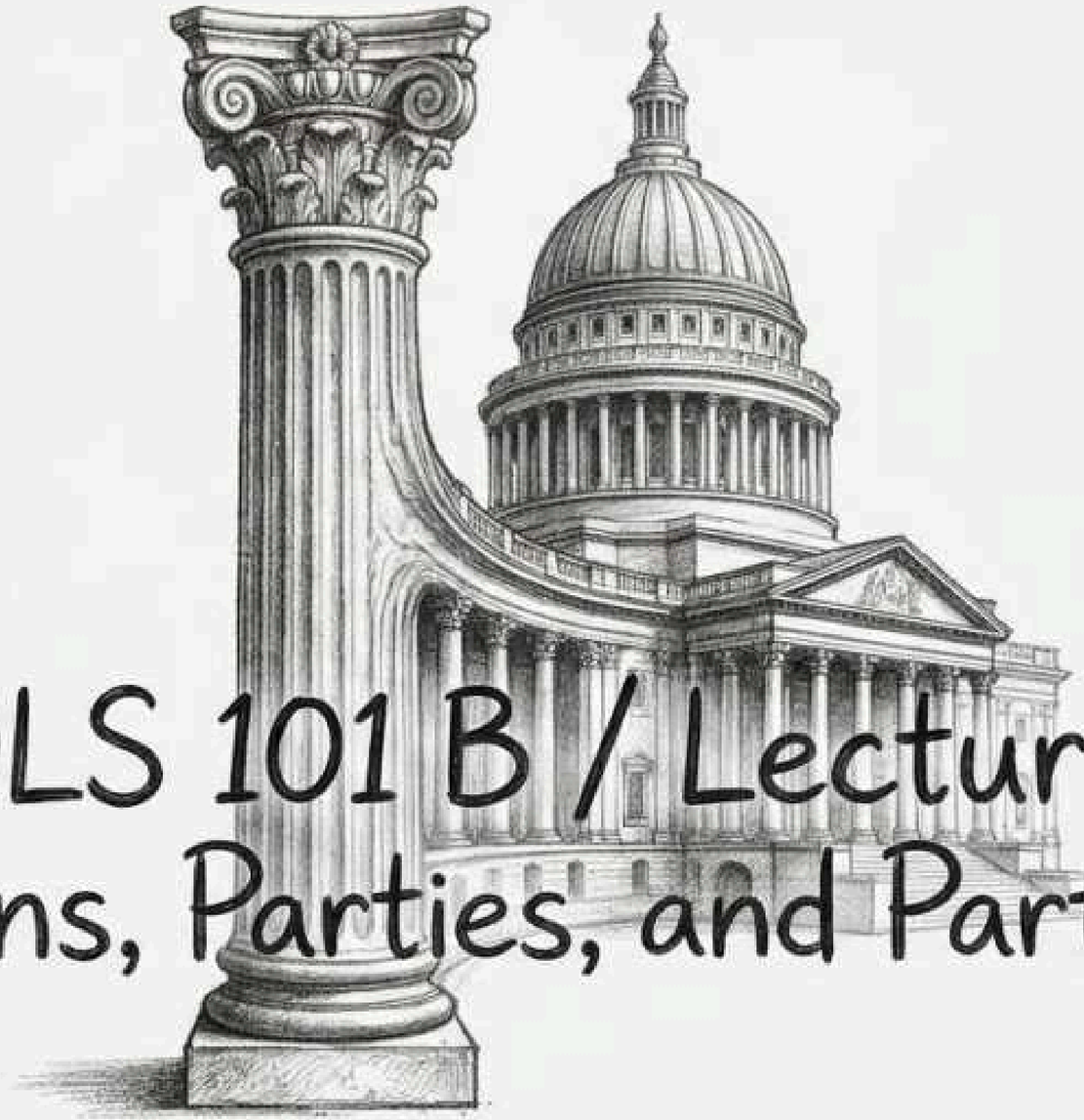
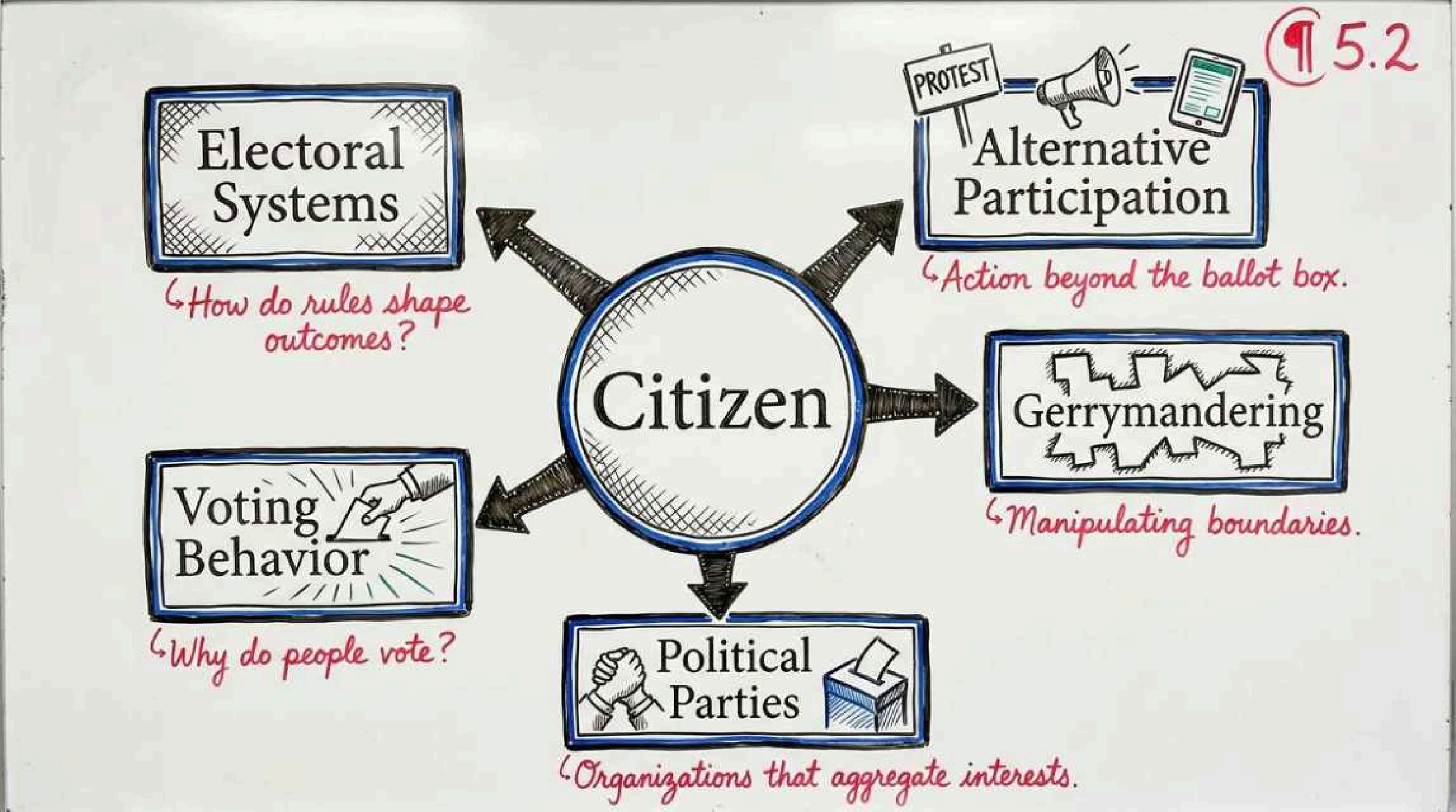
¶ 5.1

