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The Undermining of Representative Democracy through Racial Gerrymandering

Minority Voters and their limited voices in the US House of Representatives

Introduction

Although the United States of America is one of the world's oldest democracies, voter turnout and political participation rates are shockingly low for a country with so many opportunities to influence government. Voter suppression based on land ownership, race, age, religion, and gender has been woven into the fabric of American democracy since its creation. While the right to vote has been given to many groups that were previously marginalized, there are currently still many institutions in place to prevent Americans from voting. One of these is the principal of gerrymandering, which is carried out by legislative bodies of individual states according to census data and effecting the seats in the House of Representatives.

The Constitution states in Article I, Section 2 that “[Representatives... which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, and three fifths of all other Persons] The actual Enumeration of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years.” The inclusion of this power that is granted to the House of Representatives places high value on white, landowning males, and allows Representatives to exclude specific groups from their constituencies, leading to severe disenfranchisement of the aforementioned groups. While the Constitution was created prior to the abolition of slavery, extending suffrage to

women, the Voting Rights Act or any other legislation that has expanded suffrage, the original document itself does very little to ensure that all Americans are given the rights described, and this is a detail that has been long exploited by lawmakers through the use of gerrymandering. This allows gerrymandering is used as a tool for representatives to stay in power, at the expense of the voting rights of minority citizens.

The racial demographics of a community serve as a predictor of if they will be gerrymandered for partisan gain or not, and gerrymandering affects how voters participate in elections and if they feel their elected officials represent their interests or not. Therefore, minority voters are negatively affected by gerrymandering in their representation and participation in the US House of Representatives.

Literature Review

Research in the field of gerrymandering is predominantly carried out by quantitative studies, measuring variables that researchers feel represent the possible causes and effects of gerrymandering. Many researchers, such as Erik Engrstrom, choose to examine levels of voter turnout, which is thought to be descriptive of the level of efficacy in gerrymandering. Other research, like that done by Matthew Jacobsmeier, focuses on the demographic makeup of gerrymandered districts, providing evidence that race and wealth are related to redistricting in the House of Representatives. All works cited agree that gerrymandering is a pervasive issue in the House of Representatives, however they differ in their hypothesis of what the long a short term effects of gerrymandering are. Research on the topic predominantly focuses on the negative

influences of gerrymandering on the democratic process through its effects on the participation and representation of minority groups.

History of Racial Gerrymandering

The legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and other forms of oppression against black communities creates one of the largest barriers to adequate representation of the American population in Congress. Underrepresentation of black voices in Congress is likely a factor in the slow social progress black communities have made in the struggle for equality, as a lack of federal policy has been passed to address issues related to racism. Gerrymandering is a continuation of a legacy of voter disenfranchisement and limiting the electoral power of minority communities. Historical oppression has led to modern forms of oppression including gerrymandering, poverty, low voter turnout, and lack of action taken on minority issues are a consequence of this. Cobb and Jenkin's "Race and the Representation of Blacks' Interests during Reconstruction" evaluates the role that the House of Representatives played in the establishment of Jim Crow and the black codes, and the effects this legislation had on the black community. While this work does not include analysis of current gerrymandering trends, Cobb and Jenkins establish that gerrymandering has long been used as a partisan tool to try to keep black people out of elected office, and out of polling stations. Even though the topic is over a century old, Cobb and Jenkins discover through their research that black congresspeople are the only members of the legislature that actively represent black interests, and even white congressmen that represent predominantly black populations historically fail to adequately represent their constituencies. This text states that when representing minority districts, white congressmen will campaign on issues that are

specific to the community, but once in the House of Representatives will focus on broadly partisan issues or self serving interests. This leaves their minority constituents with the promises of community specific action, but no beneficial legislation or representation of the issues that matter to them.

Political Parties Exploit Racial Divides

Gerrymandering, in order to prevent minorities from gaining political power, is a strategic action that has been taken by many conservative politicians to retain control of their districts and prevent potential shifts to the left that may arise if minority voices were better represented in elections. Historically, the Republican party has typically been in power post-census, and therefore has had the ability to be responsible for redrawing the congressional districts in most states. This concentration of power in the Republican party allows lawmakers to strategically draw districts that will vote conservatively, this usually means districts that purposefully disenfranchise minorities. These efforts to minimize the impact of a voting bloc, such as non-white voters, are referred to as “packing and cracking”, two common methods of partisan gerrymandering. According to “Redistricting the Nation”, an online resource for understanding the gerrymandering process: packing refers to placing all members of a minority group into a singular district in order to ensure success of the opposition in other districts, and cracking is when the voting bloc is divided between multiple districts to ensure that they cannot create a controlling majority in any single district. These methods of gerrymandering are effective tools when used to prevent particular groups from feeling that they can influence the lawmaking process through their representatives.

