

Sitting politicians have shown their unwillingness to remove from public office a psychopath like Trump, and to prevent him from running for office again. All politicians should undergo a mandatory health check.

How to Get Rid of Psychopaths in Politics - And of Others Medically Unfit

By Jacques Chaoulli, MD MA Ed

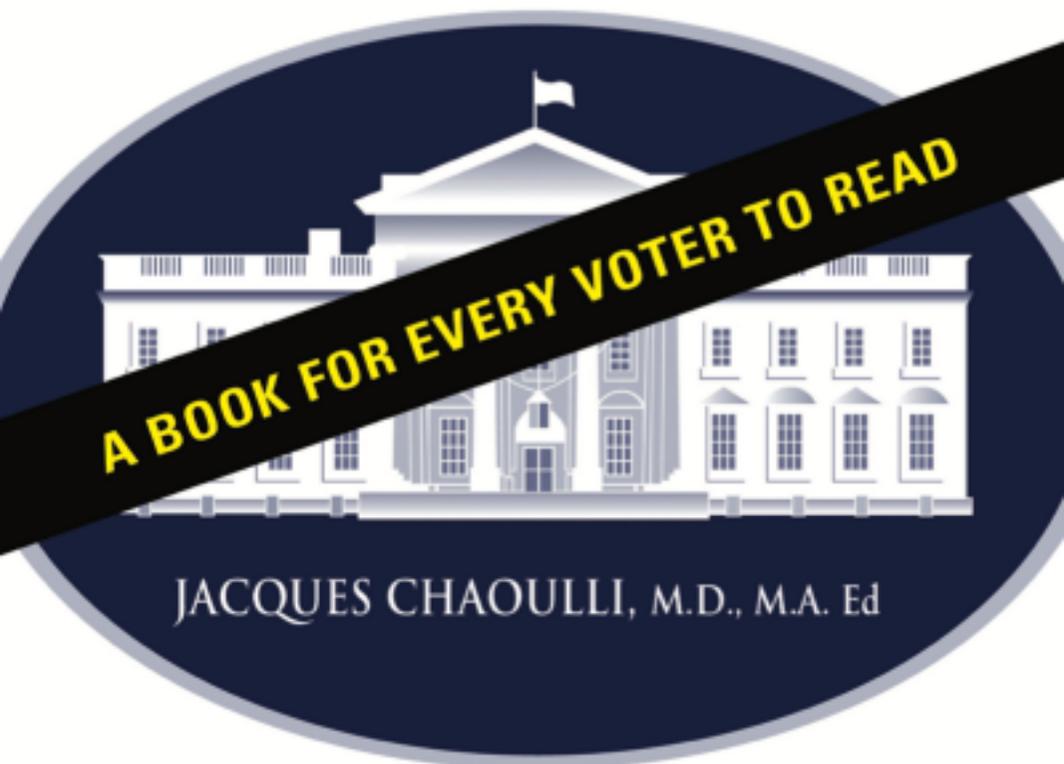
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HOW TO GET RID OF PSYCHOPATHS IN POLITICS

AND OF OTHERS MEDICALLY UNFIT



A BOOK FOR EVERY VOTER TO READ

JACQUES CHAOULLI, M.D., M.A. Ed

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Preface

In the United States and abroad, violent domestic extremism is on the rise. Current political systems fail to properly oppose that trend. Free elections are vital, and yet more and more voters bring to power psychopaths like Donald Trump, who incited an assault on the US Capitol. It is common for a politician psychopath to act as an autocrat. In 2016 and again in 2020, an unprecedented number of Americans voted for him, well aware of his disturbed personality. Many of those voters felt they did not have any other valid choice.

Sitting politicians, looking out for their own interests, have shown their unwillingness to remove from public office such a psychopath or an inapt politician because of any physical or other mental illness, and to prevent him/her from running for election again. This essay proposes a step-back analysis and a remedy, to be of interest not only for citizens of the United States but also for those in other countries holding free elections. It reconciles political philosophy and neuroscience, reaffirms that human nature is compatible with good governing, and provides a way forward through necessary constitutional amendments.

All elected officials and individuals willing to run for office would have to undergo a compulsory medical examination conducted by a panel of independent medical experts appointed by the Judiciary, following specific criteria including the procedure to be followed and safeguards for avoiding political bias, all to be outlined in a constitutional amendment. Those refusing to comply to the medical examination, as well as those found unfit, would be removed from office or banned from running for office.