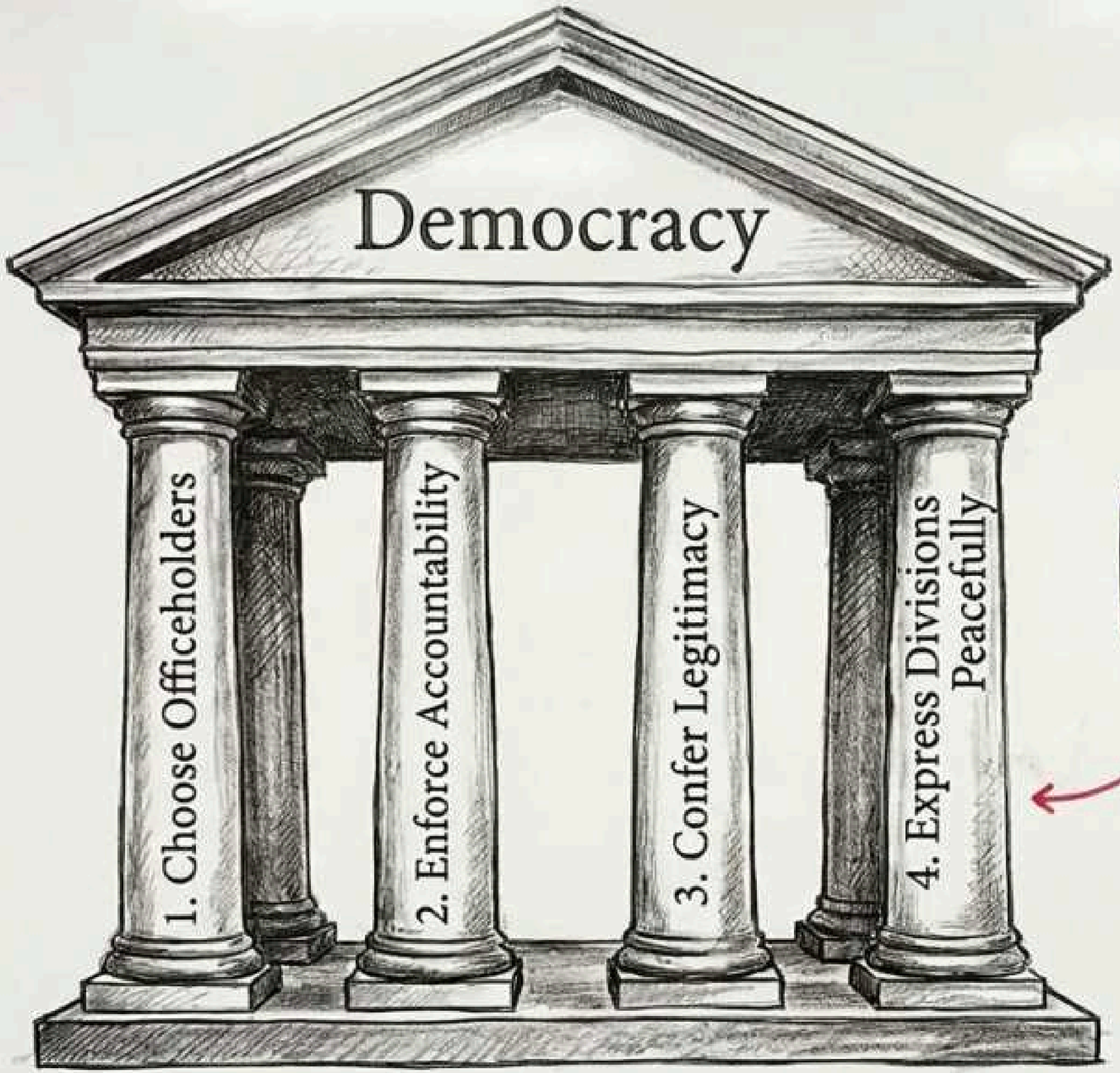


POLS 101 B / Lecture 5:
Elections, Parties, and Participation

¶ 5.2


Electoral Systems
↳How do rules shape outcomes?
PROTEST
Alternative Participation
↳Action beyond the ballot box.
Citizen
Voting Behavior
↳Why do people vote?
Gerrymandering
↳Manipulating boundaries.
Political Parties
↳Organizations that aggregate interests.

¶5.3



Genuine ≠ Staged

Structure collapses if contests are staged to preserve ruler's power.

¶ 5.4

Plurality Voting (First Past the Post)

$$\text{Votes}(\text{Candidate_A}) > \text{Votes}(\text{Candidate_B})$$

AND

$$\text{Votes}(\text{Candidate_A}) < 50\% \rightarrow \text{WINNER}$$



Single-member districts = simple, direct local link.

