



Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa (California Studies in Critical Human Geography)

By Roderick P. Neumann

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Arusha National Park in northern Tanzania, known for its scenic beauty, is also a battleground. Roderick Neumann's illuminating analysis shows how this park embodies all the political-ecological dilemmas facing protected areas throughout Africa. The roots of the ongoing struggle between the park on Mount Meru and the neighboring Meru peasant communities go much deeper, in Neumann's view, than the issues of poverty, population growth, and ignorance usually cited. These conflicts reflect differences that go back to the beginning of colonial rule. By imposing a European ideal of pristine wilderness, Neumann says, the establishment of national parks and protected areas displaced African meanings as well as material access to the land. He focuses on the symbolic importance of natural landscapes among various social groups in this setting and how it relates to conflicts between peasant communities and the state.

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Review

"Any library, personal or institutional, that takes nature conservation or Africa seriously should contain this book. . . . Though firmly grounded in Africa, the implications of its story are much wider."--"Progress in Human Geography

From the Inside Flap

"An impressive achievement. . . . Given the intense and sometimes violent character of park-centered conflicts, given the pivotal role of nature tourism in the foreign-currency earnings of African countries, and given the persistence of rural poverty, Neumann's observations and arguments take on tremendous significance."—Allan Pred, Editorial Board, California Studies in Critical Human Geography

From the Back Cover

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