DEMOCRATIC CONTRACTION? POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF FELON DISENFRANCHISEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

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Universal suffrage is a cornerstone of democratic governance. As levels of criminal punishment have risen in the United States, however, an ever-larger number of citizens have lost the right to vote. The authors ask whether felon disenfranchisement constitutes a meaningful reversal of the extension of voting rights by considering its political impact. Data from legal sources, election studies, and inmate surveys are examined to consider two counterfactual conditions: (1) whether removing disenfranchisement restrictions alters the outcomes of past U.S. Senate and presidential elections, and (2) whether applying contemporary rates of disenfranchisement to prior elections affects their outcomes. Because felons are drawn disproportionately from the ranks of racial minorities and the poor, disenfranchisement laws tend to take more votes from Democratic than from Republican candidates. Analysis shows that felon disenfranchisement played a decisive role in U.S. Senate elections in recent years. Moreover, at least one Republican presidential victory would have been reversed if former felons had been allowed to vote, and at least one Democratic presidential victory would have been jeopardized had contemporary rates of disenfranchisement prevailed during that time.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE is a cornerstone of democratic governance and a fundamental element of citizenship in democratic societies—one that "makes all other political rights significant" (Piven and Cloward 2000:2). Although the timing and sequencing of the establishment of formal voting rights has varied from country to country, it has almost always been a slow, contested, and uneven process (Bowles and Gintis 1986:43–44, 56; Collier 1999; Rokkan 1970: 31–36; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992; Therborn 1977). As Dahl (1998) puts it, "In all democracies and republics throughout twenty-five centuries the rights to engage fully in political life were limited to a minority of adults" (p. 89). Political and economic elites often resisted the extension of voting rights to subordinate

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groups, including women, youth, the non-propertied, workers, poor people, racial and ethnic groups, and others (Keyssar 2000; Markoff 1996:45–64; Wiebe 1995).

Yet over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, restrictions on the franchise within countries claiming democratic governance have gradually eroded, and universal suffrage has come to be taken for granted as a key component of democracy in both theory and practice (Dahl 1998:90). One recent survey reports that by 1994, fully 96 percent of nation-states claimed to formally enfranchise adult men and women citizens alike (Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan 1997:735).[1] To proclaim democratic governance today means, at a minimum, universal suffrage for all citizens.

We consider a rare and potentially significant counter-example to the universalization of the franchise in democratic societies: restrictions on the voting rights of felons and ex-felons. Felon disenfranchisement constitutes a growing impediment to universal political participation in the United States because of the unusually severe state voting restrictions imposed upon felons and the rapid rise in criminal punishment since the 1970s. While a number of other countries (including the United Kingdom, Russia, and many of the post-Soviet republics) deny voting rights to prison inmates, the United States is unique in restricting the rights of nonincarcerated felons (who, as we show below, make up approximately three-quarters of the disenfranchised population). In many European countries, including Ireland, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, and Greece, as well as Australia and South Africa, inmates retain the legal right to vote even while in prison (Australian Electoral Commission 2001; Ewald 2002; Fellner and Mauer 1998).[2] In a number of other countries, voting restrictions are contingent on the length or type of sentence imposed (among these countries are Austria, Belgium, Italy, and Norway in Europe, and Canada, Australia, and New Zealand elsewhere). Among postindustrial democracies, the United States is virtually the only nation to permanently disenfranchise ex-felons as a class in many jurisdictions, and the only country to limit the rights of individuals convicted of offenses other than very rare treason or election-related crimes. Finland and New Zealand disenfranchise some ex-felons for specific election offenses, but only for a limited time (Fellner and Mauer 1998). Germany allows, by judicial discretion, the disenfranchisement of those convicted of election offenses and treason for a maximum of five years beyond their sentence (Demleitner 2000). The United States stands alone in the democratic world in imposing restrictions on the voting rights of a very large group of nonincarcerated felons.

As many recent analysts have documented (Donziger 1996; Lynch 1995; Savelsberg 1994; Sutton 2000), the United States is also exceptional for the rate at which it issues felony convictions (and thus removes the right to vote). For example, the incarceration rate in the United States in 2000 was 686 per 100,000 population, compared with rates of 105 in Canada, 95 in Germany, and only 45 in Japan (Mauer 1997a; U.S. Department of Justice [henceforward USDOJ] 2002; Walmsley 2002), and similar disparities can also be found for nonincarcerated felons.

Whether felon disenfranchisement in the United States actually constitutes a threat to democracy, however, is not a simple question. Modern democratic governance entails a set of macro-political institutions that register citizens' preferences through (among other things) regular competitive elections (Bollen 1979; Dahl 1998; Przeworski 1991, chap. 1). For democratic governance to be threatened, disenfranchisement must reach levels sufficient to change election outcomes. Raw counts of the size of the disen-

[1] To be sure, many of these countries have incomplete or "façade" democracies without fully competitive elections (Markoff 1996, chap. 5). Even within the most democratic countries, barriers to participation inevitably persist (e.g., registration requirements, barriers faced by disabled voters, difficulties accessing polling places, especially when elections are held on working days). Every country excludes noncitizen immigrants from voting in national elections.

[2] We thank Joe Levinson at the Prison Reform Trust, and Femke van der Meulen at the International Centre for Prison Studies, both in London, for making the results of their international survey of felon voting rights in Europe available to us.

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franchised felon population are inconclusive: However much the loss of voting rights matters for affected individuals, there may be no effect on political outcomes and hence, no substantive macro-level impact. Group-level analyses face the same limitations. Some analysts have focused on the disproportionate racial impact of felon disenfranchisement (Harvey 1994; Shapiro 1993) and on the widely reported statistical estimate that approximately one in seven African American men are currently disenfranchised (Fellner and Mauer 1998). While unquestionably important for many reasons, the disproportionate racial impact of felon disenfranchisement cannot by itself address the implications for American democracy as a whole. Given these considerations, we develop an appropriate, macro-level test. We suggest that determining whether felon disenfranchisement has had an impact on American democracy requires examining the extent to which it has directly altered actual electoral outcomes.

Because felon voting rules are state-specific, the handful of earlier studies of the political consequences of felon disenfranchisement estimated the average impact of disenfranchisement on election turnout rates across the states (Hirschfield 2001; Miles 2000). In the analyses developed here, by contrast, we advance an alternative, counterfactual approach. We examine specific elections and test whether the inclusion of felon voters at predicted rates of turnout and party preference would have been sufficient to change actual election outcomes. We use data on voter turnout from the Current Population Survey's Voter Supplement Module, and data on voting intention from the National Election Study, to estimate the likely voting behavior of the disenfranchised felon population. We utilize information on felon characteristics from censuses and surveys of prison inmates to estimate the size and social distribution of the felon population. Combining these data sources, we are able to estimate the net votes lost by Democratic candidates in closely contested U.S. Senate and presidential elections, and to assess the overall impact of felon disenfranchisement on the American political landscape. Finally, we use unique longitudinal data on criminal background and political behavior to test the reasonableness of the assumptions we make in our voting analyses, drawing on newly available data from the 2000 wave of the Youth Development Study (Mortimer forthcoming).

We present our paper in five parts. First, we develop the theoretical and historical background of our topic, situating our empirical analyses in the literatures on democratic theory and American criminal justice. Second, we describe the logic of our investigation. Third, we address data sources and methodological issues, presenting our estimates of the size of the disenfranchised felon population in each state. Fourth, we offer two sets of results: estimates of the likely turnout and vote choice of felons if they had the right to vote, and confirmatory analyses from the Youth Development Study. Last, we discuss some of the implications of our results.

THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Models of Universal Suffrage and American Democracy

The current state of democracy in America is frequently characterized as troubled. Low turnout rates (Piven and Cloward 2000; Putnam 2000), high levels of public apathy (Eliasoph 1998), poor information and citizen ignorance (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996), declining trust in the political system (Brooks and Cheng 2001; Nye, Zelikow, and King 1997), a "crisis" of the party system (Burnham 1982) characterized by rising independent partisanship, candidate-centered politics, and voter dealignment (Wattenberg 1991, 1994) are among the symptoms most frequently identified in the recent literature. Yet, virtually no attention has been paid to issues surrounding the right to vote.[3]

A lack of attention to voting rights reflects the predominant scholarly consensus that suffrage has been a settled issue since the passage and enforcement of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Observing the early ex-

[3] A partial exception to this claim has resulted from the aftermath of the 2000 presidential election and the controversies growing out of the Florida vote (e.g., National Commission on Federal Election Reform 2001).

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tension of the franchise to nonpropertied white men in the United States in the 1830s, Tocqueville ([1835] 1969) famously asserted, "When a nation begins to modify the elective qualification one can be sure that sooner or later it will abolish it altogether. That is one of the most invariable rules of social behavior" (p. 59). To be sure, democratic governance has been overturned in many countries over the course of the past 150 years, in some cases more than once (Markoff 1996).[4] Such societal-wide democratic reversals have typically entailed the elimination of democratic institutions and free elections as part of larger shifts to authoritarian forms of governance. In such cases, the right to vote in meaningful elections is either completely eliminated or rendered irrelevant; *selective* disenfranchisement of particular groups, however, is rarely the source of the turn away from democracy. Democratic theory suggests that suffrage rights are exceptionally sticky: Once the vote is extended to a particular segment of the population, it is rarely removed as long as the polity as a whole remains democratic.

The history of suffrage rights in the United States has appeared to many observers to have more or less followed a Tocquevillian model, even if unevenly. Although the struggle to extend the franchise to all continued for some 130 years after Tocqueville wrote, the history of suffrage has been generally viewed as a steady march toward universalism (Flanigan and Zingale 2002:31–34; Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978:5; Williamson 1960). As keen an observer of the limitations of American democracy as Schattschneider (1960) could assert that "one of the easiest victories of the democratic cause in American history has been the extension of the suffrage. . . . The struggle for the ballot was almost bloodless, almost completely peaceful, and astonishingly easy" (p. 100). The dominant assumption in the literature today is that "at least since the voting rights reforms of the 1960s, political rights have been universalized in the United States. With relatively insignificant exceptions, all adult citizens have the full complement of political rights" (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995:11).