UK

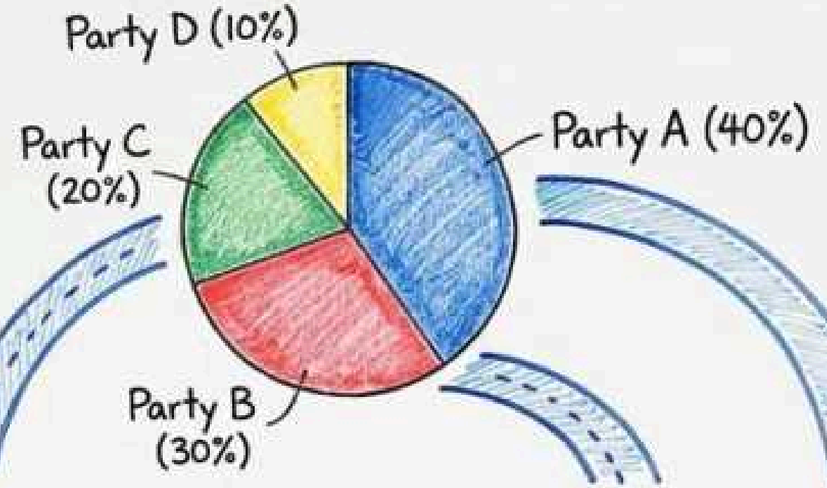
US

Canada

India

Proportional Representation (PR)

¶5.5



% Votes ≈ % Seats

List System

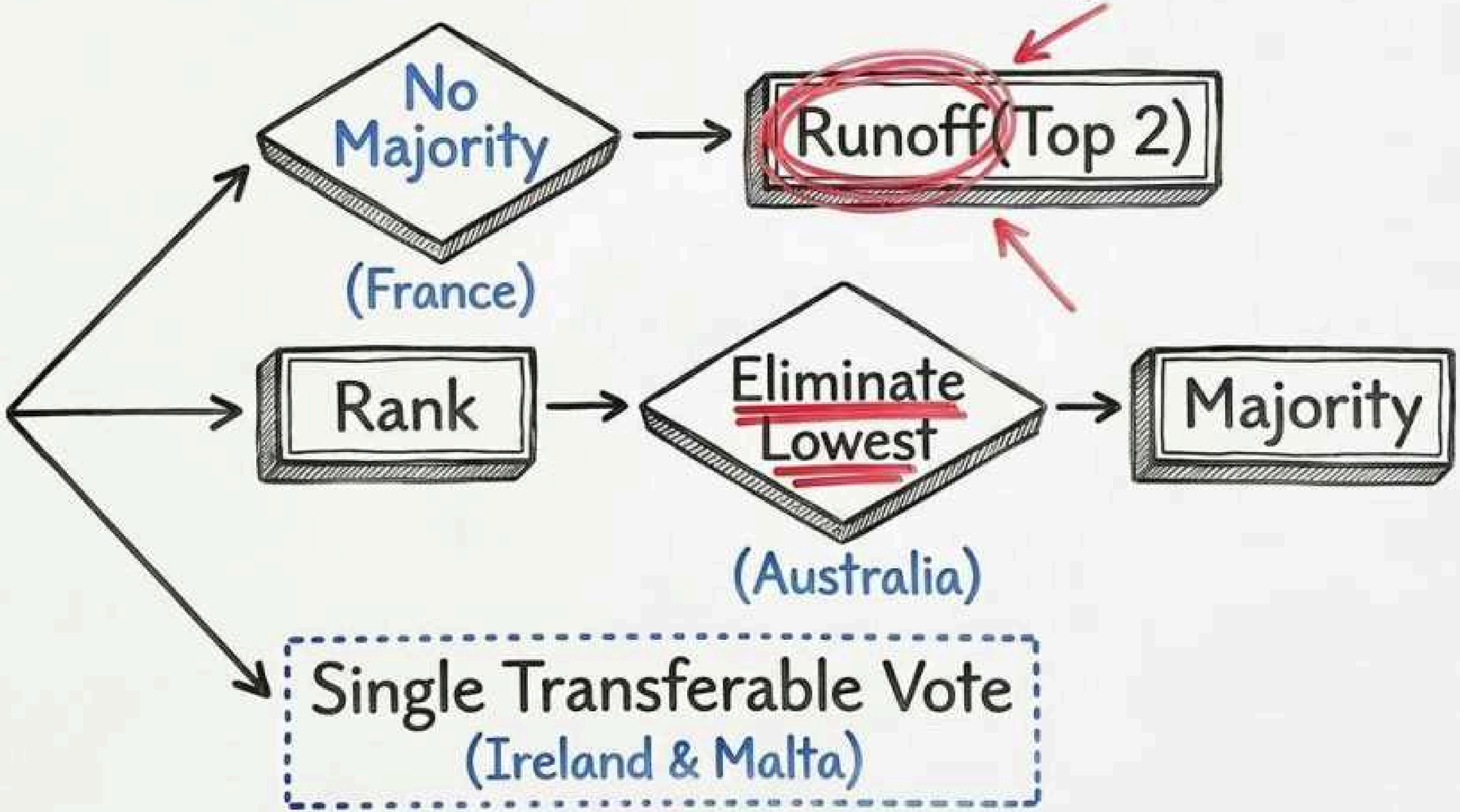
(Netherlands, Sweden) → Voters choose party list.

Mixed Systems

(Germany, NZ) → Local Districts + Proportional Top-Up seats.

