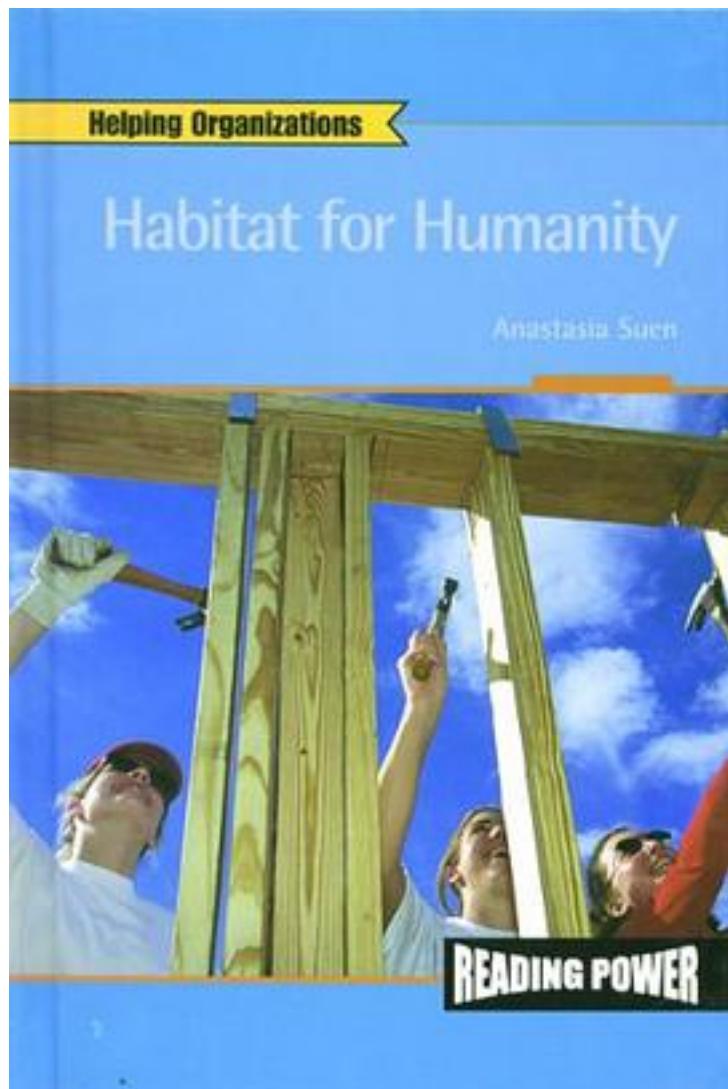


Habitat for Humanity



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Habitat for Humanity[registered], a grassroots house-building ministry founded in 1976 by evangelical Christians, is one of the best-known and most widely popular nonprofit organizations in operation today. With approximately 1500 local affiliates in the United States and more than 300 abroad in sixty-four countries, the organization has constructed more than 90,000 homes primarily by mobilizing concerned citizens, who include about 250,000 American volunteers each year. The author tells the story of Habitat's development and the special fervor it evokes among volunteers and those for whom it builds houses. Through interviews with staff, he also provides a look into the organizational dynamics of Habitat, a non-profit whose religious mission for social change is inevitably affected by the instrumental, bottom-line orientation of the state and the market. Baggett argues that Habitat is an example of a particular social form of religion, the paradenominational organization, that is uniquely adapted to the climate of the modern world. It is one of the vital forms that voluntarism takes today. Jerome P. Baggett is Assistant Professor of Religion and Society at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley.

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目录:

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