



Rural geography: blurring boundaries and making connections

Michael Woods*

Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences, Aberystwyth University,
Aberystwyth SY23 2NF, UK

Abstract: A number of commentaries and articles have been published in recent years reflecting on the nature, history and practice of rural geography. The introspective mood follows a period in which rural geography has been widely considered to have been resurgent, but indicates concerns about the unevenness of progress in rural geography, and about the readiness of the subdiscipline to address new challenges. This article, the first of three progress reports on rural geography, focuses on attempts within these interventions to rethink the boundaries of rural geography and its connections with other fields of study. First, it examines renewed debates on the definition and delimitation of the rural, including efforts to rematerialize the rural. Second, it considers the rejuvenation of work on rural–urban linkages, including concepts of city regions, exurbanization and rurbanity. Third, it discusses the interdisciplinary engagement of rural geographers, including collaboration with physical and natural scientists.

Key words: hybridity, interdisciplinary research, networks, rural geography, rural–urban interface.

I Introduction

There is something of an introspective mood in rural geography at present. A steady trickle of articles have appeared over the last few years, variously charting the historical development of rural geography as a subdiscipline in Britain (Lowe and Ward, 2007) and the United States (Duram and Archer, 2003; Forbes and Katkins, 2003), reflecting on the uneven adoption of critically engaged and theoretically informed perspectives between rural geographers in different countries (Madsen and Adriansen, 2006; Kurtz and Craig, 2009), and offering

thoughts on the future epistemological development of rural studies (Cloke, 2006; Marsden, 2006).

To the casual observer, the timing of this bout of introspection might be considered curious. Rural geography appears to be as strong as ever. Cloke *et al.*, in the preface to the *Handbook of rural studies*, note the upsurge in rural theorization and conceptualization experienced since the 1970s and argue that rurality ‘has been put back on the map through a revitalized rural studies’ (Cloke *et al.*, 2006: xi). Peter Jackson, in an editorial for the journal *Urban Geography*, goes further,

*Email: zzp@aber.ac.uk

suggesting that 'once regarded as something of an intellectual backwater, rural studies has clearly undergone a revival in recent years and, if the citation data are to be believed, may now be outstripping urban studies in terms of academic impact' (Jackson, 2005: 1). Yet, as several commentaries have identified, engagement with theorization and conceptualization in rural geography has been more pronounced in some countries, such as Britain and New Zealand, than in others, including the United States (Madsen and Adriansen, 2006; Kurtz and Craig, 2009; Woods, 2009a; 2009b). The overall picture is therefore of a subdiscipline in which intellectual progress has been uneven, with the circulation of knowledge constrained by the continuing parochialism of much rural geography research.

Moreover, Marsden (2006) observes that the revitalization of rural studies has occurred in spite of broader political-economic trends that he identifies as 'conceptual paradoxes'. These include the development of 'more intensive and diversified social science rural research despite the continual urban cosmopolitanism and globalism of advanced societies and the 'urbanization' of the countryside' (Marsden, 2006: 4), and despite the application of neoliberal projects within the academy that have limited opportunities for critical rural research, as well as the identification by researchers of new paradigms of local rural development despite 'new processes of modernity and technology [that] are attempting to deny local rural nature and communities' (Marsden, 2006: 5).

Equally, however, Marsden also points to the centrality of rural concerns in contemporary risk society. Issues such as the global production and supply of food, biosecurity, the control of energy resources and development of renewable energy technologies, and responses to climate change, including the alleviation of threats from flooding, fire and drought, all cast a new focus on the use and regulation of rural space and rural commodities. These are areas of inquiry to which

rural geography might legitimately lay claim, but they also beg questions about the state of readiness of rural geography.

As such, the introspective mood within rural geography is recognition that the subdiscipline is faced by both opportunities and challenges that will have consequences for both the conduct and the constitution of rural geography. Accordingly, interventions have in part considered the practice of rural geography, including issues of methodology and political engagement. I intend to return to these questions in next year's progress report. In this report, though, I wish to address the implications of current trends for the scope of rural geography, understood both in terms of its spatial focus (ie, the meaning of 'rural space'), and its interdisciplinary boundaries and relations. The report hence first examines recent discussions that have returned to questions about the definition and conceptualization of rural space before progressing to review the growing body of research on rural-urban interactions and the blending of rural and urban space. The latter part of the report then explores the involvement of rural geography in interdisciplinary research, and in connecting with other subdisciplines in geography.

