



# Barrio Democracy in Latin America: Participatory Decentralization and Community Activism in Montevideo

*Eduardo Canel*

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The transition to democracy underway in Latin America since the 1980s has recently witnessed a resurgence of interest in experimenting with new forms of local governance emphasizing more participation by ordinary citizens. The hope is both to foster the spread of democracy and to improve equity in the distribution of resources. While participatory budgeting has been a favorite topic of many scholars studying this new phenomenon, there are many other types of ongoing experiments. In *Barrio Democracy in Latin America*, Eduardo Canel focuses our attention on the innovative participatory programs launched by the leftist government in Montevideo, Uruguay, in the early 1990s. Based on his extensive ethnographic fieldwork, Canel examines how local activists in three low-income neighborhoods in that city dealt with the opportunities and challenges of implementing democratic practices and building better relationships with sympathetic city officials.

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