A Proposal for Questionnaires to Collect

the Public's Opinions Concerning Direct Democracy and a

Survey of Teachers about Methods of

Teaching Direct Democracy Procedures in Schools

ED5006

Research Methodology

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"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident."   Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860)

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable [inalienable] Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed..."   Thomas Jefferson (1743 - 1826).

"Every nation has a right to govern itself internally under what forms it pleases, and to change these forms at its own will." - Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Pinckney, 1792.

Democracy: "government by the people; *especially*: rule of the majority",   the first definition of "democracy" in the Merriam-Webster dictionary.

"Democracy arises out of the notion that those who are equal in any respect are equal in all respects; because men are equally free, they claim to be absolutely equal.

In a democracy the poor will have more power than the rich, because there are more of them, and the will of the majority is supreme."   Aristotle

"Amongst other problems, The CalTech/MIT Voting Technology Project estimated some four to six million votes were lost in 2000 due to ballot, equipment, registration or polling-place problems. In response, Americans clamored for new voting technology to replace the aging machines peppering US polling booths across the nation."   (Bushell, 2003).

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ABSTRACT

This research proposal concerns the procedures for developing direct democracy in the United States of America utilizing computer and Internet technology as well as the existing educational system. The first step is the development — through research and proposed methods of implementation, study of precedents, and historical and literary references — of the procedures and then the implementation (which would run concurrently with educating the public about the concept beginning with the K-12 levels up through post-secondary and adult levels) of the procedures involved in direct democracy. This will be an action research project involving theoretical, historical, socio-cultural, and evaluative aspects.

INTRODUCTION:

Now is the time to utilize modern technology to allow the public to vote directly via the Internet, thus creating a government closer to a pure democracy. The real possibility of a direct democracy, through direct voting, on the local, state, and national level now exists with the advent of Internet technology so now is the time to utilize modern technology to allow the public to vote directly via the Internet, thus creating a government closer to a pure democracy.

This study would involve obtaining opinions through questionnaires from the public, professionals, politicians, and focus groups concerning direct democracy and its feasibility and effectiveness as a method for establishing legislation and local, state, and national policy. The study would also involve collecting information from teachers of Social Studies, Political Science, Civics and Government for their opinions and suggestions as to how the history and philosophical concepts of direct democracy could be included in and taught through the educational curriculum and how direct democracy could be implemented and training and information supplied through the schools and community and governmental organizations.

The qualitative and more subjective side of the research would involve a brief history of democracy, a brief discussion of the definitions and philosophy of democracy, the use of the educational system to prepare learners for the use of direct democracy, and the contemporary uses of direct democracy in countries such as Switzerland and Ireland. The quantitative and more objective side of the study would involve statistics and the numbers of people, governments, and institutions presently using these concepts, how they were implemented, and the reliability and effectiveness of those procedures.

Research question:

How has direct democracy, utililizing computer and Internet technology, been implemented and used in various countries and institutions and what has been and could be the role of educational systems in the implementation and continuing use of direct democracy?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

One problem with the educational system, and society in general, involves political philosophy: if most societies are called democratic then why don't the people govern by voting directly and democratically (as is done in Switzerland, for example) on issues rather than voting only for representatives? When educating post-secondary or adult students (or even K-12 students to prepare them for being adults), how can the concepts of democratically controlled governments be conveyed and transferred to the learners and how can they become directly involved in the implementation of democratically determined plans? My project involves exploring what methods have been used previously in other countries and organizations to establish direct democracies, which are basically the public voting directly on issues rather than through elected representatives who can, after elected, vote any way they choose, and how these procedures can be introduced and used on a continuing basis in the political structures of the United States of America.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To determine the level of interest in the public, the politicians and professionals involved, teachers, and students in the concept and practice of direct democracy. And to determine the practicality in implementing a direct democracy in the United States of America and the methods of training all voting citizens in using it on a continuing basis.

A review of literature about direct democracy and its use and implementation:

Involving political philosophy, one problematic issue with the educational system, and society in general, is the following: if most societies are called democratic then why don't the people govern by voting directly and democratically (as is done in Switzerland, for example) on issues rather than voting only for representatives? When educating post-secondary or adult students (or even K-12 students to prepare them for being adults), how can the concepts of democratically controlled governments be conveyed and transferred to the learners and how can they become directly involved in the implementation of democratically determined plans? My project involves exploring what methods have been used previously and how to implement the methods through the educational and societal systems and to establish direct democracies which are basically systems whereby the public votes directly on issues rather than through elected representatives who can, after elected, vote any way they choose. The following is a review of the literature concerning the topic of direct democracy and its implementation and use.

In Adult Education for Social Change: From Center Stage to the Wings and Back Again, Thomas Heaney views adult education as participatory and as a tool for social change, where educational progressivism is the contemporary approach to educating the public. " 'Adult education turns out to be the most reliable instrument for social actionists' since it assures that any action undertaken would be authentically democratic" (Brookfield, 1984). Eduard Lindeman, as influenced by John Dewey, considers adult education to be intertwined with democracy, social action, and control by people over their daily lives. To Lindeman, adult education equals social change, a method to create good and productive citizens. Even if education is viewed as a "great selector" rather than a "great equalizer", each person can, as a result of education, find their niche, based on their abilities and merits, within a democratic society. The concept of using the educational system to implement a direct democracy is closely connected with the ideas expressed by Heaney, Miles Horton, Paulo Freire, and Jack Mezirow since their approach is to empower the populace through education in order to create a democratic society. Since it is necessary to have an educated public in order to have democracy function efficiently, democracy is dependent on the educational system to survive and prosper.

In "Developing e-Citizens and e-Consumers, an Irish e-Commerce Case Study" (2001), John MacNamara and David O'Donnell offer a comprehensive study of the effects the new cyber culture of the computer and the Internet and their effects on society, culture, and education. and the necessity for society and the educational system to produce "e-literate" citizens for the resulting new society. As they state it in their abstracted introduction: "We present a very simple argument: e-business needs e-consumers and e-literate workers; e-government needs e-citizens". The authors give many examples from Ireland, where they are based, and other nations and institutions using online voting. They present an in-depth description and qualitative analysis of the trends toward e-government, e-commerce, e-education, and e-culture in general backed by knowledge, examples, and statistics.

