



**Communities Of Work: Rural Restructuring In
Local & Global Contexts (Research in
International Studies. Global and Comparative
Studies Series, No. 2)**

William W. Falk

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The image of rural America portrayed in this illuminating study is one that is vibrant, regionally varied, and sometimes heroic. *Communities of Work* focuses on the ways in which rural people and places are affected by political, social, and economic forces far outside their control and how they sustain themselves and their communities in response.

Bringing together the two fundamental concepts of community—where the relationships and practices of daily life occur—and work, in which an elementary exchange occurs, *Communities of Work* bridges several fields of study. Presented here is the contextual and embedded nature of social relations and the complexity involved in understanding them. Through the use of multiple case studies, the authors apply diverse theories and methods in seeking an integrated outcome, one captured by “communities of work.”

Beginning with a description of the broad changes in work and economic activities across the United States, ranging from the Ohio River Valley to a western boomtown, the book shifts its focus to the interplay of work, family, and local networks in time and place. Activities range from fishing in the Mississippi Delta to farming and family life in the Midwest. The authors then highlight how rural people and places respond to extra-local, increasingly global forces in settings as diverse as rural South Carolina and Wisconsin.

A certain communitarian theme runs through *Communities of Work*. It is about people and communities not merely reacting, but instead responding in ways that reflect their local culture, while being cognizant of the larger world within which they live.

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