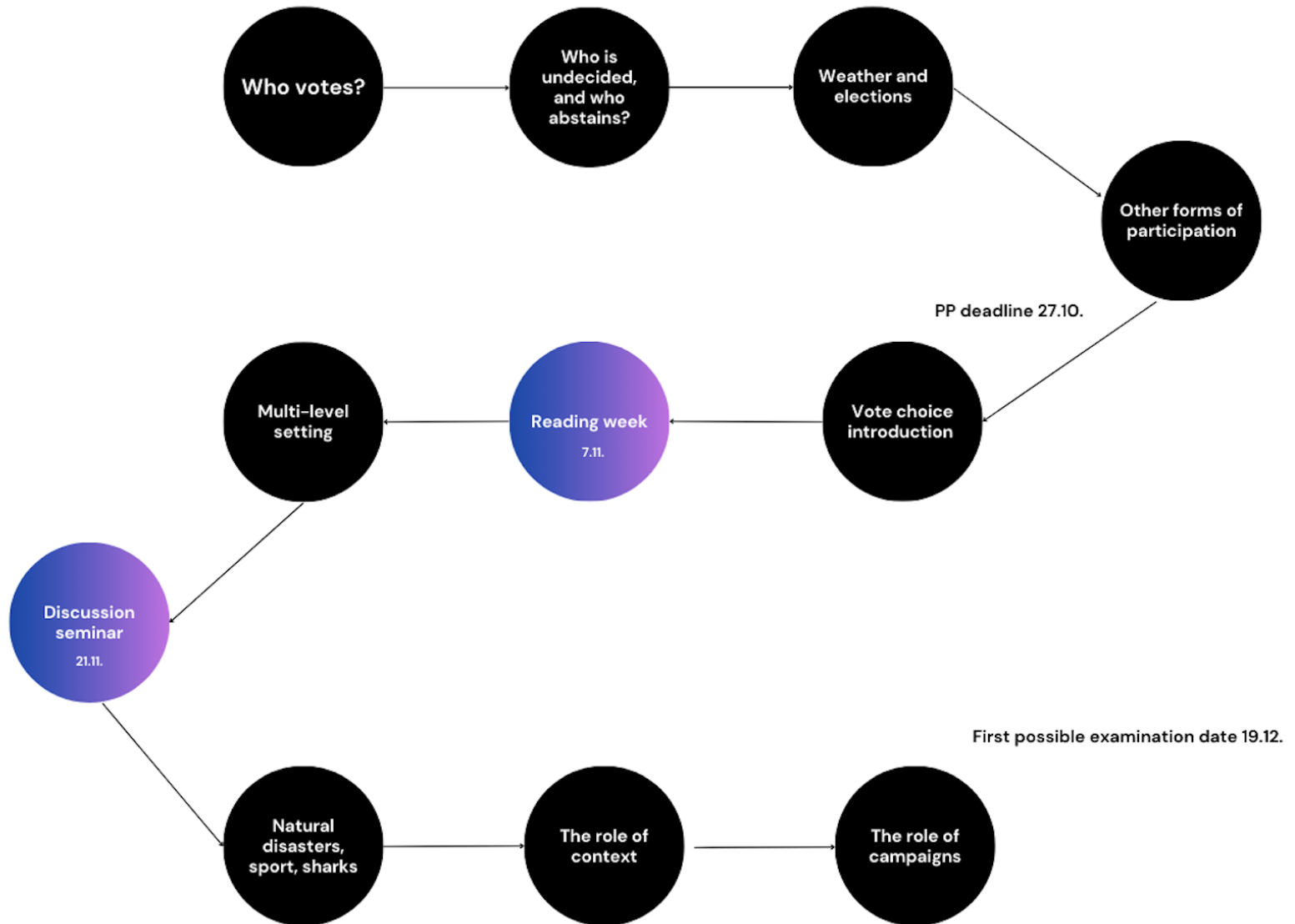


Elections and electoral behavior



M U N I
F S S

The role of election day context – ballot, heuristics, cues

Jakub Jusko

Seemingly unrelated events

- The classic notion that voters should use all relevant information to make a rational decision-making
- However, voters are emotional beings; many things happen between the pre-election campaign campaign to the moment of casting a ballot
- Health problems, life - changing events, and normal events seemingly unrelated to the electoral process -> **also things happening during election day**
- **Undecided voters or voters with not enough information – susceptible to be influenced**

