

Original Paper

The Assault on Voting Rights, Minority Voter Registration, and the Myth of Voter Fraud in the United States

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Abstract

Ordinary American voters probably and tacitly don't want to think about electoral voting matters as it might set their teeth on edge. Nevertheless, voting is the fundamental and constitutional right of all American citizens. Moreover, the truth about voting for some is difficult to digest. Therefore, this paper describes the unique problems we have as a nation — that is, when it comes to voting and politically participating. But has this issue been overblown because of one particular political party in the United States? To be sure, American citizens should feel obligated to learn and accept the truth about so-called voting fraud and other irregularities, if any. Unfortunately, some voters naturally gravitate toward one of the major political parties — mostly because of their political beliefs; and they vote accordingly. But when it is all said and done, American voters must be allowed to register and ultimately vote without interference from their state governments and other outside forces. Our only concern should be: Where is the evidence to support such voter fraud assertions? American voters should also reject the ugly partisan tactics of voter suppression to deny blacks and other citizens of color their right to vote. Finally, we must expose deliberate attempts to undermine our voting systems across the nation.

Keywords

illegal voting, voter fraud, disenfranchisement, partisan, voter registration, discrimination, false claims, ACORN

1. Introduction: Voting and Cultural Wars

As early as the 1960s, unscrupulous political practices in the United States, such as pushing *misinformation* that the dead were voting in elections (in droves) for a particular political party were rampant. And it was claimed that even animals voted in some states — which was untrue. Nevertheless,

extremely powerful *political party machines* (e.g., Richard Daley of Chicago or Huey Long of Louisiana) flourished in the United States for many years. Indeed, voter fraud *did* occur; but massive voter fraud is a thing of the past — that is, it rarely happens today; or it doesn't occur to the extent that some conservative pundits would have you believe. And, "according to many state surveys, there is virtually no voter fraud going on" (Krause, 2017, p. 2). Furthermore, many political scientists contend that this issue is not a serious problem, as "academic studies repeatedly show that election fraud is exceeding rare" (Altman, 2017, p. 8). This is to say that the states are properly managing and "are up-and-at-'em on maintaining accurate registration rolls and keeping ineligible away from the ballot box" (Ambrose, 2017, p. 3E). Although there is a potential for voter fraud and other serious voter irregularities in some states, it doesn't mean that it is happening on a massive scale.

To be certain, such revelations and *hard truths* about voter fraud are unsettling for many white supremacists, because these "conservative anti-voter fraud crusaders" refuse to accept actual voting data that proves otherwise, or to the contrary (Election panel, 2017, p. 2). This is to say that voter fraud and "illegal voting [being] epidemic is a myth" (Altman, 2017, p. 8). However, the GOP vigorously defends such frivolous allegations that voter fraud — no doubt — is occurring. For example, we have a Republican President "who [still] refuses to accept that he lost the popular vote fair and square" to his opponent Hillary Clinton after the 2016 presidential election (Election panel, 2017, p. 2). Further, many GOP members "declined to disavow [such] false assertion that millions voted illegally" (Werner & Lerer, 2017, p. 1). So, will Republican lawmakers acknowledge that their false assumptions about voter fraud is wrong? Probably not. When it is all said and done, according to political scientist Steffen W. Schmidt (2001), "Voter fraud is something regularly suspected but seldom proved." This is to say that, "Voting in the nineteenth century, when secret ballots were rare and people had a cavalier attitude toward the open buying of votes, was probably much more conducive to fraud than modern elections are" (pp. 329-330). Indeed, massive voter fraud is not the case today in our election politics — and the polemics of other political things and accurately voting. Yet, for some Republicans, the issue of voter fraud is their *raison d'être*. So, is this unshakable falsehood agreed upon by many voters in the GOP? Perhaps.

It should also be noted again that voter fraud nationally is relative rare, not something that is happening at an alarming rate. Indeed, complaining about voter fraud by mostly conservatives has been like a tradition over the years. Or so it seems. In fact, the GOP has always been enamored with the whole illegal voting notion. Still, "Voter fraud is extremely rare, and in-person fraud — the only kind that can be caught by [cursed] voter — ID laws — is essentially nonexistent" (Election panel, 2017, p. 2). Therefore, are Republicans in denial of the true facts about voter fraud? Of course, there is a lot of silliness associated with this political issue, as conservatives wrongly believe that our different state voting systems are uniquely vulnerable to voter fraud. What nonsense. Moreover, their emphasis is always on Democrats who they believe are rigging elections through voter fraud, without providing substantial proof or real facts. And they are "rock-solid" in their false beliefs, without addressing GOP

election *chicanery* — which will later be discussed in this paper — such as illegally purging legitimate minority voters from state voting rolls. In essence, the problem, at least for some conservatives, is that they are losing elections, because of the Democratic Party’s voter *intransigence*. What rubbish. There is also the misperception that *voting fraud* is pervasive; but stating such disinformation is the worst thing that can possibly happen to American voters — and our political system. In other words, the GOP continues to bitterly complain that *voter fraud* is common, or a fact of political life, when it is not. To be sure, fabricating the story of *voter fraud* is not the answer to what ails our voting system. But for some conservative Americans, it is increasingly becoming easy to believe in a contrived lie, or a fake, voting theory. Generally speaking, assumptions about *voting fraud* do not mean that such beliefs are true.

