

2nd edition

revised & updated

Public Policy in the Community

Marilyn Taylor



Public Policy and Politics

Series Editors: Colin Fudge and Robin Hambleton

Public policy-making in Western democracies is confronted by new pressures. Central values relating to the role of the state, the role of markets and the role of citizenship are now all contested and the consensus built up around the Keynesian welfare state is under challenge. New social movements are entering the political arena: electronic technologies are transforming the nature of employment; changes in demographic structure are creating heightened demands for public services; unforeseen social and health problems are emerging; and, most disturbing, social and economic inequalities are increasing in many countries.

How governments – at international, national and local levels – respond to this developing agenda is the central focus of the Public Policy and Politics series. Aimed at a student, professional, practitioner and academic readership, it aims to provide up-to-date, comprehensive and authoritative analyses of public policy-making in practice.

The series is international and interdisciplinary in scope, and bridges theory and practice by relating the substance of policy to the politics of the policy-making process.

Public Policy and Politics

Series Editors: Colin Fudge and Robin Hambleton

PUBLISHED

Danny Burns, Robin Hambleton and Paul Hoggett, *The Politics of Decentralisation: Revitalising Local Democracy*

Stephen Glaister, June Burnham, Handley Stevens and Tony Travers, *Transport Policy in Britain* (second edition)

Christopher Ham, *Health Policy in Britain: The Politics and Organisation of the National Health Service* (sixth edition)

Ian Henry, *The Politics of Leisure Policy* (second edition)

Christopher C. Hood and Helen Z. Margetts, *The Tools of Government in the Digital Age*

Peter Malpass and Alan Murie, *Housing Policy and Practice* (fifth edition)

Robin Means, Sally Richards and Randall Smith, *Community Care: Policy and Practice* (fourth edition)

David Mullins and Alan Murie, *Housing Policy in the UK*

Gerry Stoker, *The Politics of Local Government* (second edition)

Marilyn Taylor, *Public Policy in the Community* (second edition)

Keiron Walsh, *Public Services and Market Mechanisms:*

Competition, Contracting and the New Public Management

Public Policy and Politics

Series Standing Order

ISBN 978-0-333-71705-9 hardcover

ISBN 978-0-333-69349-0 paperback

(outside North America only)

You can receive future titles in this series as they are published by placing a standing order. Please contact your bookseller or, in case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address, the title of the series and the ISBN quoted above.

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS, England

Public Policy in the Community

2nd edition

Marilyn Taylor

palgrave
macmillan



© Marilyn Taylor 2003, 2011

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No portion of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, Saffron House, 6–10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS.

Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The author has asserted her right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First edition 2003

Second edition 2011

Published by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN 978-0-230-24264-7 hardback

ISBN 978-0-230-24265-4 ISBN 978-0-230-34409-9 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-0-230-34409-9

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

Contents

<i>List of Figures, Tables and Boxes</i>	viii
<i>Preface to the Second Edition</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
1 Introduction	1
2 The Changing Fortunes of ‘Community’	9
Community lost	9
Community regained	13
Can community deliver?	18
3 Community in Policy and Practice	22
Community failure	26
System failure	30
Structural and economic failure	34
Government failure	40
Area-based policies	42
Summary	43
4 Ideas of Community	45
Community	45
Communitarianism	51
Social capital	53
Civil society	56
Mutuality	59
Networks	62
Trust and informality	63
Summary	64
5 Contradictions of Community	66
Community and communitarianism	66
Social capital	71

Civil society	76
Mutuality, informality and networks	80
Discussion	82
6 Prescribing Community to the Poor	85
Poverty and social exclusion	86
Prescribing community to the poor	96
Discussion	108
7 Power and Empowerment	110
Understanding power	111
The potential for empowerment	118
Routes to empowerment	121
Summary	134
8 Power in the Policy Process	135
Who makes policy?	135
How is policy made?	137
From government to governance	139
The interactive state	145
Frameworks for empowerment	151
Discussion	155
9 Experiencing Empowerment	158
Window dressing or window of opportunity?	158
The rules of the game	160
Should we be playing this game at all?	181
Discussion	183
10 Reclaiming Community	186
Releasing community power	187
Designing in community	206
Summary	209
11 Reclaiming Power	211
Communities as producers and co-producers	211
Communities as policymakers	221
Discussion	236

12	The Challenge for Communities	240
	Reconciling cohesion and diversity	240
	Reconciling leadership, participation and representation	247
	Scaling up	256
	Inside or outside?	261
	Summary	264
13	The Institutional Challenge	266
	Changing people	267
	Changing cultures	273
	Changing structures	278
	Bringing the state back in?	284
	Discussion	289
14	Community Empowerment: Myth or Reality?	291
	A global world	291
	Can community deliver?	293
	Pessimist, optimist or pragmatist?	297
	Making pragmatism work	303
	<i>References</i>	313
	<i>Author Index</i>	344
	<i>Subject Index</i>	350

List of Figures, Tables and Boxes

Figures

6.1	Choice and exclusion	90
6.2	A cycle of exclusion	95
7.1	Processes of empowerment	127
8.1	John Abbott's community participation surround	144
8.2	Types of partnership	152
8.3	Jackson's stages of public involvement	153
8.4	The power cube	156
11.1	An empowerment tree	237
13.1	Partnership behaviour	279
13.2	The learning curve in partnership	284

Tables

3.1	Recurring themes in community policy and practice	23
4.1	Characteristics of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft	49
7.1	Approaches to power	114
7.2	Arguments for voice	124

Boxes

1.1	Community Driven Development	2
1.2	Building the Big Society	4
3.1	The need for reform	31
4.1	Dimensions of social capital	56
6.1	The experience of exclusion	92
6.2	Stigma	94
7.1	How systems are institutionalised	118
7.2	Consumer rights as defined by the UN	131
7.3	The capabilities approach	133
8.1	Strengthening participatory approaches to local governance in the global South	150

