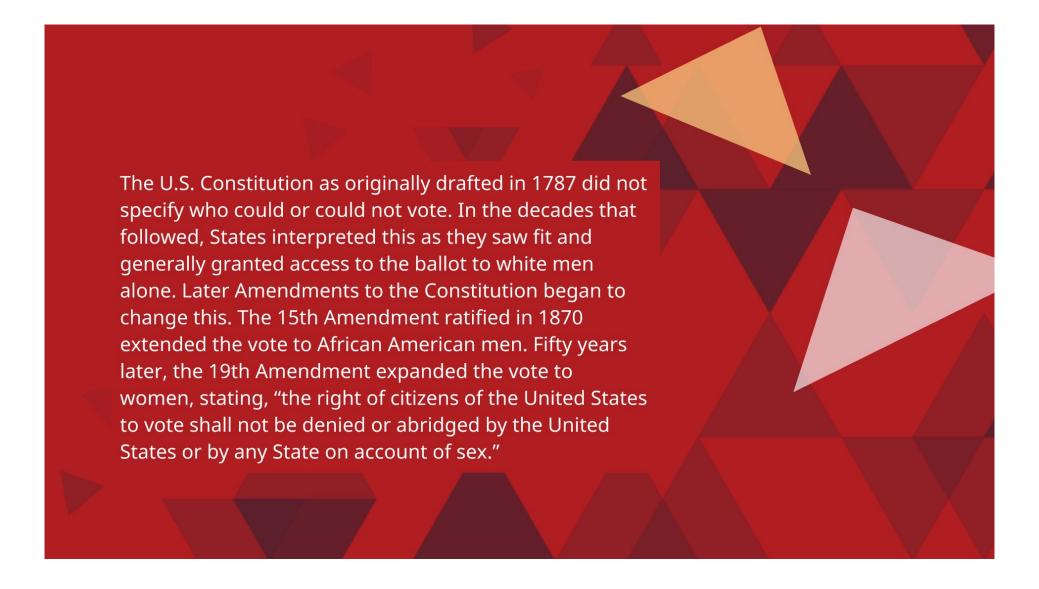


The Beginning

By the dawn of the 20th century, American women were no longer satisfied with being considered just keepers of the home and bearers of children. With the new century, came waves of social change inspiring women to challenge tradition and push for a greater political voice. Although eventually victorious, this change did not come easy.

Gaining the right to vote in 1920 gave women a tool to shape the world around them. Their struggle for political equality ultimately helped change Raleigh and the nation. **Exclusion!**





Cornelia Petty Jerman

(1874-1946)

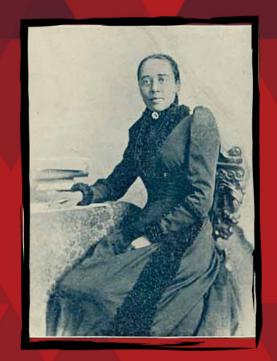
Jerman served as head of the state's suffrage movement and the local League of Women Voters. She became the first woman to represent the state at the Democratic National Convention in 1920. She was dubbed the "States First Woman."



Anna Julia Haywood Cooper

(1858 - 1964)

Cooper was born into slavery in Raleigh.
After emancipation, Cooper attended St.
Augustine's University in Raleigh and
Oberlin College in Ohio. In 1925, at age 67,
she received a doctorate from the Sorbonne
in Paris. In 1892, Cooper, published the first
book to advocate for African American
women's suffrage, A Voice from the South.
Her work inspired women across the
country, but the impacts in her hometown
would take another century to see.



Mary Hilliard Hinton

(1869–1961)

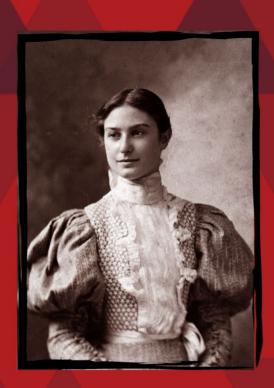
Hinton came from a prominent Raleigh family. She was an author, artist, genealogist, historian, and activist who did not believe women should vote. Hinton draped her headquarters with a banner stating, "Politics are bad for women and women are bad for politics."



Gertrude Weil

(1879 - 1971)

Weil was a Goldsboro, NC native who became involved in a wide range of progressive and often controversial causes, including women's suffrage, labor reform, and civil rights.



The Struggle for Suffrage

At the end of the 19th century, a number of reform movements based in progressive ideas swept through the state and nation. Women's rights, including the right to vote or suffrage, was one such movement. Women's suffrage was not a new movement, but rather a long struggle that gained momentum following the first women's rights convention held at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848.

The Women's suffrage movement in North Carolina moved slowly, but by the early 20th century the movement for women's suffrage had a foothold in the state's urban centers. This included women in Raleigh who clearly understood that their votes could change the world for the better.



Gertrude Weil (left) and other leaders of the North Carolina Equal Suffrage Association chose a location near the state capital for their office. This put them in close proximity to politicians they needed to lobby.



Gertrude Weil (left) and other leaders of the North Carolina Equal Suffrage Association chose a location near the state capital for their office. This put them in close proximity to politicians they needed to lobby. Among Raleigh's first supporters of women's suffrage were affluent women who utilized their social organizations as places to discuss ideas, organize, and push for a constitutional amendment that would give women voting power. In 1920, talented organizers such as Goldsboro native Gertrude Weil came to Raleigh and formed the North Carolina Equal Suffrage Association, which enlisted other prominent women to advocate for North Carolina's ratification of a proposed 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

During this era, suffragists primarily concentrated their efforts enabling white women's access to the ballot. Though the 15th Amendment gave African American men the right to vote, state segregation laws known as "Jim Crow" laws in North Carolina and across the South made it difficult for African American men to exercise their right. The reality of Jim Crow, whereby many African American men were already disfranchised, made the prospect of franchising African American women difficult to imagine for even the most determined suffragists. Thus African American women faced the double burden of working for equality on two fronts, both: racial and political as suffragists excluded them from the mainstream movement. Yet, they made their voices heard. African American activists such as Raleigh native Anna Julia Haywood Cooper were instrumental in elevating early demands for civil rights, including extending the vote to black women.



The headquarters of the North Carolina Equal Suffrage Association was located at 116 Fayetteville Street. The office of the anti-suffrage effort, the States Rights Defense League, was just a few doors down.



