Official

Ranked Choice Voting Results Table

Contest: **County Assessor - Treasurer**
Load Type: **Complete**

	Round 1			Round 2			Round 3			Round 4		
	Votes	%	Transfer	Votes	%	Transfer	Votes	%	Transfer	Votes	%	Transfer
Dale Washam	65676	25.02%	+6322	71998	28.94%	+10492	82490	36.44%	+15876	**98366**	**51.93%**	**0**
Terry Lee	50278	19.16%	+8245	58523	23.52%	+11686	70209	31.02%	-70209	0	0.00%	0
Jan Shabro	50023	19.06%	+8224	58247	23.41%	-58247	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0
Bernardo Tuma	18205	6.94%	-18205	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0
Barbara Gelman	49874	19.00%	+10133	60007	24.12%	+13640	73647	32.54%	+17420	91067	48.07%	0
Beverly Davidson	27340	10.42%	-27340	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0
Write-In	1051	0.40%	-1051	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0
Exhausted by Over Votes	363		+71	434		+73	507		+93	600		0
Under Votes	49961		0	49961		0	49961		0	49961		0
Exhausted Ballots	0		+13601	13601		+22356	35957		+36820	72777		0
Continuing Ballots	262447	100.00%		248775	100.00%		226346	100.00%		189433	100.00%	
TOTAL	**312771**		**0**	**312771**		**0**	**312771**		**0**	**312771**		**0**
REMARKS	***Tie resolved in accordance with election law.**											

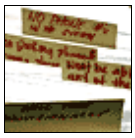
312,771 total voters showed up at the polls
262,810 voted in this well publicized race. 49,961 did not.
City polling said many people were confused.

Washam elected with 98,366 votes. 37% Support of Voters that day.

Counting S.F. ballots will take a record amount of time

John Wildermuth, Chronicle Staff Writer
Wednesday, November 7, 2007



More...

(11-06) 21:03 PST SAN FRANCISCO -- San Francisco's election for mayor went surprisingly smoothly Tuesday, if you don't count the two weeks or more it's likely to take to tally all the ballots and come up with a final result.

Scores of extra election workers were on hand Tuesday evening to begin counting the tens of thousands of ballots cast at the polls in a painstaking, state-mandated manner that could drag on until Thanksgiving.

"It's going to be a challenge," admitted John Arntz, the city's election director. "But we have an absolute mandate from the secretary of state to do this in a certain way."

That means that not a single ballot cast anywhere in the city Tuesday showed up in the vote totals released Tuesday night, which included only 48,104 absentee and early votes at City Hall. As the votes are tallied, the latest results will be released each day at about 4 p.m. until the count is complete.

Arntz hopes to have 65 percent of the absentee ballots and 75 percent of the polling place ballots counted by Friday.

The record slow count can be blamed on a long-running battle between the secretary of state's office and Election Systems and Software, which manufactures the city's voting equipment.

A 2006 test by the state showed that the ES&S equipment used in San Francisco was unable to read some ballots that were marked in anything other than dark pencil or black or dark-blue ink. When the city was unable to bring in a replacement system in time for Tuesday's election, Secretary of State Debra Bowen reluctantly certified the ES&S machines, but with conditions that slowed the vote-counting process dramatically.

In years past, voters marked their ballots in ink and then fed them into a machine at the polling place that electronically tallied the results and stored them in the machine's memory pack. When the polls closed, one team of deputies picked up the ballots at each polling place and took them to Pier 29 for preliminary processing. Another team grabbed the memory packs and took them to a nearby modem center, often a police station, where those results could be electronically transmitted to the election center in the basement of City Hall.

"Our primary focus was capturing those memory packs and getting that information," Arntz said. "That's

how we could get the results to make public on election night."

But if the machines couldn't be trusted to read the ballots properly, there was no way to tell if the information in the memory packs was accurate, so Bowen banned the use of the packs. Instead, each ballot had to be individually inspected to ensure that pencil or the proper ink was used. Then the ballots had to be put through one of the four vote-counting machines at City Hall.

So instead of dealing with one memory pack from each of the city's 580 precincts, with the votes already counted, election officials will be forced to hand-check more than 100,000 ballots, then run them through the counting machines.

That completely changed the Elections Department's emphasis. The actual ballots still went from the polling places to Pier 29, where election officials checked them in and ensured that the ballots from every precinct were accounted for. But they quickly had to send those bags of ballots to City Hall.

"Our focus now is to get those ballots to City Hall so that we have votes to start counting," Arntz said.

The first smattering of ballots wasn't expected to arrive at the election headquarters until 10 p.m. Election officials planned to work through the night - and through future nights - to get the votes counted.

The city's problems didn't end there.

Under San Francisco's ranked-choice voting system, voters can - but don't have to - list three choices for mayor. But because of concerns about the voting machines' reliability, Bowen ordered that any ballot which didn't include three choices for mayor had to be kicked out by the vote counting machines. Election officials not only had to examine each of those ballots, but they also had to physically remake all of them, transferring the choices on the original ballot to a new ballot, which would then be counted.

That takes time. And because an astounding 94 percent of the absentee ballots processed by Monday had to be remade because voters didn't list three choices for mayor, it has taken a lot of time.

"I was amazed by how many of absentee ballots were" kicked out, Arntz said. "If that 94 percent holds with the polling place ballots, we're buried, man."

At polling places throughout the city, under-voted ballots were spit back by the machines, so that voters had to either fill out the list for mayor or ask the poll workers to override so their ballot could be tallied.

"There's probably a whole lot more interaction than usual between voters and poll workers today," Arntz said Tuesday.

Although results will be updated daily, Arntz expects to have a preliminary vote tally by Nov. 16 and all the votes, including the expected 5,000 to 6,000 provisional ballots, counted by Nov. 21, the day before Thanksgiving.

If none of the mayoral candidates has 50 percent plus one of the votes when every ballot is tallied, the city will then run the ranked-choice system, eliminating the lowest-ranking candidates and reshuffling their second- and third-place votes until someone has a majority.

But even that final total doesn't mean it's over for city election workers. Because of the concerns about the ES&S machines, Bowen has ordered the city to hand-count 10 percent of the city's precinct votes and 25 percent of the absentee votes to crosscheck the results of the vote-tallying machines. In a typical election, only 1 percent of the precincts are hand-counted.

The tallies, rechecks and hand counts all have to be finished in time to meet the state's Dec. 4 deadline for the final statement of the vote.

"It's tight," Arntz said. "We'll max out, easy."

The expected low turnout probably saved the city some of the estimated $300,000 added cost of Bowen's requirements. Although the city was ready to run the election office 24 hours a day last week, it only took a 14-hour schedule to keep up with the absentees.

Counting the votes

In San Francisco, the tough part of the election comes after the polls close. Most of the times and dates are estimates provided by the Department of Elections:

Tuesday night: After the polls closed at 8 p.m., the city stopped counting absentee ballots that arrived in the mail on Tuesday or were turned in at the polls. The count will resume after the polling place ballots are tallied.

Ballots were taken from polling places to Pier 29 for preliminary processing. From there, they were to be taken to City Hall. Counting is scheduled to run 24 hours a day until completed.

Today and beyond: At 4 p.m. daily, the latest vote counts will be released, with final results expected by Nov. 21. The daily counts will be available on the Elections Department's Web site, *www.sfgov.org/site/elections*.

E-mail John Wildermuth at jwildermuth@sfchronicle.com.

http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/11/07/MNHUT7FPT.DTL

This article appeared on page **A - 1** of the San Francisco Chronicle

aspendailynewsonline

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Instant runoff voting loses by razor-thin margin

Writer:
Curtis Wackerle
Byline:
Aspen Daily News Staff Writer

In an election decided by six votes, Aspen citizens told their elected leaders they do not wish to retain instant runoff voting as their election method.

Tuesday's vote, which split 805 votes against keeping IRV and 799 votes for keeping it, a breakdown of 50.2 percent to 49.8 percent, was advisory. The city must have another election to amend the charter to officially dump IRV. The details on how and when this charter election will be conducted must be worked out by City Council.

Voters' rejection of IRV is a political victory for former mayoral candidate and City Hall critic Marilyn Marks, an opponent of IRV. While she said she didn't campaign hard for Tuesday's advisory question, she said she believed her work raising questions about certain aspects of last May's election, where IRV was used in Aspen for the first time, made a difference. Marks is suing the city to compel it to release images of the actual ballots cast in the election.

"I think this says there are plenty of questions about IRV," Marks said. "It's not nearly as simple as it was billed to be."

Marks said she would be more active in campaigning against IRV when the actual charter amendment question is proposed.

In November 2007, Aspen voters by a 76 percent margin approved a charter amendment instructing the city to implement IRV as the voting method in council and mayoral races. In May, Aspen used the system for the first time. IRV allows voters to rank their choices of candidates. If no majority is gained through first-choice votes, lower-ranking candidates are eliminated with those candidates' votes going to the voter's next preference.

Councilman Steve Skadron said the razor thin margin of the IRV defeat prevented him from drawing any strong conclusions about the mood of the electorate.

"I don't think this tells us anything other than that the voters are split," said Skadron, who questioned whether IRV was right for the city following the last election, although he supported it initially.

"I don't know if people are voting based on the merits of IRV or based on some bad publicity surrounding (the last election)," Skadron said.

Aspen Mayor Mick Ireland, noting that the council will have to propose some other system to replace IRV, said it could be difficult to get consensus on what that system should be. Support exists in the

community for going back to the runoff system that IRV replaced, going back to the system before runoffs where whoever had the most votes won, as well as keeping IRV. There could also be other alternative methods proposed. Ireland proposed putting all these on the ballot as yes or no questions. If any one was to get majority support, it would become Aspen's voting method; if more than one gets a majority, than whatever received the most support would be selected, Ireland proposed.

Ireland notes there is a possibility that nothing would get majority support.

"It could be like the entrance to Aspen," Ireland said.

In any case, the city is preparing for the possibility that it will have to use IRV for the next city election in the spring of 2011, since if the charter is not successfully amended, IRV remains the default voting method. City of Aspen attorneys John Worcester and Jim True said they are prepared to propose ways to make IRV run smoother next time.

"We know what worked in the election and what didn't," Worcester said.

Skadron said he believed IRV got off on the wrong foot to begin with. Prior to the May election, there was months of debate about which method the city should use to tabulate people's vote ranking. The debate was confusing and poorly understood, Skadron said.

"There's been a huge amount of negative publicity," Skadron said. "The city and council are partly to blame."

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Aspen Colorado used IRV in an election recently. It was plagued with problems, all well documented. One of them, upon review of the votes, showed a candidate Michael Behrendt would have won if we would have received *less* first place votes.

This is a well known counting problem with Instant Runoff Voting and has been described in paper from leading academics Academics, Election Experts and Political Scientists. An extensive discussion of this topic is covered in Mathematics and Democracy, Designing Better Voting and Fair-Division Procedures by Prof. Steven Brams, Political Science Dept. of NYU

Two informative step by step videos covering this can be view at:

www.tinyurl.com/IRVMoreVotes

And

www.tinyurl.com/IRVLast2First

Though there have been many IRV elections over the years, mostly in private institutions. With less than 80 municipal IRV election completed, it has only been recently that sunshine and transparency laws have provided academics and election integrity advocates the ability to analyze IRV elections to see if this effect has occurred. Without the ability to review the anonymous ballot strings, the information contained in each vote, how each ballot ranked which candidate, this evaluation was impossible. This problem could have happened many times over. Only a handful of elections have been analyzed, and both Aspen's recent election and Burlington showed similar problems. Traditional voting methods are completely immune from these effects as the votes are additive, one person, one vote, add them up, over 50% is the winner, if not, a run-off is held later.

This is one of the reasons Aspen voters rejected IRV at the polls on Nov. 4th, and Burlington, VT's petition drive to repeal IRV is gaining steam.

Here is a letter sent by Prof. Brams to the NY Times in response to an article advocating IRV as a money saver to elections:

Dear Editor,

The answer to the question that Sam Roberts poses is not that runoffs are superfluous but that they are too expensive. But the solution he suggests, "instant runoff voting," whereby voters rank candidates, is a poor one for two reasons.

First, because instant runoff eliminates candidates who get the fewest first-choice votes--transferring their votes to the candidates their supporters rank highest that remain in the race--a strong centrist candidate who comes in third in a 3-person race

will not make the runoff. Consequently, the runoff will be between the two more extreme candidates, even though the centrist could beat each of these candidates in separate face-to-face contests by getting votes from not only his or her own supporters but also from the supporters of the other extreme candidate.

Second, though hard to believe, a voter can on occasion help a favorite candidate by not voting for him or her, or giving that candidate a low ranking. This is because of complications that arise in the elimination of candidates and the transfer of their votes to candidates they rank lower. Thus, a voter may affect negatively the chances of a favorite winning by ranking that candidate first--just the opposite of what one wants a voting system to do.

There are better remedies to the problem of selecting the strongest candidate in a race. One is "approval voting," whereby voters can approve of as many candidates as they like. This system tends to elect the strongest candidate overall, not the strongest minority candidate. Moreover, unlike instant runoff, a voter can never affect negatively the chances of an approved candidate's winning by approving of him or her.

Sincerely,
Steven J. Brams
Professor of Politics, NYU

All the Blue Ribbon Review Panel members contributed to the discussion. The discussion time continued for approximately 2 hours which included information from John Arntz on 'The San Francisco Experience':

San Francisco had only 6 months to implement RCV
Software algorithm did not work initially
Counting time was lost due to this fact
It takes time to report the algorithm results, (it's not as easy as pushing a bottom), limiting the reports to a day or two after the election, and periodically after that until certification is the preferred schedule in San Francisco
SF is presently experiencing voter drop off since implementation
Elected candidate/campaigns did not realize the impact to them in an RCV election
"How to Mark the Ballot" is the most important issue for education
You'll need to reach the voter numerous times to educate them
John commented that "Pierce County is working on a very good plan thus far"

After the discussion time, Pat McCarthy gave a recap of the Blue Ribbon Review Panel meetings, highlighting the 4 topics of discussion which were:

Filing for Office
Results Reporting
Voting Options
Voter Education

As a result of these meetings, eleven items were identified and will be presented to the County Council for review on Monday, June 11, 2007 at 11:00 am.

Pat McCarthy continued the meeting with an explanation of 'what's next' on the RCV time line in order to move forward with the Ranked Choice Voting implementation process.

Three minute time periods were given to the public to present comments to the panel and the Pierce County Election staff. Ten public attendees addressed the panel:

Karen Willard
Rich Anderson-Connolly
Roxy Giddings
William Giddings
Robert Hill
Chris Karnes
Kelly Haughton
Erika Crammer
David Minikel
Renee Rich

Burlington Vermont 2009 IRV mayor election

Thwarted-majority, non-monotonicity & other failures (oops)

By Anthony Gierzynski, Wes Hamilton, & Warren D. Smith, March 2009. (skip to summary) (Brian Olson's independent analysis)

The Propaganda

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) advocates, especially FairVote's Terrill G. Bouricius (who lives in Burlington, formerly served there as alderman, also formerly served as a Vermont state legislator, calls himself a "political scientist," was instrumental in making IRV happen in Burlington starting in 2006, is denoted a "senior analyst" by FairVote, and in 2005 received a contract to design Burlington's IRV voter education program), often hail Burlington's adoption of IRV for its mayoral election as a "great success." Bouricius has also contended in various online posts, print media, and interviews that IRV always elects a "majority winner." E.g.

Claims made by T.G.Bouricius and FairVote (IRV advocates)

1. Under **instant runoff voting**, if there is no majority winner, you're not done yet. You have a runoff. But instead of calling voters back to the polls, you just declare the bottom candidates defeated, look at those ballots, and transfer those ballots to those voters' second choice. **So you determine which candidate is actually preferred by a majority of voters.** – Terrill Bouricius, January 1999 published interview by Labor Party.

2. Districts with plurality election laws face the prospect of **"spoiler"** candidates throwing an election to a candidate that is not the most preferred by the majority. **IRV solves [this problem]** and offers additional advantages... IRV also **allows voters to vote their true preference without any need for calculating which candidate has the best chance.** You can vote for the candidate you want most, without any fear that you will inadvertently help elect the candidate you can't stand. – Terrill Bouricius, endorsement letter for IRV in Vancouver.

3. Burlington's instant runoff voting (IRV) election went off **without a hitch in 2009.** If anything, it was even more successful [than 2006]. **IRV clearly worked as intended to avoid the "spoiler" dynamic**... While Sore losers in Burlington are complaining about sour grapes, instant runoff voting has proven itself again as a bulwark of democracy. – FairVote blog post by Terrill Bouricius 6 March 2009 titled "Some Analysis of the 2009 Burlington IRV Election." This "analysis" contains no mention of any of the numerous pathologies we shall point out below.

4. The Burlington election was a model of clean, open debate **without "spoiler" concerns**... – FairVote official press release dated 3 March 2009 titled **"Burlington Holds Second Highly Successful IRV Election."**

However, there are reasons to believe otherwise... We shall show by considering Burlingon's 2009 Mayor election that all the claims by Bouricius and FairVote in bold print above are false.

The votes

This was the second IRV election conducted in Burlington and it was won by Progressive Bob Kiss. (The other 4 candidates were Andy Montroll[Dem], James Simpson[Green], Dan Smith[Indpt], and Kurt Wright[Repub]. Kiss also won the *first* election, held in 2006; in that election Kiss had been both the plain-plurality and IRV winner, and almost certainly also a "beats-all" and Borda winner – won by a "landslide" – so there was little basis to dispute his enthronement.)

Official Burlington Mayoral 2009 IRV race results (election held 3 March) from http://www.burlingtonvotes.org/20090303/. 8980 valid ballots (also 4 "invalid" ballots were left uncounted). Smith, Simpson, and Write-ins were eliminated immediately & simultaneously since their "defeat was mathematically inevitable." Then Montroll was dropped. That left Wright vs Kiss in the final round, which was won by Kiss.

Candidate(Party)	1st Rd	2nd Rd	Final
Bob KISS(Progr)	2585(29%)	2981	4313 (wins)
Kurt WRIGHT(Repub)	2951(33%)	3294	4061
Andy MONTROLL(Dem)	2063(23%)	2554	
Dan SMITH(Indpt)	1306(15%)		
James SIMPSON(Green)	35 (0.4%)		
(Write-ins)	36 (0.4%)		

Unofficial Burlington 2009 Mayoral race vote data. Votes counted by Juho Laatu. Also counted independently (pdf) by Univ. Vermont students in the Vermont Legislative Research Shop supervised by professor Anthony Gierzynski. (All 8980 ballots included in these counts, but candidates other than Kiss, Wright, and Montroll are ignored. Further data processing by W.D. Smith. There are *disagreements* among the Laatu, UVM, and official counts by up to 5 votes.)

#Voters	Their Vote
1332	M>K>W
767	M>W>K
455	M
2043	K>M>W
371	K>W>M
568	K
1513	W>M>K
495	W>K>M
1289	W

[Sample ballot (pdf)]

Pairwise-defeats matrix: entry says how many voters preferred canddt in that row over canddt in that column.

Canddt	K	M	W
K	*	3477	4314
M	4067	*	4597
W	4064	3668	*

Remarks on the counts: Unfortunately, the Official, Laatu, and U.Vermont counts all *disagree*; but never by more than 5 votes (which is small enough that none of our conclusions below will be affected, no matter which count you trust). Laatu's count (done by software inputting official ballot files) is the most complete of the three and is the one we shall use below. The official count (which we downloaded various times, the latest on 27 March 2009 from Burlington's web site; it had not

changed) was also done by computer using the same input files; but the U.Vermont count was done manually. We believe we understand the reason for the Laatu-vs-Official discrepancy: it is that the official count treated ballots involving equal-rankings in a stupid manner. Specifically, the official method apparently *discarded* the 4 ballots ranking their top-two candidates equal; but did *not* discard ballots ranking other candidate-pairs equal. This approach is a holdover from the olden pre-computer days when a ballot had to be put in one or the other pile. Since this election was counted by computer there was nothing stopping the computer from putting *half* of the vote in *both* piles. That, it seems to us, would have more-accurately reflected what the voter wanted (versus just discarding her vote entirely). This subpage gives full details about these discrepancies (as well as the full set of votes, plus many other calculations).

The pathologies

1. According to the pairwise table, Democrat Andy Montroll was favored over Republican Kurt Wright 56% to 44% (930-vote margin) and over Progressive Bob Kiss 54% to 46% (590-vote margin) majorities in both cases. In other words, in voting terminology, Montroll was a **"beats-all winner,"** also called a "Condorcet winner" – and a fairly convincing one.

However, in the *IRV* election, Montroll came in *third!* Kiss beat Wright in the final IRV round with 51.5% (252-vote official margin).

We repeat: According to the preferences stated by the voters on their ballots, if Montroll had gone head-to-head with either Kiss or Wright (or anybody else) in a two-man race, he would be mayor. This **refutes** Bouricius's claim that IRV "determines which candidate is actually preferred by a majority of voters."

> Of course it was a huge success! No voting machines exploded or burst into flames. A majority of voters did not suffer from paper cuts.
>
> A majority of the voters expressed a second preference. We'll assume they were glad to have that opportunity.
>
> Hmm, I wonder if the W>M>K voters would be pleased to know that their second choices *weren't counted*, or that they could have elected M if they had voted for M as their first choice? I wonder if the Montroll supporters would be pleased to know that the voters preferred Montroll over every other candidate – including the winner that IRV chose?
> – Jan Kok, responding to FairVote's claims this IRV election had been a "big success" like usual.

(Montroll, incidentally, was endorsed by both former VT governor Howard Dean and the *Burlington Free Press.* It is possible in principle for IRV to yield even more dramatic thwarted-majority pathologies, e.g. X defeating every rival pairwise by 99:1 or larger majorities, yet still IRV eliminates X in its first round.)

2. Despite that, IRV still seems to have performed better in this election than plain plurality voting, which (based on top-preference votes) would have elected Wright. That would have been even worse, since Wright actually was a "lose-to-all loser" among the Big Three, i.e. would have lost head-to-head races versus either Kiss or Montroll.

Incidentally, plurality also elects Wright with *reversed* ballots (M,K,W only), i.e. paradoxically regards Wright as *both* the best winner *and* worst loser among the Big Three! IRV can also exhibit such "reversal failures" but did not in this

particular race.

3. Also, in this IRV election, Wright was a **"spoiler"**; if Wright had not been in the race then Montroll would have won (which the Wright voters would have preferred: 1513 were for Montroll versus 495 for Kiss). Any voters who voted for Wright as their favorite "without any fear of inadvertently electing Kiss" were foolish to lack such fear, because, in fact, if they instead had "calculated" right, they could have strategically voted Montroll and thus avoided electing Kiss. (That's an example of **"favorite-betrayal."**) This **refutes** Bouricius's & FairVote's other claims shown in bold print.

4. Another problem with IRV is the fact that it cannot be counted in precincts because there is no such thing as a "precinct subtotal." That's bad because it forces centralized (or at least centrally-directed) counting, thus making the election more vulnerable to fraud and communication outages. This election also exhibited this kind of **nonadditivity paradox**. There were 7 wards. Apparently, the ward-winners (if IRV had been done in each ward independently) would have been

Ward	Ward#1	Ward#2	Ward#3	Ward#5	Ward#6	Ward#7	Ward#4
IRV Winner	KISS	KISS	KISS	MONTROLL	MONTROLL	WRIGHT	WRIGHT
#Valid Ballots	836	691	1035	1530	1225	1715	1944
Total Ballots	2562			2755		3659	

Let's just say that it is hard to infer from this that Kiss "should" be the overall IRV winner – most people would guess Wright or Montroll before guessing Kiss, especially if they knew that Wright voters expressed a preference for Montroll over Kiss by more than a 3:1 ratio.

It is possible in principle for IRV to yield more-dramatic such pathologies, for example X can be the IRV winner in *every* district, with Y the IRV winner in the whole country.

5. If we assume that the "W" voters who expressed no preference for K>M or M>K are regarded as (really) favoring one or the other with 50% chance – e.g. if "W"s are regarded as half W>M>K and half W>K>M (or any realistic ratio of W>K>M and W>M>K besides 50-50) – then this election also featured (what voting theorists call) a **"no-show paradox."** That is: If 753 Wright voters who favored Montroll over Kiss had simply *stayed home* and refused to vote, they would have gotten, in their view, a better election winner (Montroll) than they got by honestly voting. So for them, a better "calculation" than voting honestly, was *not* voting! (More details.)

6. Finally – and probably craziest of all – this election also featured **non-monotonicity**. If 753 of the W-voters (specifically, all 495 of the W>K>M voters plus 258 of the 1289 W-only voters) had instead decided to vote for K, then W would have been eliminated (not M) and then M would have beaten K in the final IRV round by 4067 to 3755. In other words, *Kiss won, but if 753 Wright-voters had switched their vote to Kiss, that would have made Kiss lose!*

With non-monotonicity we can be *100% certain* that IRV *must* have delivered the "wrong winner" in either the election, or in the altered election got by changing the 753 votes (or both) – there is no way to contend both winners were sensible choices. (And the same sort of remark can also be made about no-show paradox elections.)

Further false claims made by T.G.Bouricius and FairVote (IRV advocates).

> In terms of the frequency of **non-monotonicity** in real-world elections: there is **no evidence** that this has **ever played a role in any IRV election** – not the IRV presidential elections in Ireland, nor the literally thousands of hotly contested IRV federal elections that have taken place for generations in Australia, nor in any of the IRV elections in the United States... Monotonicity has little if any real world impact. –

FairVote web page on "monotonicity" downloaded 15 March 2009.

Burlington just conducted an election for mayor using Instant Runoff Elections. This method quickly produced a candidate with a **majority** vote in a field of **four** candidates. – Letter by Adam Kleppner to *Caledonian Record* published 13 March 2009 and featured on FairVote web page. Amazingly enough (which was not mentioned in this letter) *Caleb* Kleppner is yet another "FairVote senior analyst" and the vice president of TrueBallot, Inc. and co-founder with Bouricius of Election Solutions Inc, both IRV-voting companies.

Who would other voting methods have elected?

Method	Winner (full vote set)	Winner (M,K,W only)
Nanson-Baldwin, Black, Raynaud, Schulze-beatpaths, Simpson-Kramer minmax, BTR-IRV, Tideman-ranked-pairs, WBS-IRV, Copeland, Heitzig-River, Arrow-Raynaud, Borda (if combine all write-in canddts into "one" or omit them), Dodgson, Keener-Eigenvector, Brian Olson's IRNR method, Sinkhorn, Bucklin, and (probably) Range & Approval	MONTROLL	MONTROLL
AntiPlurality and Coombs	?	MONTROLL
IRV	KISS	KISS
Plain Plurality	WRIGHT	WRIGHT

Notes: There really is no sensible way to run Borda, Coombs, or AntiPlurality elections if there are write-in candidates.