One of the concerns many people have about online voting revolves around the security and privacy issues and these are well-explored by Dr. Russell Smith in "Electronic Voting: Benefits and Risks" (2002). Dr. Smith, who is deputy director of research at the Australian Institute of Criminology, thinks national electronic voting will be prevalent in the near future, but people are hesitant because of security and secrecy issues and some people now attach a certain ritual to voting and some would therefore want to resist online voting in order to hold on to past traditions. He even includes a history of the changing methods of voting procedures. He mentions that there would have to be sophisticated servers for many people voting at the same time but the pluses of speed and accuracy, ease of use, lower costs compared to paper ballots,

the fact that online voting is already successfully being used in many countries, etc., outweigh the minuses. Dr. Smith mentions in an interview (2003) with Rachel Lebihan that, in his opinion, security is not an insurmountable problem, since the solutions that are used in financial transactions can be incorporated into methods for e-voting. His expertise and knowledge is evident in his writing and his use of examples and I think with many other technical experts on the project that the security and efficiency issues can be solved.

Largely a critique and analysis of the philosophy of the German philosopher Jurgen Habermas, the book "Democracy, Real and Ideal" (1999), largely a critique and analysis of the philosophy of the German philosopher Jurgen Habermas, the book's author Ricardo Blaug examines Habermas' philosophy in relation to the theory and practical aspects of democracy. Habermas' work includes a theory of democracy and his exploration of the realistic practicality of democracy and an in depth analysis of his normative theory of democracy and his theory of judgement. "Only where democracy is conceived as an everyday and real interactive process can we understand what it might mean to truly rule ourselves" (p. xv). In the study of Habermas' discourse of ethics, references are made to Hobbes's Leviathan and Locke's concept of protective rights (p. 12).

Democracy is discussed in relation to the rationalism of Plato and the empiricism of Aristotle. The essay mentions that Locke's theory starts with the natural human rights, Hobbes' begins with rational death avoidance (or survival instinct), and Kant begins his premise with the idea of pure practical reason (p. 6). Kant says: " a person is subject to no law other than those he (either alone or at least jointly with others) gives to himself", a thought which is greatly influenced by Jean Jacques Rousseau and Kant also refers to a social contract like Rousseau's. Kant's support of the moral law assumes that mankind is essentially good and moral by nature, a concept which figures heavily in democratic theory (but Hegel criticizes Kant's philosophy as being overly abstracted and not applicable to reality). Also explored are Aristotle's episteme (objective knowledge), techne (technical knowledge), and phronesis (practical reason) in relation to democratic theory (p. 23, 24).

The what, who, how and where of political theory including the location of the democratic process, as well as Rousseau's concept of popular sovereignty, are discussed. "The normative theory requires that the maximum number of people be involved and that the procedure they use be as fair as possible" (p. 50). According to J.F.Bohman: "more democracy ... is possible ... so long as citizens find the public sphere a discursive space for criticism, learning, and new forms of associations" (p. 54). R. Bernstein says: "If we don't strive to realize the conditions required for practical discourse then we will surely become less than fully human" (p. 54). And from K. Baynes: we need a "robust and multifaceted model of the public sphere in which individuals can deliberate about the collective terms and conditions of the common lives" (p. 54). Blaug concludes his introduction with: "If we forget what he (Habermas) has taught us we will achieve nothing, for the world is full of theories of deliberative democracy that, lacking normative sophistication, amount to little more than heart-warming remonstrances, fantasies of positivistic control, or mere semantic incantation." (p. 127).Concerning the actual functioning of the democratic fora, Blaug mentions that the application of democratic theory in reality "has always had a profound distrust of the people" (p. 133) as evidenced by the American Constitution.

Habermas states that:

> What we need is a hegemony of democratic values, and this requires a multiplication of democratic practices, institutionalizing them into ever more diverse social relations, so that a multiplicity of subject-positions can be formed through a democratic matrix. It is in this way - and not by trying to provide it with a rational foundation - that we will be able not only to defend democracy but also to deepen it ... a project of radical and plural democracy requires the existence of multiplicity, of plurality, and of conflict, and sees in them the raison d'etre of politics" (p. 134)

In "Democracy from the Participant's Perspective" (p. 136), a discussion ensues concerning a "breakout of democracy", which has definitive characteristics and its own life cycle. When this breakout occurs, and as public interest increases, the people will, in Rousseau's words "fly to the assemblies". "With a breakout of democracy we have Sartre's 'group in fusion', Pizzorno's 'mobilization' type of political participation, Mansbridge's 'fragile bubbles' of 'unitary democracy', Phillip's 'internal democracy', Moscovici's 'consensual' participation, Arendt's 'oasis in the desert' or 'elementary republics', the Czech Republic's Charter 77's 'parallel poleis', and the opening of a Habermasian 'public sphere'." (p. 138).

Blaug mentions the democratic decision making process as having five elements: 1. problem recognition 2. deliberation 3. decision making 4. implementation 5. evaluation (p. 141). L. Goodwyn (1981, p. 146) mentions that democratic institutions build slowly so, in their development, patience is required. And Blaug says: "While mistrust of the political consciousness of the populace has served to ground the need for elitism in democracy, participation itself is just as frequently appealed to as the supreme educator. If practiced regularly, perhaps at first on tasks appropriate to the level of learning, participants can make significant gains in proficiency." (p. 146). K. Elder refers to the three levels of society as micro, meso, and macro (p. 149).

Concerning the democratic participatory process, Blaug states (p. 151):

When we begin to consider the a movement seriously challenging the power of the state, we reveal the extraordinary lack of knowledge we have accumulated over our history regarding what it actually means to rule ourselves. the flight into liberal democracy evinced by those countries who have recently joined the "democratic" club shows both the collective paucity of our understanding of such a process and also the dangers in imagining that one "revolutionary" push, one legitimating social contract, one constitutional founding, can relieve us of the need to preserve genuine democracy. Where we conceive of a social contract as an ongoing procedure requiring constant work and attention, so do we understand that deliberative capacities must be learned, practiced, preserved, and patiently extended. (p. 151).