Recent critical historical accounts have challenged unilinear models of democratic extension, emphasizing the uneven development of suffrage over the course of American history (Keyssar 2000; Rogers 1992; Shklar 1991; Wiebe 1995). This more recent scholarship describes the halting, and at times reversible, processes through which universal suffrage finally came to be adopted in the United States. Examinations of state and local variation in the timing and extension of the franchise reveal this pattern most clearly. The possibility that growing felon disenfranchisement may constitute a challenge to the legitimacy of democratic elections, however, has not generally been considered (for one notable exception, see Keyssar 2000:308).

The widespread consensus around the view that universal suffrage has been attained seems to be driven by a simple but plausible assumption: There is no reason to think that disenfranchisement has any substantive impact on political outcomes, as it affects only a small group of individuals; hence, while it may be an interesting legal or philosophical question, it does not by itself pose an empirical threat to democratic governance. Yet there are reasons to believe that felon disenfranchisement has not had a neutral impact on the American political system.

Racial minorities (Kennedy 1997; Mauer 1999; Tonry 1995) and the poor (USDOJ 1993, 2000b; Wilson and Abrahamse 1992; Wolfgang, Thornberry, and Figlio 1987) are significantly overrepresented in the U.S. criminal justice system. We estimate that 1.8 million of the 4.7 million felons and ex-felons currently barred from voting are African Americans (see Appendix Tables A and B). Because African Americans are overwhelmingly Democratic Party voters (Dawson 1994; Huckfeldt and Kohfeld 1989; Tate 1993), felon disenfranchisement erodes the Democratic voting base by reducing the number of eligible African Americans voters. Moreover, the white felon population is

[4] Among the most important of these antidemocratic waves were the rise of fascist governments in Europe between the two world wars and the uneven development of democratic governance in Asia and Central and South America after World War II (for a global overview, see Rueschemeyer et al. 1992).

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principally composed of poor or working-class offenders (USDOJ 1993, 2000b) who are also likely to vote Democratic (although not nearly to the same extent as African Americans) (Form 1995; Hout, Brooks, and Manza 1995). According to a nationally representative survey of state prison inmates, less than one-third of all state prisoners had completed high school, and fewer than half reported an annual income of $10,000 in the year prior to incarceration (USDOJ 1993:3, 2000b). In the southern states, where disenfranchisement laws tend to be most restrictive, education and income levels are even lower (tables available on request from authors). For all of these reasons, then, the possibility at least exists that felon disenfranchisement affects the outcomes of democratic elections by taking net votes from the Democratic Party.

Criminal Justice and Felon Disenfranchisement

The possibility that felon disenfranchisement could be influencing recent electoral outcomes is largely tied to changes in the criminal justice regime over the past three decades. For a 50-year period, from the 1920s to the early 1970s, United States incarceration rates fluctuated within a narrow band of approximately 110 prisoners per 100,000 people. The policy consensus accompanying this stability was undergirded by a model of "penological modernism" in which the rehabilitation of offenders was the primary goal of incarceration (Rothman 1980). Structural elements of the criminal justice system, including probation, parole, and indeterminate sentencing, were designed to reform offenders and reintegrate them into their communities. The model began to break down in the 1960s, however, as Republican presidential candidates Barry Goldwater (in 1964), and Richard Nixon (in 1968), and other conservative and moderate politicians (such as Nelson Rockefeller in New York) successfully promoted more punitive criminal justice policies (Beckett 1997; Jacobs and Helms 1996; Savelsberg 1994). By the mid-1970s, a rising chorus of conservative scholars, policy analysts, and politicians were advocating punitive strategies of deterrence and incapacitation, dismissing the rehabilitative model as "an anachronism" (Martinson 1974:50; Wilson 1975). These trends continued in the 1980s and 1990s, with the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations aggressively focusing the nation's attention on problems associated with drug use and the incarceration of drug offenders (Beckett and Sasson 2000).

The success of the conservative crime policy agenda over the past three decades has had a remarkable impact, producing an enormous increase in felony convictions and incarceration, and a corresponding increase in rates of felon disenfranchisement. Since 1970, the number of state and federal prisoners has grown by over 600 percent, from fewer than 200,000 to almost 1.4 million (USDOJ 1973:350, 2001a:1). Other correctional populations have also grown by rate and number, with the number of felony probationers and parolees quadrupling from 1976 to 2000 (USDOJ 1979, 2001b). When jail inmates are added to state and federal prisoners, approximately 2 million Americans are currently incarcerated, with an additional 4.5 million supervised in the community on probation or parole (USDOJ 2000a), and some 9.5 million ex-offenders in the general population (Uggen, Manza, and Thompson 2000).

Not all of these felons and ex-felons are disenfranchised, as ballot restrictions for felons are specific to each state. Restrictions were first adopted by some states in the post-Revolutionary era, and by the eve of the Civil War some two dozen states had statutes barring felons from voting or had felon disenfranchisement provisions in their state constitutions (Behrens, Uggen, and Manza 2002; Keyssar 2000:62–63). In the post-Reconstruction South, such laws were extended to encompass even minor offenses (Keyssar 2000:162), as part of a larger strategy to disenfranchise African Americans—a strategy that also included devices such as literacy tests, poll taxes, and grandfather clauses (see Kousser 1974). In general, some type of restriction on felons' voting rights gradually came to be adopted by almost every state, and at present 48 of the 50 states bar felons—in most cases including those on probation or parole—from voting. At least 10 of those states also bar ex-felons from voting, 2 other states permanently disenfran-

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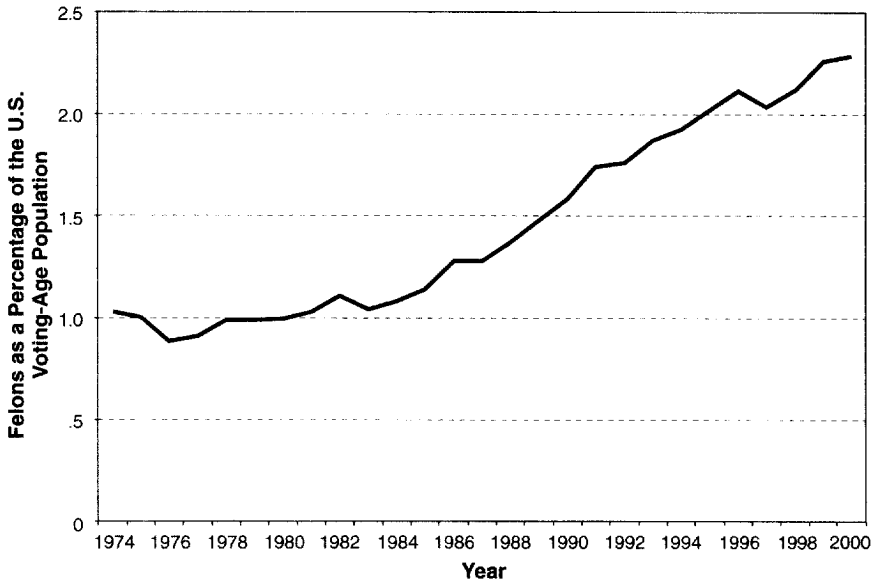

Figure 1. Felon Disenfranchisement as a Percentage of the U.S. Voting-Age Population, 1974 to 2000

Note: Estimates are based on life tables constructed from U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Census Bureau publications (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1948–2000; USDOJ 1948–2001). All sources are described on pages 785–86.

chise recidivists, and 1 state requires a post-release waiting period.[5]

Overall, the combination of an increasing number of convictions, state laws that prevent most felons from voting, and the steady cumulative growth of the disenfranchised ex-felon population in those states that permanently restrict their voting rights has produced a significant overall growth in the disenfranchised population. Our estimates suggest that the total disenfranchised population has risen from less than 1 percent of the electorate in 1976 to 2.3 percent of the electorate in 2000. Figure 1 shows the steady growth of the percentage of the voting age population disenfranchised over this period. The slight dips in the mid-1970s and late-1990s reflect certain states liberalizing their restrictions on ex-felons (see Behrens et al. 2002; Manza and Uggen forthcoming).

PRIOR RESEARCH AND STRATEGY OF ANALYSIS

Our primary research question is whether felon disenfranchisement has had meaningful political consequences in past elections. In other words, would election outcomes have differed if the disenfranchised had been allowed to vote? To fully answer this counterfactual question, we must determine how many felons would have turned out to vote, how they would have voted, and whether those choices would have changed the electoral outcomes. If so, a closely related consideration is whether disenfranchisement has affected public policy through feedback processes tied to these electoral outcomes. Figure 2 provides a schematic representation of the questions we pose. Our burden is to estimate who votes (a), their vote choice (b), and the electoral

[5] At present, Vermont and Maine are the only states that allow incarcerated felons to vote. Referenda eliminated voting rights for Utah and Massachusetts inmates in 1998 and 2000, respectively. Alabama, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, Nevada, Tennessee (for those convicted prior to 1986), Virginia, Washington (for those convicted prior to 1984), and Wyoming permanently disenfranchise felons unless reinstated by a clemency procedure. Arizona and Maryland permanently disenfranchise certain recidivists (those with two or more felony convictions), and Delaware requires a five-year waiting period. New Mexico rescinded permanent ex-felon disenfranchisement in 2001, and Maryland narrowed its voting ban on ex-felons in 2002.

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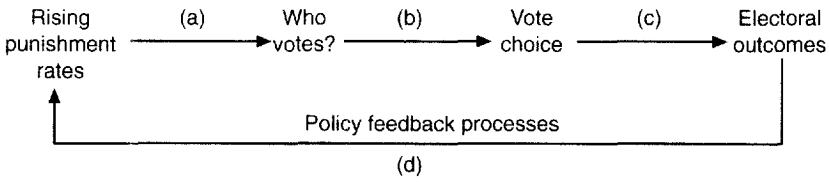

Figure 2. Schematic Diagram of the Impact of Felon Disenfranchisement on American Electoral Outcomes and Policy

outcomes (c). In the conclusion we suggest some possible views regarding the feedback process (d) as well.

