

This resource list was assembled to help you research and develop exhibitions and programming around the themes of the *Voices and Votes: Democracy in America* exhibition. Work with your local library or bookstore to host book clubs, discussion programs, or other learning opportunities in conjunction with the exhibition or develop a display with books on the subject. This list is not meant to be exhaustive or all-encompassing. It is simply a start! A quick search of the library will reveal numerous lists compiled by experts. All titles should be readily available unless otherwise specified. Descriptions below are taken from the respective publishers.

### Adult Fiction

**Drury, Allen. *Advise and Consent*.** New York: Originally by Doubleday & Co., 1959. This Pulitzer Prize winning book of political fiction offers a sweeping tale of corruption and ambition that cuts across the landscape of Washington, DC. Allen Drury penetrated the world's stormiest political battleground—the smoke-filled committee rooms of the United States Senate—to reveal the bitter conflicts set in motion when the President calls upon the Senate to confirm his controversial choice for Secretary of State.

**Warren, Robert Penn. *All the King's Men*.** New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 1946.

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, this classic book is generally regarded as the finest novel ever written on American politics. It describes the career of Willie Stark, a back-country lawyer whose idealism is overcome by his lust for power.

**Adams, Henry. *Democracy: An American Novel*.** Penguin, 2008.

Originally published in 1880, *Democracy* explores a young woman's introduction to the political system when she moves to Washington, DC to understand how power works.

### Adult Non-fiction

**Bird, William L, Jr., Lisa Kathleen Graddy, Grace Cohen Grossman, Harry R. Rubenstein, and Barbara Clark Smith. *American Democracy: A Great Leap of Faith*** (accompanying publication for the original exhibition at the National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution). Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2017.

**Chernow, Ron. *Alexander Hamilton*.** New York: Penguin Books, 2004.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Ron Chernow presents a landmark biography of Alexander Hamilton, the Founding Father who galvanized, inspired, scandalized, and shaped the newborn nation. Few figures in American history have been more hotly debated or more grossly misunderstood than Alexander Hamilton. Chernow's biography gives Hamilton his due and sets the record straight, deftly illustrating that the political and economic greatness of today's America is the result of Hamilton's countless sacrifices to champion ideas that were often wildly disputed during his time.



**Dray, Philip. *Capitol Men: The Epic Story of Reconstruction Through the Lives of the First Black Congressmen.***

Philip Dray reclaims the story of Sixteen black Southerners elected to the U.S. Congress during reconstruction. Drawing on archival documents, contemporary news accounts, and congressional records, he shows how the efforts of black Americans revealed their political perceptiveness and readiness to serve as voters, citizens, and elected officials.

**Foner, Eric. *The Story of American Freedom.*** New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1999. "Eric Foner examines freedom not as a timeless truth, but as a value whose meaning and scope have been contested throughout American history. This narrative shows freedom to have been shaped not only in congressional debates and political treatises but also on plantations and picket lines, in parlors and bedrooms, by our acknowledged leaders and by former slaves, union organizers, freedom riders, and women's rights activists."

**Foner, Eric. *The Second Founding: How the Civil War and Reconstruction Remade the Constitution***

Eric Foner traces pivotal amendments from their dramatic origins in pre-Civil War mass meetings of African-American "colored citizens" and in Republican party politics to their virtual nullification in the late nineteenth century. A series of momentous decisions by the Supreme Court narrowed the rights guaranteed in the amendments, while the states actively undermined them. The Jim Crow system was the result. Again today there are serious political challenges to birthright citizenship, voting rights, due process, and equal protection of the law. Like all great works of history, this one informs our understanding of the present as well as the past: knowledge and vigilance are always necessary to secure our basic rights.

**Grinspan, Jon. *The Virgin Vote: How Young Americans Made Democracy Social, Politics Personal, and Voting Popular in the Nineteenth Century.*** Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press; 2016.

There was a time when young people were the most passionate participants in American democracy. In the second half of the nineteenth century--as voter turnout reached unprecedented peaks--young people led the way, hollering, fighting, and flirting at massive midnight rallies. Parents trained their children to be "violent little partisans," while politicians lobbied twenty-one-year-olds for their "virgin votes"—the first ballot cast upon reaching adulthood. In schoolhouses, saloons, and squares, young men and women proved that democracy is social and politics is personal, earning their adulthood by participating in public life. Drawing on hundreds of diaries and letters of diverse young Americans--from barmaids to belles, sharecroppers to cowboys--this book explores how exuberant young people and scheming party bosses relied on each other from the 1840s to the turn of the twentieth century. It also explains why this era ended so dramatically and asks if aspects of that strange period might be useful today. Jon Grinspan recalls a time when struggling young citizens found identity and maturity in democracy.

