Dodgson’s Rule
Approximations and Absurdity

John C. McCabe-Dansted

Abstract

With the Dodgson rule, cloning the electorate can change the winner, which Young (1977) considers an “absurdity”. Removing this absurdity results in a new rule (Fishburn, 1977) for which we can compute the winner in polynomial time (Rothe et al., 2003), unlike the traditional Dodgson rule. We call this rule DC and introduce two new related rules (DR and D&). Dodgson did not explicitly propose the “Dodgson rule” (Tideman, 1987); we argue that DC and DR are better realizations of the principle behind the Dodgson rule than the traditional Dodgson rule. These rules, especially D&, are also effective approximations to the traditional Dodgson’s rule. We show that, unlike the rules we have considered previously, the DC, DR and D& scores differ from the Dodgson score by no more than a fixed amount given a fixed number of alternatives, and thus these new rules converge to Dodgson under any reasonable assumption on voter behaviour, including the Impartial Anonymous Culture assumption.

1 Introduction

Finding the Dodgson winner to an election can be very difficult. Bartholdi et al. (1989) proved that determining whether an alternative is the Dodgson winner is an NP-hard problem. Later Hemaspaandra et al. (1997) refined this result by showing that the Dodgson winner problem was complete for parallel access to NP, and hence not in NP unless the polynomial hierarchy collapses. This result was of interest to computer science as the previously known problems in this complexity class were obscure by comparison.

For real world elections we do not want intractable problems. Tideman (1987) proposed a simple rule to approximate the Dodgson rule. The impartial culture assumption states that all votes are independent and equally likely. Under this assumption, it has been proven that the probability that Tideman’s rule picks the Dodgson winner converges to one as the number of voters goes to infinity (McCabe-Dansted et al., 2007). Our paper also showed that this growth was not exponentially fast. Two rules have been independently proposed for which this convergence is exponentially fast, our Dodgson Quick (DQ) rule and the GreedyWinner algorithm proposed by Homan and Hemaspaandra (2005). It is usually easy to verify that the DQ winner and GreedyWinner are the same as the Dodgson winner, a property that Homan and Hemaspaandra formalise as being “frequently self-knowingly correct”. However the proofs of convergence depended heavily on the unrealistic impartial culture assumption. We shall show that under the Impartial Anonymous Culture (IAC) these rules do not converge.

The importance of ensuring that statistical results hold on reasonable assumptions on voter behaviour is considered by Procaccia and Rosenschein (2007). They define “deterministic heuristic polynomial time algorithm” in terms of both the problem to be solved and a probability distribution over inputs. However they do not consider the issue of whether a

1 The author would like to thank Arkadii Slinko for his many valuable suggestions and references.
heuristic is self-knowingly correct. Thus we extend the concept of an algorithm being “fre- 
quently self-knowingly correct” to allow particular probability distributions to be specified. 
[Procaccia and Rosenschei (2007)] also propose “Junta” distributions; these distributions 
are intended to produce problems that are harder than would be produced under reasonable 
assumptions on voter behaviour. Hence if it is easy to solve a problem when input is gen- 
erated according to a Junta distribution it is safe to assume that it will be easy under any 
reasonable assumption of voter behaviour. We will not use Junta distributions, but instead 
simply use that fact that even “neck-and-neck” national elections are won by thousands of 
votes. We will also show that the rules we have considered previously, Tideman, Dodgson 
Quick etc., do not converge to Dodgson’s rule under the IAC.

However, the reason that the Dodgson rule is so hard to compute is because cloning 
the electorate can change the winner. That is, if we replace each vote with two (or more) 
identical votes, this may change the winner. When discussing majority voting [Young (1977)] 
described this property as an “absurdity”. Young suggested that such absurdities be fixed 
in majority voting by allowing fractions of a vote to be deleted. [Fishburn (1977)] proposed 
a similar modification to the traditional Dodgson rule, which we call Dodgson Clone. The 
Dodgson Clone scores can be computed by relaxing the integer constraints on the Integer 
Linear Program that [Bartholdi et al. (1989)] proposed to calculate the Dodgson score; normal 
(rational) Linear Programs can be solved in polynomial time, we can compute the Dodgson 
Clone score in polynomial time [Rothe et al. (2003)].

The Dodgson Clone rule is also an effective approximation to the Dodgson rule. In 
computer science, an approximation typically refers to an algorithm that selects a value 
that is always accurate to within some error. This form of approximation is not meaningful 
when selecting a winner, although these rules can be used to approximate the frequency 
that Dodgson winner has some property. For example, [Shah (2003)] used Tideman’s rule 
to approximate the frequency that the Dodgson winner matched the winners according to 
other rules, and so such Tideman, DQ etc. can be considered approximations of Dodgson’s 
rule in a loose sense. However we can approximate the Dodgson score. We will show that for 
a fixed number of alternatives, the Dodgson Clone score approximates the Dodgson score to 
within a constant error. As it is implausible that the margin by which the winner wins the 
election will not grow with the size of the electorate, the Dodgson winner will converge to the 
Dodgson Clone winner under any reasonable assumption of voter behaviour. In particular 
we will show that they will converge under the Impartial Anonymous Culture assumption.

We propose two closer approximations Dodgson Relaxed (DR) and Dodgson Relaxed and 
Rounded (D&R). These approximations, like the traditional Dodgson rule, are not resistant 
to cloning the electorate. This allows them to be closer to the Dodgson rule than Dodgson 
Clone, both rules converge to the Dodgson rule exponentially quickly under the Impartial 
Culture assumption. The DR rule is superior to the Dodgson rule in the sense that it can 
split ties in favour of alternatives that are fractionally better. The D&R scores are rounded 
up, so the D&R rule does not have this advantage. However it is exceptionally close to 
Dodgson. In 43 million elections randomly generated according to various assumptions on 
voter behaviour, the D&R winner differed from the Dodgson winner in only one election.

