

A FAILURE TO KEEP IT

HOW MISDIAGNOSIS, MISSED OPPORTUNITY AND MISPLACED
HOPE ARE DOOMING THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT
(AND WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT)



The WeleadUSA CONTRIBUTORS



THOSE WHO EXPECT TO REAP THE BLESSINGS OF FREEDOM MUST,
LIKE MEN, UNDERGO THE FATIGUE OF SUPPORTING IT.

– **Thomas Paine**



WE CANNOT IMPROVE ON THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT HANDED
DOWN TO US BY THE FOUNDERS OF THE REPUBLIC. THERE IS NO WAY
TO IMPROVE UPON THAT. BUT WHAT WE CAN DO IS TO FIND NEW
WAYS TO IMPLEMENT THAT SYSTEM AND REALIZE OUR DESTINY.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY THE GAME PROPERLY, YOU'D BETTER
KNOW EVERY RULE.

– **Barbara Jordan**



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DEDICATION

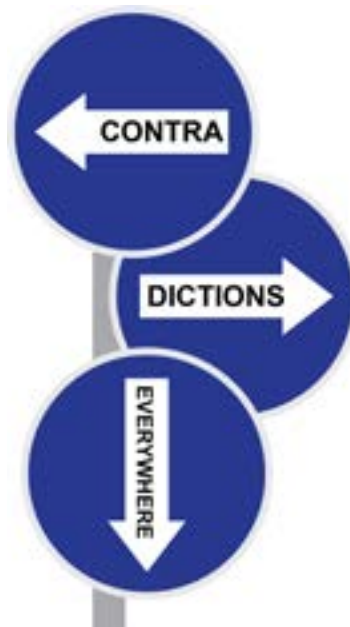
**To unplanned expression and the people -
then and now - who plan so it can be expressed.**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Preface	13
Part-I	21
Fundamentals; Argument and Purpose	22
The American System: It Works Fine!.....	24
Unbroken America (Linked Material).....	26
Contempt and Opportunity	31
The Greatest? A Framework For Comparison	37
Part-II	41
How to Fix America Fast (Linked Material).....	42
Distinguish Before Discarding	45
Monolithic Political Parties? Think Again!.....	49
Standards That Measure.....	52
Super Voter Dynamics	55
Networks Rule.....	63
The Network=New Media (Linked Material).....	67
Uncommon Power (Audience) Dynamics	70
City Hall: Why Fight What You Own.....	80
Part-III	83
Contradictions and Connections	85
No Competition, No Democracy (Linked Material)	88
Knowledge is Not Power	91
State of The Union (Linked Material)	95
Fighting The Last War.....	99
The Need Identified (Linked Material)	134

American Bosses	137
Proof: Politics & Political Science (Linked Material)	160
Key Outcomes Explained (Linked Material)	163
Beware Empowerment	169
The Eric Cantor Reverberation	174
Strategy and Tactics (Linked Material).....	199
Part-IV	202
Organization, Media and Destiny	204
Gold vs Fiat.....	207
The Problem (Linked Material)	230
Let's Choose Wisely (Linked Material)	233
Protection.....	237
No Tortured Verdict This	242
Getting It Wrong (Linked Material).....	251
Proportional Deference.....	254
The Network (Linked Material)	258
Collaborative Media (Linked Material)	262
Truthism and Solutions.....	265
Epilogue.....	295
More Links.....	301
About The Author	304



Origin

In the pages that follow there is no *me* or *I* to be found. There is no personal story to this work nor are there opinions on “policy” or analysis of personalities offered. That would not be appropriate in a work that is “system focused” and claims to offer genuine insights into the difficulties the American currently encounters in their civic world and beyond; and what we might do about it.

However, here, it couldn’t be avoided so let me first point out that the work resulting in this book has an arc that by now spans many phases and years.

It started out with a modest enough objective; the desire to incite some discussion regarding the potential I saw for innovation within the American electoral and media systems. The people and institutions operating within these systems had always been of interest to me and, over time and with study, I came to understand how badly misunderstood – and misused – our electoral, party, and media systems were; and why it produces the results it does.

Moreover, as a simple citizen observer, it seemed unquestionable that the increasing alarm and unhappiness expressed by so many fellow citizens in so many forums must have meant people had reached a boiling point. This would naturally indicate the time was ripe for action as responsible members of the citizenry would surely be seeking ways and means to be what Americans have been told they were; jealous guardians of independent thought, freedom and political equality.

Therefore, if I was sure I had a clear-cut contribution to make - and I was - I should do my part.

However, this expectation **not only** turned out NOT to be met, circumstances emerged that were quite strange and contradictory indeed. Further, the crucial anomalies I observed were being ignored; going unrecorded and unanalyzed-contributing mightily to a self-imposed feedback loop of public hypocrisy, futility and delusion.

Given that the core proposal of this effort is devoted to exploring and explaining the unrealized potential of the existing American system to enable its people to execute genuine self-government and major control over their destinies, understanding these incongruities was central to my original purpose. After all, if the public outcry was just for show, there naturally would be little demand for what I was attempting to propose.

This conundrum instigated the title and theme of this work as I recalled the story of Benjamin Franklin's famous answer to the question of a Mrs. Powel as to what the constitutional convention had brought.

Of course "*A republic, if you can keep it*" was his answer. That we clearly were not keeping it was the initial concern that interested me. But, as these realizations made the need to expand the scope of this book increasingly plain, the question as to what, or who, was meant by the "you" in Franklins quip necessarily became a central focus.

Was he referring to:

- Society's institutions: both existing and the new ones sure to be formed?
- The federal officials soon to be created by the Constitution they had just signed off on?
- The many officials that would continue to serve at the state and local levels?
- Or, was he talking about the rank-and-file individual/citizen when he answered Mrs. Powel's question using the possessive "you"?

While it's possible he was talking about all, or others, it's unlikely he was completely excluding the citizen given that possessive you and all the framers talk of the people and self-government.

The people

However, it is a difficult question to get a focus on. The idea that the citizen must be *an active participant* in the running of this machine has always been a controversial one. Even today, perhaps more so, that notion has been resisted, if not utterly dismissed. Disdained not only by "elite" society that so enrage the bellowing people; *but by the bellowing people themselves.*

Even the use of a handy reference related to the founding experience creates trouble as our heated public environment hair-rigger reactions are likely to produce at least two wholly opposed reactions:

- That of **the patriot** who, with tears welling up in his eyes, hand over heart, will quickly dash off to Mount Rushmore to sing God bless America
- On the other side of the coin, with knowledge and cynicism spreading at electric speed, we would also encounter **the revisionist** who would quickly reject any talk of those events as romantic nonsense. They might point out that the American founders were likely agents of the English crown - perhaps even occult practitioners - carrying out a secret plan meant to lead us exactly where we find ourselves today.

The partitioning hardly ends there. There are those whose concerns are animated by such prospects of organized conspiracy while others are driven by questions of economic freedom and prosperity while others focus on matters of social equality and related issues. Though the list seems endless there are two key, common, and consistent threads:

1. The disproportionate attention paid to the office of president of the United States; with those energized by their love for and hope in, or hatred and fear of whomever the incumbent may be. Deepening the imbalance is that the question of who will be the next one is never far from the conversation.
2. A quest for more and more information (media content) that is effectively mindless as a purpose to all this information has never been demanded much less spelled out.

The difficulties of navigating such narrow attachments, extreme emotions and mixed allegiances prove to be quite substantial despite the overwhelming agreement on the part of the “awakened” public regarding the wrong track question and the danger that direction foreshadows. This raised the question of whether we are a divided society as is so often said or just a clueless one with no clear direction; *certainly no plan*.

Given the general agreement that “our moment” involves very high stakes indeed, these absurdities and contradictions seemed increasingly to be the real story. Perhaps the greatest never told, as any anticipation that some mechanism of basic human survival would emerge from all this has proven totally wrong.

The more you look at it the more clear it becomes; Americans – irrespective of any political bias - who are most vocal about the dangers posed to their view of independence, freedom, and political equality care quite a lot about expressing their feelings; but are loathe to, *and loathe the idea of*, acting wisely on those feelings.

Media

Another motivating factor in all of this was my distress at the role media was playing in making these problems; both by what they emphasize and what they ignore. Even in the age of the Internet – saturating our lives with more alternatives than a stick can be shaken at – our media has produced remarkably little innovation; despite any claims or any superficial opinions to the contrary.

- How often have we heard this statement made?
 - We need to have a national discussion or debate on this or that issue.
- How often has that been followed up with a commitment to actually do so?
 - Of course the answer is never as the throwaway comment will usually come from a media figure of one kind or another whose very existence would be threatened by any performance of serious or thematic inquiry.

Moreover, just considering the componentry of a genuine discussion, much less a national one, would raise disruptive questions that this fragmented form of media producer (and consumer) show *no signs of even being aware of*; much less taking on:

- Where would one go to conduct such a discussion- one that would necessarily be complex, thematic, and as on-going as it needed to be?
- What attributes would be required in a setting designed to carry out this mandate?
- What would compel an audience to support such work: and see that it endures?
- Who will participate in building it?

Far from acting as any kind of fixer, the role of new media has been to agitate and hinder, not collaborate and solve; fundamentally breaking the early promise of “new media” as an alternative to the old.

That is must be true can be seen in the rapid and much documented decline of both civic effectiveness and civility that has accompanied the proliferation of so much media content (politically oriented) and the countless channels and devices that distribute it.

Therefore, it should be unsurprising that for more than a century our democratic-republic can boast little to no innovation as well. Rooted in a failure to truly understand the indivisibility of media from civics and citizenship, we have witnessed a very poor performance indeed.

With it now totally uncontroversial to say our society’s hyper connectivity and “new” media has indeed made matters worse, it is no wonder that media visionaries **warned us that the electric age posed many dangers** that a focus on media content alone could not penetrate or explain; this decades before personal computers and broadband Internet were common!

Yet, despite the past warnings or present recognition, there remains very little reflection or constructive attention paid to the fact; other than the unhappiness that continues to be expressed more and more virulently.

Contradiction

To be sure, every system and society will encourage inertia no matter how close to the precipice people may perceive they are; change is scary! No people have

ever been different in this regard but, the founding purpose and ideal of the U.S.A. was supposed to be. The framers summarized the problem in their **declaration of independence** with this statement:

Prudence, indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

Can't argue that but, the plebian of the Roman Empire didn't have access to any such foundational ethos or document; ***much less the internet!***

Accordingly, it's not too much to ask what's going on here.

To have this much media, so much knowledge spreading so rapidly, this much "sharing", this much activism, so many outspoken "heroes" assembling so many indignant "followers", some cooperative, well-constructed response to all this should not have been unreasonable to expect.

The irony of the current circumstances in contrast to those upon which the United States was founded can be seen in this cartoon panel:



[Click here to view cartoon](#)

Exacerbating the problem of man's inclination towards inaction is the well-established problem of *beliefs*; and the individual's need to confirm them. This problem now extends beyond the usual matters of personal identity, religion, politics etc. - to the media sphere.

With the proliferation of light-speed information and platforms that custom tailor content to one's pre-determined point of view, people are not now just mere consumers of their new media; they have become fans and often financial underwriters of it!

While never seeming to tire of receiving repetitious messages citing a multitude of dangers, rigged realities, culprits and saviors etc.; no cogent demand for this “new medium” of supposed learning and empowerment to be used as an engine of actual power and change has materialized.

In fact, the opposite is true as the rare suggestion it should be is overwhelmingly met with hostility!

This would seem to indicate this mode of public involvement has simply created a new form of entertainment-based confirmation bias. This, in favor of one’s preferred new-media celebrity and the conceit of being awake while others sleep; *all at the expense of self-defense and the reflection that would require.*

This book

These strange and mostly unexplored behaviors are crucial to this work *because* they fully intersect with the domains of media and civic engagement that are at the center of what is laid out here. A solution centered on capable people exercising powerful citizenship; built on the fusing of our media and learning systems **directly** to civic action.

This, along with a prominent message that nothing positive can develop in the absence of that fusion.

Therefore, to reconcile all the public inertia, inconsistency and delusion this work revealed with what so many publicly claim they wish to achieve - a high functioning and successful United States of America - a broadened study beyond that core proposal was necessary to a full accounting.

Among others these topics include:

- Alternative media: its hazards and failures and the gulf that exists between the portion of the citizenry that uses it, and that those don’t - and the ignorance they share
- Media; as a model
- The problems with reform efforts and the “professional activist” that champions them: failures, double-downs and unsought lessons
- The limits of the public expert and the waste of the private one
- Siloing: no insight or potential innovation **ever** gets attached to anything else
- The vocal and unhappy citizenry; *that loves being vocal and unhappy*
- A headless chicken: no meaningful definitions are applied to our most historically important precepts, actions and institutions

If treated at all, these interconnected and inseparable topics are seldom connected; and inadequately so on those rare occasions.

Additionally, there are the related matters that were always central to this work:

- The existing American party and electoral system; and the precise powers and responsibilities it confers on her citizens
- Comparisons that highlight the differences between that system, what preceded it, and others around the world
- The relationship between media, civics and politics
- Citizenship, networks, and an electoral system vs. voting
- Too many false standards: Quantitative guessing vs. Qualitative knowing
- What genuine new media would look like
- Political and civic realities that are undeniable; but denied

These too are subjects that are inseparable, but kept separate in a society that values a highly fragmented, compartmentalized approach to life. These dynamics have their effect even on an aroused, concerned public. As seeing the whole becomes more difficult, so does making connections. This is enfeebling to a people; making cooperative self-defense impossible.

Here, these factors put a premium on maximizing context. So, throughout the body of this work these subject matters are dealt with thematically - not sequentially - in an effort to layer and build a foundation for increased discernment and connection.

Further, insights gained along the way strongly indicated a high level of interactivity would be necessary to achieve that. In order for the reader-viewer to fully grasp what is possible, so the implications of what is being proposed would be obvious, a visual, **involved experience** would be required. This demanded the e-book format as the confines of the printed word alone prove too limiting to the flow of that context.

The book is organized essentially as a series of brief, narrative essays - hardened with video clips, images, footnotes, and suggestions for further reading, strategically integrated with other materials structured as:

- Featured video presentations
- Thematic video playlists
- In-depth essays
- Infographic displays
- FAQs

Some of these materials are web-based. Chapters of the book that will open web pages are designated as “linked materials” in the table of contents; all of which are first summarized for appropriate background.

For the reader’s information: the word-count here would equal some 275+ printed pages.



Most people do not give much thought to why they believe many of the things that they do. Matters may be accepted as true not because they are, but because others believe it; it's conventional wisdom. The conventions become especially hardened when the information comes from a recognized source, or authority figure. Particularly when repeated over and over, perception becomes reality and the act of acceptance and the truth become one.

An understanding of these things made the battle to influence people's perceptions a major component of human reality and much has been invested in order to both know and sway the sentiments of mankind. An early expression of

the modern approach to these efforts could be found in the era of newsreels where it was discovered that blending media and entertainment could be a very effective means of controlling people's perceptions and beliefs¹. The idea of a mass media was born as the word propaganda took on its modern implications.

As the 20th century progressed, an amalgam of aspiring influencers from government, industry, and civil society honed these skills in the mass mediums of radio, film, and television. Therefore, it should be no surprise that the contemporary environment of the information age has become a very treacherous one. Truth has become ill defined, difficult to establish and has mostly been outsourced.

Marshall McLuhan a pioneer of media studies who we will return to at the end of this work observed that our official culture was striving to force the new media to do the work of the old². He said this in the 1960's long before there was an Internet and a shared concept of a "new media". Though his observation has fully bloomed in recent decades, his caution has gone unheeded; an issue that is much the focus of this book.

The idea of an old and new media played into another of his important thoughts regarding expertise. McLuhan posited that the expert is the man who stays put; as the professional tends to classify, specialize and accept uncritically the ground rules of his or her environment. This opposed to the "amateur" who must seek the development of total awareness of the individual; and of the ground rules of society³.

These all are very important concepts here as we examine the question of whether the American system is truly broken and requires input from both the professional and amateur of our civil society and media.

It is a central theme of this work that those two domains are inextricably linked, but kept more (and disastrously) separate than we realize. It has also been with help from both that we have seen our system badly misunderstood; and our perceptions much constrained. Therefore, we must integrate the input of both sources from both domains in order to understand what has happened.

For example, the professional expertise of our civil society has chiefly told us what is wrong with this system and what must be reformed - or abandoned - in order to fix it; fix us. This, while our media - that now features much tension between the professional of the old media and the amateur of the new - both deliver that very same message through "content" largely devoid of a broader context or qualitative study.

This is a dire failing.

1 Jacobson - "Mind Control in the United States": Pg 17

2 McLuhan - "The Medium is the Message" pg.94

3 McLuhan - "The Medium is the Message" pg. 93

To confront it with the necessary perspective requires we first see the intersection of our public sphere and our media not only as content, or even as a societal force, but, like McLuhan suggested, as model and a medium; a roadmap that guides this work.

For instance, while there has been a great deal of focus on media consolidation and its implications for a free society, too little attention has been paid to the what the new media of the internet has brought in response, or even if it represents anything new; despite whatever trappings of the old or claims of great divergence from the new.

That a media saturated world full of endless analyses and opinion lacks for such reflection proves we still suffer from the unresolved tensions McLuhan defined. This has made it very difficult to formulate answers to our most pivotal questions and, as we shall see, has actually created an environment where very little demand exists for answers to be found!

Here, the work “Defining Democracy in a Digital Age” establishes the muddle clearly as the authors (kind of) pick up on the question of whether it is a bad idea to ask old media to do the job of the new.

By asking if the digital age will be a driving force for human development or, the new opiate of the masses, they define two concepts of popular culture the digital age of the Internet can create:

- One is where the Internet is a site of revolt; a network of networks beyond the reach of authorities. A site of empowerment, for self-reflection and self-assertion where the long-term objective is to reassert values of equality, multiculturalism, participation, deliberation and open communications for the purposes of reinventing democracy.
- The other is that of individuation, autonomy, isolation, atomization, where virtual social contact - an empty form of social interaction - increasingly crowds out the real thing; full of the human dynamic⁴.

It will be argued here that the question has chiefly been answered - in the negative - and that unless something is done there is little hope for that human development. Capturing the hopes of both professionals and the public for the internet's positive impact on civil society, they take their analysis further and propose:

4 Lutz and Du Toit - “Defining Democracy in a Digital Age Pg. 117

⁵That Internet-based social media provide a radical new technology for the articulate expression of interests which, in tandem with the new data analysis methods, can be used for executing the first steps for aggregating the interests for expanding collective self-awareness through self-reflection, a key to the construction of new imagined communities.

Their contribution to that big idea is that “sentiment analysis software” should be used to study Twitter - in order to better understand people’s “feelings about democracy”⁶.

The thought being of course that:

- Democracy (as a form of government) needs the support of people
- Therefore these public sentiments must be understood, and
- That surveying tweets to discover and catalogue their classification would both represent innovation and provide insights.

Although the goals expressed here are fine and the inextricable link of civics to media is made, the advocacy does unmask the problem. This, as we ponder whether rather qualitative, human ideas - like new “imagined communities”- or values; like “articulate expressions of interests”, “self-expression”, and “self- reflection and awareness” are attainable, or even compatible, with mass aggregation and data analysis methods.

Any reasonable doubt should signal that McLuhan was more than correct in his observations regarding both the professional, and the new/old media; themes that will be carefully examined in the pages ahead.

As this is a work focused on connections - particularly those that are missed or paid only lip service - we can use this lens to better see our contradictions and learn from our mistakes. A critical tenet here is that it’s necessary we commit ourselves to finding the genuine interconnectedness of our politics, society and media in order to create the medium that will channel our energies productively.

Such a commitment would reveal a flawed perspective that invests far too much in quantitative approaches and calls for radical technologies as a means for understanding and solving. These become the dogmas of our conventional wisdom and lead us to neglect the order of things. For instance, wouldn’t it first be the creation of a true medium, based on meaningful and civically powerful

5 Lutz and Du Toit - “Defining Democracy in a Digital Age” Pg. 119

6 Lutz and Du Toit - “Defining democracy in a digital age Pt. 4

interactions, that would be “radical”; not the technology of any delivery system? The primacy of such thinking has allowed authoritative sources to go unchallenged and left the public chiefly with contradictions and memes to guide its “reality”.

These are systemic problems that must be openly recognized and dealt with in active forums where those of influence in the public sphere can engage an engaged public. Failure to do this will leave us unable to meet the formidable challenges we face as we become more resistant to true innovation or entertain too many strange ideas about what that would be.

Exemplifying the issue are our elections - the American electoral system - the foundation of all things consensual and constitutional in the United States. Conventional wisdom now greatly discredits all things voting as memes and their slogans sell the idea that the system is rigged and, that voting not only doesn't matter, it confers consent on much illegitimacy.

The professional assessment agrees with these prevailing beliefs as our electoral system is denounced as an irrational relic; that must be either abandoned or radically reformed. From his work “Against Elections, the Case for Democracy”, the author, “a pioneering advocate of participatory democracy”, boils it down colorfully by asking:

⁷If the founding fathers of the United States, 250 years later have thought it a good system for expressing the will of the people to have them queue up at polling stations every two or four years with a bit of card in the hands and go into a dark booth to put a mark NOT next to ideas, but to names on a list?

Names of people about whom restless reporting had been going on for months in a commercial environment that profits from the restlessness!?

Would we still have the nerve to call what is in fact a bizarre archaic ritual, a festival of democracy?

Brimming with meme potential, these are sentiments which many Americans agree with and do represent very interesting and legitimate questions.

As this point of view is considered, particular note should be made that once again, the connection of democracy to media was made. However, the *commitment* requires we consider the implications of what goes unconnected and might be

7 Van Reybrouck - Against Elections; The Case For Democracy Pg. 55

overlooked. (These we will see are potent examples of McLuhan's observation about "staying put versus consideration of the total environment").

It is argued here that, in the end, these are all questions of power; a word, and concept left out of most conversations. When considered at all, "empowerment" has become the preferred term which - importantly - indicates something quite different⁸.

Not neglected here, our examination specifically concerns itself with the citizen's relationship to power and whether the American electoral system can be a vehicle for its expression.

- ❓ Is the author's description of elections all there is to it - is it, in all actuality, the absurd relic that demands abandonment?
- ❓ Does the American citizen have the ability to act - powerfully- on the problems they face through existing channels; with no need of a reformation?
- ❓ And, if they do, does not the claim of a broken system - as opposed to the very different problem of broken citizenship - present a misdiagnosis of a most dangerous nature?

With simple questions, of a qualitative nature, we can increase our field of vision and begin to see what otherwise will be ignored; things like errors we make, assets we squander, and potential that goes unrealized.

Here we refer specifically to the distinct American approach to elections that features a "first tier" of open ballot access and popular nominating elections as a balance to its "second tier" of a general election. The study of this century old, unique American innovation, and the potential it represents, is the foundation of this work and it turns out to be quite a strange topic.

With all the carelessness and contradiction we should expect when carefully crafted beliefs are drilled into the professional and public mind alike, we see on one hand the great significance of this system acknowledged, while, at the very same time, it elicits no more than a collective shoulder shrug; *from most everyone*.

With this third example, once more the problem and opportunity get defined.

In the some thousand pages of his book, "On Politics" Professor Alan Ryan (of politics and political theory Princeton and Oxford) summarizes the history of political thought, from Herodotus to the present. A fascinating, informative and, needless to say comprehensive work, here - in the books introduction - is what Prof. Ryan had to say about this singular American contribution to political and democratic theory, and reality:

8 <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G01985.pdf>

⁹Nonetheless just who gets to be a member of the political elite or elites and how that person gets there remains a contentious issue.

Even in Western liberal democracies there might be a fierce competition between politicians, but a restrictive system of recruitment, to the ranks of the competitors.

The American system of primary elections was established to counter just that problem; *its success has been only partial.*

That one simple thought - after-thought really - could embrace so much relevance, across so great an expanse yet, receive so little consideration, explains the reason for this book.

It should not be missed that in just this one passage - regarding this one topic - Ryan has summarized the problems and struggles of some 5,000 years (or more) of civic-political experience; *pretty much the subject of his book.* Charged with pivotal subtext, here sits the essential questions of elite control, power, competition, restrictions, recruitment, and differences that make all the difference. All this is present within several words that conclude: there has been a response, but its success has only been partial.

Nothing more is said.

If we look carefully at these three examples we will see that what is ignored in the analysis is more important than what is noted, given:

- A focus on outcomes - as opposed to processes that shape results
- Narrow definitions of innovation and quantitative methods are favored
- Contradictions of great importance emerge; and are then disregarded.

We can infer from the professionals that:

1. Democracy requires radical new technologies - essentially of media - to assure its survival
 - ↑ and that a study of tweets might be a sound basis to inform that effort
2. Given dysfunctions in media, elections are an absurd relic that cannot deliver participatory democracy
 - ↑ and must be abandoned in favor of new forms that will
3. In the United States of America there has been a response - to every known issue of power and politics
 - ↑ but no more than a single paragraph of consideration need be paid to the subject

The problem is not that these thoughts and approaches are bad, illegitimate or totally useless; the problem is that they are representative of a very much greater - and unbalanced - whole.

As we will see, these perspectives confirm a threatening neglect and bias that lies at the heart of our greatest national contradictions; because they are hardly limited to academic treatises of little account beyond other academic treatises.

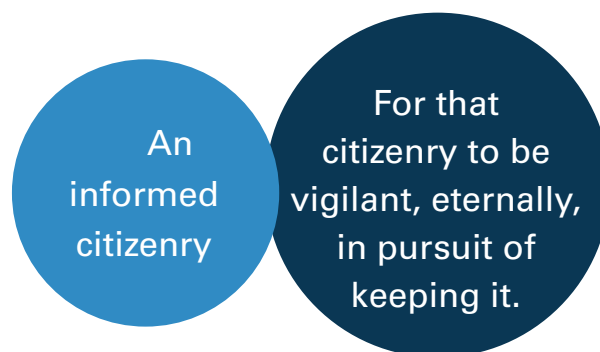
NO, quite the opposite is true! The disconnectedness introduced here permeates our common beliefs underpinning too many self-inflicted wounds and paradoxes to count.

A house of contradiction is no better off than a house divided and there can be no medium under these conditions. Moreover, to answer the question of a broken system it is imperative that destructive contradictions be identified in order to better understand either what drives divisions, or if they are more the illusory byproducts of accepted beliefs.

These themes and inquiries join the others to represent the spirit and substance that animates this work.

Woven throughout is the principle that on occasion - from the time of our founding to the present day - fundamental truths about the American situation were told and are known. One was that the republic would have to be kept.

That statement, indicating the certainty of struggle, called for:



Perhaps these ideas have not been repeated enough or sufficiently explored leaving the most basic and essential questions of self-government, citizenship, and personal responsibility ignored.

Here these matters will not be neglected as the inquiries and explorations in the pages that follow will affirmatively demonstrate that the American system is quite healthy, in fact, doing only what it can; representing those who show up and use it wisely.

It will be further demonstrated that nothing stands in the way of “the people” - those concerned and capable - to be present and wisely defend and use their system - just as it is - for their own ends; aims that are often and loudly proclaimed but apparently backed by little more than words and sentiment.

However, one question that seems destined to resist an answer is whether the cycle of human failure we now witness can be broken; even by a people with every opportunity to do so.

PART - I

THEMES



**SIDELINING USELESS
ARGUMENTS**

**CONVENTIONAL THINKING
AND MEMES; WEAPONIZED**

**EXPRESSION AND ACTION:
BLURRING THE LINE**

**COMPARATIVE STUDY REVEALS
THE INTANGIBLES**

FUNDAMENTALS; ARGUMENT AND PURPOSE



Basics:

- Informed vs. Vigilant; the approach to the messaging of this book
- Essential: context, clear language and clarity
- Goal: discerning intent and avoiding unnecessary quarrels

That basic theme's taken from our founding era are used here to create a structure for this work and its message should not be mistaken for myths.

The central question of the founding debate was if the benefits of union - *centralization* - could be reconciled with its associated dangers of bringing corruption and tyranny. As concepts like constitutions, checks and balances, and virtue can only go so far, it was understood by the founders, *and even explicitly stated on occasion*, that question could only be answered by the public.

Therefore, it seems quite appropriate that we illustrate this works proposal through the filter of an informed citizenry, cultivating correct knowledge and executing eternal vigilance. These are timeless concepts that apply to all aspects of life; *obviously, if any kind of store is left untended there will be severe consequences.*

Developing correct knowledge - in its proper context - and setting priorities is foundational to the smooth running of any complex entity; but here the information age has created many paradoxes. While we have access to a wider range of ideas than has ever been possible, increasingly, there is also a lack of vision in a public sphere¹⁰ operating with far too few definitions and so, far too little clarity.

¹⁰ The public sphere can be defined as the space of communication, ideas and projects that emerge from the engaged publics discussions, debates and deliberations on public affairs

This drives a proliferation of quarrels amongst the public that may be fueled by the use of language that can at times be dangerously elastic while at others times might be quite benign; or, simply useless to any discussion. With no ability to tell the difference between them, there's trouble.

For example, there is afoot a revisionist consideration of the founders and their motivations suggesting they may not have been so heroic or well-intentioned. Well, there's little we can do about that now. Distraction!

Another that correlates here is the fairly common – and perhaps, *depending*, – not common enough argument as to whether America is a republic or a democracy?

This may be an important, even pivotal question in the proper context and a silly, distracting quarrel in others.

Consider cases where the terms are being used euphemistically, or interchangeably, and where the context of the conversation clearly indicates that freedom, self-government, and sovereignty of the people etc., are the topic; there the argument is quite unhelpful.

However, when recommending something new or remedial, say a change to a major piece of civic infrastructure, like doing away with the Electoral College¹¹, the word “democracy” certainly does mean something else and must be considered. Do we have the *wrong argument* that distracts or, is our language so loose as to induce ignorance of a sweeping change in some while fomenting major resistance in others?

These are matters of great importance because as the founders **themselves acknowledged**, words, even those on revered pieces of paper, can take you only so far. Ultimately it would be up to the people to decide their own fate and that requires discernment.

Given a process that would foster correct knowledge and proper context (qualitative properties) there would be clarity on such matters creating focus; under these circumstances the right question would be asked!

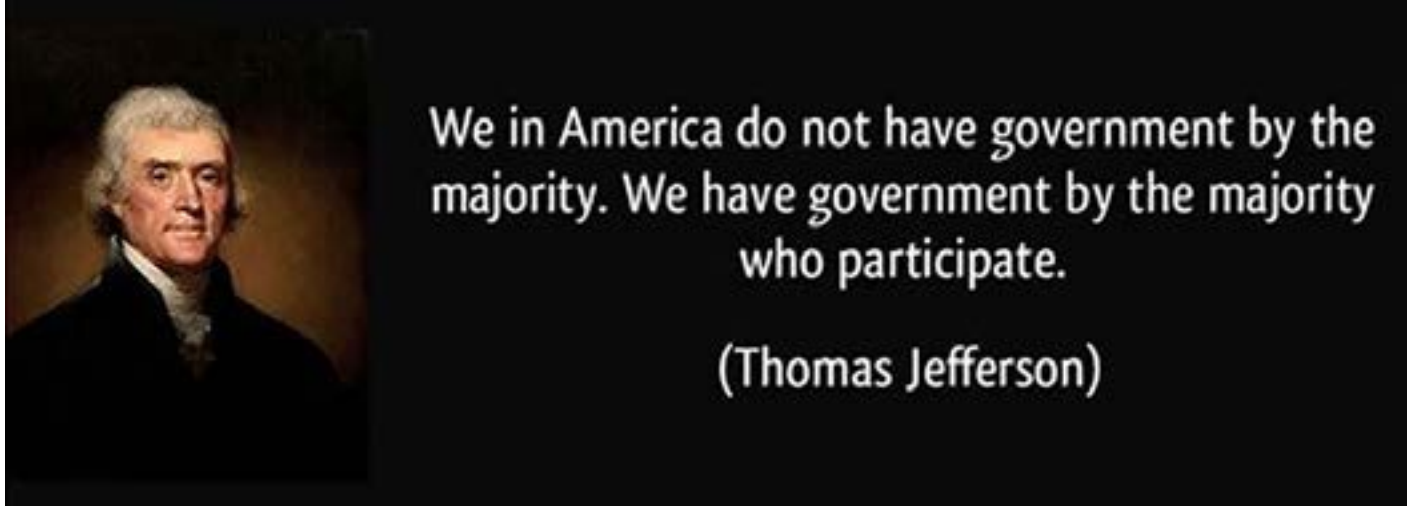
In this case that would be whether our founding, and ensuing history, has given the ideals of republican self-government and American democracy a chance to both identify and deal with the difficulties a constantly changing world presents. And, even under difficult circumstances, offer a way out of tough circumstances that have historically divided peoples; who lacked the information and tools to do that discerning.

The fundamental **argument** of this book is that the answer is a resounding yes and its fundamental **purpose** is to explain why and how.

that can then be addressed to decision makers in the institutions of society; an essential component of civic organization an participation that should provide legitimacy and accountability to government.

¹¹ <https://www.nationalpopularvote.com/>

THE AMERICAN SYSTEM: IT WORKS FINE!



Citizenship and discernment:

- Victim or accomplice?
- Powerful or powerless?
- Confessions of Congressman X. Beggars don't get to choose; or get any respect.

There is clearly a strong consensus - if not universal agreement - that the democratic-republican system of the United States system is “broken” and with that, a prevailing attitude that the people have no recourse.

If true, **and therefore victimized by a broken system**, a people are reduced to the status of a tragic bystander, unable to look away from the wreckage, but powerless to do anything about it.

These are potent images and consequential beliefs so, before allowing ourselves to be so reduced, we should ask; is this actual truth or is it, **as Jefferson implied**, the expected outcome of a well-functioning design. A system operating **as only it could** - *representing those who participate; and do so wisely.*

The conventional wisdom of the broken system claims are up offered up within sweeping generalities that point blame at the usual suspects of plutocratic elites, political money, self-interested politicians and parties and a media that is somewhere between ineffective and hopelessly corrupt.

This is a narrative of a few powerful bad guys, using their position to impose their will on the helpless many; *the logic being that any system permitting this **must be broken***. Despite the truth in all this, the conventional wisdom lacks substance as crucial questions are mostly left unexplored.

Exactly how is the system broken? What are the pressure points *where* advantage gets taken? What form does it take and *why* is it effective?

No system can be considered such if it is not consistent and predictable, so understanding how these mechanics work to bring the participants the results they desire is very important.

Unfortunately, the American people¹² comprehend very little of this system beyond this conventional narrative. As we can see here, this does not earn us respect, much less influence and power.¹³



Click here to view the image

While encountering a beggar one might feel empathy as opposed to contempt, but consider the beggar who not only felt entitled to your charity *but annoyingly demanded it of you*. As Congressman X's commentary indicates, this is exactly how the people of the United States are perceived by those of the established order with a cynical bent; *a system that is not so broken from their point of view*.

In order to gain respect, much less power over our destinies, we will have to do more than cry about a broken system.

First we should demand proof that this system is in fact broken - **and where** - so focus can be placed on a **sound remedy that will work**; *with nothing wasted*.

If unable to do that, (which we will be) we should then stop the crying and simply resolve to participate, *wisely*.

12 Unless otherwise indicated, herein "the American people" are defined as those engaged by/ in these matters; this in contrast to the disinterested most i.e. "the masses" who are not.

13 https://www.amazon.com/Confessions-Congressman-X/dp/1634139739/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511076601&sr=8-1&keywords=congressman+x

Primer / noun: primer
• any book of elementary principles; great primer

CONTEXT IS KING

UNBROKEN AMERICA
Self-Government, Elections, and Media in the Absence of American Citizenship
The Un-American Contributors

Primed For Change

CONTEXT

COIN

Preparation

The "system" is broken, voting doesn't matter, and the elites, money, and parties rule; **we know!**

But, is that all there is to it?

Well, no.

In fact this pervasive conventional wisdom is a major problem because it **only** considers the bad outcomes; *and then pronounces everything hopeless.*

That is bias-confirming non-analysis and must be rejected!

Because it makes no effort to understand what gives these tactics power, why they are successful, and what could be done about it; **we never identify what we can do about it.**

A system is a system because it will produce results that can be known and relied upon.

The Question:

Through a very different approach and understanding, **to and of this very system**, can we create very different outcomes; *with certainty?*

UNBROKEN AMERICA; VIDEO SYNOPSIS

In some six minutes the Unbroken America video presentation provides an overview of this work; already begun and continuing on the pages ahead.

Its theme is a simple reminder directed to the concerned, capable American that there are significant powers and responsibilities they hold as citizens and a people.

Using the device of duality it asks that we reflect on what our actions – and inactions - say about us.

For example, the videos protagonist looks in the mirror and sees reflected back a bright, awake active citizen; ***all while he is actually very much asleep***. When he comes to see his true reflection, he is shocked. This metaphor is reinforced with this character appearing as both the regular guy he is, but also a superhero; in the form of a super voter.

The super voter is not a concept or a hope; it's very real. A unique product of the American electoral system, it plays a role of great national consequence that to date, unfortunately, has not been positive. The uncommon power dynamics that status enables, the history of how it came to be - and how all its potential came – and continues - to be twisted is presented in this video.

Delivering the central message of this book the video emphasizes that our vote is (potentially) far from a simple and singular act to be performed on a futile election day. Regrettably however, that is the way an unreflective public has come to see their most important civic responsibilities; and with that, has come to squander their decisive powers. The story reinforces the idea that it is that bias - and the neglect it fosters - that has allowed our electoral system to become weaponized thus leaving the public not an effective citizenry, but a mass, faceless blob; subject to what is even transparent political manipulation.

Made to encapsulate, the video argues we must properly understand the natural, structural origination of our country, the decisive power the American citizen holds as a voter, and the potential use of that organization and authority. If we did, that vote would be understood as a culminating act of public control

within an **electoral landscape**; a rich environment fusing our nations vast common, electoral and media assets. These are assets that were hard won but long squandered and the video demonstrates this by pointing out:

- ➔ That contrary to conventional wisdom the American people are in more than enough agreement on what is most important
- ➔ That even the disagreement regarding the founding debate had – and still has - people of principle agree that this framework could only work if the people were vigilant and, that if they weren't, no design could protect their freedoms
- ➔ That **professionals** endorsing reforms that do not engage – or come directly from - the citizenry will always come up short
- ➔ That elections are the **only channel** available to the public to enforce its will and that it's silly to dismiss this simple fact and truth
- ➔ That we have **never** demanded a standard for the proper conduct of elections so it should be no surprise that we get terrible results
- ➔ That the people of the United states are far from powerless given that the systems central power was handed over to them more than a century ago; **yet they have done nothing with it**
- ➔ That this electoral authority extends to the furthest reaches of law and society because there is virtually no area of officialdom that does not face the people in elections; elections that are very much more than what is commonly believed
- ➔ That this authority can also be projected to those powerful, yet unelected players, operating in the government beyond

Here, the video introduces the Citizens Access Network, the purpose and proposal of this book; that would assemble, activate and channel.

Transforming the historic and current futility of our election day into a highly networked, powerful and effective electoral landscape, the vast potential for our system to control its governing forces and shift power to its people could be realized.

5 Phases Of Enduring Citizen Power Throughout The Electoral Cycle

Electoral Landscape

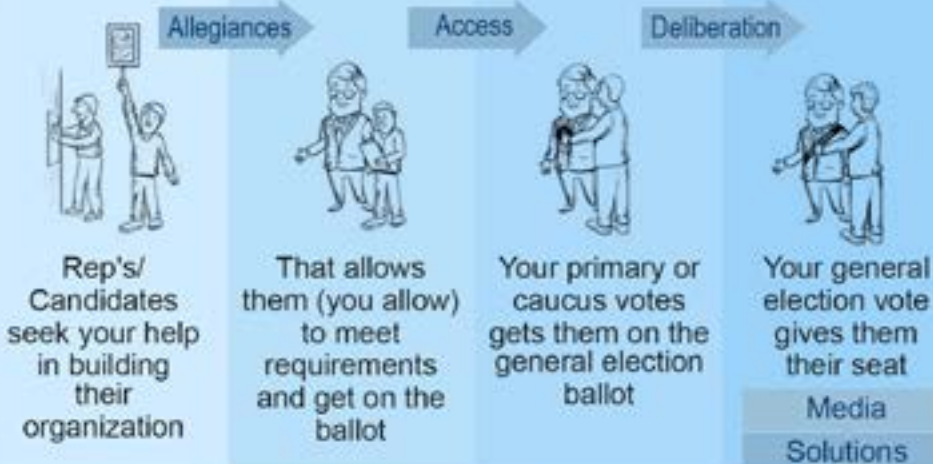


Organization

Ballot Access

Nomination

Election



Protection

Your Continued Attention

- 1) Protects them from outside forces
- 2) Ensures their allegiance and participation and endures throughout the cycle and beyond



[Click here to view the video](#)

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**

INFORMED CITIZENS

CONTEMPT AND OPPORTUNITY



POWER FLOWS *Use It Or Lose It*

Discernment and the problems caused by alternative media:

- The difference between real divisions and those that are imposed; and sold
- Blurring the line; making the distinction between the disinterested most and the engaged many
- More blurring; the difference between talk and action
- A need to reflect; the discrediting of voting and ignore-ance of an electoral system

While those disinterested masses of any nation or era will always have little interest in, and so influence over civic-political affairs¹⁴, we can see another striking paradox with their opposite number in the United States; Americas engaged citizenry. This is an audience more immersed than ever in issues of public interest bringing with with them ever-proliferating amounts of “**democratic expression**”.

At the heart of these dynamics of course is the internet and the universe of

¹⁴ As opposed to being demographically relevant, which of course they would be.

That demographic relevance could have civic-political implications in terms of mass voting trends and results.

However, here our definition of relevance is impact that is qualitative; i.e., an ability to know, understand, penetrate and influence.

messages its many mediums deliver. At its early stages there was the promise of a digital “revolution”- emerging new media forms capable of transforming our long-sagging politics. And, through these years, knowledge has indeed increased allowing people the ability to see the bad more clearly; which is good. However, and in direct contradiction to the promise, there has instead developed a superseding effect where *all things media* have come to saturate our body politic dulling rational citizenship and critical analysis; which is bad.

Consequently, instead of the potential for revitalized, citizen-based democratic engagement being realized, we have seen poor national results fuel surging, erratic fixations that have deepened distrust in our civic and political methods; and *in each other*.

The erraticism, fostered by this saturation media, manifests an obsessive focus on many nebulous offenders and so-called solutions:

- Elites-Celebrities
- Waking people up
- Sheeple
- Truth
- Intrigues
- Liking-Commenting

All this has led to an inevitable futility that, being excellent fertilizer, is generously breeding the contempt expressed by Congressman X amongst the public. This is a population that is characterized as an apathetic, *house divided*.

The implication and context of that charge is ideological - that the nation’s populace is divided along party lines; red and blue, conservative and liberal etc. However, this indictment is made right alongside charges that the American public doesn’t know very much about their politics; *a confusing contrast*.

To the extent ideological divides do exist, they certainly center on major - and typically polarizing - figures (one office and officeholder in particular) and the most superficial and amorphous of concepts; things like *big government vs. small*.

The injection of **personal identity - identity politics** - into civic affairs is another important contributor to a dubious claim; a hot button element that can effectively, **and explosively, shape the narrative of a divided people**.

Using ambiguity and unchallenged contradictions to level and promote a serious charge, it gains acceptance. All while the promoters and believers consistently

ignore the political-social science¹⁵ and civic achievements¹⁶ that refute their claim- and the unnecessary public absence that feeds the poor performance that makes it seem plausible.

Given the potential for dramatic exploitation, it would only be sensible to create the means to review such charges on a priority basis. Only organized public mindfulness and empirically-based discernment will be able to end strategic manipulations since “divisions” and whatever’s next (civil war?) are so easy to impose¹⁷ through the many mediums and technologies the Internet supports. But, to do that, we must first be able to strategically qualify and expose them.

With that, the critical citizen can clearly see and strongly reject emotion infused, ill-defined, social or private issues that don’t genuinely belong in the public arena. Where they are clearly found to be part of an agenda-driven narrative, they can be arrested using new media forms transmitted via the internet and beyond. This must be the goal. Not only because this is chiefly where the imposing gets done, but, because it’s also the only place where solutions can be tested, agreed upon and implemented by a capable citizenry.

- The purchase and use of broadcast spectrum by the public is not possible.
- The domination of media and minds by the five corporations is well known.

So, whether one learns from blogs or books, watches nightly news or you-tube truth, reads newspapers and magazines or prefers to be fed from their social media news feeds – everyone must understand modern forms of alternative media and the **forces it can create and unleash**.

15 What culture wars?

<https://web.archive.org/web/20100619075920/http://www.hoover.org/publications/hoover-digest/article/6699>

Disciplined environments are the difference

<http://scienceofvirtues.org/forums/t/807.aspx#>

Don’t confuse nuance with being divided

<https://medium.com/@SNovi/the-curious-yale-study-on-conservatives-and-liberals-explains-a-lot-about-trumptrolls-6d8dbe9b1008>

16 Citizen assemblies

http://archive.fairvote.org/e_college/index.php?page=1977

17 Astrourf: Fake grassroots groups and efforts

<https://scholars.org/brief/how-grassroots-lobbying-consultants-are-reshaping-public-participation-policy-battles>

Operation sock puppet: Systemic trolling of on-line discussions

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sockpuppet_\(Internet\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sockpuppet_(Internet))

<https://boingboing.net/2011/03/17/us-military-launches.html>

With that, it will be a simple matter to qualify and halt unseemly influences and coherently challenge potential contrivances like “divisions”; which if properly treated might be processed constructively.

- Petty animosities are destructive and legitimate grievances left unresolved will fester. But these are problems that can be dealt with given a proper, powerful and disciplined environment; which our current engagement mechanisms certainly do not provide.

They can, and must be distinguished from the many clearly invented divisions being injected into a media fueled story of a divided country. Allowing bad behavior to be anonymously carried out in a purposefully unruly and provocative environment¹⁸ and labeled “division” mischaracterizes, and discourages careful analysis; making the idea of a divided people easy to sell.

- There are the disinterested masses and the heatedly engaged many. The disinterested masses are clearly not going to be relevant to any civic solution - or resolution - and should not be of concern to those intensely involved, *which should be obvious*. However, the breeding contempt is often - and erratically - directed at those multitudes, by those engaged - with no consideration given to historic norms.
- This simultaneously - and unhelpfully - allows these people to absolve themselves of responsibility, confirm a bias in favor of their further victimization, and use such narratives (rigged system, sleeping sheeple etc.) to “prove” they are powerless; an excuse to neither seek or act.
- It should be acknowledged that it is wrong, or disingenuous, to not sort these two units carefully. Lumping together two such very different populations and classifying them a divided people makes hasty and harsh judgments easy. However, being identical in their ineptitude makes it simple for society to do that lumping and so perceive the two groups as one. After all, a useless fixation on a major politician, or events beyond ones influence, is as much a useless fixation as a focus on a celebrity beyond ones social sphere.

So, while it is very important to expose divisions that are provably socially engineered; false and imposed, distinctions of mindset and motivation also must be drawn.

