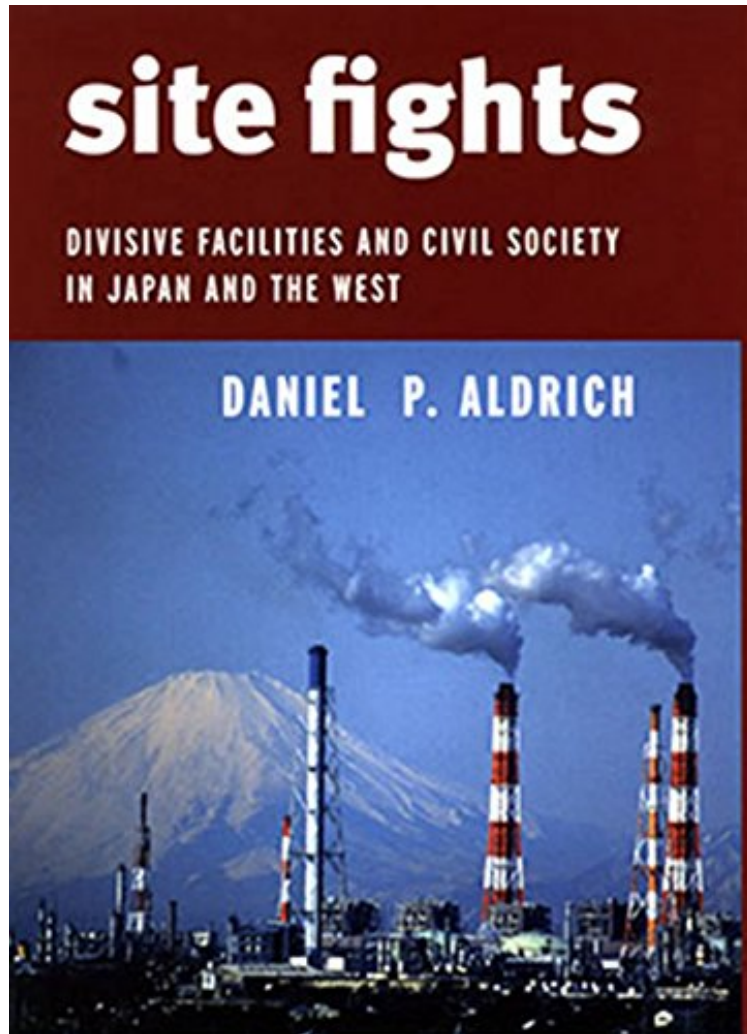


# Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West

*Daniel P. Aldrich*

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**Daniel P. Aldrich : Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good workBy Jacob Yuroh TeshimaThe author has cool and objective eyes to observe the authentic pictures of Japan as she is. The work is excellent and his critique on Japanese society is fair. I expect his additional works to come.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Love it!By Shirley FieldDaniel P. Aldrich's Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West is an extraordinarily comprehensive overview of the factors surrounding the placement of unwanted facilities in Japan and

France, with some brief mention of conflicts that occurred in the United States. He focuses on three types of facilities in particular: dams, airports, and nuclear power plants. These facilities are both "public goods" and "public bads" in that they provide diffuse benefits to the majority of society in the form of clean drinking water, power, and transportation, but they create high costs that must be paid by a small, geographically isolated chunk of the population. His argument is a simple yet powerful one: civil society affects the placement of controversial facilities. He divides this argument into two main points. States handle initial conflict by avoiding areas with high levels of civil society and thus the most potential for resistance and, when encountering resistance, states use coercion and hard social control first. As with any book mentioning civil society, Aldrich handpicks his own definition, describing it as "sustained, organized social activity that occurs in groups that are formed outside the state, the market, and the family"(15). This definition is sufficiently vague enough to allow its application to Japan without requiring any messy argument over the existence of a Japanese civil society. He spells out clearly how he measures civil society - through "quality," the depths of connections between individuals and through "relative capacity," the number of individuals in a particular civil society. Throughout his examination of controversial sitings in France, Japan, and the US, he shows how these qualities of civil society are the most important in facilitating effective resistance. Most refreshing is his examination of all stages of the selection process. Rather than merely looking at cases and times when civil society reacts to a public bad, Aldrich looks at what occurs before that, examining the reasoning behind a state's choice of a certain site. He argues that, while technical feasibility is an obvious major factor behind siting decisions, it is not the only one. Rather, states behave in a Machiavellian manner by purposely seeking out sites with the least potential for resistance. As clear-cut and articulate as his argument is, it is difficult to imagine a negative critique of this book. Aldrich carefully covers all his bases with clear explanations of all his data and painstakingly illustrates every step he took to get to his conclusion. This book will be an excellent read for all those interested in state strategies against resistance, no matter their country of focus.

