

Inauguration Trends in GCP data

Roger Nelson, Jan 23, 2021

The inauguration of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris is an event of the kind we identify and assess using data from the Global Consciousness Project. Huge numbers of people were engaged both intellectually and emotionally. When we look at the data recorded during the inauguration we find a result that is interesting but different from our prediction in what turns out to be a characteristic way. The GCP event was defined as the period beginning at 11:00 Eastern time, when people were assembling for the inauguration ceremony expected to take place at noon, and continuing for 6 hours -- the typical GCP event length. The result does depart from expectation and is marginally significant. However, the trend is downward away from expectation, and though that is not the direction of the formal GCP predictions, it is something we often have seen in big meditation and peace prayer events.

Beyond this observation, there is a more explicit and persuasive argument for this result being meaningful though it does not match the prediction. We have a context of six inaugurations, that is, exact replications of the defined conditions every four years. In the original formal series we looked at one Bush and two Obama inaugurations, and after the formal series ended, we assessed the Trump and Biden inaugurations. All of these have negative trends -- in other words the Biden inauguration is like all the others I had assessed. We could see that five out of five US presidential inaugurations show the same signature.

There is a bit more complexity due to the history of our analysis procedures, which were developed over the first years. For one of the inaugurations, the original Bush analysis in 2001, we looked at just one hour, 11:30 to 12:30, so it was necessary to redo it to conform to the parameters used for the later inaugurations. Also, we had not included the 2nd Bush inauguration in the formal series. To do a clean assessment using a consistent analysis protocol, I went back to the data archive to redo all the six inaugurations using the 6-hour period beginning at 11:00 on January 20 every fourth year. This provides a complete and rigorous replication data-set including all US presidential inaugurations during the lifetime of the Global Consciousness Project.

On the next page you can see and compare the cumulative deviation graphs for the six inaugurations, but a statistical summary gives a simple composite view. When we look at all the cases using the same 6-hour analysis protocol (11:00 to 17:00 local time) we find a significant composite outcome, with $Z = 2.12$ and $p = 0.04$. This corresponds to odds of about 1 in 25 against this result being a chance deviation from random expectation. Five of the six cases have a negative trend in the cumulative deviation, and three of those are substantial, though not significant by the usual $p = 0.05$ standard.