The Constitution would also be amended to allow citizens' initiatives to directly amend the Constitution. For such amendments to be adopted, citizens, whatever their political affiliation, would have to regroup and require from their elected representatives the adoption of the constitutional amendments proposed in this essay. Reluctant politicians—informed about the opinion of a majority of the population in favor of such amendments—would know that they might not be elected or re-elected at the next election.

Introduction

On November 26, 2016, before Donald Trump entered the Oval Office, high-profile American psychiatrists sent an open letter to President Barack Obama¹, strongly recommending Trump have a deep neuropsychiatric examination before he would enter into office. In 2017, a year after President Trump got to power, a 27-person panel of mental health experts, led by psychiatrist Bandy Lee from Yale School of Medicine, publicly called to remove Trump from office because of his “dangerous mental illness, his tendency to distort reality, to fit his personal myth of greatness and attack those who challenge him.”² The most widely used rating scale designed to measure traits of psychopathic personality disorder, the Hare Psychopathy Checklist, provides reliable ratings of psychopathy, based on comprehensive file information alone. It includes 20 items rated on the basis of the person’s lifetime functioning and not solely on the basis of the person’s present state (See Appendix 1).

¹ Greene, Richard. “Is Donald Trump Mentally Ill?” *The Huffington Post*, December 17, 2016. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/is-donald-trump-mentally_b_13693174

² Lee, Brandy, MD. *The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump: 27 Psychiatrists and Mental Health Experts Assess a President*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2017.

On January 10, 2021, a survey conducted after the US Capitol insurrection showed that 56% of Americans thought the sitting commander in chief should be removed from office before the official transfer of power, and 67% of Americans laid blame squarely at Trump's feet for the riot.³ On February 8, 2021, another survey showed that 58% of voters said Trump should be banned from ever seeking office again.⁴ But to no avail.

For ages, politicians succeeded in avoiding scrutiny of their own health by independent medical experts, particularly regarding their mental health. To their advantage, they have designed the political system for them to be the sole decision-makers on the laws and on the Constitution, as well as whether their mental health condition should allow them to serve in office, or not. They haven't been challenged yet by the people on this issue. The time has come.

³ Karson, Kendall. "After the Capitol siege, a majority of Americans say Trump should be removed from office before term ends: Poll." *ABC News*, January 10, 2021. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/capitol-siege-majority-americans-trump-removed-office-term/story?id=75154331>

⁴ Yokley, Eli. "Majority of Voters Continue to Support Trump's Conviction Ahead of Senate Trial." *Morning Consult*, February 8, 2021. <https://morningconsult.com/2021/02/08/trump-senate-trial-impeachment-polling/>

In that regard, there is a tasty anecdote to start with. In 1965, during the hearings about presidential inability, the issue of compulsory medical examination of the president had been raised when Willard S. Curtin, Representative from Pennsylvania, suggested that, under some circumstances, a doctor should go in and forcefully examine the president, and that a commission should have the power to compel an examination. Basic Lee Whitener, representative from North Carolina, challenged Representative Curtin on what would happen then if a president, as commander in chief, would order to put the army in front of the White House and stop any doctor trying to step in. Curtin replied that under such circumstances, there would obviously be no need to call a doctor to examine him, because it would be obvious on the face of it that the president was mentally ill.⁵

In 2017, after a 27-member mental health expert panel had called on the dangerousness of the mental health condition of President Trump, the White House's medical doctor declared him, in 2018, physically fit for the office. He added that the president had not been examined by a psychiatrist. At that time, President Trump publicly characterized himself as a "very stable genius." One of

⁵ Congressional Materials, Twenty-Fifth Amendment Archive, February 9, 1965. Presidential Inability: Hearings Before the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 89th Congress, pp. 140 and 143.

the negative consequences of having a psychopath serving as president is to attract citizens previously stable mentally and having them embrace the same type of delusion proposed by such a charismatic leader. That is also a public health issue. On January 8, 2021, two days after the riot on the Capitol incited by President Trump, the speaker of the House of Representatives qualified Trump as unhinged and dangerous, and called upon Vice President Mike Pence to start the process under the 25th Amendment for the president to be immediately removed from office. The vice president refused.