We do not know who **Range & Approval voting** would have elected because we only have rank-order ballot data – depending on how the voters chose their "approval thresholds" or numerical range-vote scores, they could have made *any* of the Big Three win (also Smith). However it seems likely they would have elected Montroll. Here's an **analysis** supporting that view: Suppose we assume that voters who ranked exactly *one* candidate among the big three would have approved him alone; voters who ranked exactly *two* would have approved both, and voters who ranked all *three* would have approved the top-two a fraction X of the time (otherwise approve top-one alone). The point of this analysis, suggested by Stephen Unger, is that voters were allowed to vote "A>B," which while *mathematically* equivalent to "A>B>C" among the three candidates A,B,C, was *psychologically* different; by "ranking" a candidate versus "leaving him unranked" those voters in some sense were *providing* an "approval threshhold." Then the total approval counts would be

$$\text{Montroll}=4261+1849X,\ \text{Kiss}=3774+1035X,\ \text{and Wright}=3694+741X.$$

Note that Montroll is the most-approved (and Wright the least-approved) *regardless* of the value of X for *all* X with $0 \le X \le 1$.

Hence: pretty much every voting method mankind ever invented would elect MONTROLL – making this a pretty easy election to call – *except* that IRV elects KISS and plurality elects WRIGHT. This election thus singles out IRV & plurality as nearly-uniquely bad performers.

Another way of looking at it is: among the Big Three, *all* these voting methods, including IRV, unanimously agree that Wright is the *worst* choice, i.e, they all would elect Wright using *reversed*

ballots. (The exceptions: AntiPlurality would select Montroll and Coombs would select Kiss as "worst.") If we agree Wright is clearly worst, then it comes down to Kiss vs Montroll. And the voters prefer MONTROLL over Kiss by 4067 to 3477.

How will the IRV-propagandists respond?

Our observation is that IRV-propagandists generally follow this 4-step procedure.

1. Contend IRV is the most amazing, best-possible voting method in all sorts of (unfortunately demonstrably false) ways. This tends to impress those who think about it for ≤3 minutes or know little about voting theory.
2. When confronted with counterexamples to their claims, sneer those were mere "semantics" of interest only to "mathematicians." (Unfortunately, as we've just seen, these counterexamples have very real democracy-denying consequences.)
3. When that doesn't work (because now they're talking to somebody who actually knows something), contend such counterexamples, while *admittedly* making IRV look bad, only arise incredibly rarely. (E.g. FairVote "senior analyst" Stephen Hill, quoted in W.Poundstone's book *Gaming the Vote*, compared the rate of occurrence of IRV pathologies like non-monotonicity to that of a "major meteorite strike.") Hill must be amazed how not only non-monotonicity, but 5 other pathologies *as well*, all managed to occur in only the second IRV election Burlington ever tried! What an incredible fluke! This must be like the annihilation of the entire *galaxy*! The amazingness increases to even greater astronomical levels when you realize the number of times such phenomena have already been seen when surveying the Louisiana governor runoff elections (such as the notorious "Lizard vs. Wizard" race), or the Australia 2007 IRV races; and in the (also continually touted by these same IRV propagandists as a "great success" – as usual they never mention its pathologies when they do that) 1990 Irish presidential election...
4. When *that* too has fallen to the ground, they generally claim the pathology actually was no problem, e.g. it was just *great* that Kiss won this election, and they see no problem with any of the vast number of pathologies here (course, they'd perceived problems back when it was a "rare" artificial election example in step 3, but that was *then*); or contend that better and simpler voting systems such as range or approval are somehow bad and/or unobtainable for mysterious reasons that only they possess, but which cannot be divulged or clearly explained; or falsely contend that somehow Arrow's theorem means that nothing can avoid these problems, so IRV is doing as well as anything could; or flail around trying to distract attention with some red herring.

(When with a new audience, they revert back to step 1.)

(27 March 2009) IRV propagandists indeed responded roughly as predicted above: Extensive discussion & compressed summary.

The truth

As shown in this election, IRV does *not* "solve the spoiler problem," does *not* "allow voters to vote their true preference without fear of inadvertently electing a candidate they cannot stand," and it does *not* elect candidates "actually preferred by a majority." These and other (e.g. non-monotonicity) pathologies are *not* rare. IRV in this election did *not* serve as a "bulwark of democracy" – rather the opposite. Our belief is that range voting, also known as "score voting," (and probably also approval voting) would *not* have exhibited any of these problems and in the

present example would have elected Montroll. (Indeed range voting *never* exhibits non-monotonicity or spoilers, and it is rare that it refuses to elect beats-all winners.)

Some references

Anthony Quas: Anomalous Outcomes in Preferential Voting, Stochastics and Dynamics 4,1 (2004) 95-105;

William H. Riker & Peter C. Ordeshook: An Introduction to Positive Political Theory (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973);

Peter Fishburn & Steven Brams: Paradoxes of Preferential Voting: What Can Go Wrong with Sophisticated Voting Systems Designed to Remedy Problems of Simpler Systems, Mathematics Magazine 56,4 (September 1983) 207-214.

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November 5, 2009

Burlington IRV repeal picks up momentum

By John Briggs, Free Press Staff Writer

The controversy over Burlington Telecom finances has energized the effort to repeal instant run-off voting, say those involved in the petition drive to put the issue on the city ballot in March.

"No question," said Dave Hartnett, a New North End Democrat and Parks and Recreation Department commissioner. "It clearly has picked up momentum. There are just more people contacting us throughout the city asking for petitions they could sign or take out."

The petition drive by the group "One Person, One Vote" began shortly after Mayor Bob Kiss was re-elected in March. He won first-place votes from just 29 percent of voters and trailed Republican Kurt Wright by 313 votes after the second IRV round.

In the third round, after Democrat Andy Montroll was mathematically eliminated, Kiss gained a plurality of third-place votes and defeated Wright. The voting data also showed that Montroll, with 4,683 votes, received more first- or second-place votes than either Kiss (3,969) or Wright (3,936).

IRV was approved by voters in 2005 and subsequently by the state Legislature. It was used in Burlington mayoral elections in 2006 and 2009. The previous system called for a run-off election between the top two candidates if neither received 40 percent of the vote.

"A lot of people think the mayor's race was invalid, that we have an invalid mayor," Hartnett said. "I'm not ready to say that, but for those who think that, Burlington Telecom has added fuel to the fire."

Democrat Sandy Baird has supported the Kiss administration's handling of the Burlington Telecom issue but has been involved in the effort to repeal IRV. "Many people think IRV tends to select a person who doesn't represent the choice of the first-place votes," she said. "That's really what people are upset about."

Baird said the Burlington Telecom issue has energized the IRV petition drive, though in her view "energy began to build before the BT situation. It's a good opportunity to revisit it, because there's so much feeling about it since the last election."

Wright, who was City Council president when he lost to Kiss, said the petition drive has gathered about 1,200 of the 1,600 signatures needed to put the issue on the March ballot. "I'm going to call everyone with a petition sheet in the next day or two and encourage them to finish up in the next couple of weeks," he said. "Then we'll set up a meeting and see if we've passed the magic 1,600 mark. The signatures are undoubtedly out there."

The deadline for petitioned articles to be added to the March ballot is Jan. 22, according to the Secretary of State's Office.

"I went out last weekend in Ward 7 to get some signatures, and ... (BT) was all they wanted to talk about," said Councilor Paul Decelles, R-Ward 7. "There's an enormous amount of frustration and anger in the community. It's advantageous for us to be gathering signatures now."

Decelles said the BT issues are adding energy to the IRV petition drive because of "buyer's remorse. Seeing the second-place candidate become the mayor frustrates (voters)," he said. "Seeing this going on with BT, and the financial mess we're in adds to the anger and frustration."

"What I'm hearing," Wright said, "because BT has been such a hot topic in the news and with voters, with the mess we have in Burlington, is 'Yeah, give me that petition. We need a change.' People seem really fired up, and a lot are making the connection: 'Let's change the voting system.'"

"It's crucial to have a full debate," Wright said. "I think it will get a lot more debate and attention this time than when it was voted in in 2005, the year of the YMCA (Moran plant proposal)."

Kiss did not respond to requests for comment.

Contact John Briggs at 660-1863 or jbriggs@bfp.burlingtonfreepress.com. See Briggs' City Hall blog at www.burlingtonfreepress.com/cityhallblog.

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thenewstribune.com

PRINTER-FRIENDLY FORMAT

Tacoma, WA - Monday, September 14, 2009

< Back to Regular Story Page

Results are in: 63 percent disliked Ranked Choice Voting

Auditor defends ranked choice

JOSEPH TURNER; joe.turner@thenewstribune.com
Last updated: December 6th, 2008 01:45 AM (PST)

Pierce County spent a lot of money on a new voting method for a few county offices in November's election, and most voters didn't like it a bit.

Auditor Pat McCarthy said ranked-choice voting will cost county taxpayers about $1.7 million, which is half of the overall $3.4 million it cost to put on the 2008 general election.

Although Pierce County voters changed the county charter last year to allow the new voting method, it appears they've changed their collective mind. Two of three voters who responded to a survey were opposed to the concept.

"It was overwhelming," McCarthy told members of the state Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee on Friday. "The majority did not like it."

That was based on nearly 91,000 voters who filled out a questionnaire that accompanied mail-in ballots.

Ranked-choice voting, sometimes called instant runoff voting, allowed voters to indicate their first, second and third choice in a race. If no candidate gets more than 50 percent of the total number of votes in the first round of counting, the second choice on ballots of the last-place candidate are then counted. That continues until one candidate finally gets a majority.

McCarthy, who won a close election in a four-way race for county executive, joined election officials from Yakima and Chelan counties to give state lawmakers a report on the election. The state used online voter registration, and 37 of the 39 counties – all but King and Pierce – conducted their elections entirely by mail.

Pierce was the only county to use ranked-choice voting, and for only a few county races. Pierce voters got a second, conventional ballot to vote for president, governor, Congress and local races.

McCarthy said she considered the election "an amazing success," even though she didn't care much for the new method. She said the computer system and algorithms worked and that most voters understood how to fill out the ballots.

State Sen. Pam Roach, R-Auburn, a committee member, took issue with that assessment.

"How can you say it was a success when voters didn't know who the executive was for two weeks?" Roach asked. "That absolutely was a disaster."

Processing ranked-choice ballots did slow down the tally, McCarthy said, but the method had nothing to do with how close the races were. Her own race for executive wasn't decided until three weeks. But McCarthy pointed out that a couple of legislative races were so close that even using conventional voting methods, they

required a recount and weren't decided until earlier this week.

The decision to adopt the new voting method was approved by 53 percent of voters. McCarthy said she thinks voters were eager to switch to something else because they were still angry about the previous election when they were forced to pick a Democratic, Republican or other political party's slate of candidates.

She said she hopes the County Council will give voters a chance to reconsider the charter amendment that created ranked-choice voting.

Susan Eidenschink, treasurer of the Tacoma-Pierce County League of Women Voters, blamed the long lines at the polls on Election Day on McCarthy's decision to have fewer polling places.

"We're interested in seeing it expanded," she said of ranked choice. "We feel it definitely deserves more of a trial than this one election."

Krist Novoselic, chairman of FairVote, echoed that sentiment. The former Nirvana bassist is now a local government official in rural Wahkiakum County and said he's worked to get Memphis, Tenn., and Telluride, Colo., to try ranked-choice voting.

Committee chairwoman Sen. Darlene Fairley, D-Lake Forest Park, said she's been listening for years to people and groups who are supporters of the new voting method, but she has no interest in seeing it extend beyond the borders of Pierce County.

"I'm with those folks who said they were confused," Fairley said.

"This sounds just insane," said Sen. Eric Oemig, D-Kirkland, a committee member.

Joseph Turner: 253-597-8436

blogs.thenewstribune.com/politics

Originally published: December 6th, 2008 12:35 AM (PST)

Pierce County Facts

- Total Registered Voters in Pierce County (as of 3/4/2009)
  - 441,331 Total Voters
    - 412,993 Active
    - 28,338 Inactive
  - Total Absentee Voters – 78%
    - 320,117 Absentee Voters
    - Approximately 10,000 Military, Overseas and Out of County Voters
  - Total Poll Voters – 22%
    - 92,876
    - 58 Polling locations

How did Pierce County adopt Ranked Choice Voting?

- Pierce County's Charter Commission submitted Charter Amendment No. 3 to the voters to adopt Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)
  - Approved by the voters of Pierce County in November 2006
    - 52.93%
    - Eliminated the Pick-a-Party Primary for these offices

- Required the Pierce County Auditor to implement instant runoff voting for certain county offices by July, 2008
  - Executive
  - Assessor-Treasurer
  - County Council Members
  - Sheriff
  - Auditor
  - Excludes Judges and Prosecuting Attorney

We changed the nomenclature

- IRV = RCV
- Why?
  - To assist the voter education process
  - More descriptive of how the process works

What were some of the impacts to RCV candidates?

- The political parties chose who could use their party label through internal party rules for the partisan county offices
  - Executive
  - County Council
- All candidates filed nominating petitions with signature of 25 registered voters
- All candidates appeared directly on the General Election ballot
  - No primary was held for these offices

How did we implement RCV?

- Hired RCV staff and a consultant to study and develop a project plan
- An internal legal review was conducted of the newly passed amendments and the changes to the charter
- Consulted numerous times with our vendor (Sequoia)
  - Product availability and timeline
  - Software parameters

Blue Ribbon Review Panel

- A Blue Ribbon Review Panel was formed
  - Five meetings were held
  - Provided feedback and input regarding new charter rules and implementation
  - Major topics included:
    - Filing for Office
    - Results Reporting
    - Voting Options
    - Voter Education
  - Presented 11 action items to the County Council

Additional Charter Amendments

- Four additional Charter Amendments were presented to the voters in November 2007
- These amendments sought to clarify the implementation of RCV
  - Ranking of three candidates
  - Minor Party Candidate Filing Requirements
  - Implementation Dates
  - Allowing for the Multiple Elimination of losing candidates
  - Algorithm stops when a candidate has a majority

2008 – A Busy Year

Hurdles Jumped and Major Accomplishments

- Policies, Procedures and Rules Established
  - Nominating Procedures and obtaining permission to use Party Label
  - Filing Procedures
  - Procedures for Write-In candidates
  - Candidate Advancement
  - Multiple Elimination
  - Procedures for RCV Recounts
  - Running the Algorithm and Results Reporting

2008 – A Busy Year

More Hurdles

- Obtained Budget Funding for purchase of software
- Go/No Go Decision by vendor to release RCV Module was made
  - It was a GO!
- Conducted Internal Testing of RCV Tabulation software

2008 – A Busy Year
Another High Hurdle

- Received Emergency/Provisional Certification from the State
  - Still awaiting Federal Certification
  - Product is currently at iBeta
- During certification it was determined that the Polling Place Tabulators (Insights) could not be used:
  - Not robust enough to handle RCV ballot image
  - Would not support multiple precincts
  - Implemented a Central Count procedure for counting of Polling Place ballots
    - Hired 114 Ballot Transporters and Ballot Processors
    - Instituted 24 hour shifts to check in, visually scan and tabulate polling place ballots

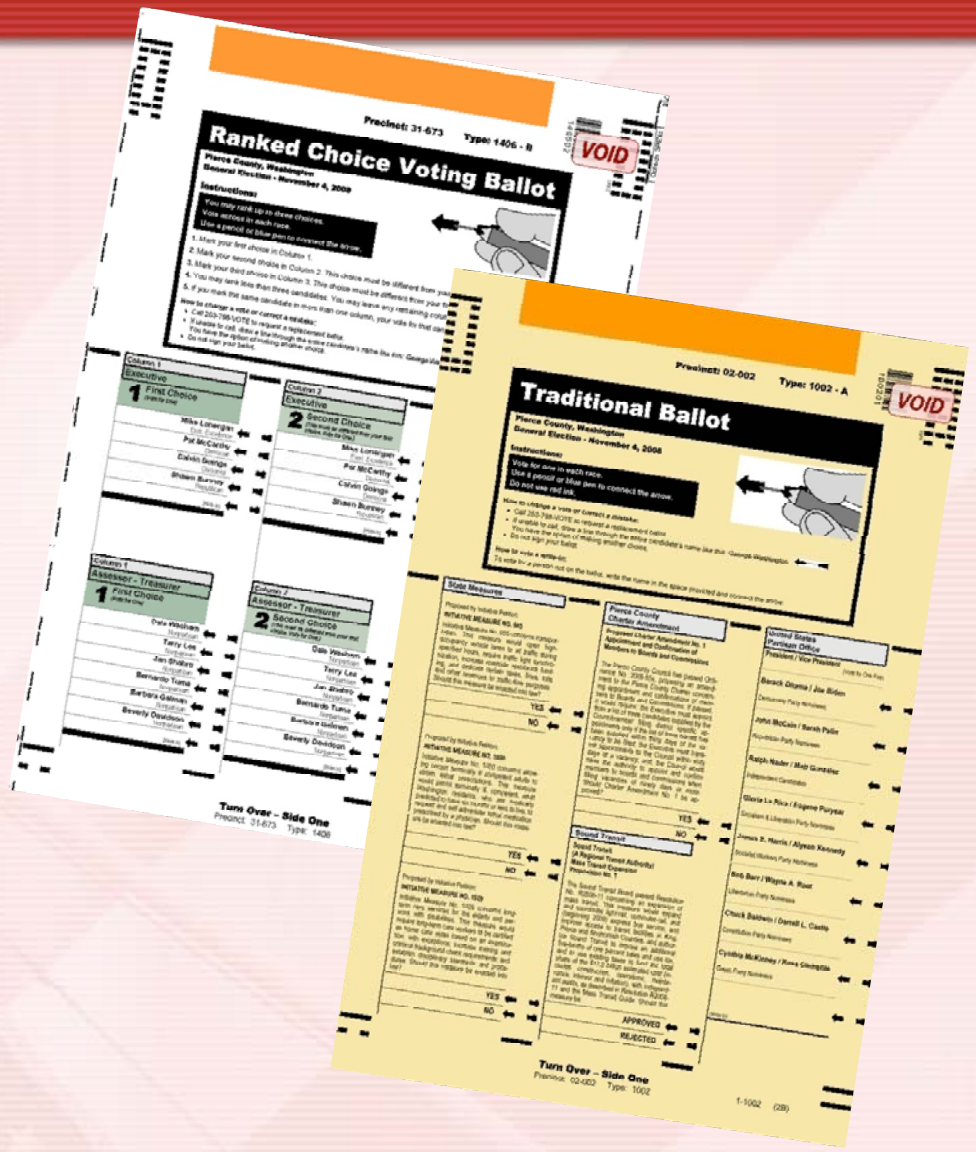
By Filing Week – June 1, 2008

We were ready!

2008 – A Busy Year

The Election Begins – Ballot Design

- Pierce County Voters received two ballot cards
  - Traditional Card
  - RCV Card
- Many hours spent developing instructions and ballot design



Postage Concerns

- The return absentee ballot envelope with two ballots required more than one stamp
- We made the decision to pay return postage
- We did not want an extra stamp to be a deterrent to returning both ballots

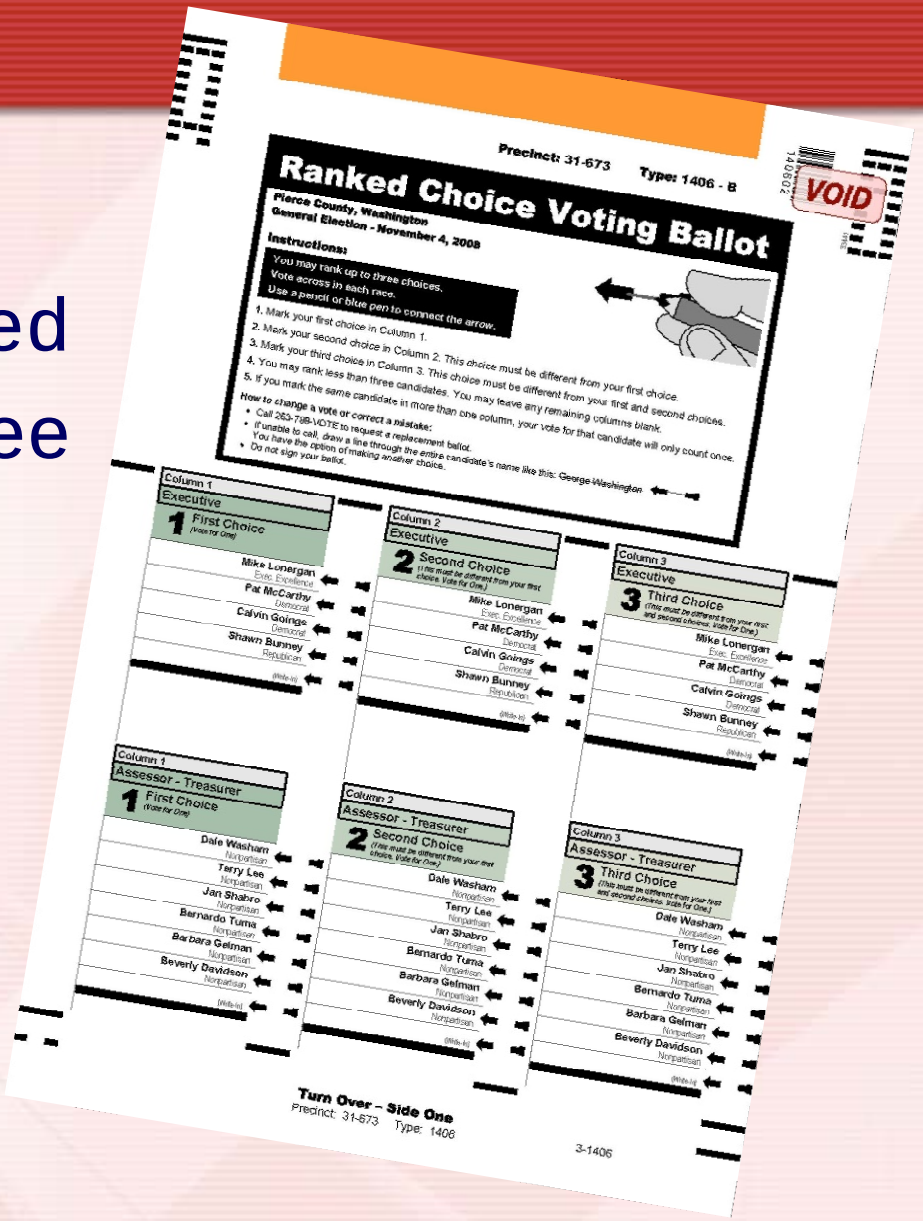
How did we educate our voters?

- Enhanced website
- Speakers Bureau
- Two Mailers
  - Postcard
  - Pamphlet
- Billboard
- Ballot insert
- Enhanced Voters' Pamphlet
- Polling place instructional posters
- PSAs on all major networks

Ranked Choice Voting – How does it work?

The Ranked Choice Voting Ballot card allowed voters to rank up to three candidates in each race.

- Executive
- Assessor – Treasurer
- Sheriff
- County Council



How were the RCV ballots tabulated?

- Every first choice vote was counted.
- Any candidate who received a majority (more than 50%) of the first choice votes was declared the winner.
- If no candidate received a majority, a process of eliminating candidates and redistributing 2nd and 3rd choices occurred.

So, how did it work?

- The candidate who received the fewest number of first choice votes was eliminated from the race.
- Next, voters who selected the eliminated candidate as their first choice had their second choice vote transferred and counted.
- Once the votes were transferred and counted, if a candidate received more than 50% of the votes, he or she was declared the winner.
- This process continued until one candidate had a winning majority (over 50%).

How much did it cost?

2008 General Election Costs	$1,664,542
RCV One Time Costs	$857,025
- Software, Education, Equipment	
RCV Ongoing Costs	$769,773
- Printing, Paper, Envelopes, Education, Staff	
RCV Subtotal	$1,626,798
Total Costs	**$3,291,340**

Did voters participate?

Voter Turnout:

Traditional Ballot Cards counted	333,824
RCV Ballot Cards counted	312,771
Total Ballot Cards Counted	**646,595**
Overall Turnout	**81.20%**

Voter Drop-off/Voter Fatigue Stats:

Executive's Race

Voters who didn't return an RCV ballot	21,053
Voters who didn't select a 1st Choice	13,330
Voters who didn't select a 2nd Choice	91,510
Voters who didn't select a 3rd Choice	140,439

Assessor – Treasurer's Race

Voters who didn't return an RCV ballot	21,053
Voters who didn't select a 1st Choice	50,431
Voters who didn't select a 2nd Choice	125,270
Voters who didn't select a 3rd Choice	150,833

Did voters like it?

- We surveyed all voters and 90,738 responded
  - 29,206 **Liked** Ranked Choice Voting
    - 33.98%
  - 56,751 **Didn't Like** Ranked Choice Voting
    - 66.02%
  - 4,781 Undecided/Miscellaneous

Note: Three times the number of voters responded to this survey compared to the 2004 Pick-a-Party primary survey.

Here's a sample of the positive comments…

- "Very clear, Bravo!"
- "It was easy, Thanks."
- "I liked it."
- "Great job."
- "I understood how to vote. Thank you."
- "New ranking method is great."
- "Let's expand it to state races."
- "More Ranked Choice Voting!"

Here's a sample of the negative comments….

- "Leave the ballots alone, why shove this down our throat, why?"
- "Keep the voting simple. Stop trying to fix what isn't broken."
- "Don't waste paper."
- "A useless endeavor and a waste of money."
- "Too complicated."
- "We vote for who we want and these extra votes I believe can only confuse the issue."
- "I'm very confused and I'm 75 years old. Too confusing."
- "I don't like it at all."
- "Traditional ballot is fantastic! What is the purpose and point of voting for 3 candidates? Isn't this an Election? NO Ranked Choice Voting, it seems fishy."

2008 – A Busy Year

The Election is certified

Ranked Choice Voting Results Table

Contest: **County Executive**
Load Type: **Complete**

	Round 1			Round 2			Round 3		
	Votes	%	Transfer	Votes	%	Transfer	Votes	%	Transfer
Mike Lonergan	45330	15.15%	-45330	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0
Pat McCarthy	79235	26.49%	+12973	92208	31.98%	+44138	136346	50.75%	0
Calvin Goings	69052	23.08%	+8375	77427	26.85%	-77427	0	0.00%	0
Shawn Bunney	105057	35.12%	+13633	118690	41.17%	+13602	132292	49.25%	0
Write-In	458	0.15%	-458	0	0.00%	0	0	0.00%	0
Exhausted by Over Votes	532		+61	593		+125	718		0
Under Votes	13107		0	13107		0	13107		0
Exhausted Ballots	0		+10746	10746		+19562	30308		0
Continuing Ballots	299132	100.00%		288325	100.00%		268638	100.00%	
TOTAL	**312771**		**0**	**312771**		**0**	**312771**		**0**
REMARKS	***Tie resolved in accordance with election law.**								

- Ballot Image Reports were posted to our website with each release of results

The Administration of the Election was a Success!

- Success was predicated on preparation
- We utilized best practices from San Francisco
- The algorithm worked
  - We even ran it on Election Night
  - Results and ballot image reports were posted to our website
- Our overall variance was remarkable
  - 0.000181

But success was not without significant challenges?

- Determined and requested an RCV budget
- Hired two additional staff members
- Hired an Election Consultant
- Spent hundreds of hours and resources to determine the protocols and procedures to implement and carry out Ranked Choice Voting
  - Staff time
  - Citizen input
- Provisional Emergency Certification of Voting System by Secretary of State
  - Central Count – Hired additional staff to transport ballots
  - Hired and trained over 600 staff
- Purchased software and equipment to conduct RCV

And more challenges…

- Confusion with some voters during the Primary and General Elections
  - Voters thought they could vote for two people in the Primary (Top Two)
  - Limited the Voter Education window
- Mailed two ballot cards to every absentee voter
  - Paid return postage to mitigate the need for multiple stamps for return ballots
- Issued two ballot cards to every poll voter
  - Made for longer waits at the polls
- Worked 24 hours per day for one week to tabulate ballots followed by 17 hour days up to certification

  333,824 Traditional Ballots Cast

  312,771 Ranked Choice Voting Ballots Cast

  646,595 Total Ballots Cast
- Election results were released daily, however due to the second ballot card results were delayed because of the sheer volume of ballot cards

Ranked Choice Voting in 2009 and Beyond?

