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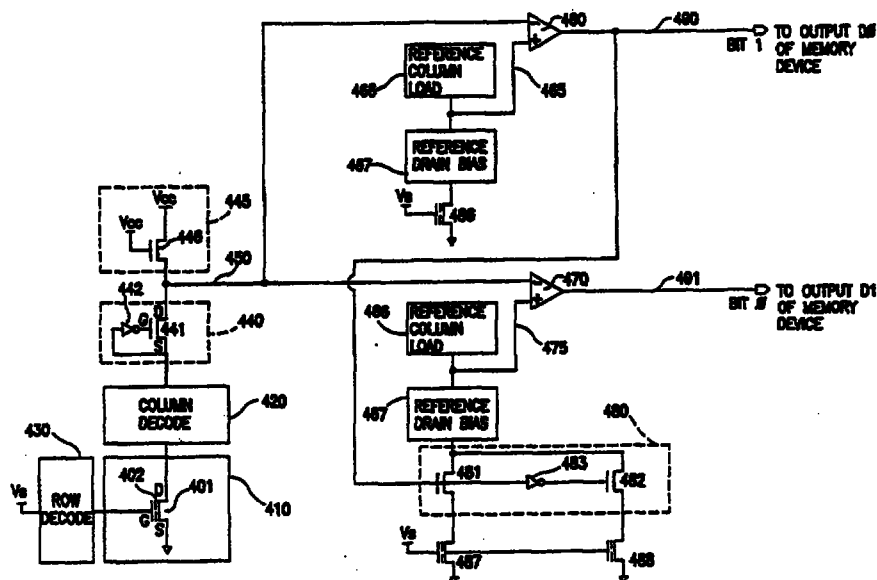
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(54) Title: **SENSING SCHEMES FOR FLASH MEMORY WITH MULTILEVEL CELLS**

(57) Abstract

Methods and apparatus for determining the state of a memory cell having more than two possible states are disclosed. For a first embodiment, the state of a flash cell (401) having n states, where n is a power of two, is determined by selectively comparing the threshold voltage V_t of a selected memory cell to $(n-1)$ reference voltages. For every two states, a single comparator (460 and 470) is provided such that the total number of comparators is equal to the number of bits stored in the memory cell.

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