



# **Wrestling with Democracy: Voting Systems as Politics in the 20th Century West (Studies in Comparative Political Economy and Public Policy)**

*Dennis Pilon*

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Though sharing broadly similar processes of economic and political development from the mid-to-late nineteenth century onward, western countries have diverged greatly in their choice of voting systems: most of Europe shifted to proportional voting around the First World War, while Anglo-American countries have stuck with relative majority or majority voting rules. Using a comparative historical approach, *Wrestling with Democracy* examines why voting systems have (or have not) changed in western industrialized countries over the past century.

In this first single-volume study of voting system reform covering all western industrialized countries, Dennis Pilon reviews national efforts in this area over four timespans: the nineteenth century, the period around the First World War, the Cold War, and the 1990s. Pilon provocatively argues that voting system reform has been a part of larger struggles over defining democracy itself, highlighting previously overlooked episodes of reform and challenging widely held assumptions about institutional change.

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