

Democracy And Its Critics Robert A Dahl

"Fake news," wild conspiracy theories, misleading claims, doctored photos, lies peddled as facts, facts dismissed as lies—citizens of democracies increasingly inhabit a public sphere teeming with competing claims and counterclaims, with no institution or person possessing the authority to settle basic disputes in a definitive way. The problem may be novel in some of its details—including the role of today's political leaders, along with broadcast and digital media, in intensifying the epistemic anarchy—but the challenge of determining truth in a democratic world has a backstory. In this lively and illuminating book, historian Sophia Rosenfeld explores a longstanding and largely unspoken tension at the heart of democracy between the supposed wisdom of the crowd and the need for information to be vetted and evaluated by a learned elite made up of trusted experts. What we are witnessing now is the unraveling of the détente between these competing aspects of democratic culture. In four bracing chapters, Rosenfeld substantiates her claim by tracing the history of the vexed relationship between democracy and truth. She begins with an examination of the period prior to the eighteenth-century Age of Revolutions, where she uncovers the political and epistemological

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foundations of our democratic world. Subsequent chapters move from the Enlightenment to the rise of both populist and technocratic notions of democracy between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the troubling trends—including the collapse of social trust—that have led to the rise of our "post-truth" public life. Rosenfeld concludes by offering suggestions for how to defend the idea of truth against the forces that would undermine it.

A contrarian yet highly engaging account of the spread of illiberal and anti-democratic sentiment throughout our culture that places responsibility on the citizens themselves. Over the past three decades, citizens of democracies who claim to value freedom, tolerance, and the rule of law have increasingly embraced illiberal politicians and platforms. Democracy is in trouble--but who is really to blame? In *Our Own Worst Enemy*, Tom Nichols challenges the current depictions of the rise of illiberal and anti-democratic movements in the United States and elsewhere as the result of the deprivations of globalization or the malign decisions of elites. Rather, he places the blame for the rise of illiberalism on the people themselves. Nichols traces the illiberalism of the 21st century to the growth of unchecked narcissism, rising standards of living, global peace, and a resistance to change. Ordinary citizens, laden with grievances, have joined forces with political entrepreneurs who thrive on the

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creation of rage rather than on the encouragement of civic virtue and democratic cooperation. While it will be difficult, Nichols argues that we need to defend democracy by resurrecting the virtues of altruism, compromise, stoicism, and cooperation--and by recognizing how good we've actually had it in the modern world. Trenchant, contrarian, and highly engaging, *Our Own Worst Enemy* reframes the debate about how democracies have ended up in this dire state of affairs and what to do about it. The fabric of democracy is threadbare in many contemporary societies. Connections that are vital to the functioning and integrity of our democratic systems are wearing thin. Citizens are increasingly disconnected from their elected representatives and from each other in polarised public spheres, and alienated from complex systems of public policy. In such disconnected times, how can we strengthen and renew our democracies? This book develops the idea of democratic mending as a way of advancing a more connective approach to democratic reform. It is informed by three rich empirical cases of connectivity in practice, as well as cutting-edge debates in deliberative democracy. The empirical cases uncover empowering and transformative modes of political engagement that are vital for democratic renewal. The diverse actors in this book are not withdrawing, resisting or seeking autonomy from conventional institutions of representative

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democracy but actively experimenting with ways to improve and engage with them. Through their everyday practices of democratic mending they undertake crucial systemic repair work and strengthen the integrity of our democratic fabric in ways that are yet to be fully acknowledged by scholars and practitioners of democratic reform.

"This book's great service is that it challenges us to consider the ways in which our institutions and systems, and the assumptions, positions and divisions that undergird them, leave us ill prepared for the next crisis."—Robert Rubin, *The New York Times Book Review*

Deftly weaving finance, politics, business, and the global human experience into one tight narrative, a tour-de-force account of 2020, the year that changed everything--from the acclaimed author of *Crashed*. The shocks of 2020 have been great and small, disrupting the world economy, international relations and the daily lives of virtually everyone on the planet. Never before has the entire world economy contracted by 20 percent in a matter of weeks nor in the historic record of modern capitalism has there been a moment in which 95 percent of the world's economies were suffering all at the same time. Across the world hundreds of millions have lost their jobs. And over it all looms the specter of pandemic, and death. Adam Tooze, whose last book was universally lauded for guiding us coherently through the chaos of the 2008 crash,