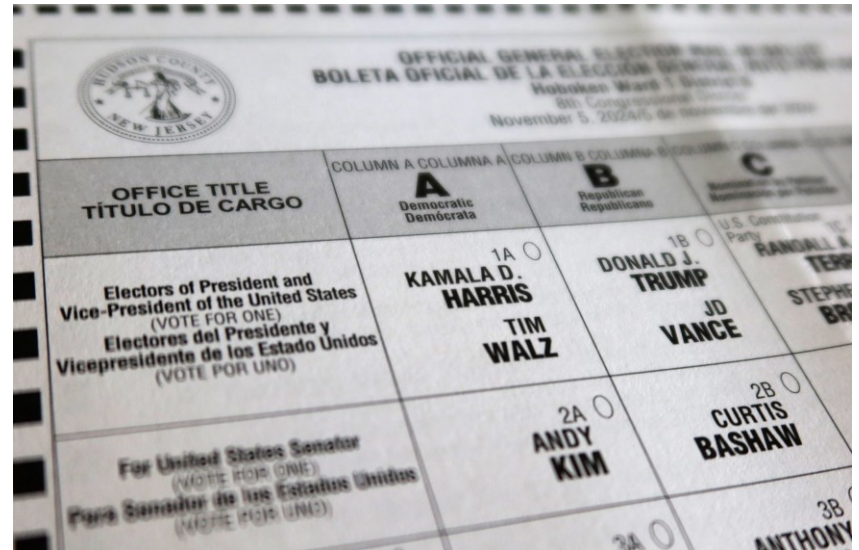
Tabuľka 10

Kedy ste sa rozhodli pre voľbu danej strany? (v %)

	VŠETCI VOLIČI	SMER-SD	SaS	OLANO- NOVA	SNS	ĽSNS	Sme rodina	Most-Híd	SIET
Dnes	15,5	11,2	15,6	16,3	17,3	15,7	25,0	14,5	21,6
Posledný týždeň	14,5	4,5	20,6	23,1	19,2	13,7	23,7	11,6	20,3
Posledný mesiac	15,3	6,2	20,0	21,6	16,8	16,4	25,2	18,3	19,7
Dávnejšie	54,7	78,0	43,7	39,0	46,6	54,3	26,2	55,6	38,4

Zdroj: FOCUS pre TV Markíza, exit poll 5. 3. 2016.

			P4. Kdy jste se definitivně rozhodli, že dáte svůj hlas <strana>?								
			Více než 2 měsíce před volbami	1-2 měsíce před volbami	3-4 týdny před volbami	1-2 týdny před volbami	V posledním týdnu před volbami	V posledních třech dnech před volbami	V den voleb	Nevím/nedokáži říci	
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
Volební model - Prezidentské volby	Petr Pavel	%	2	23.8	46.8	35.5	42.8	41.2	36.9	25	38.6
	Danuše Nerudová	%	3	9.7	18.6	25.7	20	12.1	13.4	17.6	9.2
	Pavel Fischer	%	1	5	3.3	4.7	6.8	11.4	6.3	11.5	0
	Andrej Babiš	%	1	57.4	20.4	17.8	20.1	18	29.2	35.6	33.8
	Jaroslav Bašta	%	3	2.4	8	9.6	6.5	5.9	6.4	2.7	11
	Tomáš Zima	%	3	0.2	0	0	0	0.9	0	0	0
	Marek Hilšer	%	2	1.5	2.4	3.3	1.1	5.8	5	6.8	3.4
	Karel Diviš	%	2	0	0.6	3.5	2.8	4.8	2.9	0.9	4.1
	Total	Unweighted Count	3	546	209	96	145	207	185	127	13



Election day environment context – polling station

- When people make choices, they do so in particular environmental contexts:
- People may enrol in a health plan while at work or home, select a potential mate while at a bar or park, and cast their ballot while at a church or school.
- Stimuli in the environment have been shown to **prime or activate** content in memory, making related constructs more accessible (unconsciously)
- Berger et al. (2008) – **voting in schools** -> activation of school-relevant norms (support for education), support for children -> support for increased school spending

Election day environment context – intimidation and clientelism

- In contexts where the use of violence is also an option on the ‘menu of manipulation’ of elections (Schedler 2002), parties use intimidation to prevent non-supporters from participating in elections.
- **Clientelism** – vote buying -> unaligned and core voters targeted
-intention: getting votes
- **Violence** – opposition voters targeted
-intention: abstention

Overall aim: increase support for me, decrease support for rivals

- Sub-saharan Africa
- Nigeria 2003, 2007 elections
- Sri Lanka – 2005 presidential elections