This leads to a general lack of turnover in the House of Representatives and further concentrates power in the party responsible for redistricting. Hayes and McKee's "The Intersection of Redistricting, Race, and Participation" seeks to explain how gerrymandering affects participation specifically within black communities. The authors analyze electoral data from over a decade in between two censuses, evaluating the changes that occurred in participation post redistricting. They were able to conclude that districts that are most frequently gerrymandered are predominantly black districts, which may be due to the Republican control of the gerrymandering process for the past two decades. It was also confirmed that these districts, which had been frequently gerrymandered, were then less likely to participate in elections after they are redistricted. The link between participation and gerrymandering is clear in this study, which states that there is a negative impact on voting patterns once a district's borders are manipulated.

Representation Suffers as a Result of Redistricting

Lack of minority candidates and generally low levels of political efficacy in minority districts lead to an underrepresentation of minority constituencies' interests in the legislative bodies. Gerrymandering continues because minority communities are not involved in their districts' politics, leading to continued reelection of the officials that gerrymander. Egrun, Deason, Borgida, and Charles' work "Race and Redistricting: What the Print Media Conveys to the Public about the Role of Race" addresses two key components of political representation: media influences and judicial decisions. Supreme Court decisions regarding voting rights weigh heavily on how citizens feel towards political representation and their elected leaders. However, many

other texts define representation in more simple means, evaluating how often a representative shares the values and priorities as their constituents. Also evaluating the effects of gerrymandering on political participation in minority communities is Matthew Jacobsmeier's "From Black and White to Left and Right: Race, Perceptions of Candidates' Ideologies, and Voting Behavior in U.S. House Elections." While this article fails to address the issue of gerrymandering directly, Jacobsmeier studies voting patterns and political attitudes in minority populations and how this is affected by factors including candidates race and prior political involvement of the constituency. Many voters are likely to evaluate their level of political representation based on how similar they are to their elected official, and the legislative or news attention given to issues that are important to the voter.

On the contrary, Fraga argues in "Candidates or Districts? Reevaluating the Role of Race in Voter Turnout" that the most determining factor in voter representation in the House of Representatives is not the district itself, but the race of those who live in the district, and the race of the candidate. Fraga's research specifically focuses on black and Latino communities, and draws the conclusion that minority voters were more likely to participate in elections if they could choose a candidate of their same race. This emphasizes descriptive representation-- the candidate and constituent share similarities in race, religion, or other identifiers-- rather than ideological representation, which evaluates if constituents values and priorities are represented by their elected official.

Similar to Fraga, Michael Kang's "Race and Democratic Contestation" addresses how gerrymandering affects not only representation, but competitiveness in elections. When candidates must compete for control of a district, it increases voters' feelings of political

efficacy, and Kang argues, representation of the constituency in Congress. Kang also discusses how this affects minority communities specifically, and argues that gerrymandering decreases candidates need to campaign and connect with their voters. Engstrom, Fraga, and Kang's works all reveal that race and partisanship are large factors in determining how districts will be redrawn by the House of Representatives, and can predict how the citizens of those districts will participate in elections in the future.

The Effects of Redistricting on Voting Rights

Steeped in the history of oppression of minorities is the denial of voting rights, often achieved by means of gerrymandering, poll taxes, Voter ID laws, and literacy tests, all designed to prevent minority communities from gaining clout in the House of Representatives. Mark Walsh's article, "Supreme Court Considers Challenges To Racial Gerrymandering" analyzes the specific and topical case of North Carolina, in which lawmakers have been accused of creating black majority districts in order to maintain their grasp on power. The case in North Carolina that is currently under investigation is reminiscent of the famously high poll taxes of the pre-civil rights South or the violent suppression of minority constituents as they tried to exercise their right to vote.