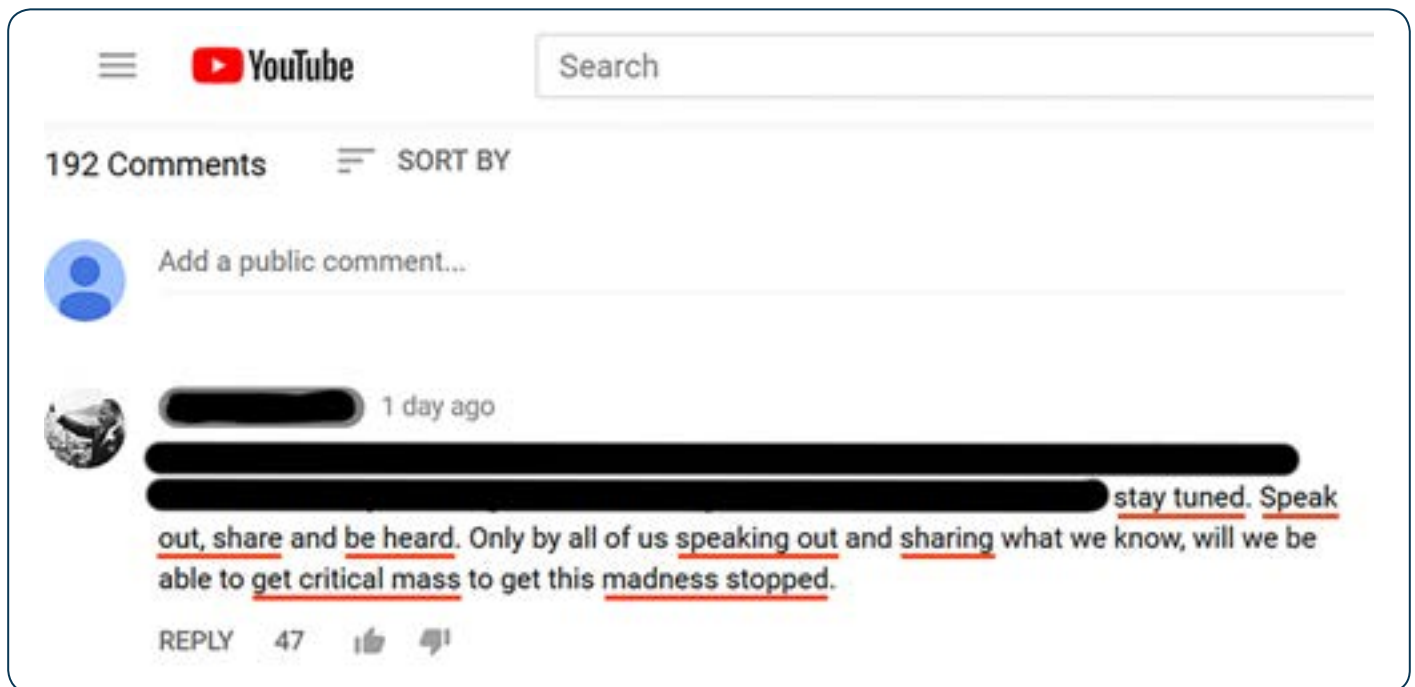
Without that clarity we will not be able to encourage the assemblage of engaged capable people necessary to oppose the model of a helpless, failing society; which can only leave our incendiary media and social media constructs to brand this simmering stew a “broken system”.

18 <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/clear-organized-and-motivated/201707/why-do-your-facebook-friends-have-so-much-political-bias>

That of course will lead, *and has already led*, to the ultimate expression of that system, **elections and voting** being discredited. With no alternative outlet or remedy recognized, or possible to formulate, the strain of cascading, stormy democratic expression takes on explosive potential.

A rational analysis would also clarify another ruinous muddle; the distinction between democratic **expression** and democratic **action**. While mutually reinforcing, these two things are crucially different. Though their differences - essentially those of talk and action - may seem obvious, the ability of people to discern them is now a very important and legitimate question.

This critical dissonance is exemplified by this statement offered by a very serious, intelligent, and successful video blogger (vlogger). The recent and important event he refers to is not at issue here; **the problem demonstrated by the comment is:**



This is a pervasive attitude that consistently focuses on elusive, fragmentary concepts like being informed, voice, sharing and critical mass; suggesting transformational outcomes that will not be possible to get on the basis of such vagaries. Never is there mention of a need to analyze, plan or organize; nor is there an offer to facilitate those things despite the emergency he is obviously citing.

Confirming the disassociation is that just some three months after these comments and related video were published; this content producer began to speak in even more ominous terms. In the midst of blatant censorship on the part of YouTube, and fearing soon all will be lost, he lamented that *"no one is/has stepped up to do anything"*.

So, voice, sharing, waking up and critical mass didn't work; *really?*

Whether it is the activist, media-content personality/producer or, the consuming, concerned citizen this incoherence is no exception; **it's the rule**. A phenomenon - of magical thinking perhaps - that represents what is really broken and must be understood but, is little considered. The 2010 New Yorker article, "Small Change" by Malcolm Gladwell, remains an important exception and contribution¹⁹.

Democratic expression is many things in our system. The intellectual freedom to search for the truth that would inform free speech and a free press join many other decisive liberties that comprise the machinery necessary for a citizenry to be informed. But, these essentials of expression do not themselves constitute action, eternal vigilance. Eternal vigilance is comprised of complex, interconnected activities: the assembling of a coherent people, deliberatively determining its will, and then enforcing it through the ongoing, yet culminating, act of applying what has been learned.

For the people of the United States, the only mechanism capable of doing that - channeling the multifaceted requirements of genuine eternal vigilance - is voting. Elections conducted within a multifaceted electoral system; the richest ever conceived. To blithely dismiss its importance without understanding that richness - its true potential - or examining our failures in its use, it is a strategic error of tragic proportions.

Doing so only confirms Congressman X's judgment; a harsh assessment that nevertheless transmits a crucial signal.

That vocal contempt, aimed at the people's ignorance of the very system that rules them - a system they instead should be ruling - is a signal that with correct knowledge, the circumstances that prevail can be reversed.

¹⁹ <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell>

THE GREATEST? A FRAMEWORK FOR COMPARISON



Realized vs. Unrealized potential

- Apples and Oranges
- Folly: Authorities and their rankings
- Assessments don't account for intangibles
- The few decide; always

America; the greatest country- in the history of the world?

That politicians – American or any other – would flatter their citizens with such rhetoric should be no surprise; old trick. Flattery is disarming and an effective tool of communications; perhaps even a necessary ingredient to the making of a national community – a pretty complex organism.

Nevertheless, it is an intriguing question because *greatness* – in whatever domain – is a subjective value that people from different places and times might see differently. Though such conjecture may seem trite, it's more influential than it may seem at first glance.

Our modern culture is obsessed with the question of greatness, and who possesses it in the greatest quantities. Moreover, the question of where such greatness ranks gives authoritative bodies the opportunity to document such rankings; *and bolster their authority*. We can see this manifest in the abundance of assessments and rankings we regularly produce.

One of many such indexes; cited here is a regular assessment of the world's nations on the status of their "democracy".

Here the United States is not fairing very well; in the eyes of the judges - or are they jurors - **we're not so great**.

Leaving aside classifications meant for less fortunate nations, these are two basic standards upon which their verdicts are handed down:

DEMOCRACY INDEX

Full democracies are nations where civil liberties and basic political freedoms are not only respected, but also reinforced by a political culture conducive to the thriving of democratic principles. These nations have a valid system of governmental checks and balances, independent judiciary whose decisions are enforced, governments which function adequately, and media which is diverse and independent. These nations have only limited problems in democratic functioning.

Flawed democracies are nations where elections are fair and free and basic civil liberties are honored but may have issues (e.g. media freedom infringement). Nonetheless, these nations have significant faults in other democratic aspects, including underdeveloped political culture, low levels of participation in politics, and issues in the functioning of governance.

This index ranked the United States 21st of 167 nations classifying it a *flawed democracy*; not a very flattering portrait. Though instructive and useful, it is at the same time an "expert" assessment as defective as any authoritative attempt to definitively compare an apple to an orange.

To be "the greatest country" should logically, by default, make the citizens of that country the greatest people and 21st place should give any American pause when considering the state of their union and **what this says about them**. In this

way, the report is useful because flattery and pride should always be balanced with skeptical reflection; a big head can be a dangerous thing!

On the other hand it is quite defective because it leaves out the “intangibles”; what a greatness index can’t truly measure. Here, the **sitting/existing/unused/neglected/forsaken** democratic-republican potential of the American system.

Partly with great forethought, and no doubt partly the result of accident and hidden hands of intrigue, **the system** that developed over time in the United States and left to succeeding generations is this country’s greatest legacy.

- **This is not a legacy of** subjective, or relative things like freedom, prosperity or happiness.
- **This is not a legacy of** the often slanted ideals of mobility: be it educational, economic, or social.
- **It is not even a legacy of** a big nation with a lot of resources capable of providing safety and stability for its citizens.

It is a legacy of a system; a system not only of law, but a tradition steeped in an allowance for **unplanned expression** that - for better or worse - basically comes down to this:

- **The opportunity for political and social outcomes to reveal who that society’s truly effective people were; and what they valued.**

This is a claim few, if any modern states – even so called democracies - can rightly lay claim to.

This is not to agree this ranking specifically, but it is arguable because:

- If one wanted to rank a nation based on the opportunity its **system** provides its people to curb all the abuses heaped - and being heaped - on it the U.S.A. would rank first with little competition.
- If one wanted to rank a people based on *doing the very least* **with the very most**; Americans would rank first, with zero competition.
- If one wanted to rank **Norway** first in a democracy competition, should they not account for what change Norwegians themselves could initiate if they felt it necessary; and then score the authority they’d hold in seeing it though?

What exactly are we assessing? Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s the greatest; **it depends and it’s complicated.**

A nation that chooses to focus myopically:

- On outcomes at the expense of process
- On conflicts and personalities at the expense the unlearned lessons of both a sordid and admirable history
- On blame at the expense of responsibility

Cannot fault its system for poor results.

But, an inability for a people to act constructively, given constraints that system may place on them is another matter completely.

If that were the basis of the assessment - a better one - it seems clear that the United States is unquestionably the freest most democratic most republican and yes most great country; *in the history of the world! What people have done with that opportunity*; that is another story and, hopefully, some useful lines will be drawn in the pages ahead.

Of course the character and culture of a nation will be determined by the fullness of its population and history but, what its political and social order reflects is always determined by the very determined few. This has always been the case, **and will always be the case**, and anyone getting here and reading this - may well be in that category.

Now it's just a question of determination.

PART-II

THEMES



**VERY REVEALING
CONTRASTS**

**ONE-SIDED APPROACHES
AND FLAWED CONCLUSIONS**

**MEETING MOMENTS;
RESOURCES RIGHT AT HAND**

HOW TO FIX AMERICA FAST

**WE SHOW UP
THEY SHOW UP**



There'd be no choice



**How To Fix
America Fast**

“It is only through the efforts of the motivated and intelligent few that a greater public enlightenment is made possible ,”



**Yes, we have the power;
but we have to know where it is and
how to use it!!**

The good news is America can be fixed fast; because it won't require the impractical and complex.

What it will require are the capable people working to beat the plowshare of simple insights and basic truths into a steely plan that can make the eternal vigilance our system demands of us feasible; easy!

Here, in summary fashion, the basic truths and simple insights inform a path of repair and achievement.

 [FAQs in context](#)

HOW TO FIX AMERICA FAST; VIDEO SYNOPSIS

“How to Fix America Fast” complements the Unbroken America video presentation by accepting – nominally - the point of view that ours is a *broken system*.

However, the predicate here is that there is a way for the American citizen to “fix” their nation fast.

The video considers the question of our political, social, and media dysfunctions through the lens of competition and access. By specifically considering the profound and damaging lack of competition in our electoral systems “first tier” of ballot access and nominations, we can then see – holistically - how that bears on the near total lack of qualitative access the citizen has to their elected, constitutional agents.

This sets the stage for total failure throughout.

Emphasizing the need to (re)imagine electoral competition as something more than pabulum or mud, the story makes it clear that simply by understanding its systems competitive mechanisms and political realities, the citizenry is quite capable of producing and managing principled, honorable, electoral competition; necessarily the lifeblood of a true democratic-republic.

This is illustrated with the device of three core pillars; assets and actions immediately available:

1. Is our **existing voting system** - with emphasis on explaining the power within, and our neglect of, its first crucial “first” tier; ballot access, and nominating primary elections and/or caucuses
2. Is **the network**; specifically the Citizens Access Network, the solution this work proposes
3. Is **genuine, collaborative media**; the unique media form the fusion of the first two pillars enables as our political, electoral and civic spheres join to produce the medium we must have for these systems to work

How to Fix America fast makes the point that by assembling the capable people as a network of nominators - super voters - within the **specially purposed environment** of the Citizens Access Network a true public, and publically owned, institution would exist.

Further, the authority of the citizens assembled with this knowledge, and in this place - built to use and channel that authority - will create the most powerful audience ever assembled.

Those dynamics would generate principled electoral competition, naturally. As sports leagues and their participants compete and prosper - the analogy is made here that in this environment, where the people would be akin to owners, our officials, candidates, and parties will participate at our direction; with results that benefit all.

The video also makes these crucial points:

- ➔ The very small numbers of citizens necessary to create tremendous shifts in power
- ➔ The proximity to, and therefore the qualitative access, this fusion will allow the citizenry to its elected officials

How to fix America fast emphasizes the need for capable people to act strategically and decisively; to use and fuse what already exists to complete a process begun more than a century ago.

A process intended to help realize the true promise of American self-government; *and the United States of America.*

[Click here to view the video and FAQ's](#)

DISTINGUISH BEFORE DISCARDING



“Democratic” systems: political parties and feasibility

- Ballot access
- Nominations
- Selectorates and electorates

The proper standard to judge a system genuinely, irretrievably, broken would require demonstrable proof that it **cannot be affected by the people** because:

- That system prevents interested citizens from organizing effectively and taking action; or
- Even if there are no certain impediments preventing an organized citizenry from acting, that system offers no **feasible** means for it to be penetrated and affected

First, for “the people” to be capable would require they be an aggregated population, representative of the whole and coherent. This is elementary for incoherent, unrepresentative populations couldn’t produce representative, coherent results.

Therefore, the first thing that must be established is whether anything stops a vigilant portion of a whole people with these characteristics and intentions from assembling. As of now, in the United States, even under what is perhaps historic duress, there is not.

The second is the nature of the system in which they operate, and what it does and does not allow to happen; feasibly.

Although labeled democratic, parliamentary democracies are excellent examples of a system so difficult to penetrate and affect that, to consider them broken (unworkable from the perspective of **the people**) would not be an overstatement; and for a simple reason.

²⁰Such systems rely on **political parties** to represent the people, *not individual candidates or members*. Candidates represent the party in a place, not the people of that place, because **they owe their access to the electoral ballot to their party; not the people**.

If successful, the candidates, of course then become members of the elected body but, it is only the party that is truly 'chosen' by the people because the candidates owed their place on the ballot – and therefore a de facto nomination – to that party. *It is from this originating source of authority where political parties that operate within electoral systems derive their power.*

This in essence creates an “allegiance affect” that makes the candidate/member a *spokesperson or representative* of the party, not the people. This also makes parties difficult to impossible to penetrate as the citizens of such systems would have to quit their day jobs en masse and get into politics and win elections en masse in order to penetrate and affect that system. Not very feasible is it? If an individual or even several were inclined to do so, they would nonetheless be operating in a **machine system** that would make it very difficult for their preferred, representative, actions to gel and stick.

²¹That machine system will also create stronger interests and ties amongst the parties themselves – and their benefactors – than with their constituents so, getting parties that present **actual choices** that will then **actually happen** is another layer of “systemic breakage”.

20 Party Membership vs. Party Registration

This is because such democracies and the parties that operate within them have varied and complex methods for selecting candidates. The bodies that make these decisions can be considered a “selectorate”.

To be a member of a party and participate as a selector might require the citizen to pay fees, attend a certain number of meetings, take loyalty oaths, or cast their vote in an inconvenient, distant location; **amongst many other changeable and restrictive arrangements**.

The slate of candidates they might be choosing from could originate from that party's leadership – and therefore represent a pre-selection of those candidates – or, could subject the selectorates choice to an ultimate approval by the party hierarchy; in either case rendering their power of choice fairly toothless.

21 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/labours-economic-policy-was-essentially-the-same-as-tories-at-election-says-jeremy-corbyn-10385885.html>

<https://www.theage.com.au/news/opinion/big-parties-big-money/2005/07/24/1122143730993.html>

²²This is the **polar opposite** of how the American system functions – at least at its core. All things electoral emanate from ballot access, and when it is open – as it uniquely is in the U.S.A. – a political party necessarily has only what power the people give it; *by the quality of their participation*.

The late 19th and early 20th century progressive era democracy reforms of open ballot access and the direct primary (among others like referendums and recall elections etc.) had the stated intention of achieving this very weakening of the major political parties in favor of the electorate. It was then, and remains today, a highly consequential (and in some circles) controversial decision.

The reformers suggested, rightly, that the people in the commanding role of both selectorate and electorate could now easily assemble, choose, support, nominate and elect their representatives. With that, the allegiance owed by the elected official to the party-boss apparatus would now shift to the people. Therefore, penetration – and so, their ongoing supervision – of public affairs would be made practicable. No longer would the “iron rule of oligarchy”²³ rule!

Those who opposed these reforms scoffed at the idea that “*the people*” (their emphasis) could be entrusted with any true power as they would certainly lack the necessary sophistication and motivation to exercise it responsibly. They argued that without the filter of professional, organized political parties, there would be a power vacuum sure to be filled by those with agendas quite different than promised. These forces, wolves wearing the *sheepskin of reformer*, would leverage a disingenuous, populist call for the rule of the people and, operating under a pretense of democracy, (direct) get their way.

Henry Jones Ford, noted political scientist of the era:

One continually hears the declaration that the direct primary will take power from the politicians and give it to the people. This is pure nonsense.

Politics has been, is and always will be carried on by the politicians, just as art is carried on by artists, engineering by engineers, business by businessmen.

All that the direct primary or any other political reform can do is affect the character of the politicians by altering the conditions that govern political activity thus determining its extent and quality.

And, events have certainly played out as Ford suggested. With the people unwilling or unable to “carry on” and use this power wisely, this reform merely created a new set of circumstances and politicians; now the contemporary players of the money media election complex.

²² In the United States, by law, and for over a century, **the selectorate are the people**. They are simply registered to vote - that’s all - and may even have not have registered with a preferred party designation. They can then cast their deciding nominating votes in an open, simple, primary election or caucus that in most cases does not restrict that vote by party designation.

²³ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/iron-law-of-oligarchy>

Interestingly, Ford also had these comments:

“The constitutional ideal is noble; but the politicians are vile. If only the checks could be made more effective, if only a just balance of power could be established beyond the strength of the politicians to disarrange ... the constitution would work perfectly.”

So, we can see that given the depth, length and damage done by the corruption of the centralized party-machine model – “the spoils system” – the call for radical change was indeed justifiable. With the benefit of a century’s worth of hindsight, the deep failure of these progressive reforms to create effective checks has also been made plain.

However, the problem remains constant: how can power be arranged so that politicians (in all their forms) cannot disarrange the constitutional arrangement?

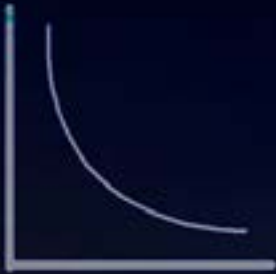
- Disingenuous or not, the reformers had it right.
- Elitist or not, so did the opponents of those reforms.

Nevertheless, what should be clear is that while the question of “the people” may remain unresolved from an intellectual standpoint, it is now being answered for them; forcefully and perhaps finally.

Yet, ironically what these reforms promised then are even more achievable today in the age of the Internet. Now, to use this authority, to create the counterweight and make the constitutional ideal work more perfectly, there is no need for people to make major life changes or for the unfeasible organizing of vast and diversified peoples over vast and diversified geographies.

However, without the considered participation of the aggregated, representative “the people” in the early process, where their decisive power sits, the ambitions of these reforms cannot be realized. With no “just balance” as Ford put it, you will have a de facto parliamentary system in all ways that matter; hence a “broken system”.

MONOLITHIC POLITICAL PARTIES? THINK AGAIN!



Inverse Proportion



How To Fix
America Fast



There may be no American ~~institution~~ entity more misunderstood than our two major political parties.

Blithely regarded by most as all powerful brokers of all things political, this brief article demonstrates this is not only untrue, it is the other way around.

The truth is they enjoy no "raw power" and their ability to wield influence is directly proportional to how effectively - or ineffectively - the citizenry participates in the electoral process.

Consider and rethink.

Excerpted From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia; Politics of the United States²⁴
[Organization of American political parties]



THE MAJOR AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES ARE MONOLITHIC POWERS??? THINK AGAIN!!!

- ☑ American political parties are more loosely organized than those in other countries.
- ☑ The two major parties, in particular, have no formal organization at the national level that controls membership, activities, or policy positions, though some state affiliates do. Thus, for an American to say that he or she is a member of the Democratic or Republican party, is quite different from a Briton's stating that he or she is a member of the Conservative or Labour party.
- ☑ In the United States, one can often become a "member" of a party, merely by stating that fact. In some U.S. states, a voter can register as a member of one or another party and/or vote in the primary election for one or another party.
- ☑ Such participation does not restrict one's choices in any way. It also does not give a person any particular rights or obligations within the party, other than possibly allowing that person to vote in that party's primary elections. A person may choose to attend meetings of one local party committee one day and another party committee the next day.
- ☑ The sole factor that brings one "closer to the action" is the quantity and quality of participation in party activities and the ability to persuade others in attendance to give one responsibility.
- ☑ Party identification becomes somewhat formalized when a person runs for partisan office. In most states, this means declaring oneself a candidate for the nomination of a particular party and intent to enter that party's primary election for an office.
- ☑ A party committee may choose to endorse one or another of those who is seeking the nomination, but in the end the choice is up to those who choose to vote in the primary, and it is often difficult to tell who is going to do the voting.
- ☑ The result is that American political parties have weak central organizations and little central ideology, except by consensus.

²⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_the_United_States

☑ A party really cannot prevent a person who disagrees with the majority of positions of the party or actively works against the party's aims from claiming party membership, so long as the voters who choose to vote in the primary elections elect that person.

☑ Once in office, an elected official may change parties simply by declaring such intent. An elected official once in office may also act contradictory to many of his or her party's positions (this had led to terms such as "Republican In Name Only").

☑ At the federal level, each of the two major parties has a national committee (See, Democratic National Committee, Republican National Committee) that acts as the hub for much fund-raising and campaign activities, particularly in presidential campaigns. The exact composition of these committees is different for each party, but they are made up primarily of representatives from state parties and affiliated organizations, and others important to the party. However, the national committees do not have the power to direct the activities of members of the party.

☑ Both parties also have separate campaign committees which work to elect candidates at a specific level. The most significant of these are the Hill committees, which work to elect candidates to each house of Congress.

☑ State parties exist in all fifty states, though their structures differ according to state law, as well as party rules at both the national and the state level.

Despite these weak organizations, elections are still usually portrayed as national races between the political parties. In what is known as "presidential coattails", candidates in presidential elections become the de facto leader of their respective party, and thus usually bring out supporters who in turn then vote for his party's candidates for other offices. On the other hand, federal midterm elections (where only Congress and not the president is up for election) are usually regarded as a referendum on the sitting president's performance, with voters either voting in or out the president's party's candidates, which in turn helps the next session of Congress to either pass or block the president's agenda, respectively.

STANDARDS THAT MEASURE



Authority: Quantitative vs. the qualitative

- Limiting the scope of understanding
- Limiting the scope of discussion
- First things last and last things first

Here we see clear proof the American system is not broken because effective action is clearly feasible. Assuming Congressman X's remarks about the citizenry's ignorance was indeed a signal to the public to wise up, we can see even the systems hardened cynics know how much power and responsibility the people of the United States have; or could.

Missing that signal unfortunately are our people. As petty animosities spread and the discrediting of our electoral system intensifies, conventional wisdom reigns, critical thinking stops, and the defeat of civics is complete.

The dismay is reinforced as little "forensic" analysis can be found as why our electoral efforts have so little affect and what's really behind the dysfunctions.

If pursued, such inquiry would show that our reliance on elite methodologies of **quantitative** study to understand our world is a crucial in all this. This influential hidden hand takes our complex, interconnected society and reduces it to counting, classifying, and constructing statistical "models" to understand the quality of human relations. While numbers have their place, the lack of a **qualitative balance** in these matters inevitably sheds our most pressing questions of context; *further clouding everything that follows.*

This fetish also serves to seduce our public sphere with the dangerous promise of certainty. Confident that numbers tell us what is happening, signals are sent that conventional wisdom should be accepted without question because it comes **from authorities**; in this case, chiefly, our domain of academic political science. As the “Networks Rule” piece demonstrates, this is a discipline with much more influence than might be commonly understood.

An example of statistics, removed from context, “telling a story” cite the some 45-50% of Americans that do not identify with either major political party; *which is reported as a crisis of democracy*. However, what such “authoritative” pronouncements fail to take into account is that population, or a large portion of it, might not so identify because they are firmly in the camp of the disinterested most! It also ignores these possibilities:

- ²⁵In their state, where they live, the elections they vote in are held on a nonpartisan basis
- ²⁶In their state, where they live no party affiliation is required in order to cast a nominating primary vote - as is mostly the case throughout the country

It also ignores the 50- 55% who do so “identify” might do so for a number of similar reasons; differing voting requirements, administrative legacy etc. But, it’s easy to spin these statistics into a narrative of highly conscious, “polarized-partisan-party-bots” versus “sick and tired independent voters of independent mind”; and it is! We are told a tale of *partisan polarization and disenfranchisement*; all based on numerical inference.

25 22 of 30 (75%) the most populous cities in the nation conduct their local, municipal elections on a nonpartisan basis. It is a safe bet after 30, the percentage goes up considerably.
<http://www.nlc.org/partisan-vs-nonpartisan-elections>

26 General elections of course never restrict based on party affiliation.

Demonstrating only a mild hodgepodge some sources say 35 of the 50 United States’ operate their state and federal elections on a basis where party affiliation **does not restrict the vote**; leaving only 15 that do.

The numbers and methods are changeable so according to Wikipedia the number is 13 that do so restrict.

However, according to Ballotpedia the number of states where the parties conduct **fully closed** primaries (one’s might be open and the others closed) - and where both parties vote is restricted - is only 12.

Though the methods of restricting or allowing the vote based on party affiliation might be arguable and controversial, what is clear is that there is substantial room for the voter to maneuver. As the previous “Think Again” essay proves, party affiliation requirements amount to very little indeed; much less monolithic control of the citizenry’s ability to act through their voting power.

https://ballotpedia.org/Primary_election

<https://www.independentvoterproject.org/primaries>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_elections_in_the_United_States#Types_of_primaries

In some - and not rare - cases this is taken to **extreme levels whereby it is expressed, as fact**, that people have no choice, and no role to play if they are not a “member” of one or the other major parties; patent nonsense as the “Think Again” piece here demonstrates.

Most telling of all is what we never hear. Amidst all the numbers, the slicing and dicing and authoritative pronouncements, no **qualitative standard** for how elections should be conducted exists; nor is there **any recognition** that this is kind of a problem. **“Democracy” 101**, 227 plus years of a democratic republic with a popular electoral system at its core, and still we have no idea - much less agreement - on what a meaningful, credible, informative election is. Our ultimate form of expression and enforcement *and this isn't even contemplated*.

Are there any standards? Sure, *if you like a good horse race*.

All arbitrary, so not a standard, a rule of thumb offered by modern political science is that **a margin of victory** determines not only the calculus - but by default also **the quality** - of an election. margin of victory determines not only the calculus - but by default also the quality - of an election.

We are told that a margin of victory of 60-65%+ represents a “noncompetitive” election and that a margin of victory of 59-64% or less represents one that is “competitive”²⁷. This is yet more numerical inference signifying nothing but, it does represent a clever strategy to keep the conversation “authoritative”, dreary and so, contained.

This, on the most ground floor matter a system based on elections and of/by and for the people principles could have.

Before we discredit and discard, perhaps we should ask if better could be done.

27 Ballotpedia assigns a much more stringent 5% margin

FIRST THINGS

FIRST



How To Fix
America Fast



In any system expected outcomes are the result of a process that must begin somewhere; and in order to reach a desired end, one must naturally start from the beginning.

The American electoral system does create predictable outcomes based upon what happens early; everything flows from that!

It is also a certainty that playing a role in the pivotal early process will impart on that population electoral super powers.

With great power comes great responsibility; who will use those powers and how?

Alternative thinking assembles the most powerful audience ever; and makes genuine alternative media a reality.

A famous quote attributed to Mark Twain declared that “if voting really mattered they wouldn’t let you do it”. As befits a Twainism, the statement was pithy, acerbic and unfortunately, true.

However, these comments were uttered in the days before the enormous power to nominate was fully handed over to the people of the United States through its popular primary voting and caucusing system; a method of republican-democracy that to this day uniquely confers very special status and extraordinary powers on them.

That shift in process was meant to create a shift in power; one that would penetrate the prevailing electoral-political alignments that made voting in Twain’s experience a relatively toothless affair.

As is evident from the preceding “Think Again” chapter, and argued and described throughout these pages, this was as big a change as could be imaged. Given their performance up to that time, a successful defanging of the political parties was completely necessary to any ideal of American self-government based on free elections.

However, a great deal of this message is also devoted to describing why this reform did not bring the change intended; and what very important change it did bring. To consider this, we focus on one pivotal dynamic of this big shift and new political alignment; based not on party, but on the people.

That is the emergence of the super voter; a political/electoral reality which bears very directly on the citizenry’s ability to penetrate, affect and change their system.

The super voter is not in any way a construct born of this proposal. As we can see from the citations from two different political consultants (advising their office holding-seeking clients) below, the super voter (as they call it) is simply a certainty our current system creates.

This phenomenon could not have existed in the days of the machine system where the apparatus had total control over ballot access and nominations, nor is it a dynamic of parliamentary systems where it’s political parties that decide these matters.

ELECTORAL IMPERATIVES AND SUPER VOTER DYNAMICS

- Anyone seeking office OR being advised on how to seek office will learn about the importance of the super voter and the necessity to identify, identify with, and **turn that person out** on election day. This is a foundational tenet of any modern campaign.
- These activities are well known and documented on the voting rolls which are available to aspiring elected officials and their consultants.

Exhibit A

Database/list Management consultants; excerpted from on-line article on the key imperative of identifying "Super-Voters".



Everyone needs to spend their campaign dollars wisely. If you're running as a Democrat you want to target Democratic voters as well as independents. If you are running as a Republican, you want to target Republican and independent voters. If your campaign can afford it, you should

just mail everybody as many times as possible.

Unfortunately, most campaigns have some sort of budget so the campaign dollars spent on political mail needs to be effectively put to use. This is where the super voters come in! Super voters are voters that have voted in two out of the last three elections. Why spend your campaign dollars on people who are not regular voters when you can send to super voters? Targeting the super voters is money well spent.

Political issues are important to the Super Voter. Not only can you be assured they will go to the polls and vote, they most likely will be talking to their friends about the issues and encouraging them to go vote.

As you know, reaching the right people with the right message is one of the most important things you can do to ensure the success of your political campaign.

Exhibit B

Pollsters/Political consultant; excerpted from essay for candidates seeking office on the electoral imperative to identify the "Super-Voter".

TARGETING VOTERS

You must be careful to TARGET your time and resources and polling on those people who will vote and be careful not to waste money and time on people who will not. Almost all local elections are decided by "super voters" and the vast majority of regular people that you meet are worthless to your election effort. You need to know who these people are.

Voter lists should cost 5-to-7 cents per voter, depending on the number of names you order and should be guaranteed to be at least 90% accurate for mailings. If you order a list of all voters with their voting histories, for example, the cost will be lower and you can sort out those most likely to vote by their voter number and pursue the list to see which of your friends and family members are registered and which are not.

THE SUPER VOTER: DEFINITION AND NUMBERS

- The super voter is defined as someone who, well, votes; particularly someone who nominates by turning out in a primary or caucus that all elected officials are subject to; **if they are subjected to them.**²⁸ (given the state of electoral competition nationally very often they are not. If any qualitative standard is applied, they never are).

28 Given the state of electoral competition nationally, very often they are not subjected to anything as some 50% of these elections go “uncontested” (no opposing name on the ballot). However, if any qualitative standard were applied to the concept of contested that number would be close to zero.

Exhibit C

Pollsters/Political consultant; excerpted from essay for candidates seeking office on how few people really decide elections.

Here is the sad, ugly truth about election math: You will probably need less than 15% of the total population in your area to vote for you in order to win.

- 40% of the voting age population do not even bother to register.
- Of the 60% who do register, only about 6% bother to vote, even in presidential elections.
- This means That only about 36% of the population will ever vote (60% of the 60%.)
- This also means that 64% of the voting age population will never vote.
- You only need 18% - or HALF plus one vote of the 36% who ever vote.
- In most non-presidential year elections, less than 15% of the total population is all that is needed.
- As a candidate, you have a legal right to obtain voter lists that contain more individual voter history information and demographic targeting information than is available to any retailer or direct marketer.

* These statistics represent the outcomes of general elections. Nominating primary elections or caucuses would represent yet smaller fractions of even these small numbers.

THE SUPER VOTER: IRONIES AND CONTRADICTIONS

Obfuscation



- The super voter is at a premium, and, really exists in the first place, given the absence of the people in these decisive processes. **That absence has allowed the considerable power of the citizen to responsibly control their system to become a firmer and more pernicious mechanism of control (over them) than anything that previously existed.**

- These super voters are themselves absent in that they are “super- voting” in a quite artificial environment. Lacking organization, genuine information - knowledge - and power they can direct, the absence is one of a qualitative presence that can wisely wield and manage authority. Not (first) the quantitative of turnout-numbers.
- The intrinsically uncompetitive environment of this reality ensures it will remain artificial and unable to produce results that are genuine. This is demonstrated not only by obvious things like high rates of incumbency, but by a near complete lack of standards capable of describing anything this system should actually be or do.
 - ✓ The lack of any standard to describe the meaning of “competitive” has been addressed and illustrates the depth of the problem. Unfortunately, it doesn’t end there. For example, an election (of any kind) will be labeled “contested” if only an opposing name appears on a ballot. No consideration of what *contested* means, or should, in this context.
 - ✓ Turnout numbers are also skewed in that votes are tallied in elections *that are not contested*; where only one name appeared on the ballot. This happens often and should not even qualify as an election much less accepted as a true measure of turnout.
 - ✓ Of course great vagaries dominate the artificial environment where useful discussion, if there is any, will mostly be delivered by mass media and advertising. Any substance that might emerge likely will have little to do with the realities the office seeker/holder actually will face; or the powers they will possess.

LOGIC OF THE WELEADUSA CITIZENS ACCESS NETWORK

As we have seen, the major political parties are not monolithic powers as they can decree no simple veto (legal) over any action citizens participating in the early ballot access and nominating processes might take. Simply as voters (and supporters) of candidates contesting in primaries and caucuses - the citizen holds the potential for decisive power; and therefore the potential for decisive influence.

We have also seen further evidence for that truth with the importance to political candidates of identifying the so called super voter; which is no fanciful notion, but a hard political/electoral certainty of a truly free democratic-republic. Political consultants and even the political party’s apparatus will play a role in assisting a preferred candidate’s efforts in this crucial regard.

This proves voting does indeed matter but raises pivotal questions as to the quality - and qualities - of our electoral system; and the engaged public. How do people understand this system? How can the myths and falsehoods that surround that understanding be clarified so the correct knowledge can be grasped; that being votes can do much more than simply select and elect individuals!

- The entire premise for the remedy offered in the form of this network is to create a visible, organized, constituency of super voters; which is simple to accomplish and simple to be part of.
- The super voting paradigm here is based on qualitative principles and is not dependent on the mass calculus of things like turnout numbers; though it does not exclude the benefits of “more”.
- The WeLeadUSA Citizen’s Access Network creates a super voter merely upon an individual’s verified registration.
- This is because by simply receiving the message leading to their registration, they will be understood by all the players as super voters; the foundation of which are the ballot access and nominating functions.
- The crucial visibility and organization is created by the registrants identification within their several voting districts; which give them responsibility for many elected officials, at all levels of government; and geographies within their state.
- This ensures the registrant is now more than one who simply meets the criteria of a prized super voter, they are visible, accounted for, and easily reached within the networks design; no longer must they be sought out as part of an expensive, divisive and artificial “political strategy”; BIG CHANGE.
- Each registrant/super voter operating within their district based constituencies are now capable of exercising considerable judgment and power in selecting and electing those many officials. With the coherence born of visible individuals becoming a visible constituency, communities of people will no longer be a faceless blob subject to “political manipulation”; BIG CHANGE.
- This allows a network design that permits incumbent and aspiring elected officials to directly reach their constituents, at all levels; free of the many shackles imposed by the money-media-election complex system²⁹.
- As well, that network design will allow super voters, and the visible constituencies it establishes, to reach their aspiring and incumbent elected officials, and each other; the Citizen’s Access Network means access.
- Backed by open ballot access and the authority to nominate, these capacities invest the assembled body with great power; power that is both reinforced and shared within the assembly itself. This is because each verified registrant creates the certainty of additional political-electoral gravity within the constituency. That deepening - and definite - power dynamic will compound the influence of the many actions and interactions the network supports.

²⁹ https://www.amazon.com/Dollarocracy-Election-Complex-Destroying-America/dp/1568589530/ref=sr_1_sc_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1520337095&sr=8-1-spell&keywords=dollaocracy

- The free access enabled will incite electoral competition that now lies virtually dormant; a republic - based on electing representatives - cannot truly exist in an environment with zero tolerance for genuine, principled competition.
- The product of this competition, and all of the interactions that underlie it, will create a separate path for genuine media; a new form of media designed to focus on solutions and agreement - not manufactured problems and contrived divisions.



The pen is mightier than the sword,
but the tongue is mightier than them
both put together

– **MARCUS GARVEY**

“ If the pen is, or is to be, mightier than the sword our pen can only find its power in our votes.

In turn, it is only a powerful vote that can infuse that pen with expression that must be taken seriously.

Serious words and ideas backed by no power are ultimately as useless as feckless votes backed by no serious words or ideas.

”



ETERNAL VIGILANCE

The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

It Must Be Kept
BY US

ETERNAL VIGILANCE



Networks: money, power and the use of authority

- Influence operates through many mediums and methods
- “Dark money”; intentional and purposed
- No intentions or purpose: excuses, instead of lessons

Networks work!

Human affairs always manifest networks of some kind but with the advent of the internet and its modern tools - it’s easy to forget that networks are hardly a recent invention or an instrument for social media alone.

Networks, whether they are based on simple human relations - a family clan or a sports league say (strong ties) - or one captured by technology, like some social media platforms, (weak ties) - **are neutral**. They exist; without representing anything necessarily nefarious or good.

However, those who understand the power of networks, and consciously meld their purposes to a **specific design**, one based on that understanding and intended to achieve their ends, will have significant advantage.

As politics and civics are naturally immersed in the capture, maintenance and use of power³⁰, networks naturally were and are essential to power relations and societal outcomes. This has made the **purposing of political networks**, and now the technology that supports those aims, central to our present; *and future*.

Yet, long before there was an internet, elite networks were constructed that incorporated important institutions, personnel, policy apparatus, communications

³⁰ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/05/05/billionaires-battle-over-media-influence-koch-bros-murdoch-vs-sorosbuffettge/#4ccf7bc76fbf>

technology and media. Quite effective, these mostly unseen influences have shaped much of our history.

But, given the many checks and balances our founding and ensuing history created, the product of those efforts could be only channeled through the visible system of our constitutional methods and agents; *our politics*. This hasn't changed though a very consequential shift had taken place in the century plus that ours became the unique two tier electoral system it is today. To the casual observer, the changes brought may be subtle, or even unnoticeable. However, when open ballot access methods, and the power to nominate joined the general election as the lawful - **and fully self-governing** - electoral system of the United States, major change to the political system and its players was ensured.

These were mechanisms of control that had previously and historically belonged only to the privileged members of the boss/machine system; the elite network suitable to that time and terrain. Now, with the people given this central authority, focus and methods had to change.

In order to achieve their political aims under these new circumstances, old networks restructured and new ones formed. Over time there came a shift from a narrower, party-centric emphasis that more featured the blunt instrument of spoils, to one focused on **very sophisticated and integrated methods of mass influence**.

The modern manifestation of the **purposed network** tasked with controlling that visible system and achieving those aims, can be accurately called a money-media- election-complex. This is a network of great complexity, strong ties, and organization that leaves little, if anything, out of its sphere of influence.

This network is much more than a simple engine to see preferred candidates presented, selected and elected within a party system. It is a highly interconnected, refined, specifically purposed network that commands key elements of our socio political infrastructure³¹.

This “post-shift” environment required control of many - seemingly humble - components of that infrastructure that, when thoughtfully networked, wend their way throughout society wielding tremendous influence.

Roughly, it looks and works like this;

- **Advocacy philanthropies:**

- ↑ Create private foundations

- ↑ That could then create advisory funds

- ↑ That might then fund tax-free nonprofits - of several kinds - capable of operating with very little transparency, or legal restriction.

- **This will then be focused to amass:**

31 <http://dradis.ur.northwestern.edu/multimedia/PDF/politics.pdf>

- ↑ Degreed scholars, social scientists, writers, media figures etc., with requisite pedigrees
- These visible, authoritative figures will then be channeled into a powerful network of academic think tanks:
 - ↑ Whose work will be to create graduate study curriculums, various studies, books, blogs, and all things media in order to propound certain agendas and points of view
- This investment in intellectuals and policy advocacy is further channeled into:
 - ↑ Judicial or legislative seminars and other ‘resources’ for our visible constitutional agents
 - ↑ ³²Marketable policies in the form of model bills; legislation that is crafted en masse and then marketed throughout our constitutional infrastructure of state and local government³³
- Digging down further, the philanthropies, nonprofit organizations and their offspring will channel these resources further into ‘grassroots’ organizations capable of:
 - ↑ planning rallies
 - ↑ or protest actions
 - ↑ or specific political/electoral action that might support favored politicians
 - ↑ or, target those deemed troublesome; unfavored

Of course all of this is filtered, promoted, and managed by and through media - a component of the networks reach and influence that can be glimpsed here, but must be considered separately.

What is important to understand is that for the network(s) that operate within the domain of money, media and elections - media is never a separate matter from the actions and intentions outlined here.

Personnel, information, aims, strategy and action are one; and fully attached to a coherent medium of communications.

However when it comes to the people, the citizenry, there remains to this day no similar attachment of personnel, information, aims, or strategy to a coherent medium of media. This despite:

- Two decades plus of internet fueled “network-mania”
- The clear and well documented history and success of this modern complex and its networks

32 https://www.huffingtonpost.com/chris-weigant/six-could-be-the-answer-t_b_6136694.html

33 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Legislative_Exchange_Council

Cries blaming the moneyed and powerful are always voiced but rarely if ever are the lessons of commitment, organization and strategic planning learned; or *sought*.

This blame, begging and distraction are unhelpful and must end.

There is much that can be done but it will require capable people to separate from the excuse-makers and the mass influence, and influencers, of the complex and for them to focus on building their own highly integrated and sophisticated network of purpose.



If powerful networks can plot, plan, and even mask true intentions, it is crucial for the public to have the means to penetrate and understand the world around them and even better those planning capabilities. This brief infographic display offers a quick assessment of the real realities of these networks and the potential for critical civic response.

[Click here to see the infographic display](#)

NEW MEDIA



The Network
= New Media

THE MISSING LINKAGE!

The crucial demand we must make, and meet, is the means to fuse our media and learning systems to direct, powerful, political action in the public sphere.

Keeping these inseparable pillars separate has been central in our failure to control our governing systems, and with that our lives for without this fusion there can - and will be - no change.

The organizational and interactive muscle the Citizens Access Network enables is illustrated here which in turn permits the emergence of a commanding form of new-media; media presented to, and executed by, the most powerful audience ever assembled...US!

With that comes the social and political regulation of self-government; unprecedented and truly of/by and for the people.

Now, knowledge is power!

 FAQs in context

ADVOCACY PROJECT

THE NETWORK = NEW MEDIA; CONTENT SYNOPSIS

This content describes the Citizens Access Network - the essential proposal of this work positing that under no logical or legitimate circumstances can areas of political, social, and civil matters be separated from spontaneous civic action and media that would inform it.

Unless and until the American people have a system of communications that qualitatively connects them, and converts what they know and have learned into a deliberative process - capable of being powerfully directed to their elected officials, and the government beyond - there will be no change to the status quo.

The solution is visualized with a comprehensive site structure that clearly establishes how the unique powers of the American citizen can be channeled to create new forms of civic engagement, citizen power and media. It is imperative to recognize that these activities must be conducted in an environment specifically and specially purposed to accommodate them - and is built as the country is built.

Therefore the design of the network fuses these standing powers to our existing, organic organization - voting districts - to create something unprecedented. Amassing, distributing, and channeling citizen power, thereby generating coherence and presence, *a qualitative medium of civics and citizenship* is created.

Nothing of this kind now exists, has ever existed, or has even been proposed. Current forms of social media are inadequate at best in meeting these needs; and moreover, have no intention to meet them.

This content is comprised of two brief introductory videos, and a detailed image gallery, broken into two separate modules that form the **Citizen's Access Network**:

The Network Display consists of 13 images with an overlay feature that detail:

1. site structure
2. visible constituency and initiatives
3. deliberative processes
4. prioritization and power projection processes
5. candidate and competitive resources

6. oversight processes (example: lawmaking)
7. user-member media: opinion, contributions and organization
8. reducing fragmentation: organizing advocacy
9. regional - national communications and synthesis
10. site data - the proper use of information
11. registration of members and advocacy groups
12. creation of initiatives and advocacy promotion

The Media Center gallery consists of 14 images that detail:

1. Media partnerships that connect media - content producers to the most powerful audience ever assembled
2. How familiar forms of civic engagement are renewed in this environment. Debates, interviews, and town hall meetings that may include - but are not limited to - investigatory, educational and electoral matters become something completely collaborative and so, wholly original.
3. Innovative media forms that will allow constituencies and the nation to understand and take control of the public policy that affects their lives
4. How we can combine our civic power to the wider world with highly collaborative, interactive and entertaining media of a social/societal nature
5. How the most important answers to the biggest public questions can be sought and found; and the new media forms and formats that will deliver them
6. How we can interactively and collaboratively get closer to and agree on elusive truths

[Click here to view - The Network Center Brief Introductory Video
The Media Center Brief Introductory Video,
The Complete Citizens Access Network Galleries and its useful FAQ's](#)

UNCOMMON POWER (AUDIENCE) DYNAMICS

THE UNCOMMON POWER DYNAMICS
Of The Citizens Access Network

Audience dynamics are always powerful but little considered.

An audience successfully assembled for specific entertainment content will impart power on producers and advertisers.

In the world of media - broadcast or social - the same applies.

Such decisive transfers of power might be appropriate in the world of entertainment but, when it comes to the civic arena, a people turning its power as an audience over to others for the benefit of agendas and bottom lines is disastrous.

Alternative thinking assembles the most powerful audience ever; and makes genuine alternative media a reality.