9.1	Deciding what counts	162
9.2	Some comments from communities and service users	165
9.3	Catch 22: Can community representatives ever win?	175
9.4	Partnership: the only game in town?	183
10.1	Developing political literacy in West Africa	193
10.2	Learning as a route to organising	194
10.3	Malvern's front-room meetings	196
10.4	The benefits of social capital	197
10.5	Defending Da Hood: involving young people	201
10.6	Placemaking in the UK	203
10.7	Small grants with no strings	205
11.1	Community enterprise in London: a response to invasion	214
11.2	Applying Community Economic Development principles to advocacy: The Philippine Women's Centre in Vancouver	216
11.3	Legislative theatre	224
11.4	Involving professionals in the work of residents: neighbourhood management in East Brighton, UK	226
11.5	Dialogue and deliberation in Wisconsin	228
11.6	Participatory budgeting in Brazil	229
11.7	Civic Driven Change in the Netherlands and beyond	234
11.8	Community organising in the Alinsky tradition	236
12.1	Working separately to work together: an example from the UK	244
12.2	Working with Gypsies and Travellers: from small beginnings	245
12.3	Peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland	248
12.4	Spreading leadership	254
12.5	Moving beyond the local	256
12.6	A social treasury	261
13.1	The hegemony of competition	268
13.2	Crossing the boundaries	273
13.3	Formality and informality in a partnership setting	282

Preface to the Second Edition

When I wrote the first edition of *Public Policy in the Community*, ideas of ‘community’ had moved to the centre of the political agenda in many parts of the world, along with ‘social capital’, ‘civil society’, ‘participation’ and ‘empowerment’. I warned then that those of us who welcomed this new direction in policy at national and international level might want to wait before rolling out the welcome mat. We had, after all, been here before. My own interest in community began in the early 1970s, when there was also considerable interest in ideas of community and participation in the public policy field. At that time, however, the interest proved to be short-lived. Community programmes introduced with a flourish in the 1960s were buried in the 1970s with little trace. The market revolution that followed was to prove a much more hardy creature and to bring with it a more individual and consumerist approach.

Perhaps I was unduly pessimistic. Since that first edition was published, ‘community’ has maintained its high profile in policy across the globe and been sustained across ideological divides. Other ideas in the community portfolio I discussed at that time – civil society, social capital, networks, empowerment and participation – are also still very much part of the policy discourse. Since 2002, however, when I finished writing the book, the context for community policy and practice has changed significantly. Then, we were in a long period of economic growth; as I write now, we are coming out of a major recession with continued uncertainty about our economic future. Then, September 11 had only just happened; since then, the ‘war on terror’ has led to widespread concerns about civil liberties, community cohesion and religious discrimination. In 2002, the election of Barack Obama as US president with his mixed-race heritage and history of community organising was almost unthinkable; now the UK government is proposing to train 5000 community organisers. Then, the immense potential of Web 2.0 had yet to be discovered – mobile phone technology was a long way from where it is now. And although environmental concerns were gaining in importance in 2002, climate change was still a specialist concern.

Then, in my country the headlines were dominated by race riots in the North of England and I based my conclusions around recent demonstrations against paedophiles. These particular events now belong more comfortably in historical references – although the issues raised still remain highly relevant and large-scale public expenditure cuts may trigger further unrest. Here, too, policies that were still relative shiny and new in 2002 (the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, for example) are now in their terminal stages. The language continues to change and evolve – ‘community resilience’ and ‘localism’ are currently in vogue and, in England, the new coalition government is pinning its hopes on the ‘Big Society’. On the world stage, since 2002, advocates of community policies in the global North have discovered that there is a great deal to learn from the South. Participatory budgeting – a model developed initially in Brazil – has been rolled out not only in the UK but also in several European countries. However, global economic crisis has again changed the context in which concepts of community are applied, with public investment in community programmes and services to disadvantaged communities particularly at risk.

In the preface to the first edition, I described the book as an odyssey – a journey through experience, discussion and reading to explore the complexities of community and power over 40 years. As I said there, I came to this journey from a number of different directions. I grew up in a New Town in the UK, a manufactured ‘community’ that demonstrated just how difficult community is to build. In the 1970s and 1980s, I worked in the community development field as a researcher and policy analyst. But I also had ‘hands-on’ experience as a tenant on a public housing estate in London. Here, I was heavily involved in community activity as well as participating in a partnership between the local authority and local community organisations that in some ways was ahead of its time. Since 1990, I have been an academic, but one of a growing number who are trying to build bridges between the world of ideas and the world of practice in the community empowerment field.

The first edition built on all that I had learnt from experience and practice over those years. But since 2002, I have read more widely and a lot more has been written about the concepts I explored then. There is more theoretical work to draw on and there is more evidence on the achievements and challenges of

community policies and practice as well as partnership working. I have further developed my own ideas and research – particularly in relation to power – and I also have new empirical data, from the UK and beyond. I am also aware of the need to engage more deeply with a number of the challenges highlighted in the first edition – particularly that of diversity.

In writing the second edition, I have tried as far as possible to maintain the structure of the first but to develop the arguments as necessary. It was particularly difficult, however, to know how much to update without writing a completely new book. The pace of change is such that language that was highly topical in 2002 is now somewhat passé, while new policies have replaced those that were topical then. But community approaches to social exclusion are still going to be needed. A friend told me recently that her young colleagues never read anything that is more than three years old. Well, as a US philosopher, George Santayana, put it: ‘Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it.’ So, while I have included many new references, I have kept faith with the many older studies and references that have inspired me over the years.

Finally, there are more people to add to the Acknowledgements below, including the several colleagues I have worked with on research projects since 2002. In this respect, I would like to single out in particular Jo Howard, Derrick Purdue and Mandy Wilson, who have been colleagues in many of the studies referenced here. I would also like to acknowledge the support of John Low at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Ben Cairns and the staff of the Institute for Voluntary Action Research, with whom I have found a new second home, Carl Milofsky, who is always willing to answer queries and put me in touch with relevant work, Chris Miller and colleagues on the editorial board of the *Community Development Journal* and John Lever to whom I owe in particular an introduction to the work of Nick Crossley and several helpful texts on Foucault and Bourdieu. Thanks are also due to the staff at Palgrave Macmillan for their support in bringing this second edition into being.

