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# Duverger's Law of Plurality Voting

The Logic of Party Competition in Canada,  
India, the United Kingdom and the  
United States

 Springer

# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Evidence for Duverger's Law from Four Countries

Bernard Grofman, Shaun Bowler, and André Blais

*[T]he simple majority single ballot system favours the two party system*

Maurice Duverger (1954: 217)

This seemingly straightforward statement, made over 50 years ago, has become perhaps the most famous theoretical generalization in political science. It is a statement that ties the electoral system to the party system in a way that has been used to explain important features of the democratic process in the world's largest, longest lived, and most successful democracies of Britain, Canada, India, and the USA. Over the years since then the relationship between seats and votes has been expanded and elaborated upon in much greater detail and sophistication, but the central insight remains: electoral systems shape party systems. It is an insight that forms a central foundation upon which our understanding of electoral systems and their consequences has been built. But it is also an insight that has limitations even in those cases in which it should apply most clearly. In this volume we examine those limitations in some detail in this, the first in-depth comparative analysis of Duverger's law in practice, focusing on its "home turf" of Britain, Canada, India, and the USA.

### Duverger's Law

Duverger was not the first to note the relationship between electoral system and number of parties in a political system. Riker doubted that Duverger was the originator of the law: "It is customary," Riker writes, "to call the law by Duverger's name, not because he had much to do with developing it but rather because he was the first to dare to claim it was a law" (Riker 1982: 754). Since the 1950s, the statement of Duverger has been developed and extended by a number of authors - most notably in the work of Taagepera and Shugart (1989) and more recently by Gary Cox (Cox 1997) but still, the effect is known as Duverger's law (Benoit 2006).

Duverger's law, as we will call it also, remains the canonical statement of why electoral systems matter. It is also a "law" that seems to be more notable for its exceptions than its application. As we show in this volume the validity of the law can be all too readily overstated. Indeed, there seems to exist only one example of a truly two-party Duvergerian equilibrium – that of the USA. The other major democracies we discuss – Britain, Canada, and India – all have persistent third or fourth parties that call into question the predicted equilibrium of two parties. The persistence of these parties – Britain's Liberal Democrats, the Canadian NDP, and the Communist Party of India – cannot be regarded as temporary, since they have all lasted for decades and – hence – have been squeezed through the mangle of incentives in multiple electoral cycles.

To be sure, even though Duverger himself saw it as a "brazen law" (1954: 228) he did also advance a somewhat more moderate version of the law:

...the brutal application of the single-ballot system in a country in which multi-partism has taken deep root, as in France, would not produce the same results, except after a very long delay. The electoral system works in the direction of bipartism; it does not necessarily and absolutely lead to it in spite of all obstacles. The basic tendency combines with many others which attenuate it, check it, or arrest it.

(Duverger 1954: 228)

Subsequent, received, versions of electoral system studies have been less nuanced and have provided a more forceful and law-like interpretation of the original insight. The law has been formalized, too. Cox (1997) represents the most sophisticated formal treatment of the law to date, but we can state the law more formally here.

Let us denote by  $m$  the number of seats in a constituency that are to be filled (*district magnitude*) and let  $n_v$  be the number of political parties whose representatives contest election in the constituency. Duverger (1954) hypothesized that, "in a plurality election system involving partisan elections, if  $m=1$ , then we expect that  $n_v=2$ ." Or, to put this result in more familiar terms, single member district plurality elections should favor two-party competition.<sup>1</sup>

The theoretical motors of Duverger's law can be broken down into "mechanical effects," and "psychological effects." The mechanical effect is the effect of the electoral system converting votes into seats. In single member district elections, small parties will tend to be squeezed out of existence "mechanically," simply because the operation of the electoral system denies them seats. In particular, if there are single member districts, then only one party (the largest in that district) can win seats in the district.<sup>2</sup> Larger parties will receive a larger share of seats than votes and so be overrepresented while smaller parties will receive a smaller share of seats than votes and so be underrepresented (Benoit 2006: 73–74).<sup>3</sup> Psychological effects are centered in the reaction of instrumentally minded voters and elites to the expected working of the electoral system (Benoit 2006: 74–76; Blais and Carty 1991). Realizing that third or minor parties have little chance of success, supporters – both elites and voters – who would otherwise back minor parties will move away to the more viable and successful two larger parties. Potential new entrants will be deterred from actually entering the race while the ambitious will hitch their career prospects to a party with a surer chance of power.