¶ 5.6

Alternative Electoral Systems



Duverger's Tendency (1951)

¶ 5.7



Maurice Duverger

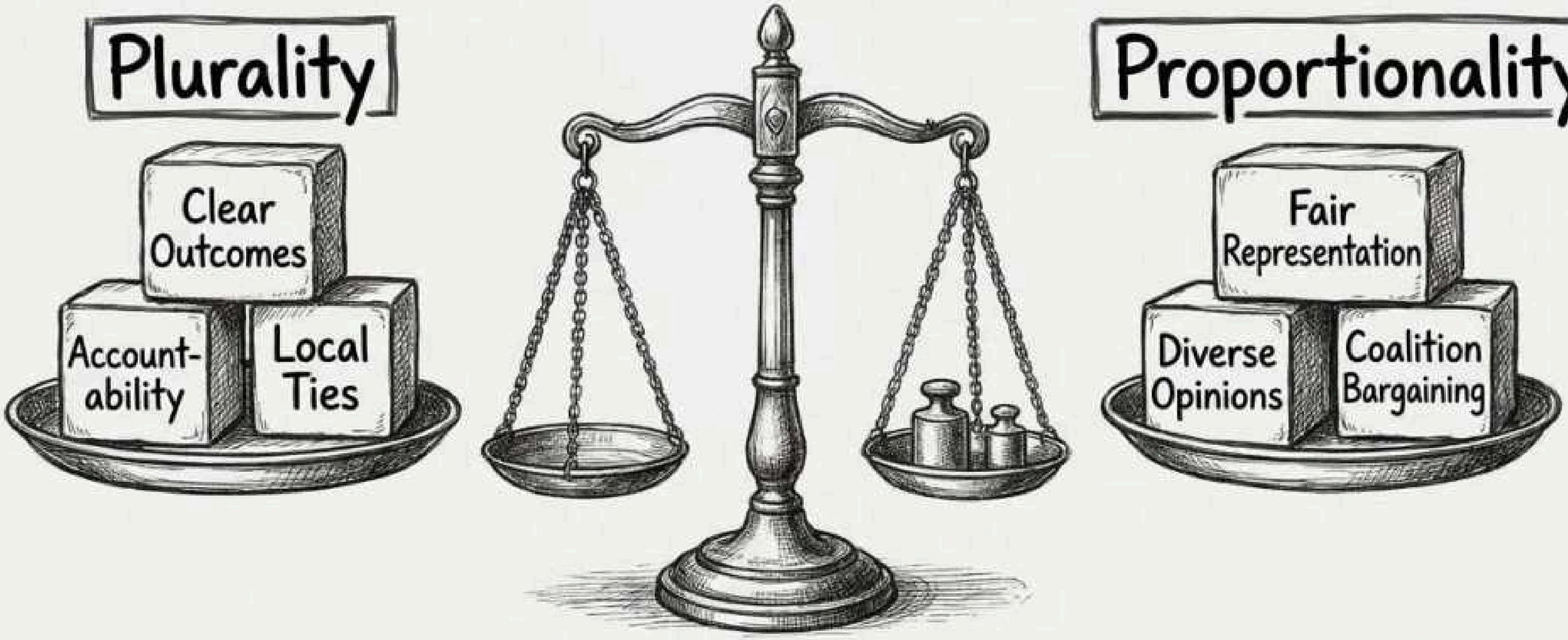
Plurality ⟶ 2 Parties
Proportional → ∞ Parties

Mechanism: Voters avoid wasted votes + Parties merge to survive.

Exception: Regional Strength = Local Plurality Win (Canada / India)

The Electoral Trade-off

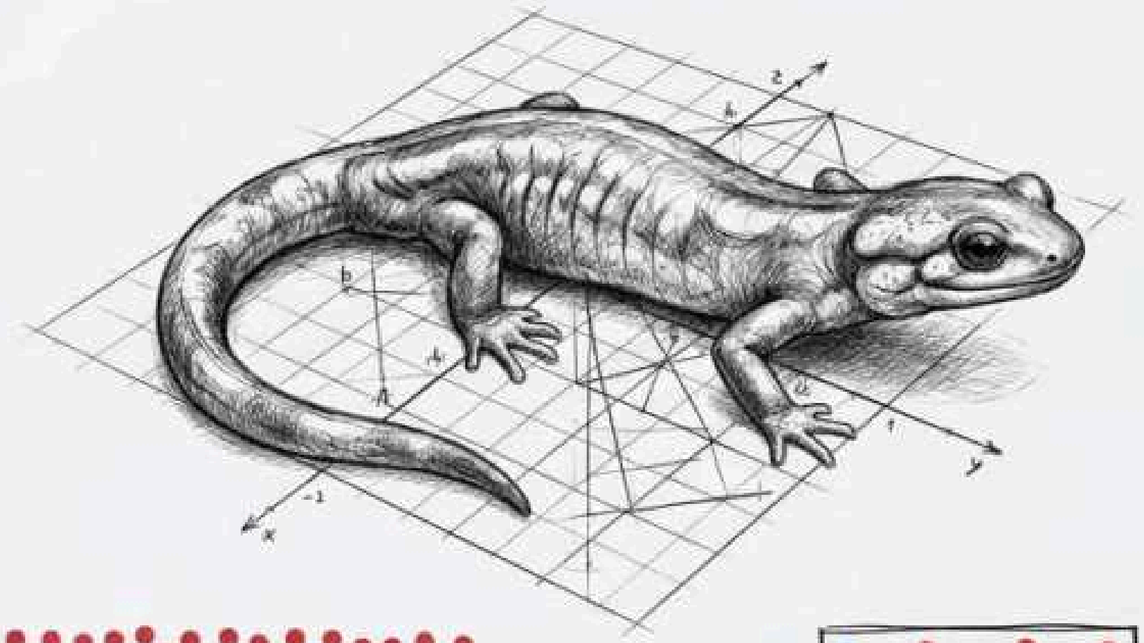
¶ 5.8



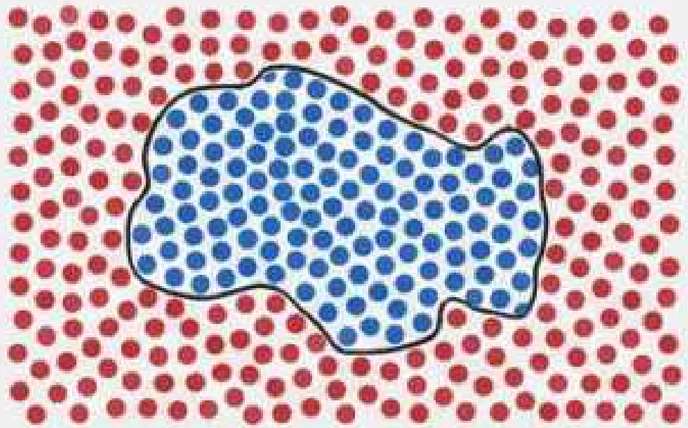
No absolute best—system choice depends entirely on societal values.

