MAKING ALL VOTES COUNT!

What Happened In 2016?

Sample Edition

Using Equal Voice Voting in PRESIDENTIAL Elections

By Jerry Spriggs

© 2012, 2016 and 2017, All rights reserved by Jerry Spriggs

This sample edition is a free version that can be used any anyone interested in our U.S. Presidential elections. The rights reserved by the copyright noted above pertain to the full-edition version.

It is hoped that this book will be shared with others to spark interest, conversation and reform by all states, to make all votes for the U.S. President matter in the Electoral College.
Only by listening to the voices of many will this cause be successful.

It should be stated that the book has matured over time. I began writing this in 2012 and published it initially under the name of *Equal Voice Voting: Making Our Voice Count in the Electoral College*. That book covered the elections from 1980-2012. I rewrote the book in 2016 with improvements in the explanations to help clarify the issues. I offered a free PDF version, entitled *Make Your Vote Count!* on the Website: www.equalvoicevoting.com. Now, I've rewritten it once again incorporating the data from 1960-1976 and 2016 to cover all 15 elections from 1960-2016. Hopefully, too, it now reflects sensitivity to the input and critiques from several sources including some 60+ state legislators across the nation to tell a fuller story.

More information can be obtained from our website at: www.equalvoicevoting.com.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(Note: This Table of Contents is for the entire book – not for this sample.)

Introduction 1

1. What's the Problem? 3

Before a full explanation of how Equal Voice Voting works and what can be expected of it, this chapter shows the challenges each state has while it tries to engage all of its registered voters in the presidential election process.

2. What Is Equal Voice Voting? 13

The chapter explains the Equal Voice Voting (EVV) method. EVV's simple formula and process demonstrate how every vote (voice) makes a difference and provides a fair representation of the state's voting sentiment. The 2016 presidential election results are compared to show how the EVV method would modify the disparities experienced in that election for two example states: Pennsylvania and Virginia.

3. What Are the Principles? (Not Available in This Sample)

The chapter discusses the principles of fairness that our presidential voting system should use and what results those principles can elicit. It points out that every voter should matter and that every state contributes to the electoral vote result as an individual and separate voice. The chapter explains that if the process is fair (includes all voters) and the mechanism of translating a state's popular vote via the Electoral College is revised, a more equitable national result can be realized.

4. How Does Our Electoral College Work? (Not Available in This Sample)

The chapter looks at a simple history of our Electoral College and how it currently works. It explains the advantages and challenges we now experience because of decisions the states originally chose.

5. What Results Do We Get? (Not Available in This Sample)

The chapter points to how the all-or-nothing approach we use on a state-by-state basis adversely affects the results we get from the Electoral College. It shows how the current system disenfranchises voters and actually acts as a deterrent for voter participation. It discusses how EVV promises to engage and include voters more than currently experienced. A short discussion is also provided to explain the impact you, the voter, have when you cast your presidential ballot.

6. What Representation Do We Get? (Not Available in This Sample)

The chapter shows how electoral votes are currently allocated for each state. That is followed by a comparison of the popular vote with the electoral vote allocation for each state. The 2016 presidential election is presented, in bar graph format, showing how the popular vote compares with the current Electoral College results. The comparisons point to how poorly the two correlate and it is suggested that this failing becomes a key cause for the existing low voter turnout among our citizenry.

7. What about Third Parties? (Not Available in This Sample)

The chapter discusses the seven presidential elections covered in this book that included third-party candidates. It shows how the votes cast for third parties affected the electoral vote results and how those differences would have been experienced had EVV been used instead. The chapter explains how third-party entries are a positive inclusion in elections because they give voice to counter perspectives and values that are sometimes not addressed by the primary parties and/or their candidates.

8. What Happened in 2016? (Not Available in This Sample)

The 2016 presidential election is covered in this book with a comparison between what actually occurred and what the experience would have been had EVV been used instead.

9. Why Not Use the Popular Vote? (Not Available in This Sample)

This chapter shows how the popular vote fails to represent this country's voting citizens because of the wide variances that exist in the states' population densities. Alaska, our largest state, is very sparsely populated while New Jersey and the Washington D.C. area are heavily populated. A simple popular vote would heavily favor the more populous areas and create an imbalance in our representative government. How our nation's population is unevenly spread across our 50 states is illustrated. The chapter also points out how a popular vote strategy would do our citizenry a disservice in that it likely would increase the low voter turnout challenge.

10. Why Not Use the National Popular Vote? (Not Available in This Sample)

The chapter points to a National Popular Vote (NPV) bill that is currently wending its way throughout state legislatures. It has gained some favor but is risky and would further disenfranchise voters. The chapter shows that NPV is a poor fix for a major problem.

11. Why Not Use Congressional District Voting?
(Not Available in This Sample)

The focus in the chapter is on congressional districts and how splitting a state's vote along these lines runs the risk of manipulation and fraudulent control. Gerrymandering is discussed along with an example of a district that has been obviously manipulated to circumvent true representation. A short discussion is also provided to exemplify how a few well-chosen principles can easily cause congressional districts to be drawn more fairly.

12. What about Political Party Control? (Not Available in This Sample)

The chapter addresses the false notion that political parties have predictable control of presidential outcomes. Politicians may resist voting mechanism changes for fear of eroding a voting advantage that is currently experienced. The chapter illustrates how history tells us that such reticence is not well founded.

13. What Does All of This Mean? (Not Available in This Sample)

A summary is presented pointing out the key salient points made throughout the book. The short chapter points out the principles and advantages of EVV. Drawing on the 15 presidential elections presented in this book, the summary points to key trends, lessons learned and results that can be realized in future elections using the EVV approach.

14. What Can We Do? (Not Available in This Sample)

You really can make a difference in our presidential elections. You are encouraged to keep the discussion going by sharing the book and its ideas with others. The chapter shows you how to find your state senators and representative(s). You are encouraged to let them know you are aware of EVV and favor its adoption.

Appendix A – Maps & Data of Past Elections (Not Available in This Sample)

Appendix B – Vote Suppression

Appendix C – Voting Results

Appendix D – Gerrymandered Districts

Appendix E – Resources

List of Figures

List of Graphs

List of Tables

INTRODUCTION

This book presents a new approach for how each state can improve how it translates the popular votes into electoral votes for presidential elections. I refer to the approach as *Equal Voice Voting* (EVV). Succinctly, EVV converts each state's popular votes into a proportional electoral vote.

Fifteen presidential elections are analyzed in this book in light of what happened during those years and what could have happened had the entire nation used EVV. While many would agree that the results from our Electoral College seems to not represent the consent of the governed well, it is not the fault of the Electoral College itself. Rather, each state has chosen to use an all-or-nothing approach that disenfranchises many and provides a false sense of what the voters have actually stated through their voting power. This book examines this difference and offers a simple solution that each state can adopt.

