

# Drawing Electoral Lines

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# A frame for the conversation

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- Assume John's covered the basics

- Common problems

- Potential approaches 
  - National
  - State
  - Local

# Problems

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- Accurate census count
- Racial discrimination
- Excessive partisanship
- Polarization in legislatures
- “Unfair” resulting districts
  - Partisan
  - Racial
  - Other

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# Problems

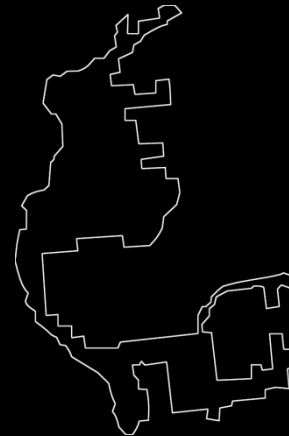
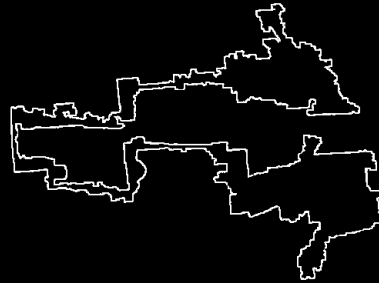
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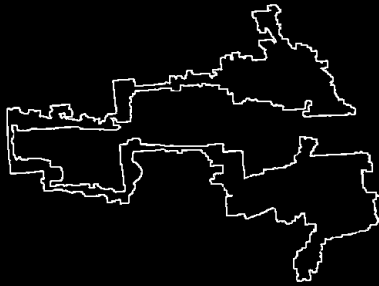
# Is this a good district?

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# Is she a good singer?

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# Problems

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## Incumbents drawing their own lines

*Garza v. County of Los Angeles*, 1991:

When the dust has settled and local passions have cooled, this case will be remembered for its lucid demonstration that elected officials engaged in the single-minded pursuit of incumbency can run roughshod over the rights of protected minorities. . . . Protecting incumbency and safeguarding the voting rights of minorities are purposes often at war with each other. Ethnic and racial communities are natural breeding grounds for political challengers; incumbents greet the emergence of such power bases in their districts with all the hospitality corporate managers show hostile takeover bids. What happened here — the systematic splitting of the ethnic community into different districts — is the obvious, time-honored and most effective way of averting a potential challenge. . . . Today's case barely opens the door to our understanding of the potential relationship between the preservation of incumbency and invidious discrimination, but it surely gives weight to the Seventh Circuit's observation that "many devices employed to preserve incumbencies are necessarily racially discriminatory."

# Good news!

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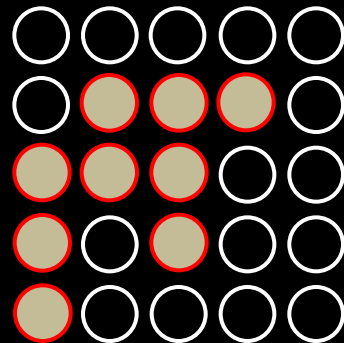
# Other means to impact the process

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- Support for recognition of local communities
- Support for an accurate Census
- Enforce existing law
  - Constitution
  - Voting Rights Act
  - California Voting Rights Act
  - other state laws
- Local commissions
- Alternative voting systems

# The frequent status quo

- Citywide “at-large” elections
- Each voter: 1 vote for each seat



5-seat city council

EXAMPLE

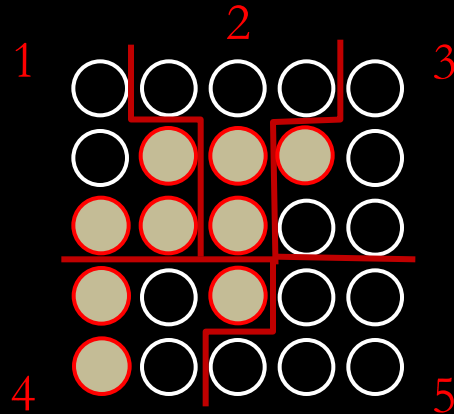
Vote for up to 5



George W.	16	0
John A.	0	9
Thomas J.	0	9
James M.	16	0
Andrew J.	0	9
Martin v. B.	16	0
William H.	0	9
John T.	16	0
James P.	16	0
Zachary T.	0	9

# Districts are the standard solution

- Districted elections
- Each voter: 1 vote in your district



5-seat city council

EXAMPLE

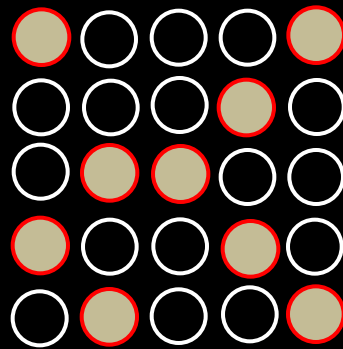
Vote in your district



1	George W.	2	0
	John A.	0	3
2	Thomas J.	0	2
	James M.	3	0
3	Andrew J.	0	1
	Martin v. B.	4	0
4	William H.	0	3
	John T.	2	0
5	James P.	5	0
	Zachary T.	0	0

# Just as an example: cumulative voting

- Citywide “at-large” elections
- Each voter: as many votes as seats, and the votes can be grouped



5-seat city council

EXAMPLE

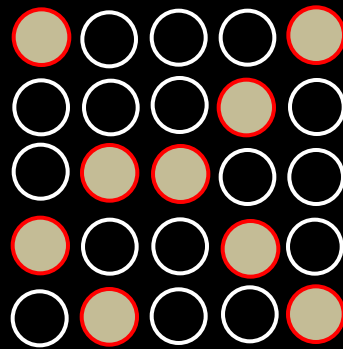
Allocate five votes

George W.	
John A.	
Thomas J.	✓ ✓ ✓
James M.	
Andrew J.	
Martin v. B.	
William H.	✓
John T.	
James P.	
Zachary T.	✓



# Just as an example: cumulative voting

- Citywide “at-large” elections
- Each voter: as many votes as seats, and the votes can be grouped



5-seat city council

EXAMPLE

Allocate five votes



George W.	50	0
John A.	0	0
Thomas J.	0	23
James M.	25	0
Andrew J.	0	0
Martin v. B.	0	0
William H.	0	22
John T.	5	0
James P.	10	0
Zachary T.	0	0

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16x5    9x5

# Further information

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