

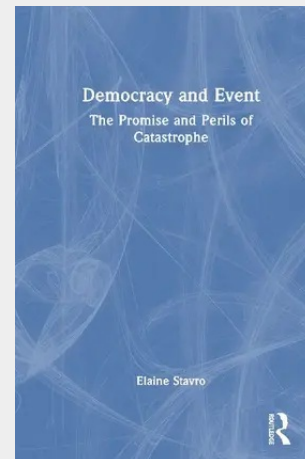
Stavro

Democracy and Event

The Promise and Perils of Catastrophe

Catastrophes unsettle our safe places within the world. As such, they provide an interesting site to analyze the intersection of our affective and political lives. Bringing radical democratic thinking, affect theory, psychoanalysis, and discursive analysis to bear on contemporary catastrophic events, *Democracy and Event* presents a fresh perspective on the study of affect and its impact on democratic sensibilities and practices. Situated in different countries with differing institutional histories and cultures – the Grenfell Tower fire in London, England (2017); the SARS epidemic in Toronto, Canada (2003); the Parkland shooting in Florida (2018); the early days of the COVID-19 crisis and the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA (2020) – Elaine Stavro interprets the rhetoric, discourse, and affective communication of politicians and passionate protestors. She examines their linkages to well-established organizations informed by democratic ideals, as well as the context in which they arise, which have a bearing on their ability to challenge neoliberal and authoritarian practices. Inspired by the urgent need to bring theory back to politics and politics back to theory, Elaine Stavro demonstrates how theory might inform our attitudes to contemporary events while recognizing that political action and events cannot be captured in their complexity by theory. Her skillful engagement with various theoretical approaches, read through the lens of catastrophic events, will speak to a wide-ranging scholarly readership in numerous academic fields.

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