

How US Elections are Rigged

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This paper describes election-rigging techniques which can still be used today. Fraud is rampant and preventative actions are needed.

Pre-Election Deception

Deceptive tricks employed immediately before Election Day have been well-organized in preventing people from voting.

LETTERS AND FLYERS on official-looking stationary – mailed or hung on doorknobs – convey false information about polling stations being moved. Some fliers have told people they can still vote the day after election.

A Spanish-language letter once sent to some 40,000 registered democrats in California's Orange County read: "You are advised that if your residence in this county is illegal or if you are an immigrant, voting in a federal election is a crime and could result in jail time." Naturalized citizens can, of course, legally vote but many are intimidated.

MISLEADING TELEPHONE CALLS announce incorrect changes in polling booth locations. Other intimidating calls – purportedly from the Elections Commission – threaten people with arrest if they vote because they are registered in another state; or because they are an ex-felon.

ROBOCALLING is a telemarketing technique using pre-recorded, computer-generated messages designed to create anger against democratic candidates. The calls typically begin by offering information about the candidate. If recipients hang up immediately they think it is the democrat who is harassing them. If they listen on, they hear of all the perceived wrongs about that candidate, which also might influence their vote. These misleading calls are made late in the evening or during the night, in an effort to generate anger toward the democratic candidate who is in no way associated with the harassment.

PUSH POLLS are a more sophisticated telemarketing ploy. Automated calls ask a series of questions, but the computer picks each question according to how the previous one is answered. The caller first asks which candidate he or she favors. The system then asks 'yes' or 'no' questions about different issues. This manner of finding a democrat's undesirable attribute, then distorting it out of context, has proven very effective in swaying opinions.

INACCURATE SAMPLE BALLOTS mailed or passed out describing republican candidates as being endorsed by democrats. Unwary voters might vote for republicans.

OTHER MEANS used for deception are changing voting station locations without timely notice in areas most likely to vote democratic; or such stations being placed in inconvenient locations; or moving them from large, warm places like auditoriums and gymnasiums to smaller places where voters have to wait outside in the rain and cold.

Purging Voter Lists

The federal 2002 Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requires that each state maintain an up-to-date and accurate list of registered voters. Purging names of people who have died or moved away is of course necessary. But a clear procedure is lacking. Some states have had a 10% error rate resulting in hundreds of eligible voters being purged. In some states if names on the voter lists are not on the motor vehicle or social security databases, they were automatically purged. Simple typos and misspellings, absence of a middle initial, hyphenated last names, and Asian names where the surname is listed first, can result in a mismatch. A woman listed by her maiden name on one list and her married name on another is a mismatch.

Voter purges reached new heights with the *Interstate Voter Registration Crosscheck Program (Interstate Crosscheck)*. The 2014 mid-term election in the US saw 27 states¹ cooperating in finding voters supposedly registered in multiple states, which would be a federal crime. Some 3½ million people were alleged to have registered in two states even though a quarter of them had middle names that didn't match. None were arrested, of course, they just didn't get to vote. Each voter in every pair of matches would be suspect at their particular polling place. That means, in all, 6,951,484 voters were potentially removed for the voter list, with the removals skewed toward democrats.

Investigative journalist Greg Palast and his team ran a statistical study of over 2 million names (one million alleged double voters) on the crosscheck list. "Their projections found names like Jackson, Washington, Garcia and Kim overrepresented. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 53% of all Jacksons and 90% of Washingtons are African-American; 91% of all Garcias are Hispanic; and 94% of all Kims are Asian." (*Democracy Now*) These ethnic groups are most likely to vote democratic.

Originally there were 28 states participating in *Interstate Crosscheck*. Palast explained: "Washington dropped out. That's how I got the list. Washington said this list is junk. ... It only matches first and last names. So they handed me the list. They said, 'These aren't criminals. It's just a list of common American names'." (*Democracy Now*)

Some states send a postcard to people on the list asking them to verify their address. The card looks like junk mail so many are thrown out. Other states remove the name permanently for future elections if the person in question doesn't vote in an election. If, after being purged, that person does show up to vote they may be given a provisional ballot, which ends up in the trash.

