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Trends. The United States Presidential Election: Curds and Wheys, Words and Cays

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As power politics among competing factions plays out in the ongoing United States (US) presidential election, one might be easily struck by what is being said and by what what is being said is intended to mean by the sayer for receivers of what is being said.

Republican spokespersons insist that the votes have been counted, recounted, and recounted yet again. Because Governor Bush has maintained a lead after each counting, the counting of ballots should no longer occur and he should be declared the winner. However, some votes have not been counted at all, other have been multiply counted through the same vulnerable process, thus, guaranteeing the same inaccuracies. The intention is to engender an island of belief disparate from the "facts on the ground." Republican spokespersons also claim that because of the short time between the November 7th voting and the January 20th inauguration of the new president, the counting of ballots should stop and Governor Bush be declared the winner. Yet the Republicans are prolonging the process that could result in ballot counting by a series of lawsuits and other legal interventions above and beyond legal initiatives of the Democrats. The intention again is to engender an island of belief disparate from the "facts on the ground."

Democratic spokespersons insist that all they want is a fair and accurate count of all the votes. Let the chips fall where they may. However, the very notion of a fair and accurate count is a chimera or convenient fiction. Each vote counting process or combination of processes will be associated with biases and inaccuracies. The intention is to engender an island of belief disparate from the "facts on the ground." Democratic spokespersons also assert that the ultimate aim of their legal efforts is to ensure (pace, sexism-phobic readers) one man/one vote. However, divinations from ambiguously marked ballots allow more than one vote for some men (ballot hand-counters), no votes for others. The intention again is to engender an island of belief disparate from the "facts on the ground."

Besides obvious parities in language corruption among Republican and Democratic partisans, one might note more ominous phenomena. A political space in which the interpretative meanings of words are so corrupted may be having significant, noxious effects on the rule of law, internal and external standards of morals and ethics, and what elements of human nature are more likely to become character. As the election continues with protestations of purity from all sides, the body politic (nurtured on language corruptions) may slowly be cast too far adrift from islands of belief and sink into the mire--an oceanic void of nothingness. (See Barker, C. (1997). Television and the reflexive project of the self: Soaps, teenage talk and hybrid identities. *British Journal of Sociology*, 48, 611-628; Dunn, R.G. (1997). Self, identity, and difference: Mead and the poststructuralists. *Sociological Quarterly*, 38, 687-705; Lewis, M. (1998). Altering fate: Why the past does not predict the future. *Psychological Inquiry*, 9, 105-108; Pittam, J. (1999). The historical and emergent enactment of identity in language. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 32, 111-117; Sparrow, L.M. (2000). Beyond multicultural man: Complexities of identity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 24, 173-201.) (Keywords: Elections, United States, Voting.)