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DEMOCRACY IN A NEW AMERICA: A SYMPOSIUM

As America enters the twenty-first century, the struggle to create a more participatory democracy has reached a crossroads. The analytical framework established by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and grounded in biracial politics has been seriously undermined by recent Supreme Court decisions and an increasingly multi-ethnic population. When state legislators embark on a new round of reapportionment after the 2000 census, they must accommodate the changing demographics and navigate an uncertain legal framework. Though many commentators believe the Voting Rights Act may no longer be able to achieve its goals, there is little consensus about alternative means of empowering voters and ensuring that all citizens have a meaningful vote. The question is: Where does the new America go next?

Meeting in the state that has generated some of the fiercest voting rights litigation and on the heels of one of the most hotly-contested presidential elections, Symposium contributors begin to answer this question. Contributors analyze voting rights from a variety of perspectives to explore the future of both the Voting Rights Act and other initiatives to ensure a more inclusive democracy. By focusing on the intersection between practice and theory, the Symposium provides a uniquely thorough examination of democracy in a new America.

