IMAGINARY NUMBERS PERSIST IN OUR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

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Lurking within the numbers that recorded Barack Obama's election victory are some numbers that cannot be true. And while the errors are of nowhere near the magnitude to call Obama's victory into question, they are substantial enough to continue to challenge the accuracy of optical scanners and electronic tabulators. We need a fair, accurate, and verifiable count, especially because, in every election, there are some contests that are very close, and even relatively small discrepancies, whether accidental or intentional, could reverse the outcomes of those elections.

Many of the imaginary numbers derive from erroneous data for voter turnout, which is equal to the total number of ballots cast divided by the total number of registered voters, expressed as a percentage. Both the Diebold tabulators and the ES&S optical scanners produce two different sets of numbers for ballots cast. One parameter is called "cards cast," and the other is called "times counted." The lower number may or may not be true. The higher number certainly is not true, because it is derived by counting each page of every absentee ballot, which has the effect of double counting them as ballots cast. This does not necessarily carry over into the vote count for individual candidates or ballot issues, but it does make the vote count unverifiable. If we do not know how many voters there were, then we do not know if the right numbers of votes were counted, and we certainly do not know if they were assigned to the right candidates.

Equally disturbing are the states that report no voter turnout data at all. In Indiana and Missouri, for example, these data are not available until the official results are certified, which is to say: "First we certify the results, and then we release the numbers." Thus the public does not get to scrutinize the accuracy of the results prior to certification, and therefore cannot bring errors to the attention of election officials in a timely manner. In Virginia, the numbers reported as "turnout" are invariably equal to the number of votes counted, which is not the truth, and is of no use at all. There are always some voters who do not make a choice for a given office or issue, and we need to know how many of these there were, in order to assess the accuracy of the count.

This apparent lack of concern for accuracy results in two wild and obvious discrepancies: (1) If the reported number of ballots cast is too high, and the number of votes counted is accurate, there will appear to be too many uncounted votes -- whether "undervotes," ballots cast with no choice for the office, or "overvotes," ballots cast with two or more choices for the office. Ordinarily the percentage of undervotes/overvotes for the office at the top of the ticket will be on the order of 1% or 2%. When the percentage exceeds 10%, or even 20%, the numbers are imaginary. (2) If the reported number of votes counted is too high, and the number of ballots cast is accurate, there will appear to be an overcount. These are known as "phantom votes," because there can be no legitimate explanation when more votes are counted than the number of persons who voted. When there is even one "phantom vote," the numbers are imaginary.

The most disturbing thing about the two different sets of numbers produced by Diebold tabulators and ES&S optical scanners is that it opens a window of opportunity for wholesale election fraud. If the reported number of ballots cast and the reported number of votes counted are both too high, the two numbers, relative to each other, will not appear impossible. The only red flag would be that the voter turnout percentage (ballots cast divided by registered voters) might appear too high when compared to other counties in the state. Only by painstakingly counting the numbers of names in the voter signature book, and the absentee voter lists, and the provisional voter lists, precinct by precinct, can the accuracy of the turnout data be verified, and even then we have no way of knowing if the votes were assigned to the right candidates. If a serious discrepancy were found, and there were no paper ballots, or if the chain of custody for

those ballots could not be verified, there would be no way to correct the count. Imagine how the Internal Revenue Service would respond if you told them that you keep two sets of books.

In Ohio, according to numbers posted on the official website of Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner, and presumably provided by the county Boards of Elections, there were 5,600,022 ballots cast in the 2008 presidential election. Of these, 146,484, or 2.62%, were not counted as votes for President. This would be the combined total of "undervotes" and "overvotes." While these results are incomplete and unofficial, this is a very high number. In the 2004 election, there were 5,722,391 ballots cast, of which 96,760, or 1.69%, were not counted as votes for President.