EVV ensures popular votes make a difference while preserving the strengths of the Electoral College. EVV is not a radical idea, does not require a constitutional amendment and can be implemented on a state-by-state basis. EVV retains the independent voting voice of every state, respecting the federalist form of governance of our republic.

This is a book of facts. It is not a book of selected anecdotal examples to prove a point. Rather, facts are gathered to show voting trends on an aggregated national basis as well as state-by-state over the past 15 presidential elections showing what has happened and what could have happened if Equal Voice Voting had been used instead. You will not wade through a lot of hyperbole used to establish a premise, prove a conclusion or to defend a point-of-view. I admit that I provide my own opinion at certain points but have been careful to identify when I do. The numbers and statistics shown are facts that allow you to easily see for yourself the positive effect Equal Voice Voting would have on our nation's presidential elections.

As you read this book, you'll probably become aware of three things:

First, I've been accused of being a bit obsessed with the mathematical details in that I have used a lot of numeric data and presented the results in many tables and graphs. You don't have to study each of these. As a convenience to you, I've placed most of the graphs and tables in the Lists at the back of the book so you can focus on the most recent election (2016) comparisons to appreciate the essence of what is being presented.

Second, it's a book of facts and numbers, which may make for some dry reading. I get that. I'll do my best to guide you through the topics and will show you why I think we should modify our approach to the Electoral College, on a state-by-state basis, and what results we can expect if EVV is used. You may find this is similar to a reference book. You may find yourself flipping back and forth as you compare years and state results. You may be surprised by what you find. I think it's rather fun, but that refers back to my first point of being a bit obsessed with the mathematical details.

Third, the formula for EVV voting is new, but the remaining data is public record. I've relied heavily on data that can be easily viewed via the Internet, and I've referred to those sources either within the chapter's text and/or in Appendix E – Resources. I encourage you to visit these same Websites and do some searching of your own. I have found that voting via our Electoral College is a topic that has interested many, especially due to this most recent election. That is encouraging and, hopefully, you'll be part of the ongoing discussions to help improve the results we currently experience. It's important, vital even, that more of our voting citizenry be involved and be heard.

Note: The numbers for the 2016 election have been gleaned from several state Secretary of State Websites from and from David Leip's Atlas of Presidential Elections Website, as noted in Appendix E (Resources). Great care has been taken to ensure their accuracy though some have not been certified as of this writing.

1. WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

In the United States presidential election process, millions of votes do not matter, which undermines the intentions of our nation's founders. Many people are saying our Electoral College is antiquated. Many are calling for the Electoral College to be replaced. It is clear that minority-voting voices are silenced causing a fair and inclusive voting process to be lost – the very basis of our democracy!

Simply stated, your vote during United States presidential elections may not matter! Further, the votes of your friends and neighbors, whether living nearby or in another state, may not matter. It is a voting failure that should concern all of us.

The Electoral College is not to blame! How we translate popular votes to electoral votes is the problem. The results push voters away as they realize their votes are effectively cast aside. They become disenfranchised and disengaged. Many citizens simply don't participate by either not registering to vote or refusing to vote when they do. Such dissension is becoming more vocal and more prominent with each election, causing the very fabric of our democracy to be ripped apart. Our nation cannot long withstand this discord without something positive being done. Our national governance is at risk!

This book is an introduction to and evaluation of *Equal Voice Voting* (EVV). It is a proportional vote and non-partisan solution that does not require a Constitutional amendment. It makes all votes matter, and brings balance to the process allowing all states to participate on an equal basis. Equal Voice Voting retains the Founding Fathers' intention that minority voices are not lost and all voters are encouraged to engage in the fundamental national exercise of electing our presidents. Equal Voice Voting is essential for the future success of our nation's presidential elections!

The source of the problem is what I refer to as *vote suppression*, which is different from vote(**r)** suppression. Voter suppression is when U.S. citizens are either denied the opportunity to register as a voter or, upon being registered, are denied the opportunity to cast a ballot. Vote suppression, as it is used in this book, refers to votes cast but are not recognized in the Electoral College results due to our all-or-nothing approach. Such vote suppression occurs during every presidential election and prevents the vote (voice) of large segments of our voting citizenry from being counted during the democratic process. EVV is the only practical answer to this problem.

Here's how vote suppression works: If you vote for a presidential candidate in your state who does not win the popular vote in your state, your vote is ignored (not counted) as part of the electoral vote tally for your state. Your state, employing the all-or-nothing principle, casts all of its electoral votes for the candidate who wins the popular vote within your state.

Two states apply a variance to the all-or-nothing approach: Nebraska and Maine. Each of these states use Congressional District voting, wherein each congressional district awards one electoral vote to the popular vote winner of that district and two electoral votes to the presidential candidate who wins the state's popular vote. This is still vote suppression! Votes cast for a candidate who does not win a congressional district's popular vote are set aside (suppressed) when considering the congressional district's electoral vote. Likewise, votes cast for any candidate who does not win the statewide popular vote are likewise suppressed for the two electoral votes awarded for that state. More will be explained later in this book but the point here is that vote suppression is present in all states and for Washington, D.C. as well.

This book explains why and how we should change the all-or-nothing approach when we derive voting results from the Electoral College. I call the revision outlined in this book *Equal Voice Voting*. It provides an equal voice to all voters on a state-by-state basis. Equal Voice Voting also gives equal representation to all viable presidential candidates on a state-by-state basis.

It is important to point out that rectifying the vote suppression problem does not call for a modification of our Electoral College. Rather, the results of our Electoral College can actually be strengthened through the use of Equal Voice Voting on a state-by-state basis. Such results would alleviate much of the concerns surrounding our presidential voting process.

1. What's the Problem?

Vote suppression has been with us since we, as a nation, first began to use the Electoral College back in 1787. The individual states soon agreed to employ the all-or-nothing approach for deciding their *state vote*. The application of the Electoral College was met with a lot of contention in those early days, many saying that the intent of the Founding Fathers was being lost in the process. A more in-depth discussion of the Electoral College is discussed later in the book. Suffice it to say at this point that vote suppression is neither nefarious nor partisan for any political party. The all-or-nothing approach serves our presidential election process poorly and it is the intent of this book to point out how it fails our needs and how we can rectify the situation on a state-by-state basis.

Here's an insight about this book: I use numbers to explain the different points. If math and statistics are off-putting for you, don't worry. I won't ask you to do any mathematical calculations – no adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing. I do that for you. I'm just illustrating what happens when we dig into the facts by showing you tables and graphs. You may find it easiest to focus on your own state's results in the 15 elections shown here (1960-2016) rather than trying to take in all data shown in every table. I point out some of the salient points of each election and highlight key state factors as they emerge.