Blaug also discusses the issue of emotions in the democratic process (p. 153) but mentions that, according to Rousseau, "once you have citizens, you have all you need" (p. 155). S. Behabib is quoted as saying: "the question is not whether discursive democracy can become the practice of complex societies but whether complex societies are still capable of democratic rule" (p. 156). I think that, with the advent of Internet technology, they are.

In "Democracy in America" (2000), Alexis de Tocqueville(1805-59) explores, in two volumes using a sweeping and panoramic view, the process of government in the United States and his view of its type of participatory government. His essays cover various aspects of American life and government including the sociology and psychology of the American people, discussions of local, state, and federal governments as well as an in depth analysis of the United States Constitution and discussions of the practical philosophy of democracy. In "Why it can strictly be said that the people govern in the United States", he says:

In America the people appoint both those who make the laws and those who execute them; the people form the jury which punishes breaches of the law. The institutions are democratic not only in principle but also in all their developments; thus the people directly nominate their representatives and generally choose them annually so as to hold them more completely dependent. So direction really comes from the people, and though the form of government is representative, it is clear that the opinions, prejudices, interests, and even passions of the people an find no lasting obstacles preventing them from being manifest in the daily conduct of society.

In the United States, as in all countries where the people reign, the majority rules in the name of the people.

This majority is chiefly composed of peaceful citizens who by taste or interest sincerely desire the well-being of the country. They are surrounded by the constant agitation of parties seeking to draw them in and to enlist their support.

Steven Vago in "Strategies of Change" probes the three components of social change which are agents (leaders — directors, advocates, backers, technicians, administrators, and organizers — and supporters — workers, donors, and sympathizers), targets (micro, meso, and macro), and methods (empirical-rational, normative-reeducative, and power coercive). All of these components would be used to develop an interactive form of direct democracy following the principles of Peter Reason's Participatory Inquiry and Peter Park's Participatory Research, both of which are types of Participatory Action Research.

In Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum & Recall (1999), Thomas E. Cronin explores the workings of democracy and the variations of democracy in use today and in the past. The author analyzes the history of the democracy and its possible continued evolution. He states that in early America most people were ambivalent about the concept of democracy. Most thought elections existed only to select leaders to rule them and not for the public to rule itself yet Thomas Jefferson supported the right of the people to rebel against unjust rulers and Alexander Hamilton thought the proceedings of government should be based on the consent of the people. Later on, the populists and progressives thought that more democracy was needed using the methods of initiative, referendum, and recall.

Today, there is talk of using more direct democracies and direct elections as well as electronic town meetings and teledemocracy. The public has become disenfranchised with the issues of taxes, regulation, inefficiency, the arms race, ecological problems, etc. since public policy is made in distant capitals by unknown agents. Direct democracy dates back to Massachusetts in 1640 with its town meetings utilizing majority rule and embodying three main principles: consent of the governed, rule by law, and representation of the people. During that period, the people were primary and governments were secondary and subservient to the people.

> Citizen initiatives will promote government responsiveness and accountability. If officials ignore the voice of the people, the people will have an available means to make needed law. Initiatives are freer from special interest domination than the legislative branches of most states, and so provide a desirable safeguard that can be called into use when legislators are corrupt, irresponsible, or dominated by privileged special interests. The initiative and referendum will produce open, educational debate on critical issues that otherwise might be inadequately discussed. Referendum, initiative, and recall are nonviolent means of political participation that fulfill a citizen's right to petition the government for redress of grievances. Direct democracy increases voter interest and election-day turnout. Getting the citizens involved in the decision making process would make interested in politics and would thus alleviate apathy and alienation.
>
> Finally (although this hardly exhausts the claims), citizen initiatives are needed because legislators often evade the tough issues. Fearing to be ahead of their time, they frequently adopt a zero-risk mentality. Concern with staying in office often makes them timid and perhaps too wedded to the status quo. One result is that controversial social issues frequently have to be resolved in the judicial branch. But who elected the judges? (Cronin, 1999, 11)

Bowler, S., Donovan, T. and Tolbert, C. (1998) in Citizens As Legislators: Direct Democracy in the United States contains factual information and statistics concerning direct democracy on the local, state, and national levels with listings of the results of numerous initiatives and referendums throughout the history of the United States. "This book focuses primarily on one commonly used feature arising from the Progressive Era: the citizens' initiative." (Bowler and Donovan 1998) "To its advocates, then, direct democracy would provide openness and end evasive partisan legislatures, mitigating the corrupting influences thought to operate within them, and would also improve the quality of public life. Voter interest would be stimulated as citizens participated directly in drafting and approving legislation. The new, open process would thus instill civic virtue by simultaneously educating and involving the mass public (Haynes 1907, Barnett 1915, Beard and Schultz 1912, and Key and Crouch 1939)." The citizens' initiative seems to be a trend that is growing but the most of the referendums now are in the western half of the United States and in Florida:

Since South Dakota adopted the initiative in 1898, hundreds of these 'citizen'-drafted laws have appeared on ballots in American states. David Magleby note that from 1898 to 1992, over 1700 initiatives were placed before U.S. voters. Among states using initiatives, the most during this period, 274, appeared in Oregon, with 232 appearing in California, 160 in North Dakota, 150 in Colorado, 133 in Arizona, and 91 in Washington (Neal 1993). Hundreds of additional referenda were placed before voters by legislatures. Most initiatives were rejected by voters, yet 38% passed from 1898 to 1992 (Magleby 1994, 231).

In Direct Democracy in Switzerland (2002), Gregory Fossedal explores the history of Switzerland as related to direct democracy and the development of the procedures of direct democracy in Switzerland. He mentions that:

The Swiss polity, as an historical and on-going exhibit of the exercise of a deliberative direct democracy, is a persuasive rebuttal to the stand of elites from the Greeks of yesterday to the elites of today who hold that exclusionary representative democracy, in itself, is a better form of democracy than a direct democracy in partnership with representative democracy....In a word, an effective rebuttal to the stand; you can't trust the people...Switzerland answers the potential question of the political scientist or citizen: What happens if we place so much faith in the people that we make them lawmakers? (Fossedal, 2002).

In Part 1, the author explores the origin of the development the Swiss version of democracy and the reasons for writing this book. Fossedal, in Part 2, describes this millennium of Swiss history and how its system of self protection developed. In Part 3: the Swiss Constitution and institutions, including Swiss referendums, are examined. In Parts 4 and 5 he gives examples of why democracy actually works when the citizens are entrusted with the power to determine the functioning of the government that governs them.