The approximation proposed by [Procaccia et al. (2007)] is similar to these approxima-
tions in the sense that it involves a relaxation of the integer constraints. However their 
approximation is randomised, and thus quite different from our deterministic approxima-
tions. Using a randomised approximation as a voting rule would be unusual, and they do 
not discuss the merits of such a rule. Thus the focus of their paper is quite different, as 
we present rules that we argue are superior to the traditional formalisation of the Dodgson 
rule. Additionally, they do not discuss the issue of frequently self-knowing correctness.

Another approach to computing the Dodgson score has been to limit some parameter. 
[Bartholdi et al. (1989)] showed that computing the Dodgson scores and winner is polynomial
when either the number of voters or alternatives is limited. It was shown that computing these from a voting situation is logarithmic with respect to the number of voters when the number of alternatives is fixed [M'Cabe-Dansted, 2006], and hence Dodgson winner is Fixed Parameter Tractable (FPT) with number of alternatives as the fixed parameter. It is now also known that the Dodgson winner is FPT when the Dodgson score is taken as the fixed parameter [Betzler et al., 2008].

Thus we will define the Dodgson based rules in terms of Condorcet-tie winners, rather than Condorcet winners. As we will discuss briefly, this does not affect convergence.

2 Preliminaries

In our results we use the term agent in place of voter and alternative in place of candidate, as not all elections are humans voting other humans into office. For example, in direct democracy, the citizens vote for laws rather than candidates.

We assume that agents’ preferences are transitive, i.e. if they prefer \( a \) to \( b \) and prefer \( b \) to \( c \) they also prefer \( a \) to \( c \). We also assume that agents’ preferences are strict, if \( a \) and \( b \) are distinct they either prefer \( a \) to \( b \) or \( b \) to \( a \). Thus we may consider each agent’s preferences to be a ranking of each alternative from best to worst.

Let \( A \) and \( N \) be two finite sets of cardinality \( m \) and \( n \) respectively. The elements of \( A \) will be called alternatives, the elements of \( N \) agents. We represent a vote by a linear order of the \( m \) alternatives. We define a profile to be an array of \( n \) votes, one for each agent. Let \( P = (P_1, P_2, \ldots, P_n) \) be our profile. If a linear order \( P_i \in \mathcal{L}(A) \) represents the preferences of the \( i \)th agent, then by \( aP_i b \), where \( a, b \in A \), we denote that this agent prefers \( a \) to \( b \).

A multi-set of linear orders of \( A \) is called a voting situation. A voting situation specifies which linear orders were submitted and how many times they were submitted but not who submitted them. A voting situation is sometimes referred to as a “succinct” election, as it can be represented succinctly when there only a few alternatives [Faliszewski et al., 2006].

The Impartial Culture (IC) assumption is that each profile is equally likely. The Impartial Anonymous Culture (IAC) assumption is that each voting situation is equally likely. To understand the difference, consider a two alternative election with billions of agents; under IC it is almost certain that each alternative will get 50% (±0.5%) of the vote; under IAC, 50.0% is no more likely than any other value.

Let \( P = (P_1, P_2, \ldots, P_n) \) be our profile. We define \( n_{xy} \) to be the number of linear orders in \( P \) that rank \( x \) above \( y \), i.e. \( n_{xy} \equiv \#\{i \mid xP_i y\} \).

**Definition 2.1.** The advantage of \( a \) over \( b \) is defined as follows:

\[
\text{adv}(a, b) = \max(0, n_{ab} - n_{ba})
\]

A Condorcet winner is an alternative \( a \) for which \( \text{adv}(a, b) > 0 \) for all other alternatives \( b \). We define a Condorcet-tie winner, to be an alternative \( a \) such \( \text{adv}(b, a) = 0 \) for all other alternatives \( a \). A Condorcet winner or Condorcet-tie winner does not always exist.

It is traditional to define the Dodgson score of an alternative as the terms of the minimum number of swaps of neighbouring alternatives required to make that alternative defeat all others in pairwise elections, i.e. make the alternative a Condorcet winner. When not requiring solutions to be integer this becomes undefined, as if we defeat an alternative by \( \epsilon > 0 \) then there exists a better solution where we defeat the alternative by only \( \epsilon/2 \).

For this reason, when defining the Dodgson scores we only require that the alternative defeat or tie other alternatives, i.e. make the alternative a Condorcet-tie winner. For better consistency with the more traditional Dodgson rule we could define the Condorcet winner...
as an alternative \( a \) for which \( \text{adv}(a, b) \geq 1 \). However this would mean that the Dodgson Clone rule would not be resistant to cloning of the electorate.

This difference in definition does not affect convergence. Our proof of convergence relies only on fact that Dodgson, D\&s, DR and DC scores differ by at most a fixed amount (\( O(m!) \)) when the number of alternatives is fixed. To convert a Condorcet-tie winner \( c \) into a Condorcet winner \( c \) we need to swap \( c \) over at most \( (m - 1) \) alternatives, each requiring at most \( (m - 1) \) swaps of neighbouring alternatives. Hence the difference between the score according to these different definitions of Dodgson is at most \( (m - 1)^2 \).

We will now define a number of rules in terms of scores. The winner of each rule below is the alternative with the lowest score.