Frequent changes in voting districts and requirements for voting discourage Americans, especially members of minority communities, from exercising their right to vote. Michael Waldman's contemporary work, *The Fight To Vote*, published in 2016 addresses the long history of American politicians using suffrage as a political bargaining chip, rather than a genuine tool to improve the lives of their constituents. Waldman identifies many different ways that legislators have used their policy making power to prevent groups from participating in elections, and citing

gerrymandering and arbitrary laws such as Voter ID laws as the most effective weapons lawmakers have to remain in power. Unlike Cobb and Jenkins, Waldman does not focus merely on the history of voter suppression, but on the long term effects of denying suffrage on American democracy. Using gerrymandering and Voter ID laws as his examples, Waldman comes to the conclusion that the American people's right to vote is in jeopardy, especially Americans who are members of minority communities. Among Waldman's peers are Forgette and Winkle, authors of "Partisan Gerrymandering and the Voting Rights Act" who focus on the legal background of using redistricting to oppress minority groups. Forgette and Winkle link House of Representative gerrymandering that occurred in 2000 with the congressional vote against the Voting Rights Act, proving that Americans' delicate suffrage is in the hands of the House of Representatives, who may not have the voters best interests in mind. The repeal of the Voting Rights Act benefits the Republican party, who had control of the house at the time, specifically as their grasp on power is strengthened by limiting minority voices in elections. The gerrymandering that occurred in 2000 and 2010 led to Republican controlled legislatures, which later led to a favorable result on the Voting Rights Act vote in the house. The literature suggest that this change in legislation will lead to drastically less representation of non-white voices in the congress.

The dismantling of the Voting Rights Act, which prevented policies like Voter ID laws from being enacted has also led to a surge of voter suppression, which according to "The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress", affects electoral factors such as voter turnout, incumbency, and competitiveness (Macchiarola). The reinstatement of these policies has most negatively affected minority communities that are frequently redistricted, because of the low levels of political engagement that already exist, as

described in Fraga or Kane's findings. Waymer, Damion, and Robert L. Heath also choose to evaluate voting habits in the South, "Black Voter Dilution, American Exceptionalism, and Racial Gerrymandering The Paradox of the Positive in Political Public Relations" addresses gerrymandering in South Carolina. This case study points out many of the flaws in the system of redistricting and the consequences of underrepresentation of minority voices. Recent changes to the Voting Rights Act coupled with widespread redistricting after the 2010 census have left states like North and South Carolina barely democratic, and their citizens feeling underrepresented in the House of Representatives.

The literature cited all suggests that gerrymandering leaves a significant impact on both the way that parties interact with constituents and the way voters are involved in the democratic process. Gerrymandering is thought to have long term effects on voters, and based on the literature reviewed, I hypothesize that minority voters participation and representation are impacted specifically.

Research Design

The purpose of my study was to discover the relationship between gerrymandering, race, and their impacts on the degree of political participation and representation. My expectation was to find that race predicts living in a heavily gerrymandered district, and that living in a gerrymandered district leads to lower levels of representation and political participation. To prove this, various results from a survey were analyzed in their relationship to one another with the intention that they would hopefully lead to evidence that all of these factors are related. My

aim was to learn about individuals identities, voting patterns, and opinions with a survey in order to prove that race predicts gerrymandering, and gerrymandering predicts the level of participation and representation non-white voters feel in the House of Representatives.

To test my hypothesis, I utilized an online survey administered through the online survey platform Qualtrics. The 60 question survey included questions designed to tap into political attitudes and behaviors with each question being provided by a different student in an undergraduate research methods course. The sample was recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk crowdsourcing program. Mechanical Turk, in spite of being a more recent tool for recruiting survey respondents, is inexpensive and documented to produce reliable data (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011; Mason and Suri 2012; Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2010; Levay, Freese, and Druckman 2016).

The survey, available for one week during the spring of 2017, recruited respondents by paying them \$0.50 upon completion of the survey. The survey had a total population of 741 respondents. The average time of completion for respondents was 583.53 seconds or 9 minutes and 44 seconds. This translated to an effective average hourly rate of \$3.51.

A survey was used for this particular research because data such as representation and participation are largely based on self reporting, as both are subjective to an individual's personal definition of each. While descriptive representation and polling data can be gathered without the use of a survey, asking participants to report on their own opinions and voting patterns gives me qualitative insight into their feelings about the democratic process. The survey as a whole focused on issues that impact everyday Americans and was aimed at collecting data that could be generalized as public opinion on a national scale. In the wake of the 2016 election cycle, it is

especially interesting to gather data on voters feelings of representation in the 115th congress and their willingness to participate in elections.

In order to test my hypothesis that gerrymandering negatively affects minority representation and participation in the House of Representatives, it is important to identify the demographic makeup of my sample, because race is a significant factor in my research. To discover the race of the survey taker, I used a question in the demographic module of the survey instrument. This module is at the end of the survey in order to ensure the most honest answers from participants, it is probable to assume some participants may be cautious in their answers if asked about sensitive, personal information initially. In this module, participants are asked to identify themselves based on gender, income level and other identifiers, but my interest lies in their race. The question I based my results from asked “Please specify your race or ethnicity (check all that apply)” and gives participants the options of: White, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American or American Indian, and Other (Please Specify). This question is significant to my research because I hypothesized that non-white voters, and particularly black voters, were more likely to live in gerrymandered districts, or feel underrepresented in the House of Representatives. Race is used as an antecedent variable in my study, and I hypothesized that it would be a predictor of levels of representation and participation.