These are difficult questions. A group the size of the disenfranchised felon population *could* have a considerable political impact, but given its composition, neither its rate of political participation nor its preferences are likely to mirror those of the general population. In this case, and in observational research more generally, information is missing on an important counterfactual condition (Holland 1986). If we could assume unit homogeneity—that felons would have voted in the same numbers and with the same preferences as nonfelons—we could simply count the disenfranchised felons and apply national turnout and party-preference averages. But because felons differ from nonfelons in ways that are likely to affect political behavior, this sort of blanket assumption is likely untenable.

Another way to measure political impact is to estimate the average causal effect of a treatment—in this case laws stripping criminals of their voting rights. In a state-level analysis of National Election Study data, Miles (2000) reports that rates of voter registration and turnout tend to be lower in states with strict felon disenfranchisement laws than in states lacking such laws, but that the differences are not statistically significant (cf. Hirschfield 2001). Although such studies provide evidence about the statistical significance of the *average* effect of disenfranchisement—and suggest that this average effect is likely to be small—it is possible that even such small differences may have great practical significance.

First, it may be reasonable to examine the impact of disenfranchisement on particular elections rather than the overall impact because political choices are less about average causal effects than about tipping points. In some elections, particularly those in two-party systems requiring a simple plurality for victory (as in most U.S. elections), a small number of votes are often decisive. In this case, we also have a great deal more information at our disposal than the standard statistical approach assumes, as we have access to population data rather than sample data. We know the precise number of votes cast for each candidate and the plurality or margin of victory in every election. We also know the exact number of prisoners, probationers, and parolees in each state who cannot vote, and we can reasonably estimate the number of ex-felons in states that restrict their voting rights. The only real questions, then, are how many felons and ex-felons would have turned out to vote, and which candidate they would have selected.

Assuming that nothing else about the candidates or elections would have changed, we therefore undertake a historical accounting of the counterfactual condition: What would have happened had felons been allowed to vote in U.S. Senate and presidential elections? We calculate the number of felons and ex-felons affected, then estimate voter turnout and vote choice on the basis of their known characteristics to determine the number of votes lost to Democratic candidates. To assess the political consequences of disenfranchisement, we then compare the actual margin of victory with counterfactual results that take into account the likely political behavior of disenfranchised felons.

DATA AND METHODS

Turnout and Vote Choice

Our analyses of turnout and vote choice utilize standard election data sources. To derive turnout estimates for the disenfranchised population, we analyze data from the Voter

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Supplement File of the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of individuals conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Since 1964, in each November of even-numbered (national election) years, the survey includes questions about political participation. All sampled households are asked, "In any election some people are not able to vote because they are sick or busy or have some other reason, and others do not want to vote. Did [you/another household member] vote in the election on November __?"

Questions of this type produce slightly inflated estimates of turnout in the CPS series, with the inflation factor ranging from a low of 7.5 percent (1968) to a high of 11.1 percent (1988) in presidential elections between 1964 and 1996 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1998:2). Accordingly, after obtaining estimated turnout percentages for the felon population, we reduce them by a CPS inflation factor, multiplying predicted turnout rates by the ratio of actual to reported turnout for each election.[6] Because turnout is most overreported among better-educated citizens (Bernstein, Chadha, and Montjoy 2001; Silver, Anderson, and Abramson 1986), inflation rates are likely lower among disenfranchised felons than among nonfelons, so this procedure is likely to produce conservative estimates for our study.

Our estimates of the expected vote choice of disenfranchised felons are developed using National Election Study (NES) data for 1972 to 2000. We begin in 1972 because it is the first presidential election year for which we have reasonably proximate sociodemographic information about incarcerated felons and because it immediately precedes major increases in incarceration rates. The NES is the premier source of U.S. voting data. It includes a rich battery of sociodemographic and attitudinal items and the lengthy time-series needed for this investigation. The biggest drawback of the NES series is that while it asks respondents how they voted in presidential and congressional elections, there are too few respondents ($N < 2{,}500$) to permit meaningful state-level analyses.[7]

To analyze the expected turnout and vote choice of disenfranchised felons, we do not have any survey data that asks disenfranchised felons how they would have voted. We can, however, "match" the felon population to the rest of the voting-age population to derive such an estimate and then test the reasonableness of this approach with a supplementary survey analysis. Our models of political behavior include sociodemographic attributes that have long been shown in voting research to contribute to turnout and vote choice: gender, race, age, income, labor force status, marital status, and education (Manza and Brooks 1999, chap. 7; Teixeira 1992; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980). We analyze age and education (in years) as continuous variables. Income is a continuous variable measured in constant 1999 dollars. Labor force status, marital status, gender, and race are dichotomies (an African American–non-African American dichotomy necessitated by the lack of information about Hispanic voters in the NES series prior to the 1980s). We use similar measures for both the turnout analyses (using CPS data) and vote choice analyses (using NES data).[8] Once we have estimated political participation and party preference equations on the general population, we insert the mean characteristics of disenfranchised felons into these equations to obtain their predicted

[6] The use of proxy respondents to report on the voting behavior of others in the household is a potentially greater threat to validity. However, U.S. Census Bureau verification tests show that proxy and self-reports were in agreement about 99 percent of the time in 1984 and 98 percent of the time in 1992 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1986:10, 1993). Also, the CPS has produced much more reliable turnout estimates than the National Election Study, which typically overestimates turnout by 18 to 25 percent.

[7] It would be possible to obtain state-level data for many elections, such as data collected in recent elections by the Voter News Service. Unfortunately, these surveys generally lack the battery of items needed to match the characteristics of the felon population to those of the survey respondents, and are therefore not suitable for deriving estimates of felon voting behavior.

[8] Ideally, we would also have data on partisanship, and candidate and policy preferences to develop estimates of felons' voting behavior. Because such information is currently unavailable, below we supplement the national analysis with additional analyses from a longitudinal study that allows us to more directly compare the voting behavior of felons and nonfelons.

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rates of turnout and Democratic Party preference. We obtain information on the sociodemographic characteristics of convicted felons from the *Survey of State Prison Inmates* data series (USDOJ 1993, 2000b).

The dependent variables in both the turnout and vote-choice analyses are dichotomous, so we estimate logistic regression models of the probabilities of participation and Democratic vote choice, respectively. In the turnout equations, the outcome is coded 1 for voted, and 0 for did not vote. In the voting equations, the outcome is coded 1 for Democratic and 0 for Republican choice. We consider only major party voters, as in Senate elections few third-party or independent candidates have come close to winning office.[9] Coefficients from these regressions are reported in Appendix Table C.

Legal Status and Correctional Populations

In addition to estimating the likelihood of voting and the partisan alignment of felons, we must also determine their absolute numbers in each state. To establish which correctional populations to count among the disenfranchised population, we examined the elector qualifications and consequences of a felony conviction as specified in state constitutions and statutes (Manza and Uggen forthcoming) and referenced secondary sources detailing the voting rights of offenders (Allard and Mauer 1999; Burton, Cullen, and Travis 1986; Fellner and Mauer 1998; Mauer 1997b; Olivares, Burton, and Cullen 1996; USDOJ 1996). To establish the number of disenfranchised felons currently under supervision, we sum the relevant prison, parole, felony-probation, and convicted felony jail populations. The data on felons under supervision come from Justice Department publications, such as the *Correctional Populations in the United States* series. We estimate that on December 31, 2000, 3 million current felons were legally disenfranchised, or slightly less than half of the 6.5 million adults under correctional supervision (USDOJ 2001b). For most states, this calculation involves a rather straightforward accounting of the prison, parole, and felony probation populations.[10] Convicted felons who serve their sentences in jail represent a smaller but potentially important group not considered in prior estimates (Mauer 1997b). In 1998, for example, 24 percent of felony convictions resulted in jail sentences (USDOJ 1998). We therefore include a conservative estimate of the number of convicted felons in jail—10 percent of the total jail population.

These "head counts" are based, by social scientific standards, on excellent data. Estimating the number of disenfranchised ex-felons not currently under supervision, however, is a greater challenge. Existing estimates vary with the assumptions made by researchers. Important early work by the Sentencing Project (Fellner and Mauer 1998; Mauer 1997b) based estimates on national felony conviction data and state-level reports of criminal offenses between 1970 and 1995. Although valuable, such procedures may make untenable assumptions about stability and homogeneity, such as applying national information on racial composition and criminal convictions to individual states. Moreover, such procedures do not account for deceased felons, nor do they consider those convicted prior to 1970 or after 1995.

We develop alternative estimates based on exits *from* (rather than entry *into*) correctional supervision. Our data sources include the annual *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics* and *Correctional Populations* series, *Probation and Parole in the United States*, and *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear*. For early years, we also referenced *National Prisoner Statistics*, and *Race of*

[9] The only independent candidate to win a Senate seat since 1972 was Harry F. Byrd Jr. of Virginia in 1976.

[10] Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Delaware, Alaska, and Hawaii combine their prison and jail systems. In such cases, we classify felons serving greater than one year as prisoners and felons with shorter sentences as jail inmates (taking 10 percent of the latter group to represent convicted felony jail inmates). For five states that do not distinguish felony and nonfelony probationers, we estimate that 50 percent of probationers are felons (a more conservative figure than the 52 percent national average) (USDOJ 2001b). Jail figures for 2000 were estimated by applying state-specific 1999–2000 prison growth rates to 1999 jail populations.

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Prisoners Admitted to State and Federal Institutions, 1926–1986 (all of these are USDOJ publications). We determine the median age of released prisoners based on annual data from the National Corrections Reporting Program (USDOJ 1983–1996). We use recidivism data from national probability samples of prison releasees (USDOJ 1989) and probationers (USDOJ 1992) to establish the number who reoffend. We then compile life tables for the period 1948–2000 to determine the number of released felons lost to recidivism (and therefore already included in our annual head counts) and to mortality each year (e.g., see Bonczar and Beck 1997). Each cohort of disenfranchised releasees is thus successively reduced each year and joined by a new cohort of releasees. This allows us to compute the number of ex-felons no longer under correctional supervision for states that disenfranchise ex-felons.