Although the mechanical and psychological effects are analytically distinct in actual practice they tend to overlap: if the workings of the electoral system were not bad enough news for small parties in terms of its direct effects, such parties will tend to be further squeezed out due to the expectations that the system generates among voters and elites. Under Duverger's law the (vote) rich get (seat) richer. Deviation from this rule, that is the presence of more than two parties, is termed an example of a non-Duvergerian equilibrium (Palfrey 1984; Benoit 2006).

### Non-Duvergerian Equilibria

The logic of Duverger's law is compelling but it, and the resulting equilibrium of two parties, rests on a series of assumptions. These assumptions, if violated, should lead us to expect a series of non-Duvergerian equilibria or, more simply, we should see more than two parties. The enterprise of looking for these unexpected equilibria is more than a matter of simply noting that some exceptions to the "law" or some conditions under which it does not work with a wave of the hand to "local conditions" or "exceptions."<sup>4</sup> Because Duverger's law represents a fundamental intellectual building block in our understanding of elections it speaks to the way in which we understand what electoral systems do, and how they achieve their effects.

As Cox (1997) reminds us, the model of expectations underlying Duverger's Law can be unsettled in a number of ways. Voters and parties are assumed to be able to reliably predict losers in advance, and when they cannot then we may see non-Duvergerian equilibria. For example, as Cox notes, if the difference in vote share between second and third (or even fourth) parties is small, then we can get persistence of three-or-more party competition. In general, if the distribution of party vote shares from the largest to the smallest party is relatively flat, then many rather small parties may have a reasonable chance of winning given random movements in electoral tides, since all parties are competing with each other. Taagepera (2007) suggests that the more parties there are, the flatter will be the distribution of party vote shares. Thus, non-Duvergerian equilibria may, in part, be self-sustaining.

Expectations may be unsettled in other ways, too, if actors do not behave as the model assumes. By Duvergerian logic, it might seem that no party should ever run that had not run successfully before. Yet hope springs eternal and so we might end up with multiple parties regularly contesting a given seat even but with some of those parties having short-lived existences. Alternatively, we might find some new parties entering who build up support over time as their perceived viability increases, and who maintain support because of expectations not because of what they have done in any single election, but because of expectations that they will do better in the future based on a multielection trajectory. If reliable expectations about winners and losers are not available because party systems are in flux (e.g., party systems in new democracies that have not jelled, or party systems in more established democracies that are in the process of realigning) then we can have non-Duvergerian outcomes. In general, these disruptions due to upsets in expectations

provide one class of examples of the kinds of coordination failure Cox discusses. In this class of failures of Duvergerian expectations voters – as a group – fail to coordinate expectations.

There are other ways in which coordination may fail, too, including failure to coordinate across party elites. As the example of Canada attests and as a number of authors have pointed out (see Chhibber and Kollman 1998) it is quite possible to have every district competition involve only two parties and yet have a multiplicity of parties represented in the national parliament. All that it takes are regionally based parties and/or substantial variations in the ethno/linguistic/religious or socio-economic composition of districts that foster different patterns of competition across districts. This may be especially important if those differences are part of a federal framework, which provides incentives of its own to support regional party systems (Chhibber and Kollman 1998). Thus, as both Cox (1997) and Taagepera (2001, 2007) emphasize theories that link electoral system type to party competition at the district level the theories are not sufficient; we also need to have theories that can take us from district level effects to national level outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

Effects may not simply run from district to national level but national level effects may also affect what happens in the district. The logic underlying Duverger's law assumes away what Grofman (1999) refers to as embeddedness effects: constituencies, districts, and ridings are embedded within a wider political system that provides its own set of incentives. To make credible the claim that it is a truly national party, and not simply a regional one, a party may contest seats nationwide, even if it has little chance of winning. There may also be more instrumental motivations for a party to contest a seat even if it has little chance of winning it. Access to TV time or public subsidy may depend on the number of seats contested or votes obtained. Or, more narrowly still, party managers may see an apprenticeship system at work watching how well candidates do in seats that are safe for a rival party.

