

YOU ARE BEING LIED TO ABOUT AV (<http://avlies.com/>)

MEDIA COMMENTATORS ARE TRYING TO HEDGE-THEIR-BETS BY CLAIMING THAT "BOTH SIDES ARE LYING," AS IF THAT SOMEHOW GIVES BALANCE.

THE FACTS ARE SURPRISING. SOME OF THE LIES ARE SHOCKING, BUT STILL BEING REPEATED. The media has really dropped the ball by not highlighting - and ridiculing - some of these whopping great LIES

If the media can't (or won't) track these lies, then we have to do it ourselves.

To that end, here are some of the lies about AV doing the rounds. Lies from both sides.

For ease of use, anything that isn't, strictly speaking, true, is a LIE and it comes with an explanation of the truth.

If the media will not tell you the facts, and politicians definitely will not tell you the truth, you will have to check for yourself.

VISITORS TO THIS SITE CAN ADD A COMMENT, OR ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A LIE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE.

LIES BY 'YES TO AV' CAMPAIGNERS

AV WILL MEAN THAT MPs ARE ALWAYS ELECTED WITH AT LEAST 50% OF THE VOTE.

LIE

It is mathematically possible for no candidate to reach the 50% goal under AV, but in those cases, the candidate with the most votes wins, regardless.

AV WILL MAKE MPs WORK HARDER.

LIE

If an MP is working all the hours that God sends, working "harder" is not possible. If you don't mean "working longer hours" when you say "work harder" you should be more specific.

Work may be "harder" for an MP that was elected with only 37% support, and who's views are very different to the views of large segments of his constituency. Under AV, this MP would have to engage with more voters (that they may disagree with, over many issues) in order to get elected in the first place.

Engaging with people you disagree with? Whatever next?

Where shall we go to drink tonight?



Vote Yes: Let's 'AV a beer!



AV WILL GET RID OF SAFE SEATS.

LIE

If an MP is really popular with their voters, and they can easily reach more than 50% of the votes, AV would not change that, since at least half the voters want that candidate. That is democracy.

AV WILL MAKE POLITICS CLEANER, LESS OPEN TO CORRUPTION, LESS PRONE TO SCANDAL.

LIE

The people being elected will still be politicians. The underlying system will do nothing to change that.

The thing that AV would change is that at the next election it would be harder for a scandal hit politician to be reelected if he has lost the confidence of 50% or more of the voters, whereas now, some MPs get elected with less than 35% of the support from their constituency.

LIES BY THE "NO TO AV" CAMPAIGNERS

There are several different version of this first LIE. It is designed to confuse people that do not understand AV into thinking that AV is a very unfair system of voting:

AV WILL TAKE AWAY ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE.

LIE

AV WILL GIVE SOME PEOPLE MULTIPLE VOTES.

LIE

AV MEANS THAT SOME PEOPLE'S VOTE COUNTS SEVERAL TIMES.

LIE

There are other versions of this LIE, but they all amount to the same thing, that AV is unfair due to multi-voting. If it were true, AV would be unfair. But it is not true.

With the current system we are limited to:

One "man," one vote, for, one candidate. Total number of votes is one.

With AV we can have:

One man, one vote, for, a range of candidates. The total number of votes remains one. Only one of the candidates you select gets your vote, NOT ALL THE CANDIDATES YOU CHOOSE.

The thing that makes it APPEAR as though a voter has more than one vote, is the number of

Here is an example: Let's say the percentage of the vote either candidate would win on their own, if the other similar candidate did not stand for election, was 60%. But that 60% vote was "split" between the 2 candidates, since they both ran. The result: they each got (e.g.) half, 30%.

When that happens, the 3rd best candidate only needs to win 31% of the vote to get elected. FPTP delivers 3rd best candidates, where the vote for the best 2 similar candidates is split. This is a common occurrence under FPTP.

AV completely eliminates this serious problem. Is that a reasonable thing to expect from a voting system?

AV WILL MAKE IT HARDER TO GET RID OF GOVERNMENTS.

LIE

The current FPTP system makes it very hard to get rid of governments. We have just had, from 1980-2010, 17 years of Conservative followed by 13 years of Labour, for a total of 30 years of government with only ONE change!

