© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

CONTENTS

Preface ix

Introduction 1

1 The Distinctive Value of Elections 20

2 Democratic Realism and the Value of Voting 56

3 Evaluating Voting Systems 87

4 Voting with Political Parties 117

5 Election Day! 154

6 Valuing Democracy in Practice (A Response to Radical Critics) 188

Conclusion 214

Acknowledgments 221

Bibliography 225

Index 239

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

Introduction

In the spring of 2014, the Indian government administered what was then the largest election in history. Over the course of five weeks, from April 7 to May 12, over 550 million Indians cast a vote for members of the Lok Sabha, the Indian parliament.[1] The election required over 900,000 polling places and an estimated 11 million personnel.[2] Administering the election cost the Indian electoral commission the equivalent of about 580 million US dollars.[3] The scale of this civic exercise was spectacular, but also, for the world's largest democracy, a matter of course. In 2019, India conducted an even bigger election; over 600 million people voted in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.[4] The time and resources devoted to making the polls accessible to each of the approximately 900 million members of India's eligible electorate provide just one striking example of the massive effort democratic communities routinely undertake to administer elections. No other public effort to encourage citizen participation approaches the scale and expense of elections.[5]

Of course, to focus only on dramatic events like these would present a misleading picture of voting in today's democracies. With a few notable exceptions, turnout has been declining across the United States and Western

1. "Statewise Turnout for General Election—2014."

2. Vyawahare, "A Primer on India's Parliamentary Elections."

3. Sivakumar, "Polls to Cost Country Rs 3,500 Crore This Year."

4. Jain, "Lok Sabha Elections: At 67.1%, 2019 Turnout's a Record, Election Commission Says."

5. For comparison, France spent 12 to 15 million euros on its 2019 "Great Debate," which has been described as "the world's biggest 'deliberative democracy' exercise to date" (Landemore, "Can Macron Quiet the 'Yellow Vests'").

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

Europe for more than half a century. This is true even as political parties offer voters more direct influence over electoral agendas and platforms and even as many governments work to make voting more convenient. And, in the United States in recent years, electoral administration has become a site of bitter political conflict which reaches to the very heart of voting's democratic purpose. Consequently, narratives of a crisis in electoral democracy abound in both academic and popular discourse.

This dual reality of voting in contemporary democracies demands the attention of democratic theorists. If we are at a crossroads for electoral democracy, how should we move forward? Should we view this as an opportunity to recover the value of popular voting and reinvigorate elections as spectacular moments of mass participation? Or should we instead see this crisis as an opportunity to rid ourselves of a defunct practice and to rethink democracy from the ground up?

A number of academics and journalists have recently argued for the latter approach. The past few years have seen an explosion of interest in sortition or "lottocracy"—an approach to choosing representatives that uses random selection rather than election. Many defenders of lottocracy argue that the contemporary crisis of electoral democracy is merely the inevitable failure of a defunct and elitist paradigm of democracy. Some claim that popular elections betray the ideal of political equality because they reflect "a commitment to the idea that some are better able to rule than others."[6] Others argue that electoral democracy invariably creates a distinction between a "ruler" class and the bulk of "ordinary" citizens.[7] Different accounts of lottocracy vary in their prescriptions.[8] But many assert that the current crisis in electoral democracy calls for a paradigm shift that would displace voting from the center of thinking about democracy.[9]

While lottocrats critique popular voting for being too elitist, epistocrats argue that it is not elitist enough. At the extreme, defenders of epistocracy—that is, rule by the wise or knowing—question the value of electoral democracy

6. Guerrero, "Against Elections," 169.

7. E.g., Landemore, *Open Democracy*, 4–5. Landemore describes the defining characteristic of this distinction as the "enclosure of power."

8. Most contemporary proponents of lottocracy argue for using sortition alongside elections, to constitute a second legislative chamber (typically to replace "upper" parliamentary houses), or to create "citizens' assemblies" charged with various advisory, oversight, or agenda-setting functions. But some view these institutional reforms as transitional steps toward more extensive lottocracy. See Gastil and Wright, *Legislature by Lot* for a varied collection of lottocratic visions.

9. E.g., Landemore, *Open Democracy*, xvii; Van Reybrouck, *Against Elections*.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

altogether.[10] But more moderate versions hold that low turnout and widespread disengagement may be desirable if they lead to power being exercised by a more educated or knowledgeable segment of the populace.[11]

Neither the lottocratic nor the epistocratic take on voting represents a dominant position among democratic theorists or among citizens of contemporary democracies. But those of us who believe that electoral democracy is worth saving require a clear account of what, exactly, the purposes of voting are, and what preserving or recovering voting's value will require of us. It is not enough to fall back on a familiar democratic creed. To adequately respond to voting's increasingly numerous and vocal critics, and to assess competing proposals for electoral reform, we must have a clear-eyed explanation of what voting is for, one that is sensitive to voting's limitations and specific about its functions within complex and multi-faceted democratic systems. That is what this book provides.

This book examines the purposes of popular voting in modern democracies with two aims in mind. The first is to defend the centrality of voting in popular conceptions of democratic citizenship as well as the spectacle of elections. Even among the large body of political theorists who reject the radical critiques of voting I have just described, it is still commonplace to lament the social norms and discursive tropes that seem to treat voting as the alpha and omega of democracy.[12] Some theorists go further to criticize particular aspects of popular treatment of voting, including the widespread idea of a duty to vote,[13] the emphasis on high turnout,[14] and the spectacle and expense of elections.[15]

These criticisms are misguided. Skeptics of voting's centrality rightly observe that voting is just one among many essential components of a complex modern democracy. A thriving democracy also requires practices of deliberation, consultation, negotiation, petition, contestation and even resistance.[16] But we do not need to believe that voting is more important than other democratic practices to justify its singular treatment. We need

10. Brennan, *Against Democracy*.

11. E.g., Caplan, *The Myth of the Rational Voter*, 198.

12. Shiffrin, "Speaking Amongst Ourselves," 147; Chalmers, *Reforming Democracies*.

13. Brennan, *The Ethics of Voting*; Lomasky and Brennan, "Is There a Duty to Vote"; Lever, "Liberalism, Democracy and the Ethics of Voting," 226.

14. Lever, "Compulsory Voting: A Critical Perspective"; Brennan, "Medicine Worse Than the Disease?"; Saunders, "Increasing Turnout: A Compelling Case?"

