How to Win Proportional Representation
And What Comes Afterwards

Paul Nijjar

October 28, 2015
CONTEXT AND DISCLAIMERS
About this talk

This is not primarily a talk about how we can force the Liberals to adopt PR. But it is a talk about how voting systems change.

This is not primarily a talk about different PR systems. (That can be a different talk.)

Ask questions, but please don’t sermonize.

The talk is being recorded: audio (and video?) will be online!
I am not an expert!

I am not a member of Fair Vote Canada! This is not an official FVC talk!

There are things in this talk that do not reflect Fair Vote Canada policy! (but I will let you know what they are!)
Contents

- What we have now: First-Past-the-Post
- Case studies of successful change
  - Lesotho
  - Scotland Municipal Elections
  - New Zealand
- The Canadian experience
- Lessons
- What next?
- Questions and Discussion
WHAT WE HAVE NOW
About First-Past-the-Post

Idea: Divide the country into ridings.

Parties run candidates in each riding.

Each voter votes for one candidate in one riding. The candidate with the most votes wins a riding seat.

The party with the most seats forms the government.
Canadian Federal Election 2008

Legend:
- **Votes**
- **Seats**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>% Votes</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BQ</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Canadian Federal Election 2011

Justin Trudeau pledges 'real change' as Liberals leap ahead to majority government

Harper to resign as Conservative leader

By Mark Gold løm, CBC News  Posted: Oct 19, 2015 7:00 PM ET  |  Last Updated: Oct 20, 2015 11:50 AM ET

Justin Trudeau will be Canada's next prime minister after leading the Liberal Party to a stunning majority government win, dashing the hopes of Stephen Harper, who had been seeking his fourth consecutive mandate, but will now step down as party leader.

This will be the second time for Canada to be led by a Trudeau, as the 43-year-old Liberal leader follows in the footsteps of his father, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who served as prime minister for almost 16 years before retiring in 1984.

INTERACTIVE  |  Explore election results from across the country
ANALYSIS  |  Trudeau's turn to face that hopey-changey challenge
POLL TRACKER  |  Was the Liberal majority won in the last days?
Trudeau scores stunning Liberal majority

OTTAWA - Just watch him.

A Trudeau is headed back to 24 Sussex Drive, completing the first father-son dynasty in Canada's federal government history, and vanquishing the Conservative leader who came to politics hoping to remake the Trudeau vision of Canada.

Justin Trudeau will become Canada's 23rd prime minister after his party steamrolled to a stunning majority victory

Trudeau scores stunning Liberal majority-Image2

The Canadian Press, 2015

A woman wearing a niqab leaves the Ecole Marius-Barbeau polling station, in Ottawa, after casting her vote in the Canadian federal election on Monday, Oct. 19, 2015. THE CANADIAN PRESS/ Patrick

Waterloo Record:

Liberals unseat Conservatives

Liberal leader Justin Trudeau wins Canada's general election in a landslide that ends nine years of Stephen Harper's Tory rule.
Canadian Federal Election 2015 (Unofficial)

Vote Distortions

It appears that winning parties usually win more seats than they deserve.

Parties that don’t form the majority get squished, unless they win Quebec. Smaller parties get squished entirely.

What’s going on?
Typical Riding Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party A Candidate</th>
<th>40%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party B Candidate</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party C Candidate</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party D Candidate</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60% of the votes are wasted – they don’t count towards earning political representation.
Typical Riding Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party A Candidate</th>
<th>40%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60% of the votes are **wasted** – they don’t count towards earning political representation.
75% Ridings, 40% of the Vote

Party A 40%
Party B 35%
Party C 15%
Party D 10%

Party A 40%
Party B 39%
Party D 16%
Party C 5%

Party A 40%
Party D 25%
Party B 25%
Party C 10%

Party C 45%
Party A 40%
Party B 10%
Party D 5%
VOTE SPLITTING
News Flash

Source: Official Agent for Raj Saini Campaign
If you believe...