I assessed every state and all candidates during those 15 election years. I then compared those results with what would have happened if Equal Voice Voting had been used. I discuss Equal Voice Voting later in the book to show how easy it is to use and the many benefits it offers.

I have lived in five states, three of which are considered blue (majority voting for the Democratic candidate) and two of them red (majority voting for the Republican candidate). I became aware that casting my vote for a presidential candidate may or may not be reflected in the Electoral College results. I realized that something was (and is) fundamentally wrong about how our Electoral College results fail to reflect the votes (voices) of so many voters. I remember watching the red and blue electoral map of states being displayed on our television news showing that an imbalance exists in our voting process. Something was, and still is, amiss!

Before you jump to the conclusion that I have a solution for how votes should be physically counted, be aware I am not addressing the mechanics of vote capture. Problems in that realm may sometimes persist and a viable and secure vote counting solution still needs further attention. A remedy to ensure every vote is accurately counted remains as a continuous challenge, especially considering how technology may address concerns in the future.

Let’s take a quick look at our most recent presidential election and see how vote suppression raised its ugly head. The 2016 presidential election had 137,258,848 votes cast. Of those, 63,091,118 votes (46 percent) were NOT represented in the Electoral College when it came time to tally the final results.

Let me show you what I mean about votes not mattering with a simple table showing the votes that disappeared in 2016 (Leip, 2016).

Table 1: Votes That Did Not Matter in 2016

State	Voters That Didn't Matter	% of Votes That Didn't Matter	State	Voters That Didn't Matter	% of Votes That Didn't Matter
AK	155,221	48.72%	MS	508,643	42.06%
AL	805,117	37.92%	MT	215,286	43.53%
AR	445,763	39.43%	NC	2,407,009	50.47%
AZ	1,409,096	52.94%	ND	133,151	38.05%
CA	5,308,786	37.75%	NE	348,266	41.25%
CO	1,520,346	53.17%	NH	383,703	52.40%
CT	778,362	46.44%	NJ	1,725,768	44.55%
DC	28,438	9.14%	NM	398,085	50.82%
DE	209,625	47.08%	NV	586,125	52.08%
FL	4,802,153	50.98%	NY	3,165,234	40.99%
GA	2,076,301	49.85%	OH	2,835,657	50.57%
HI	162,484	37.84%	OK	503,856	34.68%
IA	765,048	48.85%	OR	1,049,342	51.15%
ID	281,200	40.74%	PA	3,195,965	51.83%
IL	2,612,436	46.73%	RI	211,619	45.59%
IN	1,177,672	43.06%	SC	968,078	45.59%
KS	513,384	43.35%	SD	151,274	39.91%
KY	721,178	37.48%	TN	985,102	39.28%
LA	850,394	41.91%	TX	4,284,179	47.77%
MA	1,329,850	39.99%	UT	616,106	54.46%
MD	1,091,982	39.42%	VA	2,015,181	50.42%
ME	414,192	53.66%	VT	141,894	44.28%
MI	2,519,741	52.50%	WA	1,574,278	47.46%
MN	1,577,097	53.56%	WI	1,570,866	52.78%
MO	1,214,094	43.23%	WV	242,991	33.18%
			WY	84,369	32.60%
Total Votes That Did Not Matter = 63,071,987 = 46% of Votes Cast					

These are votes cast for candidates who did not win the majority popular vote within a state (or district for Maine and Nebraska) in which they were cast. These votes have no representation in the Electoral College. We must change this all-or-nothing mentality!

Let me interject an explanation of why I'm using *all-or-nothing* instead of the *winner-takes-all* phrase more commonly used. Winner-takes-all implies a rather positive approach as the focus is on *winner* and on *taking all*. If words matter (and I think they do), the impression is that something positive is to be realized in the results. It does not acknowledge the high risk of losing in the process. Similar to a gambler's bet at the casino, using the all-or-nothing phrase puts more emphasis on the binary outcome of either winning (all) or losing (nothing). Consequently, you'll see I use the all-or-nothing description throughout the book as it more accurately points to the fallibility of the Electoral College vote tally approach.

Let's do a quick review of the 2016 presidential election. Hillary Clinton won the popular vote over Donald Trump with a 2.09 percent margin. That's fairly close. However, she lost the Electoral College vote to Donald Trump by a 14.3 percent margin. That's a significant difference. However, only 54 percent of the votes cast had representation in the Electoral College (74,167,730 votes). That means that 125,253,465 registered voters (including non-voters) did not essentially participate in the 2016 presidential election!

There were 199,421,195 registered voters in 2016. Only 137,258,848 voted. Since only 68.63 percent of eligible voters voted in this election, Donald Trump won the election with only 20.46 percent of the eligible voters selecting him and being represented in the Electoral College. It means even fewer eligible voters (16.73 percent) chose Hillary Clinton (though she actually won the popular vote count) and were represented in the Electoral College.

- Registered Voters in 2016 = 198,360,591
- Popular Votes = 137,100,901 (69.12 percent of Eligible Voters)
- Votes Represented in Electoral College = 74,028,914
- Votes for Donald Trump Represented in Electoral College = 40,742,470 (29.72 percent of votes cast)
- Votes for Hillary Clinton Represented in Electoral College = 33,286,444 (24.28 percent of votes cast)

Now that you have an appreciation of the number of popular votes that do not translate into electoral votes, vote suppression, I urge you to flip back in this book to two appendices: Appendix A – Maps & Data of Past Elections and Appendix B – Vote Suppression. Appendix A provides electoral maps and data tables for each of the last 15 elections (1960-2016). Appendix B provides tables that show how close voting margins were in several states in these elections. They highlight the fact that voters in these states were fairly evenly divided in their presidential choices. Together, these appendices point to the fact that rather than being predominantly *red* or *blue*, our nation is actually much more *purple* – a mix of political party sentiment. It is truly an injustice to silence so many voters while they exercise their voting rights.

What's up with the low voter turnout?

Do you care? I doubt many readers of this book could be considered apathetic about their vote or their voting rights. That's an assumption on my part, but if you've picked up this book and are reading it, you are showing you have an interest in our presidential elections. When I mentioned that many voters don't bother to vote, it is not simply apathy that is my central concern. I believe that many have already broken the code of the Electoral College rules and realized that their vote won't make a difference!

If you realize you're among the voters within your state who prefer a candidate who may not win your state's election, you might question why you should bother to cast your vote. You probably realize your vote may not matter. Or, if you are a voter in a state that favors a candidate that you like, you may not be encouraged to vote because, after all, many of your friends and neighbors will vote as you would and get your candidate elected. Your vote really isn't needed.