15. Chalmers, *Reforming Democracies*, 138.

16. Cf. Warren, "A Problem-Based Approach to Democratic Theory"; Mansbridge, "What Is Political Science For?"

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

only believe that voting is *different* from these other practices, that it serves a unique set of purposes. Popular voting combines an ambition toward universal participation, a concrete and transparent application of equality, and a rhythm of decisive, consequential, participatory moments to create a singular experience of democratic citizenship. In this book, I show that some of these features of popular voting practices that have drawn the most criticism are actually essential to voting's purposes. They instantiate—that is, they create real instances of—unique and important aspects of democratic values, and they contribute to vital democratic functions.

The second aim of the book is to guide efforts to improve elections and voting so that they better realize the values they are meant to serve. Voting reforms of one kind or another are a constant subject of debate in modern democracies, but interest in and conflict over voting reforms has reached a fever pitch in the United States over the past few years. Many state governments, Republican and Democratic alike, have made substantial changes to their electoral administration in recent years, but they have taken divergent reform paths. Voting administration has become a salient and contentious issue in national politics as well. Congressional Democrats have declared federal voting reform a top priority and introduced sweeping reform proposals that touch on everything from campaign finance and redistricting to same-day voter registration and mail-in voting. States' scramble to accommodate a high-turnout presidential election in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and Republican leaders' insistent claims of fraud in the 2020 election have further increased the bitterness and the urgency of US electoral reform debates.

Enthusiasm for electoral reform, propelled by the faith that electoral democracy can and should be made to work better, is widespread. But this alone does not help us assess competing reform agendas or the rationales behind them. Effective reform efforts should be grounded in a clear account of the purposes voting is meant to serve. This book provides just such an account.

Treatises on electoral reform are in no short supply, but the guidance I offer in this book differs from others. I do not aim to provide a detailed blueprint or agenda for electoral reform. Rather, I offer some guiding principles for would-be reformers. At times I illustrate how these principles might bear on some live issues, such as the principles for drawing electoral districts or the move toward "convenience voting." But the account of voting's distinctive value that I offer in this book is intended to be portable across contexts. It can inform a range of controversies about how we vote, and different insights

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

from the book will have more relevance or resonance to different political systems at different times. The principles I offer for evaluating and improving voting practices therefore will continue to be relevant even after we have moved on from the debates of the moment. They can also be applied beyond the North American and European polities which receive disproportionate attention in this book.

The guidance for improving elections that I offer in this book differs from typical electoral reform tracts in two additional ways. First, its relevance is not limited to formal electoral institutions, but also bears on the social norms and customs maintained by the actions of parties, campaigns, interest groups, businesses, churches, and other social institutions, and, of course, individual citizens. Second, the guiding principles for reform that I offer in this book are derived from a systemic and holistic account of voting's purposes in modern democracy.

In the remaining pages of this introduction, I will say a bit more about the practical and theoretical problems that motivate this book, provide a sketch of the argument, and then offer readers some guidance for navigating the book.

The Practical Problem—Reforming in the Dark

Calls for political reform—especially the reform of voting institutions—are a constant feature of modern democracy. Finding ways not only to live side-by-side, but also to build and maintain a flourishing civilization in societies characterized by troubled histories and deep disagreements is hard work. And it is made even harder by our commitment to treating one another as equals in the task. This work of democracy is inevitably frustrating and messy, fraught with false starts, mixed successes, and disappointed hopes. Our institutions inevitably fall short of the ideals that justify them. But those ideals of democracy retain their allure. We can't help but hope that we can do right by them if we revisit our political institutions and reshape them with enough thoughtfulness and virtue. However endless the task of democratic reform may be, this constant push to improve democratic processes—and the perpetual tinkering it prompts—is undoubtedly necessary to keep the frustrating, messy, and yes, essential, project of democracy chugging along.

Voting and elections tend to occupy most of our attention in these reform efforts. But without a clear account of the relationship between voting and democracy—of the particular purposes that voting is meant to serve—these reform efforts can end up being counter-productive. Some readers will no

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

doubt call to mind reforms like strict voter ID laws that increase the material costs of voting, making it more difficult for some citizens to exercise their right to vote. Voter ID requirements enjoy widespread support among US citizens in part because they appeal to an important political principle: election integrity. For many people, it can be hard to understand why critics make such a big deal about voter ID requirements. We already require a photo ID to access many social goods, after all. Why shouldn't we treat voting like we treat driving a car or boarding an airplane? Furthermore, voter ID requirements are commonplace in other countries, and not particularly controversial. And while there is emerging evidence that the strictest photo ID laws may deter some participation, the absolute size of the turnout effect appears quite small.[17]

By adopting a more holistic perspective on the value of voting, this book offers new insight into the debate over ID requirements and other contentious issues in electoral reform. Whether or not they ultimately depress turnout among targeted groups, ID requirements in the United States, especially strict photo ID requirements, impose a significant burden on some citizens. And these burdens fall disproportionately on those who are already the most socially and politically marginalized. This book shows why this differential burden is especially objectionable in the context of voting: because, as I will argue, voting is meant to be a floor on political participation—a uniquely easy and egalitarian way for citizens to access political influence. The decentralized character of US election administration exacerbates the burden imposed by voter ID laws. Variations in voter ID requirements from state to state, along with frequent changes to the status of existing voter ID laws can leave citizens unsure about whether and how they can meet the requirements to vote.[18] And citizens can face additional discrimination as they attempt to navigate these requirements.[19] Voter ID requirements in the United States—and to some extent even the public debate around them—have also created an atmosphere of suspicion that clouds the experience of voting as a shared, collective undertaking. Voter ID laws in the United States

17. Grimmer and Yoder, "Durable Differential Deterrent Effects"; Fraga and Miller, "Who Does Voter ID Keep from Voting." There is a great deal of debate about the size and distribution of voter ID's turnout effects, which are hard to measure for a variety of reasons (see, e.g., Grimmer et al., "Obstacles to Estimating Voter ID"). There is also some evidence counter-mobilization might offset some of the otherwise damping effect on turnout of voter ID laws (Valentino and Neuner, "Why the Sky Didn't Fall").

18. Jones, "Many Americans Unaware."

19. White, Nathan, and Faller, "What Do I Need to Vote?"

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

have also been enforced in arbitrary and discriminatory ways.[20] In the particular context of US elections, then, voter ID laws negatively affect many citizens' experience of voting in ways that might not apply elsewhere.[21] For the most affected groups of citizens, voter ID laws create yet another layer of bureaucratic complexity and potential discrimination in an exercise that should instead give them a feel for their own power.

