

## Grassroots Environmentalism

Grassroots activism is essential to the success of the contemporary environmental movement, which depends on the organization of local activists as well as state, national, and international organizations. Yet grassroots activists confront numerous challenges as they attempt to organize diverse participants and devise fresh strategies and tactics. Drawing on more than seven years of fieldwork following five organizations in Pittsburgh over time, this book sheds light on the struggles that activists face and the factors that sustain movements. It examines individual motivations and participation, organizational structures and cultures, relationships in movement communities, and strategies and tactics, including issue framing. The book shows that collective action campaigns and tactics generate solidarity, maintain involvement, and bring in new participants even as organizers struggle to devise effective new types of actions.

SUZANNE STAGGENBORG is Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research examines the dynamics of social movements. She is the author of *The Pro-Choice Movement: Organization and Activism in the Abortion Conflict* (1991) and *Social Movements* (2016) and is the 2019 winner of the John D. McCarthy Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Scholarship of Social Movements and Collective Behavior.

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SUZANNE STAGGENBORG

*University of Pittsburgh*



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978-1-108-47848-9 — Grassroots Environmentalism  
Suzanne Staggenborg  
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[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108478489](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108478489)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108777872

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First published 2020

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

NAMES: Staggenborg, Suzanne, author.

TITLE: Grassroots environmentalism / Suzanne Staggenborg.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2020. |

SERIES: Cambridge studies in contentious politics | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2020021919 (print) | LCCN 2020021920 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108478489

(hardback) | ISBN 9781108745864 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108777872 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Environmentalism.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC GE195 .S73 2020 (print) | LCC GE195 (ebook) | DDC 363.7-dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020021919>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020021920>

ISBN 978-1-108-47848-9 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-74586-4 Paperback

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To Charlie and Laura

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## Acknowledgments

This book brings together my longstanding interests in environmental problems, movement dynamics, and fieldwork methods. The climate crisis motivated me to devote my research efforts to examining how environmental activism can help save our planet. My interest in organizational dynamics and strategic choices led me to focus on the internal workings of the movement. To be sure, this research is only a very partial contribution to our understanding of the movement's potential. National and transnational movement organizations and actions are certainly essential, but so are local groups; I am particularly interested in what ordinary people can accomplish by participating in grassroots organizations and actions. By studying the environmental movement in Pittsburgh through participant observation, I was able to see firsthand both how much they can accomplish and how many difficulties they face in trying to organize and create change through collective action. I was happy to be able to make small contributions to the activities of the groups I studied, something I would not have had time to do if it was not also a research project.

*Grassroots Environmentalism* has been many years in the making, and numerous people helped me along the way. My ability to observe movement dynamics depended on my access to local groups. I owe a great debt to the activists who trusted me to be part of their groups, knowing I was studying the movement and not only participating in it. I am also thankful to those who shared their experiences and assessments with me in interviews and in numerous informal conversations. I benefited greatly from the interest, insights, and encouragement that I received from them. Some of these people are named, with their permission, in the book, but there are many unnamed people who also talked to me and helped me understand the movement. I am also grateful to the photographers, credited under their photos, for sharing their pictures with me. Special thanks to Tom Jefferson, a professional photographer who often covers movement events, for graciously allowing me to use his photos.

I appreciate all of the support provided to me by so many activists, and I value the ongoing relationships I have with many of them.

I also received a lot of support from academic sources. The best perk of being chair of my department for six years was that a research assistant came with the job. Hatem Hassan, Matthew Hemphill, Corinne Ogrodnik, and Caitlin Schroering all contributed to this project in various ways. Hatem was my first assistant, early in the project, who assisted with bibliographic work and helped me think through the importance of movement communities in an essay we wrote together. Matt helped me with various tasks, most importantly coding some of the data when I finally admitted to myself that I couldn't do it all alone. He encouraged me greatly when he told me how interesting my fieldnotes were at a time when I was beginning to fear that I was drowning in so much detail. Corinne was my assistant for two years, and she contributed significantly to the project by coding data, interviewing most of the informants from Transition, and constructing the figures on activities in the anti-fracking movement over time with data compiled from email communications. In writing an article together on Transition, we worked through many ideas about the struggling organization. Caitlin was also my assistant for two years, mostly during the time that I was writing the book, and she helped me in too many ways to list. Most importantly, she read and commented on multiple versions of every chapter of the manuscript, providing me with invaluable comments and discussing the work with me as a trusted assessor. I also benefited from hearing about her research on conflicts over water in Pittsburgh and Brazil and from our work together on a paper comparing coalitions that we studied. I am grateful to the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh for funding these research assistants.

In addition to my research assistants, some wonderful colleagues helped me to develop the work. At the University of Pittsburgh, Josh Bloom read an early draft of the entire manuscript and gave me very helpful comments on it. Dana Moss read parts of the manuscript and helped me think it through. I was also fortunate to have excellent reviewers of the manuscript. Paul Lichterman, Nancy Whittier, Shannon Bell, and an anonymous reviewer all gave me extensive comments that aided me greatly as I worked to reorganize and develop the manuscript. I also benefited from comments made by other scholars at professional meetings where I presented early versions of the work. Tony Ladd gave me very useful comments on a chapter I published in his edited book, *Fractured Communities*, which contains material that is reworked across several chapters in this book. Finally, Rod Nelson read as many drafts of every chapter as Caitlin Schroering did, often going over it with me line by line. As a sociologist outside of the social movement field, Rod pushed me to clarify discussions that were confusing to nonspecialists and to eliminate unnecessary jargon. The book is much clearer as a result.



*Acknowledgments*

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At Cambridge University Press, my first editor, Robert Dreesen, gave me sound advice and encouragement early on, and my next editor, Sara Doskow, along with editorial assistant Cameron Daddis, guided me through the final stages. David Meyer also supported the project as lead editor of the Contentious Politics series. I thank everyone profusely.

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978-1-108-47848-9 — Grassroots Environmentalism  
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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACHD	Allegheny County Health Department
AG	Allegheny Group (Sierra Club)
CC	Coordinating Committee (Marcellus Protest)
CCJ	Center for Coalfield Justice
CELDF	Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (Pennsylvania)
ESAT	Endangered Species Action Team (Allegheny Group of Sierra Club)
ExCom	Executive Committee (Sierra Club)
GA	General Assembly
GASP	Group Against Smog and Pollution
GWAT	Global Warming Action Team (Allegheny Group of Sierra Club)
LPAG	Lincoln Place Action Group
LULU	locally unwanted land use
MOB	Marcellus Outreach Butler
MP	Marcellus Protest
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NIABY	not in anyone's back yard
NIMBY	not in my back yard
NOW	National Organization for Women
PGRP	Pittsburgh G20 Resistance Project
POP	Protect Our Parks
PSEC	Pittsburgh Student Environmental Coalition
RAN	Rainforest Action Network
SC	Sierra Club
SHAADD	South Hills Area Against Dangerous Drilling
SMC	Social Movement Community
SMO	Social Movement Organization
T4T	Training for Transition
TMC	Thomas Merton Center
TRRT	Three Rivers Rising Tide

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