In order for my research to be significant, high levels of racial diversity would have to be present in the sample. Since my research centers specifically around minority groups opinions, results from a vastly white sample will not be of use. For example, if the survey has 800 respondents, and less than 50 of them are non-white, it will be difficult to apply my findings to

the American population at large. Ideally, survey respondents who are of a range of minority groups will participate and offer differing opinions on the topics into which I am inquiring. For my hypothesis to be proven, minority groups must report different levels of political participation and representation than white participants in the survey.

For the purpose of data analysis, all participants that identified themselves as only white were coded as (0) while any participant that selected an option other than or in addition to white was operationalized as (1) for non-white. I felt that any non-white respondent would be affected by gerrymandering in similarly negative ways and could therefore be grouped together in the operationalization of my variables. If replicated on a larger scale with a more diverse sample size, this variable could be broken down by the varied non-white racial groups in order to compare the results provided by each specific minority group.

The main focus of my research, gerrymandering, is a phenomena that occurs at a federal level that has an effect on the districts in which individual survey respondents. Some states are more gerrymandered than others, and I hypothesized that states with larger minority populations will be more aggressively redistricted. The state and district of the survey participant are the independent variable in my research, and are necessary to know in order to determine if the district is gerrymandered or not. In order to determine if a state was gerrymandered or not, I reviewed 2010 census data that informed me that states Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin had all either gained a congressional district, lost a congressional district, or manipulated the borders of existing districts since 2010. These states were coded as (1), gerrymandered for the purpose of

data analysis. The states in which no redistricting occurred: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon and Utah, were coded as (0), not gerrymandered in my operationalization of variables. Making this variable a dichotomous variable was beneficial to my research, not only because it allowed me to perform a T-Test, but it also allowed a broader definition of gerrymandering rather than analyzing all of the ways that states had been gerrymandered separately.

To determine the state and district of the survey participant, I included two questions in the demographics module of the survey instrument. The first question asks “In which U.S. state do you currently live?” and survey participants were offered a drop down menu with all 50 states and Washington DC, participants selected one or chose not to answer the question. This allowed me to determine the demographics of their state, as well as if the state changed its congressional districts after the 2010 census. The following question will ask the question “In which congressional district do you currently live?” and offered a drop down menu of district options determined by the state chosen in the previous question. The data from this second question was not used in the results portion of my research because so few participants were able to identify their congressional district, instead gerrymandered or not gerrymandered was evaluated based on the state as a whole rather than by the individual districts.

Race was my antecedent variable and state served as the independent variable, but in order to find a relationship between these factors and gerrymandering, two questions about the dependent variables: representation and participation were included. Both of these questions were a part of the survey’s elections module. The dependent variables tested in this study are

political participation and feelings of representation. To measure political participation I asked “Did you vote for your current US Representative”. Rather than asking about the presidential election or elections in general, I chose to ask specifically about the House of Representatives because it is most closely related to gerrymandering. Since terms are different for the House of Representatives, this question also allows for votes that may have voted for their representative not at 2016 to participate in the question. It is important for my research to ask if they voted for their representative, not only if they voted because I hypothesize that gerrymandering affects not only participation, but representation. The possible answers to this question are Yes, No, I voted for someone else, and I did not vote. This answer allows the maximum amount of information, both their participation and their affiliation, without asking more than one question. Concision, especially in a survey instrument of this size is key for ensuring that participants understand and process the questions, leading to more accurate results. For the purpose of data analysis, those who indicated that they did not vote were coded as (0), and respondents who answered either that they voted for their representative or voted for someone else were coded as (1). All voters were operationalized the same to isolate the variable of participation from the respondents approval of the representative.

The next question addressed representation specifically by asking “How often do you feel that your U.S. Representative represents what is important to you?”. The goal of this question was to target an opinion or feeling towards the participant's representative's ideology rather than descriptive representation. I believe both of these factors are important to analyzing voters satisfaction with their elected officials, so it was necessary to be comprehensive. The answer options for this question were: Always, Sometimes, Don't Know/No Opinion, Infrequently, and

Never. This question hopefully lead participants to consider not only what political issues are important to them, but also evaluate their elected officials. To operationalize these variables, Don't Know/No Opinion respondents will be dropped from the results and the rest of the responses will be coded as follows: Never (1), Infrequently (2), Sometimes (3), and Always (4). This data is what will be evaluated as a dependent variable, and I will be looking for relationships between levels of satisfaction and the antecedent and independent variables listed prior.