**Goetzmann, William H. *Beyond the Revolution: A History of American Thought from Paine to Pragmatism.***

Pulitzer Prize-winning historian William H. Goetzmann tells the story of America's greatest thinkers and creators, from Paine and Jefferson to Melville and William James, showing how they built upon and battled one another's ideas in the critical years between 1776 and 1900. An unprecedented work of intellectual history by a master historian, this book will be essential reading for anyone interested in the origins of our national culture.

**Keyssar, Alexander. *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States*.** New York: Basic Books, 2000.

Most Americans take for granted their right to vote, whether they choose to exercise it or not. But the history of suffrage in the U.S. is, in fact, the story of a struggle to achieve this right by our society's marginalized groups. In *The Right to Vote*, HKS historian Alexander Keyssar explores the evolution of suffrage over the course of the nation's history. Examining the many features of the history of the right to vote in the U.S.—class, ethnicity, race, gender, religion, and age—the book explores the conditions under which American democracy has expanded and contracted over the years. Keyssar presents convincing evidence that the history of the right to vote has not been one of a steady history of expansion and increasing inclusion, noting that voting rights contracted substantially in the U.S. between 1850 and 1920. Keyssar also presents a controversial thesis: that the primary factor promoting the expansion of the suffrage has been war and the primary factors promoting contraction or delaying expansion have been class tension and class conflict.

**Lewis, John, with Michael D'Orso. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*.** New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998.

The award-winning national bestseller, *Walking with the Wind*, is one of our most important records of the American civil rights movement. Told by John Lewis, who Cornel West calls a “national treasure,” this is a gripping first-hand account of the fight for civil rights and the courage it takes to change a nation. In 1957, a teenaged boy named John Lewis left a cotton farm in Alabama for Nashville, the epicenter of the struggle for civil rights in America. Lewis's adherence to nonviolence guided that critical time and established him as one of the movement's most charismatic and courageous leaders. Lewis's leadership in the Nashville Movement—a student-led effort to desegregate the city of Nashville using sit-in techniques based on the teachings of Gandhi—set the tone for major civil rights campaigns of the 1960s. Lewis traces his role in the pivotal Selma marches, Bloody Sunday, and the Freedom Rides. Inspired by his mentor, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Lewis's vision and perseverance altered history. In 1986, he ran and won a congressional seat in Georgia, and remains in office to this day, continuing to enact change.

**Meacham, Jon. *The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels*.** New York: Random House, 2018.

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jon Meacham helps us understand the present moment in American politics and life by looking back at critical times in our history when hope overcame division and fear. Each dramatic hour in our national life has been shaped by the contest to lead the country to look forward rather than back, to assert hope over fear—a struggle that continues even now.

**Ngai, Mae M. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*,** Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

This book traces the origins of the “illegal alien” in American law and society, explaining why and how illegal migration became the central problem in U.S. immigration policy—a process that profoundly shaped ideas and practices about citizenship, race, and state authority in the twentieth century. Mae Ngai offers a close reading of the legal regime of restriction that commenced in the 1920s—its statutory architecture, judicial genealogies, administrative enforcement, differential treatment of European and non-European migrants, and long-term effects. She shows that immigration restriction, particularly national-origin and numerical quotas, remapped America both by creating new categories of racial difference and by emphasizing as never before the nation's contiguous land borders and their patrol.

**Sanchez, George J. *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture, and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945*.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Twentieth-century Los Angeles has been the locus of one of the most profound and complex interactions between variant cultures in American history. Yet this study is among the first to examine the relationship between ethnicity and identity among the largest immigrant group to that city. By focusing on Mexican immigrants to Los Angeles from 1900 to 1945, George J. Sánchez explores the process by which temporary sojourners altered their orientation to that of permanent residents, thereby laying the foundation for a new Mexican-American culture. Analyzing not only formal programs aimed at these newcomers by the United States and Mexico, but also the world created by these immigrants through family networks, religious practice, musical entertainment, and work and consumption patterns, Sánchez uncovers the creative ways Mexicans adapted their culture to life in the United States. When a formal repatriation campaign pushed thousands to return to Mexico, those remaining in Los Angeles launched new campaigns to gain civil rights as ethnic Americans through labor unions and New Deal politics. The immigrant generation, therefore, laid the groundwork for the emerging Mexican-American identity of their children.

**Schama, Simon. *The American Future: A History*.** New York: HarperCollins, 2008.

“As the adaptation of a television series, *The American Future* treads a fine line between history and a kind of quick-cut shorthand that tries to neatly define the virtues of America and Americans (the *Miami Herald* deemed the genre the “Earnest Television Spinoff”). Simon Schama, a shrewd and experienced scholar, writer, and commentator, makes his points clearly (the biographical sketches, particularly of lesser-known figures such as the Meigses, an 18th- and 19th-century military family, can be affecting) and chooses his examples well. Still, some readers may be put off by the author’s apparent lack of objectivity and a tendency to underdeliver in making any substantive predictions based on his reading of history.”

