ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: The Presidential Primary: Analysis of Problems and Reforms

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Today there are numerous flaws in the method of selecting nominees that need reform. This paper will (i) review the different ways that American parties have nominated their presidential candidates, (ii) describe the flaws that many believe exist in the current nominating system, and (iii) discuss some proposed reforms to the contemporary nominating process. The purpose of these reforms, like those made in the past, should be to make the process as open and democratic as possible while striving to provide fairness to all contenders, especially early on in the process. Acquiring these characteristics has been a constant challenge throughout American history; however, as the paper’s opening section makes clear; such reforms of the nominating process are not without precedent. The major challenge seen today with nomination reform is that there are numerous proposals that fix, but also create, new difficulties. Because of this, determining the best possible reform requires an extensive look at their history as well as the positive and negative implications associated with the reform proposals. In addition, assessing recent technological advancements and their impact on the process and the future of the nominating process as a whole will also be important as its impact has grown exponentially over time.