Introducing additional barriers to voting is not the only way that reforms can go awry, though, and this book highlights how some reforms that are more popular among political progressives can also be counter-productive. One example of this is the shift toward "convenience voting" reforms like early voting and mail-in voting, which aim to make voting easier. Like voter ID laws, convenience voting policies enjoy widespread popular support in part because they appeal to a core political value: making the opportunity to vote more widely accessible.[22] But, contrary to popular belief, most convenience voting reforms do little to increase actual turnout, especially among those citizens who are least likely to vote.[23] At the same time, as I will argue in chapter 5, the widespread use of convenience voting radically changes citizens' experience of voting in ways that could undermine popular voting's distinctive democratic functions.

By offering a clearer and more complete understanding of which purposes voting serves in a democracy and how it performs those purposes, this book better enables us to assess the trade-offs that arise with any election laws. This is not all it does, though. It also invites a more creative and productive conversation about election reform. When we better understand the purposes of voting and keep them squarely in sight, we can look for reforms that minimize or offset the costs of changes we deem essential. We can also imagine new ways of producing or instantiating values that may suffer with a particular reform. The discussion of convenience voting in chapter 5 provides an example of what this kind of conversation can look like.

A third variety of misguided reform simply demands too much of voting. This manifests most clearly in electoral excess—the idea that more voting is better voting. Voters, especially in the United States, often face

20. Cobb, Greiner, and Quinn, "Can Voter ID Laws Be Administered in a Race-Neutral Manner?"

21. Voter ID laws are less objectionable where they are paired with the free provision of a standard (national) voting ID for all registered voters (as, for example, in Mexico), and other efforts to reduce barriers to turnout (such as automatic voter registration).

22. Of course, they are also popular because people just like convenience for themselves.

23. See chapter 5 for an overview of this research and discussion of its significance.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

an overwhelming number of electoral decisions. For example, in November 2020, registered voters in Palo Alto, California (like myself) were charged with filling 16 elected offices and considering 12 statewide and 3 local ballot measures. The "more voting is better voting" principle has also fueled a recent explosion of direct democracy around the world.[24]

Many scholars have observed that increases in the number of elections probably have diminishing democratic value, as citizens are more likely to abstain from some decisions and have to work harder to locate reliable information about their choices.[25] But an examination of voting's distinctive role in modern democracies provides two more reasons to be skeptical of the idea that more voting is better voting. First, like all decision-procedures, voting has distinctive benefits and drawbacks, and for some aspects of democratic decision-making, popular voting is not the most appropriate procedure. Second, I argue that one of the core features that helps to constitute the value of voting is that elections (or other occasions for popular voting) are uncommon and special events. They create distinctive and disruptive political moments that capture the attention of the mass public. If popular voting becomes too frequent or common, then it no longer has this momentousness. Instead, it fades into the background of our lives. When this happens, voting loses some of its distinctive democratic value.

These examples of reform enthusiasm gone awry illustrate the need for a clear account of how voting contributes to democracy in contemporary societies, and what that means for the nitty-gritty details about how, when, and where we vote. Academic political theory has not adequately met this need. To be sure, there is no shortage of remarks about voting and elections within contemporary democratic theory, but these remarks are not typically grounded in a full account of what popular voting is, and what it is for. Only when we examine practices of popular voting holistically and seek to understand the purposes they serve within a broader democratic system can we adequately evaluate them against alternatives or work to make them better.

Voting at the Margins of Democratic Theory

Normative democratic theory has many purposes. One of those purposes is to provide guidance to citizens about how they should act in pursuit of democratic ideals. Political theory ideally supplies the standards that citizens

24. Kaufmann and Mathews, "Critical Shift."
25. See, e.g., Cain, *Democracy More or Less*, 70–78.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

and political leaders use to assess how well political institutions are functioning, and the criteria for justifying and comparing potential reforms.

When it comes to voting, contemporary democratic theory has not fulfilled this purpose as well as it might. There is a substantial disconnect between the way that democratic theorists think and talk about voting and the way that most citizens think and talk about voting. This disconnect amounts to more than the expected difference in precision and sophistication between popular and academic discourse. Voting occupies a central place in the popular democratic imagination. But contemporary democratic theory tends to de-emphasize voting. Recent democratic theory has yielded rich accounts of the value of democratic deliberation and of the best approaches to fostering meaningful deliberation, but similar treatments of popular voting are rare.

Some democratic theorists will argue that the gap between academic and popular views of voting exists because the popular or "folk" treatment of voting is fundamentally unsound.[26] More commonly, though, scholars choose to de-emphasize voting as a corrective to what they see as an overemphasis on voting in earlier democratic theories, and a tendency of citizens to overlook other essential aspects of democracy.[27] If popular views of democracy are too centered on voting, this could have negative consequences for democracy in practice. Some argue that the fetishization of voting distracts citizens from more effective modes of pursuing their political goals.[28] Others argue that too much emphasis on voting distorts popular views of democratic citizenship, casting citizens as consumers or spectators whose primary job is to listen to and judge the claims of political elites, while neglecting many other valuable roles and activities of democratic citizens.[29]

Democratic theorists are not wrong to be concerned about the public's tendency to lay all of their hopes for democracy at the feet of voting. But correcting this tendency requires articulating what voting *can* do, as well as what it can't. First, and foremost, this is because without an adequate account of voting's democratic purposes, we are likely to reach the wrong conclusions about the ethics of voting and electoral reform. As I have suggested, a sustained examination of voting in contemporary democracies reveals that some of the features that have received the most criticism from

26. E.g., Brennan, *The Ethics of Voting*.

27. Shiffrin, "Speaking Amongst Ourselves," 147.

28. See, e.g., Chalmers, *Reforming Democracies*, 66–67; Lever, "Compulsory Voting: A Critical Perspective."

29. Cohen, "Money, Politics, and Political Equality," 299.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

political theorists are actually essential features of a practice of popular voting that realizes unique and important facets of democracy's value. And at the extreme, the failure to provide a positive account of what voting does contribute to democracy has opened the door to the radical critiques of popular voting that I described at the start of this introduction.

Moreover, as I will argue in this book, by neglecting to examine the modern practice of popular voting, democratic theorists have missed many opportunities to offer much-needed insight into live debates about how democratic principles should be applied to electoral institutions. It is true that popular voting is one among many essential elements of democratic practice. But that truth alone is incomplete and inadequate to resolve many weighty conflicts about how we should vote. This book reveals that attention to the distinctive functions of popular voting in modern democracy provides important insight for leaders designing and administering elections, and for citizens discharging their civic duties.

Normative democratic theorists—at least those of us who hope to contribute to the maintenance and improvement of democratic regimes—should be worried when large gaps emerge between popular and academic discourse around democracy. At the very least this is true because effective communication depends on directly addressing people's existing beliefs. Democratic theorists who hope to influence popular understandings of democracy must be attentive to how the ideals they articulate will be received given the views that citizens already bring to the table. And if we only casually acknowledge what so many people regard as the centerpiece of democratic practice, there is a risk that the normative guidance of democratic theory will seem too unfamiliar to be relevant.

