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Autore	Grant Jill
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Sommario/riassunto

The drama of democracy seldom plays out as literally as it does in urban planning disputes. Yet these are complex dramas in which villains aren't clearly identified, protagonists are caught with ulterior motives, and fifth business runs rampant. In this book, Jill Grant aptly uses a dramaturgical metaphor to show how community planning offers illuminating episodes of the workings of democracy. Grant argues that planning provides a significant venue for the debate of major questions about how we govern ourselves. She illustrates her theory with two case studies of planning disputes in Halifax. By examining the language and actions of the citizens, planners, and politicians involved in these disputes, Grant explores underlying motives and concerns. Overall, this work has much to say about the nature of cultural obstacles that prevent greater democracy. The author concludes that while democracy is a valued cultural concept, its practice proves weak. Much of the work on urban planning takes a socio-economic perspective; the cultural implications of planning are still largely unexplored. By applying a cultural analysis to contemporary case studies, this book takes up the slack, thereby providing a timely addition to existing literature.

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