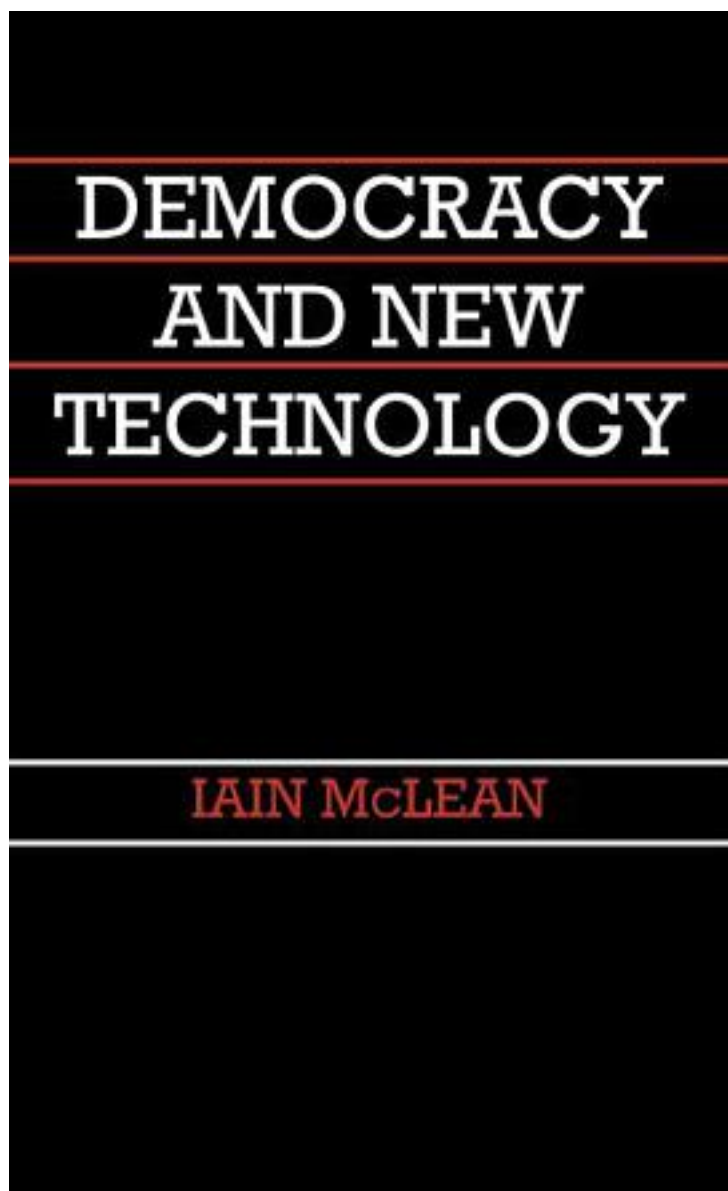


Democracy and New Technology



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In this accessible new book, Iain McLean explores the impact of information technology on democracy. Combining democratic theory, social choice theory and description of new technology at work in Europe and the USA, McLean explores democracy as it is and as it could be. The author begins in ancient Athens and moves through Pliny, Rousseau, Madison and J S Mill to modern representatives and direct democracy. Introducing the theory of social choice, he argues that democracy is about procedures, not results, and sets out some criteria for fair aggregation of individuals' preferences to society's. Exploring the impact of new technology on these procedures, McLean shows how it can save time, and increase accuracy and accessibility, but also how it can lead to manipulation and come up against Arrow's, Gibbards' and McKelvey's impossibility theorems.

In conclusion, McLean asks whether new technology widens or narrows our democratic horizons, and points to the technical and logical boundaries of democracy. Democracy and New Technology will be of great interest to students and researchers in politics, sociology, and media and communications studies. It is one of very few books to explain social choice theory in totally non-technical language and to explore what it means for democracy.

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