Physical illnesses can also impair the ability to assume the powers and duties of office. The remedy for such circumstances, along with mental illnesses, will be dealt with under the chapter "The Way Forward." Currently, many Americans are concerned about the declining mental faculties of President Joe Biden. In 2019, at the time he announced his candidacy for the presidency, Joe Biden declared publicly, "I am a gaffe machine." He actually has a well-documented history of confusing or downright embarrassing gaffes and misstatements. For example, at a campaign stop in Missouri in 2008, then vice president nominee Biden exhorted State Senator Chuck Graham to stand up for a round of applause. Graham was a paraplegic after a car accident he had at age 16. "Stand up, Chuck, let them see you," Biden said. In 2010, Biden got confused over which of then Irish prime

minister's parents had passed away. He didn't act that way by malice, only as a result of episodes of loss of memory.⁶

In 2019, the *Washington Examiner* reported that Dr. David Scheiner, who had treated Barack Obama for 22 years before he became president, said he would like to get the results of an MRI or CT scan that was not included in Biden's medical record. Biden had two brain aneurysms in 1988, the first of which almost killed him.

The Harvard Medical School reported that a silent stroke can have a significant and lasting impact on memory, that silent strokes are actually far more common than strokes with symptoms, that for every person who has a stroke with symptoms, about 14 others have a silent stroke. Researchers estimate that more than one-third of people over age 70 have had a silent stroke. At the time of this writing, Biden is 78 years old. An MRI of the brain (or a CT angiogram of the cerebral blood vessels) might reveal small spots of damage to areas of the brain as a result of silent strokes that can cause cognitive impairment. Over time, the damage from silent strokes can accumulate, leading to more and more memory problems.

⁶ 'I am a gaffe machine': a history of Joe Biden's biggest blunders', *The Guardian*, April 25, 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/apr/25/joe-biden-2020-public-gaffes-mistakes-history>

In 2020, Biden's personal medical doctor issued a statement concluding that front-runner Biden was a "healthy, vigorous, 77-year-old that is fit to be president." Historically, presidential candidates have relied on letters from their personal doctors to disclose details of their health to the public. There have been no compulsory medical examinations to be conducted by independent medical experts.

In 2020, a journalist asked Biden to explain his refusal to take a cognitive ability test. Biden replied, "I am very willing to let the American public judge my physical as well as my mental fitness." With all due respect, such a statement from Biden is misleading because voters are not physicians nor mental health experts. Furthermore, it is paradoxical to have the 1973 Goldwater rule, endorsed by the American Psychiatric Association but never enforced, preventing a psychiatrist to make a determination without a face-to-face examination, and at the same time to have a candidate to the presidency calling on the public, not even medical experts, to make such a determination remotely.

Obviously, there is something wrong with the system.

The impeachment clause in the Constitution is silent on a situation where a president impeached by the House of

Representatives would appear at the Senate for trial after the end of his/her mandate. Senators acquitted Trump in 2021 on the ground of the unconstitutionality of a Senate trial since he was a private citizen at that time. Still, they held Trump responsible for the riot at the Capitol. Although Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) voted to acquit Trump from the accusation of incitement of insurrection at the Capitol, he said, on that same day, that Trump's actions preceding the riot were "a disgraceful dereliction of duty."⁷

American people had been left alone by their elected representatives. For President Obama to be allowed to follow recommendations issued by psychiatrists in 2016, for the call for the removal of President Trump from office by 27 mental health experts, and for the will of the people to be respected, the US Constitution would first have to be amended.

In line with the Goldwater rule mentioned earlier, the American Psychiatric Association has tried to prevent psychiatrists from commenting on the mental health of

⁷ Fox, Lauren and Jeremy Herb. "Even after acquittal, GOP senators and Democratic managers hope rebuke of Trump has lasting impact." *CNN*, February 14, 2021. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/02/13/politics/trump-acquittal-gop-rebuke-lasting-impact/index.html>

elected officials without personally conducting an examination. That rule is outdated and even unethical for preventing psychiatrists from pointing out behaviors that raise questions about a government official's mental state. In fact, for decades the State Department and other federal agencies have asked psychiatrists to offer their views on the psychological state of foreign leaders, evidence that government officials believe it is possible to make informed inferences about mental states based on public behavior and speech. To criticize such an analysis on the grounds of not having personally met the concerned high-profile public servant would amount to not making any psychological analysis based on documents publicly available on individuals like Mussolini or Hitler. A large number of psychologists and psychiatrists rightfully argued a "duty to warn" the public about what they saw as Trump's narcissism, impulsivity, poor attention span, paranoia, and other traits that, they believed, impaired his ability to lead.

