



The Democrats: A Critical History

Lance Selfa

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"The Democrats is at its best not just when analyzing Democratic foibles — and there are plenty — but when assessing how the party stifles dissent.... Lance Selfa has crafted a smart, readable history of the Democrats that reminds us of the party's allegiance to capital."

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"If you've ever wondered where the democracy is in the Democratic Party and why US elections rarely seem to change anything, this book will explain the where and the why. Providing readers with the history of the Democrats from its genesis as the party of the slaveholders to the neoliberal DLC, author Selfa describes the Democrats' role in diverting Americans' desire for change."

—Ron Jacobs

Offering a broad historical perspective, Selfa shows how the Democratic Party has time and again betrayed the aspirations of ordinary people while pursuing an agenda favorable to Wall Street and U.S. imperial ambitions.

He examines the relationship between party leaders and social movements, from the civil rights struggle to the movement to end the Iraq war; reveals the unhappy marriage between U.S. labor and the “party of the people;” and assesses the mixed record of attempts to build a third party alternative.

Further, Selfa argues that the Democrats' record of backing the rich and breaking promises to its voting base is not a recent departure from an otherwise laudable past, but results from its role as one of two parties serving the interests of the U.S. establishment.

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