

The Future Of Teledemocracy

by Ted Becker and Christa Daryl Slaton

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Professional, technical, reading is daily, customary and unsurprising for most of us. But here comes a time when we perceive some other view of the things, when mental patterns we are used to have to be refreshed. It is the time of an essential reading. We ought to direct attention to new conceptual paradigms, we are intrigued of or we are not, which is high time for us to understand, which possibly have accompanied us so far but we have not been capable to truly understand. These conceptual structures take us to the door of the next century, but to get over its threshold, technically speaking, is to have the key to new social and political paradigms and to their influence on our lives.

Recently published one book of such impact might be that authored by Ted Becker and Christa Daryl Slaton, titled as above.

Ted Becker is Professor of Political Science at Auburn University. His earlier writings include Quantum Politics (Praeger, 1991). As political activist he aims at bringing together teledemocracy, direct democracy and environmental sustainability.

Christa Daryl Slaton is director of the Masters in Public Administration Program and Professor of Political Science at Auburn University. She wrote about "Televote: Expanding Citizen Participation in the Quantum Age" (Praeger, 1991).

Part One of the book reveals the authors' consciousness of a new turn just going to happen, with a new perspective of the world up in its sleeve. A bridge spanned over from the political theories, institutions and practices nourished by the Newtonian paradigm to those fathered by the quantum theory and the chaos theory with Newtonian elements still present, take the authors to an emerging Paradigm – a New Democratic Paradigm, which they dedicate deep analysis and very serious and attentive approach. The New Democratic Paradigm's characteristic elements are seen to be advanced Information and Communication Technologies

and the inevitability of classical democracy entering a teledemocracy age thanks to these technologies. Its post-Newtonian and theoretical background -new forms, types and styles of democracy-are revealed.

Chapter 2 goes through the intertwining between science and politics, from the quantum theory application to spheres outside government, and to the political science. The emergence of a new political science and of a New Democratic Paradigm incorporating chaos theory, quantum theory and social energy is announced.

The titles of the two Chapters of Part One are:

1. *"The Emergence and Components of the New Democratic Paradigm: Historical Surges and Visions of the Future"*
2. *"The New Physics as the Scientific Foundation for the New Democratic Paradigm"*

Part Two discusses a most desired and also a most expected posture of citizenship, that of making use of powerful and interactive ICTs, which modern democracies impose on them. Opinions are expressed at a time when the multimedia information and communication system-the Internet-was not yet materialized but was arduously anticipated, but the authors' palpable ICT included telephone, radio and TV. This Part also shows the authors' personal evolution in the age of PC and shows how PC has become their main instrument of expressing vision, thinking, design.

The titles of the four Chapters of Part Two are:

3. *"Empowering Citizens by Televoting: An Experiment in Scientific Deliberative Polling"*
4. *"The Untapped Potential of Interactive TV Town Meetings and Public Hearings"*

5. *"The First Step Toward Synergy: Collaborative Designs for Advanced, Genuine Electronic Town Meetings (ETMs)"*
6. *"Beyond ETMs: Synergizing Future Teledemocracies via Computers"*.

In Chapter 7 titled *"The Future of Teledemocracy: Entering the Post-hierarchical Age"* authors mentioned *"is our best scientific forecast, but we also hope it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy in America and any part of the world that might afford a better proving ground. Just as our web site is designed to both describe and synergize the global democracy movement, so has it been the goal of Part I and*

Part II to describe, and is the goal of Part III to synergize, the future of teledemocracy, this time through the print medium."

The reviewer's appreciation of the book as a most captivating reading, made her and possibly readers at large, realise how important open-mindedness and knowledge adventure are in understanding the spirit of the age and in approaching the perspective.

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