In any event, the remedy proposed in this essay includes a compulsory physical and mental examination by independent medical experts, as it was envisioned by some Framers of the 25th Amendment and shown below.

One of the issues raised by Trump's incitement of insurrection at the US Capitol in 2021 is that a president who lost reelection and acted as an autocrat can get away

with a premeditated violent coup attempt in a bid to stay in power, stay influential in politics, and seek re-election four years later. Such an impunity is an incentive for more psychopaths to enter into politics.⁸ That event should act as a wake-up call, illustrating the danger of a Constitution that allows psychopaths to enter and remain in politics.

Sitting politicians knew at least since 2017 about Trump's dangerous psychopathy. Still, they acquitted him twice during impeachment trials, showing their unwillingness to remove from office a psychopath and to prevent him from running for election again. As a result, people can't count on the current US Constitution to safeguard their security and well-being. As a remedy, the people need the US Constitution to be amended. This is the very purpose of this essay.

Trump's mental illness is not an isolated event in US history. Yale Law School reported that between 1776 and 1974, 18 (49% of) US presidents had a diagnosable psychiatric disorder, including 10 (27%) for whom that

⁸ Collinson, Stephen. "Trump's trial set to rock Washington and echo through the ages." *CNN*, February 9, 2021. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/02/09/politics/donald-trump-impeachment-trial/index.html>

disorder was evident during their time in presidential office and probably impaired job performance.⁹

After the presidency of Richard Nixon ended in 1973, the mental illnesses he had suffered and the danger it had posed to the nation's security became public knowledge. The 25th Amendment, adopted a few years earlier, in 1967, and which will be further analyzed in this essay, was supposed to bring a remedy against unhinged leaders, but to no avail. George Carver, the CIA's top Vietnam specialist at the time, recalls that Nixon became incensed and ordered a tactical nuclear strike. Kissinger got on the phone with the Joint Chiefs and they agreed not to do anything until Nixon sobered up in the morning. Then, along with the highest military officers, Kissinger established an informal policy refusing to implement any order from the president for the use of nuclear weapons unless there would be unanimous consent to such an order. In 1973, Nixon was described as a deeply paranoid leader, hinting that the « totalitarian » methods employed by members of the administration stemmed from deep-seated psychological disturbances¹⁰

⁹ Davidson, Jonathon, et al. "Mental Illness in U.S. Presidents between 1776 and 1974: A Review of Biographical Sources." *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 194(1):47-51, January 2006.

¹⁰ Summers, Anthony. *The Arrogance of Power: The Secret World of Richard Nixon*. New York: Penguin Books, 2001.

The New York Times reported that Dr. Arnold Hutschnecker was a psychiatrist whom Nixon began seeing in the early 1950s. He visited the president twice at the White House. He was the only mental health professional known to have treated a president.¹¹ Hutschnecker was well aware of the dangers posed by unhinged leaders. Until 1935, he lived in Germany. He fled from the Nazis to seek refuge in the United States. About his new country of adoption, he suggested that the governed had to strive for greater participation in government and resist the shifting of power away from the people to those who govern. He suggested that candidates, before being allowed to enter a political race, ought to be cleared by a board of physicians and psychiatrists to make certain that they are healthy in mind and body.¹² He thought such an innovation would be a rational step forward in view of our struggle for world peace, freedom, and respect for the dignity of the individual and his rights, that it would foster the “pursuit of

¹¹ Goode, Erica. “Arnold Hutschnecker, 102, Therapist to Nixon.” *The New York Times*, January 3, 2001. <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/01/03/us/arnold-hutschnecker-102-therapist-to-nixon.html>

¹² Hutschnecker, Arnold A. “A Suggestion: Psychiatry at High Levels of Government.” *The New York Times*, July 4, 1973. <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/07/04/archives/a-suggestion-psychiatry-at-high-levels-of-government.html>

happiness” in the spirit of the 1776 Declaration of Independence.¹³

More recently, in 2004, psychoanalyst Dr. Justin Frank published a profile of George W. Bush, based on documents publicly available. He concluded that Bush was not mentally fit for being president. He called for all candidates for public office, as well as those who presently held office, to be assessed for mental health.¹⁴

George W. Bush was obsessed with ousting Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, motivated at least in part by revenge for Saddam’s assassination attempt on his father, President George H. W. Bush. The younger Bush told ABC News about Hussein, “There’s no doubt he can’t stand us. After all, this is a guy that tried to kill my dad at one time.”¹⁵

In 2002, a year before he ordered the invasion of Iraq, President George W. Bush, while referring to the attempt

¹³ Killen, Andreas. *1973 Nervous Breakdown: Watergate, Warhol, and the Birth of Post-Sixties America*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.

