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Lisa Belkin

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Lisa Belkin : Show Me A Hero before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Show Me A Hero:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyed it By CalamityJane Since this was a story about my hometown, where it was also filmed, I had to watch it. I do remember those times back then when everyone was in an uproar over the low income housing issue. I don't seem to recall some of the violent scenes in the movie though and that was pretty shocking to me.....All in all, everything turned out ok. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

the book gave me a terrific understanding of the dynamics of creating additional affordable housing. I appreciated the perspective of the various individuals involved from the Judge, the Mayor, Councilman and citizens for and against. The view from the people in the housing projects were ones that more affluent Americans are spared from having to experience and that was also important. The weakest part of the book was whether or not the scattered housing plan has been a success both in Yonkers but also in metropolitan areas around the country. Westchester County, which includes Yonkers, has been under federal pressure to produce affordable housing and seems to skate by year after year.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Love this book

By Anne Elliot This is a great read! I honestly could not put this book down. The writing is fluid and intriguing. You really become invested in this fascinating story and learn a lot of about inner city politics. But it's written in such an interesting way that even if politics aren't your favorite subject, the plot and the people involved make this a very relatable tale that everyone should read about.

Not in my backyard -- that's the refrain commonly invoked by property owners who oppose unwanted development. Such words assume a special ferocity when the development in question is public housing. Lisa Belkin penetrates the prejudices, myths, and heated emotions stirred by the most recent trend in public housing as she re-creates a landmark case in riveting detail, showing how a proposal to build scattered-site public housing in middle-class neighborhoods nearly destroyed an entire city and forever changed the lives of many of its citizens.-- Public housing projects are being torn down throughout the United States. What will take their place? Show Me a Hero explores the answer.-- An important and compelling work of narrative nonfiction in the tradition of J. Anthony Lukas's Common Ground.-- A sweeping yet intimate group portrait that assesses the effects of public policy on individual human lives.

.com "The pipe bomb was small as pipe bombs go, but the explosion could be heard from several blocks away--a sharp bang as rows of factory-fresh ceramic tiles shattered into a pile of razor-edged rubble. Neighbors who were drifting off to sleep sat upright, awake. Family members who were preparing for bed looked at each other first with questions, then with certainty they had the answer. 'I guess somebody is trying to blow up the new housing,' one man joked to his wife. But it wasn't a joke. That's exactly what someone was trying to do." In 1988, when a federal judge ordered the city of Yonkers, New York, to integrate more thoroughly its low-income housing throughout the city, it set off a bitter dispute that would consume the town for the next five years. Among those caught in the controversy was the city's 28-year-old mayor, Nicholas Wasiczko, who had used the issue to his advantage during his campaign and found that he would never be able to escape it, either during or after his administration. Veteran New York Times journalist Lisa Belkin focuses not on the abstract "sides" of the integration debate, but on the people who take those sides. It's that personal perspective that makes her account most worth reading.

From Publishers Weekly In the late 1980s, the city of Yonkers, N.Y., made national headlines because of a bitter battle waged by many of its residents and political leaders against a federal court-ordered public housing plan. The plan compelled Yonkers to build public housing in the predominantly white east-side districts of the city. The heated opposition to the plan convulsed the city, which complied with the court order only when court-imposed fines threatened to consume the entire city budget. Belkin, who covered the story for the New York Times, follows the housing battle through the eyes of its participants: fearful white residents of the east side; black public housing tenants anxious to escape the misery of the west-side projects; Oscar Newman, the housing consultant and architect who designed the new town houses; and Nick Wasiczko, the young mayor of Yonkers who courageously confronted his own core constituency and tried to get the city to accept the plan (and who, five years later, out of office and out of prospects, shot himself). In her effort to interweave so many personal perspectives, Belkin sometimes loses her focus on the key public policies at stake. She does, however, enable readers to feel the hopes and fears of both the homeowners, who felt that their neighborhoods and property values were threatened by the housing plan, and the disadvantaged public housing tenants, who were seeking redress for years of discrimination and simply wanted a safe place to call home. Belkin's gritty book is a vivid slice of urban politics, racial tension and the difficulties inherent in realizing the American dream. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal In the 1980 case U.S. v. Yonkers, the Justice Department charged that race determined the location and quality of education in Yonkers, a situation created by the segregation of housing. In 1985 the court ruled that new public housing must be built on the white middle-class east side of the city. By 1988, when New York Times writer Belkin's narrative begins, the stand-off between the federal judge and the city has escalated into war; the judge's orders were not obeyed until his fines brought the city to the brink of bankruptcy. Belkin (First Do No Harm, LJ 1/93) lets a diverse group of individuals tell the story of the battles and then the building, including the mayor, a citizen who protested the decision, and several residents of public housing. This is an interesting look at how a court decision and politics can affect people on an individual level. Although there are no footnotes, it's apparent that Belkin has done a thorough job. Highly recommended for all libraries.--ALinda L. McEwan, Elgin Community Coll., IL Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.