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now brings his bravura analytical and narrative skills to a panoramic and synthetic overview of our current crisis. By focusing on finance and business, he sets the pandemic story in a frame that casts a sobering new light on how unprepared the world was to fight the crisis, and how deep the ruptures in our way of living and doing business are. The virus has attacked the economy with as much ferocity as it has our health, and there is no vaccine arriving to address that. Tooze's special gift is to show how social organization, political interests, and economic policy interact with devastating human consequences, from your local hospital to the World Bank. He moves fluidly from the impact of currency fluctuations to the decimation of institutions--such as health-care systems, schools, and social services--in the name of efficiency. He starkly analyzes what happened when the pandemic collided with domestic politics (China's party conferences; the American elections), what the unintended consequences of the vaccine race might be, and the role climate change played in the pandemic. Finally, he proves how no unilateral declaration of "independence" or isolation can extricate any modern country from the global web of travel, goods, services, and finance.

Democracy and Its Critics Yale University Press
Why do some democratic governments succeed and others fail? In a book that has received attention from policymakers and civic activists in America and

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around the world, Robert Putnam and his collaborators offer empirical evidence for the importance of "civic community" in developing successful institutions. Their focus is on a unique experiment begun in 1970 when Italy created new governments for each of its regions. After spending two decades analyzing the efficacy of these governments in such fields as agriculture, housing, and health services, they reveal patterns of associationism, trust, and cooperation that facilitate good governance and economic prosperity. In this prize-winning book, one of the most prominent political theorists of our time makes a major statement about what democracy is and why it is important. Robert Dahl examines the most basic assumptions of democratic theory, tests them against the questions raised by its critics, and recasts the theory of democracy into a new and coherent whole. He concludes by discussing the directions in which democracy must move if advanced democratic states are to exist in the future. "When Robert Dahl speaks about democracy, everyone should listen. With *Democracy and Its Critics* Dahl has produced a work destined to become another classic."—Lucian W. Pye, *American Political Science Review* "In this magisterial work [Dahl]... describe[s] what democracy means...; why our own democracy is still deeply flawed; and how we could reform it.... A work of extraordinary

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intelligence and, what is even rarer, a work of extraordinary wisdom.”—Robert N. Bellah, New York Times Book Review

The Democracy Sourcebook offers a collection of classic writings and contemporary scholarship on democracy, creating a book that can be used by undergraduate and graduate students in a wide variety of courses, including American politics, international relations, comparative politics, and political philosophy. The editors have chosen substantial excerpts from the essential theorists of the past, including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, Alexis de Tocqueville, and the authors of The Federalist Papers; they place them side by side with the work of such influential modern scholars as Joseph Schumpeter, Adam Przeworski, Seymour Martin Lipset, Samuel P. Huntington, Ronald Dworkin, and Amartya Sen. The book is divided into nine self-contained chapters: "Defining Democracy," which discusses procedural, deliberative, and substantive democracy; "Sources of Democracy," on why democracy exists in some countries and not in others; "Democracy, Culture, and Society," about cultural and sociological preconditions for democracy; "Democracy and Constitutionalism," which focuses on the importance of independent courts and a bill of rights; "Presidentialism versus Parliamentarianism"; "Representation," discussing which is the fairest system of democratic

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accountability; "Interest Groups"; "Democracy's Effects," an examination of the effect of democracy on economic growth and social inequality; and finally, "Democracy and the Global Order" discusses the effects of democracy on international relations, including the propensity for war and the erosion of national sovereignty by transnational forces.

Collects and analyzes seventy years of communist crimes that offer details on Kim Sung's Korea, Vietnam under "Uncle Ho," and Cuba under Castro. The political discontent or malaise that typifies most modern democracies is mainly caused by the widely shared feeling that the political freedom of citizens to influence the development of their society and, related to this, their personal life, has become rather limited. We can only address this discontent when we rehabilitate politics, the deliberate, joint effort to give direction to society and to make the best of ourselves. In *Pluralism, Democracy and Political Knowledge*, Hans Blokland examines this challenge via a critical appraisal of the pluralist conception of politics and democracy. This conception was formulated by, above all, Robert A. Dahl, one of the most important political scholars and democratic theorists of the last half century. Taking his work as the point of reference, this book not only provides an illuminating history of political science, told via Dahl and his critics, it also offers a revealing analysis as to what progress we have made in our thinking on

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pluralism and democracy, and what progress we could make, given the epistemological constraints of the social sciences. Above and beyond this, the development and the problems of pluralism and democracy are explored in the context of the process of modernization. The author specifically discusses the extent to which individualization, differentiation and rationalization contribute to the current political malaise in those countries which adhere to a pluralist political system.