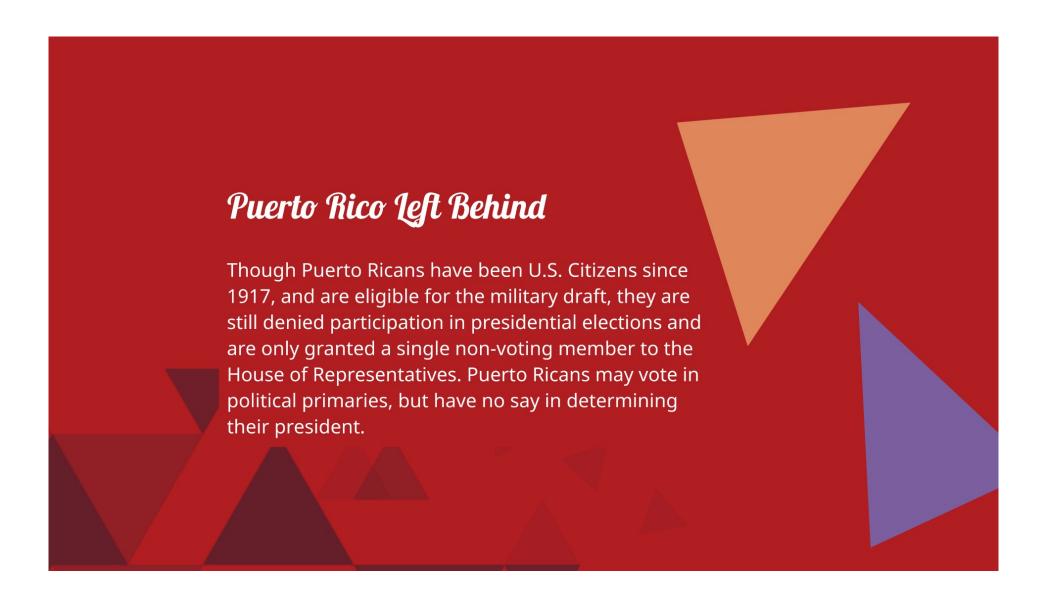
Still, not all white women supported the movement and the call for suffrage alarmed women who disagreed. Counter campaigns led by anti-suffragists claimed a voting amendment would increase the reach of the federal government, damage family values, and eventually shift power to African Americans. One of the most passionate women to fight against the effort was Raleigh native Mary Hilliard Hinton. Hinton established the Southern Women's League for the Rejection of the proposed Susan B. Anthony Amendment.

In the summer of 1920, the 19th Amendment needed only one more state to ratify before it became law. North Carolina stood poised to be the final state. On August 17, Legislators in Raleigh deferred the vote, not wanting to be responsible for the success of the amendment. Hinton and anti-suffrage campaigners won the battle, but Tennessee ratified the amendment the next day and it became law. North Carolina waited 51 years before it ceremoniously ratified the amendment in 1971.



The headquarters of the North Carolina Equal Suffrage Association was located at 116 Fayetteville Street. The office of the anti-suffrage effort, the States Rights Defense League, was just a few doors down.

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The Struggle for Change

Following the passage of the 19th Amendment, Raleigh women began to consider their new role in the political sphere. One group of activists organized the Wake County League of Women Voters to encourage and register women to vote. Over the next decade women embraced their new power to advocate for change and championed politicians who supported their causes.

The Great Depression, during the 1930s, deflated much of those efforts. The struggle to survive replaced the desire for political engagement. Women stayed politically active but focused their efforts on helping Raleigh recover during the financial downturn. Women faced another shock, when their lives and roles were dramatically redefined again during World War II. The absence of military age men on the homefront left a vacancy in both the workforce and at the ballot box. Women stepped into this vacancy and occupied new roles as clerks, factory workers, and soldiers to support the war effort and became the voting majority between 1942 and 1945.

The return of peace challenged the new opportunities women had embraced during the war. Men returned home in 1945 expecting to resume old jobs, as well as, start families. The "Baby Boom" in the post-war years kept many women at home. Changes the war elicited for women, however, were not totally undone. A sense of independence and confidence remained, and in 1947, Raleigh elected its first female member to City Council. Ruth C. Wilson won the election against the odds and became the first in a long line of women to lead and shape the Capital City.



Millie Dunn Veasey

(1918 - 2018)

After her studies at St. Augustine's University in Raleigh, she enlisted in the Women's Auxiliary Army in 1942. She served in the only all-female and all-black battalion to serve overseas during World War II. After the war, she went on to become the first female president of Raleigh's chapter of the NAACP.



Ruth C. Wilson

(1903-1999)

Wilson was born in Dover, NC and graduated from NC College for Women, what is now UNC Greensboro. She bragged she possessed, "a practical knowledge of Raleigh's governmental affairs and needs," which led her to victory over fourteen other candidates in a place one newspaper termed, "the citadel of masculine politics." She served two terms on the City Council including one term as Mayor Pro-Tem.



League of Women Voters of Wake County: Educate and Inspire

A group of suffragists formed Raleigh's chapter of the League of Women Voters (LWV) on September 27, 1920. The LWV is still a non-partisan organization dedicated to educating women voters and campaigning for social causes, such as affordable housing and environmental issues. Today, the LWV is involved in voter registration, voter engagement, and hosting candidate forums. In addition, the group advocates for issues important in the community and works to empower all residents of Wake County to exercise their democratic rights.

League of Women Voters of Wake County celebrated the 99th anniversary of the 19th amendment by registering voters. From left to right is Marian Lewin, Dianna Wynn, Diane Simmonds, and Theresa Rosenberg.



21.

New People, New Ideas

The post-war years fostered a new, progressive spirit that clashed with traditional attitudes. Raleigh found itself at the heart of this great transformation with the creation of Research Triangle Park, the increased enrollment at universities and colleges, and the changing views on race. These new ideas, new people, and new attitudes motivated women to come together and make change happen. In 1955, the newly reactivated Wake County League of Women Voters was one of the first political organizations to desegregate. This move offered a glimpse of things to come as women, regardless of race, united for a common cause.

Change erupted with greater intensity over the next ten years as social movements rocked the nation and also shook Raleigh. Women united to confront racism on the streets of the Capital City during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. The campaign for racial equality fueled women's long-standing desires for gender equality and ignited a powerful wave of feminism that called for political change. However, not all women agreed.





Literacy Tests

Even as the fight for racial equality ensued, many southern states still administered literacy tests to suppress African American voters. In fact, as late as 1959 the US Supreme Court Case Lassiter v. Northampton County Board of Elections, upheld the use of literacy tests to determine voter eligibility. Southern states did not stop administering literacy tests until forced to do so by federal legislation in the 1960s.





