CIRCLE Working Paper 75
Voting Laws, Education, and Youth Civic Engagement: A Literature Review

by CIRCLE staff with Haley Pero and Laura Nelson[1]

Executive Summary

Since the founding of public schools in the United States, a primary purpose of public education has been to produce capable, informed, and engaged citizens. In particular, civic education can prepare students to be *informed voters*. Unfortunately, the turnout rates and the civic knowledge of young people are unacceptably low; there are deep disparities in both turnout and civic knowledge by class, educational attainment, and race.

Governments can influence young people's rates of informed voting in two important ways: by enacting laws and policies that regulate the electoral system and by using laws and policies to influence civic education. The following findings illustrate the relationships among education, voting laws, and youth voting.

1. Young Americans' political engagement and knowledge are uneven

The turnout of young adults (18-29) varies by election, from 1 percent in the 2012 Nevada caucuses to 51% in the 2008 national election, but it is generally low compared to other nations and the voting rates of older adults. The trend since 1972 (when the voting age was lowered to 18) has been largely flat.

Civic knowledge, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Civics Assessment, is also largely unchanged and is generally considered poor, although the cutoffs for NAEP proficiency levels are a matter of judgment.

Both voting rates and civics test scores show very large gaps by class and race.

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2. Education is strongly related to political engagement

Individuals with more educational attainment vote at higher rates. In fact, according to Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry (1996), this is "the best documented finding in American political behavior research." To some extent, educational attainment may be a proxy for social status or personal motivation and ability, but some careful studies find that more education contributes to a unique positive impact (Dee, 2003; Sondheimer & Green, 2010).

Studying civics and government boosts knowledge (Niemi & Junn, 2005). All states have civics standards, and many have course or testing requirements. Most high school students who reach 12th grade have taken American Government (Niemi 2012)

Instruction devoted to civics varies widely across school districts and schools, affecting the levels and kinds of instruction different student populations receive. Prior educational success, family SES, and school SES have each been shown to independently affect the quality of civics education a student is likely to receive (Kahne & Middaugh, 2009; Levinson, 2012).

Civic education courses and programs in high school have significant, positive effects on voting after graduation (Bachner, 2010; Bachner 2011).

Extracurricular participation in high school, with the exception of sports, is positively related to voting (Thomas & McFarland, 2010).

State laws regarding civic education vary, but no evidence has been found that the variation in state laws affects student knowledge or behavior (Lopez et al., 2009).

3. Election laws have mixed effects on youth turnout

State laws regarding voting vary widely and are rapidly changing. Several states recently added or tightened requirements to present state-issued voter ID at the polls, attracting particular controversy. But other relatively recent reforms—such as Oregon's move to voting exclusively by mail—have also been momentous.

Election-Day Registration (EDR) seems to be an effective mechanism for bringing young people to the polls. Most other reforms presented as favorable to voting only modestly improve turnout. EDR's greater impact may indicate that registration, not voting per se, is the largest hurdle in electoral participation for young people. Although measures that make voting easier are more likely to retain already-engaged voters, EDR appears to *stimulate* new people to vote (Berinksy, 2005; Burden et al., 2010; but see Hanmer 2009 for a partial dissent).

When schools encourage students to register or allow 16- and 17-year-olds to "preregister," available evidence suggests an increase in turnout (McDonald, 2010).

States that mail information about polling locations and sample ballots to households seem to raise turnout significantly among less advantaged young people (Wolfinger et al., 2004).

As of 2004, 5.3 million Americans, of whom about two million are African Americans, were ineligible to vote because of state laws disenfranchising felons and ex felons (Manza & Uggen, 2006).

Felon-disenfranchisement laws not only block the turnout of those directly affected, but they seem to depress the turnout of non-felons from the same communities (Bowers & Preuhs 2009; McLeod, White & Gavin 2003).

The findings of preliminary research on measures that place *restrictions* on voting are mixed. Stringent residency requirements may dampen the participation of some college students, but voter ID requirements do not appear to have a sizable effect on turnout even though many college students and urban youth lack acceptable identification.

The lack of evidence regarding photo ID and other restrictions requires several caveats. The available research has not looked closely at youth, who may be especially affected. Many of the most controversial requirements, including the stringent photo ID laws adopted since 2010 in several states, are new and have not been studied. Finally, the identification requirements may not appear to affect turnout because populations who lack IDs have low turnout anyway; but implementing new requirements would place a ceiling on their participation.

4. How education policies and voter laws interact

State laws vary in how they approach education and election administration. These two topics are rarely treated together in the scholarly literature or in legislative debates, but it is likely that they interact with each other. For example, a law that makes voter registration more difficult would probably have less impact in a state that also requires students to study elections in high school and allows them to “pre-register.”

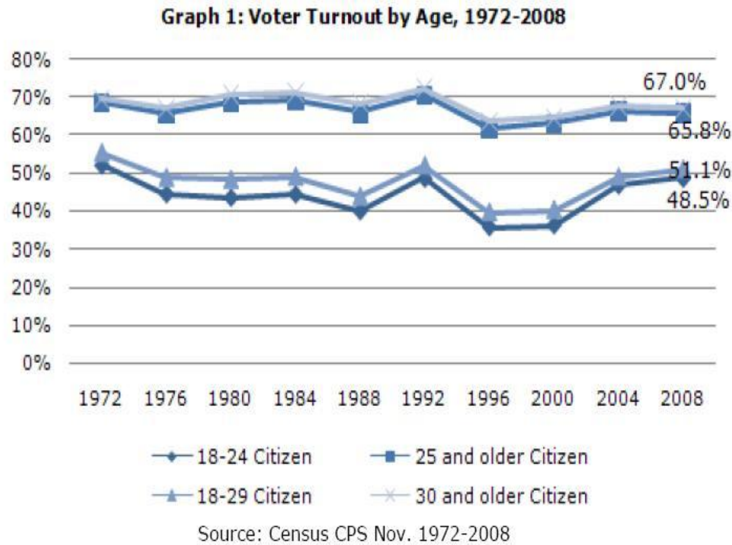
5. Normative (philosophical and legal) issues

This draft literature review emphasizes empirical social science, specifically peer-reviewed (or other highly credible) studies that treat youth turnout and/or political knowledge as the dependent variables. However, the issues that we consider here are not simply empirical. They also raise complex and contested philosophical and legal questions. Thus many works from philosophy and constitutional law are relevant. Although we have not attempted a full review of those sources, we do cite several normative perspectives and selected sources.