The Geometry of Gerrymandering

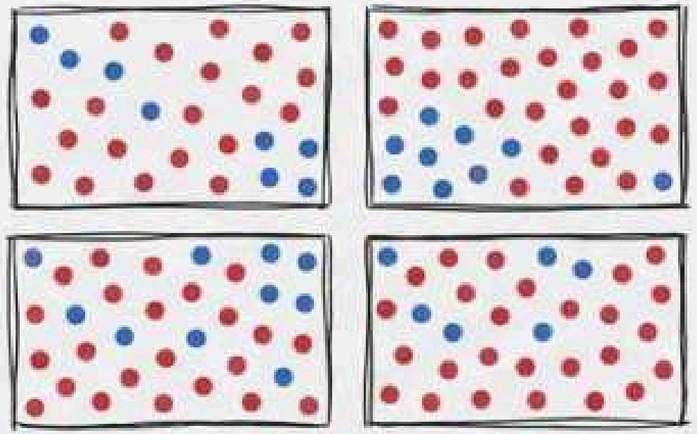
¶ 5.9



Gerrymandering:
Manipulating single-member district boundaries.



Packing

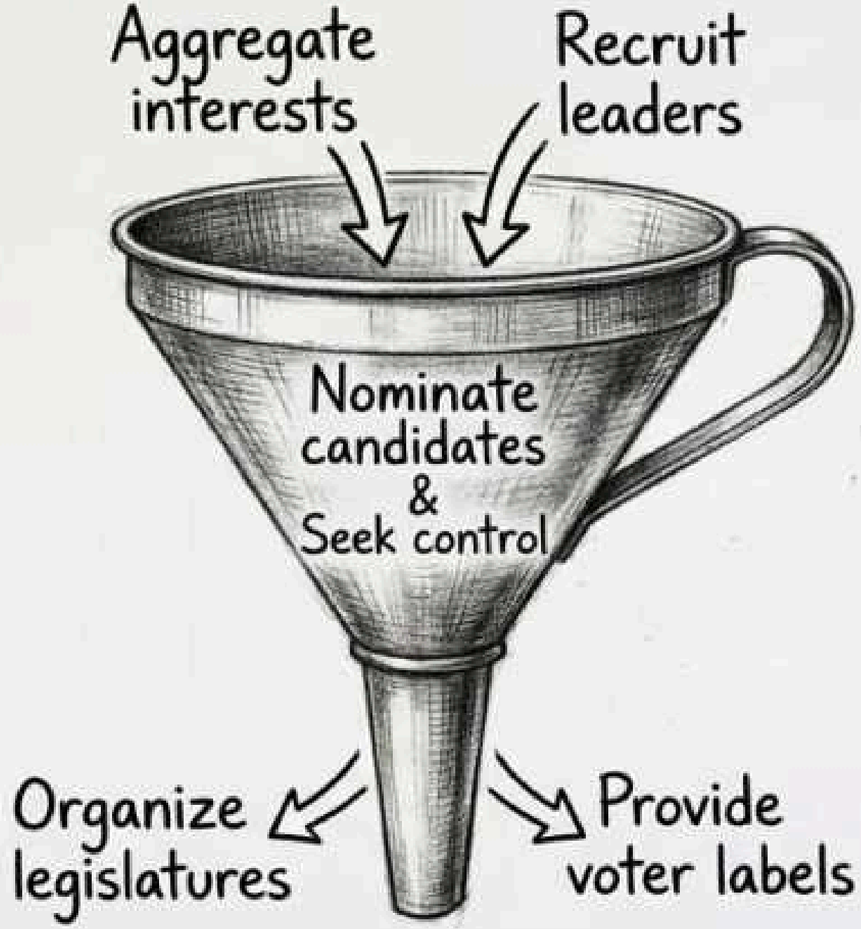


Cracking

Solution:
Independent Commissions

The Anatomy of Political Parties

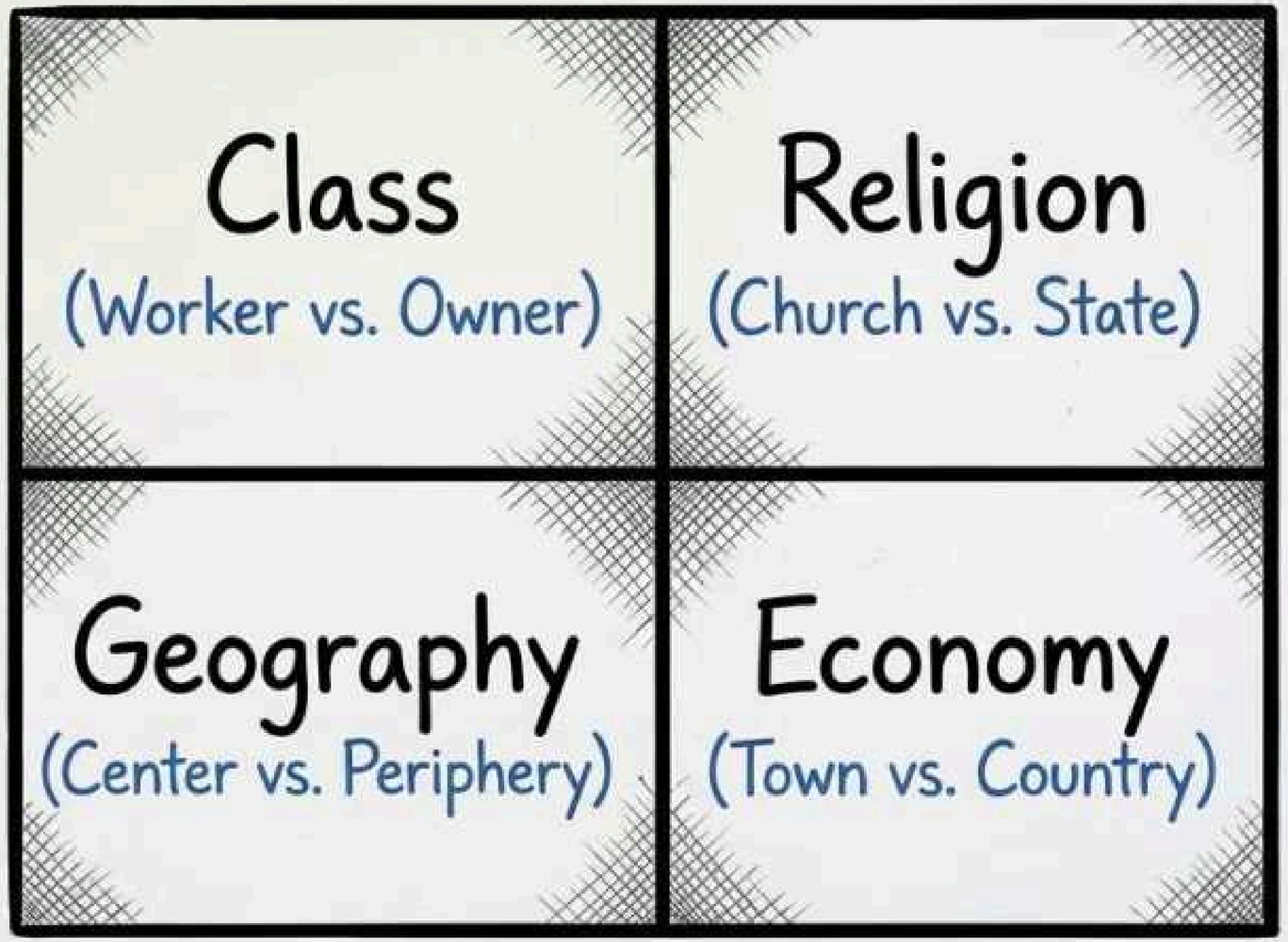
¶ 5.10



Elite Cadre ⟶ Mass Membership ⟶ Broad Catch-all

Party Systems and Social Cleavages

¶ 5.11



These deep cleavages shape system types:

Two-party, Multi-party, or Dominant party

(Lipset & Rokkan, 1967).

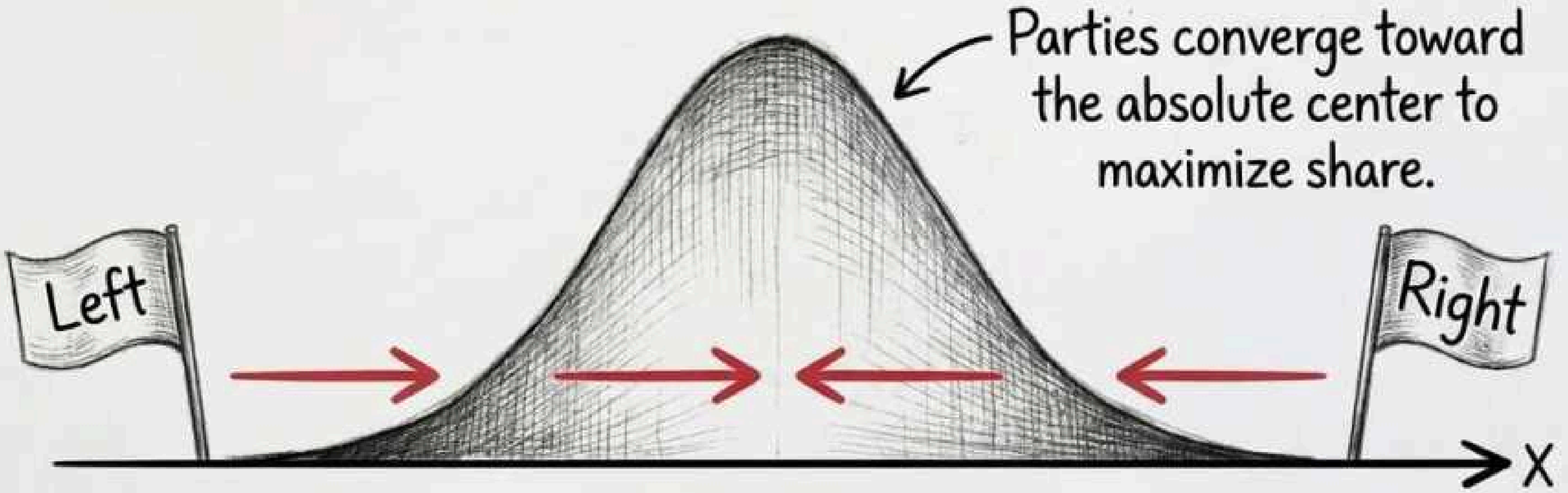
The Paradox of Voting & The Median Voter

¶ 5.12

$$(P \times B) - C < 0$$

Probability of deciding vote × Benefit – Cost is negative.

Solution: Add + D (Civic Duty, Expressive value, Social pressure).



¶ 5.13

Drivers of Vote Choice

Social Group Identity

Issue Views



The American Voter (1960)
→ Party ID (loyalty)

