



# **Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life (The Julian J. Rothbaum Distinguished Lecture Series)**

*Theda Skocpol*

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Pundits and social observers have voiced alarm each year as fewer Americans involve themselves in voluntary groups that meet regularly. Thousands of nonprofit groups have been launched in recent times, but most are run by professionals who lobby Congress or deliver social services to clients. What will happen to U.S. democracy if participatory groups and social movements wither, while civic involvement becomes one more occupation rather than every citizen's right and duty? In *Diminished Democracy*, Theda Skocpol shows that this decline in public involvement has not always been the case in this country—and how, by understanding the causes of this change, we might reverse it.

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