LWV Mission and Roles

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization. The LWV encourages informed and active participation in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Voters Service/Citizen <u>Education</u>: We present unbiased nonpartisan information about elections, the voting process, and issues, and we organize candidate forums.
<u>We never support or oppose any political party or candidate.</u>

Action/Advocacy: While the League is non-partisan, we use our Program Positions to advocate for or against particular policies and legislative proposals.

Visit the LWV Boulder County Voting Methods Team page,

with these slides and supplementary materials, at **lwvbc.org**
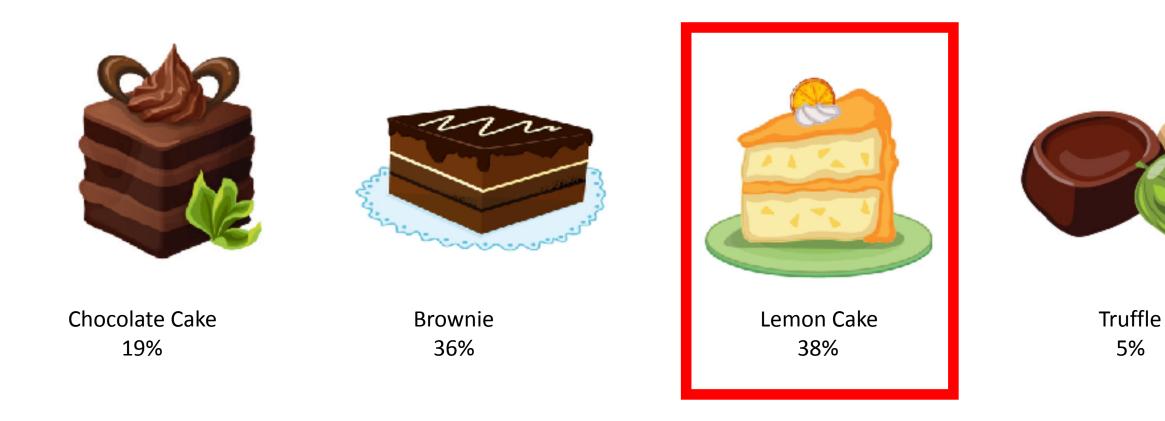
Problems with Plurality (First-Past-The-Post) Voting

Because you can only show your support for one candidate....

1) You can't express your preferences as clearly as in other voting methods.

2) You might see no option but to vote for a candidate who is not your favorite, or you might decide to just not vote.

3) Two good candidates can split the vote and result in the election of a third, less desirable candidate (spoiler effect).

Vote Splitting / Spoiler Effect

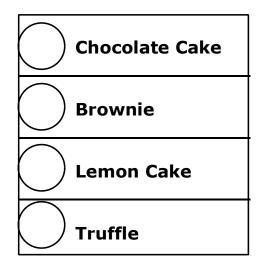**Chocolate Cake**
19%

Brownie
36%

Lemon Cake
38%

Truffle
5%

2010 Maine Governor's Race

Libby Mitchell
Democratic

19%

Eliot Cutler
Independent

36%

Paul LePage
Republican

38%

Shawn Moody
Independent

5%

APPROVAL VOTING

• Vote for one or more dessert candidates.

• You are not required to approve more than one candidate.

• To vote, fill in the circle next to the candidate or candidates of your choice.

• The candidate with the most votes wins.

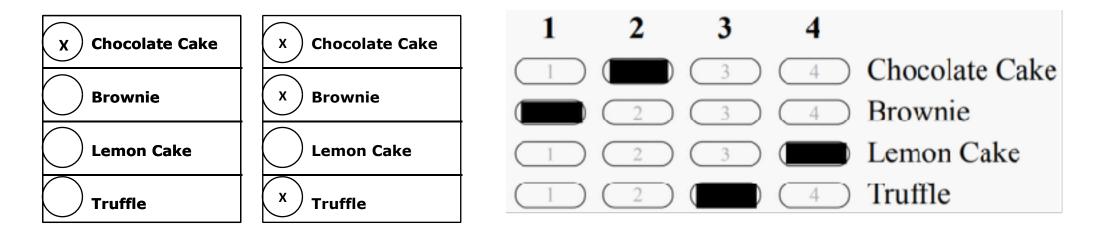|	
◯	**Chocolate Cake**
◯	**Brownie**
◯	**Lemon Cake**
◯	**Truffle**

SCORE VOTING

- To vote, rate each choice by clearly circling one score in that dessert's row. The worst score is 0. The best score is 3.

