



The Politics of Participation: From Athens to E-Democracy

Aberdeen Matt Qvortrup is Professor of Political Science at the Robert Gordon University

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We live in an age of democracy. Very few people challenge the virtues of 'government by the people', yet politicians and commentators are fond of decrying the 'crisis of democracy'. How do these views square up? This book provides the answer by surveying the philosophical history of democracy and its critics and by analysing empirical data about citizen participation in Britain and other developed democracies. In addition to analysis of major political thinkers like Plato, Machiavelli and J.S. Mill, the book analyses how modern technology has influenced democracy. Among the issues discussed in the book are why people vote and what determines their decisions, what prompts citizen involvement in riots and demonstrations, whether spin doctors and designer politics pose a threat to democracy and the influence of mass media on our political behaviour. More than merely providing an overview, the book also presents original analyses of timely issues such as referendums and the consequences of postal voting. An essential book for students of politics, history and media studies, this study puts the debate about democracy into perspective and offers a solid grounding for future discussions.



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