Zimbabwe: Election observers criticize voter intimidation

DW Africa
26. august 2023 · 🌐

Zimbabwe's presidential and parliamentary elections this week did not meet all legal requirements, regional election observers said. In some rural areas, there was widespread intimidation by groups close to the ruling Zanu-PF party, a report by SADC election observers said on Friday. The inter-governmental organization also criticized delays at polling stations after election documents were not delivered on time. Regional and international observers listed concerns over the canning of opposition rallies, denial of accreditation to several foreign media, missing voters' names from the roll at their polling station and biased state media. **Zobrazit menj**

👍👎 52 21

👍 🗨️ 🕒 ↻

Najrelevantnejšie ▾

Wisdom Zwellbanzi Dziya
Let them declare them null and void.
1y Páči sa mi to · Odpovedať

Používateľ DW Afric... · 4 odpovede

Babangida Shu'aibu Sambawa
That is African,
1y Páči sa mi to · Odpovedať

Isaiah Rayzee Mushili
Zimbabwe will always be like this I mean it's totally different from my country 🇳🇬🇳🇬
1y Páči sa mi to · Odpovedať

Bwalya C B Kokombwe II
Only European imperialists and their puppet observers in the name of SADC observers, appointed by a puppet President from Zambia have expressed those concerns ...and we know why. The African Union and ECOWAS have a different analysis of their observations
1y Páči sa mi to · Odpovedať

Zobrazit všetkých 9 odpovedí

Komentovať ako Jakub Jusko

Ballot

- A tool for a voter to express their choice in elections
- Contains information about the candidate's name, party affiliations, sometimes age, education, occupation, residence
- A line of research focusing on how the ballot structure can influence voters
- The role of heuristics and ballot order

Heuristics

Heuristics

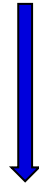
“how a public that is notoriously uninterested and largely “innocent” of political matters can provide any control over public policy”

- Most individuals fall short of fully informed, fully rational voting behaviour
- Our behaviour reveals that we are **cognitive misers** attempting to maximize the utility of the limited information we do have while avoiding the time-consuming search needed to enact a fully informed vote (e.g., Conover and Feldman 1984, 1989; Redlawsk 2004; Lau et al. 2018)
- How can democracy survive?

Heuristics

- People solve their lack of knowledge with **cognitive shortcuts**
- Original research by Kahneman and Tversky
- People use heuristics to simplify decision situations, may lead to errors in judgment
- **Political science** adopts the concept of heuristics as a tool to help people navigate an overly complex political environment
- Major optimism boom in the 1990s -> “low information rationality” (Popkin 1991) vs. backlash of not “correct voting”
- The concept helps overcome the problem of not being informed fully
- Applies also to other situations

Heuristics (Lau and Redlawsk 2001)



“heuristics,” we mean problem-solving strategies (often employed automatically or unconsciously) which serve to “keep the information processing demands of the task within bounds” (Abelson and Levi 1985, 255). The reader

Heuristics

- **Law and Redlawsk (2001):**

- party affiliation and ideology

- endorsement

- polls

- candidate appearance

- Sophisticates can use heuristics to make the right choice (paradoxically)

- They are useless to unsophisticated voters

- Sophisticated = ideology and endorsement, unsophisticated voters = partisanship and appearance

- **Bernhard and Freeder (2020)**

- Endorsements, experience, and specific programmatic stances -> SOPH

- Personal requests -> UNSOPH

Knowledgeable voters report looking for good representatives, while less knowledgeable voters report looking for good people.

Heuristics -> can be found on a ballot list

Assumption – voter not fully informed

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Occupation

- Jobs as roles through which we learn skills and talents that help us to move up the occupational ladder
- Since voters are choosing candidates to fill or retain a position in government -> past experience is important
- The relevance of previous experience to future performance may make voters likely to rely on this inferred information -> communication of competence

Occupation

208

Monika L. McDermott

TABLE 1

Candidates and Occupational Ballot Designations in California Statewide Elections, 1994

Office	Candidates and Occupations	
	Democrat	Republican
Treasurer	Phil Angelides—Businessman, Financial Manager	Matt Fong—Appointed Member, State Board of Equalization
Controller	Kathleen Connell—Businesswoman, Economist, Educator	Tom McClintock—Taxpayer Advocate
Secretary of State	Tony Miller—Acting Secretary of State	Bill Jones—Businessman, Farmer, Legislator
Attorney General	Tom Umberg—Orange County Assemblyman, Prosecutor	Dan Lungren—California Attorney General
Lieutenant Governor	Gray Davis—California Controller	Cathie Wright—Businesswoman, State Senator
Insurance Commissioner	Art Torres—California State Senator	Chuck Quackenbush—Small Businessman, Legislator