I utilized seven two-tailed T-Tests to evaluate the relationships between all of the different variables. I chose T-Tests because I was more interested in evaluating the directions of each respective relationship rather than the existence of the relationships. By evaluating each of the variables in pairs, I was able to isolate and analyze results of each individual variables impact on another.

Results

The survey used was made available for one week, and during this time 741 individuals responded to it. Of those 741, 589 indicated in the demographics module that they were white, while only 152 participants identified themselves as anything other than white. For the purposes of my analysis, a more diverse sample would have been helpful in applying my conclusions to the American population, which according to the 2010 census was 61.6% white, whereas nearly 79.49% of the survey's respondents were white. Of the 152 non-white respondents, 39.47% of non-white participants identified as black, the minority group most frequently discussed in the literature. This demographic data is integral to the significance of my antecedent variable of race.

The results related to my independent variable of gerrymandering, of the survey's participants, 65.99% lived in a state that had either gained a district, lost a district, or had its district borders manipulated since the 2010 census. 34.01% of respondents lived in a state that had not been gerrymandered, which is about the result that I had expected when reviewing data prior to receiving the results of the survey.

In regard to my antecedent and independent variables, I was able to conclude that the average participant in this survey was white and on average lived in a state that had been gerrymandered since 2010. Most respondents fell within a single standard deviation in relation to each of these variable tested.

The first dependent variable I tested was participation, which used a dichotomous variable and found that nearly 80% of survey participants had voted in the election that elected their current representative. This number seems inaccurate in comparison to the national averages regarding electoral participation, and the social desirability factor of reporting participation must be considered when evaluating this data. Another consideration must be made that the number of participants living in gerrymandered states is higher because the average participant lived in a gerrymandered state and reported that they voted, which may inaccurately skew the results. The difference in means between gerrymandered and non-gerrymandered voting was $-.0317947$, meaning that there was an impact on what district an individual lives in and if they participate or not. A difference is clearly present, however, this is not enough to reject the null hypothesis within a 95% confidence interval, and must be ruled statistically insignificant.

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]
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-----+-----
      0 |   252   .7698413   .0265691   .421772   .7175144 .8221681
      1 |   489   .801636   .0180514   .3991761   .766168   .837104
-----+-----
combined |   741   .7908232   .0149514   .4069956   .7614711 .8201753
-----+-----
      diff |          -.0317947   .0315602                -.093753   .0301636
-----+-----

      diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                t = -1.0074
Ho: diff = 0                                                degrees of freedom = 739

      Ha: diff < 0                Ha: diff != 0                Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.1570            Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.3141            Pr(T > t) = 0.8430

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Similar results were found when testing a participant's feeling of representation, the average respondent felt that their interests were represented “Sometimes” and this remained constant based on if a state were gerrymandered or not. A negative relationship between gerrymandering and representation was shown to exist though, as most “Never” or “Infrequently” responses came from voters in gerrymandered states. Once again the difference in results was statistically insignificant, but a relationship exists between the two variables.

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-----+-----
      Group |   Obs      Mean      Std. Err.   Std. Dev.   [95% Conf. Interval]
-----+-----
      0 |   209   2.593301   .0580378   .8390431   2.478884   2.707719
      1 |   396   2.590909   .0450693   .8968684   2.502303   2.679515
-----+-----

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combined |    605    2.591736    .0356399    .8766268    2.521742    2.661729
-----+-----
diff |                .0023923    .0750121                -.1449243    .149709
-----+-----
diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                t =    0.0319
Ho: diff = 0                                           degrees of freedom =    603

Ha: diff < 0                Ha: diff != 0                Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.5127          Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.9746          Pr(T > t) = 0.4873

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In additional T-Tests, the relationship between the gerrymandering and the dependent variables was evaluated with the antecedent variable of white and non-white. None of these tests yielded statistically significant results, but the outcomes were interesting nonetheless. Among whites, the difference in sums was smaller than the difference among non-whites. This signifies that non-white voters levels of electoral participation were affected more dramatically by gerrymandering than white voters were.

