

Words Poorly Used #126 — Duly Elected

I'm listening to the audiobook by Matt Kibbe, *Don't Hurt People and Don't Take Their Stuff*. It is an excellent book, but my feathers ruffled just a bit when I heard the phrase, "duly elected." Due in what sense?

In the real world, natural phenomena are due to natural events. What goes up, must come down — a thing has duly returned to the Earth ... due to the natural force of gravity. It is factual. When the qualifier, "duly" is applied to a fiction such as a statist election process, the "elected" are also fictions. There are no natural laws which apply, there is no natural due product of the process. The product of an artificial process is an artificial product. That product inherits every flaw in the process. And in truth there have been many hair-raising outcomes of the very flawed artificial process that we use for American elections. It probably depends on what your leanings are as to which instances you remember as most egregious.

Take, for example, the election of POTUS. Right now we have a POTUS who lost the popular vote (and "popular" is a misnomer because fewer than 1 in 5 members of the population voted for either of the leading candidates. In 2000, SCOTUS had to decide the POTUS because ballot irregularities caused an unresolvable, by regular vote tallying means, gridlock. Read the book, *1876* by Gore Vidal if you would like a version of how Rutherford B. Hayes became POTUS.

In the two most lopsided popular victories, FDR in 1936 and LBJ in 1964, less than 2 out of 3 **registered** voters actually cast ballots. Consequently, each president had less than a 40% mandate.

And none of this addresses the possibilities for corruption in the system.

— Kilgore Forelle