

Classic Works on Pluralism:

- Bentley, A. F. 1908. *The Process of Government*.
Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kornhauser, W. 1959. *The Politics of Mass Society*.
New York: Free Press.
- Latham, E. 1952. "The Group Basis of Politics: Notes
for a Theory." *American Political Science
Review*, 46:376-397.
- Lipset, S. M. 1963. *Political Man: The Social Bases
of Politics*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books.
- Truman, D. B. 1951. *The Governmental Process*.
New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

The Geometry of Pluralism

1. For Pluralism to work -- that is, to produce public policy that reflects the multiplicity of interests taking part in the bargaining process -- **there must be multiple *distinct* policy dimensions.**
2. In terms of a geometric (spatial) voting model this means that, given a specific group/individual, the public policy will be close to that group/individual on some dimensions but distant on other dimensions **reflecting the tradeoffs made during the bargaining process.**

Ideal Point: $X_i = (X_{i1}, X_{i2}, X_{i3}, \dots, X_{in})$

Policy Outcome: $O_j = (O_{j1}, O_{j2}, O_{j3}, \dots, O_{jn})$

on some dimensions, k , $|X_{ik} - O_{jk}|$ is small;

on some dimensions, h , $|X_{ih} - O_{jh}|$ is large

3. However, if this is true, social choice theory tells us that we will encounter "problems" (see below) because multidimensionality allows *cyclical majorities* in legislatures.

4. For example, suppose there are 3 Alternatives:

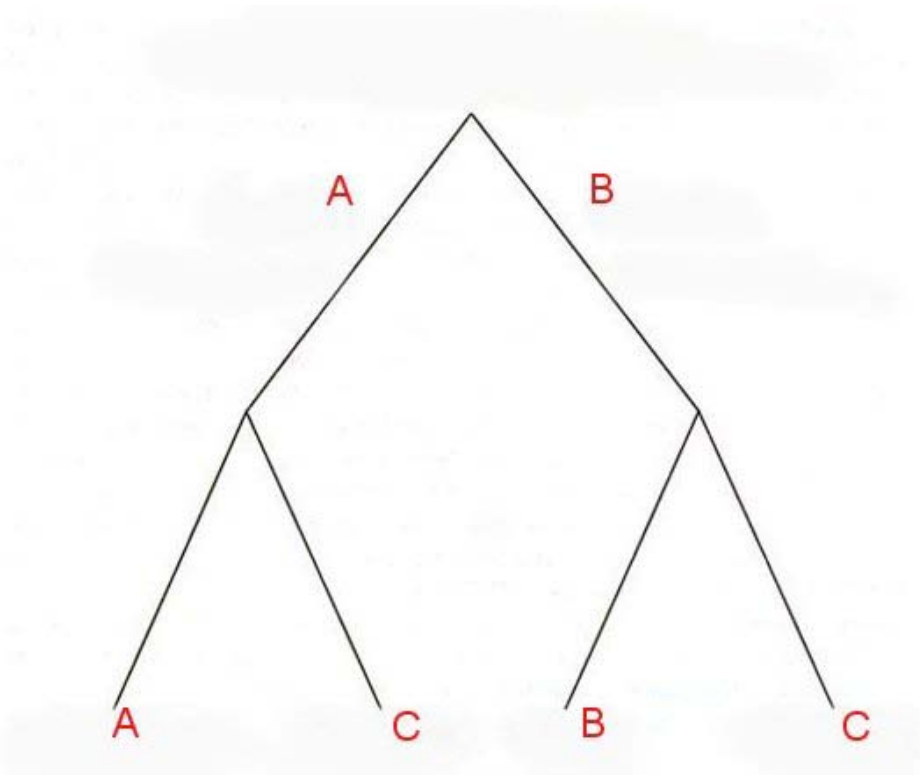
A, B, and C, and three voting blocs in the legislature of equal size. The preferences are:

Bloc 1 (33%): A > B > C

Bloc 2 (33%): B > C > A

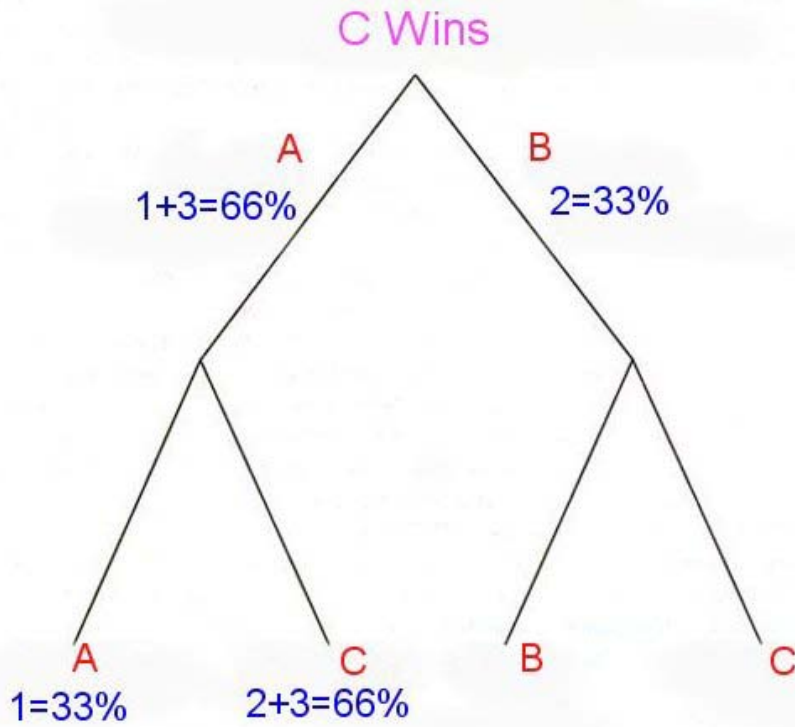
Bloc 3 (33%): C > A > B

a. Binary Voting, A vs. B first Vote, Winner Against C



- Bloc 1 (33%): A > B > C**
- Bloc 2 (33%): B > C > A**
- Bloc 3 (33%): C > A > B**

b. Binary Voting, A vs. C first Vote, Winner Against B

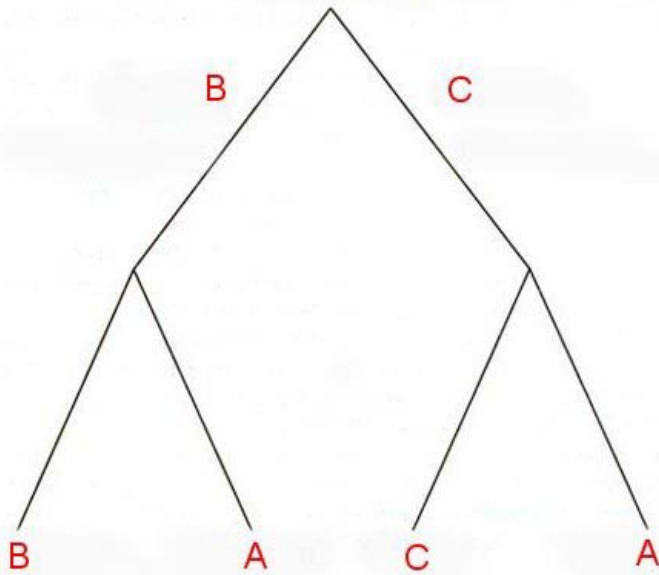


Bloc 1 (33%): A > B > C

Bloc 2 (33%): B > C > A

Bloc 3 (33%): C > A > B

c. Binary Voting, B vs. C first Vote, Winner Against A



Bloc 1 (33%): $A > B > C$

Bloc 2 (33%): $B > C > A$

Bloc 3 (33%): $C > A > B$

5. In the geometric (spatial) model of choice, [Richard McKelvey](#) in his landmark paper "Intransitivities in Multidimensional Voting Models and Some Implications for Agenda Control," *Journal of Economic Theory*, 1976, 12:472-

482, showed that if someone *controlled the agenda*, that is, what alternatives were to be voted on in an assembly and in what order, then *any outcome was possible, even one remote from all the members of the voting body.*