II Revisiting rurality

A symptom of the current introspective moment in rural geography has been the creeping back into discussions of questions about the definition and conceptualization of rurality. As Cloke (2006) summarizes in the *Handbook of rural studies*, rural geography moved during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s through three theoretical framings of rurality: from a *functional* perspective that sought to fix rural space through the identification of its distinctive functional characteristics; to a *political-economic* perspective that attempted to position the rural as the product of broader social, economic and political processes; to a perspective in which rurality is understood as *socially constructed*, such that 'the importance of the 'rural' lies in the fascinating world of

social, cultural and moral values that have become associated with rurality, rural spaces and rural life' (Cloke, 2006: 21).

The apparent dominance of this last perspective, at least in Anglo-centric rural geography, in effect sidelined debates around the conceptualization of the rural for the past decade, while also stimulating a new line of inquiry into the production, reproduction and contestation of discourses of rurality. Work on this theme continues to be prominent within rural geography, with recent studies examining the reproduction of rural discourses through the news media (Hidle *et al.*, 2006; Juska, 2007), children's television (Horton, 2008a; 2008b) and public policy (Woods, 2008; Cruickshank, 2009), as well as young people's discourses of rurality (Rye, 2006). A key appeal of this approach is that it does not constrain the 'rural' spatially, yet the deterritorialized rural implied by social constructivist perspectives has been critiqued for neglecting the material dimensions of the rural condition that have a real impact on the experiences of people living, working and playing in rural space (Cloke, 2006).

Attempts at rematerializing the rural have come from three directions. The first examines the material and discursive conditions associated with the geographical context of rural localities, without suggesting that such contextual attributes are characteristic functions of rural space or assigning causality to the state of 'being rural'. For example, Conradson and Pawson (2009) and Paulgaard (2008) examine how the condition of 'peripherality' or 'marginality' is negotiated with respect to economic development and identity politics in the contexts of west coast New Zealand and northern Norway, respectively, while Argent (2008) assesses the relationships between population density, social interaction patterns and morale in rural communities of New South Wales.

The second attempt at rematerialization comes from the reassertion of efforts to statistically define rurality and categorize

rural space, in effect returning to a functional perspective. The drive for this move is in part technological, reflecting the development of georeferencing methods in GIS that can surmount problems of ecological fallacy associated with using larger statistical units (Mullu and Rusanen, 2004), but it is also in part political. Governments have responded to the mobilization of rural interest groups in a new 'politics of the rural' by seeking mechanisms through which they can 'fix' rural space and 'objectively' evaluate rural needs (Woods, 2003; 2008), as, for instance, in the UK government's commissioning of a new rural definition and area classification (Shepherd and Bibby, 2004). However, the varying criteria employed in producing rural classifications can have major consequences for the identification of rural need and the delivery of policy programmes, and critics have seized on the perceived weaknesses of current models to argue for the development of new unified definitions for use in both policy and research (Bhagat, 2005; Isserman, 2005; Shambaugh-Miller, 2007). While the political potential of refined models of rural classification should not be easily dismissed, new quantitative definitions have little of analytical value to offer rural geography research and disregard the conceptual lessons of the last 25 years. Moreover, they risk closing down the spatial horizons of rural geography when the prevailing trend is in precisely the opposite direction.

Far more promising for rural geographers interested in broadening the horizons of the subdiscipline is the third approach to rematerializing the rural, which conceptualizes the rural as a hybrid and networked space. As Cloke (2006) again observes, there are at least two conceptual pathways that have been marked out for this approach. One pathway, outlined by Halfacree (2006), also in the *Handbook of rural studies*, draws on Lefebvrian theories of the representation of space to present rural space as a socially produced set of manifolds, in which imaginative, material and practised

ruralities are intrinsically and dynamically entwined and inscribed in the totality of the rural. The other pathway draws on actor-network theory and Deleuzian ideas to emphasize the rural as a multifaceted and co-constituted space, 'defined by networks in which heterogeneous entities are aligned in a variety of ways ... [that] give rise to slightly different countrysides: there is no single vantage point from which the panoply of rural or countryside relations can be seen' (Murdoch, 2003: 274).