Models grounded in a Downsian approach are often quite consistent with Duverger's expectations. Where political competition is along a single dimension, Downs (1957) (Black 1958) showed that movement of a right-of-center party and a left-of-center party toward the location of the median voter can squeeze out any centrist party, thus reinforcing incentives for two-party competition. But there are exceptions. If the movement to the center is too far then this may leave space open for a far right and/or far left party to begin a new process of squeezing out the party/parties now in the center. But Brams (1975) and others (Palfrey 1984) have looked at this issue in sequential game terms and shown that there are equilibrium locations of the right-of-center and left-of-center parties that will both deny the possibility of a successful rival forming in the center and deny the possibility of successful rivals on their flanks.<sup>6</sup>

Once we move away from a pure unidimensional spatial model and introduce ideology or noninstrumental motivations then the Duvergerian model may also be disrupted. Ideology may impact the number of political parties in much the same way that cloud seeding can impact the onset of rain. Taagepera and Grofman (1985), drawing on the work of Arend Lijphart, have suggested that ideology can

have an independent effect on the creation of party constellations under the regularity that  $N = I + 1$ , where  $N$  is the Laakso and Taagepera (1979) index of the *effective number of parties*, defined as the inverse of the sum of the squared party seat shares, and  $I$  is the number of distinct issue dimensions. Here, the idea is that when new parties enter the system they tend to be organized to foster a particular issue, and often take a relatively centrist position on existing issue dimensions. If we begin with two parties taking opposite stands on a single issue, then as new issues arise and persist, we will, on average, add one new party for each new issue, and thus might expect that the (effective) number of parties is one more than the number of issue dimensions.

Opportunities for minor parties to exist and possibly flourish even absent the creation of new ideologies if the distribution of voter preferences varies across districts. Imagine that there are two major parties competing nationally and that each adopts a platform designed to maximize its seat share. If constituencies differ in their ideological distributions of voters, and each party is constrained to offer the same positions in each district that it offers nationally, then we may get a situation where the party policy locations that are optimal in the aggregate still leave open the possibility that, in particular districts, a third party can find a position that defeats both major parties (Shvetsova 1997).<sup>7</sup> Under these circumstances we can get persistent three-party competition in at least some districts if the (two) major parties compete everywhere. So, for example, the distinct community of Quebec may well produce a party system that is also distinct from that of the rest of Canada. A similar nationalism is the engine that drives differences between Scotland, Wales, and the rest of Britain.

A somewhat different variant of this argument is found in India. Viewing its politics as one-dimensional Riker (1976, 1982) asserts that the Congress party is both the median party and a dominant party, and that parties to its right and left can both persist in competition with it because, even if their combined supporters outnumbered those of Congress in some district, an alliance to defeat Congress is all but impossible because of the ideological divide that separates the ideological extremes. Such parties, while recognizing that they have little hope of winning national majorities in the short run, may retain hope that they will eventually be able to replace Congress, and they retain their viability due to their strength in particular regions of the country.<sup>8</sup> The inability of the extremes to combine against the middle is another example of what Cox refers to as a "coordination failure" (see Cox 1997:Chap. 13).

A similar argument can apply if we superimpose a system of racial/ethnic/religious cleavages on other dimensions of conflict. One possibility is that cleavages have a multiplicative effect in which, say, if there is a left party and a right party, then each of these parties will split into distinct parties based on the cleavage structure, with one party of each type for each politically salient cleavage (Neto and Cox 1997). This seems to match recent patterns in Belgium after the linguistic cleavage in that country rose in importance. Another possibility, however, is simply to have one party for each politically salient cleavage. Here, it is the cleavage structure that would determine party proliferation, not the electoral system.<sup>9</sup>

## Duverger's Law at Work?

The circumstances identified earlier are not all mutually exclusive and so there may be a multiplicity of factors operating to produce non-Duvergerian equilibria. Indeed, given the long list of assumptions and conditions under which Duverger's law can be violated it is surprising that it is one of the more robust findings in all of political science. Nonetheless, the empirical regularity of fewer parties being associated with the simple plurality electoral system as used in the major democracies is one that is repeatedly found in the large body of work on electoral systems since that time (e.g., Lakeman and Lambert 1955; Rae 1971; Taagepera and Shugart 1989).

