

Acknowledgments

This book was sparked by a late-night conversation after a National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Core Centers meeting in 2004. Members of four Community Outreach and Engagement Cores—Andrea Hricko, Johnnye Lewis, Fran Lynn, and myself—reflected on the impactful local collaborations taking place in our diverse communities. Although the environmental health issues, geographies, and partners differed, we noted common elements, including the involvement of multidisciplinary experts, extensive community engagement, and involvement of professionals with a sustained commitment to supporting collaboration. In each case, these collaborations were successfully changing systems to promote environmental justice. We mused that because these experiences took place in such different issue-areas, geographies, and contexts, their common themes were not widely recognized and local communities could not readily learn from one another's work. My goal in writing this book was to provide insight into the processes, successes, and challenges of local environmental health initiatives with a view toward helping diverse practitioners, community members, and scholars build on their promising potential.

For the first case study, I drew on seventeen years of direct interaction with the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning in Rochester, New York. It has been an honor to work with devoted community members, health care professionals, civil servants, and researchers throughout this effort, and their contributions to telling Rochester's story were invaluable. Colleagues in the health impact assessment field pointed me toward the second case study of the policy, systems, and environmental change work in Duluth, Minnesota. In Duluth I found a rich network of people who had been promoting health equity through the regeneration of the city's built environment for over

ten years. Without fail, they were generous, kind, tolerant, and patient in helping a stranger understand and recount their experiences. I hope I have done their admirable work justice. For the final case study, Andrea Hricko shared nearly two decades of experience working to address the health impacts of goods movement activities around the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, California. Throughout this project, she remained an active, supportive, and steadfast partner, connecting me with key resources, collaborators, and materials. For a list of case study contributors, see the methodological appendix.

To elicit common themes from these three diverse collaborations, I built on the rich social science scholarship on ecosystem management. In 2004, a group of colleagues (Koontz et al. 2004) developed a framework to identify lessons learned from in-depth case studies of diverse ecosystem management efforts (*Collaborative Environmental Management: What Roles for Government?*). One of these colleagues, Toddi Steelman, helped me adapt our framework to local environmental public health initiatives. Toddi was my constant cheerleader, supporter, and accountability partner throughout this project, and I benefited tremendously from her humor, clarity, and kindness.

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