Marilyn Taylor
Bristol, UK
February 2011

Acknowledgements*

Since this book describes a personal journey, it owes a great deal to the many people I have worked with over the years and reflects many conversations with them. I would particularly like to acknowledge my debt to Al Kestenbaum and Brian Symons, who started me off on this journey, to colleagues in the Community Development Foundation and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) with whom I worked over the 1970s and 1980s, to fellow community activists in Kings Cross and to the many people in communities who have participated in research I have done over the years and shared their learning and ideas with me. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has supported a great deal of the work I have drawn on here and I owe it a great deal. I would also like to acknowledge my debt to Murray Stewart, Lucy Gaster, Paul Hoggett, Robin Hambleton and Julian Le Grand, with whom I worked at the School for Advanced Urban Studies at Bristol, to Perri 6 who persuaded me that I had something to say, and to my colleagues on the Board of the *Community Development Journal*, in particular Gary Craig and Marj Mayo, who provided valuable comments on the final text. I have drawn on research carried out with other colleagues in the body of the book, and along with those already mentioned, would like to acknowledge the contribution of Danny Burns, Surya Monro, Linda Seymour, Diane Warburton and Mick Wilkinson to the work reported here. More recent acknowledgements for the second edition are given in the Preface to this edition.

This book has drawn on material that I have published elsewhere over the years, particularly on work published by the Policy Press, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Community Development Foundation and SQW. I have also drawn on articles I wrote for *Urban Studies* (2007) and the *Journal of Civil Society*

* This Acknowledgements relates mainly to the first edition, although the permissions to publish have been updated. Further acknowledgements to colleagues are given in the Preface to the Second Edition.

(2010) as well as chapters contributed to two edited collections: *Urban Governance, Institutional Capacity and Social Milieux* (Cars et al., 2002) published by Ashgate and the *Handbook of Community Movements and Local Organisations* (Cnaan and Milofsky 2007) published by Springer. The author and publishers would also like to thank the following for permission to reproduce copyright material. The Policy Press for permission to reproduce Table 7.2 on p. 124, Figure 7.1 on p. 127 and the material on Box 10.2 on p. 194; the Joseph Rowntree Foundation for permission to reproduce Figure 6.1 on p. 90; Taylor & Francis (<http://www.informaworld.com>) for permission to reproduce Figure 6.2 on p. 95; the Community Development Foundation for permission to reproduce the material in Box 6.2; Earthscan Publications for permission to publish Figure 8.1 on p. 144; Taylor & Francis for permission to reproduce Figure 8.3 on p. 153; John Gaventa for permission to reproduce Figure 8.4 on p. 156 the King's Fund for permission to reproduce Figure 13.1 on p. 279; and Local Governance Innovation and Development Ltd for permission to reproduce Figure 13.2 on p. 284. I would also like to acknowledge the following for permission to draw on their experience for boxed case studies: East Brighton New Deal for Communities for Boxes 10.6 and 11.4; Capital Action also for Box 10.6; Coin Street Community Builders for material in Box 11.1; Novas Scarman for Box 11.3; John Gaventa for Box 11.5; Yorkshire and Humber Empowerment Partnership for Boxes 12.2 and 12.4; Nick Acheson and Carl Milofsky for Box 12.3 and Carl Milofsky for Box 12.6. Every effort has been made to contact all the copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently omitted the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangement at the earliest opportunity.

There are, of course, many others to thank, not least my colleagues over the years in the field of third-sector research and current colleagues in Brighton and Hove. Peter Ambrose has been a recent source of inspiration, keeping my attention firmly fixed on the values that community participation should promote. I am also indebted to Mary Jacob and Tessa Parkes – whose postgraduate research kept me in touch with recent developments in the empowerment literature – and to Liz Cunningham who has been assiduous in keeping me up to date with the international literature and developments in the field of participatory research. An eleventh-hour conversation with John Gaventa and

Juliet Merrifield was particularly helpful in giving me a sense of the international relevance of the issues covered here. On the international front, I also owe a debt to Ralph Kramer, Carl Milofsky and Les Salamon, who over the years have provided a wider perspective, given me confidence in my ability to make a significant contribution and provided invaluable practical advice on how to realise a project that turned out to be much more ambitious than I originally anticipated. Finally, I would like to thank my publisher, Steven Kennedy, for his support and patience while I learnt to juggle different demands on my time.

MARILYN TAYLOR

Introduction

We can learn a great deal about a society from the words that crop up again and again in government policy documents, that are *de rigueur* in the top circles and that mark the insiders from the outsiders. In the 1980s, that language was the language of the market and those who wanted to get on in any sphere of public life went to business school to learn it. Every organisation got its ‘mission statement’; people who used to suffer poor quality public services suddenly became ‘customers’ – even those on welfare benefits, who were hardly in a position to exercise much choice. Public sector services were ‘outsourced’, bureaucracies were ‘downsized’, departments became ‘cost centres’. The development of a new approach to public management placed ‘performance’ and ‘efficiency’ at the top of the agenda.

During the 1990s, however, a new vocabulary began to emerge – of community, civil society, participation and empowerment – along with a set of ideas that also included ‘communitarianism’, ‘social capital’, ‘networks’, the ‘social economy’, ‘mutuality’, ‘partnership’ and ‘civic engagement’. First, Etzioni’s communitarian manifesto seized the attention of leading politicians and institutions. Shortly afterwards, Robert Putnam popularised the idea of ‘social capital’, capturing the attention of the World Bank among many others. By the end of the decade, a UN document commented:

It is difficult to think of an academic notion that has entered the common vocabulary of social discourse more quickly than the idea of social capital. Not only do academic journals devote special issues to discuss the concept, journalists make frequent references to it, and politicians pay homage to it. (Dasgupta and Serageldin 1999)

At the same time, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the concept of ‘civil society’ was rediscovered. Initially it was promoted

as an alternative to the state but then, as the 1990s progressed, commentators also saw it as an alternative to the market. Similarly, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund began to require community participation as a condition of debt relief, stressing the ‘need to engage the energies and enthusiasm of those at the grass-roots as a key to market success’ (Salamon 1995, p. 257). This led to a range of flagship initiatives to foster social capital, self-help and community participation (see, for example, Box 1.1). As Cornwall and Coelho argued in their 2003 book on participation (2003, p. 4), ‘The last decade has been one in which the voices of the public and especially the ‘poor’ have been increasingly sought’.

BOX 1.1 Community Driven Development

Community Driven Development (CDD) is an approach to development that supports participatory decision-making, local capacity building, and community control of resources. The five key pillars of this approach are:

- Community empowerment
- Local government empowerment
- Realigning the center
- Accountability and transparency
- Learning by doing.