Occupation

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Title

Boas (2014)

- Brazilian city council elections – low information contests (2012 – median 52 candidates – 9 seats)
- Paulo Rodrigues de Souza vs. Carlos Fernandes da Silva
- **Pastor** Paulo vs. **Dr.** Carlos
- Pastor decreases vote intention (except Evangelical voters), doctor increases vote intention
- Group associations and stereotypes – positive features of doctors (intelligent, competent, experienced) vs. many religious groups in Brazil

Photos

- A wide range of traits are inferred from facial appearance, and several of these – particularly compassion, likeability, authority and honesty – significantly boost the willingness to vote for candidates displaying such traits => attractiveness

+ stereotypes about candidates -> gender and age

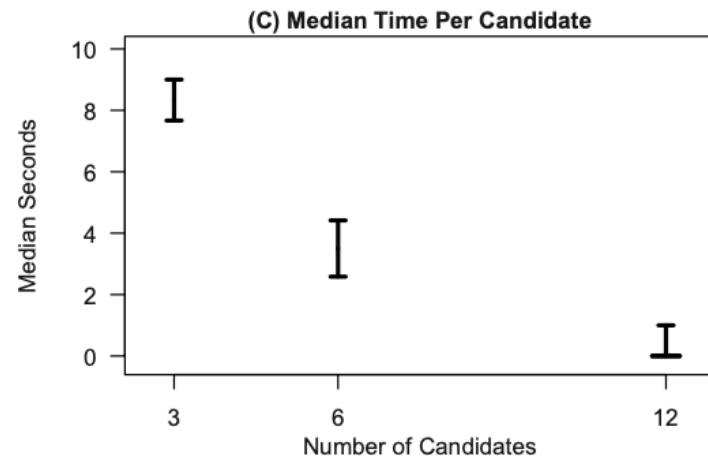
- UK (Johns and Shepard 2011) – more attractive (when comparing woman vs. man) are more likely to get votes (when a photo is on a ballot), strongest impact on a least interested and least likely to vote, a tendency to reward younger candidates
- Ireland (Buckley et al. 2007) – voters know the faces of candidates -> 80% accuracy of voting with only photos compared to real elections

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39. Adriana Pištejová, Mgr., 52, riaditeľka školy, Košice – Sídliisko Ťahanovce, ŠANCA
40. Jaroslav Polaček, Ing., 40, poslanec mesta Košice, poradca pre samosprávu v odpadovom hospodárstve, Košice – Sever, nezávislý kandidát
41. Lucia Rennerová, Ing., 53, SZČO, Košice – Staré Mesto, OBYČAJNÍ ĽUDIA a nezávislé osobnosti (OLANO), Sloboda a Solidarita, Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, NOVA
42. Robert Roland, MUDr., 70, lekár, Košice – Staré Mesto, Demokratická strana
43. Mária Sadovska, Mgr., 53, stredoškolská učiteľka, Košice – Sever, OBYČAJNÍ ĽUDIA a nezávislé osobnosti (OLANO), Sloboda a Solidarita, Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, NOVA
44. Zuzana Sedláková, PhDr., 44, mediátorka, Košice – Sever, MOST – HÍD
45. Peter Slávik, Ing., 52, podnikateľ, Košice – Ťahanovce, Šport do Košíc a na Východ
46. Zuzana Slivenská, Mgr., 28, právnička, Košice – Sídliisko Ťahanovce, nezávislý kandidát
47. Ján Struk, 59, riaditeľ spoločnosti, Košice – Staré Mesto, STRANA MODERNÉHO SLOVENSKA (SMS)
48. Štefan Surmánek, PhDr. CSc., 64, SZČO, Košice – Sever, Kotleba – Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko
49. Adam Šepetka, Ing., 37, riaditeľ, Košice – Sever, Nezávislosť a Jednota
50. Miroslav Špak, 42, stavebný technik, Košice – Sídliisko Ťahanovce, nezávislý kandidát
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Caution: ballot length

- Cunow et al. (2021)
- Less is more (3 vs 6 vs 12 candidates) - subjects presented with many options:
 - learn less about candidates
 - are more likely to vote based on meaningless heuristics (ballot position)
 - are more likely to commit voting errors



- Ballot completion lower when having less information on a ballot (Lamb and Perry 2020)

Ballot order

Ideal vs reality of elections

- Free and just elections
- Fair electoral system
- Equal strength of a vote
- **Equal chance to get a seat**

VS

- Chance to get a seat is not the same for candidates ->>>>>>

Ballot order effect

- The structure of the ballot affects candidates' chances of winning a seat
- Key attributes:
 - Length (number of candidates on the list)
 - Importance of the election and voter's information bank

Ballot order effect

- The ranking of candidates on the list is not only a technical and formal aspect
- Ranking as a key predictor of vote gain (or loss)
- In other words, being at the top of the list is not the same as being in the middle of the list
- More names on the list reduce the attention span of voters who use cognitive shortcuts to make their choice
- This is especially true for lower-profile elections.

