



Voter ID and Voter Suppression

PowerPoint Presentation

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Voter ID and Voter Suppression



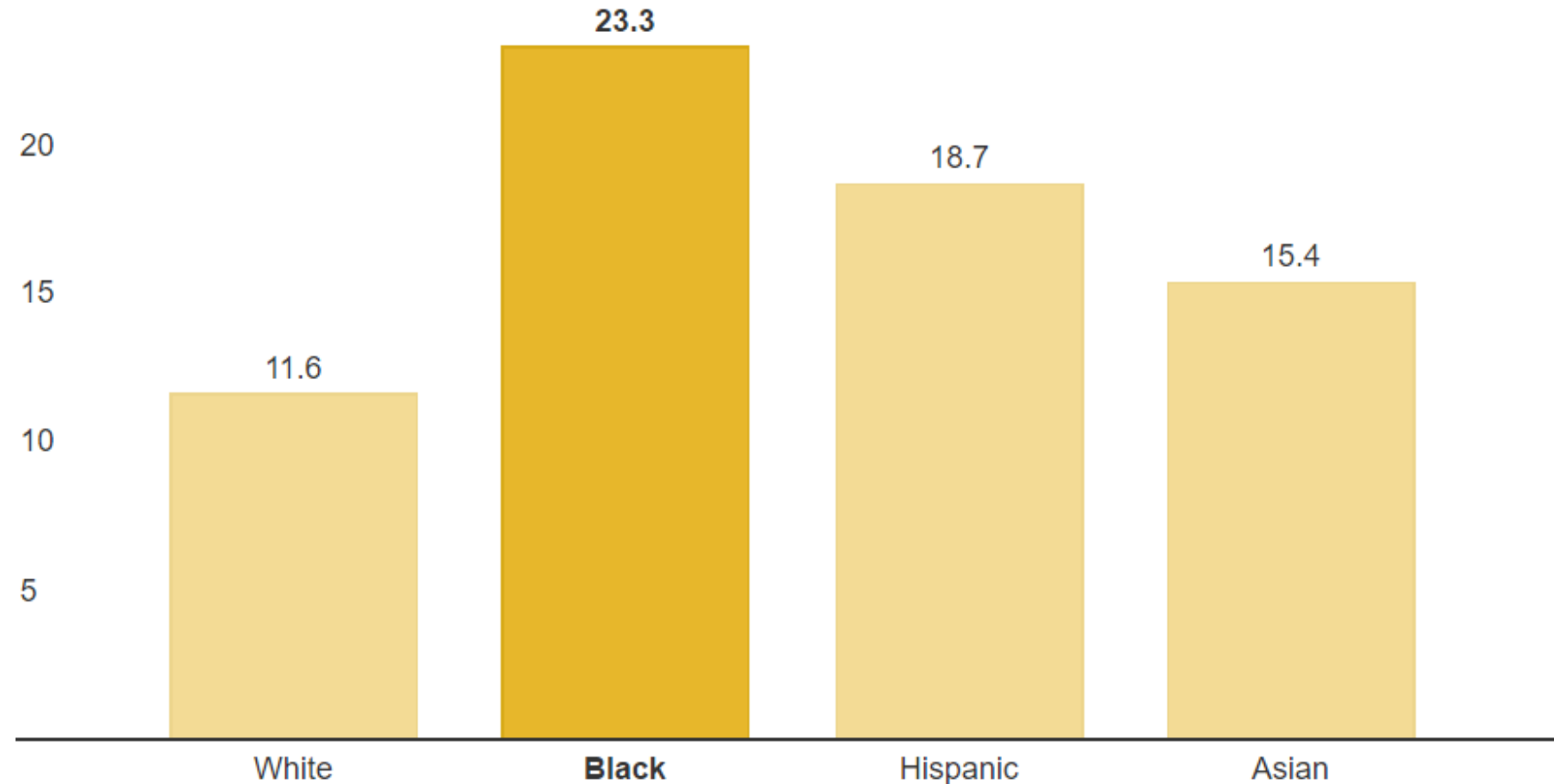
What are some methods that have been used to suppress the right to vote?

- RH 1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- RH 2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate, objective summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Warm Up: Looking at this graph, what group or groups of people would be most affected? What do you think would happen as a result of this difference?

