The tumultuous history of the right to vote in the U.S

Marion Douzou
January 28th, 2021.
TURNOUT SOARS, ALONG WITH SUSPENSE, AS NATION IN TUMULT DELIVERS VERDICT
How 2020 compares to other high-turnout presidential elections

As a share of the voting-eligible population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Turnout</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>60.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
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The Founding Fathers and the right to vote:

- **James Madison** (« Father of the Constitution » + president 1809-1817) “the great danger is that the majority may not sufficiently respect the rights of the Minority”

- **Andrew Jackson** - president from 1829 to 1837
This illustration, published in a newspaper in 1874, shows women gathered in protest outside a local saloon.

A large group of women and some men gathered outside of Family Groceries in Waynesville, Ohio during the Women's Temperance Crusade of 1873-1874. The women were protesting the sale of alcoholic beverages.

Source: https://ohiohistorycentral.org/w/Temperance_Movement
15th amendment

Section 1

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2

The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Birth of a nation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBzDH-Vwzy4
Selma, Ava DuVernay, 2014.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YRUUFYeOPI&feature=emb_logo
“When women, because they are women, are dragged from their houses and hung upon lamp-posts; when their children are torn from their arms, and their brains dashed upon the pavement; when they are objects of insult and outrage at every turn; when they are in danger of having their homes burnt down over their heads; when their children are not allowed to enter schools; then they will have an urgency to obtain the ballot equal to our own.”

When someone asked him, “Is that not all true about black women?”, he replied: “Yes, yes, yes; it is true of the black woman, but not because she is a woman, but because she is black.”

Frederick Douglass, annual meeting of the Equal Rights Association in May 1869

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcrGQ0npuCw
Civil Rights organizations:
Student Non-Violent Coordinating committee (SNCC)
The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)
The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

Fannie Lou Hamer
(1917-1977)
Voter suppression in the early 21st century

- Cut back early voting
- Closing of polling places
- Voter purge
- Voter ID laws
- Felon disenfranchisement

Source: https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/new-voting-restrictions-america
Source: https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/criminal-disenfranchisement-laws-across-united-states

Trailer 13th: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6IXQbXPO3I
March 1965, taken by Gill, Henry

Twitter post Stacey Abrams August 7th 2020.

Source: https://twitter.com/bennettcartoons/status/1346235641412136961
On voter suppression and the 2020 presidential election:
- Whose Vote Counts, Explained, September 28th, 2020, Netflix: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn36tY7rNUM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn36tY7rNUM)
- NJ-ACLU Cartoon Contest winner, 2012
- Episode from The Newsroom HBO: [https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2plftz](https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x2plftz)
- Daily show episode: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz640fs6q0A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gz640fs6q0A)
- Jon Oliver - Election 2020: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver- October 4th, 2020: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AytDzZ2ecCc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AytDzZ2ecCc)
- How does vote-by-mail work and does it increase election fraud?, Brookings Institution, Sep 21, 2020: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vz7d0C1cGE&feature=emb_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Vz7d0C1cGE&feature=emb_logo)

On women’s right to vote:
- 19th Amendment: 'A Start, Not A Finish' For Suffrage, NPR, August 26th, 2020: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcrGQ0npuCw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcrGQ0npuCw)
- History of voting in Washington state:

On African Americans’ access to voting:
- Fanny Lou Hamer: [https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/fannie-lou-hamer](https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/fannie-lou-hamer)
- The trailer 13th Ava Duvernay: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6lXQbXP03I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6lXQbXP03I)
- In the Heat of the Night, 1967: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIIxY-LUhkE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIIxY-LUhkE)
- Fair Fight: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XS1go5Q85Ik&list=UUYl2B5hF-SxbzQmrSOuERAA&index=2
- **For more about the history of the right to vote in the U.S:**
NJ-ACLU Cartoon Contest winner, 2012