Our recidivism estimates are based on USDOJ studies of prisoners (1989) and probationers (1992). The prisoner and parolee recidivism rate is 18.6 percent at one year, 32.8 percent at two years, and 41.4 percent at three years. For probationers and jail inmates, the corresponding three-year failure rate is 36 percent. To extend the analysis to subsequent years, we computed a trend line based on the ratio of increases in Hoffman and Stone-Meierhoefer's (1980) study of federal prisoners. By year 10, we estimate a 59.4 percent recidivism rate among former prisoners and parolees, which increases to 65.7 percent by year 52 (the maximum duration in the analysis). Because these rates exceed those of most long-term recidivism studies, they should yield conservative estimates of the disenfranchised ex-felon voting base. We calculate mortality based on the expected number of deaths for African American males (the group with the highest mortality rates) at the median age of release for each state, multiplied by a constant factor of 1.46 to match the high death rates observed in the Justice Department's recidivism study (USDOJ 1989). Age-specific and year-specific mortality data were obtained from the *Statistical Abstract* series "Expectation of Life and Expected Deaths, by Race, Sex, and Age" (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1948–2000).

These ex-felon estimates also account for the fact that some states restore the civil rights of many releasees or only disenfranchise certain ex-felons. Florida, for example, has restored voting rights to over 160,000 disenfranchised felons since the 1960s and does not impose felony adjudication for some probationers who successfully complete their sentences.

THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF FELON DISENFRANCHISEMENT

Turnout and Party Preference

Table 1 shows the estimated national participation rates and voting preferences for disenfranchised felons by year since 1972. These estimates are based on the voting behavior of those matching felons in terms of gender, race, age, income, labor force status, marital status, and education, adjusted for overreporting of voting in the CPS. In short, they provide evidence regarding the likely behavior of hypothetical felon and ex-felon voters. Our estimates of felon turnout range from a low of 20.5 percent (for the 1974 Congressional elections) to a high of 39 percent (for the 1992 presidential election). On average, we predict that about 35 percent of disenfranchised felons would have turned out to vote in presidential elections, and that about 24 percent would have participated in Senate elections during nonpresidential election years. Although these numbers are well below the corresponding rates among nonfelons, they suggest that a non-trivial proportion of disenfranchised felons were likely to have voted if permitted to do so.

According to our analysis of party choice in Table 1, our hypothetical felon voters showed strong Democratic preferences in both presidential and senatorial elections. In recent presidential elections, even comparatively unpopular Democratic candidates, such as George McGovern in 1972, would have garnered almost 70 percent of the felon vote. These Democratic preferences are less pronounced and somewhat less stable in senatorial elections. Nevertheless, the survey data suggest that Democratic candidates would have received about 7 of every 10 votes cast by the felons and ex-felons in 14 of the last 15 U.S. Senate election years. By

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Table 1. Estimated Turnout and Voting Preferences of Disenfranchised Felons: Election Years 1972 to 2000

	Presidential Elections			Senate Elections	
Year	Candidate	Percent Turnout	Percent Democratic	Percent Turnout	Percent Democratic
1972	McGovern	38.2	69.1	38.2	68.2
1974	—	—	—	20.5	77.1
1976	Carter	34.3	80.7	34.3	79.6
1978	—	—	—	23.0	80.2
1980	Carter	35.7	66.5	35.7	69.6
1982	—	—	—	26.2	76.8
1984	Mondale	38.2	70.1	38.2	68.9
1986	—	—	—	25.3	73.6
1988	Dukakis	30.0	72.8	30.0	79.4
1990	—	—	—	23.8	80.5
1992	Clinton	39.0	73.6	39.0	74.7
1994	—	—	—	23.1	52.2
1996	Clinton	36.1	85.4	36.1	80.4
1998	—	—	—	23.9	69.7
2000	Gore	29.7	68.9	29.7	76.1

Sources: Current Population Survey, National Election Study, and *Survey of Inmates of State Correctional Facilities Series, 1974–1997* (USDOJ 2000b).

removing those with Democratic preferences from the pool of eligible voters, felon disenfranchisement has provided a small but clear advantage to Republican candidates in every presidential and senatorial election from 1972 to 2000.

Impact on Individual U.S. Senate Elections

We next use these turnout and party preference rates to gauge the impact of felon disenfranchisement on U.S. presidential and Senate elections. We obtained information on victory margins and Senate composition from standard election data sources (Congressional Quarterly's *America Votes* biennial series 1960–2000). Table 2 applies the voting behavior estimates from Table 1 to these election data and identifies seven elections that may have been overturned if disenfranchised felons had been allowed to vote.

To determine the *net* Democratic votes lost to disenfranchisement, we first multiply the number of disenfranchised felons by their estimated turnout rate (in each state), and the probability of selecting the Democratic candidate.[11] Because some felons would have chosen Republican candidates, we then deduct from this figure the number of Republican votes lost to disenfranchisement, which we obtain in a similar manner. For the 1978 Virginia election detailed in the top row of Table 2, for example, we estimate that 15,343 of the state's 93,564 disenfranchised felons would have voted (16.4 percent). We further estimate that 12,305 of these voters would have selected Andrew Miller, the Democratic candidate (80.2 percent of 15,343), and that the remaining 19.8 percent (or 3,038) would have chosen John Warner, the Republican candidate. This results in a net total of 9,268 Democratic votes lost to disenfranchisement in the 1978 U.S. Senate race in Virginia, almost double the actual Republican victory margin of 4,721 votes.

In recent policy debates over felon disenfranchisement, restoring voting rights has been most widely discussed for ex-felons who have completed their sentences (Bush 2001; Sengupta 2000). Yet some analysts have asserted that ex-felon voting restric-

[11] We draw on the large CPS sample to derive state-level turnout estimates for these key races.

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Table 2. The Impact of Felon Disenfranchisement on U.S. Senate Elections: 1978 to 2000

		Disenfranchised Population			Estimated Voting Behavior			Republican Victory Margin			Senate Composition		
Election Year	State	Current Felons	Ex-Felons	Total	Turnout Percent	Percent Democratic	Net Democratic Votes Lost	Actual Margin	Counter-factual Margin	Republican Held Seat Through	Actual[a]	Limited Counter-factual	Cumulated Counter-factual
1978	Virginia[b]	21,776	71,788	93,564	16.4	80.2	9,268	4,721	–4,547	2008+	58:41-D	60:39-D	60:39-D
1978	Texas[c]	100,707	89,662	190,369	13.4	80.2	15,408	12,227	–3,181	2008+	58:41-D	60:39-D	60:39-D
1980	*Unchanged*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	53:46-R	51:48-R	51:48-R
1982	*Unchanged*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	54:46-R	52:48-R	52:48-R
1984	Kentucky[d]	20,583	54,481	75,064	38.5	68.9	10,925	5,269	–5,655	2008+	53:47-R	52:48-R	50:50 —
1986	*Unchanged*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	55:45-D	56:44-D	58:42-D
1988	Florida[e]	87,264	206,247	293,512	26.5	79.4	45,735	34,518	–11,217	2000	55:45-D	58:42-D	60:40-D
1988	Wyoming[f]	3,013	6,969	9,982	24.5	79.4	1,438	1,322	–116	2006+	55:45-D	58:42-D	60:40-D
1990	*Unchanged*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	56:44-D	58:42-D	61:39-D
1992	Georgia[g]	131,911	0	131,911	29.6	74.7	19,289	16,237	–3,052	2000	57:43-D	60:40-D	63:37-D
1994	*Unchanged*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	52:48-R	51:49-R	54:46-D
1996	*Unchanged*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	55:45-R	54:46-R	51:49-D
1998	Kentucky[h]	31,456	94,584	126,040	25.4	69.7	12,614	6,766	–5,848	2004+	55:45-R	54:46-R	50:50-D
2000	*Unchanged*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	50:50 —	51:49-D	55:45-D

Sources: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., *America Votes* (1978–2000); Current Population Survey (1978–2000); National Election Study (1978–2000).

[a] Data on actual Senate composition taken from U.S. Senate (2002).

[b] In Virginia, J. Warner (R) defeated Miller (D) in 1978, Harrison in 1984, Spannaus in 1990, M. Warner in 1996, and Spannaus in 2002.

[c] In Texas, Tower (R) defeated Krueger (D) in 1978; Gramm (R) defeated Doggett in 1984, Parmer in 1990, and Morales in 1996; Cornyn defeated Kirk in 2002.

[d] In Kentucky, McConnell (R) defeated Huddleston (D) in 1984, Sloane in 1990, Beshear in 1996, and Weinberg in 2002.

[e] In Florida, Mack (R) defeated MacKay (D) in 1988, and Rodham in 1994; McCollum (R) defeated Nelson (D) in 2000.

[f] In Wyoming, Wallop (R) defeated Vinich (D) in 1988, and Thomas (R) defeated Sullivan in 1994.

[g] In Georgia, Coverdell (R) defeated Fowler (D) in 1992, and Coles in 1998. After Coverdell's death in 2000, he was succeeded by Miller (D).

[h] In Kentucky, Bunning (R) defeated Baesler (D) in 1998 (Class 3 election).

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tions are "electorally insignificant" (*Harvard Law Review* 1989:1303). Is this assumption accurate? The results in Table 2 offer a new perspective. Recall that most states only deprive those currently under some form of correctional supervision of the right to vote; only 15 states additionally disenfranchise some or all ex-felons in 2000 (see Appendix Table A). In only one instance (the late Paul Coverdell's election in Georgia in 1992), however, was a Senate election likely to have been overturned as a result of the disenfranchisement of those actively under correctional supervision.[12] Even in this case, however, the number of current prisoners in Georgia (25,290) and convicted felony jail inmates (2,163) was too small to affect the election. Rather, it was the large number of felony probationers (80,639, or a full 61 percent of the state's disenfranchised population) and parolees (23,819, or 18 percent of disenfranchised Georgians) that likely cost the Democrats the election. As this case illustrates, the political impact varies with the particular correctional populations that are disenfranchised. The other reversible cases in Table 2 all include net Democratic vote losses from *ex-felon* voters.

