**ABSTRACT**

**Electoral Engineering and Electoral Manipulation**

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There are conflicting views of the importance of electoral rules for the smooth functioning of democracy. Some scholars have regarded such rules as epiphenomena to more fundamental social structures; while other more recent scholarship emphasizes the possibility of electoral engineering both for good (e.g., to mitigate ethnic conflict or to increase gender representation) and for bad (e.g., to help dictators manipulate electoral outcomes to their advantage). I look at this debate from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective. In particular, I review the claim that certain electoral systems deserve to be called “dictators’ friends.”