There is yet another reason for theorists to devote more attention to a practice that occupies such a central role in popular conceptions of democracy. This is that democratic theory ought to be, well, democratic. Most justifications for democracy give us reasons to take seriously the shared understandings of democracy that sustain its practice in existing communities. Democratic theorists who hope to provide citizens and political leaders with guidance on how to promote democratic values should begin by locating the value in our existing institutions and practices.

The word "democracy" denotes a political ideal. But it also denotes a kind of political regime or activity that embodies that ideal. This means that practical reasoning about how to contribute to democracy must always tack back and forth between contemplation of democratic principles and the requirements of the practices that embody those principles. To make matters even

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

more complicated, the ideal of democracy itself embeds a notion of shared activity. The ideal of democracy only applies in situations where a group of people acts together. And the quintessential embodiment of the ideal of democracy—a self-governing political community—involves a group of people finding ways to act together in spite of deep and serious disagreements that even touch on the nature of democracy itself. The fact that the democratic practice of popular voting has secured such widespread acceptance and is celebrated and perpetuated by citizens who in other respects disagree so deeply and seriously should give pause to anyone inclined to denigrate its democratic credentials.

The goal of doing *democratic* democratic theory motivates the starting point of this book. Rather than beginning—as theory often does—with the definition of democracy or an elaboration of democratic principles, this book begins with a description of voting practices as they exist in contemporary democratic societies. In chapter 6, I dive deeper into questions about the definition of democracy and democratic principles. In doing so, I explain and justify the method of democratic democratic theory I employ here, which is a form of what political theorists call "constructive interpretation." Readers who want to better understand the relationship between the descriptive and normative claims in this book may wish to skip ahead.

I have saved the discussion of this methodology for the end of the book, though, because I want this book to be interesting and accessible to readers who are not well versed in academic debates about democratic theory. This book is for anyone who wants to better appreciate the value of popular voting, and to have an account of its democratic purposes that can help us navigate ethical and policy debates about voting. Despite its fancy name, the method of constructive interpretation, at least as I employ it here, is not an exotic invention of the ivory tower. It is a common feature of public discourse in democratic societies, where, in determining what we ought to do, we often appeal to the shared values implicit or explicit in the things we already do together. Readers who are comfortable with this sort of argument, then, can get right to the main contributions of this book, without having to wade through the kind of conceptual debates that academics like me live for. Of course, some readers who don't live for such discussions and are not yet familiar with the relevant jargon of democratic theory may also want to know more about the concept of democracy and its value that informs the arguments of this book. I believe these readers will find the more abstract philosophical account of this book's methodology that I offer in chapter 6 easier to follow once they have seen it in action.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

The Value of Voting

The approach I take in this book differs from other scholarship on voting and from other treatises on electoral reform in a few key ways. I provide an account of the distinctive value of *popular* voting that is grounded in a *holistic* view of the practice and a *systemic* perspective on democracy. Let me now explain each of these ideas.

This book is about popular voting. I argue that the value and purposes of popular voting in elections or on ballot measures are different than those of voting in, for example, legislatures and juries. There are, of course, some overlapping features and values common to any use of voting procedures. All of the familiar uses of voting in democratic governance apply an aggregative interpretation of equality. The values of popular voting, and its distinctive role within democracy, though, are created by the conjunction of aggregative equality with other key features that form part of the practice of *popular* voting, in particular.

Relatedly, I adopt a holistic perspective on the practice of popular voting. This means considering how formal voting procedures and administrative policies interact with the many informal aspects of the practice. The social norms, discursive tropes, and popular attitudes that have developed in relation to popular voting are no less a part of the practice of popular voting than its formal elements. I will argue that the interaction of formal voting procedures with social norms and expectations creates much of the value of voting. Consequently, efforts to improve the way we vote must be attentive to how reforms to electoral institutions or administration affect attitudes and norms related to voting.

Finally, the account of popular voting's value I offer here comes from adopting a systemic perspective on democracy. My starting point is a view that democracy is a rich and multi-faceted political ideal. No single institution or practice should be expected to realize the full value of democracy. Instead, democracy's value is best realized in democratic systems. Within democratic systems, different practices may evince different aspects of democratic values.[30] Some practices may also perform functions that help to support the value of other institutions or practices. I do not argue that popular voting realizes democratic values better than other participatory practices. Rather, I argue that popular voting instantiates or exemplifies

30. See Warren, "A Problem-Based Approach to Democratic Theory."

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

aspects of democratic values that other practices do not, and it also performs essential functions that support a healthy democratic system.

The core thesis of the book is that voting should not be evaluated simply as one possible mode of democratic participation. The practice of popular voting is constituted by a set of features that work together to create voting's unique value. This book focuses on three core features of popular voting. The first is an expectation of approximately universal participation. Declining voter turnout rates around the world have rightly prompted much handwringing about the state of democratic citizenship. Yet despite these declining turnout rates, we still treat high voter turnout as a standard for evaluating elections. Public discourse around elections reflects a social ambition toward universal participation as well as an expectation that citizens will, in fact, show up at the polls, en masse. And when they do not, we take that as a sign that something is going wrong.

The second core feature of contemporary voting practices is the application of aggregative equality. Voting involves a decision-procedure that treats individual contributions equally and symmetrically. This is the feature that most scholarly accounts of voting have emphasized, since it is common to voting procedures in many different political contexts. But aggregative equality also takes on special significance in the context of popular voting. I will argue that the counting of votes according to a predefined, transparent, and replicable voting rule exhibits unique virtues when combined with mass participation and the spectacle of elections.

The third core feature of popular voting that I emphasize in this book is what I call, for lack of a better word, voting's momentousness. I use the word momentous in two senses. First, the practice of popular voting centers around temporally defined, decisive participatory moments. These are moments when the relationship between citizens' acts of participation and important public decisions are rendered as transparent as possible. These moments also recur predictably and periodically, creating a rhythm to public life that aids in the formation of political identities and projects. Second, voting is momentous in the colloquial sense of marking a significant, memorable occasion. Partly because they are temporally well defined, occasions for popular voting create moments that can command widespread attention. These moments interrupt the ordinary, delegated, and diffuse business of government with a spectacle of mass participation. They serve as an unavoidable reminder and public reaffirmation that democracy is something we must all do together.