The **Dodgson score** \( \text{Sc}_D(a) \) of an alternative \( a \) is defined as the minimum number of swaps of neighboring alternatives required to make \( a \) a Condorcet-tie winner. We call the alternative(s) with the lowest Dodgson score(s) the **Dodgson winner(s)**. (Bartholdi et al., 1989)

The **Tideman score** \( \text{Sc}_T(a) \) of an alternative \( a \) is:

\[
\sum_{b \neq a} \text{adv}(b, a).
\]

The **Dodgson Quick (DQ) score** \( \text{Sc}_Q(a) \) is defined as:

\[
\sum_{b \neq a} F(b, a), \quad \text{where} \quad F(b, a) = \left\lceil \frac{\text{adv}(b, a)}{2} \right\rceil.
\]

Although the definitions of \( \text{Sc}_Q \) and \( \text{Sc}_T \) are very similar, the Dodgson Quick rule converges exponentially fast to Dodgson’s rule under the Impartial Culture assumption, where as Tideman’s rule does not (M’Cabe-Dansted et al., 2007). This is because Dodgson and DQ are more sensitive to a large number of alternatives defeating \( a \) by a margin of 1, than Tideman is.

We define the \( k \)-Dodgson score \( \text{Sc}_D^k(a) \) of \( a \) as being the Dodgson score of \( a \) in a profile where each agent has been replaced with \( k \) clones, divided by \( k \). That is, where \( \mathcal{P} \) is our fixed profile, \( \mathcal{P}^k \) is the profile with each agent replaced with \( k \) clones, and \( \text{Sc}_D[\mathcal{P}](a) \) is the Dodgson score of \( a \) in the profile \( \mathcal{P} \), then

\[
\text{Sc}_D^k(a) = \frac{\text{Sc}_D[\mathcal{P}^k](a)}{k}.
\]

We define the **Dodgson Clone (DC) score** \( \text{Sc}_C(a) \) of an alternative \( a \) as \( \min_k \text{Sc}_D^k(a) \).

The DC score can be equivalently defined by modifying the Dodgson rule to allow votes to be split into rational fractions and allowing swaps to be made on those fractions of a vote. Note that like the Tideman approximation, the DC score is less sensitive than Dodgson to a large number of alternatives defeating \( a \) by a margin of 1, so the DC score is unlikely to converge to Dodgson as quickly as DQ under the Impartial Culture assumption.

We define the **Dodgson Relaxed (DR) score** \( \text{Sc}_R(a) \) as with the Dodgson score, but allow votes to be split into rational fractions. However we require that \( a \) be swapped over \( b \) at least \( F(b, a) \) times. Thus \( \text{Sc}_R(a) \geq \text{Sc}_Q(a) \) and the Dodgson Relaxed rule will converge at least as quickly as DQ. The DR rules thus sacrifices independence to cloning of the electorate to be closer to the Dodgson rule than DC.

The **Dodgson Relaxed and Rounded (D\&) score** \( \text{Sc}_{\&}(a) \) is the DR score rounded up, i.e. \( \text{Sc}_{\&}(d) = \lceil \text{Sc}_R(d) \rceil \).
3 Dodgson Linear Programmes

Bartholdi et al. [1989] defined an ILP for determining the Dodgson score of a candidate as follows:

\[ \min \sum_{ij} jx_{ij} \text{ subject to } \sum_{j} x_{ij} = N_i \text{ (for each type of vote } i) \]
\[ \sum_{ij} e_{ijk}x_{ij} \geq d_k \text{ (for each alternative } k) \]
\[ x_{ij} \geq 0, \text{ and each } x_{ij} \text{ must be integer, where } x_{ij} \text{ are the variables and the candidate } d \text{ is swapped up } j \text{ positions } i \text{ times in votes of type } i. \]

The constant \( N_i \) represents the number of votes of type \( i \). The constant \( e_{ijk} \) is 1 if moving \( d \) up \( j \) positions in vote type \( i \) raises \( d \) above \( k \), and 0 otherwise. The \( d_k \) is the “minimum number of votes” that \( d \) must gain to defeat \( k \). This definition opens a potential ambiguity: is \( d_k = \text{adv}(k,d)/2 \) or is \( d_k = F(k,d) = [\text{adv}(k,d)/2] \). This ambiguity does not affect the ILP as both definitions are equivalent when we require that the variables be integer. However when we relax the requirement that the variables be integer, we get the DC score if \( d_k = \text{adv}(k,d)/2 \) and the DR score if \( d_k = F(k,d) \). Bartholdi et al. [1989] note that there are only \( m! \) orderings of the alternatives and thus no more than \( m! \) vote types. However, since we never swap \( d \) down the profile [McCabe-Dansted, 2006], the ordering of the candidates below \( d \) are irrelevant.

We will formalise this notion as \( d \)-equivalence:

**Definition 3.1.** Where \( v \) is a linear order on \( m \) alternatives, let \( v_i \) represent the \( i^{\text{th}} \) highest ranked alternative and \( v_{\leq i} \) represent the sequence of \( i^{\text{th}} \) highest ranked alternatives. Where \( d \) is an alternative, we say \( v \) and \( w \) are \( d \)-equivalent \( (v \equiv_d w) \) iff there exists \( i \) such that \( v_i = d \) and \( v_{\leq i} = w_{\leq i} \).

**Lemma 3.2.** Let \( S_d \) be the set of \( d \)-equivalence classes. Then \( |S_d| \) is less than \((m - 1)!e\) where \( e = 2.71\ldots \) is the exponential constant.

