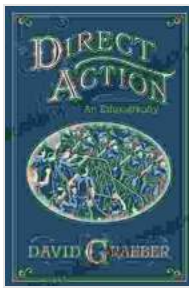


Direct Action: An Ethnography by David Graeber

David Graeber's 'Direct Action: An Ethnography' is a groundbreaking work of anthropology that provides a unique and in-depth look at the global justice movement. Graeber, a renowned anthropologist and activist, spent years embedded with activists from around the world, observing their tactics, strategies, and motivations.



Direct Action: An Ethnography by David Graeber

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2215 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 594 pages



The book is based on Graeber's participant-observation of the World Social Forum, a global gathering of activists and social movements that takes place every year in a different city. Graeber's research also includes interviews with activists from a wide range of organizations and movements, including the Zapatistas, the Occupy movement, and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Key Concepts

Graeber argues that direct action is a form of political power that is distinct from both state power and market power. Direct action is based on the principle of collective self-organization, and it involves people taking action directly to achieve their goals, without relying on the mediation of the state or the market.

Graeber identifies three key elements of direct action: autonomy, horizontality, and prefiguration. Autonomy means that direct action is independent of the state and the market. Horizontality means that direct action is based on the principle of equality, with no one person or group having more power than another. Prefiguration means that direct action creates a microcosm of the society that activists are trying to create.

Tactics and Strategies

Graeber describes a wide range of tactics and strategies used by activists in the global justice movement. These include: blockades, occupations, strikes, boycotts, and civil disobedience. Graeber argues that these tactics are effective because they disrupt the normal functioning of the state and the market, and they create spaces for people to come together and build alternative ways of living.

Graeber also discusses the importance of non-violence in direct action. He argues that non-violence is not simply a moral imperative, but it is also a strategic choice. Non-violence allows activists to maintain the moral high ground and to avoid being criminalized or delegitimized by the state.

Challenges and Limitations

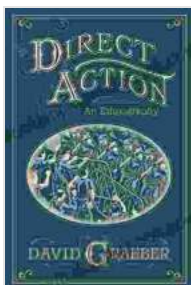
Graeber acknowledges that direct action is not without its challenges and limitations. One challenge is the risk of co-optation by the state or the

market. Another challenge is the difficulty of sustaining direct action over the long term.

Graeber also discusses the limitations of direct action in terms of its ability to achieve systemic change. He argues that direct action can be effective in raising awareness of issues and in mobilizing people, but it is less effective in bringing about concrete policy changes.

David Graeber's 'Direct Action: An Ethnography' is a valuable contribution to the study of social movements and political power. Graeber provides a rich and detailed account of the global justice movement, and he offers a unique perspective on the role of direct action in social change.

The book is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the global justice movement and the future of social change. It is also a valuable resource for activists and organizers who are looking for effective ways to fight for their goals.



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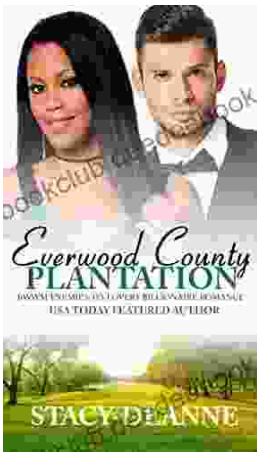
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