



The Problems
of
Separation

essays
& diatribes

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The Poorly Defined Debating Club. (I)

Isn't it absurd that a debate can be decided like a flower show, with a show of hands.

This is effectively how our so called democratic Parliament works. Things, ideas, concepts .. dare I say laws .. issues that may be of the utmost importance to the common mass of the people within our society are decided by a small group of people. A small clique who in most cases have no greater knowledge of the issues, nor are better equipped than the common man in the street. And who, in many cases, will not be directly affected by their decisions, are allowed to decide a debate in a partisan show of hands. Have you ever thought about this?

Instead of working through the issues and carefully considering them in all their parts, with relation to the whole of society, in the best interest of the whole of society .. what we like to refer to as parliamentary debates are often nothing more than highly expensive flower shows. Worse even than this; these men and women participating in the judgement of this flower show have for the most part, had their decisions made for them, on our behalf, prior to the debate taking place. Decisions made supposedly for a whole society - a collective of communities - by these wise judges belonging in essence to a small minority of an even smaller minority of our whole society. Something along the lines of the 12 Judges of Ancient Rome - the Fasces - except for them there was no need to falsify the process for our digestion.

How absurd to believe that an argument can be won like a flower show is judged, or a game of football won .. by a point score. A show of hands. A show of hands could perhaps decide the winner of the 'prize for the best debater', but I don't believe that this method has any place in the process or the validity of a democratic debate. Especially when we are told, and believe, that the result of the debate and the process used to reach a conclusion are in *our* best interests, the mass that make up the collective of communities in an inclusive and open society - a Democracy.

With this system a debate is never properly entered into, its a farcical

push and push of pre-decided points of interest along party lines. Our highly paid representatives to this Debating Club may as well sit about on the parliamentary veranda smoking OPs, counting public cash and plugging their ears with fluff and other noise until it's time to make the decision .. the bell rings and they all traipse in .. a show of hands please gentleman, and ladies ... And the winner is .. Da Da .. the side waving the most hands in the air! Wonderful. Democratically inclusive, and sure to be in the best interests of our society. And expensive too, as it's us, the mass, that receive and pay the bill. And we pay it in more ways than one.

Surely if we are going to keep allowing our decisions to be made for us in this way, then we can find a much cheaper way to do it.

Are we sure that this is Democracy? Now I know I've asked this question previously - perhaps continuously - and while I'm sure by the reaction I get when I ask the question, that you all think I'm one helluva a dumb bunny .. but is this really Democracy? And are we all so very sure that it does benefit the whole of our society? And do we really care? Somehow for me there is something in it that just doesn't feel right. It appears to take ideas like Democracy, Consensus and even Debate as mere show things .. words to be played .. and it plays us all for fools.

Wouldn't it be better, if we are going to have these debates, to define just what a Debate is to be, and if a parliamentary debate is going to be different than any other form of debate, then to define it prior to the supposed debate?

For me, I'd like to define this debate more as a discussion that requires a resolution, and to carry the point through to the end to be the purpose of this debate. To win each point by agreement or consensus, rather than the debate as whole. Wouldn't it be better to have our representatives go into the Debating Club without their vote pre-decided? Not to have their show of hands previously decided by a minority of a minority regardless of the worth of the debate for the society as a whole?

These parliamentary debates don't sound like I'd imagined they should, nor what I was taught that they should be. To be a faithful representation of a democratic debate, shouldn't we wind back our definition to the time that the word, the idea - Debate - was first defined?

Or is this just another case where the definition is defined by every individual view of the world? It doesn't sound like it can possibly be in the best interest of our society if every representative to the Debating Club comes in with an individual definition as to the process that the Club is designed, and professes, to work under. If every member gets to make his or her own rules, to move the goal posts, as is said, and there are to be no losers ... Is this what our modern NeoLiberal Society means when they say that everyone's a winner. Its a nice concept but doesn't that mean that nothing gets done, no battles are fought for our interests? That in reality we may as well not even enter into the game, that we may as well not have a Parliament in which to put forth and argue for our ideals. Isn't this more a definition of a dictatorship, or is this too a word that has myriad definitions? Is there a point to this if it only makes for highly paid pre-decided representatives who, no matter what, are always winners? I think it requires a new definition of such concepts as Democracy and Winner - since Democracy will no longer have 'all the people' in it, and 'all the people' will always be winners.

