



# **Contingent Work, Disrupted Lives: Labour and Community in the New Rural Economy (Studies in Comparative Political Economy and Public Policy)**

*Belinda Leach, Anthony Winson*

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*Contingent Work, Disrupted Lives* examines the repercussions of economic globalization on several manufacturing-dependent rural communities in Canada. Foregrounding a distinct interest in the 'grassroots' effects of such contemporary corporate strategies as plant closures and downsizing, authors Anthony Winson and Belinda Leach consider the impact of this restructuring on the residents of various communities. The authors argue that the new rural economy involves a fundamental shift in the stability and security of people's lives and, ultimately, it causes wrenching change and an arduous struggle as rural dwellers struggle to rebuild their lives in the new economic terrain.

Beginning with broader theoretical and empirical literature on global changes in the economy and the effects of these changes on labour, the text then focuses exploration on manufacturing in Ontario with an analysis of five community case studies. Winson and Leach give considerable attention to the testimony of numerous residents; they report on in-depth interviews with key respondents and blue-collar workers in five separate communities, ranging from diverse manufacturing towns to single-industry settlements. The result is an intimate contextual knowledge of the workers' lives and their attempts to adapt to the tumultuous economic terrain of 1990s rural Canada.

Winner of the John Porter Prize for 2003, awarded by the Canadian Sociology and Anthropology Association.

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