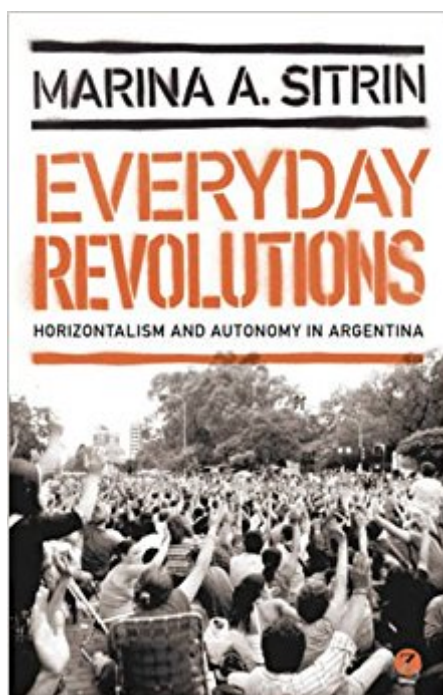


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# Everyday Revolutions: Horizontalism And Autonomy In Argentina



## Synopsis

In the wake of the global financial crisis, new forms of social organization are beginning to take shape. Disparate groups of people are coming together in order to resist corporate globalization and seek a more positive way forward. These movements are not based on hierarchy; rather than looking to those in power to solve their problems, participants are looking to one another. In certain countries in the West, this has been demonstrated by the recent and remarkable rise of the Occupy movement. But in Argentina, such radical transformations have been taking place for years. *Everyday Revolutions* tells the story of how regular people changed their country and inspired others across the world. Reflecting on new forms of social organization, such as horizontalism and autogestión, as well as alternative conceptions of value and power, Marina Sitrin shows how an economic crisis spurred a people's rebellion; how factory workers and medical clinic technicians are running their workplaces themselves, without bosses; how people have taken over land to build homes, raise livestock, grow crops, and build schools, creating their own art and media in the process. Daring and groundbreaking, *Everyday Revolutions* serves as an instructive example for activists the world over. It shows how the experiences of the autonomous movements in Argentina can help answer the question of how to turn a rupture into a revolution.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In the last decade, few things have inspired and influenced me more than Marina Sitrin's reports from Argentina." - Rebecca Solnit, author of *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary*

Communities That Arise in Disaster and Hope in the Dark. "This is a timely and inspiring book whose ideas spill over from the streets of Buenos Aires into Tahrir Square, Zuccotti Park, Sintagma and Plaza del Sol. Just the discussion we need." - John Holloway, author of *Change the World Without Taking Power* "Sitrin shows us that something new and global is taking hold in democratic politics, moving beyond the nation-state system. Her knowledge is deep and gives us reason for hope." - Susan Buck-Morss, Professor of Political Science at the CUNY Graduate Center, author of *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* "Everyday Revolutions...contributes to our being able to visualize revolution, not as something to accomplish one day, far in the distance, and in the place of presidential palaces, but instead in the daily life of regular people." - Raul Zibechi, Uruguay, activist, writer and researcher of social movements. Author of, *Dispersing Power: Movements as Anti-State Powers and Territories of Resistance: Urban Periphery in Latin America*. "Most books do not have the good fortune to be published exactly at the time when they are most needed. *Everyday Revolutions* has that distinction." - Silvia Federici, Hofstra University, NY, author of *Caliban and the Witch: Women the Body and Primitive Accumulation* and *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction and Feminist Struggle*. "Everyday Revolutions provides a richly detailed, insightful, and inspiring account of the full array of social movements that emerged out of the Argentine economic meltdown of late 2001...Sitritin vividly portrays the prefigurative, affective politics and novel practices of horizontalism, autonomy and 'auto-gestión' or self-management that characterized Argentina's popular rebellion and the movements of unemployed workers, recuperated factories, neighborhood assemblies and barter clubs that proliferated in its aftermath. Like many of today's mass protest actions, occupations, and encampments, the movement formations exhaustively documented in this book advance innovative modalities of social and economic relations, citizen action, and radical politics, aptly captured in the recuperated factories' motto 'Occupy, Resist, Produce.' Analyzing the accomplishments as well as contradictions that typify such radical experiments, this book offers powerful insights for activists and scholars alike." - Sonia E. Alvarez, Leonard J. Horwitz Professor of Latin American Politics and Society University of Massachusetts, Amherst and author of *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movements in Transition Politics* and co-editor of *The Making Of Social Movements In Latin America: Identity, Strategy, And Democracy*. "This is the book we need to begin to understand the new era of revolutionary change inaugurated by the Zapatistas in 1994 and now exploding everywhere." - Gustavo Esteva, Universidad de la Tierra, Oaxaca Mexico, and author of *The Commune of Oaxaca*. "Looking at the recent history of some of the most interesting social movements in recent years, *Everyday Revolutions* speaks of things that are happening here and now. Through a close reading of