In The Future of Teledemocracy (2000), Ted Becker and Christa Slaton study the efforts and procedures involved in the implementation of direct democracy and theories behind its historical and socio-cultural development. Just as the Newtonian interpretations of physical forces were replaced by Einsteinian theories in the physical sciences, the authors claim it is time to discard current political science's outdated methods of democracy and replace them with the new world consciousness and the now technologically possible system of direct democracy.

They suggest that in today's world of relativity and quantum mechanics, mainstream political science is, comparatively speaking, centuries behind — a system not only dysfunctional but counterproductive. In 1928 Harvard professor of government, William Bennett Munro, "quantum political science's first voyager" (Becker and Slaton, 2000, p. 38), criticized "American political scientists, political commentators, leaders and gurus for continuing to be 'in bondage to eighteenth-century deification of the abstract individual man' " (p. 39) who instead needed to modernize "the marriage between physics, politics and the science of government" (p.. 21), a view also shared by Buckminster Fuller, Eric Fromm, and Becker and Slaton, all of whom think it is now time for a new quantum political science. We need to, they suggest, replace 18th century Newtonian hierarchical age of government with a 21st century non-hierarchical and interactive deliberative democratic government and in order to achieve this governments must utilize methods of initiatives and referendums and participation in the global direct democracy movement.

One proponent of change in the democratic system is Mike Gavel, a former U. S. senator from Alaska (1968-80) who, using an concept referred to as Philadelphia II, wants to created a citizens' initiative which would exist "within new democratic paradigm parameters"(p. 163). To begin this process, the authors suggest that "Congress...[is] to set up something called 'the Electoral Trust' (which would be funded by the U. S. Treasury) which would be a new, largely independent agency of the U. S. government" and which would eventually evolve into a legislature of the people.

Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson, co-authors of The Cultural Creatives, How Fifty Million People Are Changing the World (2000), describe how culture, society, and technology are changing all aspects of society at the beginning of this millennium in a similar way that Alvin Toffler's Future Shock did in the '70s and John Naisbitt's Megatrends did in the '80s and 90's. Based on their research, about 50 million Americans are what they call Cultural Creatives, a group that includes people of all races, ages, and classes usually people who are not particularly materialistic and are philosophically inclined and supportive of the arts and sciences. The authors claim this subculture could have enormous social and political influence if it had an organizational structure through which the opinions of the group could be expressed utilizing the group's collective consciousness as a cohesive unit and this cohesiveness could expressed via a direct democracy. Also covered in the book are new ways that governance can be realized using the available new technologies. In the modern era of advanced travel and communications technology, representative democracy and legislative procedures without direct democracy are archaic and should become obsolete.

David Broder's book, Democracy Derailed: The Initiative Movement and the Power of Money (2000) is generally not in favor of the idea of citizens functioning as legislators and shares the views of some of the forefathers, such as James Madison, who were distrustful of the ability of the people to rule themselves. He entertains a stated attachment to Madison's skeptical view of people in this role. (But some, including James Wilson, a member of the Constitutional Convention, thought of the people as the ultimate and rightful lawmakers who are — were, if direct democracy were to be enacted — denied direct legislative procedures mainly for technological reasons who said all "power is originally in the people and should be exercised by them in person, if that could be done with convenience, or even with little difficulty." Perhaps at some point in the future, his name will be as equally well known in American history as the other forefathers). Broder suggests that Mike Gravel's concept of Philadelphia II would require a new Constitution using direct democracy (I say that amendments to the existing Constitution could accomplish the objectives). Senator Gravel suggests creating the Direct Democracy Initiative which would eventually lead to a legislature of the people which I think could coexist with the current Congressional system.

But Broder is not moved by such arguments preferring to instead hold on to the establishment's antiquated ways of governance, to him "the choice is easy. I would choose James Madison's design over Mike Gravel's without a moment's hesitation" (pp. 239). Broder would prefer elected legislators to decide on complicated issues such as abortion, drugs, abortion, crime and punishment, gambling, assisted suicide, affirmative action, human rights, and whether or not to go to war. He elaborates about how California's Proposition 13 is now a multimillion-dollar enterprise in which lawyers and advertising agencies sell their expertise to private interest groups though some would say that this is capitalism at work in the political realm. Broder would prefer elected legislators to decide on such issues rather than trusting the (educated) public. He thinks initiatives and public opinions are influenced by moneyed interests, but what about lobbyists and briberies or favors to Congressmen?

In The Bill of Rights: Creation and Reconstruction (1998), A.R. Amar mentions the original Bill of Rights as well as the post Civil War Bill of Rights and that, We the People, are capable of progressively advancing to higher levels of collective self government which combines political initiatives of direct democracy with representative democracy .

S. M. Milkis in Political Parties and Constitutional Government: Remaking American Democracy (1999) mentions that Jefferson, Madison, and Andrew Jackson formed political to guarantee that the people had a say in governmental policies, mostly in local matters. The Progressive movement thought that the parties created obstacles and impediments to the functioning of government in the industrialized society. The thought the solution was to develop direct democracy using referendums on a local and national scale.

In Democracy in the Digital Age : Challenges to Political Life in Cyberspace (2000), Anthony G. Wilhelm offers another exploration the emergence of public participation in the processes of government using the new communication technologies but he mentions that despite the superficial appearance of progress of technological advances, there is not necessarily progress in the lives in many people, especially in the undeveloped countries. He says the use of a direct democracy requires a focused policy and the cyber world of political control contains the features and advantages of access to resources, inclusion, potential for deliberation, and comprehensible design.

In Stealing the Initiative: How State Government Responds to Direct Democracy (2000). E. R. Gerber and other authors explore eleven California initiatives and referendums to give readers with a better understanding the political world. Topics covered in the book include taxation, transportation, legislative spending, term limits, primaries, and multilingual education. This book also includes varied conclusions about how to reform the initiative process to improve direct democracy. For citizens who want to understand and/or increase their role in government. The book also includes suggestions as to how to reform the initiative procedures to improve and positively evolve the practices of direct democracy. Democracy, Citizenship and the Global City (2000) edited by Engin Isin is a collection of essays from several authors concerning what the functions of politics and democracy are in the postmodern world of globalization.

