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Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change.
Kristina Smock.

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of formal education now serve a diverse development agenda, while Chapter six describes changing health policies and the gradual demise of primary health care in the context of economic liberalization. Chapter seven and eight respectively examine the role of social work and social security policies in the South. Finally, chapter nine explores the contributions of overseas development assistance to advancing the global social policy agenda.

The strength of this book lies not only in its effective theoretical framework and knowledgeable account of social development issues in the South, but also in its feasible and practical social policy proposals that permeate all the chapters. What seems to be missing, however, is the interaction between developmental social policy and other important developmental dimensions, such as environment and politics. Needless to say, social policy in the development context must interface with the environmentalist's critical arguments and concerns. With regard to politics, the success of social policy will also depend on political stability, especially in view of the vicissitude of power struggles in the South.

Nevertheless, by articulating original and feasible solutions for sustainable development in the South, this book makes a significant contribution to social policy thinking. It will be of particular benefit to students of social policy and development studies but also to those working in related interdisciplinary fields. Practitioners in government and in the international and non-governmental organizations will also find it useful.

Joon-Yong Jo, University of California, Berkeley

Kristina Smock, *Democracy in Action: Community Organizing and Urban Change*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004. \$62.50 hardcover, \$26.50 papercover.

Interest in community practice has intensified in recent years and many more books on the topic have been published. Most of these are textbooks intended for course adoption at schools of social work where students today appear to be more eager to engage in community practice. Some social work educators will view this as a desirable development when compared to

the strong preference for clinical courses which characterized social work education in the 1980s. However, some will question whether there really is a need for yet another book on the subject. Students and faculty alike, it seems, are overwhelmed by the large number of community practice books that are now available.

While Kristina Smock's book adds to the volume of teaching materials on community practice, it has a number of strengths that deserve special attention. First, unlike many other textbooks, it is intellectually stimulating requiring the reader to grapple with complex issues. Second, Smock makes extensive use of the literature and of wider theoretical concepts. Third, the book offers an analysis of the different normative orientations that have been used in the field over the years. Specifically, the author identifies five models that she believes encapsulate different approaches to community organizing. These are the power-based model, the community—building model, the civic model, the women—centered model and finally the transformative model. She then makes extensive reference to case study material of community practice in different communities in Chicago and Portland, Oregon to illustrate the way these models have been implemented. Although most standard community practice textbooks use case study material to emphasize the practical aspects of community organizing, Smock links practical examples to theoretical models and offers a sophisticated account of the way the community organizing process should be implemented.

This is an engaging and readable book which is most suitable for graduate students who will appreciate the author's use of theoretical ideas and concepts and no doubt respond to the challenges she poses. Not all will agree that her five models encompass all forms of community organizing or that they are mutually exclusive. Some will question her optimistic view of the transformative model and its ability to bring about significant social structural change. Others will ask for a more explicit exposition of what structural change involves and question whether community organizing has, as the author suggests, actually promoted democratic values and practices. Is precisely because this book stimulates readers to think about these complex issues, that it is strongly recommended.