Following on from pioneering work by the late Jonathan Murdoch (2003; 2006), rural geographers have applied concepts of hybridity and networks to investigate the co-constitution of rural places by human and non-human actants (Cloke and Perkins, 2005; Rudy, 2005; Jones, 2006), the significance of distance as a 'hybrid actor' in rural economies (Young, 2006), and the contested hybrid reconstitution of rural localities within globalization processes (Woods, 2007). These developing perspectives on the hybrid and networked rural offer prospects of recovering the material and social dimensions of rurality, complementing the cultural narratives that have dominated in the past decade. Critically, they also point to a blurring of the spatial boundaries of rural geography research and to forging interdisciplinary connections that can interrogate the 'more-than-human' constitution of the rural.

III Blurring the rural–urban divide

The theoretical innovation of conceptualizing the rural as a hybrid or networked space has been accompanied by renewed interest in the empirical investigation of the spatial settings in which rural and urban identities are most entangled and rural–urban distinctions most elusive: small towns in rural regions (Powe and Shaw, 2004; Courtney *et al.*, 2007); new exurban developments (Walker and Fortmann, 2003; Larsen *et al.*, 2007); peri-urban communities within urban commuting fields (Bossuet, 2006); and the

rural–urban fringe (Mahon, 2007; Qviström, 2007; Gallent and Andersson, 2007; LeSage and Charles, 2008). As recent studies have emphasized, such spaces present challenges for land-use planning based on the separation of town and country (Qviström, 2007; Gallent and Andersson, 2007; Masuda and Garvin, 2008); are the sites of conflicts between rural and urban interests (Walker and Fortmann, 2003; Smithers *et al.*, 2005; Masuda and Garvin, 2008); and are arenas in which rural and urban identities are negotiated and contested (Bossuet, 2006; Mahon, 2007).

Through this work, three models have emerged as attempts to describe the context of such localities and to explain the dynamics of rural and urban forces observed within them. First, the concept of 'city-regions' has been deployed in the examination of peri-urban and fringe areas, particularly in Europe. Developed by urban-economic geographers as a means of advancing the stalled localities debate by providing a subnational framework for investigating the spatial organization of the economy, the city-region (CR) is a field of spatial interaction focused on the 'city zone' but extending across adjacent rural districts. Thus, proponents argue, 'when placed within the context of a given CR, the categories of urban and rural can be considered in a manner that more adequately reflects their inter-relatedness, and this is particularly so for labour markets and housing markets, as well as for shopping and leisure patterns' (Parr, 2005: 565), such that 'the competitive and complementary aspects of urban–rural relations become more transparent' (p. 565).

However, the city-region approach carries risks of addressing rural localities solely in terms of their relation to the urban, of disregarding any sense of an overarching, interregional rural condition, and of marginalizing rural concerns within structures dominated economically and demographically by cities. The incorporation of the city-region model into policy, including the

European Spatial Development Perspective, has further amplified these dangers (Hoggart, 2005). Research that explicitly interrogates the role of rural areas within a city-region framework is therefore important and welcome, such as the recent 'Urban pressures on rural areas' (NEWRUR) programme in Europe. The summary volumes from the NEWRUR programme edited by Bertrand and Kreibich (2006) and Hoggart (2005) highlight the complexity and diversity of peri-urban areas, identifying the impact of urban pressures and processes, but also the limits of an urban-centric perspective.

Second, North American rural geographers have increasingly employed the term 'exurbia' to situate work on communities at or beyond the rural-urban fringe. Although frequently used loosely to refer to peri-urban districts, the term exurban is most helpful when specifically applied to rural localities that have been transformed by in-migration from towns and cities (often for amenity purposes) and associated development. With a strong influence from political ecology, much work on exurban settings has focused on land-use change and landscape conflicts (Crump, 2003; Walker and Fortmann, 2003; Smith and Sharp, 2005; Gosnell *et al.*, 2006), as well as on social recomposition and adjustment (Larsen *et al.*, 2007). Both analyses support the positioning of exurban areas as hybrid spaces in which rural and urban values, cultures and landscapes have become fused. As such, the approach complements the hybrid perspective on rurality and offers a way of capturing the spatially uneven outcomes of urban-rural interactions. Yet, to date 'exurbia' has been largely used as a descriptive, positional category and requires further development as an analytical concept.