If you are among those who realize how the Electoral College results do not reflect how registered voters vote, and vote anyway, congratulations! You're doing your patriotic duty by participating in the process. **Our democracy is precious and it is made more so when we vote!**

Studies have shown that people don't vote for a variety of reasons, such as: lack of time, failure to register, don't like the candidates, sick or disabled, forgetting, don't care, or can't get to the polls. These studies are interesting but I contend there is something more worrisome afoot. I believe our citizens have come to realize that their votes may not matter.

For example, voter turnout in my home state of Oregon is among the best in the nation. In 2016, Oregon's voter turnout was 80.33 percent. Only two other states did better (Minnesota and Wyoming). One plausible reason for this positive turnout is that we have mail-in ballots. We get our ballot in the mail and have the luxury of filling them out in the comfort of our homes over a span of several days. We then mail the ballot or drop it off at a convenient location. Pretty easy, right? Maybe there is a lesson to learn for some other states.

I have spoken to Republicans in my state (Oregon usually votes Democratic, by the way) and they say there's not much use since the Democratic candidate will win anyway. I've spoken to Democrats and they say there's no big need to vote because so many Democrats will carry the day! There's something seriously wrong with a system that engenders that kind of voting response!

The low voter turnout this nation experiences during presidential elections may not be because our nation has citizens who are lazy or apathetic or unpatriotic. It may be largely because those voters realize that their votes simply won't matter!

Why is it this way?

A quick look at the intention of what our Founding Fathers wanted when they set up the Electoral College may help here. I'll discuss the Electoral College in more depth later, but many of you might wonder why we have it in the first place.

A simple way to look at it is that the Founding Fathers decided to let each state decide whom they, as individual states, would choose as their next president. The states, then, are free to decide how they do so. Rather than every state coming up with their own unique way of doing things, they all decided to do it the same way, initially.

So, today, we have 51 separate contests (50 states and Washington, D.C.). Remember, Nebraska and Maine do things a bit differently than the rest but essentially the results are the same. Each state, consequently, suffers from an all-or-nothing approach causing many of our votes to be lost in the process.

It doesn't have to be this way! Rather than having 51 separate contests, each state should reflect the voting sentiments of its citizens. The citizens should have an equal voice within their state when they go to the polls (or mail in their ballots) to elect a president. That blue and red electoral map we see during elections, reflecting Democrats and Republicans, should be a blend of voices making the map appear more purple than blue or red.

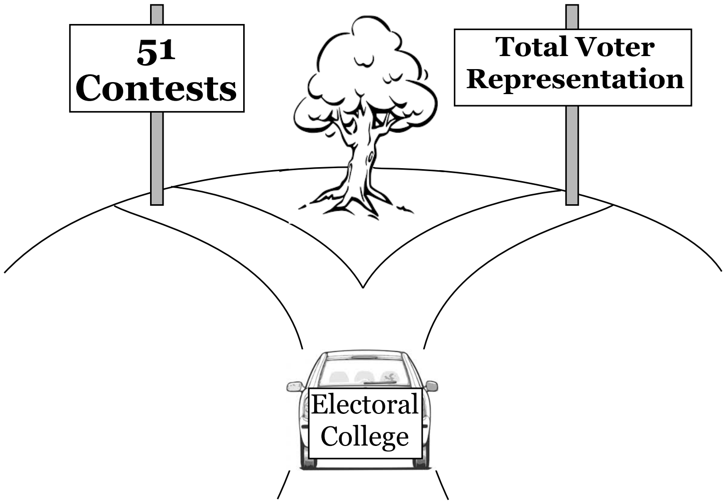


Figure 1: Electoral College Decision

The Electoral College is a process established by our Founding Fathers as a compromise between electing the president by our nation's popular vote or by the members of Congress. The process is noted in Article II of the United States Constitution. When you consider that voting is a basic right and tenet of our democratic system, it's obvious we need to consider how the current system fails us and what we can do about it.

The news media plays into the hand of this process as they capture the news. Voters are interviewed as they exit the polls and trends are quickly reported. The voting on the East coast prevails and voters on the West coast become reluctant to cast their vote (their voice) as candidates may be declared to be projected winners/losers early in the game before all polls are closed. Our cherished democracy suffers.

What should our Electoral College accomplish?

First of all, the results from our Electoral College should be that a president is elected. It does that already. That’s only the first requirement and it’s really easy to accomplish. In fact, almost any process will work. We could drop marbles in cans to indicate our choices and a winner would be declared. Of course, that would be terribly messy and open to error and fraud. So we don’t do that. Still, the point is that picking a winner from any system is not tough to do.

The key issue is that our Electoral College system should not only identify the winning candidate, it should also be one that reflects how all people vote! Our current all-or-nothing approach does not do that! It should reflect how people vote and also be sensitive to regional concerns and considerations as the citizens cast their ballots.

Further, our voting system should actually encourage people to vote. That is simply saying that it should be clear that our votes matter! Just as we become concerned when we hear of voter suppression (such as difficulties some may have in getting to open polls), our voting system should not disregard a significant portion of votes cast as it does now.

2. WHAT IS EQUAL VOICE VOTING?

Equal Voice Voting (EVV) is a voting method that leverages the wisdom of our Founding Fathers and incorporates the popular vote, as well as state-by-state representation for our presidential vote allocation. Equal Voice Voting makes every vote matter!

Remember how each state gets its allocation of electoral votes? First, the Electoral College is comprised of 435 votes, one for every member of the House of Representatives. It also adds three votes for Washington's District of Columbia for a total electoral vote count of 438. Finally, 100 votes are then added to the 438 to correlate with the members of the Senate, giving us a total 538 electoral votes. Thus, our Electoral College has one electoral vote for every national legislator plus three for Washington, D.C.

Each state is allocated a portion of those votes according to their respective populations and Senate representation (each state has two Senators). For example, my home state of Oregon currently has seven electoral votes. Five of those votes correlate with our five Representatives and two for our Senators.

The following is a description of EVV for allocating electoral votes. It is designed to give greater representation to everyone across the nation and to every state. Hopefully, too, it will encourage a more vigorous voting response from our citizens.

The EVV formula:

First – Determine the Popular Vote Value (PVV)

Total the state's popular votes.
Divide by the state's electoral votes.

$$\frac{\text{State Election's Popular Votes}}{\text{State's Electoral Votes}} = \text{Popular Vote Value (PPV)}$$

The result is called the Popular Vote Value (PVV). The PVV is rounded to the nearest whole number.