- In January 2009, the Pierce County Council passed a Charter Amendment to repeal Ranked Choice Voting
  - Will appear on 2009 General Election ballot
- One RCV race (Auditor) for a one-year unexpired term will appear on the same ballot

Ranked Choice Voting

Questions and Answers

Political Buzz

Talking WA politics.

ABOUT

A team of experienced reporters keep you updated on what's happening in political arenas at the city, county, state and federal levels. From presidential campaign visits to who's running for city council, we've got it covered.

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Crosscut

Exit 133

Horse's Ass

Jim Camden's Spin Control

Politics Northwest (Seattle Times)

Publicola

Schmudget

Sound Politics

Strange Bedfellows (Seattle P.I.)

RCV repeal winning big; term limits extension failing

POSTED BY DAVID WICKERT ON NOVEMBER 3, 2009 AT 9:09 PM SHARE THIS

First returns on on Pierce County charter amendments:

Proposition 1 (term limits extension for county exec, council):

Approve: 33.5%

Reject: 66.5%

Proposition 2 (move elections for assessor-treasurer, auditor, sheriff to odd-numbered years):

Approve: 48.4%

Reject: 51.6%

Proposition 3 (repeal ranked choice voting):

Approve: 71.8%

Reject: 28.2%

CATEGORIES: BALLOT MEASURES, PIERCE COUNTY
TAGS:

TACOMA Daily Index

Nearly $3M cut in Pierce County Council's 2010 budget

Nov 10 2009

The Pierce County Council this evening adopted a 2010 county budget that cuts nearly $3 million and puts $1.5 million into reserves. The council's $269.3 million general-fund budget is $1.4 million less than the $270.6 million proposal it received from the County Executive in September. Of the $2.9 million in reductions councilmembers achieved, $1.9 million came from the Planning and Land Services Department (PALS). To help further prepare for more possible budget reductions next year, an amendment asks the executive to report by Jan. 31 on how to lower 2010 general-fund expenditures both by 1 percent and by 3 percent.

Councilmembers decided not to use cash reserves to help balance the budget; the County Executive's proposal pulled $1 million from the county's savings account, also known as general fund balance. Voters' repeal of Ranked-Choice Voting last week also freed-up $500,000 that would have been needed to implement the voting system for the 2010 election. The budget also dedicates $150,000 in the auditor's budget to retain poll voting in Pierce County

On the public safety and criminal justice front, the jail budget was reduced by $85,000, Superior Court increased by $80,000, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office received $190,000 more and District Court was increased by $50,000.

The council budget explores consolidating county departments. One amendment asks the executive to report back by June 30 on the feasibility of combining the Human Resources, Budget and Finance, Facilities, Risk Management and Information Technology departments into one General Services Division. Another amendment asks for a report by June 30 on making PALS a part of the Public Works & Utilities Department, which administers the county's roads, utilities, ferries and airports.

More information on the budget is available at http://www.piercecountywa.gov/council .

- -

For earlier Index coverage of the Pierce County budget process, click on the following links:

1. Home stretch for Pierce County budget process -- http://tacomadailyindex.com/portals-code/list.cgi?paper=88&cat=23&id=1658084&more=0

2. Budget shortfall forces Health Department closures in 2010 -- http://tacomadailyindex.com/portals-code/list.cgi?

ABOUT

This blog offers readers a behind-the-scenes glimpse of The News Tribune's opinion sections. We post observations, our editorials prior to publication, commentary we can't fit into the print edition and interesting ideas we've come across. Staff bloggers are Patrick O'Callahan, Cheryl Tucker and Kim Bradford; guest bloggers are Karen Irwin, Michael Allen, Richard Davis and David Seago.

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Spokesman-Review

Tri-City Herald

Vancouver Columbian

Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

Wenatchee World

Yakima Herald-Republic

POLITICAL AND POLICY COMMENTARY

Julie Anderson for Pierce County auditor

POSTED BY PATRICK O'CALLAHAN ON OCTOBER 19, 2009 AT 8:07 PM SHARE THIS

This editorial will appear in tomorrow's print edition.

A funny thing happened to the Pierce County auditor's office in the two years since citizens voted to make it nonpartisan: It seems to have become more partisan than ever.

Its current occupant, Jan Shabro, was appointed by the Republican majority on the County Council early this year after former Auditor Pat McCarthy was elected county executive.

In appointing Shabro, the council rebuffed the Democratic Party's nominees – which included Shabro's chief challenger, staunch Democrat Julie Anderson. The contest this year looks as partisan as any in the past.

Perhaps it's understandable that the Republicans and Democrats want to keep their stamp on the office. The auditor gets to print her name on every ballot sent out, which is a nice way to pick up name familiarity. That makes the position a good springboard to higher office, as McCarthy's election demonstrated.

Still, the county's chief elections officer ought to be more than nominally nonpartisan, if only to avoid the perception (inaccurate so far) that a particular party has its thumb on the scale when the ballots are counted. Running elections is pure administrative work, as are licensing, animal-control and the other responsibilities of the office. There's no liberal or conservative way to chase pit bulls.

Looking at this choice in terms of administrative experience, we think Anderson has the advantage.

A former lawmaker and County Council member, Shabro has impressive credentials as a legislator. Anderson – a member of the Tacoma City Council – has worked as an administrator in state government and as a director of nonprofit organizations. She has displayed a formidable attention to detail that would serve her well as auditor.

The third candidate in the race, Will Baker, deserves special mention. He's been arrested many times for disrupting public meetings, and he's been convicted of disorderly conduct.

He's made a hobby of running for office, and we would ordinarily regard his candidacy as a joke. Under ranked-choice voting, however, he could conceivably win if he garners enough second-choice votes. Not all diehard Republicans and Democrats are aware of Baker's past, and some might choose him over the better known candidate from the other party. When he ran for state auditor as a Republican in 2004, he won a dismaying one-third of the total vote.

Another perennial candidate with no apparent qualifications, Dale Washam, managed to get himself elected assessor-treasurer on an RCV ballot last year. The assessor-treasurer's office is now in predictable disarray. Let's not repeat the mistake with a candidate who, unlike Washam, actually has a criminal record.

CATEGORIES: ELECTION, SNEAK PREVIEW

TAGS: AUDITOR, ENDORSEMENTS, JAN SHABRO, JULIE ANDERSON, PIERCE COUNTY

Opinion of the News Tribune, IRV has elected Perennial Candidates with no apparent qualifications (elected with 37% support)

Pierce voters nix 'ranked-choice voting'

by David Ammons | November 10th, 2009

It was widely advertised as the latest cool thing in voting – "ranked-choice voting" or "instant-runoff voting."

Just three years ago, Pierce County voters, responding to a proposal from the charter review commission, approved this new system for all county elected officials except judges and prosecutors. This system, used rather than the Top 2 Primary, essentially combines the primary and general. Voters pick their favorites for each office, ranking their choices 1-2-3. Candidates who win strictly on first-place ballots are declared elected. If no one does, then second and third choices are apportioned out. The factoring is done by a computerized algorithem.

It has always been kinda confused to explain, but advocates believed it would be extremely popular and then possibly catch on elsewehere. Its biggest usage was last year when a new County Executive and other offices were filled this way, running in tandem with the regular state primary and general elections.

It went downhill from there. Voters participating in an auditor's survey said by a 2-to-1 margin that they didn't like the system. And this year, it was back on the ballot –and voters have thrown it out by a 71-29 margin.

The UNIVERSITY of VERMONT

Vermont Legislative Research Shop

Instant Runoff Voting

An Assessment Prepared by Anthony Gierzynski, PhD,
Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Vermont

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) or rank order voting suffers from three fundamental problems: 1) it discriminates against classes of voters by adding complexity the ballot; 2) it has a very real potential to produce perverse outcomes or voting paradoxes that are not majoritarian; and, 3) it fails to address the real problem that arises when multiple parties compete in a two-party system.

Increasing the Complexity of an Already Complicated Ballot

One of the ways that the US elections are unique when compared to other democratic systems is the length and complexity US ballots. The US asks voters to make decisions on a multitude of offices from Presidency down to Justice of the Peace and to answer a multitude of ballot questions. Another way US elections are unique is their low level of voter turnout. The two are related. The complexity of US elections increases the costs of participating (having to gather more information to make more decisions) while making it more difficult for voters to discern the connection between any one vote they cast and what government does, which ultimately results in fewer people voting (particularly those at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale).[1]

If anyone has any doubt that the complexity of an election ballot can disenfranchise voters, particularly more vulnerable classes of voters, one need only to remember Florida in 2000. Complex ballot designs—including butterfly ballots and ballots that listed candidates on more than one page—confused tens of thousands of voters, who spoiled their ballots by voting for more than one candidate. Spoiled ballots included a disproportionate number on which Al

[1] See Richard W. Boyd, "Election Calendars and Voter Turnout," *American Politics Quarterly* 14 (January-April 1986), pp. 89-104; Richard W. Boyd, "The Effects of Primaries and Statewide Races on Voter Turnout," *Journal of Politics* 51 (August 1989), pp. 730-739; Shaun Bowler, Todd Donovon, and Trudi Happ, "Ballot Propositions and Information Costs: Direct Democracy and the Fatigued Voter," *The Western Political Quarterly* 45 (June 1992), pp. 559-568; Pippa Norris, *Count Every Voice: Democratic Participation* Worldwide (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Pippa Norris, "Do Institutions Matter? The Consequence of Electoral Reform for Political Participation," in *Rethinking the Vote: The Politics and Prospects of American Election Reform* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 133-148; and, Arend Lijphart, "Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma: Presidential Address, American Political Science Association, 1996, *American Political Science Review*, vol. 91, no. 1, March 1997, pp. 1-14.

Gore was selected, costing him the election. Spoiled ballots were more likely to occur with the more complex ballots. And, those disenfranchised by these complex ballots tended to poorer, less educated, minority, and elderly voters.[2]

The US has the longest and most complex ballots in the democratic world, a fact that has negative consequences for voter participation and political equality. If states in the US were to adopt IRV for all (or even some) of their elections, the situation would only be made worse. Instead of simply choosing the preferred candidate for president, senator, representative, governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, treasurer, and so on, the public would be asked to rank each candidate. Ranking each candidate in all these races means that the cognitive costs of voting would double, triple or even quadruple. And, the effect of adding such complexity to the ballot is not neutral or random; it is more likely to confuse those same groups of disadvantaged voters confused by the Florida ballots. This fact was demonstrated by exit polls of both Burlington voters and San Francisco voters who have also used IRV.[3] Even when used in a single contest, IRV caused greater confusion among those on the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. In other words, IRV discriminates against certain classes of voters, violating the principle of political equality.

> Note: IRV proponents counter these exit poll results with data from wards or precincts, arguing poorer wards/precincts performed well in IRV contests. The problem with that claim is that it is not possible to infer facts about individual behavior (whether individuals had problems with the ballots) from aggregate data (totals for each voting location). This is known in the trade as an ecological fallacy. The exit poll data which measures the relationship at the individual level are the more reliable data.

Proponents of IRV like to frame this argument about the complexity IRV would add by countering that what critics of IRV are saying is that voters are stupid. Not so. These analyses are not impugning the intelligence of the American voter, just recognizing the limits to what a political system can ask of its citizens and recognizing that adding complexity to an already complex ballot will disproportionately harm some groups of people more than others. In a democracy that values political participation and political equality such side-effects should not be dismissed lightly.

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[2] See Jonathan N. Wand, Kenneth W. Shotts, Jasjeet S. Sekhon, Walter R. Mebane, Jr., Michael C. Herron and Henry E. Brady, "The Butterfly Did It: The Aberrant Vote for Buchanan in Palm Beach County, Florida," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 95, No. 4. (Dec., 2001), pp. 793-810. Also see *New York Times* web site http://www.nytimes.com/images/2001/11/12/politics/recount/.

[3] Neely, Francis, Lisel Blash, and Corey Cook, "An Assessment of Ranked-Choice Voting in the San Francisco 2004 Election," (Public Research Institute, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA. May 2005; and, Anthony Gierzynski, "Testing Grounds: How Well Does Instant Runoff Voting Work?" *Campaigns & Elections: Special Case Study Edition* (May 2007), pp. 52-56, http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/intellisphere/ce0507-special/, accessed June 13, 2007.

Voting Paradoxes or perverse outcomes

There exists a number of voting paradoxes or perverse outcomes that can occur with IRV, which are not associated with the typical single vote system. Such outcomes contradict the claim of IRV proponents that IRV creates majority winners. Perverse outcomes include the possibility that one candidate could increase their vote only to lose the election. Another possibility is one in which every candidate can beat another candidate in a head-to-head matchup (such as candidate A beats B, B beats C, and C beats A...a paper-scissors-rock scenario) so that the election results fail to produce a true majority preference for *any* candidate. Yet another is one in which a candidate can beat any other candidate by a majority in a head-to-head matchup and yet lose the election. The probability of these perverse outcomes happening is not small.[4]

Indeed, the 2009 mayoral election in Burlington witnessed several of these perverse outcomes in what was only the second election Burlington ran using IRV. One candidate who lost the election, Andy Montroll, was preferred over all other candidates in a head-to-head matchup. That is *a majority of voters ranked Montroll ahead of the winner Bob Kiss and ahead of the second place finisher, Kurt Wright*, yet Montroll lost the election (see Table below).

No. of Voters who ranked	Kiss (Prog)	Montroll (D)	Wright (R)
Kiss (Prog) ahead of...		3,477	4,314
Montroll (D) ahead of...	4,067		4,597
Wright (R) ahead of...	4,064	3,668	

Democrat Andy Montroll was favored over Republican Kurt Wright 56% to 44% (930-vote margin) and over Progressive Bob Kiss 54% to 46% (590-vote margin) majorities. The above table provides the total number of voters choosing one candidate over another in one-on-one match-ups (shaded cells represent winner of match-up between row and column).

The 2009 election also suffered from the "no-show paradox" that means Wright voters who preferred Montroll over Kiss (that is, ranked Montroll 2nd) would have been better staying home and not voting at all. And, the election also evinced the property of nonmonoticity—additional votes for Kiss could have made Kiss lose (if more Wright voters voted for Kiss, Montrol would have come in 2nd place in the first round and then defeated Kiss in the runoff). In sum, *it is unequivocally clear that IRV did NOT result in a majority winner in 2009.*

[4] See Anthony Quas, "Anomalous Outcomes in Preferential Voting," *Stochastics and Dynamics* Vol. 4, No. 1 (2004),pp. 95-105; William H. Riker and Peter C. Ordeshook, *An Introduction to Positive Political Theory* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973); and Peter Fishburn and Steven Brams, "Paradoxes of Preferential Voting: What Can Go Wrong with Sophisticated Voting Systems Designed to Remedy Problems of Simpler Systems," *Mathematics Magazine* vol. 56, no. 4, September 1983: pp. 207-214

Failing to Address the Real Problem

In essence what IRV is, is an attempt to use a technological fix to solve a political problem. Single seat contests (such as mayor, or US Senator, or governor, or president) provide an incentive for those of similar political mind (that is ideology) to coalesce behind a single candidate in order to win a majority of votes and capture the seat—those that work together to build a majority before elections win, those that don't lose. This structural incentive is the main reason the US has a two party system. Forcing people of like mind to work together to win elections then creates the governing majorities that have been approved by the people and that can then go about the work of implementing the will of the people.

When a group with a (mostly) shared ideology—such as the case the Progressive Party and the Democratic Party in Vermont—becomes fragmented in this type of system, with each putting forward their own candidates, the problem that arises is a *political* problem (politics defined here simply as the means by which conflicts are resolved in order to determine who controls the government). In such cases, what IRV does is it allows the factions to ignore the political problem by using a technological fix while failing to resolve their political differences through the necessary negotiations that characterize politics. In other words, IRV allows such factions to avoid working together (as they should if they want mostly the same thing). When such factions fail to work together, they ultimately fail to accomplish the raison d'être of such organizations, which is not just to continue existing, but is to win control of government in order to use it to make people's lives better in a manner consistent with their political values.

Conclusion

The problems with rank order voting documented here are well known among political science scholars (PhDs) who have recognized expertise in electoral systems; indeed, it would be about as easy to find one such expert in support of rank order voting as it would be to find a qualified climate scientist who thinks global warming isn't taking place. In the end, Instant Runoff Voting is simply not the panacea that its proponents claim.

IRV proponents claim that despite these problems IRV works better than the standard plurality system with a runoff. Analyses of the startup and administrative costs of IRV conducted by the states of Maryland, Vermont, Maine and a number of local communities suggest that the claim that IRV would save money compared with traditional runoff systems is questionable.[5] Additionally, it is not clear whether IRV elections would produce better outcomes than the standard plurality with runoff system, as IRV supporters claim. We know that IRV elections do not assure majority support for the winner (see discussion above). We also know that the strategic decisions of candidates and voters differ under different electoral systems, but the

[5] See Department of Legislative Services, Maryland General Assembly, 2006 Session, "Fiscal and Policy Note, Senate Bill 292," http://mlis.state.md.us/2006rs/fnotes/bil_0002/sb0292.pdf, accessed October 23, 2009; Vermont Office of Secretary of State, "Instant Runoff Voting (IRV): Administrative Implementation Options and Costs," Report to the Vermont General Assembly, March 7, 2007, http://vermont-elections.org/elections1/2007IRVReport3.8.07.doc, accessed October 23, 2009.

specific nature of those differences when it comes to IRV versus plurality voting systems is not known at this point in time. So, it is difficult to know how any race would play out under different rules or whether the strategic calculations of voters in an IRV system would be "purer" than their strategic calculus in the current plurality system. Finally, it is not known how often runoff elections would actually be necessary under the current system versus how often runoffs occur when using IRV. That is, IRV may actually end up encouraging the very problem it is designed to fix. While we don't have the evidence to answer this question at this time, we can note how rare runoffs are under the current system—for example, there had not been a runoff election in Burlington for at least 25 years before it adopted IRV (I am unable to find data that go back any further), after it adopted IRV runoffs occurred in both of the first two elections.

UVM Professor Anthony Gierzynski, PhD, is author of two books, over a dozen peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on elections, co-recipient of an NSF grant to study state elections and two Joyce Foundation grants to study city elections, an expert witness for *Landell v Sorrell* (548 U.S. __ [2006]) and *Homans v. City of Albuquerque* 264 F.3d 1240, 1243-44 (10th Cir. 2001), and is currently completing work on a book on electoral reform with the working title, *Prescriptions for a Healthier Democracy: Our Dying Elections and what We Can Do to Save Them.* He conducted an exit poll study of IRV in the 2006 Burlington Mayoral race with his Vermont Legislative Research Shop students.

Now, how did this guy get elected?

John Diaz
Sunday, June 10, 2007

IN RECENT years, San Francisco voters have set up systems promising to encourage the election of citizen-politicians from the neighborhoods and to raise voter participation and the prospects that our elected leaders arrive in office with a "mandate."

So, how did it come to pass that the city's newest supervisor, Ed Jew, apparently did not even live in the Sunset District and was the choice of just 5,125 (or 26.2 percent) of voters? And the FBI is looking into what this "citizen politician" was doing with $40,000 in cash from tapioca-shop owners who had sought his help with city permits.

It turns out that both of the voter-installed "reforms" -- district elections, instant-runoff voting -- helped make it possible for the flower-shop operator, who once served as vice chairman of the local Republican Party, to get elected in San Francisco on a "grassroots" campaign.

District elections, reinstituted in 2000, have turned the races for San Francisco's 11 supervisorial seats into mini mob scenes to represent districts that each contain about the population of the city of San Leandro. One of the arguments against district elections is that, in running to represent these 11 territories, candidates may lose sight of their larger responsibilities as a custodian of citywide and even regional matters.

Jew certainly played to provincial concerns, such as water rates, potholes and neighborhood schools. He shook a lot of hands. He spent $80,000 of his own money, courted the Chinese-language press and let the convention wisdom anoint Doug Chan and Janyry Mak as perceived frontrunners. In what might be an unthinkable gaffe for most serious candidates, he arrived an hour late for The Chronicle's endorsement-interview session, sitting down just as the other five candidates were getting ready for closing statements. He blamed Muni.

San Francisco's system of electing supervisors did not require him to win over very many of the city's voters -- and he did not. On election day, 73.8 percent of the voters in District 4 expressed a preference for someone other than Ed Jew.

In the old days, Jew would have been forced into a runoff against Ron Dudum, the candidate who was just 53 votes behind, with 25.96 percent of the vote. Jew's belated switch from Republican to Democrat and

questions about his family residence in Burlingame surely would have been significant issues in a one-on-one race against a lifelong Democrat and lifelong Sunset resident.

"I always thought if Ed and I were in a runoff, I would have had a good chance," Dudum said in a interview last week.

But under San Francisco's instant-runoff voting system, voters never had a chance to further scrutinize and choose between Jew and Dudum. Voters had been asked to rank a second and third choice. The runoff was conducted by automation, knocking out the lowest-scoring candidate on each round. Dudum led after two rounds, but lacked a majority. Jew ultimately prevailed in the fourth round.

"At least in a runoff, you win or you lose, there's no in-between," Dudum said. "With ranked-choice voting, you don't allow people to think. It's programming. It's terrible public policy."

Ed Jew went to City Hall and, within months of taking the oath of office, the FBI is shaking down his quarters at home and work in connection with a curious $40,000 cash transaction.

Jew offered rather preposterous explanations for how someone could live in a house on 28th Avenue without turning on the faucets or even giving neighbors the impression that it might be occupied.

Then there is his equally implausible contention that he just could not say "no" when the businessmen who sought his advice for permits insisted that he relay the $20,000 cash fee to a consultant he recommended -- along with $20,000 in cash for a donation to a neighborhood park group that did not know it was coming and did not receive any of it until after the FBI raid.

If Jew remains mired in denial, at some point Mayor Gavin Newsom will have to initiate official misconduct proceedings, which could lead to Jew's dismissal with a vote of eight of his 10 fellow supervisors.

In the meantime, we might need to start asking candidates to bring their utility bills when they come in for endorsement meetings.

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http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/06/10/EDGCUQBP7F1.DTL

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aspendailynewsonline

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Minnesota group takes aim at Aspen's election

Writer:
Curtis Wackerle
Byline:
Aspen Daily News Staff Writer

A Minnesota group which says instant runoff voting is unconstitutional said it plans to file a federal lawsuit challenging Aspen's May election and the voting system it used.

"This is the essence of the main argument against IRV — your vote can be changed in its value and effect by the votes cast by others," the directors of the group Minnesota Voters Alliance wrote in an op-ed in the St. Paul (Minn.) Pioneer Press. The column, published July 22, says a legal challenge of the Aspen results should be ready by early August. The group also plans to challenge this November's Minneapolis municipal election, the first election where that city will use IRV to pick its mayor and city council.

Andy Cilek, who co-authored the piece, said that legal challenge should be forthcoming by early September.

The group has enlisted about eight local people in support of its cause, Cilek said, including council candidate Michael Behrendt, whose loss in the election may or may not have been affected by a quirk of instant runoff voting. An analysis of the May election results show that if 75 people who had voted for Behrendt as their first choice had instead voted for him as their second-place choice, he would have won the election.

Behrendt described the IRV system as a "miserable, terrible mess."

Behrendt said he thought the city got good council members from the May election in Torre and Derek Johnson, and that the city was acting in good faith to create what it thought would be a good system. But the system is "certainly not transparent," he said.

He said he would happily be a witness in the lawsuit in an effort to snuff out IRV.

Jim True, special counsel to the city of Aspen who oversaw the development of Aspen's IRV system, defended the system, and said it did not cost Behrendt the election. In any system that has a runoff election, instant or otherwise, there is a chance you could hurt your preferred candidate by voting for them, True said.

Word of the Minnesota group's intention to file a lawsuit came out at a Tuesday Aspen City Council work session where council members were deciding whether a question on the November ballot asking voters if they liked IRV should be binding or not. The council went with the nonbinding option, but since changing IRV requires a binding charter amendment question, council members said they might support a special election in spring 2010 if voters said they wanted to change last May's system.

During the meeting, Mayor Mick Ireland took umbrage over an out-of-state group challenging the Aspen election.

"I resent the Minnesota Voters Alliance coming in and telling me how to run my elections," Ireland said. "I don't go to Minneapolis/St. Paul and tell them how to run their elections."

Cilek said his group's lawsuit is nothing personal against the mayor or Aspen.

"Our goal is to work toward setting a national precedent," Cilek said, noting the national stature of Fair Vote, a Maryland-based group that came to Aspen and successfully lobbied the city to support IRV. Burlington, Vt., San Francisco and Pierce County, Wash., have also adopted some form of IRV.

Potential legal challenges aside, council members said they might be thinking twice about IRV.

Councilman Steve Skadron said that it's unfortunate last May's election did not have the extra month of runoff campaigning, where the three or four top candidates would have made for more focused debate. Instead, during the debates, voters got hour-and-a-half affairs where each of the nine candidates had about 15 minutes total of speaking time.

Ireland, who has been a staunch supporter of IRV, noted the difficulty in having a large field of candidates that does not get smaller as voters make their choices known, as what happens in Democratic and Republican presidential primaries.

But voters — who by a 76 percent margin approved a charter amendment instituting IRV in the November 2007 election — will have another chance to tell the city how they feel, and if it has changed after seeing IRV in practice. This fall's election will be conducted only by mail-in ballot, another new system for Pitkin County which made council members hesitant to make the November IRV question binding.

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Instant Runoff Voting Not Meeting Expectations

by John Dunbar, 2005-11-17

(2nd of two parts)

In this year's sole RCV contest, only 4% of the ballots were exhausted, meaning they did not count in the final pass to determine which candidate won. There were only three candidates on the ballot, and just two passes were required to determine the winner. Three quarters of Chun voters made a second choice. Binder's polls and Phil Matier's residency story gave informed Chun voters a heads up on the need to get ready for a second choice. What about contests without horserace polls or those with large candidate fields?

In the District 5 2004 supervisor contest with 22 candidates, 26 percent of the voters had their ballots exhausted by the time Mirkarimi crossed the finish line. In the affluent District 7, which also sported a large field of candidates, 23 percent of those who voted had their ballots exhausted by the final pass.

Frontloading of the endorsement process is a particular problem when groups fail to endorse one of the two finalists. Slate cards without 1, 2 and 3 rankings don't reflect what is possible, and the endorsement hinges upon the success of the first place choice. Groups that endorsed Howard Dean early in 2003 experienced the downside of this.

It's noteworthy that the Green Party which has long supported ranked choice voting so that there could be oxygen in the American electoral system for their politics failed to make a single endorsement, much less three for Treasurer, Assessor and City Attorney. Non was the operative ranking principle.

San Francisco lacks a comparative study of which groups experience a disproportionate number of exhausted ballots. A bona fide study could help the Department of Elections meet its responsibility to educate voters on how to use IRV, and where to target its public education campaign. Campaigns seeking second place votes would have a better idea on where to target their efforts.