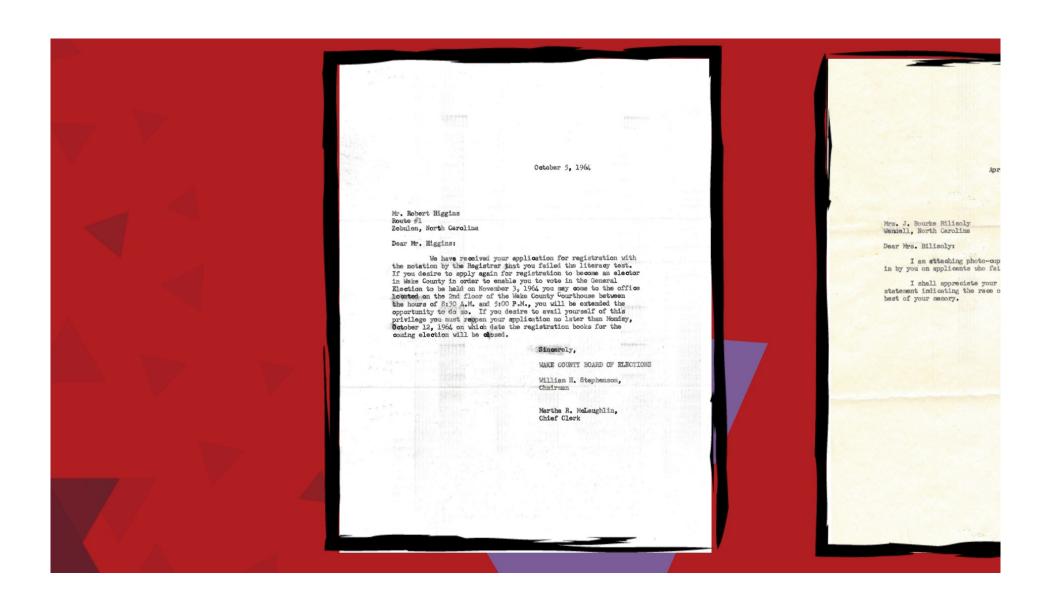


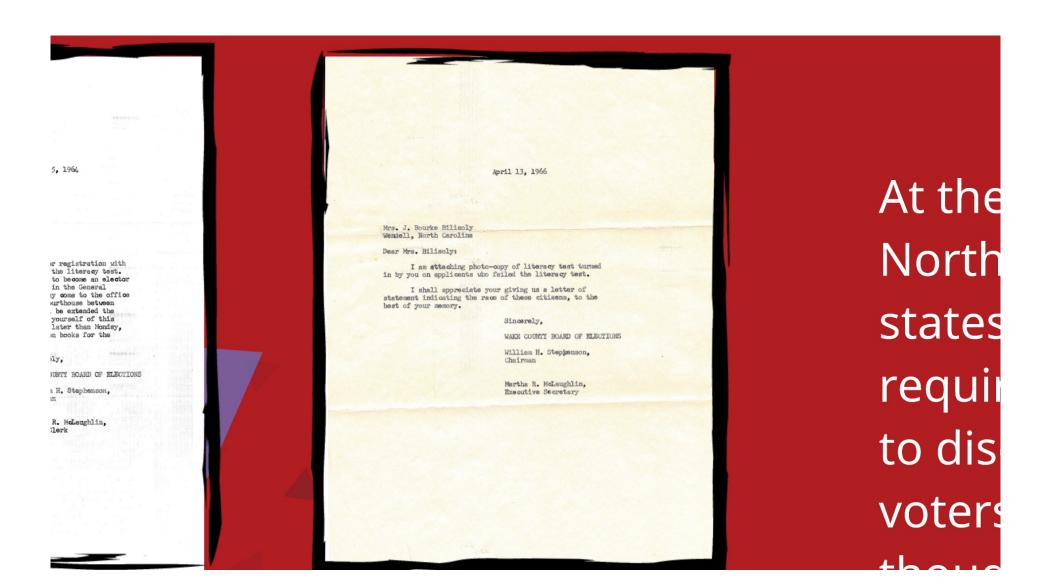






At the turn of the twentieth century, North Carolina and other Southern states instituted literacy tests as a requirement to vote. The aim was to disqualify African American voters who could not read or write, though the law disenfranchised illiterate white voters as well. Pictured are examples of literacy tests given in Raleigh in 1964.





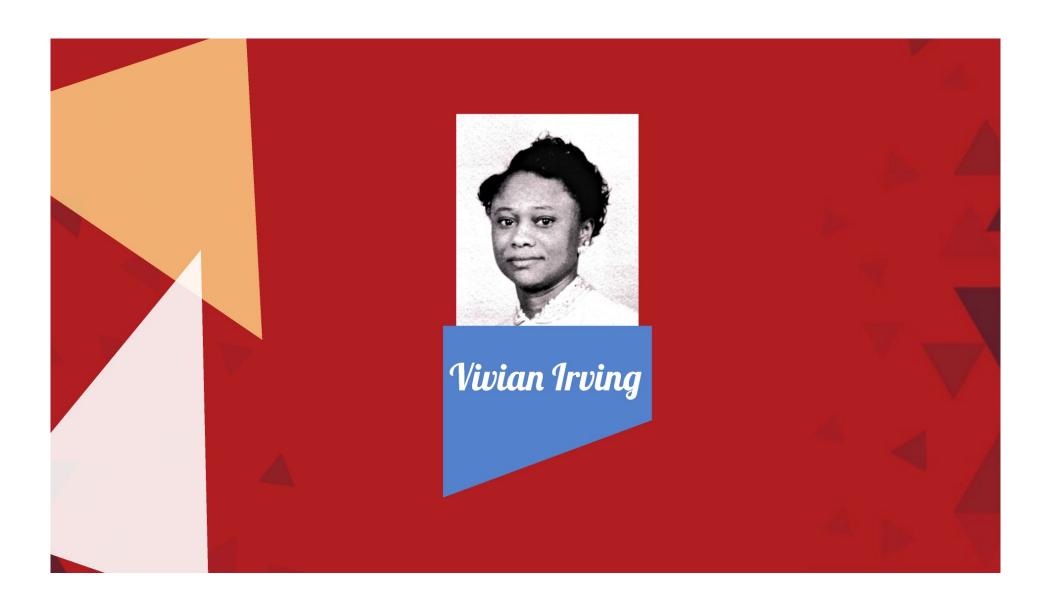
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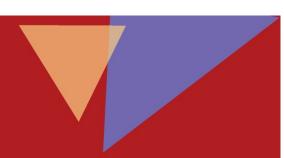
Vivian Irving

(1920-2014)

Irving was a Raleigh native who worked in her family's printing company, Irving-Swain Press, Inc. Irving was on the forefront of the Civil Rights movement and became a community leader.



Advancements in technology have helped women gain political power.



- **1920** The spread of electricity along with new inventions, such as the vacuum cleaner and the washing machine, allowed women more free time to devote to activities outside of the home.
- **19304** The influence of the radio exposed women, in real time, to news from across the U.S. and the world.
- 1940s Wartime industries and professions needed women. Trained in a variety of jobs, women gained skills including photography, machinery, and welding.
- 19504 Television expanded women's exposure to news and new ideas through its ability to reach homes across the country.

- 1960s The introduction of the birth control pill allowed women to choose when to start families. This new choice provided them an opportunity to seek higher education opportunities, pursue careers, and run for political office.
- **1990** Female candidates first began using the internet in 1995 to broadcast their message and introduce themselves to wider audiences.
- **2000**Social media broadened opportunities for candidates to connect with constituencies, fundraise, and promote their campaigns.



Raleigh based Carolina Power and Light Company helped electrify the city's homes and allowed women to take advantage of time-saving conveniences, 1924.



In 1955, WUNC television joined two other North Carolina stations. Raleigh's own WRAL started broadcasting the following year.



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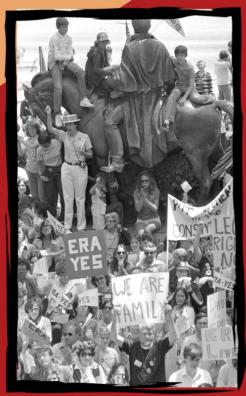
wer and Light the city's homes e advantage of 1924.