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38. Emil Petrvalský, Ing. RNDr. CSc., 59, zástupca starostu, Košice – Sídliisko Ťahanovce, Šport do Košíc a na Východ
39. Adriana Pištejová, Mgr., 52, riaditeľka školy, Košice – Sídliisko Ťahanovce, ŠANCA
40. Jaroslav Polaček, Ing., 40, poslanec mesta Košice, poradca pre samosprávu v odpadovom hospodárstve, Košice – Sever, nezávislý kandidát
41. Lucia Rennerová, Ing., 53, SZČO, Košice – Staré Mesto, OBYČAJNÍ ĽUDIA a nezávislé osobnosti (OLANO), Sloboda a Solidarita, Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, NOVA
42. Robert Roland, MUDr., 70, lekár, Košice – Staré Mesto, Demokratická strana
43. Mária Sadovska, Mgr., 53, stredoškolská učiteľka, Košice – Sever, OBYČAJNÍ ĽUDIA a nezávislé osobnosti (OLANO), Sloboda a Solidarita, Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie, NOVA
44. Zuzana Sedláková, PhDr., 44, mediátorka, Košice – Sever, MOST – HÍD
45. Peter Slávik, Ing., 52, podnikateľ, Košice – Ťahanovce, Šport do Košíc a na Východ
46. Zuzana Slivenská, Mgr., 28, právnička, Košice – Sídliisko Ťahanovce, nezávislý kandidát
47. Ján Struk, 59, riaditeľ spoločnosti, Košice – Staré Mesto, STRANA MODERNÉHO SLOVENSKA (SMS)
48. Štefan Surmánek, PhDr. CSc., 64, SZČO, Košice – Sever, Kotleba – Ľudová strana Naše Slovensko
49. Adam Šepetka, Ing., 37, riaditeľ, Košice – Sever, Nezávislosť a Jednota
50. Miroslav Špak, 42, stavebný technik, Košice – Sídliisko Ťahanovce, nezávislý kandidát
51. Andreja Takáčová, JUDr., 62, právnička, Košice – Sever, nezávislý kandidát
52. Vladimír Vágási, Mgr., 55, riaditeľ Košice – Sever, MOST – HÍD

Satisficing theory

- Miller and Krosnick 1998
- Voters are willing to accept suboptimal decisions if they are acceptable enough
- With each additional name on the list, voter interest declines
- Resultant effect:
 - Support for front-runner candidates (primacy effect)
 - Support for candidates in lower positions (recency effect)

Other explanations

- Voters' efforts to pose as "good citizens":
 - Important for them to vote no matter who
 - The vote will go to the "first in line"
- Complicated voting mechanism:
 - Australia
 - Awarding points to candidates
 - Donkey voting - votes awarded in descending or ascending order

HOW TO VOTE 1

VANESSA RAULAND

FOR CANNING



STANDING UP FOR WHAT MATTERS

You must number every
box for your vote to count.
No ticks or crosses.

PLACE A '1' IN
THIS BOX, THEN
NUMBER ALL
OTHER BOXES.



Authorised by Jess McCall on behalf of The Greens (WA), 445 Hay St, Perth, 6000
Printed by The Environmental Printing Company, 2/20-24 Commerce St, Malaga WA 6090

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

- 6 SHARMA, Vimal Kumar
Palmer United Party
- 8 WHITTLE, Connor
Liberal Democrats
- 2 ALLEN, Michelle
Pirate Party
- 7 SMITH, Greg
Australian Defence
Veterans Party
- 3 LOVE, Katrina
Animal Justice Party
- 9 HASTIE, Andrew
Liberal
- 12 VAN LIESHOUT, Teresa
Independent
- 4 KEOGH, Matt
Australian Labor Party
- 1 RAULAND, Vanessa**
The Greens (WA)
- 10 McCOURT, Jim
Family First Party
- 11 VAN BURGEL, Jamie
Australian Christians
- 5 SMITH, Angela
Sustainable Population Party