The Mayor, Board of Supervisors, Board of Education, Public Defender, City Attorney, District Attorney and Treasurer all make appointments to the Elections Commission and have a real voice in whether such a study takes place. We have two separate elections across the City now to study this question. At present there is only conjecture on who knows how to use IRV and who doesn't.

1) When Lyndon Johnson received 49% of the vote in the New Hampshire Democratic primary in 1968 to Gene McCarthy he was finished. Tet was the stimulus, and he failed to win a majority.

Getting below 50 percent of the vote for an incumbent is a historical marker of vulnerability. It certainly was for Mayor Brown's appointees who faced City voters in December 2000. Pollsters consider it essential for incumbents seeking re-election to have majority support for re-election.

So far under IRV we have incumbents getting well below 50 percent and even into the low 30 percent range on the first pass being re-elected under IRV. A frontrunner in a supervisor contest was successful with under 30 percent support in the first pass.

This could be what voters want or the consequence of moving the contest forward, and the loss of time for voters to learn more candidates and issues. The sharp focus of a two- person race is not present in these multi-candidate fields.

If this pro-incumbent bias holds it will deter candidates from entering races, and retard electoral competition. Potentially it represents an even great barrier to electoral competition than any Machine known to this town.

If electoral competition only takes place when there is an open seat, this will be a huge loss for citizens seeking a voice in their local government.

How good a job is IRV doing in terms of producing democratic outcomes with the greatest number of voters? In 2004, no supervisor in a contested race triggering ranked choice voting won a majority of the total votes cast in their districts. In multiple candidate races, supervisors were elected who received well under 40 percent of the total votes cast.

While it is true that more voters participated in these contests than in December runoff elections, it's a long way from the majoritarian promises. It may another sober fact of life that it is not possible to have a majority of the electorate determine the makeup of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, independent of the voting system used.

2) Negative campaigning. It was a vote winning argument for Proposition A but it's a myth. In fairness, hit pieces often perform a service to the electoral process. They hold individuals who will pass laws, appropriate public funds and play an important role in shaping local debate to account. They also are a major deterrent to all kinds of bad habits.

But there is no evidence IRV is stemming the flow of hit pieces. In the 2004 supervisor contests Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 all witnessed negative campaigning.

Some negative campaigns used robo calls, others used the mail while others used both. The District 1 race broke new ground with negative street signs. In this year's contests, there were hit pieces.

Negative campaigning is basic to our politics and no voting method is going to eliminate it. City voters have placed boundaries on hit pieces because they often backfire, even ones that are well written can result in electoral blowback.

San Francisco journalism under the influence of Warren Hinckle perfected its own style of the hit piece. It is the kidney chop that puts things neatly into black and white categories and doesn't let too many facts stand in the way.

Well written, critical exposes in the Chronicle or San Francisco Weekly today are just as deadly to candidates and they don't involve the electoral downside to the beneficiary, which is common with campaign or IE driven hit pieces. IRV won't change that.

IRV is simply a voting system. It gives the electorate a new set of tools, but it asks an enormous amount of voters, news organizations and endorsement groups. The jury on this San Francisco experiment is still out, but IRV to date falls short of its backers expectations.

If 10,000 people Voted, how many votes doe a candidates need to win to have a majority?

Instant Runoff Voting does not provide a majority winner in many races when votes start getting redistributed, particularly when cities use IRV3 - the ability to rank only 3 candidates rather than as many who are running. Votes are thrown out from the counting during the redistribution and not included in the calculation for majority even though the voter turned up to the polling place and voted. It elects candidate more on a plurality basis.

It is of no fault of the voter if they voted for 3 candidates who are not included in the final two in a redistribution round, their “lack of support” for the candidate must be reflected in the calculation of “majority” when determining a winner. The IRV calculation scheme does not do this. It is as if the voter did not even show up to the poll and was not counted by the registrar of voters.

In all the literature, IRV promises a “majority candidate”, or “winner by majority”. Of the 11 RCV elections in SF, only one resulted in a majority winner, the rare case when there were three candidates.

This has occurred in all the cities throughout the United States which has experimented with IRV, some being elected with a little over 30% support of those that turned out to vote.

A graphic example of many IRV races from Pierce County, Burlington, Aspen and San Francisco can bee seen at www.tinyurl.com/IRVFalseMajority

City and County of San Francisco
Consolidated General Election
November 2, 2004

District 5 - Ranked-Choice Voting

Go To: Election Results | Neighborhood Statistics |
RCV-1 | RCV-2 | RCV-3 | RCV-5 | RCV-7 | RCV-9 | RCV-11

Official Results

35,109 Voters came to have their voices heard in District 5

Mirkarimi declared winner with **13,211 votes**
That's **37.62% support** of the voters who showed up.

Majority in the "IRV Sales Information" implies the common definition of majority that has been used for decades, Example: 10,000 people voted, candidate must get 5,000 + 1 to win
But in reality, "their" majority calculation is a **moving target (denominator changes)**, and in this case eliminating over 25% of the voters.
If you didn't vote for one of the two remaining candidates, your vote is *thrown out* in calculating "the majority".
IT'S LIKE YOU DIDN'T EVEN SHOW UP TO VOTE THAT DAY.

Candidate		Pass 1	Pass 2	Pass 3	Pass 4	Pass 5	Pass 6	Pass 7	Pass 8	Pass 9	Pass 10	Pass 11	Pass 12	Pass 13	Pass 14	Pass 15	Pass 16	Pass 17	Pass 18	Pass 19
ROSS MIRKARIMI	(Winner 50.596%)	9947	9950	9952	9969	9996	10034	10094	10158	10261	10387	10472	10635	10766	10946	11262	11659	11921	12287	13211
MICHAEL E. O'CONNOR		868	870	873	882	906	930	944	973	1012	1036	1079	1127*							
PHILLIP HOUSE		62	62*																	
ROBERT HAALAND		5124	5126	5130	5146	5180	5192	5226	5254	5318	5384	5461	5538	5628	5740	5956	6319	6409	6636	7272
EMMETT GILMAN		393	394	398	405	407	423*													
JULIAN DAVIS		418	422	429	443	462	467	481*												
LISA FELDSTEIN		3257	3265	3274	3289	3309	3323	3381	3430	3484	3566	3671	3765	3851	4070	4313	4636	4759	5064	5628
SUSAN C. KING		977	980	984	1007	1034	1051	1072	1116	1147	1206	1237	1293	1371*						
DAN KALB		1398	1400	1400	1412	1430	1449	1466	1493	1540	1582	1610	1698	1739	1867*					
TYS SNIFFEN		686	687	688	692	707	719	730	746*											
FRANCIS SOMSEL		368	368	370	379	381*														
JIM SIEGEL		1540	1542	1543	1551	1565	1608	1639	1657	1743	1763	1820	1866	2053	2111	2184	2242*			
PHOENIX STREETS		657	658	660	673	699	714	731	752	771*										
ANDREW SULLIVAN		2477	2478	2479	2494	2501	2550	2570	2580	2639	2663	2716	2771	2831	2870	2982	3068	3601*		
PATRICK M. CIOCCA		91	91	91*																
BRETT WHEELER		832	833	835	845	871	881	896	929	951	995	1026*								
VIVIAN WILDER		130	134	135*																
NICK WAUGH		3025	3025	3027	3035	3053	3070	3090	3118	3187	3243	3296	3391	3441	3540	3732	3900	4063	5041*	
ROB ANDERSON		336	341	342	346*															
H. BROWN		57*																		
JOSEPH BLUE		802	805	807	814	819	842	851	860	876	908*									
BILL BARNES		1664	1670	1671	1680	1690	1709	1719	1731	1751	1804	1871	1945	1977	2018	2142*				
WRITE-IN		*																		
	Eligible Ballots	35109	35101	35088	35062	35010	34962	34890	34797	34680	34537	34259	34029	33657	33162	32571	31824	30753	29028	26111
	Exhausted Ballots	4146	4154	4167	4193	4245	4293	4365	4458	4575	4718	4996	5226	5598	6093	6684	7431	8502	10227	13144
	Total Ballots	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255	39255

Notice over 10% did not vote, know what to do or get counted in this highly competitive IRV. Voter confusion?

19,814 Voters came to have their voices heard in District 4
Jew declared winner with **8,388 votes**
That's **42.33% support** of the voters who showed up.

In reality, "their" majority calculation is a **moving target (denominator changes)**, and in this case eliminating nearly 20% of the voters. You get three choices. If you didn't vote for one of the two remaining candidates, your vote is *thrown out* in calculating "the majority". IT'S LIKE YOU DIDN'T EVEN SHOW UP TO VOTE THAT DAY.

OFFICIAL RESULTS
RUN DATE: 12/05/06 11:43 AM

Race and Candidate MEMBER, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DIST. 4	Pass 1	Pass 2	Pass 3	Pass 4		Pre-RCV Count	Pre-RCV Diff.
RON DUDUM	5,134	5,521	6,305	7,587		5,072	62
ED JEW (Winner 52.507%)	5,184	5,441	6,455	8,388		5,125	59
JAYNRY MAK	4,569	5,012	5,851*			4,504	65
DOUG CHAN	3,236	3,414*				3,192	44
HOUSTON ZHENG	234*					225	9
DAVID FERGUSON	1,455*					1,419	36
WRITE-IN	2*					2	0
Eligible Ballots	19,814	19,388	18,611	15,975	Undervotes	2,253	
Exhausted Ballots	2,171	2,597	3,374	6,010	Overvotes	193	
Total Ballots	21,985	21,985	21,985	21,985	Total	21,985	

To understand the difference between the Pre-RCV and RCV vote totals:

1. A number of undervotes reported were, in fact, advanceable ballots (Difference column)
2. The RCV algorithm advances those ballots and sums them in Pass1.
3. The candidate(s) with the lowest vote total is selected for elimination (indicated with an asterisk *)

Ballot Definitions:

- The number of **Eligible Ballots** (for Pass 1) is the number of ballots with a mark for a candidate in the 1st choice, plus those whose marks were advanced.
- The number of **Exhausted Ballots** is the number of undervotes minus the number of advanced ballots, plus the number of overvotes (invalid votes for multiple candidates).
- The number of **Total Ballots** is all cards, marked in any way, or blank.

Notice that nearly 10% did not vote or get counted in this IRV. Voter confusion?

31,639 Voters came to have their voices heard in District 7

City and County of San Francisco
Consolidated General Election
November 2, 2004

District 7 - Ranked-Choice Voting

Go To: Election Results | Neighborhood Statistics | RCV-1 | RCV-2 | RCV-3 | RCV-5 | RCV-7 | RCV-9 | RCV-11

Official Results

Elsbernd declared winner with **13,834 votes**
That's **43.72% support** of the voters who showed up.

In reality, "their" majority calculation is a **moving target (denominator changes)**, and in this case eliminated over 23% of the voters. You get three choices. If you didn't vote for one of the two remaining candidates, your vote is *thrown out* in calculating "the majority". IT'S LIKE YOU DIDN'T EVEN SHOW UP TO VOTE THAT DAY.

Candidate		Pass 1	Pass 2	Pass 3	Pass 4	Pass 5	Pass 6	Pass 7	Pass 8	Pass 9	Pass 10	Pass 11
MICHAEL PATRICK MALLEN		975	1004	1017	1040	1066	1110*					
SHAWN REIFSTECK		1108	1136	1187	1210	1236	1286	1388*				
CHRISTINE LINNENBACH		6784	6817	6865	6962	7078	7231	7452	7782	8490	9160	10491
PAT LAKEY		763	783	804	823	840*						
DAVID PARKER		348*										
MILTON "RENNIE" O'BRIEN		2372	2410	2481	2525	2588	2691	2847	3090	3300	3799*	
VERNON C. GRIGG III		2091	2104	2114	2151	2186	2252	2323	2451*			
SHEELA KINI		349	367*									
SVETLANA KAFF		546	573	592	605*							
SEAN R. ELSBERND	(Winner 56.872%)	10505	10547	10568	10667	10740	10884	11018	11198	11827	12446	13834
GREGORY CORRALES		2560	2589	2618	2658	2721	2767	2878	2946	3110*		
ISAAC WANG		2728	2757	2785	2813	2868	2926	3007	3110	3263	3533*	
ART BELENSON		510	517	528*								
WRITE-IN		*										
	Eligible Ballots	31639	31604	31559	31454	31323	31147	30913	30577	29990	28938	24325
	Exhausted Ballots	3266	3301	3346	3451	3582	3758	3992	4328	4915	5967	10580
	Total Ballots	34905	34905	34905	34905	34905	34905	34905	34905	34905	34905	34905

RUN DATE:11/30/04 10:17 AM

Notice that nearly 10% did not vote or get counted in this IRV. Voter confusion?

Dr. Steven Brams points out in his letter to the NY Times below, and has extensively researched voting method. He desribes two fundamental problems with IRV:

Dear Editor,

The answer to the question that Sam Roberts poses is not that runoffs are superfluous but that they are too expensive. But the solution he suggests, "instant runoff voting," whereby voters rank candidates, is a poor one for two reasons.

First, because instant runoff eliminates candidates who get the fewest first-choice votes--transferring their votes to the candidates their supporters rank highest that remain in the race--a strong centrist candidate who comes in third in a 3-person race will not make the runoff. Consequently, the runoff will be between the two more extreme candidates, even though the centrist could beat each of these candidates in separate face-to-face contests by getting votes from not only his or her own supporters but also from the supporters of the other extreme candidate.

Second, though hard to believe, a voter can on occasion help a favorite candidate by not voting for him or her, or giving that candidate a low ranking. This is because of complications that arise in the elimination of candidates and the transfer of their votes to candidates they rank lower. Thus, a voter may affect negatively the chances of a favorite winning by ranking that candidate first--just the opposite of what one wants a voting system to do.

There are better remedies to the problem of selecting the strongest candidate in a race. One is "approval voting," whereby voters can approve of as many candidates as they like. This system tends to elect the strongest candidate overall, not the strongest minority candidate. Moreover, unlike instant runoff, a voter can never affect negatively the chances of an approved candidate's winning by approving of him or her.

Sincerely,
Steven J. Brams
Professor of Politics, NYU

These are real life problems, which have happened. University of Vermont's Legislative Research Shop studied the recent Mayoral election in Burlington and found the problem described in Prof. Bram's first reason.

A video describing the effect can be seen here: www.tinyurl.com/IRVHead2Head

A video Describing Dr. Bram's second reason, which manifested itself in Aspen, CO's recent election can be seen here: www.tinyurl.com/IRVMoreVotes

SFGate.com

SAN FRANCISCO
Ranked voting troublesome for Chinese
Survey finds S.F. bloc may not have understood process

Suzanne Herel, Chronicle Staff Writer
Thursday, November 11, 2004

San Francisco's new ranked-choice system of electing local officeholders may have confused Chinese-speaking voters and resulted in them having less say in the election outcome, according to a voter education group.

A poll commissioned by the Chinese American Voters Education Committee found that Chinese-speaking voters reported more difficulty understanding the new ranked-choice ballots and that they more frequently than other groups failed to take advantage of the opportunity to vote for a second and third choice.

That means that if their first choice didn't win, they didn't get to weigh in further with their second and third choices being considered, said David Lee, the group's executive director.

"While some voters genuinely like this system and found it easy to use, some voters, in particular Chinese-speaking voters, had a very different experience," said Ben Tulchin of the polling firm Fairbank, Maslin, Maulin and Associates, which conducted the poll for the voter education group.

Proponents of ranked-choice voting, however, questioned the validity of the poll and the conclusions Lee is drawing from it.

"They don't know if people only ranked one candidate because that's what they wanted to do," said Steven Hill, whose Center for Voting and Democracy is a leading advocate for ranked-choice voting. "There's no evidence ... because their exit poll didn't ask why."

Hill said reports of some confusion were to be expected because the system was being used for the first time.

Still, Lee's group is using its findings in considering whether to file a voting rights lawsuit against the city or push for a repeal of ranked-choice voting. The system was approved by voters in 2002 and was used here for the first time Nov. 2 to elect seven district supervisors.

The ranked-choice voting method is designed to eliminate runoff elections, which can cost the city up to

$3 million. The voter ranks his or her three top choices. If one candidate receives more than 50 percent of the vote, he or she wins. If not, the lowest vote-getter is eliminated from the race; the second choices on those ballots are redistributed to other candidates. The process continues until one candidate wins the majority of remaining votes.

According to the poll conducted for the Chinese American Voters Education Committee, in which 2,108 voters were interviewed, 71 percent of white voters and 74 percent of Latino voters classified the voting method as easy.

"Chinese-speaking voters had many more problems with RCV voting -- only 49 percent said it was easy to use versus 39 percent said it was difficult," Tulchin said. "This difference ... was one of the starkest demographic contrasts we found in our survey and raised a flag for us."

In addition, Tulchin's survey showed that Asian voters -- of which most are Chinese American -- were more likely to vote for just one candidate when they could prioritize three choices.

The poll-takers didn't ask respondents why they chose to limit themselves to one candidate, but Lee said that -- given the finding that a number of Chinese voters considered the voting method difficult -- he suspects they didn't understand it fully.

Lee said the research also indicated that incumbents are favored to win under ranked-choice voting. Hill, however, contends that it's not the voting system that gives incumbents a leg up -- it's the sheer fact of their incumbency, with the name recognition that goes along with it.

Since there is only one Chinese American on the Board of Supervisors, Lee predicted it would be a long wait for the board to reflect the size of the Asian community in San Francisco.

Elections Director John Arntz said that since May his department has been trying to educate voters through community meetings, mailers, advertising and other methods, all in several languages -- including Chinese.

E-mail Suzanne Herel at sherel@sfchronicle.com.

http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2004/11/11/BAG869PEDU1.DTL

This article appeared on page **B - 4** of the San Francisco Chronicle

SFGate.com

S.F. ranked-choice voting slow, confusing

C.W. Nevius, Chronicle Columnist
Thursday, November 6, 2008

(11-05) 20:28 PST -- In most cities, when the election is over the candidates hold a party. In San Francisco they hold their breath.

"I have had so many people come up to me today and say, 'I'm so sorry you lost,' " said supervisor candidate Mark Sanchez.

Actually, Sanchez hasn't lost - at least not yet.

Two days after the election, he's still locked in a close race with opponent David Campos in District Nine, which covers parts of the Mission and Bernal Heights. Because of the city's complicated ranked-choice voting procedures, in which voters pick a second and third candidate to avoid costly runoff races, election officials aren't expected to have results in some supervisor races until Friday.

Is this really the best way to run an election? Although experts say ranked-choice voting is here to stay, it has so many negatives that it is hard to believe this is the best we can do. The system encourages wheeling and dealing among candidates, allows someone who did not gain a majority of the votes in the first round to win, and doesn't create a head-to-head runoff between the two top candidates.

Besides that, it is incredibly confusing.

"It's kind of like democracy or socialism," said political strategist Alex Clemens. "In the abstract they are all perfect. In reality the complexities are burdensome."

Ranked-choice voting is one of those cutting-edge innovations that this city loves. It was national news in 2004 when San Francisco became the first major metropolis to try the concept. At the time it was suggested that it would work so well that the idea would sweep the nation. So far it has swept over to Oakland (which adopted ranked-choice procedures but didn't use them in this election) but it hasn't exactly set the country ablaze.

On Tuesday, every city voter was allowed to vote for three candidates. If no one gets a 50 percent majority of the voters' top choices, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. The second choices of voters who picked the eliminated candidate are then figured in.

Have I lost you yet?

The process continues, eliminating the lowest candidate and transferring the backup votes until someone gets 50 percent and is declared the winner.

Former Mayor Willie Brown is no fan of the procedure.

"It has clearly been designed by the left to have this very small majority win," Brown said. "I say if you're for majority rule, you're for majority rule."

Brown is among those who would like to see elections go back to the old way. If no candidate got a majority, a runoff election was held between the two top vote-getters.

Unfortunately, runoff elections had their problems, too.

"We had them in December, it was around Christmas, and nobody voted," Brown said.

A better suggestion, he thinks, is a runoff after the first of the year. That idea isn't problem-free. It means more delay and extra cost of putting on yet another election.

Brown is not impressed with that argument.

"That's BS," he said. "You can't overspend in the perfection of democracy."

In ranked-choice elections, the candidates with better name recognition often prevail in the second and third rounds of vote counting. Campos, who is currently leading Sanchez, knows his ranked-choice history. In 1984, former Supervisor Ed Jew won the election in the heavily Asian Sunset District even though he trailed Ron Dudum after the second round.

"The way we understand that experience," Campos said, "you had a non-Chinese candidate running against a Chinese candidate. We don't feel that will be the case here."

What he means is that he, Sanchez, and Eric Quezada are expected to split the Latino vote. That leaves the door open for what critics say is one of the flaws of the system - it encourages secret deal making.

"Two of the (other) candidates, Eric Storey and Tom Valtin, approached me and said they would support me with their second and third choice," Sanchez said. "And then Quezada, who is more left than Campos, said he'd support me, too. It was definitely done informally, but (ranked choice) does provide that opportunity."

So does that mean that Sanchez is poised for a come-from-behind victory? It is certainly possible. District Nine is the closest race this year, and Quezada has more than 3,000 votes that could be reassigned.

But the reality is Jew's comeback was unusual. In most situations, the person who gets the largest number of votes in the first place ends up winning.

"The reality is, in ranked-choice elections," said political consultant David Latterman, "the way to win the election is to get the most votes."

So the day after the election Sanchez was cleaning up a few things at his campaign headquarters, waiting for election officials to run through the second and third choices. Campos said he was doing pretty much the same thing - just waiting.

Would you rather see that, or a slam-bang runoff between two evenly-matched candidates in an election that really meant something?

C.W. Nevius' column runs Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. E-mail him at cwnevius@sfchronicle.com.

http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/11/06/BA8D13UUOT.DTL

This article appeared on page **B - 1** of the San Francisco Chronicle

尾劃線連接起來。**如果投選少於二名候選人，或者一個競選官職的候選人少於二名，你不用標記所有欄目，多餘欄目可留為空白。**如果發生填寫錯誤，向投票站工作人員要求一份新的選票。

INSTRUCCIONES PARA LOS ELECTORES: Puede seleccionar hasta tres opciones por orden de preferencia. Para marcar su primera opción en la primera columna, complete la flecha que apunta hacia su selección, tal como se indica en la imagen. Para indicar una segunda opción, seleccione un candidato distinto en la segunda columna. Para indicar una tercera opción, seleccione un candidato distinto en la tercera columna. Para votar por un candidato certificado no listado, escriba el nombre de la persona en el espacio en blanco provisto, y complete la flecha. **Para seleccionar menos de tres candidatos por orden de preferencia, o si hay menos de tres candidatos en una contienda, deje las columnas restantes en blanco.** Si comete un error, pida otra boleta al trabajador electoral.

CITY AND COUNTY / 市縣 / CIUDAD Y CONDADO

Vote your first, second and third choices
投選你的第一、第二和第三選擇
Vote por su primera, segunda y tercera selección

CITY ATTORNEY
市府律師
ABOGADO DE LA CIUDAD

First Choice
第一選擇
Primera Selección

Vote for One
選一名
Vote por Uno

DENNIS HERRERA
丹尼斯 · 赫雷拉
City Attorney
市府律師
Abogado de la Ciudad

WRITE-IN / 補寫候選人 / NO LISTADO

CITY ATTORNEY
市府律師
ABOGADO DE LA CIUDAD

Second Choice
第二選擇
Segunda Selección

Vote for One – Must be different than your first choice
選一名 / 必須與第一個選擇不同
Vote por Uno – Deberá ser diferente de su primera selección

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CITY ATTORNEY
市府律師
ABOGADO DE LA CIUDAD

Third Choice
第三選擇
Tercera Selección

Vote for One – Must be different than your first and second choice
選一名 / 必須與第一個和第二個選擇不同
Vote por Uno – Deberá ser diferente de su primera y segunda selección

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市府律師
Abogado de la Ciudad

WRITE-IN / 補寫候選人 / NO LISTADO

TREASURER
财政官
TESORERO

First Choice
第一選擇
Primera Selección

Vote for One
選一名
Vote por Uno

JOSÉ CISNEROS
何世豪
San Francisco Treasurer
三藩市財政官
Tesorero de San Francisco

WRITE-IN / 補寫候選人 / NO LISTADO

TREASURER
财政官
TESORERO

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選一名 / 必須與第一個和第二個選擇不同
Vote por Uno – Deberá ser diferente de su primera y segunda selección

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Tesorero de San Francisco

WRITE-IN / 補寫候選人 / NO LISTADO

Local

Money train skips The City’s November election

By: Joshua Sabatini
Examiner Staff Writer
September 29, 2009

The clock is ticking down to the November elections and so far money is merely trickling in for the ballot measures.

The lack of fundraising is not surprising for the Nov. 3 election, where two incumbents are running unopposed and the five ballot measures are not controversial blockbusters.

There are several political committees formed to campaign for or against at least three of the ballot measures, but only one committee had raised donations as of Sept. 19, according to campaign contribution filings that were due at the Ethics Commission on Thursday.

The committee supporting the Mid-Market Arts Revitalization Sign District measure raised $150,200 during the reporting period, July 2 to Sept. 19. All the money was contributed by Warfield Theater LLC, except for a $100 contribution from the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and a $100 contribution from the Market Street Association. Since January, the committee has raised a total of $190,225.

If approved by voters, the measure would create a district on and near Market Street between Fifth and Seventh streets, which includes the Warfield Theater, to allow for new general advertising signs in the area. Property owners who benefit from the new advertising revenue would have to contribute up to 40 percent of the money to a special fund for the arts.

Local political analyst David Latterman was not surprised by the overall lack of fundraising. The ballot measures are generally “under the radar,” incumbents are unchallenged and the election falls in “just one of those off years,” he said.
The two unchallenged candidates each raised a little more than $10,000 during the most recent reporting period, also July 2 to Sept. 19.

City Attorney Dennis Herrera, who is running unopposed for re-election, raised $13,275 for a total of

$367,343 since January. He has spent most of it, reporting about $60,000 left. Treasurer Jose Cisneros, who's also running for re-election and is also running unopposed, raised $12,889 during the reporting period for a total of $81,827 since January.

jsabatini@sfexaminer.com

San Franciscans, get ready to head to the polls

Measures and candidates for city office on the Nov. 3 ballot, a local election:

Measures

- **Advertisements on city property:** Would prohibit increasing advertising signs on street furniture beyond the existing amount as of January 2008 and on city-owned buildings beyond the existing amount as of March 2002
- **Mid-Market special sign district:** Would allow for increased advertising signs for arts and entertainment along Market Street between Fifth and Seventh streets, with ad revenue going toward revitalizing the area
- **Candlestick Park naming rights:** Would allow the sale of naming rights to the stadium where the 49ers play, with at least half the revenue to pay for recreation center directors

Charter amendments

- Budget process Would create a two-year budgetary cycle, adopt a five-year financial plan and impose a deadline of May 15 for submission of labor contracts for miscellaneous and public safety employees to the Board of Supervisors; billed as budget "reform"
- Board of Supervisors aides Would eliminate a set number of legislative aides per supervisor, allowing for more than two

Candidates races

City attorney— Incumbent Dennis Herrera running unopposed

Treasurer — Incumbent Jose Cisneros running unopposed

Source: Department of Elections

SF spent over $770,000 dollars on RCV education in 2004, and greatly reduced it afterwards. This impacted the disenfranchisement of voters significantly, particularly less educated, lower income groups, and many english as a second language voters.

