

The Plurality Family of Electoral Systems



Objectives

- to demonstrate how plurality family works
- to show the variations in plurality systems
- to identify key characteristics of plurality systems

Key features

- winner receives most number of votes
- local representation
- simplicity -- easy to vote
- stability -- tends to produce single-party majority governments
- candidate-centred voting (vs. party centred voting)
- non-proportional

Elements of the plurality systems

- district magnitude = one
 - exceptions to be discussed later
- formula = plurality or most number of votes wins
- ballot structure = categorical X

Effects when district magnitude is one

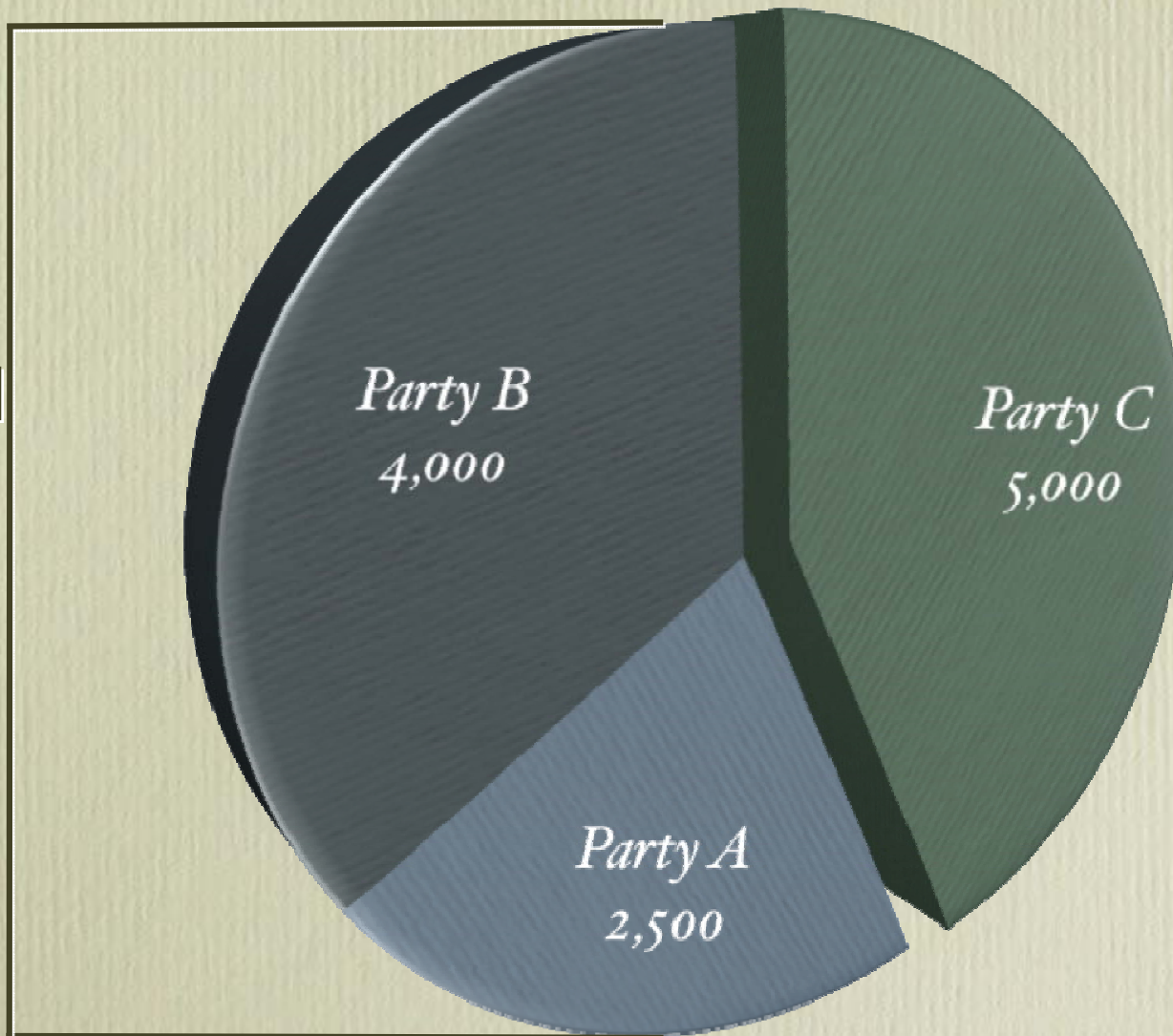
- clear lines of accountability between representative and voter
- representatives are linked to a constituency
 - achieves geographic representation
 - representative can speak 'on behalf' of a community