Example (Pennsylvania 2016)

Step 1. Total the state’s popular votes for the election.

The total state popular vote (all ballots for all candidates) was 6,166,698.

Step 2. Determine the state’s Popular Vote Value (PVV).

Divide the state’s election’s popular votes by its electoral votes. Pennsylvania has 20 electoral votes.

$$\frac{\text{6,166,698 Popular Votes}}{\text{20 Electoral Votes}} = \text{308,335 (PPV)}$$

Second – Determine the state’s electoral votes for each candidate.

Divide the state’s popular vote for each candidate in the current election by the state’s PVV. Electoral votes are rounded up or down to the nearest Popular Vote Value.

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c}\text{Trump’s Popular Votes}\\ \text{2,970,733}\end{array}}{\text{305,335 (PVV)}} = \text{10 Electoral Votes}$$

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c}\text{Clinton’s Popular Votes}\\ \text{2,926,441}\end{array}}{\text{305,335 (PVV)}} = \text{10 Electoral Votes}$$

Note: Neither Gary Johnson nor Dr. Jill Stein captured enough votes to be awarded an electoral vote in Pennsylvania.

So, instead of 20 electoral votes going to Donald Trump in 2016, he would have won 10 electoral votes and Hillary Clinton would have won 10.

Adjustment Rules

Sometimes an adjustment to the number of electoral votes a candidate receives in a state is needed. This occurs in two instances: First, if there are third-party (and more) candidates and/or there are several votes cast for write-ins, there won't be enough electoral votes awarded within a state. One or two votes may need to be added to a candidate's total. Second, one of the adjustments (see below) causes the vote percentage to be rounded up to the next electoral vote number. Candidates can accrue too many electoral votes this way, and one or two votes may need to be removed.

The following rules are required to ensure the aggregate total of electoral votes equals 538 and is correct for each state:

1. A candidate's popular votes must at least equal the PVV before rounding can be used. For example, if the PVV is 250,000 and a candidate's popular vote for a state is 150,000, no rounding can occur, even though the typical rounding rules would round up to equal one electoral vote. That candidate would receive no electoral votes.
2. Each state's electoral vote must equal the allocated votes established by the Electoral College. For example, if a state has 10 electoral votes (such as Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin) and either fewer or more electoral votes are won by that state, an adjustment must be made. To make an EVV adjustment, do the following:
    a. If the electoral vote count for a state is too many (more than what has been allocated to that state), remove one electoral vote from the candidate who has won the fewest popular votes in that state.
    b. If the electoral votes for a state are too few, add one electoral vote to the candidate who has won the most popular votes in that state.

Note: Typically, this is only a one-vote adjustment for a given state. However, some rare situations may require two votes to be added or subtracted.

For example, Virginia's popular vote (all ballots for all candidates) in this past election (2016) was 3,996,654. Dividing that number by 13 (Virginia's total electoral votes) reduces the result to 307,434.92. That number is rounded to 307,435 as the PVV.

$$\frac{\text{3,996,654 Popular Votes}}{\text{13 Electoral Votes}} = \text{307,435 (PPV)}$$

For example, Virginia's popular vote for Hillary Clinton was 1,981,473. Dividing that number by 307,435 (PVV) results in 6.45. The number is rounded down to 6 electoral votes. The popular votes for Donald Trump were 1,769,443. This number divided by 307,435 gives a result of 5.76. This number would be rounded up to the whole number of 6 for the candidate's electoral votes.

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c}\text{Trump's Popular Votes}\\ \text{1,769,443}\end{array}}{\text{307,435 (PVV)}} = \text{6 Electoral Votes}$$

$$\frac{\begin{array}{c}\text{Clinton's Popular Votes}\\ \text{1,981,473}\end{array}}{\text{307,435 (PVV)}} = \text{6 Electoral Votes}$$

Note: Neither Gary Johnson nor Dr. Jill Stein captured enough votes to be awarded an electoral vote in Virginia.

Obviously, something is wrong here because Virginia has a total of 13 electoral votes and not all of them are allocated in this scenario. An adjustment needs to be made. Since Hillary Clinton won more popular votes than Donald Trump, one additional electoral vote is added to Hillary Clinton's share. The count is then:

Hillary Clinton = 7 Electoral Votes

Donald Trump = 6 Electoral Votes

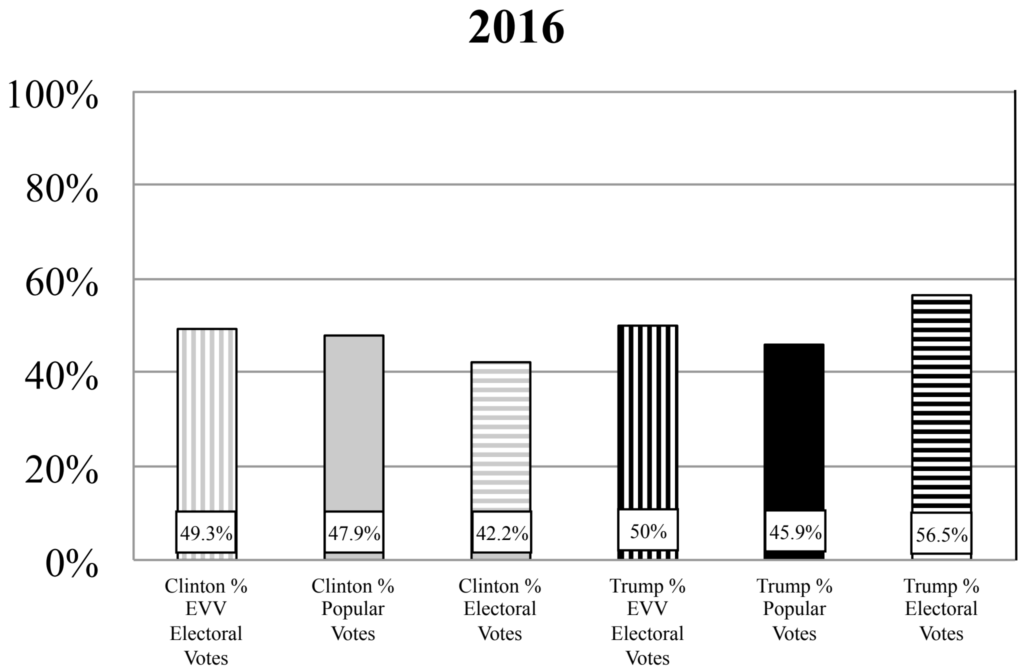
Comparing EVV to the Current Voting Method

You may find it helpful to compare the electoral votes won by the candidates in the 2016 presidential election with those that would have been earned by EVV. Also see a more complete table in Appendix A-4 (not available in this sample).