In The New Challenge of Direct Democracy (1997), Ian Budge says that direct democracy involves citizens discussing and deciding how government is to govern instead of having these decisions made by legislators, bureaucrats, or parliamentarians. His book challenges the current notion that representative democracy is the correct and most feasible form of democracy and thus threatens the established existence of these current forms of governments, as does any new system when it is initially introduced. He states that with the new communication inventions, tools, and developments that direct democracy is now technically possible and desirable in the body politic.

In A Constitution of Direct Democracy: Pure Democracy and the Governance of the Future ~ Locally and Globally (2000). the author, Michael Noah Mautner, a chemistry professor by profession, writes about democracy from a scientist's perspective. In the future people will need to decide on such issues involving governmental systems, space exploration, robotics, cloning, economics, taxation, population growth and control, abortion, crime and punishment, religious freedom, genetic engineering, biological immortality, among other issues. The decisions we make will affect all of humanity. Don't people desire to choose the best conditions for their present as well as their futures? The shared knowledge, common wisdom, and the innate desire in human nature to want what is the best for all, and the natural desire for survival, would result in decisions advantageous to the human condition. This collective consciousness would form a Constitution of direct democracy which would implement the communal decisions of the people. I might add, if two heads are better than one, how much better are 300 million heads? Some might counter this thought with the thought that too many cooks spoil the broth, but are we talking about making soup or government? In "The Constitution of Direct Democracy" he describes the structure, possible scenarios, and ethics of direct democratic systems in governments from the local, national, and world levels.

In America's Crisis: The Direct Democracy and Direct Education Solution (2000), authors D. B. Jeffs, founder of the Direct Democracy Center, and V. Hugo, start the book off by saying that you would not have heard of this book through the mass media since they are in service of the establishment which would be threatened by the institutionalization of a direct democracy in the United States of America. The authors suggest instituting a direct democracy now and they want to have this codified in a new amendment, the 28th, to the United States Constitution. They say that direct democracy is inevitable even if people in positions of power try to deny the people not in power access to the technology available to them and to the technology that makes such democratic procedures possible. The book is written in an impassioned, call-to-arms style reminiscent of Thomas Paine's essay Common Sense. The authors say that now that we have the Internet we are rediscovering democracy at a time when we were about to lose it to to bureaucratic legislators and giant corporations.

In Direct Democracy or Representative Government? Dispelling the Populist Myth (2000) John Haskell compares and contrasts the positive and negative characteristics of populist direct democracy and representative government as described in the Federal Papers of James Madison of the founding period of the United States of America. He says that the possible realization of direct democracy has exponentially increased in recent history, primarily because of telecommunications advances such as television, computers, and the Internet and publicly determined policies in states such as California. He thinks that publicly ruled legislatures would be disorganized and incoherent since public majorities are unstable and impulsive collections of varied and contrasting philosophies (but I would say that so are legislatures of elected representatives) where as elected representatives tend to be more deliberative and inclined toward negotiation and discussion. Again the importance of the Internet is mentioned as a medium for communication and a method of publicizing information and political points of view.

Electronic Democracy (2002), by Graeme Browning, describes how the Internet has transformed the political atmosphere in the United States and in the world. Using Internet technology, people now have the tools to discuss issues and affect results concerning the American and world political arena. This book is a source of names, addresses, websites, discussion groups, and email campaigns, and facts concerning how to get involved with this particular movement. There are also suggestions as to how to begin one's own political or organizational campaigns: how to organize, raise funds, develop surveys, contact people, etc. Also covered are ethical problems and abuses associated with online activism. The book covers issues such as using the World Wide Web for upstart organizations and how to create effective email campaigns as well as how to write letters to Congress members that will be read and responded to and an exploration of the past and future of online polling and voting.

In his book Utopia (1997), written during the era of the Renaissance and influenced by St. Augustine's book City of God and Plato's Republic, Sir Thomas More (1477-1535) created the term "utopia" to mean both "good place" and "no place", clearly establishing its fictitious and idealistic nature. In the book, he describes the good and desirable state and citizen. More's utopian society is a communal democracy with combined elements of Epicureanism and Stoicism utilizing the existence and principles of a natural law. Speaking of laws, in his Utopia there are no lawyers and the laws are easily understood by the layman and war is considered uncivilized and inhuman. Also in his Utopia, the king, or head of state is elected, rather than born into his position, and in my view, this is the situation today when most heads of state, including the presidents of the United States, are in fact elected "kings" or "queens".

In E-topia (2000), William J. Mitchell refers to the future online meeting places where friends, co-workers, colleagues, and students will meet:

> "What sorts of meeting places, forums, and markets will emerge in the electronically mediated world? What will be the twenty-first century equivalents of the gathering at the well, the water cooler, the Greek agora, the Roman forum, the village green, the town square, Main Street, and the mall?" Many of the meeting places will be located in the virtual world of cyberspace and he adds that "they will make growing use of electronic mail systems, mailing lists, newsgroups, chat rooms, Web pages, directories and search engines, audio conferencing, video conferencing, increasingly elaborate, avatar-populated, online virtual worlds, and software-mediated environments that we cannot even imagine yet. Some of these virtual meeting places will be the private domains of well-defined special groups, some will be discreetly out of the public eye, and some wil even be determinedly clandestine; others will be true public space open to all." (p. 85).

> "Traditionally, political power has been exerted, made visible, and architecturally celebrated through physical assemblies of kings and courtiers, senates, parliaments, cabinets, councils, and so on. Conversely, if you wanted to overthrow established political power, you assembled 'the people' in an urban public place, set up barricades, authorities had the wit and the will, they would try to take the usual countermeasures — dispersion of crowds, prohibition of assemblies, and exile of agitators." and "Tocqueville's famous insistence on the importance of free political associations, and on the 'power of meeting' in forming and sustaining such associations, takes on new meaning. Now, the necessary venues can be found not only in physical space but also in cyberspace, and this opens up fresh, highly effective avenues for political organization and action." (in the "E-Vox Populi" section, p.96).