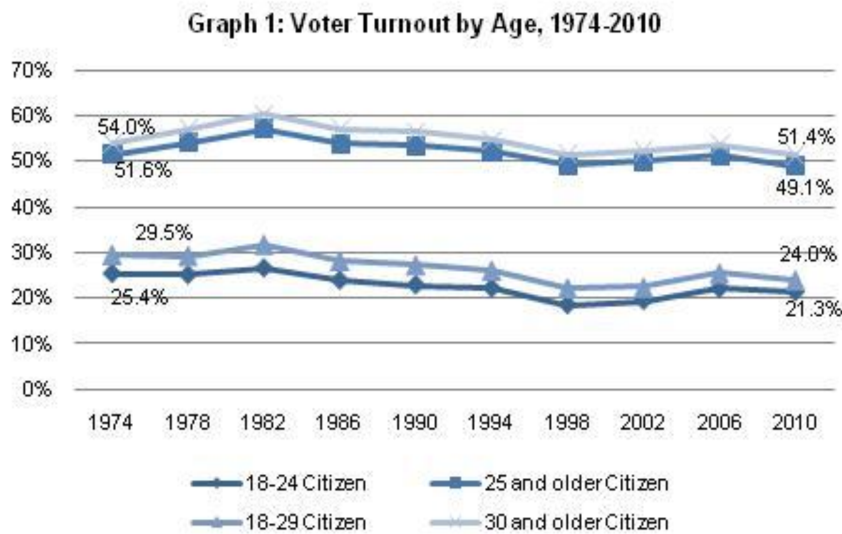
Review of Literature

1. Young Americans' political engagement and knowledge are uneven

The voting age was lowered to 18 in time for the 1972 election. That election drew relatively high turnout, but voting rates of young people began to dip in 1996 and 2000. All other elections since 1972 have posted youth turnout in a narrow range, between 45% and 51% for 18-29s.



In off-year elections, youth turnout has not varied very much since the voting age was lowered, but the trend is downward.



These graphs of national turnout conceal large differences by state and by type of contest. Just one percent of eligible young adults participated in the 2012 Nevada caucuses (CIRCLE estimation, 2012), compared to 51% turnout in the 2008 national presidential election. There are also very substantial differences by state and community in a given election (Kirby & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2009).

Civic knowledge, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Civics Assessment, is also largely unchanged since the 1970s and is generally considered poor. Only 24 percent of twelfth graders scored at "proficient" on the 2010 NAEP Civics Assessment (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). Although the designated cutoffs for the "basic," "proficient," and "advanced" categories are subjective, the trend in mean scores is flat.

NAEP Civics scores are strongly correlated with parental educational attainment and family's socioeconomic background (NCES 2011). NAEP does not measure students' educational attainment well, because every student who takes the assessment has reached the same grade level. However (as discussed below), voting is strongly correlated with young adults' educational attainment.

Correlations with race are more complex, as African American youth vote at approximately the same rates as whites despite having lower average educational attainment and lower average NAEP civics scores. Using an overall index suggests that education and race are both predictors of civic engagement, with whites ahead of African Americans and Latinos citizens substantially behind (Jacobsen & Linkow, 2012).

Instruction devoted to civics varies widely across locales, and different student populations receive different levels and kinds of instruction. Prior educational success, family SES, and school SES have all been shown to independently affect the quality of civics education a student receives (Kahne and Middaugh, 2009).

2. Education is strongly related to political engagement

The correlation between educational attainment and voting is strong, is consistently found in all studies, and usually survives controls for other demographic variables (e.g., Verba, Schlozman & Brady, 1995). Sondheimer and Green (2010) say that this relationship has been found in "literally thousands of cross-sectional surveys" since 1924.

Over the course of the 20th century, average educational attainment rose gradually and consistently. The relationship between education and voting remained strong during those decades, but turnout did not rise in tandem with education. On the contrary, the turnout of white men was considerably higher in 1900 than it is today. The divergence between educational attainment and turnout trends has led Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry (1996), among others, to believe that education is mostly a proxy for relative social status. Education does not increase turnout but rather defines a high-SES group that votes at a relatively high rate. (See also Campbell, 2009).

Although this position remains tenable, recent research has identified positive returns from education. In a study using child labor laws and the availability of local community colleges as instrumental variables, Dee (2003) finds that educational attainment has a unique positive effect on youth turnout. The increases are "plausibly concentrated among students with poorly educated parents"; thus, improving educational success might reduce inequality in voting as well as raise the total amount of voting. Sondheimer and Green (2010) note that they were initially skeptical that the correlation between education and voting was causal. However, they took advantage of three prior experimental interventions that had raised educational attainment and examined voting rates in the treatment and control groups. They found that "a high school dropout with a 15.6% chance of voting would have a 65.2% chance of turnout if randomly induced to graduate from high school" by means of an intervention such as the Perry Pre-School Experiment.

3. Civic education boosts knowledge and engagement

Civic education is broadly understood as any effort to educate young people about civic participation. Forms of civic education are wide-ranging, including courses on American government and civics as well as experiential activities offered by schools or community organizations.

Despite lamentations that civic education is not as robust in public schools as it once was, requirements to teach civic material or offer at least one civics/government-related course do, in fact, exist in all fifty states (Lennon, 2006). Most high school students who reach 12th grade have taken American government. Yet civic education requirements and accountability measures vary significantly, with the best experiences generally reserved for advantaged students (Kahne & Middaugh, 2009; Levinson, 2012). However, civic education is prevalent.

Some schools offer traditional civics courses that teach students the basics of democracy and American government. Others have implemented hybrid curricula that aim to be both practical and conceptual. These programs typically aim to equip students with the civic skills necessary to be active participants in society, seeking to show students the relevance of government and elections in their lives as they develop their civic identities.

Bachner (2010; 2011) analyzes the National Educational Longitudinal Studies of 1988 and 2002, using a strong set of controls. She finds that a year of American government coursework in high school boosts voter turnout for a decade after graduation, with the biggest effects (7-11 percentage points) found on students whose parents are not politically active. Niemi and Junn had also found positive effects on knowledge.

Apart from these studies, most research on civic education and voting is limited to evaluations of particular programs, but such research is still useful in that it provides insights into the potential of such courses.

One such study is Kahne, Chi, and Middaugh's (2006) examination of the CityWorks program in Los Angeles. This innovative curriculum focuses on making government relevant by engaging students in simulations of interactions with government at the local level. Although researchers did not measure the program's direct impact on participants' voting propensities, their research indicated that the program was effective in generating a greater sense of civic engagement. In particular, CityWorks not only fostered justice-oriented citizenship, but also participatory citizenship, the latter being of particular interest to the discussion of education's impact on youth voting. In contrast to more traditional civics courses, CityWorks' success may be attributed in part to its focus on personal relevance: this and similar programs "can help students envision themselves as civic and political actors and adopt related identities" (Kahne et al., 2006, p. 402).