COMPARISON OF VOTER TURNOUT IN OHIO

	Registered Voters	Ballots Cast	Percent Turnout	Votes Counted	Under / Over	% Under / Over
2008	8,291,877	5,600,022	67.54%	5,453,538	146,484	2.62%
2004	7,974,770	5,722,391	71.76%	5,625,631	96,760	1.69%

According to these unofficial results, there were four counties in Ohio with more than 15% undervotes for President. Either 15.77% of the voters in Wayne County, 17.21% in Highland County, 20.14% in Butler County, and 23.75% in Perry County made no choice for President, or else the machines are not accurate. Closer scrutiny reveals that these are the four counties with the largest percentage turnout (ballots cast divided by registered voters). All four counties reported 80% turnout, or very close to it, compared to 67.54% statewide. This suggests that the erroneous data are the numbers of ballots cast (identified by Brunner as Voter Turnout). For example, there were not really 42,046 voters in Butler County who made no choice for President. It is more likely that there were about 40,000 fewer voters than the number reported. If the clearly erroneous numbers from these four counties are excluded from the statewide totals, there are 86,399 undervotes or overvotes remaining, which amounts to 1.63% of 5,288,930 ballots cast in the other 84 counties in Ohio, a percentage quite in line with the election results from 2004.

OHIO COUNTIES WITH MORE THAN 15% UNDERVOTES

County	Total Voters	Voter Turnout	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over	% Under / Over
Perry	22,897	19,839	86.64%	7,128	7,585	415	15,128	4,711	23.75%
Butler	261,359	208,757	79.87%	62,871	101,537	2,303	166,711	42,046	20.14%
Highland	26,996	22,022	81.58%	6,437	11,390	405	18,232	3,790	17.21%
Wayne	73,344	60,474	82.45%	21,144	28,730	1,062	50,936	9,538	15.77%

By comparison, there are six other counties in Ohio with a reported turnout above 75%. Three of these counties (Coshocton, Putnam and Geauga) have undervote/overvote rates of 1.92%, 1.51% and 1.25%, respectively, quite in line with the statewide average. In Mercer County the percentage is 0.13%, low enough to be questionable. Only 27 of 20,700 voters made no choice for President, or else the machines are not accurate. In Morgan County the percentage is 7.87%, which is much higher than the real statewide average, suggesting that the reported number of ballots cast is too high. There are seven other counties with undervote/overvote rates greater than 4%, or two and one-half times the real statewide average. One of these, Hamilton County, where Cincinnati is located, is the third largest county in the state, where 26,015 more voters were reported than the number of votes counted for President. Either 26,015 voters in Hamilton County made no choice for President, or else the machines are not accurate.

OTHER OHIO COUNTIES WITH 75% TURNOUT

County	Total Voters	Voter Turnout	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over	% Under / Over
Morgan	9,171	7,062	77.00%	2,921	3,387	198	6,506	556	7.87%
Putnam	24,320	18,629	76.60%	5,169	12,855	323	18,347	282	1.51%
Coshocton	22,204	16,978	76.46%	7,580	8,583	489	16,652	326	1.92%
Delaware	119,612	91,102	76.16%	35,849	53,671	954	90,474	628	0.69%
Geauga	66,721	50,370	75.49%	20,692	28,314	735	49,741	629	1.25%
Mercer	27,585	20,700	75.04%	5,636	14,730	307	20,673	27	0.13%

OTHER OHIO COUNTIES WITH MORE THAN 4% UNDERVOTES

County	Total Voters	Voter Turnout	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over	% Under / Over
Hamilton	605,634	426,808	70.47%	208,802	187,862	4,129	400,793	26,015	6.10%
Fayette	16,431	11,988	72.96%	4,199	6,931	183	11,313	675	5.63%
Sandusky	43,377	31,049	71.58%	15,101	13,935	569	29,605	1,444	4.65%
Marion	41,644	28,852	69.28%	12,016	14,840	664	27,520	1,332	4.62%
Vinton	9,036	5,782	63.99%	2,405	2,962	158	5,525	257	4.44%
Monroe	10,217	7,104	69.53%	3,623	2,973	209	6,805	299	4.21%
Holmes	18,166	11,389	62.69%	3,074	7,590	248	10,912	477	4.19%

Also according to the unofficial results, there were three counties in Ohio with "phantom votes" – more votes counted for President than the number of voters who cast ballots. Only an examination of the voter signature books and absentee voter lists could possibly determine if these votes are legitimate. For such an examination the provisional voter lists are irrelevant at present, because, as of this writing, the provisional ballots have yet to be counted. In Allen County, the turnout is reportedly 62.93% even without the 3,154 phantom votes which, if considered, bring the turnout to 67.40%; and there are 1,723 outstanding provisional ballots which, if counted, would bring the turnout to 69.84%. Any of these percentages are plausible. The problem is that we do not know which, if any, of these numbers are real. If the number of votes counted exceeds the number of ballots cast, at least one of those numbers is imaginary.