The Network = New Media

Pedestrian Audience, Organized Audience, Selected Audience, Captive Audience, Concerted Audience

ABSTRACT

Topic - The relevance and meaning in “public spaces” of the typical on-line action of registration, “membership”, and “sign-ups”

Aim - Ascertain the effects of this specific action on the power dynamics to the individual citizen and of society at large.

A SIMPLE REGISTRATION INTO PLACES AND SPACES LIKE THESE

Category: Networks, Media platforms, and related web sites

Examples: Facebook, LinkedIn, New York Times online, Infowars, etc.



RELEVANCE: SIGNIFICANT

Registration as a subscriber or member-user is extremely important in this category for one reason above all; these sites depend upon circulation in order to determine the value of their platform to advertisers or, in some cases they charge directly for their content.

Therefore, with each new registration “proof of audience” is generated which in turn induces more people to trust the site-source and participate. At the same time, this compounding phenomenon of social proof and trend reinforces the site-sources ability to claim a greater circulation and influence.

With that, so too can these organizations claim an associated dollar value for the placement of advertising on their site or direct subscription fees to access its content; and in some cases, sell products to their public directly for profit.

Effects On Public Power Dynamics: Potential, Paradoxical

These factors serve to limit the beneficial effects of “joining” to that site-source, or channels financial bottom line and “public reach”. This has the paradoxical effect of transferring the individual’s power to the source-*as their registration devolves the benefits of social proof upon it.*

Of course no entity in this category is specifically purposed - with its infrastructure or by intent - to enable powerful, active citizenship by its public. Consequently, it is highly unlikely that users in these media environs would gain any reciprocal power from this act; and relationship.

Therefore, given the site-source's purpose and architecture, a user's deeper interactions - like offline activities or communicating/meeting with others - would likely be solely of the users' own making and completely unconnected to the site-source. Given the vast distribution of people, territory and subject matter the site-source may facilitate (weak ties), such occurrences are likely to be quite rare.

However, though there may be no beneficial effects - or even mutual advantage - to the individual in terms of their relationship to power in society at large, there are important byproducts.

This, because as more people use a Facebook, subscribe to a N.Y. Times - or "uniquely visit" a media site - there is that much more potential social influence that site-sources ecosystem can wield with its technological infrastructure and/or published content. Likewise, its commercial power is accordingly hardened by increased advertising, subscriber, or "store" based revenues.

This all compounds the basic, well known, and too easily accepted - yet murky - immense hand over of power in terms of user's personal information; which of course the site-source can access and monetize with little oversight or hindrance.

In these ways the individual both makes more powerful, and cedes their power to others who will decide what is important and what is real; what political candidate to endorse or reject, what "expert" or policy to promote or obscure, what information to reveal or conceal.

ABSTRACT

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A SIMPLE REGISTRATION INTO PLACES AND SPACES LIKE THESE

Category: Advocacy, Issues and Causes

Examples: Online petitions, Nonprofit Organizations, Various Causes and Initiatives



RELEVANCE: INSIGNIFICANT

Registration as a member or supporter is fairly irrelevant in this domain. As an indicator of some interest in the petition, cause, or organization it is somewhat useful to that entity as a public relations and fund raising tool but, in a world of many pleas and causes, lasting, genuine effect beyond that is unlikely.

Effects On Public Power Dynamics: Absent to Negative

The act of a sign-up or registration - *limited to only that* - creates no change in public power dynamics and in fact may be harmful to the general welfare of the public.

With no further action attached, “joining” simply becomes a statistical measurement; at best. In many cases where more may be asked of the registrant, it’s often limited to the imperatives of fund-raising; an overt transfer of power and responsibility.

If physical action were even possible (on-line petitions for instance would typically involve no further “call to action”) truly desired, and explained - still, few people could or would be responsive to that call.

Whether or not that outcome is attributable to some defect in registrant, cause, or organization, the sheer number of these efforts serves to provoke a fragmented, overlapping and competitive environment;³⁴ which is a problem.

Because these dynamics of dilution and competition tend to make clarity elusive and accomplishments doubtful, they fuel a public inertia and fatigue. This in turn undermines the power potential of all of these causes as the public's precious resources of time, attention and money are exhausted.

Accordingly, no genuine effects on the power dynamics of the individual or society at large can be associated with the act of registration or "membership" with interests operating in this category.

Therefore the act is rendered insignificant, perhaps frivolous and increasingly unhelpful.

34 <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/2016/07/26/many-nonprofits-many-silly-questions/>

ABSTRACT

Topic - The relevance and meaning in “public spaces” of the typical on-line action of registration, “membership”, and “sign-ups”

Aim - Ascertain the effects of this specific action on the power dynamics to the individual citizen and of society at large.

A SIMPLE REGISTRATION INTO THE CITIZENS ACCESS NETWORK

Category: Unique/Unprecedented

Examples: An institution for advanced citizenship wholly owned by the people



RELEVANCE: HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT

As we have seen the act of registration is the most simple, undemanding, and perhaps trivial action one can take in their on line interactions.

In the other “places and spaces” being evaluated here, major intent, commitment and componentry - absent by design or default - would be required to convert those particular interactions into meaningful results.

Therefore, no effect on so great a force as the power dynamics of society could be reasonably expected from an activity so basic and removed; whatever area of engagement might be considered.

However, we now have an exception; registration into the WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network.

Here the simple, sometimes innocuous act becomes the foundation of a profound and enduring shift in the power relations of our society; and a foundation of opportunity.

Effects On Public Power Dynamics: Far-reaching, sweeping, and momentous

For the domains being weighed here, any appeal to join, to register or sign up, has the intention of creating some class of audience.

Whether the aim is to see them receive newsletters, fund-raising solicitations, socialize and consume media, or attend a function; the offer to register - and the effort to make that offer - has the inherent objective of assembling an audience.

For their part, registrants have a pretty good idea as to what is intended by the offer and what they are agreeing to.

There is no difference here as the WeLeadUSA proposal is based explicitly on assembling an audience:

An audience with explicit powers - those of electoral nominators



Based on their understanding of the clear message that brought them to the act of "joining"- they will be recognized as a body capable of exercising those powers.

An audience assembled for unequivocal purposes



To leverage those powers into a public institution of and for advanced American citizenship; creating the most civically potent audience ever assembled.

Fundamental to understanding the powerful **effects** the simple act of verified registration into the Citizens Access Network will **cause** is an understanding of the power the American citizen possesses as a nominator.

IN SUMMARY:



Power- Parties- Nominations

The power that each and every eligible citizen can wield as a nominator springs from our relationship to the existing voting system and the nature of our political parties.

As has been expounded in many places throughout these pages our political parties originally derived their powers from their authority to nominate those who stand for our many representative, judicial and law enforcement offices.

For more than a century however, through our caucus and primary voting system, that authority has - and does - rest SOLEY with the people.

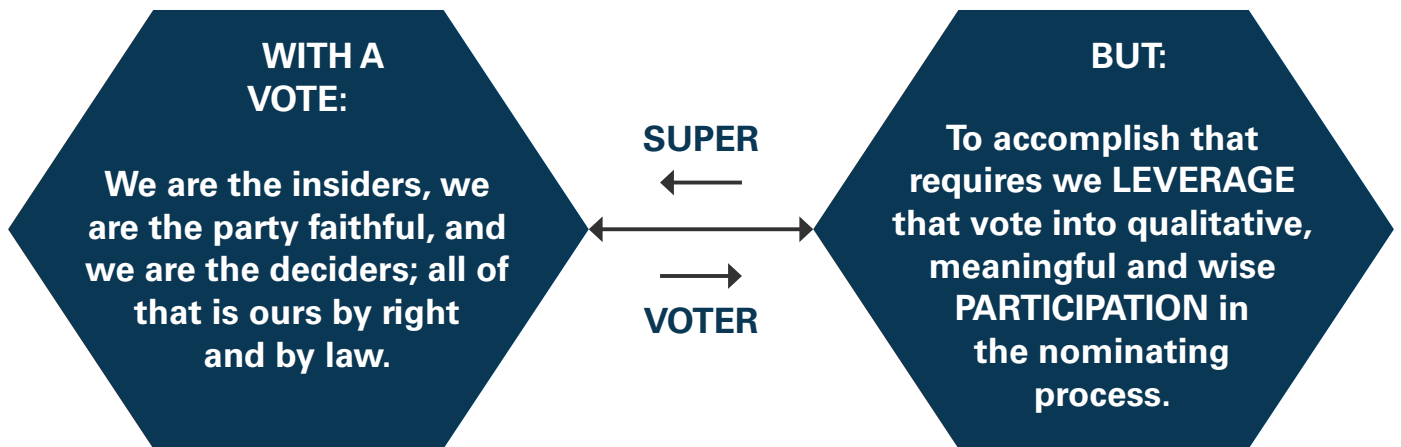
Then and now, this unprecedented shift in power left the apparatus of the country's political parties not with direct, unambiguous powers, but only their will.

Nevertheless, will is a major asset and they haven't wasted it. They've used it to change, to leverage their position and amass resources, and to remain relevant by channeling the powers available to them.

One thing however hasn't changed; whatever power and influence they do express emanates from the ballot access/nomination process.

The true meaning of all this cannot be missed; any authority they now exercise is simply inversely proportional to our participation; particularly the quality of that participation.

In other words WE, the people, are the political parties; nothing more or less!



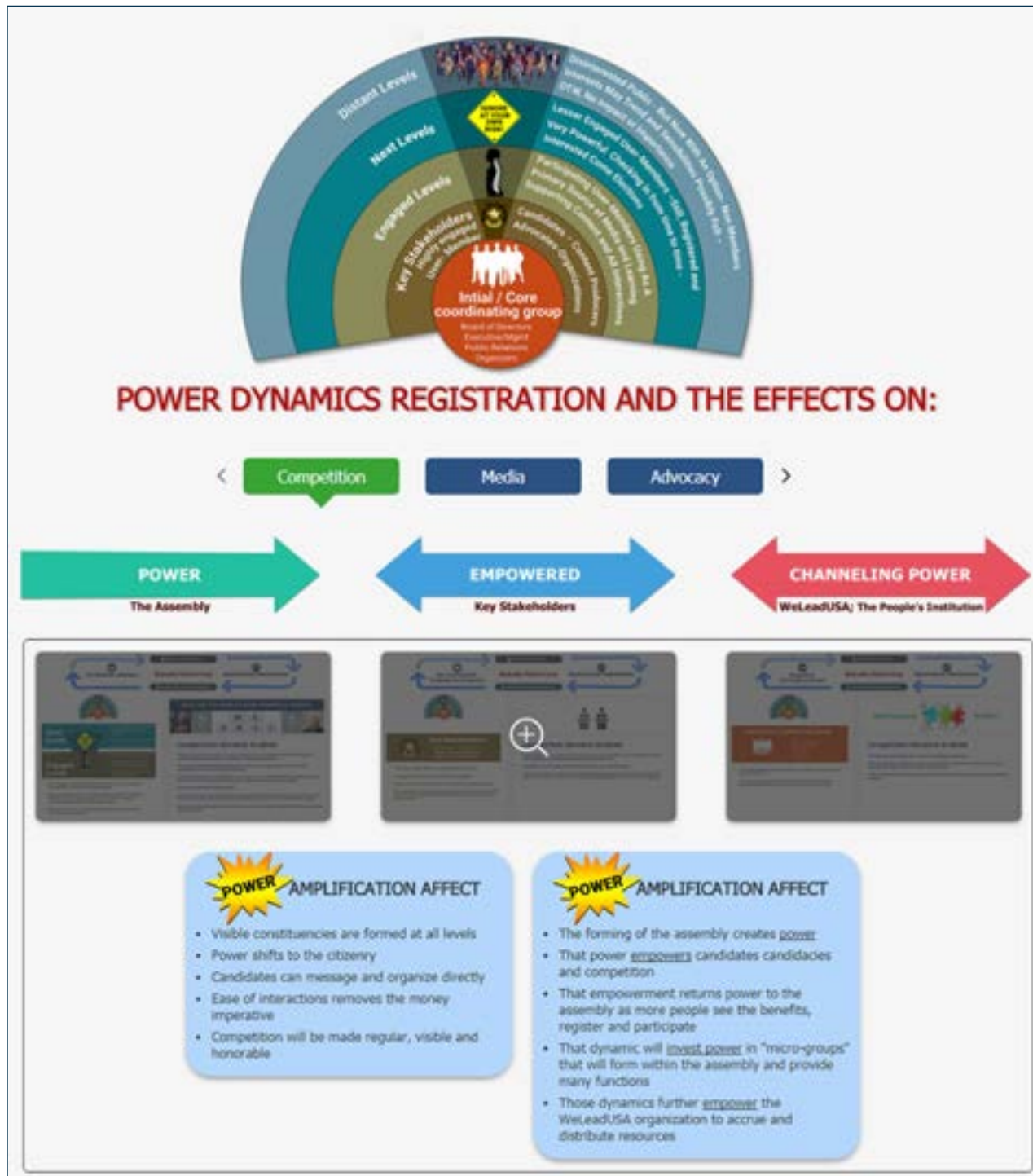
If we did, the political parties and its associated apparatus would suffer a proportional loss of whatever power they wield as we create and manage electoral competition; and use it.

It is important to note that by political party, here we are not only talking about an elephant or a donkey; we are talking holistically about the money-media-money-election complex, which makes for the totality of our electoral system...of which the major political parties are a component.

That complex derives its power first from their qualitative participation in the ballot access and nominating process and will lose power as we gain through our qualitative participation.

With that established it is a simple matter - with the effortless act of verified registration into the Citizens Access Network - to see major change brought to the power dynamics of civic society.

POWER DYNAMICS DIAGRAM



[Click here to view the content](#)



The Network
= New Media



With channels of communication open and the most powerful audience visible, specific actions will not always be necessary.

The mere presence, and the ability to direct the sunlight, will change untoward behaviors and shift allegiances making the unfair or absurd very difficult to impose.

Although it tells a story from another country this blog posted by Martin Armstrong is instructive anywhere, anytime.

Whether more frivolous, like the levying of hefty fines for simply being alive, or the very dangerous and growing practice of asset forfeiture - local "authorities" perpetrate these outrages because they can.

Most everyone has had disturbing experiences with such officials, from nasty clerks at your local DMV, to the judges who sit in judgment or the police who might arrest you to meet a quota.

Woman Fined for Pouring Coffee Down Sewer



Posted Jan 20, 2017
by Martin Armstrong

Sue Peckitt, 65, poured a cup of coffee down the street drain and then threw the cup in a public garbage can.

The police then gave her a ticket for 80 pounds. She appealed to have the unbelievable fine overturned and was told to pay up. The police told the press that her act of pouring the coffee down the drain violated laws against introducing "poisonous, noxious or polluting matter" into the drainage system.

After the press got wind of this crazy fine, the city council was embarrassed and investigated the incident. After two months they offered Peckitt an apology and a refund. They said, "Our priority is to make sure that the borough is clean and litter free and we apologize for any inconvenience that this may have caused."

The real question: What if this incident had not become public? Would there have been any refund or apology?

Seemingly, we are powerless against these trespasses but as this article demonstrates that is simply not true and actually quite the opposite is true.

Here the problem was dealt with derivatively as in this particular case the press (U.K.) did its job and through its medium made people aware. This embarrassed the authorities and caused them to back down; an all too rare occurrence.

However, an arbitrary reliance on others need not ever be a prerequisite for justice if the simple actions advocated here were undertaken.

With an operational Citizen's Access Network, all constituencies that comprise the United States - the people - would have the full attention of their elected officials who in turn have the full attention of all appointed officials "serving at their pleasure". That means non-elected officials, and the employees within these public agencies will be serving directly at the pleasure of the people.

Therefore, any such misdeed; from simple discourtesy, to unnecessary and onerous bureaucratic procedures, to serious abuses of power, will be made immediately known to the responsible officials through the processes of this network; with great clarity.

The demands for redress and action made by the assembly and backed by the most decisive direct grant or deny power in our system ensures these officers must act; or risk incurring the wrath of those who control their political future.

Moreover, with the powerful media and communication channels this network will create, there will be no dependence on the "good offices" of any intermediary - elected official or media body - to shine the bright and disinfecting light.

Because, as Armstrong's article underscores, human behavior has always been regulated by simple social mores, like shame, embarrassment, exposure and exclusion. With a structure capable of using them, these remain very potent tools of societal control and will often be enough.

But, where they will not be, the people will own the levers of power beyond and so will no longer be subject to wanton abuses whether born of stupidity or predation.

This will also ensure that an entirely different kind of public official will emerge within an entirely new type of relationship between the public and its governments.

PART-III

THEMES



**THE MANY SIDES OF
COMPETITION**

**POLITICS AND MEDIA;
SEPARATED BUT INSEPARABLE**

POWER - PROOF - PLAN

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**

INFORMED CITIZENS

CONTRADICTIONS AND CONNECTIONS



Learning from contradictions

- Deterrence: electoral competition controlled; by electoral competition
- Same teams, always on opposite sides
- The powerful choosing to be powerless

Perspective is important; it allows connections to be made. Without a frame of reference a dot will be a dot, but with perspective meaningful interrelationships come into focus and a more rich tapestry seen.

That is a process that can be assisted by exposing important contradictions and dismantling them in search of angles overlooked.

Already identified is the major contradiction of discrediting elections and advocating for their abandonment (and with it our entire democratic-republican structure) while no interest in a forensic investigation into this failure can be found; at least beyond the rather shallow, and by now shrill, blame on the power brokers and their political money.

perspective 

[per-spek-tiv]

Spell Syllables

Examples Word Origin

See more synonyms on [Thesaurus.com](#)

noun

the state of one's ideas, the facts known to one, etc., in having a meaningful interrelationship:
You have to live here a few years to see local conditions in perspective.

the faculty of seeing all the relevant data in a meaningful relationship:

While the discrediting voiced by one squad has gained currency, the endless search for reforms pursued by others continues. All the while the two inseparable - but unconnected - crews never bother to meet and compare notes.

Therefore it should be unsurprising that there is not even a thought - much less a proposal - to be found that would attempt to define what an election should actually be; and do. The interrelationship between

contradiction and lack of perspective is also evident in something else never heard; not one red question as to the contribution such a lack of standards might make to the poor outcomes everyone is (supposedly) so upset about.

In theory elections must necessarily be of a competitive nature and, from that “rub”, differences would be marked, principles established, and preferences understood. Unfortunately, the state of our union is such that the best we can do with the concept is conjure archetypical images of mudslinging and triviality.

This takes us to another serious and harmful contradiction. In addition to the one federal and 50 state, there are some 88,000 local and county governments across the United States that seat over a half-million elected officials of so many varieties that there is no area of policy, law, or social outcome they cannot influence. Given their electoral authority, this means there is nothing beyond the influence of the electorate as well.

And that is unfettered authority; deriving from the fact these elected offices all are 100% subject to the people through the processes of open ballot access and nominating primary elections; not to mention the culminating properties and powers of the general election. Therefore, it should be indisputable that our country uniquely offers their citizens the richest, most democratic landscape ever conceived; *potentially*.

However, with that potential unrealized, we experience the most undemocratic outcomes as genuine competition throughout our system has been vanquished. *Sort of.*

The electoral system of the United States, while being uncompetitive in the extreme - and therefore unable to yield information, results, or control to its people - *is at the same time very much driven by competition.*

Competition actually rules our uncompetitive system!

This can be understood simply by using the analogy of deterrence. We have always been told that a strong defense will deter enemies and therefore make war or attack less likely. Well, in the same way - given the absence of a strategic presence of the people - it's a pretty simple matter for the complex to leverage a noncompetitive system into one where only the threat of competition - **on which they have a de facto monopoly** can deter principled, organic competition; thereby maintaining the equilibrium they desire.

A career politician might never face a serious threat to his/her incumbency because they give the complex no reason to remove them - or threaten removal - by the organizing (or potential organizing) of competition against them. This is well resourced and supported competition that would therefore present a clear danger to the incumbent.

This makes for a system devoid of credible, meaningful electoral competition *because of the threat of empty, unprincipled electoral competition*; this is the paradox.

On the occasions it is deemed necessary to remove a troublesome official, the competition plotted is a surgical operation that targets;³⁵ mud, frivolity, busloads of raiders³⁶; any tactic deemed necessary can be called on and supported by every node of the network previously described.

This leaves the people with a completely noncompetitive, moribund system, while the power to organize any "necessary" competition - of the most negative nature - remains in the hands of the few; **executed below the radar of the many.**

The same visible power as always does the enabling. The only difference being that this authority has and does belong to a disinterested and ill-informed public being misled by their "thought leaders" and so, hung with a rope of their own making.

35 <https://www.workers.org/2006/us/mckinney-0824/>

36 Party raiding

Excerpted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Party raiding describes a tactic in American politics where members of one party vote in another party's primary election in an effort to either nominate a weaker candidate or prolong divided support between two or more contenders for that party's nomination.

Party raiding can easily occur in jurisdictions which allow open primary voting

NO COMPETITION, NO DEMOCRACY

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK!

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINED. NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

NO COMPETITION NO DEMOCRACY

We the People
Domestic Tranquility, foreign Peace, Liberty, Justice, under the auspices of Providence

ZERO **TOLERANCE**

Without vibrant, honorable competition no genuine republican form of government is possible; because there is no medium.

No medium means that no clarity, media, relevant elections, change or democratic expression is possible. Here we can see not only just how uncompetitive the U.S. electoral system is - It's worse than you may think - we can see its true character, and what it unleashes.

From this angle a full explanation of the WeLeadUSA approach is documented.

FAQs in context

NO COMPETITION, NO DEMOCRACY; CONTENT SYNOPSIS

Comprised of an infographic display and video content, this section provides important background on the very alarming state of American electoral competition and the decisive – and quite negative - effects that has on the entirety our civic and social systems.

The focus of this material starts with results from the 2014 election cycle, specifically the nominating primaries held that year. Consistent with results before and since, our political dysfunctions and their deeper consequences can easily be traced to these outcomes.

³⁷Though this study focused on these nominating elections at the congressional level, the moribund state of this system as a whole – *nationally* - must be understood in the broader terms of state and local levels. In the USA, everything, everywhere, is connected making the public's overarching concern with players and events in Washington D.C. a grave strategic error.

At these levels the outcomes are likely worse³⁸ in the same process that – elects more than 98%³⁹ of our officials nationally. These are officials of great consequence who get - and stay - elected to these degrees; perhaps even greater.

The exhibits that follow demonstrate the problem. If some 85% of the elections conducted - elections without which there could be no genuine democratic-republic – are farcical, it should be no surprise that bad results would ensue and be reflected throughout society.

Of course this is analysis based on the quantitative and derivative and cannot begin to tell the story of these failures based on qualitative standards. These are

37 <https://www.princeton.edu/csdp/events/Trounstine020509/Trounstine020509.pdf>

38 For the 2014 cycle, in state legislative primary races, the defeat rate was actually 2.2% in contrast to the less than 1% defeat rate at the federal level; municipal level races are not indicated here. https://ballotpedia.org/Incumbents_defeated_in_2014%27s_state_legislative_elections

39 https://www.census.gov/prod/2/gov/gc/gc92_1_2.pdf - pg.7

the only standards appropriate to apply to this sphere and, if they were, it would take little effort to make a convincing argument that 100% of these elections are without merit.

If the foundation on which something is built is unstable or worse, what is built upon it cannot stand. The problems and dysfunctions that we have seen in our society flow directly from this however little understood it may be; and unnecessary it is.

Beyond the statistical summary of the infographic display, video content on this page includes:

- ➔ **Parties, power and allegiances** - discusses the effects of these dynamics through the lens of political allegiances, and how the Citizens Access Network disrupts the old to create something new
- ➔ **Obfuscation** (two parts) - discusses how without control at the ballot access and nominating level, we leave our elected officials with no protection; and ourselves with no ability to penetrate the many techniques meant to keep the citizenry in the dark
- ➔ **Conclusion** - shows how the focus on the quantitative creates political campaigns and engagement of a wholly ridiculous nature; *garbage in, garbage out*

[Click here to view content](#)

KNOWLEDGE IS NOT POWER



Media; creating mediums from citizenship

- The single author broadcasting model of media: a failure
- Citizen based media that focuses on citizenship
- Being informed vs. being vigilant

The contradictions and paradoxes hardly end there, nor do the connections.

A central argument presented here is that the full potential of the American democratic landscape cannot be realized with the traditional media model we have obediently accepted, and right there is another paradox.

Media capable of conducting and transmitting such analysis needs to exist, but doesn't. Therefore, to realize that potential, and the countless other possibilities for better lying dormant, will require the development of a "third way" for media; a *genuine alternative*.

The freedom of the press (media) guaranteed at the founding, then primarily understood as newspapers, was soon throngs that often reflected politically partisan points of view.⁴⁰This "grew" to become an always consolidating, "corporate media" that over time mostly came to be controlled by powerful individuals representing certain segments of society; their interests and perspectives.

⁴⁰ <https://www.nyu.edu/classes/stephens/Collier%27s%20page.htm>

The commercial imperative, constantly present, neatly fused agenda to the profit motive and created the press of yellow journalism, spin, and sensationalism still featured prominently today. And, despite centuries passing, and the mediums of media changing and proliferating greatly, its central model - the single author broadcasting⁴¹ - has hardly been questioned much less transformed.

These essential features of our media landscape have not been disrupted in any practical sense even with the “innovations” of public broadcasting and now, the alternative media of the Internet, added to the menu.

Upholding the model while mostly taking its cue from the mainstream, alternative media in all its forms considers a *mission of truth* to be its only mandate; and to be fully decisive as well. It has failed to do - or even considered doing - these very important things:

Make the knowledge it provides actionable - simply ask, what could be done with even the best information this or any media form can provide; without quitting the day job?

Focus on things possible to influence - With a myopic focus on distant people and matters; presidents, central banks, leaks, etc. and so little regard for analysis or ironically, alternatives, they have promoted the abandonment of civics; obviously the only channel through which the media they produce could ultimately have impact.

Offer organizing principles - assembling like-minded audiences while reporting “truth and crisis” while, *without exception*, attaching information, audience, and energies to nothing further speaks for itself.

With no genuine framework as a guide, all media of today persists with what has consistently failed; from the standpoint of the people. In practice, these last decades have simply reproduced the newspaper; with a comment thread. Every new media device of the Internet age - **while demanding and claiming change** - stubbornly, irrationally, functions as a fragment operating in a totally disconnected environment.

So, even while knowledge has spread, this has assured a self-defeating mission with the cruelest of contradictions; even its best work will change nothing and maybe even have the opposite effect.

However, from the standpoint of those in control it is a different matter completely. For them, our historic, constitutionally protected media has never lacked an action component. Its centrality to their integrated network of authority already documented has always been a foundation of the eternal vigilance they execute; as it of course it would have to be.

41 The media model of the single author broadcasting:

Media produced by individuals or media outlets and delivered to passive viewers - consuming - and attached to no action or organizing componentry..

For the people though this connection is never made. With the dogma unchallenged, what we are told - ad-nauseam - is that "truth", being "informed", is enough.

But democratic expression is not the same thing as eternal vigilance and "being informed" alone represents no plan. Unless and until that connection is made and the capacities of the organized matched, there will only be the rulers and the ruled.



ETERNAL VIGILANCE

The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

It Must Be Kept
BY US

ETERNAL VIGILANCE

EVOLUTIONARY

ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK!

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINED. NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

STATE OF THE UNION

The more things change, the same they stay the same? You betchya! Exploring the current state of our union from the angle of Frank Capra's 1948 film "State of The Union" lets us appreciate just how true the old axiom is.

This move classic is itself an enduringly perceptive examination of the American system - and people - and is in many ways quite prescient too. With just a bit of analysis added to the key points of this film we see the problem and the solution have not changed, not even a little after 65+ years. Is it too late to learn the lesson?

FAQs in context

STATE OF THE UNION; VIDEO SYNOPSIS

The State of the Union video content is essentially an analysis of the eponymous 1948 film by Frank Capra that itself was an analysis of the American political system, its relationship to media and, the role the public plays in the enduring drama.

The film has four major protagonists:

- ➔ Grant Matthews, portrayed by Spencer Tracy - a wealthy industrialist who comes to seek the presidency
- ➔ Mary Matthews, his wife - portrayed by Katharine Hepburn
- ➔ Jim Conover, the political consultant - portrayed by Adolph Menjou
- ➔ Kay Thorndyke, the media baroness - portrayed by Angela Lansbury

The film was a very interesting treatment of ambition, idealism, political realities and the inseparable relationship of politics and media; it remains a singular contribution.

Quite notable in this film was its precise portrayal of the nomination as the central driving force in the US political system and the double edged sword it is; and could only be. On one hand, with proper understanding and attendance, it is capable of devolving great authority to the public; or, in their absence, it's capable of becoming the means for an even more effective system of control.

These dynamics play out as Grant and Mary start off with good intentions and high ideals that quickly encounter reality. This is the problem of a candidate getting elected, without first being nominated to stand for office, and the absence of the people from that nominating process; a fact (symbolizing the nation as a whole) the political neophytes had neglected to consider.

In their absence (*they're only people*) that decision - from which all else flows - can only be left to what the film appropriately terms politicians, meaning the "professionals"; an important idea that underpins the film. With that, the people are left only an illusory vote; and democracy.

While Grant's ambitions and desires to do well are twisted by these political realities, his wife holds to them and it these tensions that this video captures to emphasize the crucial points this film made.

- ➔ The importance of nominating elections to our political system
- ➔ The illusion that political parties and political figures are monolithic powers
- ➔ The inseparability of media from our electoral politics and civic responsibilities
- ➔ The futility of investing in leaders who are not emerged from or protected by visible constituency

The character of the political consultant and the media baroness demonstrate the degree to which players who are not evident or accountable to the people can use their powers to influence and steer the public and public outcomes, wherever they wish⁴².

In its 12 minutes, this video uncovers the truly groundbreaking work this film exemplified with both its commentary and visual connections to our current players, methods and circumstances.

At the end of this video there is a moment captured that was perhaps the driving force behind Capra making the film and is certainly the central message of this particular treatment and overall work.

At that moment, the character of Mary Matthews barbs the character of Jim Conover - the political consultant - with the line - your kind are only as much political professionals as the people are amateurs.

It is most unfortunate that this crucial reality is neglected by those so many people we give so much of our attention to; who analyze and connect so little.

All of which makes unquestionably clear that what happens, happens with the consent of the American people who are not powerless victims but powerful citizens of a country that has long offered its people more opportunity to control their destinies than any other; *in history*.

[Click here to view the video and FAQ's](#)

42 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2013/05/05/billionaires-battle-over-media-influence-koch-bros-murdoch-vs-sorosbuffettge/#4ccf7bc76fbf>

INFORMED CITIZENRY

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INFORMED CITIZENS



CONTEXT IS KING



Primed For Change



Primer / noun
• any book of elementary principles
great primer

Stop the Insanity!

Nothing creates a better foundation for analysis and constructive criticism than agenda-free, 20/20 hindsight; and the long and winding road towards realizing a high functioning United States of America offers plenty of hindsight to review!

Fighting the Last War puts that sad surplus to work to bring us insight into the question of why that flagging struggle has been one defined by futility; then and now.

A careful study of the hardened, conventional thinking behind this enduring failure helps us understand what must be done to see the indispensable goal achieved.

All The Wrong Questions!



ALL THE WRONG QUESTIONS

X Misdiagnosis

Insanity, with justification, has been defined as doing the same things time and again while expecting a different result. Accepting that definition helps us run a public sanity check by comparing the political-social decline of the U.S.A., and the people's habitual responses to it, to the field of medicine and the frightening prospect of a misdiagnosis.

Kneejerk treatments to symptoms not well understood can create a cycle of doing the same, while expecting, and hoping for something different. By leaving vital questions of possible underlying cause to anything but careful analysis, what lingers can metastasize into what can be fatal.

Until symptoms are properly understood in the context of cause, dead ends will be followed that lead nowhere; but to exhaustion.

Unless the approach changes, ***no solution is possible!***

If a poor diagnostic process can still get you killed despite all the advances of modern medicine, we must also consider the parallel of the failing social-political-economic health of the U.S.A., despite all the advances in modern communications.

If we consider the conventional wisdom - or the 'misdiagnosis' - of our socio-political health in the form of questions, we can shed light on critical issues, errors in logic, and important connections and options that otherwise be missed.

The conventional questions that indicate faulty analysis:

- How can we wake people up?
- What protest, boycott or "local" movement can work?
- What law or reform can be crafted that can empower people to change this?
- What leader can we elect that can change this?
- What Constitutional approach can change this?
- Why won't responsible parties in government, the military or law enforcement stand up to and against abuses?
- What facts and truth can be provided that will change this?

All The Wrong Questions!



WAKE UP?

X How can we wake people up?

Waking people up !

In general this seems to be ***the strategy***.

Endlessly parroted by so called ‘truthers’ of our alternative media and the advocates of our many protest movements, this term has become a social meme; ever present in our media landscape.

Its prominence in our language and its power as a default setting of THE corrective action demands that we ask: what does this “wake -up” idea really mean?

Where does it lead? What does it assume?

Can something so innately vague even qualify as a genuine strategy?

✓ The right questions, a proper analysis:

1. Many millions have been awakened, supposedly, yet things continue to deteriorate. Why?

Is there a magic number of people who need to be awake for in order for things to change?

2. What have people accepted that confirms them as awake; a conspiracy? That we are on a wrong track? Who decides the standard?
3. And, once people are awake, what then should happen and why would “it” work?
4. Logically, waking people must be considered a quantitative “strategy” based on engaging the masses. However, the masses have never been decisive in any society of any era, except maybe when it’s time for food riots.

Since action, for better or worse, has always been engineered by the few - motivated individuals or groups - what exactly is the proposition here?

5. Further, a stand-alone strategy of waking people up - i.e. with no action

component attached- would seem to suggest, by default, a path of protest or confrontation.

6. The problems with protest actions as a strategy are dealt with in the “doth protest too much” section but the bullhorn approach, necessary to awaken those asleep, mostly doesn’t win friends and influence people.
7. It should be noted that a new system would want to deploy a strategy of discrediting the old one in order to overthrow it, with consent.

Therefore they would want people awake enough to be angry at the old and uncritically accepting of the new.

Beware the awakened with no further purpose; there are all different flavors of “awake”.

AND THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...

Awareness-raising is very important but it does not make a strategy.

With no definition of what it really means, the emphasis placed on what is nothing more than a meme is quite useless and, moreover, harmful. It clearly represents a major abdication of responsibility of those who consider themselves awake because squarely placing blame on those who don’t know, don’t care to know, or just plain don’t care, *while millions are supposedly awake and of like-mind*, is obvious nonsense.

And what is the definition of awake?

And who is truly awake; a civic minded person willing to cooperate actively with others or a content producer (or consumer) purveying fear, while offering no organizing ethos or solutions? (The proper definition of fear-mongering)

Under the extraordinary circumstances that prevail today, the over/misplaced emphasis on this pervasive notion is quite unhealthy as its simplistic appeal inhibits critical thinking. It also leads to people wearing themselves out when, even with a successful awakening, there’s no action plan waiting to move forward with; **how half-baked can you get?**

Like-minded people organizing around specific action must obviously be made the priority and wasting time with vague nonsense that explains nothing must be immediately rejected! Seeing those who are “already awake” (motivated regardless of their specific underlying beliefs) working together successfully, will do more than anything else possibly could.

Nothing succeeds, or wakes people up, like success.

All The Wrong Questions!



DO TH PROTEST TOO MUCH

X What protest, boycott or “local” movement can work?

Protest actions today are everywhere in our social and political sphere but few seem to ask hard questions as to what these activities intend to, or actually might accomplish.

Are protests a strategy? Are they a tactic? Are their goals clear and the action sustainable? Are they safe? Are they prone to infiltration? How are they viewed by those they are aimed at and by the public at large? No era or recent century has lacked for crowds of people protesting. This, if nothing else, should demonstrate that protest actions are quite an ineffective tool for achieving social-political change.

There have been movements, like the Civil Rights efforts of the 1950s and 60s that used protest actions successfully; somewhat. Those actions, however, were tactics of a broad strategy that integrated politics, economics, communications, religion and more. Its aims were clear and based on obvious moral- social inequities.

Overall it was reasonably well executed, but this experience raises important questions.

Is it possible the events of that time have conditioned us to somewhat romantic ideas about “what it takes” in our time? Is it possible that this stand-alone, quantitative form of “resistance” has become habitual, a reflex that blinds us to important lessons about the failings of even that “successful” effort?

As was the case with the Civil Rights Movement, advocates today also promote the idea of boycott as a “companion item” to protest actions. However, they do so with none of the realism or shrewdness of those efforts. Activists today propose to boycott businesses in favor of using local resources only or opting out of civic activities altogether like voting or paying taxes. These ideas of voluntarism, or anarchy, are all of the same flavor and too are very flawed.

✓ The right questions, a proper analysis:

1. By any measure protesting is begging. Beggars cannot be choosers. Beggars may be given a crumb or two but can never exercise true power! Worse, they

will be lulled into a false sense of progress and a greater state of dependence on their “generous benefactors” for the trouble.

2. Protest actions devoid of an integrated strategy are essentially emotional and social and are therefore useless in enforcing change.
3. Almost all protest movements will demand some action in law or reform. Those problems are dealt with in the “Laws??!!” section.
4. Protest actions seek to Petition; to plea or lobby, or Redress; to restore or equalize. These are fine constitutional concepts that define relations between people and government but, they basically indicate submission and do not consider the powerful tools the people can fashion as true catalysts and leaders in our system.
5. Protests are difficult to sustain; they are physically arduous and require substantial energy that can be spent more productively.
6. Success; meet the new boss. Failure; same as the old boss.
7. As we have seen, protest/civic actions are easily coordinated amongst and funded by agenda driven groups i.e. “astroturfing”. Further, legitimate citizen-based groundswells are easy to infiltrate and discredit with ‘provocateurism’; and they can make sincere people easy targets for retribution. Maintaining the purity of purpose and clarity of message is near impossible following this path.
8. Many boycott-related protest-advocacy suggests that we “go local” and opt out of citizenship and system by ending our relationships with government, businesses and industries that we have grown dependent on:
 - ↑ For that have an impact it would **require organizing very large percentages** of the population - the masses - to participate AND for them to tolerate significant change to their relationship with society and their comfort levels. As we have seen, any cogent action on the part of masses would be unprecedented
 - ↑ The local level is pure? It is as immersed in all of the abuses we see everywhere else. Everything is connected and any remedy, to be a genuine remedy, must have corresponding effect on all levels and geographies
 - ↑ Any suggestion that people should not vote, not pay, not bank, not buy and so on fails the tests of logic and feasibility as the amount of co-ordination and fellowship required to execute such mass action is beyond what is realistically possible. If it were, there wouldn't be a problem in the first place.

AND THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...

While there is no question that the internet must be the organizing hub and information center for any successful civic effort, no solution will be found on a computer screen alone. We will not be able to blog, comment and podcast our way out of this.

Therefore, one very important lesson, from the Civil Rights Movement of the mid-20th century cannot be missed: demonstrating credible teamwork.

Those accomplishments made clear that success in the “change business” will require the strong ties of physical presence, shared sacrifice, coordination and fellowship.

Though protest actions by nature will have this potential, lacking a winning strategy they can only leave the crucial attribute of strong ties to wither. Much more is needed.

Logically, if protest actions were understood as tactic of a winning strategy there would no longer be a need for protests.

Such gatherings instead would be part of a process of **servicing notice**; powerfully communicating that a shift in power has occurred.

That would be waking people up in the right way and should be the goal.

No more mindless protests, please!

All The Wrong Questions!



LAWS??!!

X What law or reform can be enacted that can empower people to change this?

Laws, reforms, empowerment.

Laws have their place but as anyone claiming to be awake would know, our system of law-making and giving has been perverted and used for the purposes of control; not for the benefit of society.

One method of control our legal establishment uses in law-making is the deceptive practice of manufacturing words for legal purposes that mean something quite different than what they would in common use. That means our law - our legal, political, and justice system - is not really one of clear rules, but of terms of art and fiat.

This is well established and means we are a country of men and not laws; in other words, the exact opposite of what we've been told.

Therefore, to demand that our social-political problems - steeped in such law and practice - be solved by that very law and practice is an illogical, terribly flawed idea. Flawed quickly becomes horrendous when one considers the enormous time and resources that's constantly devoted to such efforts; a very undiscerning and misplaced confidence in a clearly failed approach.

A dependence on laws to reform and fix what we perceive to be broken requires two major leaps of faith. One, is that the people who have used their authority to forge all this would be willing (and permitted) to undo the work. That is unlikely, no? The second is that our problem lies in "bad" laws and that "good ones" are the answer⁴³.

Well, if we consider our law making machinery much like a clever and well-resourced industry where we are much like the disorganized, under-resourced regulators we can see the problem clearly.

⁴³ <https://inthesetimes.com/article/10-years-ago-connecticut-got-big-money-out-of-its-politics>

Also, our history is full of reforms; enshrined in law!

Consider that tons of anti-corruption laws have long been on the books; has corruption been eliminated? And, in recent years, public financing⁴⁴ of political campaigns has even been implemented in many states. The logic behind these laws, ostensibly, is to make elections more meaningful and competitive; yet no effort is made to even define what that means or create a standard; which makes as much sense as starting with the roof when building a house.

Yet, all of this law and reform comes with the usual promise of changed behaviors and the empowerment of the citizenry.

However, they have not only failed to produce results, in some cases they have prompted new innovations of control and corruption. This poor record requires that we ask if the endless path of petitioning for reforms and accepting vague promises of “empowerment” isn’t really just a lost highway



The right questions, a proper analysis:

1. If a law or reform will be of the process and system that has us in this mess in the first place, how can we expect they are a way out?
2. Any solution of law we might wrangle will likely be the product of years of efforts and compromise and would be contained in an overly complex statute comprised of many words that don’t even plainly mean what they would in everyday life; then the lawsuits, judges *and justices*.
3. Further, there are no means for such statutes and reforms to be offered to the people in a way that offers simplicity, understanding or the power to change, reject or regulate them. If there were, there would be no need for them in the first place.
4. “Empowerment”; Beware the word. It chiefly means to “give”, “authorize” or “promote”. It is not the same as POWER which, given our founding premise, we are endowed by our creator to exercise in the pursuit of happiness. It can be “given” by no authority.

It is therefore illogical in the extreme to continually pursue remedies through lawmaking when the people have no qualitative means to control their creation or regulate their implementation. This does however leave us with several logical conclusions:

44 <https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/editorials/seattle-voters-should-reject-campaign-finance-reform-measure-initiative-122/>

AND THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...

- We must seek the power to command both the making and implementation of law
- We must seek the power to control the language in law and its purpose
- We must have the means to discuss, process and decide
- We must have the means to change, reject and eliminate
- It must be virtuous behavior that's encouraged and tracked; which alone, no law can ever deliver

Any pursuit of lawmaking to remedy abuses that lack this understanding must be immediately rejected; ***along with their advocates!*** To have any chance from here we must be very discriminating about the allocation of the capable public's precious resources of patience, time, money and attention - these are finite resources that cannot continue to be wasted.

All The Wrong Questions!



LEADERS??!!

X What leader can we elect that will change this?

Leaders???

Leadership is important, but our cultural archetype of leaders and leadership has served to twist our perceptions of reality, dull our sense of civic skepticism and hamper our ethos of self-reliance. We have been conditioned!

Whether it is stories of Kings and Queens - now so often featured in our popular media and entertainment - or the horse race of our presidential elections, we have been programmed to an idea of **leaders** as something akin to royalty and seem to have come to consider their work and lives as more the stuff of drama than public service.

This has served to fuel perceptions that stratify society; making them something quite separate from, and superior to, us.

This stratification also blinds us to more a meaningful understanding of how power really works; its aims, institutions, and its continuities.

One way this shows up in our republic is that the people have become habituated to the idea of “leaders delivering” and doing so within a fixed hierarchy. That model suggests we can only “express ourselves” via an occasional, and highly derivative vote, and that we are excluded from directing any regular influence and power.

If a so-called leader is promoted and chosen by this model - one clearly based on submission and hope - and that model always fails to deliver, how likely is it that the said leader would even intend to “deliver” in the first place? And, even if they did wish to, “could they”?

If that were attempted, without the **protection** of a visible constituency who elected that leader based upon a coherent understanding of a clear platform, that leader in order to “deliver” would have to love the “little people” enough to risk bucking the system and players they owe allegiance to.

Too many contradictions; too much fairytale.



The right questions, a proper analysis:

1. If you put even the most talented, sincere, sovereign and “reform minded” person or people in office, but left most everyone and everything else as it was - exactly what we always do - how could their big promises be kept? They could not be.

Therefore it is illogical and self-defeating to depend on individuals - or parties - promising leadership, and “change” to emerge from a conventional approach.

2. Without the protection of that powerful constituency no one can “deliver” within a genuine representative republic. Therefore, the people, as policy demanders, would have to be powerful - which is not at all the same as being “empowered” - in order to provide that protection.
3. Nothing incoherent can be powerful. Unfortunately, numbers of people aren’t easily made coherent. Therefore, no protection can be offered, and nothing can happen, until people can be made coherent by forming a visible, dependable constituency that can communicate and be communicated with. With the creation of a visible constituency we have our protection, and only then are we free to act effectively.
4. The path to coherence and constituency - that enables genuine power to be wielded - is a fundamental criterion that must be met.

However:

- Since our system is based on empowering representatives via elections. (We empower them, not the other way around)
- And since under current methods they consistently fail us and, could not be reasonably expected to succeed given our absence
- And since waking people up to protest for legal based reforms have proven 100% ineffective

Logically, we as citizens must change the methods.

**AND
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...**

That means we must seek out, support, and adopt ONLY those strategies that will create coherence and power within our existing electoral framework; with no permissions necessary.

Only when leaders are chosen by, are from, and are answerable to a coherent constituency can any change be expected. Anything that does not account for this simple strategic-logical truth must be rejected.

That we consistently invest precious resources in leaders operating in an unchanged theater is a strategic blunder we continually repeat.

That insanity must stop. Leadership must start and end with the capable people. A focus on finding that path must be our number one priority.

All The Wrong Questions!



THE CONSTITUTION

X What Constitutional approach can change this?

Ah, the constitution!

The constitution is the way, but invoking it as a stand-alone solution, too often amidst romantic images of 1776, does not offer a clear path. Simplistic demands from different groups - with varying sensibilities - that we “just return to it” are unhelpful. More specifics will be necessary for a coherent response; much less a genuine plan/path that can be followed.

The suggestion that we can change our society - and the many institutions that regulate it - by amending our constitution does not bear up to scrutiny and fails the tests of logic, coherence and power.

The more grounded approach is that we use the moral and legal force the constitution embodies as wisely as its ambiguities - and the opportunities for mischief they present - have been used against us.

✓ The right questions, a proper analysis:

1. We do hear some calls for a “return to the constitution” in the context of armed resistance. Are these sensible? For three reasons they are not:
 - ↑ Any call for violence is against the law and unconstitutional itself, therefore illogical and self-defeating.
 - ↑ Secondly, with no clear and achievable *political platform* describing something better attached to it, there is nothing tangible for people to support. Therefore such advocacy does not pass the tests of feasibility, coherence and power.
 - ↑ Thirdly, no action could be more prone to mischief and *provocateurism* than this. Self-defense in last resort scenarios is of course the default of all natural law but any remedy based on ‘armed rebellion’ must be rejected
2. There has been, and continues to be, many efforts undertaken to amend the constitution based on the several options it offers for doing so but amending the constitution is problematic in the same way as the legal/statutory reform path previously discussed.

