



# Reviving Citizen Engagement: Policies to Renew National Community

*Larry N. Gerston*

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Whereas our nation was once united in purpose, today it is bitterly divided. Why? Racial discrimination, diminishing educational opportunities, poor economic mobility, greedy corporations, and an unresponsive federal government have combined to create two Americas. Presented in Gerston's characteristic, no-holds-barred style of wit and candor, **Reviving Citizen Engagement: Policies to Renew National Community** casts a harsh light on the current state of American public policy. It then offers approaches to healing some of the country's most pressing problems.

The book begins with an assessment of the extent to which America has become a fractured society and the residual damage from the social implosion. It then examines the fragile condition of the 21st century electorate and a political system where private power too often has overcome values intended to protect the public good. The author argues it isn't American entitlement run amok, but suggests there really is a powerful disconnect. The large number of Americans who have been left out of the system are no longer engaged citizens.

This development represents a monumental threat to American democracy, for our democracy can succeed only if its people believe they have the opportunity to succeed. This book not only provides evidence of our frayed society but also includes recommendations for strengthening America's social fabric. It details the steps we can—and must—take to repair, rebuild, and renew American society. Gerston contends they are within our reach if we are willing to make the sacrifices long overdue in what historically has been recognized as the world's most powerful and successful nation.

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