• In aircraft carriers over health care.
• In Mulroney-Harris-Eves failed economics and deficits.
• We should have gone to war in Iraq.
• Women shouldn’t have the right to choose.
• Charter rights should be subject to political interference.
• Kyoto should be scrapped.

Then sit on the sidelines by not voting.
Or vote NDP or Green Party.

Both parties have their merits. But a vote for either will do nothing to reduce the chances of a right wing Harper government.

Stephen Harper says he wants to change Canada in a way “you won’t recognize.” The choice for progressive voters is clear.

Or if you believe...

• In public health care and shorter waiting times.
• In protecting the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
• In continuing to balance the books.
• In an independent Canada.

Then, on June 28th, vote Liberal and stop American-style policies that won’t work in Canada.

Only the Liberals can prevent Stephen Harper and his hidden agenda from fundamentally changing our country.

On June 28th, choose your Canada. Vote Liberal.
Then sit on the sidelines by not voting.
Or vote NDP or Green Party.

Both parties have their merits. But a vote for either will do nothing to reduce the chances of a right wing Harper government.

Stephen Harper says he wants to change Canada in a way “you won’t recognize.” The choice for progressive voters is clear.

Source: Liberal Party of Canada
10. The NDP only need 35 more seats – Liberals need 100

Source: http://www.ndp.ca/top-ten-reasons-to-vote-ndp
LOPSIDED VICTORIES
75% Ridings, 40% of the Vote

Party A 40%
Party B 35%
Party C 15%
Party D 10%

Party A 40%
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Party C 5%
Party D 10%

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Party B 25%
Party C 10%

Party C 45%
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Party B 10%
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100% Ridings, 40% of the Vote?

Party A 40%
Party B 35%
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Party D 10%

Party A 40%
Party B 39%
Party C 5%
Party D 10%

Party A 40%
Party B 25%
Party C 25%
Party D 16%

Party A 40%
Party B 16%
Party C 39%
Party D 5%
Alberta Provincial Election 1979

Tallies from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberta_general_election,_1979
"PEI elections2". Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikipedia -

New Brunswick Provincial Election 1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Wrong-Way" Winners
Quebec Provincial Election 1998

New Brunswick Provincial Election 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Con</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Canadian Federal Election 1979

Tallies from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadian_federal_election,_1979
What have we learned about FPTP?

- Usually winners get exaggerated seats, and losers get squished.
- Leads to vote splitting and strategic voting.
- Sometimes there is little to no opposition.
- Sometimes the party that wins the popular vote loses the election.

(And that’s not the end of the story...
# CBC Election Dashboard

**Liberal majority government**

## National Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>party</th>
<th>Elected</th>
<th>Vote Totals</th>
<th>% of Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>6,928,514</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>5,597,565</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDP</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3,460,288</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>818,652</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>605,637</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

Popular vote does not determine the outcome of the election.

[Show all parties](http://www.cbc.ca/includes/federalelection/dashboard/)
Popular vote does not determine the outcome of the election.
WHAT ELSE IS THERE?
Other Voting Systems

Proportional Systems: parties should get seats matching their share of the vote.

- Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP or MMPR)
- Single Transferable Vote (STV)

Non-proportional systems: There are many; here are two:

- Instant Runoff Voting (IRV, aka Alternative Vote)
- Parallel Voting (aka Mixed-Member Majoritarian, MMM)
MMPR in One Slide

Have riding seats in ridings like now. Each riding elects one politician. Local candidates are elected via FPTP.

Use extra *top-up seats* (aka list seats) to make overall seat totals proportional.

Pick the top-up seat members via some kind of list.

(There are many variations. This is one.)
Have riding seats in ridings like now. Each riding elects one politician.

Use a *ranked ballot* to select candidates in order of preference.

Tally votes by dropping unpopular candidates and redistributing their votes until somebody has over 50% of the ballot.