This constellation of features realizes aspects of democratic values that may be suppressed or underemphasized in other democratic practices.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

Popular voting renders the equality of citizens concrete, formal, and transparent. And because each vote is counted, it also means that the constitution of political power rests on the dignity and equal worth of each individual contribution. Even as it depends on individual contributions, though, voting also makes salient the fact that modern democracy is a mass collective phenomenon. Voting is irreducibly something we do together. It serves as a reminder that our political agency depends on joining together with others. The practice of popular voting, then, especially when it conforms to the ideal of approximately universal participation, provides an occasion for the community to express its commitment to democracy's core values of political equality and popular sovereignty, and for citizens to affirm and participate in this expression.

Occasions for popular voting also perform valuable functions in large, modern democracies that help to support and maintain other aspects of a healthy democratic practice. The ritual of mass participation on formally equal terms serves as a periodic reminder of democratic norms, made all the more effective because citizens do not merely observe the message, but participate in expressing it. The practice of popular voting, when characterized by the expectation of universal participation, also plays an important role in the socialization of citizens into their role as political agents by establishing a floor for political engagement and clearly defining an age of political maturity. And not least, of course, as other scholars have argued, the practice of popular voting disciplines public officials to attend to the concerns of citizens from all sectors of society.

This account of the distinctive value of voting within modern democracies has important implications for the standards that we use to evaluate and improve electoral institutions and practices. This book draws out several principles that are often underappreciated in both theoretical and practical discussion of electoral reform. I have already alluded to these in this introduction. First, voting best serves its role in democracy when it is characterized not only by meaningful access or opportunity to vote, but by actual high turnout. Second, understanding the value of voting and how we can improve it requires adopting a systemic perspective on democracy. We cannot adequately assess the relationship between voting and democratic values in isolation from complementary political practices. Third, any effort to evaluate or reform practices of popular voting should place heavy emphasis on how citizens *experience* the act of voting and the public occasion of elections. Much of the value of popular voting comes from what it communicates to citizens, and how they see themselves and their actions fitting within the

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

broader project of democracy. Evaluating electoral institutions and practices, then, requires careful attention to how electoral rules—including and especially administrative decisions about how citizens cast their votes—affect how citizens interpret the act of voting. In later chapters of the book, I draw out the implications of these evaluative insights for specific issues within election systems, including the role of political parties in electoral agenda-setting and the value of simultaneous, in-person vote-casting.

By directing attention to the distinctive role of voting in modern democracy, this book charts a course between minimalist democratic theories that reduce democracy to elections and radical democratic theory that minimizes the value of voting as an act of participation or practice of citizenship. This book takes on board a clear-eyed assessment of voting's limitations. Even with the most well-designed institutions, voting's value cannot be fully realized unless it is also embedded within a broader democratic system that enables the formation and aggregation of meaningful political preferences. But, as I will show, voting need not be able to bear all of the normative weight of democracy on its own to be worthy of its prominence in our civic life.

A Note on Scope

Readers will no doubt detect a disproportionate focus on examples and public debates from the United States. This focus, of course, reflects the concerns about voting that are most salient to me. As a citizen and resident of the United States, I have greater familiarity with and a personal stake in the character of US democracy. Additionally, because of the breadth and bitterness of electoral reform debates in US politics at the time I am writing this, I expect many readers of this book will be interested in its application to the US context.

But this book is not just about voting the United States. The account of voting's democratic value that I provide here is common to most, if not all, established democracies. This includes not only so-called "Western" democracies of North America, Europe, and the English-speaking world, but also many polities in East and South Asia, Latin America, and Africa. If there is an exception among established democracies, it is Switzerland, where elections and referenda have been conducted by mail for decades, where occasions to vote are more frequent, and where turnout exhibits a different pattern than is typical in places where voting is a more infrequent occurrence.[31] Switzerland

31. See Dermont, "Taking Turns at the Ballot Box."

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

perhaps aside, though, popular voting plays a similar role across today's large democracies. Of course, there is variation in the extent to which the norms or institutions of any given society reflect different aspects of this account. But there is no prototypical electoral system on which this account is based. It is compiled from research on democracy around the world.

Indeed, despite this book's bias toward anecdotes and applications from the United States, many polities exhibit the core features of popular voting much better than the United States. Turnout rates in the United States are below average.[32] Our redistricting practices regularly contravene aggregative equality. The increasing and unregulated length of campaigns combined with widespread use of early voting dilutes the impact of electoral moments. Some of the clearest normative guidance from this book—such as the case for compulsory voting, an Election Day holiday, and limits on both the campaign and voting periods—constitutes an ambitious reform agenda in the United States, but a justification of existing institutions in other countries. It is important, then, to note that even though I hope that this book provides a constructive intervention into US debates about voting reform, the principles and recommendations I offer are not intended exclusively for the United States, and many will be more immediately feasible in other contexts.

Plan of the Book

Chapter 1 characterizes the practice of popular voting and lays out the account of the value(s) of this practice that is at the heart of this book. Drawing on survey research, public discourse, histories of suffrage movements, administrative practices, and empirical scholarship, I demonstrate the depth of citizens' attachment to the practice of voting and I identify the three core normative features of popular voting as a democratic practice. In this chapter I provide an overview of the aspects of democracy's value that voting most uniquely instantiates. I also argue that popular voting performs essential functions that support a healthy democratic culture. The argument of this chapter is not that voting is the only or even the most important participatory practice in democratic societies, but rather that it plays an essential role—especially in large communities—and is not interchangeable with other forms of participation. Moreover, the value of voting's distinct role in modern democracy is partly constituted by its special salience in citizens' beliefs about democracy.

32. "Civic Engagement."

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

Chapter 2 outlines important limitations of voting's ability to realize democratic values. I argue that these limitations do not undermine the value of voting, but they do reveal how voting's value is dependent on its fit within a broader democratic system. This chapter focuses on two potential challenges to the value of voting procedures. The first is the "inputs" problem: the value of elections and electoral outcomes is derived from the value of individual citizens' political agency. The preferences that voters express with their votes, then, should reflect what we think is valuable about their individual agency. Voting's value may therefore be attenuated if voters' judgments fall too far short of standards of rationality or authenticity, reflecting the influence of cognitive biases, elite manipulation, or poor information. The second potential challenge to the value of voting procedures is the "outputs" problem, also known as the social choice problem. Even if individual votes do bear the value of individual agency, it is not always possible to aggregate them in a way that preserves and transfers that value to the electoral outcome. Any account of voting's role in modern democracy must be sensitive to these potential challenges. However, I argue that in responding to these challenges, democratic theorists have sometimes been overzealous in distancing the ideal of democracy from the central practice of popular voting. A systemic approach to evaluating democratic practices shows how popular voting can occupy a prominent and central role in our civic life while avoiding the "realist" critiques to which theories of electoral democracy are often vulnerable.

