Too Weak to Govern: Majority Party Power and Appropriations in the US Senate

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Too Weak to Govern: Majority Party Power and Appropriations in the US Senate Peter Hanson Can today's gridlocked Senate still perform the vital role in lawmaking entrusted to it by the Constitution? Too Weak to Govern examines the ability of the Senate majority party to tame the unruly Senate floor and pass the federal budget. Drawing on rigorous analysis and interviews with Senate leaders, it shows how the majority party manipulates the passage of appropriations bills to create massive "omnibus" spending bills. Omnibus bills help the majority party to overcome trouble on the floor and pass a budget at the cost of reducing transparency, accountability and the opportunity for senators to participate in lawmaking. Too Weak to Govern challenges traditional accounts of parties in Congress by demonstrating that the Senate majority party has more power to control the chamber than believed and that it is likely to use this power when it is weak and struggling to meet its goals.

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