Average Wait Time by Race Nationwide, Election Day, 2012

(in minutes)



Understanding the voting process is like knowing the rules of the game.

- It empowers us not only to participate, but also to influence the decisions that will shape our future.

- But how can we make learning about this process easier to understand?

There is much in the news about the tension between color-blind voting security laws, and historic structural barriers that affect voter turnout.

Students are often taught THAT they should vote.
But are they taught HOW to vote?

Challenges voters face can include:

- Few polling locations in some rural areas;
- difficulty finding time to vote if one works during polling hours;
- Few voting options in some states without early voting or mail-in voting;
- Long process of getting acceptable Voter ID in some states; and
- Strict witness, signature and notary requirements for some of the nation's most vulnerable voters.

Some citizens are eligible to vote who may not have realized they could cast ballots, like Americans who:

- have never lived in the U.S.
- move overseas and don't keep a home in the U.S.
- are deployed in a military conflict
- do not have a permanent address
- are hospitalized
- are dual citizens

Quick Check:

- What if you have two homes, from which one do you register?
- What if you live abroad, or in a different state, as a military member?
- Or maybe you're a student studying outside your home state? Even homeless?

The registration follows residence.

- Residence and domicile are funny legal concepts; basically, the state wants to see you “intend” to live there.
- For example, New York permits citizens to vote they have a “fixed” and “permanent” home in NYS to which they intend to return.
- And over half the states also require would-be voters to register by a certain cut-off deadline, generally around 30 days before an election.

Americans on the Move:

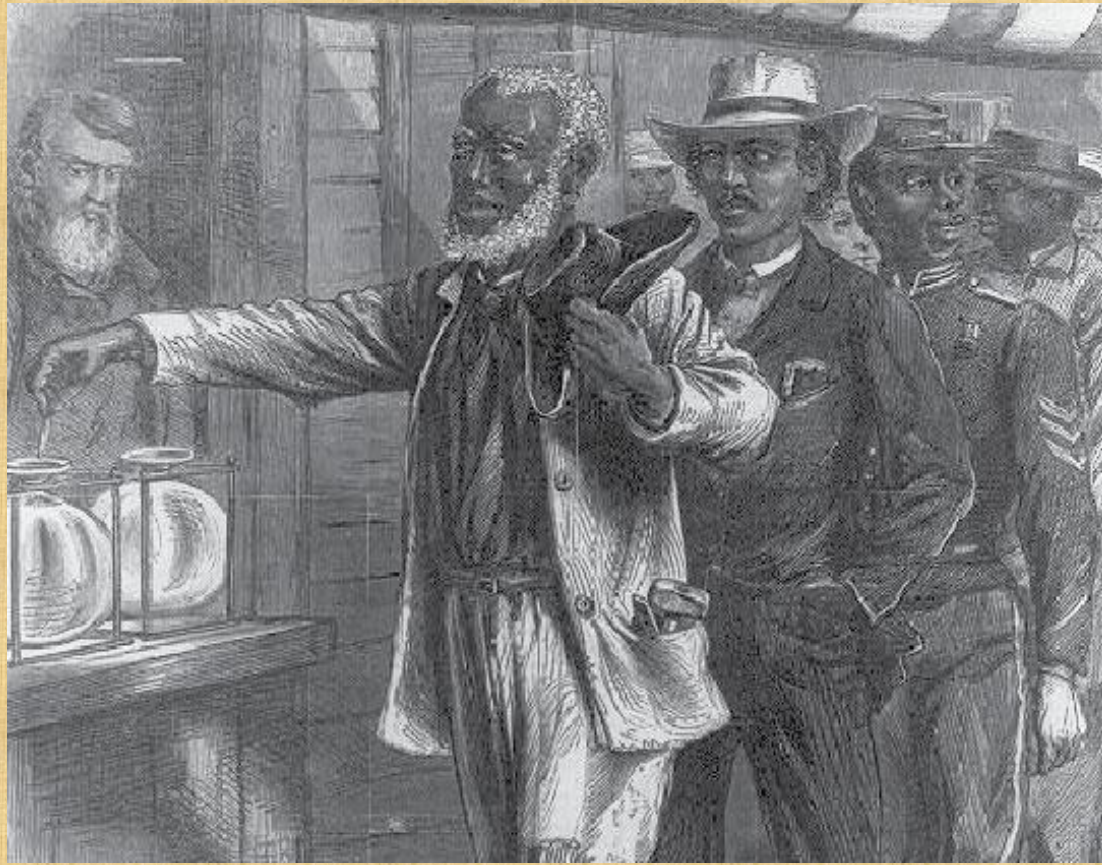
- As a citizen, your right to vote goes with you wherever in the world you might be (and for whatever reason you're there).
- So, if you move to another country, you can still vote in American elections.
- What if you're homeless? Or couch surfing with friends?
- You can register from the location where you spend the most amount of time, if you're not located at a specific address (like a shelter or friend's home).