In the section, "Reinventing Public Space" he says that:

the twenty-first century will still need agoras — maybe more than ever. But these will not always be physical places. They will operate at an extraordinary range of scales, form the intimately local to the global. And even where they *look* familiar, they will no longer function in the same sorts of ways as the great public places of the past. Under these new conditions, though, the simple, ancient principles of public space remain crucial. If public life is not to disintegrate, communities must still find ways to provide, pay for, and maintain places of assembly and interactions for their members — whether these places are virtual, physical, or some new and complex combination of the two. And if these places are to serve their purposes effectively, they must allow both freedom of access and freedom of expression. (p. 97).

He includes a quote from the American philosopher and educational theorist John Dewey who observed that:

"It seemed almost self-evident to Plato — as to Rousseau later — that a genuine state could hardly be larger than the number of persons capable of personal acquaintance with one another. Our modern state-utility is due to the consequences of technology employed so as to facilitate the rapid and easy circulation of opinions and information, and so as to generate constant and intricate interactions far beyond the limits of face-to-face communities...The elimination of distance, at the base of which are physical agencies, has called into being the new form of political association. " (p. 133).

In The Communicative Ethics Controversy (1990) edited by Seyla Benhabib and Fred Dallmayr, the article Kantian Skepticism toward Transcendental Ethics of Communication by Otfried Hoffe offers the following observation: "Today, and not only in the sciences, the themes of language and communication are experiencing a boom. Among the varied reasons for this fact there certainly belongs the self-evident manner in which — at least 'in principle' — we recognize democracy as a political institutional reality." (p. 217). And in the same book, Albrecht Wellmer in Practical Philosophy and the Theory of Society remarks that "...one may speak of a generalized domination-free discourse if the basic institutions of society already corresponded to the principle of consensus, i.e. if that practical relationship between individuals was produced and institutionally secured which is the presupposition of a generalized unconstrained discourse." (p. 316).

Rather than paraphrasing, I will conclude the literature review by including a few translated (by Christopher Betts) thoughts of the great French philosopher of democratic ideals, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), whose political philosophy influenced Thomas Jefferson as well as the other American forefathers and formed the basis of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America, from The Social Contract (1994):

The first and most important maxim of a lawful or popular government, that is to say a government which has as its object the good of the people, is therefore to follow the general will in everything; but in order to be followed, it must be known, and above all it must be clearly distinguished from the particular will, beginning with that of the individual self. (p. 9).

Public education, following rules prescribed by government, and controlled by officers established by the sovereign, is therefore one of the fundamental principles of the popular or legitimate form of government. (p.23)

Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme directions of the general will; and we as a body receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole. (p. 55).

If, when properly informed, the people were to come to its decisions without any communication between its members, decisions without any communication between its members, the general will would always emerge from the large number of small differences, and the decision would always be good. But when there are intrigues, and partial associations arise at the expense of the greater one, the will of each of these associations becomes general in relation to its members and particular in relation to the state: it can then be said that the number of voters is no longer the same as the number of men, but only the same as the number of associations. (p. 66).

By the social pact we have given existence and life to the body politic; we must now, by legislation, give it the ability to will and move. For the act by which this body is originally formed and unified does nothing to determine what it must do so as to preserve itself. (p.73).

Laws, properly speaking, are no more than a society's conditions of association. The people, being subject to the laws, must create them; it is the associates who have the right to determine the conditions of society. But how are they to determine them? By sudden inspiration bringing common agreement? Has the body politic some organ by which to articulate its wishes? Who will give it the foresight it needs to produce acts of will and publicize them in advance, or how, in time of need, will it make them known? (p. 75).

Legislative power belongs to the people, and can belong to it alone. (p. 91).

What then is a government? It is an intermediate body set up between subjects and sovereign to ensure their mutual correspondence, and is entrusted with the execution of laws and with the maintenance of liberty, both social and political. (p. 92).

Let us suppose that the state is composed of ten thousand citizens. The sovereign can be thought of only collectively, as a single entity. Yet each particular person, in his capacity as subject, is considered as an individual. Thus the relationship of sovereign to subject is as ten thousand to one. In other words, each member of the state has only one ten-thousandth share of the sovereign authority, although he is entirely subject to it. If the population consists of a hundred thousand men, the position of the subject stays unaltered, each submitting equally to the whole authority of the laws, while the power of his vote is reduced to one hundred-thousandth, and his influence over the creation of law is ten times less. The subject remaining a single unit, then, the relationship between the sovereign and himself grows wider in proportion to the number of citizen. Whence it follows that the larger the state becomes, the more liberty decreases. (p.93).

The sovereign can entrust the responsibility of government to all the people or to the greater part of the people, so that more citizens will be members of the government than are simply individual citizens. The name given to this form of government is democracy. (p. 99).

By new forms of association let us, if we can, correct the faults in the general form of association. (p. 175).

CORE QUESTIONS

How has direct democracy been practiced in other countries and institutions and how effective has it been?

How can the educational system participate in the implementation of a direct democracy utilizing Internet and computer technology?

How can direct democracy be introduced and taught in Social Studies and Political Science courses?

How can a constitutional amendment be proposed?

How can the reliability of Internet voting be assessed?

How can the privacy and security of voters be assured?

How can the public be informed of issues to be voted on?

How can the voters register their votes via the Internet or computer?

How can the public be made aware of the safety and limitations of direct democracy?

How can the public be made aware of the roles and duties of citizens in a democracy?

How can the public be made aware of the philosophy and history of democracy?

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

While contacting the public, legislators, politicians, professionals, focus groups as well as teachers of Social Studies, Political Science, History, Civics and Government, the methods most used would be questionnaires with briefly descriptive cover letters, surveys (and pilot surveys), and interviews all using mostly closed ended, and some open ended, questions. Pilot surveys could be employed utilizing university students with some questionnaires being sent to politicians and some to a random selection of respondents.

Most of the research information and questionnaire development issues would be derived from the following sources:

Gall, M.D., Borg, W., & Gall, J.P. (2003). Educational Research: An Introduction. 7th Ed. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. and

Dillman, Don A. (1999). Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Salant, P. & Dillman, D. (1994). How to Conduct Your Own Survey. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Goodman, A. (2003) Data Collection and Analysis; Retrieved on Nov 20, 2003 from http://www.deakin.edu.au/~agoodman/sci101/index.php

Below is a brief overview of the concepts and methods of questionnaires, interviews, and surveys as derived from the above sources:

Questionnaires are documents that ask the same questions of all individuals in a sample. Their advantages over interviews are that they are used mostly in quantitative research since they are standardized and the results are statistical, their costs are lower costs for sampling over a large geographical areas than interviews and the time needed to collect data is less than with interviews. Their disadvantages are that they can not probe as deeply into beliefs, attitudes, and inner experiences as interviews and it is not possible to modify or clarify question/items after the questionnaire is distributed.

