



March 1997

Community Builders: A Tale of Neighborhood Mobilization in Two Cities. Gordana Rabrenovic.

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Recommended Citation

(1997) "*Community Builders: A Tale of Neighborhood Mobilization in Two Cities.* Gordana Rabrenovic.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 24: Iss. 1, Article 18.

Available at: <http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol24/iss1/18>

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economy preferring to focus on issues of service delivery, it is clear that the economic dimension can no longer be ignored. It was previously assumed that steady economic growth and full employment would generate the resources needed to fund social programs for the small proportion of the labor force who could not work. Social policy, it was believed, would be concerned with identifying the best methods of caring for those in need. However, it has become apparent that the original assumptions on which social welfare were based are no longer valid. Economic performance has not been able to create full employment in most industrialized nations and, as populations have aged, larger numbers of people than previously anticipated have come to rely on governmental expenditures for their livelihoods. As these trends have become more marked over the years, it has been claimed that social programs have retarded economic performance. The welfare state, it is argued, is a major reason for the economic decline of the Western industrial nations.

Fazeli's book provides an excellent opportunity to examine this argument in detail. However, while its title suggests that the author will provide a definitive analysis of the subject, the book fails to meet expectations. Unfortunately, its discursive overview of diverse economic aspects does not adequately address the basic economic challenges facing the welfare state. The book does contain a short section on the neo-classical critique of the welfare state but it devotes far too much space to Marxist accounts, analysis of the British social budget, income distribution impacts and other matters. While the book contains much that will be of interest, particularly to those who wish to know more about social policy in Britain, an opportunity to comprehensively address the economic critique of state welfare has been missed. It is to be hoped that the author will find the time to produce another volume focusing specifically on this critical issue.

Gordana Rabrenovic, *Community Builders: A Tale of Neighborhood Mobilization in Two Cities*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1996. \$54.95 hardcover, \$22.95 papercover.

Throughout the United States, medium cities, like their larger metropolitan counterparts, suffer from a multitude of social problems. These include a deteriorating physical infrastructure, increased crime, abandoned homes and businesses and blatant

poverty. However, these social problems are not new. They have existed since the emergence of the modern city. However, so have community-based organizations. Since the time that migrants first settled the city, local associations have formed to assist people deal with urban problems and enhance the quality of their lives.

This informative book examines the role of neighborhood organizations in the remediation of social problems. It pays particular attention to the economic level of the neighborhood as well as the wider urban context in which neighborhood organization takes place. This is done by examining neighborhood associations in two medium-sized cities, namely Albany and Schenectady in the state of New York. This comparison permits Rabrenovic to examine variations in community organizing in the context of both the local neighborhood and wider city. The distinction between the service-sector city (Albany) and the declining manufacturing city (Schenectady) provides an opportunity to compare gentrifying areas with low-income areas. The income level of each neighborhood, along with these broader structures, are shown to influence the resources available to local organizations, the goals of neighborhood groups and the participation of various social and religious organization.

This book offers a refreshing and innovative look at the often over-simplified topic of community revitalization. Rabrenovic does so by exploring factors relevant to the the emergence of effective neighborhood groups. She recognizes the essential link between the social and economic contexts as well as the need for national support for revitalization efforts. Her discussion of the necessity for these divergent element to cooperate makes a powerful argument which all those interested in community revitalization need to understand.

Sheryl R. Tynes, *Turning Points in Social Security: From Cruel Hoax to Sacred Entitlement*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996. \$39.50 hardcover.

At a time when social security is under increasingly scrutiny, there is a need to have accurate information about social security's contribution to American society over the years. Although critics claim that social security is expensive, bureaucratically rigid, demographically inappropriate and inequitable, many millions of