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The Fight for a New Amendment

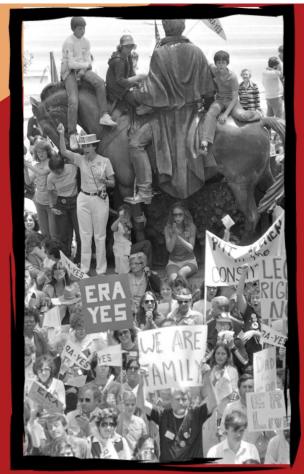
Once again, progressive women looked to the Constitution to provide equality. A new battle launched in 1972, with the introduction of an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which proposed to provide equal legal rights for all American citizens regardless of sex. Though many supported the ERA, others expressed opposition believing the amendment would jeopardize the family by reversing gender roles, remove protections for crimes that depend on gender, and take away Social Security benefits for women. Some of the most vocal opponents were women. National figures like Phyllis Schlafy came to Raleigh in 1977 and gave a voice to conservative viewpoints. The amendment was ultimately defeated and the voices of women who opposed the ERA helped reshape conservative politics for the next fifty years.



Equal Rights Amendment supporters rally on the grounds of the North Carolina State Capitol on May 3, 1981.

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Equal Rights Amendment supporters rally on the grounds of the North Carolina State Capitol on May 3, 1981.

The national debates around the ERA helped heighten the profile of women in politics and influenced local change in Raleigh's leadership. Resident Betty Knudsen developed a network of women who organized and supported female candidates. Her efforts to recruit and mobilize women became known as the "Knudsen Machine," a phrase often heard in her own election to become a Wake County Commissioner as well as the race to elect Raleigh's first female mayor, Isabella Cannon, in 1977.





Leading advocates against the ERA amendment Phyllis Schlafly and North Carolina Senator Sam Ervin speak at Raleigh's Dorton Arena on February 23, 1977.

first female mayor, Isabella Cannon, in 1977.



Leading advocates against the ERA amendment Phyllis Schlafly and North Carolina Senator Sam Ervin speak at Raleigh's Dorton Arena on February 23, 1977.









Miriam Preston Block

(1920-2005)

Block became the second woman elected to Raleigh's City Council in 1973 and served for 10 years. Block promoted women's participation on city boards and commissions. The Block Gallery in the Municipal Building was named in her honor.



Isabella Cannon

(1904-2002)

Cannon moved to North Carolina from Dunfermline, Scotland as a teenager. Cannon ran for mayor with the slogan, "planned growth." She became known as the "little old lady in tennis shoes" due to being 73 years old at the time of election and her go-to practical shoe choice.



Betty Knudsen

(1926-2012)

Knudsen was born in Kingsport, Tennessee and came to Raleigh in 1960. She became involved in several organizations which benefited women. In 1976, she was elected to the Wake County Board of Commissioners and became its first female chairman two years later.



The Royal Order of the Butterflies

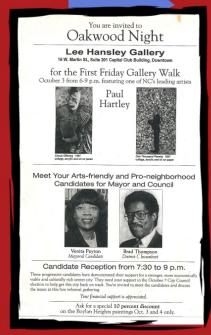
Betty Knudsen used butterflies as a metaphor for women coming out of secure cocoons, taking risks, and blossoming into positions of personal power and leadership. Initially members were selected by Knudsen and included women politicians and non-profit leaders. Each received a butterfly pin and a poem with the message "you can fly, but the cocoon has to go."

Changing Voices

These elections of the 1970s were a significant political achievement for women, but new historic landmarks were yet to be achieved. The presidential election of 1980 marked the first time since World War II where more women than men voted, a trend that is still true today. Women demonstrated their power at the polls by electing a record six women to serve on Raleigh's City Council, with four serving together through the end of the decade. Momentum swept the nation and resulted in an unprecedented number of women elected into office in 1992 which became known as, "The Year of the Woman." The 1990s saw the most diverse field of candidates in Raleigh. In 1997,

Venita Peyton became the first African American woman to run for mayor. In 2020, Stormie Forte became the first African American woman elected to City Council.





"I had no role models, so I had to create my own," remembered Venita Peyton. Peyton was the first African American woman to run for city council and mayor.

990s saw the most









Brad Thompson
District C Incumbent

Candidate Reception from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

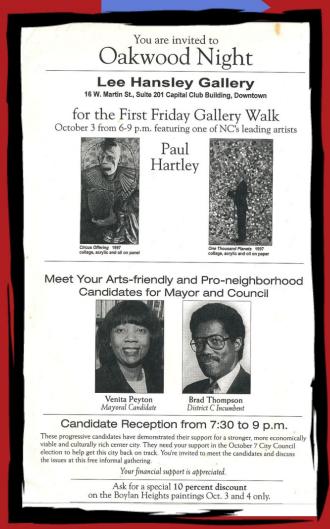
These progressive candidates have demonstrated their support for a stronger, more economically viable and culturally rich center city. They need your support in the October 7 City Council election to help get this city back on track. You're invited to meet the candidates and discuss the issues at this free informal gathering.

Your financial support is appreciated.

Ask for a special 10 percent discount on the Boylan Heights paintings Oct. 3 and 4 only.

"I had no role models, so I had to create my own," remembered Venita Peyton. Peyton was the first African American woman to run for city council and mayor. al achievement for chieved. The nee World War II still true today. cting a record six erving together e nation and resulted office in 1992 which 0s saw the most





As women grew in political strength, they continued to develop different perspectives. Voting trends indicate that issues such as abortion and prayer in school have encouraged many conservative women to support the Republican Party. Other women have gravitated to the Democratic party based on issues like environmental policies, reproductive rights, and education. Similarly, studies show that most African American women prefer the Democratic Party, a decision some have based on issues such as civil rights and welfare reform.



Janet Cowell being sworn in to serve on the city council in 2001. Her career with the city would continue until 2004 when she was elected to the state legislature. She went on to serve as the state's first female Secretary Treasurer in 2008.

Exclusion!



Anne S. Franklin being sworn in a city council that was the first of its kind - an equal number of men and women serving together.