With these pillars in place, CDD approaches can create sustainable and wide-ranging impacts by mobilising communities, and giving them the tools to become agents of their own development.

Support to CDD usually includes:

- Building capacity of community groups
- Promoting an enabling environment through policy and institutional reform (decentralisation, sector policies, etc.)
- Strengthening local governance relationships, including forging linkages between community based organisations and local governments.

Source: World Bank 2010a.

It is not that the language of the market has disappeared – far from it. But the rediscovery of ‘community’ over recent years has been heartening to many who despaired of the individualism and competitiveness fostered by the market, the dominance of structural adjustment policies and the priority given to economic over social agendas. After years of market supremacy, it has been encouraging to see policymakers and academics across the world pay attention to the need to invest in ‘social capital’ as well as the individual skills and financial resources that are needed to combat social, economic and political exclusion. It has also been encouraging to see worldwide recognition of the territory between the state and market, which tended to be lost in many of the ideological battles between right and left in the twentieth century. Increasing attention to social alongside market enterprise offers the potential to bridge the chasm between market definitions of value and the values of those concerned with social justice. Indeed, the award of the 2009 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences to Elinor Ostrom, famous for her work on ‘the commons’, reinforces the sense that the hegemony of the neo-liberal economics of the 1980s has at least been tempered. We have a President in the White House in the US with a history of community organising and in the UK a right-of-centre coalition government committed to the Big Society – a commitment that invokes community, devolution of powers and mutualism (See Box 1.2). The emphasis on community empowerment and participation from the World Bank down to local governments in many parts of the globe has the potential to offer a voice to those who have been most marginalised and silenced by the supremacy of the market or indeed by authoritarian states.

This widespread adoption of the language of ‘community’ holds much promise. But its very popularity – and its adoption across significant ideological divides – also urges caution. The frequent and interchangeable use of the different terms in the community portfolio as a ‘spray-on’ solution to cover the fault lines of economic decline and social fragmentation has attracted considerable criticism, and threatens to devalue a set of ideas that could offer a great deal in addressing the complexities of the global society in which we live. It fails to acknowledge the considerable complexities and contradictions within this set of ideas. The language of community empowerment, too, often fails to grapple with the realities of power. Is there not something

BOX 1.2 Building the Big Society

The Big Society was a central theme in the election manifesto of the Conservative party in 2010 and has taken centre stage in the opening months of the coalition government that came to power after that election. While the language has changed from that of the previous New Labour administration, many of the Big Society's features are familiar and demonstrate the cross-party appeal of the 'community' portfolio. It makes a commitment to:

1. Give communities more powers
 - In the planning system
 - To save local facilities and services and to take over state-run services
 - Through training 'a new generation' of community organisers to support the creation of neighbourhood groups, especially in deprived areas.
2. Encourage people to take an active role in their communities
 - Encourage volunteering and involvement in social action
 - Encourage charitable giving and philanthropy
 - Introduce a National Citizen Service aimed at 16-year olds



paradoxical in the idea that one set of people can empower others? In the context of savage public expenditure cuts in many countries, many also fear that, as used in policy, 'community' is a codeword for the continued assault on the state as the guarantor of social justice and the welfare of its citizens.

As someone with nearly 40 years of experience in this field, I am still convinced of the potential of these ideas to create real and lasting change in tackling the marginalisation of many people across the globe. However, I also believe that the language of 'community' and the ideas associated with it will only deliver on its promise and the expectations that surround it if its use is based on a robust understanding of these ideas and the contradictions and paradoxes within them. This understanding needs to be informed by communities themselves, by experience in both the global North and the global South, by theories of community and power and by a continuing dialogue between the

3. Transfer power from central to local government
 - Devolve power and introduce greater financial autonomy
 - Introduce a general power of competence (which UK local government does not have)
 - Return regional powers in housing and planning to local authorities
4. Support local co-operatives, mutuals, charities and social enterprises
 - Encourage much greater involvement in the running of public services
 - Support public sector workers in creating their own employee-owned co-operatives
 - Use dormant bank accounts to establish a Big Society Bank to invest in neighbourhood groups, charities, social enterprises, etc.
5. Publish government data
 - Create a new 'right' to government-held datasets
 - Publish local crime data statistics

Source: Adapted from Cabinet Office 2010.

experience of the past and the aspirations, energies and hopes of the present.

In the mid 1990s, Murray Stewart and I reviewed the experience of community empowerment in the UK and beyond for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Stewart and Taylor 1995). At that time, we commented on the failure of government and others to learn from the past and the tendency to 'reinvent the wheel'. With the renewed interest in community and participation across the globe since that time, there may be a real opportunity to build on this past experience and move forward. This book is therefore an odyssey. In part, it revisits and reassesses the experience and debates of the past 40 years or so to see what they have to offer in the new political environment; in part, it explores current debates and their potential to 'make a difference' this time. It asks whether the prominence of these ideas in current policy and debate will have more than symbolic

value and whether ‘community’ policies and practice have the potential to achieve what states and markets alone have failed to do: to change the balance of power in society; to reduce exclusion and polarisation; and to deliver sustainable improvements in the quality of life of the world’s poorest citizens. In doing so, it draws on work that I and colleagues have published over the years; but also on the much larger body of theory and experience that I have found useful in trying to understand better how these ideas can be made to work.

My search for understanding began in the UK, but while there are obvious differences between countries and communities, due to different political structures and traditions as well as different economic profiles, the common themes that resonate across countries and the potential of learning across these different traditions are striking. My journey has been informed by the themes and concerns voiced in international debates, by more informal conversations with academics and practitioners from other countries, and by literature from across the globe. And while this book is aimed principally at readers from what is variously called the global North, the developed world, OECD or advanced capitalist countries, it has also been guided by the growing recognition in the North of the need to learn from the rest of the world. As such, while recognising the different contexts in which much of this learning has taken place, it draws from time to time on some of the best-known examples of effective community policy and practice in the South.