**Note:** This is NOT proportional.
Have ridings, but each riding elects multiple politicians (as in Regional Council).

Use a ranked ballot to select candidates in order of preference.

Redistribute votes from unpopular candidates AND extra votes from winners until all seats are filled.

**Note:** This IS proportional. The more seats in the riding the fewer votes get wasted.
WHO HAS MADE THE SWITCH?
Lesotho
Lesotho switched from FPTP to a Mixed-Member Proportional (MMPR) system in 1998. How did they do it?
About Lesotho

- Population: 2 million
- Independent from Britain since 1966
- Main parties:
  - Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD)
  - Basutoland Congress Party (BCP)
  - Basotho National Party (BNP)
  - All Basotho Convention (ABC)
  - Democratic Congress (DC)
Early History

- **1966**: Lesotho gains independence from Great Britain.
- **1970**: First elections. Basotho National Party loses to Basutoland Congress Party, but declares state of emergency and imprisons BCP.
- **1985**: BNP supposedly holds elections, but other parties boycott. BNP wins all the seats!
1991: Military allows democracy.
1993: FPTP election won by the BCP.
1994: King Letsie III deposes the government via a military coup, but the BCP regains power after negotiations.
1998: FPTP election won by the LCD. Elections are judged to be “free and fair”
Tallies from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesotho_general_election,_1993
Lesotho 1998

Life Under Democracy?

1998: The opposition organizes mass protests against the election. Troops come in from Botswana and South Africa. People die.

1998: The Southern African Development Community puts together an Interim Political Authority, which convenes representatives from 12 political parties to decide on a new electoral system.

1998: The IPA chooses an MMPR system with 80 riding seats, 40 top-up seats.
Lesotho 2007

2002: First MMPR election. LCD wins big, but gets no top-up seats.

2007: Shenanigans! LCD uses an MMPR trick to increase its share of top-up seats. Its rival ABC follows suit.

System is reformed to close the MMPR trick.
2012: New party Democratic Congress (DC) wins 41.57/120 (40.0%) of the seats on 39.6% of the party vote.

2014: Another attempted coup. The prime minister flees the country.

How Lesotho Won PR

- Hold crazy FPTP elections that look stolen even though they might not be.
- Suffer civil unrest.
- Convene all-party committee to come up with a fairer system.
- Experience shenanigans.
- Fix the problems with the system.
Scottish Municipal Elections
Scotland

Scottish municipal politics switched from FPTP to STV in 2007. How did they do it?
Scottish Devolution

1995 The *Scottish Constitutional Convention* (consisting of political parties, excluding Conservatives and SNP) proposes a form of MMPR called the Additional Member System for the new parliament.

1997: UK Labour government holds referendum on creating a Scottish Parliament. It passes with 74.3% of the vote.
Municipal Reform

- **2003**: Labour forms a coalition with Liberal Democrats. As a condition, LibDems demand PR for municipal elections.
- **2004**: *Local Governance (Scotland) Act* act is passed, which legislates STV.
- **2007**: First STV elections.
How Scotland Won PR

- Long devolution campaign and adoption of PR for new parliament (not switching from FPTP).
- Coalition in which junior partner demands PR in exchange for cooperation.
New Zealand
New Zealand switched from FPTP to a MMPR system in 1993. How did they do it?

New Zealand holds national elections every three years. Main Parties:

- Labour: large centre-left party.
- National: large centre-right party.
- New Zealand First: centrist anti-immigration party.
- United Future: leftish party formed from the ashes of the United party and Future New Zealand (2002 on)
- Green: environmentalism.
- Maori: Indigenous rights.
- ACT: classical-liberal right-wing party.
New Zealand 1981

Timeline

- **1985**: The Labour government implements a *Royal Commission on the Electoral System*, which recommends MMPR.
- **1987**: Labour promises a referendum on MMPR but doesn’t implement it.
- **1990**: Labour (accidentally?) promises a referendum. National promises a (non-binding) referendum.
Referendums

Voters were asked whether to change the electoral system and what alternative to choose.