Table 2: 2016 Electoral Vote Comparisons

States	Current Electoral College		Equal Voice Voting		
	Popular Votes	Electoral Votes	Popular Vote Values	Clinton Electoral Votes	Trump Electoral Votes
AK	318,608	3	106,203	1	2
AL	2,123,372	9	235,930	3	6
AR	1,130,635	6	188,439	2	4
AZ	2,661,497	11	241,954	5	6
CA	14,062,574	55	255,683	35	17
CO	2,859,216	9	317,691	5	4
CT	1,675,934	7	239,419	4	3
DC	311,268	3	103,756	3	0
DE	445,228	3	148,409	2	1
FL	9,420,039	29	324,829	14	15
GA	4,165,405	16	260,338	7	9
HI	429,375	4	107,344	3	1
IA	1,566,031	6	261,005	3	3
ID	690,255	4	172,564	1	3
IL	5,589,934	20	279,497	12	8
IN	2,734,958	11	248,633	4	7
KS	1,184,402	6	197,400	2	4
KY	1,924,149	8	240,519	3	5
LA	2,029,032	8	253,629	3	5
MA	3,325,046	11	302,277	7	4
MD	2,769,910	10	276,991	7	3
ME	771,927	4	192,982	2	2
MI	4,799,284	16	299,955	8	8
MN	2,944,813	10	294,481	6	4
MO	2,808,605	10	280,861	4	6
MS	1,209,357	6	201,560	2	4
MT	494,526	3	164,842	1	2
NC	4,769,640	15	317,976	7	8
ND	349,945	3	116,648	0	3
NE	844,227	5	168,845	2	3
NH	732,229	4	183,057	2	2
NJ	3,874,046	14	276,718	8	6
NM	783,319	5	156,664	3	2
NV	1,125,385	6	187,564	3	3
NY	7,721,358	29	266,254	19	10
OH	5,607,641	18	311,536	8	10
OK	1,452,992	7	207,570	2	5
OR	2,051,448	7	293,064	4	3
PA	6,166,698	20	308,335	10	10
RI	464,144	4	116,036	2	2
SC	2,123,467	9	235,941	4	5
SD	378,995	3	126,332	0	3
TN	2,508,027	11	228,002	4	7
TX	8,969,226	38	236,032	16	21
UT	1,131,317	6	188,553	2	4
VA	3,996,654	13	307,435	7	6
VT	320,467	3	106,822	3	0
WA	3,316,996	12	276,416	8	4
WI	2,976,150	10	297,615	5	5
WV	732,362	5	146,472	1	4
WY	258,788	3	86,263	0	3
Totals		**538**		**269**	**265**

The following graph is shown to compare the 2016 election between the popular votes and electoral votes and how these same elections would fare under the Equal Voice Voting method. The gray bars depict the results for Democrats; the black bars depict the results for Republicans. More graphs are shown in the Appendix. Some graphs shown in the Appendix use white bars for third-party candidates, when needed.



Graph 1: 2016 EVV, Popular & Electoral Votes

2016 Variances between parties:

Popular Votes (solid bars) = 47.9%:45.9% = 2%
Electoral Votes (horizontal striped bars) = 42.2%:56.5% = 14.3%
EVV results (vertical striped bars) = 49.3%:50% = 0.7%
Variance between EVV results and Popular Votes:
    Democrat = 49.3%:47.9% = 1.4%
    Republican = 50%:45.9% = 4.1%

As you review the graphs, notice how close in height the popular votes (solid bars) compare to the Equal Voice Votes (vertical striped bars). Then compare these heights with the Electoral College results depicted here with the horizontal striped bars. Typically, these bars vary significantly from the other two.

The 2016 election shows that Donald Trump won the most Electoral College votes. Yet he lost by a 2 percent popular vote margin. The EVV results for both candidates clearly show a more equal representation.

Electoral Vote Variance Summaries

The tables below display the two major party voting results by showing the variances between the electoral and popular votes for all 15 of the example elections (1960 – 2016). These variances are compared between the two major parties. The first table shows the current comparison and the second table shows the results if the Electoral College had been replaced with EVV during those presidential election years.

Note: The next two tables may seem to not mean much – they're just numbers, right? But, they illustrate one of the main tenets of this book. Our nation's voting results should not vary so starkly as the contrast (the gap) we see between the Electoral College and popular vote results (Table #3). The slight variance we see between EVV and the popular vote (Table #4) points to the diversity of this republic – it's a healthier result and points to the sensitivity to the popular vote and the state-by-state consideration.

Table 3: Variance between Current Electoral College Votes and Popular Votes

Year	Democrat	Republican
1960	8.9%	6.9%
1964	29.3%	28.8%
1968	7.2%	12.5%
1972	34.4%	36.0%
1976	5.5%	7.4%
1980	32.7%	39.2%
1984	38.5%	38.5%
1988	25.3%	25.3%
1992	25.5%	6.5%
1996	20.4%	11.9%
2000	0.8%	1.8%
2004	1.5%	2.9%
2008	14.9%	13.4%
2012	10.3%	10.3%
2016	5.7%	10.6%

Ideally, the variances between popular votes and electoral votes should be minimal. Notice the scale used in the graph below ranges from 0 to only 4.1 percent compared to 0 to 39.2 percent for the current Electoral College method shown above.

Table 4: Variance (gap) between EVV and Popular Votes

Year	Democrat	Republican
1960	1.7%	1.0%
1964	1.4%	1.9%
1968	0.3%	1.4%
1972	0.4%	2.2%
1976	1.0%	0.9%
1980	0.4%	4.1%
1984	0.4%	0.4%
1988	0.2%	0.2%
1992	1.7%	1.7%
1996	1.6%	2.1%
2000	0.0%	1.0%
2004	0.0%	1.0%
2008	0.8%	0.7%
2012	0.1%	1.7%
2016	1.4%	4.1%

Do You Prefer Neat or Messy?

It has often been stated that democracy is a messy form of governance. Whenever issues or elections are subjected to popular opinion so as to capture the consent of the governed, opinions push and pull in a sometimes-ugly fashion. Compromise is sought but is not always won meaning more struggle is left for yet another day.

Remember that Grand Compromise of 1787 wherein it was agreed to establish a bicameral congress with two chambers: one for the Senate to represent each state with two senators and a second for the House of Representatives to represent the citizenry. The Electoral College also attends to this compromise such that states and citizens carry a voting weight in our presidential elections. As we've seen in the recent election of 2016, things can get messy.