There is, however, an important issue of measurement that needs to be mentioned. In Duverger's original formulation the "number" of political parties is simply  $n_p$ , the number of parties whose representatives are elected. But virtually all of the tests of Duverger's law (and Duverger's hypothesis) use not  $n_p$ , but rather the Laakso-Taagepera index of the *effective electoral number of parties* (Laakso and Taagepera 1979), defined as the inverse of the sum of the squared party seat shares. Even if the *effective number of parties* is "close" to 2 on average, for first-past-the-post systems, or the number in some particular country is "near" 2, say 2.4 or 2.5 in a particular country, this allows for a lot of potential variation in the number of parties that are seat gaining. For example, we might have nearly half the seats won without opposition and the rest characterized by competition among a very large number of parties all of about the same size. Even more importantly, an effective number of parties near 2 need not tell us that the fundamental mechanical and psychological logic underpinning Duverger's law is working well over time, since we might find a small party (say one with 10% of the vote) continuing to contest even in situations where votes for the second- and third-place parties exceed votes for the winning party and a substantial number of third party supporters prefer the second-place party to the winning party.

When we take a more direct look at number of seat gaining parties in first-past-the-post systems or at the persistence of third and, especially, fourth parties in these systems, the prediction of two parties is not really so robust. In fact the major example of Duverger existing in practice at the national level is that of the USA. The other major democracies – Britain, Canada, and India – all have persistent third (or fourth) parties that call into question the predicted equilibrium of two parties. The persistence of these parties – such as Britain's Liberal Democrats or the Canadian NDP or the Communist Party of India – cannot be regarded as temporary since they have all lasted for decades and – hence – however, squeezed through the mangle of Duvergerian incentives provided by multiple electoral cycles they still survive. Looked at this way it is the Duvergerian equilibrium of the USA that is the oddity – not these other cases.<sup>10</sup>

But we must be careful not to reject Duverger's law if sometimes we find other than two-party competition, since we should take the law to express a probabilistic tendency rather than a certainty.<sup>11</sup> As we noted earlier we must also be careful to distinguish results at the district level from national level results. The presence of a multiparty system nationally does not in any way preclude Duverger's law working



well at the district level. Furthermore, even when Duverger's law can be said to fail it is not entirely clear whether we understand which of the reasons for its failure hold.

In the chapters that follow the authors take up the major cases of Duverger's law – Canada, India, Britain, and the USA – and examine arguments relating to the limitations of Duverger beyond the usual suspects of coordination and regional effects. Overall, the lesson from these studies is that even the canonical case of electoral system effects in plurality voting – the simplest electoral system and the one that provides the strongest incentives – is not yet fully understood.

### *Canada*

Johnston and Cutler consider the longest running “deviant case” of Canada. But in looking at district by district results Johnston and Cutler argue that the failure of Duverger in Canada cannot be attributed simply to regional discrepancies or to failures to coordinate across districts. Rather the failure of the effect is much more thoroughgoing and may well lie at the level of the voters, rather than the parties. While one explanation for multipartism at the national level lies in the aggregation of a collection of different two-party contests in each district there is, in Canada, a district by district persistence of multipartyness.

Blais, Bodet, and Dostie-Goulet, in their chapter on Canada, examine another feature of voter behavior that is Duvergerian in nature: the strategic voter. One of the properties of Duverger's argument is that it involves a “dance” between two strategic partners – the voters and the parties. Strategic voters will, goes the argument, desert smaller parties in the interests of making their vote “count” and should do so in response to the local competitive context. As they show, however, the level of strategic voting that occurs seems not to vary very much, even though at some times both media and political parties pay a great deal of attention to it while at other times they do not. The relative invariance of the amount of strategic voting – i.e., the seeming unresponsiveness of voters to strategic context – poses (in principle at least) a challenge to a fundamental assumption of how voters respond to the incentives of the electoral system.

### *India*

Despite being the world's largest democracy and, also, being a case of democracy in very difficult circumstances India is one of the relatively understudied examples of democratic practice. It is the regional diversity that is often held to explain India's exception to the Duvergerian rule of two partyism. Csaba Nikolenyi shows, however, that it is also a society where the number of parties at the national level has, in sharp contrast to Duverger, grown not shrunk. He argues that Duverger's original expectation that a local party system would be automatically projected onto

the national level happens only in the special case when the center is empty. When the center, as in India with the Congress party, is occupied the dynamics of the party system differ markedly.