**Proof.** We see that there is one equivalence class where \( d \) is ranked in the top position, \( m - 1 \) equivalence classes where \( d \) is ranked in the second highest position, and in general \( \prod_{k=m-i+1}^{m-1} k \) when \( d \) is ranked \( i^{\text{th}} \) from the top. We note that:

\[
\prod_{k=m-i+1}^{m-1} k = \frac{(m - 1)!}{(m - i)!}
\]

We see that

\[
|S_d| = \frac{(m - 1)!}{(m - m)!} + \frac{(m - 1)!}{(m - (m - 1))!} + \cdots + \frac{(m - 1)!}{(m - 1)!}
\]

\[
= (m - 1)! \left( \frac{1}{0!} + \frac{1}{1!} + \cdots + \frac{1}{(m - 1)!} \right)
\]

\[
< (m - 1)! \left( \frac{1}{0!} + \frac{1}{1!} + \cdots \right) = (m - 1)!e \]

**Corollary 3.3.** If we categorise votes into type based on \( d \)-equivalence classes (instead of linear orders), the ILP below has less than \( m(m - 1)!e = m!e \) variables.

Note that there are less than \((m - 1)!e\) choices for \( i \), no more than \( m \) choices for \( j \) and thus less than \( m(m - 1)!e = m!e \) variables (each of the form \( y_{ij} \)).

**Lemma 3.4.** We can transform the ILP into the following form [McCabe-Dansted, 2006]:

\[ \min \sum_{i,j} y_{ij} \text{ subject to } y_{i0} = N_i \text{ (for each type of vote } i) \]
\[
\sum_{ij} (e_{ijk} - e_{(i-1)jk})y_{ij} \geq D_k \text{ (for each alternative } k) \\
y_{ij} \leq y_{i(j-1)} \text{ (for each } i \text{ and } j > 0) \\
y_{ij} \geq 0, \text{ and each } y_{ij} \text{ must be integer.}
\]

**Proof.** For each \(i\) and \(j\) variable \(y_{ij}\) represents the number of times that the candidate \(d\) is swapped up at least \(j\) positions. In the LP \(D_k\) may be defined as \(\text{adv}(k,d)/2\) to compute the DC score or \(\lceil\text{adv}(k,d)/2\rceil\) to compute the DR score (under the ILP these are equivalent). Thus, \(x_{ij} = y_{i(j-1)}\) and \(y_{ij} = \sum_{k \geq j} x_{ik}\). Using these two equalities it is easy to derive the above ILP. \(\square\)

**Theorem 3.5.** The DR (\(S_{CR}\)), DC (\(S_{C}\)) and D&E (\(S_{CE}\)) scores are bounded as follows:

\[
S_{CD}(d) - (m - 1)! (m - 1)e < S_{C}(d) \leq S_{CR}(d) \leq S_{CE} \leq S_{CD}(d)
\]

**Proof.** Every solution to the Integer Linear Program for the Dodgson score is a solution to the Linear Program for the DR score. Every solution to the LP for the DR score is a solution to the LP for the DC score. Thus the DC score cannot be greater than the DR score, which cannot be greater than the Dodgson score (\(S_{CC}(d) \leq S_{CR}(d) \leq S_{CD}(d)\)). Since \(S_{C}\) is integer, it follows that \(S_{CR}(d) \leq \lceil S_{CR}(d) \rceil = S_{CE}(d) \leq S_{CD}(d)\). Also note that given a solution \(y\) to either LP, we can produce a solution \(y'\) to the ILP simply by rounding up each variable \((y'_{ij} = \lceil y_{ij} \rceil)\), hence

\[
S_{CD}(d) - S_{C}(d) \leq \sum_{i} \sum_{j > 0} \lceil y_{ij} \rceil - y_{ij} < \sum_{i} \sum_{j > 0} 1 \leq (m - 1)!e
\]

Since \(i\) can take less than \((m - 1)!e\) values, and \(j\) can vary from 1 to \((m - 1)\), it follows that

\[
S_{CD}(d) - (m - 1)! (m - 1)e < S_{C}(d) \leq S_{CR}(d) \leq S_{CE} \leq S_{CD}(d) \quad \square
\]

We can transform the (I)LP into a form with less than \(M = (m - 1)!e\) variables and encoded in \(L \in O((m - 1)! \ln ((m - 1)!n))\) bits \(\text{(}MC\text{abe-Dansted, 2006). Using }\text{Gonzaga's} \text{ algorithm we may solve LP's in } O(M^4L) \text{ arithmetic operations of } O(L) \text{ bits of precision. From these two facts we get the following corollary:}

**Corollary 3.6.** We can compute the DC, DR and D&E scores with

\[
O \left[ ((m - 1)!)^4 \ln ((m - 1)!n) \right]
\]

operations of

\[
O \left[ (m - 1)! \ln ((m - 1)!n) \right]
\]

bits of precision.

This suggests that computing these scores for a 100 million agent, 5 alternative profile would be a trivial task for a modern computer. Hence these rules could be used as a real world approximations to the Dodgson rule.

We also note that there cannot be more vote types than votes, hence there are at most \(mn\) variables, and the LP can be encoded in \(O(mn)\) bits. Hence we can compute these scores in \(O(mn^4 \ln (mn))\) arithmetic operations requiring \(O(mn \ln (mn))\) bits of precision. Hence computing the DC, DR and D&E scores requires only polynomial time.
3.1 Empirical Results.

In practice the major difference between DR and Dodgson is that the DR rule picks a smaller set of tied winners. We performed 43 million simulations (McCabe-Dansted, 2006) with up to 25 alternatives and 85 candidates and assuming various amounts of homogeneity, modeled using the PE distribution, in the population. We found only 25 cases where DR picked a different set of tied winners to Dodgson, and only two cases where the set of tied DR winners was not a subset of the Dodgson winners. As the DR scores are fractions, the DR rule can split ties according to which are fractionally better, which may be considered to be more democratic than e.g. splitting ties according to the preferences of the first agent. In this sense DR is superior to the Dodgson rule.