OHIO COUNTIES WITH PHANTOM VOTES

County	Total Voters	Voter Turnout	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Phantom Votes
Allen	70,652	44,463	62.93%	18,206	28,656	755	47,617	3,154
Henry	20,135	13,667	67.88%	6,163	8,091	273	14,527	860
Summit	379,939	268,661	70.71%	155,105	110,499	3,445	269,049	388

The number of phantom votes is always a minimum, because they are always offset by genuine undervotes or overvotes. In other words, the number of extra votes counted for a given office minus the number of ballots containing no vote for that office will equal the number of phantom votes that appear in the election results. Similarly, the reported number of undervotes

will be artificially low if any phantom votes are in the system. Thus, in a state where phantom votes appear in any of the counties, undervote/overvote percentages close to zero in other counties are suspect. In Ohio there are eight counties where the undervote/overvote percentage was reportedly less than one-quarter of one percent. Less than one out of every four hundred voters made no choice for President, or else the machines are not accurate. In Hardin County, for example, there were zero undervotes or overvotes reported. There were 12,740 voters, and every single one of them made a choice for President. If an examination of the ballots should reveal even one undervote or overvote, this would mean that there are phantom votes in the count.

OHIO COUNTIES WITH LESS THAN 0.25% UNDERVOTES

County	Total Voters	Voter Turnout	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Under/ Over	% Under / Over
Hardin	18,036	12,740	70.64%	4,847	7,553	340	0	0.00%
Carroll	19,697	13,715	69.63%	6,302	6,952	449	12	0.09%
Mercer	27,585	20,700	75.04%	5,636	14,730	307	27	0.13%
Greene	114,059	80,277	70.38%	31,888	47,190	1,064	135	0.17%
Defiance	26,504	18,606	70.20%	8,058	10,138	374	36	0.19%
Hancock	53,911	35,998	66.77%	13,357	21,898	671	72	0.20%
Champaign	26,157	18,471	70.62%	7,161	10,919	351	40	0.22%
Medina	128,636	87,973	68.39%	39,645	46,829	1,305	194	0.22%

Unfortunately, such numbers are nothing new for Ohio. In the 2005 off-year election, the unofficial results showed eight counties with undervote/overvote percentages above 10% for Issue Two, an election reform initiative that was the biggest draw on the ballot. The rate was as high as 23.03% in Pike County. In the same election there were 395 phantom votes in Greene County. In the 2006 mid-term election, the unofficial results showed 16 counties with undervote/overvote percentages above 10% for the United States Senate. The rate was as high as 26.48% in Cuyahoga County, where 148,928 voters allegedly could not decide between Sherrod Brown and Mike DeWine. In the same election there were 1,275 phantom votes in Marion County. All of these counties used Diebold touch screens. There was an attempt to correct these numbers in the official results, but four of these same counties still had undervote/overvote percentages above 10% for the United States Senate, and two new counties appeared on the list. In Stark County, where the official results showed only 4,107 more ballots cast than the unofficial results, Sherrod Brown gained 11,634 votes, and Mike DeWine gained 8,612 votes, which is impossible. In Cuyahoga County, where Diebold touch screens were used, the official results showed better than 100% turnout, more ballots cast than registered voters, in sixty precincts. In Summit County, where ES&S optical scanners were used, the official turnout was 110.16% countywide. These imaginary numbers were posted online by the Boards of Elections, and were certified by then Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell. These numbers are set forth in greater detail in my book, "Witness to a Crime," in a chapter entitled "Auditing the Mid-Term Election."

And it's not just Ohio. In New Mexico, in the 2008 presidential election, at least 23 of 33 counties reported phantom votes. There were 14,744 more votes counted than "actual voters" (to use the terminology of the New Mexico Secretary of State) in 23 counties. And there were only 152 fewer votes counted than "actual voters" in the other ten counties, which suggests that there may also have been phantom votes in these counties that were offset by a greater number of genuine undervotes or overvotes for President.