Amending the constitution is rare and unsafe! Yes, an amendment may carry more weight than the typical statute, and removing ambiguities from the constitution is an admirable - however misguided - goal, but, whatever might be done, it will still be subject to all our established institutions that interpret and enforce.

Since, as it stands, those bodies and their work are well beyond the reach of the people, any priority that emphasizes words on paper - any paper - as opposed to an enduring, coherent, involvement of capable people will fail the tests of feasibility, logic and power.

3. There is a school of thought amongst a portion of the population who believe that Americans have been fraudulently classified as PERSONS, i.e. subjects-citizens, as opposed to self-governing men and women. This has given rise to advocacy for a constitutionally based means of re-establishing a lawful standing of the supremacy of the citizen based on these findings.

- ↑ Many approaches based on “common-law” could have concrete applications in basic areas of civic interaction; from parking tickets to taxes.

- ↑ However, while this category of action does fit the mandate for the wise use of our constitution by seeking tools for the permission-free and practical application of power our system potentially offers, it generally will require some eventual engagement with the courts and law enforcement.

4. Actions and advocacy meant to create citizen based responses and institutions that are based on honorable, historically sound principles do approach the feasibility and power tests more firmly; however, they must be pursued VERY judiciously.

If done piecemeal, in the absence of protective-coherent constituencies that are truly visible and powerful, they will fail to realize their potential as instruments of freedom.

The support of officials from our elected sphere and the government beyond will be needed; and in turn, they’ll have to do the people’s bidding as their commands become a coherent political reality. However, the participating public who will create that reality are not going to wage this essentially political battle in the unfamiliar and risky surroundings of the courts.

Therefore, any attempt to return to constitutional/citizen based lawfulness that offers no path for public control of our electoral and media systems - where most of us “live” - will be dangerously non-inclusive and likely to fail.

**AND
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...**

- With no power to **directly grant or deny** elected officials their seats of representative and/or law enforcement authority
- With no clear means to establish citizen based discourse and decision making that will be decisive
- With no popular, accessible means to explain, assure, and seek wider influence and support
- With no ability to sideline all the destructive , divisive, imposed “noise”
- With no media design aligned to achieve these carefully crafted purposes

The capable people cannot succeed.

In order for freedom to stand **it must reach people; *beyond courtrooms and law.***

Confronting established orders of power with a fragmentary approach, engaging only one pillar or branch of our system while leaving others as they are, is dangerously incomplete.

It will be far from enough to leave it at constitutional remedies of whatever nature.

However, the citizens and groups pursuing this type of action and advocacy are amongst our most knowledgeable and motivated and considered action will be necessary.

We must all channel our legacy of freedom wisely and understand our problems and people in the context of OUR times.

Everything, and everyone, is connected!

All The Wrong Questions!



WHY DON'T THEY DO SOMETHING?

X Why won't responsible parties in government, the military or law enforcement stand up and against these abuses?

This is a lament often heard from frustrated Americans who wonder how and why people in responsible positions, most of whom are surely unhappy with our direction, don't "do something"!

First we must understand that the *chilling effect* is pervasive and reaches through all levels of our society. Second we must put ourselves in the shoes of those people who we imagine should be standing up and ask ourselves: why should they? Third, in a world of deception, fueled by completely failed media systems, we ought to be very discerning about who we accept information from, who we ask to stand up, and what we want them to say.

There is all the difference in the world between dramatic and potentially dubious whistle blowing and straightforward demands coming from credible people that unwarranted or failed systems should be dismantled and new ones established.

✓ The right questions, a proper analysis:

1. All of us are in some way reliant on the existing system; none more so than those employed directly by it as they are as dependent on their salaries, pensions and benefits as anyone else. Therefore, we cannot expect that officials, in enforcement roles particularly, will ignore orders unfavorable to an incoherent public who are in no position to unravel, explain, plan or assure. For them, even empty promises from authorities that these obligations will be met will sound much better than cries of liberty and fraternity from a people capable of nothing.

So, for those in this position, any speaking out, or resistance to following "unsavory orders", might bring great risk to themselves and their families; *needless to say a very heavy burden to bear.*

2. However, considering the cases where visibly heroic stands were (seemingly) taken or important "whistles blown" what was the result? Did the people,

with the help of our crusading alternative media use that vaunted awareness raising to wisely organize a coherent, powerful response? **No they didn't.**

But, these courageous deeds were met by our established order quite coherently. By targeting such people for legal prosecution/persecution, loss of financial security and social status and even – the prospect of bodily harm, notice was served to anyone who might dare.

3. Was their sacrifice worth it? Well, from their point of view perhaps not. Despite all of the abuses and dangers revealed, anyone with anything of potential interest to say couldn't reasonably be called a pessimist to think the American people ineffective, and their alleged new-media useless.

Even if these heroic truths did serve to awaken many, certainly nothing effective, protective, or decisive has emerged as a result. Why then would anyone risk their life or livelihood for what seems to be a country that either doesn't care or can't be effective? Would you?

4. Questions regarding the “best practices” for speaking out and standing up are among the most important we face. What a coherent and powerful people should ask responsible people – at all levels of government and law enforcement – “to do” goes directly to the high priority of creating the protective safe space born of visible constituencies- which are necessary to neutralize the chilling effect.

AND THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...

Getting people in – *and/or “of” government* – bottom to top, to defend their country is one of the most important strategic goals because, as that happens (or cascades- perhaps), a de facto handover begins. Therefore, to encourage and manage that, we will surely need to leverage our civic, legal, and electoral forces so true public servants can be unshackled and freely join the people in that process.

Sunlight disinfecting, quickly and gently, is potentially the only way out of a perilous situation.

However, people who wish for a high functioning America must realize that it is a profound sign of weakness to depend on - or demand - dramatic heroics to save us. We must show up so they will show up. We must save them to save ourselves; everything is connected. By doing this deliberately, strategically, we create a platform that will reassure those officials who should be – and want to be – answerable. Only then can they be expected to deliver their support in ways that are clear and useful. By doing this we can also end all the dependence on murky leaks and the priesthoods that support them; dynamics that badly warp our media sphere and sense of reality.

Simple demands for transparent change in our power structures and its decision making apparatus are the responses of a healthy public sphere where deep throat-like intrigues are sure signs of illness. This is a demand all those who are capable should participate in voicing. We must be very careful – very mindful – of what we demand; *the demand we create is very, very important.*

The results we seek must include the creation of that protective safe space steeped in coherence and power. Only when that exists will people feel secure and therefore free to speak their truth.

Accomplish that, with the people firmly established in right and organized behind a clear strategy; logically there will no longer be a need for drama or heroics.

All The Wrong Questions!

Say NO to the
LAMESTREAM MEDIA

THE TRUTH

X What facts or truth can be provided that will change this?

Few Americans would disagree that we have a media problem, a big one, but we must consider our part in its making.

We have done this by expecting facts and truth – to be delivered to our door, nice and neat – and furnish us with the power to change hardened circumstances. This has been one of the biggest lies our society has both promoted and accepted and is perhaps the essential problem we face.

It is for understandable reasons we have become conditioned to believe our modern media systems must provide us facts and truth, and, if they do, all will be fine. This highly uncritical conclusion ties directly to the problems discussed here of ***awareness-raising as a strategy*** and our many other misplaced/misguided demands for action.

Established forms of media content, and the mediums that deliver them, have, and always will have, the power to shape our perceptions, our responses, and to a great extent even our personas.

It is probably the most powerful external social force on earth and the leaving of that power to chance is bad enough.

Worse is that it's now pretty well known that only some six corporations - all playing their various roles - own this media system and with it our minds; though the trend towards consolidation was well underway before the days of modern electronic media.

So it should have come as no surprise that with the advent of the internet, dissatisfaction with this most crucial monopoly quickly led to today's Internet-based ***alternative media "revolution"***.

This supposedly new form of media promised citizen based journalism and genuine collaborative media, disrupting the old while bringing in the new.

There is however little evidence that this has happened and it can and should be argued that its continuing failures and deepening entrenchment have made things even worse.



The right questions, a proper analysis:

1. The constitution itself recognizes the importance of media to genuine freedom and protects it as a fundamental check on power. However, for the general public, our media-information systems have always operated in ways unconnected to direct civic action.

This often is framed as the whole “we tell you and you make up your mind” (in isolation) nonsense! When really considered, it’s clear this is a silly fairytale because it is saying “facts and truth”, delivered – with nowhere to go with them no less - are enough to ensure progress and freedom in the modern world.

That this non-thinking has persisted - particularly in the age of the internet - is a foundational failure of intellect and imagination; especially of our political and media activists.

2. It is a fact that everyone who has ever eaten a banana will at some point die; is there a connection? Facts with no context, no processing, no analysis, no fellowship and no strategy are easily submerged, subsumed and shaped to fit agendas.

With domestic propaganda now legal and a fact; with strident agenda-driven groups funded and directed by shadowy forces (astroturfed), with carefully staged events an effective component of a strategy to confuse and divide us, we must be prepared to take full account of our media systems; or else

3. **Truth?** Well, not too much can be done without that. But, given the astonishing success of our money- media- election complex’s machinations and manipulations, we must recognize that being delivered some ideal of a perfect truth is unrealistic. Moreover, in our heated public sphere, agreement that it was ideal, perfect, and truth would be difficult to come by.

Therefore, if left unchecked, this misguided pursuit becomes a destructive fetish that can only deepen divides making us even easier pickings.

4. Consequently, a simplistic demand for, or claim of having, “truth” will be inadequate to any remedy. It is certainly no strategy. This requires that we recognize the failure of our historic media model of **the single author broadcasting** TO the passive viewer – consuming - and consider other options.

The problem with this model is that there is nothing in it that is active or activates and so it represents just another form of consumerism. From a practical standpoint, it is completely unconnected to the immediate and impactful civic treatment that it necessarily must be connected to; this in order for there to be any coherence attached to the public will.

Be it mainstream or alternative, this model ensures a passive citizenry; not an informed one capable of executing eternal vigilance.

5. This has led to major absurdities on top of major absurdities. For instance, it is quite typical that so called alternative media outlets and activists - many with substantial audiences - constantly tell us that we are going to die and yell “we gotta do something”.

And then? *Pleasseee*; like, share, subscribe and of course DONATE (and wake up). THANKS FOR LOVING ME AND HAVE A NICE DAY Y’ALL!

See the problem there? We have handed our profound powers as an audience over to others, who maintain a failed - and completely unexamined - model. As we demand nothing more of them, of course no one involved is the least bit interested in organizing all those hours and energies spent or “truths” revealed into something cogent.

Then there is us. It seems we have commoditized this form of media and its message of elite intrigues and our impending doom into yet another form of entertainment! **People literally go get popcorn** and watch the latest insights into exactly how we are going to be destroyed. Further, no critic of, or participant in, our political, media, or activist domains have even focused attention on these obvious idiocies, much less searched for or offered a genuine alternative.

This explains a lot about why nothing changes despite the fact that there is a great deal of great information and opportunity for learning out there.

6. The only logical conclusion to all this illogic is that we make it our foremost priority to develop and deploy media that is truly collaborative and represents a true alternative. It must foster coherence by fostering constituency.

That requires it be tethered to action that is politically powerful.

The old and unimaginative chains must be broken.

**AND
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...**

There can be no mistake; we cannot succeed without workable media, *but how do we make media work?*

First we must face the fact that we have more “facts and truth” than ever before; yet our decline deepens and accelerates. A big reason why can be understood by understanding that truth is not as simple a thing as we are conditioned to believe and, moreover, is too important to be left for others to decide upon and deliver to us.

We must disabuse ourselves of the notion that facts and truths, in isolation, with no strategy attached to it, no structure for processing it, no fellowship or action component tethered to it, can work. These elements are essential for any truth to be vetted, and accepted much less acted on.

We must recognize that in this era, the unchallenged model of the single author broadcasting as a sole approach to media is a total disaster, unnecessary given the vast opportunity we have to forge new mediums, and so fails the tests of feasibility, coherence and power.

The only logical conclusion is that we must stop supporting pointless media that offers no path and innovate towards a new form that does.

The Right Questions Lead To The Right Diagnosis

THE KEY TO WISDOM IS KNOWING ALL THE RIGHT QUESTIONS.



THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Understanding analytical errors leads to better analysis, and then, answers

We have seen that our typical assessments of and responses to the problems we face are serial dead ends.

To stop the insanity we must extract lessons, isolate the right questions and resolve to follow them to a more promising path.

The right questions, a proper analysis:

 OLD THINKING OLD RESULT	 NEW THINKING NEW POSSIBILITIES
How can we wake people up?	How can we get even a small percentage of our already aware and motivated citizens coherent and have them understood as a powerful constituency?
What protest, boycott or “local” movement can work?	How can we get beyond the old mindset of beggary and romance, and direct our energies more productively?
What law or reform can be crafted that can empower people to change this?	How can we spark this fast, asking for no permission and get the focus on behaviour?
What leader can we elect that can change this?	How can we do this with no one leader or fixed hierarchy that we’d be dependent on?

What constitutional approach can change this?	How can we make constitutional issues and approaches more accessible and go beyond words on paper?
Why won't responsible parties in government, the military or law enforcement stand up and stand against abuses?	How can we create a safe space that will allow people the freedom to act on their conscience?
What facts and truth can be provided that will change this?	How can we make our media systems effective by making knowledge trustworthy, actionable and powerful?

**AND
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...**

Critical thinking - Definition

Critical thinking is the process of independently analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information as a guide to behavior and beliefs.

The American Philosophical Association has defined critical thinking as “the process of purposeful, self-regulatory judgment. The process gives reasoned consideration to evidence, contexts, conceptualizations, methods, and criteria”.

Critical thinking is sometimes broadly defined as “thinking about thinking.”

The Right Diagnosis; Definitions, Attributes And Logic



CRUCIAL ATTRIBUTES

**We must know what we are looking for so we know when we see it-
and when we don't see it**

In the same vein as a medical diagnosis – where attributing symptoms to a probable cause is the first thing you'd do; considering what attributes a solution must contain in order for it to be a genuine solution is only sensible.

This should begin with what defines a solution in this context.

This is really important because we waste a lot of energy in debating 'solutions' that are nothing of the sort. For example:

- Hold elected officials “accountable”
- Remove elected officials if they fail to represent the interests of the people (Kick the bums out)
- Get the money out of politics
- Audit the Fed
- End war
- Balance the budget
- Improve education
- Simplify the tax code
- Blah-Blah

There is never a shortage of such “solutions”

This however is nothing but a big blunder or a big distraction because these notions must be understood – depending on where you sit – as **preferred outcomes** or policies; not solutions!



The right questions, a proper analysis:

In this context we must be quite disciplined about what we term a solution and here it's simple because only ONE definition applies;

solution

[suh-loo-shuh n]

[Synonyms](#) [Examples](#) [Word Origin](#)

[See more synonyms on Thesaurus.com](#)

noun

That which enables desired policies or preferred outcomes to be adopted; subject to constitutional and democratic principles and processes etc.

If it's not possible to GET, and it's not of/by and for the people - verifiably - it cannot be a solution.

With that definition defined we can then focus on what attributes a genuine solution would hold and the logic that would require its presence.

This creates clarity that lets us quickly reject what won't work, identify what can work, and provide a crucial focus that's been totally lacking.

ATTRIBUTE	LOGIC
It must have the ability to work fast	Time is short, patience is limited and seeing traction come quickly is necessary to success
It must therefore require no laws, reforms or permission	Operating from a position of weakness is a no strategy at all
It must work with the least risk of danger and drama	With the carefully planned social engineering in place, a post-meltdown reset to constitutional freedom is highly unlikely. We must do all we can to create a retribution free environment of powerful but gentle transition
It must offer protection so all those participating have the security of visible fellowship	No one can do this alone; coherence through constituency is the foundation

It must be resistant to being hijacked and perverted by agenda driven forces but also accommodate legitimate issues that currently fragment and divide us	Nothing can happen without a focus on the whole; single issue, emotional, and identity-driven agendas must be contained
It must give us direct grant or deny authority over our elected officials and thus the government beyond	Without the means to select, elect and control our elected officials nothing will happen, nothing can stick
It must equally and affect all levels of government: local, state and federal	Advocacy based on fixing one or another level of government is false as they are all connected and interrelated
It must counteract the distortions, intended or otherwise, of our information and media systems	Truth and public policy must be “emerged” from citizen based processes and media manipulations must be neutralized
It must create coherence and power for small percentages of our capable people; that means those who are motivated to act	It is not possible for the “masses” to act coherently. Only the directed actions of the capable few can do that, and in doing so they then set the example for others

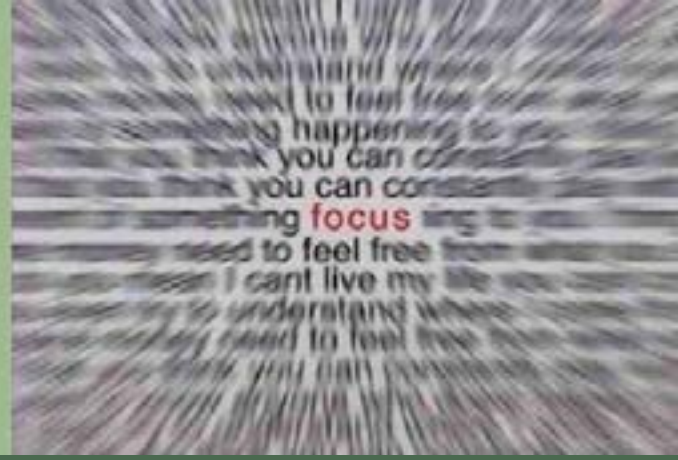
**AND
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...**

We should consider two questions:

1. Haven't we floundered long enough by tolerating fragmented and failed advocacy that's wasted precious resources; all with zero effort made to seek and apply lessons from the vast experience and effort?
2. Could a solution - as defined - be first adopted, and then successfully sustained, in the absence of even one of these attributes?

If the answer is no, then it cannot be a genuine solution

The Solution Comes Into Focus;



SOLUTION IN FOCUS

But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it – Matthew 7:14

The purpose of this critique/analysis has been to clearly reveal the ways we, the people, repeatedly fail to approach the national ills we hear so much complaint about sensibly and rationally.

Plainly, we are continually led to fixate on the wrong questions, pushed to listen to the same old pool of promoted ideas – and people – and so, constantly draw the same flawed conclusions. From this quagmire, if or when we “act”, it is **mindlessly**.

We have made no genuine progress, yet expect and hope for different. This insanity trends toward ominous consequences as many now feel the patient is terminal.

On the plus side, it is obvious that drawing 20-20 insight from this 20-20 hindsight does lead to some crucial perspective.

Like what at to look for, what to reject, *and why!*



The right questions, a proper analysis:

If we seized the opportunity and did just that, we could break this endless cycle of failed conventions in favor of finding a powerful strategy, effective tactics and practical step by step action; *in other words, a plan.*

We know many systems of control have discouraged our exercise of effective citizenship. Some of these systems are physical, visible in nature. Others are more subtle and psychological but they are mutually reinforcing and powerful.

They shape what we think, how we interact, what we do and what we don't do, and they ultimately decide fates; individual and collective.

Here, in the United States; and everywhere else too.

We can say that the visible systems may number many but three stand above all others and it is our relationship to, and our perception of, these crucial pillars of system from which all else flows:

CRUCIAL PILLAR	TYPICALLY ASSOCIATED CONDUCT
Political/Electoral	Corrupt-psychopathic-power hungry-puppets
Media-MS/Alt	Staged-controlled-owned-puppets-amateurish
The people	Asleep-apatetic-stupid-sheep

**AND
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...**

These components of system are not unique to the United States of America or the times in which we live.

They have always present in various forms and have taken the blame for the many horrendous outcomes suffered by societies in both historic and recent times. However, we tend to condemn them more in isolation rather than see them for the integrated, interdependent and enabling structure that it actually is, or can be.

but now;

That we have established the definition of a true solution

along with;

The attributes and logic necessary to produce a genuine solution

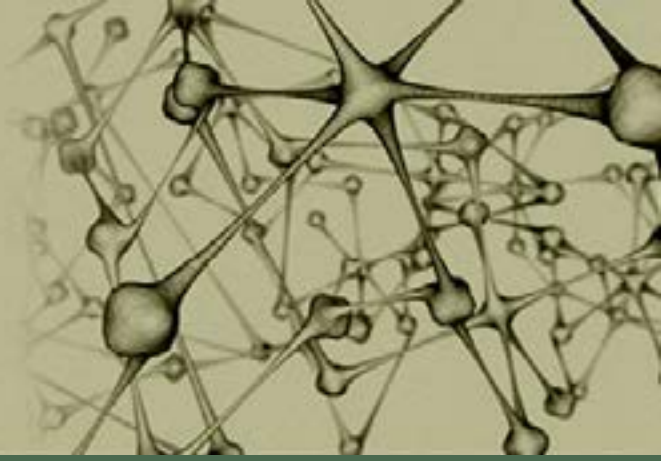
we can also;

Reason how to connect those insights to the crucial pillars of system, society, and culture they must affect

in order to;

Powerfully validate a plan that will work

Everything Is Connected



EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED

When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe. –John Muir

There are many reasons why sovereignty, freedom and prosperity in United States of America are under assault and none operate in isolation –everything is connected.

It's right there.

Missing that simple truth is at the core of our misdiagnoses and the central reason why we doom ourselves to failure, time and again.

The right questions, a proper analysis:

Comparing notions of what **SHOULD** happen and what **DOES** happen within these pillars of system and society help to make important connections and illustrate the point:

WHAT DOES HAPPEN IN OUR DISCONNECTED INCOHERENT SYSTEM;	WHAT SHOULD HAPPEN IN A WELL CONNECTED REPRESENTATIVE REPUBLIC;
Our media systems, all, react and too often emphasize the unimportant and emotional	Our media systems would inform the people –the engaged participating public -about important issues of public policy and our political systems responses to them
The general public is ill informed and targeted for division; the engaged public is sidelined	The people grasp this information and act to ensure the political system is both responsive and wise

Our political system is unresponsive and deceitful	The political system, seeking the advice and consent of the people, would formulate wise policies and respond transparently
The media, either fueling these behaviors and/or simply making a living complaining about it, ensures it will continue	The media would provide a “processing filter” useful to both the political system and the people; ensuring wisdom, transparency and communication
Our electoral process - as practiced - informing nothing has therefore become a side show of distraction and near irrelevance	The engaged participating public would exercise influence via essential communication with their fellow citizens, elected officials and the media manifesting in systematic, honorable, competitive and transparent elections
No one is answerable, confusion abounds, advantage is taken and anything goes	All of this would be reinforced by an effective media and these collaborative interactions would ensure a high functioning republic and democratic public sphere

**AND
THE MORAL OF THE STORY IS...**

Treating these “power centers” as organisms that are separate and apart ensures dysfunction, destructive imbalances of power - and the hamster wheel.

Therefore any solution, in order to be taken seriously as an actual solution, must make these three components fully integrated, interdependent, and mutually reinforcing.

The mind, body and yes, soul of our system and culture: politics, media, and our citizenry are of one.

They must be fused!

Are You Ready?



THE ADJUSTMENT

When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't adjust the goals, adjust the action steps. – CONFUCIUS

This analysis was meant to reveal the necessary adjustment and lay the groundwork for understanding the action steps involved in making it.

This can be boiled down to a simple precept; our political and electoral systems must be combined with our systems of media and learning.

This will:

- Make our information and knowledge less delivered and more a process that is shared, transparent, independent, fully vetted and trusted; ensuring an informed citizenry
- Make what is known and learned directly actionable, and decisive; ensuring that informed citizenry has a clear path for executing eternal vigilance

If that is accomplished, all goals can be met and all the promise of country and people fulfilled.

Conclusion



CONCLUSION

If you have absorbed this material and agree with its conclusions then you are ready to ask the question; How?

Davinci said, “Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication” and that idea is very well captured in the whole of this message - this is our long-standing system and it is very simple; however misunderstood. But, that simplicity is not unsophisticated, so understanding and acting on it will require the intervention of our wisest and most able people.

Those who do continue this inquiry will clearly see both how straightforward and decisive this adjustment can be; even with challenges as complex as the ones we now face.

If you agree that rise and fall of a nation rests with every one of its citizens then IT IS UNDERSTOOD; the responsibility is yours.



ETERNAL VIGILANCE

The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

It Must Be Kept
BY US

ETERNAL VIGILANCE

THE NEED IDENTIFIED


EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH ...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINES HOW KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

THE NEED IDENTIFIED



The Need Identified

Clear cogent moments identify the need;
for this solution

THE NEED IDENTIFIED; VIDEO PLAYLIST SYNOPSIS

Although it is argued in these pages that too much deference paid to 'authority figures' is a bad thing, it is certainly appropriate to call on those with noted reputations who have considered the problems that are being considered here; hence the featured playlists that are an important tool of clarification here.

In their entirety they reveal much by both reinforcing and validating the arguments made in this work and also by capturing the common mistakes and contradictions of the people our society promotes as experts. In this collection the question is demonstrated by the comments of audience members in these forums who clearly understand things in a way the experts do not and cannot.

This in itself suggests more limited deference and greater discernment on the part of the people is appropriate and further attests to the fact that only the people can be trusted to lead.

The *Need Identified* playlist reinforces. By featuring brief, yet very revealing clips of several discussions that include people like Larry Lessig, Bill Moyers and others, we can see the experts groping about; here, in the right direction.

One such clip features an academic named Henry Giroux talking with Bill Moyers. In the discussion Giroux focuses on the problem of our fragmented sphere of advocacy and its ill effects; a problem very little considered; but both treated and solved in this works proposal. With too many competing, fragmented efforts, traction and problem solving are impossible to realize. This while a subsequent futility feeds a public exhaustion that desensitizes them to the very problems the advocacy is concerned with.

Giroux describes his solution by describing the problem, of course never accounting for how it could be achieved. It is left there.

Still, very useful, his portrayal of needs and outcomes is completely integral to what the proposed Citizens Access Network would do.

The corroboration - and much more - can be seen with each clip in the playlist.

[Click here to view the video playlist](#)

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING



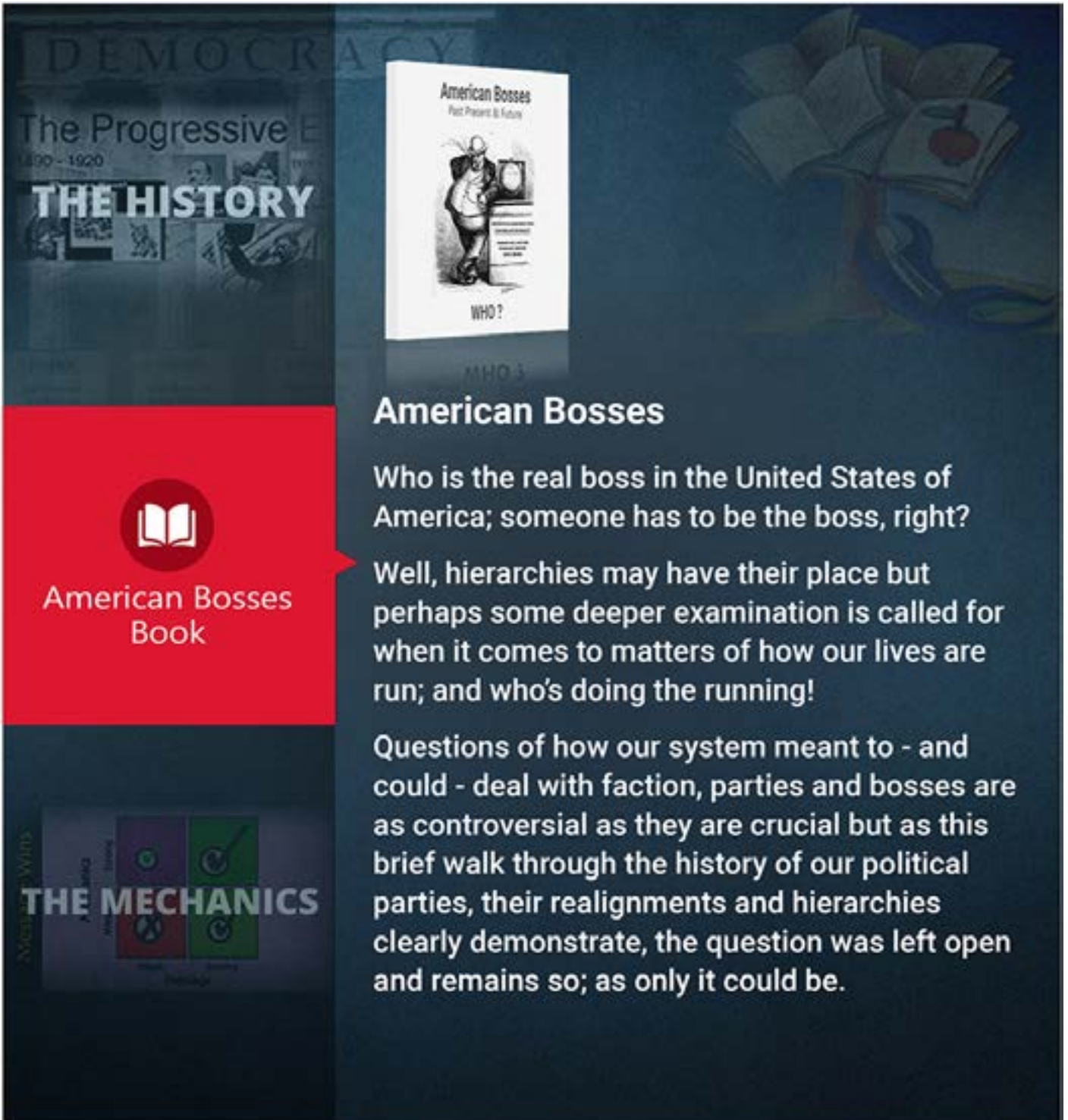
And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**

INFORMED CITIZENS



American Bosses

Who is the real boss in the United States of America; someone has to be the boss, right?

Well, hierarchies may have their place but perhaps some deeper examination is called for when it comes to matters of how our lives are run; and who's doing the running!

Questions of how our system meant to - and could - deal with faction, parties and bosses are as controversial as they are crucial but as this brief walk through the history of our political parties, their realignments and hierarchies clearly demonstrate, the question was left open and remains so; as only it could be.

THREE PILLARS OF POWER



In these pages the WeLeadUSA contributors propose a comprehensive solution to our nations many political and social dysfunctions in the form of the Citizen's Access Network.

This network, and the strategy that makes it possible, will provide what has never been available to any people, anywhere at any time; unfettered access. Access to each other, access to our elected officials; our constitutional agents, and with them, access to our government beyond.

Our system is a decentralized republic that from the beginning was based on electing representatives; and lots of them. This means that the relationship between the people and their governing bodies are dependent on the election - the electoral system - as the ultimate means of enforcement and regulation available to the people. So, if that mechanism was improperly structured, or executed, obviously, trouble would be sure to follow; and follow it has.

Yet today - after 200 plus years of running this republic, framed on these electoral realities - we still lack a definition of what a meaningful election should be; nor have we even attempted to apply **any kind of standard** to our only means of public control.

Therefore it should come as no surprise that despite the attention paid to the subject of political relations and the elections that must express them, the remedies offered have been faulty, redundant, paternalistic and failed; with one very notable exception.

Yes, the correction has been made and the tools exist, if we will consider our problems more holistically.

If we do, it will become clear that access born of proximity and unquestionable power can end our historic political-civic relations based on fixed hierarchies of "leadership", with its limited transparency and poor record, and be supplanted with

a model of public partnership based on our established constitutional principles and foundational traditions.

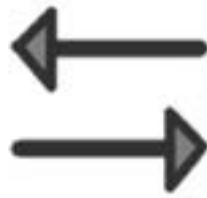
This can be accomplished by the capable people leveraging three core pillars; assets and actions available for immediate and powerful use.

They are:

1. Our existing voting system; beginning with our very unique system of open ballot access, nominations and primary elections; a process that despite being poorly understood, carries decisive power that is fully owned by the people.
2. The Network; an unprecedented environment specifically purposed and designed to leverage that power into proximity and electoral competition.
3. A new form of collaborative media that emerges from this fusion; tethering knowledge to direct and powerful action in the public sphere that will provide the people the means to manage their public business as fully free, self-governing citizens.

In order to best understand this; how and why it will work, a brief walk through history shows us how we arrived at our current circumstances and provides important context and proof that makes it clear.

THE FRAMERS AND POLARIZATION



As this chapter attempts to clarify, we should revere the work of our founders for one good reason at least. For all of their flaws, more recent controversies regarding their motives, and the inequities of their time, after 230 years plus, we can't say they didn't give us a chance!

The country they forged became quite successful, quite powerful, and so it might be easy to look back and consider the result to have been inevitable; but this would be incorrect. There were so many obstacles to overcome that they may have on occasion thought that "vanquishing" England was the least of it.

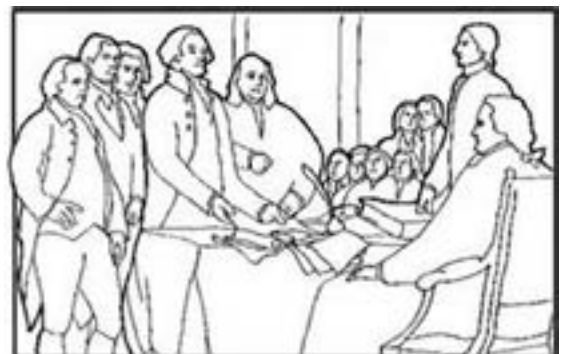
For example, agreement among men- not to be confused with unity - is perhaps always in much greater supply than imagined but capturing that agreement, and putting it to use is another story. Tensions born of that process can create what we might today call polarization.

Many so-called polarizing differences of issue and mind - as momentous and terrible as slavery - were present yet did not stop these men from capturing their agreement on the need to create this nation; whether through the waging of war or politics.

We make much of polarization today but the politics of the framers time, and beyond, were quite polarized and vitriolic.

The men who came together at the Constitutional convention in 1787 came from disparate colonies of what was then a loose, far-flung association of states that sometimes operated with great difficulty under the articles of Confederation. They could hardly be classified as unified but questions of trade, management of the war debt, monetary policy, and relations both foreign and domestic, all made their contributions to the convening of this body. It was clear that in order for the promise of the revolution to be fulfilled - and the ambitions of the founders realized - a cogent nation must emerge from these distinct and occasionally polarized territories.

However, it would be the grounded search for - and the seizing of - agreement and settlement that would be decisive; not demands for an impossible unity.



THE FOUNDERS AND FACTION

faction
fac·tion \ 'fak-shən\
noun
a group, or clique formed to seek a single minded
goal within a disagreeable political party or
government.

That process began in May 1787 as fifty-five delegates from those 13 colonies – covering nearly 500,000 square miles – arrived in Philadelphia to begin work on what would become the U.S. Constitution; the nation’s legal and moral framework that remains central to our identity to this day.

With some irony, it was essential to the work of the convention that a fairly polarized group of framers had to deal with a prevailing concern of what was then commonly called faction. Driven by fears stemming from the “untempered will of a provincial majority cobbled together from dangerous factions of special interests”; this was a problem that required great care.

Though their anxieties regarding faction have been interpreted differently through the years, there is no doubt that issues of property rights and the balancing of power was central to this question. With the circumstances and effects of Shay’s rebellion an important element to the calling of the convention, managing the levers of political power – that would either protect or overthrow those rights – was much on the mind of those defending the Constitution and advocating its ratification.

Concerns regarding partisanship and political parties are also generally accepted as integral to these deliberations. The problems of mischievous faction – and the corruption it was sure to bring – as well as balancing power to ensure the rights of populations “whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole” are reflected throughout the framework of the Constitution; including the Electoral College a very carefully crafted answer to the problem.

This framework thought the problem through mostly as a matter of balancing competing interests. This balance depended upon three things primarily:

- The filtering and derivative effects of delegating public decision-making to elected representatives. This would help cool the will of an untempered majority; and dilute the authority of any firebrands who might inflame them

- The optimal sizing of the constituency. Leaning towards a greater scale, the goal would be to both make the representative not too distant from or, interestingly, too dependent on their electors
- Use the great scale of the proposed republic to make it very difficult for any one faction to remain unified enough to gain a toehold.

A difficult act to balance to say the least and, although success of this model can certainly be claimed, the tensions endure. Considered from another point of view, an overarching goal to control factions could be interpreted as an effort to create some sort of de facto unity or, as some have argued, an incoherent and ineffective structure likely to benefit those most organized; which many would argue is exactly what we see today.

In any event the framers well understood that even within related groups, differences of mind, body, and experience - being part of the human dynamic - would be present and difficult to manage and this was true of the very group and experience they were part of.

This can be seen most everywhere; a good example being our major religions. There, a core tenet is acceptance by all members, yet differences feed a tendency towards faction that can create many sects within the overall group. In the United States alone it is thought that there are some 1,500 Christian denominations and perhaps as many as 39,000 worldwide. The tiny population of Jews still managed to divide themselves into seven separate sects. Islam has something on the order of 45. No doubt many of these schisms were born of relatively earthly matters.

The fledgling republic had no more immunity to such tendencies than in these cases and quickly the lines of polarization and faction began to blur - embodied in the differences between the antifederalists, skeptical of the constitution, and the federalists who pushed hard for its ratification.

Once the new system was adopted these polarizing differences manifested factional expressions (in the sense of politics and political parties) in the persons of Thomas Jefferson, anti-Federalist (Democratic-Republicans), and Alexander Hamilton, Federalist; two men of extreme polarity.

Hamilton, with his belief in a powerful central government, thought that the war debts of the several states should be repaid by the new federal government. He also advocated for aggressive action regarding internal improvements and the creation of a central bank to assist in managing that and as well the nation's overall monetary and economic affairs.

This was in great contrast to the sensibilities of Jefferson who worried about the unwarranted accumulation of centralized power. In his "debate" with Hamilton, he denounced the bankers and stock jobbers who, with their speculation and greed to own the supply of money, would surely trigger a loss of the liberty that was so recently and hard won.

So, even amongst the core group who agreed on the desirability of a national government, there would be no unity but, there would be faction; demonstrating that passions so innate to human behavior and endeavor be it church, state, family or friend are not going to be so easily tamed or balanced. (Despite the agreement, the settlement, the two men ultimately came to of consolidating the war debts and the creating the central bank in exchange for locating the Capitol on Southern territory)

However, whatever the angst and anguish - then and now - studies of evolutionary biology do indicate a substantial benefit in such “groupish” behavior. Perhaps this inclination for polarization or faction might be more useful and not quite so negative a trait as the framers thought; or we think. As pain in the body signals important information that something is amiss; so too does the threat - or perception - of faction signal where and how we must focus attention.

With the benefit of hindsight we can see that perhaps opportunities were lost by attempting to stamp out what could not be stamped out at the expense of other approaches. And here a pivotal consideration emerges that drives both the problems and opportunities of the American system to the present moment:

- Is the delicate balancing of power in a democratic-republic - with a popular electoral system at its core - through quantitative and derivative measures the only or best answer?
- Might not have more attention been paid to the differences between principled polarization and faction of a more selfish or dangerous nature?
- Might not more attention have been paid to that electoral system and the people’s ability to both ensure balance and express wisdom deliberatively through it?

Although that would not and could not have been the mindset of the framers given their background and era, the question would take center stage; and stay there.

With the passing of just a few more years - in what came to be called the “Age of Jackson” - and taking its cue from the founding generations divides - faction would manifest its modern character in the form of the two-party system in an ever more expanding, and raucous, electoral environment.

THE AGE OF JACKSON AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM



The election of 1824 brought John Quincy Adams to the presidency, with what the supporters of his opponent Andrew Jackson called the corrupt bargain. Adams lost the popular vote, but with no majority in the Electoral College, was confirmed as president by the House of Representatives.

This was a pivotal event that fueled a more formalized party politics. This in turn facilitated the emergence of our rather unique two-party system as a more populist national mindset led to the easing of voting qualifications and participation; a feature of that “**unplanned expression**” of an evolving democratic process.

The subsequent election of Andrew Jackson as president in 1828 catalyzed the formation of the Democratic Party and made Jackson’s presidency a defining moment in the evolution of the American political system. The campaign of 1828 was crucial to the development of a two-party system - and our modern system of politicking - as presidential electioneering and electoral politics at all levels took its more contemporary form. This, as the country’s business was now being more visibly processed through the two parties; then the Whigs, basically considered the heirs to the Federalists, and the Democrats, the successors to Jefferson’s anti-Federalist Democratic Republicans.

Under the sway of Jackson’s fearsome personality there was also a strengthening in the power of the executive branch and many lines of polarization - still with us today - were drawn.

Though occasional third-party challenges and movements were seen - expressed particularly in presidential elections - the major two-party approach continued to solidify and has remained at the heart of the American political system.

MACHINES, BOSSES, PATRONAGE AND CORRUPTION



Naturally as a result of these dynamics, strong party organizations began to take form and with them the machinery and hierarchies necessary to run such large, complex organisms. Such features; more of that *unplanned democratic expression*, may be innate to a process of great growth and experimentation and should not, in the immediate anyway, be thought of solely in the negative terms of faction or corruption.

Given the proper concerns of the framers it's quite understandable they may not have been able to foresee (or reconcile) that a growing country - a republic based on the election of representatives - would require the means to filter and clarify the mind of the public. Without some form of political organization - platforms and other means to draw distinctions and organize around them - how could a vast and diversified people be accurately represented?

However, the problem this presents is revealed more by the question of power - to whom it is distributed and how it is used - rather than a simple condemnation of faction as we will see.

In any event, the growth of the party machines were particularly felt in concentrated urban areas where the political machines and its bosses would seek out and demand loyal supporters who would serve the interests of the party.

Those interests began with winning the elections that determined public policy. Of course attached to the power to enact policy is patronage - and the power to distribute it - which unfortunately is quite encouraging of corruption. Jobs, lucrative contracts, career opportunities- who got them and what was gained in the exchange all hung in the balance as the parties and its machines won and lost elections in their struggle to influence the public and gain supremacy.

However, all that was at stake in this 'spoils system', as it was known, hinged on **the** central power these machines and its bosses wielded; the power to control access to the ballot. With this control, **they alone** would determine who would stand for - and thus likely hold - elected office. This would ensure that the allegiance of the constitutional agents running, and being elected, was owed first - perhaps solely - to the party and people responsible for nominating them; not the citizens who voted for them.



It was there; right there, that the merging of faction to corruption in this system was assured.

As unexpected and extraordinary powers devolved to remote people and processes, beyond the reach or understanding of the public, the game would be for spoils and power and not considered deliberation of principled differences.

WHAT GAVE THE MACHINES AND BOSSES THEIR POWER?

POWER CORRUPTS

Despite the solidification of the major two-party system, these parties from time to time were subject to realignment- with some six being counted over the generations⁴⁵. **Prior to the last** of these realignments, the parties' asserted their iron-grip control through the apparatus of ballot access and party nominations; the foundation of any hopefuls attempt to seek elected office.

Dog catcher to president; that access/nomination must first be secured or there could be nothing; *and that meant a binding of candidate to party-machine in an unshakeable trust.*

The political machinery - the bosses, their friends in industry and beyond - with this trust; this absolute grant or deny power, were able to control the "public sphere" - by proxy.

This because:

1. The visible constitutional agents in our system naturally held through their offices the ability to *deliver*
2. But with the machine system enjoying total control over the crucial electoral apparatus of ballot access and party nominations
3. The constitutionally authorized elected representatives - in our ostensible democratic system - *were securely in the pocket of these bosses and machines*

Given the nature of this power-structure what would be delivered would be exactly what the machine demanded.

With no question as to who a whom their allegiance was owed, a quid pro quo relationship was unavoidable and much more than "an appearance of corruption" was the norm.

Though it could be argued that the human dynamic makes these outcomes inevitable, and that there were important accomplishments this system could claim, its downside was substantial. The prizes of graft; the lucrative contracts, the no work jobs, the pensions, the skims - these were no doubt the least of it.

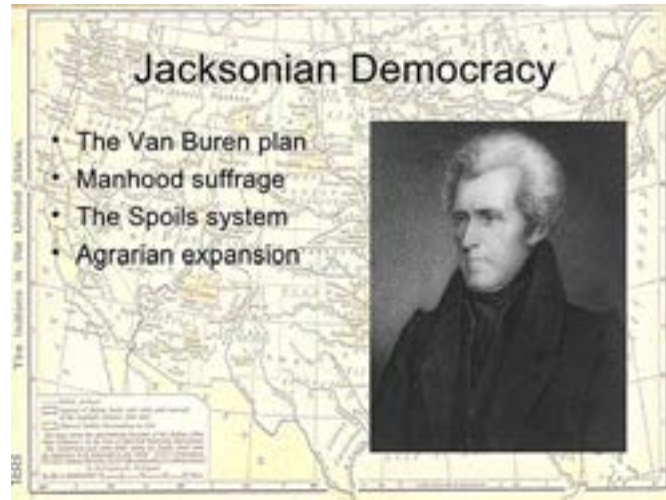
45 <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~norrande/pol231/hist-06-bw.pdf>

But whatever their nature, all the distortions of public policy first were enabled by the power to control ballot access; **a power only the party machinery could wield.** Naturally, as a result, our republic was substantially in the hands of this machinery and those who channeled its power.



Just as the framers had feared, however unexpected or unforeseeable this expression of it may have been, **faction and corruption ruled.**

Nevertheless, this sorry state of affairs would allow their work to be put to the test and answer the crucial question; *would it give us "that chance"?*





This corrupt state of affairs was unacceptable to many and reforms were pursued.

Inherent to this pursuit was the question of whether the extraordinary framework the founders created – meant to establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty – could provide a solution.

Could it accommodate an ongoing, evolutionary and unplanned democratic expression; but one now required to push back and *reform the distortions of power, faction and corruption permitted by previous unplanned expressions?*

The movement that would answer this question – and attempt to create a *pure* realignment – began.

Drawing support from an urban, college-educated middle class, the progressive era reformers – circa 1890-1920 – sought to eliminate this corrupting synthesis of party and government from our democratic processes. Testing boundaries, they also fought to curb abusive business practices, force management to address the hazards that plagued the health and working conditions of its labor, and consider matters of the environment.

In civic matters they fought to get an apathetic public more engaged by giving them more authority over government through mechanisms like the direct election of senators, ballot initiatives and referendum, and recall elections. With the women's suffrage movement central, great change swept through America and though its nature and aims were very different, it was no less a radically transformative time than the revolutionary era.

This broad movement also saw controversial failures; most notably prohibition. It is therefore understandable that amidst this upheaval of social change and democratic experimentation – and dearth of alcohol – the importance of another reform of this period could easily get lost and its vast implications largely overlooked. This was the extraordinary accomplishment of making access to the **election ballot open to all**, and passing – eventually in all states – the reform of the direct primary.

This reform took the absolute power to control ballot access and party nominations from the party bosses and machines and gave it to the American voter.

As we have seen, this was the pivotal power from which all else flowed. This meant that also given to the American people with this change was the potential to reverse deeply rooted power structures within government and society. Unfortunately, it seems that the potential of this potential was, and still remains, too big for most people to fathom; much less put to work.

Nonetheless, it also provided conclusive proof that the “chance” the framework provided its people to establish, and when necessary, renew their republic was indeed genuine. However, keeping that republic is quite a separate task so that part of the equation would once again have to be put to the test.



