

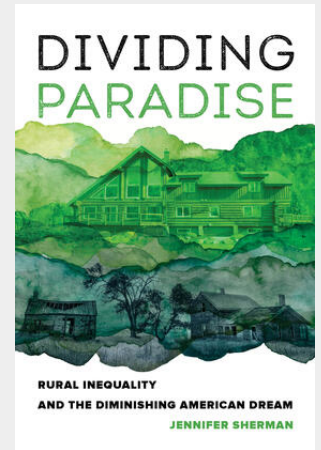
Sherman

## Dividing Paradise

Rural Inequality and the Diminishing American Dream

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CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title, 2022 How rural areas have become uneven proving grounds for the American Dream. Late-stage capitalism is trying to remake rural America in its own image, and the resistance is telling. Small-town economies that have traditionally been based on logging, mining, farming, and ranching now increasingly rely on tourism, second-home ownership, and retirement migration. In *Dividing Paradise*, Jennifer Sherman tells the story of Paradise Valley, Washington, a rural community where amenity-driven economic growth has resulted in a new social landscape of inequality and privilege, with deep fault lines between old-timers and newcomers. In this complicated cultural reality, "class blindness" allows privileged newcomers to ignore or justify their impact on these towns, papering over the sentiments of anger, loss, and disempowerment of longtime locals. Based on in-depth interviews with individuals on both sides of the divide, this book explores the causes and repercussions of the stark inequity that has become commonplace across the United States. It exposes the mechanisms by which inequality flourishes and by which Americans have come to believe that disparity is acceptable and deserved. Sherman, who is known for her work on rural America, presents here a powerful case study of the ever-growing tensions between those who can and those who cannot achieve their visions of the American dream.



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