A study that has taken a somewhat closer look at the link between civic education and voting is McDevitt and Kiousis's (2006) assessment of the Kids Voting USA (KVUSA) program. This CIRCLE-funded research consisted not only of interviews and focus groups with student participants and their parents over an extended period of time (2002-2004) but also included a quantitative analysis of voting records in the four counties (in Florida, Colorado, and Arizona) where the curriculum was taught. The program, described as an "interactive, election-based curriculum" (p. 2), offers a holistic approach to civic education: students in the program follow news coverage, dissect political ads, organize get-out-the-vote drives, interview parents to discover their voting habits, learn about the history of voting rights, and even volunteer with campaigns. Researchers found that this "synergistic strategy" (p. 8), encompassing multiple spheres of students' lives, helped engrain important civic norms into young people. Though voting was only one of fourteen dimensions of civic development measured in this study, McDevitt and Kiousis found that KVUSA had a positive, albeit indirect, effect on voting and other facets of civic development that lasted for at least two years after the course. The authors characterized the KVUSA as "a successful catalyst for deliberative democracy" (p. 35) and a program that helped stimulate "discussion networks" both in school and, perhaps more importantly, at home. It was through this deliberative behavior that voting propensities were positively affected; in 2004, for example, official records showed that approximately 73% of past participants had voted.

Syversten and colleagues (2009) studied the Student Voices program, using a randomized test in 80 classrooms (Syvertsen, Stout, Flanagan, Mitra, Oliver, & Sundar, 2009). They found significant positive effects on students' knowledge of the voter registration process, self-reported knowledge of politics, confidence in their ability to vote, belief in the importance of voting, use of news media, and discussion of politics. Students did not demonstrate increased intention to vote or otherwise participate politically, implying that some additional support may be needed to move them to action. A previous study of the ssme program had also found positive effects on students' efficacy (Pasek, Feldman, Romer, & Jamieson, 2008).

A fourth program that has linked school-based civic education to civic participation is We the People (overview in Soule & Nairne, 2009). Produced by the Center for Civic Education, this program was almost exclusively funded by the federal government for many years until its

earmark was ended in 2012. It was the only major federally funded civics program. Evaluations were problematic, because they relied on self-reported data from classrooms chosen by the Center; nevertheless extremely high levels of participation were found. In the 2004 election, for example, 92% of respondents eligible to vote reported doing so, and 85% indicated that they had cast a ballot in all previous elections in which they were eligible (Soule, 2005). Program alumni boasted an even higher turnout rate in 2008: 95% self-reported voting (and 76% voted in previous elections).

The *Civic Mission of Schools* report (Gibson & Levine, 2003) and other documents supported by the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools treat classroom instruction on politics and government and school-based discussions of controversial issues as but two of six "promising practices" in civic education. The others are: service-learning, student voice in school governance, games and simulations, and participation in extracurricular clubs and associations. In general, research on the effects of these interventions on voting is scarce. However, in theory, they might contribute to students' sense of belonging to a desirable political community and hence their propensity to vote. Thomas and McFarland (2010) find that participation in extracurricular activities, in general, promotes voting, though some activities (notably, some sports) decrease it. Gardner, Roth, and Brooks-Gunn (2008) find that participating in school-sponsored extracurricular activities for at least two years is associated with a 25% increase in the voting rate two years after high school.

Several studies support the general theory that "youth voice" in classrooms and schools encourages political participation, probably because the school models the broader political community for students. Within classrooms, teachers can provide opportunities to build various civic skills by creating opportunities for open exchange of opinions (Campbell, 2008a, 2008b; Torney-Purta, Lechman, Oswald, Schultz & Barrett, 2002), scaffolded discussions of controversial issues (Hess, 2009), and "teaching moments" for civic skills such as conflict resolution, collaborative decision-making and tolerance for different opinions. Teachers also play a key role in creating a democratic environment among peers by modeling democratic behaviors themselves, which is related to a sense of belonging (Meier, 2002). School, as an institution, also plays a role in development of civic efficacy and motivation (Gibson & Levine, 2003) by, for example, providing supportive authority and rule structures (Torney-Purta, 2002) and positive peer civic norms (Campbell, 2005).

These daily interactions and pedagogical methods have powerful cumulative effects over time. Research using a variety of methods but generally incorporating controls for socioeconomic background finds that students who attend schools with positive school climate can develop a positive sense of belonging, connection to peers, trust in institutions and eventually in broader society and its democratic system (Berman, 1997; Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, 1998). The connection to school and a perception of school as a fair and supportive system is related to a perception of just society, stronger sense of civic commitment (Kahne & Sporte, 2008; Torney-Purta et al., 2002), intent to intervene when peers have dangerous plans (Syversten, Flanagan & Stout, 2009), and also to civic behaviors such as voting (Campbell, 2005) and volunteering (Putnam, 2000). Dill (2009) finds that private schools have a positive effect on

voting (net of demographic factors) which, if the controls in his study are adequate to account for background factors, may suggest that the "climate and context" of private schools is generally more favorable for civic development (p. 1282). That claim is consistent with the premise that school climate matters.

Campbell (2005, 2008a) argues that adolescence is an especially important time in life for the adoption of norms about civic engagement, and therefore civic norms in high school should affect voting behavior in adulthood. Campbell finds that students who attend schools where a high proportion of students believe that voting is characteristic of good citizenship are more likely to believe that they will become civically active, and more importantly, they are more likely to vote as adults by seven percentage points (results are based on students followed 15 years after graduation, now in their mid-thirties).

Little research has been conducted on the impact of state education *policies* on civic outcomes. A major reason is a lack of reliable civic outcome data at the state level. NAEP civics scores are available for the national student population only. However, a national survey of 100,000 students' knowledge of the First Amendment and their support for First Amendment rights allowed us to investigate the impact of state civic education policies on those outcomes, controlling for a host of variables. No significant effects were found, even though state standards varied in how they treated First Amendment issues (Lopez et al., 2009). That study raises doubts about whether existing state laws are effective instruments for changing civic outcomes.

4. Election officials and agencies may be effective civic educators

State and local election officials can serve as educators if they administer policies designed to inform voters. In many other countries, notably Canada and the Nordic democracies, election officials are nonpartisan administrators who have the responsibility and the resources to educate citizens widely about the voting process (Milner 2010). In the United States, election officials—Secretaries of State and local administrators—tend to be elected in partisan contests or appointed by incumbent officeholders, and they have limited responsibility for public education. But some states entrust some educational responsibilities to their Secretaries of State.

