

Public Abstract

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Title: Building Wal-Mart with Resistance: Community Political Action Against a New Wal-Mart Supercenter

Local development politics are often overlooked as inconsequential to daily life. Yet, when a new Wal-Mart Supercenter is going to be built in the middle of a neighborhood, area residents immediately try to get involved in the process. Through the use of face to face interviews and in depth analysis of local government documents, newspaper articles, and a website that offers advice for these battles over land use, I uncover the ways in which political context plays a role in determining the strategies and outcomes of social movements which have formed in an effort to stop big box development. Overall, if local politics are not designed to encourage citizen involvement, citizens are generally unable to have a role in the development process. In an increasingly privatized world, I make a call for deep democracy in the development process.