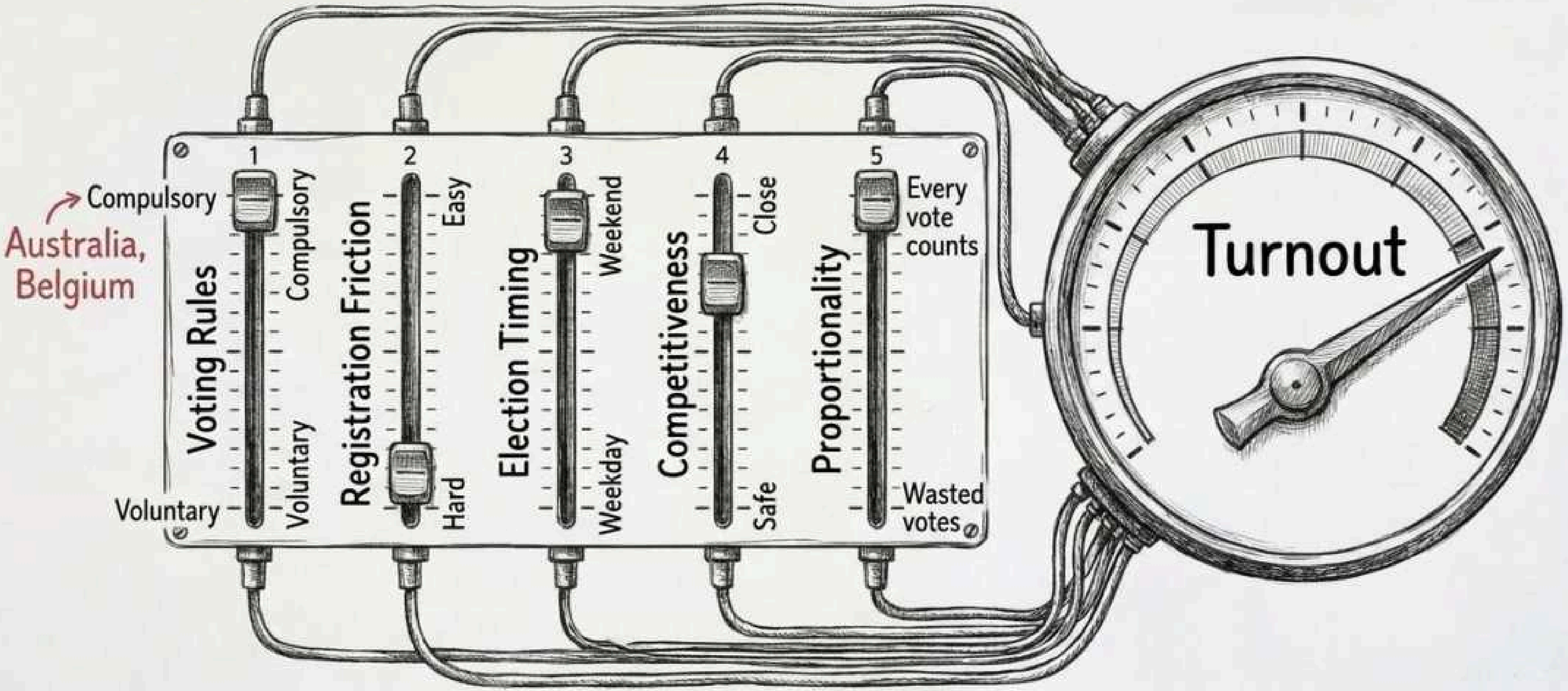
The Economy

Candidate Traits

Fiorina's Retrospective Voting: Reward / Punish ← Recent Performance

¶ 5.14

Variables of Voter Turnout



Participation Beyond the Ballot

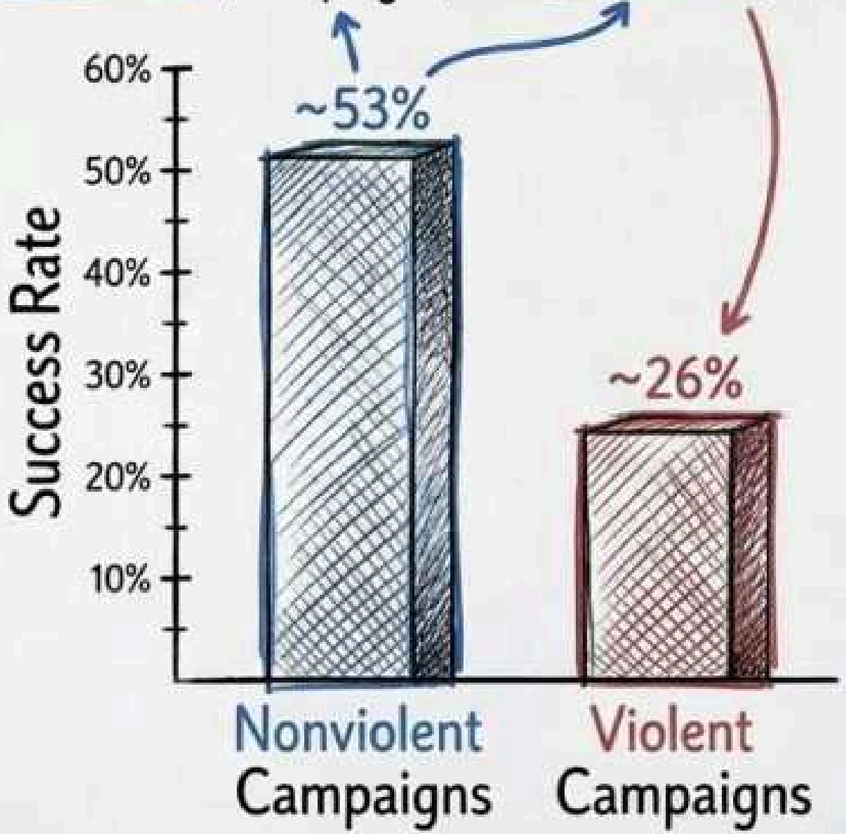
¶ 5.15



- Contacting officials
- Joining interest groups
- Signing petitions
- Protests

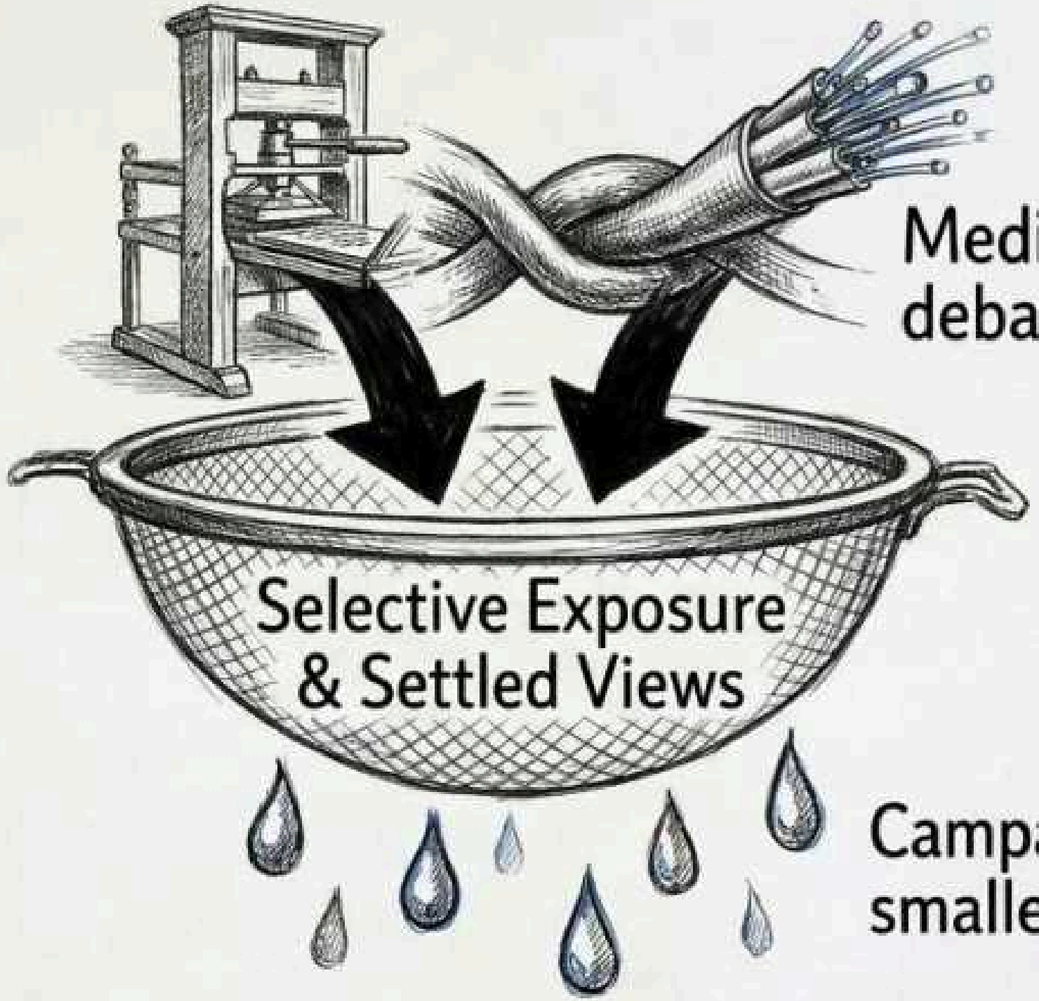
Chenoweth & Stephan (2011)
Data: 1900-2006

Success(Nonviolent Campaigns) > Success(Violent Campaigns)