By rounding the DR scores up, we get a new rule that approximates Dodgson yet more closely, picking the Dodgson winner in all 43 million simulations except for a single profile with 25 alternatives and 5 agents generated under the Impartial Culture assumption. 10,000 such profiles were generated, and by comparison, both the Tideman and DQ approximations differed from Dodgson in 13% of these profiles.

The similarity between DR and Dodgson suggests a reason why we were able to compute the Dodgson winners for non-trivial populations in milliseconds. LPs tend to be easy to solve, the NP-hardness of ILPs comes from the difficulty in finding integer solutions. Since the LP solutions tend to be very close to the integer solutions, finding the integer solution from the LP solution is often trivial.

4 Counting Proof of Convergence under IAC

For a voting situation $U$ and linear order $v$, we represent the number of linear orders of type $v$ in $U$ by $\#_v(u)$.

Where $X \in \{D, T\}$, let $\Delta_X(a, z)$ be equivalent to $Sc_X(a) - Sc_X(z)$. Given an arbitrary pair of alternatives $(a, z)$ we pick an arbitrary linear order $ab\ldots z$ with $a$ ranked first and $z$ ranked last and call it $v$. We also define the reverse linear order $\bar{v} = z\ldots ba$.

Lemma 4.1. Replacing a vote of type $\bar{v}$ with a vote of type $v$ will increase $\Delta_T(a, z)$ by at least one.

Proof. We see that replacing a vote of type $\bar{v}$ with a vote of type $v$ will increase adv$(a, z)$ by one, or decrease adv$(z, a)$ by one. □

Lemma 4.2. Replacing a vote of type $\bar{v}$ with a vote of type $v$ will increase $\Delta_D(a, z)$ by at least one.

Proof. Say $a$ is not a Condorcet-tie winner, but is a Condorcet-tie winner after some minimal set $S$ of swaps is applied to the profile $P$. Let $P'$ be the profile $P$ after one vote of type $\bar{v}$ has been replaced with a vote of type $v$. If any swaps were applied to the vote those swaps are no longer required, and $Sc_D(P')(a) < Sc_D(P)(a)$. Otherwise we can apply the set of swaps $S$ to $P'$ resulting in adv$(a, k)$ being at least 2 for all other alternatives $k$. Hence we can remove one of the swaps, and still result in $a$ being a Condorcet-tie winner after the swaps have been applied to $P'$.

Say $a$ is a Condorcet-tie winner in $P$. Then $z$ is not a Condorcet-tie winner in $P'$. As in the previous paragraph we can conclude that $Sc_D[P](z) < Sc_D[P'](z)$. □

Lemma 4.3. For a fixed integer $k$, and a fixed ordered pair of alternatives $(a, z)$ the proportion of voting situations, with $n$ agents and $m$ alternatives, for which $\Delta_X(a, z) = k$ is no more than:

\[
\frac{(m! - 2)}{(n + m! - 2)}
\]
Proof. Say $v = ab \ldots z$ is some fixed linear order and $\hat{v} = z \ldots ba$ is the reverse order. We define an equivalence relation $\sim$ on the set of voting situations, as follows: say $U, V$ are two voting situations, then

$$U \sim V \iff \forall w \neq v, w \neq \hat{v} \#_V(w) = \#_U(w).$$

From Lemma 4.1 and 4.2 we see that in each equivalence class, there can be at most one voting situation for which $\Delta_X(a, z) = k$. Also note that whereas there are $|S^n(A)| = \binom{n + m! - 1}{n}$ distinct voting situations there are at most $\binom{n + (m! - 1) - 1}{n}$ equivalence classes under $\sim$. Hence the proportion of voting situations for which $\Delta_X(a, z) = k$ is no more than:

$$\frac{(n + m! - 1)!}{n!(m! - 1)!} \cdot \frac{n!(m! - 2)!}{(n + m! - 2)!} = \frac{(n + m! - 1)! (m! - 1)!}{(n + m! - 2)! (m! - 1)!} = \frac{(m! - 2)}{(n + m! - 2)}.$$

\[\Box\]

**Lemma 4.4.** If $\Delta_T(a, z) = k$ and $a$ is a Tideman winner and $z$ is a DQ winner, then $0 \leq k < m$.

**Proof.** As $a$ is a Tideman winner and $z$ is a DQ winner, then

$$S_T(a) \leq S_T(z), \quad S_Q(z) \leq S_Q(a)$$

Recall that

$$S_Q(x) = \sum_{y \neq x} \left\lfloor \frac{\text{adv}(y, x)}{2} \right\rfloor, \quad S_T(x) = \sum_{y \neq x} \text{adv}(y, x).$$

We see that $\text{adv}(y, x) \leq 2 \left\lfloor \frac{\text{adv}(y, x)}{2} \right\rfloor \leq \text{adv}(y, x) + 1$ and so $S_T(x) \leq 2S_Q(x) < S_T(x) + m$ for all alternatives $x$. Thus

$$S_T(z) \leq 2S_Q(z) \leq 2S_Q(a) < S_T(a) + m.$$ 

And so $S_T(a) \leq S_T(z) < S_T(a) + m$. Let $k = S_T(a) - S_T(z)$. Then $0 \leq k < m$, and so there are no more than $m$ ways of choosing $k$ if we wish the DQ and Tideman winners to differ.