certain vectors of change that have crossed the Argentine political space in recent decades, this book provides conceptual tools which are very helpful when thinking about how to transform the material conditions that shape our lives." - Ana MÃfÂndez de AndÃfÂs, an architect and urbanist, is a part of the research project, Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid and Traficantes de SueÃfÂ os. She also teaches at the European University of Madrid."Everyday Revolutions engages with the central questions movements for change face all over the world: local self organization, autogestion, affective politics and horizontal organizing. Sitrin delves deeply into the questions most books about movements avoid or simplify far too much, such as the question of production or the complex relation with the state. Everyday Revolutions could only be written by a long time activist and researcher like Marina Sitrin who knows about the challenges we face." - Dario Azzellini, Johannes Kepler University Linz, author of Partizipation, Arbeiterkontrolle und die Commune and co-editor of Ours to Master and to Own: Workers Control from the Commune to the Present"Everyday Revolutions truly conveys not only what an affective politics is, but what this affective politics can do. Moving with the movements it both describes and analyses, this is not just a book, it is a companion on the journey through the worlds worth fighting for in the streets, squares, factories, fields, chat rooms and classrooms of our everyday lives." - Emma Dowling, Queen Mary, University of London."A living history of a living revolution, Everyday Revolutions shows us how people in Argentina, not 'political' or 'activists,' but rather 'actors,' 'protagonists' and 'historical subjects,' are moving from fissures and cracks to creation. It shows us how these people are deepening the rupture of December 2001, changing themselves, changing society, changing the world - and leaving the state behind. Reading Everyday Revolutions we read of the emergence, the collective self-making, of new people. Beautiful!" - David Harvie, University of Leicester, author (with The Free Association) of Moments of Excess: Movement, Protest and Everyday Life and editor of Turbulence: Ideas for Movement."Marina Sitrin has long been pioneering the kind of intellectual practice, that is now becoming more and more crucial, with its cherished sensitivity toward the struggling/questioning/thinking in common from which all revolutionary thoughts arise. With both passionate and rigorous analyses of Argentinian processes, her Everyday Revolutions embodies what theory can and should do today in the age of global insurgency." - Sabu Kohso, independent writer and translator"Essential reading for those trying to understand or enact the global movement for horizontal democracy." - Michael Schwartz, Professor of Sociology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, author of War Without End: The Iraq War in Context and Radical Protest and Social Structure: The Southern Farmers' Alliance and Cotton Tenancy, 1880-1890."At a promising moment when people in all over the world are seeking to reclaim their lives in the face of systems of

power that have failed them, Marina Sitrin's smart and incisive analysis of horizontalism and autonomy in Argentina as an alternative form of not-power is a critical, timely, and lively contribution to understanding both why and how. Crackling with acuity, bits of history, and keen insights of a participant observer and social scientist, Sitrin joins those making an activist social science indispensable for those of us committed to both close, careful scholarship and passionate about social justice." - Eric Selbin, Professor of Political Science at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas , author of *Revolution, Rebellion, and Resistance: The Power of Story and Modern Latin American Revolutions*. "Marina Sitrin's feet are solidly planted in Argentina - and in this book she gives a wonderful introduction to the concepts and practices that have animated radical politics there for over a decade. But she is also able to reach up and, on the basis of the Argentine perspective, grasp the promise and importance of revolutionary activity elsewhere, from the encampments in Spain and Greece to the Occupy movements and beyond. The result is an inspiring and practical guide for understanding what revolutionary politics can be today." - Michael Hardt, Professor of Philosophy and Politics at the European Graduate School, Saas Fe, Switzerland and co-author with Antonio Negri of *Declaration*

Marina A. Sitrin holds a PhD in Global Sociology and a JD in International Women's Human Rights. Her work focuses on social movements and justice, specifically looking at new forms of social organization, such as autogestión, horizontalidad, prefigurative politics, and new affective social relationships. Her first book, *Horizontalism: Voices of Popular Power in Argentina*, is an oral history based on the then emergent autonomous movements in Argentina, Spanish (Chilavert 2005) and English (AK Press 2006). She has published in a range of journals and books, from the *International Journal of Contemporary Sociology* to *Znet*, *LeftTurn*, and *Yes! Magazine*. While much of her most recent published work has been on the contemporary social movements in Argentina, she has worked throughout the Americas, Caribbean, and Japan. Her current research includes the global mass assembly movements, specifically in Greece, Spain, and Egypt.