In the *public’s eye*, the lies and false claims from the GOP are only intensifying. Indeed, the false *voter fraud* claims are more acute today, perhaps, than ever before. But it has become apparent that there isn’t any solid or clear evidence to prove the *voting fraud* assertions of Republicans, as they believe that some kind of harm is being perpetrated against them. Furthermore, the idea of democratic *voter fraud* is especially put forward and tossed around in conservative circles, which is inaccurate on its face. Equally, American citizens who believe in *voter fraud* shouldn’t form their own ideas about this matter until they have *all* the facts. Therefore, we must consider the motives behind *anyone* who traffic in such false, voting information. Proponents, nevertheless, will ardently proclaim that *voter fraud* (using unreliable sources) is still going on (constantly) without providing a shred of evidence. Also, some GOP operatives will continually lament that *noncitizens* are illegally voting in U.S. elections; and that *voter fraud* is being conducted on a massive scale in every election. But these are falsehoods, because conservatives never present *unequivocal* and substantiated facts to back up their (voter fraud) allegations. More important, “studies conducted by academics and secretaries of state have found noncitizen voting to [also] be extremely rare” (Rab, 2017, p. 12). And to underscore this point, “the [U.S.] Justice Department’s voter fraud crackdown during the Bush years... found that only 14 noncitizens were convicted of voting between 2002 and 2005” (Rab, 2017, p. 12). In this regard, we should know that there is more *complexity* when it comes to alleged *voter fraud* than perhaps we would like to believe, particularly with such a small number of violators to account for. And as much as some conservatives might wish that *voter fraud* is a common occurrence, there is a lack of definitive data to support this false claim. Hence, fraudulent voting is essentially a *myth*, but it “makes a popular scapegoat” (Levitt, 2007, p. 3). Ultimately, this belief is to say that there isn’t a *dollop* of truth to the so-called notion of massive *voter fraud* in the United States. So, what are these false claims really all about? According to jurist Justin Levitt (2007) in an exemplary study by the *Brennan Center for Justice*, entitled “The Truth About Voter Fraud,” concludes:

Allegations of widespread voter fraud..., [is] often prove greatly exaggerated. It is easy to grab headlines with a lurid claim (“tens of thousands may be voting illegally!”); [however,] the follow-up — when any exists — is not usually deemed newsworthy. [Moreover,] on closer examination, many of the

claims of voter fraud amount to a great deal of smoke without much fire. The allegations simply do not pan out.... Usually, only a tiny portion of the claimed illegality is substantiated — and most of the remainder is either nothing more than speculation or has been conclusively debunked. (p. 3)

2. Constitutional Voting Rights and Disenfranchisement

Unfortunately, conservatives feel aggrieved and sometimes overreact when *anyone* commit *voter fraud* — that is, unless it is perhaps a member of the Republican Party who sometime violates the rules. Indeed, there has been many instances where conservatives have been caught committing *voter fraud* or over-voting. For example, “the N.C. Republican Party and their attorneys falsely accused” 600 voters of committing *voting fraud*, “or casting suspect absentee ballots” in the 2016 gubernatorial election in North Carolina, where Pat McCrory, a Republican, lost to Roy Cooper, a Democrat. Of course, “nearly all of the accusations proved false” (Sturgis, 2017, p. 1). (Note 1) Question: Why hasn’t this deceitful, *voter fraud* conduct been investigated by the Department of Justice? Or why hasn’t the law firm of Jill Holtzman Vogel been brought up for charges for violating the Voting Rights Act of 1965? — that is, engaging in deceitful *voter fraud* in the North Carolina 2016 gubernatorial election, and not being prosecuted? Another example, and “according to a criminal complaint” in Colorado (filed in Weld County District Court), Steven Curtis, “who served as state GOP boss from 1997 until 1999 [was] charged with one felony count of forgery and one misdemeanor count of tampering with a mail-in ballot,” where he forged his ex-wife’s signature in the 2016 presidential election (Coffman, 2017, p. 2). We should also consider that, “in February 2012 a jury found Indiana’s Republican secretary of state, Charlie White, guilty on six counts of voter fraud, theft, and perjury” (Williams, 2013, p. 2). Finally, “four [GOP] staffers of Republican congressman Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI) were indicted... [and later] charged with submitting over 1,500 [illegal ballots],” who “forged and falsified signatures in what the Michigan attorney general,” also a Republican, called a “*blatant* and disgraceful attempt to qualify [McCotter] for elected office” (Williams, 2013, p. 2). To be sure, these are just a few examples of how the GOP conservatives commit *voter fraud*. In fact, according to Wes Williams (2013), “Republican operatives” are the source of most of the voter fraud going on in the United States (p. 2). Hence, claiming alleged *voter fraud* is really about *cannibalizing* votes, and denying someone their right to vote. Black people, of course, have long been denied this Constitutional entitlement, or the right to participate in politics. So, voting hasn’t been easy in this country — that is, for some people of color. In this respect, we must also remember the past, when African Americans “were [routinely] denied access to the ballot box” (Dionne, 2017, p. 3), or not allowed to exercise their right to vote and participant in local, state, and national governments. We should also consider how conservatives today are now trying “to repeat this [cursed] history” of denying people their rights to vote (Dionne, 2017, p. 3). But this mistreatment of minority voters has always been “unacceptable” to black people in the United States, as it has prevented them from voting and engaging politically and socially.