NEW MEXICO COUNTIES WITH NET PHANTOM VOTES, 2008

County	Eligible Voters	Actual Voters	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Phantom Votes
Bernalillo	393,922	279,278	70.90%	171,357	110,522	3701	285,580	6,302
Cibola	15,489	9,006	58.14%	5,828	3,130	139	9,097	91
Curry	22,305	14,362	64.39%	4,664	9,593	169	14,426	64
Doña Ana	108,747	66,698	61.33%	40,276	28,066	930	69,272	2,574
Eddy	27,908	19,670	70.48%	7,351	12,500	242	20,093	423
Grant	22,188	13,750	61.97%	8,142	5,406	207	13,755	5
Guadalupe	3,554	2,185	61.48%	1,557	620	19	2,196	11
Lea	28,933	18,460	63.80%	5,108	13,347	190	18,645	185
Lincoln	13,779	9,570	69.45%	3,534	6,001	160	9,695	125
Los Alamos	13,186	10,922	82.83%	5,824	5,064	181	11,069	147
Luna	12,357	8,333	67.44%	4,311	3,870	159	8,340	7
McKinley	37,833	22,750	60.13%	16,572	6,382	253	23,207	457
Rio Arriba	25,732	16,439	63.89%	12,703	4,086	151	16,940	501
Roosevelt	10,429	6,683	64.08%	2,303	4,311	106	6,720	37
San Juan	65,376	45,759	69.99%	18,028	27,869	614	46,511	752
San Miguel	21,646	12,736	58.84%	10,320	2,478	143	12,941	205
Sandoval	79,423	57,895	72.89%	32,669	25,193	768	58,630	735
Santa Fe	97,704	70,655	72.32%	55,566	15,808	849	72,223	1,568
Socorro	12,533	7,871	62.80%	4,696	3,032	167	7,895	24
Taos	24,828	16,468	66.33%	13,816	2,866	204	16,886	418
Torrance	9,656	6,910	71.56%	3,087	3,735	119	6,941	31
Union	2,433	1,736	71.35%	492	1,227	23	1,742	6
Valencia	40,605	28,823	70.98%	15,366	13,136	397	28,899	76

NEW MEXICO COUNTIES WITH NET UNDERVOTES, 2008

County	Eligible Voters	Actual Voters	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over
Catron	2,912	2,113	72.56%	664	1398	50	2,112	1
Chaves	34,439	22,136	64.28%	8,197	13,651	264	22,112	24
Colfax	9,212	6,391	69.38%	3,490	2,805	89	6,384	7
De Baca	1,467	1,056	71.98%	359	675	9	1,043	13
Harding	778	629	80.85%	260	358	8	626	3
Hidalgo	2,885	1,973	68.39%	993	936	22	1,951	22
Mora	4,067	2,772	68.16%	2,169	569	22	2,760	12
Otero	32,659	21,827	66.83%	8,610	12,806	350	21,766	61
Quay	6,125	4,005	65.39%	1,547	2,367	82	3,996	9
Sierra	7,974	5,502	69.00%	2,352	3,017	116	5,485	17

Unfortunately, such numbers are nothing new for New Mexico. There were phantom votes reported in New Mexico in the 2004 presidential election also. According to a "Summary Report on New Mexico State Data," by Ellen Theisen and Warren Stewart, who examined election results for the entire State of New Mexico at the precinct level, there were a total of 2,087 phantom votes reported in 250 of 1,429 precincts. This amounted to 34.85% of the official margin of 5,988 votes separating Bush and Kerry. Moreover, the real number of undervotes or overvotes for President must have been greater than was reported at the state level, where there were 775,301 ballots cast, and 756,304 votes counted for President, which leaves 18,997 undervotes (or overvotes). Because phantom votes appearing at the precinct level cancel out undervotes reported in other precincts, the real number of undervotes for President must have been 2,087 higher, or 21,084.