Third, French geographers have argued that the much-discussed 'urbanization' of the countryside is accompanied by a parallel 'ruralization' of the city (Urbain, 2002). In part, this argument observes that as forms of civic organization and social interaction

associated with Weberian notions of the western city have been adopted in rural settings, so a significant part of contemporary urbanity is now practised within rural space, producing a condition labelled as *l'urbanité rurale* (Poulle and Gorgeu, 1997). However, it also recognizes the preference among urban populations for lifestyle experiences traditionally associated with rural life, such as community solidarity, and attempts to re-create these in contemporary urban planning. For Urbain (2002) and others, exurban migrants who settle in the countryside play a critical role in these processes, transgressing urban and rural mentalities. As Lacour and Puissant (2007) note, a double expectation is placed on colonized rural communities to simultaneously conform both to urban ideals (convenience, centrality, diversity) and to rural ideals (community, solidarity, tranquillity). The resulting condition of 're-urbanity', with urban forms and practices reinvented and articulated in a range of settings, leads according to Lacour and Puissant (2007) to the abandonment of conventional dichotomies of rural and urban and the search for new sociospatial models.

In these ways, rural geographers are re-thinking the nature of rural-urban interactions and the spaces that are produced. On the one hand, the identification of a networked space characterized by multiple flows and dependencies linking city and countryside points towards a collapse of the rural-dichotomy (Champion *et al.*, 2003; Champion and Hugo, 2004). On the other hand, it is clear that the result is not a homogenous extended city, but rather the production of new hybrid sociospatial forms that blur the rural and the urban yet can exhibit a distinctive order and identity (Qviström, 2007). Moreover, these dynamics impact as much on the nature of the contemporary city as they do on the contemporary countryside, and their further investigation calls for all-too-rare collaboration between rural and urban geographers.

IV Making connections interdisciplinary rural research

Rural geographers have always worked in an interdisciplinary environment. As discussed by several of the commentaries mentioned at the start of this piece, the boundaries between rural geography, rural sociology, agricultural economics and other cognate fields are permeable and vary by national context. Lowe and Ward (2007), for example, have argued that the comparative dynamism of British rural geography reflects its positioning at the crux of an interdisciplinary rural studies field as British rural sociology and agricultural economics weakened. In the United States, by contrast, the disciplinary boundaries have remained more solid.

A similar observation can be made about the position of rural geography within geography as a discipline. Rural geographers form a distinctive community, but do not have a monopoly over geographical research on rural areas. At times of greatest dynamism, the rural has always attracted research by cultural geographers, social geographers, economic geographers, political geographers, political ecologists and so on, yet the engagement of established 'rural geographers' with these interventions has also varied. From this perspective, it is interesting to note the amount of recent innovative rural research undertaken by individuals who would probably not primarily identify themselves as 'rural geographers', especially in North America (eg, Braun, 2002; P. Walker, 2003; R. Walker, 2004; Prudham, 2005; Torres *et al.*, 2006; Lawson *et al.*, 2008). Such work has great potential significance for rural geography, yet the collaborative engagement of rural geographers is patchy.

One area where collaborative links have been successfully forged is the geography of food. Food production has long been a core interest of rural geographers, but recent work has involved the development of wider connections as rural geographers have expanded their horizons beyond agriculture to the larger agri-food system. In one direction,

rural geographers have connected with perspectives in economic geography to trace agri-food commodity chains, including examining the impact of globalization and the role of policy regimes and of transnational corporations (Jackson *et al.*, 2006; Marsden, 2007; Stringer and Le Heron, 2008; Ward *et al.*, 2008). In another, they have connected with perspectives in cultural geography to link food production and consumption, exploring consumers' practices and attitudes (Holloway *et al.*, 2007; Clarke *et al.*, 2008; Cox *et al.*, 2008; Eden *et al.*, 2008), as well as in extending the concept of hybridity to analyse processes of food localization (Trabalzi, 2007). Both strands of research have transgressed the rural-urban dichotomy to expose the networks of rural-urban co-dependency in the agri-food system, articulated for example through initiatives such as community supported agriculture and farmers' markets (Jarosz, 2008; Slocum, 2008; Smithers *et al.*, 2008).