If voters chose to change the system, there would be a second referendum the following year.
### 1992 Referendum Question, Part A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part A: Choose one Proposal</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retain FPP</td>
<td>15.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I vote to retain the present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Past the Post System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change System</td>
<td>81.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I vote for a change to</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the electoral system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 1992 Referendum Question, Part B

**Part B: Choose one Option**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preferential Voting (aka IRV)</td>
<td>6.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Member Proportional</td>
<td>64.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Member</td>
<td>5.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Transferable Vote</td>
<td>16.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Invalid)</td>
<td>7.89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Having two questions meant voters could indicate that support for eliminating FPTP was much stronger than any consensus on the replacement.

The New Zealand government sent out information to all households about the different voting systems for Part B.

There was a 50% double threshold (50% + 1 vote, 50% ridings)
### 1993 Referendum Question

**Choose one Proposal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Past the Post (FPP)</td>
<td>46.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I vote to retain the present First Past the Post System as provided by the Electoral Act 1956</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Member Proportional (MMP)</td>
<td>53.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I vote for the proposed Mixed Member Proportional system as provided by the Electoral Act 1993</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
First MMPR elections

- **1996**: National gets a plurality, and unexpectedly partners with New Zealand First (who campaigned against them!)
- **1999**: Labour wins 38.7% of the vote, forms government with Alliance and Greens.
- **2002**: Labour wins 41.2% of the vote, forms government with United Future. Main issue: fight with Greens over GMOs.
- **2005**: Labour wins (41.1%), forms coalition with Progressive, with **supply and confidence** from NZ First, United Future.
New Zealand 1996

New Zealand 1999

More elections

2008: National wins 44.9% of the vote, governs as minority with supply and confidence from ACT, United Future, Maori parties. National promises to “reevaluate” MMPR via referendum.
Reform, Revisited

- **2008**: National promises a referendum to revisit (and possibly abolish) MMPR.
- **2011**: Referendum! Voters choose to keep MMPR with 57.7% of the (valid) vote.
- **2012**: MMPR is reviewed and some amendments are made to prevent tiny parties from getting extra list seats.
### 2011 Referendum Question, Part A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should New Zealand Keep the Mixed Member Proportional voting system?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes - keep MMP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I vote to keep the MMP System</td>
<td>56.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No - change system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I vote to change to another system</td>
<td>41.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Invalid)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If New Zealand were to change to another voting system, which voting system would you choose?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting System</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Past the Post</td>
<td>31.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferential Voting (aka IRV)</td>
<td>8.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Transferable Vote</td>
<td>11.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary Member</td>
<td>16.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Invalid)</td>
<td>33.14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The number of invalid ballots for Part B was enormous.
Support for MMP appears to have grown since the 1993 election.
Support for FPTP is still significant: over 30%?
Recent Elections

- **2011**: National wins 47.3% of the vote, governs as minority with supply and confidence from ACT, United Future, Maori.
- **2014**: National wins 47.0% of the vote, 60/121 seats, governs as minority with supply and confidence from ACT, United Future, Maori.
How New Zealand Won PR

- Two wrong-way winners that made Labour (and NZ voters) mad.
- Government report followed by foot-dragging, followed by election promises.
- Two successful referendums.
- Wacky coalitions, then three Labour victories in a row, followed by promises to re-evaluate the system.
- Another referendum which supports MMPR.
- The system is improved.
THE CANADIAN STORY
What has the closest Canada has come to winning proportional representation at any level of government?
1920: Manitoba Liberal party introduces STV for Winnipeg seats (and IRV for rural seats in 1924).
1924: Alberta Progressive party introduces STV for Calgary and Edmonton (and IRV everywhere else).
1916-1928: 18 municipalities introduce STV for municipal elections.
No Surprise!

- **1959** Alberta Social Credit party institutes FPTP everywhere.
- **1956** Manitoba redistributes ridings and eliminates STV.
No Surprise!