¹ Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia

I searched the web for my name and found a Vietnam veteran from Kentucky named Robert C. Aldridge; lawyers in both Cleveland and Broadview Heights, OH with my name; and another Robert C. Aldridge in Birmingham, AL died in 1998 at the age of 87. When I omitted my middle initial I got 20 exact matches on Facebook. Mine is not a real common name so it is easy to see how fraudulent *Interstate Crosscheck* can be, and why Washington State called it junk.

To sum up: “The Crosscheck list purges could easily account for Republican victories in at least two Senate races in 2014. In North Carolina, republican Thom Tillis won over incumbent Sen. Kay Hagan by just 48,511 votes. Crosscheck [in that state] tagged a breathtaking 589,393 ... as possible illegal double voters.” (Palast, “Voter Purges ...”) State election officials whittled that list down to 190,000 but that could still have changed the outcome. The other race was in Colorado where “Republican Corey Gardner was able to force out incumbent Senator Mark Udall.” (Palast, “Voter Purges ...”) Colorado had 300,842 voters subject to being purged. Other states were not as transparent but if all 27 had purged 13½% of the Crosscheck list, as Virginia did, it would explain how republicans gained control of Congress in 2014.

Voter ID

Voter Identification at the polling stations affects mainly African Americans, Hispanics, students, the elderly, and poor white folk from voting. These people, who tend to vote democratic, often lack the proper type of identification. The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School broke down the number in each category that lack government photo ID: (See Palast, “Scalia’s Bad Habits”)

- 5.5 million African Americans
- 8.1 million Hispanics
- 4.5 million 18-24 year olds
- 6.0 million seniors
- 15% of voters with household income under \$35,000 a year

Those figures won’t tally because many are in more than one category and they don’t all live in states requiring photo ID. However, according to the Brennan Center, *five million* registered voters in the US will lose their right to cast a ballot because of voter ID laws. (Palast, “Scalia’s Bad Habits”)

The federal HAVA requires first-time voters in a federal election to provide identification (not necessarily photo) if they register by mail. That is a one-time thing and only for those registering by mail. More damaging is the 2008 Supreme Court ruling that Indiana’s strict (i.e. government-issued) photo ID law is Constitutional. That opens the door for more states to enact such laws. Currently there are 13 states that have strict voter ID laws (9 photo and 4 non-photo), 10 states that have non-strict photo ID laws (can be other than government photo ID), 11 that have non-strict, non-photo ID requirements (perhaps just a utility bill in the voter’s name), and 17 states plus the District of Columbia that have no voter ID laws. (See *Wikipedia*; “Voter ID Laws in the United States,” for a detailed description of each state’s voter ID requirements.)

Action to stop polling station officials from requiring stricter identification than required by state law will allow many more people to lawfully vote.

Absentee Voting

OVERSEAS ABSENTEE VOTING. The *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act* (UOCAVA) of 1986 provides for voting by fax or email for US citizens and military personnel abroad. An August 2006 internal Pentagon review found “significant concerns” because e-mail is often relayed through various governments, companies and individuals where it can be easily tampered with. Security specialists cited the same problems with faxes. Soldiers are required to waive their rights to a secret ballot, and are not told their ballots go through handlers with possible republican leanings.

The *Military and Overseas Voting Empowerment Act* (Subtitle H of Public Law 111-84 – October 28, 2009) amended the UOCAVA but that Act still only protects Security and Privacy “To the extent practicable.”

DOMESTIC ABSENTEE VOTING. Even though domestic absentee voting is on paper ballots there are still risks of fraud:

- Absentee ballots are tallied by an optical-scan computer which can be rigged for vote manipulation.
- Faulty instructions for timely mailing of ballots can invalidate votes.
- Unknown volunteers knocking on doors offering to deliver absentee ballots to the election office.
- History tells us that others besides the intended persons can cast absentee ballots.
- History also tells us that more absentee votes can be counted than are logged into poll records

Polling Station Problems

Many avoidable problems at the voting place prevent people from voting:

“NO PARTY PREFERENCE” VOTERS GIVEN PROVISIONAL BALLOTS

- “Poll Workers in their training sessions have erroneously been instructed to give ‘No Party Preference’ voters provisional ballots which is a polite way of saying your votes won’t count.” (From Patrick Shannon’s Facebook page) **NOTE: This seems to be a new trick for vote rigging for the 2016 General Election.**

ARBITRARY DECISIONS AND OBNOXIOUS BEHAVIOR:

- Minority voters intimidated by police roadblocks.
- Polling judges rushing people through the lines and allowing insufficient time to vote.
- Precinct workers requiring extensive identification for voting, usually selectively.
- Vote challengers and observers intimidating poor and minority voters to cause delays or cause some to leave.
- People in line outside being told the doors will close before they can vote.
- Refusing a provisional ballot to people who didn’t receive their absentee ballot.

LONG LINES, SHORT HOURS, AND DELAYS:

- Poorer precincts, which often have the highest percentage of minority voters tending to vote democratic, being adversely affected by shortage of equipment, supplies; and voting machines.
- Polling stations opening late, thus making it hard for people to vote before work.
- Voting machines delivered late, causing the polls to open late.

- Polling stations not prepared for a large turnout of minority voters due to democrat canvassing.
- Power outages crippling voting machines and causing people to use paper ballots which are later entered into the machine by someone else.
- Closing the polls at the designated time and turning people away who have waited in long lines.

NO PROVISION FOR MINORITY-LANGUAGE GROUPS. The federal *Voting Rights Act* requires translators at the polls or special-language ballots if a single-language group in the jurisdiction exceeds 10,000. This requirement affects hundreds of jurisdictions in 27 states where some 60 million people live. Election protection volunteers have found mistranslated ballots and interpreter shortages that led to minority voters being disenfranchised or casting an unintended vote. Poll watchers are often denied permission to help voters who requested bi-lingual assistance.

NO PROVISIONS FOR THE HANDICAPPED. Some polling stations lack adequate handicap access. People in wheelchairs are faced with steps and unreachable voting machines. People with impaired vision find no help in reading the ballot. Some unequipped precincts simply turned disabled people away.

Provisional Ballots

The federal HAVA mandates that voters found ineligible for any reason “shall” be notified of the right to cast a provisional ballot. A person whose name is not on the sign-up sheet can request a provisional ballot which is to be sealed and held until his or her name can be checked on the voter roster. People never know if their ballot is counted.

675,000 provisional ballots cast during the 2004 US general election were not counted; mainly because voters weren’t on the registration list, reported to the wrong precinct, had inadequate identification, or did not complete their ballot. Some states disqualify provisional ballots if not cast in the voter’s ‘home precinct’. This problem multiplies as more precincts are consolidated to share one large area or building; which is most prevalent in the democrat-prone poor and minority districts. Voting stations sometimes run out of provisional ballot forms, or don’t have them at all.

Getting provisional ballots from the voting station to the county headquarters is tricky. Manipulation can occur during transportation if not under the watchful eyes of observers. Then, when checking provisional ballots election officials usually rely on the computerized voter list which often contains errors and misspellings. They do not look for the original registration cards. Some counties check back several years to validate those ballots while others only check recent records.

Post-Election Fraud

SPOILED BALLOTS. Ballots can be deemed “spoiled” if they are damaged or marked in such a manner that the machine can’t read them – a stray mark, a machine malfunction, or writing in a candidate’s name instead of checking it (voters sometimes mark the wrong candidate and try to correct the error by writing in the desired candidate).

VOTING MACHINES. Voting machines have tallied more votes than voters, with some precincts showing unbelievably high voter turnouts of 94-98%. Also, voting machines can be rigged to periodically not register a democratic vote. If there is no vote marked for president it can be deemed a spoiled ballot. Precincts have had 25% of their ballots spoiled in this manner – 75% more democrat than republican.

RECONSTITUTED BALLOTS. Republicans statistically hold a 2-to-1 advantage in absentee ballots. If a ballot is damaged in the mail the counting machine may reject them. Rather than calling it a spoiled ballot the vote counters piece these ballots together and figure out what the voter intended. Although this is legal in some states it opens the door to fraud because a democrat ballot could be altered, or simply declared spoiled.

References

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