Equally, alleged *voter fraud* is also about fomenting suspicion and denying a political candidate the right also to be elected to political office. And since African Americans (or black people) have long been denied their voting and political rights, it goes without saying that many don't see the issue of *voter fraud* as clearly as those who are being disenfranchised. Furthermore, "these claims of voter fraud are frequently used to justify policies that do not solve the alleged wrongs, but that could well disenfranchise legitimate [black] voters" (Levitt, 2007, p. 3). It is almost like going back in time during the *Jim Crow* era. Minnite and Callahan (2003) write:

Deliberate disfranchisement of voters may also occur because of other kinds of official misconduct: turning away voters already in line when polls close; intimidating or misinforming voters when they arrive at the polls; producing misleading or poorly designed ballots; failing to provide bilingual voting materials, as required by law; [or] failing to upgrade or repair voting systems in specific election districts; and by other means. (p. 3)

Introducing such voting *shenanigans* might help explain why this *voter fraud* issue is really about why we should be far more concerned about disenfranchising minority American citizens and their right to vote. Indeed, are conservatives primarily motivated to suppress votes "to disenfranchise people of color, who overwhelmingly vote Democratic?" (Cesca, 2017, p. 3) In all, we are *flummoxed* by the complexities of *misinformation* and *disinformation* about this *voter fraud* issue. Also, are Republicans desperate to circumvent state governments and their voting policies? To say the least, the notion of "widespread fraud is received wisdom for some on the right" (Altman, 2017, p. 8); (Note 2) but this belief is actually foolish. Furthermore, this is a frightened commentary on our *partisan politics* of today. It should also be noted that, "Election fraud may involve wrongdoing by either individual voters or as is more often the case, by organized groups such as campaigns or political parties" (Minnite & Callahan, 2003, p. 2), who may try to impose even more voting disenfranchisement. At the end of the day, the Republican Party is consumed by this *voter fraud* issue. Why? Do we really know? According to political scientists David V. Edwards and Alessandra Lippucci (1998), "voting is as much an effect as a cause" (p. 195). But *any* government — such as a democracy — that denies its people the right to *franchise* is not a viable nation state. Moreover, "the poor and uneducated are less likely to vote than the affluent and educated" (Edwards & Lippucci, 1998, p. 195). Equally important, voting restrictions are still being based on race. And this *caveat* is the real problem. We must also bear in mind, as journalist Bob Cesca (2017) points out: "more than a few Republicans accidentally blurted out the real purpose of voter ID and voter suppression tactics: to elect more Republicans by keeping the electorate disproportionately white amid a growing brown population" (p. 4). It might be uncomfortable for some Americans to accept this truth, because it will, perhaps, be a tough thing to do. But to accept the idea of not sharing political power with all American citizens is the reality. Moreover, "the irony of the big GOP push for voter ID laws seems to be that when it comes to actual voter fraud, Republicans are often the ones who are most responsible" (Williams, 2013, p. 2). Further, is the GOP racially insensitive when it comes to this controversial voting matter? And why do some Republicans believe that only

Democrats have an affinity for *voter fraud*? Finally, it should be understood that, “the disfranchisement of [minority] voters through antiquated voting systems, errors, mismanagement of registration bases, and intimidation or harassment is a far bigger problem today than traditional forms of election fraud” (Minnite & Callahan, 2003, p. 2). Perhaps out of political instinct, some conservatives jumped on the *voter fraud* bandwagon claim. Also, it can be incredibly difficult, as mentioned, or hard for someone to vote without being an American citizen; mostly because asking whether a person is a citizen is one of the major questions (already) asked on most state voter applications. So, should we look for alternative ways to protect our state voting systems from an implacable, political party?

