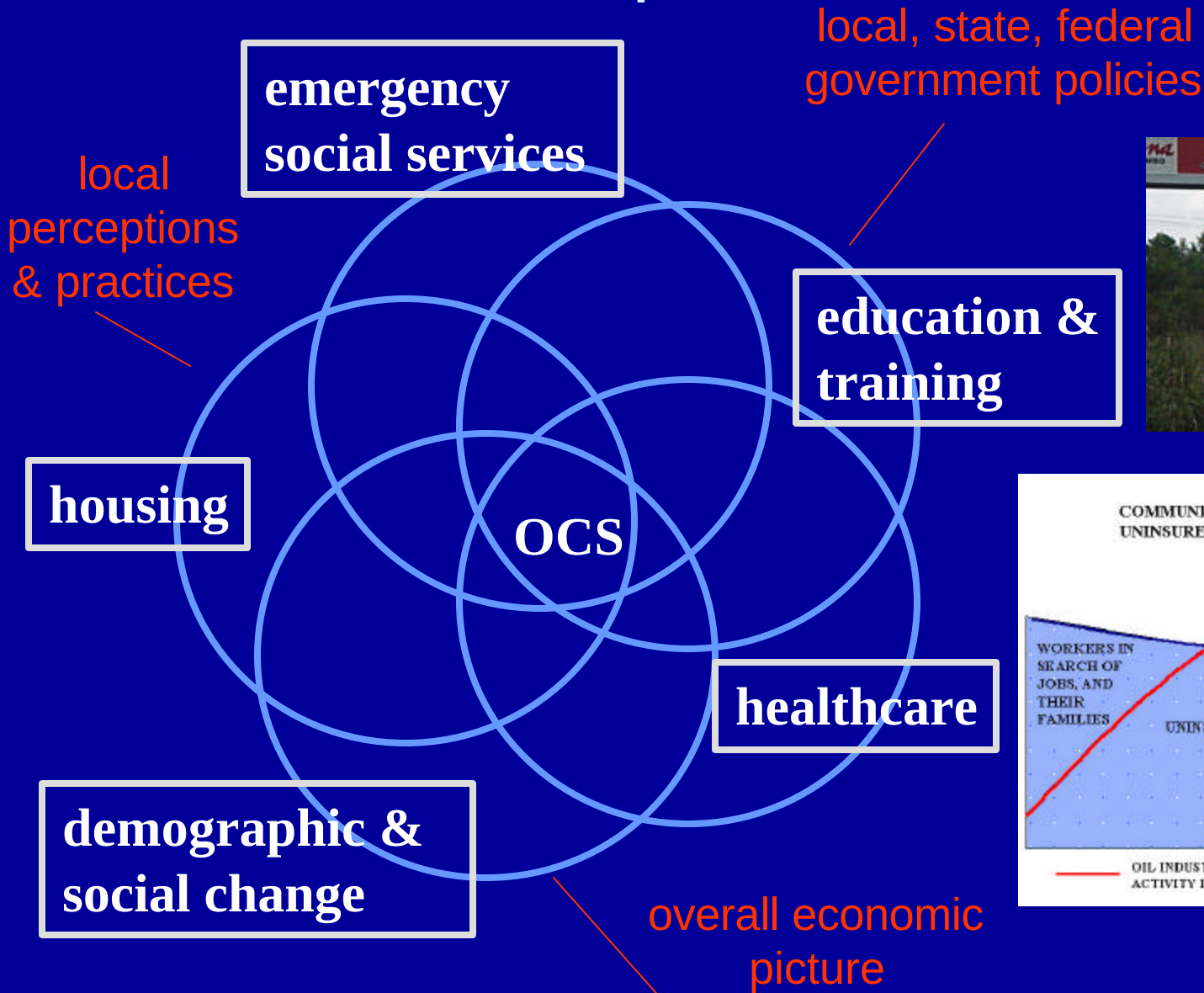
danger

economic rewards

OCS

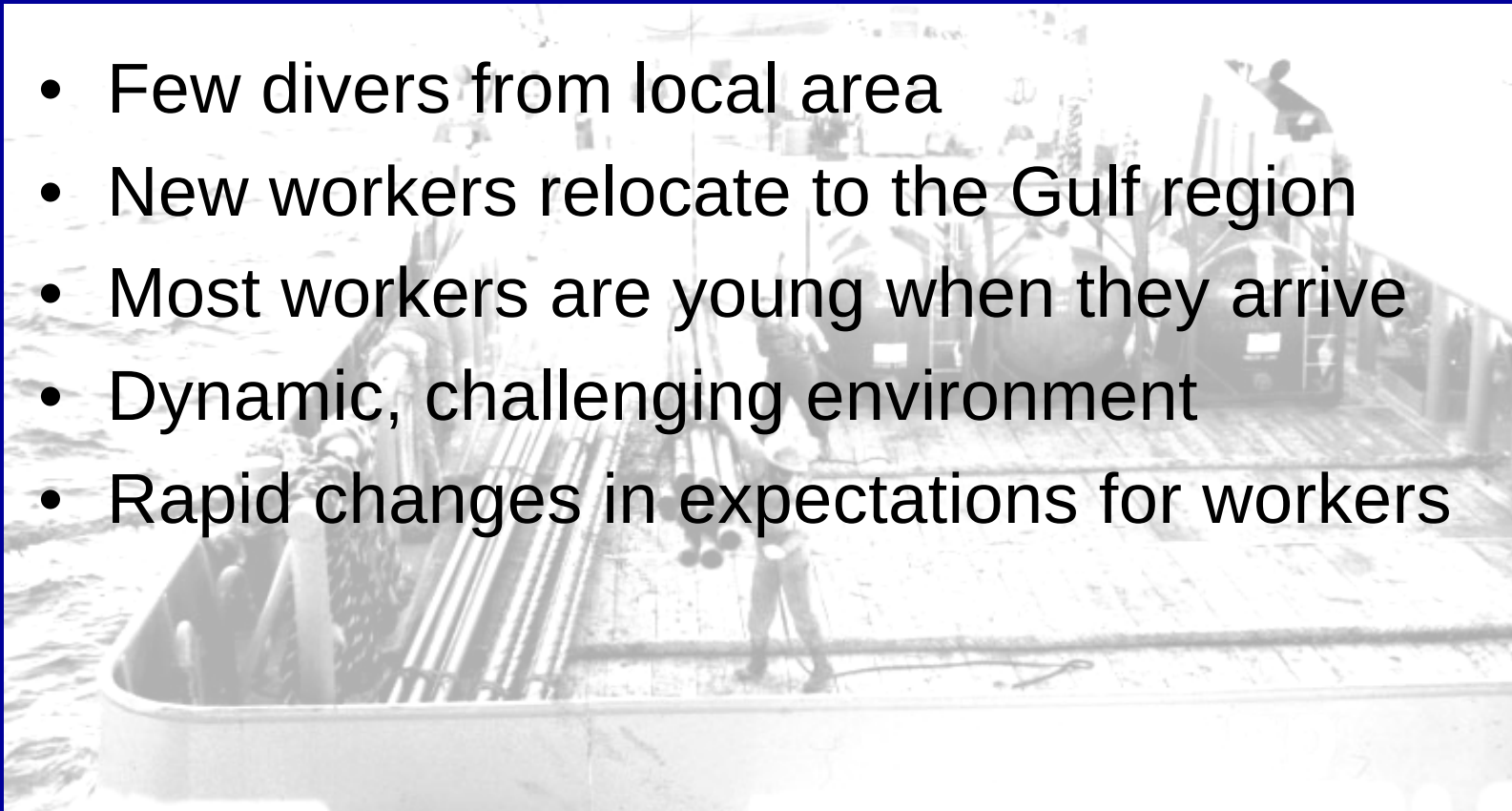
overall economic picture

# Sources of Impacts on Communities



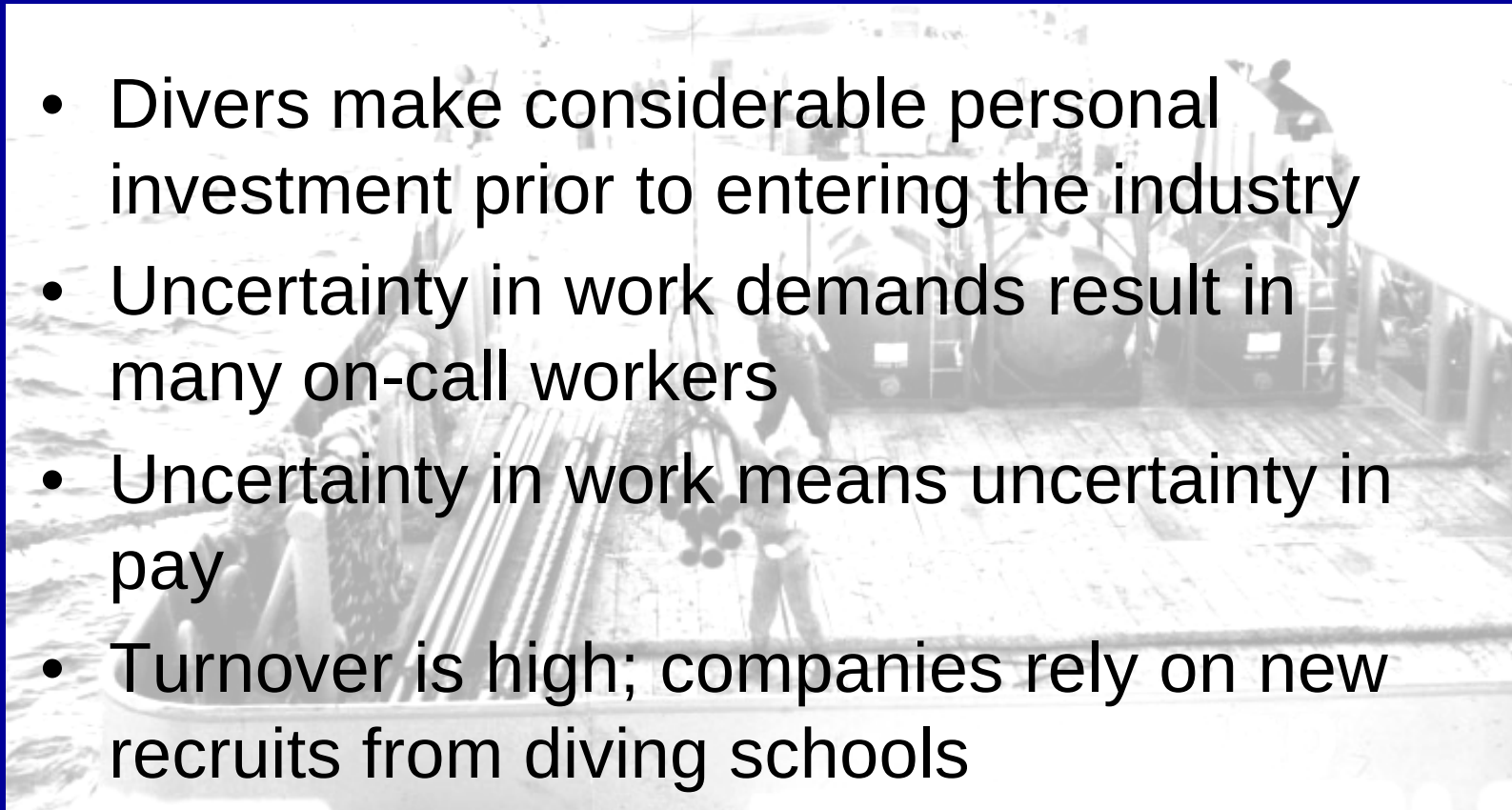
# Features of OCS-Related Diving and Underwater Construction Sector

- Few divers from local area
- New workers relocate to the Gulf region
- Most workers are young when they arrive
- Dynamic, challenging environment
- Rapid changes in expectations for workers



# Features of the Diving and Under-water Construction Sector (cont).

- Divers make considerable personal investment prior to entering the industry
- Uncertainty in work demands result in many on-call workers
- Uncertainty in work means uncertainty in pay
- Turnover is high; companies rely on new recruits from diving schools



# Impacts on Life Outside the Workplace

- Many workers have families
- Social networks are limited
- Responses and adaptations are highly variable
- Diving may enable women to escape traditional gender-based roles



# Some Findings and Implications

- Expectations of and for workers, especially fathers, have changed
  - Diving and underwater construction make it difficult to meet new expectations
- Few local young people express interest in the industry
- Few parents encourage the next generation to enter the industry
- Changes in local perceptions must accompany changes in industry and worker demand

# Summary

- Social and cultural impacts extensive and pervasive
- What is found is determined by what is sought and how the search proceeds
- Need thorough understanding of history and of context of new activity
  - Within community
  - Within industry
  - Within policy environment