I begin, in Chapter 2, by tracking the fortunes of ‘community’ over recent years and asking why it has seized the attention of policymakers across the globe. I set out three scenarios for the future: optimistic, pessimistic and pragmatic. I move on, in Chapter 3, to explore the way that ‘community’ has been applied in policy over the past four decades and the different assumptions that lie behind community policies, exploring the rationales for different forms of community intervention and the different roles that communities are expected to play. Chapters 4 and 5 then take a step back in order to unpack in more detail the set of ideas that have clustered around community, social capital, civil society and related concepts: their ambiguities, the potential they offer, the pitfalls to be avoided and the challenges they pose. Chapter 6 explores more closely the relevance of these ideas for tackling poverty and social exclusion.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 take a similar look at concepts of power, participation and empowerment. Chapter 7 examines different ways of understanding power and empowerment, while Chapter 8 looks in more detail at the policy process, the new political opportunities that have opened up over recent years and some frameworks for assessing levels of empowerment within them. Chapter 9 then explores the challenges that community empowerment policies and initiatives have faced over the past four decades and the tensions they have had to resolve.

Chapters 10 and 11 take up the challenges posed in the previous six chapters. They set out the elements of a strategy to tackle exclusion and to make participation and empowerment policies work. Chapters 12 and 13 then discuss in more detail the contradictions and tensions inherent in community work and partnership and how these can be addressed.

The final chapter considers the prospects for community empowerment and participation and the extent to which policies that seek to promote these aims offer genuine and sustainable opportunities for change. It reviews the optimistic, pessimistic and pragmatic scenarios set out in Chapter 2 in the light of the evidence presented in the body of the book. It ends by assessing the challenges that still need to be addressed if the resources of communities which have been marginalised and excluded by economic change are to make a full contribution to the search for sustainable solutions to the problems of the twenty-first century.

Many terms have been used to describe community interventions, often meaning different things in different countries or policy fields. This poses significant dilemmas in relation to the terminology this book will use. I have decided to use the terms community policy and community practice to cover external policies and interventions in the community and, where appropriate, action taken from within. I have focused mainly, too, on policies that seek to support those in disadvantaged and socially excluded communities to achieve social justice and a better quality of life. I have also referred throughout to 'communities' as either agents or objects of policies. I acknowledge that in doing so, I am falling prey to the criticisms I will make of others in using 'community' as a blanket term. But in the absence of suitable alternatives I use it in a purely descriptive sense to mean communities of place, identity or interest who take collective action or who are the targets – or potential beneficiaries – of policy.

One other set of terms I probably need to justify is the use of ‘global North and global South’ to describe what used to be called the developed and developing (or even ‘third’) world. I recognise that richer and poorer countries are not conveniently grouped to the North and South of the Equator respectively – Australia and New Zealand are, for example, very much part of what used to be called the developed world. I also recognise that the issues affecting community politics and policy *within* North and South are very different. But the terms global North and South are familiar in the development studies literature on which I have drawn and seem to have the fewest normative implications attached to them.

The Changing Fortunes of 'Community'

In the heady days of the 1960s, it was possible to be optimistic about the prospects for 'community' and 'empowerment'. These were the years when the civil rights, peace and feminist movements in the North were challenging the post-war consensus, while, behind the Iron Curtain, the Prague Spring of 1968 briefly defied Soviet totalitarianism. Northern governments were introducing programmes – such as the War on Poverty in the USA and the National Community Development Project in the UK – that worked with communities to tackle the problems of poverty and alienation that persisted despite the growth of the welfare state and the economy. Change was in the air.

Community lost

The new dawn was to be short-lived, however. The oil crisis of the mid-1970s triggered recession, which brought with it rising unemployment and public expenditure cuts. In the Soviet bloc, the Prague Spring had been ruthlessly suppressed. Outside the communist world, increasing dissatisfaction with state welfare in many countries provided fertile ground for the rapid advance of a neoliberal ideology of welfare, based on the market. Government sponsors of community development programmes had their fingers burnt as they discovered that community responses were more radical than they had bargained for (Marris and Rein 1967; Moynihan 1969; Loney 1983; Lawrence 2007) so they looked elsewhere for solutions. In the global South, structural adjustment policies subordinated state welfare to economic growth, reproducing on a global scale the increasing polarisation, disenfranchisement and social division that the market was bringing to the North.

At the national level, these developments were reflected in the rise to power of radical right-wing governments – exemplified by the march of Thatcherism in the UK and Reaganomics in the USA – both committed to rolling back the frontiers of the state. This was not all-encompassing – within the UK, for example, resistance came from a ‘new urban left’, with its power base in the major urban municipalities. As part of its strategy to seize back the initiative from Margaret Thatcher’s government, it continued to fund and promote community practice. But the scope for resistance was increasingly curtailed as the 1980s progressed. This was due to trends which were reflected in many countries across the globe: a combination of public expenditure cuts, the privatisation (or contracting-out) of services and the devolution of state functions to an increasing number of non-elected quangos (quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations) at national and local level, the latter used in the UK in particular to circumvent the power of democratically elected local authorities.

Interest in ‘community’ did not die away completely, but it was increasingly subordinated to other agendas. In the neo-liberal lexicon, ‘community’ was reinterpreted predominantly in terms of self-help, with the potential to substitute for what leading right-wing thinkers saw as excessive dependency on the state. Community organisations also had the potential to offer alternatives to state service provision, and could be more responsive to consumer needs.

This new pluralism in the delivery of welfare was one for which many in the voluntary non-profit sector had been arguing for years. It also had the potential to give people in communities the opportunity to take control of their own services. However, many commentators took a more critical view of such developments. In a climate of increased pressure on public expenditure, with an emphasis on the responsibilities of individual citizens rather than their rights, critics argued that communities were being used to cut costs and free the state from its own responsibilities. Under the guise of self-help, they argued, communities were being asked to pick up the pieces of structural adjustment and new market policies. Where welfare service delivery was being ‘contracted out’ to non-state providers, many were concerned that voluntary and community organisations would become

either tools of or substitutes for the state. This was a concern that spanned North and South:

NGOs have a long history of providing welfare services to poor people in countries where governments lacked the resources to ensure universal coverage in health and education; the difference is that now they are seen as the *preferred channel* for service-provision in *deliberate substitution* for the state. (M. Edwards and Hulme 1995b, p. 6 [original emphasis])

Furthermore, as the focus moved more and more to the individual as a *consumer* in the marketplace, the importance of *citizenship* and *collective action* was sidelined. The needs of those who did not have the resources to choose scarcely featured at all, except when they drew attention to themselves through rioting and urban unrest. Structural adjustment, meanwhile, bound many countries in the global South to policies which impoverished the public sector and public welfare programmes.