Recall that Theorem 3.5 states:

$$S_D(d) - (m - 1)!e < S_C(d) \leq S_R(d) \leq S_K \leq S_D(d)$$

where $e = 2.71 \ldots$ is the exponential constant. Given that there are $m$ ways of choosing $k$ such that the Tideman and DQ winners differ, and less than $(m - 1)!e$ ways of choosing $k$ such that the Dodgson, DC, DR and/or D&k winners differ, we get the following theorem.
Theorem 4.5. The proportion of voting situations, with \( n \) agents and \( m \) alternatives, for which \( a \) is a Tideman winner and \( z \) is a DQ winner is no more than:

\[
\frac{(m! - 2)}{(n + m! - 2)}^m.
\]

The proportion for which \( a \) is Dodgson winner and \( z \) is a DC, DR and/or D\& winner is less than

\[
\frac{(m! - 2)}{(n + m! - 2)}^m(m - 1)! (m - 1)e.
\]

Theorem 4.6. The proportion of voting situations, with \( n \) agents and \( m \) alternatives, for which the Tideman winner differs from the DQ winner is no more than:

\[
\frac{(m! - 2)}{(n + m! - 2)}^m(m - 1)m^2.
\]

The proportion where the Dodgson winner differs from the DC, DR, and/or D\& winners is less than

\[
\frac{(m! - 2)}{(n + m! - 2)}^m(m - 1)! (m - 1)^2 e.
\]

Proof. Obvious, as there are only \( m(m - 1) \) ways of choosing \( a \) and \( z \) from the set of alternatives.

Corollary 4.7. The probability that the DQ and Tideman rule pick the same winners converges to 1 as \( n \to \infty \), under the Impartial Anonymous Culture assumption. Likewise the probability that the DR, DC, D\& and Dodgson rules pick the same winner converges to 1 as \( n \to \infty \).

In other words the DR, DC and D\& winners (and scores) provide “deterministic heuristic polynomial time” \cite{ProcacciaRosenschein2007} algorithms for the Dodgson winner (and score) with the IAC distribution. We can use the same technique to show that the Greedy Algorithm proposed by Homan and Hemaspaandra \cite{HomanHemaspaandra2005} converges to the DQ and Tideman rules under IAC, as the GreedyScore differs from the DQ score by less than \( m \). By setting \( k \) to 0 we may likewise prove that the probability of a non-unique Tideman or Dodgson winner converges to 0 under IAC.

We extend the concept of a “frequently self-knowingly correct algorithm” \cite{HomanHemaspaandra2005} such that we can specify a distribution over which the algorithm is frequently self-knowingly correct.

Definition 4.8. A self-knowingly correct \cite{HomanHemaspaandra2005} algorithm \( A \) is a “frequently self-knowingly correct algorithm over a distribution \( \mu \)” for \( g: \Sigma^* \to T \) iff

\[
\lim_{n \to \infty} \sum_{x \in \Sigma^n, A(x) \in T \times \{\text{maybe}\}} P_{\mu}(x) = 0
\]

where \( P_{\mu}(x) \) is the probability that \( X = x \) when \( X \) is chosen from \( \Sigma^n \) under the \( \mu \) distribution and for all \( x \) we have \( (A(x))_1 = g(x) \) or \( (A(x))_2 = \text{“maybe”} \).

Using the set of linear orders \( L(A) \) as \( \Sigma \) we may construct a frequently self-knowingly correct algorithm from DC (or DR, or D\&) as the algorithm can output “definitely” whenever the DC winner has DC score that is at least \( (m - 1)/(m - 1)e \) less than any other alternative.
5 Non-convergence of Tideman Based rules

Under the Pólya-Eggenberger (PE) urn model we start with a non-negative integer \( a \) and an urn containing balls, each of a different colour. To generate each random sample, we pull a ball out of the Urn at random and note its colour. After removing each ball, we return the ball that was taken to the urn together with \( a \) additional balls of the same colour to the urn. Our sample is the ball taken from the urn.

If \( a = 0 \), PE generates a binomial or multinomial distribution and these distributions converge to the standard distribution as the number of samples increase to infinity. As the number of samples increase to infinity, it is almost certain that the ratio of the balls drawn will match the ratio of the balls in the urn.

If \( a > 0 \) the ratio of balls in the urn varies. We see that for any \( x \in (0, 1) \) and \( \epsilon > 0 \) there is a finite set of draws which will result in the ratio of balls of in the urn ratio being within the range \((x - \epsilon, x + \epsilon)\). Because of this, the samples drawn from the urn may converge on any ratio as the number of balls drawn approaches infinity. More formally, the PE distribution converges to the Beta distribution as the number of samples approaches infinity (Feller, 1971), thus the limiting probability of the ratio falling within any open set is non-zero.

For generation of random profiles, we replace colours with linear orders. The parameter \( a \) characterises homogeneity; for \( a = 0 \) we obtain the well known Impartial Culture assumption and for \( a = 1 \) the Impartial Anonymous Culture assumption (Berg and Lepelly, 1994).

**Definition 5.1.** A “voting ratio” is a function \( f : L(A) \rightarrow [0,1] \) such that

\[
\sum_{v \in L(A)} f(v) = 1.
\]

We say that a profile \( P \) reduces to a voting ratio \( f \) if

\[
\forall v \in L(A) \# \{i : P_i = v\} = n f(v)
\]

**Note 5.2.** A voting ratio is similar to a voting situation, but unlike a voting situation does not contain any information about the total number of agents.

**Definition 5.3.** We say that a voting ratio \( f \) is “bad” if for every profile \( P \) that reduces to \( f \) and has an even number of agents, the DQ winner of \( P \) differs from the Dodgson winner.