- 1959 Alberta Social Credit party institutes FPTP everywhere.
- 1956 Manitoba redistributes ridings and eliminates STV.

Official reasons: STV and IRV are too difficult to tally, Winnipeg was underrepresented...

Unofficial reasons: Hmmm...  
(Also see: British Columbia 1951-1953)
British Columbia
2001: Liberals under Gordon Campbell get lopsided majority, promise electoral reform.
2002: Gordon Gibson of Fraser Institute recommends a citizens assembly and referendum.
March 2004: Electoral Reform Referendum Act demands 60% supermajority.
Dec 2004: Citizens Assembly recommends STV.
## 2005 BC Referendum

Should British Columbia change to the BC-STV electoral system, as recommended by the Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>% Vote</th>
<th>Num Ridings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Campbell and the Liberals “officially neutral”. The NDP was split (despite having endorsed PR officially). The Green leader Adrienne Carr made statements opposing STV (!)

Second referendum was promised for 2009, with new electoral boundaries filled in, and funding offered to pro- and anti- groups.
2009 BC Referendum Question

Which electoral system should British Columbia use to elect members to the provincial Legislative Assembly?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>% Vote</th>
<th>Ridings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The existing electoral system (First-Past-the-Post)</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The single transferable vote electoral system (BC-STV) proposed by the Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform?</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Change System</th>
<th>No Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BC 2005</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>42.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI 2005</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ON 2007</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC 2009</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, attempts in Quebec (ended 2007) and New Brunswick (ended 2006).

Each of these losses hurt the movement. The BC 2009 loss was crippling.
The Liberals and NDP would make these democratic changes to our democratic system and impose them on Canadians without consultation because when Canadians are asked – as they have been in Ontario, British Columbia, and Prince Edward Island – they’ve chosen the status quo.

(emphasis mine)
LESSONS
Lesson: Wacky Elections

Lopsided results and wrong-way majorities motivate electoral reform. (NZ, BC, Lesotho)

Phony majorities and vote-splitting is “business as usual.”
Lesson: Inertia

Moving from FPTP to anything else is really hard.

Once electoral reform has started it can keep going:

- Voting system improvements (NZ, Lesotho)
- Reversions to FPTP (Canada)

Rejected electoral reform attempts cause setbacks.
Lesson: FPTP Corrupts

Governments that win majorities under FPTP have little incentive to change the system unless they get ripped off or can be held accountable.

Governments can sabotage electoral reform:

- “Official” neutrality.
- Supermajority requirements.
- Dragging feet until it is too late.
Lesson: Rocky Beginnings

Expect the first few elections under PR to be rocky.

People will be grumpy with weird outcomes.

Politics will still be dirty.
Lesson: Life Under PR

Democracy means parties you don’t like will win power.

PR can make it harder to “kick the rascals out”.

Coalition agreements add post-election drama and can be unexpected (NZ 1996).

FPTP defenders make some arguments that are worth considering (and others that are ridiculous).
Lesson: Referendums

New Zealand has demonstrated that clear multi-part referendums can work well.

The New Zealand referenda clearly distinguished between evaluating FPTP and choosing a different system.
WHAT COMES NEXT?
Municipal Ranked Ballots

The Ontario government will allow (not force) municipalities to use ranked ballots for elections.

“Ranked ballots” are not a voting system, but can be used to implement voting systems:

- Proportional: Single-Transferable Vote (STV)
- Non-proportional: Instant Runoff/Alternative Vote (IRV or AV), Borda Counts...
What to do?

Should we advocate the use of ranked ballots in the region of Waterloo? For mayors? City councillors? Regional councillors?

Should we reject ranked ballots if they will not be used to implement proportional systems?

What happens if we reject electoral change again?
We will make every vote count.

We are committed to ensuring that 2015 will be the last federal election conducted under the first-past-the-post voting system.
We will convene an all-party Parliamentary committee to review a wide variety of reforms, such as ranked ballots, proportional representation, mandatory voting, and online voting.