Written by the preeminent democratic theorist of our time, this book explains the nature, value, and mechanics of democracy. In a new introduction to this Veritas edition, Ian Shapiro considers how Dahl would respond to the ongoing challenges democracy faces in the modern world. "Within the liberal democratic camp there is considerable controversy about exactly how to define democracy. Probably the most influential voice among contemporary political scientists in this debate has been that of Robert Dahl."--Marc Plattner, New York Times "An excellent introduction for novices, as well as a trusty handbook for experts and political science mavens."--Publishers Weekly

In what is widely considered the most influential book ever written by Walter Lippmann, the late journalist and social critic provides a fundamental treatise on the nature of human information and communication. The work is divided into eight parts,

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covering such varied issues as stereotypes, image making, and organized intelligence. The study begins with an analysis of "the world outside and the pictures in our heads", a leitmotif that starts with issues of censorship and privacy, speed, words, and clarity, and ends with a careful survey of the modern newspaper. Lippmann's conclusions are as meaningful in a world of television and computers as in the earlier period when newspapers were dominant. Public Opinion is of enduring significance for communications scholars, historians, sociologists, and political scientists. Copyright © Libri GmbH. All rights reserved.

Robert Dahl's Preface helped launch democratic theory fifty years ago as a new area of study in political science, and it remains the standard introduction to the field. Exploring problems that had been left unsolved by traditional thought on democracy, Dahl here examines two influential models--the Madisonian, which represents prevailing American doctrine, and its recurring challenger, populist theory--arguing that they do not accurately portray how modern democracies operate. He then constructs a model more consistent with how contemporary democracies actually function, and, in doing so, develops some original views of popular sovereignty and the American constitutional system. In this provocative book, one of our most eminent political scientists questions the extent to which the

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American Constitution furthers democratic goals. Robert Dahl reveals the Constitution's potentially antidemocratic elements and explains why they are there, compares the American constitutional system to other democratic systems, and explores how we might alter our political system to achieve greater equality among citizens. In a new chapter for this second edition, he shows how increasing differences in state populations revealed by the Census of 2000 have further increased the veto power over constitutional amendments held by a tiny minority of Americans. He then explores the prospects for changing some important political practices that are not prescribed by the written Constitution, though most Americans may assume them to be so.

The troubling ethics and politics of philanthropy Is philanthropy, by its very nature, a threat to today's democracy? Though we may laud wealthy individuals who give away their money for society's benefit, *Just Giving* shows how such generosity not only isn't the unassailable good we think it to be but might also undermine democratic values. Big philanthropy is often an exercise of power, the conversion of private assets into public influence. And it is a form of power that is largely unaccountable and lavishly tax-advantaged. Philanthropy currently fails democracy, but Rob Reich argues that it can be redeemed. *Just Giving* investigates the ethical and political dimensions of

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philanthropy and considers how giving might better support democratic values and promote justice. All over the world democratic reforms have brought power to the people - but under conditions where the people have little opportunity to think about the power that they exercise. Do we want a democracy inspired by Madison or by Madison Avenue? A democracy animated by deliberation or by manipulation? This book examines each of the principal democratic theories and makes the case for a democracy in which the people offer informed judgments about politics or policy. It then goes on to show how this form of democracy can be made a reality. *When the People Speak* describes deliberative democracy projects conducted by the author with various collaborators in the US, China, Britain, Denmark, Australia, Italy, Bulgaria, Northern Ireland, and in the entire European Union. These projects have resulted in the massive expansion of wind power in Texas, the building of sewage treatment plants in China, the crafting of budget solutions in a region in Italy, and greater mutual understanding between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. Critics of deliberative democracy say that it will privilege the more educated or that the public is incompetent when it comes to understanding policy issues, and should not be consulted. Others argue that it will increase polarization. Fishkin offers rebuttals for each of these arguments. Combining