**Example 5.4.** The following voting ratio is bad.

\[
g(v) = \begin{cases} 
7/18 & \text{if } v = abcde \\
6/18 & \text{if } v = cdabe \\
5/18 & \text{if } v = bcead \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]

For any profile with \( 18n \) agents that reduces to the above voting ratio, the DQ and Dodgson score of \( c \) will be \( 3n \); the DQ score of \( a \) will be \( 2n \) and the Dodgson score of \( a \) will be \( 4n \). Hence \( a \) will be the DQ winner but \( c \) will be the Dodgson winner.

**Example 5.5.** The following voting ratio is bad.

\[
h(v) = \begin{cases} 
16/39 & \text{if } v = abcx \\
12/39 & \text{if } v = cxab \\
10/39 & \text{if } v = bcxa \\
1/39 & \text{if } v = cbax \\
0 & \text{otherwise}
\end{cases}
\]
We see that for a profile that reduces to the above voting ratio, we have the following advantages and scores per 78 agents:

|      | a | b | c | x |
|------|---|---|---|---|
| DQ   | 12| 17| 13| 54|
| Dodgson | 14| 17| 13| 54|

The Dodgson score of a is higher than the DQ score of a as to swap a over c we must first swap a over b or a over x. We have to swap a over c at least 7 times. Hence we must use a total of at least 14 swaps to make a a Condorcet-tie winner. We see that a is the DQ winner, but c is the Dodgson winner.

We will now show that there exists a neighbourhood around the voting ratios g and h that is bad.

**Lemma 5.6.** Altering a single vote will change the Dodgson scores and DQ scores by at most \( m - 1 \).

**Proof.** Recall that

\[
S_{\text{Q}}(a) = \sum_{b \neq a} F(b, a), \text{ where } F(b, a) = \left\lceil \frac{\text{adv}(b, a)}{2} \right\rceil.
\]

We see that for each other alternative \( b \) changing a single vote can change \( F(b, a) \) by at most one, and there are \( m - 1 \) such alternatives.

Say that \( P \) and \( R \) are two profiles that differ only in a single vote. Let \( P' \) and \( R' \) be \( P \) and \( R \) respectively after some arbitrary \( d \) has been swapped to the top of the vote that differs, which requires no more than \( m - 1 \) swaps. We see that

\[
\begin{align*}
S_{\text{D}}[P](d) &\leq S_{\text{D}}[P'](d) + m - 1 \\
S_{\text{D}}[R](d) &\leq S_{\text{D}}[R'](d) + m - 1.
\end{align*}
\]

**Corollary 5.7.** For any positive integer \( k \), alternative \( d \), profile \( P \) and rule \( X \in \{D, Q\} \) (i.e. Dodgson or DQ), if \( S_{\text{X}}(d) < S_{\text{X}}(a) - 2k(m - 1) \) for all other alternatives \( a \), then \( d \) will remain the unique \( X \) winner in any profile that results from changing \( k \) or less votes.

**Lemma 5.8.** There is a neighbourhood of bad voting ratios around the voting ratio \( h \) from Example 5.5.

**Proof.** We see that in a profile with \( n \) agents that reduces to the voting ratio \( h \) the Dodgson and DQ winners have scores that are at least \( \frac{n}{78} \) lower than the other alternatives. Thus if we alter less than \( \frac{n}{78} \) votes, the DQ winner will remain different from the Dodgson winner.

**Theorem 5.9.** If we generate profiles randomly according to the PE distribution, with \( a > 0 \) and abce, cxb, cxa, cbad existing in the urn, the probability that the DQ winner is not the Dodgson winner will converge to some non-zero value as the number of agents tends to infinity.
Proof. The PE distribution converges to the Beta distribution. Given any neighbourhood, the probability that a variable distributed according to a non-trivial beta distribution will fall within that neighbourhood is non-zero. There is a neighbourhood of bad voting ratios and any profile that reduces to a bad voting ratio has a DQ winner that is different to the Dodgson winner.

We can generalise this result by adding alternatives that lose to all of \(a, b, c\) and \(x\). As the Impartial Anonymous Culture assumption is a special case of the PE distribution with \(a = 1\) and the urn starting with an equal number of all linear orders, these approximations also do not converge under the IAC assumption. Thus we may now state the following theorem:

**Theorem 5.10.** If we generate profiles randomly according to the IAC distribution, with \(m \geq 4\), the DQ, Greedy and Tideman winners do not converge to the Dodgson winner as the number of agents tends to infinity.

Under the IAC, the Tideman rule \(\text{[M\textsuperscript{C}Cabe-Dansted et al., 2007]}\) and the greedy algorithm proposed by \(\text{[Homan and Hemaspaandra, 2005]}\) converges to the DQ rule, which does not converge to Dodgson’s rule. It follows that the Tideman rule and greedy algorithm do not converge to Dodgson’s rule under the IAC.

As the difference between the DQ scores and the GreedyScores \(\text{[Homan and Hemaspaandra, 2005]}\) is less than \(m\), the DQ winner and GreedyWinner will converge under the IAC. \(\text{[M\textsuperscript{C}Cabe-Dansted et al., 2007]}\).

6 Conclusion

We have previously \(\text{[M\textsuperscript{C}Cabe-Dansted et al., 2007]}\) proved that Tideman’s rule does converge under IC, and presented a refined rule (DQ) which converged exponentially quickly. Another approximation with exponentially fast convergence was independently proposed by \(\text{[Homan and Hemaspaandra, 2005]}\).