Impact on U.S. Senate Composition

Would changes to a handful of elections have had any real impact? Since 1978, there have been over 400 Senate elections, and we find 7 outcomes that may have been reversed if not for the disenfranchisement of felons and ex-felons. Yet even this small number might have shifted the balance of power in the Senate, which has been fairly evenly divided between the two major parties over this period. To assess this possibility, we recomputed the U.S. Senate composition after each election. Because two Republican seats were overturned in the 1978 elections, the Democratic majority would have increased from 58:41 to 60:39. We followed the beneficiaries of these closely contested elections to see how long their seats remained under Republican control. John Warner of Virginia remains in office today, and John Tower's Texas seat also remains in Republican hands (with Phil Gramm holding office in 2002). Although we cannot know whether the Democratic Party would have held these seats in subsequent elections, the well-known advantages of incumbency make this a plausible scenario. Of the 32 U.S. Senate elections in 1978, the incumbent party retained the seat through at least 1990 in 29 cases (91 percent), through at least 1996 in 27 cases (84 percent), and through at least 2002 in 23 cases (72 percent). Because incumbent parties are unlikely to hold such seats indefinitely, we cumulate the counterfactual using a more reasonable (though untested) assumption: that the Democrats would have retained these seats as long as the Republicans who narrowly defeated them. This procedure makes strong ceteris paribus assumptions, however, so Table 2 also shows "limited counterfactual" results, which assume the victor's party would lose the seat immediately after a single six-year term.

After the 1984 elections, the Republicans held a narrow 53:47 Senate majority. Under the cumulated counterfactual scenario in which disenfranchised felons are calculated to have voted, the Democrats may have achieved parity with the Republicans. In the Kentucky election of 1984, the Republican candidate (Mitch McConnell) narrowly defeated the Democratic nominee by 5,269 votes. Because Kentucky disenfranchises ex-felons as well as current inmates, parolees, and felony probationers, the total number disenfranchised was over 75,000 in 1984. Because 1984 was a presidential election year, turnout was relatively high, and our voting preference model indicates that almost 70 percent of the felon voters would have selected the Democratic candidate. Thus, almost 11,000 Democratic votes were likely lost to disenfranchisement in this election, more than twice the 5,269-vote Republican plurality. With the addition of this seat, and the Virginia and Texas seats discussed above, the counterfactual Senate composition in 1984 shows an even 50:50 party distribution.

Pursuing the counterfactual to the present day, we find that Democratic candidates are likely to have prevailed in Florida (1988), Georgia (1992), and in Kentucky's other seat (1998) if felons had been allowed to vote,

[12] Georgia's state constitution disenfranchised "until the granting of pardon" until 1983, when the constitutional ban was lifted upon "completion of this sentence."

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with a narrower reversal occurring in Wyoming (1988). Without felon disenfranchisement, our cumulative counterfactual suggests that Democrats may well have controlled the Senate throughout the 1990s. Although it is possible that both parties may have shifted course or that other factors could have arisen to neutralize this impact, it seems likely that the Senate deadlock after the 2000 elections would have been broken in favor of the Democrats if the ballot had been returned to disenfranchised felons. We discuss the implications of these shifts in our conclusion.

Further Tests

Our counterfactual results are startling, but subject to a number of assumptions that might be challenged. How robust are these results? Our estimates of disenfranchised felon turnout are based on sociodemographic characteristics at the time of incarceration. For ex-felons, who represent more than one-third of the entire disenfranchised population, we are likely to *understate* political participation because our sociodemographic measures are taken at the time of incarceration. That is, they do not consider changes in age and personal circumstances (for example, greater residential stability, labor force attachment, and marriage) linked to turnout. During or after completion of their sentences, many (though certainly not all) ex-felons acquire greater education and more stable attachments to work, family, and their communities (Sampson and Laub 1993) that may conceivably increase their likelihood of voting.

Moreover, the surveyed *inmate* population is generally less educated, less likely to be married, and less likely to be employed than the entire *felon* population, which also includes a large number of felony probationers who were never sent to prison. For these reasons, we might expect felons and ex-felons to be closer to the national turnout mean than suggested by our model, which is based on sociodemographic characteristics at the time of incarceration. If this were the case, higher estimated turnout rates would *increase* the impact on electoral outcomes.

Finally, our estimates count only 10 percent of the total jail population among the disenfranchised. Although jail inmates serving time for misdemeanor offenses and those being held prior to trial are legally eligible to vote, they lack access to a polling place, rendering them practically—if not legally—disenfranchised. If we had included all 621,149 jail inmates in 2000 among the disenfranchised (USDOJ 2001a), the political impact would have been even greater.[13]

Nevertheless, other unmeasured characteristics of felons and ex-felons, beyond those captured by the individual- and group-level sociodemographic information available in inmate surveys, could significantly depress political participation among this group. Felons may be less cognizant of, or less willing to accept, basic norms of citizenship and acceptable behavior than nonfelons with otherwise identical characteristics (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990). If so, they may be less likely to vote than our model based solely on sociodemographic traits would predict.

Our counterfactual analysis hinges on the key assumption that the political behavior of disenfranchised felons would approximate that of nonfelons matched to them in terms of age, race, gender, education, income, and marital status. Although we cannot provide a conclusive test of this assumption, we gathered new data to examine how experiences with the criminal justice system affect voting behavior. The Youth Development Study is a longitudinal survey begun among a sample of ninth graders in 1988 in St. Paul (Minnesota) Public Schools (Mortimer forthcoming). By 1998, when most respondents were 24 to 25 years old, approximately 23 percent had been arrested and 7 percent had been incarcerated. We estimated logistic regression models to see whether a bivariate association exists between criminal justice experiences and voting and, if so, how much of the observed association is due to the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics that we account for in the models we have presented above.

Table 3 shows the effects of arrest on voter turnout and party preference (results for the jail analysis are similar, although there are

[13] Absentee ballots are not routinely available in jails, although there have been scattered efforts to register jail inmates in recent elections (Mitchell 2002).

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Table 3. Logistic Regression Predicting 1996 Voter Turnout and 1996 and 1998 Party Preference: Youth Development Study, St. Paul, Minnesota

	1996 Voter Turnout				1996–1998 Party Preference	
Predictors	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Clinton (D)	Ventura (I)
Criminal Sanction						
Any arrest	−.681**	−.264	—	—	—	—
	(.217)	(.252)				
Property arrest	—	—	−.323	.148	−.242	−.346
			(.326)	(.353)	(.488)	(.597)
Drug/alcohol arrest	—	—	−.341	−.171	1.274*	1.599*
			(.342)	(.380)	(.633)	(.789)
Violent arrest	—	—	−1.246*	−.851	−.758	.946
			(.501)	(.541)	(.860)	(1.150)
Other arrest	—	—	−.065	.145	.582	.198
			(.372)	(.397)	(.589)	(.771)
Voting Predictors						
Nonwhite (vs. white)	—	−.663**	—	−.628**	1.216*	−.792
		(.258)		(.261)	(.517)	(.422)
Female	—	.066	—	.089	1.231*	−.332
		(.216)		(.215)	(.266)	(.281)
Years of education	—	.415**	—	.414**	.117	−.536**
		(.063)		(.063)	(.085)	(.102)
Income (in $1,000s)	—	.036**	—	.036**	−.004	.001
		(.012)		(.012)	(.014)	(.016)
Full-time employment	—	−.257	—	−.268	−.390	−.592
		(.240)		(.240)	(.313)	(.342)
Married	—	.088	—	.018	.130	.076
		(.224)		(.223)	(.293)	(.301)
Constant	.928**	−5.429**	.879**	−5.452**	−1.228	8.778**
	(.107)	(.925)	(.103)	(.923)	(1.281)	(1.554)
Number of cases	550	550	550	550	354	285
−2 log likelihood	673.8**	599.4**	676.1**	603.4**	373.6**	368.7**

Note: Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ (two-tailed tests)

far fewer jail inmates than arrestees; tables available on request from authors). As expected, Model 1 shows a significant bivariate relationship between arrest and turnout in the 1996 presidential election: The odds of voting are only about half as high for arrestees as for nonarrestees ($e^{-.681} = .51$). Model 2, however, shows that this effect is reduced to nonsignificance once race, gender, education, income, employment, and marital status are included in the full voting behavior model. When these independent variables are set to their mean values, the predicted probability of voting in Model 2 is about 63 percent for arrestees and 69 percent for nonarrestees. It is likely that at least part of this remaining turnout gap is attributable to the legal disenfranchisement of arrestees still under correctional supervision. In Minnesota, those convicted of felonies may not vote until they are "off paper" (i.e., they have completed probation or parole supervision in addition to any prison sentence). Unfortunately, we cannot determine from these data whether individual arrestees were legally eligible to vote at the time of the 1996 election. Model 3 disaggregates the arrest data, showing that those who had been arrested for violent offenses were significantly less likely to vote in 1996. Those convicted of violent offenses are most likely to face long sentences, so a portion of this effect may again be due

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to legal disenfranchisement. Although the coefficient for violent arrests remains large in magnitude in Model 4, it is again reduced to nonsignificance when the full set of voting predictors is introduced.

The remaining models in Table 3 predict party preferences in the 1996 presidential and 1998 Minnesota gubernatorial elections. Unlike the turnout models, there is some evidence that criminal justice sanctions remain associated with party preferences, even net of our set of voting predictors. In particular, those arrested for drug- or alcohol-related offenses were significantly more likely to favor the Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton in 1996 and the Independent Party gubernatorial candidate Jesse Ventura in 1998. Although Youth Development Study arrestees and jail inmates may not be representative of the U.S. felon population, results from this Minnesota cohort of young adults do help to establish the plausibility of our turnout and party preference models and our inferences regarding the political impact of felon disenfranchisement.