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theory and practice he shows how a more deliberative politics is both practical and compelling. In this book, the eminent psychoanalyst Leonard Shengold looks at why some people are resistant to change, even when it seems to promise a change for the better. Drawing on a lifetime of clinical experience as well as wide readings of world literature, Shengold shows how early childhood relationships with parents can lead to a powerful conviction that change means loss. Dr. Shengold, who is well known for his work on the lasting affects of childhood trauma and child abuse in such seminal books as *Soul Murder* and *Soul Murder Revisited*, continues his exploration into the consequences of early psychological injury and loss. In the examples of his patients and in the lives and work of such figures as Edna St. Vincent Millay, William Wordsworth, and Henrik Ibsen, Shengold looks at the different ways in which unconscious impressions connected with early experiences and fantasies about parents are integrated into individual lives. He shows the difficulties he encounters with his patients in raising these memories to the conscious level where they can be known and owned; and he also shows, in his survey of literary figures, how these memories can become part of the creative process. *Haunted by Parents* offers a deeply humane reflection on the values and limitations of therapy, on memory and the lingering effects of the past, and on

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the possibility of recognizing the promise of the future.

Shows that current elitist theories are based on an inadequate understanding of the early writings of democratic theory and that much sociological evidence has been ignored.

This critical tour through recent democratic theory examines the deliberative turn in democratic theory which argued that democratic legitimacy is to be found in authentic deliberations on the part of those affected by a collective decision.

Ever since its first publication in 1992, *The End of History and the Last Man* has provoked controversy and debate. Francis Fukuyama's prescient analysis of religious fundamentalism, politics, scientific progress, ethical codes, and war is as essential for a world fighting fundamentalist terrorists as it was for the end of the Cold War. Now updated with a new afterword, *The End of History and the Last Man* is a modern classic.

Individual decision making can often be wrong due to misinformation, impulses, or biases. Collective decision making, on the other hand, can be surprisingly accurate. In *Democratic Reason*, Hélène Landemore demonstrates that the very factors behind the superiority of collective decision making add up to a strong case for democracy. She shows that the processes and procedures of democratic decision making form a cognitive system that

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ensures that decisions taken by the many are more likely to be right than decisions taken by the few. Democracy as a form of government is therefore valuable not only because it is legitimate and just, but also because it is smart. Landemore considers how the argument plays out with respect to two main mechanisms of democratic politics: inclusive deliberation and majority rule. In deliberative settings, the truth-tracking properties of deliberation are enhanced more by inclusiveness than by individual competence. Landemore explores this idea in the contexts of representative democracy and the selection of representatives. She also discusses several models for the "wisdom of crowds" channeled by majority rule, examining the trade-offs between inclusiveness and individual competence in voting. When inclusive deliberation and majority rule are combined, they beat less inclusive methods, in which one person or a small group decide. Democratic Reason thus establishes the superiority of democracy as a way of making decisions for the common good.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER •

“Comprehensive, enlightening, and terrifyingly timely.”—The New York Times Book Review (Editors' Choice) WINNER OF THE GOLDSMITH BOOK PRIZE • SHORTLISTED FOR THE LIONEL GELBER PRIZE • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The Washington Post •

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Time • Foreign Affairs • WBUR • Paste Donald Trump's presidency has raised a question that many of us never thought we'd be asking: Is our democracy in danger? Harvard professors Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt have spent more than twenty years studying the breakdown of democracies in Europe and Latin America, and they believe the answer is yes. Democracy no longer ends with a bang—in a revolution or military coup—but with a whimper: the slow, steady weakening of critical institutions, such as the judiciary and the press, and the gradual erosion of long-standing political norms. The good news is that there are several exit ramps on the road to authoritarianism. The bad news is that, by electing Trump, we have already passed the first one. Drawing on decades of research and a wide range of historical and global examples, from 1930s Europe to contemporary Hungary, Turkey, and Venezuela, to the American South during Jim Crow, Levitsky and Ziblatt show how democracies die—and how ours can be saved. Praise for *How Democracies Die* “What we desperately need is a sober, dispassionate look at the current state of affairs. Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, two of the most respected scholars in the field of democracy studies, offer just that.”—The Washington Post “Where Levitsky and Ziblatt make their mark is in weaving together political science and historical analysis of both domestic and

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international democratic crises; in doing so, they expand the conversation beyond Trump and before him, to other countries and to the deep structure of American democracy and politics.”—Ezra Klein, Vox
“If you only read one book for the rest of the year, read *How Democracies Die*. . . . This is not a book for just Democrats or Republicans. It is a book for all Americans. It is nonpartisan. It is fact based. It is deeply rooted in history. . . . The best commentary on our politics, no contest.”—Michael Morrell, former Acting Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (via Twitter) “A smart and deeply informed book about the ways in which democracy is being undermined in dozens of countries around the world, and in ways that are perfectly legal.”—Fareed Zakaria, CNN

This book makes a realpolitik argument for supporting democracy in the Arab world, drawing on four decades of policy experience.

