

THE POLITICAL SCIENCE
GAME OF GOLF

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Getting a small ball to enter a small hole is a preoccupation of a significant proportion of humanity. Somewhat arbitrarily, we may refer to this preoccupation as the game of "golf."

Physicists have attacked the general problem of getting a given object into a given position. They would have us believe that the problem is solved by discovering the proper amount of force to move the mass the given distance, and then applying that amount of force in the proper direction. However, this solution is clearly inadequate. Being a preoccupation of humanity (or a significant proportion thereof), the problem is essentially behavioral and therefore subject to the more sophisticated methods of the behavioral sciences. Many of these sophisticated methods are applicable to the ball-in-hole problem and the following applications are not intended to exhaust the problem.

1. The Aristotelian Method. Imbue the ball with falling virtue. Alternatively, imbue the hole with a balling essence.
2. The Hegelian Method. The closed ball is the antithesis of the open hole. Apply a certain amount of Teutonic logic and they will synthesize.
- 2a. The Marxist Variation. The ball represents the class of balls. The hole represents the class of holes. History represents class struggles. Apply Marxist logic and after a period of conflict they will synthesize happily ever after.
- 2b. The Leninist Variation. **If** the classes do not cooperate as in (2a), smash them together and force them to synthesize happily ever after.

(Compare with the Rostow and Westmoreland Methods below.)

3. The Lane Method. This is a variation on the Aristotelian method. Procure Robert Lane. Hypnotize him, and imbue him with desire to jump into the hole. Then chain him beside the ball with instructions to converse with the ball. After a few hours of conversation, the ball will have absorbed Lane's desires sufficiently that it will jump into the hole.

Lane will then write a book on "Ball in Hole Ideology."

3a. The Apter Variation. In this variation Lane, and through him the ball, is imbued with a consummatory desire to jump into the hole.

4. The Russett Computer Method. Put the ball into a computer. The computer will sputter and gulp and then eject the ball. The ball will look very much the way it did before it entered the computer. Pick up the ball and put it in the hole.

5. The Russett Factor Analysis Method. Put the ball into a computer and request a factor analysis. The computer will sputter and gulp and eject fine sprays of rubber, thread, and plastic. Accumulate these in a dustpan and dump them into the hole.

6. The Braybrooke and Lindblom Method. Put a thousand children on the golf course. Arm them with feathers and instruct them to bat at things with the feathers. All other things being equal, and the golf course being bounded, large numbers of children are likely to bat at the ball with their feathers, and the ball will move incrementally. Sooner or later, all things still being equal, the ball will fall synoptically into the hole.

Note. If the children get hungry before the ball drops home, feed them Wheaties. This is called the cereal remedial method.

7. The Bentley-Truman Method. Divide Braybrooke and Lindblom children into groups. Then proceed as in the Braybrook and Lindblom Method.
8. The Huntington Method. This is a modernized version of the Braybrooke and Lindblom Method. Place the children in a circle around the ball. Take the children on the opposite side of the hole from the ball and put them in jail. Let the others play as above. The secret of this method is the subtle balance between institutionalization and participation.
9. The Merton Latent Function Method. Write a treatise on why the ball will fall into the hole. Then, while everyone else is reading the treatise, kick the ball into the hole.
10. The Lewis Coser Method. Kick the ball away from the hole. If you do this often enough, you will eventually kick the ball into the hole from the opposite direction.
11. The Schelling Method. Place two balls on different parts of the golf course. By mysterious methods known only to Tom Schelling, both balls will seek out the same hole.
12. The Schelling Commitment Model. Construct a gallows. Tie a noose around your neck and fasten the trap door of the gallows in such a way that it will drop if the ball does not go into the hole. Point out to the ball that disaster will follow if it does not jump into the hole. You will not live to see the day when this method does not work.
13. The Walt Rostow Method. If the ball does not jump into the hole, smash it with a sledge hammer. This method does not necessarily get the ball into the hole, but it gets Walt Rostow a reputation as a real ball buster.
14. The Nixon Vietnam Method. Pick up your ball and go home. This does not necessarily get the ball into the hole either, but it allows you to stand Pat.

15. The Westmoreland Method . Attack the ball with a flight of B-52s. Although this will destroy both the ball and the hole, you will have saved the ball from the humiliation of not getting into the hole.
16. The Herman Kahn Intuitive Method. Flail at the ball with a club that nobody else would have considered using. This will not always get the ball into the hole, but **it** sure keeps the crowd on **its** toes.
17. The Herman Kahn Alternative Futures Method. Project Alternative Futures for the ball. At least one of those futures will have the ball fall into the hole. Choose that future.
18. The Chairman Mao Method. Read and study the Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung. Wave the little red book . March in a parade of workers and peasants. Distinguish between the two lines. Smash the anti-party black gang. Grasp revolution and promote production. Support the army and love the people. Then put the ball in the hole.

This method combines the methodological sophistication of the Russett Method with the mass base of Braybrooke and Lindblom Method .
19. The de Gaulle Method. Pick up a club. Brain your partner . Then put the ball in a different hole .
20. The Kissinger Method. A variation of the de Gaulle Method. Using this method you can brain as many as a dozen of your partners simultaneously. Some players complain later, however, of serious inability to get the ball into the hole.
21. The State Department Method . Go to the opera . This will increase your empathy for the cultural context within which decisions must be taken. Write a memo demonstrating your superior empathy. If the ball is **still** not in the hole, your superior can write a memo to Kissinger or employ the University Method or the Think Tank Method .

22. The Vance Method. Deny that the ball-in-hole problem exists. While this does not get the ball into the hole, many anxious people find it reassuring.
23. The Shulman Method. Same as the Vance method. With footnotes.
24. The Brzezinski Method. Speak loudly and carry a small stick. Neither the loud voice nor the small stick will get the ball into the hole, but right wing anxious people find both reassuring.
25. The Carter Method. Use the Vance method. Then the Brzezinski method. Then the Vance method. Then the Brzezinski method. However, carefully avoid doing anything that would actually move the ball, because that might offend specific groups of voters. After four years with this method, you will successfully annoy all the voters. They will stuff the ball down your throat and stuff you down the hole. Note analogy to the Dubcek method below.
26. The Reagan Method. Same as the Brzezinski method. Without footnotes. (Preferably used on a golf course without trees, which Reagan believes cause pollution.)
27. The University Consultant Method. Give a grant to a university professor. He will count the number of pock marks on the ball, then write a final report emphasizing the need for increased empathy for the cultural context within which decisions are made. This may not get the ball into the hole but will justify an increase in your research budget.
28. The Think Tank Method. Give half your research budget to a think tank. The think tank will measure the depth of the hole, applaud itself for having increased your empathy for the context within which decisions must be made, and recommend further research. For an extra consideration, the

think tank will also employ a university consultant .The think tank method may not get the ball into the hole, but it will justify a very large increase in your research budget .

29. The Delphi Method. Collect a dozen golf nuts and have them flail each other with clubs for a week. Announce the consequences. Leave the ball where it was. This method does not get the ball into the hole, but it may get you a Ford Foundation grant.
30. The Aleksandr Dubcek Method . Throw the ball at your boss. He will then stuff the ball down your throat and stuff you down the hole.

If any reader of this paper has an antidote for the Aleksandr Dubcek Method, the author of this paper would appreciate hearing about it as soon as possible.