By the end of the 1980s, the 'economic hegemony of the market ... appeared ... to be complete' (Craig, Mayo and Taylor 2000, p. 325). But this brought with it an increasing polarisation between rich and poor. If wealth was being created by the move to market policies, there was little evidence to suggest that it was trickling down to the most disadvantaged in society as it was supposed to do. Thus in 1996, the UN Research Institute for Social Development reported that 'As government services have crumbled and more and more ground in the so-called social sectors is left to market forces, there has been an explosion in the numbers and categories of marginalised and excluded people' (Dey and Westendorff 1996, p. 8). This was not just a polarisation between nations or between South and North, hugely significant though this was; it was a polarisation within nations, with richer nations such as the UK and the USA among those with the highest rates of inequality and the fastest growing inequalities (Hills 1998). Indeed Northern non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that had previously focused solely on the global South – Oxfam, for example – began to turn their attention to those who lived on their own doorsteps, to what John Gaventa (1999, p. 22) called 'the South within

the North'. Gross inequalities were becoming acceptable, while cultures of poverty, unemployment and backwardness were explained away as part of the natural order of inherent inequalities in enterprise and ability (Dey and Westendorff 1996, p. 9).

These trends continue to the present day. A study in the latter years of the New Labour government in the UK found that, despite that government's commitment to reducing child poverty, the numbers of low-income households were rising and that the country was moving back towards levels of inequality in health and poverty last seen more than 40 years ago (Dorling *et al.* 2007). It also found that rich and poor were living further apart – a spatial segregation common in many parts of the world. Similar trends have been noted elsewhere, with the top 1 per cent in the USA accounting for 21.2 percent of the national income in 2005 (Judt 2010) and capturing half of the country's overall income growth between 1993 and 2007 (Saez 2005).

Critics of the market also comment on the way that public goods – from health and education to leisure – are being 'commodified', putting them out of the reach of those who cannot afford to pay for them. Offe and Heinze (1992) cite the disappearance of institutions in which time can be passed in a useful, satisfying and socially recognised way without the possession of additional disposable income. Public space has been privatised. The privately owned shopping mall, subject to continuous surveillance, has become the new 'town centre'. Some have argued that as the public sphere is abandoned, the whole concept of civilization is under threat (Hutton 2002). Neo-conservatism, Mouffe argues (1992), thus reduces the common good to a question of wealth creation, taxpayers' freedom and efficiency – and we might add, consumer choice. Even the alternative public spaces of the Internet are not immune to being commercialised and bought up by media barons.

Public space is also being evacuated by fear. As more intrusive surveillance and impersonal CCTV cameras replace the municipal park warden, this becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The case for increased surveillance has been compounded by major terrorist incidents in Bali, London, Madrid, Moscow, Mumbai, New York and other target cities. But Zygmunt Bauman (1999, pp. 5–6) comments that 'Most measures undertaken under the banner of safety are divisive. ... They sow mutual suspicion, set people apart, prompt them to sniff enemies and conspirators

behind every contention or dissent, and in the end make the loners yet more lonely than before'. He laments the loss of the *agora*, a space that is the province neither of the public nor the private, but of both at the same time. This is 'the place where private problems meet in a meaningful way', he argues, where private troubles can be re-forged into public issues and which can thus provide collective levers for the alleviation of private misery and uncertainty (pp. 3, 7).

The impoverishment of the 'public' has extended to politics. In the 1990s, Manuel Castells (1996) described the way in which the 'information society' allows capital to flow beyond the reach of political institutions. With key decisions in the hands of multinational corporations, the power of the nation state has been 'hollowed out'. The state has also been under sustained ideological attack from international economic institutions and neo-liberal commentators. The power of the ballot box, according to Naomi Klein (2000) is being replaced by corporate power.

Community regained

At the end of the 1980s, I was involved with colleagues in editing a special issue of the international *Community Development Journal* (Craig, Mayo and Taylor 1990) that looked back at the fortunes of community development over the *Journal's* 25-year life. At that time it was easy to be pessimistic about the prospects for a policy and practice that would give recognition to communities. In the UK, we were into our eleventh year of Thatcherism, with Margaret Thatcher's celebrated observation that 'there is no such thing as society – only individuals and their families'. Elsewhere, structural adjustment policies were biting and privatisation policies were beginning to creep into the social democratic heartland of mainland Europe (Ascoli and Ranci 2002).

Ten years later, as Chapter 1 has already remarked, the picture seems very different. The 'marketisation' of welfare continues but, as the costs of the globalisation of the economy become more apparent, and neither government nor the market seem equipped to address the challenges facing society, 'community' has been brought back in from the cold. What have been the triggers for this?

A rapidly increasing demand for welfare

In 1997, the then editor of the UN newsletter *Habitat Debate* argued that rising levels of need were outstripping the state's capacity to provide:

It is now widely recognised that government alone cannot bear the entire responsibility of providing housing, infrastructure and other basic services to the poor. Scarce public funds and increasing populations are straining government's capacity to deal with the problems brought on by rapid urbanisation. Many governments and local authorities are, therefore, enlisting the support of the private sector, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based groups. (Warah 1997, p. 1)

The informal care and support provided by families, neighbours and communities has always been a major source of welfare provision, both financial and social. In some countries in the South, for example, where a weak state cannot or will not provide, community provision and/or remittances from family and community members abroad are essential. Elsewhere, states that over the years have taken an increasing responsibility for welfare have come under increasing criticism from the right of the political spectrum for sapping people's initiative and encouraging dependency. There are therefore both economic and moral arguments being made for communities themselves to take on more responsibility. Community-based provision is also seen as more sensitive to consumer needs and preferences than more professionalised and formalised state systems.

A breakdown of moral cohesion and responsibility

Some argue that the market has produced an individualistic culture, dominated by self-interest. But a number of other trends have led to increasing fragmentation and the loss, some believe, of a moral compass. One is the displacement of populations across the globe, along with the flare-up of racial and inter-community tensions, some ancient in origin, some linked to patterns of immigration. Another relates to the geographical concentration of low income, unemployment, dependency on state benefits,

poor health and a range of associated social problems in pockets of deprivation, as a result of economic restructuring. In the 1980s and early 1990s, this latter trend led some critics to suggest that state welfare has encouraged the emergence of an underclass, detached from the morality of mainstream society (Murray 1990). Whether it is the state or the economy that is seen to be at fault, reinstating a sense of community is seen as essential to the development of greater cohesion and mutual responsibility, based on shared meanings and moralities.