Food research has additionally formed an arena in which rural geographers have made interdisciplinary connections with physical and natural scientists, along with contexts such as sustainable development and resource management. The development of such linkages reflects broader growing interest by rural geographers in the impacts of environmental change and of new biotechnologies (eg, Ferreyra *et al.*, 2008; Holloway and Morris, 2008), as well as in the 'more-than-human' dimensions of the hybrid rural (eg, Jones, 2006; Kaljonen, 2006; Lulka, 2006).

A key facilitator of interdisciplinary collaboration with physical and natural scientists has been the Rural Economy and Land Use (RELU) programme in Britain. Established in 2003 and co-funded by three research councils responsible for the social, natural and biological sciences, RELU aims to 'advance a holistic understanding of the major economic, social, environmental challenges facing rural areas', holding that 'the salient challenges cut across disciplinary boundaries and that

interdisciplinary research is required as a basis for sustainable rural development' (Lowe and Phillipson, 2006: 166). Human geography is the third-best represented discipline in the RELU programme, with around 45 human geography researchers involved in projects (RELU, 2007). These include studies of the links between quality food production and biodiversity protection, environmental knowledge controversies in flooding and rural land management, the lessons of Dutch elm disease for threats from sudden oak death, and angling and the rural environment.¹

V Conclusions

In May 2008 demographers in the United States announced that the estimated global urban population had exceeded the estimated global rural population for the first time. However, in spite of this apparent eclipse of the rural, the rural remains central to many contemporary geographical concerns. Issues such as food security, biosecurity, sustainable development and adaptation to climate change have provided political imperatives for geographical research on rural issues, while theoretical interests in hybridity and 'more-than-human geographies' have also led geographers towards rural examples. Against this backcloth, if rural geography is experiencing an introspective moment, then the introspection reflects anxieties about the fitness of the subdiscipline to take on this new agenda – anxieties about the need to rethink established concepts and approaches, about the encroachment of non-rural geographers doing rural geography and the imperative of interdisciplinary research, and about the uneven capacity of rural geography in different national contexts to engage appropriate conceptual tools. This unsettled environment has provoked discussion about the practice of rural geography, its theories and its methodologies, as will be examined further in the next progress report. Yet, such anxieties need to be overcome if rural geography is to embrace the opportunities

that will follow from blurring boundaries and making connections, and make the progress promised in recent leading-edge studies.

Note

1. Full details of the Rural Economy and Land Use programme can be found at www.relu.ac.uk. The programme is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, the Natural Environmental Research Council and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, and runs from 2003 to 2010. The projects highlighted here are 'Eating Biodiversity: an investigation of the links between quality food production and biodiversity protection' (Principal Investigator: Henry Buller); 'Understanding Environmental Knowledge Controversies' (PI: Sarah Whatmore); 'Lessons from Dutch Elm Disease in Assessing the Threat from Sudden Oak Death' (PI: Clive Potter); and 'Angling and the Rural Environment' (PI: Liz Oughton).

References

- Argent, N.** 2008: Perceived density, social interaction and morale in New South Wales rural communities. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 245–61.
- Bertrand, N.** and **Kreibich, V.**, editors 2006: *Europe's city regions competitiveness: growth regulation and peri-urban land management*. Assen: Van Gorcum.
- Bhagat, R.B.** 2005: Rural-urban classification and municipal governance in India. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 26, 61–73.
- Bossuet, L.** 2006: Peri-rural populations in search of territory. *Sociologia Ruralis* 46, 214–28.
- Braun, B.** 2002: *The intemperate rainforest: nature, culture and power on Canada's west coast*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Champion, A.** and **Hugo, G.**, editors 2004: *New forms of urbanization: beyond the urban-rural dichotomy*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Champion, A.**, **Hugo, G.** and **Lattes, A.** 2003: Towards a new conceptualization of settlement for demography: beyond the urban/rural dichotomy. *Population and Development Review* 29, 277–97.
- Clarke, N.**, **Cloke, P.**, **Barnett, C.** and **Malpass, A.** 2008: The spaces and ethics of organic food. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 219–30.
- Cloke, P.** 2006: Conceptualizing rurality. In Cloke, P., Marsden, T. and Mooney, P.H., editors, *Handbook of rural studies*, London: Sage, 18–28.
- Cloke, P.** and **Perkins, H.** 2006: Cetacean performance and tourism in Kaikoura, New Zealand. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 23, 903–24.
- Cloke, P.**, **Marsden, T.** and **Mooney, P.H.**, editors 2006: *Handbook of rural studies*. London: Sage.