Among Whites

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-----+-----
Group |    Obs    Mean    Std. Err.    Std. Dev.    [95% Conf. Interval]
-----+-----
0 |    216    .7916667    .0276969    .4070598    .7370744    .8462589
1 |    373    .8284182    .0195474    .3775229    .789981    .8668555
-----+-----
combined |    589    .8149406    .0160151    .3886759    .7834868    .8463944
-----+-----
diff |                -.0367516    .0332263                -.1020084    .0285053
-----+-----
diff = mean(0) - mean(1)                                t =   -1.1061

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Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 587

Ha: diff < 0 Ha: diff != 0 Ha: diff > 0

Among Non-Whites

Pr(T < t) = 0.1346 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.2691 Pr(T > t) = 0.8654

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	36	.6388889	.0811894	.4871361	.4740657	.803712
1	116	.7155172	.0420716	.4531251	.6321815	.798853
combined	152	.6973684	.0373852	.4609158	.6235028	.7712341
diff		-.0766284	.0880058		-.2505194	.0972627

diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = -0.8707

Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 150

Ha: diff < 0 Ha: diff != 0 Ha: diff > 0

Pr(T < t) = 0.1926 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.3853 Pr(T > t) = 0.8074

When evaluating representation broken down by the dichotomous antecedent variable of race, a slight difference proved that white participants were less affected by gerrymandering, with less white voters responding “never”.

Among Whites

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
0	180	2.583333	.0609642	.8179208	2.463032	2.703634

1		306	2.591503	.0509145	.8906397	2.491315	2.691691
-----+-----							
combined		486	2.588477	.0391726	.8635762	2.511508	2.665446
-----+-----							
diff			-.0081699	.0812018		-.1677215	.1513816

diff = mean(0) - mean(1)						t =	-0.1006
Ho: diff = 0			degrees of freedom =			484	
Ha: diff < 0		Ha: diff != 0		Ha: diff > 0			
Pr(T < t) = 0.4599		Pr(T > t) = 0.9199		Pr(T > t) = 0.5401			

Among Non-Whites

Group		Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
-----+-----							
0		29	2.655172	.1808291	.9737946	2.284761	3.025584
1		90	2.588889	.0972717	.9228004	2.395612	2.782166
-----+-----							
combined		119	2.605042	.085411	.9317242	2.435905	2.774179
-----+-----							
diff			.0662835	.1997029		-.3292175	.4617846

diff = mean(0) - mean(1)						t =	0.3319
Ho: diff = 0			degrees of freedom =			117	
Ha: diff < 0		Ha: diff != 0		Ha: diff > 0			
Pr(T < t) = 0.6297		Pr(T > t) = 0.7406		Pr(T > t) = 0.3703			

The results yielded from this survey were not statistically significant, but regardless they proved relationships between each of the tested variables. While the impact of gerrymandering is not dramatic enough to reject the null hypothesis, it is shown that it affects participation and feelings of representation. It is also evident that non-whites experience the consequences of gerrymandering more than white participants in this survey do.

Conclusion

When lawmakers and members of the media discuss the lack of diversity in legislative bodies or low voter turnout in elections, they often blame voters for being apathetic. Voters are considered to lack a civic education or understand the impact of their actions, but what is not discussed are the ways that apathy is bred on an institutional level. Gerrymandering should always be a part of the conversation when the issues of participation and representation are addressed in a public forum, because it is at the root of these larger issues.

If proceeding with this research, a larger and more representative sample size as well as a more narrow focus on the impact of gerrymandering on minorities would be key to strengthening my hypothesis. The data collected was limited by the size of the sample and scope of the variables analyzed, but relationships in the data I collected show the impacts of gerrymandering on minority voters.

This information is pertinent to the controlling party approaching the 2020 census, as discontent with the current system may lead to further apathy towards the government. The implications of this data, which shows that the gerrymandering done in 2010 by the Republican

party undermined minority voices in the House, may have an impact on who voters select in upcoming elections. Whatever party grabs control of the US House of Representatives post census will be given the power of long term effects on the upcoming decades of elections, and therefore the direction of congressional policy for years to come.

Partisan gerrymandering undermines the relationship that constituents build with their representative and often leaves minority groups even more disenfranchised than before. Rather than being used as a tool to make more diverse and compact districts that voters could easily identify themselves within, gerrymandering is used to strengthen whatever political party is in charge. Minority voters, who would benefit most from active political participation and having their agenda pushed in the House of Representatives, are cracked and packed into districts that undermine their ability to influence policy effectively. Without a change in gerrymandering, which has been proven to be predicted by race and impact levels of participation and representation, American democracy will remain as unrepresentative as it is now.