Unfortunately, real voters are not independent, and so the Impartial Culture assumption is not realistic. This paper investigates the asymptotic behaviour of approximations to the Dodgson rule under other assumptions of voting behaviour, particularly the Impartial Anonymous Culture (IAC) assumption, that each multiset of votes is equally likely.

We found that the approximations converge to each other under IAC, but they do not converge to Dodgson. Hence the DQ rule is not asymptotically closer to the Dodgson rule than the Tideman rule is, although DQ converges faster under the IC.

It is not realistic to assume that voters’ behaviour will precisely follow any mathematical model, including IAC. Fortunately the proof that our new approximations converge to Dodgson does not depend on the details of the IAC. Indeed, the DC, DR, D\& and Dodgson winners will all be the same if the scores of the two leading alternatives differ by less than \((m – 1)!/(m – 1)e\). This assumption is realistic for a sufficiently large number of voters. Even in the neck and neck 2000 US presidential elections, the popular vote for the leading two alternatives differed by half a percent — over half a million votes. If we used the Dodgson rule to choose between the top five alternatives, the difference between the Dodgson scores of the leading two alternatives would have to be less than 261 for the winners to differ. Even if the entire electorate conspired to cause the winners to differ, minor inaccuracies such as hanging chads could frustrate their attempt. Even in cases where the Dodgson Relaxed does differ from the Dodgson, the difference seems to be primarily that the Dodgson Relaxed rule picks a smaller set of tied winners as it is able to split ties in favour of alternatives that have fractionally better DR scores. This is in some sense more democratic than tie breaking procedures such as breaking ties in favour of the preferences of the first voter.
Thus determining that an algorithm is “frequently self-knowingly correct”, as defined by Homan and Hemaspaandra (2005), is insufficient to conclude that the algorithm will converge in practice. The DQ and GreedyWinner provide frequently self-knowingly correct algorithms, but do not converge under other assumptions of voter behaviour such as IAC. We have extended the definition to allow a distribution to be specified. So, in other words, DQ and GreedyWinner provide algorithms that are “frequently self-knowingly correct over IC”, but unlike DC, DR, and D&m, do not provide algorithms that are “frequently self-knowingly correct algorithms over IAC”.

We have previously shown that the Dodgson scores and winners of a voting situation can be computed from a voting situation with $O\left(\frac{f_1(m)\ln n}{n}\right)$ arithmetic operations of $O\left(\frac{f_2(m)\ln n}{n}\right)$ bits of precision (McCabe-Dansted, 2003) for some pair of functions $f_1$ and $f_2$. However we did not find a good upper bound on $f_1$ or $f_2$, even $f_1(4)$ may be unreasonably large. In contrast, we found that we may compute the DC, DR and D& score with $O\left(\left(\frac{(m-1)!}{n}\right)^4\ln\left(\frac{(m-1)!}{n}\right)\right)$ operations of $O\left(\frac{(m-1)!}{n}\right)$ bits of precision. Although $((m-1)!)^4$ is quite large, a modern computer can perform billions of elementary operations a second. This result suggests that even the worst case time for billions of voters and 6 or 7 alternatives is feasible. Also, whereas DodgsonScore is NP-complete (Bartholdi et al., 1989), we can also compute the DR and D& scores using $O(m^4n^4\ln(mn))$ arithmetic operations requiring $O(mn^4\ln(mn))$ bits of precision.

We have found that the scores of the most of the approximations we have studied form a hierarchy of increasingly tight lower bounds on the Dodgson score:

$$\frac{SCS(x)}{2} \leq \frac{SC^T(x)}{2} \leq SC_Q \leq SC_R \leq SC_C \leq SD \leq SC_D \leq SC + (m-1)!/(m-1)e$$

The Dodgson Clone rule does not fit in that hierarchy, although it is the case that

$$\frac{SC^T(x)}{2} \leq SC_C \leq SC_R \leq SC_D \leq SC + (m-1)!/(m-1)e$$

Despite the great accuracy of the D& approximation, there are good reasons to pick other approximations. The difference between the DR rule and the D& rule is that the DR rule can split ties based on fractional scores, so the DR rule may be considered superior to D& and Dodgson’s rule. The DC rule is resistant to cloning of the electorate. The DQ rule is very simple to compute, and very easy to write in any programming language. As the DQ rule is known to converge exponentially fast under IC, this makes the DQ rule very appropriate for cases where the data is known to be distributed according to IC. This is the case for studies that have randomly generated data according to the IC (see e.g. McCabe-Dansted and Slinko, 2006; Shah, 2003; Nurmi, 1983). The Tideman rule is no more easy to compute than the DQ rule. However, the mathematical definition of the Tideman rule is simpler than the DQ rule. This makes the Tideman rule useful for theoretical studies of the Dodgson rule where the speed of convergence is not important. Also, like the DC rule, the Tideman rule is resistant to cloning the electorate.

We conclude that the DC and DR rules are superior, for social choice, to the traditional definition of the Dodgson rule. DC provides resistance to cloning the electorate, and both are better at splitting ties than the traditional definition of Dodgson rule. We know of no advantage of the traditional definition over these rules. Even if the traditional Dodgson winner is preferred, it may be hard to justify the computational complexity of the traditional Dodgson rule, especially since it is almost certain that these rules would pick the same result. If, despite all this, the traditional Dodgson rule is still chosen, these new rules provide
frequently self-knowingly correct algorithms for the Dodgson winner for any reasonable assumption of voter behaviour, including IAC.

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John Christopher McCabe-Dansted
M002 The University of Western Australia
35 Stirling Highway, Crawley 6009
Western Australia
Email: john@csse.uwa.edu.au