Effects of a plurality formula

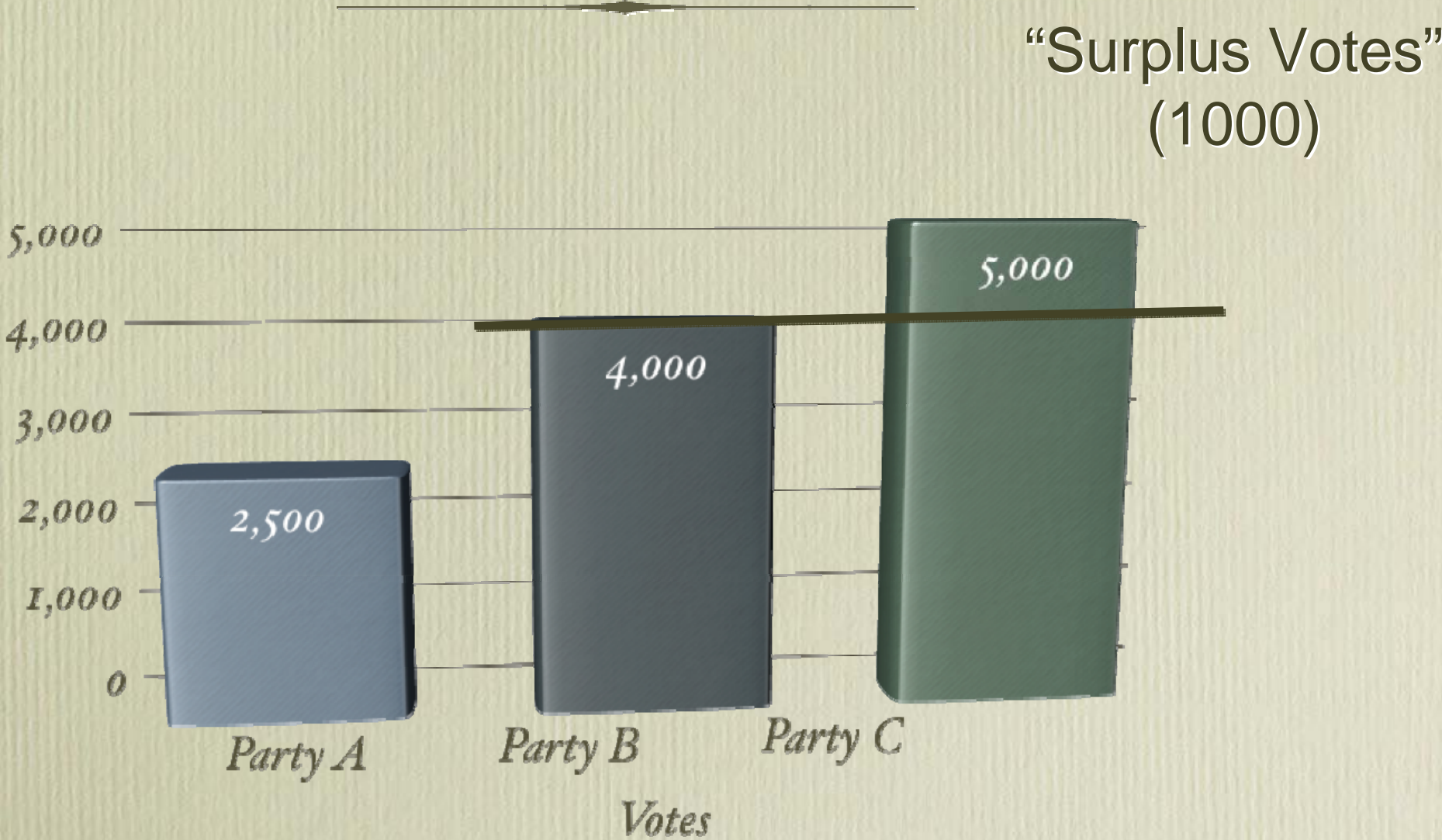
- most popular candidate wins in each district
- other votes do not count in electing a representative or determining party standing
 - sometimes called 'wasted votes' and 'surplus votes'