NEW MEXICO COUNTIES WITH PHANTOM VOTES, 2004

County	Eligible Voters	Actual Voters	Percent Turnout	John Kerry	George Bush	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over	% Under / Over	Phantom Votes
Bernalillo	356,536	262,617	73.66%	132,252	121,454	3,105	256,811	7,045	2.68%	1,239
Chaves	33,520	22,156	66.10%	6,726	14,773	206	21,705	485	2.19%	34
Cibola	14,270	8,003	56.08%	3,913	3,477	97	7,487	528	6.60%	12
Dona Ana	94,345	63,777	67.60%	31,762	29,548	650	61,960	2,075	3.25%	258
Grant	21,100	13,751	65.17%	7,095	6,135	162	13,392	458	3.33%	99
Lea	29,333	18,317	62.45%	3,646	14,430	105	18,181	149	0.81%	13
McKinley	34,934	22,223	63.61%	13,051	7,351	221	20,623	1,664	7.49%	64
Otero	31,052	21,326	68.68%	6,433	14,066	265	20,764	589	2.76%	27
Quay	6,198	4,129	66.62%	1,422	2,661	34	4,117	18	0.44%	6
Rio Arriba	24,839	15,613	62.86%	9,753	5,149	97	14,999	661	4.23%	47
San Juan	63,340	45,938	72.53%	14,843	29,525	638	45,006	959	2.09%	27
Sandoval	63,951	45,863	71.72%	21,421	22,628	492	44,541	1,323	2.88%	1
Santa Fe	94,634	67,782	71.63%	47,074	18,466	660	66,200	1,780	2.63%	198
Taos	23,080	15,482	67.08%	10,987	3,666	182	14,835	702	4.53%	55
Valencia	37,398	26,155	69.94%	11,270	14,474	268	26,012	150	0.57%	7

In 2004, the great majority of phantom votes (1,649 of 2,087, or 79.01%) were reported in precincts which used optical scanners, the same technology now in use in New Mexico on a statewide basis. Small wonder that phantom votes now exceed undervotes statewide. If the 2008 results from New Mexico were examined at the precinct level, one would surely find the numbers of both phantom votes and undervotes to be even higher than 14,744 and 152, respectively, with the additional numbers canceling each other out. Only an examination of the voter signature books, the absentee voter lists, and the provisional voter lists could possibly reveal how many of the 829,938 votes counted were "actual voters," and how many were not actual voters. And unless there are paper ballots to be examined, or the phantom votes are due to canvassing errors, the numbers assigned to the candidates cannot be corrected, because no one can know which votes were from "actual voters" and which were not.

One is reminded of the famous quotation from Lew Wallace, Territorial Governor of New Mexico from 1878 to 1881: "All calculations based on experience elsewhere, fail in New Mexico."

By examination at the precinct level, Theisen and Stewart were able to show that, in the 2004 presidential election, phantom votes and undervotes were reported in the same counties. Even these numbers are minimums, because even at the precinct level, phantom votes and undervotes cancel each other out. Even so, there were eight counties in New Mexico where undervote rates above 4% were reported in 2004. Four (Cibola, McKinley, Rio Arriba and Taos), which also had phantom votes, are shown in the table above; and four (Colfax, De Baca, Mora and San Miguel), which did not have phantom votes, are shown in the table below. Seven of these counties (all except De Baca, by far the smallest of the eight) are located in northern New Mexico, and all seven have majority Hispanic or Native American populations.

NEW MEXICO COUNTIES WITH NO PHANTOM VOTES, 2004

County	Eligible Voters	Actual Voters	Percent Turnout	John Kerry	George Bush	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over	% Under / Over
Catron	2,766	2,006	72.52%	551	1,427	15	1,993	13	0.65%
Colfax	8,549	6,259	73.21%	2,824	3,082	62	5,968	291	4.65%
Curry	21,554	14,323	66.45%	3,541	10,649	96	14,286	37	0.26%
De Baca	1,462	1,084	74.15%	281	706	6	993	91	8.39%
Eddy	27,926	20,340	72.84%	6,880	13,268	122	20,270	70	0.34%
Guadalupe	3,720	2,354	63.28%	1,340	914	13	2,267	87	3.70%
Harding	785	649	82.68%	259	380	5	644	5	0.77%
Hidalgo	2,968	1,975	66.54%	861	1,081	22	1,964	11	0.56%
Lincoln	14,100	9,273	65.77%	2,822	6,070	122	9,014	259	2.79%
Los Alamos	13,633	11,232	82.39%	5,206	5,810	181	11,197	35	0.31%
Luna	11,085	7,625	68.79%	3,340	4,164	89	7,593	32	0.42%
Mora	4,413	3,001	68.00%	1,876	928	22	2,826	175	5.83%
Roosevelt	11,071	7,163	64.70%	2,082	4,997	65	7,144	19	0.27%
San Miguel	21,081	12,832	60.87%	8,683	3,313	120	12,116	716	5.58%
Sierra	7,258	5,286	72.83%	1,926	3,162	69	5,157	129	2.44%
Socorro	12,445	8,158	65.55%	4,025	3,696	130	7,851	307	3.76%
Torrance	9,503	6,715	70.66%	2,386	4,026	95	6,507	208	3.10%
Union	2,523	1,894	75.07%	411	1,454	16	1,881	13	0.69%

