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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN VIOLATION BY STANDARD PRESIDENTIAL VOTING PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

Much consternation has come to be highlighted in recent years even in the most scrupulous democratic republics with attention to secure vote casting and counting process. That the people tend to elect those candidates that reflect popular opinion is a widely held belief. Popular opinion is elicited by the process of adding up citizen votes that are assigned as ballots received toward electing a candidate nominated to a political party. Despite all transparency with frequent news media polling updates, it is a wonder why huge segments of the electorate remain dissatisfied. A sizeable portion of the answer can be found by questioning the statistical validity of the vote casting and counting process. The authors present arguments in favor of reform that would remove the experimental design violation inherent in electing candidates nominated for President, Prime Minister, Governor, and such other political positions. Some historical examples of good and bad governance are provided to introduce the topic. Brief mention of notable personalities lamenting the loss of political accountability and ethical responsibility of free nations are included. The formidable scheduling constraints for a singular leader of a republic make near impossible effective execution of major decisions in a timely manner. The authors recommend that the Office of Presidency be shared by 3 capable individuals simultaneously, with one among them interfacing with news media personnel.

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INTRODUCTION

The first enduring human settlement prospered in the geothermal rift valley of the river Maeander, among trees of a lightly grazed climax forest inhabited by Bronze-Age nomads from Eastern Europe settling near the Caucasian mountains, a short distance inland from the waters of the Aegean and Mediterranean Sea. Precise dating of this original settlement of Miletus, Anatolia is near impossible, with older estimates dating back to 3,500 BC (1-3). Although the Vikings had superb skills and older rock carvings of geometric figures, the first available evidence for technology is the discovery dated to 2,200 BC, of plano-convex optical quality lenses, among more than 42 standard diameter lens-shaped crystals (4): over two Millennia before the Nazarene of Bethlehem. Flourishing trade with the Minoan civilization was established by 1,900 BC. In ancient Greek writings of a dramatized play from year 423 BC the author Aristophanes describes a discussion between Socrates and a pharmacist, mentioning, a "beautiful transparent glossy stone with which they kindle fire."

The magnifying lens concept was attributed about 450 years later to the Roman philosopher-statesman Seneca [4 BC to 65 AD]. And now we speak about philosopher-statesmen.

STATESMEN, LEADERS, PILGRIMS: Some of our past statesmen sustainably represented the choice of their people, and others failed for one reason or another (5-10). Many of these statesmen were chosen to lead the political office of a democratic republic, others for a constitutional monarchy, and yet others were dictatorial czars. Among the kings and queens of England, William II [born 1057 AD], the second surviving son (11) of the first King William, despite confiscating Church property, did not himself participate in the military Crusades. Another king, born year 1600, Charles I, usurped the powers of Parliament, and despite being offered an honorable peace following defeat in a civil war, resumed armed militancy. Charles I was found guilty for waging war on his own people, tipped by one single vote of the legislative body, and was publicly executed in 1649. England became a Republic thereafter for eleven years under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell [born 1599]. Cromwell, aside from leading the government and the armed forces, also served to form a republican Commonwealth of Nations, ending the Irish Confederate wars, and ruling the British Isles from 1653 till his death in 1658 (12-15).

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The loss of Oliver Cromwell was filled by restoration of power to the son [born 1630] of the executed King Charles I. Charles II temporarily reconciled enemies. His callous fathering of many children and his propensity to enjoyment made him much loved despite the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London. Believing that the Church of England was beyond reform, a group of people that preferred to pray alone or in a private space went to Holland in 1608, where they could worship by personal choice. On a boat owned by Christopher Jones, 132 individuals sailed across the Atlantic Ocean on the *Mayflower* and dropped anchor near Cape Cod on November 21, 1620. Making peaceful relations with Indigenous Native Americans of Plymouth, the newly arrived immigrants learned about local flora and fauna, and more than half were able to endure the bitter cold of winter. While still sea-faring, the Pilgrims had agreed upon a participatory form of governance for their new settlement, and signed the *Mayflower Compact* (16).

From the *Mayflower Compact* to the American Declaration of Independence many years elapsed and documenting the changes of intent from the original Pilgrims to the Founding fathers and the proposed manner of exercising authority is not the subject of this writing. Neither is our purpose to place blame on governmental process for the parceling of land ownership and taxation. It may be sufficient to state here that as a Promised Land, America represents a beacon of hope for many. Reading Emily Dickinson one learns the value of welcoming refugees as a religious Covenant; reading Thomas Hardy one is reminded that Christianity is not the same as the finer Christian value systems (17).