THE MORE THINGS DON'T?

From *“The Decline of Competition in U.S. Primary Elections, 1908-2004”* Stephen Ansolabehere⁴⁶, Department of Political Science Massachusetts Institute of Technology;



VERY FEW OTHER COUNTRIES USE PARTY PLEBISCITES TO NOMINATE THEIR CANDIDATES, BUT THE UNITED STATES HAS EMPLOYED PRIMARY ELECTIONS WIDELY FOR NEARLY 100 YEARS.

Now for the first time - anywhere - the power to control access to the electoral ballot and nominate was firmly in the hands of the American people.

As to the parties and elected officials, this was a pivotal change that of course demanded caution. They were wary in their approach to this new, unknown arrangement and likely encouraged participation tactically and with great care. They coped fairly well through this transition period however as their influence remained strong with the last vestiges of the machine system lasting into the 1960s, and in some places beyond.

As to the public - despite some early success - participation in the nominating process and turnouts in primary elections declined steadily and mostly have remained at very low levels in terms of both participation and awareness. Thus, the profound shift in power relations this reform made possible produced little fundamental change.

Interesting and unfortunate to note in all of this was that as a momentous, highly unlikely experiment of historic proportions unfolds - and fails - little public reflection on the events can be found. A society overthrows an entrenched, corrupt, powerful and essentially ancient system; hands its central power over to the public no less, sees that experiment fail; and yet hardly a peep about what happened or why can be heard?

Perhaps these few questions would have been a place to start!

- Was/is this result a failure of the reform effort to communicate the magnitude of the chance this offered?
- Was/is it a failure on the part of the American media to explain and promote the opportunity it presented?

⁴⁶ <http://economics.mit.edu/files/1226>

- Was/is it a failure of the endless number of advocates - that claim to represent the public interest at the grass roots level - to consider the potential that organizing around this power offers their myriad causes?
- Was/is it that since all politics are indeed local, more “unplanned expression” manifested rules for participation that varied from state to state and thus fueled confusion; confusion that inhibited a national sense of importance or operating ethos around primary elections?

Again, from “The Decline of Competition in U.S. Primary Elections”;

Primary elections have been a prominent feature of U.S. politics for the past century. However, surprisingly little is known about how primaries have operated over time. Except for the most recent decades, we do not even know simple facts such as how many primaries were contested, how competitive the contested races were, and how these patterns varied across states, races and time. This is mainly because of data availability [lack thereof].

Unlike in general elections, the main political parties do not exert oligopolistic control over access to the ballot and do not structure the choices of voters through well-established brand names. Rather, any candidate who can secure sufficient numbers of signatures or pay the appropriate filing fee can get on the ballot.

If such reflection were sought we would have to come to the conclusion that only the people at large; free of special interest, conflicts or some manner of entrenchment, could be depended on to seize this opportunity. Clearly others will not, and by failing to understand this - and the chance - they are ultimately responsible for this profound failure.

Compounding the failure was that while this most powerful invention - one likely only the American system could produce - made very little lasting impact of the kind intended; it did have an immense impact of the kind unintended.



“The price of liberty is eternal vigilance”; so said Thomas Jefferson and certainly the idea of vigilance was the intention behind this reform. The progressive reformers pushed this unprecedented, unplanned expression of democracy as the way to undercut the power of local and state political machines and with that bring into the process and parties fresh candidates, new ideas, and coherent, organized constituencies.

This, because it was understood – even if only vaguely – that only popular elections for ballot access/nominations could produce a genuine, principled, **electoral landscape** – *as opposed to a far too little and late Election Day.*

Alas, these goals were not achieved. Wherever the finger of blame for that unhappy outcome might be pointed, what clearly did happen was that the “professionals” learned to manage the new reality. That reality brought a new kind of machinery to bear; more of the boardroom than the smoke filled room.

A clever label, the Money- Media- Election Complex, captures well the idea of this modern model of political-social control that has emerged supreme. With this complex added to our list of complexes, one could say we developed a complex that has manifested the dysfunctions that today we are so familiar with; a very consolidated yet very fragmented, ineffective media, entrenched incumbency, revolving doors, endless wars, economics that beg bankruptcy, and bitter social concerns of doubtful character.

Fully matured however this machine – unlike its predecessors – is “not of faction”. No! But, by exploiting its divisive dynamics for its own benefit only, it has taken American politics and its issues of corruption, globalism and social division to the next and perhaps fatal level.



COMPLEX CHANGES?



Over time this latest realignment transformed many of the methods and assets of the old system into its modern equivalent. Party discipline - a major feature of the boss system - gave way to candidates more dependent on donors, and other “policy demanding” players rather than a party apparatus itself. These donor-demanders fully involved themselves in the nomination process thereby becoming integral to and within the party. No longer was a formal rise through a party hierarchy necessary to attain influence and power; *now, the clever use of modern electoral tools would be sufficient.*

The parties, though substantially diminished in raw power, still remained important, coordinating the trade of this complex. For the public, with ballot and direct nomination reforms in place, electoral-access was now technically available to anyone capable of meeting the requirements; this served to change the role of the major-parties to that of a regulator.

By recruiting and “front running” candidates who are more likely to fit the mold of fundraiser and cooperator, their job in - *and for* - this complex is to assess, filter and limit. So, what determines “electability” in the minds of the complex is the candidate’s capacity for and willingness to raise money (or their own personal wealth) and of course play ball.

This has served to homogenize the profile of many elected officials; for instance there is about a 50% chance that a member of our federal Congress is a millionaire⁴⁷. The average net worth of members in Congress is a bit more than \$6 million, while the median net worth is \$1 million. Further, while some 54% of Americans are considered “working class” only 2%⁴⁸ of the members of our federal congress come from that background with percentages at the state and local just as low. Clearly, money has become a defining factor in our system.

47 <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/10/us/politics/more-than-half-the-members-of-congress-are-millionaires-analysis-finds.html>

48 Carnes: White-Collar Government <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/W/bo16956543.html>

However, with electoral advantages born of redistricting limiting competition and favoring incumbents in general elections - *thus ensuring safe seats for one or the other party* - we might want to ask why this is the case.

In other words, if a seat is safe, why would the money be so important?

The answer can be found in the nomination process where great disruption would be possible if the intent of the primary voting reforms had been achieved and eternal vigilance enabled.

Genuine competition for ballot access/party nominations to stand for office would ensure unregulated discourse - a medium - that is necessary to a genuine republic and self-government; which is not possible in a controlled environment where principled differences cannot contest.

Through mass media, technology, sophisticated polling techniques, political advertising, staffing and support for writing the legislative outcomes desired by the policy demanders, the tools and trade of the money-media-election complex do their work. Directing access to these tools - and the money that buys them - is the means by which the electoral sphere is disciplined and safe candidates selected; first and foremost at the ballot access level.

This is the lynchpin; the root of the control system because allegiance will always be owed to the nominator! That boss will decide who sits at the table and what is open for discussion.

How could this be changed? A civic assembly of the people - organized and understood as nominators - would shift allegiance to the people thus permitting an unregulated discourse - of the people's design - which in turn would enable our electoral processes to become the medium they were meant to and must be.

Incumbent or aspiring elected officials, now beholden to the private policy demanders of the money-media-election complex - who now shepherd the nomination process - would shift to the public policy demanders - of/by and for the people; who could emerge, support, vote for, and directly nominate *their* candidates.

That was the original intent of this reform because there is and has to be a system; and a system will create particular certainties. In ours - *a much decentralized and very democratic arrangement* - it is certain that allegiance will always be owed to the nominators and that wasn't us!

Our absence ensured the old boss simply became the new one - the modern complex - and the money it dispenses is but one tool of its apparatus. It is an insufficient explanation for what truly drives our system and its dysfunctions; past or present. It is the complex's' overall management of electoral competition - **maintaining an effective monopoly on the threat of its use** - that offers a more complete understanding.

Much more than money alone, these factors essentially create "the means of exchange" for these modern-day powerbrokers.

Now the question becomes; *what makes this strategy work?*

THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION ARE ONE IN THE SAME



What makes the strategy work, what fuels it is simple; our persistent absence from this process we were meant to own, and still can.

It's is the public's lack of attention to, and complete ignorance of our electoral architecture, and how it distributes power in our system, that enables a continuing ownership of our country by non-representative influences. Naturally, under these circumstances a vast and diversified people would be unable to develop strategies that could challenge the strong organization and steely resolve that prevails in any system of control; of any era.

Contrary to popular belief, politicians aren't lazy; **but the people are!**

Without a wholly feasible strategy capable of channeling real power to the portion of the population with similar resolve, there is no alternative to being ruled.

For the American people, power in their system ultimately requires expression at elections - that they vote - but obviously it was never as simple as that. As we have learned- even our carefully crafted constitutional framework could not tame faction and corruption as the politics and sensibilities of the country developed.

But, what must be understood is that the central power that fueled those distortions derived from the most basic principle of popular elections; that was - *and is* - the authority to name the candidate standing for office.

CONCLUSION



The national implementation of open ballot access and the popular primary-nominating process was meant to give to the people the leverage previously enjoyed by the political powerbrokers, of all eras. But, absentee ownership cannot deliver on that leverage; *wielding power is an everyday business* and what this study leads to is clear.

In order to effectively exercise that power we must:

- Become the undisputed nominators in our electoral system
- Enable simple, easy participation in that process and beyond
- Enable genuine electoral competition at all levels
- Capture and process the discourse produced by that competition as media.

To achieve this would require:

- A place where these activities would be organized and visible. A home, where its work would be facilitated, its influence brought to bear and its accomplishments recorded.

Its byproducts would be:

- A clearer truth processed not through the filter of a mass media, but through that of fellow citizens
- A tethering of that information and knowledge to immediate and powerful civic action
- An understanding and control gained at all levels of government; county to federal
- Clarity on the electoral processes of our system that would cut through the hodgepodge of our many state/local rules and practices

- An infusion of realism to our public language that would define - among many things - terms like “electoral competition” or the word “solution” without the muddle or restriction of devious political correctness.
- A more sensible, reflective and solutions oriented public sphere
- A decisive influence on the greater society

It should now be indisputably clear that it is the **intense policy demanders**, of and behind the money-media-election complex, who participate in the nomination process **and as result rule**.

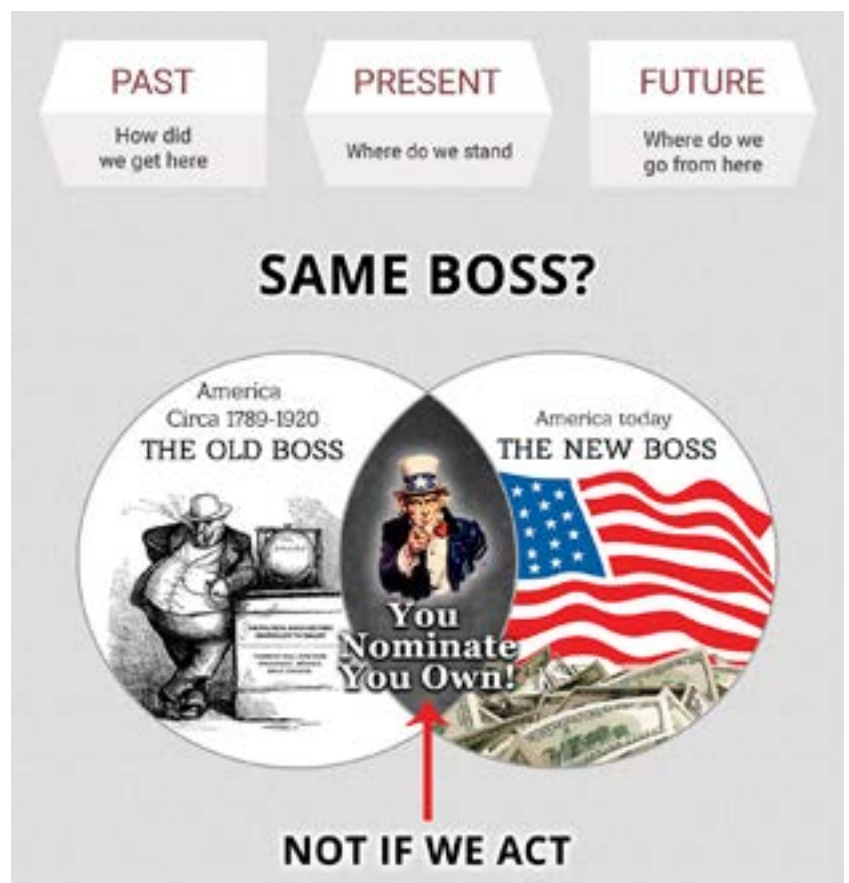
We have established however that the founding opportunity for self-government is genuine while it has also been demonstrated that in order to succeed it will be necessary for us to change.

It is also demonstrated that the change required is minimal; *as will be the numbers of citizens necessary to effect it*; but it must start with those of us that are ready to accept our own failures before blaming the “elites” of our control system. We have failed to analyze and understand. We have failed to demand from our sources of information and learning more and better.

Most importantly we have failed to participate effectively; individually and collectively. It is only this absence - of awareness and commitment - that has enabled the corruption of our past and the dysfunction and danger of the present.

It is a simple matter, now in the age of the Internet particularly, to overcome these difficulties and make the realization of our national concept and purpose practicable.

How this can be accomplished; what the Citizens Access Network makes possible and why, is, in its entirety, the message this work is devoted to delivering.





ETERNAL VIGILANCE

The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

It Must Be Kept
BY US

ETERNAL VIGILANCE

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH ...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK!

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINED... NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

PROOF-POLITICS & POLITICAL SCIENCE



Proof : politics & political science

Don't take our word; major academics and public figures state the obvious

PROOF, POLITICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE; VIDEO PLAYLIST SYNOPSIS

Proof, Politics and Political science is a playlist that validates the core argument of this work. That being that the *first tier* of our electoral system - nominations and nominating elections - is the true driving force of that system, directly affecting (historically, and currently, negatively) all else we experience in the public sphere.

The playlist begins with an explanation featuring authorities from the arena of political science; followed by commentary from others notable in the fields of politics, academia and law; like former U.S. Sen. Olympia Snow, Heather Gerkin of Yale University and former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens.

When this playlist is considered in the light of the commentary from the preceding "The Need Identified" playlist we can see unquestionable validation for the fusion argued for and proposed throughout these pages. This is in terms of both the civic-political realities, capable of powering this solution, and, the practical means to channel those dynamics in the form of the network.

A common statement we hear from many quarters in life typifies the problem however. Something to this effect; "*we have to be able to talk about these things*". As true and crucial as that might be, what is always forsaken is the how to do that part; the necessity for a dedicated commitment to find the means and achieve the goal.

All this demonstrates that the solution hides in plain sight, but our experts cannot - or are unwilling to - follow their own reasoning (and promises) to a logical conclusion; making it obvious that this can only be left to the people to complete.

Should they – *the capable people* – come to understand this, it would become clear that ours is much more than a two-tier system - though that alone is unique and decisive. We would see with simple, considered action - informed by that understanding - a genuine landscape of civic engagement and national success can be created.

[Click here to view the video playlist](#)

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**

INFORMED CITIZENS

KEY OUTCOMES EXPLAINED

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH ...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
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THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINES. NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

KEY OUTCOMES EXPLAINED

WORLD COM
Virginia Operations Center
Richmond County Building

FARGO

IP Morgan

citi

BANK OF AMERICA

Infographic displays with simple step-by-step illustrations demonstrate just two examples of the potential impact of the Citizen's Access Network on key stake holder groups.

Here, we see how it would work with candidates for elected office and group or individual issue advocates; and with that get the big picture too.

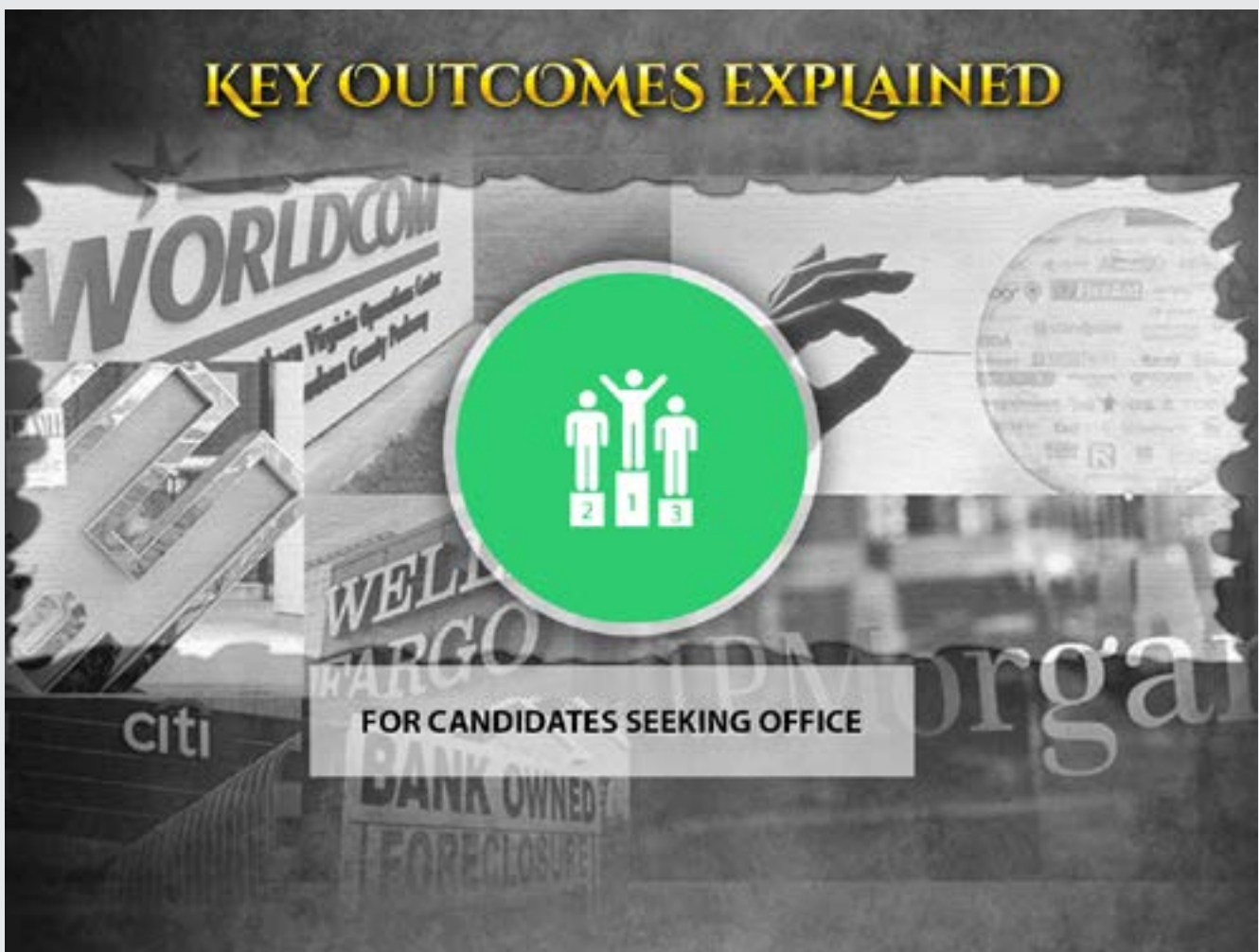
FAQs in context

KEY OUTCOMES EXPLAINED; CONTENT SYNOPSIS

Although there are many facets of our democratic - republican system it has been stressed here throughout two mechanisms of that system - electoral competition and issue advocacy - are integral, of tremendous influence, and far too little understood.

In Key Outcomes Explained, through the simple illustrations of two infographic displays, we look at the effects the Citizens Access Network would have on those two areas in order to better understand the whole of what is being proposed.

The dynamics of principled competition



Principled Electoral Competition:

A major theme presented here submits that the electoral system of the United States – while quite a simple one – features many paradoxes that contribute to it being badly misunderstood.

One is that the great decentralizing characteristics of the nation masks that simplicity as different states and localities have, over time, developed divergent rules and methods for conducting their elections. The decentralized architecture, while there from the start, and vital to the framework of self-government, created not only tensions, it created a jumble!

However, that jumble plays out only in small ways as basic, hard won rights have been much institutionalized, nationally; despite past and present assaults that demonstrate how vigilantly they must be guarded.

Nevertheless, the hodgepodge seems to have won the day as an absent citizenry confused a proper understanding of their critical civic infrastructure as too many of the wrong battles were fought and/or poor strategies deployed. All the while, our domains of media, advocacy, and leadership neglected to engage any in discovery/recovery effort; *quite the contrary*.

Hence a system rich with nuance and opportunity, has mostly come to be discredited; viewed as a broken system offering its people little.

Considering the paradoxical and disastrous effects of a noncompetitive electoral system kept uncompetitive by the threat of competition, we see the Network work as six simple illustrations show how:

- ➔ The visible, verified, constituency is built
- ➔ That creates the most powerful audience ever assembled
- ➔ User-members within the constituency and beyond are connected to each other
- ➔ User-members are connected to elected officials
- ➔ The dynamics of reciprocal access emerges arrangements necessary to create and manage principled competition
- ➔ This eliminates dependency on the harmful, superficial electoral mechanisms we believe cannot be eliminated

- This creates the strongest of ties between the constituency and those who seek or hold office
- This enables a completely transparent environment free of all of the debasement's and imbalances of the current system
- This will unshackle our electoral sphere from those controls; first and foremost the threat of unprincipled competition
- These dynamics will fuse to make for media, politics and a civil society that operates not on delusion and hope - but on empirical knowledge and strong social underpinnings

Fragmented Issue Advocacy



A sensible approach to advocacy:

Another crucial focus of this work examines the failures of advocacy and its deeper effects of feeding fragmentation and social divisions.

With concepts like freedom of assembly, petition and redress enshrined in the framework of an always flawed enterprise, it should be no surprise that reform has been a central activity of those concerned with the greater good, as well as those focused on more narrow agendas.

We have seen of late that this has become an industry - the third largest employer in America - and how with consolidating power, subtle changes to certain laws and the proliferation of saturation media, it has become hard to tell the difference between principled, necessary advocacy and the stuff of those narrow agendas.

We have also seen how the sheer weight of these multitudinous efforts has served to create a cacophony of fragmented interests and entrenchments that have not served us well; despite this community being a store of great knowledge and organizing potential.

Once again, we project a fully operative Citizens Access Network, and measure its effects on activism - both large scale and small - as the seven slides of this display illustrate how the problems diminish and the potential gets realized:

- ➔ Concerned individuals and cooperators, as well as established advocacy groups, get on equal footing as they engage the most powerful audience ever assembled
- ➔ No limits; this happens across as broad a spectrum of subject matter and interests as is brought into the process
- ➔ The initiative process allows wide-ranging advocacy to be properly structured and classified; getting it exactly where, and to whom it needs to go
- ➔ The initiative process involves others beyond the core group in shaping missions; thereby enlisting others in the cause
- ➔ This will serve to de-stratify relations and make fundraising a less integral imperative
- ➔ The advocacy gets further organized within the deliberative and prioritization framework of the networks design

- ➔ That process (always) creates media making for a holistic approach to action as easy, flexible, coalition building is enabled; thus strengthening viable efforts
- ➔ These processes will aid discernment, expose and sideline the false advocacy that feeds on fragmentation and is otherwise dependent on promotion and funding from narrow interests
- ➔ These processes will encourage physical co presence off-line (though the processes always produce media available online)
- ➔ As well as intellectually and socially satisfying interactions online
- ➔ The know-how of the citizenry will engage with traditional sources of expertise
- ➔ As well as engage the larger, more distant, and even questionable institutions of the country making them more proximate and transparent
- ➔ Small steps and small numbers of people can always create these dynamics

A contrast consistently denoted here is the difference between empowerment and power, an important and significant distinction.

Crucial activism – involvement – outsourced to others is incompatible with any reciprocal claims of empowerment. This is particularly true when such efforts cannot help but divide attentions while - mostly – seeking and consuming resources.

Under current circumstances the term is a sham. Whatever good might come from these quarters will be narrow in scope and lack for qualitative engagement and oversight; just as our electoral sphere does. And, just as is the case there, the bad will outweigh the good; *by a lot!*

Only by the citizen amassing, distributing and directing their power appropriately can the proper relationship between the people and advocates of all stripes be established. Regardless of the domain - officialdom or this - *it is for the citizenry to do the empowering.*

[Click here to view the Infographic displays and FAQ's](#)

BEWARE EMPOWERMENT



Power vs. empowerment

- Minding the store; deliberative democracy
- People know stuff
- He who does the empowering has the power

For the people, turning expression into action can only begin when the power that's distributed to them within the system is understood, accounted for and captured.

With that, the game can change as respect for that clear political authority, and the access it allows will be established. Then, with the proper tools of communications and deliberation at hand, knowledge, options, and the ability to initiate can be enabled and become part of an integrated and intentional process of *deliberative democracy*.

This is genuine power.

The idea of deliberative democracy is interesting in that it's now **a thing** (a "movement" even) despite it being intrinsic to and inseparable from our system; evidence of how far basic precepts of store-minding citizenship has fallen.

However, with the componentry of our potential laden system never quite connected, the separation has always been present and so we see something that should be considered as natural as a rainy day presented as something new or innovative. Nevertheless, the need is identified and it's important.

Recent examples of deliberative democracy (as a movement) in the United States has emerged citizen groups working on matters of local budgeting; participatory budgeting. Also, in some states, citizen assemblies have been tasked with drawing electoral districts in the hope of getting gerrymandering out of the process of redistricting.

In other nations like Australia, Canada, and some EU nations, citizens have been gathered in various ways and tasked with responsibilities that range from recommending new electoral laws to entirely new national constitutions.

As these actions were sanctioned by governmental authority, they are examples of empowerment.

Therefore it should come as no surprise that the convening of such bodies by might be intended to meet entirely different objectives than seeking the people's wisdom for the purposes of adopting their recommendations; therefore the results of these proceedings were often non-binding. Here, the parliamentary systems required everything from parliamentary AND executive acceptance to a national referendum to approve the citizen's recommendations; rendering their work pretty toothless.

In the United States, redistricting reform that remains unattached⁴⁹ to the issues deeper meaning and enablers has been discussed here at length; and is a very questionable remedy. Therefore, convening citizen commissions (or any other scheme of non-partisan district drawing) to address this makes the scope of such an effort quite limited and controllable; and very may well misunderstand the problem in the first place.

Therefore, making these assemblages a *cause célèbre* of democracy is quite dubious.

The lesson here is that for a citizenry to enter the sphere of deliberative politics with no real power over their officialdom is not a level playing field; ***being empowered and having power are night and day different.***

49 This concern seems to pay very little attention to the question of whether there are really significant - and principled - differences between the two major parties.

If there is not, a higher likelihood of electing a representative from one or the other party - as opposed to only one - would hardly do any good.

<https://ivn.us/2012/11/06/100-ways-republicans-are-just-like-democrats/>

Given that, and unaccounted for in the redistricting "literature", is that this is about the principled, intra- party electoral competition at the nomination level; not the general election level.

Please see All Faq's:

Will the WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network have an effect on our stubborn problems, like revolving doors, redistricting/gerrymandering, and entrenched incumbency?

Nevertheless, the results of these efforts has demonstrated - very convincingly - that so called average citizens respond very well to a disciplined environment and serious responsibility⁵⁰. They were able to easily shed biases and work together cooperatively to produce professional and useful results; puncturing a significant hole in the “polarized population” theory, among other prevailing presumptions.

However, motivated citizens exercising their natural rights and producing good results will be difficult for elite components of the political and media complex to accept⁵¹. This will be particularly so if those results exceed the mandate of the empowerment scheme or threaten the purpose of public relations or appeasement.

Here fellowship will be needed as hostility and interference from those circles can be expected; as these experiences indicate. Access to fellow citizens is essential to the participating citizen or the process will be drained of trust and the crucial ingredient of an involved public partaking, watching and protecting; *genuine inclusivity*.

Lacking that, the vulnerabilities of such remedies are immediately apparent as their actions will be compromised from the outset. Such proceedings can only have meaning if they are conducted in an environment of specific purpose. To defeat the **theatrics of “populistic” posturing** and elite antipathy requires an ecosystem! One that creates digestible and even entertaining media within a design that informs broader deliberative processes, forges stronger ties, and is delivered in ways that are layered and politically potent.

Of course hostilities to effective public action will be managed by design in this ecosystem as the fellowship expands.⁵² The protection and effectiveness unleashed will unshackle the many now that are otherwise constrained and unable to support - with voice or action - a truly deliberative and free democratic-republic. But, first things have to come first.

Accordingly, any attempt to fix our politics with some derivative scheme of citizen contribution and deliberation based on “empowerment” will be futile and render any inclusivity phony.

Without accounting for actual power, and a comprehensive media component, anything offered will be mere theater; a distraction, a sop.

50 Fishkin: <http://scienceofvirtues.org/forums/t/807.aspx#>

51 LeDuc

The Quiet Referendum: Why Electoral Reform Failed in Ontario

http://www.democratienuouvelle.ca/wp-content/uploads/z2012/08/lawrence_leduc_heather_bastedo_catherine_baquero-the_quiet_referendum_why_electoral_reform_failed_in_ontario_2008.pdf

52 The WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network channeling the most powerful audience ever assembled

What all this demonstrates is several-fold:

- Empowerment is real and important, but, the source of the power, that is then distributed and used by others, must be understood and accounted for
- Properly organized and informed, in the United States, it's the citizen that does the empowering whether directed to officials, media, or fellow citizens; *not the other way around*
- Buying into the soft ideals of empowerment and voice – privileges from above – will always limit
- It will always allow others to choose where to apply the focus
- Without full powers to initiate, prioritize, and manage, such efforts will be subject to political manipulation
- People know things, are capable, and given responsibility and a disciplined environment they will produce
- As examples of elite networks illustrate: power, deliberation and media are inseparable and mutually reinforcing; unless matched in an environment of the people's making nothing real can happen
- However, that environment will have to be formulated on the very different organizing principles and assets the American constitutional and electoral system confers on its people



ETERNAL VIGILANCE

The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

It Must Be Kept
BY US

ETERNAL VIGILANCE

THE ERIC CANTOR REVERBERATION

SEE IT IN ACTION



The Eric Cantor Reverberation

Nothing has been taken from us that we didn't give away.

Absentee management is generally not a profitable strategy in any domain but when it comes to matters public, well there are challenges to organizing a vast and diversified country; this has been our great weakness!

But, now that we can see how the original and organic organization of our country allows for a simple approach to a feasible, enduring presence of the people, we can also see the strategy to fill the vacuum of our enduring absence.

A case study of the recent – and major – political upset of Virginia's Eric Cantor helps us see the vast implications, omissions, and, opportunities.



The 0.005%
-1.3% Solution

CASE
IN
POINT

FAQs in context

THE BIG UPSET



Although two years removed from the time of this writing, we would do well to remember that in June 2014 we had one of the biggest upsets in American political history when Eric Cantor, then House majority leader, considered next-in-line to be House speaker and third in line to the presidency, lost his **Republican Primary** by *double digits* to David Brat.

Now U.S. representative Brat was then an unknown college professor who Cantor had heavily outspent. Despite poll numbers showing the incumbent with a 34-point lead over his rival, Cantor became the first majority leader to lose a primary in 115 years.



This event of course became great grist for our distraction-mill with much energy devoted to establishing the ultimate cause and the “inner-meaning” of this supposedly seismic upset.

After all, this isn't supposed to happen. Incumbents rarely lose their bid for re-nomination in primary elections, or general elections for that matter, and the 2014 cycle was a continuation; *a classic example of the profound lack of competition - and usefulness - in our nominating, and overall electoral system.* **No wonder the shock.**

Holding true to form, the 2014 primaries for congressional races saw **only four** (4) U.S. representatives lose (none in the senate); less than 1%, of all members. At the state and local level we can only image how low it goes; **Fuhgeddaboutit!**

In the analysis of this defeat that followed- more in the category of handwringing - our punditry and their “political junkies” focused heavily on the money-media-election complex inside-game of hot button issues and questions of political maneuverings;

- Was Cantor too soft on immigration and a potential compromiser?
- How did Brat, a nominal tea party candidate, who appeared to receive very little support and money from tea party organizations, beat a big man like Cantor?
- Wasn't Cantor a tea party favorite who did not seem to be targeted for political extinction, as other unfortunates of the republican establishment sometimes are; by being **“primaried”**?
- Did the increase in turnout compared to the 2012 cycle indicate that the Democrats took advantage of Virginia's status as an open state (where voters are not restricted based on party registration) to “raid” the primary and vote in favor of the challenger in order to hurt the Republicans?
- How about that dark money? Did it plot to bring out conservative support for Brat in the form of big talk radio personalities like Laura Ingraham and Mark Levin?

Questions of intrigues, mistakes, lessons and portends surged through the media-sector of the complex as they struggled to make sense of it all; poor dears!

THE FALLACY OF MEDIA AND ELITES



These postmortems of Mr. Cantor's defeat seemed to focus on a narrative that stressed that elite point of view; perhaps to evade discussion of a simpler possibility. That being Americans, in this case Virginians, as independent agents, took conscious action to remove a representative with whom they were unhappy ***within a system designed specifically for that action to be taken.***

This system of primary elections - unique to the United States - for party nominations, to first stand for office, was not mandated by our Constitution. It emerged from our modern concept of constitutional government; that powers are conferred by the consent of the governed and that consent - or possible repudiation- should be regularly expressed and ultimately decided at an election.

The open ballot access and primary voting reforms were instituted more than 120 years after the founding as it became clear that our closed party "single election" system was so mired in corruption that it could no longer be trusted, and therefore the consent illusory.

The purpose of a preliminary **nominating** election was to create proximity to and control over our elected officials and public sphere. This because the American system of politics that developed - however unforeseen - made it certain that allegiance would be owed to those who control access to the ballot and nominate; an **inescapable consequence of our expansive democratic expression.** These reforms acknowledged that certainty and represented an attempt to give its citizens power over any machinery that might be working behind the curtain.

These reforms were eventually adopted in all 50 states and perhaps (not perhaps, definitely) represents the most sensible, straightforward, and powerful democratic reform effort ever conceived.

Many other aspects of our civic structure - like political parties - were not mandated by our Constitution either (on the contrary, the framework of the constitution was designed to discourage the rise of powerful political parties) but evolved over time as an unplanned expression and byproduct of a consensual, and evolving, democratic process. Therefore it should come as no surprise that, on occasion, the people - *without any help from above* - might use the tools at their disposal for the purposes intended.

That is, they would openly and consciously act to **grant or deny** a seat of authority to an elected official based on their own judgment and observations.

THE FAULT LIES NOT IN THE STARS



That shock would be the result of such an event should be telling in and of itself; *the misdirection worked*.

Missing the point completely, more and more Americans have come to condemn their electoral system as “rigged” and irrelevant, a side show staged for entertainment purposes; the results predetermined.

Is this belief accurate?

Well, Mr. Cantor’s re-nomination/election would have played perfectly in to this point of view as he did outspend his opponent 20-to-1 and the seat he occupies is safe for his party. Money and redistricting rules our politics, doesn’t it? As a major figure in his party he had all the name recognition, media attention, and high profile that bodyguards and hobnobbing at Davos could buy. Can’t lose, right?

Locally, he had power to “deliver” for his district and being seen as next in line for speaker would have meant even more power and prestige for that district; even better, no?

But the events did not play out to script.

What then does this tell us about the perception, now *pretty much the prevailing conventional wisdom*, that our electoral process is rigged and irrelevant?

Well, using a casino analogy we can say rigged is loaded dice. In an election it would mean a stuffed ballot box or a hacked voting machine with no paper trail. Rigged means you can’t win. On the other hand, in the casino, gamed is being plied with alcohol, distracted by cocktail waitresses, and being denied easy access to a clock. In an election, gamed means using confusion and a manufactured disdain for the process and applying that to an illusion – a good one – that competition and communications are controlled and beyond the reach of the citizen-voter.

In fairness however, you cannot say that a process is rigged because you do not participate, understand, or play the game shrewdly!

Consider the people of Hong Kong. Activists there courted great danger by agitating for exactly the nominating mechanism that was the means for Virginians

to remove a powerful figure like Cantor⁵³. They understood; without this power elections are rigged and irrelevant.

Therefore, with this is authority *available to Americans - yet effectively squandered for over a century* - proposing this as a rigged/irrelevant system is not only wrong, it qualifies as psychological warfare. A struggle we help to perpetuate and wage on ourselves.

However unusual, Mr. Cantor's example should make this truth crystal clear; the American system is ultimately owned by her people - *if and when they show up*.

Why then wasn't the "shocking" defeat of one of our most prominent national political figures a "wake-up" call to a wise people for the strategic use of this power? That is a good question for the many crusading truthers of our media multiplex but, since they are asleep, let's take a crack at it here by digging deeper in to the moribund state of our electoral system and our part in its making;

- A partial explanation can be found in the fact that the ballot access/nominating-primary system remains a state-by-state hodgepodge of election days and procedures.
- Some states, like Virginia itself, use a confusing and arbitrary combination of primaries and conventions to determine their nominees.
- Unlike this particular race, often incumbents are not even challenged by as much as a name on the ballot. This is evidenced by the fact that in 2014, 50% of incumbents who stood for re-election went **unopposed** in **uncontested** "races".
- This amounts to nothing less than a potential election. Debates, when an incumbent is challenged, are rare occurrences and none occurred in this case.
- The nominating process across the country, and at every level of government, is such that candidacies that represent wholly⁵⁴ organic expressions of voter discontent - *as opposed to an agenda driven targeting of an incumbent* - are difficult to discern and are certainly quite rare.
- ⁵⁵Data regarding competition and outcomes is elusive and all of these issues are compounded by a bottomless degree of ignorance and obfuscation about what our elected representatives actually know; and what we know about the environment in which they function.

53 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/29/hong-kong-democracy-protests-china-umbrellas-police>

54 Getting Primaried: The Growth and Consequences of Ideological Primaries
http://www.uakron.edu/bliss/docs/state-of-the-parties-documents/Boatright_sotp09.pdf

55 On the Representativeness of Primary Electorates -footnotes pg 9
https://www.vanderbilt.edu/csdi/miller-stokes/07_MillerStokes_SidesVavreck.pdf

- Zero public education and/or a demand for better can be found.

All these factors no doubt hinder sophisticated engagement and therefore do “game the system” with controls and distractions into a very relevant irrelevance.

The real problem is that these discontents are not driving strategic minds to see the dots not being connected.

The fault lies not in the stars...



ABHORRENT VACUUMS



If nature abhors a vacuum imagine how power feels!

Playing the game of power seems fundamental to human nature so it should come as no surprise that our absence from, and ignorance of the power centers in our system leaves a vacuum to be filled by those seeking superiority and control- and are willing to work at it.

Since the unlikely effort to make the people preeminent - potentially - by making their votes strategic and decisive, was successful, it is interesting to contemplate why after more than a century of operations our system of open ballot access and primary voting remains a mystery to its people; **but not to the people of Hong Kong.**

After all, this process is the foundation of the system that determines who will hold the elected seats of authority - everywhere - in our country and its centrality to our civic infrastructure is unambiguous; everything flows from it. The age of partisan redistricting intensifies those dynamics but, regardless of how districts are drawn, this would still remain the case.

Civic affairs are driven to even greater depths when electoral gaming meets other key civic processes; like our system of endless laws and lawmaking. As matters well below our radar and a self-imposed electoral IGNORE-ANCE combine; we become lost.

The muddled and deceptive environment of law-making saturates our lives yet few - them or us - know anything about it. Nonetheless, this domain remains unquestioned as the foremost pillar of our civic lives. It features;

- Multi-thousand page statutes, sometimes wrapped up in so called “omnibus bills”, with scope⁵⁶ so vast that most any deception or mischief within its pages are possible

56 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omnibus_bill

- Mischief that too often begins with the extreme stealth in which such complex legislation is presented to representatives; often only minutes before a vote
- Elected officials who mostly are not inclined to read or understand such legislation anyway, even if given the opportunity
- The inevitable result that such pivotal, all-encompassing “ruler-ing” will be inaccessible to the people; intellectually and practically
- Hidden conflicts of interest given the dark influence and revolving doors of the money-media-election complex

This ***is the*** ecosystem of citizenship in which we operate. It makes the relationship between a position any candidate takes and the votes - any vote - their constituents cast pretty much irrelevant and does therefore lend credence to that charge. The dependable failure of the people to “keep up” creates a deadly combination that has emboldened the complex toward more overt rigging; so, in this regard the alarm is warranted- *however one-dimensional.*



Here the consideration of Eric Cantors defeat leads to logical and crucial questions;

- What if the energies of our most motivated and engaged people focused attention and education on the power potential of our nominating system of open ballot access and primary elections?
- What if we connected those energies to that power by means of erecting a roof over the head of these activities; the goal being to create operative constituencies and tame the jumble of smokescreens and ignorance?
- What if we resolved to channel that connectivity to ensure that competition and discourse around the all-important nominations to stand for all elected offices - at all levels - became unthinkable to do without, as opposed to unthinkable?
- Would this not answer the need for a central strategy to control our elected officials and with them the government beyond?
- Could that not transform our dysfunctional civic ecosystem from one of government superiority to one of civic supremacy and collaboration; of/by/ and for the people?
- What evidence exists that this would not only be feasible, but that it would be the only course of action worthy of consideration?

This defeat of the prominent, powerful Mr. Cantor is quite instructive because if we accept that it was a byproduct of that unplanned expression and consensual democratic process, we can see that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with

our political or electoral system other than - from the people's standpoint - it's, well, **too darn unplanned.**

Clearly, our system is not so irrelevant and rigged as it undeniably endows its non-insider citizens with many powers and benefits; **potentially!** Potentially!

However, that such a political upset is presented as something so rare and shocking- and then left at that should serve to tell us the problem is ours. Our media has failed us, our would-be activist saviors have failed us and we have failed us. We have not demanded enough of those who choose to speak publicly; we have not talked to each other enough, or sought the necessary strategy and tools.

We just have not looked hard enough. Instead, and unwisely, we continually fall back on the same failed methods, mindsets and people.

Clearly, it is only our absence - in all its facets - that creates the vacuum the forces of "insiderism" fill.

Let's do the examination of this race *that should have been done* and see where these questions lead.



A MORE MEANINGFUL AND REVEALING ANALYSIS

U.S House, Virginia District 7 Republican Primary. 2014		
Candidate	Vote %	Votes
✓ David Brat	55.5%	36,110
Eric Cantor <i>Incumbent</i>	44.5%	28,898
<i>Source: Results via Associated Press.</i>		65,008

VOTER TURNOUT

The dissection oriented question asks if the increase of voter turnout in this Republican primary resulted in Cantor's defeat.

PREVIOUS CYCLE

In 2012, 47,037 votes were cast in a "contested" (opposing name on the ballot) yet "uncompetitive" (60+% margin of victory)⁵⁷ district 7 primary which Mr. Cantor carried with 79% of the vote.⁵⁸

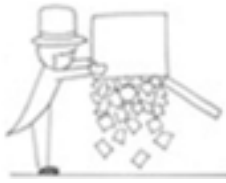
This compared to the 65,008 votes cast in this June 10, 2014 primary; an increase of 38.2 percent. But, this increase in turnout might just be part of an *unplanned expression* - of discontent - and is not really the real story here.

CLOSER TO, BUT STILL NOT THE REAL STORY

In district 7, with a population of over 750,000 the 65,000 votes cast represented a turnout of a paltry 9%. However, the more relevant metric would be an estimate based on the **voter eligible population** (VEP); within this district, likely in the range of some 530,000. That would mean only a slightly less paltry turnout of some 12%.

57 http://www.cfinst.org/pdf/papers/Boatright_2014_Primarys_in_Context_9-30-14.pdf
Boatright: The 2014 Congressional Primaries in Context pg 3 (suggests an even more generous 75% margin)

58 Less than 60% is an arbitrary margin of victory - assigned by the political science community - necessary to a designation of 'competitive' i.e. 59% or less margin of victory = competitive; 60% or more = Not Competitive.



Both metrics - in their smallishness - and despite the increase from the 2012 cycle, are representative of the country as a whole in that they hardly represent a robust turnout in THE elections that determine so much; that is, when there even are such elections; but that is another story.

It is most unfortunate that it's the complex quantitative characteristics of important matters that always draw the attention of our media and academic analysts. Seduced by the certainty (and authority) the numbers promise, they are followed; despite early and regular admissions they are faulty, incomplete, and no more than just part of a whole. This is true even when very small populations and very limited subject matter is examined-*like the defeat of a House member in a primary*. The cost of this myopia is very high because we not only lose sight of the things that numbers cannot tell us, but also of the more simple things they can.

In this case, focus on the quantitative - turnout or percentage increases or decreases alone - distracts us from the very much more important **qualitative** focus on the significance and power of even a small number of nominating, primary votes - i.e. voters.

THAT IS THE REAL STORY!

MANY VOTES ARE A STATISTIC



THE PRIMARY VS. THE GENERAL ELECTION

The 65,008 that turned out in the 2014 primary that sent Mr. Cantor packing represented only a quarter of the November general election turnout of 243,000 voters that ultimately sent Dave Brat to the U.S. House of Representatives.

But, given that this district was considered solidly Republican and that the Republican nominee was overwhelmingly favored to win the general election- and did (with 60.8%) - which electoral population was decisive in sending Dave Brat to the House of Representatives?

Was it the 243,000 (45% of VEP) November general election voters? - Weeellll; it was from this group that he was “officially” sent to the U.S. House of representatives.

Was it the 65,008 June (Republican/Open) primary voters (12% of VEP) that really made the decision? - Well yes, because this district was electing a Republican; there was no question about that!

BUT

Note Brat’s “double-digit” margin in his victory over Cantor. Note also that the double digits so much were made of total just 7,200 votes. 11% doesn’t seem so much of a landslide victory when you boil it down to 7,200 individuals; in a population of some 530,000, does it?

THE TRUE DECIDERS

7,200 - That number of votes/voters/actual real people; only 1.3% of the VEP, were the true deciders here.

Not sixty percent’s, not eleven percent’s; **1.3%** of the voter eligible population... of **a congressional district!**

The next largest district after that is an entire state-*and the next smallest?*

What percentage would be decisive in an election for a local or county office; 0.65%, 0.32%?

TRUE POWER

The stolid and too often silly quantitative approach of “how much” cannot connect dots to tell you why, or how. This tiny percentage of Virginia’s 7th district voter eligible population - in however much an unplanned, unconscious, non-strategic manner - removed one of the most powerful, high profile politicians in the country and nothing stopped it!

However, to exercise that authority required a combination, a fusion;

- That small number of people
- Voting as nominators, in a primary!

That same number - or even one much greater - would have little sway in the general election because it’s already as predetermined as these things can be that a republican would hold the seat. So, if the population isn’t organized, and understood as nominators - the power is lost.

Makes one wonder; *what if such power became planned, conscious and strategic.*

IF VOTING DOESN'T MATTER, WHY LUST FOR CONTROL OF IT?



These dynamics notwithstanding, we have a system that is gamed and in danger of worse; *no question*.

That game is meant to dampen electoral competition in order that the entirety of our electoral system should be rendered useless **as the medium** it was naturally meant, and required to be. The eternal vigilance that self-government requires ultimately means enforcement - which can only be properly expressed at an election.

However, if that electoral authority is limited to and expressed only on an Election Day, and an electoral landscape - capable of executing a holistic eternal vigilance - is never considered, much less sought, then yes, this is all nothing but a rigged game.