Were those governments popular the whole way through those 30 years? No. Was it easy to achieve change using FPTP? No.

Governments are elected on an MP by MP basis, and with each MP requiring either 50% of the vote, OR, an outright majority from their local electorate, AV makes it EASIER to change governments, if that is what the public wants.

THIS IS NOT JUST ALL POLITICAL SPIN

111 MPs in the House of commons took their seats with 39.9% of the vote, or less.

The only way to know if the majority of their local electorate would approve of this happening is to give them the chance to say who they think will be better as their MP: this candidate, who did not win an overall majority, or one of the other candidates, that did not win an overall majority.

AV gives voters that choice from the outset.

VOTING YES FOR AV WILL NOT MAKE THINGS PERFECT, SO WHY BOTHER?

You cannot make an informed decision if the information you get is deceptive, or worse, outright lies. The truth is not nearly as sensational.

AV WOULD MEAN THAT MPs ELECTED TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS HAVE BEEN CHOSEN BY MORE PEOPLE.

That is all that AV can promise. Is that a good reason to get out and Vote YES?

This is a big drawback of FPTP and it explains why so many governments can be, simultaneously, unpopular, yet also, seemingly, untouchable.

IF AV IS SO GOOD, WHY DON'T WE USE IT IN THIS REFERENDUM?

...

This is a question, not a statement, so it cannot be a lie, but it can be used to mislead.

This referendum is a choice of 2 things: a) or b). NO or YES? There aren't any alternatives for the alternative votes. To suggest that anyone would have Yes as their first selection and No as their second selection is silly.

AV IS LIKE THE PERSON THAT COMES 3rd IN THE 100m RACE BEING GIVEN THE OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL.

LIE

For a start, in order to get to the FINAL of the 100m race, athletes have to go through heats, where the weakest runners get knocked-out. Just like AV.

Then, there is a finish line, 100m, that has to be reached. With First Past the Post, there is no set finish line. There is no fixed "Post." Someone can be declared the winner with a very small % of the vote. There is an MP at the moment that has less than 30% of the vote, The LibDem MP for Norwich South - there are plenty of other MPs with less than 35% of the vote.

With AV the set finish line is 50% (+1) of the vote - a majority. Once that goal line is reached by someone, that person is the winner and the race is over. It is, mathematically, possible for no one to reach 50% of the vote, but in that case the person with the most votes still wins.

Does that sound like the right person gets elected?

AV DELIVERS THE 2ND BEST, OR, "LEAST WORST" OPTION, INSTEAD OF THE BEST CANDIDATE.

LIE

More than 200 of the current MPs were elected with more than 50% of the vote. Under AV the result would have been the same - an outright win for those popular MPs that are elected by the majority of their voters.

The best MPs sail through AV the same way they sail through FPTP.

AV's real difference lies in picking a popular winner from a close run race. Particularly with "split," as we call them in the UK, or "spoiler" votes as they are called in the USA and Australia.

Split votes happen where 2 (or more) popular candidates are similar. If one of those candidates was not standing, then the other similar candidate would probably have taken all, or at least most, of the votes instead.

candidates selected. Up to four.

The total number of ballots and votes is unchanged. At no point could one candidate have 54%, and another candidate have 60%! That would happen if the number of votes was greater than one vote each, but it doesn't happen, because with AV there is still only one vote each.

Selecting more than just one candidate is a different mindset. But this same method of selecting a range of candidates, is used in every type of preferential voting system. You have the right to express your opinion on a range of candidates, instead of just one candidate. But you still only have one vote. And everyone else has exactly the same right to select a range of candidates, so the playing field is level.

THE AV SYSTEM IS TOO COMPLICATED.

LIE

As noted by many supporters (and the majority of people that actually use AV all the time in their elections) AV is simple to use.

AV IS AS EASY AS

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

OR, IF YOU ONLY WISH TO SELECT ONE CANDIDATE, IT IS AS EASY AS

- 1

ANTI-AV propaganda insists on discussing how votes are counted, and then doing a very bad job of that explanation. People then believe that the system is complicated.

AV is simple to understand if clearly explained. Here is an independent 2 minute animation, by the Electoral Commission, that shows how AV works in comparison to FPTP.

http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/referendum_2011.aspx

In its simplest terms, the explanation "the person with the most votes wins" applies just as much to AV, the only difference being that MORE VOTERS would have selected the winner if we had AV. Is that fair?