This committee will deliver its recommendations to Parliament. Within 18 months of forming government, we will introduce legislation to enact electoral reform.
The Liberals are *not* promising to implement proportional representation.

They are promising a multi-party committee which can recommend whatever it wants.
More uh oh

- Electoral catastrophe? No.
- Trudeau supports PR? Not during his leadership campaign.
- Liberals benefit from PR? Not necessarily. IRV is better for big-tent centrist parties.
- Liberals ripped off by FPTP? Not more than usual.
- Government won phony majority? Yes.
- Official opposition advocating for PR? No.
What can we do?

We cannot *force* the Liberals to adopt PR. But maybe we can...

- Keep pressure on all parties in parliament.
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- Broaden support and awareness of electoral reform.
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- Keep proportional representation multipartisan.
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- Keep pressure on all parties in parliament.
- Criticize attempts by the government to sabotage the process.
- Broaden support and awareness of electoral reform.
- Take advantage of municipal electoral reform.
- Keep proportional representation multipartisan.
- Stop fighting among ourselves!
How? (You already know how)
Learn

Can you explain FPTP and PR to others?

Are you comfortable with the tradeoffs yourself?

What things do you want from democracy?
Get Involved

Fair Vote Canada is holding a meeting on: Monday Nov 9, 7pm, Heuther Hotel: Working with MPs.

You can join the leadnow.ca campaign.

You can make other local activities (discussions, learning circles, public events) happen as well.
Keep Up the Pressure

Let your MP know you are vigilant.

In-person meetings are most effective, followed by snail mail, email, and then signing petitions.
Positive signs

Awareness of the term “First-Past-the-Post” is rising.

Some big players (eg leadnow.ca) are taking up this cause.

The kids are all right.

The Conservatives mentioned electoral reform in their platform.
THE END
FEEDBACK
Thank You!

To all of you for attending.

To those who offered publicity help.

To everybody who put up with me obsessing about this talk for a month and a half.

To people who helped with setup and takedown.

To The Working Centre for hosting the space.
QUESTIONS?
CLARIFICATIONS?
PITCHFORKS?
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REFERENCES

References: FPTP II


References: FPTP III


References: Lesotho I


References: Lesotho II


References: Lesotho IV


References: New Zealand I


References: Election Tallies I


References: Election Tallies II


References: Election Tallies III


References: Election Tallies IV


References: Election Tallies V


References: Election Tallies VII


References: Election Tallies X


EXTRA SLIDES
Other Provinces
2005: Prince Edward Island

- **2003**: Government appoints one-person commission (Norman H Carruthers) to conduct consultations and study electoral reform.
- **2005**: PEI holds plebicite on MMPR system (with usual supermajority).
- 36.4% vote in favour, passing in 2/27 ridings.
PEI Comments

- Referendum was not held during an election. It had fewer polling stations. Turnout was low.
- Neither the Liberals nor Conservatives supported the change.
2006: New Brunswick

- **2003**: Commission on Legislative Democracy established by Conservative Bernard Lord.
- **2005**: Commission recommends MMPR system and referendum.
- **2006**: Conservatives lose election (in wrong-way winner!), and Liberals drop the recommendation.
2003: Estates General on Reform of Democratic Commissions recommends regional MMPR.

2004: Draft bill proposed to Quebec assembly.

2006: Appointed Citizens Committee rejects bill as written, but recommends a different form of MMPR.

2007: Chief Electoral Officer releases report recommending a switch.

And then...?
2007: Ontario

- **2004**: Liberals announce Citizens’ Assembly and referendum
- **2007**: Citizens’ Assembly recommends MMPR.
- **2007**: Ontario holds referendum with usual supermajority thresholds.
- 36.9% vote for MMPR, passing in 5/107 ridings.
Ontario Comments

- Media coverage was overwhelmingly negative.
- Government education campaign: terrible.
Canada
2004: Law Commission of Canada drafts a report recommending MMPR.