An Illustration of McKelvey's "Chaos" Theorem

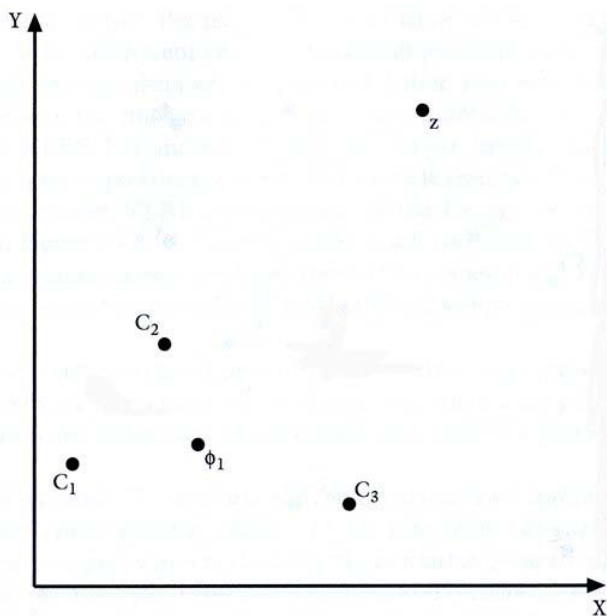


FIGURE P1.3

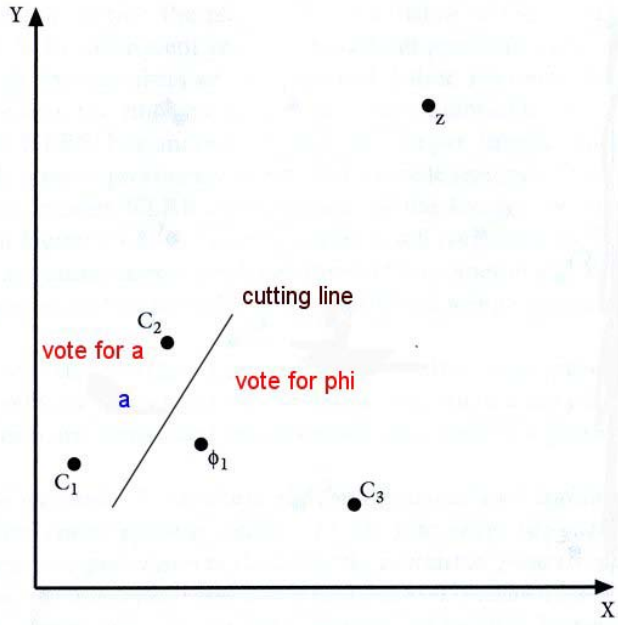


FIGURE P1.3

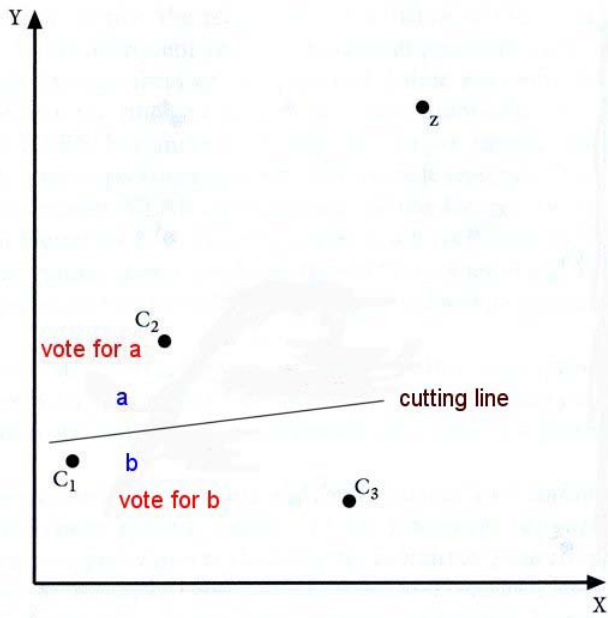


FIGURE P1.3

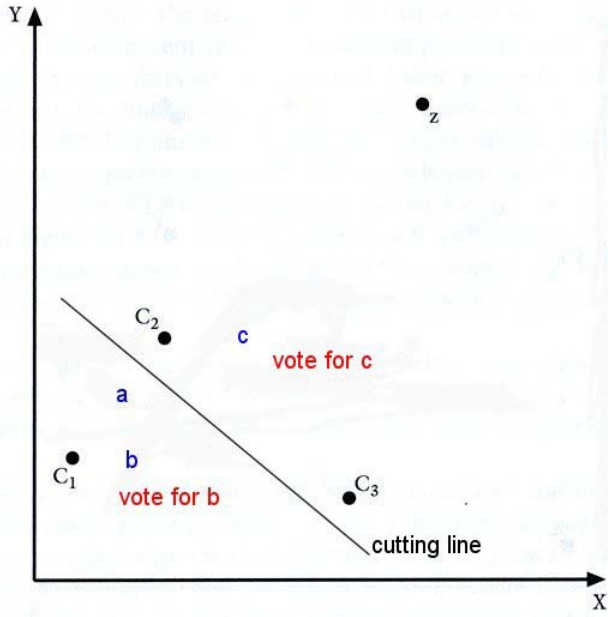


FIGURE P1.3

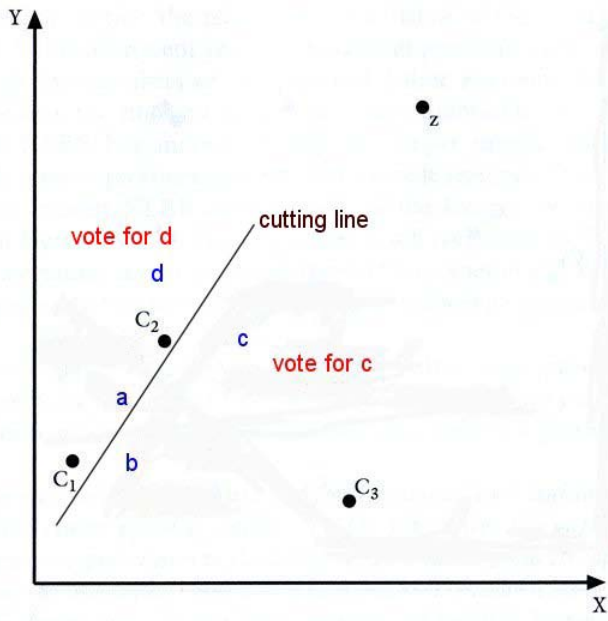


FIGURE P1.3

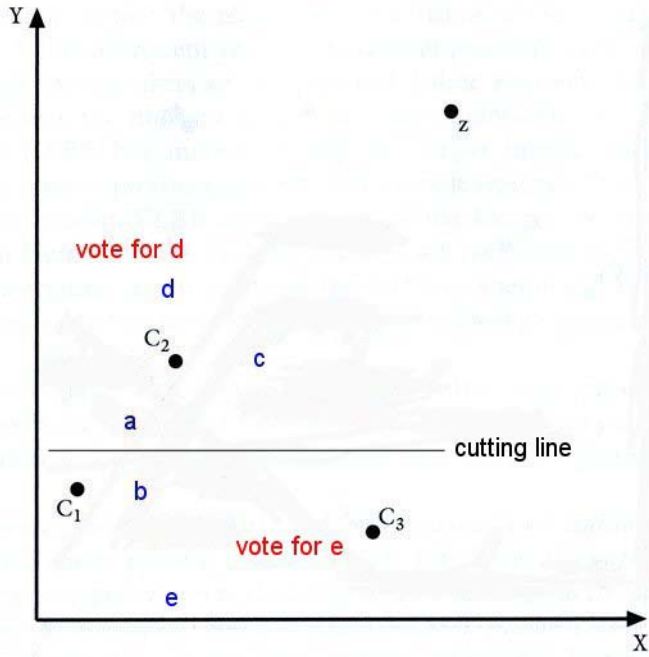


FIGURE P1.3