IT WILL COST €100-230 MILLION.

LIE

That includes the cost of buying machines, which we would NOT need to run AV, and the costs of printing ballots, that we'd have to print ANYWAY. They are made-up scary cost numbers with no basis in fact.

Counting machines were introduced in London, when a form of AV was introduced there for mayoral elections. Machines were introduced in Scotland, when a form of AV was introduced there for local elections.

But AV has been used in countries like Australia for 80 years without the need for €200mn worth of counting machines. It is all done by hand.

AV IS ONLY USED TO ELECT GOVERNMENTS IN 3 COUNTRIES.

OUTRAGEOUS LIE

AV is a form of Preferential Voting, and very similar (or the exact same) versions of Preferential Voting are used to elect members of National Governments in many countries. Including being used right here in the UK to Select Members of the HOUSE OF LORDS!! The UK's general public does not get to use AV to elect Members of Parliament, but The Lords already DO use AV to elect Members of the House. That's right: AV is used to elect Members of the House of Lords, which is part of the UK government.

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) is used by the general public in to elect Parliamentarians in countries as diverse as

India
Iceland
and
The Republic of Ireland, among others

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IRV>

Countries, such as Ireland, that use STV (Single Transferable Vote) to elect more than one MP from a single constituency, automatically revert to AV for electing a single MP from any constituency. For example during by-elections.

STV is the Multi-MP version of AV. Some countries would not even be aware that they are using AV because it is just their normal STV, but with just one MP being returned.

Another example: the Republic of Ireland's official Presidential Election information describes the voting system used as STV, despite the fact that it is really AV.

Similar forms of AV are used to elect elements of government in many countries, not just 3 countries, including being used right here in the UK.

The flip side of this is the implied LIE that "everyone" else must use FPTP. This is not true. No EU country other than the UK uses FPTP to elect members of parliament. FPTP is a voting system that many nations start with, and then, due to some serious shortcomings, move away from.

AV CAN MAKE YOU VOTE-IN SOMEONE YOU NEVER WANTED.

OUTRAGEOUS LIE

The simple way to make sure that you do not vote for someone that you do not want is this: do not select that person. Most people are able to understand that concept. You do not have to select a set-number of candidates, you have the option to select up to four, but you do not have to. If you would not be happy to see a candidate win, do not select that candidate.

LIES ABOUT AUSTRALIAN AV

VOTING IS COMPULSORY BECAUSE OF AV.

LIE

AV IS DEEPLY UNPOPULAR WITH AUSTRALIAN VOTERS WITH MORE THAN HALF WANTING TO CHANGE BACK TO FPTP.

LIE

AV IS ABOUT TO BE ABANDONED FOR FPTP.

LIE

Here is a link to an Australian journalist that is keeping track of these ANTIPODEAN LIES being told in, and by, the UK media (along with his refutations). You may have to scroll down the page to see some answers. Needless to say the Australian media is finding these lies both annoying and insulting.

<http://blogs.abc.net.au/antonygreen/uk-alternative-vote-referendum/>

AV WILL LET IN THE BNP

LIE

According to live data from countries that use AV, AV makes it harder for extremist parties to win seats. That is probably why extreme parties like the BNP and Communist party are against AV.

MP's HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SELECTED "FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS" USING ONLY FPTP AND PREFERENTIAL VOTING FOR MP's IS "UNBRITISH"

LIE

Preferential Voting was used in the UK to elect some MPs up to 1950 - which is WELL WITHIN LIVING MEMORY.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/av/av-debate-the-voting-system-that-america-is-fighting-for-is-a-veritable-novelty-2270578.html>

AV WILL CAUSE ENDLESS COALITIONS AND EXAGGERATED LANDSLIDES.

LIE

Those two outcomes are mutually exclusive.

Once a government has an "outright majority," it can do what it likes. And under the current system the government can have an outright majority with just 35% of the total vote

- i.e. even if less than 36 out of every 100 people voted for them, the government can still control everything under the current system. Labour did that in 2005.

That is an extremely "exaggerated landslide," since it was never a landslide in the first place.