



The Future of American Democratic Politics: Principles and Practices

Gerald M. Pomper, Marc D. Weiner

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Even before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, political scientists were assessing changes and continuities in the principles and practices of American democracy. Recent events, including the passage of the U.S. Patriot Act and the current debates about civil liberties versus homeland security, intensify the need to examine the long-term viability of democracy. In this book, fifteen major scholars assess the current state of American democracy, offering a spirited dialogue on the future of democratic politics. Contributors focus on three principles fundamental to democracy—equality, liberty, and participation. They examine these principles within the context of the basic institutions of American democracy: Congress and the state legislatures, the president, political parties, interest groups, and the Supreme Court. They raise questions regarding the checks and balances among formal governmental institutions (with the contributors sharing concern over the fading power of the legislature and the increased power of the executive and judiciary) as well as the role of political parties and interest groups.

Topics discussed include: the incomplete mobilization of the electorate, the debates over campaign finance reform and term limits, the Supreme Court's activist role in the Florida recount, the dangers of teledemocracy and state initiatives, the separation of political participation from residential location, "identity politics," the clash of "negative" and "positive" liberty, and the prospects for personal freedom in an era of terrorist threats. This timely collection covers the issues relevant to the future of American democracy today not only for lawmakers, students, and historians, but for any concerned citizen.

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