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Título: Mexican Community Health And The Politics Of Health Reform

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The struggle of Mexicans to secure quality health care is the focal point of this study. Large-scale transformations in Mexico's national health care system have resulted in budget cuts, increased user fees and decreased public services. At the local level community-based health groups that practice popular medicine are addressing the challenge by training health promoters in a variety of preventive and healing practices and offering low-cost services in community clinics. Their health care approach integrates local and global practices ranging from Mexican herbalism to Chinese medicine. Suzanne Schneider's ethnographic study of grassroots health groups in Morelos, Mexico, addresses the lives of the participants and the groups' contributions to community health. What draws women to these groups? Are they reacting to their experiences with formal health care? To what extent are the groups' teachings applied in the household and accepted throughout the community? Does group participation offer women new sources of empowerment or avenues to income generation? Does the government support these groups? How do they fit into larger trends of health care reform and the shift toward privatization? Taking a political economic approach, Schneider examines the conditions under which community-based health groups are emerging and explores the ways different constituencies address health dilemmas. She delineates future roles for new participants in health care, new models of community health, and a new medical pluralism.