### *Britain*

An important dimension to Duverger's law is the normative one of how we should construct representative democracy. Constraining the choice of voters to two parties may seem arbitrary and unfair. On the other hand, there are important advantages to having fewer parties in terms of wider concerns of accountability and representation. One argument in support of the effect of squeezing the number of parties is that it helps to provide representative and accountable governments. That is, the consequences of Duverger's law in practice are normatively good.

Curtice takes up the normative issue of the contribution that first-past-the-post to representative democracy. In examining Britain's governments, he shows that the system provides neither representative nor accountable government, in part because of local variations in vote share. Curtice's findings echo those of Johnston and Cutler in identifying the importance of local conditions.

Gaines shows that electoral effects need to be considered against a broader canvass, in this instance, against the other kinds of elections that take place (a theme addressed in the Canadian case by Johnston and Cutler). The effects of a single institutional arrangement – the electoral system for the national legislature – can be muted and shaped by differences in other arrangements – the electoral system for other legislative institutions. He also notes that a focus on the relationship between seats and votes assumes away nonvoters. Yet each of the democracies we consider has millions of nonvoters within them. As Gaines concludes, claims about party competition rely, at some point, on theories about individuals' voting decisions, and it seems perverse to omit the first important such decision of whether or not to vote. The "party" of abstention automatically wins no seats, exhibits no discipline, and has no ideological unity. But a thorough understanding of how institutions shape electoral outcomes requires a broader understanding of outcomes that encompass turnout, or at least explores the extent to which turnout and concentration of vote are related.

### *USA*

Gaines's theme is taken up and expanding in the US case by McDonald who shows the impact of districting and district safety as further factors shaping the outcomes of the election. To some extent, the results of Duverger in the USA may not be produced by incentives of the electoral system per se but by the operations of the electoral system taken in conjunction with the workings of electoral districts.

Burden and Jones adopt a slightly different tack in their study of strategic voting in the USA. They note the many different opportunities for various kinds of strategic voting that the USA affords to voters. They also note that US conformity to

Duverger is more apparent than real given how common multicandidate contests are in both primary and general elections. In the final chapter Bowler Grofman and Blais consider several of the leading explanations for the persistence of two parties within the USA. They argue that while a range of legal and practical barriers do help reinforce Duverger there is an underlying ideological structure to US politics that has a powerful effect on reducing the number of parties.

Taken together, these chapters underscore both the value and limitations of Duverger's argument. While Duverger's argument provides the theoretical lynchpin for making sense of a disparate body of national experiences, the empirical patterns show considerable deviation from that theory. This leads us to urge a note of caution for those who would engage in institutional engineering. "Duverger's law" has become a widely used short hand both for a specific effect and, also, as the seminal statement of the consequences and importance of electoral system design: if one wishes to change the electoral politics of a country all one has to do is change the electoral system. Many present day advisors and experts are emphatic when they discuss the importance of electoral system design:

The choice of electoral system is one of the most important institutional decisions for any democracy. Electoral systems define and structure the rules of the political game; they help determine who is elected, how a campaign is fought, the role of political parties, and most importantly, who governs. Furthermore, the choice of an electoral system can help to "engineer" specific outcomes, such as to encourage cooperation and accommodation in a divided society.<sup>12</sup>

Different electoral systems have different effects but, in principle, Duverger's law represents the clearest, simplest, and most definite statement of the potential for these kinds of "political engineering" effects. The plurality electoral system provides a combination of incentives to both voters and politicians that systematically favor the larger parties and disadvantage smaller parties: over time, these incentives should squeeze the seat share of smaller parties while rewarding the larger parties further reinforcing the effect in subsequent elections. In practice, as the chapters in this volume show, for many of the important long-term democracies, these effects are not so certain. The exact electoral system-related effects differ from one nation to another, largely for reasons that differ across our cases. Thus, while we do know quite a bit about the effects of electoral systems, and electoral systems can be altered so as to impact outcomes, relationships are more probabilistic than mechanistic in character. The findings of this volume should give pause to those who believe that changing institutions can be guaranteed to engineer specific outcomes.