Impact on Presidential Elections

Although the outcome of the extraordinarily close 2000 presidential election could have been altered by a large number of factors, it would almost certainly have been reversed had voting rights been extended to any category of disenfranchised felons. Even though Al Gore won a plurality of the popular vote, defeating the Republican George W. Bush by over 500,000 votes, he lost narrowly in the Electoral College. Had disenfranchised felons been permitted to vote, we estimate that Gore's margin of victory in the popular vote would have surpassed 1 million votes, as shown in Table 4a. Regardless of the popular vote, however, one state—Florida—held the balance of power. If disenfranchised felons in Florida had been permitted to vote, Democrat Gore would certainly have carried the state, and the election.

As Appendix Table A shows, there are more disenfranchised felons in Florida, approximately 827,000, than in any other state. Had they participated in the election at our estimated rate of Florida turnout (27.2 percent) and Democratic preference (68.9 percent), Gore would have carried the state by more than 80,000 votes. As a test on the sensitivity of these results, we halved the estimated turnout rate and consider only *ex*-felons in Table 4a. Under the reduced turnout scenario, the Democratic Party's margin of victory is still more than 40,000 votes. More interesting, perhaps, is the finding reported in Table 4a that even if only ex-felons had been enfranchised in Florida, they would have yielded an additional 60,000 net votes for Gore, more than enough to overwhelm Bush's narrow victory margin (and to reverse the outcome in the Electoral College). And even if we halve the estimated turnout rate, Gore's margin of victory would have exceeded 30,000 votes. We can thus conclude that the outcome of the 2000 presidential race hinged on the narrower question of *ex*-felon disenfranchisement rather than the broader question of voting restrictions on felons currently under supervision.

What about earlier presidential elections? Here we examine a much different counterfactual condition. Because a greater share of the voting-age population is disenfranchised now than ever before, some closely contested Democratic political victories of the recent past might have gone to the Republicans had contemporary rates of disenfranchisement prevailed at the time. In particular, two Democratic presidential victories in the last 40 years (1960 and 1976) were decided by very narrow margins that might have been threatened under current levels of incarceration and disenfranchisement.

John F. Kennedy won the 1960 presidential election by a popular vote margin of 118,550 and a 303:219 margin in the Electoral College. Had contemporary rates of criminal punishment held at the time, however, it is likely that Richard M. Nixon would have won the popular vote. As Appendix Table A shows, about 4.7 million citizens, or 2.28 percent of the voting age population, were disenfranchised in 2000 because of felony convictions. If this percentage had held in 1960, about 2.5 million voters would have been disenfranchised, as shown in Table 4b (2.28 percent multiplied by the voting-age population of 109,672,000). Because the population percentage of convicted felons was actually much lower in 1960 than today, however, we estimate that only about 1.4 million were actually disenfranchised at the

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Table 4a. Disenfranchisement Rates and the 2000 Presidential Election: ***What if Felons Had Been Allowed to Vote in 2000?***

Unit	Actual Republican Margin	Total Disenfran -chised	Estimated Turnout Percent	Estimated Percent Democrat	Net Democratic Votes Lost	Counter-factual Democratic Margin
U.S. total	–539,947	4,695,729	29.7	68.9	527,171	1,067,118
Florida felons and ex-felons	537	827,207	27.2	68.9	85,050	84,513
50-percent lower turnout	—	—	13.6	68.9	42,525	41,988
Florida ex-felons only	—	613,514	27.2	68.9	63,079	62,542
50-percent lower turnout	—	—	13.6	68.9	31,540	31,003

Sources: Congressional Quarterly, Inc. (2000); Current Population Survey (2000); National Election Study (2000).

Table 4b. Applying Contemporary Disenfranchisement Rates to the 1960 Presidential Election: ***What if Felons Were Disenfranchised in 1960 at 2000 Rates?***

Unit	Actual Democratic Margin	Actual Disenfran -chised	Counter-factual Disen-franchised	Estimated Turnout Percent	Estimated Percent Democrat	Net Democratic Votes Lost	Counter-factual Republican Margin
U.S. total	118,550	1,378,156	2,502,211	40	75	224,811	106,261
50-percent lower turnout	—	—	—	20	75	112,405	–6,145

Sources: Congressional Quarterly, Inc. (1960); for state laws, Behrens, Uggen, and Manza (2002).

time of the 1960 election.[14] Therefore, at current rates of disenfranchisement, over 1 million additional citizens would have been denied the vote in 1960. If 40 percent of these new felons had voted (in an election in which the overall turnout rate reached a post-World War II peak of 62.8 percent), and 75 percent of this group selected the Democratic candidate, figures in line with our findings for other presidential elections, then Kennedy would have lost approximately 225,000 votes—almost twice the popular vote margin in that election. If the felon turnout rate had been only 20 percent, we find that at current disenfranchisement levels Kennedy would have prevailed by only 6,000 votes. In applying the counterfactual to the Electoral College, our analysis suggests that Nixon would likely have been victorious in New Mexico (with 4 electoral votes) but would have lost by very narrow margins in other states. Therefore, if current rates of disenfranchisement had held in 1960, it is likely that Nixon may have beaten Kennedy in the popular vote, but unlikely that he would have surpassed his electoral vote total.

It is doubtful that applying contemporary disenfranchisement rates would have overturned the 1976 election, although Jimmy Carter's victory margin would have been considerably narrower. At current rates of disenfranchisement, about 2.5 million additional citizens would have been denied the vote in 1976. Our National Election Study estimates suggest that 34.3 percent of these would have voted and that 80.7 percent of this group would have selected the Democratic candidate. This would have accounted for about 525,000 votes, or about 31 percent of Carter's final 1,682,970-vote victory margin.[15]

[14] Many states altered their disenfranchisement regimes between 1960 and 2000 (Behrens et al. 2002; Manza and Uggen forthcoming), and the 1960 figures account for these legal changes within the limitations of the available data. Prison, parole, and jail information are available for 1960, but probation figures are imputed based on state-specific ratios of probation to other correctional populations. Ex-felon figures are based on releases from 1948 to 1960 only, so they may be understated relative to recent years.

[15] The National Election Study does not ask

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DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

We find that felon disenfranchisement laws, combined with high rates of criminal punishment, may have altered the outcome of as many as seven recent U.S. Senate elections and at least one presidential election. One startling implication of these findings relates to control over the Senate. Assuming that Democrats who might have been elected in the absence of felon disenfranchisement had held their seats as long as the Republicans who narrowly defeated them, we estimate that the Democratic Party would have gained parity in 1984 and held majority control of the U.S. Senate from 1986 to the present. Changing partisan control of the Senate would have had a number of important policy consequences: In particular, it might have enabled the Clinton administration to gain approval for a much higher proportion of its federal judicial nominees, and key Senate committees would have shifted from Republican to Democratic control.

In examining presidential elections, we find that the Republican presidential victory of 2000 would have been reversed had just ex-felons been allowed to vote, and that the Democratic presidential victory of 1960 may have been jeopardized had contemporary rates of disenfranchisement prevailed at that time. Disenfranchised felons and ex-felons currently make up 2.28 percent of the voting-age population, a figure that we project may rise to 3 percent within 10 years (Manza and Uggen forthcoming; estimates available upon request). Because the margin of victory in 3 of the last 10 presidential elections has been 1.1 percent of the voting-age population or less, felon disenfranchisement could be a decisive factor in future presidential races.

One potentially important implication of these results concerns the differing correctional populations affected by ballot restrictions. We estimate that the disenfranchised population is composed of approximately 35 percent ex-felons, 28 percent probationers, 9 percent parolees, but only 27 percent prison and jail inmates (Manza and Uggen forthcoming). Disenfranchisement of prisoners alone is therefore unlikely to alter elections, but the numbers mount when those felons supervised in the community are added and reach a critical mass in states that disenfranchise ex-felons. Thus, the impact of felon disenfranchisement would have been greatly reduced had ex-felons, probationers, and parolees been permitted to vote in all states. Moreover, the philosophical rationale for disenfranchisement, founded on the liberal legal model and Enlightenment conceptions of the social contract, would appear to be much stronger for current prison inmates than for those who have completed their sentences (ex-felons) or those otherwise deemed fit to maintain community ties (probationers and parolees). Just as disenfranchisement is a powerful symbol of felons' diminished civil rights, restoration of voting rights provides a clear marker of reintegration and acceptance as a stakeholder in a community of law-abiding citizens. Although the public opinion evidence is limited, our recent experimental national survey (Manza, Brooks, and Uggen 2002) suggests that significant majorities of survey respondents believe that an offender's right to vote should be restored upon release from prison.

Although these results are striking, do they signal a true democratic contraction in the United States? Figure 3 presents data placing felon disenfranchisement in historical context, showing the percentages of states holding felon disenfranchisement provisions from the late eighteenth century to present. Most states began to restrict the ballot for felons in the mid-nineteenth century, and there is evidence in some states that lawmakers fully appreciated the partisan consequences of their actions (Behrens et al. 2002; Keyssar 2000; Manza and Uggen forthcom-

respondents how they voted in specific gubernatorial or other state elections, so we cannot model voting behavior in state elections. We can, however, make some informed assumptions to estimate the effect of felon disenfranchisement in gubernatorial elections. If we apply the mean rate of turnout (24 percent) and Democratic preference (73 percent) in Senate elections to these races, it is likely that at least three Republican gubernatorial victories would have been overturned: in Alabama (with James Folsom [D] defeating James Forrest [R] in 1994), New Jersey (James Florio [D] defeating Thomas Kean [R] in 1981), and Texas (John Hill [D] defeating William Clements [R] in 1978).