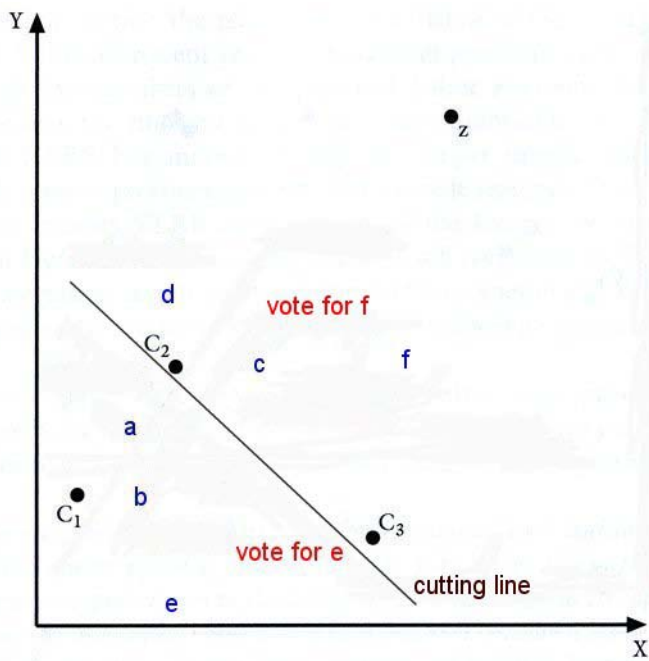


FIGURE P1.3

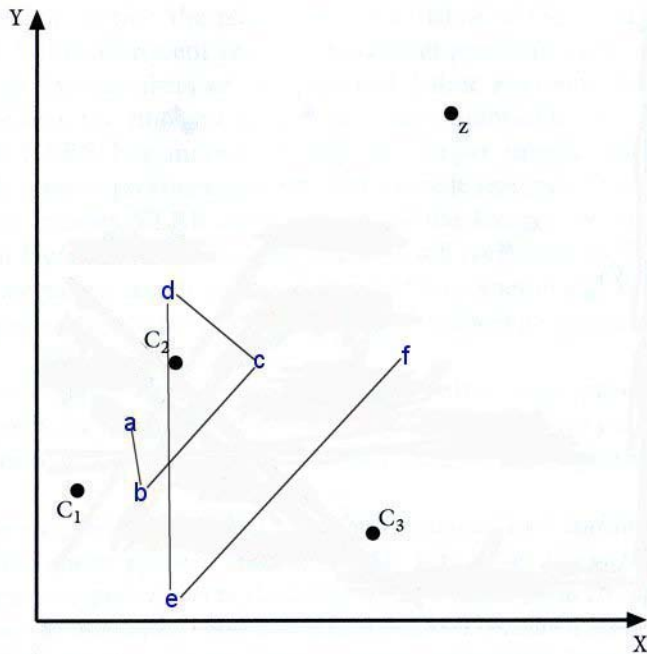


FIGURE P1.3

6. **Pluralism vs. Social Choice Theory:** The irony here is that pluralism heaven is one where *no permanent majority can form*. Cross-cutting divisions of society that produce different majorities on different issues are regarded as good under pluralism but produce cycling in Social Choice Theory.