10 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Book! By CRB 22 NY

It is rare to make an original contribution to such mature fields as social movements, state theory, and environmental politics, but Daniel Aldrich's comparative study of divisive facilities is one of the more satisfying books I have read in the past decade. Aldrich shows that states select communities with weak civil societies as sites for airports, dams, and nuclear reactors. Moreover, he shows that states develop their "toolkits" through their interaction with strong civil societies and move away from conventional coercive strategies. Playing both the "lion" and the "fox," strong societies foster sophisticated "Machiavellian" state strategies that enable them to control contentious citizens. The strength of Aldrich's argument comes out in his incisive analysis of variations across facility types and political contexts. The detailed studies of airports, dams, and nuclear reactors show that different facilities engender different political dynamics. Moreover, by comparing the politics of nuclear power in France and Japan, he shows how weak resistance in France led to a reliance on coercion, while strong resistance in Japan caused the state to expand its skill set. This book does many things well. It is methodologically sophisticated without being esoteric. Its lucid presentation and effective use of interpretative graphs makes the results readily understandable to the greenest undergraduate, while its theoretical sophistication will make even the most jaded scholar wish they had written it. This is an ambitious book engaging many literatures and scholars ranging from Japanese politics to social movements to social and political theory and will be fruitfully used in courses from introductory undergraduate courses to advanced graduate seminars. With the dramatic rise of energy use and transportation infrastructure, the problems surrounding divisive facilities will only increase in the future and there is no better place to start than this welcome addition. I look forward to Aldrich's next book.

One of the most vexing problems for governments is building controversial facilities that serve the needs of all citizens but have adverse consequences for host communities. Policymakers must decide not only where to locate often unwanted projects but also what methods to use when interacting with opposition groups. In *Site Fights*, Daniel P. Aldrich gathers quantitative evidence from close to five hundred municipalities across Japan to show that planners deliberately seek out acquiescent and unorganized communities for such facilities in order to minimize conflict. When protests arise over nuclear power plants, dams, and airports, agencies regularly rely on the coercive powers of the modern state, such as land expropriation and police repression. Only under pressure from civil society do policymakers move toward financial incentives and public relations campaigns. Through fieldwork and interviews with bureaucrats and activists, Aldrich illustrates these dynamics with case studies from Japan, France, and the United States. The incidents highlighted in *Site Fights* stress the importance of developing engaged civil society even in the absence of crisis, thereby making communities both less attractive to planners of controversial projects and more effective at resisting future threats.

Daniel Aldrich has written an extraordinary book in *Site Fights*. It will be very good for classes on public policy, environmental policy, Japanese politics, and comparative politics. --Mary Alice Haddad, in *Governance* (Vol 22 No. 4) How do governments make decisions about siting controversial facilities such as nuclear power plants, dams, and airports? This is the central research question raised by this extremely well written and highly readable book. --