¹⁴ Milazzo, Linda. “The Case for Mental Health Screening of Candidates.” *The Huffington Post*, December 6, 2017.

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-case-for-mental-health_b_103604

¹⁵ “Is Bush’s Iraq Stance Rooted in Revenge?” *ABC News*, January 7, 2006. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=90764&page=1>

of assassination of his father by Hussein, declared at the UN that in 1993, Iraq attempted to assassinate the emir of Kuwait and a former American president. He was obviously referring to his own father. US President Bill Clinton, receiving reports from the FBI, was deeply convinced of Iraq's guilt. He subsequently ordered a missile strike on Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Baghdad that killed six civilians in June 1993. Clinton's decision to launch a missile attack in Baghdad was based on statements by Wali Abdelhadi Ghazali, a male nurse from Najaf who had admitted the existence of a plot to assassinate George Bush during his official visit to Kuwait.¹⁶

From there, George W. Bush built his big lie about the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, never found by international observers, as a pretext for invading Iraq in 2003 and topple Saddam Hussein. That invasion had not been allowed by the United Nations. To George W. Bush's satisfaction, Saddam Hussein was sentenced to death and hanged, but the invasion of Iraq had no exit strategy and led to catastrophic consequences. Estimates

¹⁶ Orto, Nino. "Revenge: Was the Iraq War started by the Bush family's personal vendetta against Saddam?" *The Conflict Archives*, September 2, 2017. <http://theconflictarchives.com/latest-articles/2017/8/24/revenge-was-the-iraq-war-started-by-the-bush-family-personal-vendetta-against-saddam/>

of Iraq War deaths vary greatly, with most estimates in the hundreds of thousands, most of whom were civilians.¹⁷

The US Army dismantled the Iraq Army and police, paving the way for Islamist extremists to take hold in Iraq, including Iranian Islamists; for the Islamic State (ISIS) to thrive; and for the Islamic Republic of Iran to expand its regional influence in the Middle East. Experienced members of the Iraq Army and police turned to the Islamists and helped them gain power in Iraq. One of the many Islamists imprisoned in Iraq and freed from jail under US control became the chief of ISIS.

Media reported that a jihadist, who used the nom de guerre Abu Ahmed, entered Camp Bucca as a young man and became a senior official within ISIS. A general claimed that 80% of prisoners released from the US-run Camp Bucca had rejoined terrorists. He added that if there had been no American prison in Iraq, there would

¹⁷“Casualties of the Iraq War.” *Wikipedia*.
https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualties_of_the_Iraq_War

be no ISIS now.^{18 19 20} Although on a personal level, it is quite understandable to get mad at somebody who attempted to assassinate your own father, the president of a nation should not mess up the world order for the benefit of his own ego.

The issue of allowing psychopaths to enter and remain in politics has to be addressed anew. Around the world, other psychopaths also get elected and act as autocrats: in Brazil with Jair Bolsonaro, in Hungary with Victor Orbán, in Turkey with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Because of the failures of democracies to address key issues such as a sense of loss of identity, lack of security, and the shortcomings of globalization, there is a growing demand for authoritarian rule. Moderate-minded people still have the power to reverse that trend.

¹⁸ Chulov, Martin. "Iraq prison system blamed for big rise in al-Qaida violence." *The Guardian*, May 23, 2010. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/may/23/iraq-prison-al-qaida-violence>

¹⁹ Hale Spencer, Saranac. "Meme Falsely Claims Obama Released al-Baghdadi." *FactCheck.org*, November 12, 2019. <https://www.factcheck.org/2019/10/meme-falsely-claims-obama-released-al-baghdadi/>

²⁰ Chulov, Martin. "Isis: the inside story." *The Guardian*, December 11, 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/11/-sp-isis-the-inside-story>

In 2018, a professor from Harvard warned, “Narcissistic sociopath presents a more virulent threat to peace and justice than at any time since the end of WWII. Democracy is the arch enemy of every concrete-thinking, pathologically narcissistic sociopath.”²¹

