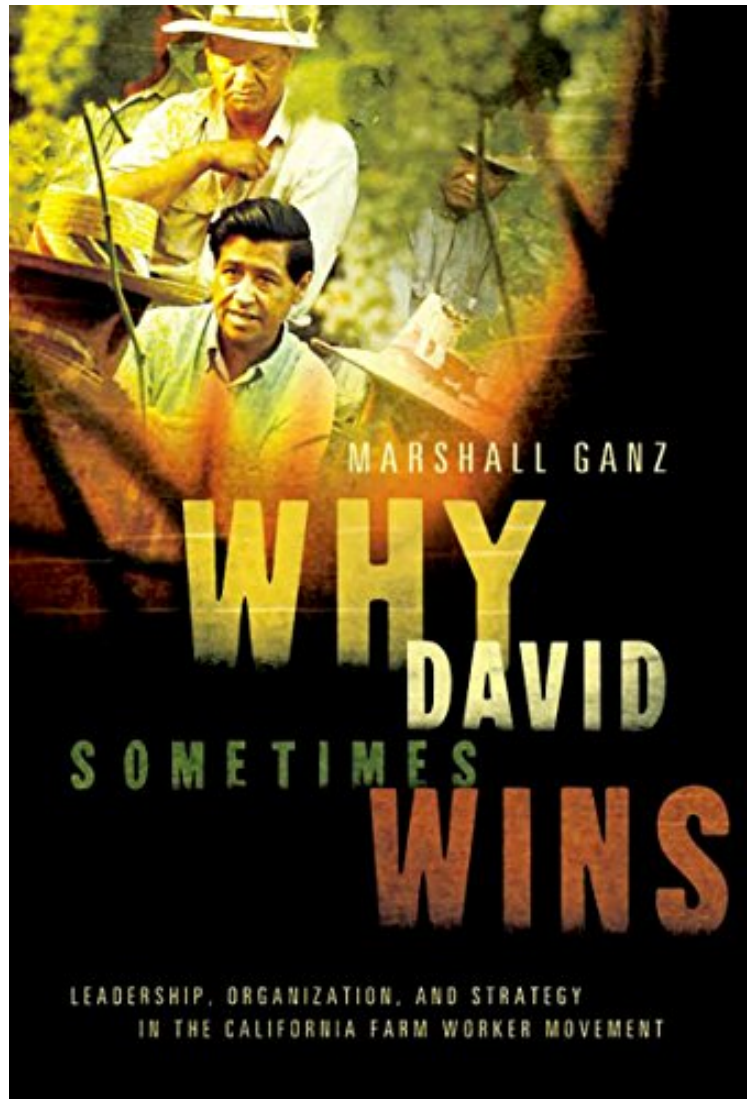


[Ebook free] Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement

Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement

Marshall Ganz

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Marshall Ganz : Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement:

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rights15 of 18 people found the following review helpful. More theory than storytellingBy Greg SchellUnfortunately, Ganz's book reads all too much like the Ph.D. dissertation from which it sprung. Lots of footnotes to theoretical works and a continuous effort to place the events of the early UFW days into analytical constructs. What is missing is the sort of inside tales of the early days of the farmworker movement that Ganz could share with readers. Unfortunately, there is precious little revealed regarding the strategic decisions of the UFW and the day-to-day challenges faced by the organizers. Heck, Ganz ran a number of the organizing sites himself but tells us next to nothing about the obstacles he and the other organizers faced. The first few chapters, summarizing California farm labor organizing efforts prior to the UFW are largely an effort by Ganz to place these efforts in his analytical framework - there is little original research and one feels that the historical presentation may have been molded to fit Ganz's theory. Frankly, there are plenty of books on organizing techniques and theories and Ganz offers nothing really new in this regard. Sadly, his book omits what could have been his unique contribution to the literature: an intimate portrait of the internal decision-making and strategic planning by Chavez and the other organizers during the UFW's heyday.

Why David Sometimes Wins tells the story of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers' groundbreaking victory, drawing important lessons from this dramatic tale. Since the 1900s, large-scale agricultural enterprises relied on migrant labor--a cheap, unorganized, and powerless workforce. In 1965, when some 800 Filipino grape workers began to strike under the aegis of the AFL-CIO, the UFW soon joined the action with 2,000 Mexican workers and turned the strike into a civil rights struggle. They engaged in civil disobedience, mobilized support from churches and students, boycotted growers, and transformed their struggle into La Causa, a farm workers' movement that eventually triumphed over the grape industry's Goliath. Why did they succeed? How can the powerless challenge the powerful successfully?Offering insight from a longtime movement organizer and scholar, Ganz illustrates how they had the ability and resourcefulness to devise good strategy and turn short-term advantages into long-term gains. Authoritative in scholarship and magisterial in scope, this book constitutes a seminal contribution to learning from the movement's struggles, set-backs, and successes.

"[T]his thoroughly documented account is support by insights and evidence from Marshall's personal experience, and many will read it as much for its exciting story of the farm workers' struggle as for its contribution to the theory of social movements.... Recommended." --Social Behavioral Science "In Why David Sometimes Wins, Ganz demonstrates his own marvelous story telling skill in his narration of the farm workers' movement in America... It's about organizing and tactics that work. Ganz describes them in a unique and interesting manner from his own vantage point within the farm workers' movement. Why David Sometimes Wins is a valuable resource for teachers and students of community organizing, labor history and the dynamics of social change." --Journal of Sociology Social Welfare "A brilliant new book."--The Nation "Why David Sometimes Wins is an exceptional book that will be of widespread interest to scholars and activists alike."--American Journal of Sociology "This book is a must read for organizers. The analysis of how a small and poor, but motivated, group of workers triggered a social movement provides invaluable lessons on what to do and not do as we struggle with the challenges of the 21st century." --Andy Stern, President, Service Employees International Union "How does David defeat Goliath and, equally important, avoid becoming Goliath? The answer is to develop strategic capacity, an ongoing interactive process of experimentation, learning, and adapting. This fascinating book shows how Cesar Chavez and the UFW created and then lost its strategic capacity-an important lesson on leadership and organization." --Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Harvard University "Through unforgettable and compelling stories, Marshall Ganz convincingly shows how we need not wait for the right time in history, but how we can all participate in making history together and how the resources to do so can be found in one another. Why David Sometimes Wins will enter the canon of readings on social change. Get this book. Read it. Use it!" --Gerald Torres, co-author of The Miner's Canary "Why Sometimes David Wins by Marshall Ganz provides another example of a focus on pure organizing, using the 1960s Farmworkers, a union in which Ganz was a key participant, to develop a general theory of organizing... this nicely crafted book distills a lifetime of knowledge about the strategies and contexts of grassroots organizing to provide new and fundamental insights into how social movements can be most effective" --Contemporary Sociology About the AuthorMarshall Ganz joined Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers in 1965, where he worked for 16 years, and has since continued work with grassroots organizations to design voter-mobilization strategies for local, state, and national electoral campaigns, most recently with Barack Obama. Ganz is currently Lecturer in Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.