

**CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPES OF RURAL
SUFFOLK COUNTY, ENGLAND**

(An Abstract of)

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Abstract. The residential landscape takes on many different forms throughout the world, and has various meanings for different socioeconomic groups. We use the residential landscape for aesthetic purposes, enjoyment, pride, or just as a way to venture out into nature.

The purpose of this study is to describe the patterns and practices of single-family, residential, landscapes located in rural Suffolk County, England. More specifically, this study proposes to ascertain the factors that have influenced the landscapes of rural homes by comparing them with the traditional, English gardens from the past.

The data is mostly qualitative in nature and consists of a small sample size; therefore, the triangulation research approach has been used. Triangulation puts to use more than one type of research method. This thesis employs what is known as methodological triangulation because it uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

Specific research methods include: questionnaire and interviews, landscape maps and photos, frequency analyses of vegetation and landscape attributes, and a comparison between the selected rural residences and three traditional, English gardens preserved by the National Trust charitable organization of the United Kingdom. The questionnaire and interviews help guide the research and provide answers to the questions related to the hypothesis. The landscape maps and photos provide a visual guide to the gardens at each residence and the frequency analyses show quantitative evidence of plant species and landscape attributes that are most common. The comparison of these residences with the landscapes of the National Trust properties provides a specific test on the hypothesis.

The results of this study show that, even though these rural residences of Suffolk County are much smaller and of a different social class than the traditional, stately gardens of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they have an overarching theme that is the same. These humble gardens within the rural Suffolk landscape are British and have been influenced by the grand gardens of the past.