Wolfinger, Highton, and Mullen (2004) find that providing information about voting locations and sample ballots may increase youth turnout, particularly among certain subpopulations. Although overall turnout was just 2.5 percentage points higher in states that mailed registrants polling location information, and two percentage points higher in states that mailed registrants sample ballots, these initiatives appeared to have a greater impact on two demographic groups: younger voters and less-educated voters (Wolfinger et al., 2004, p. 8).

In states that mailed ballots, absolute turnout was 5.7 percentage points higher in among registered 18-to-24 year-olds than in other states (Wolfinger et al., 2004, p. 9). Multivariate analysis of the effect yielded only one substantial interaction, but it was a large one: a 7.1

percentage point rise among 18-to-24 year-olds who do not live with their parents (Wolfinger et al., 2004, p. 10).

The other significantly affected demographic group was young people without a high school diploma. States that mailed information about the polling place location saw 7.4 percent higher absolute turnout, and states that mailed a sample ballot had 6.2 percent higher (Wolfinger et al., 2004, p. 8). The authors estimate the turnout effect to be 2.9 points from polling place information, and 3.9 points from sample ballots (Wolfinger et al., 2004, p. 9) for those without a high-school diploma.

These findings support the hypothesis that information has the greatest effect on those who are less likely to obtain it from other sources. Such initiatives can "provide potentially useful information that is likely to be especially informative—if not reassuring—to those facing their first visit to a precinct polling place. Seeing a complete list of candidate races and ballot questions in the format that will appear 'behind the curtain' might reduce the uncertainty associated with voting for the first time," explains Wolfinger et al. (2004, p. 9). According to the authors' estimates, implementing post-registration "best practices" (mailing information and extending poll hours) nationwide would boost youth turnout by close to 7 points, and turnout among the least educated by 7.5 points (Wolfinger et al., 2004, p. 12).

5. Voting laws have mixed impact

Many argue (see Downs, 1957) that an individual will vote when the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. Since it is commonly believed that the costs of voting are already higher for young people—who are new to the voting process, likely to have multiple addresses, and likely to move frequently—it follows that raising or lowering such costs through election reform may have a particularly strong impact on this group.

Voting laws have been changing rapidly of late. Several states recently added or tightened requirements to present state-issued voter ID at the polls, attracting particular controversy (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2012). But other relatively recent reforms—such as Oregon's move to voting exclusively by mail—have also been significant. One factor that makes the impact of laws difficult to measure is that states with high turnout and favorable climates to political participation are generally the ones that adopt permissive voting laws. Thus the mere correlation between convenient voting and turnout does not show that the former causes the latter (Hanmer 2009).

State reforms can be broadly grouped into three categories:

1. Reforms that aim to engage young people well before Election Day (pre-registration of 16- and 17-year-olds, high school registration for eighteen-year-olds, registration by mail for newly-eligible voters);

2. Reforms that promise to make the casting of one's ballot easier (Election-Day Registration, "convenience voting" – generally understood to include reforms such as early in-person voting, voting by mail, absentee voting, etc.); and
3. Reforms that place stricter regulations on who may vote (typically regarding registration and identification requirements).

The first two types of reforms are often seen as lowering barriers to registering to vote and casting a ballot. The third category includes measures that are typically proposed as ways to ensure the integrity of elections, with critics arguing that such reforms unnecessarily and unfairly raise the costs of voting and effectively limit the participation of groups such as students and other young people.

Election reforms that engage high school students before elections

Some high schools intervene to encourage young people to become voters. Common interventions include:

a. **High School Registration**: Initiatives may range from making voter registration forms available to high school students to more comprehensive programs that incorporate voter education and registration drives.
b. **Preregistration**: In some states, individuals who are 16 or 17 years old may complete all the necessary steps for voter registration. Preregistered young people can then be "activated" as registered voters when they become eligible to vote at age eighteen.

Both opportunities typically occur in public high schools as joint efforts between school and local election officials. We consider them together.

It may be especially important to engage potential voters while they are still in high school. Voting is habit-forming (Gerber, Green, & Shachar, 2003; Plutzer, 2001). Franklin (2004) finds that the turnout rate in the election when a cohort first becomes eligible to vote has a lasting effect on that group's voting participation. He argues that lowering the voting age to 18 depressed turnout in the Western democracies because it meant that people became eligible to vote at a time when they were relatively unlikely to vote, since they were separated from older adults, likely to move, and relatively uninformed about politics. Getting high school students registered or pre-registered could help. Unlike recent high school graduates, current high school students typically still live at home and are enrolled in institutions that can deliberately inform them about voting and encourage them to participate.

Project Vote conducted a survey of election and school board officials in all fifty states. Results from the survey showed that programs vary from one jurisdiction to another in terms of creation, scope, and costs (Herman and Forbes, 2010). More than half (53%) of respondents indicated that their programs were created through individual initiative, while only a minority of programs were the result of legislation or official mandates. Wisconsin recently repealed a state law requiring schools to provide voter registration information (Senate Bill 386, 2012).

Election and school officials employ a variety of methods in their programs, with the most basic and most common being simply sharing registration forms with eligible students. However, voter education is also incorporated into a number of programs nationwide, taking forms such as mock elections, poll worker recruitment drives, presentations by election administrators, and assemblies. Although few respondents were able to provide information on the costs of their high school voter registration programs, the general finding was that costs were negligible.

Since only 10% of states have pre-registration programs, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the impact of such programs. However, preliminary research in Florida and Hawaii by Michael P. McDonald and Matthew Thornburg provides some insights into this reform. Although far less than half of young people eligible to preregister actually do so, those who do generally have a turnout rate approximately two to three percentage points higher than those who register when they turn eighteen. Florida preregistrants turned out at a 4.7 percentage points higher rate in the 2008 election than young voters who registered after they turned eighteen (McDonald and Thornburg 2010, p. 565-6). Preregistration may be particularly important for young minority preregistrants, who tend to vote at higher rates than white preregistrants. Moreover, preregistration appears to have positive and persistent effects on long-term voting habits.

Cherry argues that preregistration should be national policy (2012), and that it is both "constitutional and politically viable" (p.514). The variation in state laws can be confusing for first-time voters, she argues, who may not rely on locally-based news sources. In addition, Cherry argues that preregistration should be available at schools, departments of motor vehicles, and public assistance agencies.