Additionally, it should be remembered that different states in America, in terms of all elections, have *unilateral* authority to conduct elections and establish their own voting standards — that is, as long as they don’t run astray of federal voting requirements. Furthermore, “there are already laws in place (at the state levels) against voter fraud, as evidenced by the existence of prosecutions and convictions” (Cesca, 2017, p. 3). And as far as determining the eligibility of the American voter, it should be clearly understood that an individual, as discussed, must be a “native born” citizen to vote. However, naturalized citizens can also vote. Therefore, *illegal* or *undocumented* workers (or immigrants) “may not vote in any public election held anywhere in the United States” (Sidlow & Henschen, 2007, p. 185). Perhaps most non-American citizens already know this. Additionally, with the possible exception of the state of Vermont that allows some of its convicts to vote, “most states... do not permit prison inmates, mentally ill people, convicted felons, or election-law violators to vote” (Sidlow & Henschen, 2007, p. 185). So, is there a *ubiquitous* misunderstanding from those who know less than they actually do about *voter fraud*? Proponents of this *myth* have actually thrived with using this political tactic, which allows them to subvert the *legitimacy* of elections at the local, state, and national levels. Voter fraud advocates also believe that:

Most voters are largely ignorant about the positions of the people for whom they vote. [And] except for a few highly publicized issues, they do not pay a lot of attention to what legislative bodies do, and even when they do pay attention, they have little incentive to gain the background knowledge and analytic skill needed to understand the issues. (Shaw, 1993, p. 151) (Note 3)

3. The Republican Takedown of ACORN

The *voter fraud* narrative, especially by conservative, political operatives, of course, is a rather simplistic or demeaning way of thinking about this serious voting issue, as it is unmistakably a *tragicomic* way of viewing things. According to political scientist Lorraine Minnite, “it’s [all] about creating a narrative that the [voting] system is broken and the laws have to be changed” (Altman, 2017, p. 8) (Note 3 Note 5) to protect or save our elections. Voting in the United States, of course, “is influenced not only by political differences but also by religious, racial, and economic dissimilarities” (voting, 1975, p. 2913). Hence, the ambiguity is essential to note in regard to this matter; but we *cannot* ignore the reality of what is happening with the GOP *voter fraud* claims. Which is to say that, “the

Republican [or conservative] narrative of massive *voter fraud* persists despite evidence from the party's own crackdown" (Rab, 2017, p. 11) and lack of proof. To be certain, we should not fabricate a new voting reality in regards to this issue to convince people. The conventional wisdom (by some members of the GOP) is: *Voter fraud* must be occurring (somewhere) in different state elections — to help get *only* Democratic officials elected to respective, political positions. But this belief is utter rubbish.

Without providing any *real* facts, for example, conservative columnist Jay Ambrose (2017) made the bold claim that, "Voter fraud... is usually to the Democrats' advantage and they [Democrats] just might [or should] be more concerned about making it hard to cheat than making it hard to vote" (p. 3E). (Note 4) What *drivel*. Ambrose's statement is a terrible, *specious* argument, as he misses the point entirely — that is, he mainly tries to *obfuscate* the fact that some conservative Republicans today are the champions of suppressing Democratic and/or minority votes to increase their electoral victories or chances of winning. Therefore, claiming *voter fraud*:

is not [really] to restore integrity to elections but [it is] to undermine the public's confidence enough to push through [asinine] policies and practices that make registration and voting harder, if not impossible, for certain groups of people who tend to vote Democratic. (Election panel, 2017, p. 2)

Or take for example what the GOP or Republicans did to ACORN for political gain. The embattled *grassroots* community organization, or the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) was completely *upended* and destroyed by "a right-wing smear campaign," because of its work in registering the black, poor people and other minority groups to vote in elections. According to journalist Elizabeth Schulte (2010), "the assault on ACORN recalled the days of the anti-communist witch-hunts of the 1950s, as conservative politicians and their Fox News partners went on a relentless assault against the organization" (p. 1). Of course, voter registration drives are not *illegal* or *unconstitutional*; but it was easy to blame progressive groups for *voter fraud* — that is, before broaching or accepting the electoral truth. In essence, the media was duped by criminal and conservative activist James O'Keefe, a white man, who "posed as a pimp and filmed a misleading video of ACORN employees supposedly advising him and a prostitute on how to get a mortgage" (Rab, 2017, p. 11). (Note 5) As far as the defunct ACORN is concerned, we should realize that there will always be people who do dubious and mischievous things for *whatever reasons*, or for political advantage. Unfortunately, some Democrats, even in our Congress, jumped on the *political bandwagon*, which shut down the 40-year old ACORN in 2010 — that is, "after Republicans stepped up attacks on the liberal-leaning ACORN and the federal funding [of] it" (Democrats run, 2009, p. 1). However, Republicans failed to tell the truth to the American people about the *grassroots* organizing and voter registration work of ACORN, which was second to none. According to Schulte (2010):