7. This raises the question: **How Multi-Dimensional is actual Policy Making in Congress and the U.S. State Legislatures?**

8. IT IS LOW DIMENSIONAL

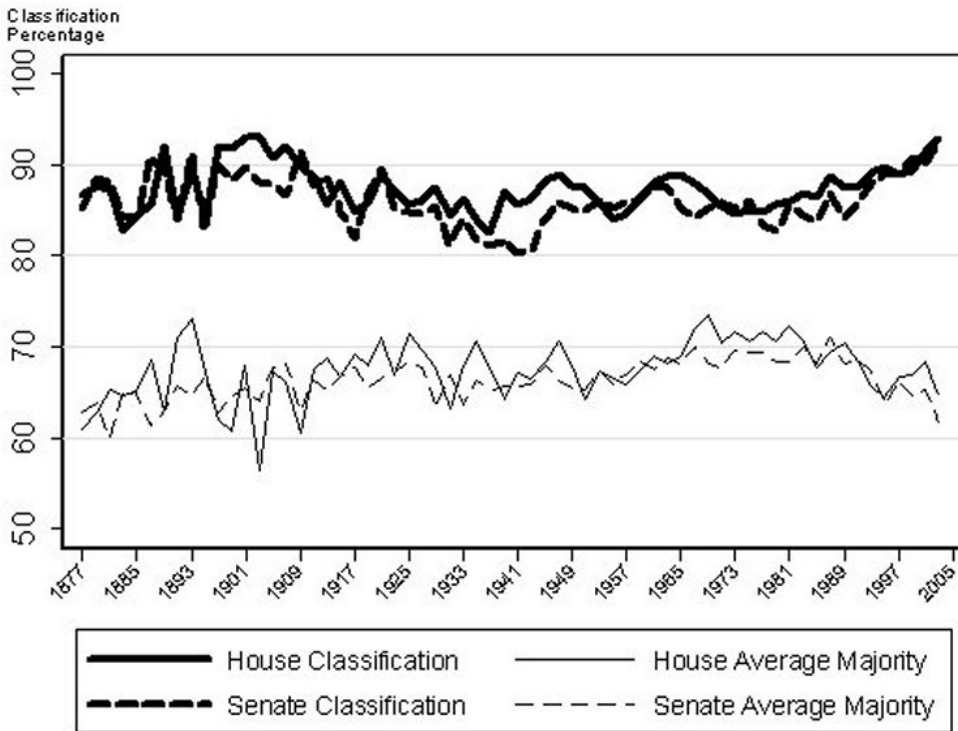


Figure 2.1: Classification of Roll Call Votes, 1877-2004

Source: Computed from Two-Dimensional DW-NOMINATE Model.
Only scalable roll calls on included in figure.