

Theda Skocpol

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"Americans today live in a very different governmental and civic universe than their forebears—a changed public world in which political authorities and nonprofit organizations rely on professional management and media messages rather than on organized popular participation. We need to reinvent our democracy for the twenty-first century."

Theda Skocpol

Areas of expertise

- The debate about the decline of American civil society
- Women, race and civic engagement
- The history and structure of voluntary associations
- How and where people unite across class, race, religion, and gender

Topics in the News

- Funding AmeriCorps
- The moral frameworks of Medicare and Social Security
- The professional management of not-for-profits
- The disconnect between policy elites and the rest of the citizenry






Biography

Theda Skocpol is an expert in how democratic leadership is being redefined in America. She can discuss how, although membership groups have waned, some groups are doing creative work to involve large numbers of people and speak in different, and persuasive ways. Skocpol has demonstrated that in America's move from voluntary membership associations, including many religion-related, to professionally run advocacy groups and nonprofit agencies, the nation has gained the voices speaking for women and minorities, yet lost fellowship across class lines. Skocpol was President elect of the American Political Science Association, 2001–2002.

Resources by this expert

- *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2003)
- *The Missing Middle: Working Families and the Future of American Social Policy* (W.W. Norton and The Century Foundation, 2000)
- *Boomerang: Clinton's Health Reform and the Turn Against Government* (W.W. Norton, 1997)
- *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Harvard University Press, 1992)

Recent Interviews & Articles

- Associated Press, March 2, 2006, by Ron Fournier "[Video underscores public's frustration with government at all levels](#)" 
- *The New Republic*, September 12, 2005, by Lawrence F. Kaplan "American Idle"
- *Associated Press*, February 26, 2005, by Chris Newmarker "Masons seek to shed secretive image, attract new members"
- *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 9, 2005, by David Brooks "Goodbye Elks; hello Howard Dean"
- *New York Times*, February 5, 2005, by David Brooks "A short history of Deanism"
- *Newhouse News Service*, July 19, 2004 "U.S. Is Nation of Bystanders in War on Terrorism"
- *The Sedalia Democrat* (Sedalia, MO), July 4, 2004 "[Service clubs find attendance declining](#)" 
- *The Associated Press*, June 28, 2004 "[A nation of bystanders: By most measures, Americans are participating less and less in civic life](#)" 
- *The American Prospect*, May 26, 2004 "[The Narrowing of Civic Life](#)" 
- *Daily Times*, March 8, 2004 "[Chicken and egg of development](#)" 

Organizational links for this expert

- [Harvard University, Sociology](#)
- [Harvard University, Government](#)

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