Learning objectives - Students will:

- Learn about the importance of elections as a tool to sustain a free, just, and equal democratic society.
- Learn about the history of the voting process and the rights and responsibilities of voters in the United States.
- Learn about voter fraud and some measures to prevent it.
- Analyze the effects of some voter fraud prevention measures on various sectors of the American public.

1869: 15th Amendment

The 15th amendment gave African Americans the right to vote
However, states implemented unfair literacy tests and poll taxes to
better control who could actually vote.



Poll Tax

Background: *This section of Mississippi's 1890 Constitution imposes a poll tax on voters. The tax is levied in order to support public schools, and affects any man between the ages of 21 and 60. The only exclusions to this tax are people who are "deaf and dumb or blind, or who are maimed by loss of hand or foot." Poll taxes were established in many states. They comprised of a fee charged for voting. This fee made voting unattainable for many poor men, black and white. However, some states waived requirements for voting like poll taxes if an individual's grandfather could vote, which effectively banned black people from voting while still allowing white people to vote.*

Sec. 243. A uniform poll tax of two dollars, to be used in aid of the common schools, and for no other purpose, is hereby imposed on every male inhabitant of this State between the ages of twenty one and sixty years, except persons who are deaf and dumb or blind, or who are maimed by loss of hand or foot; said tax to be a lien only upon taxable property. The board of supervisors of any county may, for the purpose of aiding the common schools in that county, increase the poll tax in said county, but in no case shall the entire poll tax exceed in any one year three dollars on each poll. No criminal proceedings shall be allowed to enforce the collection of the poll tax.

Citation: "The Mississippi Constitution of 1890 as originally adopted." Mississippi Historical Society. Accessed April 2, 2019. <http://mshistorynow.mdah.state.ms.us/articles/103/index.php?s=extra&id=270>

ORIG

1926

WARD NO

RECEIVED OF

ADDRESS

PRECINCT

No.

5

AGE

STATE

COUNTY

CITY

YEARS

OCCUPATION

WHITE

RACE

COLORED

PAID BY

No

154

DATE

R. F. D.

BOX

SEX

MALE

FEMALE

THE SUM OF ONE AND 75/100 DOLLARS IN PAYMENT OF POLL TAX FOR THE YEAR SHOWN ABOVE THE
TAXPAYER BEING DULY SHOWN BY HE SAYS THAT THE ABOVE IS CORRECT ALL OF WHICH CERTIFY

BY

DEPUTY

TAX RECEIPT
STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HARRIS

B-101-7

Wm. S. G. [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear]
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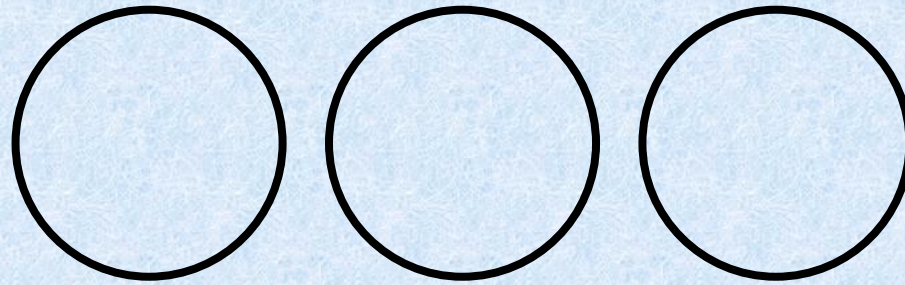
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DEPUTY