In addition, African Americans were considerably less likely to know than any other racial or ethnic group to be educated about RCV and use that opportunity.

From the Public Research Institute's Report on An Assessment of Ranked Choice Voting in the San Francisco 2005 Election:

Prior Knowledge of Ranked-Choice Voting (RCV)

- A narrow majority of voters surveyed (54%) knew before voting that they would be asked to rank candidates for City Treasurer and Assessor in the 2005 election.
- The proportion of voters who had prior knowledge of RCV was lower in 2005 (54%) than in the 2004 election for the Board of Supervisors (67%).
- Those with lower rates of prior knowledge tended to be those who were less educated, reported having lower incomes, and spoke a primary language other than Spanish.
- African Americans were considerably less likely than other racial and ethnic groups (41.9%) to know they would be ranking their choices for these offices.
- Voters residing in districts that used RCV for the 2004 election for the Board of Supervisors were more likely to know that they would be ranking their choices in 2005 (57%) than those from districts using RCV for the first time (49%).

Understanding of RCV varied. Only 51.6% understood it perfectly well. Combiner with 35.6% who self reported understanding it “fairly well”, that leaves an unconscionable 12.9% not understanding this new voting scheme. This should not something to be proud of.

Table 9. Overall Understanding of RCV
(N = 1633)

Understood it perfectly well	51.6%
Understood it fairly well	35.6%
Did not understand it entirely	9.9%
Did not understand it at all	3.0%

Overall Understanding of RCV

- The wide majority of voters said that they understood Ranked-Choice Voting either "fairly well" or "perfectly well" (87%).
- The proportion of voters indicating they understood RCV in 2005 (87%) is about the same as those saying they understood RCV in the 2004 Board of Supervisors election (86%).
- Self-reported levels of understanding were lowest among voters with low levels of education and those for whom Chinese was their first language.

Table 12. Understanding of RCV by Education
(Chi-square = 9.69, p < .05, N = 1409)

	Did not understand entirely or did not understand at all
Less than HS	23.8%
HS grad	15.3%
Some college	13.9%
College grad	13.3%
Post-grad study	10.0%

One's understanding of RCV was also related to one's first language. A higher proportion of voters who learned Chinese as their first language said they did not understand RCV (22%) than did voters who first learned Spanish (9%) or English (12%).

Table 13. Understanding of RCV by First Language
(Chi-square = 10.08, p < .02, N = 1610)

	Did not understand entirely or did not understand at all
English	12.1%
Chinese	21.9%
Spanish	9.0%
Other	13.9%

For both native and non-native English speakers, lack of understanding was substantially higher among voters who had been unaware that they would be asked to rank their choices for Assessor and Treasurer. Still, statistically significant differences remained between those whose first language is English and those whose first language is another language among those aware that RCV would be used in this election.

Voter confusion and participation breaks along racial line, education lines, and income lines. This is the definition of disparate treatment. When 2 to 1 on a race and 2 to 1 on a language someone fails to understand how to mark their ballot, that is a backward step in the pursuit of participatory democracy.

SFGate.com

No one is running against S.F. district attorney in fall election

Demian Bulwa, Chronicle Staff Writer
Thursday, August 16, 2007

San Francisco District Attorney Kamala Harris collected more than $500,000 from donors for her re-election effort, lined up high-profile endorsements and launched a campaign Web site.

Then the clock at the Department of Elections struck 5 p.m. Friday, the deadline for filing candidacy papers. Harris found herself with no challenger in the Nov. 6 election - the first time that has happened to a San Francisco district attorney since 1991.

A write-in candidate could still decide to run, but that person's name wouldn't appear alongside Harris'. The city's ranked-choice ballot - which allows voters to mark first, second and third choices - will feature Kamala Harris, Kamala Harris and Kamala Harris.

"Isn't that amazing," said Terence Hallinan, whom Harris unseated in 2003 after two terms. "There's no campaign, no excitement, no controversy."

Supporters and critics of Harris pointed to many reasons why nobody came forward, but generally agreed on one thing: Any challenger was likely to lose to an incumbent who has proved to be popular, well-connected and an effective fundraiser.

Even before Friday's deadline, Harris had locked up endorsements from most members of the Board of Supervisors plus the public defender. Campaign contributors included business heavyweights and actor Robin Williams.

"She's definitely proved her mettle as a politician," said Public Defender Jeff Adachi. "She's continued to be very active with her constituency and her community, and she's reached out to those who initially opposed her."

Harris's first term has not been without controversy. Although she has a better relationship with police than Hallinan did, investigators have accused her of being slow to prosecute homicide suspects and of boosting her conviction rate through lenient plea agreements.

Kevin Martin, vice president of the Police Officers Association, said officers were "pleased with a lot that Kamala Harris has done." But he said hard feelings remain over her decision, four months after she took office, not to seek the death penalty for David Hill in the fatal shooting of Officer Isaac Espinoza. Hill was convicted of second-degree murder in January and sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Harris told voters during the 2003 campaign that she opposed the death penalty, and said this week that she had no regrets about her decision on Hill. "This job is too powerful, and its impact too profound, to make decisions based on their popularity," she said.

However, San Francisco is one of the nation's most left-leaning cities, and opting not to seek capital punishment for Hill appeared to cause little damage to Harris' popularity outside the Police Department.

Harris' supporters said voters shared the 42-year-old district attorney's philosophy of balancing prosecutions of violent crimes with rehabilitation for lesser offenders.

They said Harris also got off to a good start by professionalizing her office. Harris said two-thirds of her lawyers lacked e-mail accounts when she arrived, a problem that has been fixed. She said the office's felony conviction rate has jumped from 52 percent to 68 percent in the past three years.

Others said Harris benefited from the lack of a strong challenger to Mayor Gavin Newsom. That candidate, they said, might have partnered with a challenger to Harris on a ticket to the left of the incumbent mayor and district attorney.

Jim Ross, a political consultant who ran Newsom's 2003 campaign, said ranked-choice balloting might have discouraged challengers to Harris. Promoted by its advocates as a boon to underfunded candidates hoping to avoid a costly runoff, ranked-choice voting actually strengthens incumbents, Ross said.

Voters pay less attention to second and third selections than the top slot and often leave them blank, Ross said. The resulting under-vote means incumbents can prevail with less than the 50 percent-plus-one that they once needed to avoid a runoff.

Unlike Harris, Newsom will be on the ballot with other candidates - 13 people, including former Supervisor Tony Hall, are running against him. Fringe candidates are less likely in a district attorney's contest, however, because the office must be filled by a lawyer. Also, many attorneys would be taking a pay cut if they settled for the top prosecutor's salary of $176,261.

A few experienced attorneys said they had considered taking on Harris. One was Jim Hammer, a former prosecutor who helped win convictions against a couple in the city's infamous dog-mauling case and later raised his profile by doing television commentary. He said this week that he wasn't ready "for the personal level of politics" or prepared to solicit donors.

Randall Knox, another former prosecutor, said he had concluded that he could not beat Harris.

"I thought that given her level of name recognition and her approval ratings and her ability to raise money, it was not feasible," said Knox, who recently dealt Harris a blow by helping former city building official Augustine Fallay beat fraud and corruption charges. "I'm a nobody with no political base."

Former Supervisor Matt Gonzalez, who ran against Hallinan for district attorney in 1999 and against Newsom for mayor in 2003, said he never seriously considered a campaign this year. Bill Fazio, who ran unsuccessfully for district attorney in 1995, 1999 and 2003, was out of the country this week and could not be reached.

Only one person, 39-year-old Maurice Chenier of Los Angeles, even took out nomination papers to run against Harris. He said he was frustrated by the city's high violent crime and by the handling of the fatal shooting of his nephew, rapper Max Chenier, in San Francisco in November 2005. A grand jury heard evidence in the case but did not indict anyone.

Chenier said he would be tougher on criminals than Harris because they "don't respond by being given a break."

Chenier said he still may become a write-in candidate. He said he rents a room from his parents in San Francisco's Ocean View neighborhood and spends most of his time in the city, where he was born and raised.

Even with no challenger, Harris said she assumes she will still have an election night party in November. "I hope so," she said.

But she may not receive a concession call.

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http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/08/16/BAB6RIAE2.DTL

This article appeared on page **B - 1** of the San Francisco Chronicle

Hon. Willie Brown, Former Mayor San Francisco, Former Speaker of the California Assembly on the Ronn Owens Show, KGO Radio

Date: Nov. 4th 2009

Audio: www.tinyurl.com/IRVinSF

Transcript:

Hon. Willie Brown: "Instant runoff is really, really very bad. And I believe you should have an opportunity see the contestants up close and do some comparative shopping among them because after all ya know we are not looking at cars in this case we are looking at people who are going to be determinative on a policy basis of our lives for the next 4 years and you really need to have them answer the same questions in the same forum. You don't get that with instant runoff."

Ronn Owens - KGO Host: "And one other question though, today, and people don't even realize this, is election day, here I am, I live in San Francisco, you got two races, the people are running unopposed, then you have 5 propositions, which nobody know about what's going o there?"

Hon. Willie Brown: "Well San Francisco is an going in to a spin, a tailspin on candidacies, in the ld days, you would have half a dozen really qualifies people arguing with each other about every office whatsoever. You don't get that anymore because we went into what we call instant runoff and that has eliminated the opportunity for comparative shopping We need to get rind of instant runoff and them people on the west side wold have an opportunity to have their candidacy tried against people on the east side. I know Sean Elsbernd would be a candidate for Mayor if you had the runoff process. He could get the nomination, he could be one of the top two finishers and believe me in a debate between East and West he might win."

Ranked-Choice Voting and Flawed Ballots Tax San Francisco's Election

By Kat Zambon, electionline.org
November 09, 2007

Rules requiring hand-inspection, confusion over ranking could delay results for weeks

*This article was posted at **electionline.org** and is reposted here with permission of the author.*

Rules requiring manual checks of every ballot before counting stemming from concerns over vote counting systems were expected to make this city's municipal elections more complicated than usual. Maybe not quite this complicated, though.

Because of high numbers of ballots needing to be remade before they can be tabulated, getting official results in this week's vote could take weeks.

John Arntz, the city's election director, said at a press conference this week that officials have had to remake 94 percent of absentee ballots cast before they can be counted, because of casting errors, confusion about ranked-choice voting, incorrect pencil or ink and other problems. An informal survey of poll workers indicated that ballots cast on election day at precincts could be similarly flawed.

When a ballot needs to be remade, election officials pull it aside and one election official fills in a new ballot while another official watches. Those two election officials then give the old ballot and the remade ballot to a different pair of election officials who ensure that the new ballot reflects the voter's intentions and code the new ballot so it can be traced back to the original.

While the task of remaking ballots is not unusual, some questioned whether the ranked-choice system, which requires voters to put the names of three candidates on the ballot, made sense in this particular election.

Kim Alexander, president of the **California Voter Foundation**, said she wasn't surprised that so many ballots have needed remaking, noting that there were three places on the ballot to rank candidate choices for the sheriff's race, in which only two candidates were running and the district attorney race in which Kamala Harris ran unopposed.

"I did not understand that," she said. "I was confused looking at the ballot in San Francisco and I imagine a lot of voters would be too."

Poll workers deployed around the city noticed the same thing.

Nick Andraide, a poll worker from Noe Valley at Eureka Playground in the Castro said that as many as a third of ballots cast were initially rejected by the ballot counter because the voter failed to rank three choices. When poll workers explained to the voter why the ballot was rejected, every voter either asked the poll worker to override the counter and let them cast their ballot the way they marked it or they marked the same candidate for all three choices.

Jay Bordeleau, an election inspector at Notre Dame Des Victoires in Union Square concurred.

"There are a lot of people who only mark one [candidate] or the same person three times," he said.

The ballot remaking comes at the direction of Secretary of State Debra Bowen (D) who has expressed concerns that San Francisco's ranked-choice voting (RCV) system by ES&S may not be able to read all ballots cast by voters. Ballots that don't have three choices marked for the mayor's race or are marked with an instrument other than a number 2 pencil or a pen with black or dark blue ink need to be remade.

Remaking ballots is already an accepted practice in some California counties that use the AutoMark ballot marker, said John Gideon, co-director of **VotersUnite**.

"I think that somewhere along the line, election administrators have to be trusted to do the right things and I think this is one of those cases," he said.

Since election officials aren't allowed to count ballots until they inspect the ballots and remake them if necessary, unofficial election results released Tuesday night only included the estimated 44,000 absentee ballots received before election day.

Steven Hill, director of the political reform program at the **New America Foundation**, said he also wasn't surprised by the high percentage of remade ballots. Hill worked on a study to estimate how many ballots would have to be remade in San Francisco by examining an election with similar characteristics and found that more than 60 percent of the ballots would have had to be remade in the election he studied. Hill predicted that about 70 percent of ballots cast at the polls will have to be remade.

While perhaps the most challenging and time consuming, remaking ballots is not the only challenge facing the elections department as they work in 24 hours a day to count the vote.

While San Francisco voters have used RCV before, confusion remains. "People get confused when their ballot comes back, [they ask] 'what do I do?'" Bordeleau said.

Geraldine Lum, a poll worker at Maria Manors in downtown San Francisco was careful not to tell voters how to vote.

"They know what they want, if they want to vote they'll vote but we can't tell them what to do," she said.

Voters also questioned the value of ranked-choice voting. Andraide said that when he told the voters ranked-choice voting was useful because it eliminated the need for a runoff election, voters told him there wouldn't be a runoff. "

"I guess it's useful when there's a lot of candidates," Wendy Lee, a voter from the Mission said after turning in her absentee ballot at City Hall, but "I don't want to vote for a second one, I want this one."

While he ranked three choices in the mayor's race, Allan Rosenberg, a photographer voting on Russian Hill said, "I don't find it satisfying that I have to make a second choice."

"Would you accept a second choice photograph? Why would I accept a second choice candidate?" he asked.

As confused as the vote has been, it could have been worse.

Poll workers around the city described turnout as low, which may be partly attributed to a **decrease in registered voters**.

"This is what constitutes a big rush," said Mary Dolan, a poll worker from the Tenderloin, "three people at once."

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Shotgun Elections:
Only 43.5% voter for 3 candidates in the 2005 SF IRV elections

The most common reason voters gave for not ranking three candidates was that they did not know enough about the other candidates on the ballot. Nearly one-third (31%) of the voters who did not rank three candidates checked that as a reason. Just over one in five (21%) said that none of the other candidates were acceptable to them and about 8% said that they will probably always just pick one candidate. In other words, a sizeable majority of those ranking less than three candidates may have made a conscious or strategic choice to do so. However, a small proportion of voters (9%) reported ranking fewer than three choices because they did not know they could do so.

Table 23. Why Voters Did Not Rank Three Candidates

	Percent
I didn't know enough about the other candidates	31.2%
No other candidates were acceptable to me	21.2%
I didn't know I could rank three	8.9%
I'll probably always just pick one	7.9%
I didn't understand that part of the ballot	2.9%
My favorite candidate suggested that strategy	2.8%

With IRV3, (the ability to rank 3 candidates) how does the electorate get to know the candidates? In the end of the election, someone will be elected to office.

- Forums/Debates
- Local Newspaper Coverage
- Candidate pieces/Lawn signs
- Name Recognition/Incumbency/Perennial Candidates

Forums and Debate
These rely heavily on neighborhood association and community groups. As the candidate pool grows, a feature of IRV, they have proven not to provide substantive issues based debate, but more of a beauty contest. Imagine 8 candidate having 1.5 hours to define their candidacy. In a recent Minneapolis IRV race, the incumbent refused to meet the 9 other challengers until a radio forum the night before the election.

Local Newspaper Coverage
The local media typically picks and chooses to spotlight particular candidates, giving more coverage to some, less to other up and coming candidates

Candidates Pieces/Lawnsigns
Money continues to play a big part in IRV, maybe even more so than a two round

system. Incumbents have the upper hand and in San Francisco have scared off opponents in the recent elections with war chests of over $250,000 running unopposed.

Name Recognition/Incumbency/Perennial Candidates
IRV has been called incumbency protection due to lack of focused debates on how well an incumbent is doing, which would typically happen if a run-off occurs later in the fall. Name recognition plays a big part as people who may not have know enough about the candidates due to lack of information but knew the name. Perennial candidates have been elected after several rounds of IRV dropped other candidates, as in Pierce County, which is partly a reason why voters repealed IRV on Nov. 4th.

Not being able to get to know the candidates and possibly winnow the field to the two most popular candidates for a later election has common complaint in cites who have voted to stop using IRV.

Don Franz, Councilmember in Cary, NC where they experimented with IRV, and now no longer use it:

"I like the fact that that traditional elections, no matter how many candidates you have in the race, the top two have a month to go at it. You might have your favorite, it doesn't make the instant runoff… you didn't know who to rank… but once you know who the top two candidates are… **I don't think it's that broke**… I don't' think we really need to focus on fixing it…"

(http://irvbad4nc.blogspot.com/2009/05/instant-runoff-voting-retreats-in-north.html)

From the Pierce County Newspaper:

> Another perennial candidate with no apparent qualifications, Dale Washam, managed to get himself elected assessor-treasurer on an RCV ballot last year. The assessor-treasurer's office is now in predictable disarray. Let's not repeat the mistake with a candidate who, unlike Washam, actually has a criminal record.

With a runoff election, if needed, the press and the public can focus on the two candidates for an additional amount of time. This allow the vetting of their qualifications to hold office. The one on one debates between the candidates are more issue oriented, and focused to the things the public cares about.

The shotgun approach with IRV3, does not allow the electorate ample time to get get to know the candidates. Money and connections play a big part in getting elected in IRV3, particularly if a candidate does not get over 50% in the first round. Afterwards, they do not need to get 50% support to win the election.

San Francisco Run-off System

The San Francisco run-off system is completely different tan Sacramento. The voted in November, and if no candidate had the majority, the voted again in December, during the holidays.

Campaigning, hearing about the candidates, scheduling debates, attending them, and voting during the holiday season certainly was not a good formula fro anyone involved, and was seen by the reduced turnout. When asked if you could vote just once, and not have to come back a month later in December, the answers are mostly predictable.

But the survey does provide some interesting points:

Opinions of RCV

- By a margin of three to one, voters preferred the ranked-choice voting system to the prior two-stage runoff election system: 51% preferred RCV; 17% preferred the traditional runoff method, while the remainder expressed no preference.
- Younger voters, those whose first language was English, and those with more education and income were more likely to voice a preference for RCV.
- Among racial and ethnic groups, African Americans (32%) were by far the least likely to say that they preferred ranked-choice voting.
- By a margin of greater than two to one (37% to 15%), voters perceived the Ranked-Choice Voting system as more fair than the runoff system. However, a plurality of those surveyed said there was no difference between the two.
- Older voters and self-reported conservatives were the least likely to perceive RCV as more fair than the runoff system.

51% preferred not to come back during the holidays. African Americans, who as a group has the highest level of not knowing IRV would be used, had the lowest level of understanding of IRV, were far less likely to prefer IRV. They certainly felt disenfranchised in their constitutional right to vote.

More than half of those polled responded IRV was no more “fairer” that the run-off system.

San Francisco’s preference for IRV is misleading. They do not like to vote so quickly after the last election, and during the holidays. Sacramento’s formula is used in many jurisdictions with great success. Voting system should be simple, the survey also shows adding complexity disenfranchises segments of voters that we overcame year ago. It is not time to turn back the clocks.

National Election Data Archive
P.O. Box 682556 Park City, UT 84068
Phone: 435-658-4657

Realities Mar Instant Runoff Voting
18 Flaws and 4 Benefits

June 10, 2008, Version #2– updated Jun 25, Aug 3, Aug 7, 2008 & Feb 12, 2009
By Kathy Dopp, MS Mathematics

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Abstract

This report discusses flaws and benefits of instant runoff voting (IRV) methods and shows how IRV threatens the fairness, accuracy, timeliness, and economy of U.S. elections.

The right to vote is conferred in several places in the U.S. Constitution including in Article. 1.

> "The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators."

What is Instant Runoff Voting?

Instant runoff voting (IRV) is a method of counting ranked choice ballots. A ranked choice ballot is a ballot style where voters are asked to order the candidates in order of preference.

Depending on the variant, the voter can be asked for a partial ordering where voters are allowed to omit some candidates from their rankings, or a total ordering of all candidates can be required. Partial orderings are likely to be permitted in the U.S. because of the right to have all votes which are cast for eligible candidates counted, and because most optical-scan voting machines economically permit ranking only up to three candidates for each contest.

Ranked choice ballots can be counted by several methods such as:

1. the instant runoff voting (IRV) method described below, or
2. the Bucklin method which adds the lower preferences of voters to the existing totals whenever there is not a majority winner in the first choice count, or
3. the contingent method, also known as "top-two IRV", where all but the two candidates with most votes are eliminated after the first counting round[i], or
4. the Borda counting method where the voters' rankings are converted to ratings, with higher ratings used for first choice (e.g. first choice 3 pts, second choice 2 pts, third choice 1 pt),

This report focuses on the IRV method. Not all of the flaws of IRV are shared by other voting methods that use ranked choice ballots.

In instant runoff voting the counting proceeds in "rounds" where the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and the lower-ranked choices of voters whose candidates are eliminated are reallocated to the remaining candidates. For instance, if there are three candidates, then the two candidates with the greatest number of first-choice votes advance to a second round of counting. In a second round, the second choice candidate of all voters whose first choice candidate was eliminated in the first round is counted, along with the first-choices of other voters, and the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated again. If there is only one candidate remaining who has not been eliminated, that candidate is the winner. If not, there is a third round.

As the number of elimination rounds increase, the IRV counting process becomes more complex. In the third round, some ballots have their first choices counted, some ballots have their second choices counted, and some have their third choices counted. Voters who do not provide total orderings of all candidates may have all their candidates eliminated and their ballots are excluded from the final counting rounds. In the round "n", voters' 1st or 2nd or 3rd,…, or nth ballot choices may be counted, depending on each particular ballot. After a number of rounds equal to the total number of candidates minus one, hopefully only one candidate remains, and is declared the winner.[ii]

There are also alternative voting methods which do not employ ranked choice ballots but instead are *rating* voting schemes (i.e. voters rate each candidate with a number) including a simple method

called "approval" voting; as well as the "top-two runoff" election method. Appendix E provides a brief description of some alternative voting methods.

What is "Plurality" Voting?

Plurality voting is a name given to the voting system used today in the U.S. where voters cast one vote in each contest for each elected position available and the winners are the candidates who receive the most votes.

Who Supports Instant Runoff Voting?

Support for instant runoff voting **(IRV)** has grown since the 2000 election, and it is being considered for adoption now in many U.S. locations. IRV is billed by its proponents as a solution to the "spoiler problem".[iii]

A "spoiler" is a non-winning candidate whose presence in the election contest causes a different candidate to win than would otherwise win, by splitting the vote. The "spoiler problem occurs when two candidates have overlapping support and both candidates are penalized. When a third party candidate receives an amount of votes that is more than the vote margin between the two major political party candidates, it may tip the balance of votes to the major political party candidate who is favored by fewer voters overall.[iv] The spoiler effect has elected the "wrong" U.S. president 11% of the time[v].

In recent years, a nonprofit organization named Fair Vote has led local referenda to adopt IRV which Fair Vote prefers to other ranked choice voting methods such as the Bucklin or Borda methods.

League of Women Voter groups in Minnesota and North Carolina have adopted resolutions supporting ranked choice methods, including IRV. Burlington, VT, San Francisco, CA, Minneapolis, MN, Takoma Park, MD, and Pierce County, WA have adopted IRV and Cary, NC has tested IRV. IRV has been called "rank choice voting" by some municipalities that have adopted it.

Some Fairness Principles for Voting Methods

Conditions have been proposed to judge whether or not voting and vote-counting methods result in fair or in non-fair, paradoxical election results.[vi] Such fairness criteria include:

1. **The addition of an alternative (candidate) who does not win should not affect the outcome**. This fairness principle says that if you have an election contest where candidate A wins, and you introduce a new candidate C, then either candidate A should still win, or candidate C should now win. In other words, spoilers should not be possible. The addition of a candidate that doesn't win should not affect the outcome.

This is some times called "independence of irrelevant alternatives" that says that the collective (societal) preference order of any pair of candidates x and y must depend solely on the individual voters' preferences between these candidates and not on their preferences for other irrelevant (non-winning) alternatives.

IRV does *not* meet this condition of fairness. (See appendix A.) As we've seen from prior U.S. elections where "spoilers" determined who won, plurality voting also does not meet this condition.[vii] Other alternative voting methods exist, such as approval or range voting that do seem to meet this fairness condition.

2. **Whenever all individuals prefer an alternative x to another alternative y then alternative x must be preferred to alternative y in the collective preference order**[viii] [the final election result]. This principle says that whenever all individuals prefer an alternative x to another y then x must be preferred to y in the collective preference order. It is possible to find examples of when IRV and plurality voting violate this fairness condition. (See appendix B.) Other voting methods such as approval voting, however, do seem to meet this fairness condition.

3. **The candidate who wins should have received a majority of voters' votes.** Some jurisdictions require winning candidates to have a majority (more votes than 50% of the ballots cast by voters). Some voting methods, such as plurality voting and IRV do *not* meet this condition. Actual top-two runoff elections do. A different definition of "majority"– a "majority of voters who have candidates remaining in the election contest after elimination rounds" is used by IRV proponents in order to claim that IRV "finds a majority candidate". Another way that IRV proponents finagle to claim that IRV satisfies the majority winner condition would be if voters' ballots are only counted whenever the voter has provided a complete ranking of all candidates in the contest, but this practice would probably not be legal in the U.S. and would not be practical with existing U.S. voting systems. On the other hand, top-two runoff elections that IRV is promoted to replace, virtually always finds a "majority" winner for all voters who participate by voting in the runoff election. In practice top-two runoff elections produce different results than IRV elections, because more often a runner-up in the original count wins a top-two runoff election.

4. **Any candidate who is the favorite [first] choice of a majority of voters should win**. While IRV does not always pick a majority winner out of all ballots cast, IRV proponents emphasize that *if* a majority winner exists among voters' first choices, then IRV will always select this candidate as the winner. However, existing plurality voting method also meets this condition, which IRV proponents call the "majority criterion". Range and approval voting do *not* meet this criterion. With IRV and plurality, the majority criterion candidate wins even if the candidate is the last choice or disapproved of by all other voters, and even if there is an alternative candidate who is approved of by *all* voters.

5. **The pair-wise favorite among all voters should be the winner**. In other words, the candidate preferred when compared pair-wise to other candidates by the most number of voters should win. This is called the Condorcet winner. Both IRV and plurality do *not* meet this condition. Range and approval voting meet it more often, as shown in the examples in appendix A.

IRV does *not* meet four out of the above five fairness conditions. Other alternative voting methods are available that do meet these fairness conditions.

IRV proponents often compare IRV versus plurality on the one hand or compare IRV versus "top-two runoff" on the other hand.

Against plurality voting, IRV supporters point out the spoiler effect which IRV partially solves.

Since top-two runoff elections fix the exact same special case of the spoiler problem that IRV fixes plus also finds majority winners, IRV proponents talk about expense when comparing IRV to top-two runoff elections. However, claims of the economy of IRV over top-two runoff are dubious because in practice runoff elections are rarely needed and IRV requires difficult new machine programming, additional voter education, additional training for poll workers and election administrators, increased ballot printing costs, significantly more difficult and expensive manual audits, increased staff time to count, and the purchase and maintenance of new more complex vote-reading and counting machines.