If we preferred a more tidy process, we could have foregone the Grand Compromise and simply let Congress make the presidential election and left the rest of us well enough alone. That would not have been very democratic of course but a simple majority would have been reached even if (again behind closed doors) the legislators had to vote several times to make it so. Remember, many voting approaches will work (and have) but the consequences are important. Ours is a democracy calling upon the inclusion of the voting citizenry. Ours is also a republic using a federalist form of governance, which requires each state to independently cast its voting voice in the process. A messy presidential election process is necessary to address both concerns.

Equal Voice Voting could cause the presidential election to not be settled via the Electoral College because none of candidates may reach a majority of electoral votes (threshold of 270 votes). The solution in such instances, anticipated by our Founding Fathers and noted in the Constitution, is to then have the House of Representatives decide the election. This, in my opinion, is sheer genius because it provides for those situations wherein the voting public fails to reach a majority decision. It then becomes incumbent on the House of Representatives to reach a decision by a majority vote. The exercise of this governance provision ensures that democracy is respected as well as the federalist republic concerns.

What Happens if Rules Are Changed?

This book obviously proposes an alternative method for translating the popular votes on a state-by-state basis such that the Electoral College outcome is more reflective of the voting citizenry and state voting voices. What can we expect if such rules would change?

First, campaigns would change. Instead of focusing on states with large numbers of electoral votes that could easily swing for either Democrats or Republicans, all states would be of campaign concern. States that may offer only a one or two or even three vote advantages would be considered to be valuable in the campaign. Evidence of this was realized in the 2016 election. Two states (Nebraska and Maine) use congressional district voting approaches and caused campaign changes as Hillary Clinton made speeches in the Republican dominant state of Nebraska in hopes of capturing one of its five votes (she failed to do so). Meanwhile, Donald Trump campaigned in Democrat dominant Maine in hopes of capturing one vote there (he did).

Second, if registered voters realize that their vote counts on a state-by-state basis they may be more inclined to cast their ballots in greater numbers. Voter turnout is always a concern and this slight shift in voting rules would likely improve the result. If so, the quiet voters who represent minority sentiments within states may effectively move the presidential election more to the political middle than to the polarized left or right. If data from the previous 15 elections point to anything, they show the nation's presidential voting is more evenly divided than what we are led to believe when viewing the red and blue election maps.

Every Vote Counts

Popular votes are never lost with Equal Voice Voting for each one affects a state's Popular Vote Value (PVV). Though popular votes may be rounded up or down to produce an electoral vote, each vote still matters as it helps establish the factor (PVV) used. A higher voter turnout (more votes) gives a state a higher PVV. A lower voter turnout (fewer votes) makes that state's PVV lower. Every voter should realize his or her individual vote truly makes a difference with Equal Voice Voting.

You will see in these pages that the electoral vote count derived from Equal Voice voting in each state is not an all-or-nothing result. Rather, electoral vote counts will be more evenly split, sometimes dividing the count equally between the two major political party candidates. Some may object to this declaring that their state would become insignificant and not command any campaign attention. A closer examination is warranted to reveal a deeper truth.

Imagine if Ohio with its 18 electoral votes was evenly split 9-9. It might appear to some that there would be no advantage for either candidate and that Ohio would not emerge as significant to the political race. Imagine the alternative: Would you rather your favorite candidate experience a 0-18 vote split (your candidate receiving none)? Even at this level, gaining nine votes and limiting your competitor to nine means your national campaign has managed to equalize the competition in Ohio. This is significant and there is more.

If your political party's campaign was more robust and gained another vote or two, making the split 10-8 or even 11-7, the vote swing difference then becomes a two or four vote advantage. This result is significant especially when aggregated with the rest of the nation's electoral vote counts.

Beyond this perspective, however, consider what the counter-argument is proposing. It is basically stating that the sentiment of all state constituents is secondary to one political party emerging victorious over the other. The mechanism to identify the nation's president is not a form of competitive entertainment. It should reflect the voice of all voting citizens.

Seeking to control campaign spending and activity via the voting mechanism should not be the primary focus for a fair voting process. Campaign attention will adapt to the rules and focus on wherever electoral votes can be won, as evidenced by the campaigns of Maine and Nebraska noted earlier.

Every vote counts with Equal Voice Voting!

Equal Voice Voting Results of 2012 and 2016

This book presents an approach to reforming how we acknowledge the presidential election vote results, so every vote (voice) matters on a state-by-state basis, ending the current injustice of **vote suppression**! Instead of our usual blue and red map depicting the states won by Democrats or Republicans, respectively, the voting results would be proportional giving us a more mixed map of states depicted as various shades of purple. The images below show the voting results we would have realized if Equal Voice Voting had been used in every state in 2012 and 2016. They show the voting populace of the country is not as divided as the blue (white below) and red (black below) maps lead us to believe. The maps turn into an assortment of white, grays and black rather than distinct blue/red (or white/black).