- Conradson, D.** and **Pawson, E.** 2009: New cultural economies of marginality: revisiting the West Coast, South Island, New Zealand. *Journal of Rural Studies* 25, 77–86.
- Courtney, P., Mayfield, L., Tranter, R., Jones, P.** and **Errington, A.** 2007: Small towns and 'sub-poles' in English rural development: investigating rural-urban linkages using sub-regional accounting matrices. *Geoforum* 38, 1219–32.
- Cox, R., Kneafsey, M., Venn, L., Holloway, L., Dowler, E.** and **Tuomainen, H.** 2008: Constructing sustainability through reconnection: the case of 'alternative' food networks. In Robinson, G., editor, *Sustainable rural systems*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 67–82.
- Cruickshank, J.A.** 2009: A play for rurality – modernization versus local autonomy. *Journal of Rural Studies* 25, 98–107.
- Crump, J.R.** 2003: Finding a place in the country: exurban and suburban development in Sonoma County, California. *Environment and Behavior* 35, 187–202.
- Duram, L.** and **Archer, J.C.** 2003: Contemporary agriculture and rural land use. In Gaile, G. and Willmott, C., editors, *Geography in America at the dawn of the twenty-first century*, New York: Oxford University Press, 326–38.
- Eden, S., Bear, C.** and **Walker, G.** 2008: Understanding and (dis)trusting food assurance schemes: consumer confidence and the 'knowledge fix'. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 1–14.
- Ferreira, C., de Loë, R.C., Kreutzwizer, R.D.** 2008: Imagined communities, contested watersheds: challenges to integrated water resources management in agricultural areas. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 304–21.
- Forbes, W.** and **Katkins, S.-L.** 2003: Rural development. In Gaile, G. and Willmott, C., editors, *Geography in America at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Oxford University Press, 339–49.
- Gallent, N.** and **Andersson, J.** 2007: Representing England's rural-urban fringe. *Landscape Research* 32, 1–21.
- Gosnell, H., Haggerty, J.** and **Travis, W.** 2006: Ranchland ownership change in the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem, 1990–2001: implications for conservation. *Society and Natural Resources* 19, 743–58.
- Halfacree, K.** 2006: Rural space: constructing a three-fold architecture. In Cloke, P., Marsden, T. and Mooney, P.H., editors, *Handbook of rural studies*, London: Sage, 44–62.
- Hidle, K., Cruickshank, J.** and **Nesje, L.M.** 2006: Market, commodity, resource and strength: logics of Norwegian rurality. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift* 60, 189–98.
- Hoggart, K.**, editor 2005: *The city's hinterland: dynamism and divergence in Europe's peri-urban territories*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Holloway, L.** and **Morris, C.** 2008: Boosted bodies: Genetic techniques, domestic livestock bodies and complex representations of life. *Geoforum*, 39, 1709–20.
- Holloway, L., Kneafsey, M., Venn, L., Cox, R., Dowler, E.** and **Tuomainen, H.** 2007: Possible food economies: a methodological framework for exploring food production-consumption relationships. *Sociologia Ruralis* 47, 1–19.
- Horton, J.** 2008a: Producing Postman Pat: the popular construction of idyllic rurality. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 389–98.
- 2008b: Postman Pat and me: everyday encounters with an icon of idyllic rurality. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 399–408.
- Isserman, A.M.** 2005: In the national interest: defining rural and urban correctly in research and public policy. *International Regional Science Review* 28, 465–99.
- Jackson, P.** 2005: Editorial: The eclipse of urban geography? *Urban Geography* 26, 1–3.
- Jackson, P., Ward, N.** and **Russell, P.** 2006: Mobilizing the commodity chain concept in the politics of food and farming. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22, 129–41.
- Jarosz, L.** 2008: The city in the country: Growing alternative food networks in Metropolitan areas. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 231–44.
- Jones, O.** 2006: Non-human rural studies. In Cloke, P., Marsden, T. and Mooney, P.H., editors, *Handbook of rural studies*, London: Sage, 185–200.
- Juska, A.** 2007: Discourses of rurality in post-socialist news media: the case of Lithuania's leading daily 'Lietuvos Rytas' (1991–2004). *Journal of Rural Studies* 23, 238–53.
- Kaljonen, M.** 2006: Co-construction of agency and environmental management. The case of agri-environmental policy implementation at Finnish farms. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22, 205–16.
- Kurtz, M.** and **Craig, V.** 2009: Constructing rural geographies in publication. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, in press.
- Lacour, C.** and **Puissant, S.** 2007: Re-urbanity: urbanizing the rural and ruralizing the urban. *Environment and Planning A* 39, 728–47.
- Larsen, S. C., Sorenson, C., McDermott, D., Long, J.** and **Post, C.** 2007: Place perception and social interaction on an exurban landscape in central Colorado. *The Professional Geographer* 59, 421–33.
- Lawson, V., Jarosz, L.** and **Bonds, A.** 2008: Building economies from the bottom up: (mis)representations of poverty in the rural American Northwest. *Social and Cultural Geography* 9, 737–53.