Chapter 3 builds on the insights from the first two chapters to elaborate on the normative guidance that my account of voting's value can offer citizens and political leaders who hope to make voting practices better conform to their animating purposes. The chapter discusses evaluative standards related to three key aspects of popular voting: the goal of universal turnout, the choice of voting rules that instantiate aggregative equality, and the importance of attending to how citizens experience voting moments. This chapter also compares the character of popular voting in elections versus referenda and considers the kinds of questions best suited to a popular vote.

Chapter 4 introduces another element in the practice of popular voting: party politics. Political parties and party systems have played a major role in the development and maintenance of contemporary practices of popular voting. Party politics also plays a major role in voting's integration into the broader system of democratic governance. This chapter examines the role of political parties in the practice of voting and the principles that we should use to evaluate different forms of party politics. The chapter begins

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

where chapter 3 leaves off, with the observation that the value of popular voting depends on the democratic character of prior agenda-setting processes. But we cannot apply the same evaluative standards that we use to assess voting procedures when we assess agenda-setting processes. In particular, democratic agenda-setting processes must exhibit a non-aggregative form of political equality. After briefly identifying some core principles of democratic agenda-setting, I defend the party system paradigm as the appropriate starting point for conceptualizing democratic agenda-setting processes. Finally, I consider some candidate models for healthy party politics, and argue that an ideal of "parties-as-mobilizers" provides the best standard for evaluating party politics and for guiding efforts to improve party systems, party organizations, and practices of partisanship.

The distinctive value of popular voting in democracy revolves around citizens' shared experience of Election Day. In chapter 5 I discuss the importance of some of the nitty-gritty details of electoral administration that shape the environment in which citizens cast their votes and that consequently affect how citizens perceive the significance of voting. This chapter makes a case for simultaneous, in-person vote casting and for an Election Day holiday. The chapter also discusses the pros and cons of decentralized electoral administration and the visibility of parties on Election Day.

Chapter 6 takes a step back to respond to potential concerns about the book's methodology. The defense of voting that I offer in this book begins with the—perhaps historically contingent—role that voting has actually come to play in our democratic practices. This starting point might prompt a radical criticism. Why should we care what values voting happens to serve in existing democracies? Why not instead focus our energy and attention on designing participatory practices for an *ideal* democracy? In this chapter, I provide a rejoinder to this line of criticism that is inspired by the realist[33] tradition in political theory. But more importantly, I argue that there are

33. The term "realist" has multiple uses within political theory, and I engage with a couple of them in this book, so it is worth briefly disambiguating these two uses of the term. The first kind of realism I discuss first appears in chapter 2 in a discussion of what has come to be called "democratic realism." Democratic realists cast doubt on the value of citizens' political judgments and expressed preferences. They argue that realistic assessments of citizen competence and political behavior undermines many traditional theories of democracy. I am largely critical of the normative claims offered by democratic realists, though I argue that their concerns should be taken seriously. The second kind of realism I discuss in this book appears in chapter 6. There I draw on the tradition of political realism, which I argue is best understood as attentiveness to a particular set of risks in politics, especially those associated with the concentration of political power. This form of realism I tentatively embrace.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

reasons internal to democracy for valuing existing practices and that those reasons play an important role in practical reasoning about the ethics of democracy. As part of this argument, I sketch an account of democracy as shared agency dependent upon a structure of shared plans.

Because this book serves two aims—to defend voting's centrality in modern democracies and to guide efforts to improve voting practices—readers who are more interested in one or the other of these two purposes may wish to skip some sections of the book. In particular, readers who are unmoved by skepticism about the primacy of voting and elections and who are primarily interested in practical questions of electoral reform may wish to skip chapters 2 and 6. These chapters delve into scholarship on voting and democracy that can at times be rather technical. I have endeavored to render the discussion of this work in layman's terms where I am able, because I believe it does help us understand how we should—and should not—evaluate voting institutions and practices. But I have also tried to write the book in such a way that readers who wish to skip some of these more technical discussions can still make sense of the book's core arguments and practical guidance.

As human societies change in the coming decades, the way we vote will change, too. It is important that we have a clear understanding of the values voting serves in modern democracies to guide these changes and understand their implications for our civic life. More than a blueprint for the future of voting, though, this book stands as a celebration of what we have achieved with the modern practice of voting. Most importantly, this book extends an invitation to scholars, policy makers, political leaders, and all citizens to reflect on how the unique value of voting can be preserved and strengthened for a new era of democracy.

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

INDEX

absentee voting, 161–62, 164, 165. *See also* convenience voting
accessibility to polls, 1, 7, 14, 29, 90, 91–92, 161, 164, 167–66; symbolism of, 159–60, 164–66, 179, 183
acclamation procedure, 38
activism, 20–21, 43, 44, 51, 141, 143, 208, 212; online, 48n57
African American suffrage, 20–21, 173–74
agency: agency slack, 52n67; collective, 38, 39, 58, 59, 66–67, 71, 73, 87, 97–98, 106, 118, 218; effective, 102–3; individual, 17, 38, 40, 58–59, 66–69, 93, 97, 123, 159–60, 218; shared, 49, 93–94, 97, 98, 127, 150, 160, 191, 199–208
agenda-setting, 18, 31, 66, 85, 103, 109, 118–51; democratic function of, 124–28; openness to innovation and transformation in, 126–27; paradigms of, 131–38, 140, 151; usage of term, 120–21. *See also* party politics
aggregation, 57–71; minimalist response to, 71–74. *See also* input and output problems in voting; social choice theory
aggregative equality, 12, 13, 17, 23, 30, 32–34, 35, 58, 79, 87; application of, 88–89, 94–101, 118, 119; and minorities' interests, 33n29, 99–101; redistricting and, 16; voting rules and, 97–102, 109
Aldrich, John, 129n25
Almond, Gabriel, 46n52
anarchy, 200
anonymity in voting, 99–101
Arrow, Kenneth, General Possibility Theory of, 61–62, 65
artificial intelligence and voting, thought experiment, 215–18
audits, 39n38, 96
Australia, voting in, 28, 105, 156

ballot exhaustion, 105, 218
ballot initiatives, 109, 110, 111–12
Beer, Samuel, 185
Beerbohm, Eric, 90n2
Belgium, voting in, 25n9, 28
Bensel, Richard, 154, 158, 182, 185
biases and misinformation, voting based on, 17, 34, 68–69, 120, 123, 216
Birch, Sarah, 49, 177
Bratman, Michael, 200–206
Brennan, Geoffrey, 40–41
Brettschneider, Corey, 83n59
Brexit referendum, 32, 110n, 127

