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978-0-521-70268-3 - Aversive Democracy: Inheritance and Originality in the Democratic Tradition

Aletta J. Norval

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Aversive Democracy

The twenty-first century has brought a renewed interest in democratic theory and practices, creating a complicated relationship between time-honoured democratic traditions and new forms of political participation. Reflecting on this interplay between tradition and innovation, Aletta J. Norval offers fresh insights into the global complexities of the formation of democratic subjectivity, the difficult emergence and articulation of political claims, the constitution of democratic relations between citizens and the deepening of our democratic imagination. *Aversive Democracy* draws inspiration from a critical engagement with deliberative and post-structuralist models of democracy, while offering a distinctive reading inspired by contemporary work on the later Wittgenstein. This is a creative and insightful work which reorients democratic theory, elucidating the character of the commitments we engage in when we participate in democratic life together.

Aletta J. Norval is Reader in Political Theory in the Department of Government at the University of Essex. She is the author of *Deconstructing Apartheid Discourse* (1996).

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For David and James

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It is when Emerson thinks of thinking, or conversion, as oppositional, or critical, that he calls it aversion.

Cavell, *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome* (1990, 36)

The alternative to speaking for myself representatively (for *someone* else's consent) is not: speaking for myself privately. The alternative is having nothing to say, being voiceless, not even mute.

Cavell, *The Claim of Reason* (1982, 28)

Hence the calculation of units, that is, what are called *voices* or *votes* [*voix*] in democracy... What is a voice or a vote?

Derrida, *Rogues* (2005, 30)

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