

How real is voter fraud and the election actually be rigged ?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fo8NCtmaOpA>

« They even want to try and rig the election at the polling booths where so many cities are corrupt, and you see that, and voter fraud is all too common. And then they criticize us for saying that. »

This week Donald Trump made waves by claiming the Presidential election is rigged. While a majority of people thought the comment was outrageous or bizarre, some have expressed real concern. But just how real is voter fraud and how hard would it be to rig an election ? We're gonna ask Wendy R. Wiser this morning who directs the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at the NYU school of law. Good morning to you and welcome. First of all, when we talk about voter fraud, there are different types of voter fraud so what are they ?

« Voter fraud is any kind of deceptive attempt to interfere with the election and it could take many forms. It could be voter intimidation, it could be ballot box stuffing, misrecording of votes, tampering with electronic voting machines, vote buying, or it could be what was just insinuated, an ineligible person trying to impersonate another at the polls. »

But how often does this actually happen ?

« Well the kind of voter fraud of ineligible people showing up at the polls and voting or trying to vote in the name of another is vanishingly rare. A very widespread study found that, looking at all votes cast from 2000 to 2014, in over 1 billion votes cast, there were only 31 voters frauds. So this is something that, while certainly unacceptable, something that should be punished if it happens, is not something that's a real threat to our elections. »

Is there any confidence shaking this year at all by some because of outside influence in other areas ? Does hacking present any sort of a problem when it comes to counting votes ?

« No. The real risk with the hacking news and stories, and more and more experts and election officials are worried about this, is the shaking of voter confidence. Experts do not think that there is any real credible threat to the integrity of our elections from hacking. While there were attempts to interfere with voter registration and to hack into and get information from voter registration data bases, voting machines are not and should not be connected to the internet at any point. So you can't worry about someone in a basement, in Moscow, or anywhere else trying to access your voting machines. »

But just hearing something like this, can't that shake voter confidence and make them say 'I don't know if I even wanna participate' ?

« That is the concern out of this kind of activity that voter confidence will depress participation and people should know that and know that the most patriotic thing that they can do is actually go up, show support for their democracy and go and vote on Election Day. »

On Election night, the losing candidate, whoever that is, does not actually legally have to concede in any way.

« Absolutely not. In fact at no point is there a required concession, this is an important ritual of our democracy, showing that we come together and believe in our democracy and accept the legitimacy of the results. And sometimes the election results won't be falling on at the end of Election Day, but when all is said and done and the final results are certified, we accept the outcomes and we move forward with our new leaders. » [...]

US election : what happens if there is a contested election ?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgP2pjy_4tk

This election could be a first for the US. Never has a sitting president rejected the results of an election. But Donald Trump has made it pretty clear that if he loses, he may put up a fight. His biggest issue ? Mail-in votes. « I've been complaining very strongly about the ballots. » « The ballots are going to be a disaster » « It's a scam »

He's making these claims without any kind of proof, most of them are baseless and while he's been trying to say that he wants to get rid of mail-in balloting, the truth is the United States has been doing mail-in ballots for more than a century.

The US postal service has seen a surge in mail-in votes because of the coronavirus pandemic, meaning this year's election could take weeks to finalize.

Whatever a legitimate result means, it should be not at all a question that both candidates will honor and respect it.

Beyond the usual call for recounts, if either candidate was unhappy with the results, there are a couple ways of trying to change them. The first involves the electoral college. When voters cast a ballot, they're determining the popular vote. But that does not decide the presidency. That falls to the 538 members of the electoral college. A candidate needs 270 of their votes to win the presidency. Normally an elector would cast their ballot for the party which won the popular vote in their respective state. But because the electors are also affiliated with a political party, it is possible that they could go against the popular vote. It's rarely done and some states have laws against it but it is a possibility.

Another way the election could be contested is by going to the Supreme Court. That court

just rejected a democratic attempt to extend mail-in voting in Wisconsin. There is a fear that if this winds up in the Supreme Court that things could be tilted towards President Trump. The recent game changer is Amy Coney Barrett, a new Supreme Court Justice who was appointed by President Trump. There have been questions as to whether Amy Coney Barrett would step aside and recuse herself from any kind of decision. The Supreme Court was involved in the 2000 election, it ultimately decided the Bush v. Gore fight. The Court terminated the recount effort in Florida and Gore conceded.

No one has a crystal ball but what is likely to happen in this election? My hunch is that we'll see more of that and less of the nightmare scenarios of actors in the system really trying not to honor the will of the people. I certainly hope that's the case.

Whatever happens after Election Day, the US Constitution and Federal law require a President to be sworn in by January 20th. Every party is pursuing victory here, but for true democracy to happen, they also have to accept that they may lose.