Jennifer Chan, JJPSSite Fights makes a very important contribution to both the civil society and comparative politics literatures relating to Japan. --Patricia Maclachlan, Journal of Japanese Studies"The unique contribution of this book lies in its nature as an exercise in comparative public policy. The case studies, which include Japan and France, are very well done and provide empirical evidence for the universal nature of the human reaction to siting dilemmas. They suggest that the strategic interaction between democratic state policy processes and the organizational structure of the civic society involvedincluding its conventions, values, and legal backgroundcan indeed predict the success or failure of facility siting."Political Science Quarterly"Site Fights is an impressive book that pushes the reader to reconsider the role of civil society in state policymaking. It is of great interest to scholars in comparative politics and civil society research, activists, and policymakers alike."Japanese Journal of Political Science"Although the study is largely a chronicle of failed efforts by civil-society groups to stop public projects in their communities, Aldrich emphasizes that when civil society mobilizes broadly and strongly, it can force the state to use milder tactics and can sometimes even prevail."Patricia G. Steinhoff, American Journal of Sociology"The popular slogan NIMBYNot in My Back Yardcaptures a classic dilemma that confronts policymakers: Although society as a whole requires certain basic public goods, such as energy supplies, improved infrastructure, and transportation hubs, individual communities are often unwilling to bear the localized costs and externalities of hosting these installations. In this fresh, insightful, and creative study, Daniel Aldrich explores the ways in which states decide to site controversial facilities and the types of instruments that public agencies employ to respond to societal opposition against these siting decisions."Alexander Cooley, Perspectives on Politics "Site Fights makes a very important contribution to both the civil society and comparative politics literatures relating to Japan. It will serve as an excellent text in a graduate-level seminar on Japanese domestic politics and should be of interest to scholars and policymakers interested in environmental issues, state-society relations, and the challenges faced by modern states in their quest to secure expanded sources of energy. Finally, citizen activists in advanced democracies would do well to take heed of one of this book's implied lessons: in order to force state compliance with democratic standards of behavior, you must gaman (persevere)."Patricia L. Maclachlan, Journal of Japanese Studies"Daniel Aldrich's book should be read by anyone interested in Japanese politics in general and those who want to have a deeper understanding of the politics behind the siting of what Aldrich calls 'public badsrsquo;; facilities that impose costs directly upon a community."Linda Hasunuma, Journal of Asian Studies"Daniel P. Aldrich has written an important book that analyzes the ways in which national bureaucracies interact with anti-project social movements. He explains with impressive empirical evidence why in highly charged policy areas governments sometimes use coercion, whereas in other cases they adopt softer policy instruments."Ezra Suleiman, IBM Professor and Chair, Department of Politics and Director, Program in Contemporary European Politics and Society, Princeton University"In Site Fights, Daniel P. Aldrich looks at frictions between state bureaucracies and elements of civil society and posits a model for their interactions and mutual influences over time. He argues that states worry primarily about the strength of civil society in the areas they target for their projects. Therefore, civil societies play a crucial role in the development of a country and its democracy."Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, University of Utah"Site Fights is a very rich account of facility siting, an issue that takes on added significance in the case of Japan, where population density is high and land is scarce. The study of Japanese society will benefit from what it says about decision making and the influence of and constraints on the power of civil society in Japan."Miranda Schreurs, Director of the Environmental Policy Research Centre and Prof. of Comparative Politics at the Free University of Berlin"Daniel P. Aldrich has produced a fascinating book that investigates how states approach the siting of public nasties comparatively. Integrating the social capital and facility siting literatures, it qualifies the dominant paradigm that states seek to develop controversial projects through open, noncoercive, and participatory strategies. Site Fights will generate a lively scholarly and policy debate about the relationship between the state and civil society in the management of contentious siting politics."Hayden Lesbirel, James Cook University, author of NIMBY Politics in Japan"Daniel P. Aldrich provides a fresh look at a familiar and enduring arena of political stalemate. His comparative approach cuts across multiple siting venues and offers important insights that can serve to guide contentious land use decisions."Barry G. Rabe, Gerald Ford School of Public Policy, University of MichiganFrom the Back Cover"Daniel P. Aldrich has written an important book that analyzes the ways in which national bureaucracies interact with anti-project social movements. He explains with impressive empirical evidence why in highly charged policy areas governments sometimes use coercion, whereas in other cases they adopt softer policy instruments."--Ezra Suleiman, IBM Professor and Chair, Department of Politics and Director, Program in Contemporary European Politics and Society, Princeton University "In Site Fights, Daniel P. Aldrich looks at frictions between state bureaucracies and elements of civil society and posits a model for their interactions and mutual influences over time. He argues that states worry primarily about the strength of civil society in the areas they target for their projects. Therefore, civil societies play a crucial role in the development of a country and its democracy."--Wesley Sasaki-Uemura, University of Utah "Site Fights is a very rich account of facility siting, an issue that takes on added significance in the case of Japan, where population density is high and land is scarce. The study of Japanese society will benefit from what it says about decision making and the influence of and constraints on the power of civil society in Japan."--Miranda Schreurs, Director of the Environmental Policy Research Centre and Prof. of Comparative Politics at the Free University of

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About the Author Daniel P. Aldrich is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Security and Resilience Studies Program at Northeastern University.