False Promises and Scandal: Choosing a leader for the highest political office of a democratic republic is fraught with uncertainty that is influenced in part by false promises made by a charismatic personality. Campaign finance is another source, and the hidden unwritten agreements between candidate and fundraiser are rarely disclosed. Jack Cafferty, reflecting on the America he no longer recognizes, lamented that he feels trapped in a sectarian slaughterhouse (18). Today, despite the best of education and advising by Ivy-League qualified university professors and officials, our statesmen have become masters of the catch-word phrase and crafted charisma: not what can be justifiably classified as “philosophical” in the likes of Seneca. It is obvious that the founder-members of the American constitution did not envisage such travesty, and neither did the makers of the four times larger population of the country India: of Himalayan sages actively contemplating the hourglass shaped Mount Meru from Buddhist, Jain and Hindu Cosmology. Scandal comes in many forms. Scandal from a prudish sentimental mentality can make a cross-dressing male nominee be caricatured as decadent high-handed British aristocracy (19). Scandal by members of Congress endorsing acts of treason that placed innocent cadets in harm’s way and deceived 350 million peace loving citizens can remain a historical faux pas of misinformed intelligence gathering.

Shared presidency proposition: An important question that comes to the fore is the singularity of the office of President (20) or Prime Minister; or even the requirement to have a singular versus a shared office of any constitutional monarchy. The task of the highest political office is formidable and it should be inconceivable to execute all tasks with efficient effectiveness by one person for the 12 hour

working day demanded by the position. If the highest office were shared by perhaps three (3) individuals, much more could be accomplished. The division of powers and specializations are a matter of concern but can surely be worked out. One of those three might serve to interface with news media personnel. All three might lend signatures when unanimously approving any and all domestic and international affairs documentation. The number three is significant because if two agree on a planned course of action, and one dissents, it could not be regarded as a majority vote, and there would be a few days of stalemate followed by revision of plans and further deliberation.

Inherent bias in candidate selection: The age-old process of selecting a candidate running for political office has been implemented by counting of preferences elicited from the citizenry. If my roommate prefers pink cardigans in winter to keep her warm, then surely she votes for the candidate with the pink cardigan. If I prefer blue suede shoes, then my choice for President is based on shoe texture. Clearly, in such choice I would have neglected to consider the domestic and international manifesto of nominees wearing rubber sandals, topsiders, and red stilettos. It is strange that this gross violation of simple logical inference has been ignored by the worldwide intelligentsia for centuries. Concerns expressed by second American President John Adams are relevant here. During discussions with James Madison, Adams expressed the will to have a decision process that would help remove from selection those nominated “Natural Aristocrats” that failed to pass the test of combining wisdom and virtue. No such test has been devised till date. While the class of people defined as “liberal” appear more open-minded and willing for progressive change (21) than “conservatives,” any claims to universality are misrepresented. Both categories have certain common values inherently desiring the greater good. The maligning of a conservative position and endorsing under a “liberal banner” universal legislation for unlimited personal choice with no accountability for public health and religious sentiment is deeply disturbing.

Experimental design and statistics: It is widely believed that statistical results and graphical analysis can be misconstrued and sometimes intentionally deployed in favor of conflicted interest people or institutions. This may be true, but a good match-making to ensure that a given experimental design is not violated by the statistical process, can help reduce one major source of erroneous calculation, inference and conclusion (22). Among popular statistical assumptions, the Student t-test comparing two samples given the same treatment requires a Gaussian distribution for each. For any Gaussian distribution graphic visual representation to appear as a smooth contour, a minimum number of class intervals might be in the range of 16 to 24. When the number of class intervals or sample size is less than about 12, non-parametric statistical tests are generally mandated so that inferences can be mathematically validated. Among non-parametric tests, rank-order, or signed-rank, is simple to understand (23) and has been employed by the first author of the present article for scientific publications on eye focusing neuroscience (24, 25). A report from November 2019 published by *Time* magazine (26) citing a non-profit organization named Fair Vote indicates that 18 cities in America either endorse or currently employ a ranked-choice voting system, such as New York City, Minneapolis and San Francisco. Elections for Hollywood Film Academy Awards might be the most visible

publicized example of effective usage of such voting method. Australia has some form of ranked voting system in place for over a hundred years, but decisions from the Canberra legislature are not universally endurable. Other nation states using some form of rank order selection of candidates nominated for political office include New Zealand, Malta and Ireland.

Need for legislative process innovation: Many new millennium political pundits that have placed blame for bad decisions during a presidency on congressional legislative process, but to quote one source is difficult because some of their statements are exaggerated. Insiders may know the truth, and each individual member of the Senate and House of Representatives might secretly hold a preferred outcome. News media personnel may speculate, but their corporate sponsorship and necessary advertising dollars make them less than trustworthy. The resulting mood among the populace is a natural despondency, and citizens have become hapless victims of their own voting ballot choices: a despondency palpable after the tragic assassination of President John F. Kennedy. In a world where one click of an electronic computer switching hand operated "mouse" can take the aspirant from Boston to Bangkok, it is a wonder why the internet web forum "Yelp" can do it, but the legislative process of Parliament, Congress, and City Hall remains impervious to periodic committee censured feedback from the voting citizenry. If all subscribers to the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune and the San Francisco Chronicle were requested to participate in legislative process 4 times each year, they might feel a sense of honor and gladness in accepting the offer, and could thereby exercise the necessary responsibility that can be expected from capable citizens that take have taken liberty for granted for several decades.

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