

Poor, White, Trash: An Investigation of Rural Simulacra, Place Identity and Media Representations of Southern Illinois

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Abstract: This investigation of Southern Illinois rural simulacrum is informed by critical rural theory. The argument is framed by three main conceptions of the rural: rural as wild, rural as simple, and rural as escape. These themes reference three filmic texts to analyze how media's urbanormativity influences perceptions of rurality and hinders self-identity of Southern Illinoisans. The discussion addresses the cogent questions: How is Southern Illinois represented in the media and how might these representations be problematic and further validate urban hegemony? What will it take to intervene?