

Election Day



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Uses contemporary documents to provide the flavor of election day, past and present, showing how the day has evolved over the centuries. From the beginning of the Republic to the controversial outcome in 2000, election day has been a time of great importance--the climax of a multifaceted drama built up over several months. Yet studies of the election process rarely devote space to Election Day itself. This book tells the story of how this day has evolved over the centuries, using contemporary documents to provide a sense of the flavor of election day, past and present. In the words of participants--voters, candidates, election officials--and of foreign travelers, reporters, and historians, the book looks at the elaborate celebrations of the early republic, the virtues of the system and the abuses, the exclusion and eventual inclusion of African Americans, women, and Native Americans, and some recent innovation in methods and technology. Arranged in chronological sections, the book opens with an introductory survey of the evolution of election day, begins each section with a brief introduction to the period, and puts each document into historical context with a short discussion of the significance of the particular subject. Bringing the story through the controversial presidential contest of 2000, the book also raises questions about how election day is likely to evolve in the future.

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