

GERRYMANDERING

Explained in the document titled gerrymandering, but with these definitions:

1. A safe district is one that will vote red or blue no matter what (>55%)
2. A swing district is one that may elect one or the other (on the edge).
3. The upper hand rests in taking control of these swing districts, and appeasing the far left or right districts.

RACIAL GERRYMANDERING

At some point in time POCs were marginalized by changing districts so that mathematically, they would have less of a voice (i.e. making sure every district has many whites and only a few POCs).

This became the main issue in the 1993 Shaw V. Reno case.

HISTORY

In Gomillion v Lightfoot, the city lines were redrawn so places with majority African-American were outside city lines. They eventually decided the litigant was in the right as a result of the AM14/AM15 (Equal Voting).

NOW

After the 1990 Census, NC submitted their new lines to the federal government. Previously, the Court decided that using race to create districts was OK. This was the creation of majority-minority districts with a majority who were African American. The NC map only had one of such districts, and the federal government encouraged NC to make another black majority district. NC did so and made a map that looks more gerrymandered than your mom.

This resulted in two African American representatives being elected to Congress. R. Shaw, amongst other white voters, filed a lawsuit, claiming that the divisions used to create districts based on race were illegal and against the ideal that every person is the same.

The court voted in favor of Shaw because race had been the only determining factor and this had violated AM14 and the ideal of colorblind justice.

The question was “can race be used as a sole/one of few deciding factors in creating districts?”

DIVIDED GOVERNMENT

This is when the Exec branch is controlled by a party and Congress another party.

- This creates partisan gridlock, much like if the two houses are different houses.
- This also creates disputes over who gets on the S.Court, as they are the final determining factors as to whether or not a law flies.
- An example of this is when Obama attempted to put a new Justice on the SC but was blocked by a Republican majority Senate. Trump then attempted the same thing with a conservative justice and it went without problem.

- When Trump attempted to put another justice in, Democrats criticized the nominee hard, one of the main issues being the nominee's alleged sexual harassment. The Republican controlled Senate eventually confirmed them.
- This also means that real debates and congressional operations have been overtaken by things that look cool on camera but are ultimately unproductive.
- A lame duck president is one that is facing being not elected or reaching their term limits soon.

CONGRESS' BAD IMAGE

- Literally everyone has been flaming Congress for not taking enough action recently. According to the TB the approval rating for Congress has dipped below 20%.
- However, many members of Congress have an approval rating of more than 60% by their constituents.
- Not sure why this part is in here considering how obvious it is that we flame the government a lot