- You may give **EQUAL** scores to different desserts.

- To determine the winner, add up the scores for each dessert. The dessert with the highest total wins.

Chocolate Cake	Circle one →	0	1	2	3
Brownie	Circle one →	0	1	2	3
Lemon Cake	Circle one →	0	1	2	3
Truffle	Circle one →	0	1	2	3

3 Main Types of Voting Methods

Plurality

Rated
(e.g. Approval,
Score)

Rank Order
(e.g. IRV)

(X)	**Chocolate Cake**
( )	**Brownie**
( )	**Lemon Cake**
( )	**Truffle**

(X)	**Chocolate Cake**
(X)	**Brownie**
( )	**Lemon Cake**
(X)	**Truffle**

1	2	3	4	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Chocolate Cake
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Brownie
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Lemon Cake
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Truffle

Comparing Single-Winner Election Methods

Based on Bayesian Regret computer simulation with 2.2M trials using 5 candidates, 200 voters, and 2 issues

Warren D. Smith, 2000

Simplicity (vertical axis)

Voter Satisfaction Efficiency (horizontal axis)

Random winner

Strategic Voters → Honest Voters →

Plurality Voting
Currently used, USA

Approval Voting

Score Voting

Borda Count

Instant Runoff Voting

Condorcet Method

Magic Best Winner

- **Simplicity**: Ease of explaining, understanding, voting, and calculating
- **Voter Satisfaction Efficiency**: Normalized Bayesian Regret
- **Bars**: Voting methods, with left edge showing worst case of people voting strategically, and right edge showing best case of people voting purely honestly

Proportional Representation

Single-winner elections throw votes for losing candidates away, sometimes more than half of all votes!

Proportional Representation systems for council, legislature etc. have many winners. Votes remain active, nearly always eventually supporting a candidate the voter prefers.

PR was common in cities in Colorado and around the country early last century.
10 State legislatures have multi-member districts.

Many good approaches to borrow from around the world:

Multi-member districts with **Proportional approval voting,** or **Single Transferable Vote** (Cambridge, MA)

Mixed Member PR ala Germany

GOLD (Geographic Open List/Delegated voting): new hybrid

Use existing single-member districts, familiar ballots

But also get to write-in any candidate in the state

Every party assigns a representative to every district
Nearly everyone is represented by someone they supported

Benefits of Modern Voting Methods

Every vote makes a difference with Proportional Representation, used in most countries

   Everyone gets a lawmaker who represents them. **No wasted votes!**

Approval Voting (CU students), **Score Runoff Voting** (Oregon effort), **IRV** etc. for single winner contests, all better than Plurality!

No more spoiler candidates or splitting the vote so the minority wins

More **satisfying** voting experience, **pride** in your vote

Leads to more **positive campaigning**, any voter can support you to some degree

What <u>You</u> Can Do for Better Voting Methods

LEARN
- Invite the LWV to give a more in-depth interactive talk to your local organization. Contact us at lwvbc.org
- Go to the LWVBC Voting Methods webpage for more info: lwvbc.org, click Teams at Work, Voting Methods

ADVOCATE
- Create a buzz -- Talk to your friends, family, county clerk and other elected officials and candidates about better voting methods.
- Practice using better voting methods when conducting a vote or straw poll in your local organization.

Website Resources

- ## Center for Election Science
  ## electology.org:
  Approval Voting, Proportional Representation, etc.

- ## Center for Range Voting
  ## rangevoting.org
  Score Voting

- ## FairVote, fairvote.org
  IRV / STV (RCV), Proportional Representation, etc.