



Democracy in Retrograde

How to Make Changes Big and Small in Our Country and in Our Lives

Sami Sage & Emily Amick · 2024

WHAT IT'S ABOUT

Sami Sage, cofounder of Betches Media, and Emily Amick, a lawyer and former counsel to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, wrote a practical guide for people who care about politics but don't know where to start.

The book works like a choose-your-own-adventure map. You pick civic actions that fit your values, skills, budget and time, from a few hours to a long-term role, with real stories of ordinary people who made a difference. It also makes the case that civic engagement can be a form of self-care.

WHY WE PICKED IT

Most of us don't need another reason to care. We need a realistic next step. This book is built around exactly that.

QUESTIONS FOR THE TABLE

- 01 What skills from your job or hobbies could be useful to a local cause?
- 02 Does calling civic engagement “self-care” make it more appealing to you, or does it undersell it?
- 03 Which story of an ordinary person making change stuck with you, and why?

CONNECT IT TO RIGHT NOW

All 124 seats in the South Carolina House are on the ballot on November 3, and South Carolina has had two weeks of no-excuse early voting since 2022.

The book is about finding a realistic next step. What is one thing you could do before an election besides voting yourself?

In February 2026, South Carolina's Social Media Regulation Act took effect immediately when it was signed, changing how apps and websites must treat users under 18.

Had you heard about it before it became law? Where do you actually get news about the Statehouse, and how could that be easier?