What these numbers really mean is that in some precincts there were more phantom votes than undervotes, while in other precincts there were more undervotes than phantom votes. The only way to tell how many phantom votes have entered the system and corrupted the count is to examine all the ballots, one by one, and determine how many undervotes there really were. Then, by simple subtraction, one can calculate how many phantom votes there must have been in order for the numbers to turn out the way they did. If there are no paper ballots, there is no way to correct the corrupted count. If we really care about the accuracy of the vote count, we might as well go to hand counted paper ballots in the first place and dispense with the machines.

Because phantom votes and undervotes cancel each other out, it is possible to rig the machines so that a portion of "actual voters" have their votes disappear, thus opening a window of

opportunity to replace them with phantom votes for the desired candidate. So long as the number of phantom votes does not exceed the number of undervotes, no one will be the wiser.

Theisen and Stewart showed that in the 2004 presidential election, statewide, although only 382,941 (49.39%) of 775,301 votes were cast at the polls on Election Day, these accounted for 17,095 (81.08%) of the undervotes. The rate was 4.46% (17,095 of 382,941) for Election Day voting, compared to 0.70% (1,664 of 236,340) for early voting, and 1.49% (2,325 of 156,020) for absentee voting. Also, the undervote rates were far higher with push-button electronic voting machines 3.67% (17,600 of 479,761), the major culprits being Sequoia Advantage at 5.28% (5,703 of 108,044), and Danaher Shouptronic at 4.89% (10,409 of 212,965), than with optical scanners, on which the undervote rate was 1.18% (3,484 of 295,540). An equivalent rate of 1.18% on electronic voting machines would have resulted in 5,660 undervotes, not 17,600, which raised the disturbing possibility that 12,000 votes cast on electronic voting machines may have been lost to machine malfunctions. This was twice the official margin of 5,988 votes separating Bush and Kerry.

New Mexico's undervote rate of 2.72% (21,084 of 775,301) was the highest in the nation, and Stewart confirmed that the electronic voting machines were programmed so that you could erase your own vote. If you pushed the button for "straight party voting," this would activate the choices for all the candidates in that party. If you then pushed a button for a specific candidate (for example, John Kerry), you were "deselecting," or erasing, your own vote. All 33 counties in New Mexico used optical scanners for absentee voting, but 21 counties used electronic voting machines at the polls, and all had striking differentials in their undervote rates. In Taos County, which voted 70.97% for Kerry, the undervote rate was 0.61% (12 of 1,968) for absentee voting, but 9.55% (672 of 7,036) at the polls. In San Miguel County, which voted 67.67% for Kerry, the undervote rate was 0.78% (13 of 1,657) for absentee voting, but 10.06% (686 of 6,816) at the polls.

This brings us back to the 2008 election in Ohio. Those four counties with extremely high undervote rates – Perry County (23.75%), Butler County (20.14%), Highland County (17.21%), and Wayne County (15.77%) – all used electronic voting machines, not optical scanners. While their anomalously high turnout percentages, ranging from 79.87% to 86.64%, suggest that the reported numbers of ballots cast are too high, we do not know this, and there are no actual ballots to examine in order to find out. Surely there were not 42,046 voters in Butler County, Ohio who made no choice for President. One hopes that these were not "actual voters" whose votes were lost on Premier (a.k.a. Diebold) touch screens.