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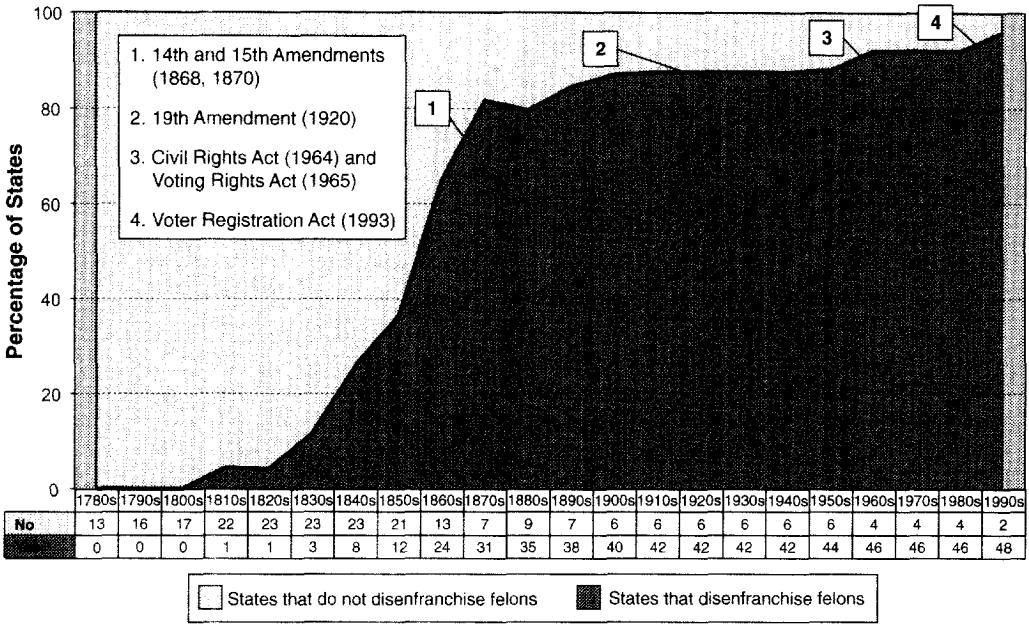

	1780s	1790s	1800s	1810s	1820s	1830s	1840s	1850s	1860s	1870s	1880s	1890s	1900s	1910s	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s
No	13	16	17	22	23	23	23	21	13	7	9	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	4	4	2
	0	0	0	1	1	3	8	12	24	31	35	38	40	42	42	42	42	44	46	46	46	48

Figure 3. The Percentage of States with Felon Disenfranchisement, 1788 to 2000

Source: Behrens, Uggen, and Manza (2002).

ing; McMillan 1955). Few states rescinded such measures following the enfranchisement of African American males (with passage of the 14th and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution) and women (with passage of the 19th amendment). Nor was felon disenfranchisement dismantled during passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Voting Rights Act of 1965, or Voter Registration Act of 1993. Although several states have removed voting restrictions on *ex*-felons since the 1960s (including New Mexico in 2001), most continue today to disenfranchise prisoners, probationers, and parolees. In fact, as Figure 3 shows, a greater percentage of states disenfranchised felons in 2000 than in any prior year.

Today, high rates of criminal punishment, rather than new laws, account for the political impact of felon disenfranchisement. In light of past theory and research on the extension and universalization of suffrage, however, the persistence and expansion of these ballot restrictions are noteworthy. We have shown that about 4.7 million adult U.S. citizens do not enjoy the full complement of political rights. As the number of disenfranchised felons expands, the electorate contracts. Because the contracted electorate now produces different political outcomes than a fully enfranchised one, mass incarceration and felon disenfranchisement have clearly impeded, and perhaps reversed, the historic extension of voting rights. Nevertheless, we must also note a number of caveats to these findings. First, our counterfactual examples rely upon a ceteris paribus assumption—that nothing else about the candidates or elections would change save the voting rights of felons and ex-felons. Had these laws changed, other forces might have arisen to negate the political influence of felons and ex-felons. Moreover, although the Democrats lose votes to felon disenfranchisement, they may also have gained votes by attempting to be just as punitive as Republicans.[16]

[16] By embracing a law-and-order agenda in the 1990s, Democrats have neutralized crime as a partisan political issue (Lin 1998). Research decomposing the unique contribution of crime policy to individual vote choice is needed to determine whether the votes gained by such strategies outweigh the votes lost with the disenfranchisement of potential Democratic voters. We should note, however, that returning the ballot to felons is not necessarily inconsistent with a crime control agenda. One may advocate extending the franchise on public safety and reintegrative

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Second, our estimated vote choice and turnout analysis matched nonfelons to felons on the basis of region, gender, race, age, labor force status, marital status and education. Although nonfelon voters resemble felons in many respects, we cannot be certain that the experience of criminal conviction itself may not suppress, (or conversely, mobilize) political participation. Our analysis of new survey data on this question provides some reassurance that our turnout and party preference estimates are reasonable, although the Youth Development Study results do not constitute a conclusive test of the effects of felony convictions on political behavior. Third, our analyses have assumed that felon disenfranchisement laws are well enforced, and that felons and ex-felons do not attempt to vote in disregard of these laws. Surely some disenfranchised felons have cast ballots, although occasional charges of fraudulent voting have not, upon further investigation, produced significant evidence of illegal voting. There is also some evidence that state authorities have improperly purged ex-felons from the rolls, thereby offsetting or perhaps eclipsing the number of votes cast fraudulently (Palast 2000; cf. Stuart 2002).

Despite these important caveats, we find considerable evidence that ballot restrictions for felons and ex-felons have had a demonstrable impact on national elections, and in this sense rising levels of felon disenfranchisement constitute a reversal of the universalization of the right to vote. Further, our focus on national and state-level elections understates the full impact of felon disenfranchisement. Because of the geographic concentration of disenfranchised felons and ex-felons in urban areas, it is likely that such impact is even more pronounced in local or district-level elections, such as House, state legislative, and mayoral races.[17] Moreover, our analysis has only examined past elections. Unless disenfranchisement laws change, the political impact is likely to intensify in the future. Even if the numbers of those incarcerated begin to level off (USDOJ 2001a), the number of disenfranchised ex-felons will continue to rise for several years in those states that restrict their franchise.

Although we have specified the political consequences of felon disenfranchisement, we have only touched on the origins of these laws and the mass incarceration phenomenon that gives such force to them today. These questions are important for situating felon disenfranchisement within a broader model of social control of dispossessed groups. Proponents of the "new penology" argue that the focus of criminological interest has recently shifted from the rehabilitation of individual offenders to the social control of aggregate groups (Feeley and Simon 1992; Wacquant 2001). The correctional population is subject to a number of exclusions: They are often ineligible for federal grants for education (such as Pell Grants [Page 2000]), they have restricted access to social programs, they face sharp disadvantages in the labor market (Western and Beckett 1999), and they must live with the social stigma associated with a felony conviction. Restricted access to the ballot box is but a piece of a larger pattern of social exclusion for America's vast correctional population.

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grounds, arguing that ex-felons who become stakeholders in their communities will have lower rates of recidivism.

[17] Note that in many local races, especially in mostly black urban districts, the partisan impact of felon disenfranchisement might be diminished because Republican candidates are already uncompetitive in these districts.

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APPENDIX TABLE A

Estimates of Numbers of Disenfranchised Felons by State: December 31, 2000

State	Prisoners	Parolees	Felony Probation	Jail Inmates	Estimated Ex-Felons	Total	Voting-Age Population	Percent Disen-franchised
Alabama	26,225	5,494	30,887	1,214	148,830	212,650	3,333,000	6.38
Alaska	2,128	507	4,543	212	—	7,390	430,000	1.72
Arizona	26,510	3,474	50,897	1,053	58,936	140,870	3,625,000	3.89
Arkansas	11,915	9,453	29,048	—	—	50,416	1,929,000	2.61
California	163,001	117,647	—	7,714	—	288,362	24,873,000	1.16
Colorado	16,833	5,500	—	967	—	23,300	3,067,000	.76
Connecticut	13,155	1,868	29,641	520	—	45,184	2,499,000	1.81
Delaware	3,937	579	10,808	298	14,384	30,006	582,000	5.16
District of Columbia	7,456	—	—	143	—	7,599	411,000	1.85
Florida	71,233	6,046	131,186	5,228	613,514	827,207	11,774,000	7.03
Georgia	44,232	21,556	217,038	3,451	—	286,277	5,893,000	4.86
Hawaii	3,553	—	—	150	—	3,703	909,000	.41
Idaho	5,526	1,443	8,774	321	—	16,064	921,000	1.74
Illinois	45,281	—	—	1,711	—	46,992	8,983,000	.52
Indiana	20,125	—	—	1,333	—	21,458	4,448,000	.48
Iowa	7,955	2,763	9,326	330	80,257	100,631	2,165,000	4.65
Kansas	8,344	3,829	—	426	—	12,599	1,983,000	.64
Kentucky	14,919	4,909	17,464	1,010	109,132	147,434	2,993,000	4.93
Louisiana	35,047	—	—	2,637	—	37,684	3,255,000	1.16
Maine	—	—	—	—	—	0	968,000	.00
Maryland	23,538	14,143	22,563	1,115	78,206	139,565	3,925,000	3.56
Massachusetts	—	—	—	—	—	0	4,749,000	.00
Michigan	47,718	—	—	1,600	—	49,318	7,358,000	.67
Minnesota	6,238	3,072	31,644	523	—	41,477	3,547,000	1.17
Mississippi	20,241	1,596	15,118	986	82,002	119,943	2,047,000	5.86
Missouri	27,323	12,357	42,607	725	—	83,012	4,105,000	2.02
Montana	3,105	—	—	160	—	3,265	668,000	.49
Nebraska	3,895	473	4,828	231	44,001	53,428	1,234,000	4.33
Nevada	10,012	4,056	8,410	517	43,395	66,390	1,390,000	4.78
New Hampshire	2,257	—	—	159	—	2,416	911,000	.27
New Jersey	29,784	14,899	96,831	1,592	—	143,106	6,245,000	2.29
New Mexico	5,342	1,670	7,279	544	63,565	78,400	1,263,000	6.21
New York	70,198	57,858	—	3,217	—	131,273	13,805,000	.95
North Carolina	31,266	3,352	34,701	1,334	—	70,653	5,797,000	1.22
North Dakota	1,076	—	—	67	—	1,143	477,000	.24
Ohio	45,833	—	—	1,628	—	47,461	8,433,000	.56
Oklahoma	23,181	1,825	26,385	698	—	52,089	2,531,000	2.06
Oregon	10,630	—	—	677	—	11,307	2,530,000	.45
Pennsylvania	36,847	—	—	—	—	36,847	9,155,000	.40
Rhode Island	1,966	353	15,844	132	—	18,295	753,000	2.43
South Carolina	21,778	4,240	25,323	869	—	52,210	2,977,000	1.75
South Dakota	2,616	—	—	111	—	2,727	542,000	.50
Tennessee	22,166	8,094	30,235	1,934	28,720	91,149	4,221,000	2.16
Texas	157,997	111,719	250,642	5,609	—	525,967	14,850,000	3.54
Utah	5,630	3,266	—	—	—	8,896	1,465,000	.61
Vermont	—	—	—	—	—	0	460,000	.00
Virginia	30,168	5,148	29,596	1,847	243,902	310,661	5,263,000	5.90
Washington	14,915	160	109,956	1,078	32,856	158,965	4,368,000	3.64
West Virginia	3,856	1,112	3,635	272	—	8,875	1,416,000	.63
Wisconsin	20,612	9,430	22,715	1,268	—	54,025	3,930,000	1.37
Wyoming	1,680	514	2,760	99	12,797	17,850	358,000	4.99
Total	1,209,243	444,405	1,320,684	57,710	1,654,497	4,686,539	205,814,000	2.28