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Questions from a real literacy test:

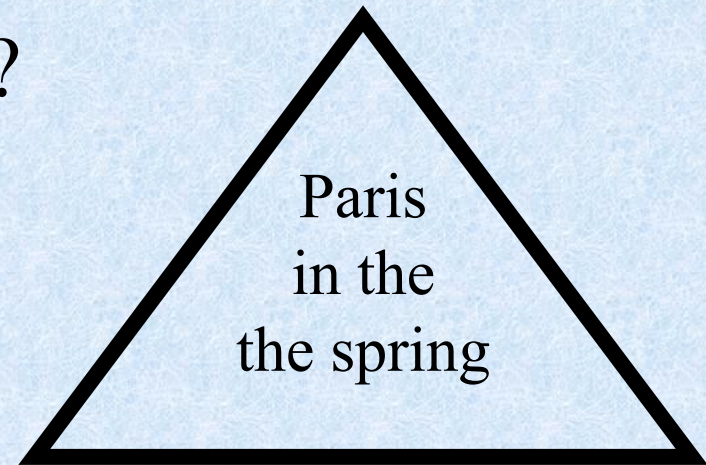
1. Draw a line around the number or letter of this sentence.
2. Circle the first, first letter of the alphabet in this line.
3. In the first circle below write the last letter of the first word beginning with “L”.



1. Write the word “noise” backwards and place a dot over what would be its second letter should it have been written forward.
1. Spell backwards, forwards.

Questions from a real literacy test

6. Print the word vote upside down, but in the correct order.
7. What do you read in the triangle below?



6. Write right from the left to the right as you see it spelled here.
7. Divide a vertical line in two equal parts by bisecting it with a curved horizontal line that is only straight at its spot bisection of the vertical.

Questions from a real literacy test

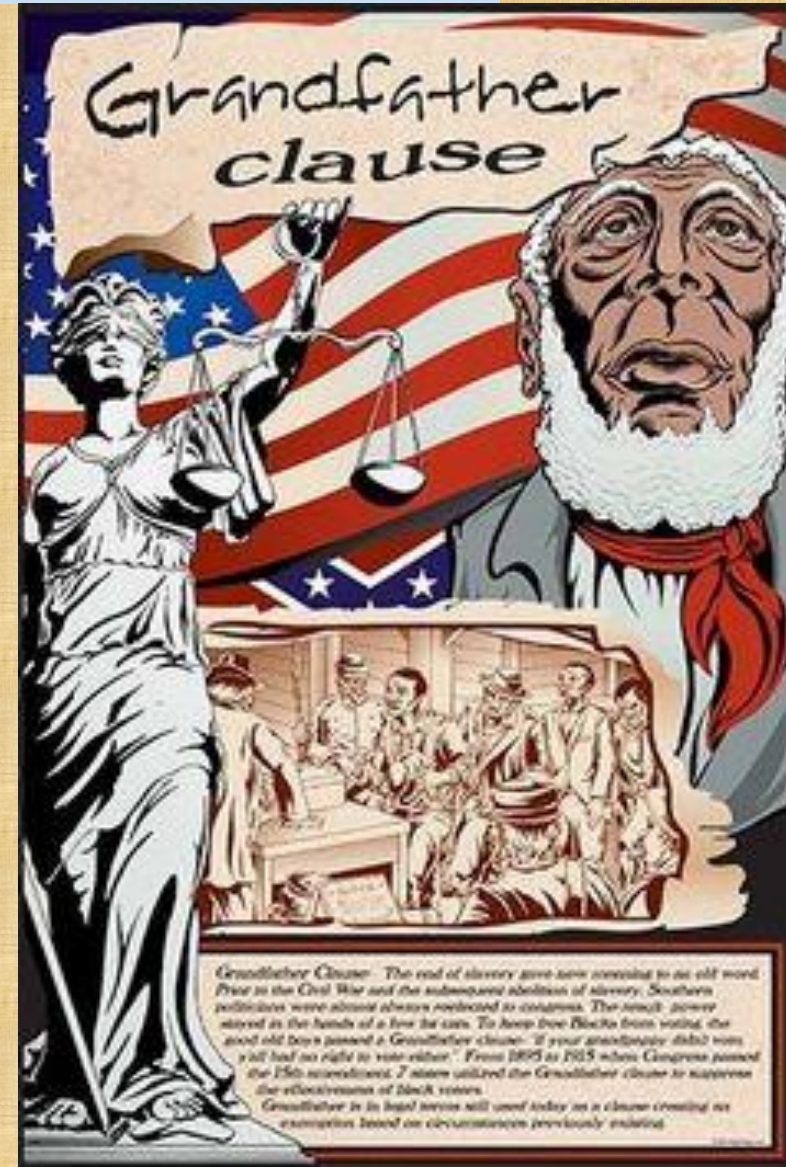
10. Will you bear arms for your country when called upon to do so?
11. Name some of the duties and obligations of citizenship.
12. In what State Senatorial District do you live, and what are the names of the counties in such district?
13. How does the Constitution of the United States provide that it may be amended?
14. Name the attorney general of the United States.
15. What does the Constitution of the United States provide regarding the suspension of the privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus?