When votes cast do not contribute to electing a representative

“Wasted
Votes”
(6,500)

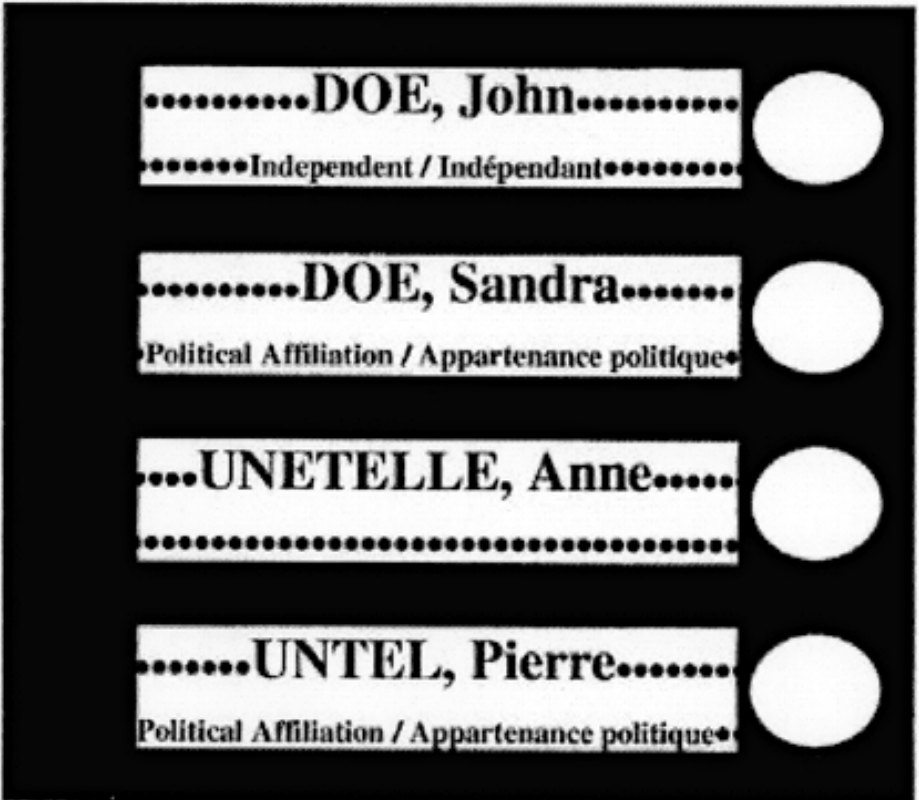


When votes cast do not contribute to electing a representative



Ballot structure may be simple or complex but is usually categorical

Form of Ballot Paper, Front

<p>FORM 3 <i>(Subsections 116(1) and 138(1))</i> FORM OF BALLOT PAPER <i>Front</i></p>	<p>FORMULAIRE 3 <i>(paragraphe 116(1) et 138(1))</i> FORMULAIRE DU BULLETIN DE VOTE <i>Recto</i></p>
 <p>.....DOE, John.....Independent / Indépendant.....</p> <p>.....DOE, Sandra.....Political Affiliation / Appartenance politique.....</p> <p>.....UNETELLE, Anne.....</p> <p>.....UNTEL, Pierre.....Political Affiliation / Appartenance politique.....</p>	

**OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOT
GENERAL ELECTION
NOVEMBER 8, 1994
TULSA COUNTY, OKLAHOMA** ²⁶

TO VOTE: COMPLETE THE ARROW(S) ← → POINTING TO YOUR CHOICE(S), LIKE THIS: ← →
USE A #2 PENCIL (NO INK)

STATE OFFICERS

STRAIGHT PARTY VOTING
(Vote for One)



DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLICAN

FOR GOVERNOR
(Vote for One)

JACK MILDREN, Democrat
FRANK KEATING, Republican
WES WATKINS, Independent

FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
(Vote for One)

NANCY DIAMOND, Democrat
MARY FALLIN, Republican
BRUCE D. HARTNITT, Independent

FOR STATE AUDITOR AND INSPECTOR
(Vote for One)

CLIFTON H. SCOTT, Democrat
JERRY GERALD PAUL DULANEY, Republican

FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL
(Vote for One)

DREW EDMONDSON, Democrat
MIKE HUNTER, Republican

FOR STATE TREASURER
(Vote for One)

ROBERT BUTKIN, Democrat
BOB KEASLER, Republican

FOR SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
(Vote for One)

SANDY GARRET, Democrat

CONGRESSIONAL OFFICERS

STRAIGHT PARTY VOTING
(Vote for One)



DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLICAN

FOR US SENATOR
(Unexpired Term)
(Vote for One)

DAVE McCURDY, Democrat
JAMES M. INHOFE, Republican
DANNY CORN, Independent

FOR US REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT NO 1
(Vote for One)

STUART PRICE, Democrat
STEVE LARGENT, Republican

JUDICIAL OFFICERS

FOR DISTRICT JUDGE
DISTRICT NO. 14. OFFICE NO. 11
ELECTORAL DIVISION NO. 1
(Vote for One)

ART PRICE
THOMAS S. CREWSON

FOR DISTRICT JUDGE
DISTRICT NO. 14. OFFICE NO. 1
(Vote for One)

ALVIN HAYER, JR.
RONALD L. SHAFFER

FOR DISTRICT JUDGE
DISTRICT NO. 14. OFFICE NO. 7
(Vote for One)

GAIL HARRIS

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT & COUNTY OFFICERS

STRAIGHT PARTY VOTING
(Vote for One)



DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLICAN

FOR STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT NO. 77
(Vote for One)

GARY A. STOTTLEMYRE, Democrat
MARK LIOTTAT, Republican

FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY
DISTRICT NO 14
(Vote for One)

DAVID MOSS, Democrat
WILLIAM J. MUSSEMAN, Republican

FOR COUNTY ASSESSOR
(Vote for One)

JAMES R. DUVALL, Democrat
CHERYL CLAY, Republican

FOR COUNTY TREASURER
(Vote for One)

J. R. MASLANKA, Democrat
ROBERT NELSON, Republican

When DM is greater than one in plurality systems

- plurality systems can be multi-member
- block vote
- cumulative vote
- single non-transferable vote

When DM is greater than one in plurality systems

- block vote: electors have as many votes as there are candidates to be elected (i.e., $dm = 3$ then 3 votes)
- allows for greater voter choice

When DM is greater than one in plurality systems

- cumulative vote: more than one vote and can vote for one candidate or more
 - used in Illinois legislature
- voters can indicate a strong preference for one candidate
- greater complexity in voting

When DM is greater than one in plurality systems

- single non-transferable vote:
- one vote and more than one representative
 - was used in Japan
- encourages rivalry among candidates
- sometimes used in school boards and for trustees

Conclusion

- plurality family is one of the most commonly used
- promotes single party, stable government, local representation
- produces disproportional results by 'wasted' and 'surplus' votes