



# Tobacco Town Futures: Global Encounters in Rural Kentucky

*Ann E. Kingsolver*

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Situated between the foothills of Appalachia to the east and bluegrass country to the west, Nicholas County has been home to small tobacco farms in rural Kentucky for the past 200 years. But now, in the midst of tremendous economic changes generated by the movement of both textile jobs and tobacco production to other countries, residents of Nicholas County face an uncertain future. Based on twenty-five years of research, Kingsolver's longitudinal ethnography of Nicholas County, her home community, synthesizes geographical, historical, economic, and political processes that have shaped lifeways and worldviews. She documents the perspectives of farmers, factory workers, politicians, those pursuing new niches in the labor market, and middle school students in search of "alternative futures." Countering stereotypes, Kingsolver emphasizes the skills and agency of rural residents and demonstrates how people in widely dispersed and seemingly isolated communities in the world are connected through capitalist logic and practice, thereby illuminating globalization's far-reaching effects.

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