Historical Context of Voter Suppression

1898: Grandfather clauses

Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama and Virginia pass laws saying anyone whose father or grandfather could vote before the Civil War could skip poll taxes and literacy tests

In Louisiana, the percentage of African Americans registered to vote drops from 45% to 4%



Grandfather Clause: The end of slavery gave new meaning to an old word. Prior to the Civil War and the subsequent abolition of slavery, Southern politicians were almost always selected as senators. The result: power stayed in the hands of a few big men. To keep free Blacks from voting, the good old boys passed a Grandfather clause: "If your grandfather didn't own a rail road you had no right to vote either." From 1890 to 1901 when Congress passed the 15th Amendment, 7 states utilized the Grandfather clause to suppress the effectiveness of black votes. Grandfather is in bad news still used today as a clause creating an exemption based on circumstances previously existing.

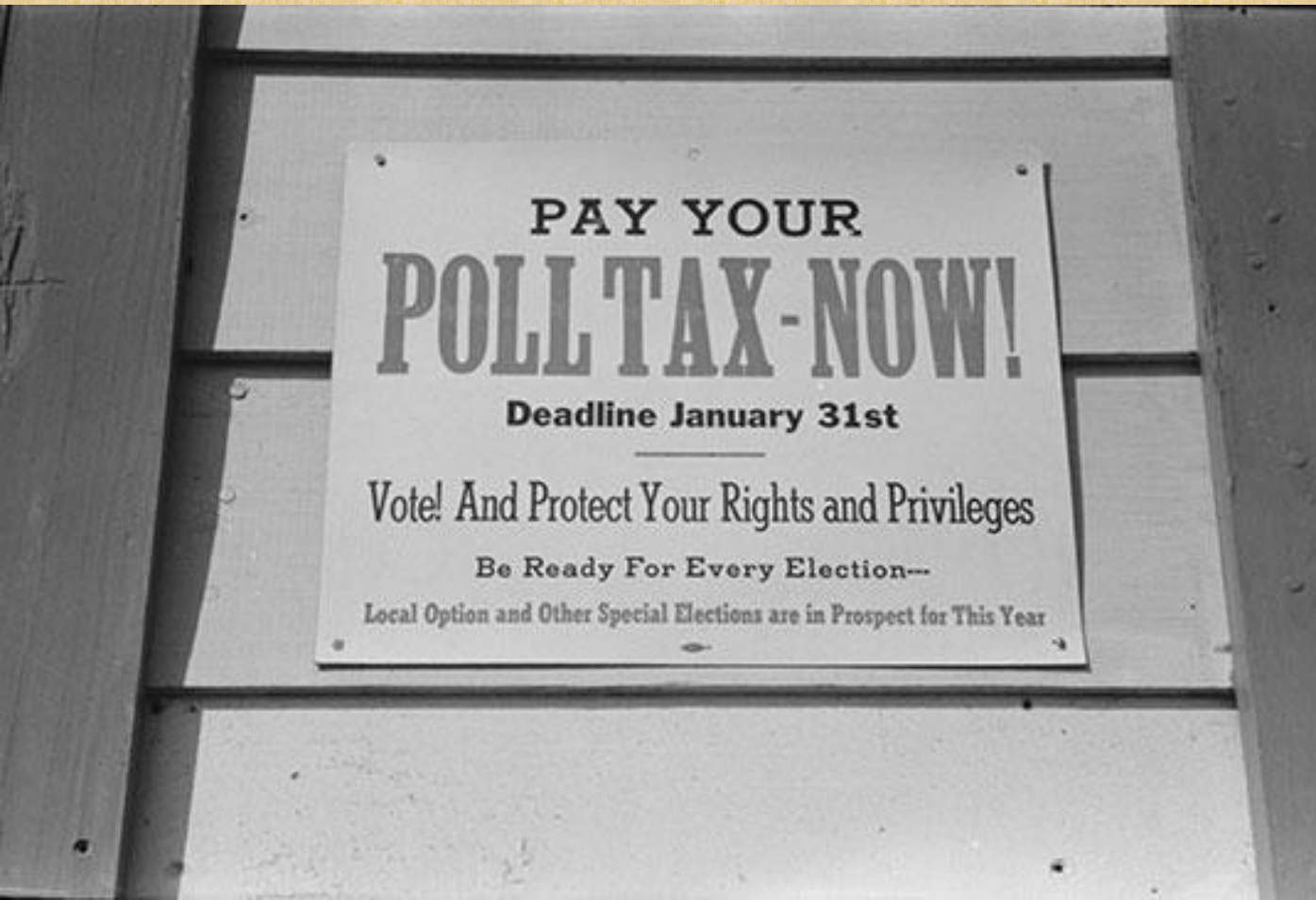
1920: 19th Amendment

The 19th Amendment gave women suffrage - the right to vote - for the first time



1964: 24th Amendment

The 24th Amendment outlawed poll taxes



1965: Selma to Montgomery
500 civil rights supporters, marching
from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama
to demand voting rights for African
Americans, are attacked by police.



1965: Voting Rights Act

The Voting Right Act outlaws
any barriers to voting based on
race

It also requires many states with a
history of discrimination to get
federal approval for any changes
to their election laws



2013: Supreme Court rules against section of the VRA

The US Supreme Court determined (in a 5-4 vote) that the way the Voting Rights Act determines which states must get approval on law changes, is unconstitutional.

Suddenly, those states with a history of voter discrimination can pass just about any voting laws they wanted.

Voter

Fraud

Voting Fraud:

There are many types of voting fraud, including:

- Impersonation
- Double voting
- Vote buying
- Absentee vote fraud
- Voting while ineligible

A conviction results in up to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine

Voting fraud – how often does it happen?

Most “voter fraud” is due to typos and other innocent errors in data

In cases where voter fraud has been reported “widespread”, sending the media into a frenzy, the rate of fraud consistently lands around .0003% - a handful of votes out of **millions**.

These are most commonly double voters (voters registered to vote in multiple counties or states) and ineligible voters who are still listed as eligible to vote.

So what kinds of IDs and proofs do you know?

- List a few here:

Voter ID Laws

Voter ID laws were passed in ~30 states to prevent **impersonation**.

Types of ID:

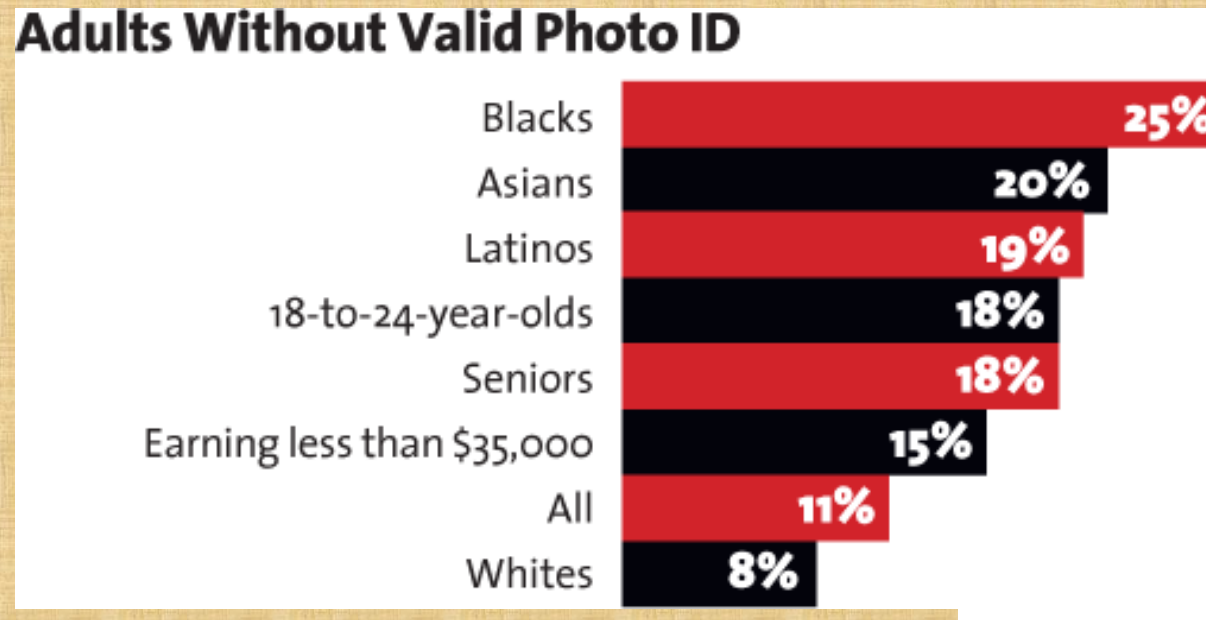
- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Social security card | - no photo, so it's not eligible |
| Passport | - expensive, less than 50% of Americans have one |
| Driver's license | - only if you have a car |
| Citizenship card | - only if you're born in another country |
| Military ID | - only if you're in the military |
| Non-driver's ID | - need birth certificate, which can be challenging if you've lost it, and usually costs money |

Impersonation – how often does it happen?

Between 2000 and 2014, there were:

- 834,000,000 votes cast in general elections
- 76,000 reported UFO sightings
- 465 Americans killed by lightning
- 31 cases of impersonation

Why do some think ID may be discriminatory?



In North Carolina in 2013:

Percentage of registered Democratic voters lacking ID: 8.9%

Percentage of registered Republican voters lacking ID: 3.4%

Is it intentional?

From a Houston Chronicle interview with Royal Masset, the former political director for Texas' Republican Party:

“Among Republicans it is an ‘article of religious faith that voter fraud is causing us to lose elections,’ Masset said. He doesn’t agree with that, but does believe that requiring photo IDs could cause enough of a drop-off in legitimate Democratic voting to add 3 percent to the Republican vote.”

Let's compare those numbers

Based on statistics from past elections, the likely number of cases of impersonation

Fewer than
10

Americans for whom it is now significantly harder to vote because of voter ID laws

More than
5,000,000

What other state laws affect voters?

- Shorter voting hours
- Earlier voter registration deadlines
- Removal of same-day voter registration
- Removal or reduction of early voting
- Restrictions on voter registration drives
- Restrictions on whether ex-felons can vote

How much does this matter?

During the 2000 Presidential election in Florida, a private organization created a list of 58,000 names that should be purged from the list of eligible voters, because they were ex-felons.

This list had a lot of mistakes.

What happens to people who may have been on this list in error? What correction is there?

How much does this matter?

After the election, the company was ordered to double-check the list.

There were 12,000 eligible voters mistakenly on the list.

President George W. Bush won Florida (and, thus, the election) by 537 votes.

Voting Modernization

It's not all bad!

Improvements over the last 20 years:

- Automatic voter registration at the DMV (five states)
- Same-day registration (fifteen states)
- Online registration (thirty-nine states, including WA)
- Early voting and absentee voting
- Electronic voting machines that aren't terrible
- Provisional ballots (2,100,000 in 2008, 62% of which were accepted)

Online voting – the future?

- Security – hacks, viruses, phishing.
- Access – 12% of Americans do not use the internet, many more don't have access at home.
- Today, Americans overseas (in the military, living abroad and **in space**) can submit absentee ballots by email.
- Countries like France, Canada and Australia have experimented with online voting, but have faced serious issues and security concerns.
- Would **you** trust an online voting process, instead of in-person?

So how do we fix this?

- 51 million eligible Americans are not registered to vote
- 3 million Americans showed up to vote in the 2008 election only to be turned away for being ineligible
- Different types of ballots and electronic voting options have different issues – which is best?