¶ 5.16

Media, Information, and Civic Skill



Media (sets agenda, frames debates, spreads falsehoods)

Campaign effects are smaller than assumed.

Evaluating sources is a mandatory modern civic skill.

¶ 5.17

The Core Question

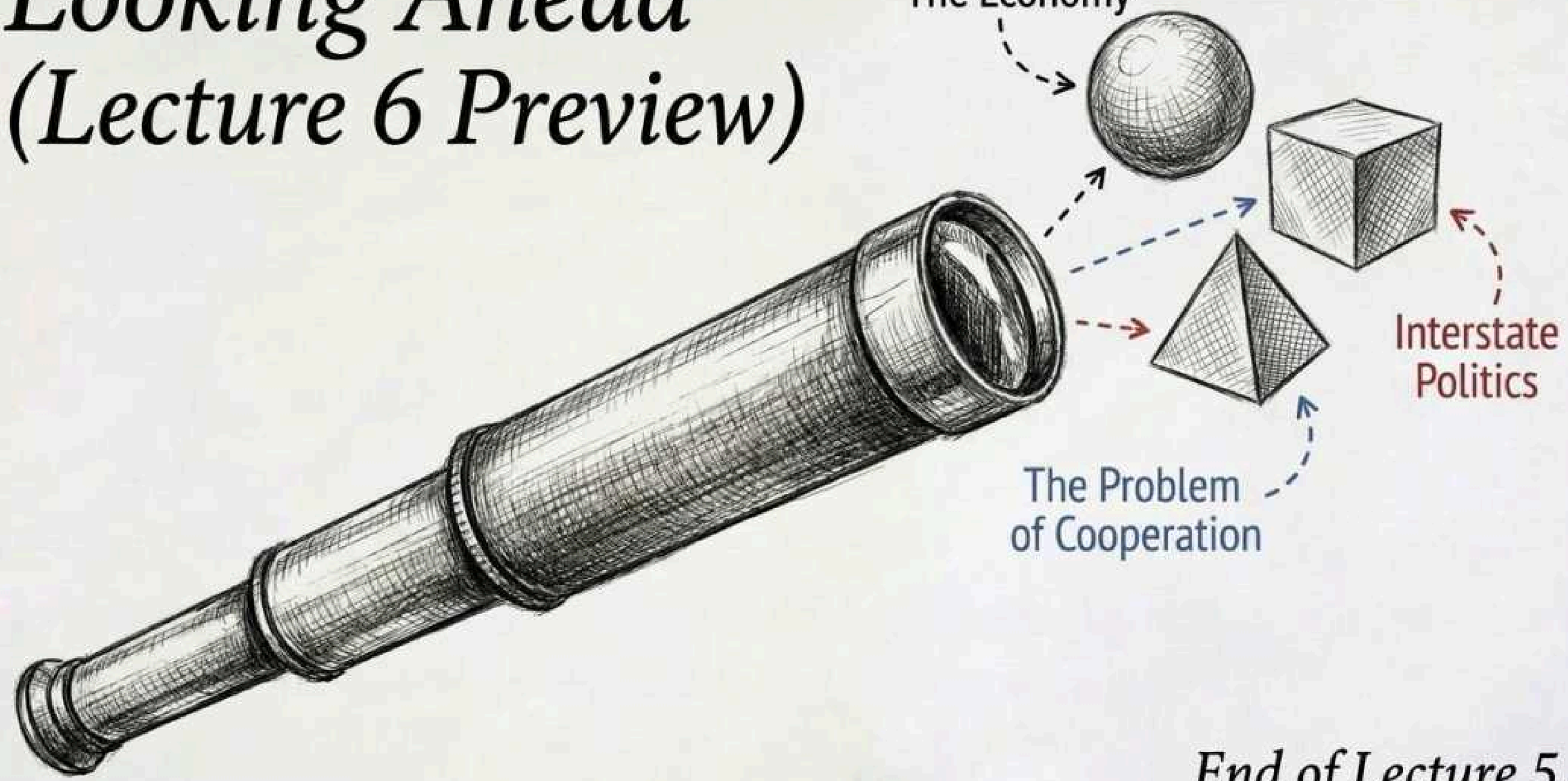
Imagine changing your country's electoral system. Which value comes first?



What trade-offs will you accept?
What will you lose by your choice?

¶ 5.18

Looking Ahead (Lecture 6 Preview)



End of Lecture 5.