Dr Kerryn Phelps

Independent Wentworth

Vote Kerryn Phelps



How to vote for Dr Kerryn Phelps













Place a in this box

Remember... number every
box to make your vote count

- 16 CALLANAN, Robert
KATTER'S AUSTRALIAN PARTY
- 12 KANAK, Dominic Wy
THE GREENS
- 9 HIGSON, Shayne
VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA PARTY
- 14 GEORGANTIS, Steven
AUSTRALIAN PEOPLES PARTY
- 11 MURRAY, Tim
AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY
- 3 FORSYTH, Ben
DERRYN HINCH'S JUSTICE PARTY
- 15 ROBINSON, Tony
AUSTRALIAN LIBERTY ALLIANCE
- 13 GUNNING, Samuel Joseph
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS
- 10 SHARMA, Dave
LIBERAL PARTY
- 7 VITHOULKAS, Angela
INDEPENDENT
- 4 DOYLE, Deb
ANIMAL JUSTICE PARTY
- 5 LEONG, Andrea
SCIENCE PARTY
- 8 HEATH, Licia
INDEPENDENT
- 6 KELDOULIS, Barry
THE ARTS PARTY
- 1 PHELPS, Kerryn**
INDEPENDENT
- 2 DUNNE, Kay
SUSTAINABLE AUSTRALIA

Authorised by Wendy McCarthy AO, 7/20 Wylde St, Potts Point NSW 2011
Printed by Enviro Press Australia, 8-10 Frank St, Wetherill Park NSW 2164

MUNI FSS

<p>Baird, Shiona 9 Heaven's Gate, Clifftop, LN18 4XS SCOTTISH GREEN PARTY</p>		
<p>Canavan, Dennis 14c Love Lane, Linford, LN1 4PD INDEPENDENT</p>		
<p>Fox, Colin 386 Burns Drive, Linford, LN5 7RF SCOTTISH SOCIALIST PARTY</p>		
<p>Goldie, Annabel 55 Camellia Crescent, Linford, LN8 3DK SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST PARTY</p>		
<p>Jamieson, Cathy 16 Thames Close, Bromham, AB13 4EF SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY</p>		
<p>Lochhead, Richard 70 Rock Close, Bromham, AB21 12WX SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY</p>		
<p>MacDonald, Margo 12 Grafton Grove, Bromham, AB12 3CD INDEPENDENT</p>		
<p>McConnell, Jack 24 Wallace Walk, Linford, LN4 9BY SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY</p>		
<p>McLetchie, David 94 Highland Grove, Bromham, AB18 9QR SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST PARTY</p>		
<p>Peacock, Peter 6 South Africa Road, Horwood, N1 3FG SCOTTISH LABOUR PARTY</p>		
<p>Stephen, Nicol 25 Trebor Road, Horwood, N1 9TV SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS</p>		
<p>Sturgeon, Nicola 6 Sea Grove, Horwood, N1 8MN SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY</p>		
<p>Swinney, John 6 Post Office Grove, Bigtown, KL1 6MN SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY</p>		
<p>Wallace, Jim 6 South Road, Bigtown, KL1 3FG SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS</p>		



Ballot order effect

- A lot of evidence from many countries
- **California** (Ho and Imai 2008), **New York** (Koppel and Steen 2004), **Spain** (Bagues and Esteve-Volart 2011), **Australia** (King and Leigh 2009), **Ireland** (Regan 2012)
- BOE stronger in polling stations compared to postal voting (Jankowski and Frank 2022)
- The measured effect is often stronger than the difference between the winner of the election and the runner-up
- Better-placed candidates not only get more votes but also have better access to seats

Is it a problem?

NO:

- If the political parties themselves decide on the order of candidates on their lists
- The ranking of candidates is a matter for their political entity and is the result of some consideration (ideological, pragmatic, power)

YES:

- If the ranking of the candidates is decided by a chosen criterion which does not say anything about the quality of the candidates



Alphabet

- A seemingly neutral element:
 - Student names in the examiner's notebook
 - Telephone directories
 - Statistical lists of municipalities in districts
- If the assumption that the order itself is meaningful holds, the neutrality of the alphabet is eliminated
- Even more so if neutrality (= equality) is part of the constitutionally enshrined right to vote