campaign finance, 4, 172
campaigning period, 16, 31
Campbell, David, 26
Canada, voting in, 25n8, 27, 28
canvassing and "get out the vote" drives, 28, 29, 147–48, 149, 176, 183, 184
Chambers, Simone, 75n39
Citizen Climate Convention (France), 188–89, 193, 196
citizen sovereignty, 102n28
cognitive accessibility, 113–14
Cohen, Joshua, 76n41, 77n45, 78n47, 83n61
collective rationality, 32, 61–63, 65, 76, 96–98, 102–8, 120, 122, 123, 130; collective irrationality, 98, 106–7
Condorcet Rule, 64–65, 103, 105
"constructive interpretation," 11, 209–10
convenience voting, x, xii, 4, 7, 29, 92, 155–56, 159, 161–62, 214–15; drawbacks to, xiv, 162–66, 169–70, 186
creative equality, 125–26, 136, 138, 146, 147, 148–49, 150
cumulative voting, 100–101, 104n32

Dalton, Russell, 26
deliberation, 3, 9, 24, 31, 33, 34, 57, 68, 76, 77n45, 86, 125n, 130
democracy, definitions of, 10–11, 35, 40, 53, 190, 199–200, 213; minimalist, 71–72, 73, 74

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

democracy, forms of: agonistic, 77; discursive, 79, 80–81; open, 78, 191–95, 198; representative, 193; shared agency, 200–208
Democratic Party, xiv, 4
democratic theory, voting and, x, 8–12, 17, 21–22, 30, 56–86, 126, 189–90; "deliberative turn" in, 57, 75–79, 82; "democratic realism," 18n, 56; interpretative task of, 208–10; radical proposals in, 189–98; systemic approach to, 35–36, 49, 57, 75, 79–85
democratic values, voting as instantiation of, 4, 17, 22–23, 25, 30, 34–42
demonstrations, 39, 51n63
disciplining function of elections, 14, 23, 42, 51–53, 80, 196
Downs, Anthony, 27
duty to vote, 3, 25–28, 40, 89–91; "folk" belief in, 24n, 54, 90
Dworkin, Ronald, 209

early voting, 7, 16, 148, 161–62, 165, 167n30, 170, 171, 172
"educative" arguments for democracy, 93–94, 126
Election Assistance Commission, 171
Election Day, 18, 152, 154–87; as holiday, 16, 18, 167–68; in 19th century America, 154, 158, 182, 185; party agents on, 148, 157, 158, 182–83; sanitization of, 155, 159, 185. *See also* momentousness of voting
electoral accountability, 51–52, 78n48, 141, 157, 193
electoral administration, xiii, 4, 6, 18, 152–53, 155–87; definition of, 156; local (state) vs. centralized (federal), xiv, 156–57, 170–81; political parties' role in, 157, 182–86; preclearance requirements and, x, 180–81; variations in, 6, 174–75
electoral fraud, 158, 179, 180, 183; claims of, ix, x, xi–xii, xv, 4, 170
elites and elitism, xii, 2, 9, 52, 69, 72, 84, 112, 143, 159, 196–97, 200n26; Landemore on, 192–93
environmental conditions of voting, 94, 164
epistocracy, 2–3
equality. *See* aggregative equality; creative equality; voter equality
equality, deliberative interpretation of, 33, 124–26
equal opportunity, 91–92
Ewald, Alec, 176, 178n52
expense of elections, 1, 3, 29

factionalism, 139
For the People Act (H.R. 1), 172, 178
France: "Great Debate" in, 1n5; voting in, 30n25
Freedom House, 21

Gerber, Alan S., 165n27, 176
Germany, voting in, 25n9, 67, 156
gerrymandering. *See* redistricting practices
"get out the vote" drives. *See* canvassing
Gibbard–Satterthwaite theorem, 62n8
Gilbert, Margaret, 203n35
Gill v. Whitford, x
Goldman, Alvin, 90n1
Green, Donald P., 165n27, 176
Guerrero, Alex, 90n1
Guinier, Lani, 100–101
Gutmann, Amy, 78, 82

Harper v. Virginia, 173
Help America Vote Act (HAVA), 171–73, 180

Iceland, reform proposal in, 193, 196
independence of irrelevant alternatives (IIA), 61–62, 64, 104n32, 107n39
India, voting in, 1, 29, 166
in-person voting, 15, 18, 39, 156, 169
input and output problems in voting, 17, 55, 56–57, 76, 79, 89, 119–20; inputs, 66–71, 122–23; outputs, 59–66, 123–24, 129–30
instant runoff voting, 103–5, 106, 108n
internet voting, 155–56, 214–15
ISSP citizenship module, 25

John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, 181

Landemore, Hélène, 78, 191–95
legislative elections, 99
Lipset, Seymour Martin, 50n60, 128–29
literacy tests, 170, 173–74
lobbying, 20, 37, 143n53, 218
Lomasky, Loren, 40–41
lottocracy, 2–3, 53, 78, 189, 193

Madison, James, 66n
mail-in voting, 4, 7, 29n21, 161–62, 169–70
majority rule, 60–61, 64, 78, 103, 123
Maloy, J. S., 151–52
mandatory voting: case for, 16, 90, 91, 148n64, 168–69; polities with, 28, 48–49, 169
marginalized groups, xiii, 6, 136, 146
Maskivker, Julia, 90n1
media coverage, 38–39, 44n48, 117; bias in, 47

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

Michels, Robert, 139
Mill, John Stuart, 93, 99
minorities and the disadvantaged, 33n29, 104n32, 161–62, 178, 180–81
mobilization and organization, 42–44, 80–81, 146–51, 165–66, 183–86; creative equality and, 126, 147, 148–49
momentousness of voting, 8, 13, 23, 30–32, 34–35, 38–40, 80, 82, 83, 87, 110, 187; strengthening of, 88; weakening of, 16, 114–15
moralism in politics, danger of excessive, 196, 197–98
Muirhead, Russell, 130, 144n55
"multi-channel" voting, 161

Nader, Ralph, 107
National Voter Registration Act (NRA), 171–72
negative campaigning, 106, 216. *See also* partisanship
New Zealand, voting in, 99
1992 election, 98
19th Amendment, 20, 178
non-voters, 37, 46, 49, 92, 110, 165, 169, 218; excuses by, 161

