



# The Age of Direct Citizen Participation (ASPA Classics)

*Nancy C. Roberts*

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Citizen involvement is considered the cornerstone of democratic theory and practice. Citizens today have the knowledge and ability to participate more fully in the political, technical, and administrative decisions that affect them. On the other hand, direct citizen participation is often viewed with skepticism, even wariness. Many argue that citizens do not have the time, preparation, or interest to be directly involved in public affairs, and suggest instead that representative democracy, or indirect citizen participation, is the most effective form of government. Some of the very best writings on this key topic - which is at the root of the entire "reinventing government" movement - can be found in the journals that ASPA publishes or sponsors. In this collection Nancy Roberts has brought together the emerging classics on the ongoing debate over citizen involvement. Her detailed introductory essay and section openers frame the key issues, provide historical context, and fill in any gaps not directly covered by the articles. More than just an anthology, "The Age of Direct Citizen Participation" provides a unique and useful framework for understanding this important subject. It is an ideal resource for any Public Administration course involving citizen engagement and performance management.

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