

Birthdaying alone

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

June 20, 2014

This week, I keep seeing this video everywhere (I think my H/T goes to [Know More](#) but it's hard to remember these days):

It's a sad little premise, isn't it? Here I thought a wedge-shaped slice of birthday cake is a perfect thing, each bite a slightly different experience with its varying thickness and cake-to-frosting ratio. Nope! We asked science, and science told us to cut cake this weird, crazy way instead—so that a person can eat a progressively smaller rectangular slice each day, with progressively more frosting on it, because you don't want the cake to get dry throughout the week, because *of course you're going to be consuming a birthday cake alone, one slice a day.*

In the name of all that is holy, why would you go out of your way to ensure that every piece of cake you eat (except, presumably, the one right at the midpoint) has either too little frosting or too much? And in the name of one actual thing that is holy—table fellowship—why would you eat an entire birthday cake by yourself, even a little at a time? I've spent some birthdays alone. I did not bake myself a cake.

Now, this strange birthday-cake-cutting idea comes from Francis Galton, a major proponent of eugenics. I guess maybe people stopped wanting to come over for his birthday because of his disturbing ideas, and he baked himself cakes each year to cope. In any case, of all the clickbait videos I've ever bait-clicked, this is one of the most disappointing: It's about a really cool way to slice birthday cake! Whoops, no, it's about the sad assumption that people eat almost exclusively alone.