Considered from another, less defeatist and more strategic angle however - and in light of the facts of the Cantor defeat - we do learn quite a bit about the game and the vital importance and potential vitality of voting in our system.



The key here is the **actual** control of competition while at the same time controlling our **perception** of it. On one hand elections could be deemed “divisive” and therefore undesirable. It might be suggested we get rid of them; a radical and dangerous step. On the other, divisions are quite beneficial to those who rule as are the illusions and narratives they support.

So, why not manage outcomes very astutely while encouraging discouragement; just let differing perceptions do the work of dividing. For example:

Amongst the people - there is the growing public disdain for voting that is showing up in these three ways;

- By individuals giving up on and no longer participating in the electoral process
- By advocating that others not participate as doing so only gives consent to the abuses

- By habit, or a sense of civic duty, participating, but in the same old way that ensures votes will be relevant only in providing that unintended consent

With no alternative it's a losing proposition every which way...*unless all you aim for is complaint.*

As for the established order - public suffrage has historically, and does still focus on;

- Turning out the vote
- Dividing the vote
- Suppressing the vote
- Stealing the vote
- Buying the vote
- Pandering to the vote
- Denying the right to vote
- Agitating for the right to vote
- Making it easy to vote
- Making it hard to vote
- Often, and finally, going to the judge to decide the meaning of it all.

It's a very clever approach but considering it carefully leaves us with an irreconcilable difference.

If we claim voting doesn't matter; Not 243,000 votes, Not 65,000, Not 7,200, what would Eric Cantor, or for that matter now U.S. Rep. Dave Brat (R-Virginia) say?

If we claim voting is irrelevant, then how could we explain why "power elites" bother to game what doesn't matter? By what reasoning could one deem something "irrelevant" that so much is invested in?

Here we can make this attempt to reconcile;

All the players know that with no meaningful competition there can be no genuine democracy/republic. Without it, the people's ability to understand and control their government, and with it their lives, is beyond reach.

The controllers know the indispensable tool of electoral competition, bent to its own will/use, can be **used as a cudgel**. If anyone wants to speak out, they will be alone, and targeted for defeat within the ballot access/nominating process. This ensures loyalty, acquiescence, and the control of potential apostates within, while maintaining a false reality without.



The totality of all this makes clear exactly what lever of power we must wrest control of. Perceptions must change so allegiances can change. Allegiance in our system is owed to those who nominate and as it stands that is NOT the capable people.

This is both the lynchpin and soft underbelly; ***the opportunity***.

IMAGINE, IMAGINE, IMAGINE!



Now the question becomes; what can be done with all this?

If by now you have reviewed enough of the material that explains the dynamics and underpinnings that have just been summarized here, perhaps the picture is clarifying as to how the opportunity can be capitalized on.

The Citizens Access Network now takes the stage as the enabling mechanism of a genuine solution. (Please consider re-reviewing those illustrations after completing this reading).

Imagine; 400 M.P.G. and 0-60 in 4 seconds

- Imagine that the 65,008 voters - remember, only 12% of the voter eligible population of that congressional district that voted in this primary election - were registered into the WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network.
- This forms a community, the **visible constituency** we have already identified as necessary. This, not just of likely voters, but of nominators; which makes all the difference.
- You do not need to imagine that this community - constituency - would be visible and accessible to all the players; incumbent or aspiring elected officials, the media, the people registered within the network and those at large.
- Now, imagine that even only half that number were so registered; six percent.
- Now, imagine that *only* 7,200 people were so registered. That was the decisive margin; again only 1.3% of that VEP. Remember too, that rather small number provided a “double digit” margin of victory for Mr. Brat.
- Quite the bang for the buck; feasibility and realism abound!
- Now imagine what these district numbers would look like at local levels. It gets quite “granular” when you consider sheriffs, judges, dog catchers and the like. Perhaps 50 WeLeadUSA members are potentially a political powerhouse as all seats/elected officials are subject to the ballot access/nominating process *and so are subject to the people.*

BOTTOM LINE

Only 1.3% - and certainly less - of a voting eligible population - at the *largest district level*; congressional - are proven decisive and so cannot be trifled with; many dynamics are thus created.

NOW, IMAGINE THE AFFECTS;

- With a ready audience of motivated constituents, aware of their power and now easily within reach, do you think of/by and for challengers, those interested in true public service, might emerge to create genuine competition?
- Easily in reach because the need for money, name recognition/imprimatur, media exposure and all the rest are no longer factors. Direct, unfettered access to constituents is right there for message and organization building - in a network purposed for these functions.
- Do you think that would loosen the already very loose grip of the parties; and wouldn't incumbents take note and show up in any way necessary to meet the challenges/challengers?
- Would they not be at great risk of losing face - and their seat - if they did not?
- How many candidates - incumbents or otherwise - who attempted to avoid this medium would have to lose (or even just come close to losing) before everyone would start showing up?
- Do you think under these circumstances there'd be the opportunity to create many innovative forums; be it online or physical, designed for meeting, debate, deliberation and answering?
- As the serious get busy with serious matters, do you think all the typical media noise and agenda driven nonsense would get sidelined?
- How many candidates - incumbents or otherwise - would be happy to accept competition for the freedom this would create; for us all?
- With the **visible safe space of constituency secured**, it wouldn't require too many people in official positions to take a stand which would be heard everywhere; would it?
- Do you think all this might change things a little?

IMAGINE SOME MORE



IF WE SHOW UP, SO WILL EVERYONE ELSE!

Now, let's consider what could, and very likely would, result from all this. As demonstrated by the Citizens Access Network display, it is a relatively simple matter to leverage the organic design of our country into a network purposed to capture its deep organization and reach. Using the tools of the network, we are free to develop innovative mediums, process input and seek answers and solutions to any and all issues.

With this network - fused to the power we own as citizens - no subject would be beyond the reach of the people and their representatives to explore, and no problem beyond solving.

Capable of affecting decision making at all levels, we transform our anemic, artificial, election day into an electoral landscape capable of delivering true self-government.

The fusing of the two pillars - this network to our existing voting system - creates a third; a new form of media - *genuine collaborative media*. This form of media will be wholly different in nature from any other that has existed; because, by design, it will be tethered to powerful civic deliberation **and action**.

Essential information and learning systems; i.e. knowledge, must be translatable into traction and action; absent that capacity nothing can succeed!

- This starts with the simple precept that the engaged public must be enrolled and visible; based on their voting districts - where they live. This simple, powerful organizational structure of course exists; it is organic, it connects us to society's power structures at all levels- *and it connects us to each other*.
- Leveraging that, the Citizens Access Network, its media and network environment, will be specifically purposed for interactions with and between:
 - ↑ Citizen-voters
 - ↑ Elected officials - incumbent or aspiring

↑ Media (in all its forms)

↑ The government beyond

- Imagine that this specially purposed environment emphasizes a blend of citizen-based and established media approaches -suitable to the situation - designed to drive innovation and test the public policy that determines our collective fate.
- Imagine that in this environment our people are called on. Unentrenched and unbiased, with their talents and experience channeled, their influence will be felt. The people, not the lobbyists do the advising and consenting.
- The opportunities this presents would naturally attract the wisest, most motivated people from all walks and strata. Imagine the trailblazing examples of deliberation and effectiveness they could offer others; and the wider influence they'd earn as a result.
- Imagine how this *institution of the people* would help raise-up other member-users as emphasis on the "highest use" simultaneously marginalizes the unserious, uninformed and troublesome.
- Wouldn't all that create a new and powerful approach to participatory new media?
- Wouldn't all that create a new and powerful approach to participatory democracy?
- Wouldn't that serve to rebalance the power structures in our society leveraging only a relatively small percentage of our most informed and engaged population- while including all willing to participate?
- Wouldn't this greatly increase the levels of trust and transparency in our society with favorable effect in all sectors; government, business etc. - **and certainly our social relations beyond?**

WE MUST HIGHLY RESOLVE



The founders, whether federalist or anti federalist, agreed and often stated - in one way or another - that the framework they created demanded advanced citizenship of its people; *they'd have to want it*.

Realistically of course, it could be no other way.

However, the form or expression of that advanced citizenship must meet the era; its challenges, sensibilities and the opportunities that will present themselves. As we come to another crossroads, in another time, our time, will we demand that we build on the advanced citizenship that came before; to not only preserve, protect and defend, but to also evolve?

Is it now clear that the bar we've established for feasibility, coherence, and power **can be met**? Is it now clear how this single example - this one unexpected political event - brings into focus the rich potential for solving and evolving - with *no dependence whatsoever on all the remote, complex remedies we're always told will be necessary*.

The right lesson to learn from Eric Cantor's defeat is that our system can work. However, the rarity of, and shock attached to, what should otherwise be a routine event - of incumbent politicians facing competition, and maybe even losing - tells us that we have misused and misunderstood our systems most vital powers. This is an epic failure of imagination and organization; a very poor performance indeed, particularly in our age of modern communications and saturation media, with the immeasurable innovation of the Internet at its heart.

As pointed out here elsewhere and often; no challenge we face can be met with the capable people lacking for **organization and planning**. Ignoring that simple truth would be like expecting a commercial enterprise to be successful in the

absence of robust management or for freedom to reign in the absence of eternally vigilant citizens; *how could such things ever be?*

Would any sports fan accept the coach of their team having no plan for how their players will be used? Would any fan accept a coach who met his opponent on the field of play with no preparation, no idea of his rivals strategy or tactics? Would any fan accept a coach who had his players watch film incessantly but make no attempt to practice, plan, or act on what was learned? What is the expectation, just show up and ask your opponent to forfeit?

This sounds ridiculous but it's exactly what the capable people of this country do; make no mistake, *exactly*.

The first step in changing this must be to acknowledge that our unchanging approaches have not been working AND acknowledge that an alternative to continuing these fiascoes does exist.

If we fail to do this, what are we saying?

- We're in it deep; so we better start a blog or podcast?
- The end is near; so let's pick up a protest sign?
- Please oh great leader; lead me, be nice to me?
- Don't tread on me (*please*)?
- I surrender?

If we are to get from "here to there", we must do it with our votes; there is no alternative. But as we can plainly see, that vote has vast implications that have been vastly misjudged. There are too many things we have been reluctant to consider preferring instead the habitual non-strategy of hasty reaction and emotion. We have also been badly advised by the "voices of change" in our public sphere and have not held them to account.

All these factors we must take stock of, we must think. The destinies of a people are determined by their character; not their governments and certainly not their public intellectuals! Therefore, if we are to get out of this, we must look to what was best in us and likely it's more than enough; *if it gets organized*.

Building up - not tearing down - the oldest and most successful democratic framework is the only way out; and the only way forward. We mustn't allow ourselves to be sold a bill of goods demanding unity or touting grand bargains; that's a trap. We should insist on ground up solutions born of settlement, flexible coalitions, study, and dialogue; realistic measures exercised in an environment of **our own creation**.

The fusion of the Citizen's Access Network to the strategic use of our existing voting system makes this more than possible. Moreover, it will make advanced citizenship easy; **but not free**.



“BEHOLD, I SEND YOU FORTH AS SHEEP IN THE MIDST OF WOLVES: BE YE THEREFORE WISE AS SERPENTS, AND HARMLESS AS DOVES.”

MATTHEW 10:16 (KJV)

As to Eric Cantor and the lessons his political career offers, we owe him a debt of gratitude.

If we are willing to accept it, this is **notice being served** - a wakeup call being made - that tells us every elected official, at all levels of government - county official to president of the United States - all, are subject to the ballot access/nominating process and that this is the foundation of our electoral system and democratic infrastructure. Without these features there would be no “truth” to our democratic-republic, **but it does exist, it is true, AND, it is ours.**

Starting there and adding just a wee bit of imagination and industry, reinvigorating our unique form of representative democracy would be highly effective, inexpensive in every way, and great fun.

[Click here to view this chapter's useful FAQs](#)

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**



INFORMED CITIZENS

HOW

it will happen

WHY

it will work



Strategy And Tactics

HOW

it will happen

WHY

it will work



There is no strategy not born first of thoughtful organizing principles; and that we can now see.

With that natural form of cogent, powerful assembly at hand, we can also see how to direct it.

But, however much order and systemization are integral to strategy; it must first be applied before it can live, before it can mean anything, and this? This is no ordinary thing!

That leads to more granular questions of how this could happen, how it would unfold and why it would work.

What? When? Why? How?

A step by step plan of strategy and action along with much associated logic and proof can be found here within vital reference materials for the discerning eye, ear, and mind.

STRATEGY AND TACTICS; CONTENT SYNOPSIS

“Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat” is a famous quote attributed to Chinese military strategist and philosopher Sun Tzu.

This advice is very relevant when we consider the approaches so favored by the advocates of our public sphere. Rarely is a genuine strategy even in sight, and on the rare occasions it might be, they are deeply flawed and inadequate to the task at hand.

Analysis, logic and experience clearly reveal - as fact - that waking people up, protest actions, laws, lawsuits and reforms do not constitute a strategy. They are noisy tactics that, unfortunately, most of our engaged civil society insists should be doubled down on. Understood as tactics within a powerful strategy, yes, they can become potentially useful ingredients of change; but as standalone and standard remedies they are proven failures.

In contrast to this poor record, and to offer a thorough explanation of a genuine answer – with no need for hope - this content puts focus on the strategy for realizing the solution of the Citizens Access Network.

Here both movement and mechanism merge with concrete detail as we document:

- ➔ How a successful effort would begin; ***with money no issue***
- ➔ The coalescing of, and impact on, the public; as detailed in “levels of participation”
- ➔ The immediate effect on elected officials and the government beyond, even at its earliest stages - statewide tallies
- ➔ Step by step, milestones and the expected achievements at each phase of the overall effort
- ➔ How the tactics suggested harmonize at all levels of government; from county to federal for maximum impact

The strategy is of course the network, built as the country as built and backed by the power of the nominator; which is no fiat. Signaling that the people are organized and capable of unraveling, protecting and achieving, a host of campaigns can be conducted effectively; and with that everything changes:

- ➔ Organizers working at each level begin an early and crucial initiative process
- ➔ This narrows down agreement to several demands of the highest priority
- ➔ Notice is served to the appropriate and corresponding officials who must respond or face electoral oblivion
- ➔ Allies are unshackled and opponents must make clear opposition to their constituents; and self-government

This is the polar opposite of toothless, feckless, protest actions - and hopes that leaders will reform. The effort gains strength with each step of a very clear process that sees the greater network constructed.

[Click here to view the infographics display](#)

PART-IV

THEMES



**NOTHING WASTED;
MISTAKES AND WISDOM**

**THE MANY SIDES OF
EXPERTISE**

**THE FUSION OF
INSEPARABLE PILLARS**



ETERNAL VIGILANCE

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ETERNAL VIGILANCE

ORGANIZATION, MEDIA AND DESTINY



Connected: organization, media, and destiny

- Voting districts; mapping a nation and making what's big small
- Remove confusion and get command
- Only the people can; strategic separation

Those very different assets and organizing principles previously alluded to are embedded in the design of the country and now — given the routine nature of networked communications — our everyday lives. By connecting that design directly to the citizenry and the source of their power and authority, *the environment of special purpose is enabled*.

It starts with the humble voting district, our most powerful (and forsaken) form of organization; capable of shrinking a gigantic nation into its local components and making its multitude of constituencies visible and manageable.

By mapping the spectrum of offices/officeholders within our vast landscape of local/state and federal districts and connecting them to their voters – their selectorates and electorates – **and these citizens to each other**, visibility gives rise to an ever more informed citizenry capable of action.

These dynamics of citizen control will be accelerated and strengthened by the information the Citizens Access Network's user-member will both build and have access to in this eco-system; that will go beyond the office and office holder.

The confusing hodgepodge of local rules that necessarily results from the decentralized and democratic-republican nature of the nation can be tamed with deeper mapping and simple documentation; providing the citizenry more and more command of their country:

- Rules, procedures and distinguishing characteristics for various elections; particular offices, non-partisan or party affiliation etc.
- Election dates, locations and voter registration methods
- Rules and procedures for candidates seeking office: ballot petitions, deadlines, dates, costs

The foundation of authority that will drive these actions, and make them effective, are confirmed by the power of open ballot access and ownership of the nomination; which makes visible and unquestionable the citizens ability to grant or deny every aspiring/elected official their seat of office.

Now, the citizen is both informed **and** has the authority to deliberate and act. Never again will public action depend on others empowering or permitting it; a power shift of significant proportions to say the least.

The nature of participation in this electoral system ensures the numbers required to create these dynamics are easily quantifiable and always very small. These few will encourage many more as this visible power and purpose transforms our current failed model of an Election Day into an **electoral landscape** as they:

- Stimulate electoral competition and extract all its vast potential
- Manage the electoral process; define its means and ends
- Can swing any election and force all politics of the constituency through this network
- Produce the knowledge/media necessary to explain the stakes and set the agenda

Putting these assets to work would mirror the decisive capabilities of elite networks and easily enough do these things:

- Create subgroups that can focus on specific problems
- Leverage the specialized expertise that exists within the population
- Incentivize the participation of other and/or publicly known experts
- Operate within a framework that is **publicly owned**, priority focused and solutions oriented
- **Organize the creation, sharing and use of a truly new form of media**

This form of genuine collaborative media will:

- Originate from the initiatives, deliberations and priorities of the people.
- Be focused on public policy - from local matters of stops signs to national and international matters of war/peace, money etc.
- Be backed by their fully realized powers as nominators and electors; *which is no fiat!*

However, the clarity that we face a crossroads is required because:

- Failure to make these connections will ensure our long-standing and failed media model will go on - or follow its current path to its logical end.
- Experience should indicate that it will be **unquestionably impossible** to resolve our political and social difficulties without an approach to media that accounts for these failings.

This is not to say that our media can count no accomplishments but that persistent fragmentation combined with the domination of a few siren platforms - *built for very different purposes than powerful citizenship* - has ensured these outcomes.

Personal and entertainment matters are one thing, but the domain of civic affairs is another and necessitates a separate track⁵⁹. There will be no civil society - in any sense of the term - without a specifically purposed civil media..

Here again there is pivotal interdependence:

- To drive the creation of this media form means those who participate must have full confidence that its product will have immediate and powerful impact
- No positive change can be effected without a form of media that is connected to spontaneous authority and the possibility for impactful action

There are other considerations as well.

With many mushrooming problems, some clear and present dangers - all of a specialized nature - we face not only a crossroads but also the need for a great unraveling; *there is a lot to do*. But, with it obvious that our elite jet setting people, their institutions, and meetings are not up to that task, it falls to the capable people.


Failing their intervention, we can expect the imposition of more sweeping changes, some perhaps commanded by “emergency”, which will affect everyone on the planet.

As is typical, they will be:

- Established in impenetrable, multi-thousand page laws with more multi-thousand pages of regulations to come
- Directed and carried out by the same authorities and institutions responsible for the crisis in the first place - *however reformed they may claim to be*

To avoid this fate and master our own destinies we must begin by assembling with the correct knowledge as to our powers as citizens of a very unbroken system.

⁵⁹ <http://www.karlalbrecht.com/downloads/Albrecht-IR-BrokenPromises-WorldFutureSociety.pdf>



GOLD vs. FIAT


Gold vs Fiat

Not an economic treatise but a breakdown on how big issues get treated in the purported environment.

Where momentous decisions and public policy meet is both crisis and crossroads. This demands a focus on the question of media, what it is and, what it must be.

Such moments typically bring imposed, impenetrable, and sweeping changes and “Gold versus Fiat” is just one of many examples that may be quickly approaching.

1913 all over again or will it be different?



"A bad workman blames his tools."

-Unknown



MISPLACED BLAME

Human society has never lacked for irrationality or contradictions; nor in troubled times have people ever hesitated to point fingers of blame. However, it's possible that our current situation has us where no man has quite gone before. Fears, many plausible, of just about everything reign supreme.

Amidst a lot of outright weirdness and divisions galore there is also an endless proliferation of media filtering all of the action through the classic polarity of good guys vs. bad.

Faced with circumstances that appear both familiar and uncharted, it seems we are in a time and place that is simultaneously unchanged yet unique.

For example; irrational as ever, we still have many weapons of mass destruction BUT they no longer limited to cinder reducing nuclear weapons or population annihilating biological weapons.

⁶⁰No, they now include off-the-shelf genetic engineering kits capable of making us smart or stupid, artificial intelligence capable of serving or enslaving us, trans-humanism that promises to immortalize our souls-*by computerizing them and* the "science" of transgenics; which might soon make us four-legged beasts suitable for entry in the Kentucky Derby.

To the cool observer of this bold new world the obvious contradiction is that despite the moment - a moment featuring unparalleled media saturation - there is only the sound of crickets where a call for a genuine solution might be expected. A solution that might be capable of steering us clear of the coming abyss and at least putting a dent in that ancient narrative that pits the bad, powerful few against the powerless - and finger-pointing - many.

A clear demand for a genuine solution could not be expected to come from our mainstream spheres of politics, activism, academia, or media whose true allegiances and associated constraints can be easily understood with even a bit of analysis.

What is remarkable though is the deafening - and not so golden - silence coming from the domain of our alternative media and from their audience; *the awake people of the United States.*

60 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-005-0007-4>

This ever increasing province - mostly of the internet - with a proud mission of truth telling (you're going to die) and truth receiving (I know) does demand some scrutiny.

Mostly this variety of media producer stays hidden in a carefully controlled environment and so sports a resistance to inquiry and criticism that their hated rival, the mainstream could only dream of. With praise that frequently comes from its own ranks, its over-hyped promises of truth and change are rarely questioned; and are not tolerated on the infrequent occasions they are.

Notwithstanding their claims of delivering radical truth and change, the feeder system of our media sphere remains fully intact with an unchanged focus on the same distant issues we cannot affect and the same remote people we won't be having a beer with anytime soon.

As usual the people at large are mere spectators with no clear influence and of little account. As usual our rulers and leaders are free play their roles and plot their course with impunity.

This media form indicts our greater political and social culture on charges of conditioning us to be submissive, indifferent creatures but seems to fail its own test given its obsessions with mainstream stories of good vs. evil, political horse races, corrupt politicians, debased celebrities and all the rest.

It states no clear mission beyond "truth" and a self-righteous criticism of the mainstream, while it more and more grotesquely apes its trappings of anchor desks and "cool" graphics.

On the other hand, their supposedly aware audiences of many millions - presumably of like-mind - are asked only to like, share, subscribe or donate. Disturbingly, they dutifully obey this order while demanding nothing more from their "new media", their peers or themselves.

To be sure, these are clear and damning failures but to be fair and seek lessons we must look at flip side of that coin and ask if there is value this "community" has produced.

What useful perspective have they shared? What awareness has been raised? Has any good come from it all?

Well, in recent years many features and factors of society's inner workings have been brought to light that were previously unknown to all but the few researchers and advocates who took them on.

This includes, but is by no means limited to subject matter like:

- The influence banking practices and bankers have on global societies and economies (the subject of this chapter)
- Polarization; in terms of the dialectical function of partisanship and parties in electoral politics

- The use of “controlled opposition” and other tools of propaganda in public media and debate
- “Problem - reaction - solution” techniques and its use to shape world events

Yes, credit is due.

It is no small accomplishment that these and so many other “hidden” yet decisive influences have been brought to light and explained to millions.

There is also the benefit of seeing many capable people - who might otherwise toil in obscurity - get a platform from which they can examine, educate, and speak their truth to a ready audience.

That is big stuff that would seem to present an unprecedented opportunity.

With such awareness raised and stakes defined could we not engineer this knowledge and sharing - *into action capable of breaking the age-old cycle?*

Now that we have all this - now that we know what we know; *WHAT DO WE DO??*

However, the natural question of “then what?” has become the Rubicon we won’t cross. Our moment of truth - of ultimate truth - we always fail to meet.

Accepting this failure by continually offering undiscerning support to remote, unaccountable people, in the absence of a discerning demand for more or better - from ourselves and others - should make it clear.

We, “the awake”, have reduced all of this; the revelations, the dire warnings etc. to simple entertainment.

- Regardless of the moment, a movie we watch.
- Irrespective of the stakes, a game we attend.
- Just another product and complex of our mass culture; in this case our *entertainment-fear-complaint complex*.

Is it possible that with this careless indulgence of all things broadcast we are being negligent? Is the finger of blame we point at our hated mainstream media, elites, and politicians just an abdication of our own responsibility to take care of ourselves?

Are we just like the workman who with a bad result blames his “inadequate tools” instead of reflecting on his talent, the approach to his work, or his resolve to improve?

This conclusion only stands to reason.

"When written in chinese, the word 'crisis' is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity."

-John F. Kennedy



AGREEMENT-OPPORTUNITY

Despite some controversy that surrounds this idea it shouldn't be considered an inherently evil thing to consider a crisis an opportunity; it depends on who's doing the opportuning and to what end; doesn't it?

It is very understandable that we fear change and resist it but such resistance can feed an inertia that may turn a decline in to a crisis and perhaps a crisis into complete obliteration.

History is replete with such outcomes and their mostly unlearned lessons so any denial of that possibility - or likelihood - must be soundly rejected as ignorant, magical thinking lest it further delude an already too uncritical population; as we have seen, *one subject to a strange urge to convert even proof of its certain demise into entertainment.*

Yet, despite the all irrationality and contradiction, we do witness this growing consciousness and agreement that a crisis may be at hand and that the hour is late. This unusual nexus of **awareness and agreement** is a revealing signal that a genuine opportunity exists.

The opportunity clear minded individuals concerned more with action - and less with questions of blame - are in a unique position to press!

This, because as awareness and agreement meet, so too do our modern communications and media systems. If they would only be properly used - and fused - they could offer people a path that's only been within the reach of strongly tied elites; with their many intersecting interests, institutions, clubs and meetings.

Though these assets have been at our disposal for decades, it could be argued that we previously lacked the awareness, clarity, and agreement about the dangers we faced and hence missed the opportunity those assets offered.

That argument however can no longer be made.

**"A gem is not polished
without rubbing, nor a man
perfected without trials."**

-Unknown



A NECESSARY UNDERTAKING

And so, here we sit on the brink; allowing ourselves to get here despite boasting the abundance of awareness our abundant tools of learning and communications have brought us.

From their beginning these tools also had social media constructs of sophisticated technology that promised much in the way of (good) political and social change which, unfortunately, has not materialized. *So what happened?*

Well, as things sorted out, power and reach devolved to a few giant platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and the like.

Interestingly, while these leading platforms took their shape and hold, countless new means and methods for public broadcast did still regularly appear and successfully integrate into that ecosystem.

In addition to these networks and platforms we also have seen a proliferation of many types of “political forums” designed to incite and manage public “dialogue and debate” and take new-media to the next level.

Remarkably, we can see this great eruption of activity has produced both dominant entities of historic significance *and* some emergent ones too.

But, paradoxically, all the sound and fury has not only failed to produce the much hyped political-social change we were promised, it has actually become a destabilizing element as power has become more concentrated, our public sphere more fragmented, and the public temper more dangerously inflamed.

So, something is wrong with this picture and it should be clear what it is; nothing from the glut of these “innovations” has ever been built with the express purpose of promoting advanced and powerful citizenship for and amongst the people of this country.

- Not more “truth” separated from action offered by wannabe journalists.
- Not opportunities to “monetize”.
- Not encouraging the soft ideals of engagement, voice, dialogue, or phony empowerment.
- Not leaders lecturing from their lecterns.

No! Something built for one purpose only; to be a publicly owned institution dedicated to the promotion and management of advanced citizenship and power.

The urgent undertaking of such a project is absolutely necessary because:

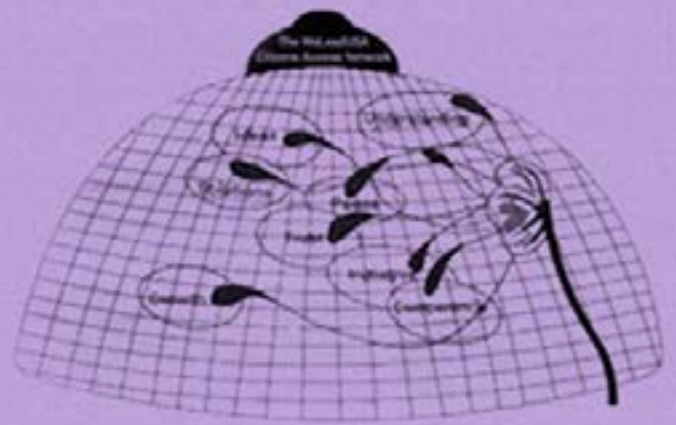
- More blame of bad elites;
- More hope for change brought to you by leaders;
- More mindless consumption;
- By More people;
- Of More of the same media/message;
- Producing More of the same waste product;

Represents no plan.

We must accept the challenge to find a solution and accept that it cannot be left to anyone else.

"The sky's the limit if you have a roof over your head."

-Sol Hurock



ROOF

Considered another way, a platform of advanced citizenship and power would be **a home**.

Since having shelter from the many storms life presents is a pretty high priority to the survival of any species, not least our own, it might make sense to consider the possibility that our problems stem from a lack of shelter; *a public roof over our civic heads*.

One might argue that the venues previously mentioned constitute a roof. With all its content – cosmic in scope – produced by a population of their peers, our citizens not only have a place to conduct citizenship, they enjoy a vast expanse of “choices” only the internet could offer.

That however would be a tough argument to make and even if one did; it’s proven to be one leaky roof!

This is because the extreme of options has led to these extremes in fragmentation and this in turn has placed profound limits on our ability to **capture agreement** and organize around it. However, the elite forces of government and governance are organized as they meet and communicate under many domes:

- From innumerable legislative convening’s
- To the endless gatherings of the experts and their think-tanks
- To those incessant meetings of leaders jet setting across the world making their always highly bureaucratic and difficult to follow “grand bargains”.
- Not to mention those many get togethers – known and unknown – with murky or secretive aims.

The people on the other hand have their cosmic, fragmented, and quite leaky roof; a proven failure.

- Our “choices” derive from materials published by distant people and organizations that too often thrive on reaction and speculation
 - ↑ Contrast that with the tight networks, coherent data and effective arrangements of the political elite

- Our environment enables motives to be easily hidden, ‘facts’ easily shaped, and for resources to be spread thin
 - ↑ Contrast that with the clarity the so-called elites have always cultivated and leveraged to amass vast resources
- In our ecosystem even the best work, made with the best intentions depend on the “single author broadcasting” model which has stated no aim to organize or evolve; EVER!
 - ↑ Contrast this with the media and message control of the established order and it’s easy to see how the few never fail to control the many; no matter how disastrous their results

The lesson of all this should be clear to a child; an emphasis must be put on channeling existent energies and enterprise into something that will establish a counterweight.

A genuine network- such that elites have historically enjoyed.

"Science is organized knowledge, wisdom is organized life"

-Immanuel Kant



WISDOM IS ORGANIZED

Kant makes an interesting point.

Whatever the domain, knowledge that is organized offers the possibility for a systematic approach to understanding and decision-making. Grounded in a solid foundation of true comprehension, a careful, even scientific process will make for wise decisions.

However, the public's ability to organize its vast knowledge across a cosmic expanse of subject matter, specialization, personal interest, and professional experience is severely limited because of that "roof problem".

The absence of such a crucial resource does not only **NOT** promote wisdom it explains much about the political, social, and economic decline of the United States. Once an engine powerful enough to overcome many impediments, harness enough human innovation and ambition to produce some rising tides, times have changed.

Many factors that include big shifts in technology and the erosion of civic society's ability to balance power and stem abuses ensures the ability to achieve at those levels will be elusive.

In fact, these dynamics intend to engineer a playing field that offers less and less to get them with.

All this makes it extremely unrealistic to expect the problem to be solved with any dependence on our prevailing methods, ideas, people, or corporations.

The historic futility of the struggle should demonstrate - unquestionably - that an enduring solution, capable of ending this never-ending cycle, can only come from a **people; at large**.

No person or entity in some position of authority or, in any way entrenched - even modestly benefiting from the status quo - will do this (or could do this alone)! The dearth of pleas, proposals and involvement coming from our multiplex of poetically waxing public advocates attests to this. At the same time we should not want them to; it is only for children that there should be an expectation of being cared for.

As children and adolescents we can't wait to grow up and make our own decisions.

Therefore, it only stands to reason the genuine adult cannot and will not accept a foisting upon them of immense distances from the momentous decisions that will determine their fate.

Nor would they leave to others the work that is necessary to organize their knowledge and produce the wisdom the moment calls for.

"Listening moves us closer, it helps us become more whole, more healthy, more holy. Not listening creates fragmentation, and fragmentation is the root of all suffering.

-Margaret J. Wheatley



RESPONSIBLE SUMMATION

An acceptance of this truth requires the genuine adult conclude the following:

- The absence of our effective citizenship has been fueled by our state of dependency and fragmentation; this means we first are responsible for the unhappy state of affairs that exist.
- To even maintain, much less improve our civilization, a gigantic unraveling of the gigantic number of corrosive problems we face will be necessary.
- This historic crisis also represents an historic opportunity.
- We must do it ourselves and not depend on leaders alone and reject those who only focus on problems or blame.
- That it will be indispensable to a future that secures freedom and prosperity that we establish a specifically and specially purposed home and dome under which OUR work will be done.
- It must make us powerful so as to ensure a coherent representative body of the people are the key decision makers and overseers of our public affairs.
- It must process our now infinite bustle into organized knowledge that produces wisdom through public discourse and decision-making.



Roger Stancill 1 day ago

Maybe WE THE PEOPLE need to start more groups of micro-management systems and set up a plan B. We don't have to be victims... We are Americans and we can be innovative and help each other, regardless of 'their' plans. DO IT Peace

Reply • 22

[Hide replies](#)



Laniemarie427 1 day ago

I agree & think ppl can come together, but the current state of HOA'S...OMG. Hate them. Hate thy neighbor. Lol

Reply •



Jason Nolan 1 day ago

+Roger Stancill beautiful plan man... too bad the majority of your country are stuck in their couches watching FAUX news

Reply • 2



Ma Le 1 day ago

+Jason Nolan agreed. nobody wants to hear about truth. so frustrating.

"The most powerful force ever known on this planet is human cooperation-a force for construction and destruction."

-Jonathan Haidt



COOPERATION VS. SWEEPING CHANGE

So what portion of the population is it that will do the cooperating? And as a result, what will be built or destroyed?

By taking one of our most pressing, important, and complex issues we can create a vivid example of how the specifically and specially purposed environment of the Citizens Access Network would work and help us to:

- Scientifically organize our information
- Produce wise decisions
- Be the decisive cooperators and builders in society.

The multi-headed hydra of our debt, currency, monetary, and central/fractional reserve banking system has produced more panics, bubbles, busts, and misery than any other.

In large part these cycles of great disruption are made possible by the great expertise of a few and the great ignorance of the many. To end the imbalances that feed these cycles - in all their forms - requires a shift in power that will enable "the gigantic unraveling".

And so, least of all, can we entrust what is perhaps our most dangerous, most integral make-or-break system to our traditional methods and power centers.

Against this backdrop there is a global sovereign debt crisis with everyone well aware that the United States is hopelessly liable for some \$20 trillion; officially. That does not however include many unofficial trillions more in unfunded obligations in the form of pension fund, social security, healthcare and other untold and sometimes hidden guarantees.

However, the growing awareness amongst the public regarding the dangers of excessive debt has brought with it a great deal more controversy about the history of and necessity for central banks; particularly private central banks that control our money supply and systems of international banking and finance.

In parallel, there has also been growing dispute surrounding the methods of commercial banking; especially those which allow money to be created and loaned on the basis of fractional reserves.



WE IN AMERICA DO NOT HAVE GOVERNMENT BY THE MAJORITY. WE HAVE GOVERNMENT BY THE MAJORITY WHO PARTICIPATE.

-THOMAS JEFFERSON

The importance of these matters and the volatility of the sector have produced consistent calls to control these dynamics and of course, laws have been passed; lengthy complex laws.

Laws of this kind are often instituted in times of crisis *while at other, more quiet moments, they* have been blithely ignored or repealed.

However, in recent decades one persistently looming remedy demands we replace what is considered our “fiat” currency - money that is simply printed (invented) by the banks - and back it with something of supposed intrinsic value; typically precious metals like gold or silver.

So now as the cycle once again threatens to bite, a real possibility for sweeping change lurks. Should it come, it will no doubt be incited by the ‘opportunity’ of crisis that is now a clear and present danger.

Perhaps even commanded by international decree, this change of massive importance to everyone on the planet will surely be imposed like all the others; and established in impenetrable multi-thousand page laws with more multi-thousand pages of regulations waiting to come.

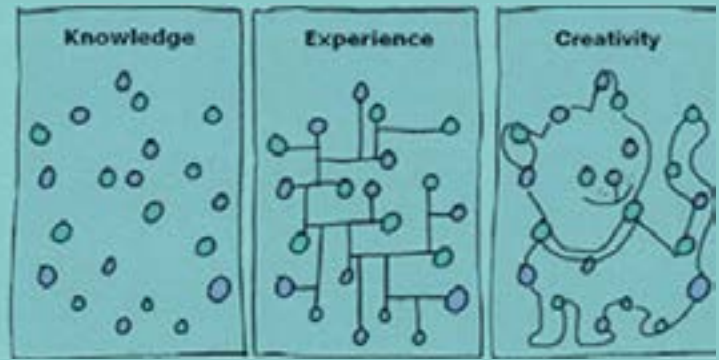
It is also certain those same authorities and institutions responsible for the crisis in the first place - however reformed they may claim to be - will be the ones to determine the aims of these measures; and carry them out.

Under these circumstances do we need to ask whose benefit will be served?

OR...

"Information's pretty thin stuff unless mixed with experience."

- Clarence Day



GENUINE NEW MEDIA

We can keep this - and all the other - momentous decisions out of the hands of those elites and in our own. To do so we must have the power and infrastructure the Citizen's Access Network will afford us in order to systemize our knowledge into the wise decision making that is so necessary.

To illustrate how the people and framework of this network would respond to *this* question, we presume the network exists; with the understanding that even at its earliest stages - the statewide tallies - the actions described here can be effectively carried out as the most powerful audience ever assembled mobilizes.

The reality of that mobilization, and what it signals, ensures the calls to action described here will be answered and that the participants represented - for illustrative purposes - here will show up; - just as the previous comment from Roger Stancill suggests.

WeLeadUSA Media Producers – From our member/partner base, those capable of creating and coordinating the particular production this scenario demands and that is described below.

Council Of Distinguished Guests - Certain noted authorities in this field who hold the necessary and differing perspectives; For example, it might look something like this:

Expandable Money Supply Team



Gold Standard Team



Martin Armstrong - President of Princeton economics; a globally distinguished thinker, market trader, technologist and advisor to many governments, institutions and the general public.

Ellen Brown - President of the Public Banking Institute, a non partisan think tank devoted to the creation of publicly run banks.

Felix Martin - Felix Martin is a macroeconomist and fund manager and also an associate of the institute for New Economic Thinking in New York. He is author of the renowned book "Money: The Unauthorized Biography".

Richard Werner - Werner's book "Princes of the Yen" was a number one general bestseller in Japan in 2001. The book covers the monetary policy of the Bank of Japan specifically, and central bank informal guidance of bank credit in general. Richard Werner is a monetary and development economist.

Steve Forbes - is renowned American publishing executive and advocate for gold backed currency, who was twice a candidate for the nomination of the Republican Party for president.

Peter Schiff - is a prominent American stockbroker, author, and one-time Senate candidate and a vocal critic of the existing fiat system.

Ron Paul - is a leading critic of the Federal Reserve System and a fiat based dollar. He is an author, physician, and former politician who served as the U.S Representative for Texas' 14th and 22nd congressional districts.

The Ludwig von Mises Institute - Advocates for currency as a store of value and for it to be backed by something of intrinsic value. They claim to be a center of classical liberalism, libertarian political theory, and the "Austrian School of Economics " with many works by Mises, Rothbard, Hayek, and others reprinted.

Distinguished specialists, recognized by the public for their work would be a crucial component to such efforts and as established public figures they will certainly aspire to have their voices heard in so decisive a forum; but it cannot be left to them/that alone. Therefore, we will also establish:

The Citizens Access Network Committee of Experts - An integral part of the knowledge and media creating process will be to impanel those WeLeadUSA member-users with the requisite expertise and interest in the subject matter at hand to participate in the proceedings.

In this case, with background in areas such as trading, banking, accounting-finance, academia/research etc., The Committee of Experts will bring their experience to bear and make key contributions by examining, questioning and reconciling as the production moves forward.



Regarding Subject Matter The Media Production Team Would:

- Amass general background; study and formulate the direction of the production
- Choose from our public sphere the people appropriate to the role of “distinguished guest”
- Work to understand the positions of their arguments, pro and con
- Apply “actionable intelligence” to conduct important fact checking, language smoothing and background on those positions and claims
- Formulate the specific questions, exemplars and paradigms the production should cover
- Then produce a design of inquiry suitable to guide the proceeding. It might look something like this;

Regarding The Production, The Team Would Be Responsible For:

- **Outreach** - assist in coordinating the participation of and the logistics for the personnel necessary to the production
- **Format** - managing the decision making process regarding the production format best suited to the subject matter at hand
- **Development and execution** - design, writing, development, post production, videography and other associated tasks



When ready, all the players would be called upon and the production recorded; this however this will be media of a very different sort:



Before - This would not limited to the usual treatment where “media authorities” hand pick their so-called experts – perhaps with conflicting interests – who offer their various opinions in an environment meant for nothing more than to have everybody go home and forget about it.

After - Material would be produced transparently, by readily accessible peers, and offered to an enduring, motivated audience. In a disciplined environment built to document knowledge and experience in an evolving decision-making process; there will be traction.

Before - Results of the work are not left to rot; “solutions” offered that never see the light of day because they carry with them no vetting processing or influence born of genuine support.

After - The power of the nominator backs this assembly of the people and that is no fiat; it would be the strongest currency imaginable.

It will ensure all the players come, participate honorably, and the decisions reached will be the principal source of “advise and consent” in our public sphere.

Before - The discussion would NOT be limited by time or commercial imperatives.

After - It could continue over some days - in various places if necessary - by keeping a remote conversation going as long as it takes to cover the necessary ground.

Before - Questions that come up, doubts that linger are not left unanswered.

After - As the network community absorbs the material and learns, it also interacts within and through its framework; follow up questions or contradictions would be identified, pursued and eventually answered; on an ongoing basis.

Before - An imposed “good vs. bad” dialectic that encourages emotion, and sentiment that obscures and obfuscates is sidelined.

After - The deliberative infrastructure that both creates and processes this knowledge ensures the means, methods, and mood to pursue genuine problem solving will persist and prevail while the forces of inertia and entrenchment are weakened and vanquished.

Before - The next headline, stone-walling by power centers, or the clever use of politics and media to confuse, distract, and discourage will no longer work.

After - Throughout this process elected officials – and with them the government beyond - will be enmeshed in the proceedings of this network as will potential political and intellectual rivals with direct access to the constituency.

The result will be a transparent and effective public sphere where those holding responsible public positions - elected or appointed - will participate and come to know the clear will of their constituencies - that are now organized and powerful so results and decisions will be abided!



**"If you want something
you've never had you've
got to do something
you've never done."**

-Unknown



NOTHING WASTED

As to these particular questions of currency and finance, history has recorded times that saw both:

- Progress and regress
- Peace and belligerence
- Abundance and scarcity
- Rises and falls

Regardless of how money was understood or banking executed.

Further, these times, whether stable or troubled or ancient or modern operated with financial and economic systems based on at least some of the approaches discussed here and it cannot be reasonably argued they have performed well, or well enough.

This leads to two crucial questions:

1. Is any system of a society - economic or otherwise - apt to serve its highest purpose if it's subject to constant neglect, power imbalances, and predatory interventions?
2. Do we suffer a crucial loss of focus and influence due to our vulnerability to the explosive conflict potential that underlies most any issue or method; at the expense of what really matters: power, transparency, details, intent and the like?

The immense and interrelated nature of economics, currency, banking, government and freedom are illustrated here in order to reveal just some of these many vital questions and the contrasts they raise.

However, if the Citizens Access Network were to be built, these principles would apply just the same to any of the multitude of issues we'd face in the unraveling.

This, because as specific groups form - with their various **goals - issues - expertise** - within the broader network community, the framework and its processes will work to ensure stable and powerful results; on matters as diverse as stop signs and schools to those of war and peace.

But, first, the *actual* public - unentrenched and dependent on no proxy - will have to take the simple, yet unprecedented step of building an institution of its own making.

By doing so it will:

- Make the people's influence decisive by enabling its collective expertise to be applied to any issue; *great or small*.
- End the historic pattern of public absence and non-organization that enable elite decision-making to answer such questions for us; often in crises of murky origins that permit sweeping transformation of fateful consequence.
- Create an enduring presence that will control the perpetual pestilence of neglect and abuse and finally defeat this great enemy of freedom.

Clearly, the resolve to take such actions starts first in the mind; and the heart.

"Loyalty to a petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul.."

- Mark Twain



PERCEPTIONS AND OUTCOMES

The example offered here - of a momentous question and a framework for its proper consideration- readily demonstrates the degree to which such matters are resistant to a simplistic conclusion of **this GOOOD** and **that BAAAD**.

But that doesn't make it so complicated either.

What is simple is to first vehemently reject any process based on sweeping changes, wrought by crisis, executed by elite institutions and people making opaque arguments and simplistic appeals to bias or emotion.

What isn't complicated is for one to resist and reject such trespasses regardless of their beliefs⁶¹ as to how things should work; that is the ancient trap that must be avoided.

Things too important to leave to elite bodies and people are also too important to leave to preconceived notions or hope; they need to be understood and worked out through a careful and transparent process.

A process that:

- Is directly within our power to create; with no obstructions
- Can strip out the unnecessary complexities, controls and deceptions we face in tackling such questions
- Will enable us to examine long-held beliefs and contain the unhelpful, reflexive responses such matters often drive. Free of charge, it would also help us shift our perspective just a little and see things VERY differently.

For example we could:

- See useful, principled differences; *instead of disagreement*
- See the opportunity for coalition; *instead of faction*
- See teachers and genuine leadership; *instead of winners and losers*

With those simple acts of autonomy we succeed in freeing ourselves from the many petrified bonds and chains that imprison us.

⁶¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation_bias

We are then ready to establish:

- A foundation for rigorous study and dialogue
- A framework specifically designed for honest inquiry, fact finding and policy making
- A process that not only respects data but also our historic experience and individual creative energies
- A simple eternal vigilance
- Our control of public decision-making in all matters we prioritize; be they of a momentous or more modest nature

So, the most profound change we can make is a very simple one.

Simple because it has been demonstrated without question that, if wisely organized and purposed, even a tiny percentage of our vast - yet futile output - would make us present and powerful in a way no people before us have ever been.

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Begining

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**

INFORMED CITIZENS

THE PROBLEM

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH ...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK!

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINED... NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

THE PROBLEM

The Problem

More cogent moments; just so we're clear on what the problem really is.

THE PROBLEM; VIDEO PLAYLIST SYNOPSIS

The Problem playlist is also validating content, but in this case confirming the critical arguments made throughout these pages regarding the sphere of “professional” advocacy. As conventional remedies are based on only a partial or flawed understanding of the problem they’re focused on, they much neglect the realities of both system and life.

Hence, the efforts consistently fail, yet are consistently pursued; a fighting of the last war bringing predictable results.

