

Democracy Within Parties

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Can too much participation harm democracy? Democratic theory places great importance upon the conduct of elections, but it is not often recognized that the electoral game takes place in two arenas, not only between parties but also within them. This pioneering book presents a new approach to understanding political parties. It sheds light on the inner dynamics of party politics and offers the first comprehensive analysis of one of the most important processes any party undertakes -its process of candidate selection. Candidate selection methods are the mechanisms by which a party chooses its candidates for the general elections. It may be the function that separates parties from other organizations. For such an important function, this field has certainly faced a dearth of serious investigation. Hazan and Rahat, the leading scholars on this topic, conduct an in-depth analysis of the consequences of different candidate selection methods on democracy. This book is a culmination of almost two decades of research and defines the field of candidate selection. Part I of the book delineates candidate selection methods based on four major dimensions: candidacy; the selectorate; decentralization; and voting versus appointment systems. Part II analyses the political consequences of using different candidate selection methods according to four important aspects of democracy: participation; representation; competition; and responsiveness. The book ends with a proposed candidate selection method that optimally balances all four of the democratic aspects concurrently, and answers the question 'Is the most participatory candidate selection method necessarily the best one for democracy?'

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