

On Candidate-Based Analyses of Assembly Elections
Abstract

by

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Analyses of assembly elections often assume that voters have well-defined preferences over candidates, even though preferences over assemblies are the natural analytic starting point. This candidate-based approach is usually justified by an assumption that preferences over assemblies are separable. We show that if preferences over assemblies are themselves derived from underlying preferences over legislative or economic outcomes, then preferences over assemblies will not in general be separable. We then suggest, through discussion of a paper by Sugden, that a candidate-based analysis may be misleading even when one can legitimately assume separable preferences over assemblies.

KEYWORDS: social choice, voting scheme, sincere voting, separable preferences,
median voter rule

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