Flaws of Instant Runoff Voting

Some flaws of the instant runoff voting method for counting ranked choice ballots include:

1. **Does not solve the "spoiler" problem except in special cases**. IRV only solves the spoiler problem in cases where there are only two viable candidates and some minor candidates who receive substantially fewer votes than the two viable candidates. IRV could result in electing to office the candidate who is the second least-favored among all voters[ix] and give the major political party whose voters are less likely to vote for third party candidates a better chance of winning especially if voters incorrectly think that IRV provides an opportunity to put a third party candidate as their first choice without hurting their major party favorite.[x] Oddly enough, IRV voters could sometimes give their favorite candidate a better chance to win by giving a different candidate higher ranking.[xi] (See appendix A.)

2. **Requires centralized vote counting procedures at the state-level**: IRV requires centralized vote counting for all election contests having districts that cross county lines because in each round, IRV requires that the individual ballots choices in the entire contest are counted first to see which candidate advances to the next round to know which ballots' second or lower choices need to be counted next. In other words, non-additive in the sense that there is no such thing as simple precinct subtotals for each candidate.[xii] Counting IRV usually requires counting the second, third … choices of voters whose first, second … choices are eliminated in a prior counting round. Prior to when the state-wide tallies of each round are computed and made available, it is not possible to know which voters' second, third … choices will be counted in the next round for each contest. For all multi-county election contests, IRV thus requires either counting all ballots on a state-level or requires a procedure which involves waiting for all counties to submit first-round results, doing the state-level calculations,

notifying the counties which voters' ballots to consider second choices for round two, then waiting at the state counting center for the second round ballot numbers from the counties to arrive, and then counting again, repeating this back-and-forth process between the state and local election offices as necessary until a winner is found. Alternatively, when voters are permitted to rank from 1 to N candidates, the counting procedure requires that the jurisdictions accurately report to the state a number of subtotals *for each* precinct or ballot grouping that is equal to $\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$ where N is the number of candidates in the election contest and that the state correctly identify which of these numerous subtotals for each precinct or ballot grouping to add together in each round to obtain the overall results. For just three candidates, there are 15 possible ballot orderings or subtotals. For four candidates, there are 64 possible ballot orderings or subtotals for each precinct. When voters are permitted to rank from 1 to R candidates, as in San Francisco where voters may only rank up to R=3 candidates, then the number of permutations is equal to $\sum_{i=0}^{R-1} \frac{N!}{(i+N-R)!}$ [1]

Maine was considering IRV but had jurisdictions that would have had to give up hand counting in the polling locations. Those hand counted paper ballot counties would have had to purchase central count scanners and truck their ballots to one central office to be "tabulated". Maine abandoned IRV for that reason. Also, if any county were to submit erroneous subtotals by mistake, the process and resorting and counting would have to be restarted. IRV thus requires a sea change in election administration and possibly in state election law.[xiii]

3. **Cannot be implemented without modification to the ballots or to the optical scan machines or their software.** (See appendix D.) You can retrofit some existing optical scanners to count IRV ballots, but not the discrete-sensor machines.[xiv] If you allow ranking all candidates, then you need a number of columns of bubbles equal to the total number of candidates by each name in which you place your rating, or the ballots will quickly become pages long.

4. **Encourages the use of complex voting systems** IRV's main proponent [Rob Richie, Executive Director of Fair Vote] testified (in April 2008) to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) that no voting systems are commercially available today to adequately handle IRV. In his testimony, Richie asked for additional technical features for optical scan voting systems, seemed to support electronic-balloting, and found fault with paper ballots.[xv]

5. **Confuses voters more than plurality voting**, and may be more confusing to voters than other alternative voting methods such as approval voting.[xvi]

6. **Confusing, complex, and time-consuming to implement and to count**. Should voters rank all candidates or only three? And, what constitutes a majority win? Is it 50% plus one vote for the total number of first column votes, or does it mean 50% plus one vote of the

[1] This paper was updated on 8/1/2008 to include this formula for when voters are restricted to ranking from one to R number of candidates. Note that when R=N, this reduces to the simpler prior formula.

accumulated votes for the candidates remaining in the contest only after many voters' ballots may have been eliminated? It took San Francisco more than two years to implement the system. In Australia it took a month in 2007 to count the difficult election contests.[xvii]

If ballots are counted prior to validating and counting all absentee and provisional ballots, the results could be wrong because incorrect candidates may have been eliminated during some rounds, causing votes to be incorrectly allocated. Thus, it is best to wait to begin the IRV counting process after all absentee and provisional ballots are available for counting.

7. **Makes post election data and exit poll analysis more difficult to perform**.[xviii] Given the lack of valid post-election audits in most states, election data analyses are often the only means available for detecting suspicious patterns caused by vote miscount.[xix] Even though Dr. Christopher Jerdonek [the Fair Vote expert on IRV] wrote a paper stating that all raw data from IRV elections should be made available to outside observers for independent analysis and verification of election results, the North Carolina State Board of Elections refuses to release the raw data, claiming privacy concerns,[xx] and some states like Utah do not even publicly post precinct-level or machine-level vote counts, let alone the detailed ballot-level data needed to analyze IRV results.

8. **Difficult and time-consuming to manually count**.[xxi] In each round, IRV requires that individual ballots cast in the entire contest are counted first to see which candidate advances to the next round to know which ballots' second or lower choices need to be counted next. For counting each election contest, for each group of ballots that must be separately maintained (say absentee, precincts …) the ballots must be sorted, stacked, and counted by voters' candidate choices on each ballot. Then the ballots corresponding to any eliminated candidate need to be sub-sorted, sub-stacked, counted and added to the appropriate sub-totals. In following rounds those sub-piles need to be further sub-divided, sub-sorted, sub-stacked, separately counted and added to previous sub-totals. In a simple Cary, North Carolina single member town council seat contest held in only 8 precincts, approximately 72 total stacks and sub-stacks were required. For any grouping of ballots it is not possible to count more than one election contest at a time because the ballots must be resorted and restacked to correctly count each contest.

9. **Difficult and inefficient to manually audit**.[xxii] To check the accuracy of voting machine results via a post-election audit of less than 100% of all ballots cast requires, as a first step, publicly publishing all separate auditable vote counts that can be used to tally the overall election results. After the unofficial auditable vote counts that can be used to tally the overall unofficial result are publicly committed then some of these auditable vote counts can be randomly selected for manual counting in order to check the accuracy of the machine tallies. The accuracy of IRV election results may be practically auditable only via a 100% manual hand count because the correctness of intermediate-stage subtotals in each auditable vote count (machine, batch of ballots, precinct, or polling location) depends on the accuracy of the state-wide subtotals. In other words, IRV is not precinct sum-able in the sense that the totals for all 2nd, 3rd, 4th,… choices for each precinct are not used to obtain the overall election result. To manually check machine counted IRV results without doing a 100% manual count of all ballots in the election contest requires:

a. publicly publishing 100% of voters' ballots prior to the manual audit and then randomly selecting individual ballots to manually count. This method requires that the voters' individual ballots have printed on them a humanly identifiable mark so that individual ballots could be randomly selected and the accuracy of the tallying could be verified. This would raise other concerns with ballot privacy and cost.

b. Alternatively, the tallies for all $\sum_{i=0}^{R-1} \frac{N!}{(i+N-R)!}$ (where N = number of candidates and R= maximum number of candidates voters are allowed to rank on a ballot) possible unique voter selections for each auditable vote count (a number of tallies usually greater than the number of voters in each precinct) could be publicly published prior to randomly selecting auditable vote counts to manually audit, and then those auditable counts manually checked. Because this is a huge number of tallies to publicly report, this method may be impractical and too confusing for auditors and election officials.

In other words, any manual audit to check the accuracy of an IRV result would require a resorting and restacking and recounting *all* the ballots for the entire election contest state-wide, or either publicly posting all voters' ballots choices for the entire election contest state-wide, along with a humanly-readable identifier marked on each ballot, or alternatively publicly reporting all of the $\sum_{i=0}^{R-1} \frac{N!}{(i+N-R)!}$ tallies for each precinct or other auditable vote count that could be used to tally the vote (the tallies for each possible unique voter ranking). Checking the accuracy of machine-counted IRV election results is more difficult than checking the accuracy of elections counted via other methods.

10. **Could necessitate counting all presidential votes in Washington D.C.** If a Constitutional Amendment or a national popular vote compact were passed in order to have a direct popular vote for the U.S. presidential election as some are pushing for, then using IRV would necessitate counting all presidential votes in Washington D.C. since there would be no such thing as individual state "subtotals". This would be a conflict of interest for the executive branch to determine the next president and could violate the U.S. Constitution.[xxiii]

11. **Entrenches the two-major-political party system**: IRV has entrenched the two-party political system wherever it has been tried.[xxiv] One reason is because if a voter puts a third party candidate as his or her first choice, it can hurt the chances of the voter's second choice major party candidate, who could potentially be eliminated in the first round, causing that voter's last choice to be selected for office.[xxv]

12. **Ranking a voter's *first-choice* candidate *LAST* could cause that candidate to WIN as opposed to ranking the *first-choice* candidate *FIRST*, which could result in that candidate LOSING!**

    In mathematics, a function f is monotonic if for all $x \leq y$, $f(x) \leq f(y)$. Instant Runoff Voting is non-monotonic because increasing a vote for a candidate does not always increase that candidate's chances of winning and in fact may decrease a candidate's chance to win. Voters should have the right to know how to rank their first-choice candidate - first or last or in-between - in order to help their first-choice candidate win. Unfortunately, this is not the case with instant runoff voting. Here is an example.

#voters	Votes 1st/2nd/3rd
6	B>A>C
5	C>B>A
4	A>C>B

Candidate C wins this contest because candidate A is eliminated in round one, giving 4 more votes to candidate C, resulting in 6 votes for B and 9 votes for C in round 2.

If **two additional new voters whose actual preferences are B > A > C** vote their real preferences:

#voters	Votes 1st/2nd/3rd
8	B>A>C
5	C>B>A
4	A>C>B

Then candidate A is eliminated first and their *least* favorite candidate C wins with 8 votes for B, and 9 votes for C.

However, if these same two voters voted A>C>B (ranked their second favorite candidate A first, their least favorite candidate second, and their favorite candidate last) then their favorite candidate B wins:

#voters	Votes 1st/2nd/3rd
6	B>A>C
5	C>B>A
6	A>C>B

This time C, their least favorite candidate loses the first round, resulting in 11 votes for B and 6 votes for candidate A, and their favorite candidate B wins.

In other words, if these two new voters want their first choice candidate B to win, they must *not* rank B as their first choice and must rank candidate B as their *last choice* instead! IRV exhibits the "non-monotonicity" property where increasing your vote for a candidate X, may cause X to *lose*.[xxvi] For some examples see http://rangevoting.org/Monotone.html or http://www.mnvoters.org/images/MVALitiBack.pdf

13. **Delivers other unreasonable outcomes**. For instance, according to Warren Smith[xxvii]
    a. IRV is more likely to lead to ties and near-ties (see appendix A.),
    b. IRV can select a winner who is the pair-wise "lose to everybody except one" loser (see appendix D), and
    c. IRV favors extremists over centrists.[xxviii]

14. **Not all voters' ballots are treated equally**: Unlike with actual runoff elections, some IRV voters are not allowed to participate in the final selection round of an IRV election because all their choices were eliminated before the last counting round. Some voters have *all* their ranked choices considered. Others do not.[xxix] Some voters' second choices are considered in a timely fashion when their second choice candidates are still in the contest. Less lucky voters' have their second choices considered only after it is too late to help that candidate to win. Some of the most unlucky voters only have their first choice considered, even though their first choice candidate loses. This unequal, unfair treatment of voters' choices, ignoring lower ranked choices on some ballots but not on others causes the IRV counting method to select winners who may be favored by fewer voters than all but one of the eliminated candidates. In other words, candidates who are favored by a majority of voters end up losing, while candidates opposed by a majority of voters may win. There is currently a lawsuit in Minnesota against the adoption of IRV on the basis of the unequal, unfair treatment of voters' ballots.

15. **Costly**: IRV is more costly than plurality voting and is more costly than some other simpler-to-count alternative voting systems. There is the cost of the new machines, software, training, and voter education. The MD legislature estimated that costs could be as high as $3.50 per registered voter in their 2006 IRV bill, and a little less in the 2008 bill which did not include the cost of software which could not be estimated. The MD legislature defeated IRV bills in 2001, 2006 and 2008.[xxx]

16. **Increases the potential for undetectable vote fraud and erroneous vote counts**. This is due to several factors:
    a. The complexity of the machine programming required for counting IRV increases the likelihood of errors.
    b. The complexity of the manual counting procedures and the requirement for a 100% manual count to check the accuracy of the results, makes valid audits less likely to occur. Any procedure lacking a routine method for detecting and correcting errors can be assumed to be inaccurate.
    c. Pre-election machine testing of IRV elections would be more complex and difficult and therefore more likely to miss innocent errors. (Pre-election testing is incapable of detecting any deliberate vote fraud.)
    d. The conflict between the requirement to make voters' ranked choices on all individual ballots available in order for the public to verify the hand count with the requirement for ballot privacy may mean that any post-election data analysis that could check for consistency with patterns caused by vote fraud and error will not be possible.

e. No one has yet been able to generalize exit poll analysis methods which can now detect vote count patterns that are consistent with vote miscount in most plurality elections, to the much more complex IRV election results. Hence it would be much more difficult, if not virtually impossible to use exit poll data to detect patterns consistent with vote miscount.

f. It could be easier to hide the effects of vote switching and incorrect failure to count votes, and vote padding within a new and more complex voting system like IRV. In other words, any vote count patterns that make vote fraud noticeable may not be easily detectable with IRV voting. IRV proponents have typically not focused attention on developing any routine policies, methods, or procedure for detecting and correcting vote count errors which would work well with IRV methods.

17. **Violates many election fairness principles**. A spoiler candidate who does not win the election contest can cause a different candidate to win than would win if the spoiler candidate were not in the election contest; IRV can fail to elect the candidate that the largest number of voters prefer to other candidates (i.e. IRV does not always elect the pair-wise favorite); IRV does not always elect a majority candidate; IRV can elect the candidate who is second to the bottom for being least favored by voters. See appendix A and the section above on fairness conditions violated by IRV.

18. **Unstable and can be delicately sensitive to noise in the rankings**. If an election is not resolved after 3 rounds of IRV then one is deep in the ranking for many people. This means noise in the rankings. Do people really study candidates they don't care much about? Thus the noise in the ranking for the most ill-informed voters is determining the outcome in deep rank run-offs.

    When an election contest is unresolved after 3 rounds of IRV, a better solution is to hold a real run off with the remaining candidates. Having winnowed the field, voters can now properly study their allowed few choices with the required care and presumably enough will to make the outcome not contingent on noise. Moreover, can you fathom how awful it would be to fill out a ballot ranking every candidate 10 deep? In Australia, voters are required by law to fill rank ever candidate running (generally 20) from 1 to 20. Do you think there is anything besides noise in the last ten? The saving grace on the Australian ballot is that generally there are only 2 questions, one with 3 to 4 rankings and one with about 20. Not like our USA ballots. Restricting the ranking depth of ranked choice ballots could improve IRV methods by reducing noise and making it easier for voters.

Benefits of Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) Over Plurality Voting

There are a few areas where IRV is an improvement over today's predominant voting method called plurality voting. The benefits of IRV include:

1. **Eliminates the spoiler scenario only in situations where the minor party candidate is behind both frontrunners** so that the spoiler candidate is eliminated before either of the two major party candidates.
2. **Will not elect a candidate who loses pair-wise to all rivals** whereas plurality voting can do so. (See appendix D.)
3. **Votes are more expressive**. It gives IRV voters a sense of being heard by giving voters an opportunity to express their preferences.
4. **An IRV** counting method called Single Transferable Vote (STV) when used in multiple-seat elections, could help minority voting groups obtain representation that is roughly proportional to their numbers in the voting population *if* sufficient candidates run for office that represent minority interests and *if* sufficient minority voters exercise the right to vote and vote for the candidates representing their interests.[2] In actual practice, IRV has not helped minorities to win representation where it has been tried.

If one ignores IRV's unequal treatment of voters' ballots, its counting difficulties, the increased potential for undetected vote fraud and error, the increased costs and complexity, the need for new high-tech voting software and equipment, and the difficulty and costs of manually auditing IRV elections, then it might be considered better than today's plurality voting method. So, if the emphasis is not on fairness, accuracy, economy, and timeliness, then IRV could be considered an improvement over plurality voting. However, IRV is not as fair as top-two runoff elections.

The IRV method, although it does not completely solve the spoiler problem, does not find majority winners, and does not solve the two-party domination problem may fit better with elections like Australia holds where there is a single contest on a single paper ballot. Australia's elections have one contest with perhaps 10-20 political parties running for election.

An "IRV-Like" Solution to Some IRV Counting Issues

While it is not strictly a ranked choice voting method, there is an "IRV-like" solution to the dilemma of the complexity of counting IRV ballots which allows the candidates who are eliminated in beginning rounds to exercise their political power, rather than being defanged by normal IRV counting methods. This is to use the current voting system we have now, where voters vote for one candidate, but then have the losing candidates' votes roll over to whomever the candidate has pre-selected prior to Election Day. That is to say the candidate not the voter determines the ranking preferences. This allows them to negotiate with the major parties to get their issues adopted in return

[2] There are other voting methods available that achieve proportional minority group representation, but do not have as many flaws as IRV methods.

for their roll-over votes. It is simple. Since the rank order is known ahead of time the votes can be counted locally not centrally. This solution solves some of the counting problems of IRV, but it does not solve IRV's fairness issues.

Two alternative methods of counting ranked choice ballots would also eliminate some of the problems of IRV. The Bucklin and Borda methods count *all* the voters' choices as compared to IRV that only counts some voters' choices, conceals the second or lower preferences of voters whose higher ranked preferences are still in the contest. The Bucklin method does not eliminate any candidates. It just counts all the votes and is similar to approval voting, but ranked. Bucklin method is more efficient at finding majorities than IRV, because IRV does *not* count all the votes. The Borda method is simpler to count and to audit than either IRV or Bucklin methods because the Borda method does not require centralized vote counting and is thus precinct-sum-able.

About the Author

Kathy Dopp has an M.S. degree in Mathematics from the University of Utah and has authored dozens of academic papers with Ph.D. computer scientists and statisticians on voting and election issues since 2003, including analyses of exit poll discrepancies and vote count patterns, and voting system recommendations. Dopp is currently executive director of the grossly under-funded non-profit, The National Election Data Archive, for which she has been doing full-time volunteer work for since 2004. Her resume is posted online at: http://electionarchive.org/ucvInfo/staff/KathyDopp.pdf

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- has a title reflecting additional flaws of instant runoff voting (IRV) suggested by experts,
- discusses how IRV does *not* select majority winners as often as real runoff elections or primary and general elections do,
- differentiates between the ballot style - "ranked choice voting" - and the counting method - "instant runoff voting" (IRV),
- gives an overview of alternative voting methods in appendix E,
- describes an "IRV-like" solution that would solve some of IRV's counting problems,
- provides a precise definition of "spoiler", and
- rebuts Fair Vote's attempt at rebutting the first version of this report in appendix F.

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Appendix A: "Instant Runoff Voting" Examples

Example 1: This example shows that an IRV outcome may not seem fair; and that the IRV counting process is complex. The table below lists twelve voters and four candidates running for a single-winner election contest. Each row represents one voter's candidate rankings.

	Candidates' Ranks			
Voter#	**Republican**	**Libertarian**	**Green**	**Democrat**
1	4	3	2	1
2	1	4	3	2
3	1	4	3	2
4	3	1	4	2
5	4	1	3	2
6	4	3	1	2
7	4	3	1	2
8	1	2	3	4
9	2	1	4	3
10	4	2	1	3
11	4	3	2	1
12	1	4	3	2

Using the IRV method, the Democrat is eliminated in the first round and the Republican and Green candidates end up being tied, despite the fact that 7 voters, or 58%, prefer the Democrat over the Republican, and 8 voters, or 67%, prefer the Democrat over the Green candidate. Notice that overall although there are 4 voters who selected the Republican as 1st choice, more voters selected the Republican as last choice than any other candidate, and the Democrat is the candidate most frequently ranked 1st or 2nd choice among all voters.

#voters who selected candidate as	Candidates			
	Republican	**Libertarian**	**Green**	**Democrat**
1st choice	4	3	3	2
2nd choice	1	2	2	7
3rd choice	1	4	5	2
4th choice	6	3	2	1
total voters	12	12	12	12

The Democrat has the most 1st and 2nd rankings but is eliminated in the first round; the Libertarian is eliminated in the second round; and the Green and Republican candidates are tied in the third round, although the Green and Democrat are both ranked 1st, 2nd, or 3rd by 11 voters and the Republican is ranked 1st, 2nd, or 3rd among only 6 voters, the least of any candidate. A real run-off election between the Green and Republican candidates is needed for this case.

Not only is the IRV counting process complex and difficult to audit, but the result could be fundamentally unfair whenever minor party candidates become viable, as this example shows by selecting the major-party candidate favored by the least number of voters. IRV proponents claim that such scenarios "occur rarely". This claim may be true because voters learn to strategize to avoid these scenarios rather than ranking candidates honestly.

Another way to look at this set of voter preferences is:

2 voters prefer D > G > L > R
3 voters prefer R > D > G > L
1 voter prefers L > D > R >G
1 voter prefers L > D > G >R
2 voters prefer G > D > L >R
1 voter prefers R > L > G >D
1 voter prefers L > R > D >G
1 voter prefers G > L > D >R

Notice that: 6 voters rank the Republican last; 3 voters rank the Libertarian last; 2 voters rank the Green party last; and 1 voter ranks the Democrat last.

Let us count the number of voters who prefer each candidate over other candidates:

D > G and L and R for 2 voters
D > L and R or R and G or L and G for 7 additional voters
D > R or L or G for 2 additional voters
11 voters prefer the Democrat over other candidates

G > D and L and R for 3 voters
G > R and L or R and D, or D and L 2 additional voters
G > L or R or D 5 additional voters
10 voters prefer the Green over other candidates

L > D and G and R for 3 voters
L > G and D or G and R or R and D for 2 additional voters
L > R or D or G 4 voters
9 voters prefer the Libertarian over other candidates

R > D and G and R for 4 voters
R > G and D or G and R or D and R for 1 additional voters
R > L or D or G for 1 additional voters
6 voters prefer the Republican over others candidates

In sum:

11 voters prefer the Democrat over other candidates
10 voters prefer the Green over other candidates
9 voters prefer the Libertarian over other candidates
6 voters prefer the Republican over others candidates

So who do you think should win this election with 12 voters? IRV counting methods result in the R and G candidates being tied for first place. If voters approve either their first two or their first three choices then approval voting results in candidate D winning.

Example 2: This is another example where IRV eliminates the candidate preferred by most voters in the first round.

Let us examine a situation where 40% of voters prefer candidate A over candidate C, and 60% of voters prefer candidate C over candidate A:

#voters	ranking
40	A > C
60	C > A

Now allow rank order voting and introduce candidate B who is preferred first by fewer voters than candidates A. Candidate C is the Ranked Pairs winner here. But with the introduction of B, we get

#voters	ranking
40	A > B > C
35	B > C > A
25	C > A > B

With IRV candidate C, the most popular candidate whom 60% of voters prefer over A is now eliminated in the first round and now candidate A wins despite the fact that most voters (60%) prefer candidate C over candidate A. So, the introduction of candidate B, a non-winning candidate, affects the outcome in IRV, violating one fairness condition.

Let's count the same election contest using approval voting:

40 voters approve of A and B
35 voters approve of B and C
25 voters approve of C and A

A receives 40+25 = 65 votes
B receives 40+35 = 75 votes
C receives 35+25 = 60 votes

Simply add up the approval votes and candidate B, the new candidate wins. Therefore candidate B is no longer a non-winning candidate and so this example of approval voting does not violate this fairness (independence) condition. (See appendix C.)

Another way to see that candidate B is an appropriate winner in this example is to note that

35 + 25 = 60 voters prefer C over other choices. i.e. over A or over B
40 + 25 = 65 voters prefer A over other choices. i.e. over C or over B
40+35 = 75 voters prefer B over other choices. i.e. over C or over A

Example 3:

#voters	their vote
36	Left>Center>Right
34	Right>Center>Left
15	Center>Right>Left
15	Center>Left>Right

In this IRV 3-candidate 100-voter election, "Left" wins.

But "Center" is preferred over Left by a 64-to-36 landslide majority.
Also Center is preferred over Right by a 64-to-36 majority.

Appendix B: A Scenario Comparing IRV and Approval Voting

This simple approval voting scenario was provided to me by Anthony Lorenzo and demonstrates another instance of how IRV violates conditions for a fair election result, but approval voting meets the same fairness conditions.

> 60% of voters approve of candidate A and candidate B, and believe anybody is better than candidate C.
>
> 40% of voters approve of candidate C and candidate B and believe anybody is better than candidate A.

The outcome in approval voting is that A receives 60 votes, B receives 100 votes and C receives 40 votes. Candidate B, with 100% approval, wins.

In other words, it seems that the fairness condition (sometimes attributed to Kenneth Arrow) that

> "whenever all individuals prefer an alternative x to another y, x must be preferred to y in the collective preference order"

is met in the above example by using the approval voting method where alternative x is that candidate B wins, and alternative y is that another candidate wins.

IRV proponent, Anthony Lorenzo points out that if IRV were used instead of approval for this example, it is possible that up to 60% of the voters who voted for both A and B, may actually have preferred A over B as the best candidate and only voted for B to help ensure that C did not win. So, in that case approval voting violates the "majority favorite criterion" that states:

> "If one candidate is the favorite [first] choice of a majority of voters that candidate should always win"

Both plurality voting and IRV conform to the "majority favorite criterion" because the majority candidate in both plurality and IRV wins even if that candidate is disapproved of by all non-majority voters, and even if there is an alternative candidate that is approved of by *all* voters.

So if the "majority favorite criterion" is considered a more important fairness condition for election outcomes rather than other fairness conditions, then there is no need to abandon the current plurality voting system for the more complex IRV methods.

Approval voting, which is a simple case of range voting methods, satisfies other conditions for fair election outcomes which IRV does not, solves the "spoiler problem", and alleviates the problem of the two-party lock on our political system. Range and approval voting are much simpler to count locally, particularly for election contests whose districts cross county or township lines.

IRV proponents object to approval voting because it fails what they call the "later-no-harm" criterion which states that:

> "a voter's indicating a second or lower preference should not hurt the voter's top choice."

IRV proponent Anthony Lorenzo notes that in the above example, if all voters who voted for both A and B actually preferred candidate A over B, then, by voting for B, they can cause the defeat of their favorite candidate (A).

On the other hand, IRV voting ensures that a voter's lower preferences never hurt their first choice. However, the first choice of IRV voters often hurts their lower choices candidates by causing their early elimination.

Existing plurality voting methods used in multi-winner election contests, like municipal city council elections, where voters may vote for as many candidates as there are available positions to fill, also could hurt the chances of voters' preferred choices.

