

The Sciences of the Democracies

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Jean-Paul Gagnon
and Benjamin Abrams *et al.*

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The field of democracy studies is more constricted than it needs to be, as researchers, for all their insights, continue to study only fragments of democracy in isolation from each other. Seeking change, *The Sciences of the Democracies* proposes a groundbreaking means for holistic study, drawing on five sources of knowledge that will provide better understanding of democracy, or rather, of 'the democracies'. These are: individual people, groups of people, non-textual media, texts, and non-humans.

This book details how the inclusion of these five sources across temporal, spatial, cultural, linguistic, and species contexts leads to the discovery of democratic practices and institutions hitherto unknown or unfamiliar to the conventional 'Western' perception. It promises to generate a new class of democratic theorist – the 'Fourth Theorist', who theorizes from thousands of multimedial democracy concepts – and it has the potential for generating better-founded, less arbitrary, more inclusive democratic theories. In doing so, the book considers the philosophical, institutional, educational, and methodological difficulties of the scientific understandings and undertakings it proposes. The book is a choral work of many collaborating authors. Their ambition is to offer a touchstone text for government and public officials, citizens, residents and visitors, researchers, practitioners, and philanthropists (big and small) participating in what is a vibrant global discussion on how to study and practice democracy equitably.

Praise for *The Sciences of the Democracies*

'A timely and ambitious project aimed at forming and consolidating a new generation of democracy scholars.'

Mark E. Warren, University of British Columbia

'A wonderful exploration of how we study democracy... timely, and inspiring reflection on democracy's past, present, and future.'

Simone Chambers, University of California, Irvine

'A genuinely original collaborative project of democratic learning and action... It should be of interest to anyone who has ever wondered what democracy is, has been and might be.'

Annabelle Lever, Sciences-Po

'This is a wonderfully ambitious book, whose great merit lies in its bold choice to view democracy as a phenomenon of continuous variation.'

Frank Hendriks, Tilburg University

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Authors

Jean-Paul Gagnon is a philosopher of democracies at the University of Canberra and an editor of the journal *Democratic Theory*. **Benjamin Abrams** is Associate Professor of Sociology at University College London's Institute of Education and Chief Editor of the journal *Contention*. **Hans Asenbaum** is a senior research fellow at the Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance at the University of Canberra. **Andreas Avgousti** completed his PhD at Columbia University and teaches History at Katz Yeshiva High School in Florida, USA. **Rikki Dean** is an associate Professor in Politics and Co-Director for the Centre for Democratic Futures at the University of Southampton.

Gergana Dimova is an associate Professor in Politics and Sociology at Northeastern University, London, UK. **Peter Donkor** earned his master's from the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration and is in his pre-doc period. **Erica Dorn** is an assistant Professor in Design and Innovation at Oregon State University. **Anna Drake** is an assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Waterloo. **Dannica Fleuß** is a visiting professor at the University of Nairobi and a research associate at the University of Canberra. **Brigitte Geissel** is Professor of Political Science and Political Sociology and Head of the Research Unit "Democratic Innovations" at Goethe University, Frankfurt.

Agustín Goenaga is an assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, Lund University, Sweden. **Petra Guasti** is an associate Professor of Democratic Theory at Charles University's Faculty of Social Sciences. **Zheng Guo** is a pre-doctoral candidate in political science holding a master's from the University of Copenhagen. **Alexander Hudson** is a senior Adviser in the Democracy Assessment Unit of International IDEA's Global Programmes in Stockholm, Sweden. **Marcin Kaim** is a researcher working at the Polish Academy of Sciences - Scientific Centre in Vienna, Austria. **Eva Krick** is a democracy scholar, based at the University of Mainz. **Kathleen McCrudden-Illert** is a Max Weber Fellow at the European University Institute in Florence. **John B. Min** is a Philosophy Professor at the Department of Social Sciences at the College of Southern Nevada. **Christoph Mohamad-Klotzbach** is a postdoctoral Fellow at the Chair of Comparative Politics at the Institute of Political Science and Sociology, University of Würzburg.

Leonardo Morlino is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at LUISS, Rome, Italy. **Kei Nishiyama** is a lecturer of education at Kaichi International University, Japan. **Remi Chukwudi Okeke** is Lecturer I at Madonna University, Nigeria. **Norma Osterberg-Kaufmann** is researcher and lecturer at the Institute of Social Sciences of the Humboldt-Universität Berlin. **Lucy J Parry** is principally a Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. **Markus Pausch** is a democracy researcher and Professor at the Social Department of the University of Applied Sciences Salzburg. **Patricia Roberts-Miller** is Professor Emerita of Rhetoric and Writing and former Director of the University Writing Center at the University of Texas Austin.

Ernesto Cruz Ruiz earned his doctoral degree from the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and continues his research on Contemporary democracies at the TUM. **Shannon Song** is a higher degree research student at the University of Canberra. **Toralf Stark** is a Research Fellow with the Institute of Political Science at the University of Duisburg-Essen. **Tom Theuns** is principally a senior assistant Professor of Political Theory and European Politics at the Institute of Political Science in Leiden.

Laurence Whitehead is a senior research Fellow in Politics at Nuffield College, Oxford, and series editor of "Oxford Studies in Democratization".

