



# Mobilizing Democracy (Themes in Global Social Change)

*Paul Almeida*

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Paul Almeida's comparative study of the largest social movement campaigns that existed between 1980 and 2013 in every Central American country (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama) provides a granular examination of the forces that spark mass mobilizations against state economic policy, whether those factors are electricity rate hikes or water and health care privatization. Many scholars have explained connections between global economic changes and local economic conditions, but most of the research has remained at the macro level. *Mobilizing Democracy* contributes to our knowledge about the protest groups "on the ground" and what makes some localities successful at mobilizing and others less successful. His work enhances our understanding of what ingredients contribute to effective protest movements as well as how multiple protagonists—labor unions, students, teachers, indigenous groups, nongovernmental organizations, women's groups, environmental organizations, and oppositional political parties—coalesce to make protest more likely to win major concessions.

Based on extensive field research, archival data of thousands of protest events, and interviews with dozens of Central American activists, *Mobilizing Democracy* brings the international consequences of privatization, trade liberalization, and welfare-state downsizing in the global South into focus and shows how persistent activism and network building are reactivated in these social movements. Almeida enables our comprehension of global and local politics and policy by answering the question, "If all politics is local, then how do the politics of globalization manifest themselves?" Detailed graphs and maps provide a synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative data in this important study. Written in clear, accessible prose, this book will be invaluable for students and scholars in the fields of political science, social movements, anthropology, Latin American studies, and labor studies.

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