

Gerrymandering and Redistricting Context

1



What is Gerrymandering?

Gerrymandering is the manipulation of electoral borders to work in the favor of, or against, a specific party (Kirschenbaum & Li, 2021). It is a major political issue and threat to democracy.

2



Types of Gerrymandering

There are two types of gerrymandering: packing and cracking. Packing is when targeted voters are grouped into one district, making surrounding districts less competitive. Cracking is when the targeted voters are split across several districts (Jones, 2018).

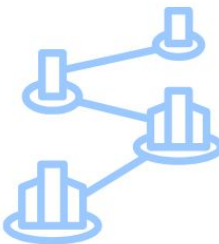
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Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act

There is legislature aimed at preventing gerrymandering, including prohibiting redistricting that intentionally packs or cracks minorities (Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, 2015), but it is only so effective when there's few objective measures of gerrymandering

4



Existing Models

There are recent redistricting models that account for compactness, preservation of old district cores, and geographic symmetry. Many of these models use the efficiency gap, a measure of "wasted votes" (Stephanopolous & McGhee, 2015).

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Knowledge Gap

Despite the availability of redistricting models, few account for just representation of minorities.