Now saying all that, and that to me, that it doesn't sound like this form of debate can possibly be in the best interest of our Society as a whole. And I suppose that there could be issues of great importance that must be decided as part of a point scoring game - as we are told there are - and that these issues, not requiring true debate are decided for us, for our own good, and in our best interests. But should these issues that could be judged as a point scoring game or like a flower show, should they be decided this way by this poorly designed Debating Club? Is this a fair way to come to conclusions that we are told will, and must, be for the greater good? Is it the right way to carry a debate, is it a debate? It seems to me that our representatives may somehow - perhaps over time - forget either the importance of the process of debate to their communities or the importance of it's resolution to all the community members who live with the community members who didn't get a big enough show of hands to call themselves winners. And while its true that not everyone can be a winner, it would be nicer to live next door to someone who doesn't feel as if they have been cheated by the process. Wouldn't it?

Also our representatives, whom we *should* have chosen ourselves from

within our own community, may lose the skill required to adequately and responsibly adjudicate the issue on behalf of their communities .. which of course belong to a collective of communities that we call a Society. They may get bored or lazy in the knowledge that no matter what they do, their side or those other more forceful, more garalous representatives of their entire communities, who appear to have the issue in hand and appear to have some idea of what would be in the best interest of all the communities will win out due to the forcefulness of the game they play, or their ability to move the goal posts through their wisdom, or the volume of their argument or perhaps the numbers they bring into the game.

Now is this scoring, this game of numbers, also to be part of the definition of what is to be in the *best interest of ones community*? Is this to become the paragon of the definition of Democratic Debate? It appears to me that we must rewrite dictionaries to accommodate these ideals in the interest of our newly defined knowledge. That we must turn the old world upside down .. or throw it out ... And that the redesigning of such ancient concepts as Democracy and Debate - and in fact, Winner - is only for the benefit of a majority of representatives so that they will always be at the top of a continually inclining , and therefore increasingly slippery slope. Though once again with my old world views this seems to be a particularly perilous place to be.

So while this problem of Democracy can be solved via a NeoLiberal redefinition of debate .. still it leaves the vast mass of humanity baffled beneath that steep and very slippery slope - looking up, though perhaps not any longer with the stars shining in their eyes, looking up to see the dribble dribbling down ...

However, me being a child of the post WWII enlightenment, I am therefore loath to waste all the learning built up by the ancients - whom it is true, had no understanding of the power of the prefixed neo - l would rather find a *solution in having the community choose their representative from within the actual community that they are going to represent* ... And to keep the debate as a process. So that the process, the debate, is something truly worthwhile to all involved and for all those whose lives may depend upon the result and for those whose actions are

going to be influenced by it. I would like to see the process carried through to the end, to a resolution that perhaps doesn't make everyone a winner but at the same time produces very much fewer losers - and very much fewer sore losers at that.

As an example, a debate - defined in 21st Century NeoLiberalesse - on a particular law in a Parliament. We must assume that this Parliament acts in the interest of *all* the people who have sent representatives - we must assume this because this is what we are told - and we must assume that all the representatives act honestly and sincerely in the interests of those who have had the honour of having them delegated to this Debating Club, called a Democratic Parliament. (This being a factor of the newer, more reasonable, more neoliberal and modern redefinition of Corruption - a definition that says that a parliamentary representative from the winning side, or in fact any member of the Debating Club, is incapable of corruption).