Not all states have such widespread problems as in Ohio and New Mexico. Even in Florida, only three counties reported imaginary numbers. Duval County reported 615 phantom votes; Glades County reported 935 undervotes/overvotes (21.78% of ballots cast); and Union County reported that all 5,293 voters made a choice for President. In the other 64 counties there were, unofficially, 62,679 undervotes or overvotes, or 0.78% of 8,029,011 ballots cast.

FLORIDA COUNTIES WITH IMAGINARY NUMBERS

County	Registered Voters	Voter Turnout	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over
Duval	536,588	415,146	77.4%	202,618	210,537	2,606	415,761	- 615
Glades	6,584	4,293	65.2%	1,381	1,938	39	3,358	935
Union	7,273	5,293	72.8%	1,300	3,940	53	5,293	0

In North Carolina, only one county reported imaginary numbers. Camden County reported 147 phantom votes. In the other 99 counties there were, unofficially, 43,576 undervotes or overvotes, or 1.00% of 4,349,175 ballots cast.

NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY WITH IMAGINARY NUMBERS

County	Registered Voters	Voter Turnout	Percent Turnout	Barack Obama	John McCain	Others	Total Votes	Under / Over
Camden	7,168	4,877	68.04%	1,646	3,291	87	5,024	- 147

In Nevada, no imaginary numbers were reported, whether phantom votes or inordinate percentages of undervotes. In Nevada, voters have the option of choosing "None of these Candidates." Thus, we know how many undervotes are intentional, and how many might be inadvertent, which serves as useful baseline data. Statewide, out of 967,346 ballots cast, 6,251 (0.65%) voted for "None of these Candidates," and another 2,202 (0.23%) made no choice at all. The highest percentages for "None of these Candidates," ranging from 1.00% to 2.71%, were in eleven sparsely populated counties with only 49,747 ballots cast among them. The highest percentage for no choice at all was in Churchill County, with 91 (0.85%) of 10,695 ballots cast. These numbers confirm the inaccuracy of much higher reported rates of undervotes.

The quest for election integrity, when properly considered, is not a partisan endeavor. We must not be lulled into complacency because a Democrat has been elected President. It is still true that only a close election can be stolen, and the 2008 election was not close enough to steal.

Electronic voting machines and optical scanners have opened a window of opportunity for election fraud on a scale that has never before existed in America. People may be weary of hearing about it, but the problem has not gone away. It is a mistake to focus exclusively on the old-fashioned methods of voter suppression and voter disenfranchisement, even though they are real, because electronic voting is disenfranchising all of us, in a silent way, so that we don't even know it is happening. This is consumer fraud. The defective products need to be recalled.

I would rather have paper ballots, marked by voters, counted by dedicated poll workers with white hair, bleary eyes, too much coffee, and too little sleep, who might have to count the ballots twice in order to reconcile an error of one or two, than have electronic tabulators count 14,744 extra votes in New Mexico, or report that 42,046 voters in Butler County, Ohio made no choice for President. I would rather wait until the next day to find out who really won the election, and know that the candidate the people voted for is the one installed in office. Electronic tabulation is driven by an inordinate need for instant gratification, reflecting not the desire of the people, but the compulsion of the media to get the story first, whether or not they get the story straight. Responsible journalism does not do this, especially when our democracy is at stake.

Our elections go forth as if the numbers are correct, and no one is checking to see if they really are. We trust that the machines are accurate, but there is no basis for that trust. Our leaders don't want us to know there is a problem, because we might get upset if we found out about it. When we do examine the numbers, we find that our elections are not verifiable. The entire process needs scrutiny. It is up to the people to do it. This means you. I have devoted four years to investigating election fraud. I have done my part. I have taught you how to fish. Now go fish.

Richard Hayes Phillips, Ph.D., is the author of "Witness to a Crime: A Citizens' Audit of an American Election." This is the document of record for the fraudulent 2004 presidential election in Ohio, the state that decided the election. It is based upon 30,000 photographs of actual forensic evidence – ballots, poll books, voter signature books, ballot accounting charts, and other election records. The book is 448 pages, hardcover, and comes with a CD containing more than 1,200 of these photographs. "Witness to a Crime" is not sold in stores. Autographed copies are still available by mail order or through PayPal at http://www.witnesstoacrime.com