

THE POLITICS OF GERRYMANDERING & DISENFRANCHISEMENT

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In representative democracies, gerrymandering is the political manipulation of electoral district boundaries with the intent to create an undue advantage for a party, group, or socioeconomic class within the constituency. To that definition, one could add race, as has historically been the case.

The manipulation may involve “cracking”, which is diluting the voting power of the opposing party’s supporters across many districts, or “packing”, which means concentrating the opposing party’s voting power in one district to reduce their voting power in other districts. Gerrymandering can also be used to protect incumbents, meaning politicians pick their voters instead of voters picking their politicians.

Though Democrats and Republicans both utilize gerrymandering to gain political power, the end result is voter disenfranchisement.