



# **Distrust American Style: Diversity and the Crisis of Public Confidence**

*Sheila Suess Kennedy*

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Political scientists have accumulated a significant amount of data suggesting that over the past decades, Americans have become less trusting of each other, and that as our population's diversity increases, our trust in our neighbors declines. Social scientists warn us that this erosion of interpersonal social trust has very negative implications for our ability to govern ourselves effectively.

In this informative discussion of Americans growing distrust, political scientist Sheila Suess Kennedy argues that diversity is not the reason we trust less. The culprit is a loss of faith in our social and governing institutions, and the remedy is to make them trustworthy once more. Rather than attempting to limit diversity through divisive measures such as building a wall between the United States and Mexico or imposing stricter immigration quotas, Kennedy emphasizes the need for the following confidence-building government reforms:

-Electoral reforms designed to eliminate gerrymandering, to ensure that electoral-college votes reflect the popular vote, and to increase voter participation through a nationwide vote-by-mail system.

-Improved government accountability so that the people are confident that constitutional checks and balances are honored and that government agencies are run by true experts, not political appointees.

-Creation of an affordable nationwide healthcare system that removes the current healthcare anxieties experienced by so many Americans.

Kennedy's cogent arguments, thorough research, and clear presentation make for a compelling book that will be of interest to politicians and citizens alike.

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