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Autore	Eliasoph Nina
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Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Empower Yourself! -- CHAPTER 1. How to Learn Something in an Empowerment Project -- PART ONE. Cultivating Open Civic Equality -- CHAPTER 2. Participating under Unequal Auspices -- CHAPTER 3. "The Spirit that Moves Inside You": Puzzles of Using Volunteering to Cure the Volunteer's Problems -- CHAPTER 4. Temporal Leapfrog: Puzzles of Timing -- CHAPTER 5. Democracy Minus Disagreement, Civic Skills Minus Politics, Blank "Reflections" -- PART TWO. Cultivating Intimate Comfort and Safety -- CHAPTER 6. Harmless and Destructive Plug-in Volunteers -- CHAPTER 7. Paid Organizers Creating Temporally Finite, Intimate, Family-like Attachments -- CHAPTER 8. Publicly Questioning Need: Food, Safety, and Comfort -- CHAPTER 9. Drawing on Shared Experience in a Divided Society: Getting People Out of Their "Clumps" -- PART THREE. Celebrating Our Diverse, Multicultural Community -- CHAPTER 10. "Getting Out of Your Box" versus "Preserving a Culture": Two Opposed Ways of "Appreciating Cultural Diversity" -- CHAPTER 11. Tell Us about Your Culture: What Participants Count as "Culture" -- CHAPTER 12. Celebrating ... Empowerment Projects! -- CONCLUSION. Finding Patterns in the "Open and Undefined" Organization: Gray

Sommario/riassunto

Volunteering improves inner character, builds community, cures poverty, and prevents crime. We've all heard this kind of empowerment talk from nonprofit and government-sponsored civic programs. But what do these programs really accomplish? In *Making Volunteers*, Nina Eliasoph offers an in-depth, humorous, wrenching, and at times uplifting look inside youth and adult civic programs. She reveals an urgent need for policy reforms in order to improve these organizations and shows that while volunteers learn important lessons, they are not always the lessons that empowerment programs aim to teach. With short-term funding and a dizzy mix of mandates from multiple sponsors, community programs develop a complex web of intimacy, governance, and civic life. Eliasoph describes the at-risk youth served by such programs, the college-bound volunteers who hope to feel selfless inspiration and plump up their resumé's, and what happens when the two groups are expected to bond instantly through short-term projects. She looks at adult "plug-in" volunteers who, working in after-school programs and limited by time, hope to become like beloved aunts to youth. Eliasoph indicates that adult volunteers can provide grassroots support but they can also undermine the family-like warmth created by paid organizers. Exploring contradictions between the democratic rhetoric of empowerment programs and the bureaucratic hurdles that volunteers learn to navigate, the book demonstrates that empowerment projects work best with less precarious funding, more careful planning, and mandatory training, reflection, and long-term commitments from volunteers. Based on participant research inside civic and community organizations, *Making Volunteers* illustrates what these programs can and cannot achieve, and how to make them more effective.