A breakdown of democracy and political legitimacy

Some of the defining images towards the end of the twentieth century were those of South African citizens and citizens from post-Soviet countries flocking to the polling booths for the first time in decades. But at the same time that those images were published, citizens in the more established democracies seemed increasingly disenchanted with the quality of their democracy, with falling voting figures in many countries (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000) and a decline in the membership of mass political parties (Durose, Greasley and Richardson 2009). In the Netherlands, Klijn and Koppenjan (2000, p. 384) noted that

The Dutch Social Cultural Planning Bureau, which has done survey research on the political and societal opinions in the Netherlands, concluded that individualisation is one of the major trends in society and that political participation becomes an option rather than something 'natural'. Support of politicians has to be earned and is not given 'naturally' any more. Individuals no longer support values because they are members of societal or political groups or because political actors tell them to do so.

Related to this is a loss of trust in public institutions, especially among the most disadvantaged. Narayan et al.'s World Bank study (2000, p. 117), for example, reports the belief amongst poor people that 'State institutions – whether delivering services, providing police protection or justice, or as political decision makers – are either not accountable to anyone or accountable only to the rich and powerful'.

Fukuyama (1989) lists a number of factors that have been blamed for this loss of faith in democratic institutions: privatisation, decentralisation, professionalisation, the increasing importance of information technologies, the decline of ideologies and the advance of individualism among them. Shore and Wright (1997b) lay the blame at the door of an increasingly remote and commercialised policy-making process, with its corporate influence, spin and preoccupation with the media. Indeed, it is increasingly difficult to know what it is precisely that citizens are voting for, as the public sphere is steadily eroded by privatisation and the globalised economy eats into the powers of the nation state. In the global South, meanwhile, the story is less one of democratic decline than of concern over the suitability of established models of democracy in countries with very different historical conditions and different challenges (Gaventa 2004).

In the face of apparent public apathy and the loss of democratic legitimacy that this implies, the response of the state in many established democracies has been an expansion of the participatory sphere (Cornwall 2008a). Communities and third-sector organisations have been supported to re-engage their members in public life, powers have been devolved to the local level and new forms of participatory or deliberative democracy have been introduced, which can bring decision making closer to the citizen.

Increasing uncertainty

In the post-modern world, uncertainty is a fact of life. Bauman uses the German word *Unsicherheit* to convey the mix of insecurity and unsafety that he considers the 'most sinister and painful of contemporary troubles' (Bauman 1999, p. 5). Peter Marris (1996, pp. 103, 104) describes how the restructuring of industry has robbed people of security, throwing 'the burden of their uncertain future back on local communities, with fewer and fewer resources to turn to'. The consequences are particularly severe for those where, as he puts it, the 'hierarchical displacement of uncertainty comes to rest': 'The competitive management of uncertainty, as it thrusts the burdens of insecurity progressively onto the less and less powerful, provokes a profound social alienation'. Networks of trust, social capital and community are all seen as offering routes to 'the reconstruction of the coherence and orderliness of widely divergent worlds', which Barbara Misztal (2000, p. 232) describes as 'a battle for the quality of life'.

Climate change and sustainable development

The Brundtland Commission, convened by the UN in 1983, defined sustainable development as: 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland Commission 1987). Since then, evidence of accelerating climate change has added urgency to this agenda.

There are many who see a fundamental contradiction between the demands of the capitalist economy for growth and the sustainability of the environment. But there is disagreement about what can be done at individual and local level. Ledwith (2005) argues that environmental crisis impacts disproportionately on those at the bottom of the income ladder. But, in keeping with the mantra 'Think Global, Act Local', Carley and Smith (2001, p. 192) see communities as key actors in the stewardship of the future and in the development of sustainable production. They deplore the advance of the consumerist lifestyle that capitalism promotes and which fuels 'excessive, inefficient resource consumption' and see the potential for communities to develop alternatives as producers in the informal and social economies, mobilising human creativity rather than seeking economic growth for its own sake. In this, their interests combine with critics of mainstream economic models, who are searching for alternative economic forms which combat alienation and exclusion from the production process (Offe and Heinze 1992) and create a 'more democratic, locally embedded, people-centred and ecologically sustainable economic system' (Robertson 1998; see also Held 1996; Carnegie UK 2010).

In summary, therefore, 'community' and the ideas that surround it offer resources, social glue, alternative ideas and knowledge that are now seen as essential to society. They are seen to contribute to the reform of welfare services, the revitalisation of democracy and the reintroduction of a moral compass and sense of purpose where this is seen to be lacking. They are potential weapons in the march towards development and sustainability. Involving the 'community' is now seen as a particularly formidable weapon in tackling the social exclusion that disfigures the progress of globalisation.

However, communities have not waited for an invitation to participate. Earlier I referred to the social movements that swept many countries in the 1960s. Since then, disabled people in many countries have taken to the streets to improve services and demand their rights as both consumers and citizens. The power of collective citizen action has been felt by governments from the communist regimes in the Soviet bloc at the end of the 1980s, through the Philippines and South Africa to Thailand, Tunisia and Egypt in more recent years. Environmental activists have scored notable victories across a number of fronts, although there is clearly a long way to go. There are, of course, thousands of examples where local communities have taken less visible initiatives to improve their own circumstances at local level.

In this context, it is essential to remember that globalisation has positive as well as negative consequences for communities. The information society may allow capital to flow beyond the reach of political institutions but, at the same time, it provides the means through which citizens can act. The communications revolution and the possibilities that the Internet has opened up for linking action by citizens in different parts of the world have fuelled a 'globalisation from below' (Della Porta 2006) which has challenged the economic hegemony of international capitalism at successive meetings of the G20 and, most recently, the failure of governments across the globe to respond to climate change. International grass roots campaigns have challenged major multinational companies on their employment and environmental practices and brought the issue of debt cancellation to the top of international agendas. They have also allowed less high-profile (but potentially powerful) connections to be made that link the concerns of the North to the South, share learning and ideas and allow local action to 'think global' (Gaventa 1999).