Tens of thousands of people... benefited from the groups organizing in cities across the country: [particularly] the more than 150,000 low-income families who ACORN helped with their tax refunds to receive Earned Income Tax Credits; [furthermore,] 50,000 families averted foreclosures with the help of ACORN, which was one of the first organizations to speak out about the dangers of predatory

lending; and the well over a million poor people and people of color who could not vote until ACORN registered them. (p. 1)

Although ACORN was called a “criminal organization” by Republicans, “the former Massachusetts attorney general and former president of Common Cause, cleared ACORN of any illegal conduct,” but unfortunately “the damage had been done to its reputation and its war chest,” (Schulte, 2010, p. 1) (Note 6), which, in no uncertain terms, utterly destroyed the organization. Realistically, some American voters are not even aware of the GOP *voter fraud*/ACORN scam, which wittingly gave the Republican Party a sense of political security — that is, knowing that minorities would be continuously denied their right to vote. Dismantling ACORN, therefore, can be seen as a way for the GOP “to [so-called] cure an epidemic of black people voting” (Sattler, 2017, p. 7A). Furthermore, conservatives in the United States *tout* that liberal democrats are doing something *nefarious* by registering people to vote. What? Moreover, accepting such a false narrative or untrue statement about Democrats and voting rights is un-American — and ridiculous. If nothing else, it is discomforting. And calling this controversial voting issue a “concerning pattern” of *bad behavior* is beyond the pale. To be sure, all adult American citizens should be allowed to register and vote without interference, or by voter suppression tactics, put in place by the Republican Party, because such actions undermine the integrity of our voter registration systems. According to *The New York Times* columnist Ross Douthat (2021), “Republicans have long championed voter ID laws as a bulwark against alleged voting fraud, while Democrats have countered that such restrictions unfairly burden many Americans, racial minorities especially, in the exercise of their hard-won right to vote” (p. 3). Also, conservative Republicans have constantly tried to convince the American people of their *bankrupt*, electoral ideas and embellished falsehoods about *voter fraud*. Indeed, “Voter suppression techniques [by Republicans] are legion and beyond belief.” In a letter to the editor in *The New York Times*, clinical psychiatrist, Daniel E. Bendor (2020) writes:

Some [Republican] election theft attempts include slowing the mail, [purging voter rolls of minorities,] allowing only one... ballot drop-off box per county as in Ohio and Texas, voter intimidation threats (“stand by”), eliminating hundreds of polling places largely in African-American and Hispanic districts as was done in Texas, and fraudulently claiming that mail-in ballots will be [or should be] illegitimate. (p. 8)

Of course, denying people their rights to vote is an affront to our Democracy, and it can have “a stark and negative affect on [voting] turnout, made worse by the discretion given to [partisan] registrars” (Bouie, 2021, p. 3). (Note 7) Additionally, and inexplicably, the repercussions might be felt for years by denying some American citizens their fundamental, Constitutional right to vote. But in this respect, some conservative actors/operatives could care less about the national interests when it comes to voting, or people having the right of individual preferences in choosing a political candidate. We must ask: Do Republicans truly believe that they are being exploited or taking advantage of in some way because of perceived *voter fraud*? The reality is: Many conservatives “are on an obsessive hunt to eradicate

phantom problems, such as supposedly massive fraud by non-citizens and people voting in [several] states” (54 years, 2017, p. 7A) (Note 8), as already mentioned. So, what exactly are these bad, political actors afraid of? Is it because they (conservatives) fear the results of a *free* and *fair* election, where they might lose? Fortunately, American voters are becoming wise to such *undemocratic* tactics and the *voter suppression* agenda of the conservative/Republican establishment, particularly when it comes to participating in elections. In addition: What are the specific recommendations/actions that the Republican Party will make in terms of encouraging the vote of minorities across the nation? Columnist for *The New York Times*, Charles Blow (2021A) writes:

There are two ways to win an election: Convince enough voters that you are best suited for the job, or rid the electorate of as many people who would vote against you as possible. Republicans seem to think it is easier to devise an electorate to their liking than to make themselves likable to the broader electorate. And to disguise the racism of their voter suppression strategy, they make voting inconvenient or too costly for the poorest citizens. (p. 3) (Note 9)