This playlist features interesting statements from, among others, Heather Gerkin of Yale University and Harvard professor, uber activist and former candidate for president of the United States, Larry Lessig. Larry always seems to be very helpful, offering deep insights; some very strange indeed.

Gerkin explains very succinctly why the effort to overturn Citizens United is misplaced and misspent. Contrary to conventional beliefs, Citizens United did not change very much about political money in terms of who could spend or, how much, or on what they could spend it.

What it did was essentially allow *statements* to be made that previously were restricted; specifically statements that advocated voting for or against specific candidates in political ADVERTISING. Before Citizens United, silly political advertising could be used to denounce - however absurdly - a particular candidate. However, what could not be said in that ad was “**vote against him**”.

After this decision, you could say: *vote against him*.

Hardly seems the stuff of constitutional amendments or worthy of all the anguish. Yet, no sooner was this Supreme Court decision rendered, did numerous entities from the advocacy sphere emerge and go into business. Their purpose would be to condemn the decision they said was sure to open the money floodgates and make our politics even worse; a complete misdiagnosis at best.

Another revealing clip in this playlist features Professor Lessig with a very important insight that tells us why the predominant model of professional advocacy – at least in the domain of civics - is a very poor one indeed. He simply tells the truth; that many of the public figures whose behavior he’d like to censure

- and change - are in fact his friends. This illustrates the point previously noted that these people travel in circles that make for strong ties amongst them; circles and ties the citizenry does not share. This will make for conflicts of interests that, despite requiring no exchange of favors, is just as damaging as those that do; if not more so.

Capturing another key point elegantly is a telling clip featuring a panel of community advocates who are discussing the problems characteristic of their organizing efforts. They lament the difficulties caused by an overarching focus on leaders which serves to reduce people's involvement and the taking of personal responsibility. A cautionary comment states clearly that these dynamics are turning their efforts into nothing less than a nonprofit industrial complex.

The negative consequences - of both complex and fixed hierarchy - for society have been discussed implicitly and explicitly throughout these pages that fully explain how the Citizens Access Network resolves them.

[Click here to view the video playlist](#)

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK!

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINED. NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

LET'S CHOOSE WISELY

achieve
realism
analyze

Much like for shopping or a brand analysis, here an informative, interactive comparison table contrasts our typical and failed approaches to public problem solving i.e. laws, reforms, third parties etc., to the powerful effects of the proposed Citizens Access Network.

The capable public's precious resources of confidence, attention, money and energy must not be wasted on what won't work; choose our actions wisely we must!

FAQs in context

LET'S CHOOSE WISELY; CONTENT SYNOPSIS

As most Americans are focused on personalities and events it would be easy to suggest that the history of reform proposals, and the “thought leaders” that promote them, are unimportant. Certainly little critical attention is paid to these influences by media and their political analysts

However, reflecting on the neglecting reveals harmful and consistent errors in public thought and method. As fragmented advocacy fragments the ability of the public to understand more precisely the issues they face, their ability to choose corrective actions more wisely is reduced.

This does damage because the ability of the concerned public to discern where they might devote resources appropriately – with little wasted - is crucial to positive change.

We have seen how this domain exerts much more authority than might first be thought and has a long, clear record; potentially offering many valuable lessons. However, if no lessons are sought, they cannot be learned and conventional thinking will go unchanged. Therefore, it has been necessary throughout these pages to look for critical guidance, gained from the failed approaches, in active and earnest pursuit of what could work.

Reinforcing and summarizing that aspect of this work is the Let’s Choose Wisely content that puts forward side-by-side analysis of the principles presented here to the typical remedies offered.

As those remedies rarely deviate from those chosen for this review, the “Choose Wisely” grid makes for compact, high-altitude arguments that create useful contrasts enabling the solution of the Citizens Access Network to be better, and more fully understood.

The study is set up to compare:

The WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network vs.

1. A Repeal of the Citizens United supreme court decision; by constitutional amendment
2. Campaign finance, disclosure, or other anti-political money/anti-corruption reforms in general

3. Electoral and voting reform: i.e. Nonpartisan redistricting, term limiting elected officials, nonpartisan primaries, instant runoffs, proportional voting, top two/blanket primaries, etc.

4. A third party or additional political parties

Reinforcing the logic amassed throughout this work, the point is made that while measures like those to reduce money in politics, or reduce corruption, is all well and good, any laws passed would still be subject to an unchanged system of law and the enforcement of that law; dependencies that will remain unchanged with any (long wrangled for) passage.

The grid attempts to show that any proposal suggesting derivative measures, based on **quantitative** mass action will create **qualitative** results - like proximity to, and power over, our elected officials is more than a little misguided.

Another comparison treats the belief of many that the answer is a Third political party that would break the stranglehold of our two major parties; *a potentially damaging bit of advocacy as that stranglehold is largely mythical.*

Further, the idea that a Third party would not be subject to the same corrupting influences - and desires - our current ones are subject to represents a major leap of faith. Also, little considered in such proposals are the dangers posed by fragmenting our electoral sphere; particularly when our long existing one is so little understood.

Another example present here is the advocacy for nonpartisan redistricting reform, an issue that has generated some public attention. However this concern seems to pay very little attention to the question of whether there are really significant - and principled - differences between the two major parties.

⁶²If they are not, a higher likelihood of electing a representative from one or the other party - as opposed to only one - would hardly do any good; and the misconceptions don't end there.

Having it all laid creates the possibility for discussion free of careless conventional wisdom and entrenched advocacy.

[Click here to view the Infographic display and FAQ's](#)

62 <https://ivn.us/2012/11/06/100-ways-republicans-are-just-like-democrats/>



ETERNAL VIGILANCE

The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US

EXECUTING

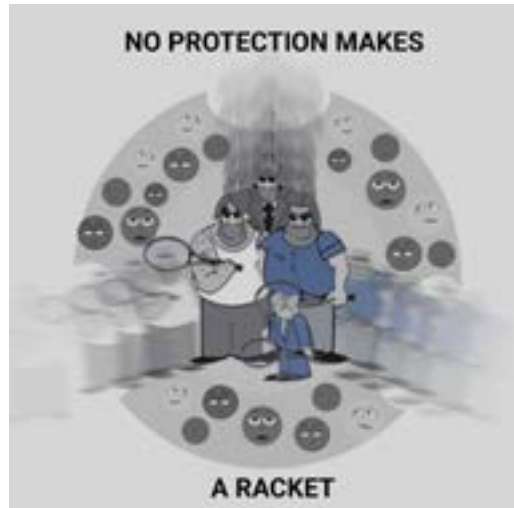
And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

It Must Be Kept
BY US

ETERNAL VIGILANCE



Reality; protection is a fundamental requirement

- The elected officials dilemma
- Politicians; not representing, but representative
- Underneath everything are elections; the electoral system
- Citizenship; to speak for yourself, you need others

Woven throughout the fabric of this work is an emphasis on the concept of protection, its meaning and key interdependence in both civic and electoral affairs.

In all its forms, the question of protection for whom and from what is pivotal, as is also the question of what happens in the absence of - *or could happen in the presence of* - such protection. In the arena of elections and electoral processes this chiefly means elected officials being offered crucial political protection by their constituents. However, the concept of protection does not and cannot end there.

We previously established that intrigues have come to dominate public minds and media and how essential it is that the citizenry is prepared to deal with these matters. Those in positions of authority or *in the know* that might have important information to share, or their platforms to lend must be made comfortable; and transparent. Therefore, the clear need for civic protection - and scrutiny - in these instances would be central to such preparation. However obvious this need is or should be, it goes mostly unacknowledged. On the very rare occasions where that's not the case, **empty lip service paid by those who preach but don't practice ensures the point will be quickly forgotten.**

The concept and reality of protection must also extend to an active citizenry that, while pursuing its goals, will be both protected - yet also restrained - by discerning fellow citizens. This will not only ensure safety for those speaking out, but also ensure the proper study and exposure of what might be unrepresentative or purposely radical discourse and demands.

Going back to our electoral sphere, we see that the methods for applying political pressure may change over time; but how the underlying forces elected officials face remain consistent. They have been documented throughout this work; starting with the video content **Unbroken America**.

In its modern form, these pressures are transmitted via the money media election complex whose first line of defense - and simultaneously offense - against those who both hold and seek office is unprincipled competition (or the threat of it) organized, sanctioned, or tolerated at the nomination level. This means that all elected officials are vulnerable to this “soft” form of intimidation *and always have to worry*; even if there are no skeletons in their closet.

These concerns place our immediate focus on the idea of protection from artificial, unprincipled electoral competition. Though these dynamics can operate along differing paths of purpose and hierarchy, it is always the true driving force in **our visible political-civic system**.

One level where this may play out is where hard truths, difficult decisions, nuance, and the possible need for sacrifice sits. This, as the endless list of unpleasant choices life often leaves us will always be fodder for simple demagogic tactics; and those willing to use them. For instance, elected officials’ fears of such unprincipled opportunism related to the closure of surplus military bases necessitated the creation of a commission - to both decide matters and protect officials. This is but one contemporary and illustrative case in point where “political courage” may create openings for ambitious political figures; making such courage something to be avoided at all costs.

Another level of the dynamic is the threat of more formal and hierarchally organized (though largely hidden) **electoral competition** executed against the unruly or undesirable; perhaps those unenthused about fundraising tasks or serious about exposing abuses.

However, in such cases, the taking of official, electoral action would be something of an ultimate “big stick” as the soft walk of deterrence - always present - makes drastic measures quite avoidable. On the rare to non-existent occasions where this may not be enough, the complex initiating and supporting active electoral competition, **at the nomination level** - where it will be unfailingly punitive and effective - is a relatively simple matter. Redistricting such a person out of office is another quiet tool, albeit a more intricate one, at the disposal of those running the game.⁶³

63 <http://www.moremonmouthmusings.net/2011/06/05/could-pallone-be-a-redistricting-target/>

This should leave little doubt that anyone attempting to exercise genuine leadership - which mostly cannot avoid crossing the organized and motivated - will be left exposed and soon find they are under attack. With the people having with no defense against a multi-media onslaught of, unfounded or hysterical hyperbole⁶⁴, “opposition research” - and no doubt much else - and the politician left with no protection, their taking a courageous stance is irrational.

Implicitly and explicitly documented throughout this work is **the elected official's dilemma**; the lack of that visible and powerful constituency. This is a dynamic given little consideration by all those public voices “sharing” their displeasure; and certainties about a broken system. Given the many truths never sought - much less told - and the vast demoralizing and discrediting implications of their rhetoric, this represents failure of significant proportions.

Any realism applied to the issue would extract the simple truth; a citizenry that cannot be depended on to even conceive, much less create such outcomes exercises the height of an infantile ignorance by having any expectation that their “public servants” should owe or pay them any allegiance.

Also demonstrating the soft *underbelly* of the American people is their unfortunate and confused overemphasis on the presidency; something revealed by a very damaging contradiction.

Given the prevailing zeitgeist, with both the fact and imagery of President Kennedy its face, no doubt any poll conducted on the question would return overwhelming agreement that a courageous leader could expect difficulties that might extend well beyond the complicated politics of championing freedom and the people.

Yet, it is to the seeker and holder of this office in whom they continually invest their hopes; despite being able to offer nothing more than their mass, derivative vote. With ongoing “support” limited only to their “voice”, expressed through toothless and artificial arenas like social media and carefully orchestrated gatherings, we may have the stuff of hopes and dreams, but not of a protective constituency.

With a public unwilling, or unable, to consider such logic, broader consequences in terms of the character of those attracted to political careers⁶⁵ and the vacancy of our electoral campaigns and system is missed. This our explains why our standard model of leadership never seeks to create the educational or practical resources that would produce the civic partnerships and protective constituencies that would ensure their promises could be kept; and elections made an effective means of control. As the people are incapable of demanding it, those now attracted to “public service” would never want it; *another reason why leadership under prevailing circumstances is an absurd concept.*

64 <https://townhall.com/tipsheet/kysisson/2014/09/29/strip-club-controversy-in-kansas-gov-race-gives-boost-to-gop-incumbent-n1898230>

65 <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/evolution-the-self/201112/narcissism-why-its-so-rampant-in-politics>

Either leading or following in these reflexive and unreflective footsteps is our “reform community” that time and again emphasizes leaders and leadership at the expense of visible constituency; **the people**. Whether it’s their promise that public campaign financing will assure us great leaders or, their work to emerge and groom a “new generation” of leaders that will deliver us to yet another *promised* land - no consideration of these “facts on the ground” are ever mentioned; much less accounted for.

So, while the impossibility of effective and transformative leadership effecting or transforming anything without the people should be obvious, with the help of many, such a path somehow remains inconceivable to contemplate.

By what means are these dynamics of missed opportunity, unprincipled opportunism, delusion and distraction dependably delivered; *or ignored?*

Through our contemporary media constructs that, being quite undeliberative, make it simple for moneyed and agenda driven political forces - often operating with great cunning - to organize, or, simply use what exists, to promote whatever unprincipled opposition or superficial meme may be necessary to effect what they wish to effect.

This is done with the help of the unwitting sincere dutifully *following the lead*, or the many levels of actors and minions delivering their “disciplined messages” and, even the drowned out, neutralized voices of reason.

Too many fragments, operating through so many channels, will by both design and happenstance amplify and endorse emotionally infused memes, biased positions and, intentionally hostile candidates for office should it come to that. This reliably keeps the discussion away from anything real⁶⁶.

Regardless of one’s attitude towards voting, in our visible system elections are the ultimate channel for all of this activity. Therefore, what is crucial to understand is that the totality of these dynamics decides - controls - what is up for discussion in society.

So, though it may not seem obvious - and is paradoxical - it is a certain truth that our electoral system - **even when there is no election in sight** - decides what we are talking and caring about. The importance of this connection to our social and economic outcomes cannot be overstated and should be noted by all those who claim an attachment to the “truth” and are quite certain that “voting doesn’t matter”.

This brings us to the civic-social-citizenship side of the protection coin. Here, it is a fundamental necessity to identify the vital - though neglected - connections that will enable the engaged citizenry to create the practical, genuine safe space capable of counteracting the chilling effect. People must feel free - and be free - to speak their truth and get involved and this has been addressed. But, there is more, because even these stark realities can hardly do full justice to the harm and darkness the absence of protection enables.

66 <https://blog.nomorefakenews.com/2017/01/23/reporters-tell-me-the-truth-off-the-record-the-fake-news-business/>

This is why it's been stressed throughout these pages that:

- Under no logical or legitimate circumstances can the areas of political, social and civic matters be separated from matters of media
- The power and influence of the protective constituency – should it be sought and assembled – would extend far beyond the realm of political/electoral unshackling described throughout these pages, though it will always be inseparable from it.

And, the central extension likely lies in the realm of relations between our people.

It should be unsurprising that in a world teeming with intrigues and distrust we would have a hard time finding proper focus as propaganda and spin – of ever more sophisticated and pernicious forms – do much more than divide a roofless house. They allow false, paid for social constructs to use ideas like group identity and mass victimization to drive complex, clouded agendas; while claiming to speak for others of that “community”⁶⁷.

The people of those communities – who see their lives and identities more broadly – and, inextricably linked to their country, **will lack for organization and safety**; whatever their majorities might be. The result; **they are spoken for and cannot speak out against!**

Even if only carried out by small, unrepresentative numbers of the disingenuous, deceived, or foolish – the same methods and channels that prank the rich potential of our civic-electoral sphere will be applied. The result – however misleading or imposed – will brand the citizens of the United States a divided people.

Under these circumstances it is a simple matter for genuine American ideals to be crushed while many unhelpful, un-American ones are promoted.

This makes it clear that protective dynamics of the visible constituency go much further than constitutional agents; elected or appointed. Just as the public domain that encompasses those of visible power and responsibility **can never** be made representative or responsive to the people without that assembled power and coherence, neither can the people be effective, and at peace with each other, without it as well.

Fortunately, simple actions based on simple and long standing facts accomplish both; simultaneously.

But, as charity begins at home, the citizenry – that seeks an end to the madness – must begin to demand and craft these outcomes for themselves and each other. A failure to do so will ensure their undoing, by their own hand.

67 <http://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/251667-poll-most-black-people-prefer-all-lives-matter>



A good problem: taming the depth of American citizenship

- Beyond “big nation/big names”; judicial elections and many other pivotal offices
- Strategic use, and so preservation of, fundamental freedoms
- Correct knowledge, electoral landscapes and self-government

To truly understand the scale of the “failure to keep it” it’s necessary to focus on the opportunities we miss and the mistakes we continually make.

Misdiagnosis’ and wasted resources abound as we see our general population accept, and elite circles of advocacy time and again propound, conventional wisdom(s) not subject to much critical analysis.

Despite having advantages born from centuries of history, experience, and the reflection of great minds devoted to these questions, we seem to make no serious attempt to methodically search for lessons; *particularly those that might identify the crucial attributes necessary to any genuine public solution.*

For example, can any successful change be contemplated absent a people’s express grant or deny power over elected politicians; or a media component capable of channeling that reality?

Such absences in any remedy being advocated needs to be identified and explained before allowing it to be considered worthy of any support. However, with no genuine hub of civic enterprise in existence, it is not possible to generate traction on such discussion and analysis. Accordingly, the deficiencies consistently go unchallenged.

As a result, naturally, we are constantly offered the same failed options - barely reheated. Mostly grounded in flawed concepts of protest, laws, lawsuits, leadership from above, the slicing and dicing of mass methodologies among other usual suspects; a lot of damage is done in the non-process.

An example of the continuing epic failure and missed opportunity can be seen here with a simple (and simplified) illustration; one of countless cases, but a very telling one⁶⁸:

In 2001 a long and winding case began wending its way through the Michigan courts that involved Swiss food giant Nestlé and their drawing fresh water from the Great Lakes region for the purposes of bottling and reselling that natural resource.

Nestle, typically, promising some jobs would be created, was typically welcomed with open arms by then-Michigan Gov. John Engler, who allowed the company to open up a plant for a licensing fee of less than \$100 per year and offered millions in tax breaks to boot.

In the fall of 2001 the group Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation (MCWC) and four individual local residents filed suit in Mecosta County Circuit Court seeking to stop this as “not a legally defined” “reasonable use” of water violating state and federal regulations.

At the trial level the judge hearing the case ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. He found that Nestlé’s pumping “would adversely affect the water resources that the plaintiffs fought to protect and that it would harm the ecosystems that those resources were a part of”. As a result, Nestlé was ordered to stop pumping water from the aquifer.

Nestlé however appealed the trial court’s decision.

Many years, and many courts were involved but as is often the case these days, when heard by the Michigan Supreme Court a tortured decision was rendered that narrowly decided the case on standing.

The only issue that the Supreme Court considered was whether Nestlé’s actions were appropriately challenged in the first place i.e. if the plaintiffs had “standing” to bring a claim under MEPA.

68 http://justice4michigan.org/files/hfp_nestle_case.pdf

This made the substance of the case not about whether Nestlé should or should not pump water from the aquifer. “It made it about whether, if someone believes this action to be harmful, they are able do something about it. If the plaintiffs have “standing,” then they have access to the courts to challenge the action that they believe is harmful.

If the plaintiffs do not have standing, then they cannot legally challenge that action.

With its decision, the Supreme Court’s majority changed the Michigan Environmental Protection Act at its core. It changed the way that thirty years of case law interpreted the Act and took away the right of a citizen to protect the state’s natural resources.”

The verdict was Nestlé could continue and even expand its operations in violation of previous agreements. Finally in 2009 the case was settled.

Throughout, the response of the people of Michigan was typical⁶⁹; lawsuits were filed, protest signs were held, boycotts threatened, and blame pointed; then everyone went home.

Of course what did endure was the litigation and interestingly, serious water related problems have persisted in the state; as they have in many parts of the country.

Poor, victimized citizens, right? Well, seemingly, what was totally ignored by the people, media, and the advocacy-activists was that Supreme Court justices of the state of Michigan must go through the people before their be-robed authority can have consequence.

The people of Michigan have the right to vote for their Supreme Court judges; as well as many other lower court judges who had been hearing this case; not to mention the governor of the state et al!

The most powerful citizenry on the planet, the people of the United States, in most states, can reach out and “touch” their judges through our very democratic electoral processes; **JUDGES**; who decide about our water; and almost everything else.

69 Extensive research revealed no effort by citizens or citizen groups to organize a response around their electoral powers.

Judicial elections are a unique aspect of American republican-democracy and, as we can see from this example, the decisions of courts make law no less than do legislatures with their legislation or executives with their executive orders.

Elections of such granular offices are a big part of our ideal of self-government and have been marveled at by many; including Alexis de Tocqueville in his classic work “democracy in America”. With over 3,000 counties in the United States it is difficult to know with certainty how many judges stand for office nationally, but the number is in the many, many thousands. Trial, Appellate and Supreme Court justices must face the voters - from the township, municipal and county, right up to the state level.

However, no elected office represents the hodgepodge⁷⁰ of the American electoral system better than this one as the states can approach these elections in many different ways. Some judges are elected through the two-tier system of nomination by direct primary and general election. In other cases the nominations are made by conventions (which then may be subject to a primary) with the candidates then facing the electorate in a general election. In some cases these races are conducted with party labels attached to the candidates (partisan) and other cases they are not (non- partisan).

There are also retention elections where the judge “stands before” the people and a simple vote will either affirm or remove them with a yes or no tallied. In some cases there are lifetime appointments - or reappointment - as well.

In Michigan there is a ‘hybrid’ approach⁷¹ that is unusual (only Ohio does it this way). For Michigan’s Supreme Court⁷², the political parties will nominate the candidate in a convention who will then stand for office in the general election. However, at the district level there are primaries (non-partisan). That fact may well have made a difference in the way the district court judge ruled in the Nestle case as opposed to the Supreme Court decision as proximity had its effect.

Whatever difficulties the varying methods of the hodgepodge may present, what should not be lost is the power Americans have to regulate their lawmaking industry with their vote.

70 http://judicialselection.com/uploads/documents/Berkson_1196091951709.pdf

71 Wheat -

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2172007

72 https://ballotpedia.org/Judicial_selection_in_Michigan

Given the incredible potential this authority offers the American to control their destiny it should come as no surprise that judicial elections have become very controversial, and in many cases are under attack.

Thus, arguments are invented and distributed by the complex and their network:

- Partisan races might attract more money - and politics - than those that are run without a party label and that is one aspect of the controversy.
- The money such elections attract⁷³; regardless of the electoral approach is another
- Judges and judicial decisions - **the law** - cannot be made subject to our petty and corrupt electoral practices is yet another; and quite humorous one
- There is also much complaint that judicial elections are simply below the radar of voters⁷⁴ who cannot make considered decisions about such offices; therefore they should not have that right.

Though some of these arguments point to legitimate issues, any advocacy for ending popular judicial elections should be looked at with very great skepticism indeed. The problems they identify are issues of citizenship and the lack of a hub: proximity, information/media, organization and fellowship; the same ones that threaten the entirety of our electoral and constitutional system.

These problems get solved under the roof of the Citizens Access Network.

Moreover, the dysfunctions the Nestle case typifies transcends weak advocacy or corporate greed. They are essentially problems of great imbalances of power. The decentralized architecture of the country (the hodgepodge) cannot help but create opportunities for the motivated and, as this case shows, these imbalances very much play out in the courts and cannot be neglected.

For example, citizens at the local level of a township or municipality may self-govern through elections, representation, ballot initiatives etc., but, find that the laws and regulations at the state or federal level favor special interests and circumvent their efforts to protect their rights. Given the specificity of a law, in some cases a judges hands may be tied while in other, less specific instances, they will “interpret” according to power and allegiance. Either way, in the absence of a visible, powerful, coherent citizenry an uphill battle would be the best one could hope for.

This clearly demonstrates that the architecture of the nation can only be made to work based on methods that understand the relationship of the various levels of

73 <https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/New%20Politics%20of%20Judicial%20Elections%202012.pdf>

74 <https://www.thenation.com/article/why-judicial-elections-are-bad-thing/>

government to each other; *and our relationship to all of them*. **The focus on one at the expense of the other is a certain dead-end**; a common mistake of our public sphere and concerned public.

This is why the mapping and connecting of local districts and offices to the state and federal level is essential. Making those connections allows correct knowledge and citizenship first principles to be easily attained, as:

- Very important but much less easily observable offices and officeholders are documented
- Their record is on the record
- The immediacy of a visible constituency is present
- The knowledge sharing of that constituency makes known pivotal issues (and positions) that might otherwise have flown under the radar
- The electoral landscape awaits those who cannot explain their reasoning; and those who can

Elected officials, whether they are executives, representatives, judges, what have you, are subject to the people through powerful electoral processes. But, to meet the brilliant organization and near limitless resources of vested interests - which use this architecture for their ends - these processes must be understood and coordinated through the network advocated for here.

With its own propriety media that will be quite difficult to spin, the challenge is much more than met:

- Now, where necessary laws can be changed
- Now, bad laws will not be written in the first place
- Now judicial interpretation will be made with the coherent will of the people known and there will be no ability to hide behind tortured decisions that are narrow of law and mind

This is something that Americans concerned with other inequities might like to keep in mind; say those who believe that the United States has far too many of its citizens imprisoned, and that a for-profit industry devoted to incarcerating them is un-American.

These concerned citizens might want to ask why a lawsuit would be filed to protest such behavior when we can select and elect the legislators that pass, and the governors that sign the laws that make this possible. They might also want to inquire as to why these are the favored, default actions of thought leaders and

activists who seem to forget that we can also vote for the attorney generals and many prosecutors who bring these cases, and (of course) the judges who hear them, and, in over 3000 counties, the law enforcement officials that enforce them⁷⁵.

Though the details of the process that will elect such officials will vary from state to state, the important mechanics mainly don't. Typically, ballot access is open to all who qualify; direct nominating authority mostly belongs to the people, and can be managed or changed where it doesn't. And finally, a general election will decide the matter. With a proper understanding and approach, these elements can combine and help us to reimagine and reinvent our idea of elections; their purpose and results.

FROM ELECTION DAY TO AN ELECTORAL LANDSCAPE



ORGANIZATION

cost-free, citizen-supporters assist those who qualify to meet ballot access/ballot petition requirements

- ✓ An opportunity to create unfiltered media-learning and community throughout that crucial process



PREPARATION

for the nominating-primary election or caucus

- ✓ An opportunity to create unfiltered media-learning and community derived from that broad electoral competition



PLANNING

for the general election

- ✓ An opportunity to create unfiltered media-learning now focused on the principled differences of the truly chosen

⁷⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheriffs_in_the_United_States

However, if we continue as we have our elected constitutional agents will act with impunity as it suits them, and the complex behind them.

Confident that they (all) operate well below the radar of the population and are not likely to suffer punishment - for even the most outrageous outcomes - this will continue; or bring the predictable end such circumstances repeatedly do.

But, perhaps, it doesn't have to come to that.

Under the reality of an "electoral landscape" these things would simply never happen in the first place; the watchful eye of the visible constituency would ensure that. Further, judges - and officials at whatever level with whatever responsibilities - would and could not act as they did here and live (politically) to tell the tale; it would not be possible.

Therefore, it is certain this would not happen a second time and so such behavior would cease to define relations between those who govern and are governed. An electoral landscape scenario will necessarily and unquestionably produce an entirely new model of relations within our political system and with that an entirely new kind of elected official.

But, if no considered action is taken and the status quo remains; if the vacant - but perhaps emotionally satisfying - reactions of victimhood are preferred to the simple, powerful recourse available to all Americans, it'll be clear where the blame should point.

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**



INFORMED CITIZENS

GETTING IT WRONG

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINES HOW KNOWLEDGE IS POWERED

GETTING IT WRONG

Getting It Wrong

Less cogent moments; signals the need for less deference and more scrutiny

GETTING IT WRONG; VIDEO PLAYLIST SYNOPSIS

Getting it Wrong is a very important playlist that contrasts the conclusions of this work with those of several luminaries who generally would be deferred to as experts. Contemplating the arguments of this work from the “getting it wrong angle” is revealing.

In one clip we meet Astrid Taylor, a noted author and thinker focused on the challenges to democracy in the digital age. Offering validation for the need of a public resource for media and learning, she also offers an endorsement through *negative logic* by suggesting that such a public resource be provided by the government; despite being previously established as a questionable partner for such undertakings. (This, as opposed to the resource being owned and operated by the people as would be the case with the C.A.N.);

Such contradictions are rife throughout this playlist but perhaps the one most interesting - and egregious - comes once again from our friend Larry Lessig.

Considered very carefully, this comment cannot easily be construed as a faux pas. In the moment, Larry is discussing the actions taken by the people of Hong Kong who, very wisely, rose up in protest against a government (Chinese) sponsored slate of candidates being foisted upon them for the coming election of their chief executive.

Basically what they were protesting for was what the people of the United States have enjoyed for well over a century, the right by open ballot to **first** choose the candidates who would **then** stand for office in a second tier of popular elections. They understood quite well that without that power there can be no genuine democracy.

In a statement that can only astonish, Harvard professor Larry Lessig laments that Americans do not “take to the streets to demand this same right”; again authority they have held, and squandered, for over 100 years.

What makes the scene even more bizarre is that he is saying this sitting directly across from Prof. Zephyr Teachout, a woman who had just attempted to challenge the sitting governor of New York, Andrew Cuomo, in a primary for the governorship of New York; strange.

Let's get this straight:

1. No mention is made of the long existing authority and squandering in his comparison of Americans to the people of Hong Kong; though his blame confirms the imperative and opportunity
2. He totally misplaces this blame on the wrong complacency! One that not only hasn't existed for over 100 years, but on the people of the *only country* in the world that has so fully conferred this authority on its people
3. He misses that fateful point; despite it sitting right in front of him
4. No one says a word; no connections are made and the opportunity is lost

Harvard professor, candidate for president of the United States, and activist against all things undemocratic - and the would-be governor of the State of New York.

Certainly there could be no better argument for very proportional deference if there ever was one.

[Click here to view the video playlist](#)

PROPORTIONAL DEFERENCE



Balancing Authority

- Unplanned expression; ambiguity is a necessary ingredient
- Experts are important, but often wrong
- Specialized knowledge, expertise, can be found in many places
- A necessary counterweight

A penetrating question of the constitutional convention and the debate for ratification was who would be entrusted with the leading executive, legislative, and judicial authority the Constitution contemplated.

Advanced mostly by the Federalists was the idea that all would be well as society's most virtuous men were sure to hold these positions.

Thomas Jefferson famously rejected a dependence on subjective values like virtue, declaring, roughly, "don't speak to me of good men; we must bind them down with the Constitution".

What that meant in practice created tensions - and still does. Obviously, it would be worse than folly to try to anticipate all contingencies in any law; much less a constitutional framework that requires consent and ongoing agreement from disparate and skeptical groups.

That however means having to live with ambiguities; which give rise to anxieties. It also leaves much room for mischief, which feeds the anxiety that in turn feeds an expectation that various leaders will manage these problems for us. Therefore, it's not surprising that criticism of the constitution is often aimed at its ambiguities and the problems they permit.

On the other hand, succeeding generations using that **same room to maneuver**, took actions *perhaps envisaged* – but never specified – in our founding documents in their attempts to check, balance, and deal with the mischief.

It seems certain that Jefferson's "bind them down" comment anticipated, or addressed the issue directly. Not simply a matter of static process, or exacting words on parchment, it is necessary for civil society and an informed citizenry to develop specific tools to meet the needs of changing times and circumstances. Taken at face value, this perhaps is where the essential virtuosity of those founding documents lay.

- Leading men, or authorities, based on their station, could not be depended on and should not be excessively deferred to.
- Ambiguity is a necessary ingredient of free society and cannot be stamped out.
- Room must be left for unplanned expression; the freedom that would permit people to adjust, meet a moment and "*bind men down*."

The "leading man" (or leader) argument is an interesting one. Just as the federalists assured us that virtuous men would rise, we are continually sold – and we continually buy – the idea of leader's managing our affairs and solving our problems. This is a dependency full of fine lines and forked roads; the questions and assumptions it raises are more relevant than ever.

It is in human nature to defer to authority, and appropriate where it has been earned through talent, accomplishment or the amassing of specialized knowledge. For someone without expertise in a particular domain, such deference might be required for survival; like soldiers following orders on a battlefield.

It is also in human nature to buck authority as too much deference can be very unhealthy. Here, the fine lines need definition.

Deferring to the boot maker when the subject is boot making or the commanding officer in the heat of battle is more than sensible. But, when the domain is the quarrelsome, uncertain modeling of human relations – unchecked deference to authority can be and has been disastrous.

Authorities in this domain may hold a powerful or prestigious position, have written a book, possess many degrees and be cited, even promoted, by various

media as “experts”, which is fine; but the obtaining of simple “disinterested truth” is a dicey matter⁷⁶.

Entrenchment, conflicts, and livelihoods are as much a part of life for this authority figure as anyone. Perhaps in this domain more than others, the pursuit of unconventional work or any speaking out against imposed boundaries can endanger careers. **With travels in the narrow social and professional circles** previously defined, and careers guided by those specialized networks, great caution is called for in any too-quick acceptance of judgments coming from such quarters.

This requires *leading opinion* be held to a constant, careful scrutiny – *they must be bound down* – lest we succumb to an elite, oligarchic technocracy envisioned by many utopian and *dystopian thinkers*. This is the dangerous proposition to trade unruly politics – freedom – for an authoritative promise of certainty delivered through expertise; a value as subjective as virtue.

In this subjective world, the **certain** promise of a perfect truth is obviously silly. Yet, so often “truths” from these spheres are readily believed by people not likely to see themselves as particularly naive or gullible. Others, claiming more discernment, scoff at such sleepy naiveté but, **let it end there** – offering or supporting no functional challenge – oblivious that the two positions both lead to inertia and docility.

That this is true is obvious because no one would deny that history is replete with dissenting voices – later proven right – being crushed by promoted authority and its certainties⁷⁷. Yet, the credulity problem remains.

And now, with precision media saturation, it is easy to disarm critical facilities by having “leading people” persistently project authoritative certainties. Therefore, we must account for the problem; with precision.

Here we see the forked roads that must be recognized and navigated:

- Expertise and authority in any domain is important and deserves respect; it must be consulted and a failure to do so is risky.
- At the same time, to allow conventional wisdom and claims of authority and expertise to go unchallenged is much more than risky.
- Examples abound of the mistakes and failures of noted authorities, and the success of the unnoted, and so-called average citizens⁷⁸, to more clearly see, and directly solve problems. Nonetheless, **both** represent potential hubs of experience and accomplishment and must be balanced.

76 Jacobson- intellectuals most vulnerable to propaganda. “Mind Control in the United States”: Pg 28

77 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327879416_Gatekeeping

78 Please see playlist “the need identified”

<https://weleadusa.org/welead-videos/need-identify-playlist-new.html>

Profound question – Where? How?

The Peoples platform – Once again the (capable) people know best

- In the absence of such balance, this authority, claiming a corner on the market of expertise and power, will further stratify society and endanger freedom.

This requires that a counterweight be created, an infrastructure of critical facilities; fully of the people. Capable of marshaling its own resources and expertise, thereby creating a check on overconfidence, conflicts of interest and bias, it will assess the findings, pronouncements and policies of authority in pursuit of “what works”.

By doing so a synthesis of interests, methods and people will be enabled as:

- Truths will be liberated that those fearful of their public reputations cannot now freely speak
- A proper forum in which to challenge convention will eliminate timidity for fear of ridicule or denouncement; protection
- Contributors make their argument - and see it through - in an empirical environment
- The counterweight ensures that arrogance must give way; which will serve to de-stratify and de-snob
- Gray areas are studied and options tested in the marketplace of life
- The danger of sweeping change engineered from above is reduced
- Flexibility in implementing change is enabled
- Entrenchment - that prevents changing change that has not proven valid - is disabled

A failure to do any less is to submit to the “order of things” and simply pay deference to plutocracy; everything that is antithetical to the ideals of republican self-government and more importantly, enlightened self-interest.

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH ...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK!

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINED. NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

THE NETWORK

WALL ST. IN PANIC AS STOCK MARKET TUMBLES
Made to Kill Italy's Crown

Fusion in the public sphere ...

Networks, the Internet and our Existing Voting System.

FAQs in context

An in-depth look at social network theory and network systems - past and present - helps us understand what may be humanity's biggest miss; how the so called 'greatest technological revolution in human history' has, and is producing ever greater amounts of social division, political dysfunction and loss of freedom. The internet – that means us - has failed to deliver on the ideal of “highest use” and here we can learn why this is happening; and how we could stop it from happening.

THE NETWORK; VIDEO SYNOPSIS

From certain circles of academic political science came a search for an operative definition of an ⁷⁹ideal democracy that produced a model suggesting these two criteria would have to be present for the ideal to be achieved:

1. Effective citizens act capably, taking full responsibility for controlling the decisions of the community
2. The system they are operating within can fully respond to the collective preferences of those citizens

This seems to be both good criteria and ideals and though it never has truly existed, in the United States it could have; and still can. The challenges to this “ideal model” have been fully considered here as has the contention that the ideals can only be met by fusing specific and unique civic powers to a network specially purposed to use them.

From that fusion it would be possible to create the media - deliberation, knowledge, and agreement - that would be necessary to achieving the goals.

Given its centrality to this proposition, and the realization of necessary and long sought after ideals, it is important to look more deeply at both networks and media from a conceptual standpoint.

Here the in-depth video “The Network” considers problems that students of social, political and media studies have long wrestled with.

These are questions - nicely summarized here – that were raised by the understandable concerns of the rapidly transforming society of the 20th and 21st century emphasizing new forms of electronic communications and media. This was change that came at the expense of many traditional – and strongly tied – places and methods of civic engagement that included churches, labor unions, cultural associations and many others.

79 Dahl: Criteria for democratic process-
http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Democracy/On_Democracy_Dahl.html

⁸⁰Could new-media construct new supportive virtual subcultures that could actually supply the emotional space necessary for individual identity, acceptance and empathy; factors that obviously contribute to the health of a society?

And, in the modern environment how can communication technologies be adapted to deliberation, interest formation, and decision-making requirements of societies that may be better positioned to experiment with direct democracy than any other in history?

In its some 16 minutes, the video takes on these pivotal questions in the context of this work by examining:

- ➔ How nature and man builds different types of networks for different types of purposes
- ➔ How networks spread information and knowledge
- ➔ How they meet social needs
- ➔ Historical examples of networks working
- ➔ The effects of technology based networks on humans physical, versus digital presence
- ➔ Emergence dynamics in a networked environment
- ➔ The potential effect of networks on hierarchies
- ➔ Modern social networks and their effect on modern civic engagement
- ➔ Networked individualism and community
- ➔ The crucial effects of strong and weak ties in a networked environment
- ➔ Modern networks and its effects on individual and collective concentration, focus and public traction
- ➔ Intentions within a network structure; supple vs. fixed formats

80 Bennett - https://www.academia.edu/653139/The_uncivic_culture_Communication_identity_and_the_rise_of_lifestyle_politics

Properly understood the questions get answers as the power and purpose of the Citizens Access Networks gets further clarified:

- Can communication technologies be adapted to deliberation, interest formation, and decision-making requirements: **YES**
- Can new-media construct new supportive *virtual subcultures*: **YES**
- Will that enable the society best - much more than any other - positioned to experiment with new forms of representative and direct democracy to evolve: **YES**
- Will it enable effective citizens to act capably and take full responsibility for controlling the decisions of the community: **YES**
- Will it allow the operative system to fully respond to the collective preferences of those citizens: **YES**
- Can the emotional space necessary for individual identity, acceptance and empathy be supplied: **YES**

[Click here to view the video and FAQ's](#)

EVOLUTIONARY
ENABLING A 21ST CENTURY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND BEYOND THROUGH...

OUR EXISTING VOTING SYSTEM
IF WE WORK IT WILL WORK!

THE NETWORK
THE MOST POWERFUL AUDIENCE EVER ASSEMBLED... US!

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
MEDIA REDEFINED. NOW, KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

COLLABRATIVE MEDIA

U.S. BLOCKADES CUBA, TELLS RUSS 'LAY OFF'

U.S. AIR FORCE

GENUINE AND ORGANIC COLLABORATIVE MEDIA
A new approach to media... Now, knowledge is power.

An in-depth look at media systems past and present helps us understand how the age of the internet has failed to deliver truly “disruptive” collaborative media, just how devastating that failure has been, and how we can and must change that.

FAQs in context

COLLABORATIVE MEDIA; VIDEO SYNOPSIS

As a companion to “The Network”; the video presentation “Genuine, Organic Collaborative Media” completes the circle as it considers the fusion of our existing voting system to the network in order to create a truly new form of new-media; made and enabled by - and delivered to - the most powerful audience ever assembled.

The point has been made here throughout that regardless of the era, or the technologies available, media and networks are inseparable.

We have established that the promise of the Internet to foster new forms of media, capable of transforming a sagging politics with new methods of civic engagement, have not been met; and under current circumstances will not be met. However, whether it was the former national ritual of reading the evening newspaper or, the equivalent of many millions engaging with today’s digital, saturation media; *media platforms is where the public meets (or becomes) the public sphere*⁸¹.

Therefore, it should be exceedingly clear that if the expectation is for the ideals of active, effective citizenship to be met, the learning media imparts cannot be separated from a viable action component accessible to the citizen. It has been much propounded here that this component has always been lacking in public media and that the dysfunctions society faces will never be solved unless this is remedied.

We have also seen that there is no such separation where the owners of the mediums (ever consolidating) that deliver our media content are concerned. And, though the public sphere is fraught with great anxiety about these deficiencies and affects, there has been no real effort to consider alternatives.

81 The public sphere can be defined as the space of communication, ideas and projects that emerge from the engaged publics discussions, debates and deliberations on public affairs that can then be addressed to decision makers in the institutions of society; an essential component of civic organization an participation that should provide legitimacy and accountability to government.

<http://annenbergl.usc.edu/sites/default/files/2015/04/28/The%20New%20Public%20Sphere.pdf>

Again, considering the issues that have occupied students, scholars and concerned citizens, we see the question focused exactly where it should be:

⁸²Can digital media, including social media, contribute to creating new and durable imagined communities favorable to the reconstruction of the social base of democracies?

From this angle, framing and summarizing the whole of the work, the video answers yes and shows how as it explores:



- ➔ The jealously guarded domain of media
- ➔ Truth versus the profit motive
- ➔ The enduring model - and enduring problem - of the single author broadcasting
- ➔ Media consolidation
- ➔ Good media imparting real knowledge; then what/so what?
- ➔ The new-media enabled by platforms versus the old blending media of newspapers, television etc.
- ➔ Great expectations unfulfilled: the soft ideals of voice, the perception of increased political polarization, and the advent of free speech zones
- ➔ How organized media can organize people
- ➔ Community + actionable media + action = change
- ➔ Low-level media - a focus on systems and how they operate
- ➔ High-level media - a focus on the bigger picture

Inherently the video makes point that society cannot afford to turn its desire for truth into an empty fetish by demanding it be provided by others. Though beautiful and necessary, it is not as simple a thing as receiving a string of facts. It cannot simply be the pronouncements of sincere - or presumptuous - truth-tellers operating in a static environment full of unquestioned biases in favor of preconceived notions.

It must be continually and actively sought, in collaboration with others, in settings designed to reveal it.

[Click here to view the video and FAQ's](#)

82 Lutz and du Toit - "Defining democracy in a digital" age pg. 31



Truthism And Solutions

Truthism And Solutions

There is so much ado about truth in our public sphere that an entire new cottage industry within our alternative media has emerged to take on the mission of providing it to us.

But who is there to take on the mission of finding a solution? When does a fixation on problems with no action component stop being truth and start being entrenched complaint; Truth-ism?

Do we now have a truthing-complaining industrial complex to add to our list of complexes? A considered demand will supply an actual solution but in fact we have been demanding nothing; which is why nothing good is happening.

Truth Is In The Process



#1 CLAIM

We Can Demand a Genuine Media; Truth-ism to Real-ism to Action-ism

There is so much ado about truth in our public sphere that an entire cottage industry within our alternative media has emerged to take on the mission of providing it to us. Unhappy with the truth supply from traditional media sources, they expend endless amounts of energy reporting on - and even sometimes analyzing - just about everything. All while claiming to deliver to us awareness; of the truth.

The alternative media is many things and an endless number of doyens in the form of bloggers, academics, journalists, pundits and social critics have emerged claiming devotion to truth and this raising of public awareness.

The so-called truthers who provide this generous service, however great their commitment may seem, have left out one important thing; namely, what are we going to do with these great truths once this lofty awareness has been bestowed on us? On the rare occasion the question might be asked:

- *What is the solution?*
- *What can we do?*

There is only the usual “I don’t know”, or silence, or worse - *particularly if challenged* - disappearance⁸³.

There is astounding absurdity at play here and more than one.

On one hand we have the absurdity of our truthing sources building substantial audiences of truth-hungry consumers and reporting to them imminent threats, ongoing lies, endless wastes, frauds and abuses. Perhaps the headlines vary but the storylines are consistent; **we are going to die.**

83 <https://www.poynter.org/news/citizen-journalism-dead>

One the other hand we have these new-fangled media-consumers, awake, and demanding of the truth.

Their absurdity; Thanks for telling me the truth that I'm gonna die; keep up the good work y'all!

What the "awakened" truth consumer has done is commoditize our most grave concerns into yet another form of entertainment all while becoming enablers to a group of self-professed truth crusaders with a mission that not only makes zero sense, but also badly wastes their own talents and the opportunity to create genuine forms of new media that could make a difference.

A bonus absurdity is the now fairly commonplace physical meeting of like-minded concerned citizens attending one or another conference, or public hearing. Whether devoted to the truth about public policy, the nature of the universe, or dubious programs and projects being implemented by local authorities, major concerns are opened to examination; and then?

Participants - audiences - in the dozens, hundreds and many thousands *go home or on to the next cause or piece of content*. Hardly is a word mentioned by anyone; organizer, petitioner, or participant, about maybe channeling the awareness and energy that got them in that room into something more than just an echo-chamber of dismay, complaint or beggary.

Add to that the waste we see in other "physical actions" taken in the public square where "activists" go to demand a square deal. It would be a very big mistake to consider the noise of protest actions, petitioning for redress, or the initiating of law-suits/legal-reform measures as **a genuine demand for a genuine solution**; no matter how many people brave the cold or how many constitutional attorneys craft a stop bad stuff law.

No product or service - naturally a solution for something - can succeed without a demand; but what do these actions suggest we are actually demanding?

Well, from one side we see a demand for solutions by proxy; a transfer of responsibility to other elites in the form of lawyers, professional activists or politicians. From the other, we see concerned and like-minded citizens in the same room - of whatever kind - forget to do anything with their new found insights into their impending doom; while their sources of truth, that helped get them into that room, *then help them to forget*.

Could there be anything more absurd than being in a media or physical space with others, whose like-minds equate to agreement that danger abounds and then the only stated end is to either eat popcorn, pop out a comment, maybe try to "wake someone up"; or just go straight home?

Clearly, all this is just silly and never will work. It just adds up to yet more layers of absurdity as yet more and new vested interests - a "truthism-complex" - pose

as would be saviors while seeking the public's money, attention, and energies; with no plan or aim to do anything. This crystallizes something very important.

Only the capable people - unattached to any form of personal interest or entrenchment - can save America and there must be made clear a demand for a solution based on that; the capable people organized, taking specific, coordinated action - operating within a strategic framework.

