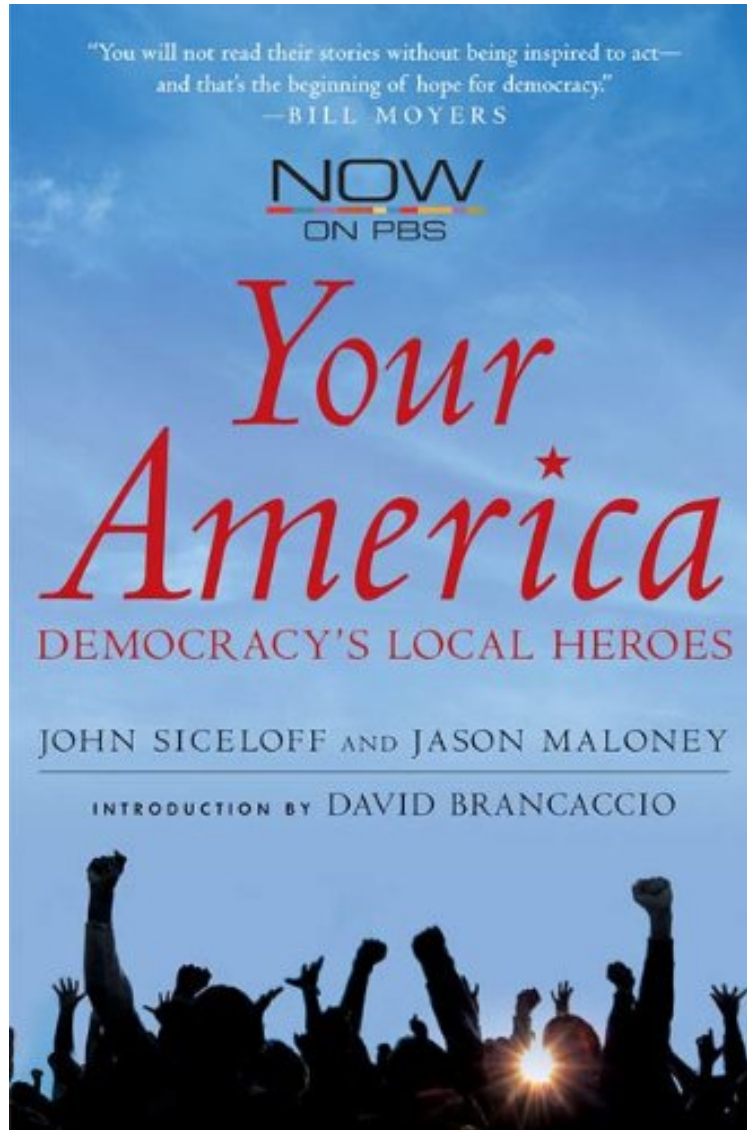


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Your America: Democracy's Local Heroes

John Sicheloff, Jason Maloney

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John Sicheloff, Jason Maloney : Your America: Democracy's Local Heroes before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Your America: Democracy's Local Heroes:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sold just as described, Great!By Greg WierzbickiSold just as described, Great!3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A book of hopeBy klnYou can't walk away from this book without feeling inspired to set about on some course of change. "Your America" profiles twelve seemingly ordinary people from vastly different backgrounds - including ethnic, social, political, professional - who have all stumbled across problems in their respective communities and set out on remarkable journeys to arrive at creative and

original solutions towards fixing those problems. One of the many bright spots in each of their stories is that they don't simply complain - rather they work proactively toward resolving the issue, often despite considerable odds stacked against them. For example, there's Wynona Ward, a truck driver who suffered sexual abuse as a child and eventually got her law degree and formed an innovative organization aimed specifically at helping abused rural women. There's also Rueben Martinez, a modest Latino barber and factory worker who, in his mid-fifties, grew an enormous literary movement right out of his barbershop. Each story is vividly written, moving, often poignant and always stirring. Every chapter left me shaking my head in admiration at the determination, spunk and grit of these people - a book that truly lifts the spirit in a time of so much cynicism, doom and gloom.

Approaching the topic of civic activism on both a national and local level, *Your America* reveals essential lessons from twelve stories of ordinary citizens accomplishing extraordinary changes in their communities. Like Bill Graham, mayor of tiny Scottsburg, Indiana, who took on the telecommunications giants and wired his town for free wifi; or Katie Redford, a young law student who dusted off the Alien Tort Claims Act of 1789 and ended up changing the way American corporations behave overseas. Each profile is the result of a story on *Now*, the popular PBS show with a viewership of over 2 million people. For fans of the show, community activists, and the blogosphere, this book provides a blueprint for working together locally to create a better global community.

From *School Library Journal* Adult/High School; Siceloff and Maloney provide snapshots into the world of modern-day activism by highlighting and expanding stories originally shown on the PBS television show *Now*. The individuals represented are from all walks of life, and yet they all exemplify how change is possible at the grassroots level. It is easy for readers to jump from one person's story to another's depending on interest; examples of subject matter include environmental concerns, education and literacy, human rights, and politics. Each chapter opens with a couple of photographs and a brief summary of what the person did. Using a combination of narrative and interview techniques, the authors then move into an in-depth examination of what the individual achieved and how the journey began. The chapter concludes with a "Producer's Snapshot" in which a member of the *Now* production team relates an experience with and impression of the individual. Links to supplemental information on the people profiled, Internet resources, and suggestions for ways to take action in one's own community are included. With its strong role models, this book would make an excellent addition to civics classes and appeal to teens interested in activism. Kelliann Bogan, Colby-Sawyer College, New London, NH Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "NOW is a welcome and nutritious addition to the rich menu of choices available on PBS. And, equally important, it is fearless about challenging conventional wisdom, a too rare quality these days." Tom Brokaw "People look at the wreckage in the world and ask, 'What can I do?' Here are some answers by people who didn't wait for others to answer it. You will not read their stories without being inspired to act -- and that's the beginning of hope for democracy." Bill Moyers "Your America is a wonderful tonic for cynicism and despair. It brims with real life heroes, from scholars to barbers to bureaucrats to businesspeople, who remind us that one determined person can begin to turn the world." Scott Simon, NPR "In this uplifting collection of profiles, Siceloff and Maloney, producers of the PBS program *Now*, spotlight individuals who have sparked successful community action without resources or (in most cases) any political or organizing experience...will inspire and embolden all readers." Publishers Weekly "During a presidential election season dominated by talk of change--from the top down--a new book shows how the disempowered in America are making a difference from the ground up." Roll Call About the Author John Siceloff is the creator and executive producer of PBS's *NOW*. An award-winning producer for such shows as *20/20*, *Primetime Live*, and *Dateline*, he is also the recipient of the DuPont Award, Peabody Award, and Emmy Award. His writing has appeared in the *Washington Post*. He lives in New York, NY. Jason Maloney is a news and documentary producer who has worked for *NOW*. His work includes reports for PBS' *NewsHour*. He was recently the editorial producer on the documentary on the AQ Kahn network entitled "Nuclear Jihad," which won the DuPont Award. He lives in New York, NY.