



Why We're Here

The US has a Congressional approval rating so bad that it occasionally dips into single digits. These are bizarre numbers considering the US's incumbency rate is over 90%. And while three of every five Americans say they want a third party, only about 2% find themselves able to vote for one—most fearing a wasted vote. Other countries face their own strange electoral behavior. In a recent Canadian election, one of its parties received over half its nation's seats while getting less than 40% of the vote.

These examples aren't anomalies. They're persistent symptoms of failed electoral systems, and they aren't going away on their own. As these symptoms persist, we'll continue to see detrimental public policy on issues across the board. It doesn't matter if your personal issue is environmental, education, military, or even taxes. Our failed electoral system affects the causes you care about.

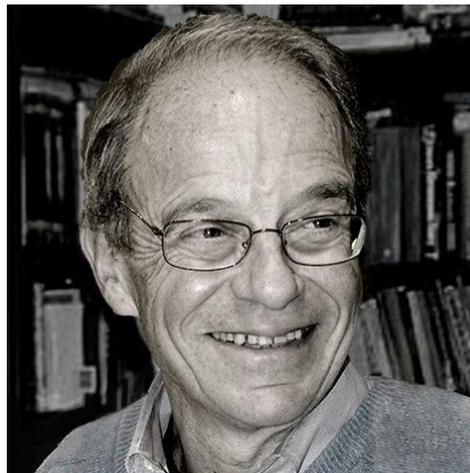
And, to make matters worse, the poor electoral systems we use in public elections are often the same ones used to make decisions in private and civic organizations. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Our History

The Center for Election Science (CES) originated from disillusioned online advocates with backgrounds ranging from areas in mathematics, political science, game theory, computer science, engineering, and law. Years'-long participants from an online forum on voting methods merged together with co-founders from The Center for Range Voting. Once organized, a board was formed and we incorporated in 2011 as The Center for Election Science. We have since added an advisory board that includes internationally recognized scholars on electoral systems and game theory.

Our Mission

Our mission is to advance smarter electoral systems in both public and private sectors to improve social good.



"I heartily endorse the efforts of The Center for Election Science to apply scientific methods to the study of voting procedures and to assess their applicability to real-world elections. Unlike many academics, members of the Center have been willing to advise election officials and politicians on the implementation of better procedures, which helps advance the practice as well as the theory of democracy."

-Dr. Steven Brams
(Professor of politics at New York University, Approval Voting pioneer)

(Quote from one of our advisors, Dr. Steven Brams)



Our Vision

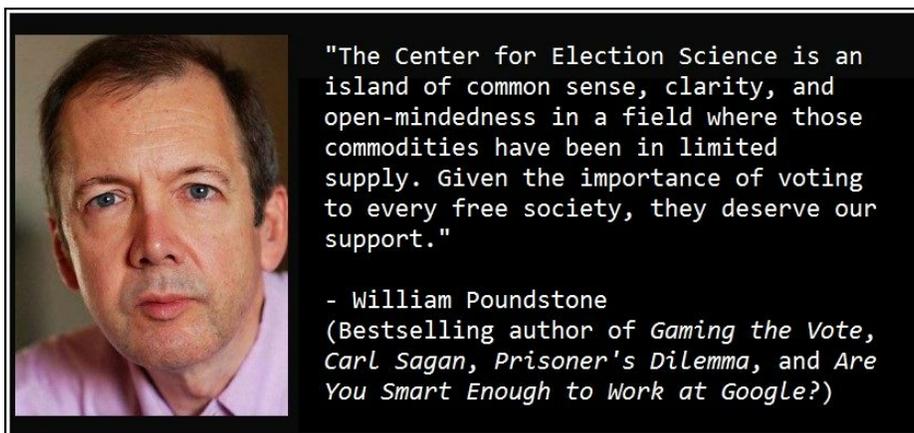
Our vision includes: (1) Making better electoral systems common knowledge by creating and disseminating educational resources and research; (2) Making it easy for anyone to use better electoral systems through user-friendly software and materials; and (3) Making better electoral systems a reality in public elections, which will likely require a sister 501(c)4 organization.