Appendix C: IRV Could Select a Winner Who Is A "Lose To Every Candidate Except One" Loser

IRV will not select a winner who loses pair-wise to all rivals (although plurality could) but could select a winner who is a "lose to every candidate except one" loser. This appendix was primarily written by Warren Stewart with some explanatory additions and editing by the author of this paper.

In IRV/RVC if the voters provide rank order votes such as "A > B > C" (meaning "I prefer A over B over C") then you can make a "pair wise matrix" showing for each candidate pair X and Y how many voters prefer X over Y and how many the reverse.

I.e. if the 3 votes are:

A > B > C (2 voters)
B > C >A (1 voter)

then

A,B: A beats B by 2 voters to 1.
B,C: B beats C pair wise 3 to 0.
A,C: A beats C by 2 to 1.

If some candidate beats every rival pair wise, then that candidate is called a "Condorcet winner" or the "beats-all winner." Here A qualifies.

If some candidate L loses to every rival pair wise, then is a "Condorcet loser" also called "lose to all loser." Here C qualifies.

Plurality voting can elect a lose-to-all loser (unfortunately). Example of Plurality voting electing "lose to all" candidate

Let the four candidates be A, B, C, and D.
#voterstheir vote

28 voters A > B > C > D
25 voters B > C > D > A
24 voters C > D > B > A
23 voters D > C > B > A

In this situation, A would lose to any opponent in a head-to-head election by a huge 72-to-28 margin, far larger than the hugest "landslide" in US presidential election history. And A is ranked dead last by 72% of the voters.

Counting the same example above using IRV method, candidate D would be eliminated in round one and “first-choice votes-for-D” would be re-allocated to candidate C. In round two, candidate B

would be eliminated and "first-choice votes for B" would be reallocated to C; and C would be selected as the winner. (This example is from http://rangevoting.org/LoseAll.html)

IRV cannot elect a lose-to-all loser L because in the final round it will be L versus somebody and somebody will win. (Or L won't make it to the final round. Either way L does not win.) That's a win for IRV.

IRV can however elect a "lose to everybody except one" loser. (See example 1 in appendix A which can be adjusted slightly to show that.)

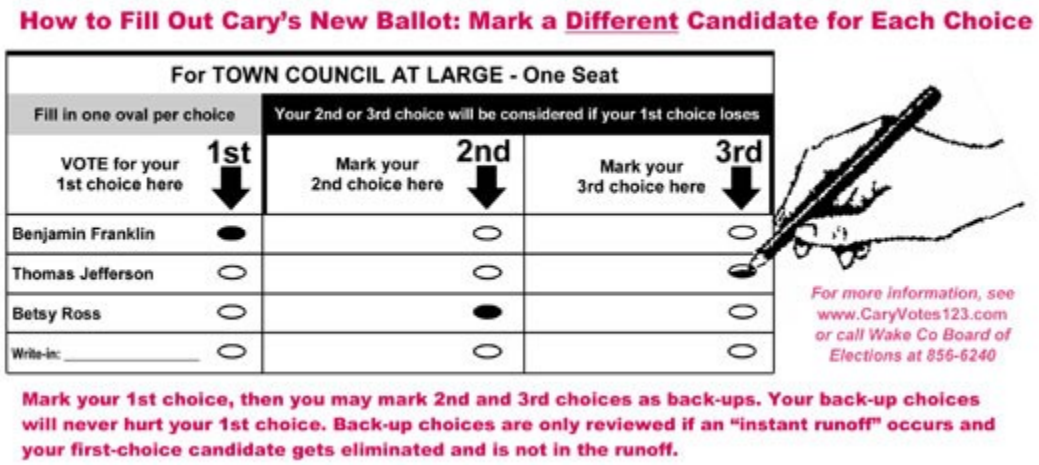
And IRV can elect as "winner" the same person IRV would also rate as the "worst" candidate, For example:

#voters	their vote
2	B > C > A
2	A > B > C
1	C > A > B

where A is (says IRV) "best" but if you use IRV to calculate the "worst" candidate by reversing all votes and using IRV to count them ("trying to choose the worst") then A "wins" also.

For another example see: http://rangevoting.org/IrvRevFail.html

Appendix D: Voter Instructions for Instant Runoff Voting, Cary, NC



Appendix E: Alternative Voting Methods Worth Considering

This appendix was built from the terse analysis of voting methods worth paying attention to by Charlie Strauss', and comments and information from U of IA, computer science professor Doug Jones and U of Berkley, computer science professor Arthur Kellner, and David Webber.

Voting methods fall into two categories, rating and ranking methods:

I. Rating Methods (Non ranked-preference)

1) Range voting. In this method voters simply rate, not rank, all the candidates on a scale (say 1-10). The candidate with highest average rating wins. Range voting has three main problems: a) tedious b) requires special machinery, and larger ballots because existing op-scans cannot be retrofitted, and c) If people were honest in their rankings, then in theory, it is Bayes optimal (an ideal voting system). But people are not honest, and will strategically exaggerate the rating differential (ten for the guy they like, zero for the guy they prefer slightly less) making for sub optimal results. Still range voting is very good.

2) Approval voting: simply mark next to any and all candidates you approve of. Works will all existing optical scanners with no changes to firmware or hardware. No changes to existing ballot designs and Easy to hand count. Key feature: this is the binary approximation to range voting (a zero to one scale). In fact, given the strategic exaggeration that occurs in range voting, Approval voting is the natural tendency of range voting results in practice. Thus this may possibly be the overall best voting system that is achievable in practice.

Approval voting is worth a serious look because it does not complicate the ballots. It can be done on the current optical ballots without modification to the ballots or to the optical scan machines or their software. Approval voting works like this: Mark the oval next to any and all candidates you approve of. The winner is the one with the most marked ovals.

Approval voting is not contingent on global outcomes like IRV, and recounting is fairly simple, and there is no difficulty with the hardware or explosion in the length of ballots. One of the benefits of Approval Voting is that by definition, there is no such thing as an overvote. Since overvotes and accessibility were the two main reasons for HAVA, eliminating the potential for overvotes significantly reduces the justification for DREs. Other advantages of Approval Voting are the ease of auditing and the fact that tallying is associative.

3) The Viking voting method. OASIS EML supports the Viking method as they still use it in Norway. In this you strike through the candidates name on the ballot that you absolutely DO NOT want! The Viking system has that nice "throw the bums out" quality. The Viking system requires a positive vote. Since it can be assumed that at least one candidate will vote for him/herself, the Viking and approval methods are essentially equivalent.

II. Ranked Choice or Ranked Preference

A. Ballot Styles: Combine one of these ballot styles with the ranked preference counting methods mentioned below.

1) candidates choose ranked preference orders of other candidates to award their votes to in case they are eliminated. No changes to current ballots. Empowers third parties and easy to hand count.

2) voter chooses ranked preference: Cedes less power to minor candidates. Ballots are tedious, physically long, easily over-voted, and hard for the voter to quickly scan for mistakes. Very inconvenient or impossible to implement in most existing op-scans. Hard to hand count. Some existing opti-scans can be retrofitted to count IRV ballots, but not the discrete-sensor ones. The big nuisance is if you allow the range 1 to N, you need N columns of bubbles by each name in which you place your rating. Diebold's older op-scan systems can do this (4 or 8 sensors per inch horizontally across the page), while the old ES&S and Sequoia scanners have only a few sensors across the page, one per column of names on the ballot. In other words, the Sequoia and ES&S opti-scans support no more than 3 bubble lanes using 3 or 4 discrete sensors (the 4rth is a position track not a bubble lane). This means that the only space-efficient way to lay out a ranked preference ballot is if the number of rankings allowed is restricted to 3. Consequently ballots will generally be 3 times longer, spill across multiple pages and increase the ways you could accidentally overvote them. The multiple page issue is slightly subtle as implementing a system that can accommodate it on existing hardware is possible but non-trivial, but I'll not dwell on this. However, limiting the depth of ranking here might not be seen a real defect. One can argue that it is what you should do, particularly if IRV is used to resolve the ranked preference.

B. Counting Methods

1) Instant run-off voting is easy to explain but a really poor idea. For example: it becomes unstable when there are three or more strong parties. In that case it will tend to elect a minor preferred fringe party over a centrist party preferred by the majority. How do you combine IRV/STV with precinct counts, especially Hand counted paper ballots (HCPB)? IRV/STV are hard to audit and are not associative. Which voting system is the overall best? We have seen so many voters get confused in voting, and poll workers that are hard to train, that any complex voting system like IRV/STV being imposed on the general voting populace increases confusion.

2) Condorcet AKA ("majority rule"). Condorcet lacks the problems with IRV and arguably the closest to fair system devised. The winner is the person who beats all others if there were just a pair-wise election contest. In the unlikely event of a circular tie, one of the better resolution methods would be to switch to a Borda count.

4) Borda count. Arguably inferior to majority-rule but with one compelling attribute. Borda up weights candidates who are closer to the top of people's rankings. Thus a majority rule winner that only emerged deep in people's rankings would lose out to an almost-majority winner that was ranked highly by most people. Main defect is the scoring scheme that achieves this balance reeks of arbitrariness. Like range voting people can vote strategically to upset the process. The Borda Count

for ranked choice voting ballots is far easier method to manually count and to manually audit than IRV, because with it, you can produce precinct totals and then aggregate the precinct totals to produce overall totals from which the winner is determined. Therefore, Borda-count precinct level audits work the same way they do with conventional ballots.

5) Top-Two Runoff election. A new and separate runoff election is held for the top two vote-getters in the first election. This has the advantage of almost always selecting a majority candidate.

Appendix F: Rebuttals to Fair Vote's "De-Bunking Kathy Dopp's 15 Flaws of Instant Runoff Voting"

This appendix relies heavily on the expertise, writing, and research of Adb ul-Rahman Lomax and his rebuttals to Fair Vote on the election-methods@lists.electorama.com with some help by other email list members, including Warren Smith. This appendix rebuts the Fair Vote organization's attempted rebuttal of the first version of this paper. (See http://www.fairvote.org/?page=2285 or http://www.fairvote.org/dopp for the full text of Fair Vote's rebuttals.) Note: The numbering of IRV flaws is slightly different in this revised version above than in the original version due to the addition of two new flaws in this addition.

1. *"Does not solve the "spoiler" problem except in special cases…."*

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *"Dopp has her "special cases" reversed. In fact, IRV solves the spoiler problem in virtually all likely U.S. partisan elections. Whenever a third party or independent candidate is unlikely to be one of the top vote-getters …, IRV eliminates the spoiler problem"*

Fair Vote does not contradict the point that "IRV does not solve the spoiler problem" except in the particular case where no third candidate is among voters' top choices. In other words, using IRV counting methods means that the presence of a non-winning "spoiler" candidate can still split the votes and cause a different candidate to win than would otherwise win an election contest.

The particular spoiler problems that IRV does *not* solve are not rare whenever there are three or more major candidates. IRV is mostly being proposed at this time in the U.S. as a replacement for non-partisan elections. For instance, that is what IRV is being used for in San Francisco. Three or more major candidates occur much more commonly in nonpartisan election contests than in partisan ones in a two-party system, so that the spoiler problem is particularly likely in the same local U.S. elections where IRV is usually tested.

Notice that Fair Vote's response uses many hedging or misleading words like "virtually all", "likely", "unique", "final", and "partisan". Because simpler, more problem-free voting methods are available which do solve the spoiler problem in *all* cases, the fact that IRV solves the spoiler problem only in cases where only two major-party candidates are viable, is not a valid reason to support IRV.

2. Dopp: "Requires centralized vote counting procedures at the state-level…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *IRV creates no need to centralize the counting or the ballots themselves, although that is one possible counting procedure … all that is required to implement IRV is central coordination of the tally. If ballot images are recorded on optical scan equipment, the data from those images can be collected centrally for an IRV ballot. If a hand-count is conducted, vote totals need to be reported to a central tallying office in order to determine what step to take next in the count. In Ireland, for example, there are 43 counting centers in the presidential election contest. Election administrators count ballots and report their totals to a national office that in turn instructs the administrators at each counting center on what to do next. The entire process takes less than a day even though more than a million ballots are cast.*

Fair Vote renames "central vote counting" to "central coordination of the tally", but does not contradict our point that IRV requires centralized vote-counting procedures at the state-level for all election contests with districts that cross county lines. What Fair Vote describes is a system where actual ballot counting takes place in regional centers, but the tallies must be transmitted to the central facility and added together and announced before the next round can be counted at the regional centers. All ballots in the entire election contest must be counted for each round and its totals computed and announced, before the next round can be counted. This web page by Warren Smith explains the need for centralized IRV vote counting: http://rangevoting.org/IrvNonAdd.html

Consider absentee ballots which frequently take some jurisdictions up to two weeks after Election Day to verify voter eligibility and count. If all the absentee voters' ballots must be counted first before proceeding to round two, then the statewide or nationwide (in the case of an IRV presidential election) would be held up for two weeks before being able to finish round one counts.

Fair Vote's response hi-lights its push for new hi-tech optical scan voting equipment needed in order to implement IRV by saying "If ballot images are recorded on optical scan equipment, the data from those images can be collected centrally for an IRV ballot". The truth is that very few of today's optical scanners create ballot images. There is a study at http://www.gregdennis.com/voting/sf_irv.pdf that describes that the San Francisco machines are programmed to "interpret" the votes in creating "ballot images" and that the alleged "ballot images" are pre-processed and do not reflect the actual patterns of votes on the paper ballots. See appendix E of this paper for a description by computer scientists of the fact that most of today's optical scanning equipment is not designed to be able to process any ranked choice ballots or to count using IRV methods. Any voting system involving transferring all individual ballot images introduces new costs and security vulnerabilities; and introduces ballot privacy issues.

The method of counting votes in Ireland is that the two lowest-ranking candidates can be eliminated in the first round as long as the sum of their votes is less than the vote total of the next highest candidate. The full counting rules for Ireland are found here: http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1937/en/act/pub/0032/gen_6.html#gen_6 This makes sense because even if all voters were transferred to one of the other eliminated group of candidates, that candidate

would still be eventually eliminated without enough votes to surpass the remaining group of candidates. While such a procedure helps shorten IRV counting, Ireland only has 1 million voters nation-wide and 43 total counting centers as opposed to the U.S. having millions of voters just in some cities and over 3300 separate election administration jurisdictions (dozens to hundreds in each state) with dozens to thousands of polling locations in each jurisdiction. The Irish Presidential election is held only once every 7 years and in 2004 it took one day to count but two days to make a decision because no candidate got a majority in the first and only round.

3. Dopp: "Encourages the use of complex voting systems and… [FairVote promotes] electronic-balloting…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *Most government IRV elections are in fact conducted with hand-count paper ballots, including national elections in Australia, Ireland and Papua New Guinea….* FairVote advocates that all such machines store a redundant electronic record of each ballot, as well as a paper ballot to allow for better fraud detection, and to simplify ranked ballot tabulations.

Fair Vote reinforces our point that "Fair Vote promotes electronic balloting" when its attempt at rebuttal asks for an "electronic record of each ballot… to simplify ranked ballot tabulations.

Consider trying to manually audit an IRV election. It is not enough to look at the totals for each rank. One has to look at each round, and the ranks on ballots transferred in that round. Suppose A is eliminated. On some ballots A might be in the first position, on some in second position, and so forth. On each of these ballots where A is eliminated, there is the candidate in the second position. The exact sequence of eliminations that took place in the original election must be followed. Compare this with just counting the marks on the ballot and adding them up. How can Fair Vote IRV activists deny the complexity of IRV counting with a straight face? IRV is far more complex to count than any other alternative voting system being considered.

Elections in Australia, Ireland, and Papua New Guinea are held under very different circumstances than U.S. elections. Please refer to response #2 above for a discussion of Ireland's IRV election. Australia …

4. Dopp: "Confuses voters…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *All the evidence shows that voters are not confused by IRV. The rate of spoiled ballots did not increase in any of the U.S. cities when they switched to IRV.*

All the evidence? Well then, let us look at the evidence. Fair Vote implies that the most confused voters in Burlington, VT would, of course, be in the "ward in town with the highest number of low-income voters". However Burlington is a college town and college students are known to be low-income. When I called the Burlington election office, I was told by the person answering the phone that IRV "confused voters". Fair Vote's claims about San Francisco are unfounded

because there is no real ballot spoilage data from which to make their statistics. There is an analysis of over-vote rates available at http://rangevoting.org/SPRates.html that found a 0.082% overvote rate in plurality contests compared to a 0.60% overvote rate in the IRV election contests, a difference that is statistically significant. More information here: http://rangevoting.org/Irvtalk.html#nospoilageincrease . There is also a study that goes into more detail at http://www.gregdennis.com/voting/sf_irv.pdf that is also inconsistent with Fair Vote's conclusion that "All the evidence shows that voters are not confused by IRV." According to the study, 14% of Latinos and 27% of Asian voters, in exit polls conducted by the Chinese-American Voter Education Committee found IRV difficult to use. Also, some patterns of overvotes do not show up in the San Francisco ballot images used to determine the statistics because the software pre-processed and interpreted the voters' ballots, rather than simply reporting them.

The author(s) of Fair Vote's rebuttal attempt should read all the news articles on voter confusion that are provided in the endnotes of this paper. It is hard to imagine how anyone could deny that IRV causes some voter confusion.

5. Dopp: "Confusing, complex and time-consuming to implement and to count…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *IRV certainly is simpler for election officials and voters than conducting a whole separate runoff election to find a majority winner. ... Note that the winning threshold for an IRV election, as with any election, must be specified in the law.*

Computer scientists who are voting system experts generally disagree with Fair Vote's unsupported assertion that IRV is "simpler" than an election plus a separate runoff election. If the required winning threshold for an IRV election is a majority of voters, then an IRV election could end by requiring a separate top-two runoff election afterwards. It took two years to implement IRV in San Francisco, and some jurisdictions have passed IRV but are still waiting to implement it whenever new voting equipment that can handle IRV elections can be purchased.

6. Dopp: "Makes post election data and exit poll analysis much more difficult to perform…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *To date, IRV election can make it easier to do post-election and exit poll analysis. Because optical scan counts with IRV require capturing of ballot images, San Francisco (CA) and Burlington (VT) were able to release the data files showing every single ballot's set of rankings – thereby allowing any voter to do a recount and full analysis on their own.*
>
> *Exit polls can be done just as well under IRV rules as vote-for-one rules. California requires a manual audit in its elections, which has been done without difficulty in San Francisco's IRV elections. Manual audits should be required for all elections, regardless of whether IRV is used or not.*

Fair Vote continues to make the unsupported assertion that election and exit polls analysis can "be done just as well under IRV". However, the fact is that no researcher or mathematician has

yet been able to generalize exit poll analyses methods that could detect patterns consistent with vote miscount or with exit poll response bias in contests with two viable candidates, to any ranked choice voting methods. Imagine exit pollsters trying to accurately obtain all the ranked ballot choices of all voters for all election contests at the precinct-level and then trying to compare their sums statistically with the number of subtotals of votes equal to $\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$ for each precinct! Imagine the sample size exit pollsters would need to reduce the error due to random chance for such statistical comparisons! For instance, I have repeatedly challenged IRV proponents to generalize the methods explained in this exit poll analysis paper to IRV and none have been able to do so yet: http://electionarchive.org/ucvAnalysis/US/exit-polls/Exit-Poll-Analysis.pdf

As pointed out above, the optical scan machines in San Francisco (and probably in Burlington) do not provide images of the ballots. The ballot data they provide are preprocessed and modified into abstracted vote data which is what San Francisco calls "images" that do not show all the rankings on the ballot. Data is processed out that is considered irrelevant for election administration purposes although it is relevant for determining voter error rates and for analyzing election data. There are also legal, financial, administrative, and ballot privacy impediments to publicly releasing the images of all ballots.

Fair Vote's response suggests, without supporting evidence, that if ballot images showing all voters' ranked choice votes were available, then election data analysis would be easy to perform, This study explains the lack of accurate, un-interpreted ballot images in San Francisco: http://www.gregdennis.com/voting/sf_irv.pdf

Fair Vote claims that San Francisco manually audited its IRV machine count accuracy "*without difficulty*". How could San Francisco manually audit 1% of its IRV election precincts according to California statutes in a publicly verifiable way? I ask Fair Vote to demonstrate that San Francisco did a publicly verifiable valid manual audit of its precinct machine counts which checked the accuracy of its IRV election results by providing the URL where San Francisco, prior to beginning its audit, publicly released all of the thousands of vote counts, $\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$ vote counts per precinct, along with each vote count's unique candidate ranking order, or alternatively, where San Francisco publicly posted all of its individual ballots' IRV rankings with humanly readable identifiers that are needed to manually audit an IRV election by randomly selecting ballots.

More discussion on post-election audits of IRV elections is below in the audit section.

7. Dopp: "Difficult and time-consuming to manually count…"

Fair Vote's rebuttal:

Manual counts can take slightly longer than vote-for-one elections, but aren't difficult, unless many different races on a ballot need to go to a runoff count. As cited earlier, Irish election administrators

> *can count more than a million ballots by hand in hotly contested presidential elections in one standard workday.*

See the response to Fair Vote's "Irish" story above which counts only one election contest using only 43 counting centers for only 1 million total ballots for only one IRV round because the election was not close, and actually took two days to decide. What does Fair Vote mean by "need to go to a runoff count"? Is Fair Vote is honestly admitting that if many different election contests on a ballot are counted using IRV, manually counting is difficult? Fair Vote fails to mention San Francisco where election workers put in 16 hour days and the counting took about a month to count their IRV election.

A number of vote counts equal to $\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$, where N is the number of candidates in the election contest, could possibly be used to tally IRV rounds in *each* precinct or voting machine. Errors in counting IRV ripple through the rounds. IRV machine programming errors are easier to make and more difficult to detect. An error in counting the first round can require the entire election to be recounted in all the precincts and in all the rounds. Absentee and provisional ballots that sometimes take weeks after Election Day to process could change the entire IRV election results, necessitating waiting until all absentee and provisional ballots have been counted to begin IRV counts. For all contests whose districts reside in more than one jurisdiction, unless all ballots are centrally tallied by the state, every local jurisdiction must wait until all jurisdictions have reported the prior round's tallies to the central office to tally and the central office reports back who won the prior round, before knowing how to tally the next round.

8. Dopp: "Difficult and inefficient to manually audit…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *IRV can be manually audited just as well as vote-for-one elections, although it does take more effort (since voters must be allowed to express more information on their ballot). A manual audit can either be done using a random sample of ballots from all jurisdictions, or a random sample of ballots from a random sample of voting machines, or by a complete re-tally from a random sample of voting machines. A complete re-tally of all ballots (a recount) is, of course, possible but unnecessary unless a court recount is ordered.*

Notice this paper said audits are "difficult and inefficient" and Fair Vote says "can be manually audited". This is true. However, ordinarily with an audit, one can pick a sample precinct and count it. Period. But with IRV, the number of possible vote counts that could be used to tally any IRV election in each precinct or other auditable vote count is equal to $\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$ if N is the number of candidates. With just three candidates, there are 15 possible ballot orderings or subtotals in *each* precinct. One cannot know if the overall IRV results are correct by randomly selecting and counting all the ballots from 1% of precincts, unless all those $\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$ counts for *each* and every precinct, including the unique candidate ranking associated with each of the

$\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$ counts within every precinct or other auditable vote count, are publicly released prior to the audit, in order that auditors could:

1. check the accuracy of all the tallies for all those counts in all precincts for each IRV round, and then that

2. randomly select from all those counts (equal to the number of total precincts times $\sum_{i=0}^{N-1} \frac{N!}{i!}$ which had been previously publicly reported.

Alternatively, Fair Vote is proposing a ballot-selection method to audit an IRV election that (to be publicly verifiable) would necessitate first publicly releasing the ranked vote choices on each and every individual ballot, along with printing a humanly readable identifier on each ballot that could be used to randomly select identifiable ballots. To avoid ballot privacy issues the humanly readable identifiers for each ballot would have to be printed on the ballots after voters cast them. With IRV's more than N! unique ballot preference orders for each precinct, if there were a lot of candidates, then individual voters' ballots could become easier to identify. Then ballots would have to be randomly selected from the entire election contest, including all precincts, so this might not meet California's requirement to manually audit 1% of precincts. See http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voting_systems/pearson_rcv_letter_091407_07_0586.pdf

The only other possible way to validly audit an IRV election that takes more than one round to count would be to manually recount 100% of the ballots involved in the election contest. Perhaps since it took San Francisco about a month to count its IRV election, it simply manually counted all the ballots and called it an audit.

9. Dopp: "Could necessitate counting all presidential votes in Washington, D.C.…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *If the Electoral College were abolished and IRV were then adopted for future national popular vote elections for president, there would need to be national coordination of the tally in order to know which candidates got the fewest votes nationwide and needed to be eliminated –… Note that voters certainly would be pleased to have a majority winner in elections for our highest office.*

Fair Vote has renamed "counting votes in Washington D.C." to "national coordination of the tally" and our two statements are in agreement. All 3300+ jurisdictions which count votes in a U.S. presidential election would first have to completely count the first choices on all ballots, including absentee and provisional ballots before transmitting first round numbers to Washington DC where these votes would be tallied and the winner of the first round announced, prior to any of the 3300+ jurisdictions being able to count round #2, and so forth. Of course each of these 3300+ jurisdictions have dozens to thousands of precincts in each of them. Alternatively, all the ballots could be sent to Washington DC for counting.

Fair Vote's misleading assertion that "*voters certainly would be pleased to have a majority winner in elections for our highest office"* is probably true. However, IRV does not find majority winners with any reliability. A majority winner occurs when a majority of those who voted in an election cast a vote for the winner. In Australia's IRV system, they find majority winners because Australia requires that all voters fully rank all the candidates, or the ballot is not counted. That a ballot containing a vote for an eligible candidate is eliminated is a violation of a basic principle of democracy and would never be adopted in the U.S. As the Australians know, once you have ranking optional, you can get majority failure. The only method being used that guarantees a majority winner is real top-two runoff voting.

If the same definition that Fair Vote uses for "majority" is used for "unanimous", why not, for the cost of a very complicated counting process, have "unanimous" elections by using IRV and continuing the elimination for one more round, until all the votes are for one candidate?

10. Dopp: "IRV entrenches the two-major-political party system …"

Fair Vote's rebuttal:
IRV neither "entrenches" nor "overthrows" the two-party system. It simply ensures no candidate wins over majority opposition. If a minor party has the support to earn a majority of vote, it can win in an IRV election. If not, it will not win.

IRV makes the continuation of a two-party system highly likely, and IRV has no record of assisting in the overturning of a two-party system, and IRV has several obvious ways in which it helps maintain a two-party system by eliminating minor political parties in the first round, with less risk to the major party candidates, so that major parties can safely ignore minor parties. Observant voters also notice immediately that ranking a minor party candidate first, could cause the early elimination of their major-party favorite, causing their least favorite candidate to win, and so voters quickly learn to rank a major party candidate first. Some information on how IRV entrenches the two-party system in Australia is in this article: http://www.abc.net.au/elections/federal/2004/items/200407/s1162263.htm On the other hand, with an actual top-two runoff, a third party has only to muscle its way to second place to make it into the runoff, giving it a better chance of winning, as opposed to IRV which provides less chance for a minor party to convince voters that it is viable. Fair Votes' response does not say that the Green party won any seats, only that it ran candidates. Could it be that the Green party supports IRV against its own interests? With IRV they are defanged. Political scientist Maurice Duverger observed (See http://rangevoting.org/DuvTrans.html note #3) that the top-2-runoff (2 round) election method is a single winner system which does not lead to 2-party domination, as is shown by historical experience.

