brought to bear. I believe a serious discussion of their properties could have greatly enriched the book.

But this critique does not take away from the great achievement inherent in the major findings: the authors’ development of the fair-division procedures mentioned above. The volume is valuable because of what must be termed the head-turning original contributions of the authors.

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Notes

1. It is interesting to note the choice criteria utilized in these algorithms: minimax. This should be quite clear from the well known and simple Johnny splits, Cathy chooses, cake division algorithm. Johnny’s division of the cake into 2 equal pieces comes from his attempt to insure that he can get at least half. This can lead to inefficiencies. If the cake is not homogeneous, and the preferences are not identical, Johnny (who say, likes chocolate) could slice the cake differently. He could leave one (smaller) piece with more chocolate, and another large piece for Cathy (who, let’s assume does not prefer chocolate). Both could be expected to prefer that outcome.

2. So, for example, the algorithm which is developed by the authors for the n-person fair division of a single object requires that the object be cut into \(2^{n-2} + 1\) pieces. For \(n = 2\) this is 5 pieces, but for \(n = 7\) it is 33 pieces. Hence, one can imagine that the step by step description of a real life application of the procedure gets burdensome. For \(n = 4\), it takes about 2 pages of text and 6 diagrams.

3. Envy and non-envy are not unknown motivations in politics. The great levelling ideology of the Chinese revolution used a promise of non-envy (and perhaps even partial achievement of such results among poor peasants) to generate envious criticisms to buttress the power and status of its elites (Chang, 1991).

References


John M. Carey’s *Term limits and legislative representation* is one of the more unusual contributions to the growing body of scholarship analyzing the
effects of term limitations on the behavior of legislators. This work is largely theoretical because the constitutional amendments imposing term limits on state lawmakers in the United States are only now becoming effective. To present some much-needed empirical data, Professor Carey has studied Costa Rica, which, in 1949, adopted a rotation requirement for all deputies in the legislative assembly. Although former deputies can run for reelection after a four-year cooling off period, the provision effectively acts as a one four-year term limit for lawmakers. Since the adoption of term limits, 87 percent of deputies have served only one term; nearly half of those who have served two terms sat out for at least two interim elections; and no one has served more than three terms. Thus, Costa Rica provides an example of a political system where the direct electoral connection between voters and legislators has been severed.

Ideally, to isolate the effects of term limits on legislators, Carey would have compared the behavior of Costa Rican deputies before and after the adoption of term limits. The paucity of information concerning the Assembly before the ratification of the Constitution of 1949 makes this comparison impossible. Instead, Carey compares Costa Rica’s political situation to that of Venezuela, a country with similar political institutions but without legislative term limits. The countries also share similar histories, demographic characteristics, economies, and social structures. In the end, Carey’s comparative analysis leaves readers with more puzzles than solutions to the questions he raises, but in identifying these puzzles, he makes a valuable contribution.

Carey concludes that Costa Rican legislators are political careerists, thus undermining the myth of the citizen-legislator that suffuses virtually all of the rhetoric from the U.S. term limits movement (Garrett, 1996). The shape of political careers in a system with term limits is, however, distinctive – at least the part of a career that follows one term of service in the Assembly. Deputies arrive in the Costa Rican Assembly already highly experienced in politics, with 70 percent of national lawmakers having held prior elected office, at least three nonelected political or party appointments, or both. Unlike U.S. or Venezuelan legislators, who then usually spend the rest of their political lives serving in the federal legislature, Costa Rican deputies seek to extend their careers after service in the Assembly by obtaining political appointments from the incoming president.

Carey first demonstrates the careerist orientation of legislators by providing results of his interviews with current deputies: for example, 30 of 33 interviewees indicated that their expected “compensation” for faithful party service was a future political appointment. Carey then tests the accuracy of these expectations by determining how many ex-deputies actually received post-Assembly appointments to executive ministries, the foreign service, or