Real Democracy

The hard data

- "Real Democracy: The New Face of Town Meeting and How It Works (American Politics and Political Economy)" by Frank M. Bryan
- Publisher: University of Chicago Press
- Pages: 100
- Price: $19

UVM political science professor Frank Bryan has written a book on town meeting. With the help of his students, who gathered data, Bryan has compiled information about 1,500 town meetings spanning three decades. His work is published in a new book, "Real Democracy," which tracks factors including attendance, participation, repetition (how many people repeated themselves), gender participation, issues debated, and more.

"To some, town meeting is a relic unsuited for modern Vermont communities. To others, it's a cherished vestige of direct democracy. Frank's book shows that out and great shape to what we talk about with Vermonters," Bryan said.

Bryan has been tracking Vermonters' voting interests and trends for 40 years. Since he polled his 1964 class at Orléans High School about that year's presidential contest. His students voted 2-to-1 in favor of President Johnson over Barry Goldwater.

"If the kids in the Kingdom were for Johnson," Bryan said, "I knew Vermont would vote Democratic.

Bryan is a devoted and hard Vermonter who twice has returned..."