



In Search of Democracy

By *Larry Diamond*

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In Search of Democracy By Larry Diamond

This book evaluates the global status and prospects of democracy, with an emphasis on the quality of democratic institutions and the effectiveness of governance as key conditions for stable democracy. Bringing together a wide range of the author's work over the past three decades, it advances a framework for assessing the quality of democracy and it analyzes alternative measures of democracy. Drawing on the most recent data from Freedom House, it assesses the global state of democracy and freedom, as of the beginning of 2015, and it explains why the world has been experiencing a mild but now deepening recession of democracy and freedom since 2005.

A major theme of the book across the three decades of the author's work is the relationship between democratic quality and stability. Democracies break down, Diamond argues, not so much because of economic factors but because of corrupt, inept governance that violates individual rights and the rule of law. The best way to secure democracy is to ensure that democracy is accountable, transparent, genuinely competitive, respectful of individual rights, inclusive of diverse forms and sources of participation, and responsive to the needs and aspirations of ordinary citizens. Viable democracy requires not only a state that can mobilize power to achieve collective goals, but also one that can restrain and punish the abuse of power—a particularly steep challenge for poor countries and those with natural resource wealth.

The book examines these themes both in broad comparative perspective and with a deeper analysis of historical trends and future prospects in Africa and Asia. Concluding with lessons for sustaining and reforming policies to promote democracy internationally, this book is essential reading for students and scholars interested in democracy, as well as politics and international relations more generally.

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- Sales Rank: #1008000 in eBooks
- Published on: 2015-07-16
- Released on: 2015-07-16
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Review

Presenting decades of accumulated insight, wisdom, and constructive provocation, this volume is not only an irreplaceable account of the global state of democracy but also a remarkable testament to the power and value of one original, rigorous mind taking on an entire field of study across a defining generation of landmark events and trends.

Thomas Carothers, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

The book – *In Search of Democracy* - brings together some of the seminal writings of Larry Diamond that have made him a pre-eminent figure among scholars of democracy and comparative democratic development. The essays in this twenty-three chapter volume are typically comprehensive and brim with insights, thanks in no small measure to the equal emphasis Diamond places on the factors of structure, culture, state, society, politics, and political economy, backed by sound empirical data and appropriate illustrations. The unique combination of hard-headed analysis, passionately delivered in accessible prose, should make the collection indispensable to all students and policy actors in the field of comparative democratization and accountable governance.

E. Gyimah-Boadi, Executive Director of the Ghana Center for Democratic Development and the Afrobarometer; and retired professor of political science at the University of Ghana, Legon.

Larry Diamond is the foremost scholar in fostering and guiding the burgeoning field of democratization over the past three decades. This collection includes the bulk of his most illuminating works of agenda-setting significance. This book cannot be ignored by anybody wanting a full grasp of all the most important intellectual debates over problems and opportunities of emerging democracies, especially during the critical phase of democratic consolidation, and the complex strategic issues as well as difficult policy choices surrounding democracy promotion.

Yun-han Chu, Distinguished Research Fellow of the Institute of Political Science, Academia Sinica

About the Author

Larry Diamond is senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and at Stanford University's Freeman Spogli Institute, where he directs the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law. He is founding co-editor of the *Journal of Democracy* and author of *The Spirit of Democracy*.

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