Reforms that make voting easier

This section considers reforms that are intended to lower the time, information, effort, or other "costs" required to vote. We categorize those reforms under two main headings:

a) **Election-Day Registration** means allowing individuals to register to vote on Election Day at their polling locations. Combining registration and voting into one transaction, those who have missed standard registration deadlines are able to cast a ballot on Election Day. Though the two terms are often used interchangeably, Same-Day Registration (SDR) is somewhat broader. It means the option to register and vote on the same day even if it is earlier than Election Day.
b) **"Convenience Voting"** is broadly understood as any method of casting a ballot other than at a polling place on Election Day. It may mean allowing people to vote in-person before Election Day, by mail, or absentee without an excuse.

a) Election Day Registration: Many scholars (including Alvarez, Ansolabehere, & Wilson, 2002) have observed that the American electoral system is unusual in requiring individuals to complete two distinct steps—registering and then actually casting their ballot—in order to

vote. Many states close the registration period well before Election Day even though interest in the campaign typically peaks just before the end. Although voter registration is determined by states and not the federal government, 49 states (all but North Dakota) require it.

A 2006 survey (Alvarez, Hall, & Llewellyn, 2006) found that nearly 90% of respondents did not consider registering to vote a difficult task. Although only a small minority of individuals polled found voter registration to be challenging, it is important to note that these respondents were typically younger, less educated, and non-white. Thus, subpopulations may be more affected by changes in the registration laws. People who have never voted before seem likely to find registration a difficult hurdle.

CIRCLE (Godsay, 2010) confirmed that young people are daunted by the registration process. Although a lack of interest and involvement in politics was the top reason given for not voting in 2008 among both young people (41 percent) and those 30 and over (40 percent), nearly twice as many young people cited not meeting registration deadlines (21 percent) as a barrier to voting as did their older counterparts (12 percent).

EDR saves young people from having to know the closing date of registration. Moreover, allowing young people to "opt in" to the electoral process on Election Day may change whether and how campaigns reach out to youth voters in the closing weeks of a race (Alvarez et al., 2002; Burden, Canon, Mayer, & Moynihan, 2010; Fitzgerald, 2003).

Indeed, some research has suggested that EDR can have a significant positive effect on turnout, particularly among young people (Alvarez et al., 2002; Fitzgerald, 2003; Kawashima-Ginsberg, Nover, & Kirby, 2009). Early estimates by Alvarez et al. (2002) put the impact of EDR at twelve percentage points among those between the ages of 18 to 25—nearly the same as Leighley and Nagler's (2009) estimated 12.1 percentage point turnout increase for 18- to 24-year olds—while CIRCLE (Kirby et al., 2008) reports that EDR increases youth voter turnout by an estimated fourteen percentage points in presidential years and by an estimated four percentage points in midterm congressional elections (citing CIRCLE-funded research by Fitzgerald, 2003). States that offer EDR are often among the highest in youth turnout: three of the top four states for turnout in 2008 have enacted EDR, and EDR states' collective turnout rate was 9 percentage points higher than in non-EDR states: 59% compared to 50% (Kawashima-Ginsberg et al., 2009).

That is a significant difference, but it is also true that the EDR states have traditions of favoring political participation that long pre-date EDR (Fitzgerald, 2001; Fitzgerald, 2003). Hanmer argues that much of the apparent impact of EDR can be explained away by properly accounting for the fact that states with friendly attitudes to voting are the ones that adopt this reform. He nevertheless concludes that EDR raises turnout by roughly four percentage points (Hanmer, 2009, p. 104).

CIRCLE's model found that youth without college experience were the most likely to benefit from EDR (a ten percentage point increase), whereas African-American youth were the least likely to be affected (their turnout rate was high in 2008 across the nation) (Kawashima-

Ginsberg et al., 2009). Again, Hanmer partially dissents, arguing that "the lack of differentiation across age categories is remarkable (Hanmer, 2009, p. 160). But even in his model, 18-21-year olds benefit most.

If EDR has a substantial positive effect, it is unclear whether that is primarily direct or indirect (Berinsky, 2005 and Burden et al., 2012). EDR simplifies the registration process, which may cause people to vote who would not have done so otherwise. At the same time, because EDR allows people to vote even if they first become interested in a campaign during its closing weeks, this reform may encourage more "get-out-the-vote" efforts by parties and other groups. A 2003 study measured the likelihood that young people would be contacted by a political party in EDR states, and it was found that parties were in fact more likely (11 to 18 percentage points) to reach out to youth in states with such laws (Fitzgerald). This contact could be crucial to increasing turnout, as young people are more likely to vote if they are asked to do so, according to Green and Gerber (2008). In an EDR state, candidates may reach out and pay more attention to the interests of young potential voters, a possibility that could bring more young people into the "virtuous circle" of political participation for the first time. Thus, EDR may not only reduce the costs of involvement for youth, but it may also make them a viable and worthwhile voting bloc for candidates to court.

b) "Convenience voting": Such reforms alter the time and place in which a person votes and include such options as early in-person voting, vote by mail (VBM), and absentee balloting, among others. For the most part, the recent trend is to repeal such measures. For example, Georgia, Florida and Ohio (pending) have cut their early voting periods by half.

Research suggests that convenience voting has marginal effects on turnout. Gronke, Galanes-Rosenbaum, Miller, and Toffey (2008) conclude that convenience voting generally increases overall turnout by two to four percentage points. Though hardly resounding, this effect does indicate that some convenience voting measures may boost participation.

CIRCLE research conducted by Fitzgerald (2003) found early voting to have a statistically non-significant impact on participation, and an analysis of 2008 data failed to find any difference between turnout in early voting and non-early voting states (Kawashima-Ginsberg et al., 2009). Although 24% of youth 18-29 did take advantage of early voting where available in the last presidential election, the reform failed to engage new voters in the process (Kawashima-Ginsberg et al., 2009).

Some research on early voting has even shown that it has the potential to *decrease* overall turnout (not necessarily youth turnout specifically, however). Burden et al. (2012) found that early voting alone may reduce turnout by three percentage points, based on their analysis of county-level data from the 2008 election. Their explanation why a reform that aims to reduce the costs of voting in fact lowers participation hinges on the idea that convenience voting does little to *stimulate* new voters, as it instead simply *retains* already engaged and informed voters (terms from Berinsky, 2005, in Burden et al., 2012) who would have voted anyway. Moreover,

early voting de-emphasizes Election Day, which, according to Burden et al. (2012), has the consequence of reducing excitement and thus overall turnout.

Voting by mail is another form of convenience voting that may affect voter turnout. However, likely due to the limited number of states that have extensive vote-by-mail (VBM) provisions and the variety of forms this type of convenience voting can take, little research exists to explore turnout effects outside of Oregon. Further study of this reform is needed to understand if and how it might affect youth voter turnout.

