The Deadlock of Democracy in Brazil
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For Olivia and Michelle
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Acknowledgments

One day in 1989, I heard that the municipal-level votes received by candidates for Brazilian congressional seats had been recorded on a computer tape. Though the tape included only the votes of winning candidates and covered just two elections in a handful of states, I thought the data might help me understand the workings of Brazil’s unusual electoral system. One step led to another. The number of elections grew from two to five, coverage expanded to nearly the whole nation, and the behavior of the elected congressional candidates in subsequent legislatures became an integral part of the research program. The project ultimately took over a decade; fortunately, I already had tenure. Not surprisingly I accumulated a great many debts for the support, both personal and institutional, I received over this long period. I am too disorganized to remember them all, but here is a start.

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To Michelle King, who produced our daughter Olivia, I owe a debt beyond words. Since “Miss O” is a lot more compelling than this book, it is fortunate that she was born when the book was essentially done.
Glossary of Major Political Parties

PDC  Christian Democratic Party

PDS  Democratic Social Party. Successor to ARENA, the party backing the military regime, joined with the PDC to create the PPR.

PDT  Democratic Labor Party. Moderately left, led by populist politician Leonel Brizola, whose career began in the 1945–64 period.

PFL  Liberal Front Party. An outgrowth of the old PDS. Conservative, strongest in the Northeast. Has an ideologically neoliberal wing and a substantial wing of nonideological “pork and patronage” types.

PMDB  Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement. Broad-based, center party that grew out of the Brazilian Democratic Movement. Began as the “official” opposition in the military regime. Plagued by frequent desertions but still the largest party in the Congress.

PPB  Brazilian Progressive Party. Conservative, created by merger of PPR and Progressive Party in 1995. The PPR was formed by the merger of the PDS and the Christian Democratic Party.

PPR  Reformist Progressive Party

PPS  Popular Socialist Party. New name for Brazilian Communist Party. Formerly Moscow oriented (unlike the Chinese-oriented Communist Party of Brazil), now mainstream socialist.


PSB  Brazilian Socialist Party. A small, mainstream socialist party, becoming an alternative for dissidents from the PSDB and other parties.

PSDB  Brazilian Social Democratic Party. A 1988 spinoff of center-left elements of the PMDB. Allied in 1994 with the conservative and northeastern-based PFL to guarantee the election of presidential candidate Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

PTB Brazilian Labor Party. In the 1945–64 period a populist, urban party. After 1979, the old PTB leaders could not reclaim the label, so they formed the PDT. Became a mostly right-wing collection of deputies whose overwhelming interest is pork and patronage.