- LeSage, J.P.** and **Charles, J.S.** 2008: Using home buyers' revealed preferences to define the urban-rural fringe. *Journal of Geographical Systems* 10, 1–21.
- Lowe, P.** and **Phillipson, J.** 2006: Reflexive interdisciplinary research: the making of a research programme on the rural economy and land use. *Journal of Agricultural Economics* 57, 165–84.
- Lowe, P.** and **Ward, N.** 2007: British rural geography: a disciplinary enterprise in changing times. In Clout, H., editor, *Contemporary rural geographies*, London: Routledge, 1–20.
- Lulka, D.** 2006: Grass or grain? Assessing the nature of the US bison industry. *Sociologia Ruralis* 46, 173–91.
- Madsen, L.M.** and **Adriansen, H.K.** 2006: Knowledge constructions in research communities: the example of agri-rural researchers in Denmark. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22, 456–68.
- Mahon, M.** 2007: New populations; shifting expectations: the changing experience of Irish rural space and place. *Journal of Rural Studies* 23, 345–56.
- Marsden, T.** 2006: Pathways in the sociology of rural knowledge. In Cloke, P., Marsden, T. and Mooney, P.H., editors, *Handbook of rural studies*, London: Sage, 3–17.
- 2007: Denial and diversity: some reflections on emerging agri-food geographies and rural development in the United Kingdom. In Clout, H., editor, *Contemporary rural geographies*, London: Routledge, 43–71.
- Masuda, J.R.** and **Garvin, T.** 2008: Whose heartland? The politics of place in a rural-urban interface. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 112–23.
- Muilu, T.** and **Rusanen, J.** 2004: Rural definitions and short-term dynamics in rural areas of Finland in 1989–97. *Environment and Planning A* 36, 1499–516.
- Murdoch, J.** 2003: Co-constructing the countryside: hybrid networks and the extensive self. In Cloke, P., editor, *Country visions*, London: Pearson, 263–82.
- 2006: Networking rurality: emergent complexity in the countryside. In Cloke, P., Marsden, T. and Mooney, P.H., editors, *Handbook of rural studies*, London: Sage, 171–84.
- Parr, J.** 2005: Perspectives on the city-region. *Regional Studies* 39, 555–66.
- Paulgaard, G.** 2008: Re-centring periphery: negotiating identities in time and space. In Baerenholdt, J.O. and Granås, B., editors, *Mobility and place: enacting northern European peripheries*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 49–60.
- Pouille, F.** and **Gorgeu, Y.** 1997: *Essai sur l'urbanité rurale: cinq territoires ruraux, leur serments et leurs modes de gouvernement*. Paris: Syros.
- Powe, N.** and **Shaw, T.** 2004: Exploring the current and future role of market towns in servicing their hinterlands: a case study of Alnwick in the North East of England. *Journal of Rural Studies* 20, 405–18.
- Prudham, W.S.** 2005: *Knock on wood: nature as commodity in Douglas-fir country*. New York: Routledge.
- Qviström, M.** 2007: Landscapes out of order: studying the inner urban fringe beyond the rural-urban fringe. *Geografiska Annaler Series B* 89, 269–82.
- Rudy, A.P.** 2005: Imperial contradictions: is the Valley a watershed, region, or cyborg? *Journal of Rural Studies* 21, 19–38.
- Rural Economy and Land Use Programme (RELU)** 2007: *What is relu?* Newcastle: RELU.
