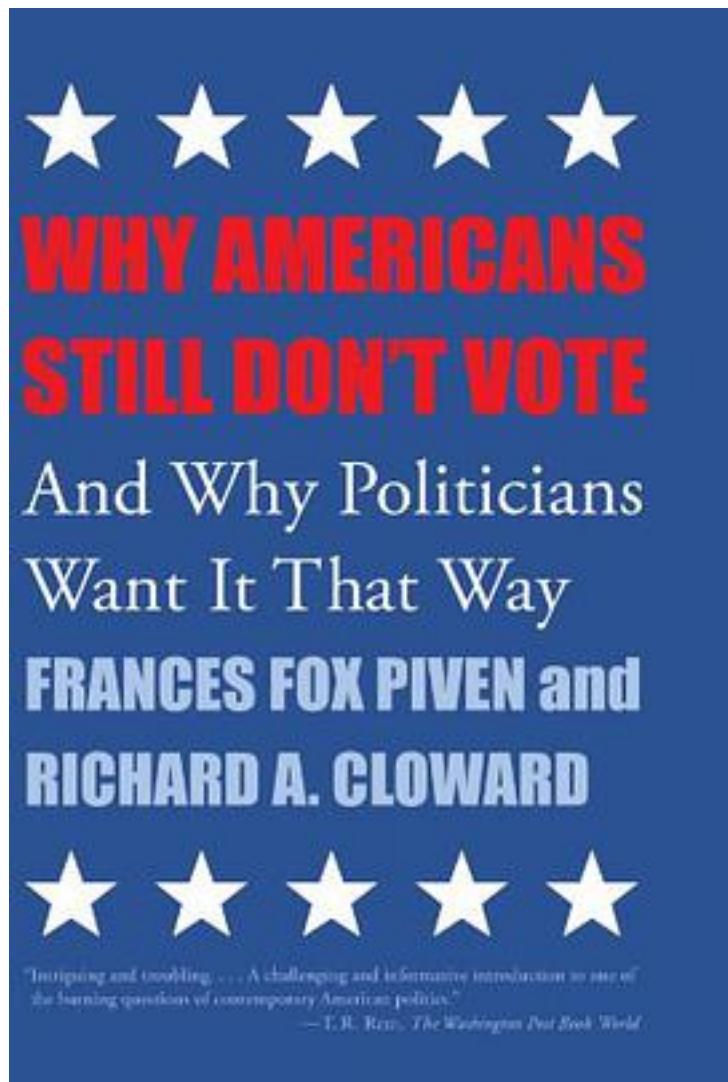


# Why Americans Still Don't Vote



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Americans take for granted that ours is the very model of a democracy. At the core of this belief is the assumption that the right to vote is firmly established. But in fact, the United States is the only major democratic nation in which the less well-off, the young, and minorities are substantially underrepresented in the electorate.

Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward were key players in the long battle to reform voter registration laws that finally resulted in the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (also known as the Motor Voter law). When Why Americans Don't Vote was first published in 1988, this battle was still raging, and their book was a fiery salvo. It demonstrated that the twentieth century had witnessed a concerted effort to restrict voting by immigrants and blacks through a combination of poll taxes, literacy tests, and unwieldy voter registration requirements.

Why Americans Still Don't Vote brings the story up to the present. Analyzing the results of voter registration reform, and drawing compelling historical parallels, Piven and Cloward reveal why neither of the major parties has tried to appeal to the interests of the newly registered-and thus why Americans still don't vote.

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