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Survey Instrument

PARTISANSHIP MODULE (randomize module & question order)

1. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a/an ...?
 - Strong Democrat
 - Not so strong Democrat
 - Independent

- Not so strong Republican
- Strong Republican
- Other: *(Please specify)*

2. We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Liberal						Extremely
		Conservative				

JUDICIAL MODULE (randomize module & question order)

3. How much trust and confidence do you have at this time in the judicial branch headed by the U.S. Supreme Court?

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- None at all

4. Scholars have found that public opinion influences the Supreme Court and its decisions. With this new information, do you approve or disapprove of the way the Supreme Court is handling its job?

- Approve
- Disapprove

5. Have you had any personal experience with the court system? (Please check all that apply)

- Yes, as an attorney or judge
- Yes, as a plaintiff
- Yes, as a juror
- Yes, as a defendant
- No, but someone close to me has
- No experience

CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION MODULE (randomize module & question order)

6. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the least and 10 being the most, how fearful are you of Syrian refugees?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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7. Do you support the United States government allowing undocumented, young adult immigrants to receive a work permit and receive a renewable two-year time frame of deferred action from deportation?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

8. (SPLIT SAMPLE) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: I believe immigrants from Latin America should be welcomed into the United States.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

9. (SPLIT SAMPLE) To what extent do you agree with the following statement: I believe immigrants from the Middle East should be welcomed into the United States.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

ELECTIONS MODULE (randomize module & question order)

10. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very unlikely and 10 being very likely, how likely are you to run for political office?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. If you were to run for political office, how likely is it that you would win your election?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neither unlikely nor likely
- Likely
- Very likely

12. When it comes to local media coverage of the issue of voter fraud during the last election cycle, do you feel that your local media outlets covered voter fraud:

- Far too little
- Too little
- About the right amount
- Too much
- Far too much

13. Did you vote for your current U.S. Representative?

- Yes
- No, I voted for someone else
- I did not vote

14. How often do you feel that your U.S. Representative represents what is important to you?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Don't Know/No Opinion
- Infrequently
- Never

15. In regard to presidential elections, do you feel that your vote matters?

- Yes
- No

16. Did you vote in the most recent 2016 General Election?

- Yes, definitely
- I do not recall
- No

17. [If Q16 == 1]: Who did you vote for in the 2016 Presidential Election? (randomize order)

- Hillary Clinton
- Gary Johnson
- Jill Stein
- Donald Trump

- Other: (Please specify)

ENGAGEMENT & KNOWLEDGE MODULE (randomize module & question order)

18. How attentive are you to the news?

- Very attentive
- Mostly attentive
- Somewhat attentive
- Not very attentive

19. How often are you exposed to news media (news sources on any platform)?

- Very often
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Very rarely

20. How much of your news or information intake is from local news compared to national news?

- Much more local
- More local
- About the same
- More national
- Much more national

ATTENTION CHECK MODULE

21. This question is to determine whether or not you are paying attention to instructions. Please select the number 3 in the box below.

Drop down menu: 0-5

GENDER EQUALITY MODULE (randomize module & question order)

22. (Split Sample) Imagine there is a contested election in your state with two qualified candidates, Michael Dawson and Emily Russell. Michael Dawson is a 44 year old elected official who is married with two children. Emily Russell is a 46 year old small business owner who is married with three children. Who are you more likely to vote for in this election?

- Much more likely to vote for Michael Dawson
- More likely to vote for Michael Dawson

- More likely to vote for Emily Russell
- Much more likely to vote for Emily Russell

23. (Split Sample) Imagine there is a contested election in your state with two qualified candidates, Emily Russell and Michael Dawson. Emily Russell is a 44 year old elected official who is married with two children. Michael is a 46 year old small business owner who is married with three children. Who are you more likely to vote for in this election?

- Much more likely to vote for Emily Russell
- More likely to vote for Emily Russell
- More likely to vote for Michael Dawson
- Much more likely to vote for Michael Dawson

24. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: the make-up of Congress should reflect the diversity of the United States when it comes to gender.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

25. Can you name a currently active female politician other than Hillary Clinton?

- Yes
- No

26. [If Q25 == 1]: What is their name? _____

27. On average, how would you evaluate the job performance of female members of Congress compared to their male counterparts?