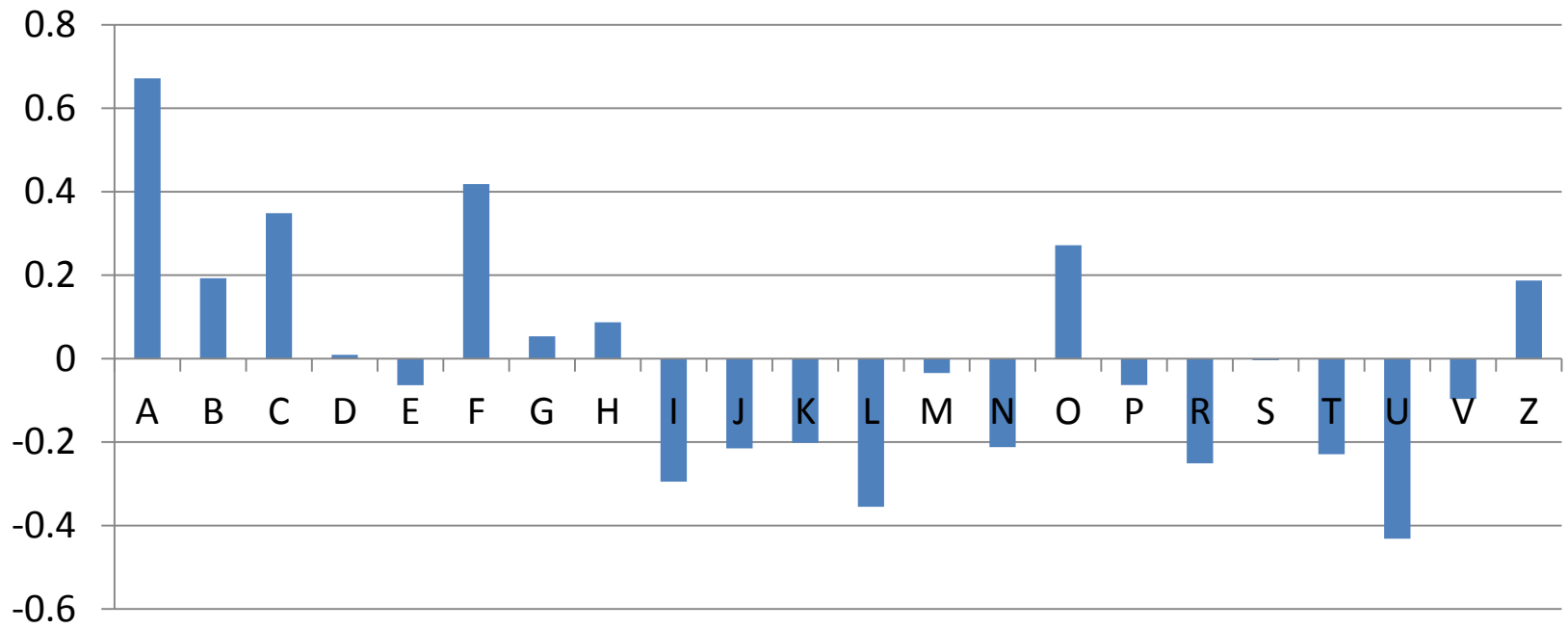
Alphabet

- Why is this a problem?

- 1) the order of the candidates is determined based on a completely random element (why not hair colour or height?)
- 2) the alphabetical criterion says nothing about the quality of the candidates
- 3) statistically, candidates with surnames starting with a letter from the edges of the alphabet have a higher chance of getting to the top/end of the list