Clearly, voting should have a positive effect on our society, but “for the past two decades, elected Republicans and partisan operatives have added increasingly forbidding hurdles to the simple act of voting” (Drutman, 2020, p. 26). Also, in terms of controlling different state governorships and legislatures, Republicans hold almost *every* lever of political power — that is, in respective state governments, because of extreme *gerrymandering*. But strangely enough, they (conservatives) still complain about so-called *voter fraud*, especially when it comes to minority voting and their political participation. Therefore, are Republicans more concerned about political power and keeping their majorities and legislative momentum at the national and state levels? Suffice it to say, conservatives devalue the very idea of *everyone* having the right to vote, because they are worried primarily about the “minority vote” in states where voting districts are made up entirely of one particular ethnic group: Black Americans. Unfortunately, “the history of pursuing black people for voter fraud is long. It is a form of terror as the black people who intend to vote and for the benefit of the white electorate nervous that their electoral power and supremacy is in retreat” (Blow, 2021C, p. 3). So, is this strict adherence to voting fraud (or voting *untruths*) by Republicans (and other conservative operatives) a figment of their imagination? More importantly, are they (Republicans) ignoring the facts and truth of this voting rights issue? Which is to say that some conservatives will continue to rhapsodize that *voter fraud* is a serious problem in our electoral politics, when it is not. To be honest, claiming *voter fraud* is just another way to further disenfranchise Black Americans and other people of color.

Furthermore, do conservatives have an insatiable desire, or need to harm minority voters? After all, “for years, GOP leaders have argued for [so-called] election rules to safeguard elections that make it harder for people who tend to vote Democrat — especially poor minorities — to cast a ballot” (Altman, 2017, p. 7) (Note 10). Hence, it is careless to conclude that there is massive *voter fraud* without backing it up with specific evidence, particularly with our current, contentious, political and partisan discourse/environment. When it is all said and done, *voter fraud* must be proved *unequivocally* if it is to

be believed. Nonetheless, conservatives desperately want massive *voter fraud* (in our elections) to be true; and they will do almost *anything* to make sure that this controversial issue stays in the political limelight or forefront, as they firmly believe that there are important discoveries yet to be made about so-called *voter fraud* in various states. To be honest, conservative Republicans and lawmakers cannot allay concerns about *voter fraud* among the American people if they lie about this important, political issue, while denying the franchise to people of color; but they aggressively register conservative leaning voters. Additionally, it should be noted that the right to vote or “the franchise is only one element in electoral representative democracies, and constriction of that right is only one way that democratic arrangements can be distorted.” (Piven, Minnite, & Groarke, 2009, p. 11). Voting, of course, empowers eligible American citizens. And there is no *middle ground* on this issue of the franchise; therefore, an honest and believable take on our voting habits should be the order of the day. Furthermore, as Marissa McBride and Tom Lopach (2021) of the *Voter Participation Center and Center for Voter Information* tell us: “some [red] state legislators seem motivated to disrupt certain groups’ access to the ballot box” by any means necessary. Unfortunately, these activists, discriminatory “legislators, and state leaders who are working to restrict access to the [voting] polls will impact largely black and brown communities, out of fear that they are more likely to support Democrats” (p. 7A). Equally important, for those so-called believers in *voter fraud* and their desire to restrict the voting rights of minority groups make them *hypocrites*. As honest patriots, they should be about ensuring that *all* American citizens have fair and equitable access to the voting polls. Not surprisingly, many conservative Republicans are explicit in regard to their bias points of view about *voter fraud*, mainly because they have already accepted the *lies* or *falsehoods* as factual. It is also self-evident, as conservatives are always cajoling and encouraging supporters of the idea (to believe) that there is still massive *voter fraud* going on. Unfortunately, this *misguided* notion about the problems of *voter fraud* continues to take place in the United States today; but this opinion is definitely useless to American voters.

To be sure, this falsehood about *voter fraud* is the common thread of such dangerous beliefs by conservatives and Republicans. Sadly, “The conservative majority on the Supreme Court shows no interest in thwarting this attack on democracy and protecting Americans constitutional right to vote” (Supreme Court, 2021, p. 2) (Note 11). Therefore, there is a *paradox* that comes with making the false claim of massive *voter fraud*. Foremost: It is just *unfathomable* that such a proclamation of lies about this voting matter is being (dishonestly) fed to the American people. For these reasons, we must consider the fact that legitimate voting is being *upended* by political, conservative operatives in several ways by continuously *scaring* people about their right to vote. This specific point is very important to understand, because “potential voters are understandably skeptical of a government that has shown over and again how little it respects their constitutional rights or cares for their [political] participation” (Republicans tried, 2020, p. 2). Furthermore, the *untrue* statements about (minority) *voter fraud* by conservatives are disappointing, as it is not indicative of the whole truth; and this political issue is not

just a matter of perspective or political values, either. However, the Republican Party, in general, is disparagingly blunt in their claims of *voting fraud*. Is this because GOP lawmakers “are terrified of losing [political] power,” while believing that “as the number of people voting goes up, their odd of winning go down [?]” (Republicans tried, 2020, p. 2) (Note 12) In this regard, we should also note that the American people are being taken advantage of by a radical and dishonest political party with no *integrity* when it comes to telling the truth about *voter fraud*. Finally, in our politically polarized country today, false claims of tremendous *voter fraud* is shameful, disingenuous, and unsettling; hence, it is impossible to believe or trust the current narrative about their being astonishingly large *voter fraud* in American elections.

