



Riot!: Civil Insurrection From Peterloo to the Present Day

Ian Heron

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Riot! covers, with a reporter's eye, almost 200 years of civil disturbance on mainland Britain, and gives a voice to some of the remarkable men and women involved. Ian Heron shows that resistance played a part, not always beneficially, in the creation of proper parliamentary democracy, the welfare state, the trade union movement, the rights of immigrants, and civil liberties. All of these, it can be argued, are under renewed attack today.

Heron tells the story of a largely unacknowledged tradition of violent protest in Britain, from the martyrs of Peterloo to the drug-fueled street violence of today. *Riot!* charts how the struggles of individual groups of workers turned into a broader campaign for electoral reform and justice; how excessive use of state force failed to extinguish the fires; how the trade unions pressed for wider social justice; how Thatcherism reversed decades of gradual reform and sparked social turmoil; and how a "good" riot played a part in her downfall. Finishing with an account of the anti-globalization movement and G8 protests, this lively book shows how the ugly roar of a mob has perhaps done more to change society than measured parliamentary debate.

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