

## Stolen Votes

by Jon Schuessler

For anyone who votes, seeing a one-person “choice” on the ballot is probably a familiar sight. Sometimes, one of the two major parties becomes so unpopular with the voters in a district that it doesn’t even try to field a candidate. It’s sad, it makes a mockery of voting, but it happens.

What these voters probably don’t know, however, is that their district is far from alone. Almost *one half* of Missouri’s current legislators were elected because they were the only candidate on the ballot. Think about that. ONE HALF got in office without any competition from the other party.

It gets worse. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the time, these same politicians had no competition in their party’s primary election either. In other words, these legislators weren’t really elected. A careful look at the records reveals that over *one third* of all Missouri legislators won by default in both the primary *and* the general election.

I’ll say that again. ONE THIRD OF OUR LEGISLATURE WAS NOT ELECTED.

You can argue semantics, play with words, and try to claim that because these legislators had to go through the formality of a voting process, they were elected. But a vote where you can only pick one person is a sham. It’s not worthy of the name “election”.

You can also shrug, and say “that’s the two-party system”. And you’d be right – because the “two-party system” isn’t about giving the public two choices for an office. It’s about splitting up money and power into two slices. That’s why the two-party system actually creates these rotten districts, shaped like alien babies so that they can keep a majority for one party or the other... because the system doesn’t mind if it offers the people only one choice – or rather *no choice* – on the ballot. It only cares about eating the public pie.

If you don’t believe me, read the saga of three-term Missouri “representative” J. J. Rizzo (click [here](#) for the story) and his outrageous claim to be the choice of the people. His story is the story not just of the Democratic Party,

but the Republican Party as well – the story of corrupt groups that only care about *winning offices* and not *serving the people*.

It's time to shift the focus. Enough talk about doing whatever it takes to win an office, no matter how dirty the candidate or the tactics, and then doing the right thing once your party is in power. The ends, no matter how noble, do not justify destroying democracy in the process.

It's time to let the people, not parties, determine their legislators. [Click here](#) to find out what you can do to help.

*If you're curious whether your representative or senatorial district is "rotten" (i.e., it only had one choice in the last election), click [here](#).*