Obama, Barack, 165
one-person, one-vote principle, 101
Oscars Best Picture voting system, 108n

pareto efficiency, 61n6, 64
partisanship, 69, 85, 99, 119, 130, 135n, 148–50; defenders of, 137–38, 149; voting options and, 170
party politics, 17–18, 85, 116, 117–53; cartel party thesis of, 137n38, 143; cleavage metaphor for, 128–30; "parties-as-mobilizers" ideal in, 18, 136, 140, 146–51, 185; "parties for the common good" ideal in, 144–46; "responsible parties" ideal in, 140–44; vices of, 131, 138–40. *See also* electoral administration: political parties' role in,
Pateman, Carole, 93
Perot, Ross, 96
pluralist model of citizen participation, 45–49, 78, 80, 108n, 195
polarization, xiv, 44, 196
political speech and discourse, 75–77, 80, 81, 86, 126, 136, 137
polling places, 94, 154–55, 158–59, 174; closures of, x, 178, 180n; local significance of, 177, 180; in 19th century, 154
poll taxes, 170, 174, 182
poll workers, 38, 168, 173, 174–77, 179, 180
popular sovereignty, 14, 35, 42, 85, 101–2, 111, 187, 195, 217; definition of, 101
popular vote, electoral choices for, 7–8, 109–15
"*popular* voting" term, ixn, 12, 78
populism, x, 73–74, 121, 132
postal voting. *See* mail-in voting
preference formation, 66, 71, 85, 102, 103, 109, 116, 119–20, 150–51. *See also* agenda-setting
proportional representation, 95, 101, 148, 152

rallies, 39, 148
ranked choice voting, 95, 104, 106. *See also* instant runoff voting
"realist" political theory, 196–97
reciprocity, 34, 50n61, 82–83, 125n9
redistricting practices, 4, 16, 174; in majority–minority districts, 99, 100; reform of, 112
referenda voting, 15, 17, 32, 218; vs. popular voting, 89, 110–12; turnout for, 110
representation, principles of, 193
Republican Party, xiv, xv, 4; election control by, 172n36; voter suppression by, 117–18
responsiveness, 61n6, 102n29, 104, 107n39, 193
Richardson, Henry, 77n45
Riker, William, 72–74, 76n41
robocalls, 117
Rokkan, Stein, 128–29, 136
Rosenblum, Nancy, 130n26, 138, 144n55
Rosenbluth, Frances, 140–42
Rucho v. Common Cause, x
"rule by the people" concept, 71, 73–75, 78, 193, 203, 207

Sanders, Bernie, 127
Sartori, Giovanni, 128, 129n22
Schattschneider, E. E., 128, 136–37, 141
Schumpeter, Joseph, 72–74
Schwartzberg, Melissa, 38
Searle, John, 203n35
secret ballot, introduction of, 171, 178, 182
Selma to Montgomery March, 20
Shapiro, Ian, 140–42
Shapiro, Scott, 206
shared plans, 191, 199, 205–12, 213
Shaw v. Reno, 100n23
Shelby County v. Holder, ix, 181
Shiffrin, Seana, 41, 75n39
"single-peaked" preferences, 64–65, 102, 105
skepticism about value of voting, 38, 41, 45, 51–52, 54–55, 56, 59, 67–71, 75, 78–86, 93; minimalist argument for, 72–74, 76, 81; shortcomings of, 189–98
Slovak Republic, voting in, 25n9

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu

© Copyright, Princeton University Press. No part of this book may be distributed, posted, or reproduced in any form by digital or mechanical means without prior written permission of the publisher.

social choice theory, 17, 60–63, 66, 72n33, 73, 96, 103, 123; political parties and, 129n25
socialization of citizens, 44–51, 80, 82, 84, 93, 114
sortition. *See* lottocracy
South Korea, voter attitudes in, 25n8
status competition, 44
Switzerland, voting in, 15, 156, 161
systemic perspective. *See under* democratic theory

Thompson, Dennis, 40, 78, 82, 163
Thornburg v. Gingles, 100n23, 173
transition of power, xv
Trump, Donald, ix, x, xv, 172n
turnout, xiii, 14, 16, 49, 91–92, 137, 148; convenience voting effect on, 7, 161–62; decline in, 1–2, 13, 24, 30n25, 54; emphasis on, 3, 4, 39, 90; mandatory voting and, 168–69; minimum requirements for, 28n19; in 19th century, 50n62; same-day registration and, 167. *See also* universal participation; voter suppression
2000 election, 107, 171; in Florida, 39, 173
2004 election, 161; in Ohio, 178n49
2008 election, 30n25, 165, 167n30
2010 election, 117
2012 election, 30n25
2016 election, x, 30n25, 39n35, 161
2018 election, x, 39n36
2020 election, x, 4, 8, 112, 155, 156; convenience voting and, x, xii, 161, 170

United Kingdom, voting in, 110n, 161. *See also* Brexit referendum
Universal Declaration of Rights, 21
universal participation, xiii, 4, 17, 22, 34, 51; expectation of, 13, 14, 37–38, 40–45, 48, 82, 87, 110, 118, 163; opposition to, 80; significance of, 23–30, 88–92

Valen, Henry, 136
Verba, Sidney, and colleagues, 26–27, 46n32
voter equality, 173–74
voter ID requirements, x, 6–7, 174
voter registration, 4, 148, 165, 166–67
voter roll-off, 110
voter suppression, xii–xiii, 117, 147, 178; older forms of, 170, 173–74
voting: centrality of, 3, 9, 21, 40, 73n36, 80–81, 83–84, 91, 109–10, 214; as collective expression, 40–41, 111; difficulties and costs of, 6, 43, 91–92, 104, 148; experience and optics of, 14–15, 17, 18, 38, 39, 40, 41, 92–94, 102, 106, 155–59, 163–64, 169, 174–75; future of, 214–18; limits of, 218–19; purposes of, 4, 6–7; as "social insurance," 27, 90n2; transparency of, 38–41; value of, xi, 12–18, 22–55, 77n45, 80, 85–86, 183, 195, 219. *See also* democratic theory, voting and; duty to vote; momentousness of voting; skepticism about value of voting
voting age distinction, 50–51
voting period, length of, 16
voting reform: funding for, 180; incremental vs. radical, 195; negative effect of, 160; proposals for, 2–3, 4–8, 14, 99
voting rights, movements for, 20–21
Voting Rights Act, 171, 172, 173, 181
voting rules, 59–65, 72, 95–109; local variations of, 105; performance criteria for, 97n19; synchronic vs. diachronic evaluations of, 96–97

Warren, Mark, 63n11
"wasted votes," 101
West Wing, The (television series), 29n24
White, Jonathan, 130n26, 137
Wilks-Heeg, Stuart, 178n48
"will of the people" concept, 21, 72–73
women's suffrage, 20, 178

Ypi, Lea, 130n26, 137

For general queries, contact webmaster@press.princeton.edu