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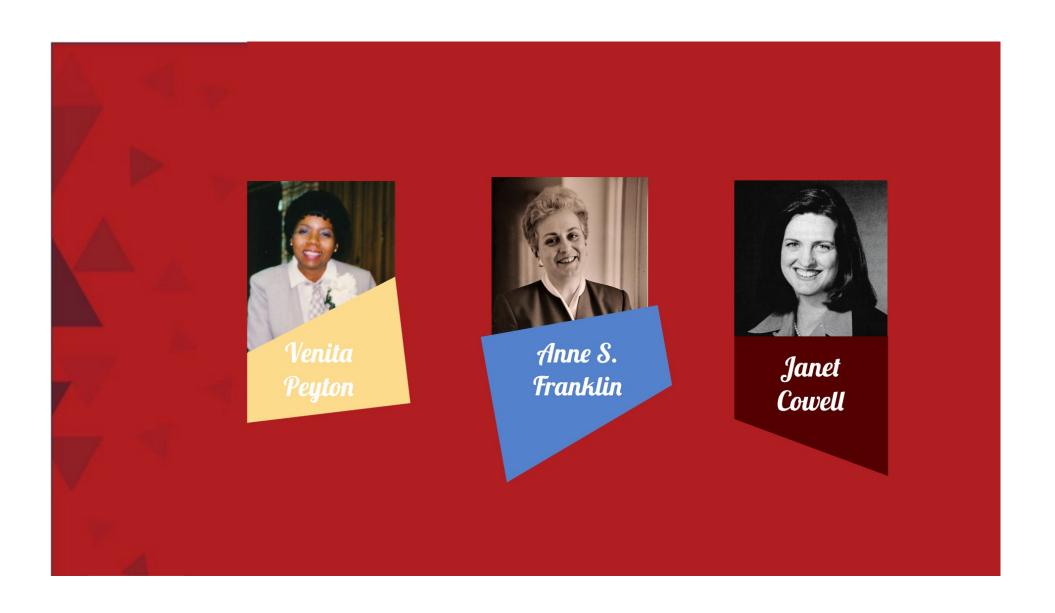


Anne S. Franklin being sworn in a city council that was the first of its kind - an equal number of men and women serving together.

Some Citizens, but not Others

Incarcerated women continue to be left out of the political process. In some states, citizens convicted of a felony are deprived of their right to vote during their incarceration. In other states, citizens convicted of a felony are permanently deprived of their right. Maine and Vermont are the only two states where a citizen is guaranteed to never be deprived of their right to vote, even while incarcerated.





Venita Peyton

(1956 -)

Peyton moved to Raleigh in 1984 from Chesterfield, Virginia and started a political career that spans three decades. She became the first African American woman to run for city council in 1987 and mayor in 1997 and 2013.



Anne S. Franklin

(1944 -)

Franklin was born in Columbus, Ohio.
Franklin became involved in Raleigh politics working on candidate Norma Burns' successful campaign for City Council.
Encouraged by Betty Knudsen, she ran and won a seat on Council in 1987. From 1991-1993 Franklin served as Mayor Pro-Tem and ran for mayor in the 1993 election year.



Janet Cowell

(1968 -)

born in Memphis, Tennessee, Cowell studied business before coming to Raleigh in 1997. She served two terms in both the Raleigh City Council and as a member of the NC Senate. She became North Carolina's first female North Carolina State Treasurer, serving from 2009 to 2017.





A Moment of Truth

In the 21st century, women are making a huge impact in politics, perhaps the greatest impact since gaining the right to vote in 1920. Raleigh's dramatic growth and urbanization has attracted women from across the nation and globe, especially those from Central America and Asia, adding new diversity and weight to their voting power.

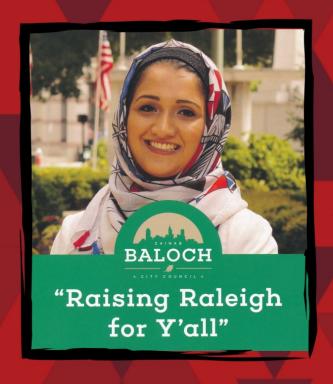
Women cast a record 70.4 million votes during the 2008 national elections, with 23% being cast by women of color. This momentum helped Raleigh elect its second female mayor, Nancy McFarlane, in 2011 followed by its third, Mary-Ann Baldwin.





Research concludes that around 21 million U.S. citizens do not have government-issued photo identification, and the U.S. Government Accountability Office has estimated that voter ID laws reduce voter turnout by 2-3 percentage points. This translates to tens of thousands of lost votes in a single state.





Zainab Baloch

(1991 -)

Baloch was born in Raleigh and became a community organizer focusing on youth engagement. She is the first Muslim to run for City Council in 2016 and Mayor in 2019.

Stormie Forte

(1971 -)

Almost 100 years after the passage of the 19th amendment, an African American woman was chosen to serve on Raleigh's City Council. Stormie Forte filed a vacant seat in July 2020.



Nancy McFarlane

(1956 -)

McFarlane is a trained pharmacist turned politician. McFarlane was first elected to Raleigh City Council in 2007 and became mayor in 2011, serving five terms until December 2019.





(1956 -)

Baldwin grew up in Rhode Island and became Raleigh's 62nd mayor in December 2019. She previously served on City Council from 2007 to 2017.



The Future is Female

Looking back over the last century, since the passage of the 19th Amendment, reveals an incredible record of accomplishments. The adversity women have overcome to shape their communities and the nation has fulfilled many of the dreams of the first suffragists. The issues women have fought for have become the bedrock of American politics, and the power of female voters has grown into a force at the polls. As women continue to make their impact on American politics, lessons learned from the struggle provide important insight for the future. The experience of the past 100 years will help guide the women of tomorrow, as they essentially rewrite America's founding documents to demonstrate all men and women are created equal.

Exclusion

The Future is Female?

Despite having achieved many things in the past 100 years, there are still many women in the United States who continue to be denied the right to vote. *Today, exclusion and disenfranchisement look like...*

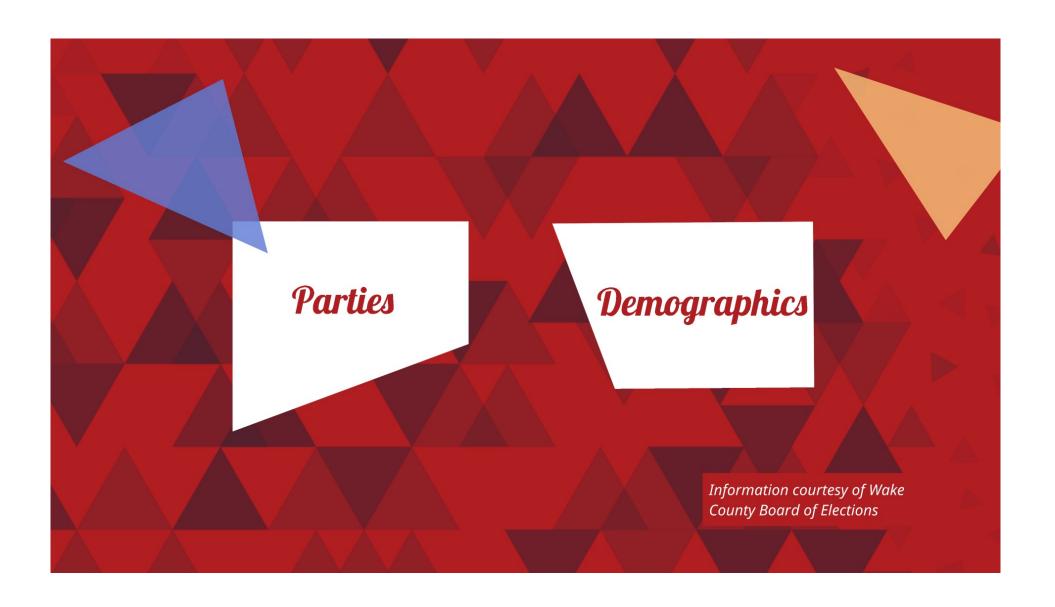
...Native American women living on reservations where tribal IDs and tribal street names are not accepted under voter ID laws.