- Rye, J.F.** 2006: Rural youths' images of the rural. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22, 409–21.
- Shambaugh-Miller, M.** 2007: Development of a rural typology GIS for policy makers. Paper presented to the Quadrennial Conference of British, Canadian and American Rural Geographers, Spokane, July.
- Shepherd, J.** and **Bibby, P.** 2004: *Developing a new classification of rural and urban areas for policy purposes – the methodology*. London: Office for National Statistics.
- Slocum, R.** 2008: Thinking race through corporeal feminist theory: divisions and intimacies at the Minneapolis Farmers' Market. *Social and Cultural Geography* 9, 849–69.
- Smith, M.** and **Sharp, J.** 2005: Growth, development and farming in an Ohio exurban region. *Environment and Behavior* 37, 565–79.
- Smithers, J., Joseph, A.E.** and **Armstrong, M.** 2005: Across the divide (?): reconciling farm and town views of agriculture-community linkages. *Journal of Rural Studies* 21, 281–95.
- Smithers, J., Lamarche, J.** and **Joseph, A.E.** 2008: Unpacking the terms of engagement with local food at the Farmers' Market: insights from Ontario. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24, 337–50.
- Stringer, C.** and **Le Heron, R.**, editors 2008: *Agri-food commodity chains and globalizing networks*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Torres, R.M., Popke, E.J.**, and **Hapke, H.M.** 2006: The South's silent bargain: rural reconstructing, Latino labor and the ambiguities of migrant experience. In Smith, H.A. and Furuseth, O.J., editors, *Latinos in the New South*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 37–68.
- Trabalzi, F.** 2007: Crossing conventions in localized food networks: insights from southern Italy. *Environment and Planning A* 39, 283–300.
- Urbain, J.-D.** 2002: *Paradis verts: désirs de campagne et passions résidentielles*. Paris: Payot.
- Walker, P.** 2003: Reconsidering 'regional' political ecologies: toward a political ecology of the rural American West. *Progress in Human Geography* 27, 7–24.
- Walker, P.** and **Fortmann, L.** 2003: Whose landscape? A political ecology of the 'exurban' Sierra. *Cultural Geographies* 10, 469–91.

- Walker, R.** 2004: *The conquest of bread: 150 years of agribusiness in California*. New York: The New Press.
- Ward, N., Jackson, P., Russell, P. and Wilkinson, K.** 2008: Productivism, post-productivism and European agricultural reform: the case of sugar. *Sociologia Ruralis* 48, 118–32.
- Woods, M.** 2003: Deconstructing rural protest: the emergence of a new social movement. *Journal of Rural Studies* 19, 309–25.
- 2007: Engaging the global countryside: globalization, hybridity and the reconstitution of rural place. *Progress in Human Geography* 31, 485–508.
- 2008: New Labour's Countryside. In Woods, M., editor, *New Labour's Countryside: Rural policy in Britain since 1997*, Bristol: Policy Press, 3–28.
- 2009a: Exploring the uneven geographies of 'rural geography'. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, in press.
- 2009b: Rural geography. In Kitchin, R. and Thrift, N., editors, *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*, Oxford: Elsevier, in press.
- Young, N.** 2006: Distance as a hybrid actor in rural economies. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22, 253–66.