Our Accomplishments

We've become one of the top internet sources for electoral systems. We get over 50K unique visitors to our site every year. We have dozens of blog entries and dozens more technical articles. We've created over a dozen educational videos and interviews, with our video on approval voting having generated over 50K views.

We've appeared on Free Speech TV, were a contributor to the high-traffic sports blog Deadspin, and are regularly featured in political blogs Independent Voter Network and Democracy Chronicles. We've done presentations across the US for political conferences, electoral reform symposiums, private election companies, science events, political parties, and civic organizations. Additionally, we've provided informational guidance for legislation or ballot initiatives in five states.

From our involvement, we've helped several organizations move to approval- or score-based methods including the Texas Green Party, German Pirate Party, Harvey Milk Democratic Club, Young Democrats of San Francisco, and The Webby Awards. The Academy Awards uses a proportional score-based method for its visual effects category nominations, a method developed by one of our co-founders.



(Quote from one of our advisors, William Poundstone)



Who Benefits?

You and everyone else benefit from better collective decisions. It is essential that when we make important decisions—either from public or private positions—that we use intelligent methods. Otherwise, we will continue to make bad choices regardless of voter wisdom. The next time you're puzzled at how someone won an award, got first in a contest, or got elected to a position, you have an example of how we can all benefit from better collective decisions.

Problem/ Solution

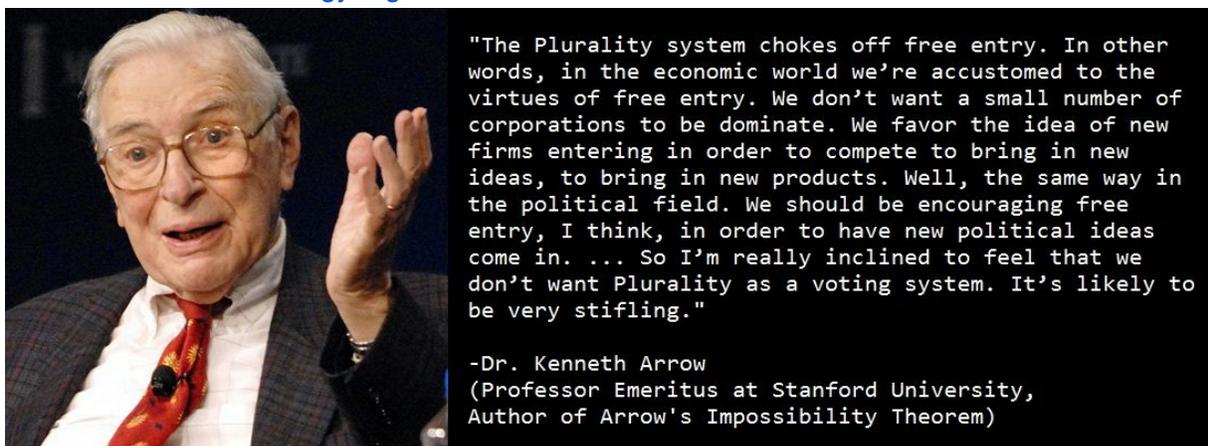
The unfortunate way that we go about making collective decisions is to limit voters to choose only one candidate and have the most selected candidate win. This has disastrous consequences. Similar candidates “split the vote,” torpedoing their chances regardless of how good they are. This choose-one method (aka plurality, first-past-the-post) also creates a barrier to entry for new candidates by creating a fear of “throwing away your vote”. Consequently, our decisions tend to be erratic and insulated from new ideas.

Multi-winner elections face their own dilemma. Current approaches create outcomes that completely shut out minority groups and opinion, which can lead to narrow discussion and justifiable hostility from marginalized groups.

We can improve by using methods that permit voters to either choose as many candidates as they wish or to score candidates on a scale—referring to approval and score voting, respectively. These methods can also be adapted for multi-winner elections so that everyone is represented proportionate to their number rather than marginalizing entire sections of voters.

While voting methods are our main focus, we also contribute on issues such as ballot security, ballot design, redistricting algorithms, ballot access, and debates.

Please visit www.electology.org for more information



(Excerpt from our interview with Dr. Kenneth Arrow)