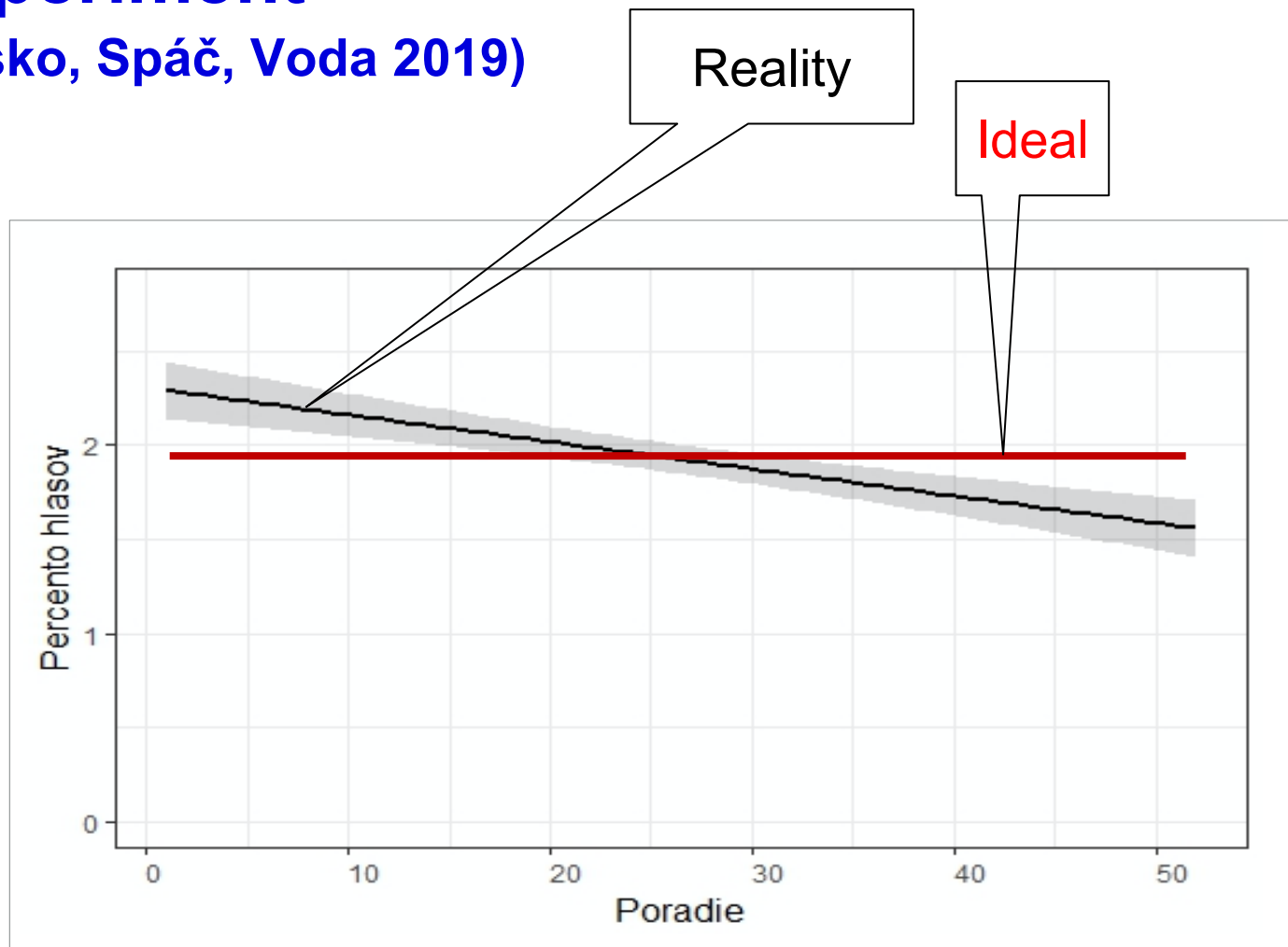
Regional elections SK

- Spáč, Voda, Zagravan 2016
- Results (always against candidates in positions 3 to 3 from the end):
- Number of votes:
 - First position (+2.18 p.p.), second (+1.14), second to last (+1.43), last (+1.19)
- Chances of being elected
 - First position (+ 75%), last position (+ 49%)
- The distribution of elected representatives' names shifted towards the beginning of the alphabet



Experiment

(Jusko, Spáč, Voda 2019)

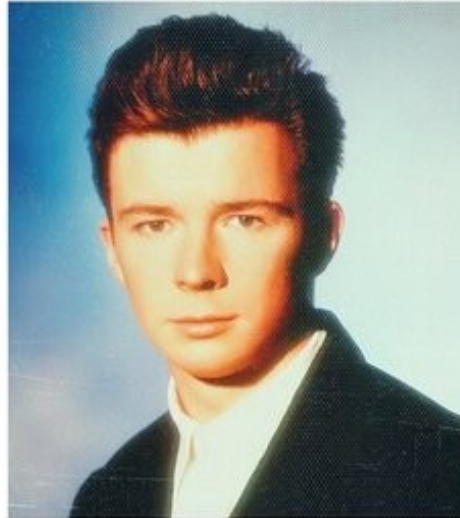


Conclusion

- Seemingly unrelated events can have outsized impacts on voter decisions and electoral outcomes, underscoring the complexity of electoral behaviour.
- Two stories important:
 - 1) Election day circumstances may change (sometimes) the behaviour of voters - weather, polling station, people with guns outside it
 - 2) Ballot structure and information – heuristics helping undecided voters, alphabet

Next...

VOTE FOR



RICK ASTLEY
HE WILL NEVER

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| × GIVE YOU UP | × MAKE YOU CRY |
| × LET YOU DOWN | × SAY GOODBYE |
| × RUN AROUND | × TELL A LIE |
| × DESERT YOU | × HURT YOU |

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