



Democracy and Its Critics

By Robert A. Dahl

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

Robert A. Dahl, Sterling Professor of Political Science Emeritus at Yale University, is also the author of *Who Governs?*, *After the Revolution?*, *Polyarchy*, and *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy*, all available from Yale University Press.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Dahl defends democracy against various criticisms, including anarchism and its tenet that even democracy is coercive; the normative view that democracy is less desirable than elite rule; and the empirical claim that democracy is impossible due to an inevitable existence of an elite. Dahl argues that a widespread distribution of wealth is necessary for meaningful political democracy, an idea he discussed more fully in *A Preface to Economic Democracy* (LJ 9/1/85). He also suggests how political institutions can prevent control by elites by incorporating groups of randomly selected citizens into the system. Dahl is well-known in political science for his major contributions to democratic theory; although this book contains material revised from earlier works, it is a necessary purchase for graduate libraries and recommended for undergraduate and public libraries.

- *David Steiniche, Missouri Western State Coll., St. Joseph*

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From the Back Cover

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