Fair Vote's statement that IRV "ensures no candidate wins over majority opposition*"* is misleading because a candidate with more opposition than any other candidate could win an IRV election. In a simple 12 voter example in appendix A above, 11 voters prefer the Democrat over other candidates; 10 voters prefer the Green over other candidates; 9 voters prefer the Libertarian over other candidates; and only 6 voters prefer the Republican over others candidates; 6 voters rank the Republican dead last; 3 voters rank the Libertarian dead last; 2 voters rank the Green

party dead last; and 1 voter ranks the Democrat dead last. Yet the Republican and Green party candidate tie for first place!

In Australia, it appears there were 9 Green "pair-wise majority winners" but IRV forced every single one of them to lose. Yet Richie considers it a "success" that the Green party "contested" and "won 8% of the vote" but did not win a single seat? The Greens are strong in Australia because of other elections in their senate which are not held using IRV.

11. Dopp: "Could deliver unreasonable outcomes…."

Fair Vote's rebuttal:
Unreasonable outcomes are less likely with IRV than with any other single-seat voting method in use today. Every single voting method ever proposed can deliver "unreasonable outcomes" in some scenarios, but real-world experience has shown IRV to be one of the best methods. The overwhelming number of election method experts agree that IRV is fairer and more democratic than plurality voting even if some might prefer other theoretical voting methods.

Fair Vote says "IRV is fairer and more democratic than plurality voting…" Sure, fairer than plurality voting, better than diving into a swimming pool with no water in it. Better than dictatorship. But is IRV fairer and more democratic than other methods in use today, such as "top-two runoff"? Absolutely not. Is IRV fairer and more democratic than other available voting methods including approval, Borda count, Condorcet, or range methods? Absolutely not.

Fair Vote's rebuttal:
The American Political Science Association (the national association of political science professors) has incorporated IRV into their own constitution for electing their own national president. Robert's Rules of Order recommends IRV over plurality voting.

Look at the APSA constitution and, sure enough, you will find a provision that if there are three or more candidates for the office of President-Elect, the "standard method of the alternative vote" is to be used, and the method is described. The method is loosely IRV. However, how does the APSA actually elect its Presidents? The President, with the advice and consent of the elected Council, appoints a Nominating Committee which names a single nominee. If there is no other nominee, this candidate is elected at the Annual Meeting. However, it is possible to nominate other candidates by petition. The last time there was a petition candidate was about 40 years ago. In order for the APSA to use IRV, there would have to be a second petition candidate. The chances of that can be estimated at once in every 1600 years.

Wait, what about the elected APSA Council? They are elected by plurality-at-large. Voters vote for as many seats as are open and the candidates with the most votes win. So the APSA is actually not using IRV. They are using plurality. Period.

Next, Robert's Rules of Order do not actually recommend IRV. It says that "preferential voting" gives fairer results than plurality voting if it is considered impractical to used repeated balloting, which is what Roberts Rules actually recommend. Robert's Rules states that "there are many

forms of preferential voting" and describes the Single Transfer Vote (STV) "IRV-like" method "by way of illustration". Robert's Rules require repeat balloting when no candidate gains a majority of all ballots cast. Then Robert's Rules discusses some of the problems of this specific method: it "deprives" voters of the opportunity to base later choices on the results of earlier rounds (which is provided with top-two runoff) and can fail to find a "compromise winner".

12. Dopp: "Not all ballots are treated equally…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *This charge reveals a lack of understanding of how IRV works. All ballots are treated equally. Every one has one and only one vote in each round of counting. Just as in a traditional runoff, your ballot counts first for your favorite candidate and continues to count for that candidate as long as he or she has a chance to win.*

In an IRV "instant runoff" voters who sincerely rank their preferred candidates cannot participate in the instant runoff unless one of their candidates is still in the last runoff. So in the U.S., IRV does not treat all voters equally because voters are likely to only get to participate in the IRV final runoff if the top two leading candidates are among their top three preferences. In addition, some voters' ballots have all their choices counted, other voters' ballots have only their top preference counted. In other words, IRV conceals votes because some votes are never counted in determining the winner. Clearly Fair Vote has a different perspective on the meaning of when voters' ballots are "treated equally". On the other hand, the top two runoff method that IRV often replaces treats all voters' ballots equally by anyone's definition of "equal".

13. Dopp: "Costly. …"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *The two main expenses associated with the transition to IRV are voting equipment upgrades and voter education. Both of these are one-time costs that will be quickly balanced out by the savings coming from eliminating a runoff election in each election cycle.*

The increased voting equipment maintenance, programming, testing, and upgrade costs of IRV are on-going, not "one-time". If IRV saves so much money, then why did jurisdictions like Oakland adopted IRV "pending implementation"? And why did the Maryland legislature estimate that costs could be as high as an additional $3.50 per registered voter in their 2006 IRV bill, and a little less in the 2008 bill which did not include the cost of software, as cited earlier in this paper? While IRV supporters in North Carolina are claiming that the pilot was a success, why did no NC counties decided to participate in the 2008 county-elections IRV pilot?

IRV is being promoted by Fair Vote to replace plurality voting, not just to replace top-two runoff elections. Not every election requiring a majority candidate necessitates a runoff election. And because IRV does not always find a majority candidate, another runoff could be necessary after the IRV election anyway.

In nonpartisan elections, IRV tends to simply ratify the results of the first round because the vote transfers tend to happen in the same ratio as the already existing votes. In other words, if candidate C is eliminated, the C votes will be split in about the same ratio as A and B have already. There are simpler methods to count ranked choice ballots which find majority candidates more often than IRV, such as the Bucklin method. Top-two runoff elections more often cause the original second-place candidate to win the final runoff. Often top-two runoff elections are held during the next general election and are therefore relatively cheap.

Fair Vote neglects to mention the increased costs of manually counting and manually auditing IRV rounds over any other voting method being recommended by voting system experts or in use today.

14. Dopp: "Increases the potential for undetectable vote fraud and erroneous vote counts…"

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *Actually, just the opposite is true, so long as paper ballots (such as optical scan) are used. The reason that any attempts at fraud are easier to detect with IRV is that there is a redundant electronic record (called a ballot image) of each ballot that can be matched one-to-one with the corresponding paper ballot. Cities such as San Francisco (CA) and Burlington (VT) release these ballot files so that any voter can do their own count. Without such redundant ballot records (which are not typical with vote-for-one elections) there is no way to know for certain if the paper ballots have been altered prior to a recount.*

Fair Vote's claim that "there is a redundant electronic record (called a ballot image) of each ballot" is:

1. False, as discussed amply above the alleged "ballot images" are interpreted ballot data,
2. prohibitively costly,
3. would open up new security issues and new avenues for electronic ballot box stuffing, vote tampering and fraud,
4. would require a humanly readable identifier printed on each paper ballot after the voter casts them to "match up" with electronic records,
5. would necessitate extra post-election auditing steps and expense, and
6. certainly does not make fraud "easier to detect" in the absence of post-election manual audits, that are absent in most states, and which IRV makes much more difficult to conduct.

In addition, the complexity of IRV counts makes any patterns caused by vote miscount much more difficult to detect by data analysis methods.

15. Dopp: "Violates some election fairness principles…."

> Fair Vote's rebuttal:
> *This charge reveals either a general lack of understanding, or intentional miss-representation. Every single voting method ever devised must violate some "fairness principles" as some of these criteria are mutually exclusive. …. When the field narrows to the two finalists in the final instant runoff count, the candidate with more support (ranked more favorably on more ballots) will always win.*

> *Some theoretical voting methods may satisfy some "fairness' criteria, such as monotonicity, but then violate other more important criteria such as the majority criterion, or the later-no-harm criterion.*

After making unsubstantiated claims, the rest of Fair Vote's paragraph substantiates the original statement that IRV "violates some election fairness principles". In fact, this second version shows how IRV violates an additional fairness condition, the majority candidate condition that was not shown in the first version.

Sure, it is possible that "all voting methods violate some election fairness principles," but many alternative voting systems, including top-two runoff, range and approval and Condorcet voting methods satisfy many fairness principles that IRV does not satisfy. For instance, some voting systems always find majority winners, pick the pair-wise favorite among all voters, or eliminate the spoiler problem completely, whereas IRV does not do any of these except in particular cases. These same voting systems, besides being fairer in many respects than IRV and plurality voting, are easier to count and to administer and to audit than IRV.

"Later-no-harm", that a voter's lower preference cannot harm the voter's higher preference, is Fair Vote's favorite election criterion. Later-no-harm, however, is incompatible with the basic principles of majority rule, which requires compromise if decisions are to be made. That is because the IRV sequential elimination guarantees that a lower preference cannot harm a higher preference because the lower preferences are only considered if a voter's higher preference candidate is eliminated. Later-no-harm is undesirable because it interferes with the process of equitable compromise that is essential to the social cooperation that voting is supposed to facilitate. If I am negotiating with my neighbor, and his preferred option differs from mine, if I reveal that some compromise option is acceptable to me, before I am certain that my favorite will not be chosen, then I may harm the chance of my favorite being chosen. If the method my neighbor and I use to help us make the decision *requires* later-no-harm, it will interfere with the negotiation process and make it more difficult to find mutually acceptable solutions. On the other hand, the Bucklin method of counting ranked choice ballots causes "later-harm" only if your favorite candidate does not win by a majority in the first round.

For a more detailed rebuttal of Fair Vote's claims, see the full email responses by Abd ul-Rahman Lomax to the election-methods discussion list which will be posted here http://uscountvotes.org/ucvAnalysis/US/RCV-IRV/

[i] Note that "top-two IRV" is not equivalent to "top-two runoff" elections because top-two IRV does not allow all voters to participate in the "top-two IRV" runoff because there may be some voters whose ranked ballot choices do not include either of the top two candidates, and "top-two runoff" elections always find a majority candidate and "top-two IRV" may not.
[ii] There is some debate about the exact definition of IRV. This definition of Instant Runoff Voting is borrowed from http://www.ncvoter.net/irv.html and from Warren Smith.
[iii] "Boxed In" by Peter C. Baker in The Nation magazine discusses Fair Vote's promotion of IRV and discusses some of the flaws of IRV. (June 2, 2008) See https://thenation.com/ or http://rangevoting.org/Baker2BookRev.html IRV was recently promoted in "An Elections Revolution" by Tony Marrero in the Hernando Today, May 27, 2008
http://www2.hernandotoday.com/content/2008/may/27/elections-revolution/
Voters Want Choices. And They Want to Be Heard. That's why Ranked Choice Voting makes so much sense.
http://seattleweekly.com/2008-06-04/music/voters-want-choices-and-they-want-to-be-heard/ IRV is being promoted for local elections. See http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/gascripts/BillLookUp/BillLookUp.pl?Session=2007&BillID=S1692 and http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/gascripts/BillLookUp/BillLookUp.pl?Session=2007&BillID=H2413
[iv] According to Warren Smith, spoilers can exist in Plurality, IRV, Borda, and Condorcet voting methods but do not exist in Approval and Range voting methods.
[v] See "A Test Drive of Voting Methods" by William Poundstone
http://www.mathaware.org/mam/08/PoundstoneMAMessay.pdf
[vi] Fairness conditions #1 and #2 have been attributed to Kenneth Arrow. Arrow's theorem requires a ranked order voting system that allows two candidates to be ranked equally that does not apply to all voting methods. See http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O87-Arrowsimpossibilitytheorm.html Fair Vote's web site incorrectly states that "In 1952, Kenneth Arrow, a professor emeritus of economics at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif., proved that *no* voting system is completely free from counterintuitive outcomes. " See http://www.fairvote.org/op_eds/science110202.htm
According to William Poundstone, "If you make a separate-but-parallel assumption, that voters are willing and able to rate the candidates on a numerical scale, as is done in range and approval voting, there is no problem in devising a fair system. This result can be demonstrated much more simply and is hardly Nobel-worthy (though it's been acknowledged by Nobel laureates such as Amartya Sen)."
See Arrow's theorem http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arrow's_impossibility_theorem#Statement_of_the_theorem or this discussion of it http://rangevoting.org/ArrowThm.html Plurality is a special case of IRV. William Poundstone says "Imagine we have a voting system where everyone is instructed to rank all the candidates, from first to nth choice, but the tallying rule says that we ignore all the rankings except first-place choices. The rule is, whichever candidate has the greatest number of first-place choices wins. This system is covered by Arrow's theorem, and it's easy to see that, for all practical purposes, it is equivalent to plurality voting. (With plurality, we don't bother to ask people for their lower choices because they're irrelevant to determining the winner.) Arrow's theorem applies to every system that uses ranking information and nothing but ranking information. This includes systems that discard some of the ranking information, as plurality does. But range and approval use fundamentally different types of information (absolute judgments on how acceptable a candidate is) and thus are not covered [by Arrow's theorem]." See http://rangevoting.org/Lorenzo.html Arrow defines a social welfare function which aggregates voters' preferences into a single preference order from the set of individual voter preference orders. See http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O87-Arrowsimpossibilitytheorm.html
[vii] This fairness condition is attributed to Kenneth Arrow. See http://condorcet.org/rp/arrow.shtml
[viii] Ibid note vi
[ix] To be precise: IRV can select the candidate as the winner whom the largest number of voters would choose as the "worst" candidate. This is easy to test by anyone using a paper and pencil or a spreadsheet to try out various situations counted by IRV.
[x] As Warren Smith explains "In fact when you have two-party domination, IRV works fine since all the minors get eliminated first and then the most popular major wins. The problem arises when the third-party candidate actually has a chance. In THAT case, "IRV spoiler" scenarios happen. If voters try to avoid them then we return to two-party domination. (If they do not avoid, then we get "wrong winner" spoiler scenarios.) So the IRV two-party-domination trap is more subtle than the 2PD trap in plurality voting, but history indicates it is still effective."
[xi] See "A Test Drive of Voting Methods" by William Poundstone
http://www.mathaware.org/mam/08/PoundstoneMAMessay.pdf
[xii] Instead if there were 4 candidates, there would be 3 rounds and 4 raised to the 3rd power or 64 possible subtotals for each precinct which might be used to count the votes during the rounds, depending on the results of prior rounds. This complexity makes plenty of opportunity for counting mistakes.
[xiii] Warren Smith has created a web page explaining the need for centralized counting procedures here:
http://rangevoting.org/IrvNonAdd.html
[xiv] According to Ph.D. computer scientist/voting system expert Doug Jones of the U. of Iowa, "Diebold's older op-scan systems can do this (4 or 8 sensors per inch horizontally across the page), while the old ES&S and Sequoia scanners can't (only a few sensors across the page, one per column of names on the ballot)."

[xv] Rob Richie of Fair Vote said: "what we … run into, is the basic problem of a jurisdiction deciding to go that direction [use IRV] and then its voting equipment not being able to handle it [IRV]" and "For an instant runoff election, a rank choice ballot for an optical scan counting system, the essential thing it needs to do, is capture the ballot image of each voter's ballot, ... And what we found was, actually a lot of optical scan systems don't capture ballot images." And "I guess the point I wanted to highlight is that, there is an issue of how to create procedures that anticipate risk, like the risk of paper ballots being destroyed or, either accidentally or maliciously, how it would change." See "United States Election Assistance Commission Public Meeting Voting Integrity Advocates Roundtable Discussion" April 24, 2008 http://www.eac.gov/News/meetings/News/meetings/EAC%20Roundtable%20042408.pdf

[xvi] "Voter finds new system frustrating" Oct 19, 2007, Harrison Metzger Times-News, Hendersonville: Bill Modlin wasn't happy with his first experience with the new "instant runoff" voting when he cast his ballot for Hendersonville City Council on Thursday. ..."It doesn't make any sense to me, and I can guarantee you because of the way they have it set up there are people in this town that are going to lose their vote," he said. ..."I call it instant confusion," he said. http://www.blueridgenow.com/article/20071019/NEWS/710190361 (Cached at http://www.ncvoter.net/downloads/IRV_Oct_19_Voter_finds_new_system_frustrating.pdf). Also "To stem runoff votes, new ballots have voters rank top 3" Oct 17, 2007 by Jordan Schrader, USA TODAY. CARY, N.C. - Winning candidate Frantz said he heard from many confused voters on the campaign trail." I found myself, when I was at some places, that's all I was doing … explaining the new voting system," he said. http://www.usatoday.com/news/politics/2007-10-17-Runoff_N.htm (Cached at http://www.ncvoter.net/downloads/IRV_Oct_17_USAToday_To_stem_runoffs_new_ballots.pdf) A sample ballot shows how instant runoff voting will affect the way voters choose Hendersonville City Council members this year. (105 KB) Asheville Citizen Times http://www.ncvoter.net/downloads/IRV_Touchscreen_Ballot_NC.pdf Also see http://rangevoting.org/SPRates.html When San Francisco adopted top-3-IRV ("as simple as 1-2-3") their ballot spoilage rate in IRV election contests went up significantly versus plurality contests held at the same time and place.

[xvii] The winner of the Cary IRV election contest won with 1401 votes when there were 3022 first-column votes cast for three candidates and a few write-in candidates. See http://msweb03.co.wake.nc.us/bordelec/downloads/cary_irv_results.xls or http://msweb03.co.wake.nc.us/bordelec/downloads/cary_irv_results.htm and the results for Council Member C-B 1 Cary Municipal District B at http://msweb03.co.wake.nc.us/bordelec/downloads/2007OCT_summary-official.htm
It took San Francisco about a month, necessitating an extended canvass period after Election Day to count its IRV votes: "Preferential voting software breaks down in San Francisco: Thu, 4 Nov 2004 10:07:12 PST. In the election of 2 Nov 2004, San Francisco's district supervisor election used ranked-choice voting for the first time. It went just fine on Tuesday during the election. Preliminary results showed candidates in three districts had won by a clear majority (so no re-ranking-rounds were needed), whereas the other four seats remained to be determined by the preferential ballot counting process. The computer processing broke down completely on Wednesday afternoon when election workers began to merge the first, second, and third choices into the program that is supposed to sequentially eliminate low-vote candidates and redistribute voters' second and third choices accordingly." See http://rangevoting.org/rangeVirv.html It took San Francisco more than two years to implement the system, a process that included making changes to its optical-scan voting machines that required the approval of the secretary of state. In the 1970's, Ann Arbor, Mich., abandoned it [IRV] after one election. See http://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/30/national/30runoff.html San Francisco officials missed a deadline Tuesday to certify the outcome of the local Nov. 6 election after a partial check found too many errors in the tally of absentee ballots run through the city's electronic voting machines. See "Instant Runoff Voting Facts Verses Fiction" http://www.instantrunoffvoting.us/ In Australia it took a month in 2007 to count the difficult election contests.

[xviii] I have asked several alternative voting methods proponents who claim otherwise to generalize the exit poll analysis methods shown in "New Mathematical Function for Analyzing Exit Poll Discrepancy" http://electionarchive.org/ucvAnalysis/US/Exit-Poll-Analysis.pdf and none have yet been able to do so.

[xix] See exit poll analysis methodology described at http://electionarchive.org

[xx] Cary, NC did release some aggregated data which was not useful for analysis because whether or not and when the second, third … choices of voters are relevant for counting or not depends on exactly in what round voters' first, and second choices were eliminated. See http://msweb03.co.wake.nc.us/bordelec/downloads/cary_irv_results.htm

[xxi] "Critics Take Runoff Concerns To Elections Board" Tuesday, Oct 30, 2007 NBC 17..."What IRV does is violate one of the basic principals of election integrity, which is simplicity," said Perry Woods, a political consultant in Cary. He says a small glitch threw everything into turmoil. Basically, someone counted the same group of votes twice; the error was caught, and corrected after an audit. Wood says his problem is with how they conducted that audit. "In this case, they ended up recounting all the ballots again and calling it an audit," said Woods. "I felt like if they were doing that, the public should have been involved, so no doubt is there." See http://www.nbc17.com/midatlantic/ncn/search.apx.-content-articles-NCN-2007-10-30-0028.html. According to Chris Telesca who observed the IRV counting in Wake County, NC, to hand-process a little over 3000 paper ballots (after the first choice votes were counted on the op-scan machines) when there were only 3 candidates plus a few write-ins for the Cary district B, single member town council seat, and the counting went only two rounds it took 6 sorting stacks for each of 12 ballot groupings or precincts (8 precincts plus absentee by mail in Cary, board of elections one-stop site, the Cary one-stop site, provisional ballots- Cary, and possibly some transfer votes from another

county which were eligible to vote in the Cary IRV contest) or 12 times 6 stacks = 72 stacks. Wake County officials decided to put each stack in a separate plastic bag to keep track. This would not be possible if there were more than one IRV contest because each contest requires independent sorting and stacking to count. The procedure was very complicated, but it was there in print. Even so, the Wake Board of Elections (BOE) didn't follow it. There was no overhead projector so that observers could follow the process. Non Board members were sorting the ballots into stacks which was hard to follow. Nonetheless, observers and the Board came up with different totals at the end of the day. The next day, the different totals were determined to be caused by a calculator error that was discovered in an "audit" – that also discovered a few missing votes. The "audit" – which had to have included going back into the previously sorted/stacked and counted ballots – was not done in public. It took 3.5 hours minimum to do the first expedited processing of the 3000 ballots, not including the non-public "audit". If you proceeded at the same pace for a county commissioner election in 2008, it could take three teams of counters 350 hours to sort/stack and count 300,000 ballots for just one election contest. That is just ten hours short of nine weeks – more time than it would take to hold a runoff election 4 to 6 weeks later. See http://www.carynews.com/front/story/7368.html and http://www.newsobserver.com/630/story/735578.html and http://www.newsobserver.com/630/story/739547.html
See also the "Instructions on counting optical scan IRV ballots" on pages 1- 3, and sample ballots on page 5 (provided by the Rocky Mount Telegram) http://www.ncvoter.net/downloads/IRV_Optical_Scan_Ballot.pdf and "2007 PILOT PROGRAM iVOTRONIC *TOUCH SCREEN) METHODOLOGY" (an illegal work around that was not used but was devised for Hendersonville, NC) http://www.ncvoter.net/downloads/Henderson_County_IRV%20Tabulation.pdf
It took San Francisco about a month, necessitating an extended canvass period after Election Day to count its IRV votes: "Preferential voting software breaks down in San Francisco: Thu, 4 Nov 2004 10:07:12 PST. In the election of 2 Nov 2004, San Francisco's district supervisor election used ranked-choice voting for the first time. It went just fine on Tuesday during the election. Preliminary results showed candidates in three districts had won by a clear majority (so no re-ranking-rounds were needed), whereas the other four seats remained to be determined by the preferential ballot counting process. The computer processing broke down completely on Wednesday afternoon when election workers began to merge the first, second, and third choices into the program that is supposed to sequentially eliminate low-vote candidates and redistribute voters' second and third choices accordingly." See "Ranked-Choice Voting and Flawed Ballots Tax San Francisco's Election" Kat Zambon, 11/9/2007 http://www.votetrustusa.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2639&Itemid=113 See http://rangevoting.org/rangeVirv.html It took San Francisco more than two years to implement the system, a process that included making changes to its optical-scan voting machines that required the approval of the secretary of state. See http://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/30/national/30runoff.html San Francisco officials missed a deadline to certify the outcome of the local Nov. 6 election after a partial check found too many errors in the tally of absentee ballots run through the city's electronic voting machines. See "Instant Runoff Voting Facts Verses Fiction" http://www.instantrunoffvoting.us/ In Australia it took a month in 2007 to count the difficult election contests. In the 1970's, Ann Arbor, Mich., abandoned it [IRV] after one election.

[xxii] Wake County, North Carolina claims to have audited the Cary IRV vote count the day after the official public count, but that audit was not performed in public and no one on the Board of Elections staff kept track of the time and manpower required.

[xxiii] A similar problem occurs today in that all county election officials count the votes in their own re-elections or for their replacement. Also see http://rangevoting.org/NPVtrainwreck.html

[xxiv] Examples include Australia (IRV seats are two-party dominated, zero third party members currently in the federal house; even though other NON-IRV seats NOT 2-party dominated, so this makes it quite clear) ditto Ireland and Fiji (but Fiji's democracy recently ended)

[xxv] Another reason is here http://rangevoting.org/KISSirv.html

[xxvi] See "Boxed In" by Peter C. Baker. The Nation's article concludes that "IRV has many flaws". Baker provides an interesting example of another vagary of the IRV method by illustrating how a winning candidate could lose by **gaining more votes** from a losing candidate, thus causing a different candidate to be eliminated in the first round. See https://thenation.com/ or http://rangevoting.org/Baker2BookRev.html

[xxvii] See http://rangevoting.org/TieRisk.html http://rangevoting.org/Monotone.html and http://rangevoting.org/IrvExtreme.html and see also http://zesty.ca/voting/sim

[xxviii] This is shown by the graphical analysis of Ka-Ping Yee http://zesty.ca/voting/sim/

[xxix] Two example elections to illustrate this are http://rangevoting.org/CoreSupp.html and http://rangevoting.org/rangeVirv.html#nasty

[xxx] These costs came from an e-mail from Scott Kennedy that referred to the 2008 bill cost study: Revision of documentation - $3 million, Agency IT systems - $4.5 million (assuming extensive revisions to much of the State Board's election management system, including considerable expansion of data sets and the reporting of data), Judge training development - $50,000, Voting system – undeterminable at this time, Voter education - $2.1 million. Chris Telesca of North Carolina notes that the first year costs in MD for the 2006 bill were $11,050,000 and $1,500,000 each year after that but the cost of the software was not included in the estimates. MD has approximately 3,135,773 registered voters. See

http://mlis.state.md.us/2006rs/fnotes/bil_0002/sb0292.pdf Most voting systems do not have IRV compatible software. For instance, North Carolina's voting equipment does not have IRV compatible software and none is available according to Keith Long, the Voting Systems Project Manager for the NC State Board of Elections. See http://www.ncvoter.net/downloads/Keith_Long_Machines_Not_IRV_Compatible.pdf IRV advocates often claim "IRV is cheaper than (non-instant) runoffs". That claim can be true, but also can be false because the multi-round runoffs involve simpler (plurality-style) voting for which the old machines suffice. The main reason their claim is misleading is that we usually in the USA have only one round so the comparison with multi-round elections is with a spurious straw man. For the MD Legislature fiscal notes for SB0233 in 2001, see http://mlis.state.md.us/PDF-Documents/2001rs/fnotes/bil_0003/sb0233.PDF or http://mlis.state.md.us/2001rs/fnotes/bil_0003/sb0233.doc. For fiscal notes for SB 292 in 2006, see http://mlis.state.md.us/2006rs/fnotes/bil_0002/sb0292.pdf. And for HB 1502 in 2008, see http://mlis.state.md.us/2008rs/fnotes/bil_0002/hb1502.pdf
Although a single IRV election could be cheaper than two elections (original plus runoff) runoff elections may only be needed rarely depending on the requirements of the jurisdiction, so the expense ratio on average is not anywhere near 2-to-1, and hence the expense of switching to IRV would usually exceed any savings in jurisdictions which conduct runoffs, for a long time (and perhaps forever considering the need to replace and update voting machines and the extra cost of manual audits). See http://rangevoting.org/Irvtalk.html

[xxxi] election-methods@lists.electorama.com See http://rangevoting.org/

[xxxii] http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080404/NEWS/80404029/-1/NEWS05