## Notes

1. Duverger also hypothesized that: "In a PR election system where  $m > 1$ , we expect that  $n_p > 2$ ," i.e., that multimember district elections under PR rules favor multiparty competition. Riker (1982) refers to Duverger's first claim as Duverger's "law" and to this second claim as Duverger's "hypothesis," and we will follow that usage, although arguably, the empirical evidence is stronger for the *hypothesis* than for the so-called *law* (see e.g., Lijphart 1994; Taagepera and Shugart 1989). There is also a third component of Duverger's electoral theory

- having to do with runoff elections, in which he suggests that runoff systems (such as the French double ballot method) used in conjunction with single seat districts will generate more multipartyism than would simple plurality elections in the same setting. In this book we focus exclusively on Duverger's "law."
2. In elections under plurality voting, if  $m=1$ , then  $\max n_s = 1$ .
  3. There is also evidence to see it work when the system is changed. According to the electoral law that was in place for the 2006 Italian election, superposed to the regional PR system there was a bonus for the plurality winner with respect to coalitions. The coalition with the most votes was to obtain at least 340 seats out of 660 and to form the government. As Duverger would have predicted, only two coalitions were formed and the parties forming the two coalitions obtained 99.5% of the total vote.
  4. Duverger, himself asserted that "The exceptions [to the law]," noted Duverger, "are very rare and can generally be explained as the result of special conditions" (Duverger 1954: 217). As we will see, this is too strong a statement.
  5. For example, Cox (1997) asserts that local bipartism is more likely to give rise to national bipartism if (a) there is a single president/executive with considerable powers and patronage who is (customarily) elected in a separate single round of balloting (e.g., by plurality), and whose election is concurrent with (or at least somehow strongly linked to) the legislative elections, (b) national bipartism is a "prominent" outcome, as in a parliamentary system with a history of single-party governments and a strong executive where only two parties are seen as having a realistic chance to win a national majority, (c) tiering procedures/thresholds provide incentives for the same party names to be used in different parts of the country in order to maximize efficiency of translating votes into seats, (d) efficiencies of scale operate to favor centralized parties, and (e) election rules for campaign finance/media access are written to foster a two-party system, with the major party candidates identified in terms of previous national party vote (or seat) shares. Confirmatory empirical test of the first of these hypotheses is found in Chap. 11 of Cox (1997) and in Shugart and Carey (1992).
  6. For example, for a uniform distribution of voters on a (0, 1) left-right continuum, such equilibria occur at 1/4 and 3/4.
  7. Shvetsova's insight has led Grofman (2004) to insist that we cannot understand party competition at the district level unless we understand the nature of the "tether" that constrains how close the position offered by a party's candidates in the districts needs to be to the national party platform.
  8. As Riker observes (1982): "Congress has been clearly defeated only when the opposition has been so consumed with intense popular hatred of Mrs. Gandhi or with intense elite lust for ministerial office that politicians and voters alike could put aside their ideological tastes and act as if they ordered their preferences with Congress at the bottom of the list. When they have done so, they have defeated Congress in both state and national elections. Then typically, coalitions of each end against the middle (like Janata in 1977-1979) have dissolved, and Congress has won again, presumably as the Condorcet choice."
  9. It remains an open question of how such nonideological cleavages are affected by Duvergerian mechanical and psychological effects that create pressures for coalitions involving party formation across ethnic lines.
  10. There are a few very small island nations where Duverger's law also seems to hold, e.g., Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Antigua and Barbuda (Singer and Stephenson 2005:1, p. 39). On the other hand, Duverger's law is a complete failure in Papua and New Guinea (Singer and Stephenson 2005:Table 1, p. 39). Also, there are a number of eastern bloc countries where Duverger's law does not seem to work at all (Singer and Stephenson 2005; cf. Moser 1999). However, like Taagepera (2007) we do not place great weight on electoral system results from countries where the party system has not yet "jelled."
  11. That our expectations about electoral system effects are ones that should always be thought of in probabilistic terms is one of the key points long emphasized by Rein Taagepera (see Taagepera and Shugart 1989; Taagepera 2007).

12. IDEA: 2006: <http://www.idea.int/esd/index.cfm>. Of course, elsewhere in the same volume, we can find more cautionary passages. Many electoral system specialists, such as Rein Taagepera, have been clear that electoral system effects are only expectational in character in terms of "on average" kinds of results (Taagepera 1997, 2007), while others have emphasized the linkage between choice of electoral system and outcomes, suggesting that great care must be taken in assigning causality (Colomer 2004).