



Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change

By Kristina Smock

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In cities across the United States, grassroots organizations are working to revitalize popular participation in disenfranchised communities by bringing ordinary people into public life. By engaging local residents in collective action to achieve common goals, community organizing expands the democratic process and enables people to create strong communities that serve their needs.

This book examines the techniques these organizations use to achieve their goals. Through the stories of ten organizations working in economically and racially diverse urban neighborhoods (in Chicago and Portland, Oregon) the author explores the strengths and limitations of the five dominant models of community organizing in use today: power-based, community-building, civic, women-centered, and transformative. Based on original empirical research, the book combines in-depth analysis with invaluable lessons for practitioners.

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Editorial Review

Review

The work's sharp-edged logic is bracing and its culminating argument quite suggestive. By bringing together the too-often separated worlds of social movement theorists and community organizers. (William Sites *Social Service Review*)

Students, residents and community organizers will benefit from the most detailed comparison of contrasting organizing models ever written. (Mike Eichler, *MSW Journal of Community Practice*)

This book stimulates readers to think about these complex issues... It is strongly recommended. (*Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*)

About the Author

Kristina Smock is a consultant to non-profit organizations working in the fields of community organizing, community development, and public policy.

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