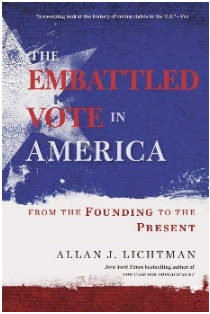


# Who Gets to Vote?

## Conversations on Voting Rights in America

Book Summaries and Author Bios\*

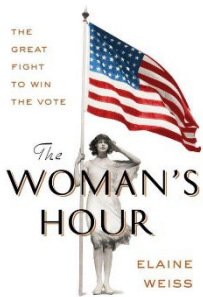


**Allan J. Lichtman, *The Embattled Vote in America: From the Founding to the Present*. Harvard University Press, 2018**

Americans have fought and died for the right to vote, yet the world's oldest continuously operating democracy does not guarantee its citizens the right to elect their leaders. For most of US history, suffrage has been a privilege restricted by wealth, sex, race, residence, literacy, criminal conviction, and citizenship.

Today, voter identification laws, registration requirements, felon disenfranchisement, and voter purges deny many millions of American citizens the opportunity to express their views at the ballot box. An award-winning historian who has testified in more than ninety voting rights cases, Allan Lichtman gives us the history behind today's headlines and shows that accusations of voter fraud, political gerrymandering and outrageous attempts at voter suppression are nothing new.

**Allan Lichtman** is a professor of history at American University, specializing in US political history. He holds the distinction of correctly predicting every US presidential election since 1984.

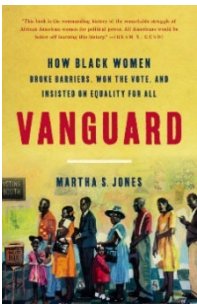


**Elaine Weiss, *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*. Viking, 2018.**

Nashville, August 1920: Thirty-five states have approved the Nineteenth Amendment, granting women the right to vote; one last state—Tennessee—is needed for women's voting rights to be the law of the land. The suffragists face vicious opposition from politicians, clergy, corporations, and racists who don't want Black women voting. And then there are the "Antis"—women who oppose their own enfranchisement, fearing suffrage will bring about the nation's moral collapse.

Following a handful of remarkable women who led their respective forces into battle, *The Woman's Hour* recounts how America's women won their own freedom, and the opening campaign in the great twentieth-century battles for civil rights.

**Elaine Weiss** is an award-winning journalist and author specializing in women's history. Her book *The Woman's Hour* is being made into a movie by Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment.



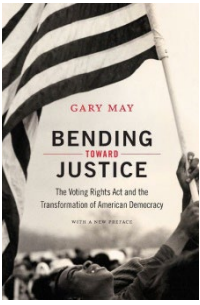
**Martha S. Jones, *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All*. Basic Books, 2020.**

In the standard story, the suffrage crusade began in Seneca Falls in 1848 and ended with the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920. However, this overwhelmingly white women's movement did not win the vote for most Black women, who required a movement of their own to secure their rights.

In *Vanguard*, Martha S. Jones offers a new history of African American women's political lives in America. She recounts how they defied both racism and sexism to fight for the ballot, and how they wielded political power to secure the equality and dignity of all persons. From the earliest days of the republic to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and beyond, Jones excavates the lives and work of Black women — Maria Stewart, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Fannie Lou Hamer, and more — who formed the vanguard of women's rights activism, calling on America to realize its best ideals.

**Martha S. Jones** is a professor of history at Johns Hopkins University and president of the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, the oldest and largest association of women historians in the US. Author of *Birthright Citizens* and *All Bound Up Together*, she has written for the *Washington Post*, *Atlantic*, *USA Today* and more.

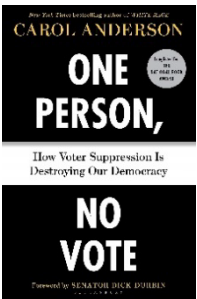
*Who Gets to Vote* is a program of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities intended to build public understanding of the complicated history of voting rights in America and is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities under the special initiative "A More Perfect Union."



**Gary May, *Bending Toward Justice: The Voting Rights Act and the Transformation of American Democracy*. Basic Books, 2013.**

When the Fifteenth Amendment of 1870 granted African Americans the right to vote, it seemed as if a new era of political equality was at hand. Before long, however, white segregationists across the South counterattacked, driving their Black countrymen from the polls through a combination of terror and devices such as literacy tests and poll taxes. Most African Americans would remain voiceless for nearly a century more, citizens in name only until the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act secured their access to the ballot.

**Gary May** is a professor emeritus of history at the University of Delaware, specializing in American political, diplomatic, and social history since 1945.

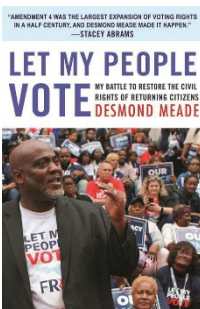


**Carol Anderson, *One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy*. Bloomsbury, 2018.**

Carol Anderson chronicles the rollbacks to African American participation in the vote since the 2013 Supreme Court decision that eviscerated the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Known as the *Shelby* ruling, this decision effectively allowed districts with a demonstrated history of racial discrimination to change voting requirements without approval from the Department of Justice.

Focusing on the aftermath of *Shelby*, Anderson follows the unfolding story of government-dictated racial discrimination as more and more states adopt voter suppression laws. She explains how voter suppression works, from photo ID requirements to gerrymandering to poll closures. With vivid characters, she explores the resistance: the organizing, activism, and court battles to restore the basic right to vote to all Americans.

**Carol Anderson** is a professor of African American studies at Emory University, specializing in public policy at the intersection of race, justice, and equality in the US. Her most recent monograph, *One Person, No Vote*, was longlisted for the National Book Award for nonfiction.



**Desmond Meade, *Let My People Vote: My Battle to Restore the Civil Rights of Returning Citizens*. Beacon Press, 2020.**

In *Let My People Vote* activist and returning citizen Desmond Meade recounts his personal journey to restore voting rights to roughly 1.4 million returning citizens in Florida. Meade survived a tough childhood only to find himself with a felony conviction. Finding the strength to pull his life together, he graduated summa cum laude from college, graduated from law school, and married. But because of his conviction, he was not allowed to sit for the bar exam in Florida. And when his wife ran for state office, he was filled with pride—but not permitted to vote for her.

Meade takes us on a journey from his time in homeless shelters to the night in November of 2018, when Florida’s Amendment 4 passed with 65 percent of the vote, enfranchising more people than at any other time since the passage of the women’s suffrage amendment in 1919.

**Desmond Meade** fought to restore voting rights to approximately 1.4 million Floridians with past felony convictions and continues to fight for the civil rights of all returning citizens. He was named one of *Time* magazine’s Most Influential People in the World in 2019, and in 2021 he received a MacArthur “Genius” Fellowship.

*\*All summaries excerpted from publishers’ websites.*