Sources: USDOJ; see pages 785–86 for details.

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APPENDIX TABLE B

Estimated Numbers of Disenfranchised African American Felons by State: December 31, 2000

State	Black Prisoners	Black Parolees	Black Probation	Black Jail Inmates	Estimated Black Ex-Felons	Total	Voting-Age Population	Percent Disen-franchised
Alabama	17,230	2,674	13,248	671	77,932	111,755	800,000	13.97
Alaska	317	53	585	10	—	966	17,000	5.68
Arizona	4,016	543	4,347	143	8,651	17,700	137,000	12.92
Arkansas	6,595	4,715	10,376	—	—	21,686	276,000	7.86
California	80,490	31,457	—	2,697	—	114,644	1,853,000	6.19
Colorado	4,224	1,639	—	199	—	6,063	132,000	4.59
Connecticut	8,302	1,175	8,689	250	—	18,417	221,000	8.33
Delaware	2,524	303	5,069	—	7,162	15,058	108,000	13.94
District of Columbia	7,382	—	—	131	—	7,513	230,000	3.27
Florida	39,427	3,472	43,305	2,774	167,413	256,392	1,600,000	16.02
Georgia	29,583	14,267	115,711	2,124	—	161,685	1,577,000	10.25
Hawaii	201	—	—	6	—	208	27,000	.77
Idaho	105	28	141	6	—	280	7,000	4.00
Illinois	32,780	—	—	1,116	—	33,895	1,249,000	2.71
Indiana	8,664	—	—	634	—	9,297	353,000	2.63
Iowa	2,028	411	1,019	62	7,671	11,192	45,000	24.87
Kansas	3,218	1,359	—	117	—	4,694	112,000	4.19
Kentucky	5,718	1,377	3,916	312	24,632	35,955	207,000	17.37
Louisiana	26,820	—	—	1,870	—	28,690	956,000	3.00
Maine	—	—	—	—	—	—	7,000	.00
Maryland	18,228	10,662	13,105	736	42,519	85,251	1,058,000	8.06
Massachusetts	—	—	—	—	—	—	270,000	.00
Michigan	27,230	—	—	572	—	27,802	977,000	2.85
Minnesota	2,309	1,841	4,587	128	—	8,865	106,000	8.36
Mississippi	15,145	1,130	9,099	698	50,035	76,106	675,000	11.27
Missouri	12,489	4,964	12,719	300	—	30,471	425,000	7.17
Montana	44	—	—	4	—	48	4,000	1.21
Nebraska	1,155	116	758	47	7,164	9,240	49,000	18.86
Nevada	3,118	1,331	1,853	154	11,514	17,970	105,000	17.11
New Hampshire	125	—	—	12	—	138	9,000	1.53
New Jersey	21,301	8,977	47,666	975	—	78,920	856,000	9.22
New Mexico	621	199	515	43	7,750	9,128	37,000	24.67
New York	38,849	43,638	—	1,749	—	84,236	2,309,000	3.65
North Carolina	20,480	2,114	17,448	868	—	40,910	1,173,000	3.49
North Dakota	27	—	—	2	—	29	4,000	.72
Ohio	24,829	—	—	720	—	25,549	895,000	2.85
Oklahoma	8,336	614	6,108	225	—	15,283	185,000	8.26
Oregon	1,506	—	—	74	—	1,580	51,000	3.10
Pennsylvania	23,104	—	—	—	—	23,104	820,000	2.82
Rhode Island	685	100	3,598	35	—	4,419	36,000	12.27
South Carolina	15,262	2,949	13,950	596	—	32,756	816,000	4.01
South Dakota	116	—	—	3	—	119	5,000	2.37
Tennessee	11,277	4,605	12,806	1,125	11,946	41,759	635,000	6.58
Texas	71,915	44,282	46,546	2,130	—	164,873	1,800,000	9.16
Utah	432	244	—	—	—	676	16,000	4.23
Vermont	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,000	.00
Virginia	20,234	3,323	15,085	1,180	121,737	161,559	1,005,000	16.08
Washington	3,376	23	14,647	205	3,824	22,075	154,000	14.33
West Virginia	615	218	316	39	—	1,188	45,000	2.64
Wisconsin	9,940	4,476	5,920	469	—	20,805	193,000	10.78
Wyoming	101	22	85	2	358	567	4,000	14.18
Total	632,474	199,301	433,216	26,215	550,308	1,841,515	24,635,000	7.48

Sources: USDOJ; see pages 785–86 for details.

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APPENDIX TABLE C

Logistic Regression Coefficients Predicting Voter Turnout and Democratic Senate and Presidential Votes: 1972 to 2000

Independent Variable	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980	1982	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000
Turnout Analysis (Voted = 1)															
Black	–.061*	–.109***	–.063*	–.033	–.105***	.102***	.161***	.174***	.101***	.058*	–.026	.024	.211***	.263***	..321***
Years of education	.228***	.190***	.245***	.206***	.249***	.211***	.232***	.195***	.283***	.211***	.256***	.238***	.254***	.212***	.277***
Male	–.035*	–.029	–.093***	–.069**	–.126***	–.060***	–.171***	–.073	–.143***	–.089***	–.131***	–.041**	–.153***	–.060***	–.163***
Married	.392***	.517***	.443***	.532***	.528***	.538***	.460***	.541***	.604***	.498***	.418***	.538***	.486***	.535***	.550***
Employed	.291***	.331***	.302***	.266***	.319***	.283***	.261***	.269***	.400***	.260***	.311***	.266***	.229***	.221***	.262***
Age	.031***	.039***	.038***	.041***	.039***	.042***	.034***	.041***	.045***	.039***	.031***	.042***	.036***	.041***	.035***
Constant	–3.753***	–4.653***	–4.384***	–4.763***	–4.464***	–4.754***	–4.149***	–4.776***	–5.615***	–4.904***	–4.265***	–5.368***	–4.750***	–5.181***	–4.945***
Presidential Vote Analysis (Voted Democratic = 1)															
Black	2.553***	—	2.824***	—	3.066***	—	2.375***	—	2.307***	—	2.471***	—	3.241***	—	2.373***
Years of education	–.006	—	–.067***	—	–.064*	—	–.015	—	–.004	—	–.004	—	–.076**	—	.033
Male	–.244	—	–.039	—	–.358*	—	–.151	—	–.162	—	–.270*	—	–.439***	—	–.430**
Married	–.163	—	.049	—	–.136	—	–.070	—	–.021	—	–.439***	—	–.223	—	–.217
Employed	–.026	—	.197	—	.335	—	–.001	—	.154	—	.078	—	.411*	—	.137
Age	–.019***	—	–.010*	—	.001*	—	.000	—	–.003	—	.007	—	.004	—	.000
Income	–.128*	—	–.276***	—	–.123	—	–.303***	—	–.191*	—	–.173**	—	–.160*	—	–.153*
Constant	.723*	—	1.817***	—	.058*	—	–.716	—	.916*	—	.354	—	1.423**	—	–.307
Senate Vote Analysis (Voted Democratic = 1)															
Black	1.719***	2.289**	1.852***	1.392**	1.525***	1.729***	1.930***	1.915***	2.049***	2.052***	1.946***	1.029***	2.072***	1.719***	1.906***
Years of education	–.041	–.026	–.027	–.081**	–.027	–.088*	–.041	–.062	–.068*	–.039	–.048	–.023	–.030	–.042	–.021
Male	–.010	–.184	–.151	.706***	.145	–.028	–.076	–.050	–.130	–.156	–.239	–.513**	–.349	–.061	–.237
Married	.017	.393	.117	–.215	–.157	.079	.262	–.163	–.043	–.106	–.339*	–.081	–.569**	.155	–.128
Employed	.218	.516*	–.090	.236	–.116	.179	.076	–.117	.195	.082	–.057	.110	.076	.291	.047
Age	–.015**	–.014*	–.011*	–.007	.005	–.003	–.001	–.003	–.005	–.002	.001	.008	.003	.008	.001
Income	–.260***	–.319**	–.116	–.253*	–.077	–.123*	–.237*	.022	–.195*	–.134	–.035	–.187*	–.230*	–.038	–.115
Constant	1.673***	1.780**	1.589**	1.763**	.482	1.672*	1.092	1.010	1.894***	1.352	1.054*	.409	1.475*	.117	.876

Sources: Current Population Survey (1972–2000); National Election Study (1972–2000).

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ ***$p < .001$ (two-tailed tests)

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