



Bootstrap Dreams: U.S. Microenterprise Development in an Era of Welfare Reform (Ilr Press Books)

Nancy C. Jurik

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Declines in real wages, increases in the number of poor families, and cutbacks to welfare and other safety-net programs have stimulated the popularity of microenterprise development programs (MDPs). These programs typically offer training and loans to individuals seeking to operate very small businesses. MDPs are often presented as a path to the self-sufficiency that comes with entrepreneurship and as an example of the success of market-based alternatives to government programs. In *Bootstrap Dreams*, Nancy C. Jurik analyzes the origins and maturation of these programs in the United States. Based on a national sample of fifty programs and an eight-year case study of one in particular, this is a rare book about microenterprise development. Jurik understands the positive social mission of MDPs, but she is not blind to the problems that they encounter. Jurik's clear perception of potential difficulties and her keen ability to place the microenterprise movement in the larger context of welfare reform and globalization make *Bootstrap Dreams* a valuable book.

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