“A work of tremendous originality and insight. . . . Makes you see the world differently.”—Washington Post
Translated into twenty languages ?*The Future of Freedom* ?is a modern classic that uses historical analysis to shed light on the present, examining how democracy has changed our politics, economies, and social relations. Prescient in laying out the distinction between democracy and liberty, the book contains a new afterword on the United States's occupation of Iraq and a wide-ranging update of the

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book's themes.

These essays by the brilliant historian of political science Juan Linz comprise a remarkable intellectual review of the life and work of Robert Michels, his major book *Political Parties*, and the dimensions of democracy as a functioning system. Linz elucidates the importance of Michels in a way that offers more than a mechanical view of political parties as some sort of precisely ordered system of authority and influence. Instead, Michels offers a view of politics that is bottom up and untidy, what he calls a "reciprocal deference structure." Michels is not simply the father of the iron law of oligarchy, but the idea of politics as a less than orderly network of responsiveness, responsibility, and accountability. Linz demonstrates, with magisterial power, why Michels must be ranked as a foremost thinker in classical political sociology. The remaining three segments of the volume cover areas with which Linz has also long been identified. Each in its own way illumines aspects of Michels as well. "Time and Regime Change" articulates differences between change within a regime and change of a regime--sometimes hard to identify because of the elongated time frames involved. The next essay explains why Spain is neither a traditional society nor a successful modern nation. The reliance upon central authority displaced the hoped for evolution of a society based on representative democratic

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institutions. The final section, "Freedom and Autonomy of Intellectuals and Artists" is a topic that gripped Michels and Linz alike. Freedom as a goal of the intelligentsia has been frustrated by those who provide ideological justification for repression of ideas and actions in the name of higher values. This segment provides a bridge between Michels and Weber--not to mention both of these major figures with Linz himself. The role of state power in mediating intellectual freedom is the leitmotif that blankets the twentieth century. The work is graced by a full-length bibliography o

A new history of the world's most embattled idea Today, democracy is the world's only broadly accepted political system, and yet it has become synonymous with disappointment and crisis. How did it come to this? In *Can Democracy Work?* James Miller, the author of the classic history of 1960s protest *Democracy Is in the Streets*, offers a lively, surprising, and urgent history of the democratic idea from its first stirrings to the present. As he shows, democracy has always been rife with inner tensions. The ancient Greeks preferred to choose leaders by lottery and regarded elections as inherently corrupt and undemocratic. The French revolutionaries sought to incarnate the popular will, but many of them came to see the people as the enemy. And in the United States, the franchise would be extended to some even as it was taken from others. Amid the

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wars and revolutions of the twentieth century, communists, liberals, and nationalists all sought to claim the ideals of democracy for themselves—even as they manifestly failed to realize them. Ranging from the theaters of Athens to the tents of Occupy Wall Street, *Can Democracy Work?* is an entertaining and insightful guide to our most cherished—and vexed—ideal.

In 2008, the collapse of the US financial system plunged the economy into the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. In its aftermath, the financial crisis pushed to the forefront fundamental moral and institutional questions about how we govern the modern economy. What are the values that economic policy ought to prioritize? What institutions do we trust to govern complex economic dynamics? Much of popular and academic debate revolves around two competing approaches to these fundamental questions: *laissez-faire* defenses of self-correcting and welfare-enhancing markets on the one hand, and managerialist turns to the role of insulated, expert regulation in mitigating risks and promoting growth on the other. In *Democracy Against Domination*, K. Sabeel Rahman offers an alternative vision for how we should govern the modern economy in a democratic society. Drawing on a rich tradition of economic reform rooted in the thought and reform politics of early twentieth century progressives like John

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Dewey and Louis Brandeis, Rahman argues that the fundamental moral challenge of economic governance today is two-fold: first, to counteract the threats of economic domination whether in the form of corporate power or inequitable markets; and second, to do so by expanding the capacity of citizens themselves to exercise real political power in economic policymaking. This normative framework in turn suggests a very different way of understanding and addressing major economic governance issues of the post-crisis era, from the challenge of too-big-to-fail financial firms, to the dangers of regulatory capture and regulatory reform. Synthesizing a range of insights from history to political theory to public policy, *Democracy Against Domination* offers an exciting reinterpretation of progressive economic thought; a fresh normative approach to democratic theory; and an urgent hope for realizing a more equitable and democratically accountable economy through practical reforms in our policies and regulatory institutions.