Interviews are oral questions by the interviewer and oral answers by the respondents. Their advantage are: they are used mostly in qualitative research with open-ended questions, they are more adaptable, interviewers can follow up to obtain more information or clarify misunderstood areas, the interviewers can build trust and rapport with respondents, they give research a human voice or human "touch", they can be used to obtain information not able to be obtained by other means. Their disadvantages are that it can be difficult to standardize the interview situation so that the interviewer does not influence the respondent to respond in an expected way, they do not provide anonymity from the interviewer so to assure respondent's anonymity, the interviewer must report results without revealing the respondent's identity.

In order to construct the research questionnaire, one must define the research objectives, select a sample, design the questionnaire format, pretest the questionnaire (pilot surveys), precontact the sample, write a cover letter and distribute the questionnaire and then follow-up on non-respondents and, finally, analyze the data (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). The design and construction of questionnaires is a predominantly subjective process that is mostly determined by the experience of the designer. Surveys can be from one to twenty pages or more. Adequate background information should be included in a cover letter so the intended respondent will be interested in responding to the questionnaire. An important issue in the variety, number of, and sequencing of questions so as to get the intended information yet not overwhelm the respondent with a burdensome number of questions. The two main types of questions are open-ended and closed-ended questions, both of which can be asked in a formal or an informal tone, and can be used in an appropriate mix in both qualitative and quantitative research. A questionnaire should be kept as short as possible but a longer questionaire should be broken into sections and usually numbered and the questionnaire should be as clear, detailed and unambiguous as possible.

Concerning the questionnaire layout, there should be a good use of whitespace which is the space between questions and sections with no writing to enhance readability, the questionnaire needs to have a preamble that explains the purpose of the survey and this can be part of the cover letter or at the head of the questionnaire, there should be instructions to the respondents at the beginning of each section, questions should be numbered questions and, if the questionnaire is divided into sections, the section should be indicated as part of the question numbering system and there should be specific instructions associated with each question to aid in the correct completion of that questions To save everyone's time, the respondents should be able to bypass questions (or whole sections) that are not relevant to them by using filter questions, with instructions such as "If you answered YES to Question 8 please go to Question 12)" and, finally, respondents who are unsure about answering a question should be able to respond with "Don't Know", "Undecided", or "Not Applicable", etc.

The wording in a questionnaire should be clear and unambiguous, questions should be worded in such a way that the response is what the respondent really thinks about the topic, questions should be made as simple as possible, and be sure not to use double negatives, grammatical errors, slang, colloquialisms, or spelling mistakes. One should be sure to be culturally sensitive while wording questions and be sure not to use a double yes and no question that could contain both yes and no answer. ("Are you a member of the _____ Party and did you vote for the party's candidate in the last election?" — There are four possible answers to this question (Yes/Yes, Yes/No, No/Yes, No/No).

Closed form (the question permits only prespecified responses such as in multiple choice or True/ False questions) items which can be assessed numerically and more objectively. This type has the advantages over open form items in that they make quantification and analysis easier and more direct, their questions can be pilot-tested more easily and they can be used to calculate percentages of respondents who answered questions in a particular way. The disadvantages are that they can not express individual views, can not express views non-conforming to the structure of the questionaire, and the respondent can not offer creative views or solutions.

Open form (respondents can make any response they wish such as in essay questions) items, which require a more subjective assessment, have some advantages over closed form questions which include: they can have interesting responses to them, they can have more in depth responses, they can use optional (can be answered or not) questions, and for qualitative research results, they can be analyzed by a grounded-theory approach. Some of their disadvantages are that they can be time consuming, their analysis requires development of a category system, they are more difficult and time-consuming to analyze and many readers are needed to analyze transcripts.

The structured form of questionnaires can include **boxes**: (e.g. check the box, including multiple choice and True/False questions) and **scales** such as *linear* (e.g. from strongly agree to strongly disagree scales) and *tabular* (tables or charts) scales.

In obtaining data from target groups the researcher should bear in mind that these are groups with shared interests and who would tend to answer questions similarly. Key informant questionnaires and interviews are data from people who have special knowledge (e.g. experts) that would not otherwise be available to the researcher. This group tends to be more educated, informed, and articulate about a particular topic that the general public is. Survey questionnaires and interviews are those used to supplement data that have been collected by other methods. These include confirmation survey interviews which are structured interviews that produce evidence to confirm earlier findings, participant construct interviews which are used to learn how informants structure their physical and social world, and projective techniques which use ambiguous stimuli to elicit subconscious perceptions. Focus group questionnaires and interviews are group interviews addressing questions to a group of individuals who have been assembled for this purpose or interviewing groups that have a shared goal.

Below are some examples of multiple choice closed form items in Direct Democracy: the Politics of Initiative, Referendum, and Recall (1999) by Thomas Cronin:

1. To be realistic about it, our elected officials:

— know more about an issue and should be trusted to make the right decisions
— should be carefully watched in case they misuse their power and go against the will of the people
— undecided

2. When making laws, government should pay attention to:

— mostly to experts
— opinions of ordinary people
— undecided

3. In government, should people with more intelligence and character have greater influence than other people

— Yes, they have more to offer
— No, because all the citizens should decide on an issue
— undecided

(questions from McClosky, 1978). Civil Liberties Survey. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

The below core questions are in the form of open-ended questions and can be answered with essay type answers:

How has direct democracy been practiced in other countries and institutions and how effective has it been?

How can the educational system participate in the implementation of a direct democracy utilizing Internet and computer technology?

How can direct democracy be introduced and taught in Social Studies and Political Science courses?

How can a constitutional amendment be proposed?

How can the reliability of Internet voting be assessed?

How can the privacy and security of voters be assured?

How can the public be informed of issues to be voted on?

How can the voters register their votes via the Internet or computer?

