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Rural Identities

Ethnicity and Community in the Contemporary English Countryside

Sarah Neal, Open University, UK

'In this extremely important book, Sarah Neal gets to the heart of what constitutes white people's attachment to the countryside. The result is a fresh and incisive analysis of the role of nature, the non-human and the emotional in the construction of ethnic identity and belonging.' – Katharine Tyler, University of Surrey, UK

Rural Identities investigates and engages with the ways in which ideas of the English countryside and rural nature, are enrolled into and fashion the narratives of Englishness. At the heart of the book is an examination of the formations of rural social relations, where the processes and practices through which rural attachments and senses of rural belonging, are established and maintained. Drawing on a substantial research project *Rural Identities* presents important new empirical material in its analysis of why the concepts of community and ethnicity are relevant to understanding the contested status of the English countryside. In doing so, it outlines the exclusionary limitations and inclusionary possibilities of the relational discourses of rurality and nation.

The rich empirical material and the conceptual apparatus employed in this volume render it appealing to policy makers as well as to scholars of sociology, geography, qualitative research methods and race and ethnicity studies.

Contents: Introduction; Debating rurality: Englishness and otherness; mapping rurality: community and countrysides; Re-thinking rurality: ethnicity and Englishness; Making rurality: practices of community, conviviality and social care; Competing ruralities: convergent and divergent discourses of the English countrysides; Connecting ruralities: alchemies of ethnicity and belonging; Conclusion; Bibliography; Index.

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