...women living in secluded rural areas who do not have access to reliable internet and are unable to make it to the polls.

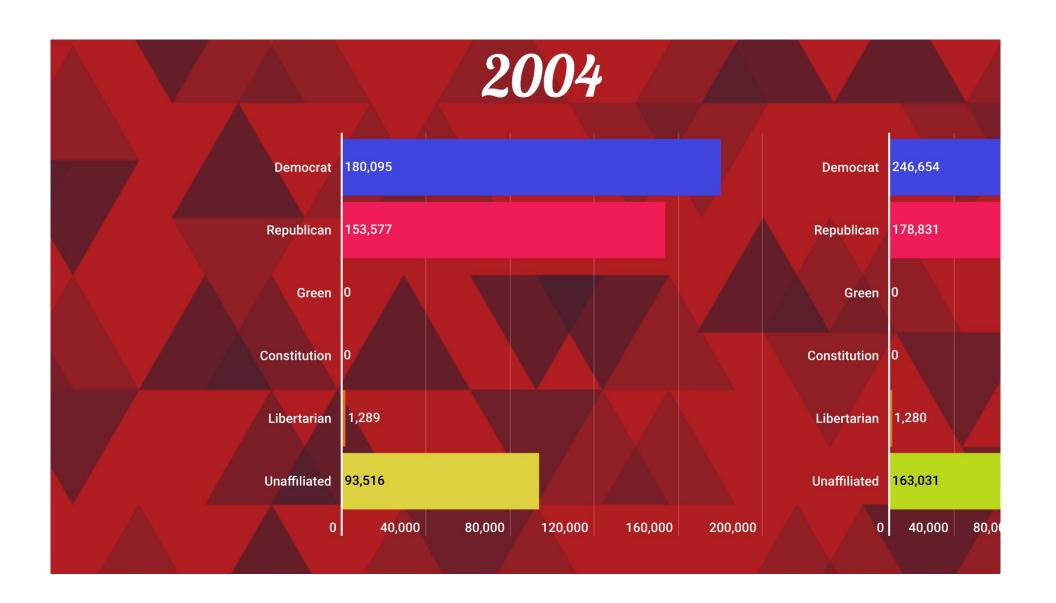
...transgender women whose government issued IDs and financial documents do not match their name or identity.

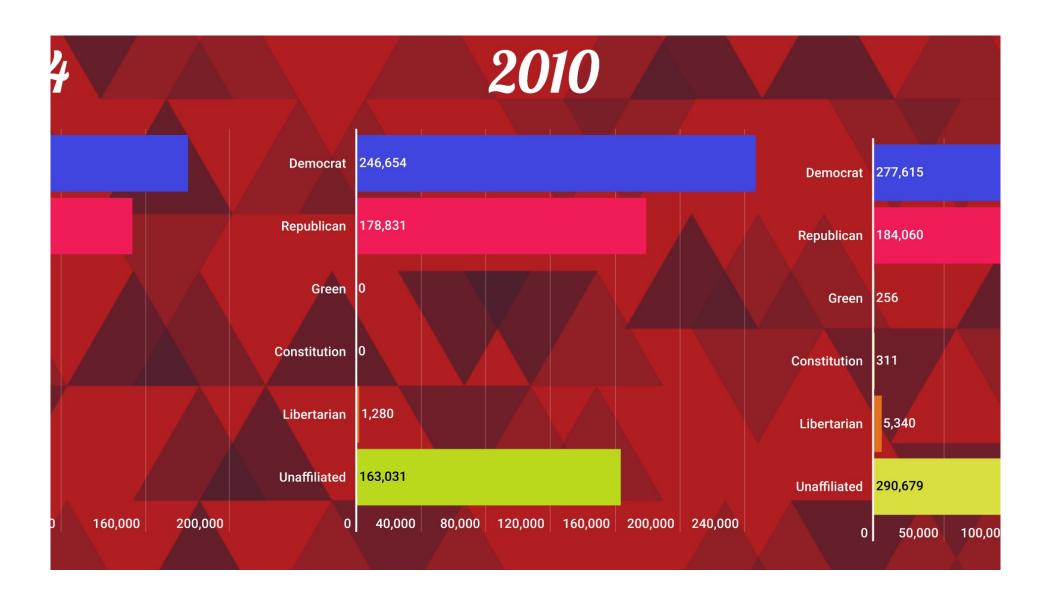
... Immigrant women whose translated names do not match voter rolls. Women have fought hard for the rights that many of us now enjoy, but work remains to ensure that every woman is guaranteed the fundamental right to vote.