Political representation lies at the core of modern politics. Democracies, with their vast numbers of citizens, could not operate without representative institutions. Yet relations between the democratic ideal and the everyday practice of political representation have never been well defined and remain the subject of vigorous debate among historians, political theorists, lawyers, and citizens. In

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this volume, an eminent group of scholars move forward the debates about political representation on a number of fronts. Drawing on insights from political science, history, political theory, economics, and anthropology, the authors provide much-needed clarity to some of the most vexing questions about political representation. They also reveal new and enlightening perspectives on this fundamental political practice. Topics discussed include representation before democracy, political parties, minorities, electoral competition, and ideology. This volume is essential reading for anyone interested in the ideal and the reality of political representation. “Continuing his career-long exploration of modern democracy, Dahl addresses a question that has long vexed students of political theory: the place of independent organizations, associations, or special interest groups within the democratic state.”—The Wilson Quarterly “There is probably no greater expert today on the subject of democratic theory than Dahl....His proposal for an ultimate adoption here of a ‘decentralized socialist economy,’ a system primarily of worker ownership and control of economic production, is daring but rational, reflecting his view that economic inequality seems destined to become the major issue here it historically has been in Europe.”—Library Journal “Dahl reaffirms his commitment to pluralist democracy while attempting to come to terms with some of its defects.”—Laura

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Greyson, Worldview“Anyone who is interested in these issues and who makes the effort the book requires will come away the better for it. And more. He will receive an explanation for our current difficulties that differs considerably from the explanation for our current difficulties that differs considerably from the explanation offered by the Reagan administration, and a prescription for the future which differs fundamentally from the nostrums emanating from the White House.”—Dennis Carrigan, The (Louisville, Kentucky) Courier-Journal Experience - M. Fathima Beevi

Democratic institutional forms and processes are increasingly widespread in Africa as dictatorial regimes have been forced to give way as a result of popular mobilization and external donor pressure. However the premises of the African scholars whose empirical research and analytical explorations are included in this volume are that democratic form and democratic substance are two different things; Western-derived institutional forms are neither necessarily the most appropriate nor the most practical in the current African context; and rooting democratic norms in the political cultures of African polities raises socio-cultural issues with which political scientists must engage. This book explores various critical questions in the context of particular elections and particular countries as diverse as Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, the Congo, Cameroon and

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the Central African Republic. They include the continuing impact of police state apparatuses following democratic transition; factors influencing African voters' attitudes and behaviour; the impact of incumbency on electoral competition; women's electoral participation; the phenomenon of often very limited party programmatic choice in the context of huge social diversity and multi-party competition; and the controversial issues around the transplantation of liberal democratic institutions. Underlying these issues is the fundamental question of whether democratic processes as currently practised in Africa are really making any significant difference to the African struggle for economic, social and cultural progress. This volume is valuable for the original perspectives of its African contributors; the issues it explores; and the concrete democratic experiences it analyses; and the challenges it makes to the existing concepts, paradigms and practices of liberal democracy. There are few better examples of analysis – the critical thinking skill of understanding how an argument is built – than Robert Dahl's *Democracy and its Critics*. In this work, the American political theorist closely analyzes the democratic political system and then evaluates whether the arguments that are in favor of it are, in fact, rigorous. ¶ Dahl sets out to describe democracy's merits and problems, asking if it really is the worthwhile political system we

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believe it to be. Knowing that the idea of democracy is now almost universally popular, his detailed analysis leads him to look at a number of regimes that claim to be democratic but do not, in truth, practice democracy. But Dahl is not only interested in uncovering uncomfortable truths. He goes further and creates a set of standards by which we can all decide whether a country really is democratic. Dahl's analysis of the evidence leads him to conclude that the following criteria must be met for a regime to be considered truly democratic: elected officials control policy-making; there are free and fair elections of officials; everyone must have a right to vote; everyone has the right to run for office; there is freedom of speech; alternative information is available; and people can form free, independent political groups.