Like in several other western countries holding free elections, under the US Constitution, candidates are selected by unelected insiders in both major parties long before citizens reach the ballot box. As a result, before elections take place, people don’t have a say on who is going to be allowed to run for office, or to run for re-election. Pre-screening individuals willing to enter or remain in politics for the office of president, as well as for the Congress, to check for physical and mental illness not compatible with holding public office, and particularly for psychopathy, would be of utmost importance. That is particularly relevant since among the elites, the

²¹ Burkle, Frederick M. “Character Disorders among Autocratic World Leaders and the Impact on Health Security, Human Rights, and Humanitarian Care.” *ResearchGate*.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330399264_Character_Disorders_among_Autocratic_World_Leaders_and_the_Impact_on_Health_Security_Human_Rights_and_Humanitarian_Care

prevalence of psychopaths is much higher than among the general population.²²

Trump should have been pre-screened by mental health experts for psychopathy and be denied the right to run for the primaries under the GOP. The reason is simple: voters are not mental health experts. Moreover, people are easily seduced by the superficial charm and grandiloquence of psychopaths and by their repetitive lies. There is a perfect fit between a leader who is psychopathic, charismatic, manipulative, and a liar and individuals who are wounded, feel insecure, and are looking for a strong sense of reassurance and security.

Such a situation carries the risk to move a society one step further toward fascism, like Mussolini and Hitler did in the past. Such charm might seduce large crowds, as happened with Hitler winning democratic elections in 1932 and being appointed in 1933 as chancellor of Germany. Fascism and neo-nazism are on the rise around the world, with a narrative close to the one used

²²“ Psychopathy in the workplace.” *Wikipedia*.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychopathy_in_the_workplace#Incidence

in the past: nationalism, protectionism, and opposition to all elites.²³

In 1922, Fascist Mussolini, a psychopath, organized a march on Rome with 25,000 Blackshirts to seize power by force. The king of Italy asked him to form a new government. In 2021, Trump, a psychopath acting as an autocrat, organized a march on the Capitol with thousands of his followers, such as the Proud Boys, some of them armed with guns. Unlike the king of Italy in 1922, Vice President Mike Pence, then presiding over the joint session of Congress, refused to hand over the power to Trump. No one can ensure that in the future, a vice president—perhaps also psychopath like the president, or following the president’s order for other reasons such as a threat—will not illegally refuse to certify the votes from the Electoral College. By the very nature of that particular mental illness, psychopaths do not seek to consult a psychiatrist because they feel perfectly healthy. If offered to consult, they would vehemently refuse to do so.²⁴

²³“ Fascism on the rise: where does it come from, and how to stop it, with a common European response.” European Economic and Social Committee, October 30, 2018.

²⁴ Dodgson, Lindsay. “How psychopaths and sociopaths deceive and trick their therapists.” *Business Insider*. August 8, 2017.

Seventy-two percent of voters nationwide think political elites believe they are superior to everyday Americans.²⁵ Distrust toward elites is also confirmed in the findings of a joint study led in the US by the University of California at Berkeley and in Canada by Toronto University.²⁶ As a matter of fact, politicians often come from the elites, making the screening for psychopathy among them particularly relevant. Fortunately, all elites are not psychopaths, but the current political system often prevents virtuous elites from getting to power. For sure, attracting altruistic people into politics would be greatly beneficial to society. In Czechoslovakia, President Vaclav Havel was not a psychopath. He had been praised for his altruism, both at home and abroad. He didn't struggle to get to power. He literally had been called to power by the people; in fact, he had never been a member of any

²⁵ Rasmussen, Scott. "72% say political elites believe they are superior to everyday Americans." *ScottRasmussen.com*, February 8, 2021. <https://scottrasmussen.com/72-say-political-elites-believe-they-are-superior-to-everyday-americans/>

²⁶ "Higher social class predicts increased unethical behavior." Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), February 27, 2012. Department of Psychology. University of California, Berkeley, USA, Rothman School of Management. University of Toronto, Canada. "Upper-class individuals were more likely to exhibit unethical decision-making tendencies, lie in a negotiation, cheat to increase their chances of winning a prize, and endorse unethical behavior at work than were lower-class individuals. Upper-class individuals unethical tendencies are accounted for, in part, by their more favorable attitudes toward greed."

political party. His presidency was not a brief accident in the history of that nation. He ruled the country for 14 years.