Demanding anything less would be suicide, no?

CLAIM 1 - With the properly formulated demand, the effective solution comes. But, it will only be from the independent and motivated few that such thinking and action will emerge. To assist, we take the approach of examining several claims of the WeLeadUSA proposal for the Citizens Access Network and the solution it offers. By doing so, we breakdown many typical misapprehensions and myths regarding the challenges we face and thus give shape and form to the coherent mandate that we – the capable people - must create.

POLITICAL MONEY – MADE USELESS



#2
CLAIM

We can remove money as a driving force in our political system;
Immediately!

Of course it is conventional wisdom that special interest money is the driving force of our political system and if only that can be changed - or stopped - all would be well.

This is understandable given all the attention we focus on the corrupting influences of campaign contributions but it is very one dimensional thinking. The “common sense” here is that political money creates a skewed allegiance; allegiance that should belong to the people but instead goes to the special interests donors behind the money-media-election complex in a fairly straightforward quid pro quo exchange. Legal decisions handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court equating political money with free-speech in the Citizens United or FEC vs. McCutcheon cases has reinforced this view.

Invariably this leads to protest actions demanding legal reform; as with the effort to amend the constitution to overturn that Citizens United case. This thinking has proven to be reactive, superficial as well as too little and late. Further, proof can be found that the underlying remedy being pursued in of all this - public financing of political campaigns - is ineffective anyway given the failure of such efforts that have “succeeded”.⁸⁴ Public financing schemes have been adopted in some states; all to no avail or worse. Still, the hopes of a perfect law remain a holy grail for this form of activism.

If we put the intuitions aside that drive this habitual response-mechanism we’d see that these actions are a total waste. Lacking



84 http://ij.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Public-Funding-Research-Brief.FINAL_.pdf

empirical treatment of such ideas, we have failed to understand how our system really works or even ask, much less comprehend the most important question; what gives the money its power?

For example; most are aware of the political consequences redistricting has on our electoral system. Based on the constitutional mandate of a census performed every decade, districts are drawn so representational lines can be adjusted afresh. However, today's scientifically politicized approach to redistricting has successfully and overwhelmingly created safe seats for one or the other party at all levels and it is now estimated that some 90% of U.S. house seats are in this category.

A safe seat naturally means no *genuine competition* is likely, or possible. So, we can't have redistricting making seats safe for a party - and its alleged ideology - and then say money will influence individual candidate's to do favors.

The seat is safe, and this is not dependent on the merits of one or the other candidate; the next guy will do just as well. So the proper question is; if seats are so safe - and this is true at all levels of government- why all the money? That is the first question necessary to an unravelling.

The answer is that the money is really just a tool of a control. Incumbent control, competition control, it's a tool of an integrated control system; not get a specific person elected to give you what you might not otherwise get tool. Incumbents, despite being in safe seats, are still expected to raise funds for election-sector tentacle of complex and will meet with swift retribution if they resist or fail to meet expectations.

So then, in a safe seat environment - where money is doggedly being raised by people who don't even need it - how could that money be applied; with consequence? Certainly not the general election as that's 90% decided - so it can't matter much there. That is the second unravelling question.

No, it can only be applied meaningfully at the ballot access/nominating level where the decision is made as to who will stand for office in a general election. Then, and only then, is the money useful, but how?

- To keep incumbents in or challengers out, that's the velvet glove.
- Or, by creating a challenge! This, to control - or be rid of - of an undesirable; that's the iron fist.

Either way the control of electoral competition stays firmly in the hands of the complex because allegiance is always owed to the nominator; that's the game. All this serves to give the moneyed, special interest "policy demanders" certainty in terms of who is there - **and who can get there.**

Once a useful politician - of the safe seat party - and the policy demanders find they are in accord, it is a simple matter for the revolving door, the giving of various gifts, providing policy-demanding input etc., to get the policy demanders what

they demand. *Lobbying*.⁸⁵ Constitutionally protected, and where the smart money is spent and received.

Under such circumstances no tawdry bribes or arm twisting is necessary. It's a system; a legal one. In this regard the major parties, though reduced in power and influence, are integral to the complex; they are the gatekeepers of competition. By spreading imprimatur and directing the traffic of political money they control competition **ensuring** that it will invariably be safe, rare and harmless to the status quo.

Therefore, in a nutshell, our error is to focus on the money as a quid pro quo - favors for money - as opposed to a competition suppressing/management machine; **aimed squarely at the nominations level**. That machine runs interference for the lobbyists who hold the sway.

To illustrate the error from another angle; some people think if "redistricting reform" were adopted all would be well- but this belief makes an assumption that must first be proven valid. To accept such reform as a comprehensive answer, one would have to demonstrate that these political parties are substantially different in temperament and goal and would bring substantially different directions to the country and world.

This is an argument few nonpartisans or capable people would accept.

So, even if each district were equally capable of producing a victor - of one or the other party, **in a general election** - the parties and candidates would still be immune from the genuine influence of the people as the parties would remain free to front-run candidates of their choosing - and those candidates would still remain dependent on the parties and greater complex for their ballot access/nominations. With that tier of the system left untouched, all the players can rely on making general promises and drawing vague distinctions thus keeping all substance well below the radar of the citizen; all that is necessary to keep the status quo intact.

Further, most elections in the country are run on a *non-partisan basis* and produce no result that is by any measure superior⁸⁶. This should tell us that our current problems are not about money-hungry, bickering parties with actual differences seeking majorities; it's about total control of our political infrastructure - especially how we participate, or don't - and the lynchpin of that control system is the first rung in the ladder; ballot access and nominations.

85 <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2012/03/22/our-corrupt-politics-its-not-all-money/>

86 Los Angeles conducts its municipal elections on a fully non-partisan basis yet...
<http://citywatchla.com/index.php/the-la-beat/11560-how-organized-crime-controls-los-angeles-city-hall>

If we understood that, instead of wasting resources trying to stop special interest money; something the Supreme Court has said we can't, we would instead focus on what we can do to create electoral competition of our own design. If the ballot access/nomination process - owned only by the people through the primary-caucus election system - were put to use, the money and lobbying would be rendered useless as allegiances would shift to a different nominator.



It is only our absence from that process that makes, and has made, all the imbalances and intrigues of machine and complex go.

“BUT NOW, I KNOW, HOW ABSENCE CAN BE PRESENT, LIKE A DAMAGED NERVE, LIKE A DARK BIRD.”

– AUDREY NIFFENEGGER

This is how it works and always has, though the delivery-system itself has changed and realigned through the years. This is a truth that the truthism-complex never bothers to offer, analysis they never care to apply. Not as exciting as global tyranny, the latest protest gathering, presidential decree or Supreme Court battle; but it's the truth nevertheless.

CLAIM 2 - The WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network will render the money useless by putting the nominators – we, the capable people - and our elected officials under one specially purposed roof. With all stakeholders visible and available to each other in this network environment, advertising, media attention, phony imprimaturs, lobbying and all the rest of the tools of control will buy nothing.

NO MEANINGFUL COMPETITION – MADE VERY MEANINGFUL



#3
CLAIM

We can make every election, for every seat, everywhere, competitive; and a medium

There can be no question that we live in a time where mass influence is sought and clever advertising and social media is just the tip of the spear in the effort to wield it; sophisticated methods as well as pernicious forms of what is nothing less than social engineering pervade our many airwaves.

From **Astroturf** – fake grass roots activism – to advanced networks deploying tools of intellectual and social persuasion, from predictive and mind-training programming to old fashioned political spin - and now, even government sponsored propaganda; all these methods – much fueled by political dark money - seek to implant their larvae in our consciousness. Not to provoke our minds to reason or to make things clear of course. No, the intent is to inflame passions, direct emotions and to confuse. At the heart of this is a war for the public psyche, with an aim to command our political minds; very high stakes indeed.

These are tactics of a battle that has long been waged of course, long before this country was founded, but it can be argued that the American experiment was at the very least a chance for the public mind to think for itself; to decide its own best interests. Therefore, no modern population would be more important to target for this form of control more than ours. Since obviously the design of our representative republic requires there be competitive elections, thereby creating **the medium** that can inform public thought and make eternal vigilance possible, there'd also be no more important sphere of public-life to control than that of the election processes that determines the character of the some 88,000 governments that can be found across the nation⁸⁷.



⁸⁷ <http://americancityandcounty.com/administration/how-many-governments-are-there>

That brings us to the current circumstances of our electoral oblivion. The path from a gamed, irrelevant electoral sphere to a very relevant one begins with first developing language that describes what this would look like. As it has never really existed, has never really been executed, it is a fairly simple matter to trick people into an uncritical acceptance of events that are not as they appear; an *uncritical mind will discern poorly*. For example, by simply putting the word “genuine” before the word “competition” we can illustrate how undisciplined language can be tamed and more rigorous judgment demanded.

Consider this; just because from time to time majorities in a legislature, or the party of an executive, might change does not mean there has been **genuine** competition, no matter how sweaty the presenters of the political horse race may appear. Or, just because an election may be a close call does not mean that there was genuine competition.

We cannot allow ourselves to be told that an environment that stresses only the “quantitative” metrics of percentages and majorities in any way constitutes a genuinely competitive landscape - particularly when they feature distortions such as these where:

- Discourse is conducted by proxy — and mostly in the form of soap-selling like advertising
- Candidates rarely debate, and even when they do...
- Overwhelmingly, emotion and sentiment are appealed to over reason/intellect
- Promises made have little to do with the realities or powers of the seat being “competed” for
- The public is neither informed nor expressly influential

The obfuscated ecosystem our governing springs from is one that very few truly know or understand; mostly, not the officials **and certainly not the people**. This is a system that at all levels of government produces lengthy bills of carefully constructed and tortured small print, presented in stealth, often at eleventh hours, just moments before a vote where any meaningful reading or judgment would be impossible.

This is well known and just the tip of the iceberg. That it is rife with parliamentary maneuvers, secrecy, conflicts of interest, money, revolving doors and all the rest is also well-known. What good could any promises be under such conditions? Therefore, a simple yet better approach can be seen in more critical, “qualitative” metrics captured in questions like these;

- Are there alternatives to the “law-maker” model of representation we should consider?
- Is an elected official’s promise - or the issue being discussed - even germane to the office they seek or hold?

- In the end, would an issue at hand be open to any exercise of power available to even a sincere elected official in the first place and, if not, what then should the discussion really be about?
- What processes is the promise or goal being offered subject to? Are they understood? Would they need to be changed to give the promise any validity?
- BY WHAT MEANS are these and other concerns discussed; are they properly vetted and debated?

Absent this approach we are trapped! While our facilities for critical thinking are being directed, so are the mechanisms of our electoral and “law-making” processes. These crucial points *empower futility* and require our close attention. What is misunderstood here is that the dysfunctions cited do not create the scarcity of competition; *it is the scarcity of **genuine** competition that permits them.*

To combat this requires that we start with a proper definition of the terms “genuine competition” and “genuinely competitive” appropriate to our electoral processes and sphere. What may appropriately describe competition/competitive in other domains of life will not work when gauging or judging the electoral competition that decides our fate and that is what’s at stake, *a/ways.*

Here are several precepts – dealing with environment and definition - that would seem uncontroversial:

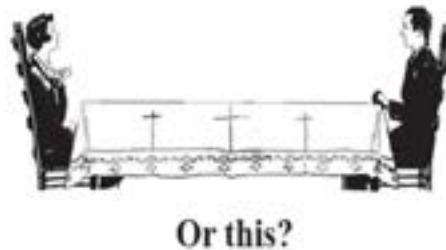
- Our representative republic must produce regular and meaningful electoral competition in order that democracy remains vibrant and genuine
- In a two-party system – when a *“partisan” election is in play* - there must be unencumbered and genuine competition within these parties at all levels of government and in every cycle because, if there is not, there is no two-party system; there’s only one
- This is no less the case in preliminary nominating elections where NO party affiliation and control is in play-which is very often. Because there is always such an election, the necessity to create and manage these dynamics will always be both our opportunity and responsibility
- The relevance of the competition can be measured by the quality of the discourse and debate it produces; being appropriate to informing a capable, engaged electorate and in turn making enforcement and oversight by that electorate and ongoing and highly feasible process
- The processes by which governments govern are made transparent and accessible to those that are holding and or seeking office and that they in turn make those processes – and the reason for their necessity - clear and accessible to their constituents; demanding simplicity and transparency must be a defining principle

- These values must be consistently applied thus making the people's enduring influence supreme in the affairs of state and society

These several simple precepts should present a very low bar indeed for the world's oldest democracy! Should we agree they are reasonable, and filter any description of future electoral activity through them, we will never be fooled again.

CLAIM 3 - The WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network will enable the people to create, manage and define genuine electoral competition and then capture its discourse for defined purposes. This, at all levels, for all offices, for all parties, at all times. Under that roof, constituency is made visible and accessible to all the stakeholders. All the organizational and messaging tools necessary to launch candidacies, and to fuel genuine competition and decision making are freely available.

NO PROXIMITY, NO POWER



#4
CLAIM

We can make every elected official, at every level - and with them the government beyond – accessible, close.

When the United States of America got underway the nature of peoples political-social life was very different than today. The original 13 States/colonies covered a vast track of land, nearly 450,000 sq. miles but that pales in comparison to the USA today that covers some 3.7 million. The population in 1790 was some 4 million and today is some 300 million.

With movement and travel difficult, even rare in the 18th and 19th century, and the communications of that time quite personal, people were in close physical and social proximity. You knew your neighbors and they knew you. This no less included people of prominence; like the elected official who you might likely see in church or perhaps in the pub from time to time. This proximity no doubt had a great effect on peoples behavior and was integral to the design of all societies as well as that of America; well before its national framework was even conceived.



After all, one is much less likely to behave badly when the people to whom you are strongly tied, and perhaps might even represent in an important post are in close proximity. They will see, hear, speak, and know many things. They could bring - or bear - any shame or pride your actions might incite; directly to the community. Where city life today puts us in close geographical and physical proximity, but a more distant one socially, back then it was just the opposite.

This understanding can be seen in the structure of our original Constitution which had the legislatures of the several states responsible for choosing their U.S. Senators. An important idea in this was that the presence of the constituent would be more immediate to the state representative and that an important decision, like

who your state would choose to represent them in the U.S. Senate, would be made with some advice and consent from that constituent. After all, if an unpopular — or corrupt — choice was made, that representative would likely be hearing about it when he went to the barbershop.

So, under the circumstances then of a more rural and natural proximity, the idea of the more distant office of U.S. Senator - representing the entire state - being chosen indirectly, by the more proximate state official/legislature made sense; at least to the founders in light of their distaste for any form of direct democracy. **Proximity**, and its social undercurrents, was the underlying logic of the democratic representativeness of this approach. Of course no system is perfect and this provision of the Constitution met with a mix of sentiments when it was proposed that the people should elect their senators directly.

- On one hand there were those who felt that a change to the direct elections of Senators would undermine state sovereignty and the power of the legislatures
- On the other side, there were complaints that the indirect election of so powerful and important an office as U.S. Senator by anyone other than the people themselves embodied plutocratic ideals; this demanded the process be reversed, by amendment.

And, in 1913, the 17th amendment to the Constitution made direct election of Senators the way of things and so it has been since that momentous year.

How did it go?

Well, as the country continued to grow, few could cogently argue that the directly elected senator was more strongly drawn into the gravitational orbit of his constituents or that the nature of our politics improved; on the contrary⁸⁸. There is also no question that with this change did come a weakening of the states and their elected bodies. This has set off controversies and calls for remedies, but as we will see not very well considered ones.

Once again, a failure to analyze based on properly constructed questions is demonstrated - these for instance:

What is the evidence of this weakening?

What is its true cause?

As to the weakening, accusers point to the marked increase in the power of the federal government in too many domains to catalogue; it is argued that power comes at the expense of the several states. Another charge is that the states elected bodies and executives have become less important to the public and this can indeed be demonstrated by the decline in press coverage of the still impactful work they do.

88 <https://www.npr.org/2014/03/26/294361018/how-to-meet-your-congressman>

⁸⁹According to the Pew research center, among all states, there is an average of one reporter covering state legislatures for every 373,777 people. *In California, the ratio of reporters to population is one per every 866,371!*

That people are unaware of what is happening in their own backyard is uncontroversial and the poor condition of too many of our states and cities speaks volumes to this unhappy truth. As to question *of the true cause*; well, since the easiest thing to do is blame the effects of the 17th amendment, there have invariably been the demands to repeal it and “return that power to the states”.

That remedy makes these assumptions:

- The states have weakened - **bad**
- The federal government has strengthened - **bad**
- The correlation proves **cause**
- Going back to the original method will **reverse** this
- Which means the State level is a victim - and **otherwise unconnected** to these outcomes
- The people are in their **unaware** state because of this reversal in power
- A return to the original process will make the people **aware**; involved and effective

These conclusions assume much and examine little. No surprise there as the habitual response of unrealistic, one dimensional, and yes, elite thinking once again rears its head.

To consider the United States of the early 20th century - much less the 21st - a mirror of its 18th-19th century self, with its state and local representatives in close proximity to the people, would be a very big mistake. Spurred by the tremendous growth of the country, and the various forms of political change and distance it naturally created, corruption was inevitable. The 17th amendment was but one of many progressive-era reforms of that time and was but ONE answer to the great tide of local/state and federal level corruption that inspired it.

It is also interesting to note that many State legislatures of the time were not unhappy to see this power go. Just consider how great the focus is today on Washington D.C. and it's easy to see why the debate about their Senate choice was ever present; and to them to the detriment of their daily work.

So it would be simplistic to claim the 17th amendment was a simple power grab



**MILE WIDE AND
AN INCH DEEP.**

89 <https://www.journalism.org/2014/07/10/americas-shifting-statehouse-press/>

at the expense of the states. What must be understood here is that along with the people's right to directly elect their senator also came the right of open ballot access and the right to **directly nominate** their candidates.

That is a pretty big thing to forget!

This momentous change to the constitution was not "unfair". Yes, with no power to nominate such a change would certainly project a weakening of the several states in favor of the central government and though this has been the result, the question of WHY it has worked out this way must be asked.

The answer is simple; it is because of the absence of the people from the ballot access/nomination process; that's it! (for a moment, for this moment, we leave aside the parallel and paramount changes/affects to our communications and media systems).

That absence eventually enabled the new alignment; the money-media-election complex, that has certainly become a better and more pernicious form of control than the old boss/spoils system could have ever dreamed of being. But this outcome was not a direct result of ratifying the 17th amendment and there is no law, reform or any amendment to the constitution that's going to fix this.

It will require the dynamics of access; a social and physical proximity that brings with it the potential for direct political power that can be coherently applied by the citizenry at all levels of government.

However, to get that will require thinking and action from our most informed and engaged citizens.

CLAIM 4 - The WeLeadUSA Citizens Access Network creates a natural proximity and strong ties amongst all stakeholders as the power to nominate meets visible constituency under the dome of the Citizens Access Network; with all its tools of communications and planning at hand. Now, all concerned and able parties are close, accessible and interdependent.

PARTNERSHIP – NOT RULER-SHIP



#5
CLAIM

We can end the stranglehold of fixed hierarchies and the divisions they depend on; and replace them with coalitions and partnership.

Where there is proximity and common cause there can be partnership. Where there are fixed hierarchies and **entrenched mediator's** gatekeeping, only confusion, conflict and the inevitable resistance-response are possible. The growing - and global - tensions between people and governments demonstrate this.

With the citizenry incoherent or absent, a carefully crafted government hierarchy is very much immune to any demand the people might make as they are in no position to demand anything! Nor are they in a position to resist anything either. Hence, in confronting the heavy-hand, protest and “resistance” actions multiply yet can accomplish nothing; other than making the participants easy targets.

Further, the sources people depend on for information or organized action are undependable. Either they are integral to the hierarchy - owned and/or regulated by it - or one of countless, splintered fragments of media and activism; *mostly they're both*. All however seek attention for their content or cause and devote much to that goal.

A central tactic of such hierarchies is to spread vast amounts of information, unattached to any context, or the means for study, analysis and fellowship. The sources spreading - or spewing - this information are not built to process this input; on the contrary! Any attempts to organize, or foster independent problem solving around issues they raise are deterred; by design.

This ensures a rough, disorderly, info-ecosystem meant to produce reaction, fragmentation, limited understanding and certainly *no ability to offer a challenge*.

Accepting this state of affairs represents nothing less than an outsourcing of our knowledge, learning and perhaps most importantly our priority making systems to others; with agendas. Likewise, the endless feeder system with its focus on people and issues meant to distract, i.e. the daily headlines, personal identity “causes” etc., prevents us from seeing this bigger picture and the opportunities for partnership

that are not only possible - but that are imperative to have in order to escape our being ruled; *absolutely*.

These are issues essentially of power and organization and all the negative consequences that prevail can always be traced directly to the absence of the oversight and involvement of an effective citizenry. ***This comes first*** and must be corrected before specific issues, ideas and grievances can be addressed.

What is necessary to do so is clear:

- To counteract the power of hierarchy and fragmentation, people must be capable of enduring presence, coherence and effective action
- To act effectively, knowledge and information systems would have to be orderly so as to provide context and emerge priorities
- To then act effectively on those priorities, knowledge and information systems would have to possess a powerful action component; one that enables operative partnerships and coalitions to form easily and flexibly
- To attach that powerful action and partnership component to knowledge and information systems (media) would require those systems be *independent of entrenchment and gatekeeping tendencies*. That means there'd be no outsourcing of this authority to people or bodies driven by agendas of issue or livelihood.

With a powerful action component available to channel information-knowledge through, expending the energy to create that knowledge (media) and those partnerships (coalitions) is worth the doing.

In that doing, natural alliances among the people will emerge as they work to agree on what is true, what is important, what can be done; **and how to do it**.

Further, as the hierarchies lose their true source of power - namely our confusion and lack of organization - many elements of its apparatus will join the capable people; because, if we show up, we will *constitute the most powerful audience ever assembled* and so, they will show up as there would simply be no choice

CLAIM 5 - The Citizens Access Network will provide the infrastructure to its visible constituencies that can both produce and process knowledge i.e. media; made collaboratively. With the grant or deny electoral power held by the constituency, that knowledge is tethered to decisive action capable of emerging priorities and coalitions as public policy and problem solving gets done. Media in action - action in media; communication, interdependence and partnerships are the result.





#6
CLAIM

We can sideline all the inappropriate, inauthentic, media fueled nonsense and focus on priorities.

A key element that characterized our founding generation was their remarkable ability to lucidly develop, discuss and initiate policies through thoughtful debate. Many examples abound from that time demonstrating carefully crafted argument, planning and listening. Among them, the Federalist papers that urged ratification of the constitution and the very cogent concerns expressed by their opposite number; the anti-federalists.

This “highest-use” of communications and analysis allowed their designs to be carefully considered and ensured the ones that were accepted got traction. The lesson is that such commitment allows even the most daunting tasks to be undertaken; as in their case forming a new nation based on many experimental concepts.

This ethos was embodied by the qualities demonstrated at the Constitutional convention with its unlikely yet profound result; a result achieved because discourse and debate wasn’t left at discourse and debate! It was attached to focused analysis, decision making and action taking.

Even the arguments that “lost the day” have stood the intellectual test of time and within these examples lay an important experience for those who subscribe to the idea that our country and world are in deep trouble. If anyone believes that we’re getting out of this without careful deliberation you have another thing coming.

To allow the antagonism that pervades our public sphere, or one’s opinion of the founders, their motives, or their generation to cloud the true importance of this lesson would be a grave error. For whether one believes the intentions were good or bad, we’d have to grant that in accomplishing their mission, they took a

reasoned, cooperative approach under difficult and delicate circumstances. This is no less the case for the contemporary forces of control we face that must be countered. Therefore, we will have to do the same.

Of course this will have to be done in a way that accommodates contemporary settings and sensibilities - but will still and always require:

- **Deep reflection** - Inside and out
- **Listening** - Any ideas? I'm all ears.
- **Planning** - If there is to be anything accomplished; it'd naturally have to involve a plan
- **Cooperation** - No one is doing this alone
- **Demanding Discernment** - A considered rejection of anything that lacks the "ingredients"

While many of the civic minded in our population are certainly imbued with substantial skills, born of education and practical experience, we have also become more and more remiss in cultivating the use of these virtues for public benefit. This is made obvious by the vapid response of those who fear the worst which can only have one conclude that their "demand" for a solution involves a magic wand.

How often do you hear such people voice a clear demand for a genuine solution; *as opposed to voicing complaints and pointing blame?*

- The Politicians
- The Sleeping Sheeple
- The Wars
- The Puppet Masters
- The Terrorists
- The Corporations
- The Media
- Voting Doesn't Matter
- Nothing Can Be Done
- We Have To Do something



Not exactly the stuff of 1787, whatever the faults of the men and time.

There can be no sticking if there is no demand for anything to stick; and there is none! Without a ringing commitment to a solution based on the capable people taking carefully crafted, deliberative action there can be no solution.

However, we have seen no such commitment from the domains from which assistance might be expected.

But what we do see is saturation media – of whatever flavor – promoting extremes; fear on one hand, fluff on the other. We also witness the country’s third largest industry by employment – what has become the nonprofit industrial complex – tackling every issue known to man. Their highly fragmented and weighted efforts are further diluted and conflicted by the tax exempt status that limits their activities – and mindset – and the inevitable and understandable mandate to secure funding and keep those jobs.

We also have a social media construct that clogs the cyber world with billions of words every day – *yet organizes nothing* – despite this being the locus of our hyper connectivity. And, we have already identified the hypocrisy problem with the people from these circles who clearly will not get past the limits of this media model; or their imagination.

While negatives and delusions are constantly reinforced, hardly a word demanding public reflection, organization, cooperation and planning can be heard. Therefore, even serious people – media, elected officials or thinkers beyond – who might seek serious dialogue will find little traction; *people give up*.

Serious problems cannot be tamed within a frivolous or momentary debate and nothing will stick unless there is demand for traction creating elements; without that all will be lost.

Only the people who already know and who already care can create this demand for active-traction; with words attached to deeds. It will be done not by ‘waking up’ those who don’t know and don’t care. It will only be done by resolving to work with those of like mind, doing what it will take and has always taken; then it will stick.

CLAIM 6 – A clear demand first rejects everything “that isn’t”. The nexus of constituency, proximity and power will take us beyond the headlines and hot buttons. Powerful use of media delivered to a powerful, motivated citizenry will ensure the fluff stays where it belongs as the important work and decision making goes to the involved, informed, and vigilant.



SOLUTIONS – IMPLEMENTED AND FLEXIBLE



#7
CLAIM

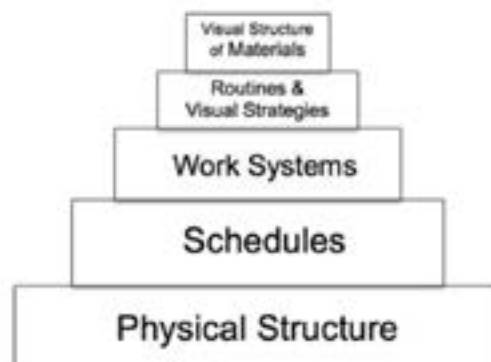
We can agree on and implement solutions; and then make sure they're working.

With a focus on substance and traction enabled, it becomes a simpler matter to find agreement, emerge solutions and implement them within framework that emphasizes tracking and benchmarks.

However, our current dysfunctional methods are - *by design* - not only meant to guarantee this never happens, they are also meant to push us into grand programs and bargains; sweeping, gigantic, impossible to understand, change, or stop. Such maneuvers represent a tragic caricature of self-government; and the decay it brings becomes more obvious each day.

The most vocal citizens among us - too often immovable and one dimensional in mindset - make matters worse by taking such proposals seriously as opposed to exposing them more holistically for what they are while offering sound alternatives. Under these circumstances, the less engaged portion of the population, ever more rudderless, can make no meaningful contribution and we collectively sink even lower.

The capable people's absence ensures the national purpose will be commandeered and driven to destructive ends and only the capable people's presence can change that.



But that presence must have a design of its own; one that structures discussion, captures agreement, and directs decision making towards rational, solution oriented results; born not of pompous concepts like unity and grand bargains, but ones of simplicity, transparency and trust.

What would the fundamentals of such a design be?

- It would have to inspire confidence. There would have to be good reason to expend the effort; no one will or should put their time into half-baked, hope infused schemes that won't produce observable results.
- In our system, where the people ultimately express their will and power through elections, that means it would have to give the participants direct, unquestionable, **grant or deny power** over their elected officials; with that will also come the government beyond they regulate.
- Further, it would have to grant them this power at all levels of government because the structure of our country IS all levels, and they are all connected and interconnected.

With this, local initiatives - that are well below our radar - and local officials, who are every bit as much beyond the reach of the people as those at the federal level - can be checked! The many decisive programs that are creeping along locally, *remaking everything nationally*, with no penetration by the people possible can now be pierced.

Arrogant representatives, administrators, law enforcement and judicial officers etc., - previously untouchable - are now touchable! From water treatment plants to school curriculums to land management and development; all will come to capable people who, using and distributing their own specialized knowledge, experience, and interests, will have the necessary access and power to unravel, influence, change and enforce the policy it determines is best for community and country.

And, with this authority and responsibility potentially theirs, it will be worth the time and effort to realize that potential.

This will work at all levels of government allowing the input and involvement of constructive participants of all stripes and strata's. This framework of accomplishment will derive its authority from first creating an enduring presence of citizens who understand the power of ballot access and NOMINATIONS; everything flows from that simple power source that they own.

This structure of such civic problem solving is detailed in "The Network-New Media" content that describes the *Citizens Access Network* which, though quite detailed, lays out only a beginning of endless possibilities.



It would emphasize:

Organization and Order:

- By the Parsing of voting districts at every level; county to federal, that will make for the visible constituency
- The committees with various expertise/review authority that will be formed

Participation, Power, and Genuine New Media:

- All elected officials of all districts are identified and connected
- All participants within the constituencies are connected
- Initiatives can be created and voted upon
- Priorities decided upon
- Full district reviews and votes
- Innovative forms of media that filter competition, ideas, and discourse
- Elected officials Informed
- Action taken and tracked

Its Results Will Encourage:

- Reflection
- Coalitions
- Flexibility
- Transparency
- Trust
- Action
- Solutions

To break a cycle that has been with us a very long time, capable Americans will need to take center stage and fill the voids and vacuums our current system both creates and preys upon.

CLAIM 7 – The power of constituency tethered to a framework designed for accomplishment allows serious people to do the serious work of advanced citizenship; leveraging traction into a focus on solutions, their implementation, and ongoing management.



LAWS AND REFORMS – NOT SO NECESSARY



#8
CLAIM

No laws, reforms, amendments or permissions are required to “change” things. It happens fast!

As this country was framed chiefly by lawyers it should be no surprise that the influence of laws and the presence of lawyers in our system have remained quite strong. However, the practice of law has changed greatly from that time and involved a transformation from the constitutional origins of **common-law** to what we have today; which is a mix of statutory, judicial and executive “law-making”. This has not only changed the character of our legal processes, it has changed the nature of its executors and all this in turn has greatly affected power-relations throughout our system and society.

These influences have made for a United States that ranks near the top of world in lawyers per capita⁹⁰ as well as number of lawsuits. The after-effects of our litigiousness are well known but perhaps less considered is the effect this has had on the evolution of self-governing ideals.

Where there was once an ethos of reliance on a common, community based approach to issues of law and government, we have shifted over the generations to one of great reliance on *legal remedy*.

Law as a remedy no doubt has its place. In an ever growing world regularly sprouting new complexities, the necessity for new laws will need to be considered. However, a default dependence on statutes, orders and regulations in favor of

90 <https://abovethelaw.com/2012/07/infographic-of-the-day-american-litigiousness-statistics-that-will-make-you-angry/>

people working together in COMMON cause has created a shift towards a legal-techno-feudalism; not evolved republican ideals. Problem solving now seems to imagine only some form of law; law as an end in itself.

The problem with this can be seen in the character of many of the causes devoted to stemming the decline of our democracy. Calls for constitutional amendments to balance budgets, limit the terms of representatives, make corporations once again corporations and not people, reform the Electoral College and maybe make everybody rich and beautiful too are examples of this trend.

Countless other laws and reforms are also touted as solutions; “anti-corruption” measures like public financing of campaigns, overhauling lobbying rules, or making the source of all the political donations more transparent. Paradoxically, changing the methods for changing the laws - like bypassing legislatures and using ballot initiatives instead - are all sold as a way out of the law making problem. However well intentioned, these are essentially elite solutions born of the problem we have in the first place; **illusion**.

What they all have in common is that they call on “laws” and not the people to ensure that happiness can be pursued freely. They are illusory - at best - because:

- They expect laws to affect human nature in ways **they cannot**
- They assume the people can regulate the **industry of government** with a law
- They transfer **regulatory** and **enforcement** mechanisms to other elite institutions of the system. Namely courts, political and law enforcement bodies where conflicts of interest are inevitable and where the administration of said law may be quite arbitrary
- They do not call on or create **grounded institutions** of/by and for the people; the continued absence of which only deepens civic infantilization

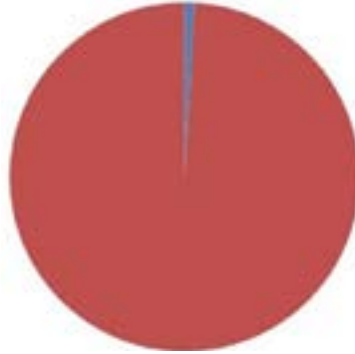
Perhaps worst of all, they suck up a great many resources necessary for this thing to change while creating illusions of a better world that cannot be built this way. The resources of time, money, public attention and most of all confidence are increasing only in their decreasing supply.

Without confidence, and the trust it engenders, there can only be collapse. A discerning demand for a solution must start with rejection of this failed model of change.

CLAIM 8 – The power to decide and enforce policy will be transferred to the capable people who now will hold grant or deny authority over their elected officials. That transfer is dependent on no law, reform or permission and so has immediate effect. Reform or lawmaking becomes part of the capable people’s policy making process; codification and laws are only made as necessary and appropriate; not be an end in itself.



SMALL %'S – NO DRAMA



#9
CLAIM

All that is necessary to a big shift is a small number of our most motivated citizens

In order for any meaningful change to come it will have to be engineered by people. The people, **“at-large”** - unentrenched, and free of conflict; *be it of mind or tangible interest.*

Driven not by agendas that are easily hidden, change that really brings change would be based on what works. Guided by principled differences that might be embodied in political “leanings”, it would necessarily reject hard ideologies that can easily mask programs of social engineering that have only control as their true aim.

For the people of the United States to create this environment they will require the authority to do so; therefore it must be understood where those powers reside.

The pivotal power in our system - the part we have access to - resides in our electoral system which decides the political fates of some half-million elected officials nationally. As the derivative, mass vote of an election day cannot capture that power, its true source and expression is, and always has been held by those who control access to the electoral ballot and the party nominations to stand for office; which means all elected offices. Everything in our visible system, what the citizenry has access to, flows from that simple mechanism; **everything!**

Throughout our history, this power has been visibly expressed by the few; either through dominant party machines, or now an elite complex of physical, institutional and yes, psychological assets. The use - or misuse - of this power has been such that stable outcomes, favorable to the many have been elusive.

These “facts on the ground” have unfortunately repressed other facts that point to alternate realities.

Since the arrival of the 20th century, at least, this power has and does rest only with the people; a people however who continually fail to understand this framework of their system and so, continually fail to change anything.

It has been proven beyond question that the common law foundation of our constitution provides for the ultimate supremacy of the people and therefore has, and does, afford us the opportunity to develop anew the tools necessary to meet new challenges. On occasion we have done exactly that as the transfer of this pivotal power from the machines to the people attest.

Provisions however, do not guarantee outcomes, action does. In the absence of action - eternal vigilance - the seeds of provision are left to rot and it is then a simple enough matter for the few and motivated to rule the feckless many. To combat that - the worst of human nature - the best of it must be motivated and have a plan; *just as those who rule do.*

To equip ourselves we must also get our heads clear:

- Laws do not govern men - at best they can be a guide - power governs men; and we must not allow ourselves to be told or believe that a legal remedy is the highest (or only) form of action we are capable of.
- We must not allow ourselves to be told - or believe - that multitudes of others - must be awake before anything can be done.
- We must not allow ourselves to be told or believe that our only course of action is to dramatically put those multitudes on the street with vague demands steeped in beggary and platitudes.
- We must not allow ourselves to be told or believe our knowledge or truth can only be authored by the “special and few” and then left unconnected to action or each other.
- We must not allow ourselves to be told or believe our only recourse is to invest our very lives in distant leaders with promises that cannot be delivered upon and who are not directly subject to our presence, support or repudiation.



The democratic republic of the United States of America requires elections and elections require candidates and candidates have to be on a ballot before they can be elected. That decisive power has never really belonged to anyone except us but, with the dawn of open ballot access and the popular primary voting system, the exercise of that power was given a clear path.



Over not too much time, it failed; *we failed!* The advent of the internet with its effects on the practical creation of civic-social networks and genuine new forms of media saw yet another opportunity to seize this authority missed.

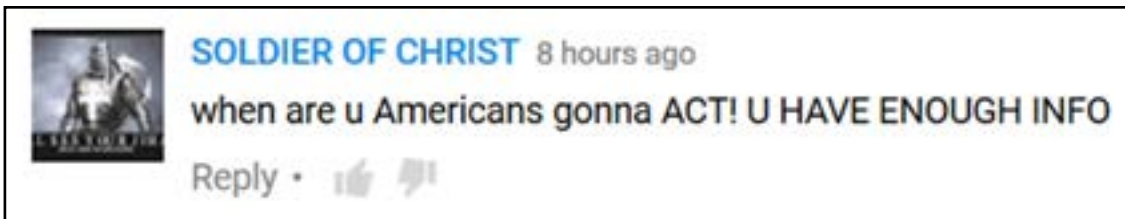
This, while inferior methods, demanding impossible levels of participation, or approaches that yield nothing new are promoted time and again.

Fortunately, with considered action, only small numbers of us have the power to offer an entirely different path.

CLAIM 9 – Transforming our election day into an electoral landscape, capable of giving citizens full control over their destiny, is much more than possible. Leveraging the power of our ballot access/nominating system through the Citizens Access Network, even tiny percentages of our informed and motivated citizenry can coolly exercise power and supervision over vast tracts of our public sphere. With their ability to swing pivotal elections, only hundreds or some thousands of signatures or votes can emerge new forms of electoral competition, media and citizen-representatives. This fact, unique to the American republican-democratic political system, will require the economic/social/political affairs of the country – at all levels - to go through the visible and rational constituency we create.



EPILOGUE



The comment above, taken from a thread on YouTube some months from this writing ago, contains themes that have been given much attention and treatment throughout these pages. Laden with perceptions and a perspective that in itself warrants deep study; a brief analysis is revealing.

Number one, this person is clearly not an American citizen and therefore can be considered an observer of the American scene through whatever lens and capacities he or she might have.

The observations indicate his understanding that information and action are not the same things and clearly express his concern that “we Americans” are having trouble making this distinction. His comment also suggests Americans as “the” responsible party as there is no mention of a necessity for peoples of other nationalities to act; a very interesting aspect to this brief comment and quite a reasonable perspective.

Whether this an Australian, an Englishman, a sub-Saharan African or a Canadian, this person seems to have an inherent appreciation that the United States allows - to an extent far greater than can be found elsewhere - its people a spontaneous authority that can manifest significant change of a quite unforeseen nature.

Further, his comment understands that the United States as a nation and a people, despite being amongst the most successful and powerful nations - in the history of nations - has been used, and misused. Fundamentally, his call for “you Americans” to act indicates not only an urgency, but a belief that this misuse has been abided and, perhaps through their neglect, even aided by her people. Given the scolding tone, it’s not too much to infer that he sees a precipice.

So, although we citizens of democratic countries (electoral based) are largely of average economic means, we are not all average in terms of responsibility or the power to act. To those who would agree, these factors all blend to create an obligation for the people of the United States because, as should be apparent to any clear thinking individual, there will be no saviors, shiny knights, or laws that will stem the tide of decline; or fall. It is only for the American people to act in their own defense, and in others. As been demonstrated, there are important precedents in the American story that can provide crucial guidance.

Also a central aim of this work has been to draw attention to the relationship between our media and political systems. This, to make the essential point that to seek a solution to the civic and political dysfunctions of the United States without considering its inextricable link to its media systems - and its dysfunctions - would be folly.

We have seen how in all matters public-civic, these central pillars of our society and constitutional framework are strictly compartmentalized and separated; yet for those in control it is another matter entirely as the five corporations etc. attest.

That such a strange and important disconnect is accepted so quietly demands we return to our pioneer of modern media studies and seek his input for some closing perspective.

In the 1960s and 70s a Canadian English literature professor by the name Marshall McLuhan turned a pithy statement - the medium is the message - into an aphorism that popularized, if not created this important field of study. He went on to further qualify what he meant with a play on words adding to the idea that the “medium is the message”.

The medium as he put it, massaged us, roughed us up and like a baker kneading his dough, shapes us into something new and different; with us hardly noticing. He attempted to convey what was then - and even now - a very novel, counterintuitive thought; that the mediums (environments) through which we receive content are much more impactful than the content itself.

One useful example he offered was that of the automobile, which he claimed (1970's) had lost its real meaning in our lives and hearts. His proof of this was the infamous oil crisis experienced in those years. In this construct, the message (figure) was the car, but its medium (ground) was the environment⁹¹; the effects it created. Roads, bridges, traffic congestion, pollution, gas stations and service and repair industries and so on are the medium in this illustration.

His contention was that the oil crisis could never have happened, that we would never have allowed it, if the car was not already obsolete. That did not mean it would disappear anytime soon he said, but only that it was clear there had been a big shift. Well, in these ensuing decades we have seen the mightiest industry in the mightiest country bought to its knees with its issues of foreign competition and bailouts perhaps no more than symptoms. With Uber, car-sharing, self-driving cars, “smart neighborhoods” and who knows what on the horizon, it seems this perspective was accurate and the paradigm has proven both persistently useful and correct; however controversial.

McLuhan labeled his time the electric age; where instantaneous information generated a “surround”. With the television at the forefront, he paid close attention to the effects his media had on the message of democracy. Its medium was the environment it created, for example; media (mainstream) content, the bureaucracy necessary for its execution: elections, politicians, conventions, voter rolls, voting machines and districts, and ancillary features like those who clamor to “reform” it.

He warned that this environment comprised many processes within a complex system and with a “surround” of light-speed information, it would be impossible for

91 <http://tmcanada.pbworks.com/f/Final+edit+article+for+TM+Canada+May+5+2010sz.pdf>

this medium to be educational. Caution would be advisable because the message of this medium was working us over, sculpting us into a form and shape that no one could argue was positive. With the medium unable to educate, public deliberation would be impossible and, as with this automobile, this could indicate a functional and dangerous obsolescence of our democratic methods in the minds and hearts of the public.

Some forty years on, with the American systems debasement well established in the public mind - and voting, its culminating act, more and more considered meaningless and rigged - McLuhan's views seems prescient; and applying his approach to our current circumstances is chillingly instructive.

Despite the promise of the internet to revitalize our democratic-republican ethos and institutions, the medium of civics, electoral systems, politics and media have instead burdened us with such a profusion of "content" and surround that any goals for it to educate and produce traction are more remote than ever.

This would seem to render the idea of obsolescence a practical fact. As with the automobile, although this would not necessarily mean its disappearance anytime soon, its future does seem uncertain and with that - unsurprisingly - so too does the future of a free citizenry.

It has been a central tenet here that the American electoral system has been profoundly misunderstood by its citizens who have allowed it to be treated as pieces of disparate, unconnected content instead of the environment that it of course is and must be. Observing our contemporary mixed republic through this lens its clear message is that we essentially accept severe limits and anti-social behavior; perhaps even celebrate it. This, in the most social of domains that, in an ever-changing world, necessarily requires maximum flexibility!

It has also been a central tenet of this work that nothing stands in the way of people to reevaluate our purportedly broken system in order to consider its processes, our results and mindset, and the options we have to redirect, reshape, and reimagine.

As a "message":

- Our media is cacophonous, reckless and useless as agent for realizing the potential of our nation and citizenry
- Politicians will necessarily continue to owe allegiance to narrow forces and special interests and behave accordingly- regardless of anyone's character or stated intentions
- Political meetings will be limited to "professionals" staging a production for the purposes of manipulating results and controlling the public
- Efforts to "change and reform" will remain in the hands of "experts" with divided interests, its promise to be delivered by "laws", and with money/fund raisings its supreme mandate
- Voting districts will remain forms with an intention only to draw territorial boundaries used to pack and crack peoples for the purposes of political manipulation

- Voting will remain an empty, isolated act – an election day – to be performed once every 2-4 years to be driven by personality and conflict
- The actions and intentions of our government - and all governance -will remain below our ability to comprehend it; and so effect it

As a “medium”:

- A new form of genuine, citizen based, collaborative media can be shaped that would involve, educate, and make clear the coherent desires of a deliberative and thoughtful public
- The allegiances of our elected officials can be shifted to ensure a loyalty and dependence owed only to that public
- Political meetings of whatever stripe will be open, transparent, and involve all participants; with principles and principled differences the driving force
- “Change and reform” will be fueled by a representative, coherent and politically powerful body of citizens; with its supreme mandate the greater good as determined through the focused, deliberative work of the people
- Voting districts will become nodes of a powerful, organic network that will efficiently organize a vast and diversified people and support innovative methods of communication and deliberation; that are built as the country is built
- Voting will become a culminating act of a multifaceted and integrated process – an electoral landscape - driven by knowledge and involvement and therefore become an unambiguous means of controlling government and events
- The architecture of the Citizens Access Network will process the interactions and deliberations of its participants across the broadest spectrum of geography and subject matter to be shared amongst the whole. In this way the specialized talents of our people will allow no bureaucratic edifice to plan or operate blow our collective radar.

With considered understanding and action, our historic message of democratic ideals and freedom can be leveraged to create these mediums; and finally see those ideals realized.

The information we have - and have always had – and the action that knowledge demands are simple matters of will and mindset; as we have also long had the power to take that action.

And, as our concerned non-American suggests, this is the responsibility of all truly aware and awake Americans, the last and best hope of a very unbroken system.

INFORMED CITIZENRY

**The Republic Cannot Be Kept
FOR US**

EXECUTING

And We Were Told From The Beginning

What That Would Take

AGREEMENT

**It Must Be Kept
BY US**

INFORMED CITIZENS

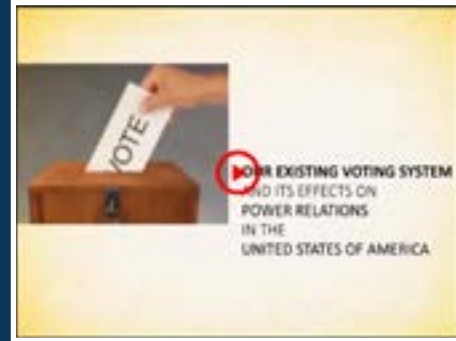
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Kirsch is a small business, and, when necessary, social entrepreneur.

A concerned citizen, website publisher, political thinker, researcher, blogger, and constructive critic, his specific areas of study focus on American citizenship, innovations for civic engagement, and the landscape of reform-activist -“change related” efforts and movements.

Due out sometime in 2019, his next book will be solely focused on such reform efforts, past and present, and the unlearned, and unsought lessons of those experiences.