The idea that the opposition has a right to organize and to appeal for votes against the government in elections and in parliament is one of the most important milestones in the development of democratic institutions. Mr. Dahl and nine collaborators analyze the role of the opposition in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United States. In introductory and concluding chapters, Dahl compares the patterns of opposition in these countries and makes predictions for the future. He carries forward on the basis of this

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evidence the theory of a pluralistic society he has explored in earlier books such as *Who Governs?* Mr. Dahl is Sterling Professor of Political Science at Yale University. His collaborators are Samuel Barnes, Hans Daalder, Frederick Engelmann, Alfred Grosser, Otto Kirchheimer, Val R. Lorwin, Allen Potter, Stein Rokkan, and Nils Stjernquist. "This stately volume is distinguished by several unusual features. First, it straightforwardly focuses on a crucial issue of Comparative Politics without being vitiated by the familiar behaviorist semantics and jargon. Secondly, contrary to the ubiquitous trend in this country, flooded by discussion—more journalistic than scientific—on the emergent states, it centers on constitutional democracy in Western Europe, a region which for a decade and more had been badly neglected by the rampant computerizers. Thirdly, for the ten countries under discussion Professor Dahl was fortunate to enlist the services of genuine experts, the majority of whom are specialists in their field. . . . On the whole the volume is one of the major contributions to Comparative Politics that have appeared in this country for some time. The study of the issue as such as well as of the individual reviews is highly rewarding."—Karl Loewenstein, *The Annals*. Why our belief in government by the people is unrealistic—and what we can do about it *Democracy for Realists* assails the romantic folk-theory at the heart of contemporary thinking about democratic

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politics and government, and offers a provocative alternative view grounded in the actual human nature of democratic citizens. Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels deploy a wealth of social-scientific evidence, including ingenious original analyses of topics ranging from abortion politics and budget deficits to the Great Depression and shark attacks, to show that the familiar ideal of thoughtful citizens steering the ship of state from the voting booth is fundamentally misguided. They demonstrate that voters—even those who are well informed and politically engaged—mostly choose parties and candidates on the basis of social identities and partisan loyalties, not political issues. They also show that voters adjust their policy views and even their perceptions of basic matters of fact to match those loyalties. When parties are roughly evenly matched, elections often turn on irrelevant or misleading considerations such as economic spurts or downturns beyond the incumbents' control; the outcomes are essentially random. Thus, voters do not control the course of public policy, even indirectly. Achen and Bartels argue that democratic theory needs to be founded on identity groups and political parties, not on the preferences of individual voters. Now with new analysis of the 2016 elections, *Democracy for Realists* provides a powerful challenge to conventional thinking, pointing the way toward a fundamentally different understanding of

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the realities and potential of democratic government. From the theory of 'deliberative democracy' to the politics of the 'third way', the present Zeitgeist is characterized by attempts to deny what Chantal Mouffe contends is the inherently conflictual nature of democratic politics. Far from being signs of progress, such ideas constitute a serious threat to democratic institutions. Taking issue with John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas on one side, and the political tenets of Blair, Clinton and Schröder on the other, Mouffe brings to the fore the paradoxical nature of modern liberal democracy in which the category of the 'adversary' plays a central role. She draws on the work of Wittgenstein, Derrida, and the provocative theses of Carl Schmitt, to propose a new understanding of democracy which acknowledges the ineradicability of antagonism in its workings. There are few better examples of analysis - the critical thinking skill of understanding how an argument is built - than Robert Dahl's *Democracy and its Critics*. In this work, the American political theorist closely analyzes the democratic political system and then evaluates whether the arguments that are in favor of it are, in fact, rigorous. ¶ Dahl sets out to describe democracy's merits and problems, asking if it really is the worthwhile political system we believe it to be. Knowing that the idea of democracy is now almost universally popular, his detailed analysis leads him to look at a number of regimes

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that claim to be democratic but do not, in truth, practice democracy. But Dahl is not only interested in uncovering uncomfortable truths. He goes further and creates a set of standards by which we can all decide whether a country really is democratic. Dahl's analysis of the evidence leads him to conclude that the following criteria must be met for a regime to be considered truly democratic: elected officials control policy-making; there are free and fair elections of officials; everyone must have a right to vote; everyone has the right to run for office; there is freedom of speech; alternative information is available; and people can form free, independent political groups.

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