Now this Law to be debated, decided upon, like most laws not considered to be necessary to almost all of those who will be effected by this law, or rather, subjected to it, and this law will effect each individual subjected to it in a different way according to Debating Club descretion. It will be wanted by some and not others and needed by even fewer, and the reason that this Debating Club has been convened; collectively, collaboratively and equitably is because while we are changing the definitions of Democracy and Debate, the last thing our representatives want us to understand is just what the new definitions do to these words, that we think of as Ideals, when it comes to the process. Because it is one thing to alter these definitions and quite another to shake the old definitions loose from the chains of millenia of knowledge, and even more expensive to re-educate such a common mass embedded with the learning of eons. This common mass, the people so ably represented, understand one thing. They understand that laws should be made in secrecy because Secrecy is a large part of the effectiveness of law. You cannot be caught breaking the law so easily if you understand just what the law is and, of course, once a law is understood then it opens up all the ways to subvert it. And subverting the law is a law that can only be used by those licenced to profit from the breaking of laws - lawyers and Debating Club members.

Now if this Parliament, this Debating Club, debates this law for, say a day, and at the end of the day the moderator of the parliament says 'times up' let's have a show of hands and the winner of the debate will be chosen and the law will be carried via the score - once again, its about the process because like all good laws, the process too must be seen to be adhered to; it must be viewed as a transparency. In reality our representatives need not have turned up to the debate, and possibly, because the debate is held in secrecy .. perhaps they didn't. But its irrelevant now under the redefinition of Democracy because its the score that decides the debate. Its expedient, there has been a due process, the debate has been carried .. and more likely than not we have a new law. A brand new law to be piled up with all the other corruptions of moral ideals overlapping in offence, and to our obvious benefit, that we may call The Law - *a thing to be policed for profit*.

So since we are working under this redefinition, and we can see that there *is* a process; what can we now say about this process? Does the process keep us, the mass, happy? Content? Does it satisfy our Democratic Ideal?

Well if there is only one representative who is at odds with the rest then I suppose that our representatives can use the score and say, 'Hey, this is a good method, let's enshrine it as law - the method - and use it every time we have something to debate'. Regardless of the machinations of this minority Debating Club, this Parliament, as long as there is a majority in numbers (and let's just assume that there are 100 honest and wise community delegates, just to make the maths easy, .. and lets also - for the time being - assume that we haven't yet redefined any mathematical principles) and as its now a game of point scoring, a majority of one will suffice to win the game. So we have a winner when the score is 51 to 49. The Democratic System of Debate that we now accept the NeoLiberal definition for, that we must believe to be Democratic, this score 51/49 is now a score that can win a debate for all the people of the collective of communities. So as long as the process is misunderstood by the mass, that's us, were happy. We go on with our lives knowing that our interests have been served.

Secrecy is the true power behind this process. Secrecy is the ideal that

needs protection within the neo systems of redefined democratic process. This is one idea, Ideal, that needs no redefinition .. Secrecy remains the same through NeoLiberal Democracy as it has through all the eons of Man's dealings with Man. Because Man will always want to remove secrecy from the dealings of other men while holding fast to its security in the dealings of his own, and so as long as the members of the Debating Club can protect this Ideal, and they can ensure that Man accepts the redefinitions required by Neo-liberalism. Or, in lue of the acceptance of the redefinition, that the mass of Man can be held in ignorance of them .. then life in the new world will run smoothly.

Once secrecy breaks down or once, for whatever reason, some men will not be held in ignorance, then the Debating Club will need to find another way or ways to control these recalcitrants. The Debating Club members will look back into Man's History and they will find tried and true methods for the exercise of this control. First they will use excuses for the requirements of Secrecy and if these excuses are found not to be adequate for the mass of Man in the collective of communities .. then they will find the ultimate tool of compliance - Fear. And through this tool of fear (which also requires no new modern definition) they will find the tool of Force. But force is a dangerous tool for a minority to place reliance on because its a tool that can be used equally by a majority - even though a majority should find no need for its use. The problem for the majority, regardless of whether they have managed to slip into a state where they may have once believed that their self is best served by a state of ignorance, where the continual redefinition of Ideals has, not so much found acceptance, but has been ignored in a false sense of self-interest, is that they may find that they no longer have any other tool to use than force. That in fact, *force has been forced upon them.*

So while redefinitions can be clever, they take a powerful amount of re-education to ensure their acceptance and the re-education, despite how it may be defined, most often degenerates into a good old fashioned definition of force. And Man, as history shows, resists the use of force.

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