Donald Trump, well known for his psychopathy, ended up as the nominee of the Republican Party in 2016, and again in 2020. Although in 2016 he was opposed vigorously as dangerous, xenophobic, tyrannical, and unhinged, he was allowed by the Republican Party to run in the primary, win the primary race, and eventually win the presidency.

Defiant individuals are looking to exercise power, to make their interpersonal relationships ones of aggressiveness and submission. Besides Trump, several heads of state had dangerous behaviors, like Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, who is racist and homophobic and totally incompetent in handling the coronavirus pandemic. It may not be a mere coincidence that the two countries in the world worst hit by the pandemic have been two countries whose heads of state were psychopaths; Trump in the US and Bolsonaro in Brazil. Both of them opposed the implementation of basic measures to contain the pandemic. Brazilian journalists and political analysts have ascribed to Brazilian President Bolsonaro a diagnosis of mental illness and particularly psychopathy. A study has

shown sociopathic traits to be linked to not wearing a mask or social distancing during the pandemic.^{27 28 29}

Leaders with those traits do not depend upon a particular cultural context. They exist in several countries that hold free elections. The common ground to all those countries is a system where candidates who run for public office are designated by insiders before even reaching the ballot box, with no pre-screening for mental health.

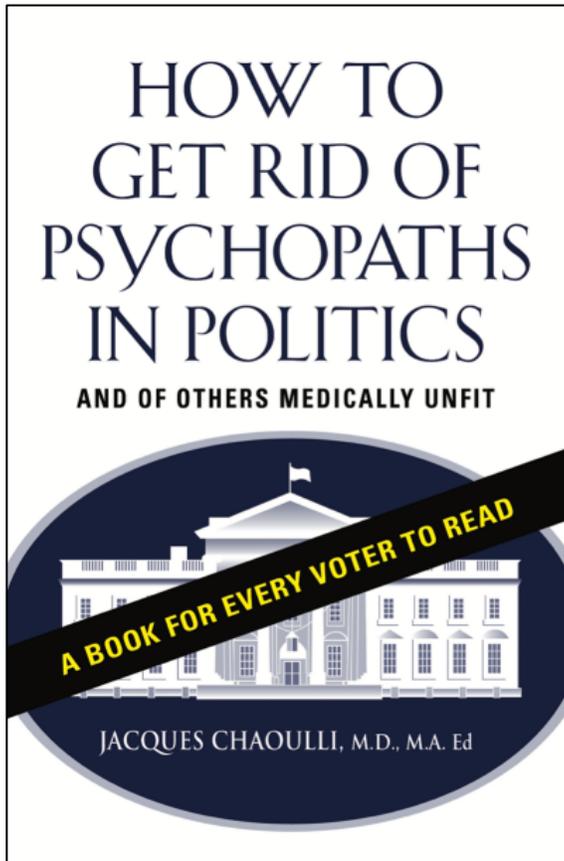
Among non-Western countries, some hold free elections while others have authoritarian regimes. Among those non-Western authoritarian regimes, some are led by heads of states showing signs of mental illness. Unfortunately, people from those countries do not enjoy the freedom to require from their representatives to undergo screening for mental health.

²⁷“Coronavirus in Brazil: What You Need to Know.” *The New York Times*, January 10, 2021.

²⁸“Does the Diagnosis of Psychopathy Help to Clarify the Current Brazilian Political Crisis?” from Eduardo Mouraco Vasconcelos, June 4, 2020, *Cadernos de Administração*, Universidad de Estadual de Maringá, Centro de Ciências Sociais Aplicadas, Departamento de Administração.

²⁹ Stieg, Cory. “Sociopathic traits linked to not wearing a mask or social distancing during pandemic: study.” *CNBC*, September 2, 2020. <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/09/02/study-refusal-to-wear-face-mask-associated-with-psychopathy-traits.html>

As shown below, in the early 1900s, the people, mental health experts, and societies as a whole were not aware of psychopathy as a mental illness and its potential danger to the public interest. If current knowledge were available at that time to the Italian and German people before the rise of Mussolini and Hitler, those two charismatic leaders could have been stopped in their rise to power. The Second World War, triggered by the invasion of Poland by Hitler, might have been prevented from happening. Nobody can erase the past, but everybody has the duty to use current knowledge on psychopathy in order to prevent similar events from occurring again in the future.



Sitting politicians have shown their unwillingness to remove from public office a psychopath like Trump, and to prevent him from running for office again. All politicians should undergo a mandatory health check.

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