Absentee voting means allowing people to vote by mail. It may be especially relevant for young people who, as students, live away from home. Like other forms of convenience voting, it does not significantly change turnout rates, nor does it mobilize new voters (Karp & Banducci, 2001; Fitzgerald, 2003). Kawashima-Ginsberg et al. (2009) did find that no-excuse absentee balloting states had a slightly higher youth turnout rate in 2008 than states that only allowed voters to use absentee ballots with a valid reason. Fitzgerald (2003) determined that unrestricted absentee balloting increased turnout, but only during midterm elections (by four percentage points). Like other forms of convenience voting, absentee voting appears to be an attractive option for young people (with 23% voting this way in no-excuse states in 2008, according to Kawashima-Ginsberg et al., 2009), but one that is most often utilized by voters who would turn out regardless of the option.

Other measures extend the hours when polling places are open or provide workers with time off to cast their ballots. CIRCLE found that while time off had no measurable effect on youth voter turnout, extending poll hours did boost the turnout of young part-time workers by five percentage points (Kawashima-Ginsberg et al., 2009). Again, while this is increase is not substantial enough to fundamentally address the voter turnout problem of young people, it is important to consider this reform as a valuable way to engage a small but important piece of the youth electorate.

5. Reforms that place restrictions on registering and voting

Some reforms make registering or voting more difficult and are often justified as anti-fraud measures. Many are new: the Brennan Institute for Justice website indicates that 21 laws have been passed since the beginning of 2011 that in some way make voting more difficult. The following categories of reforms belong under that general heading:

a) Requirements to present government approved photo identification when voting;
b) Felon and ex-felon disenfranchisement;
c) Restrictions on voting away from home that may affect college students;
d) Provisions requiring people to be dropped from registration files under various circumstances; and
e) Rules governing individuals and groups who register voters

a) Voter ID Requirements: Some states require voters to provide proof of identification beyond the requirements outlined by the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (which simply requires a document, such as a utility bill, that shows one's residence, for people who register by mail and do not provide this information at the time of registration).

Since the 2010 election, seven states have passed new laws requiring people to show specific forms of government−approved photo identification when they vote. Similar legislation was considered in 26 other states. In some cases, photo identification issued by state universities is not acceptable.

In *Crawford v. Marion County Election Board* (2008), the Supreme Court considered whether requiring voters to show photo ID was a reasonable burden whose potential cost was justified by the imperative to ensure election integrity. The Court upheld election administrators' right to require state-issued photo ID. It "[found] the burden on voters [was] offset by the benefit of reducing the risk of fraud" (*Crawford v. Marion* syllabus, 2008, p. 1). Though the ruling of the lower court was upheld, many questions about the impact—or lack thereof—of voter ID remain.

Opponents contend that there is little evidence of fraud to justify levying the cost of ID on subpopulations that may not be able to afford it. In an *amicus* brief filed by the Brennan Center for Justice and others on behalf of the plaintiffs in *Crawford v. Marion*, impersonation fraud was argued to be "highly unlikely and exceedingly rare" (2007, p. 11), citing evidence from a study conducted by Minnite and Callahan (2003).

Although people on both sides of the debate have offered impassioned reasoning for their positions, actual empirical evidence to bolster their cases remains elusive (Pastor, Santos, Provost, & Gueorguieva, 2008; Vercelloti & Anderson, 2006). Doug Chapin, then-director of the Election Initiatives division at the Pew Center on the States, says, "Election policy debates like photo ID and same-day registration have become so fierce around the country because they are founded more on passionate belief than proven fact…. One side is convinced fraud is rampant; the other believes that disenfranchisement is widespread. Neither can point to much in the way of evidence to support their position, so they simply turn up the volume" (Quoted in the Washington Post, March 8, 2011).

Two questions are frequently examined: who has ID and who turns out to vote when ID requirements are in place.

First, some segments of the electorate are indeed less likely to possess ID or have easy access to ID and will thus be disproportionately affected by laws that require such ID to vote. But estimates of the size of this problem vary widely:

- Twenty-percent of 18-29 year olds and 18% of 65+ year olds lack a government-issued photo ID (Amicus Brief for Rock the Vote; see also the Brennan Center for Justice).

- According to Pawasarat (2005), just 47%of African American adults in Milwaukee County and 43% of Hispanic adults held valid driver's licenses, versus 85% of white adults in the rest of the state. Further, only two percent of students in residence halls at University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Marquette University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison held driver's licenses that showed their college towns as their residences. If they had to show their driver's licenses to vote in their college towns, they would be blocked from voting.
- Barreto, Nuno, and Sanchez's (2009) analysis of registered voters in Indiana confirms that younger, older, less-educated, lower-income, and minority individuals are less likely to have the required photo ID. Only 78% of registered voters in Indiana between the ages of 18 and 34 have the ID necessary to vote in that state, below the rates of all other age groups (Barreto et al., 2009). Thus, an estimated 22% of voters under 35 would be turned away at the polls, based on these findings. However, it must be noted that the sample size for young voters in this study was 46 (from a larger sample of 500).
- Hood and Bullock (2007) noted disparities in the possession of identification across the population when examining the effect of photo ID requirements in Georgia – however, young people were not one of the groups with below-average levels of identification. Mycoff, Wagner, & Wilson (2009) acknowledge that first-time voters may be affected by ID laws, as they may lack proper identification or the information on requirements. However, they argue that the impact of voter ID overall is minimal and that other factors, such as an interest in politics and the competitiveness of an election, may "mediate" such an effect.
- A survey of three states conducted by the Center for Democracy and Election Management (Pastor et al., 2008) indicated that approximately one percent of the 2,000 registered voters in Indiana, Maryland, and Mississippi polled in their study lacked sufficient photo ID. When the 457 respondents under age 35 were examined, it was reported that all 457 possessed the necessary identification.

Voter ID has been shown to have a minimal effect in several studies**:**

- Alvarez et al. (2007) found no impact of voter ID requirements on turnout at the aggregate level, but did detect a small effect at the individual level (compared to not having to show ID at all).
- Vercellotti and Anderson (2006) and the Eagleton Institute of Politics and Moritz College of Law (2006) found marginal effects (2.9% decrease) in the likelihood of voting among individuals in states that require photo ID, as compared to people in states that require one to state his or her name.
- In Hershey's 2009 overview of research on voter ID, the effects of such requirements on turnout are estimated at 4% or less in the majority of studies.
- Ansolabehere (2009) supports the claim of minimal effects: out of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study's sample of 36,500, only 23 individuals, or about one tenth of one percent, were turned away at the polls in 2006 because they lacked the correct ID. The same pattern was found in 2008. And, because the number of people who could not vote is statistically insignificant, no demographic patterns could be found. Given the low incidence

of rejection at the polls, Ansolabehere (2009) contends that "photo ID laws may prevent almost no one from voting" (p. 129).