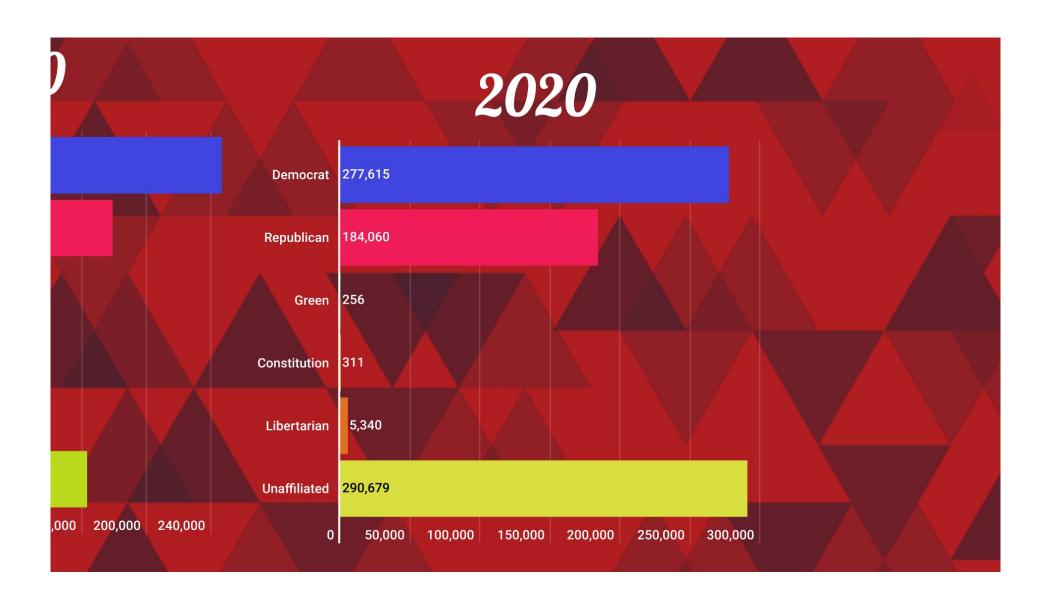


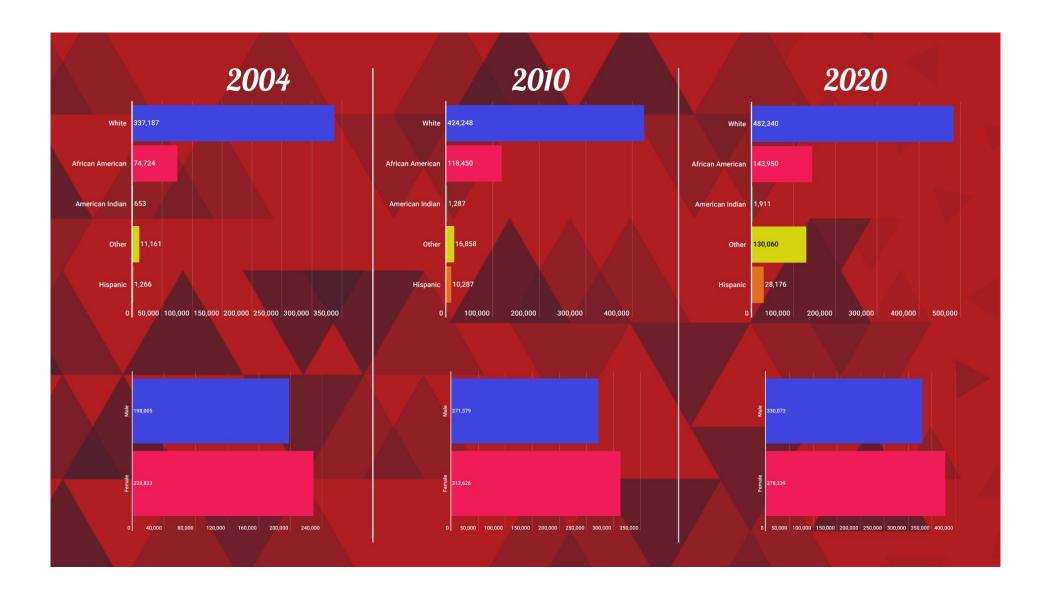


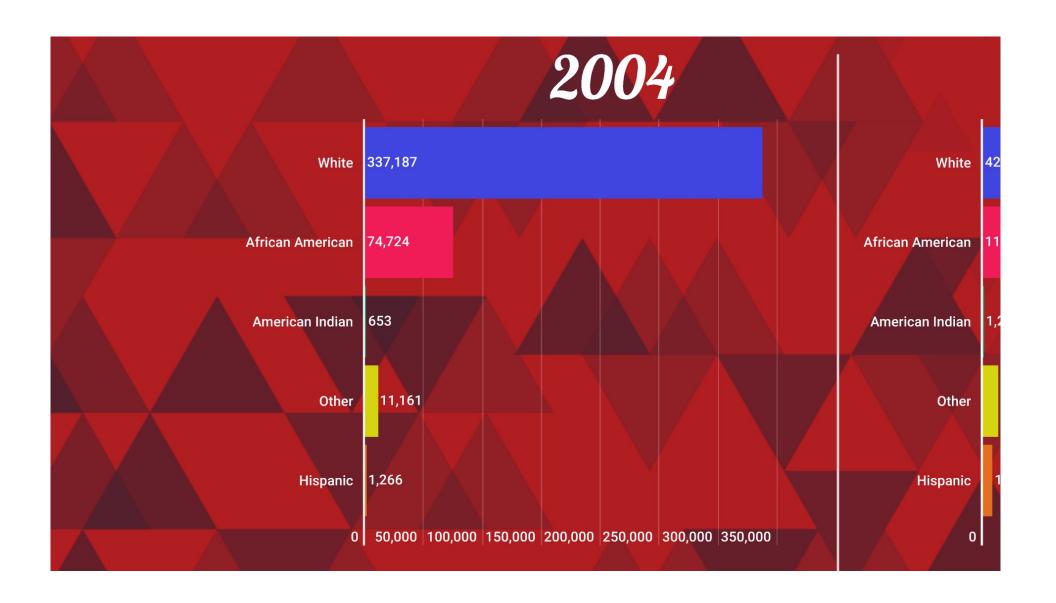


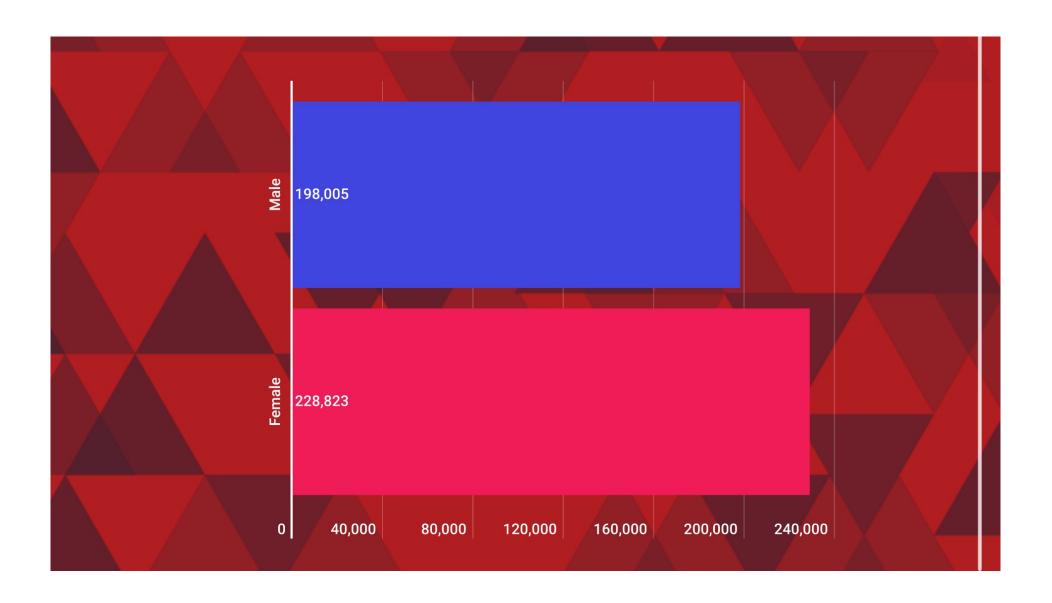


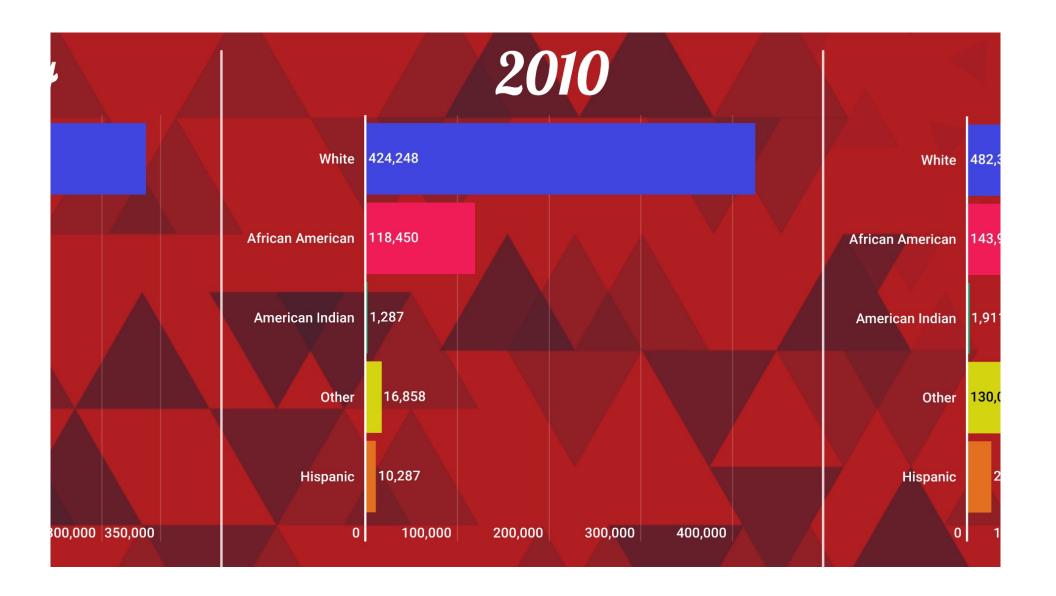