4. Conclusions

At the most fundamental level, the GOP in the United States, unfortunately, wants to deceive the American people from differences between two things: being uninformed and/or misinformed about their voter suppression tactics, which can undermine or weaken minority voter turn-out, and the notion of massive *voter fraud* occurring during all elections. And by extension, “disproportionately poorer people and people of color [are being] denied a voice in the [American] electoral process” (Republicans tried, 2020, p. 2) (Note 13). Meanwhile, almost *everything* about minority voting in *any* election becomes suspect — perhaps curiously — considering the political partisanship and *inevitable* of denying people of color their right to vote. Piven, Minnite, and Groarke (2009) also tell us that: “the history of the manipulation of the franchise [or right to vote] and of the struggles that [has] sometimes resulted is paralleled by a history of manipulation that results from formulas for representation that makes some votes count more, often much more, than others” (p. 11) (Note 14). Therefore, voting rights for all American citizens must be defended, without *any* barriers to democratic participation. Yet, conservative Republicans believe that if the American people are told over and over again that something is wrong with our basic voting systems — like having massive *voter fraud* — then voters will (wrongly) begin to believe such nonsense or *untruths*. Specifically, conservative Republicans imagine that their sometimes *warped* beliefs about minority *voting fraud* is truer than the absolute truth for them; but they often, as mentioned, don’t present any *unequivocal* evidence to the contrary. Furthermore, members of the GOP routinely exaggerate the actual figures, or the number of people who are voting illegally (especially with undocumented immigrants) in this divided country. Hence, their biased strategy of denying people of color their right to even register to vote is *off-putting*, and jarringly wrong. Moreover, for a variety of reasons, supporting such an undemocratic effort is a mistake. To be honest, how can we safeguard the American electoral process if we fall into the trap of always believing in *voter fraud*?

After all, ever since Black Americans were given the vote, they have been targeted for voting discrimination and disenfranchisement, especially in Democratic areas/communities throughout the United States — and even with the passing of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which “was one of the most

important pieces of legislation in American history” (Supreme Court, 2021, p. 2) (Note 15). That is, until the predominantly conservative U.S. Supreme Court gutted *section 5* of the Voting Rights Act, or *eviscerated* the heart of this famous legislation, which has further disenfranchised blacks and other people of color. American voters must always know and understand that, “By outlawing racial discrimination in voting and imposing federal oversight in [mostly Southern] states with [a] history of discriminating, it finally enforced the 15th Amendment and marked the first time the nation could call itself a truly representative democracy” (Supreme Court, 2021, p. 2) (Note 16). But that all changed because of Chief Justice John Roberts, a conservative, who is almost solely responsible for weakening the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as discussed. So, how exactly can we close the (so-called) *illegal* book, so to speak, in regard to this judicial matter and other voting, electoral concerns/irregularities? Indeed, beyond the jaundiced outlook by some conservatives, our voting in elections with false claims of *voter fraud* actually weakens our Democracy, because eventually, it will have *negative* consequences for all American voters in the future. As *The New York Times* columnist, Charles Blow writes (2021B):

The right to vote is everything in a democracy. Without influence over [political] power, you are completely vulnerable to that power. There is no way to access prosperity or ensure personal protection when you live in a society in which people who share your interests are inhibited in their political participation. So, the current efforts by Republicans across the country are a chilling omen as well as an eerie echo [of our racist past]. (p. 3) (Note 17)

Finally, as improbable though it might sound, denying people their right to vote or to politically participate will, generally, have a long-lasting, negative effect on our society — that is, in the political, *grand scheme of things*. Therefore, rather than being politically ignorant, “every eligible voter should after becoming educated on the candidates and/or issues, vote in every election,” which definitely “is the civic responsibility of every legal citizen... in the United States” (Karris, 2023, p. 3D). And as for the aforementioned, political party is concerned, which supposedly believes in the rights of states — that are “powers expressly or implicitly reserved to the states,” and “emphasized by decentralist” voting — the right of the voter should be of primary concern (Burns et al., 2001, p. 75) (Note 18). In the final analysis, the GOP is *cavalier* and very disrespectful toward American voters, especially in terms of taking away rights to politically participate, and engage in our government. Thus, as citizens and voters in our Democracy, we must condemn, oppose, and prevent such voting restrictions and so-called fraudulent *voter fraud* claims in the United States, to protect our Democracy and the *integrity* of our right to vote.

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Notes

Note 1. Clearly, federal officials should definitely “look into whether [GOP] protest filings may have violated state and federal laws against harassing and intimidating innocent voters, corrupting the election process and obstructing an election canvass.” See: Sturgis, S. (2017, April 28). Prominent VA politician implicated in NC GOP voter fraud deceit. *Facing South* (p. 1).

