Today, many rural areas in the world tend to turn to tourism in order to remain sustainable in the process of globalisation for better or worse. This book includes discussions of 3 experts in tourism on how tourism works and changes with local responses in rural areas from the perspectives of political economy and social theory, using case studies in Canada. These discussions and case studies are strongly related to the field of tourism studies and are not focused on geographic studies. However, the authors of the book use a significant number of geographic approaches which are useful for geographers, especially for rural geographers and tourism geographers.

This book consists of 14 chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to rural tourism development. It includes the notion of rural tourism, which is based on the OECD’s definition.

Chapter 2 is a review and the presentation of the argument over the political economy perspectives of rural tourism in Canada. In this section, authors discuss how rural development policies affect tourism-led growth in rural areas, and explain the general trends, challenges and opportunities in rural tourism development.

Chapter 3 to 7 include 4 case studies from 4 rural areas in Canada; Lunenburg, Port Stanley, Vulcan and Canso. In each case, the authors use a four-quadrant analytical framework, of which the horizontal axis represents motivation factors behind tourism, problem-based or opportunity-based, and the vertical axis stands for forces driving development processes, supply-driven or demand-driven. Then the authors classify areas into 4 types; (1) Contrived type (problem-based and supply-driven), (2) Deliberate type (opportunity-based and supply-driven), (3) Integrated/Evolutionary type (opportunity-based and demand-driven), and (4) Responsive type (problem-based and demand-driven). Lunenburg is a responsive case, which has changed from a former old fishing community into a touristic destination after becoming a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Port Stanley is an integrated case. It developed other economic industries as well as tourism, taking advantage of its close location to Toronto and Detroit. Vulcan is a contrived case. The locals in Vulcan devised and developed Star Trek (popular SF TV program) tourism in order to resolve the downturn in the community. Lastly, Canso is a deliberate case. Canso was a depressed fishing community like Lunenburg. However, it developed tourism differently by creating an unique attraction which is a music festival event. Finally, the authors provide a compendium of the 4 cases and present questions that arise from analysis of these case studies.

Chapters 8 to 9 explore the changes in rural areas with the implementation of tourism. These changes are important factors to learn the real situations of rural areas today. One common change is the commodification of local culture for tourism. Another concern is the changes in rural landscape with tourism development. The authors apply the concepts of rural gentrification and rebranding in their discussion about landscape changes.

In chapter 10 to 13, there are discussions about appropriate planning of rural tourism and public policy. The authors reveal the role of rural tourism in community development (CD). They describe the importance of citizen involvement and engaged planning in rural tourism as the essential for the sustainability of CD. Further, they survey the role of public policy and how it is used in rural tourism development.

The last section, chapter 14, is the conclusion of this book and the presentation of prospects of community development through tourism planning. In this section, the authors emphasise that tourism can be an important factor for rural community development under globalisation. However, it depends on the sustainability of tourism in rural areas. To be sustainable, it must be appropriately planned, involving all the stakeholders in a community.

This book focuses on case studies in Canada, but includes some important topics and comprehensive
discussions about rural areas in general. Therefore, this book is an important source for undergraduate and graduate students in the field of geography who are interested in rural tourism and rural planning. However, the main drawback is lack of map data, the most important tool for geographers.