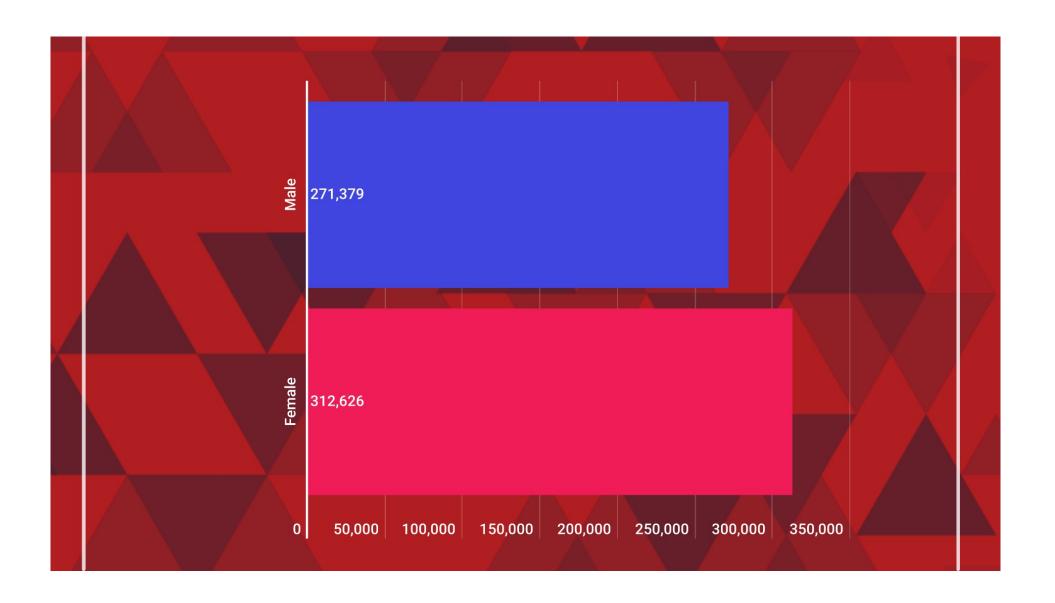


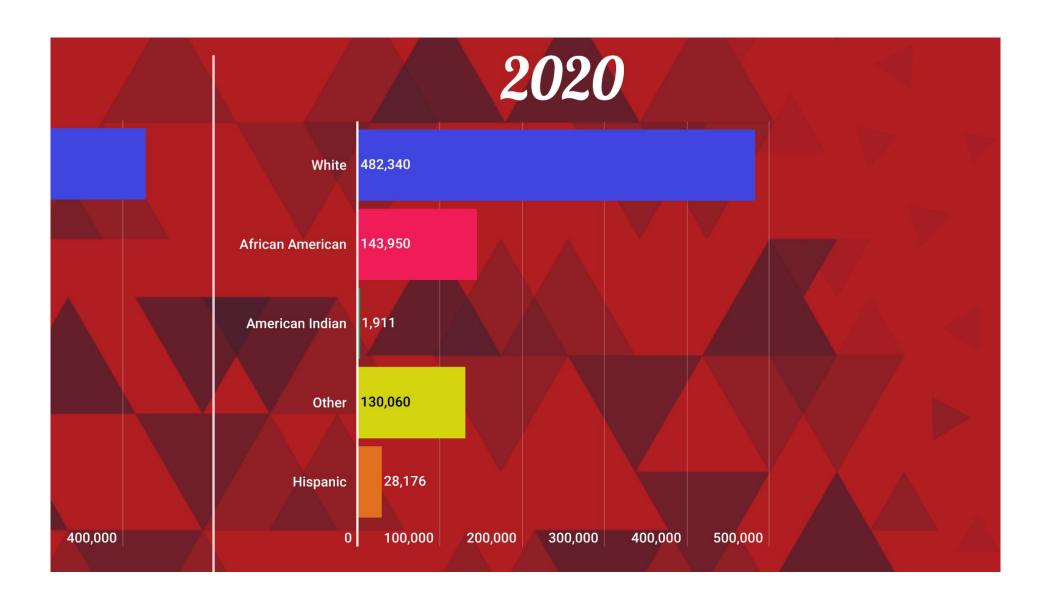


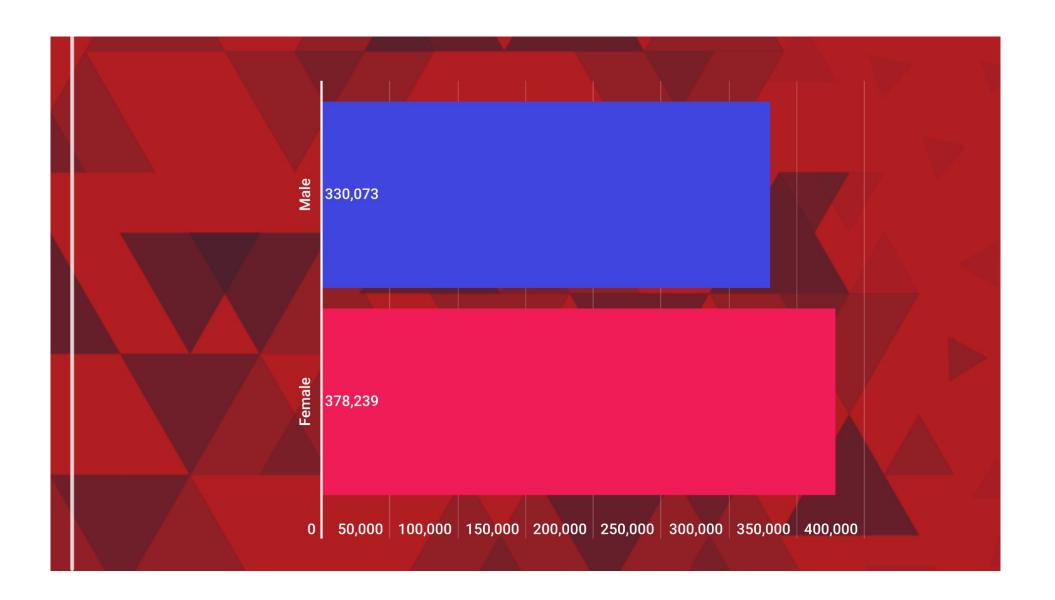












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