Being so close to Argentina, I have witness of how everyday people were changing their economic realities by taking charge of their own small worlds, one factory and one neighborhood at a time. Marina Sitrin captures those experiences in a dramatic way and reflects in the Argentinian stories what we have lived in recent years -- a collective impulse to find a new reality and change the world from the inside. Her ability to describe the new kind of revolution that has swept across Argentina in recent years is inspiring to the thousands of us across South America that strive for that new reality

for ourselves and our families. She offers a unique and very important perspective on the changes that Argentinians are contributing to a new kind of world. Her insights capture the meanings that stimulate the everyday collective heroes of her stories to be full participants in creating their own realities. This is a book that captures the essence of 21st century revolutions - direct democracy in which people replace governments to build a just and liveable world.

Very good insight of actions that can be taken from an individual, or bottom up, perspective when an economy collapses. "Recuperation" of closed businesses, by their employees, is of particular interest, given the increasing number of productive enterprises that are being closed in this country. This book offers insights into what led to the 2002 economic collapse. Argentina, like every country is unique, but their experiences have much to teach us about governmental repression in the name of "saving" the country, and how speculative excess and administrative venality leads not to recession or depression but collapse. (5 presidents in two weeks!)

Our future depends on creating new forms of society that reflect the economic change that has thrust our world into chaos . The new technology has created machines to replace human labor , both physical and mental. As fewer jobs reduce the economic power of consumers, products are produced at a more precise and rapid rate with little chance of being consumed. Profits plunder and people starve in this economic environment. Everyday Revolutions describe the response from the many to the dictates of the few by building a society outside of the existing society. This is not about overthrowing the existing decaying system, controlled by a few, but about giving birth to something new being created by the many. This book is a continuation of the book ,Horizontalism, and continues to provide us with much anticipated information of an extremely important experiment in social change.

Marina Sitrin's books have been an amazing source of insightful, intelligent, and politically salient writings that I continually turn to for my own writing, teaching, and political thinking. Having taught chapters from "Horizontalism" for the past few years in my undergraduate classes, it was with relish that I read "Everyday Revolutions." In this latest book Sitrin provides us with the social and political analysis that rounds out the "Horizontalism" project. These two books have been truly indispensable and have indeed influenced many activists that I've spoken with from New York to Budapest, to Buenos Aires. Couldn't recommend this book more highly!-Zoltan Gluck, CUNY Anthropology

I purchased *Everyday Revolutions* because I so much enjoyed Marina Sitrin's in-depth interviews in *Horizontalidad* (Horizontalism in English) letting us see and understand -in the beginning- what was happening in Argentina when the factories were being occupied and the neighborhoods were creating assemblies, and in *Everyday Revolutions* I expected an updated 'more of the same'. What I got was an education. Yes, there are great interviews, and yes we are brought up to date on the Argentine social movements, their progress or lack thereof, but more than that, the philosophy underlying the movements in Argentina, and by extension in the world, are explained in ways we can understand. If you are seeking a diatribe on why these movements will fail because they have not aligned with the parties, movements and revolutions that have worked for awhile in the past (including those close to my heart) you will be disappointed. If however, you want a well-written analysis to understand "what they want" "why they want it this way" and "can it work?" you will be enlightened... not permanently enlightened... this is a movement in movement after all, but you will definitely enjoy being educated.

This is a provocative and insightful book about grassroots community organization in Argentina in the face of a dire economic crisis. When an economic vacuum appeared the people stepped in to take charge of their communal destinies. Marina Sitrin shows us how this happened in Argentina. This book provides a possible template for similar communal organization and involvement when this type of crisis occurs elsewhere in the world. With vivid descriptive examples readers can see how people in Argentina worked out collective action and how ordinary people can take charge of their lives. This is an important book documenting social change. Howard Pflanzner, Adjunct Associate Professor, English, Bronx Community College, Author, *DEAD BIRDS* or *AVIAN BLUES*.

This is a serious, disciplined and committed work, taken from the mouths of those in action. Sitrin captured the spirit of a generation and poured their own words into paper. Excellent work, easy to read, even useful from a linguistic perspective, but more so for those interested in alternate ways of creating better societies world-wide and from the ground up. Mariano Munoz Brooklyn, NY.

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