- Even scholars who have reported or subscribe to reports of null findings (Pastor, et al., 2009; Mycoff, et al., 2009) consider the disenfranchisement of any group or individual to be problematic from the perspective of justice. The lack of empirical evidence for the impact of photo ID requirements could reflect the very low propensity of young, low-income, and urban citizens to vote in many elections. If members of those groups do not hold valid identification but rarely vote anyway, the impact of the ID requirements would not be visible in turnout statistics. Yet the new laws would essentially place a ceiling on their participation.

As with registration, the impact of photo ID requirements may extend beyond their direct effect on propensity to vote. A requirement may also send a message about the openness of the political system to people's participation. Further, the impact on young people should be explored in more depth. Race, ethnicity, education, and income are the demographic factors that have been studied most intensively so far. Given the special characteristics of young people, voter identification laws may have particularly strong effects on their turnout. Finally, from the perspective of justice, blocking even one eligible voter from participating could be problematic.

b) Felon Disenfranchisement: Manza and Uggen (2006) estimate that 5.3 million citizens were ineligible to vote on Election Day in 2004 because of felony convictions. This number had increased rapidly since 1980, mainly because of rapid growth in felony convictions. About one quarter of the felony-disenfranchised in 2004 were incarcerated; the rest had been released. A disproportionate number were African American men; in fact, five states have disqualified more than 20 percent of their Black populations (pp. 76-79).

State policies, which vary widely, directly affect felon disenfranchisement. Maine and Vermont have no felony disenfranchisement provisions, but "possession of an ounce of marijuana can result in lifetime disenfranchisement in Florida" (Manza and Uggen, 2006, p. 9).

Several recent studies find that these laws depress the turnout of people without any felony records, especially African Americans, in part by reducing the amount of election-related activity in their communities (Bowers, M., & Preuhs, 2009; McLeod, White & Gavin 2003).

c) Restrictions on Voting Away from Home: The laws governing registration vary by state and even by county, reflecting differing views about the desirability and appropriateness of college students' voting in their college towns. Not only do official rules differ, but election officials offer a range of informal advice on websites and in publications. Some Secretaries of State encourage voting in their states while others raise the possibility of prosecution or loss of tuition benefits. (Niemi, Hanmer & Jackson, 2009).

Richman and Pate (2010) compared the turnout rates of in- and out-of-state college students in what they defined as "student choice" and "restrictive" registration states. The former are

states that have relatively liberal registration rules that allow students to choose whether they will vote in the state where their parents reside or the state in which they attend college (if different); the latter are states that place restrictions on students, limiting residency to those that can fulfill strict requirements.

Using Census data, Richman and Pate found a marked disparity in the turnout rates of students living at home and those living away from home. When restrictive laws were added to the equation, the disparity was exacerbated: students were ten percent less likely to vote in "restrictive" states compared with their counterparts in "student choice" states.

d) Voter List Maintenance: Election officials must keep current and accurate records of all registered voters. These maintenance procedures vary. In states that apply a "No Match, No Vote" rule, voter records must match, often exactly, other government databases such as that of the Social Security Administration.

Most states contact a would-be registrant if there are issues with verifying personal information (otherwise requiring them to show ID on Election Day). No Match, No Vote policies suspend the processing of a voter registration application until state officials can verify the applicant's information against existing government databases, including that of motor vehicles offices and the Social Security Administration. In 2011, four states actively abided by No Match, No Vote policies: Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, and South Dakota. A matching law was successfully challenged in Washington State

States that impose "citizenship checks" subject the records in voter rolls to scrutiny to ensure that all registrants are indeed U.S. citizens. "Citizen Checks" are currently used in Georgia, and a similar law is pending in the Colorado Legislature.

e) Rules Governing Voter Registration Drives: Sixteen states have proposed bills that would regulate voter registration by "third parties" (someone other than the citizen who wishes to register or the government). Florida recently passed a bill that will impose steep fines on people who register voters and fail to deliver accurate files to the state within 48 hours of each registration. These rules explicitly cover civics teachers. Because of the risk of fines, several national nonpartisan voter registration groups have declared that they will not register voters in Florida in 2012. Texas recently passed legislation to forbid people from being paid to register voters and to forbid people who are not residents of Texas residents from registering citizens of Texas.

Since these laws are new, there is no empirical evidence about their effects on turnout, but in general, direct contact by third-parties has been found to increase turnout (Green and Gerber 2008).

6. Interactions involving education and voting laws

States can determine both their civic education policies and aspects of their election laws. Those policies may interact with each other to affect what students know about politics and public affairs and whether they vote. In general, the literature on civic education is not integrated with the research on voting laws, so interaction effects have not been thoroughly investigated.

We do know that many voting reforms have stronger effects on people with less educational attainment or less educated or politically engaged parents. For example, among the least educated, turnout is 7.4 percentage points higher for residents of states that mail polling-place information. The advantage is nearly as great—6.2 points—for the least educated registrants in states that mail out sample ballots (Wolfinger et al., 2004). On the other hand, differences are virtually nonexistent among registrants with at least some exposure to college.

Policies could be designed with an eye to positive interactions. For example, making the voting process easier would likely boost voting if students were also taught about elections in schools. Schools that pre-register students to vote could perhaps counteract the effects of onerous state registration rules.

Political knowledge is often found to facilitate voting, while being engaged in an election may motivate learning. Finally, whether young people vote in an informed way may have a feedback effect on state policies, either encouraging elected officials to serve an empowered constituency or motivating legislators to suppress turnout. Such interaction effects deserve more investigation.

5. Normative (Philosophical and Legal) Issues

Americans disagree about the basic moral principles that underlie our voting system. To some extent, this disagreement may arise from conflicting political interests. It may also depend in part on divergent empirical beliefs. However, there are also aspects of the debate that are normative—having to do with contrasting moral principles. Normative positions are not mere opinions but can be defended with ethical or constitutional reasons. (For one influential view of the status of moral arguments, see Habermas 1996). Thus a large array of sources from philosophy and constitutional law are relevant to this topic. We have not attempted a full literature review but merely cite some exemplary works. For reasons of space, we overlook those normative positions that are actually skeptical of voting, or hostile to it.

The rationale for voting has changed over American history. In the 1700s and 1800s, voting was seen as a public demonstration of loyalty to a community or cause; there were no secret ballots. With the Progressive Era, voting became a means to express private preferences regarding polices (Schudson, 1998).

These were dominant views in different eras of American history, but each still influences some citizens today. The persistent normative disagreement can be demonstrated with survey data. In June-July 2012, CIRCLE asked a national sample of young adult citizens (ages 18-29) whether

they planned to vote, and if so, why. Of those who did intend to vote, 31.3% percent said that voting was their responsibility as a citizen; 11.9% said that voting was a right; 26.2% said that their vote, along with others' votes, could affect the outcome of the election, and 18.1% said that their vote was the expression of their choice.