2005: NDP forces Liberals to establish a Committee to review electoral reform. They reject a Citizens Assembly process. They set up procedures to report by Feb 2006.

2006: Liberal government falls and is replaced by Conservatives.

And then...?
The Association for the Advancement of Democratic Rights took the Quebec government to court over FPTP, citing Charter:

- Section 3: All citizens have the right to vote, but not all votes are counted.
- Section 15: FPTP discriminates against women, minorities, and supporters of fringe parties.

In 2009 a Quebec judge ruled against the case. In 2012 their appeal to the Supreme Court was dismissed.
1951: British Columbia introduces (non-proportional) IRV to keep the CCF from benefiting from vote splitting.

1953: British Columbia Social Credit party abolishes IRV in favour of FPTP.
What do you want from democracy?

- To help elect people you like?
- To prevent people you dislike from getting power?
- To give governments strong mandates?
- To have strong local representation?
- To introduce new ideas and innovation?
- To let governments make unpopular but necessary decisions?
- To kick the rascals out?
That, in the opinion of the House: (a) the next federal election should be the last conducted under the current first-past-the-post electoral system which has repeatedly delivered a majority of seats to parties supported by a minority of voters, or under any other winner-take-all electoral system; and (b) a form of mixed-member proportional representation would be the best electoral system for Canada.
On December 3, 2014, MPs voted on an Opposition Motion for Mixed Member Proportional Representation.

- Conservative: YES
- NDP: YES
- Liberal: YES
- Bloc: YES
- Green: YES
- Independents & Forces et Démocratie: NO

Elect MPs who support proportional representation. MAKE ALL OUR VOTES COUNT! [www.fairvote.ca](http://www.fairvote.ca)

Source: Fair Vote Canada (via Facebook)
No MMP

On October 10, 2007, as part of the next Provincial election, Ontarians will be asked if they want to replace our current electoral system with a “Mixed Member Proportional” (MMP) form of voting.

To achieve proportionality, the proposed MMP system shifts power from local voters and ridings to party headquarters at Queen’s Park.

Do you want...

17 fewer local ridings, covering more territory, with less contact with your local representative?

39 politicians chosen by other politicians ... not you?

Closed door party deal-making, for weeks after elections, to decide who governs the Province?

Tax dollars paying for 22 more politicians and their staff at Queen’s Park?

A confusing ballot and vote counting system?

A weaker, indecisive Ontario?

Fringe parties holding the balance of power with 2 or 3 seats?

On October 10th

Vote to keep our present voting system!
MMP Myths and Facts

Proponents of the "Mixed Member Proportional" voting system claim that, if it is approved in the October 10th Referendum, MMP will cure most, if not all of Ontario's political ills. Here are the realities:

**MMP will not produce higher voter turnout.**

Declining voter turnout levels are a global problem and affect both MMP countries and First Past the Post (FPTP) countries equally. New Zealand switched from FPTP to MMP in 1996 and is now posting their lowest voter turnouts in history.

**MMP will not increase diversity in the Legislature.**

MMP can increase diversity only if parties choose to appoint women and minority candidates to their party lists. Otherwise, the effort to achieve a diverse Legislature is the same as under the current system. In fact, the number of women in the Scottish National Parliament actually went down in their last MMP election.

**MMP will not bring harmony to the Legislature.**

MMP will open the possibilities for more back-stabbing and backroom deals between political parties to decide who has power. MMP will do nothing to improve the bickering and partisan rhetoric in the legislatures that we are in minority governments these days.

**Our current voting system is not out of step with the rest of the world.**

Canada and each of its Provinces, the United States, the United Kingdom and India, which together represent 45% of the world's population living in democracies, use systems similar to our own.

Join a growing number of people across Ontario opposed to MMP

Send a cheque (payable to NO MMP Committee) to:
30 Glenside Avenue, Toronto M4L 2T5.

Help organize your part of Ontario.