- Much worse
- Worse
- No better or worse
- Better
- Much better

DOMESTIC POLICY MODULE (randomize module & question order)

28. Do you support Social Security?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

29. In order to continue funding the Social Security program at current levels for future generations, some support the idea of government reducing funds from other areas of government spending. Do you support the choice to reduce military funding by 5% of the national budget in order to pay for the next generation of Social Security?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

30. (Split sample) According to Fox News, humans are contributing to global climate change. Do you believe in anthropogenic (human caused) climate change?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

31. (Split sample) According to Fox News, the scientific consensus is uncertain if humans are contributing to global climate change. Do you believe in anthropogenic (human caused) climate change?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

32. What are your opinions on women's issues (i.e. protecting abortion rights, promoting equal pay, and combating sexual assault)?

- Strongly support
- Support
- Neither support nor oppose
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose

33. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being least effective and 10 being most effective, how effective is the prison system in the United States?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

34. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being least effective and 10 being most effective, how effective do you believe rehabilitation programs are for prisoners who have the potential to be released back into society?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

35. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Racism against people of color is no longer an issue in the United States.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither disagree nor agree

- Agree
- Strongly agree

36. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Affirmative action is the best way to institute equal opportunity in the workplace.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

CIVIL LIBERTIES MODULE (randomize module & question order)

37. Do you feel free to practice your religion within the current political system of the United States?

- Yes
- No

38. To what extent do you believe that democracy is the best form of government for the United States?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

39. Which of the following most closely relates to you?

- I feel that my civil rights are protected and my personal economic situation is favorable.
- I feel that my civil rights are protected, however my personal economic situation is not favorable.
- I feel that my civil rights are not being protected, however my personal economic situation is favorable.
- I feel that my civil rights are not being protected and my personal economic situation is not favorable.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS MODULE (randomize module & question order)

40. Do countries with significant wealth like the United States, England, or China have a moral obligation to provide humanitarian aid to areas plagued by conflict?

- Yes
- No

41. Which of the following comes closest to describing how often you fear a terrorist attack?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

42. Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: I support American foreign intervention.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

43. Under what circumstances would you support the United States intervening in another country?

(Please check all that apply):

- a. In response to an attack.
- b. In instances of genocide.
- c. To deliver humanitarian aid (food, water, medicine, etc.).
- d. When the country's government is supporting terrorist organizations.
- e. When terrorist organizations are based in the country.
- f. To aid in a regime change or alter the form of government.
- g. When it is in the U.S.'s economic interests.
- h. To spread or promote democracy.
- i. To aid an ally.

44. In your opinion, is it appropriate for the US military to play a role in providing humanitarian aid in foreign conflicts?

- Yes, the U.S. has a responsibility to use their resources for helping people, it's okay if that means using the military
- Yes, the U.S. has a responsibility to use their resources for helping people, if there are no weapons involved in the providing of aid
- No, military involvement could suggest bias, humanitarianism is impartial and unbiased
- No, humanitarian aid should remain the responsibility of Non-Government Organizations and other independent, non-militarized institutions like the United Nation

45. What factors concerning the rise of China do you think are the biggest threat to the United States' national interests?

- Ideological Factors
- Economic Factors
- Military Factors

46. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being no threat and 10 being very threatening, how much of a threat is China to the United States' national interests?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

47. Which of the following poses a threat to the United States' national security? (Please check all that apply)

- Cyber Attacks
- Global Warming
- Immigrants
- Nuclear Warfare
- Refugees
- Terrorism

DEMOGRAPHIC MODULE (randomize question order; keep module last)

48. In what year were you born?

- Drop down menu: 1900-2016

49. What is your gender

- Male
- Female
- Prefer to self-describe: _____

50. Please specify your race or ethnicity (check all that apply).

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Native American or American Indian
- Other (Please Specify):

51. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

- Less than high school
- High school degree

- Some college, no degree
- Trade or vocational school
- Associate Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Graduate Degree

52. What is your religious preference?

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Atheist
- None
- Other (Please Specify):

53. In which U.S. state do you currently live? (Drop down menu with all 50 states & D.C.)

54. In which Congressional District do you currently live? (Drop down menu with district options within state)

55. Which of the following best describes the place you live?

- Urban
- Rural
- Suburban

56. Are you a citizen of the United States?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

57. [If Q56 == 1]: How many generations of your family have been in the United States?

- a. 1 generation American (but not born in the United States)
- b. 1 generation American (and born in the United States)
- c. 2 generations
- d. 3 generations
- e. 4 or more generations

58. Information about income is very important to understand how people are doing financially these days. What is your total household income? *Drop down menu: Below options*

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$59,999
- \$60,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$79,999
- \$80,000 to \$89,999
- \$90,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

59. In thinking about what you do for a living, do you consider yourself:

- White-Collar?
- Blue-Collar?
- Don't Know

60. OPEN TEXT BOX: Please provide any feedback on the survey instrument or your responses.

