Revisiting Tocqueville: Citizenship Norms, Political Repertoires, and Cultural Participation

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Tocqueville, Alexis de, 1805-1859
Boudon, Raymond, 1934-2013
Civic participation
Protest
Democratic theory

2009

Bardwell Press


What are the reasons for Tocqueville’s eternal youth? This is the question Raymond Boudon asks in his recent book, Tocqueville for Today (Boudon 2006: 2). In other words, why do we keep reading Democracy in America, a book written in the 1830s, in order to understand how liberal democracy works today, both in the US and elsewhere? Boudon’s answer — that Tocqueville gave us a new and innovative sociological analysis that has yet to be surpassed — points to the exceptional character of his contribution to the understanding of modern societies. Alongside the names of Weber and Durkheim, Boudon doubtless includes Tocqueville as one of his most admired classic social thinkers. Curiously enough, Boudon’s assessment of Tocqueville as a sociological classic was itself an exceptional judgment only a generation ago.

yes

http://hdl.handle.net/10451/22710

978-1-905622-18-4


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Participation and Politics: Social Capital, Civic Voluntarism, and Institutional Context. Daniel Rubenson Department of Government, London School Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom E-mail: d.rubenson@lse.ac.uk. Various theories have been used to explain political participation, two of which will be examined in this paper. Paul Whiteley’s study for example, sets out to improve on the Tocqueville/Putnam model of social capital arguing that associational membership and participation are inadequate as a model for social capital creation.12 In its stead, Whiteley suggests a model ‘rooted in psychological variables associated with the personalities and moral codes of individuals….’13 Three components of the model are discussed: (1). Political culture Civic participation Citizenship Voluntary organizations. This is a preview of subscription content, log in to check access. Cite article. Considering cultural conflict. Class politics and cultural politics in Western societies. Maastricht: Shaker. Google Scholar. A new civic engagement? Political participation, civic life, and the changing American citizen. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Google Scholar.