Can community deliver?

The problems of the twenty-first century demand imaginative solutions and the release of new resources. The commitment to participation suggests that the 'tacit' knowledge, resources and skills that lie in the most marginalised communities are at least being acknowledged as part of the solution to some of these problems. But how robust is this commitment to 'community'?

and can 'communities' deliver what is expected of them? It is possible to imagine three different responses to these questions: optimistic, pessimistic and pragmatic.

The optimistic scenario

An optimistic scenario might argue that the current vogue for 'community' provides the opportunity to create a new settlement. In this analysis, it offers real opportunities for communities to be equal partners at the policy-making table, while the search for new forms of governance offers communities and those who work with them an opportunity to be at the cutting edge of change. Optimists would point to such examples as the participatory planning and budgeting initiatives that have spread from Brazil across the globe or the commitment to community empowerment in countries like the UK. They would also see real potential for change from below in 'bottom up' citizens' organising initiatives in the US and elsewhere. Optimists would see civil society as holding the key to a third way, which would balance the shortcomings of state and market and open up a new political space. They would also remind us that many communities do want to take more control over their lives (Powell and Geoghegan 2004, p. 154).

Two trends discussed earlier offer hope that there can be real change. One is the apparent commitment to participation and empowerment from organisations such as the World Bank and an increasing number of national governments, backed up by real incentives. This gives those who have been excluded a powerful lever for change. It also strengthens allies across the system and helps to persuade the doubters. The second is the sweep of action from below, as people question whether the costs of globalisation and economic growth are really so inevitable and necessary as the advance of capitalism suggests.

The pessimistic scenario

Pessimists, on the other hand, might question how deep-seated the commitment to 'community' is. They might argue that government commitment to community participation remains vulnerable to political fashion and political change and is very dependent on the regime in power.

They could also argue that local and even national initiatives are small-scale in comparison to the structural factors that lead to financial, political and social exclusion – equivalent to ‘re-arranging the deck chairs on the *Titanic*’. A pessimistic analysis would see the new-found interest in community participation as a cost-cutting and legitimising strategy on the part of the state, giving structural adjustment and market-based policies a ‘human face’ but ultimately making the most disadvantaged and marginalised people in society responsible for dealing with the consequences of capitalism and structural economic change.

In this scenario, communities are being bought off and co-opted into an agenda that remains relentlessly top-down and which primarily serves the interests of capital. Critics of community-based intervention strategies argue that the logic of the global economy is inescapable and the problems it creates are far too massive to be ‘solved through the patchwork of community regeneration’ (McCulloch 2000, p. 418). The power of global capital, in this scenario, is not only overt but also covert, shaping the way we see things and what we think is possible. Indeed with the increasing individualisation that has come with the market economy and the neo-liberal agenda, it is difficult to see where an effective resistance would come from. Empowerment is interpreted as consumerism, with the quality of life ‘equated increasingly with the consumption of more and more goods’ (Carley 2001, p. 5). This makes it increasingly difficult to argue for public goods and public investment, let alone any kind of redistribution.

An alternative, but equally pessimistic approach, could be drawn from post-modernist theories where, instead of everything being controlled by international capital, everything is relative. The evidence of increasing fragmentation and racial/ethnic/religious tension world-wide would, in this scenario, confirm that, instead of offering the cohesion that the advocates of ‘community’ urge, community and identity are defined increasingly in terms that divide.

The pragmatic scenario

A pragmatic scenario would find the optimists too romantic about the prospects for community, but the pessimists too deterministic. It would accept that power flows through privileged pathways (Clegg 1989; see Chapter 7). But it would also

argue that the flow of power in society is not as rigid, as predetermined or as immune to human agency as the pessimist might argue. Policymaking, in this view, is a process of paradoxes, balancing acts, irresolvable tensions and contradictions that can be exploited in favour of those who have been marginalised. More wary than the optimists, the pragmatists might see the future in terms of equipping communities to make the most of the windows of opportunity and cracks in the system, and to open up new opportunities and new accommodations on an incremental basis. At the very least, this offers possibilities for small-scale influence, even if the fundamentals of power are not addressed. At the most, these small starting points can provide the foundation for more fundamental change (Cornwall 2004; Healey 2006).

So, which of these scenarios is most realistic? What is it that international institutions and national governments seek to achieve through the mobilisation of this nexus of ideas? And what prospect is there that this new language will have more than symbolic value, that it will change the balance of power in society, reduce exclusion and polarisation and/or deliver sustainable improvements in the quality of life of the world's poorest citizens? Can communities, social capital and civil society achieve what states and markets have failed to do? In the next few chapters, I explore the way in which concepts of community and empowerment have been applied in policy and debate before turning later in the book to the opportunities for change.

Community in Policy and Practice

Community policies have undergone several metamorphoses over recent decades. They are also shaped by the socio-political context and history of the particular country in which they are based. It is, however, possible to identify several distinct themes that cut across time and space – each with its own definition of the problem, its own ideologies and assumptions, and its associated solutions. One theme focuses on the *community* as the target for change. Approaches of this kind may assume that there is something lacking in the community itself, whether it be capacity, confidence, cohesion or moral integrity. Or they may want to build on and maximise community assets so that they can be used more effectively for community benefit. A second theme sees the *system* as the focus for change. Approaches of this kind seek to make services work more effectively together and make them more responsive to community needs.

A third theme focuses on *structural* causes of exclusion. Some approaches in this theme target the capitalist economy, mobilising communities to demand fundamental structural change. Others seek to improve employment and economic opportunities, or develop radically new forms of enterprise and employment. Finally, a fourth theme focuses on the state as the arena for change. Some approaches in this theme promote the market instead and focus on communities as consumers. Others seek to introduce new forms of partnership, which include communities alongside the state and other partners in developing and implementing strategies for change.

Table 3.1 summarises these themes according to the definition of the problem that they imply, ideological underpinnings, policy solutions, and relevant strategies or forms of intervention. In doing so, it draws on a number of classifications developed in the North and South (Glen 1992 (UK); Rothman and Tropman 1993 (US); Abbott 1996 (South Africa); Smock 2003 (US) and De Filippis 2007 (US)).