**Smith, Barbara Clark. *The Freedoms We Lost: Consent and Resistance in Revolutionary America*.** New York: New Press, 2011.

The American Revolution is widely understood—by schoolchildren and citizens alike—as having ushered in “freedom” as we know it, a freedom that places voting at the center of American democracy. In a sharp break from this view, historian Barbara Clark Smith charts the largely unknown territory of the unique freedoms enjoyed by colonial American subjects of the British king—that is, American freedom before the Revolution. *The Freedoms We Lost* recovers a world of common people regularly serving on juries, joining crowds that enforced (or opposed) the king’s edicts, and supplying community enforcement of laws in an era when there were no professional police. *The Freedoms We Lost* challenges the unquestioned assumption that the American patriots simply introduced freedom where the king had once reigned. Rather, Smith shows that they relied on colonial-era traditions of political participation to drive the Revolution forward—and eventually, betrayed these same traditions as leading patriots gravitated toward “monied men” and elites who would limit the role of common men in the new democracy. By the end of the 1780s, she shows, Americans discovered that forms of participation once proper to subjects of Britain were inappropriate—even impermissible—to citizens of the United States. In a narrative that counters nearly every textbook account of America’s founding era, *The Freedoms We Lost* challenges us to think about what it means to be free.

**Weiss, Elaine. *The Woman’s Hour, The Great Fight to Win the Vote*.** New York: Viking Press, 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. And in one hot summer, they all converge for a confrontation, replete with booze and blackmail, betrayal and courage. Following a handful of remarkable women who led their respective forces into battle, *The Woman's Hour* is the gripping story of how America's women won their own freedom, and the opening campaign in the great twentieth-century battles for civil rights.

**White, Theodore H. *The Making of the President 1960*.** New York: Harper Perennial; Reissue edition, 2010.

A Pulitzer Prize-winning examination of a crucial Presidential campaign, in which the young, charismatic John F. Kennedy squared off against the seasoned vice president, Richard M. Nixon. It is both a fascinating historical document and a compelling narrative of character and consequence. *The Making of the President: 1960* revolutionized the way modern presidential campaigns are reported. Reporting from within the campaign for the first time on record, White's extensive research and access to all parties involved set the bar for campaign coverage and remains unparalleled. White conveyed, in magnificent detail and with exquisite pacing, the high-stakes drama; he painted the unforgettable, even mythic, story of JFK versus Nixon; and most of all, he imbued the nation's presidential election process with a grandeur that later political writers have rarely matched.

**Wilentz, Sean. *The Politicians and the Egalitarians: The Hidden History of American Politics*.** New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2016

Sean Wilentz offers two views or facets of American history: First, America is built on an egalitarian tradition. At the nation's founding, Americans believed that extremes of wealth and want would destroy their revolutionary experiment in republican government. Ever since, that idea has shaped national political conflict and scored major egalitarian victories—from the Civil War and Progressive eras to the New Deal and the Great Society—along the way. Second, partisanship is a permanent fixture in America, and America is the better for it. Every major egalitarian victory in United States history has resulted neither from abandonment of partisan politics nor from social movement protests but from a convergence of protest and politics, and then sharp struggles led by principled and effective party politicians. There is little to be gained from the dream of a post-partisan world.

**Williams, T. Harry. *Huey Long*.** New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1969.

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award, this work describes the life of one of the most extraordinary figures in American political history. Huey Long was a great natural politician who looked, and often seemed to behave, like a caricature of the red-neck Southern politico, and yet had become at the time of his assassination a serious rival to Franklin D. Roosevelt for the Presidency. In this "masterpiece of American biography" [*New York Times Book Review*], Huey Long stands wholly revealed, analyzed, and understood.

**Zaeske, Susan. *Signatures of Citizenship: Petitioning, Antislavery, and Women's Political Identity*.** Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

In this comprehensive history of women's antislavery petitions addressed to Congress, Susan Zaeske argues that by petitioning, women not only contributed significantly to the movement to abolish slavery but also made important strides toward securing their own rights and transforming their own political identity. By analyzing the language of women's antislavery petitions, speeches calling women to petition, congressional debates, and public reaction to women's petitions from 1831 to 1865, Zaeske reconstructs and interprets debates over the meaning of female citizenship. At the beginning of their political campaign in 1835 women tended to disavow the political nature of their petitioning, but by the 1840s they routinely

asserted women's right to make political demands of their representatives. This rhetorical change, from a tone of humility to one of insistence, reflected an ongoing transformation in the political identity of petition signers, as they came to view themselves not as subjects but as citizens. Having encouraged women's involvement in national politics, women's antislavery petitioning created an appetite for further political participation that spurred countless women after the Civil War and during the first decades of the twentieth century to promote causes such as temperance, anti-lynching laws, and woman suffrage.