How can the public be made aware of the safety and limitations of direct democracy?

How can the public be made aware of the roles and duties of citizens in a democracy?

How can the public be made aware of the philosophy and history of democracy?

-- How can the concept of direct democracy be introduced and the procedures for its implementation and utilization be taught in Social Studies and Political Science courses?

Of the methods research design (descriptive, causal-comparative, correlational, and experimental) and methods of inquiry (surveys, opinion polls, statistical data, questionnaires, sampling procedures, data collection procedures, etc.), I think the best approach to answer this question would be a descriptive design utilizing a questionnaire sent to all of the Social Studies and Political Science teachers (that the researcher can locate) in public and private schools from the K-12 levels up through post-secondary and adult education. The questionnaire could contain closed and open ended questions in addition to a blank suggestion space at the end of the questionnaire where the instructors can add any thoughts that they may have on the subject.

-- How can a Constitutional amendment be proposed?

Constitutional amendments are permanent additions to the Constitution, though they can be counter amended as was the case with the Prohibition amendment, that require a 2/3 vote from both houses of the Congress and therefore very difficult to obtain. There have been twenty seven Constitutional Amendments with the most recent being in 1992 which involved no Congressional self salary increases while the legislators are in their terms. The twelfth Amendment concerning changing the method of electing the president of the United States using the Electoral College was added in 1803 after the first ten Amendments, the Bill of Rights, were added in 1791.

I think this inquiry can be accomplished by doing a thorough historical and literature research of all of the previous 27 amendments and how they were done. Additionally, a questionnaire concerning procedures for obtaining an amendment could be sent out to focus groups related to the topic and eventually a petition could be circulated.

To make them into closed ended items they each be converted into statements that can be responded to with linear scale responses (strongly disagree to strongly agree, or don't know):

Direct democracy been practiced in other countries and institutions and has been effective

   1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0

The educational system should participate in the implementation of a direct democracy utilizing Internet and computer technology.

   1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0

Direct democracy should be introduced and taught in Social Studies and Political Science courses.

   1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0

A Constitutional amendment be proposed created a system of direct democracy in the United States.

   1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0

The Internet is a reliable method of voting.

   1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0

The voters have complete privacy and security

   1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0
.

The public can be informed of issues to be voted on.

   1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0

The voters could easily register their votes via the Internet or computer.

1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5 Don't know 0

The public should be made aware of the safety using the Internet for direct democracy.

1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5   Don't know 0

The public should be made aware of the limitations of direct democracy.

1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5 Don't know 0

The public should be made aware of the roles and duties of citizens in a democracy.

1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5 Don't know 0

The public should be made aware of the philosophy and history of democracy.

1   strongly disagree   2   3   4 strongly agree 5 Don't know 0

Some other possible questions are:

Do you think the United States is a democracy now?

Do you think Direct Democracy or people voting directly on legislative issues is a good idea?

Do you think adequate technology exists today for direct democracy?

Do you think adequate education, information, and training can be given to citizens for them to vote as legislators?

Do you think interest for direct democracy would be maintained by the public?

Do you think that eventually a new branch of Congress could be formed by the voting citizens?

Do you think the people's voting branch of Congress could be used first as an opinion collection device?

Do you think citizens and students should study for and take examinations in order to receive certification in order to qualify as a voting member of a legislature in a direct democracy?

Should the public schools provide education and training for citizens to function as voting members of a direct democracy system of government?

DATA ANALYSIS

Concerning the research topic of direct democracy and its present use and the methods of its implementation and ways of introducing and educating the public about the concept, the methods of collecting data would involve research in the history of these ideas by reviewing past research, experiments, and uses of direct democracy through a search of literature, studies, and experiments done on the topic. Also, another method would involve the collecting of information from interviews, surveys, and questionnaires conducted with the general public, focus groups, and politicians as well as social studies and political science teachers.

The information gathering instruments used would involve closed form and open form questions and the use of quantitative (in determining numbers, statistics, percentages, etc.) and qualitative (such as in eliciting opinions from the respondents for open form questions) forms of collecting and analyzing the data. The data could be collected and tabulated via Internet connections and the open-ended questions could be analyzed by readers, the number depending upon the scale of each survey or questionnaire.

PROJECTED FINDINGS

The findings from this particular study would be collected and analyzed mostly through responses to emailed questionnaires.

STRENGTHS:

There is a need for exploration and research in this topic.

There would be public interest and support of this idea.

This concept would satisfy the definition and requirements of democracy.

WEAKNESSES:

Some of this project might involve going into unexplored territory so there could be some sense of "feeling around in the dark"

This idea depends on and requires the ethical use of the system and a security system to assure that.

A great deal of research in this area would be time consuming and labor intensive

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

This questionnaires can discover the level of interest of the public and the other groups and individuals contacted on this issue.

The questionnaires to the teachers can determine how this can become an integral part of the education of every citizen. For schools, the information could be contained in the textbooks and curricula and standardized computer tutorials could be developed for school, home, and institutional use.

CONCLUSION

Democracy was discussed by Socrates and written about by Plato in Republic, Aristotle in Politics, Machiavelli in The Prince, Locke in Essay Concerning Human Understanding and Two Treatises of Government, Montesquieu in The Spirit of Laws, Hobbes in Leviathan, Rousseau in The Social Contract, and Thomas Jefferson in his writings. Democracy was first used in Athens, Greece before 500 B.C., where each citizen voted directly on all legislative issues, thereby being a true democracy. It was considered impractical to have a direct democracy before now, primarily because there was no technology to supply it. Now, with computer and Internet technology, there is.

Computer and Internet technology can supply the forum for the voting of citizens to occur and schools and community and governmental organizations can supply the knowledge, information, and training for the implementation and continuing use of a direct democracy in the United States of America.

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http://thomas.loc.gov/   (the proceedings of the U.S. Congress and egovernment development)

http://egov.mit.gov.in/   (egovernment in India)

http://www.abc.net.au/ola/citizen/interdemoc/republic.htm

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http://www.jhu.edu/news_info/news/topic/politics.html   (online voting)

http://lone-eagles.com/democracy.htm (list of related links and sources)

http://www.democracy-online.org/ (another list of related links and sources)

http://egov.mit.gov.in/ (egovernment development in India)

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