# Civil Society: Underpinnings of American Democracy

By Brian O Connell

University Press of New England, United States, 1999. Paperback. Book Condition: New. New.. 212 x 136 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Edward Gibbon said of the ancient Athenians, when the freedom they wished for most was freedom from responsibility, then Athens ceased to be free. America is the longest-lived democracy in the history of the world, but there are signs that our own extraordinary system faces a similar peril. A vibrant civil society, characterized by active citizen participation, is essential to a strong democracy, argues Brian O Connell, and in his new book he offers a citizen s guide to this concept of civil society -- what it is, how it functions, its limitations and potential, and most importantly, what individuals can do to nurture and support it. It is designed to provide practical understanding and foster action among community and national leaders, including mayors, civic leaders, school boards, public administrators, independent sector leaders, scholars, and teachers. Civil Society explores the idea and the reality of citizen participation, including government s essential responsibility to preserve the freedoms that allow and encourage it. It also traces the contemporary weakening of this tradition as a result of indifference, selfishness, loss...

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