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Those who do not have their heads buried too deeply in partisan sands will know that there is something awry with the American form of electoral democracy. Florida's continuing ability to misplace votes recently and in the 2000 Presidential election is only part of the iceberg we have been made privy to-and Steven Schier takes a good, hard, evaluative look not only at what is there in plain sight, but that which lurks below the surface (and not only in Florida and not only with the electoral college). He further proposes practical improvements that will make our surprisingly peculiar democratic processes healthy, whole, and responsive again. Identifying four essential evaluative criteria for a democracy that genuinely works, Schier asks us to examine the degree to which our system promotes political stability, the degree to which our elected officials are held accountable, what the problems are with voter turnout and how to improve it, and asks for a meaningful scrutiny of governmental policy. No look at our peculiar democracy would be complete without an examination of other established democracies, nor a look at how special interests warp political parties and the concept of majority rule. The solution to many of our electoral problems, Schier argues, lies in enhancing the roles and influence of political parties. Schier proposes reforms that include broadening voter registration; giving parties large blocks of free TV time; adopting one-punch partisan ballots, making it easier for voters to cast a straight-party vote; abandoning initiatives which clutter up the ballot; and utilizing party-based financing to boost voter turnout. With these proposals, he encourages the creative consideration of election reform, and shows how the Florida 2000 race may have played out had these suggestions been in place. Schier's book appeals to any and every citizen interested in our electoral system and its role in governmental politics. It is invaluable for professionals in political science and ideal for students in American government, political parties, elections, and political behavior courses, as well for political scientists. Any citizens concerned about the conduct of American elections will

discover here a fresh and focused analysis of our problems at the ballot box.

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