

How should we elect the president?

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At the last meeting, we considered the crisis of 1801, in which the United States nearly disintegrated trying to resolve the presidential election of 1800. We also briefly considered some additional history pertaining to the procedure for electing the president. But we didn't have time to cover the theory of how to elect the president, so in this meeting, we'll consider the theory.

We'll cover fundamental concepts that characterize the structure of representative democracy, and we will apply them to understanding defects in the current presidential election procedure and to understanding what rational alternatives there are for electing the president. In this context, I will explain my solution to the problem of how the president should be elected.

To put this in personal terms, have you ever felt that your vote for president doesn't count for anything — not because you have only one vote, but because of the current structure of the presidential election procedure? I'll explain when, in fact, your vote doesn't count for anything and how the election procedure should be modified so that your vote will always count.

After covering the theory, if people wish, we'll return to the crisis of 1801 for those who couldn't make it to the last meeting.

Meeting format

We'll cover the foregoing material interactively, discussing the concepts as we proceed.