Citizens (of any age) may hold one or more of the following premises:

1. Voting is an individual right, reflecting the basic moral principle of equal respect for all citizens. Keyssar defines the "ideal of democracy" as the principle that "all individuals … are equally worthy"—their worth marked by their "equal chance of influencing government policy" (Keyssar, 2000, p. 324). Similarly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights begins with the premise that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace." One implication is "periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures" (United Nations, 1948).

   The relationship between human dignity and the right to vote is also enshrined in classic Supreme Court decisions. For example, in *Reynolds v Sims*, 377 U.S. 533 (1963), Chief Justice Warren held, "undeniably, the Constitution of the United States protects the right of all qualified citizens to vote, in state as well as in federal, elections." Warren argued that voting rights were "individual and personal in nature." Quoting from previous decisions, Warren wrote that voting "'touches a sensitive and important area of human rights,' and 'involves one of the basic civil rights of man.'"

   According to this view, whether an individual *actually* votes ought to be his or her choice, but the government may not impose obstacles or costs unless those are required by some other compelling constitutional principle (James, 1987). Thus, for example, a photo ID law is impermissible if *any* eligible citizens will be blocked from participating, unless (contrary to fact) manifest evidence of fraud has been uncovered and photo IDs are essential tools to prevent that. More difficult questions involve convenience. Is it, for example, permissible for a government to restrict voting to a single day if that prevents some individuals from participating?

2. Voting is a way to make the government representative of the population. The politicians and ballot initiatives that win—and the policies that emerge from the government—ought to be the ones that all Americans would favor if they all voted. The first page of Verba, Schlozman, and Brady's classic book *Voice and Equality* announces, "Since democracy implies not only governmental responsiveness to citizen interests but also equal consideration of the interests of each citizen, democratic participation must … be equal" (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995, p. 1). According to this perspective, it does not matter if less than 100% of citizens vote as long the voters constitute a representative sample of the whole population. If not, the democracy suffers "participatory distortion," which arises "when any group of activists—such as

protesters, voters, or contributors—is unrepresentative of the public with respect to some politically relevant characteristic: for example, preferences on issues, needs for government assistance, demographic attributes, or participatory priorities" (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995, p. 15). By this standard, an election law is harmful if it disproportionately affects a voting group, and good if it moves us closer to equitable representation. On the whole, we should reduce inconvenience, because low-SES and young people are underrepresented in elections and are disproportionately likely to be deterred by barriers.

Note that this view is typical of the political science literature on voting, whereas the framework of individual rights and dignity (#1) is more typical of the legal and constitutional literature. The two views may have divergent significance. For example, a law that prevents a few eligible citizens from voting without affecting the overall distribution of votes would violate #1 but not #2.

3. Voting is a duty, an obligation of citizens to their republic. For John Stuart Mill, presenting the vote as a right would excuse selfish and short-sighted civic behavior, whereas emphasizing that it was a duty would remind citizens that they were obliged to do more than merely cast a ballot; they should also inform themselves, deliberate about justice, and disclose and defend their choices in public:

> Those who say that the suffrage is not a trust but a right will scarcely accept the conclusions to which their doctrine leads. If it is a right, if it belongs to the voter for his own sake, on what ground can we blame him for selling it, or using it to recommend himself to any one whom it is his interest to please? A person is not expected to consult exclusively the public benefit in the use he makes of his house, or his three per cent stock, or anything else to which he really has a right. The suffrage is indeed due to him, among other reasons, as a means to his own protection, but only against treatment from which he is equally bound, so far as depends on his vote, to protect every one of his fellow-citizens. His vote is not a thing in which he has an option; it has no more to do with his personal wishes than the verdict of a juryman. It is strictly a matter of duty; he is bound to give it according to his best and most conscientious opinion of the public good. Whoever has any other idea of it is unfit to have the suffrage; its effect on him is to pervert, not to elevate his mind. Instead of opening his heart to an exalted patriotism and the obligation of public duty, it awakens and nourishes in him the disposition to use a public function for his own interest, pleasure, or caprice; the same feelings and purposes, on a humbler scale, which actuate a despot and oppressor (Mill, 1861).

If voting is a duty, then Americans might consider *requiring* every adult citizen to vote, as Australia and several other democracies do. Or the government could require people to take extra steps before they vote. For example, children are often required to study civics, and perhaps adults who wish to vote should be obliged to pre-register and then

go a public polling place on Election Day in order to demonstrate their civic commitment and to sustain a national ritual. As long as such requirements are imposed after due deliberation, by legitimate representatives of the public, they are appropriate. Similarly, Andrew Altman (2005) argues that ex-felon-disenfranchisement is appropriate as long as it reflects popular will, because "the citizens of a legitimate democratic state have a broad collective right to order their own affairs as they choose" (p. 264).

4. Voting is way of gaining power over other people. The side that wins an election can compel anyone or everyone to pay taxes, fund specific programs, and obey particular laws, constrained only by the constitution. "In voting, *the minority has no rights*: It consists of those whose vote was lost—period" (Sartori, 1987, I: 134). Because voting confers power and produces both winners and losers, it is subject to corrupt influence. Ballot-box-stuffing, voting the dead, voting early and often: these are characteristic and unacceptable features of our politics. Even if there is some truth to the other views listed above, preventing fraud is a compelling need that may necessitate imposing hurdles on would-be voters.

5. Voting is a means to preserve other rights. Because the Constitution does not explicitly define or protect voting, yet the 15th amendment forbids discrimination in voting, the Court was at first reluctant to declare voting a right on par with due process, speech (or property). In *Yick Wo v. Hopkins*, 118 U.S. 356 (1886), the Court held for the first time explicitly that voting was a fundamental right. "Though not regarded strictly as a natural right, but as a privilege merely conceded by society according to its will under certain conditions, nevertheless [the political franchise] is regarded as a fundamental political right, because preservative of all rights." Note that this is an empirical claim (i.e., voting protects other rights), which may not be true. Sometimes majorities use the franchise to undermine rights (E.g., Dahl, 1989 p. 173).

   In the more famous *Reynolds v Sims* case, 377 U.S. 533 (1963), Justice Warren quoted the *Yick Wo* decision to the effect that voting preserves other rights, but he emphasized voting as an individual right, as in perspective #1, above.

Empirical evidence is relevant to this debate. For example, perspective #4 is weakened by a lack of evidence that the relevant kind of fraud (voting when one has no right to vote) occurs at a significant rate. But empirical evidence will not settle the basic normative questions, which need to be considered separately.

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