Note 2. Bolstered by voter fraud in some states, the GOP will continue to say that this is the reality.

Note 3. It should also be clearly pointed out that “identifying the options that voters choose from, and even specifying the order of voting on the options — can influence political outcomes.” See: Shaw, J. S. (1993). Public Choice Theory. In *Fortune Encyclopedia of Economics* (p. 151). New York: Warner Books, Inc.

Note 4. It seems inconceivable to many political researchers that voter fraud is somehow is rampant.

Note 5. Note that O’Keefe “was [also] criminally charged and arrested for plotting to tamper with the phone system in Democrat Senator Mary Landrieu’s New Orleans office, posing as a repair worker,” and had to later pay “a \$100,000 settlement to one employee whose name he had smeared.” See: Schulte, E. (2010, April 1). Why the right wanted to destroy ACORN. *SocialistWorker.com* (p. 1). Retrieved from <http://socialistworker.org/2010/04/01/why-the-right-wanted....>

Note 6. To say the least, it wasn’t enough to fight back against the onslaught of Republican outrage and political attacks.

Note 7. It should be noted that new voting restrictions will “have a disproportionate impact on black and other minority voters. [And,] there is little comfort in the fact that these rules are much less restrictive those in the olden days,” because “The Jim Crow regime was constructed gradually.” See: Congress needs to defend vote counting, not just vote casting. (2021, June 11). *Las Vegas Sun* (p. 2).

Note 8. To be certain, “Voter fraud shouldn’t be confused with the millions of people who move, [and] fail to notify election officials at their old address and end up registered in two places. But few try to use either circumstance to vote twice.” Others divide their time between homes in different states and are registered in both. See: 54 years after ‘Dream’ speech, voting rights still under assault. (2017, August 28). *USA Today* (p. 7A).

Note 9. According to Blow, “Some people assume that poor people don’t care about politics and voting. On the contrary, they are so beaten down, very often by political forces, that mere survival too often crowds out voting on their list of priorities.” See Blow, C. (2021A, March 22). Poverty as a proxy for race in voter suppression. *Las Vegas Sun* (p. 3).

Note 10. Accordingly, the suppression of minority voting rights is “a modern reboot of Jim Crow laws, which likewise established a litany of restrictions and technicalities that were designed to discourage or prevent African Americans from voting,” like with the infamous Mississippi Plan. See: If Republicans get their way, voter suppression will spread and endure. (2022, March 22). *Las Vegas Sun* (p. 2).

Note 11. We should also keep in mind that some Americans “have more representation and influence with elected officials than others and, other things being equal, they are more likely to have their preferences and interest reflected in what government does.” See: Greenberg, E. S. & Page, B. I. (2003). *The Struggle for Democracy*. New York: Longman Addison-Wesley.

Note 12. The GOP also wrongly believes that they are the direct victims of voter fraud; and the time to pay attention is now. But what exactly does this mean?

Note 13. According to *The New York Times* columnist, Ross Douthat, Republicans “all over the country are advancing bills that answer the [so-called] ‘theft’ of 2020 with new ID requirements and new limits on absentee and early votes, while Democrats are advancing a national bill that would essentially federalize election law and make certain Republican [voting] restrictions impermissible.” See: Douthat, R. (2021, March 18). America’s voting wars will seemingly never end. *Las Vegas Sun* (p. 3).

Note 14. Unfortunately, “American political parties compete as much by demobilizing voters as by mobilizing them, and that it is black Americans who are usually singled out as the targets of

demobilization.” See: Piven, F. F., Minnite, L. C., & Groarke, M. (2009). *Keeping Down the Black Vote: Race and the Demobilization of American Voters*. New York: The New Press.

Note 15. It should be understood that “disenfranchising people of color and [legal] immigrants is the overwhelming history of voter suppression in this country.” See: Blow, C. (2021B, June 14). Voter suppression must be the central issue. *Las Vegas Sun* (p. 3).

Note 16. It should be noted here that before the “2013 Supreme Court decision” — that is, “states with a history of racial discrimination” had to get “advance approval from the Justice department or a federal court for changes in election practices.” See: President must protect Americans’ right to vote. (2021, June 5). By *Los Angeles Times* Editorial. *Las Vegas Sun* (p. 2).

Note 17. Also, it should be understood that, “Since the time black people gained the right to vote during Reconstruction, racist white people have been trying to strip that right from as many of them as possible.” See: Blow, C. (2021B, June 14). Voter suppression must be the central issue. *Las Vegas Sun* (p. 3).

Note 18. To be certain, Republicans “will almost certainly try to find ways to rationalize purging legitimate voters from the [voter] rolls and erecting yet more barriers to voting.” See: Dionne, E. J. (2017, July 26). Sham alert: Trump’s voter panel is a fraud. *Las Vegas Sun* (p.3).

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