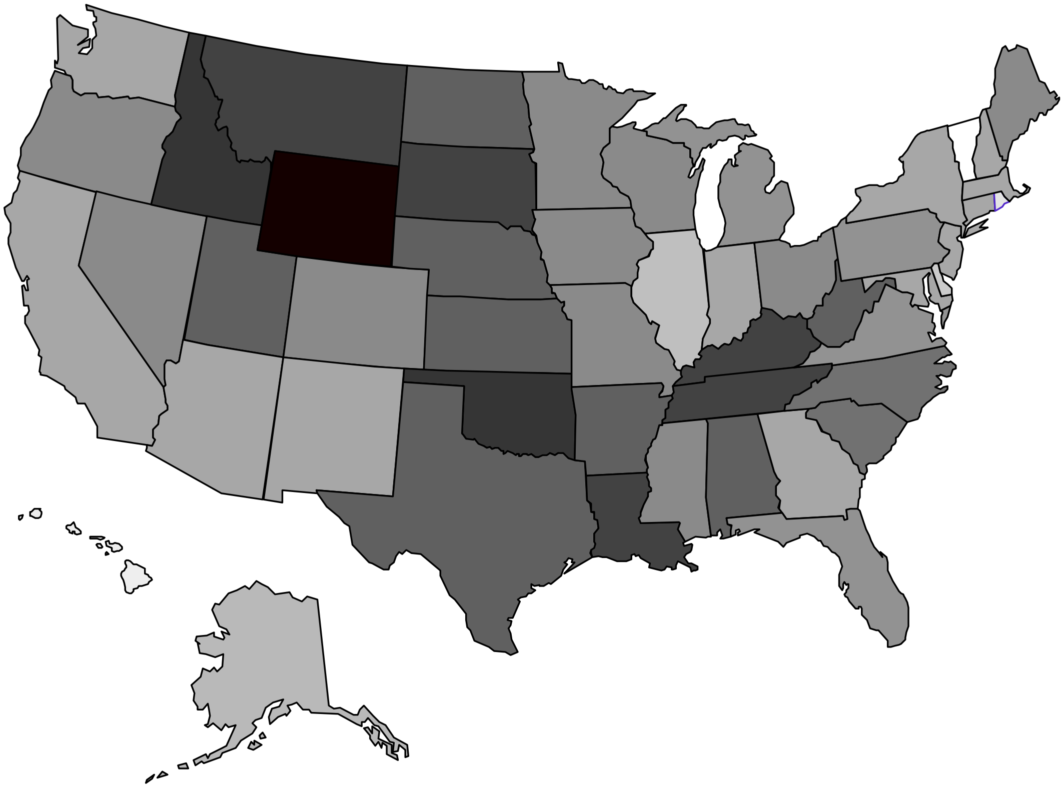


Figure 1: Electoral College Map if Equal Voice Voting was used in 2012

Vermont and Washington, D.C. (not shown above) would have cast all three of their electoral votes for Barack Obama in 2012. Wyoming would have cast all three of its electoral votes for Mitt Romney.

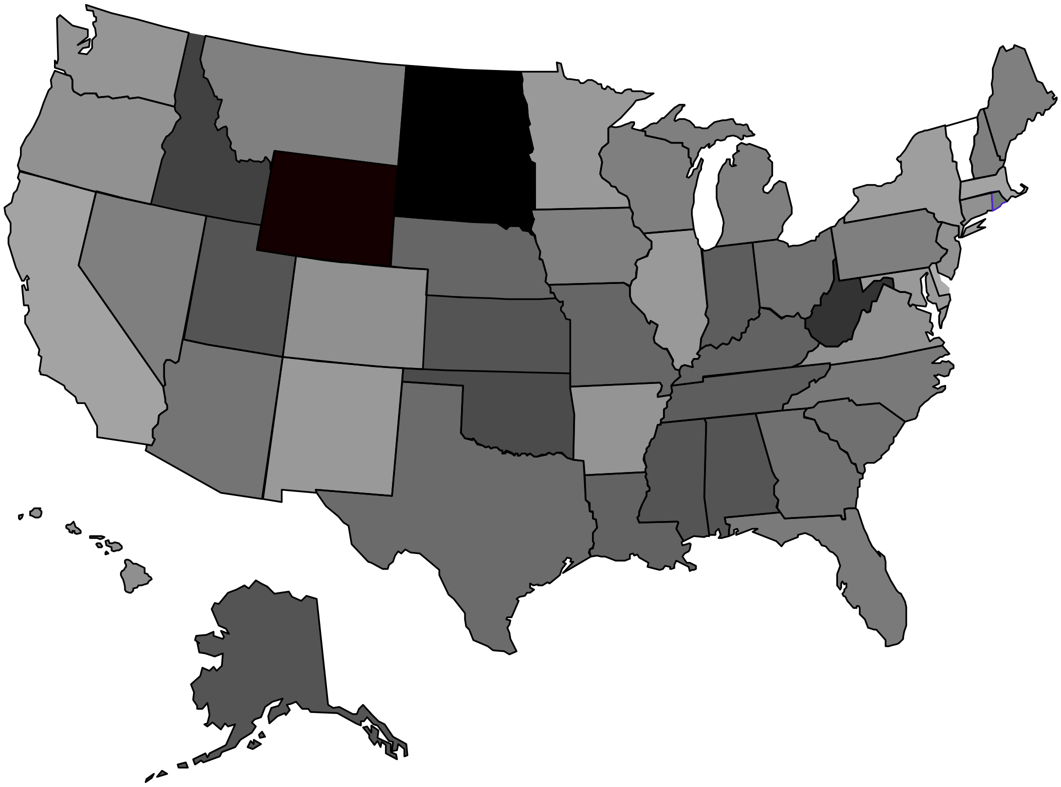


Figure 2: Electoral College Map if Equal Voice Voting was used in 2016

Vermont and Washington, D.C. (not shown above) would have each cast all three of their electoral votes for Hillary Clinton in 2016. North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming would have each cast all three of their electoral votes for Donald Trump.

The maps shown above would be a blending of red and blue states into a quilt of assorted shades of purple if Equal Voice Voting had been used by every state in these years. It would depict a nation with more political similarity than difference. I discussed this book while it was still in the formative stage with one of my doctors (I find I know many doctors at my age). She was supportive and advised that I needed a sexy title to gain attention. I told her that there's probably not much sexy about such matters as the Electoral College and voting. She suggested it should be called, Fifty Shades of Purple (reference to the best seller book *Fifty Shades of Grey* by E.L. James). Obviously, I didn't use her suggestion but I do think the title fits the message put forth in this book.

My hope is that this book can be used to bring people and political parties together rather than contribute to its divide. Political parties serve a purpose but often we need to listen to each other so we all can build, achieve and progress into our futures together.

Jon Meacham in his book, "Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power," relates how Jefferson was not a fan of political parties but wished they could work together to find compromise and consensus. Mr. Meacham writes: *He [Thomas Jefferson] proposed a covenant: Let us meet the political challenges of the country together and try to restrain the passions that led to the extremist, apocalyptic rhetoric of what Jefferson called the "gloomy days of terrorism" of the 1790s, and perhaps politics could become a means of progress, not simply a source of conflict.* Others of Jefferson's day did not agree. They emphasized the political party's role in bringing healthy discussion and debate to our governance rather than suffer the risk of becoming a nation of blinded followers hewing to a more singular world perspective.

Both views are viable, in my opinion. I have often said that what the Republicans need is a strong and healthy Democratic Party and what the Democrats need is a strong and healthy Republican Party. We need both, and sometimes other voices from other political parties, to ensure we attend to all national concerns, values and priorities.

This book is meant to be politically nonpartisan. It is a book that focuses on only one of the many governance mechanisms that our nation employs. That focus is supported by data gleaned from our history and is expressed through voting numbers, statistics, graphs, tables and figures. As you read this book, I urge you to keep an open mind and let this data speak their truth to you, revealing stories and possibilities. Ponder these truths and challenge them for your own satisfaction. Share them with others and discuss the strengths of Equal Voice Voting as well as some of the challenges it may present.

In all such pondering and discussions, I hope you can exercise the power found in the simple phrase, “What would happen if… (fill in a scenario of your choice)?” From this vantage point I hope you realize that the urgings of this book to adopt Equal Voice Voting on a state-by-state basis can be achieved.

My intention for this book is to help:

1. Raise awareness and conversation among our nation’s citizens and state legislators about the possibility of making every vote count in presidential elections through the implementation of Equal Voice Voting.
2. Promote state legislation to adopt Equal Voice Voting.